Letter from the Chair 2011

Well, I survived my first year as Interim Chair, and the "Interim" label has been dropped. Thus, my stint as chair has been extended.

Hooray – more time to deal with vehicle issues! UW-Eau Claire eliminated the university fleet in June 2010 after all of our classes were full. We have been renting SUVs from Enterprise, and now we have reduced lab sizes and structured our lab offerings to maximize vehicle efficiency. Lorilie has done a wonderful job coordinating a rental "geology fleet," but we need to streamline operations while protecting the field experiences that have made our department strong.

Geology faculty and students continue to do wonderful things. We welcomed Scott Clark, a geocognition expert from Michigan State University, to teach our Earth Science class for education majors. Scott has been a great addition to our program. Katherine Grote’s tenure and promotion recommendation was approved by the Board of Regents. Congratulations, Katherine! Brian Mahoney was in Argentina this spring. He co-taught the first offering of TIES, the Thematic Interdisciplinary Experiential Semester, which he proposed and planned over several years. Brian, along with Biology and Economics faculty members from UWEC, facilitated an immersion experience for 17 students (see separate article). Three geology students participated in TIES this spring. In addition, all faculty members are actively involved with collaborative research projects with many of our students. In fact, Katherine Grote published two journal articles with four undergraduate co-authors in Water Resources Research and the Journal of Environmental and Engineering Geophysics. Our reputation continues to grow. An environmental geology consulting firm and a frac sand company interviewed geology students on campus this spring, and the frac sand firm hired one of our graduates before he was done with Field Geology II! Many of our students are finding employment opportunities in the flourishing frac sand industry in western Wisconsin.

If you live anywhere in the USA, you have probably heard about the political “fun times” going on in Madison with regard to the budget and other things. This is a time of great uncertainty. That’s why our alumni and friends are so important! I thank all alumni who participated in the geology "phone-a-thon" conducted by the UWEC Foundation. Foundation told us Geology alumni were by far the most enthusiastic alumni they called last summer! Contributions during the phone-a-thon and during other times as well provided $12,700 to support Dept. of Geology activities. The most encouraging thing for me was the number of new donors on the list. There is strength in numbers!

This money has been put to good use. This year we were able to award $4000 in scholarships to deserving geology majors (nearly twice our previous amount). We also defrayed $1000 in travel costs so three hydrogeology students could present research at the 2010 AGU meeting in San Francisco. We strive to be wise stewards of your gifts.

We always enjoy seeing our alumni in Eau Claire and elsewhere! We hope to see you at the national GSA meeting in Minneapolis this year. Be sure to attend the Blugold Geology reunion on October 11th! See the separate news item about the GSA reunion.

Sincerely,

Mark the date on your calendar!!!
Geology Alumni Reunion National GSA in Minneapolis October 11, 2011

Calling all UW-Eau Claire geology alumni! National GSA is going to be in Minneapolis this year (October 9-12, 2011). This is a great excuse to hold a UW-Eau Claire Geology alumni reunion! The party will be held on Tuesday evening 6:30-8:30 p.m., October 11th, at a venue in downtown Minneapolis yet to be determined. It will be in easy walking distance of the Minneapolis Convention Center, but it will be held offsite so non-registrants for the meeting can attend as well.

Mark that date on your calendar and join the fun! Watch your mail and e-mail for detailed information. Hope to see you there!

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As you know, student-faculty collaborative research is a mark of excellence in the Geology Dept. at UW-Eau Claire. We thought you would enjoy this showcase of research action shots from the past year! Faculty mentor initials are in parentheses.

1. Student Jessica Meyers in the Coast Mountains of BC collecting samples of the Coast Plutonic Complex for structural analysis. (GSP, JBM)
2. Sarah Ulrich’s photomicrograph of a CA soot particle taken on the UWEC 200kV TEM (in a collaborative project with the USGS). Each concentric layer represents one atomic layer of graphite (graphene) and is very chemically active. (RLH)
3. Giselle Conde collecting obsidian samples for geochemistry research in Colorado. (PDI)
4. David Hon (L) and Crystal Nickel (R) conducting GPR soil moisture research in Wisconsin. (KRG)
5. Frank Heaton (new geology major) works on TIES project in Argentina. Beautiful chevron fold in Cambrian limestone and shale in the Eastern Cordillera Fold and Thrust Belt. (JBM)
6. Geoff Pignotta and student Jessica Meyers in the Coast Mountains of BC.

Of course, dissemination of research results should be the culmination of any research project. The vast majority of our research students present at professional meetings, thanks to generous contributions from alumni like you!
7. Giselle Conde at National GSA in Denver, CO.
8. Audrey Mohr, Anya Benda, and Taylor Crist at the annual AGU meeting in San Francisco, CA.
ALUMNI NEWS
The latest and greatest news from UW-Eau Claire Geology Alumni and Friends.

Anna Baker (2009). Anna is a hydrogeologist for the USGS in Baltimore, MD.

Elizabeth Balgord (2009). Liz is completing her MS degree at Idaho State University and has been accepted into the Ph.D. program at the University of Arizona starting this fall.

Gregory Beckstrom (1984). Greg writes, “I am starting my 19th year with Golder. After wrapping up a corporate gig, I’ve moved back into project management and business development. I am mostly working for manufacturing and oil and gas clients on acquisitions and divestitures, environmental impact assessments, and remediation projects. I spend much time in Houston and Denver, and occasionally I travel to Asia, Australia, and Europe where I direct projects. I am also serving as the Vice Chair of the Twin Cities section of the Society of Mining, Metallurgy & Exploration (check us out at: www.smetslc.org). We are looking forward to hosting the National GSA meeting here in Minneapolis next October!”

Nicole (Bergstrom) Kane (2002). Chris and I welcomed our second son, Owen, in February 2011. Our first son, Brady, will be three in March.

Casey Bowe (2004). Casey finished his master’s degree in secondary science education at UW-River Falls and the University of Wyoming. He is teaching Earth, Space and Physical Science in Greybull, WY. He and his wife Sarah have two daughters, Ainsley (7) and Abigail (1.5).

Rick Christy (1985). Rick is the Pastor of Worship and Outreach at Westend Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, MI. He and his wife, Amy, have been married for 13 years. Rick writes, “I have been living in the Grand Rapids/Holland area since 1988 when I started at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan, where I received a Masters of Divinity degree. I still play my guitar and saxophone and have a band called “Azariah” that plays classic rock music with Christian lyrics.”

Tom Danielson (1998). Tom writes, “Antje and I are still in the Seattle area and enjoying life in the Pacific Northwest. We recently purchased five acres outside of town and promptly tore down the existing house. New house plans are currently in the permitting process and we are anxious to build, but we won’t have much free time for a year (or five). I’ve been an engineering geologist with the US Army Corps of Engineers for about eight years. Antje started her own dog-walking business and is doing quite well. Travel this year included our first trip back to Germany in almost twenty years. It was a great trip, but a little chilly, so we decided to take a quick trip to Rome as well. It was fun to see Antje’s family and some of our old haunts. Work-related travel included three months of water well drilling in Afghanistan. Interesting, but Germany and Rome were a lot more fun! UWEC folks are welcome at any time - we definitely have room for campers now.”

Jae Erickson (2010). Jae is a staff geologist

“I ‘ran’ my first marathon June 2010 (Grandma’s in Duluth) an am prepping for my second try at it!”
Heidi Rantala (1997)

Field Camps I and II

We continue our strong tradition of rigorous field camp experiences in spite of the great expenses involved. We had excellent crews of students in Kingston, NM, and Whitehall, MT, for Field Geology I and II. Brian Mahoney, Geoff Pignotta, and Scott Clark were instructors for Field Geology I in New Mexico. Field Geology I students somehow survived the killer vegetation. Then they got to Montana in May to encounter sustained 40-50 mph winds during the strat section project, 4.5” of snow on Memorial Day, and plenty of challenging geological structures! Brian Mahoney was the lead instructor for Field Geology II, but Kent Syverson helped with the first half of field camp.

Top right: January 2011 Field Camp I group photo, New Mexico.
Bottom right: Field Camp II group photo, 29 May 2011, South Boulder River stratigraphic section, Montana. Do these people look warm!!

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TIES – Mendoza, Argentina

By J. Brian Mahoney

The inaugural TIES (Thematic Interdisciplinary Experiential Semester) program was launched in Spring 2011. The TIES program is a rigorous, field-intensive, project-based immersion semester that examines a central theme from different scientific, cultural, economic, and political perspectives. The pilot program, TIES Argentina, was a collaborative interdisciplinary experience offered by faculty in geology, biology, economics, and Latin American Studies focusing on the spectacular setting of the south-central Andes Mountains and the adjacent cultural center of Mendoza, Argentina. The physical, cultural, historical and political environment of western Argentina is fascinating, and TIES Argentina was designed to fully engage participants with the region.

The pilot program involved a vibrant living-learning community of 17 students selected from across disciplines and across age groups. Courses were designed in 3.5-week concentrated blocks for project-based inquiry, with overlap and integration between the blocks to provide interdisciplinary linkages. The TIES program was developed by J. Brian Mahoney of the Department of Geology, and the inaugural program was a bit heavy on geological participants. This initial bias proved to be quite a benefit, as the geologists dove headfirst into the geology of the Andes, and reveled in sharing their enthusiasm and knowledge with their fellow students. We spent the first month exploring the fascinating geology of the Andes, which perfectly set the stage for examining the biology, history, culture, and economics of western Argentina.

The TIES Argentina program was a tremendous success, and I thank the geology participants for their enthusiasm, fascination, assistance, and good humor throughout all our trials and tribulations. The entire TIES cohort quickly developed into a close-knit community, and it was my distinct pleasure to work with each one of them. The second TIES program will be TIES Vietnam in 2012, followed by TIES Cuba in 2013. This is an experience not to be missed!

Left: TIES students examining geological maps of the Andes Mountains in the picturesque courtyard of Hostel Alamo, Medoza, Argentina. Hostel Alamo was the “home base” for the TIES program in Spring 2011. Middle: Lori Snyder and Brian Mahoney on TIES trip to the Frontal Cordillera outside of Uspallata, Argentina. Right: Geology major Olivia Iverson teaches other TIES students during the initial 3.5-week geology course block.

ALUMNI NEWS (continued from page 4)

with Foth Environmental in Green Bay, WI.

Brooke Fahrenkrog (2010). Brooke has been using her geology and GIS skills in the mineral exploration industry. She was hired by Teck to work in Babbit, MN, on the Mesaba project.

Michelle Forgette (2008). Michelle writes, “After graduating college in December of 2008, I moved to Winnemucca, NV, to start my first job as an underground mine geologist at Turquoise Ridge JV with Barrick Gold NA. Just this last week I celebrated my two-year mark with the company! My job consists of working 2000+ feet underground directing the cut-and-fill mining operation. My experiences in field camp and additional mapping projects as an undergraduate have prepared me well for this position. In the near future, I plan to transfer internally with Barrick to other mines regionally and possibly globally! I couldn’t have made it this far without the help of the professors at UWEC. It was great experience to be part of the Geology Department at UWEC. If anyone wants further help or direction in the mining industry, feel free to contact me!”

Anne Gauer (2008). Anne writes, “For the month of April 2010, I had the opportunity to assist Scott Bennett, a PhD student from UC-Davis, with his thesis work involving a rift-related fault zone on Isla Tiburon in the Gulf of California. In December 2010, I started my career as a geologist for the North American branch of Maptek in Denver. My company assists mining companies in Canada, the US, and Mexico with 3D visualization of their geology and mine structures, as well as mine-site planning. My primary role involves training and consulting (in Denver as well as at the mine sites), technical support, and product development testing. I also look forward to using my Spanish skills while working at mines in Mexico. As for Colorado itself, I love it! There are so many things to do and many great people too! I have been particularly enjoying the excellent exposure of rocks while snowboarding, hiking and just driving through the mountains."

Harrison Griffin (1996). Harrison writes, “Finally broke free from Alaska’s icy and beautiful grip. Moved to southwestern Colorado as the BLM was tightening up in AK. I didn’t want to be forced out, so I opted to move out voluntarily. New area of the country to explore, but similar job duties — rights-of-way, land

ALUMNI NEWS (continued on page 6)
exchanges, and other authorizations. We have generated protests about some access road closures. America rules — speak freely or die trying. I can’t seem to find the path back to sanity, so I’ve simply given up. Hope all’s well in the Department. Thank you for the opportunities my degree from UWEC has provided. Wouldn’t be where I am currently without all your helping words and encouragement!!! I miss the field trips and the freshness of new places as seen through guided exploration. Onward through my next 40+ years of life. Good things loom on the horizon.

Kristen Gunderson-Inden (1995). Kristen and Joel Inden were married in April 2011. Kristen is an environmental compliance specialist at a specialty chemical manufacturer in Gurnee, IL. The couple lives in the Milwaukee area.

Bryan Hardee (2009). “After graduating in December of 2009, I got a job with Midas Gold as a “project geologist” for the summer of 2010. During the “summer” field season (which lasted until mid November) my tasks included core logging/sampling, drill-rig supervision, erosion control, mapping/sampling, environmental sampling, map making, report writing… basically anything that needed to be done. We were a little understaffed which actually worked out well for me because it gave me much more experience. It can be a little intense at times in the fast-paced production setting, but I work with a great crew and we get it done. After the summer I was hired on as a full-time salary employee. It has been a great experience so far, with a lot of ups and downs. I had never been introduced to the business and economic side of the industry, which can produce major headaches. Our company plans on going public this summer and I have been involved with many aspects of this process, from data entry to report/permit writing. Midas has been treating me well and they have sent me to a couple of conferences and training seminars. As for my future (if and when they sell the company), I plan to get my master’s degree and start a new company, probably in the industrial minerals sector. But who knows, only time will tell.”

Christopher Heintz (1986). Christopher is currently employed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He reports, “We recently performed a topographic survey in northern Indiana along the drainage divide between the tributaries of the Wabash River and streams that feed into Lake Michigan. The purpose of the survey was to determine the best location for structures to block the migration of the Asian carp into Lake Michigan. There is a concern that the fish will be able to cross the drainage divide and access the lake during times of high water. Billions of dollars in commerce are at stake if this invasive species is allowed to reach the Great Lakes.”

Steve Hoaglund (2007). Steve writes, “Jenny and I officially stopped dragging our feet and made it official on June 26, 2010, after 10 years of dating. Married life is great and we just welcomed our first addition to the family… a 7-week-old male Catahoula pup named Tank. He occupies much of our time and we’re learning to puppy-proof our apartment. He’s going to be a big boy, so we’re looking to move out of downtown Oklahoma City and buy a house sometime later this year. Professionally, I officially finished my MS last year at UMD. I successfully defended my thesis in June 2010 and I’m writing it up for publication. I hope to return to Midcontinent Rift geology someday. I started working for Chesapeake Energy in July, and several of my former graduate school peers have joined me at this company. It’s been a fantastic place to work and learn new things. I’m primarily doing subsurface mapping projects and steering horizontal wells in the granite wash play of the Texas panhandle. Never thought I’d end up working in Texas, but the geology world tends to take you to some strange places. Anyway, I’m still amazed and very thankful for everything I learned during my time at UWEC. The culture you’ve built in the geology program really prepared me for success in graduate school and in my current career. I will never forget Eau Claire and you can count on my support in the future.”

David Hodek (1995). David writes, “I’m still working at Enbridge Energy, but I have changed jobs. I’m now working as a pipeline engineer in design and construction. Changing positions and learning something new invigorates me, so I’m enjoying the challenges of the new job. I’m currently working on projects in North Dakota and Saskatchewan related to production coming from the Bakken Formation. It’s amazing the amount of activity in these areas compared to a few years ago. I never would have thought a year ago to finding a hotel room in North Dakota would be difficult or that I’d have my travel plans changed so many times that I’d travel to Minot by planes, trains, and automobiles (minus John Candy, of course) on the same trip. On the downside though, with the exception of some geotechnical investigations, I’ve now completely moved away from my geology background and have become a recreational rockhound only. At least the girls show an interest in rocks, so like any good parent, I’ll try to compensate for my failure by pushing my kids to become world-class geologists. In all seriousness, I still enjoy being a dad, and the new job will hopefully mean a little less travel, so I’m looking forward to spending more time with the family.”

Adam Jacobson (2003). Adam writes, “I currently work at Shaw Environmental in Onalaska, WI, as a regional lead on a national project and am directly responsible for nine states within the Midwest. I now have more responsibility managing staff and the daily operations of the project. In my fifth year with the company, I have developed skills that build upon the knowledge I obtained at UWEC. Our business line continues to grow and more opportunities are arising nationally and within the State of Wisconsin. I encourage any new graduates or others looking for work to check into the Shaw Group for opportunities across the world. If you know me, then send me an email before applying because I might be able to put in a reference for you. My entrepreneurial aspirations are also taking hold with a business that UWEC Geology alumnus Ryan Sauter and I recently started. Our company is called Acoustic Remedy Cases, LLC and I encourage any guitar players to check out our website at www.acousticremedycases.com. We have a patient pending on our product, which proved to be an interesting, yet time-consuming, effort to protect our idea. There is never a day where we don’t come across some aspect of running a business – on top of working full time – that doesn’t challenge us!”

Beth Johnson (Visiting Assistant Professor 2009-2010). Beth spent the 2010-11 academic year teaching at Winona State University in Minnesota. Beth recently accepted a tenure-track position as an assistant professor of geology at UW-Fox Valley in Menasha, WI. Congratulations, Beth!

Tony Jones (1992). Tony writes, “I am still a Registered Land Surveyor in Wisconsin, A.R. Jones Land Surveying. I am currently focusing on floodplain mapping and surveys for landowners who have issues with their property and FEMA. The kids are still growing and I’m excited that our oldest, Ashley, will be attending UWEC in the fall. I plan on living vicariously through her. On a recent trip to E.C., I walked down Water Street and realized there is no possible way that any of those people I saw walking around were of an age to be in college, much less out having a beer. My wife, Nancy, is still working for Payless Shoes and is a regional Group Leader for Wisconsin. Our other
Students worked hard at three different sites in Wisconsin collecting data, and although we have only processed a portion, the preliminary results are exciting! Taylor, Audrey, and Michael are developing techniques for measuring the vertical soil water content profile over large areas using multi-frequency GPR groundwater techniques, and Audrey and Anya are using geostatistics to determine which geophysical techniques can best estimate soil texture across a field. David and Anya are working on an additional project to answer some of the inevitable questions that arise when you are working with real data: they are developing techniques to better calibrate GPR antennas so our water content measurements are more accurate. Research life remains interesting, and I have more than enough to keep me busy processing data and writing during my upcoming sabbatical. I did find time to publish two journal articles with UWEC Geology alumni Cale Anger, Taylor Crist, Bridgett Kelly, and Crystal Nickel.

After teaching Hydro I and II, Engineering Geology and Geophysics, and Environmental Geology again this year, a sabbatical is sounding very attractive, but I have requested to postpone it for one year to give me time for maternity leave. Yes, my last child arrived safely in late June, so the climb up Mt. Simon for spring field trips left me a bit more out of breath than usual this year. The other children are doing well and sometimes enjoying a new sibling. We took our family vacation this year to Rocky Mt. Natl. Park, where we took our 8-year old son on his first 3-day backpacking trip into the alpine tundra.  He did well, but was relieved to go back to car-camping afterwards. It may be a while before his younger siblings get to go backpacking...

As always, it has been great hearing from those of you who have left UWEC, and I am always eager to learn how your lives and careers are progressing. Please keep the emails coming!

Greetings! I am still working in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, which keeps me busy and out of trouble. We just wrapped up the 19th annual Student Research Day at which nearly 260 research posters were presented. We are looking forward to being able to move the 21st event into the new Davies Center, currently under construction. The space there should allow us to expand to having oral presentations and arts performances as well as posters.

Not much has changed on the home front,

FACULTY NEWS (continued on page 8)
except for more political action this spring in light of legislation with which we disagree cutting funding to many things we hold dear such as education, environmental protection and the arts. Our daughter is still a mining geologist in northern Nevada and we’re thinking of Christmas in the desert this year.

I’m looking forward to my (gasp!) 35th college reunion this summer. A highlight for me this past year has been reconnecting with former research student Beth Wenzell who had been away from geology for a while and is now headed back to graduate school at the University of Minnesota. It’s always great to learn what interesting things you all are up to, so please be in touch.

ROBERT HOOPER, Professor  

I have not seen a lot of alumni recently because I haven’t been attending the big conferences. I’m still busy teaching Mineralogy/Petrology I, Geochemistry and Physical Geology. I do have students who will be presenting research from the Transmission Electron Microscope at Minneapolis next fall. I know it’s not the most exciting place to visit, but we have been working on trace-metal contamination in soil and air samples with the USGS in Denver and they are sponsoring a special session this fall. We have an increasing number of students interested in joint geology and chemistry degrees, so I can select some excellent students for research. A new SEM arrives this month and I’m excited to check out the new capabilities, but the TEM remains my primary instrument for collecting data.

My free time has expanded exponentially since resigning as Chair, so I have been spending more time on road biking (I put on 2000 miles last year); skiing, and snowshoeing. This was an excellent winter with very few thaws and almost continuous new snow. I have also taken up scuba diving and have done a few dives in the Caribbean and Atlantic off the island of Saba. I am staying out of university politics and this has lowered my blood pressure. I have fought to make UW-Eau Claire a better place for 28 years and now it’s time for others with new ideas to take the lead.

PHILLIP IHINGER, Professor  

A hearty Hello to all UWEC geology alumni from the Ihinger end of the hall! This has been a busy year for our group. We have continued to push the boundaries of petrology with exciting new research projects concerning the evolution of mafic magma chambers with Christopher Olson (2010), J.R. Guy (2010), and Chris Spencer (2011); the geochemical evolution of the Earth’s mantle with Brandon Holt (2011) and Sarah Ulrich (2011); the formation of perlite through the hydration of natural obsidian with Giselle Conde (2012) and our dear collaborator Ellery Frahm (Univ. of Minnesota); and the characterization of new techniques for sourcing archaeological artifacts with Shilo Bender (2011) and Robert Barth (1922-did I say that? Sorry Bob!). Giselle presented her research at the Denver GSA before disappearing into the hills of Colorado to assemble a stunning collection of natural obsidian specimens. We have big plans this summer to submit several manuscripts for publication.

Meanwhile, life on the home front has been more demanding than usual, as we successfully moved into a delightful Mid-Century Modern house just five minutes from campus. After living in the basement for several months with only a bathroom sink and a two-burner electric unit, my family ascended into a fully remodeled home, complete with a new kitchen, laundry, and spare bathroom. Yes, it was challenging for our daughters (Mati, in 5th grade, and Evie in kindergarten), but they will have a number of ‘fond’ memories to hold onto for the rest of their lives! 🙄 Free feel to give Tricia and me a call if you ever are back in town!

J. BRIAN MAHONEY, Professor  

This has been a year of change and transition on both a professional and personal level. No doubt there is never a dull moment! This year marks the winding down of the North Coast project, a joint Geological Survey of Canada, British Columbia Geological Survey and UWEC collaboration focused on mapping the Alexander terrane in coastal northwestern British Columbia. It was most interesting to live aboard a mother ship and map the coast by Zodiac – definitely a change of pace from the high alpine work to which I am accustomed! This year also marks the ramping up of a multiyear Neogene basin project in western Argentina, provided the much anticipated funding comes through this year.

I have also become involved with bedrock mapping in Nevada in support of geothermal exploration, and anticipate that avenue to expand over the next couple of years. My mapping in Montana with Phil Ihinger and Geoff Pignotta continues, but we are trying to wrap up the publication of maps and related manuscripts prior to taking on significant new territory.

The political and economic chaos in Wisconsin has made it abundantly clear that continuation of my research programme requires the successful acquisition of external funding. It is important that I and my colleagues publish manuscripts outstanding from previous and ongoing projects so we are properly situated to procure new funding. Our department has an excellent track record of involving undergraduates in cutting edge research, and we have every intention of continuing that tradition!

The biggest professional change this year was launching the TIES pilot project in Argentina. I spent spring semester 2011 living and learning with 17 students from across campus in Mendoza, Argentina (see associated story). This pilot program was designed to test a new type of immersion experience in which students examine a particular locale and culture from many different perspectives. I think the students would be the first to say this has been an amazing, very positive educational and personal experience. The goal is to test the TIES philosophy over the next two years in Vietnam (2012) and Cuba (2013), after which it is up to the University to decide if it is sufficiently valuable to formally make it part of the curriculum. Early reports are quite positive!

Personally, events over the past couple of years have taught me to value things that are truly important to me. It is possible to be quite devoted to your students and your career without being consumed by it. Taking some time for the good things in life is healthy! Lori and I visited St. John in the Virgin Islands over Christmas, reveling in the sun, sand, surf and snorkeling. Marvelous place, to say the least! Lori came to visit in Mendoza over spring break, and we had a great time in and around Mendoza. The highlight of the trip was an outstanding horseback ride into the Frontal Cordillera of the Andes – breathtakingly spectacular. I look forward to other adventures upon my return from Argentina. Life is a grand adventure, so be sure to take advantage of it!!

GEOFFREY PIGNOTTA, Assistant Professor  

Hello alumni! I have finally been here long enough to have my UWEC alumni off in the “real world” of geology. I hope you all are doing very well. I have had a busy and amazing year. One of the most significant changes to my life was the birth of our first child at the end of August 2010, just three days before the start of the fall semester! Her name is Sophia and both Tania and I love the wonderful changes she brings to our lives.

Of course, teaching has kept me busy as well. I continue to teach Physical Geology and National Parks along with Structural Geology and Field Camp. Field Camp continues to be a great experience and this year was no exception. We had great weather in New Mexico and a good bunch of students. An interesting year in New Mexico as we were more or less on our own with Catherine and Pete not in town during our stay, but we held down the fort and made sure that everything was recycled appropriately. This year our newest faculty member, Scott Clark, joined me at the end of field camp for an introduction to New Mexico geology and field camp life. His presence was welcome as were his excellent driving skills through Kansas City. It was a challenging spring for Structural Geology because of the late winter melt and wild spring weather conditions. I decided to not go to Arkansas, which turned out to be a good decision especially with the tornadoes and flooding that have plagued areas to the south. Unfortunately my alternate plan to go west of Duluth was plagued by high water and discharge all spring. Baraboo was fun though!!

I continue to pursue research directions in FACULTY NEWS (continued on page 9)
British Columbia, Canada. Last summer, student Jessica Meyers, Brian Mahoney and I completed a short sampling campaign in Bella Coola, BC. We gathered samples to complete structural analyses in the Coast Plutonic Complex in the hopes of unravelling the Mesozoic structural and tectonic history of this long-lived arc. Jessica helped with sample preparation, and then student Nathan Nushart picked up the project and we have been developing a routine to complete digital image analysis on the plutonic samples to quantify the mineral fabrics in the arc. Both Nathan and Jessica presented their work at Student Research Day at the beginning of May. Jessica’s work on the geochemistry and geochronology of a package of Paleozoic rocks in the Terrace-Kitimat area of British Columbia won first place in the Earth and Physical Sciences category! Jessica also presented this research at the national meeting of the Geological Society of America in Denver, CO, in October 2010. This summer I will continue work in the Bella Coola area and hope to secure NSF funding for a long-term project to understand Mesozoic arc processes in the Coast Plutonic Complex.

Over the past four years I have enjoyed interacting with the numerous UWEC Geology alumni both in the field, at meetings, and during visits to the department or Water Street. I look forward to seeing you again in the near future!

LORI SNYDER, Senior Lecturer
snyderld@uwec.edu

Hello, Everyone. I hope this spring finds you all well and happy. Eau Claire changes slowly and life here in the Department is no exception. Meeting a fresh set of students, working hard to keep our hallmark field program in top shape, and dealing with budget and bureaucratic issues are the themes at the moment. It has been an interesting year weather-wise. The school year consisted of three HUGE snowfalls and a spring that just didn’t seem to chase the winter away. At least the attendance in class was improved when there were not sunny, warm days to tempt students! A brief, but very enjoyable, visit during the past couple of years, but I am pleased with the results.

I also spent much time finalizing the Pleistocene lithostratigraphy lexicon recently published by the WGNHS (full text available free of charge on the WGNHS website, see reference below). As lead technical editor, I had to take unit descriptions from several publications, standardize the style, revise descriptions where units had been abandoned, and send new lithostratigraphic unit descriptions out for review. This was a huge job during the past couple of years, but I am pleased with the results.

I co-led a geology field trip in the Bangor, Maine, region in early October to present stratigraphy data collected with Andy Thompson (2008) and Jeff Olson (2012). The adventure included flying into LaGuardia Airport (NYC) during a dying tropical storm, hiking the lower parts of Mt. Katahdin in monsoon rains that turned the trails into small streams, presenting my glacial striae evidence for a Penobscot valley calving embayment in beautiful sunshine, missing a connecting flight in NYC on the way home and having a fun-filled overnight stay in NYC… Ah yes, the life of adventure!

My family and I took a 2-week summer trip to Colorado. We camped in Rocky Mountain National Park for four nights (no hot water – gasp!), drove through the San Juan Mountains, and visited Mesa Verde and the Air Force Academy. My son (7th grade) and I hiked well above tree line on the way to Flattop Mountain in RMNP (approx. 8 miles round trip, 2500 ft vertical up to 12,000 ft above sea level). Other excitement included a thunderstorm and downpour at Mesa Verde.

We had a snowy winter this year. Eau Claire received 22” of snow on December 11th. My wife had to work that day, so we both strapped on cross-country skis and skied three miles downwind through the storm. Our Norwegian ancestors would have been proud of us! On the way home, I luckily caught the last city bus that took me close to home so I didn’t have to ski into the wind. (My Norwegian ancestors would have approved of that move too!)

April was literally a banner year for this UMD Bulldog hockey fan! My undergraduate team made it to the Frozen Four in St. Paul, and I even attended the semi-final victory against Notre Dame at the Xcel Center. UMD beat Michigan 3-2 (in overtime!) in the final to win the NCAA Division 1 championship. It was a wonderful run to the championship!

This is a year of transition in the Syverson household. My oldest daughter graduated from high school this spring. (She was born during my first year at UWEC). Thus, college expenses loom on the horizon and I continue to do frac sand and glacial geology consulting. I am staying in Eau Claire this summer to teach Geol 115, take care of chair’s duties, and conduct research with two UWEC undergrads at Straight Lake State Park, a new state park in western WI.

KENT SYVERSON, Professor
syverskm@uwec.edu

I continue to be very active in spreading the good word about energy-efficient housing. I give tours of our energy-efficient home, attend energy fairs, serve as a home-energy consultant, and write letters/articles urging development of wind and solar technologies (and opposing nuclear power development). This summer I will be constructing a small, super energy-efficient house.

EMERITUS FACULTY NEWS

Paul E. Myers, Professor Emeritus
paul.myers600@gmail.com

Retirement is an exciting transition to a new life free of boundaries and full of creative possibilities. It’s nothing you can “prepare for.” It “happens” – hopefully. The transition takes you to a fascinating new place from which you rarely look backward. No regrets. The world is full of fantastic places and people to see. There’s more than a lifetime—full for anyone even me. Here are some of the things I’ve been doing this last year, and there are more.

I continue to be very active in spreading the good word about energy-efficient housing. I give tours of our energy-efficient home, attend energy fairs, serve as a home-energy consultant, and write letters/articles urging development of wind and solar technologies (and opposing nuclear power development). This summer I will be constructing a small, super energy-efficient house. (continued on page 13)
Donations to the Department

The Geology funds with UW-Eau Claire Foundation are used to support a wide range of activities in the Department including student travel to professional meetings, faculty/student field trips, faculty recruitment, and student scholarships. The attached slip is intended to make it easy to contribute to the Geology funds. Please be assured that your gift will be greatly appreciated and it will be used effectively within the Department. In addition to financial support, we also welcome and encourage your support by volunteering to speak to our majors/minors about your job experiences, offering possible job opportunities to our students, or by the donation of equipment or field supplies.

During the past year, 55 individuals/companies donated $12,690 to the Geology Foundation accounts. Please understand that all gifts, large or small, are greatly appreciated! Please consider giving something back to your undergraduate department.

Due to state budget cuts and increasing gasoline prices, alumni gifts to the department’s advancement funds are becoming increasingly critical. Therefore, we have been working with the Foundation Office to learn more about establishing a named lecture series, new scholarships, etc. If you would happen to be interested in establishing a scholarship within the Department of Geology, here are a few basic guidelines from the Foundation Office.

- All gifts to the UWEC Foundation are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. You may use cash, checks, credit cards, stocks or other tangible assets to fund a scholarship.
- There are two types of scholarships: the annual scholarship, which is funded each year, and the endowed scholarship, where principal is invested and only the income is used for the annual scholarship award.
- A minimum commitment of $500 is required to establish a new scholarship fund.
- A minimum investment of $10,000 is required to establish an endowed fund; there is no maximum.
- The name of the scholarship is determined by the donor(s). Most name a scholarship after their family or the name of a loved or honored one. Some have endowed scholarships in the name of a favorite professor.
- The donor(s) may help develop scholarship criteria with the assistance of a development officer. Preferences rather than requirements are most often expressed. Preferences may involve academic major, financial need, international study, academic promise, first-year student or upper-division status.
- IRS regulations prevent donors from designating family members as recipients or from selecting the recipients themselves. Donors may be notified of the finalists and will be notified of the recipients.

If you would like more information about establishing an annual or endowed scholarship, please feel free to contact the Foundation Office at 715/836-5630. We ask that if the UWEC Foundation Office calls you asking for a donation, please remember the Geology advancement funds! If you work for a corporation or a geology-related firm, please inquire if your company has a matching program for contributions to academic geology departments.

DONATION SLIP
University of Wisconsin Eau Claire Foundation, Inc.

__________ Yes, I wish to support the Geology Department through my tax-deductible gift of $__________ (if check is used and enclosed, make payable to UW-Eau Claire Foundation, Inc.)

Name ____________________________________________________________

Address ____________________________________________________________

City __________________________ State ______ Zip ________________

Phone _______________ Email ________________________________

Please indicate below how you wish your contribution to be recorded:

____ Record jointly with my spouse (Spouse’s name) ____________________________

____ Record in my name only

____ In memory of _______________________________________________________

Credit Card Gift ____ VISA ____ MasterCard _____ Discover _____ American Express

Number ___________________________ Exp Date ________________

Signature________________________________ Date________________________

____ My employer (or my spouse’s) will match this gift. Employer: ________________________

____ I have made plans to benefit the Geology Department through my estate. Please have someone contact me.

____ Please send me information about how I might make provisions in my estate to benefit the Geology Department.

Mailing Address: UW-Eau Claire Foundation, Schofield Hall 214, 105 Garfield Ave, Eau Claire, WI 54702-4004. Or give immediately by going to http://www.uwec.edu/fndn/giving.htm

Our Geology Department Advancement Fund is the primary support fund for the department. It is used to support a wide range of activities in the Department including student travel to national meetings, special research and instructional equipment, faculty recruitment, and the seminar program. If you choose, your gift can also be applied in part or total to individual scholarship award funds. See information above for minimum commitments for establishing your own scholarship. Undesignated funds will be credited to the Geology Department Advancement Fund.

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NSDA
Taylor Crist and Audrey Mohr Presented the “Excellence in Geology” Award for 2010-2011

The “Excellence in Geology” Award recognizes the academic achievements of the outstanding graduating geology major, both in coursework and in faculty/student collaborative research. The winners of the Geology Excellence Award for 2010-2011 are Taylor Crist and Audrey Mohr.

TAYLOR CRIST
(written by Katherine Grote)

Taylor is a dual-degree geology/geological engineering student and is a native of Eau Claire. She has been an undergraduate student researcher working with Katherine Grote for more than three years, beginning with a laboratory experiment to estimate the sampling depth of GPR groundwaves, and continuing with two additional projects, one using GPR for field-scale soil moisture and texture estimation and one developing calibration techniques for accurate velocity estimation using GPR groundwaves. She has presented the results of her research at AGU in San Francisco (2009 and 2010), NC GSA in Branson (2010), WGWA in Waukesha (2009 and 2010), and NCUR in La Crosse (2009). This research resulted in a paper co-authored with Katherine Grote in the prestigious journal Water Resources Research. Taylor has been an ESTEAM scholarship recipient for three years and has won the Wisconsin Federation of Environmental Technologists Scholarship. She has also been very active in the UWEC Geology Club and has assisted with several community service projects. She is currently attending UM-Twin Cities, where she is progressing well towards her engineering degree. Congratulations, Taylor!

AUDREY MOHR
(written by Kent Syverson)

Audrey is a hydrogeology honor student from New Ulm, MN. After declaring a geology major, Audrey began the first of several research projects. Her first project investigated the origin of the Blue Hills Felsenmeer using GPR under the supervision of Kent Syverson and Harry Jol. In summer 2009, she participated in a field-based NSF-REU program at the University of Minnesota-Morris. She studied Glacial Lake Benson sediment in western Minnesota and Paleozoic glacial sediments in Brazil (Syverson, Brennan Kadulski, and Michelle Forgette). Lastly, she became part of Katherine Grote’s research team using GPR to characterize soil moisture content and soil texture. She has presented research posters at NC GSA meetings in Rockford (IL) and Branson (MO), AGU in San Francisco, NCUR at UW-La Crosse, and WGWA in Waukesha. Audrey is the recipient of several scholarships at UWEC, including the Friedrich Scholarship (the most prestigious in the College of Arts and Sciences), ESTEAM, and the Golder Associates Geology Major Scholarship. She also won a prestigious Phi Kappa Phi Fellowship for graduate school. This fall she will attend the University of Nebraska on a full-ride fellowship to complete an MS degree in hydrogeology. Congratulations, Audrey!

FORMER EXCELLENCE AWARD RECIPIENTS:
1995-1996: Kristin Weaver and Chad Underwood
1996-1997: Sarah Weaver and Mark Holmes
1997-1998: Tom Danielson and Michelle Haskin
1998-1999: Mae Willkom and Beth Wenell
1999-2000: Jean Morrison and Carrie Rowe
2000-2001: Katie Thornburg and Karl Beaster
2002-2003: Sarah Gordee and Ben Paulson
2003-2004: Laura Strumness and Mark Ciardelli
2004-2005: Jessica Lopez and James Watkins
2005-2006: Gillian (Hill) Krezoski and Christopher Kohel
2006-2007: Adam Kjos and Catherine (Kate) MacLaurin
2007-2008: Cale Anger and David Kawatski
2008-2009: Anna Baker and Elizabeth Balgord
2009-2010: Jae Erickson and Crystal Nickel

Jessica Meyers and Audrey Mohr win 2010-2011 Annual Award for Service

The “Annual Award for Service” recognizes the exceptional service a geology major has done for the department.

JESSICA MEYERS
(written by Kent Syverson)

Jessica is a senior general geology major from Green Bay, WI. Jessica’s major service contribution to the Dept. of Geology has been with vehicles. UWEC eliminated the university fleet in June 2010, after all of our classes were full. We had to rent numerous vehicles from Enterprise, and this presented a logistical nightmare. Unfortunately, much of the burden fell to Lorilie to coordinate a rental “geology fleet.” Lorilie recruited Jessica to fill vehicles with gas, shuttle vehicles to the field-trip staging area, etc. Jessica was extremely reliable and punctual, and in doing so made an extremely important contribution to our field-based geology program. In addition, Jessica served as a field assistant for both Geol 470 and 471. Jessica also has played an important role in the leadership of the Geology Club during her senior year. Jessica graduated in May and will be entering the job market. Congratulations, Jessica!

AUDREY MOHR
(written by Kent Syverson)

Audrey is a senior hydrogeology honor student from New Ulm, MN. Audrey has amazing verbal communication skills, and she has used these skills to serve/represent the Department of Geology in many important ways. She has served on several panels seeking to recruit new geology majors, has given campus tours in her role as a Campus Ambassador, and has recruited science majors at college fairs for high school students. We have a record number of incoming geology freshmen this year, and we wonder if this number will plummet when Audrey isn’t recruiting man this year, and we wonder if this number will plummet when Audrey isn’t recruiting for us…. She has also been the geology student representative on the Dean’s Advisory Council and has played an important role in the leadership of the Geology Club. She will attend the University of Nebraska this fall on a fellowship to complete an MS degree in hydrogeology. Congratulations, Audrey!

FORMER SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS
2003-2004: Sarah Prindiville
2004-2005: Christina Piper
2005-2006: Amanda LaGesse
2006-2007: Amanda LaGesse
2007-2008: Michelle Forgette
2008-2009: Brennan Kadulsik

11
children (Megan 11, Nicolas 8, and Olivia 5) are all in school and doing quite well. I’m still waiting to have Matt Hostak come up to do some privy excavating on a nice summer day. I am an active home brewer and we have organized a great club here in Rhinelander, The Brewing Innovators and Enthusiasts of Rhinelander (BIER). In addition, I was elected to the Board of Directors for the Rhinelander Area Chamber of Commerce in 2010. If you are coming to northern Wisconsin, send me an email. I’d love an email from friends long lost.

Aaron Kent (2004). Aaron has been working in the frac sand industry since December 2010. He is currently working for CRS Proponents LLC. The company is working in western Wisconsin and recently hired UWEC geology alumnus Matt Thompson (2011) as well.

Josh Kohn (2000). Josh writes, “After student teaching in Athens, Greece, this past summer, I received my Earth and Space Science teaching license from the University of St. Thomas and am one class away from earning my Master of Arts - Teaching degree. I am currently teaching 8th grade Earth Science at Farnsworth Aerospace Magnet School in the St. Paul Public School District. I am loving my challenging, but extremely rewarding new career! We just completed our school-wide science fair with 100% participation in all grades 5-8. I was in charge of more than 160 8th grade science experiments and posters, and although it was extremely stressful getting prepared, the big day and awards ceremony were great successes! On a personal note, my wife Karissa and I are expecting our first child this July and life is good!”

Richard (Ric) Kopp (1975). Ric reports, “The year 2010 was an eventful business-wise. Deldek expanded into Texas and New Mexico from our current Rocky Mountain play area and had several new discoveries. We tripled our reserves and put together several good prospects. Along comes 2011 and we went up for sale. By the time this letter gets published, I will be working somewhere else, what a business. High oil prices and good prospects makes selling companies easy. Life is still good. I am spending much time with the grandkids aged 2 and 4, and they appear to like rocks, horses and chasing cattle just like their Grandpa. All is well and as always look forward to the newsletter to see what is happening in the Geology Department and what other alums are doing. Hope to stop by to visit when Jacqueline and I are in Eau Claire this spring.”

“My job consists of working 2000+ feet underground directing the cut-and-fill mining operation.”

Michelle Forgette (2008)

Thistle Root Farm. We raise Katahdin lambs for meat, chickens for eggs, and have aspirations for fruit, vegetable, herb and additional livestock production. We invite other alumni who find themselves in northeastern Nebraska to stop by for a visit!”

Bill Lazarz (1998). Bill is a project manager for Bay West, Inc., in St. Paul, MN. Bay West is an environmental consulting firm working with stormwater pollution prevention plans, remediating contaminated industrial sites, and emergency response to spills.

Douglas Maercklein (1972). Doug lives in Tulsa, and is a consultant for several small oil companies. He creates drilling prospects in shallow conventional oil-producing field areas. He says a geologist’s most useful skill is to explain complex geological relationships to non-geologists so they can be understood and the information acted upon.

Sarah (Mindel) Stanwicks (2001). Sarah is currently working as a Youth Services Librarian at Albany Public Library in Albany, NY. In August 2010 she and her husband, Kabel, welcomed a son, Eli, into their family.

Jean Morrison (2000). Jean and her husband welcomed their daughter Omie into the world in late March 2011. Both mom and daughter are doing well.

Todd “Pyro” Myse (1995). Todd writes, “Much has happened since my last update — I’m in Montana now! The move from New Hampshire was an adventure. I landed a job as a Research Hydrogeologist with the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology (the geological survey for the state). I’m working in the Groundwater Investigation Program which studies complex, large-scale areas throughout the state that have stressed water resources and potential nitrate issues from land development. It has been great so far as these projects incorporate surface and groundwater interaction, so I still use my surface-water knowledge that I learned from my previous job in water supply. Funding for this program, however, might be cut in the next biennium. I also passed the ASBOG exam to receive my Professional Geologist certification. Glad that exam is over! On a personal note, it has been great to finally live here in Montana. I have visited it so much for vacation, geology, Ta’ing courses, etc. that I always had this pull to live out here in the Rockies. I love the snow and have been enjoying the winter, tele, cross-country and backcountry skiing, and am looking forward to hiking and backpacking! It has also been great to live near my good friend, and fellow UWEC grad, Ann (Melby) Kron! I have gotten together with her family so much already and has been wonderful to get to know her kids even more. I’ve joined them on some of their family adventures to Yellowstone and a few Forest Service cabins. Reno Walsh, who lives in Bozeman, and I have been threatening to get together for a beer, but our paths just haven’t crossed yet. As always, I welcome visitors so don’t be shy about contacting me if you are in the area. Cheers!”

Crystal Nickel (2010). Crystal is a staff geologist for CH2M Hill in Milwaukee. She is co-author on an article published by Katherine Grote in the prestigious journal Water Resources Research.

Isaac Orr (2010). Isaac (a geology/political science double major) is very involved with politics! He was hired to work on a Wisconsin State Senate campaign in the Green Bay area. His candidate won, and now he is on the paid staff of State Senator Frank Lasee.

John Peterson (2009). John is working on his Ph.D. in geology at the University of California-Davis.

Shane Peterson (2008). Shane is in a geology master’s program at San Diego State University. His field area is in the Channel Islands and he is working on a paid internship with Chevron. His research is partially funded by a grant from ExxonMobil.

G. Mitchell Piper (1970). I enjoyed meeting Kent Syverson, my fellow neighborhood resident, and boring him with details from the Bergstorm Era and surviving the first Field Mapping course the Department ran during the summer of 1968! Rather than pursue geology, I chose a career in finance. I can read an investment prospectus on oil & gas projects better than most. My wife, Barbara (UWEC 1970, Nursing), is currently the Director of Maternity at Sacred Heart Hospital here in Eau Claire.


Julia Potter (2010). After graduating in December, Julia visited her former roommate in France. She then obtained a job as a geologist with Call and Nicholas, Inc., a geotechnical engineering firm in Tucson, AZ. She is doing field work throughout North and South
America and geological engineering analyses in Tucson. She works with another UWEC grad, John Beck (2007); she says it has been nice having a friendly face in the office. She loves Tucson!

Heidi Rantala (1997). Heidi writes, “I have been at SIU-Carbondale for a little over a year now, working on a post-doc project in the Cache River, IL. My project focuses on the oxygen dynamics in this agricultural landscape and will potentially be used to guide watershed restoration. It is a cool system – the northernmost occurrence of the Bald Cypress-Tupelo swamps are found in the watershed. I have been lucky enough to move closer to my family, and even was a chaperone on my niece’s fieldtrip to the Deep Portage Educational Center (MN) for a week. I ran my first marathon June 2010 (Grandma’s in Duluth) and am prepping for my second try at it!”

Michele Skahaug-Maxson (2006). Michele has been Regional Environmental Health and Safety Coordinator for Wisconsin Industrial Minerals (a subsidiary of Fairmount Minerals) in Menomonie since January 2008. She is responsible for several sites, including a surficial sand mine in Menomonie and two underground frac sand mines in Maiden Rock and Bay City, WI.

Elizabeth Teutschmann (2010). Beth is working full time at SEH Inc., an engineering consulting firm in Chippewa Falls, WI. She analyzes much sand for frac sand companies, a booming industry in western Wisconsin.

Troy Thompson (1985). Troy writes, “I have recently completed the first year of my third career (following those as a petroleum exploration geophysicist and a consulting environmental hydrogeologist), and I like this one the best. I am now officially old enough to be the father of two UWEC alumni, although neither are geology alumni (I guess I scared them off). My wife and I are now moving on to the next chapter in our lives: we are expecting our first grandchild in July.

Chad Underwood (1996). Chad reports, “The second half of 2010 and first part of 2011 have been very busy at work, which is a nice relief after a very slow start to 2010. As a small business owner, I’m still trying to learn to ride out the highs and lows. I’m serving on the Board of the Minnesota Geotectonic Society this year and I’ve presented papers at several conferences over the past year, including the University of MN Geotechnical Conference, ASCE/WI, ASCE/IA Geotechnical Conference, Earth Retention 2010 in Seattle, and Geo-Frontiers 2011 in Dallas. It’s been a very busy year. Alison is still taking some time off from teaching to be at home with our two kids – Griffin and Abigail. They turned four in December, and have started preschool.

Kristin Weaver-Bowman (1996). Kristin writes, “Despite the “economic downturn” and California state budget problems, I have managed to continue teaching in southern California. Last semester I was what many call a “freeway flyer”! While I was still teaching earth, space and physical science concepts to pre-credential students at CSUF, I also taught Oceanography at a local community college and started teaching in CSUJF’s Freshman Programs curriculum. Coincidentally, a completely different opportunity fell into my lap last semester, too. I am now working with a fellow paleoceanologist and her research group. My current duties include drafting field logs and helping to create figures for papers and talks. I enjoy working with data and engaging in scientific discussions again! (The promise of field work in the trenches this summer also helps!) Hopefully, with these connections I can weather whatever the budget dishes out. In addition to formal, classroom education, (e.g. “work”) I am also volunteering in my first grader’s classroom and Cub Scout Pack. I am hoping to turn at least some of these kids over to the “dark side” and get them interested in science and nature!

Ron Weegman (1981). Ron is currently a senior account manager for Shell Technology-ThruBit Logging Solutions in Houston, TX. He reports, “I finally got to see the volcanoes on the Big Island of Hawaii. It is always nice to see firsthand what I was taught in Eau Claire… I can’t imagine being in any other career, what a blessing.”

Beth Wenell (1999). Beth writes, “I have lots of great life changes to report this spring. Last June Dave and I purchased a home in Minneapolis on a corner lot with a big yard and an even bigger sidewalk (or so it seemed this winter). The home is newly remodeled by fantastic craftspeople, so we are greatly enjoying home ownership and its absence of surprises thus far. We finally have a guest room and enjoy visitors (coming for CSA in October?). Anders (6) and Nils (4) are keeping us busy and frequently claim interest in paleontology (other career options include “train guy” and Iron Man, so who knows). As for my career, I will finally be starting grad school in the fall at the University of Minnesota. I will be studying chemical weathering and erosion of soils in the Christina River Basin, which is a Critical Zone Observatory established by NSF (http://criticalzone.org). I look forward to seeing many of you in October!”

Bridget Wolfe (2009). Bridget completed her Geological Engineering degree at the University of Minnesota. She is working as a staff scientist with HR Green, Inc. in Cedar Rapids, IA.

Tim Zimmer (2002). Tim and his wife Amy (2003 UWEC master’s degree) welcomed baby boy Garrett in July 2010. Tim is a stay-at-home dad and continues working as a racing transaction builder. Amy is teaching Spanish in Hartland and has recently published her second book.

IN MEMORIAM-Peter Bement (age 42, UWEC Geology class of 1995). Pete died suddenly on June 10, 2011, in Lafayette, LA. Pete, a native of Eau Claire, conducted research on the northern boundary of the Driftless Area with Kent Syverson and worked for a time as a field engineer on offshore oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico.

NEWS FROM FACULTY AND STAFF (Continued)
Student Research Day—Spring 2011

The 19th Annual UW-Eau Claire Student Research Day was held May 2, 2011, in Zorn Arena on the UWEC campus. This event showcases faculty/student collaborative research occurring on campus. The Geology Department has been very well represented throughout the years, and this year was no exception. All of the students noted below presented posters this year. We are very proud of our students!

Note: Students who presented posters at professional conferences are also indicated. Student travel to conferences was supported with money from the Geology Advancement Fund and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.


Corrie Floyd with Kent M. Syverson and Christina M. Hupy, “Using LiDAR Data and ArcGIS to Evaluate Subtle Landforms Associated with the Early Chippewa and Emerald Phase Ice-Margin Positions, Barron County, WI.” Also winner in the “Most Innovative Use of New Technology to Solve a Geological Problem” category at the Institute for Lake Superior Geology meeting in Ashland, WI, May 18-20, 2011.


Nathan Nushart and Jessica Meyers with Geoffrey S. Pignotta, “Quantifying Mineral Fabrics in the Coast Plutonic Complex, Bella Coola, British Columbia.”


GOLDER GEOLOGY SCHOLARSHIP
Beckstrom, Greg
Golder Associates Inc.

PAUL MYERS & RONALD WILLIS GEOLOGY FIELD CAMP SCHOLARSHIP
Brandes, Paul and Nathalie
Kopp, Richard and Jacqueline
Mills, Jim and Nadean
Piper, Mitchell and Barbara

GEOLOGY ADVANCEMENT FUND
Beaster, Karl
Berg, Ronald
Borski, Gerald and Jennifer
Carlson, Diane
Cummings, Michael
Danielson, Thomas and Anjie
Del Bianco, Richard and Gretchen
Drapeau, Joseph and Lamasney-Drapeau, Theresa
Drinkwater, James
Forguet, Michelle
Fredricks, Kenneth
Gill, Thomas and Lisa
Grovold, Mike and Jane
Haskin, Michelle
Hennessy, Daniel
Heuer, Curtis
Hogler, Jennifer
Hogue, Terri
Hostak, Matthew
Jacobi, Michael
Johnson, Eric
Kiessling, Mark and Savona
Kinsman, Larry
Koch, Craig
Mast, Travis and America
Mercer, Ronald and Kristine
Molde, Robert and Nancy
Molnar, Michael
Moore, Kristian and Sarah
Oakley, Jamie
Oreskovich, Roger
Peck, Curt
Pickett, Lael
Risch, Dave and Janice
Riske, Nikki
Sellwood, Stephen and Alyssa
Spehle, Heather
Taylor, Matthew
Underwood, Chad and Alison
Weigle, Jeffrey
Willkom, Mae
Wolfe, Bridget and Dennis
Zimmer, Timothy

CORPORATE CONTRIBUTIONS TO GEOLOGY ADVANCEMENT FUND
3M Foundation
Assailant Energy Foundation, Inc.
BHP Billiton Petroleum Inc.
Chevron Corporation
Conoco Phillips Co.
Directions in Research, Inc.
Cameron Hughes wins Golder Associates Geology Scholarship

This scholarship, established fall 2005 by Greg Beckstrom (UW-Eau Claire geology alumni, 1984), is for comprehensive geology majors who have completed Mineralogy-Petrology I, developed an excellent academic record, and demonstrated a financial need.

Originally from Minnesota, Cameron came to Eau Claire after spending her first year in college at the prestigious University of North Texas College of Music. While studying to be a concert pianist, she enrolled in an introductory geology course and was bitten by the ‘Geology Bug.’ Fortunately for us, she switched majors and joined our department! She has maintained a near flawless academic record while taking the most difficult math and science courses. Her motivation and natural talent for geology has drawn the attention of her Geology professors, and we look forward to following her progress in the classroom and in scholarly research.

Four students win Myers/Willis Field Camp Scholarships

Field camp experiences have become increasingly expensive for students. This scholarship, established by the department in 2006, is intended to lessen the financial burden of field camp for excellent students who also have financial need. The scholarship also honors the contributions of Dr. Paul Myers and Dr. Ronald Willis, geology professors at UWEC who worked very hard to establish a strong field component in our young geology program.

Olivia Iverson (2012, Hudson), Michael Kristoff (2011, Wausau), Matt Thompson (2011, Eau Claire, WI), and Chris Spencer (2011, Houston, TX) are recipients of this year’s Myers/Willis scholarships. Recipients were selected based on performance excellence at Field Camp I in New Mexico. Each student received $500 to defray expenses for Field Camp II in Montana. Congratulations!

This is by far the most money we have been able to award in a single year to assist our students thanks to generous donations from several alumni and friends. The Geology Dept. hopes to offer Myers/Willis scholarships to more students each year as the scholarship fund balance rises. We encourage all alumni who have benefited from our field experiences over the years to contribute to this fund. In addition, this is a great way to honor Paul and Ron for their dedication to our field program! See page 10 for information about contributing to this important scholarship fund.

Earth Science Seminar Series

The Earth Science Seminar Series has been a wonderful addition to the Geology Department. The seminar has brought excellent speakers to campus. It provides faculty and students with the opportunity to interact with other scientists working on a broad range of research topics, and it also allows us to “show off” our department and research equipment to the visitors…! Below are the talks presented during this academic year. In addition, if you live in the area and would like to receive e-mail announcements about upcoming seminars, please contact Lorilie Steinke at steinklm@uwec.edu. If you work for a company that would like to sponsor the seminar series or contribute money to defray speaker costs, please contact us!

Dr. Kent Syverson, Department of Geology, UW-Eau Claire, “So You Want to Go to Graduate School?” 11/5/10.


Dr. Alan Gishlick, Department of Geology, UW-Eau Claire, “Predatory Behavior in Theropod Dinosaurs,” 3/4/11.

Dr. John Tinker, Emeritus Professor of Geology, UW-Eau Claire, “Rates of Erosion in a Geologic Sequence of Events,” 3/11/11.


Dr. Katherine Grote, Department of Geology, UW-Eau Claire, “Using GPR Groundwave Techniques for Agricultural Site Characterization,” 4/29/11. (Talk given to celebrate her achievement of tenure and promotion to Associate Professor.)

Special Stony Award Presentations

Left: The Geology Club sponsored Stony Awards for excellence in areas such as Best Beard, Best Animal Encounter, etc. The award presentations at the banquet were quite enjoyable…!

Right: Matt Thompson proudly displays the coveted “Best in Flannel” Stony Award!