

Panther Geographer

Fall/Winter 2009, Volume 6, Issue 1

<http://www4.uwm.edu/lets/geo/department/>

Letter from the Chair

Inside this issue: Professor Mark D. Schwartz

Travel to China	2
Alumni News	2
Adventures in Puerto Rico	3
Faculty News	4
New Graduate Students	5
Graduate Student News	6
Summer Happenings	7
AGS Library	8

Well, now that a few weeks have passed, I'm starting to settle in once again to the duties of department chair. Those of you who have been around for a while will remember that I served in this role for seven years between 1996 and 2004. The last five years have in no way been idle for me, as I have played a major part in bringing a USA National Phenology Network into existence and helping it grow (visit <http://www.usanpn.org> for more information on this work and to join the effort).



As you might imagine, given the economic woes of the past few years, I was more than a bit apprehensive about once again "taking the reins." It would be all too easy for us to fixate on some strongly negative things happening across the State of Wisconsin which include furlough days and pay cuts for most of us at UW-Milwaukee. Fortunately, thanks to the devotion of all my faculty and staff colleagues, and the tireless efforts and careful stewardship of the past chair, Judith Kenny, I am pleased to report that the department is in very good shape overall.

Some of the positive developments over the past year: 1) department faculty have remained at thirteen, an all-time high; 2) we continue to increase our delivery of whole courses on-line, which has proven a popular option for students, and an important source of revenue for the department; 3) our small (six station) graduate student computer lab was outfitted with all new PCs over the summer, and PCs in all graduate student offices were also upgraded; 4) in addition to the successful completion of their degrees and placements of doctoral students Wen Lin and Deanna Schmidt last spring (as reported in our previous newsletter), my own doctoral student, Liang Liang finished up and started work this summer as a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Kentucky, and another doctoral student, Falguni Mukherjee also completed her studies and took a position at Central Connecticut State University; and 5) overall department fall enrollment reached the highest levels in past fifteen years, with continued strong numbers of undergraduate majors and graduate students, mirroring similar trend across campus.

So as you can see, despite some challenges, the department continues to move forward. I hope that all of you will contact us and share what you have been up to since your days in Bolton (or for some of you Sabin—remember the gargoyles) Hall!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- ◆The annual Geography Department Fall Picnic will be held at noon on October 11 at Lake Park
- ◆The AAG Westlakes Regional Meeting is scheduled for October 29-31 at Macalester College, St. Paul, MN
- ◆The annual AAG Conference will be held in Washington, D.C. from April 14-18, 2010

“Voluntary” Isolation in Harbin, China

by Changshan Wu

In the summer of 2009, I traveled to Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, China. I spent about a month in Harbin as a guest professor of the College of Geographical Science, Harbin Normal University. Overall, it was a really pleasant experience, and I learned a lot from the faculty and students.



My trip was, initially, somewhat worrisome. Due to the worldwide spread of swine flu, China had very strict policies. When my flight arrived at Beijing International Airport, we had to stay in the airplane while we each had our body temperature measured. If anyone had a fever, all of the passengers near to him or her (three rows) needed to be quarantined. Fortunately, none of the passengers in our flight had flu symptoms. However, when I finally arrived in Harbin at 1:00 am, I was told that I had to stay in a hotel and to be “voluntary” isolated to prevent the possible spread of swine flu. Therefore, I had to stay in the hotel for about a week watching TV, reading papers, and walking around.

The next week, I started my visit of the College of Geographical Science. The college has several departments, including human geography, physical geography, and GIScience and remote sensing. The college has forty-five faculty members, with over two hundred undergraduate students and one hundred graduate students. For faculty members, only full professors can advise Master’s and Ph.D. students. Because of this, each full professor has more than ten Master’s and Ph.D. students. During my stay in Harbin, I worked with more than ten graduate students. I found many of the students to be very smart and eager to acquire academic knowledge. They are also under a lot of pressure, as each Master’s student is required to publish a journal paper in Chinese, and each Ph.D. student is required to publish a paper in an SCI journal.

As a Co-Primary Investigator, I received a grant from the Chinese National Science Foundation. I conducted research in monitoring the urbanization process in Daqing City, and evaluating its influences on natural ecosystems. We found some interesting results and I will continue to pursue this research area during my sabbatical in spring 2010.

Alumni News

Bill Muehler would like to announce some updated ornithological information and online resources:

My website has recently been updated:
<http://home.earthlink.net/~iltlawas/>

My regular blog has new information on a weekly or twice-weekly schedule:
<http://bluebirdslaugh.blogspot.com/>

The emerging organization "Purple Martin Partners" has a new blog with info and news:
<http://puma-in-wi.blogspot.com/>

In addition to a recently published paper: Annotated Checklist; The Birds of Wisconsin by William P. Mueller and Cindy Kowalchuk. The Passenger Pigeon, Journal of the Wisconsin Society for Ornithology, Vol. 71, No. 3, Fall 2009, pp.239-281.

Sean Chenoweth received his PhD in 2003 from UWM Geography and was recently granted tenure and promoted to Associate Professor at the University of Louisiana—Monroe. He had these kind words for his former advisor, Mick Day, “I want to thank you for helping me reach this goal...it has been an enjoyable ride that has just begun.”

Fieldwork is Fun! By Andrea Hall

During 2009, I made two trips to Puerto Rico to conduct fieldwork for my Master's thesis research. My research topic concerns tourism and ecotourism in the karst landscape of Puerto Rico. For the first trip in April I was accompanied by Professor Mick Day, Brendan Vierk (a fellow graduate student also doing research in Puerto Rico), and four undergraduate students (Julie Kebisek, RJ Busch, Tyson Lowery, and Anke Keuser) through the Tropical Fieldwork Course (Geography 654). We were later joined by Sean Chenoweth, a UWM Alum, from the University of Louisiana-Monroe. We arrived in beautiful Puerto Rico, picked up our rental cars and drove to the Mata de Plátano Fieldstation.

As part of my research our group took part in three different adventure tours run by three companies of varying size that are active in the northern karst belt of Puerto Rico. The first adventure tour is run by one of the largest adventure tour operators on the island. We hiked, did some simple caving, zip-lined, ate an organic vegetarian lunch at a completely sustainable house, walked across the Tanamá river on a hammock bridge, cliff-dived, and swam in the Tanamá River. The second adventure tour was with a smaller, independently-owned company. We went to two famous Puerto Rican caves, Cueva Sorbetos and Cueva Ventana. We traversed the Tanamá River to enter Cueva Sorbetos, rappelled inside the cave and did some extremely muddy spelunking. For the third tour, also with an independently-owned company, we body-rafted down the Tanamá river, passed through river caves, cliff-jumped, and hiked. It was one of the most extreme experiences of my life. I was definitely sore for the next few days, but it was totally worth it.

Besides the three adventure tours, we visited a number of state forests that are within the karst, including Guajataca, Cambalache, and Guánica. I interviewed the forest rangers about many aspects of the park in relation to tourism. We also visited a cave called Cueva del Indio on the northern coast of Puerto Rico, near Arecibo. This cave contains many petro-

glyphs from the Taíno people who once occupied the area. The petroglyphs are well-preserved, protected from the elements inside the cave. In relation to the Taíno culture, we also visited the Caguana Indian Ceremonial Park, a site that dates back to 1200 AD and is home to the most important ceremonial center of Taíno culture in the West Indies.



The second trip to Puerto Rico took place in July, but this time I went solo. During this trip, I aimed to finish up everything that I wasn't able to complete during the first trip in April. I went to Río Abajo and Vega Alta state forests, the other two (of the five) state forests in the karst region. I went to the Arecibo Observatory, the world's largest radio telescope. Set in a giant doline, the fixed-dish telescope attracts many people to the karst area. The same day, I went to the largest commercial cave operation on the island, the Río Camuy Cave Park. This is by no means an arduous caving experience and can be experienced and enjoyed by people of all ages.

There were many other things that I did while in Puerto Rico such as collect tourism-related advertisements and flyers and spend an afternoon with the staff at the ecotourism office in Vega Baja. I wish to thank all of those people who made this fieldwork experience possible and a success, including special thanks for the Mary Jo Read funds as well as the grant I received from the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies at UWM.

Geography Faculty News

Dr. Woonsup Choi spent the summer preparing a proposal for the National Science Foundation, entitled “Effect of Urban Areas on Regional Climate Scenarios and Flood Risk,” as part of the UWM Graduate School Research Fellow in collaboration with Grant Writers’ Seminars & Workshops, LLC. Three other geographers are involved in the proposal: Dr.



Changshan Wu at UWM, Stefan Becker at UW-Oshkosh, and Hee-jun Chang at Portland State University. The proposal is going to be submitted in early December. He is the lead author of an article entitled “Simulating streamflow re-

sponse to climate scenarios in central Canada using a simple statistical downscaling method incorporating changed variability,” forthcoming in *Climate Research*. It was co-authored by P.F. Rasmussen, A.R. Moore and S.J. Kim, all at the University of Manitoba. Last May, he presented a poster at the Joint Assembly of American Geophysical Union and other organizations held in Toronto, Canada. The title of the poster was “Simulating streamflow in Manitoba using North American Regional Reanalysis as input data.” The same co-authors for the article contributed to the poster.

Dr. Rina Ghose has three papers accepted for publication later this year — two of them co-authored with former UWM Geography grads.

2009 Ghose, R. “Investigating Middle Class Migration and Rural Gentrification in Western Montana”, book chapter in *Country Dreams and City Schemes: Utopian Visions of the Twentieth Century American West*, edited by Kathleen Bros-



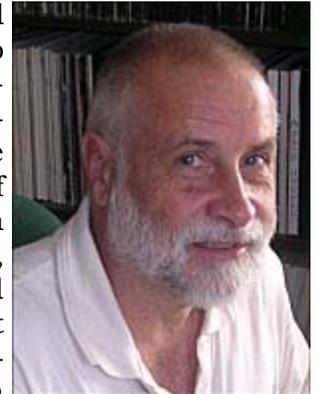
nan and Amy Scott, University of New Mexico-Press, forthcoming.

2009 Lin, W. and Ghose, R. “Social Construction of GIS in China’s Changing Urban Governance: The Case of Shenzhen”, *Cartographica*, forthcoming.

2009 Mukherjee, F. and Ghose, R. Complexities in GIS Spatial Knowledge Production in Dane County, Wisconsin. *Cartography and Geographic Information Science*, forthcoming.

Dr. Mick Day had three contributions, on Wisconsin (pp.143-145), Jamaica (pp.361-363) and the Eastern Caribbean (pp.332 and 346-347), published in *Caves and Karst of the USA*, edited by A.N. and M.V. Palmer and published in 2009 by the National Speleological Society on the occasion of the 15th International Speleological Congress.

Mick made two presentations at international conferences: “Threats to sustainability of the Caribbean karst” at the International Conference on Sustainability of Karst Environments, in Plitvice Lakes, Croatia, September 25, and “Conservation of karst landscapes” at the International Conference on Emerging Karst Issues, in Danyang, S. Korea, November 6.



For more faculty news updates and information about upcoming colloquium presentations check out the new UWM Geography Department website!

<http://www4.uwm.edu/letsoci/geography/>

Welcoming Our New Grads

Wei Huang — I am a PhD student from China and acquired my Master's degree in 2008 from Ibaraki University in Japan. My previous research interest was soil erosion and land use in the Karst region of southwest China. Currently, I'm working as a Teaching Assistant in a lab section of Geography 120 (Our Physical Environment). As my advisor is Prof. Day, my major interest now focuses on the evolution of karst geomorphology in southwest China, Environmental Geography, Hydrology, GIS and Remote Sensing.



Margaret Pettygrove — I am pursuing a Master of Arts degree in Geography. My research interests are Urban Geography, Participatory GIS, and urban food systems. My advisor is Rina Ghose. I am a TA for Geog 215 (Intro GIS) and a project assistant in the AGS library.



Isaac Park — I am a first semester PhD student at UWM. I received my Bachelor's degree in liberal arts from St. John's college in 2004, and my Master's degree in plant and environmental science from Clemson university in 2009. My current research interests involve the use of phenological data to answer basic



ecological questions, particularly as they relate to range limitations and their relevance to species' adaptability in the face of global climate change. My advisor is Dr. Mark Schwartz.

Nicholas Padilla — I am a first semester PhD student here at UWM. My current research interests center on coca eradication efforts in Latin America and their effects on traditional coca growing communities. My advisor is Dr. Kristin Sziarto, and I am one of two TAs for Dr. Sziarto's course The World: Peoples and Regions (Geog 110).



Jeff Sponcia is an incoming Master's Degree student from the Milwaukee area. For his Bachelor's Degree, he majored in History and Writing Intensive English at Marquette University. However, his life-long passion for geography reached a boiling point so now he's diving in head first! He plans to research assimilation issues and resettlement causes within Hmong immigrant and refugee communities in Milwaukee and the United States. Jeff proudly displays a miniature flag of every country in the world and dozens of maps in the office of his and his wife's Waukesha home. He is grateful for the chance to study Geography at UW-Milwaukee and looks forward to working with everyone in the department.



Continued on page 7...

Graduate Student News

Aswin Subanthore — I'm continuing my doctoral work in investigating the geographies of immigrant visibilities within the context of South Asian transnationalism. Specifically, I'm researching South Asians in Schaumburg, IL and their everyday spaces as they relate to place and identities.



Andrea Hall — I'm a second-year graduate student in the Geography department. My research interests include the intersection of karst geomorphology and (eco) tourism. I am especially interested in Latin America and the Caribbean. I finished conducting my fieldwork and data collection over the summer in Puerto Rico. Now it's time to compose my thesis!



Jeremy Sorenson — Over the summer, besides doing some academic reading, I did some travelling to Cleveland and Pittsburgh, and spent a lot of time being frustrated with our rather poor vegetable gardening weather. This Fall, I am TAing two courses - Geog 114 and Geog 125. And currently, I'm in the thick of nailing down a dissertation topic.

Greg Rybarczyk — I'm in the midst of GIS modeling and writing my dissertation, *Bicycle Travel Demand Forecasting Using Geographic Information Systems and Agent Based Modeling*. I'm also preparing a manuscript with Rama Mohapatra entitled: "Estimating Neighborhood Quality: An Integrated GIS Approach", which we will submit to the *International Journal of Geographic Information Science*.

Recent accomplishments include: the publication of my Master's thesis with my advisor, Rybarczyk, G., C. Wu (2009) "Bicycle Facility Planning Using GIS and Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis" *Applied Geography*, and a collaborative project with Rich Shaker in a forthcoming publication; Shaker, R., G. Rybarczyk (2009) "Relating Environmental and Socioeconomic Stressors to Violent Crime: Evaluating Three Major Cities in the United States" *Papers of the Applied Geography*.



Jonathan Burkham — I'm happy to have passed my preliminary exams last spring and advanced to doctoral candidacy. I spent the summer playing soccer, canoeing in northern Wisconsin, and digging volleyballs out of the sand at Bradford Beach. Now, all was not diversion—the regular soccer practices and games were part of my doctoral research. Thanks to a generous research grant from the Roberto Hernandez Center, I was able to dedicate most of my summer to interviewing Mexican migrants on Milwaukee's south side.



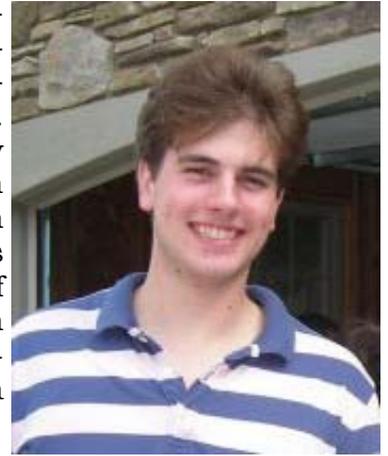
It turns out that the soccer field is really part of a larger transnational social field—a space where migrants gather and interact with other members of their home community in Mexico. I endured several minor leg injuries but came away with some really inspiring interviews and great contacts. In December, I'll be heading down to Mexico for four months to continue my ethnography of this transnational community. Enjoy the winter!

Our New Graduates continued...

Rodney Ranken — This is my first semester in the graduate program at UWM. Currently I am a TA for Geography 114: The Geography of Race in the US. My interests are primarily in Urban and Human Geography. I am also interested in urban redevelopment. I was born and raised in Illinois (Go Bears) and I lived in Ann Arbor Michigan (Go Wolverines) before moving to Milwaukee three years ago.



Joshua Rogalski — I am an incoming Master's degree student, and this is my first year attending UWM. At the moment, I'm a TA for Geography 125: Introduction to Environmental Geography, taught by Prof. Ryan Holifield. My current research interests focus on critical geographies within the realm of Human and Urban Geography. My advisor is Linda McCarthy.



Graduate Student Summer Gatherings

This summer proved to be an exciting extension of social activities for the Geography Department. Although everyone was busy with summer research, reading and travel, we managed to get together twice to continue the social spirit within our department. The beginning of the summer was in the heart of the Brewers season and we celebrated at Miller Park with brats, beers, and buddies! It was great for everyone to get together in a relaxed environment to take in a classic American



sport. Before the start of the semester we also managed to get faculty, family, friends and students together at Chill on the Hill on the Eastside. We jammed to King Solomon, a local reggae group, and enjoyed an amazing view of the city and a beautiful summer evening. These events are such wonderful opportunities to enjoy what Milwaukee has to offer with great people.

Best,
Nadia and Jon



Fall at the American Geographical Society Library

AGS Library is glad to see Geography Department students, staff, and faculty using data, maps, and other materials in their research and teaching. Join us this year as we host a number of speaking events and exhibits.



Sept.-Oct., Exhibit "The Geography of the Heavens."

Oct. 28, 7 pm, Edward Wilkommen *GeoFocus* Lecture by Richard Marston, Kansas State University, "Land, Life, and Environmental Change in the Himalayas."

Nov. 4, 7 pm, presentation by David Dickason, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, "The Upjohn Center for the Study of Geographical Change."

Nov. 13, 3 pm, *Academic Adventurers* by Brendan Vierk, Dept. of Geography, UWM "The Secondary Karst Forests of Puerto Rico: Did Landforms Mold Their Regrowth?"

Latest Geo-baby!

PhD student Rama Prasada Mohapatra's daughter, Laura Mohapatra, was born on March 30th 2009. Congratulations to Laura's proud father and mother, Suchismita Swain! Rama is boldly looking forward to balancing the challenges of fatherhood, publishing, finishing his dissertation and applying for jobs. This is no small task and we wish him the best. Shubh Kaamnaayein Rama and Suchismita!



Please 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: _____

E-mail _____ Phone: _____

Post-UWM Degree(s): _____

Employer:

Please enclose news of yourself on separate sheet of paper. Your financial support is welcome. Please make your check payable to the UWM Foundation - Geography Fund and mail it to UWM College of Letters and Science, Holton Hall 253, PO Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201-0413.

PANTHER GEOGRAPHER

Department of Geography
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

P.O. Box 413
Milwaukee, WI 53201-0413

PHONE: 414.229.4866

EMAIL: geognews@uwm.edu

WEBSITE:

<http://www4.uwm.edu/letscli/geography>

EDITORS:

Jonathan Burkham, student editor

Anna Mansson McGinty, faculty editor