

Panther Geographer

Fall/Winter 2005, Volume 2, Issue 1

<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Geography/>

Destination: Nairobi, Kenya

While many of us are dodging snowflakes to do fieldwork research this winter, **Jeremia Njeru**, a fourth year doctoral candidate will be working in the dry heat of Kenya for the next 10 months. A recipient of the Compton Peace Fellowship through the Compton Foundation in Redwood City, CA, Jeremia will be conducting dissertation research in Nairobi.

Jeremia was selected as a Compton Fellow by James Delehanty, Faculty Associate Director of the African Studies Program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison through intercession by Matt Turner. Turner, a UW-Madison geography professor, is a member of Jeremia's Dissertation advisory committee headed by UWM Assistant Professor **Nik Heynen**. Jeremia will focus on research for his dissertation titled: *The Political Ecology of Urban Deforestation in Kenya: The Case of Karura Forest in Nairobi City, Kenya*.

The Karura Forest, a major catchment for the 5 rivers supporting Nairobi's critical vegetable industry, lost nearly half its forest cover (477 hectares) during 1994-1998 to residential housing development. The forest, ecologically important as a remnant of tropical, indigenous forests, is one of the most significant left in Nairobi. Its precarious state exemplifies broader deforestation in Kenya, where forest cover represents only 2% of the land use.

Begun in the late 1980s as a condition of continued aid, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund mandated several Structural Adjustment Programs for Kenya. Centered on privatization and free market principles, these programs, as well as recent political liberalization are suspected to have played a role in the rampant deforestation. Through structured interviews and extensive primary source re-



Jeremia "rests" while cross-country skiing

search, Jeremia will determine whether the Kenyan government's embracing of these neoliberal economic and political initiatives played a substantive role in the city's massive deforestation.

Far from being limited to a local concern, broad media coverage of the deforestation in Kenya sparked Jeremia's initial interest in the issue—and he was in good company. Professor Wangari Maathai, last year's Nobel Peace Prize winner, an internationally known environmental activist and leader of Kenya's greenbelt movement, spearheaded the ensuing nationwide protest of deforestation. The expansive media coverage triggered large-scale acts of civil disobedience in Kenya between 1998-2000, including street-based riots and protests leading to widespread destruction of private property. Kenyans from all walks of life—including politicians, environmentalists, NGOs, religious leaders, the general public, and students rallied around the environmental issue.

Born and raised 2 ½ hours Northeast of Nairobi, Jeremia came to the United States after completing his Bachelor's in Geography at the University of Nairobi. His Masters research at the University of

(Continued on page 2)

Harold Mayer Distinguished Lecture Series 2005-2006

Join faculty and students this Fall and Spring for both lectures from world renowned geographers. Both begin at 3:00 pm in the AGS library.

Allen Scott, UCLA
Title: "Creative Cities; Conceptual Issues and Policy Problems"
 December 16, 2005

Scott, (Ph.D., Northwestern, 1965) is a Professor with research interests in economics, industrial location, social theory, and urban geography. Professor Scott teaches classes in economic geography and regional development.

Glen MacDonald, UCLA
Title: TBA
 April 28, 2006

MacDonald, (Ph.D., Toronto, 1984) is the Department Chair and Professor with research interests in Biogeography, paleoecology, paleoclimatology, fossil pollen and tree ring analysis. Professor MacDonald teaches classes in ecology, biogeography, and environmentalism.

Destination: Kenya (cont'd)

(Continued from page 1)

Miami-Ohio dealt with the social distribution and sagging environmental management of plastic bag waste in Nairobi.

He explains that the thin, domestically-produced plastic bags, about the size of small sandwich bags in the US, are used extensively in Nairobi's fast food, street vending, and vegetable/fruit market sectors. They are used by customers as gloves while eating street food due to the lack of clean water available for hand washing. The bags' widespread use results in their proliferation and subsequent clogging of drains while becoming breeding grounds for mosquitoes during rain events.



Map of Kenya

Though research is Jeremia's primary reason for heading back to Kenya this fall, he is looking forward to several perks of being home: seeing members of his family he hasn't seen in more than 5 years and taking trips back to his childhood home near Embu. He'll also savor the chance to eat a popular Kenyan delicacy—nyama choma, a form of roasted goat or beef. He plans on being a "tourist in his own town," taking the traditional safari often associated with visits to Africa. When asked what he'll miss most about Milwaukee, he acknowledged "us in the department" and cheering for the Green Bay Packers. However, he seemed most to lament not being able to watch the snow fall. "Falling snow—it's kind of cute," he chuckles.

You may contact Jeremia at jnjeru@uwm.edu.

Also watch for Jeremia in the Graduate School's Featured Graduate Student of the Month at: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Grad_Sch/Featured/

GeoClub Seeks Adventure Off-campus

Beginning its first full academic year after a lengthy absence, GeoClub is a group for geography graduate and undergraduate students and faculty to "talk geography." The group explores the larger world through off-campus trips to state parks, historic places, and urban environments here in Milwaukee and Chicago. These trips include activities such as canoeing, camping, and hikes.

This February the club hopes to plan a skiing or snow tubing trip to take advantage of the Midwest's snowy winters. Currently on the calendar is a November 19, 2005 canoe trip planned for the Downtown rivers.

Student and faculty participation is encouraged, with families welcomed to join in on the club outings.

Bi-weekly meetings on Wednesdays in room 435 are scheduled to discuss issues and plan activities. Contact GeoClub president Will Sharkey (MS) for information, wsharkey@uwm.edu.



The Spring Horicon Marsh trip was successful despite chilly weather conditions!

Welcome Back Picnic Feeds the Department

The annual welcome back picnic was held this year on Saturday, September 17, 2005 at Lake Park in Milwaukee. More than 50 graduate students, faculty, staff and families



Lorne Platt, left (PhD) and Rama Mohapatra, right (PhD) help Leyton Platt navigate picnic grounds.

feasted and socialized. Graduate student Rich Shaker (MS) was grill master for the dozens of brats, chicken pieces, burgers and tofu dogs graciously provided by department faculty. Graduate student-prepared highlights of the feast included fresh raspberry pies (Geri Weinstien-Breunig, PhD), zucchini bread (Falguni Mukherjee, PhD), makizushi (Dy

Katayama, husband of Star Barron, MA) and noodle salad (Jun Luo, PhD). The annual tradition allows new graduate students to meet faculty, staff and students, while giving old-timers a chance to catch up on summer happenings.

Other times for "talkin' geography" include Friday afternoons at the Gasthaus in the UWM Union. Now in its 2nd year, post-Colloquium means socializing with the many interesting members of the Department community. Please feel free to join us!



Graduate students Star Barron (rear left, MA) and James Rewolinski (rear right, MA) introduce friends and family.

Geography Faculty & Staff News

Program Associate Betty Morgan to Retire May 31, 2006



Betty Morgan will retire in 2006.

For 26 years, **Betty Morgan** has been an exceptional asset to the department. Her dedication has always been essential to the faculty, and instrumental in the survival and renaissance of the department. Throughout the years, her perseverance was routinely above and beyond the call of duty, and always accompanied by a never-failing positive attitude and consummate professionalism. Graduate students have always known and appreciated the vast knowledge and resources Betty provided. She has been steadfast but always courteous and extremely pleasant, knowledgeable but self-effacing. She has faithfully served as the critical link in our department among faculty, students, administrators and the public. As our primary departmental support system she is unequalled. All department members are deeply in her debt.

Reflecting on her time here, Betty acknowledges two main changes: a nearly complete turnover of faculty and significant technological innovation. First, Mick Day, the current Chair, is the only faculty who has been with her from the beginning. Second, she recounts the eras of mimeograph machines, typewriters, and floppy-disk based computers—all of which have largely disappeared. For her, the most rewarding aspect of the position “has been the respect shown her by faculty and students, and the promising relationships she’s developed.” In May, 2006, Betty will begin a new life phase which will include running a licensed child care out of her home. We’ll miss you, best wishes...and thank you!

Building Coalitions Against Racism and Privilege in Milwaukee, January 27, 2006

Meredith Reitman, along with UWM’s Cultures and Communities Program and the Racial Justice Institute of Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee, created this unique one-day, community-university conference to be held on the UWM campus. The conference objective is to work against the metro area’s racial divide by discussing the role of all racial groups in both creating inequality and working against it. Dr. John Powell, Executive Director, The Kirwan Institute, will give the Keynote Address. Details found at: http://www.uwm.edu/~mreitman/common_ground/

Starving for Revolution: The Black Panther Party's (BPP) Struggle to Feed the Hungry

Nik Heynen’s Fromkin Research Grant lecture, delivered November 3rd to over 300 attendees, claimed the BPPs’ efforts were important both because they challenged Milwaukeeans to face that hunger among poor children existed and because the programs they inspired eventually became Milwaukee’s Hunger Task Force, an institutional advocate for hunger relief. He discussed in detail the BPP’s Free Breakfast for Children Program, which organized across 45 Party chapters nationwide, becoming the national model for public school breakfast and lunch programs for children.

PANTHER GEOGRAPHER

DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

University of Wisconsin-
Milwaukee

Bolton Hall 410

P.O. Box 413

Milwaukee, WI 53201

PHONE: 414.229.4866

EMAIL:

GeogNews@uwm.edu

WEBSITE:

[http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/
Geography](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Geography)

EDITORS

Kathleen Doherty, editor

Taly Drezner, faculty ed.

Meredith Reitman, faculty ed.

China’s Complex Economy is Featured

Dennis Wei’s research titled “Growth of Chinese Cities Marks China’s Complex Economy in Transition,” was featured in Today@UWM on July 20, 2005, UWM’s Global Currents this fall, and in an interview on WUWM Radio.

Karst Publications Keep Chair Mick Day Busy

Geography Department Chair duties keep **Mick Day** busy, but publishing has too, with recent chapters on karst published in “Central America: Geology, Resources and Natural Hazards” and “The Physical Geography of Mesoamerica”, both due out in 2006. Also due in 2006, “Natural and Anthropogenic Hazards in the Karst of Jamaica”, which will appear in a Special Publication of the Geological Society, London.

PPGIS and Rural Gentrification Define Agenda

Rina Ghose is involved in two projects. The first examines the roles of neoliberalism, politics of scale and networks of association in Public Participation GIS. Associated project papers include: “Politics of Scale and Networks of Association in PPGIS”, and along with PhD student Wen Lin, “Investigation GIS Provision to Urban Grassroots Community Organizations through Scaled Networks: The Case of Data Center of Milwaukee.” The second project examines growth and rural gentrification in the Rocky Mountain region detailed in “A Realtor Runs Through It: Rural Gentrification in Western Montana,” a chapter from the forthcoming book, *Gentrification in the Countryside*.

From the Field: News from Our Alumni

NANCY GREIFENHAGEN, MS '94 earned her MS in Geography from UWM in 1994. She is currently working for the Village of Menomonee Falls Engineering Department as an Engineering Technician/Erosion Control where she's been for the past 10 years. She is also living out another passion, starting a photography business 6 years ago called Spirit Wolf Photography which specializes in Fire Photography and Western US landscapes. Contact her at: spiritwolf@execpc.com or on the web at : www.spiritwolfphotography.com

LAWRENCE M. DANIELS, BA '85 Lawrence writes: "Aside from loving Geography and history, I always wanted to be an airline pilot-particularly for Ozark. Upon graduation from UWM with a BA in Geography in 1985, I proceeded on to flight school to finish my qualifications for an Airline Transport Pilot. I taught Primary Aviation ground school at Milwaukee School of Engineering, (MSOE) as well as all ground and flight instruction at Mitchell Aeronautical Institute at the Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee. I worked as a First Officer on several airplanes: in a McDonnell Douglas DC-9, McDonnell Douglas MD-80, and a 19 seat Donier 228 Turboprop commuter before being promoted to Captain in 2001."



"Sky" Daniels is currently living in Fenton, Missouri, working as a Commercial Flight Instructor, specializing in Advanced & Airline Transport for Spirit Airlines. As airline pilot Captain, he'll be upgrading to the Airbus (A-320) in February, 2006.

CARLA BASTJAN HANNEMANN, BA '60 Carla attended UWM from 1956-1960 when the University became independent from the Wisconsin State Teachers College System. Carla was a geography major and a history minor in the College of Letters and Science. After graduation, Carla spent many years teaching both music and geography in secondary

schools throughout Iowa and Illinois. She recalls specific faculty during her time here, remembering **Donn Haglund**, **Paul Lydolph**, and **Mary Jo Read** who was the chair. Now "retired," Carla is a substitute teacher for the Altoona, Wisconsin school district. She writes: "I feel that the education I received at UWM and especially in the geography department gave me a good foundation for a life in education, both in teaching and in taking many courses to get teaching licenses and to keep them renewed. The Geography Club (Phi Gamma Upsilon) was an important part of the activities of the department. We went on neat week-end field trips and then had a supper meeting to enjoy each others company; as well as, show all our slides. Donn Haglund and other staff people went on the trips with us."

SHIRLEY MARGOLIS GOLD, BA, '53 earned a Bachelors in Geography from Wisconsin State College (prior to the University becoming UWM) in June 1953. She recalls this time as when "Mitchell Hall was almost the entire campus." She continues to stay active with UWM, auditing a course each fall.

OWEN S. MCGEE, MS '68 Owen writes that he "spent 18 extremely happy months in Milwaukee with my family, between 1966 and 1968 living at 3246 N Oakland Avenue, very near to the home of Professor Paul Lydolph who was then Chairman of the Department." Other faculty he recalls with affection are Lutz Holzner, Barbara Zakrzewska, Bob Eidt, and Stefan Hastenrath. Hastenrath shared Owen's interest in meteorology assisting him with his MS thesis on harmonic analysis of South Africa's rainfall. After UWM, he returned to South Africa earning a PhD at the University of Natal, where he subsequently taught meteorology and statistics in their Geography Department for 32 years, retiring in 2000. (Though he came to UW-Whitewater in 1984 to teach for a semester!)

Students, faculty, staff and alums are eager to hear from UWM geography alums! If you have internship opportunities or would consider speaking to groups of current students, please contact us to make those arrangements.

Let us hear from you!

Please send us news of yourself either by email to: GeogNews@uwm.edu or by sending this form to us.

Name: _____ UWM Degree(s)/Date(s): _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Post-UWM Degree(s): _____ Employer: _____

Please enclose news of yourself on separate sheet of paper.

Gifts can be made to the "UWM Foundation – Geography Fund," 3230 E. Kenwood Boulevard, Milwaukee, WI 53211.
