

# FROM LINDLEY



**NUMBER 23**  
**DECEMBER 2015**

## *View from the Chair's Office*

### **Heading Up a New and Thriving Department**



Hello everyone and greetings from Lindley Hall! It is my absolute pleasure to be writing this letter under the new departmental

banner: Geography and Atmospheric Science. This has been in the works for a while, and it's nice to officially be able to acknowledge the contributions of the ATMO program in the departmental name. This change in the departmental name coincides with a number of changes around Lindley Hall. Our front office staff is now shared between us, Geology and the Environmental Studies Program. We've added three new staff members: Ramia Whitecotton has returned to the department, now as the office manager; Ally Smith was recently hired as the administrative assistant; and Tori Dreyer has joined us in a new position to assist with outreach and media relations. Bev Morey has retired, which has left a hole in the departmental office but luckily she still drops by occasionally

to check in on us. Have no fear; Bev Koerner still makes sure that everything gets done!

In addition to the new office staff, we welcomed two new faculty members into the department this year. Abel Chikanda is a joint faculty member with African and African-American Studies. He received his PhD in Geography from Western Ontario and works in the area of migration and development. Prior to joining us, he was a postdoctoral research fellow at Queen's University. Ting Lei also joins us this year with a specialization in GIS network analysis and location theory. Ting came to us from a postdoctoral research position at the University of Arizona, and received his PhD from Santa Barbara in Geography.

We also saw several promotions this year. Alex Diener was promoted to Associate Professor with Tenure and is spending the 2015-2016 academic year at Harvard under a prestigious Senior Fellowship at Harvard University's Davis Center, awarded for his work in Eurasian Studies. Chris Brown was promoted to Full Professor and also received a Fulbright award to take a sabbatical and continue his efforts working with Unicamp in Campinas, Brazil. Shannon O'Lear and myself were also promoted to Full Professor this year.

The graduate students have been very successful in receiving various awards, most impressively two Fulbright Fellowships to conduct field research, and a number of awards for best presentations at conferences. Our undergrads have also been very successful at presenting their results at conferences. This was the second year of our capstone course winning an award at the Undergraduate Research Symposium. That's a tough trend for the next group of students!

On a sadder note, we saw the passing of our emeritus professor Bill Woods this year. His contributions to the field have been recognized around the world, and he will be missed.

With the passing of time and the new additions, there are also some departures from the department. We added two new members to our emeriti professors this year: Terry Slocum and Jerry Dobson. Both have made significant contributions to the department over the years, and the department would not be where it is today without their efforts and diligence in the name of KU Geography. Terry has moved north to Alaska, and Jerry has returned to Tennessee, but we know that their presence will be felt in the department for years to come. We wish them well!

We also saw the departure of Johan Feddema, who couldn't pass up an opportunity to become the Chair of the Geography Department at Victoria. He'll be missed as well and I must say that his efforts as Chair here over the past three years have certainly made my coming into the job easier.

One of the efforts that he and Donna Tucker have been leading over the past few years has finally come to fruition: the new PhD in Atmospheric Science. The program officially began this fall and we currently have two students enrolled. We are presently searching for a new assistant professor in ATMO to help the new program succeed.

We have a number of new initiatives started in the department. One of the first things I did when I started as Chair was create a new computer lab for graduate and undergraduate research. This has been something we've needed for a while and it's been fun trying to figure out the best way to get it going. We're planning on it opening early in the spring.

One of the big events coming up is a book that details the history of the department written by Pete Shortridge. This has been in the works for a while, and we're just placing the final touches on it. Look for it soon!

Another fun thing we're planning is an Alumni reunion for all students of the Geography and Atmospheric Science programs. We'll be doing this in April, so be on the lookout for more news about that. I really hope to see you all there and you can come see for yourself all the exciting things happening around Lindley Hall!

## Emeriti Corner



**Bob McColl**

One of the pleasures of retirement is time to read

widely – even indiscriminately – and to continue exploring at one's own pace. For me, one of the great writers of the geography and continuity of place is James Michener. For Michener, place is the focus and enduring force of life and history. Thus it was with pleasure and surprise that while reading his book *Iberia* I found reference to a Geographer who should be familiar to all KU Geography grads, one J. Russell Smith, the father of our own Thomas R. Smith, third Chair of the Dept., after Walter Kollmorgen (2nd Chair as I recall the history). This is not the place to expound upon the accomplishments and

contributions of J. Russell Smith. Those are tales of another sort, but the clear reference, even reverence, of Michener for a simple lesson of how to write about “place” from a Geographer was gratifying. Good writing, well-researched, is a skill often lacking or ignored in the rush to publish or “tweet.” And, to find that for an acclaimed author such as Michener (whom I personally always considered a “geographer” or at least a closet geographer) there in fact was a “professional” geographer who was a mentor, was pure joy and confirmation of the inherent value of geography (often in spite of its professionals). For those committed to field work in various cultures/countries and who seek a model of how to write readable prose about “place” one probably could not do better than to read and absorb the lessons provided in Michener’s *Iberia* and his other works. Meanwhile, I continue to explore and understand the interplay of geography and history in the overall Mediterranean. Of special interest has been the discovery that the sea level of the Mediterranean has clearly risen since Roman and even Phoenician (roughly 800 BCE) times (so many coastal ruins currently are under water – Caesera, Carteya, Sabratha, Alexandria, Turkey), and that those we often call “Phoenicians” and think of being

concentrated only along the coast; in fact in what is modern Spain, penetrated to Cordoba possibly even Pamplona. Another personal “discovery” was the nature of the geography and culture of Macedonians (land-based and horse(cavalry)-focused) that later was replicated between the ministries of the Apostles Paul and Peter, especially along what was known as the Egnatian Way (Via Egnatia). The geography of Roman Roads goes far in explaining the history as well as Geography of North Africa - even more than in Europe or Italy. Sadly, research into Central Asia remains limited (dangerous) and so that chapter/geography of early human history awaits. But some have opened the doors (e.g History's DVD, Alexander's Lost World) geographically but with confused history. Still, the effort to recreate the climates and hydrography of Bronze Age Central Asia is profoundly stimulating. We need more such re-creations – GIS and ArcInfo? The continued assumptions or assertions that all cultures share common values and that current climates and environments are the same as 10-15,000 or more years ago remains a constant frustration. There is so much Geography could do but sadly it seems we focus on ever more idiosyncratic and microscopic issues. Grand views seem left to others. Life

continues to be exciting and interesting.

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### **Robert “Bob” Nunley**

In the late 1980's or early 1990's Curt Sorenson and I installed his hot tub. Ann and I got one after that we began to use almost daily. We really got a lot of joy out of using it. Unfortunately, I went through a whole month with shortness of breath and found out I had to be treated for Hot Tub Lung. A full recovery from this condition is expected. My wife Ann continues to use it daily but I have now sworn it off. To all my colleagues and friends be well and live in joy!

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### **Terry A. Slocum**

Arlene and I are now enjoying the weather year-round in Alaska. People wonder why anyone would want to retire to Alaska but we both feel that it is a lot more interesting and fun than say, Florida or Arizona! I am still involved in several research projects with current and former colleagues. For instance, Travis White, Dave McDermott and I are examining the use of color maps in eight refereed journals over the 2004-2013 time period. Not surprisingly, color maps are becoming much more commonly used, but a detailed analysis of more than 400 of these maps

reveals a number of design problems. In another study, Fritz Kessler and I are examining the use of maps in the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* over the 1940-2010 time period. As with other journals, we are finding a decreased use of maps in recent years. We are examining this change in relation to a broad range of geographic techniques, including GIS, remote sensing, quantitative methods, and qualitative methods. Although Arlene is officially retired, she continues to make use of her IT expertise, both in her volunteer activities (ex. Ice Alaska, [www.icealaska.com/](http://www.icealaska.com/)) and with a part-time consulting business that she has established, primarily to assist elderly people with IT problems.

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### **Curtis Sorenson**

For the past several years I've been working on a large scale forest thinning project in Garden Park. The project has been supported by numerous federal, state and local agencies and has been recognized with awards from the CO State Forest Service (2013 forestry partner of the year), Natural Resources Conservation Service (2013 Earth Team Volunteer), and the Land Stewardship Award from the Palmer Land Trust 2015. Quoting from the Stewardship award letter, "...Sorenson has spearheaded the largest

collaborative forest restoration project in the region. Across Garden Park, north of Canon City, Sorenson motivated and coordinated the involvement of 37 private land owners and five agencies, resulting in wildlife habitat and diversity improvement." The recognition is really nice, but just the privilege of living in such a beautiful corner of the world is incredible. Peggy and I have also been active in preserving the old (1895) one-room adobe Garden Park School situated adjacent to our property. The school now has a new partial foundation, new west wall, new roof, and we recently got a grant for windows and a door. We started this project in 2006 with Geography field course students putting up a buttress wall to keep the building from collapsing.

We are also in the process of repurposing logs from an old homestead dating back to 1870 and building a log cabin on our property. The cabin is nearly complete and is a great spot to drink a beer and watch the sun set over the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. When we're not busy in Garden Park, and when the summer heat is unbearable here, we live in Cripple Creek in an old Victorian cottage across the street from the St. Nicholas Hotel. I tend bar in the Boiler Room Tavern at the St Nick, and I love it. We meet people from all over the world, and we also have joined the Gold Camp

Victorian Society where we play dress-up in period clothes and educate ourselves and tourists about the history of the Gold District. In addition, Peggy is a tour guide in one of only 3 brothel museums in the country, also in Cripple Creek. My sister says, "All that education and you two end up tending bar and working in a whore house." We've been doing a little domestic travel with a couple of trips to the Mexican Riviera thrown in. This summer 3 couples took a motorcycle tour of southwestern Colorado. It's a great way to travel the mountains, and Peggy got to relive her days as a park ranger at Mesa Verde National Park. Anna and her family live nearby in Florence, Colorado where she buys and sells antiques focusing on old jewelry. Spencer is an Honors graduate of CSU and is living in Mad River, CA. If anyone reads this and travels this way, be sure to let us know. There's always a cold beer in the cooler, and we always like to see old friends.

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*Construction Begins on the new EEEEC*

## Faculty News



**David Braaten**

Dave Braaten is still splitting his time between teaching

atmospheric science courses and participating in the Center for Remote Sensing of Ice Sheets (CReSIS) on West Campus. The undergraduate and graduate programs in atmospheric science have never been healthier and the new Ph.D. program in atmospheric science will help the ATMO program to continue to thrive. CReSIS is continuing as a KU research center, but is “graduating” as a NSF Science and Technology Center (STC). This is NSF’s subtle way of saying that the ten years of funding under NSF’s STC program is ending. The Center continues to be productive with a focus on snow and ice remote sensing, and there is still a large knowledge gap in assessing how ice sheets will affect sea level in the future. The CReSIS radar systems are helping to bridge that knowledge gap. Dave had the privilege of participating and co-chairing a memorial session for Professor Richard K. Moore at the International Geoscience and Remote Sensing Symposium (IGARSS) in Milan, Italy this past summer. Prof. Moore came to KU in the early 1960’s, and developed a world-class program in geophysical remote

sensing. He was a pioneer in developing several important satellite remote sensing concepts but the one atmospheric scientists appreciate the most is ocean wind-vector scatterometry. Professor Moore developed and tested the radar scatterometry concept at KU, which ranks up there as one of the greatest advances in observational meteorology of the 20th century. Active radar scatterometry satellites are now essential observational platforms, providing surface wind fields over vast ocean regions that are ingested into global weather forecast models. Some of the atmospheric science alumni from the 1980’s might remember the electrical engineering students enrolled in upper level ATMO courses. These were Prof. Moore’s students. He understood the importance of learning atmospheric physics and dynamics for engineers engaged in developing geophysical remote sensing systems. Dave worked with Prof. Moore and his graduate students after he had retired, and he presented a paper at the IGARSS memorial session on this research entitled “Characterizing Stratiform and Convective Precipitation for Correcting Radar Backscatter from the Ocean.” Richard Moore died in 2012 at the age of 89. He will be fondly remembered by his former students and colleagues. In appreciation of his scientific and engineering

contributions, KU dedicated the Richard K. Moore conference room on the 3rd floor of Nichols Hall this past year.

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**Chris Brown**

Chris Brown was recently promoted to full professor

and is spending the academic year on sabbatical in Brazil. He is with his family (Denise and the boys, Jason (12), and Connor (9)). They are Campinas, São Paulo, and Chris has a Fulbright Fellowship to develop his research on land change in some of Brazil’s fastest changing agricultural landscapes in the states of Mato Grosso, Goiás, and Mato Grosso do Sul. He is working with researchers at the State University of Campinas and at Embrapa (roughly the equivalent of our USDA). Chris got to travel already to Mato Grosso with a colleague from Embrapa to conduct ground surveys of agricultural practices for their mapping project. Chris also hopes to travel to the state of Maranhão along the northeast coast with anthropology colleagues from the Federal University of Maranhão. An ongoing project there documents the struggle of peasants to maintain their rights to land and water resources in the area of the Lencóis Maranhenses National Park. This is a classic situation where people living for a long

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time in a particular area are being removed in order to preserve a particular idea of nature. Ironically, this is the exact place where an episode of "Naked and Afraid" was filmed. [jcbrown2@ku.edu](mailto:jcbrown2@ku.edu)



**Nate Brunsell**

This has been a very eventful year for Nate Brunsell. He was promoted to Full Professor and starting in the summer became Chair of the Geography and Atmospheric Science Department. There were some new grants added to the list, involving the eddy covariance towers and using satellites to examine the carbon and water cycling across Mexico and the U.S. Ferdouz Cochran finished her PhD entitled "Biophysical indicators of sustainability for climate change mitigation and adaptation" and went on to take a position at University of Hawai'i Maui College. Nate established yet another eddy covariance station this year, this time just north of Lawrence in collaboration with the Land Institute. Nate and his graduate students have continued being successful with their publications. But the big news is that his daughter Tara (6) started first grade! His son, Warren (4), continues to make his presence known at the Little Red School

House and is always happy to talk about his Transformers. [brunsell@ku.edu](mailto:brunsell@ku.edu)

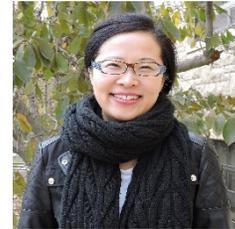


**Abel Chikanda**

Abel joined the department this semester

from the Ballsillie School of International Affairs in Waterloo, Canada. He is jointly appointed with the African & African American Studies department. He is an integral member of the *Hungry Cities Partnership*, a five-year collaborative research program funded by the Canadian Government to conduct research on food security in seven countries in the Global South. He also participates in the *Southern African Migration Programme* that regularly conducts research on migration and development in southern Africa. He is hoping to develop a new research program that seeks to understand the developmental role of the African diaspora in the U.S. in their countries of origin. Abel is the lead editor of the book *Diasporas, Development and Governance* (with co-editors Joanthan Crush and Margaret Walton-Roberts) that will be published by Springer Publishing in the Spring of 2016. He teaches courses on Africa and re-introduced Africa's Human Geographies and Geographies of

African Development in Fall 2015 and will introduce a new course on Migration and Development in Spring 2016. [achikanda@ku.edu](mailto:achikanda@ku.edu)



**So-Min Cheong**

So-Min Cheong embarked on a couple

of new projects this year. One project studies extremes-driven coastal adaptation by investigating house rebuilding strategies after Superstorm Sandy. The other one introduces data science to analyze a combination of mobile network data and environmental sensor data to examine and predict disaster response and climate change adaptation. This follows the AAAS session she organized in San Jose with a group of computer scientists, computational social scientists, and climate researchers. Other than that, she continues her work on the oil spill in coastal Louisiana and promotes student engagement with participatory action research.

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**Alex Diener**

Alexander Diener enters his fourth year with the University of

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Kansas' Department of Geography and Atmospheric Science with a promotion to Associate Professor. During the 2014-2105 academic year, Alex presented papers at conferences for the Central Eurasian Studies Society, International Studies Association, Association for Slavic, Eastern European, and Eurasian Studies. He also delivered invited lectures at the Association of Borderland Studies Annual Meeting, Oklahoma State University, George Washington University, American Corners in Alamyt Kazakhstan, and Kazakh National University. Alex was the featured speaker for a Fulbright Webinar and presented his Mongolian Mobilities project in KU's Red Hot Research Seminar. For a project on Narrating Nationalism in Urban Landscape, he received an Association of American Geographers Research Grant 2014-2015. This project resulted in an edited book entitled "From Socialist to Post-Socialist Cities: Cultural Politics of Architecture, Urban Planning, and Identity in Eurasia." (Routledge 2014) Alex also co-authored a book, "Borders: A Very Short Introduction," was translated into Japanese by Dr. Fuminori Kawakubo and published by Iwanami Shoten Publishers of Tokyo in 2015. During the summer of 2015, Alex conducted

research in Kazakhstan and Mongolia before taking up a Title VIII Scholarship at the Kennan Institute of the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars in Washington DC. At present, Alex is the Senior Fellow at Harvard University's Davis Center, where he is working on several projects.  
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**Steve Egbert**

With the departure of several of his long-term

colleagues, Steve appears to have become one of the "senior" members of the department, something he should have anticipated yet somehow didn't. This past year finally saw the publication of a paper on Territorial Cleansing in *Territory, Politics, Governance* – this represented the fruition of several years of seminars, research, and discussions on issues related to geopolitics, genocide, ethnic cleansing, and related topics with a highly talented group of graduate students who served as co-authors on the paper. He has continued to work in this mode with another group of enthusiastic and knowledgeable graduate students by forming a Native Lands Working Group that is researching the impacts of

land allotment on Native Americans. They now have begun giving presentations on the early stages of their research based on allotments among the Kickapoo and Sisseton and Wahpeton peoples and plan further research, writing, and grant applications in the coming year. On the KARS front, researchers continue to have major successes in signing long-term contracts to do crop-yield mapping and floodplain modeling, as well as habitat assessment for the Lesser Prairie Chicken. He was also fortunate to be a Co-Investigator with Mariya Omelicheva (PI) at KU and Lawrence Markowitz at Rowan University on a successful Minerva grant application to examine the human trafficking/terrorism nexus in Central Asia. Things are busy but times are good!  
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**Dan Hirmas**

This past Spring Dan Hirmas completed a sabbatical in the Texas Hill Country finishing several projects that he had started with colleagues and students. He became a teaching fellow with the KU Center for Teaching Excellence this semester and received the Soil Science Society of America Lloyd R. Frederick Soil Teaching Award to support travel in

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January to Sulaimani, Iraq where he will be giving several lectures and seminars to the Soil and Water Science Department at the University of Sulaimani. Two masters students in his laboratory, Kim Drager and Tim Bents, defended their thesis and graduated this year. Kim submitted two papers this year from her thesis to SSSAJ and Soil Science and began her PhD program at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Tim is preparing two manuscripts for submission to SSSAJ. Dan's former Masters students Dennis Eck and Scott Klopfenstein published their thesis papers this year in *Vadose Zone Journal* and *Catena*, respectively. Eric Zautner (MS), Aaron Koop (MS; co-advised with Prof. Bill Johnson), and Awesta Mohammed (PhD) continue to make progress on their thesis/dissertation and prepare manuscripts for publication on their work.

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**Bill Johnson**

This has been an exciting year from the departmental standpoint and from Bill

Johnson's personal standpoint. Two new, young faculty members in areas of great need have joined us, and the new

Lindley Hall Welcoming Center and associated Lindley Hall administrative group arrangement has been one of the best changes Bill has seen around here. Bill has had the time and opportunity to travel for personal (e.g., daughter's wedding in Ireland) and professional activities (fieldwork here and abroad). Rather than drone on he has attempted to chronicle his year with selected images:



*Bill and son at daughter's wedding in Ireland*



*Passers-by while doing field work in Alaska*



*Sea stack research*



*Approaching squall in lesser Antilles*

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**Jay T. Johnson**

Jay Johnson spent the last year on sabbatical

and fellowship leave working on a co-authored book with University of Missouri Professor and KU geography alum, Soren Larsen. The book is entitled, "Being Together In Place: Coexistence in a More Than Human World." The book is currently under review by the University of Minnesota Press and explores the agency of place in calling Native and non-Native groups to defend those places against development. The book is focused on three particular places including Cheslatta in northern British Columbia, the Waitangi Treaty Grounds in New Zealand, and the Wakarusa Wetlands in Lawrence, Kansas. Jay spent six weeks in New Zealand on two separate trips; the first trip was related to the book project with Soren and the second trip involved leading a group of Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian scholars and

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community leaders. This network is funded by the National Science Foundation to explore the research needs and capacity of Indigenous communities across the United States. During their trip to New Zealand they met with Māori research centers, learning how they have taken leadership in meeting the research needs of communities in their country over the past 15 years. Finally, Jay Johnson, along with research collaborators Dr. Renee Louis from Hawai'i and Dr. Andy Kliskey from Idaho, have just completed a special edition for the journal, "Sustainability Science." This special edition is a product of the NSF funded workshop entitled, "Weaving Indigenous and Sustainability Sciences: Diversifying our Methods" that was held in 2013. Looking forward, Jay is excited to continue his research collaborations including new projects with faculty at Haskell Indian Nations University, and in his new role as Associate Chair of the Geography & Atmospheric Science department.

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### **Ting Lei**

Ting joined the faculty of KU Geography in Fall 2015. During the past few months, Ting has developed a new GIS course on Location Modeling which

introduces students to the concept of location-allocation analysis and its many applications in urban and transportation planning. This is part of a larger curriculum development effort with Xingong Li to establish a GIS certificate program at KU Geography. Another new course that will be developed for the program is the theory and management of spatial databases to be offered in Spring 2016. Ting has also been involved in a project (as co-PI collaborating with the School of Public Affairs and Administration) starting in January of 2016 to explore the factors influencing property values and neighborhood health. The project works with the county and historical datasets to understand the factors that influence property value changes and neighborhood health and stability in Johnson County.

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**Xingong Li**

Xingong Li's research in global snow cover change, working with

graduate student Jim Coll, continues and focus on validation using SNOTEL data and trend analysis. Undergraduate student Jacob Goering also joined the team trying to make the Google Earth Engine based snow cover

analysis available through the Google App Engine. Jim, Dr. Terry Slocum, and Xingong held a workshop on Google Earth Engine at the AAG annual meeting at Chicago last spring. The workshop was well attended and is a huge success. Weibo Liu, Xingong's graduate student, published a co-authored paper, "Storm event representation and analysis based on a directed spatiotemporal graph model," in the *Journal of Geographic Information Science* as part of his dissertation research. The paper also won Weibo the first place in the UCGIS best student research paper competition. Collaboration with graduate students and various researchers has led to the publication of seven peer-reviewed journal papers and four submitted manuscripts so far this year. As for service, Xingong served as the search committee chair for hiring the new GIS faculty member. Currently, Xingong and a group of students and staff are organizing the 14th KU GIS Day event, which will take place on Nov. 18.

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**David Mechem**

The KU cloud group has had a busy year. M.S. student

Kevin Nelson defended his

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thesis in July and started a job at MesoWest at the University of Utah. His research systematically evaluated warm-rain microphysical parameterizations in the U.S. Navy's mesoscale model against observations from a large field campaign. A new student from the University of Oklahoma, Luke McMichael, joined the group in August and will be using high-resolution modeling to investigate a case of rapidly dissipating marine clouds. Although numerical simulation has traditionally been our bread-and-butter, more and more we have been drawn into the world of carefully using observations to constrain our models. The most enjoyable aspect of this hybrid approach is the opportunity to work with expert observational colleagues around the country. One highlight of the past summer was getting to spend ten days at the National Weather Center in Norman serving as an instructor for a DOE-sponsored workshop to introduce advanced grad students to observations and modeling of aerosol, cloud, and precipitation processes. Back in April, they helped sponsor the Midwest Math and Climate Conference at KU to bring together top researchers interested in interdisciplinary approaches to atmospheric science and applied math. As part a larger effort to this end, the department has been hosting

Erik Van Vleck from the Department of Mathematics, who is working with them on a number of interdisciplinary research problems. Day-to-day duties in the department revolve around teaching the undergraduate Dynamic Meteorology sequence, guiding grad student research, and serving as Director of Grad Studies. Back in February, the department hosted our first ever graduate-student recruiting day, where we invited the five top applicants to our grad program to visit KU. We had substantial buy-in from faculty and grad students and plan on holding a more extensive recruiting day this next February. Highlights of family life this year were his usual western vacation through Colorado and Arizona, and the adoption of a pointer-mix puppy ('Minnie') from the Topeka Humane Society.  
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**Shannon O'Lear**

Shannon's latest book project is complete.

Together with Simon Dalby, she co-edited, *Reframing Climate Change: Constructing Ecological Geopolitics* (Routledge, 2015). The book brings together established as well as newer scholars who take critical approaches to understanding climate change. Topics include: how climate is

misunderstood as a factor in armed conflict, how science is selectively communicated to policy makers, why the term "climate refugee" is politically contested, how climate engineering misunderstands geography, and why religious and military organizations often take a similar stance of being proactive in climate adaptation. With that book completed, Shannon is beginning work on her next book, "Environmental Geopolitics", under contract with Rowman & Littlefield.

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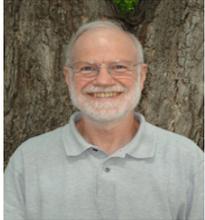
**David Rahn**

This year Dave has continued his work on a variety of research topics

which also included a collaboration on a project led by Dr. Li and his Ph.D. student Weibo Liu. Last spring Dave's first student completed his M.S. using meteorological data from commercial aircraft to obtain a diurnal climatology of the lower atmosphere in southern California. He is excited about a new ceilometer that will be arriving soon and will be used for long-term monitoring of the lower atmosphere near Lawrence. In the spring he will take a research intensive semester before going up for tenure the following year.

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**Pete Shortridge**

This has been an unusual year for the Shortridges. No trips to North Dakota, Mississippi, or other lesser-visited places that are their favorites. The reason is not waning enthusiasm but Barbara's deteriorating health. She is suffering from dementia. They first noticed signs about seven years ago. She was still able to teach for a year or so, then had to give up driving, and now has slipped further. She wanted to keep her condition private at first, which is understandable, but now Pete thinks it's better to share. Cousins and such have been told and this newsletter is an appropriate vehicle for informing their other family members. He is still teaching, partly as a way to get out of the house and partly because Barbara enjoys walking up to campus on occasion. Oh, and he is learning to cook!

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**Pamela Sullivan**

Pamela is enjoying her second year in the Geography Department at

KU. This summer she was able to get her aqueous geochemistry lab running and began fieldwork at the Konza Prairie Long Term Ecological Research Center. This fall Pam was invited to Guiyang and Yingtang China as part of a contingency from the Critical Zone Observatory (CZO) network to discuss prospects of facilitating comparisons between near earth surface processes in China and the U.S.A. Pam is excited about creating opportunities to facilitate undergraduate/graduate research in China in the coming years.

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**Barney Warf**

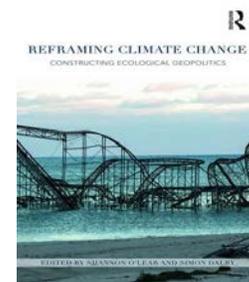
Barney is having a great year. He continues a

heavy load of editing, including serving as editor of the *Professional Geographer*, co-editor of *Growth and Change*, co-book review editor for *Dialogues in Human Geography*, editor-in-chief for geography for Oxford Bibliographies On-Line, and editor of a series of geography texts for Rowman and Littlefield. His textbook *Human Geography: A Serious Introduction* was published in 2015. He is currently working on a monograph on geographies of Asian e-government

(forthcoming with Elsevier) and an edited volume on geography and technology (forthcoming with Edward Elgar), and is starting work on his third encyclopedia, this time on the internet (forthcoming with Sage). He published a series of journal papers, including global corruption, Galician nationalism, global cities and cosmopolitanism, teaching cosmopolitanism, cyberwar, and the North Korean internet. He looks forward to a sabbatical in spring of 2016!

[bwarf@ku.edu](mailto:bwarf@ku.edu)

## FACULTY TIDBITS:



*Reframing Climate Change: Constructing Ecological Geopolitics*, a new book co-written by Shannon O'Leary



Career night in 2015

## *Staff Perspectives – Notes from the Office Manager*

To say it has been a busy year would be an understatement. As some of you may recall, I left the Geography Department in December of 2013 when I was asked to serve in the Shared Service Center. I worked as a Grant Specialist from December 2013 to April 2015 where I monitored all the grants for Geography and Atmospheric Science, Math, and some of Geology. In March of 2015 I applied, was interviewed, and subsequently hired as the new Office Manager to serve not only Geography and ATMO, but also Geology and the Environmental Studies Program (ESP). My first day on the job was April 6th and since that day, things have not slowed down.

In 2013, with the start of the Shared Service Center, the college wanted the departments in Lindley Hall to share staff in order to eliminate redundancy of duties and to save money. Due to this, there was one administrative assistant appointed to serve all of Lindley (Bev Morey). Any admin duties that she was unable to complete would be delegated to student hourlies in room 120. Since Bev was in room 213, and the students were in room 120, there wasn't "shared" staff, it was just Bev serving Geography and Atmospheric Science and the students serving Geology. This wasn't working out very well so the college decided to move all of the office staff to the 2nd floor. After the move my first project as Office Manager was to create what we call the official "Lindley Hall Welcome Center". In order to get the Welcome Center working like a well-oiled machine, I needed to hire some help. Bev M. retired so Lindley didn't have an Administrative Assistant. Most of the Geography and Atmospheric Science administrative work flew through me and/or Bev K during that time. Then, fast forward to August when the chairs and I hired Ally Smith as our new Administrative Assistant. She is awesome! Like me, she serves all the units in Lindley, and is the main go-to person for all the faculty and undergraduate students. When I am beyond busy, she is quick to ask "What can I do to help?" I don't know where I would be if she wasn't here.

Shortly after we hired Ally, we hired Tori Dreyer as our Communications Specialist. She was hired to assist with outreach and overall communications for all units in Lindley. Tori fits in pretty well around here. She is spunky, has a great attitude, and is a huge KC Royals fan. She has been going to training multiple times a week, and is getting the rules and procedures down as quickly as possible given that she only works 20 hours a week. Despite being thrown into the deep end when she got here, she's doing a great job.

Of course Bev K. is still here. KU Geography and Atmospheric Science would be lost without her. She is wonderful in so many ways; always willing to lend a hand and help out wherever she can. Geography and Atmospheric Science are her babies and while there are many things changing, she maintains a healthy attitude. It hasn't been easy, but we're all getting through it together.

Between Ally, Tori, Bev K., the student hourly workers, and myself, the Geography & Atmospheric Science Department has a fantastic team ready to do great things for this department. I can't wait to see what the next year holds!

*Best Wishes,*

*Ramia Whitecotton*

# *FLASHBACK TO HISTORY*

THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCE

Joe Poracsky (Ph.D. 1984) recently found a nearly forgotten manuscript by long-time KU professor A. Wilhelm Kuchler. Written in 1977 at the request of Poracsky and other graduate students of the time, this piece was intended for publication in a department newsletter called "Runoff." When circumstances precluded the newsletter's publication, however, the paper languished in Joe's files. It seems fitting now to complete the publication process. What follows are the essay's first two and a half pages, in which Will describes the department as he first encountered it in the mid-1950s. Note the fluidity of the prose and its sly, sharp wit. Both were typical of the man. The text's remaining eight pages (not reproduced here) detail the evolution of Will's personal research agenda.

- Pete Shortridge-

## GLIMPSES

by

A.W. Kuchler

George Cressey, the famous geographer, chaired the department at Syracuse University while I was at the University of Rochester. I consulted him when I was offered a position at the University of Kansas, and he thought it might be an interesting experience for two or three years. The Kansans invited me to give them a lecture so they could sniff at me. I sniffed a lot, too. I liked the warm and friendly reception and so, with wife and baby, moved into the wild and woolly west. It was some move: from a very fine and pleasant apartment into the old army barracks of Sunnyside, and from a spacious, splendidly appointed office into the narrow little office of 434-A. But the warm and friendly spirit prevailed and I was not disappointed. At that time, the department consisted of three men. The chairman was Walter Kollmorgen, expert in agricultural geography and also cultural, having hobnobbed with the Amish and such folk. Over the years, he built up a department of enviable reputation and one felt comfortable under his stewardship. Tom Smith was the expert in the geography of North America which seemed to stretch mainly from Massachusetts to Virginia. He was also an expert in industrial geography and the Far East. Later, as chairman, he displayed an imperturbable spirit and a bulldog tenacity which permitted him to overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Finally, George Jenks was the expert in cartography, in agricultural geography and a whole slew of other and sundry items. He was the handy man who could mount maps and do all sorts of other useful things. He was also the father

confessor of the students who kept him busy far beyond the call of duty. His quick wit and colorful language became legendary, and at the end of the semester the students of Geography 6 (now 106) spontaneously burst into “For he is a jolly good fellow” and of course, the students know.

This then was my new entourage as it was in the beginning. I became the expert in plant geography and the geography of Europe. I taught the latter course nearly every year. It began with Europe and the Soviet Union, later this became Europe and the European part of the Soviet Union. Then it became Europe west of the Soviet Union which shrank to Europe west of the Iron Curtain. As time progressed, the South somehow fell by the wayside, followed later by the North. Toward the end, Europe consisted of the British Isles, France, and the Low Countries, Germany and the Alps. My course became better and better, more and more detailed, covering less and less territory until to evaporated altogether. Plant geography, on the other hand, remained the very foundation of my intellectual endeavors.

The department grew and grew. David Simonett was hired, sight unseen, and his deceptively boyish appearance did not keep us from developing a very high regard for his competence. He was our expert in soils, climatology, Australia and later also in remote sensing. Others were added. Professor Colby, formerly of the University of Chicago became visiting professor for two years, working on the Kaw Basin, mainly with the collaboration of George Jenks whom Dr. Colby considered one of the most outstanding American geographers. Professor Colby occupied the office next to mine, and his refined personality greatly appealed to me. For decades, his outlook had been nursed by the Chicago Tribune and, as a result, he practically personified isolationism. . My international outlook represented the opposite point of view, and we immensely enjoyed our long, civilized and dispassionate discussions; it was a stimulating experience.



## Degrees Awarded:

Dissertations and theses completed during the 2014-15 period are as follows (advisor in parenthesis):

**Zachary M. Adamz, MA,** "Territorializing the *Koryo Saram*: Negotiating South Korean Perspectives on Homeland and Diaspora" (Alex Diener)

**Almokhtar M. Attwairi, PhD,** "Analyzing Urban Growth and Urban Management for the City of Tripoli, Libya" (Steve Egbert and Garth Myers)

**Vijay V. Barve, PhD,** "Discovering and Developing Primary Biodiversity Data from Social Networking Sites" (Chris Brown and Town Peterson)

**Lei Cai, MS, Atmospheric Science,** "Extreme Events over the Contiguous United States Portrayed in a CESM-WRF Dynamical Downscaling Framework" (Dave Mechem)

**Joshua S. Campbell, PhD,** "Imagery to the Crowd, MapGive, and the CyberGIS: Open Source Innovation in the Geographic and Humanitarian Domains" (Jerry Dobson)

**Woojin Chang, PhD,** "A Historical Geography of the Korean Experience in America" (Pete Shortridge)

**William E. Chatfield-Taylor, MS, Geography,** "An Assessment of Factors Affecting the Spatial

Distribution of Audubon's Shearwater (*Puffinus l. herminieri*) throughout the Caribbean" (Bill Johnson and Johan Feddema)

**Ferdouz V. Cochran, PhD,** "Biophysical Indicators of Sustainability for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation" (Nate Brunzell)

**Jiefang Ding, MA** (joint Geography/Urban Planning Program), "The Fiscal and Spatial Impacts of Church-Owned Property on a Municipality – A Case Study of Lees Summit, MO" (Barney Warf)

**Kim I. Drager, MS, Geography,** "Modifications of Fine- and Coarse-Textured Soil Material Caused by the Ant *Formica subsericea*" (Dan Hirmas and Steve Hasiotis)

**Emily R. Fekete, PhD,** "FourSquare: Hybrid Spaces of Economic Activity" (Barney Warf)

**Boyu Feng, MS, Geography,** "West Antarctica Snow Accumulation Trend Study (1979-2011) from Snow Radar and Ice Core Profiles" (Dave Braaten)

**Keith A. French, MA,** "A New Approach for Visualizing the Spatial Distribution of Population Over Time" (Xingong Li)

**Brandon A. Gillette, PhD,** "Relationships between Middle Childhood Outdoor Experiences and an Adult Individual's Knowledge of the Environment" (Steve Egbert)

**Jessey E. Gilley, PhD,** "Imagining, Practicing and Contesting Road Development in Southern West

Virginia, 1920s to 1970s" (Barney Warf)

**Nicholas E. Kotlinski, MA,** "A Political Ecology of Oil Palm in the Peruvian Amazon" (Chris Brown)

**Anthony L. Layzell, PhD,** "Plio-Pleistocene Landscape Evolution on the High Plains of Southwestern Kansas" (Rolfe Mandel)

**Blake L. Mayberry, PhD,** "Bury Me on the Prairie: Nature and Culture in the Postrural Midwest" (Pete Shortridge)

**Claire (Forgacs) Messner, MS, Geography,** "Post-IR IRSL Dating of the Nenana Dune Field in the Tanana Lowlands, Central Alaska" (Bill Johnson)

**Christopher J. Mitchell, MS, Atmospheric Science,** "An ACARS Climatology of the Boundary Layer Near the Coast of Southern California" (Dave Rahn)

**Kevin J. Nelson, MS, Atmospheric Science,** "Evaluation of Warm-Rain Microphysical Parameterizations in Mesoscale Simulations of the Cloudy Marine Boundary Layer" (Dave Mechem)

**John T. Oakes, PhD,** "Migrancy, Markets and Survival: Transitional Lives in South African Space" (Chris Brown and Garth Myers)

## *Donations to the Endowment Association*

Our *SPECIAL THANKS* to the following recent contributors:

### **Kollmorgen Geography Fund**

John Beets  
Dwight & Helen Brown  
Michael DeMers  
Peggy Dickison  
David Allen Fong  
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Jeffrey Patton  
Gregory Plumb  
John & Rebecca Preston  
Ronald Shaklee  
Robert Shapiro & Alicia Reyes  
Karl Sparber  
Jerry Whistler

### **George F. Jenks Scholarship Fund**

Dwight & Helen Brown  
James & Joan Campbell, Jr.  
Paul & Suzanne Crawford  
Michael & Margaret Hogben  
Carl Leonard  
Nicholas Sharp  
Shigeo Takahashi & Tomoko Yoshikawa  
Karen Trifonoff

If you wish to make a contribution to the Kollmorgen Geography Fund or the George F. Jenks Scholarship Fund, you can send that contribution to the Kansas University Endowment Association, P.O. Box 928, Lawrence, KS 66044-0928 or to the Geography Department. Be sure to indicate which fund on your donation.





# Alumni Advisory Board Update

***Provided by***

David Stearns

Alumni Advisory Board Chair

david.stearns@here.com 866-345-8585

The Alumni Advisory Board had a productive year in 2015 despite a lot of changes. We had a face to face meeting in person in Lawrence in April and decided to focus on 3 priorities for the rest of 2015. One big change that has been in the works for some time is the new department name to The Department of Geography and Atmospheric Science that occurred on July 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Board is looking forward to continuing its support of students and connecting with alumni for new ideas and professional networking. We have another Alumni Advisory Board meeting scheduled for April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016 in conjunction with an alumni reunion that will take place April 15<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 11 pm at the Oread Hotel in Lawrence, KS. More details about this event will be included inside this newsletter.

We sponsored a career panel discussion on Nov 5<sup>th</sup> that included Alumni Advisory Board members

Mark Burger, Matt Foster, Michelle Joest, Dan Rose and David Stearns from both Geography and Atmospheric Science who attended to talk to students about career opportunities in both fields. About 30 students showed up for pizza and soft drinks to discuss career opportunities in both disciplines.

Over the summer David Stearns and Mark Burger met to collaborate with an Alumni Advisory Board member with the KU physics department to collaborate and share ideas between the different boards.

Mark Burger reached out to the KU AMS club at the beginning of the fall semester to expand the awareness of the Alumni Advisory Board and to bring about better awareness of what we are about and why we are here.

The alumni reunion in April 2016 is being coordinated by board members Randy Baker,

Kimberly Penner and Tom Schmiedeler who are working with the department to make is a success.

The goals of the Alumni Advisory Board are to inform and involve alumni and other key constituencies to increase awareness of KU Geography and Atmospheric Science academic and research initiatives, to foster and engage an active alumni community and to establish a network of professionals who work in the industries and are available to advise and mentor students. We are a free resource that can be used for internships, mentoring, job placement and or career advice for GEOG and ATMO students.

We continue to support student travel to professional conferences such as AAG and AMS, training and field camp. Care to join the Alumni Advisory Board? Please contact Department Chair Nathaniel Brunsell at [brunsell@ku.edu](mailto:brunsell@ku.edu) or Alumni Advisory Board Chair David Stearns at [david.stearns@here.com](mailto:david.stearns@here.com) to ask any

questions you might have or submit a possible candidate who would be a good addition to the Alumni Advisory Board. Board members have made a commitment to engage and invest time in the life and activities of KU Geography and Atmospheric Science and be ambassadors for the department. Please do your part for KU Geography and Atmospheric Science by supporting the Department with your time and or donations.

Please check out our online website for more information <http://geography.ku.edu/advisory-board-0>. Please update your information on the KU Geography and Atmospheric Science Alumni Directory page. This helps us to create an updated alumni database and reach out to alumni for professional connections and introductions. <http://geography.ku.edu/alumni-directory>. We welcome comments and suggestions and any ideas to help assist the department. We are also on Facebook so please like the department page to keep up to date.

**THANK YOU TO OUR ADVISORY BOARD FOR ALL THEIR HARD  
WORK! HOORAY!**



## Alumni News

### 1960s

#### **Byron D. Augustin** MA 1968

As most of you know by now, after completing 42 years of university teaching, my wife and I retired to Valladolid, Yucatan



in the heart of the Maya civilization and Spanish colonial culture.

This past year has been exciting for us. We completed our third trip to Cuba, focusing on the eastern end of the island. We have visited Cuba three consecutive years and have really enjoyed our visits. My suggestion is to go now before the island gets overrun with Americans. It will change in ways that will take away some of the unique aspects of the culture. On our first trip to Cuba, we travelled with Dr. James Chaney, a LSU Ph.D in Geography who is teaching at Middle Tennessee State University. We developed a bond and worked together to develop a Study Abroad Program in the Yucatan for his students. It was a great group of students and we worked with them in Valladolid for several days. Hopefully, a new group will be returning this summer.

For some of you who met my parents while I was attending KU, my Mom celebrated her 104th birthday on October 8th. She is still going strong. I continue to do some research, writing, and photography for Yucatan Living. I hope that all of you are doing well and I look forward to reading about your exploits.

[ba04@txstate.edu](mailto:ba04@txstate.edu)

#### **Dwight Brown** MA 1965, PhD 1969

I was in residence from Sept 1963 to December 1966 with a stimulating group of graduate students. I remember with fondness the contributions of George Jenks, Duane Knos, and Walter Kollmorgen to my graduate career and my long career at the University of Minnesota. I retired completely almost 9 years ago. Helen and I have lived in Falcon Heights for the past 48 years. We have 3 grown children, all in education in public schools or universities. They have given us 8 grandchildren ranging from 9 to 30 years in age, as well as 2 great grandchildren. Our travels have been limited in the last 2 years, but we would enjoy hearing from former KU colleagues.

[dbrown@umn.edu](mailto:dbrown@umn.edu)

### 1970s

#### **Vern Harnapp** PhD 1972

Wife, Ruth, and I spend summers at Lake Viking near Gallatin, Missouri and winters at our home in Longwood, Florida near Orlando where we enjoy beach time in the Atlantic Ocean. This past year a fountain was dedicated at Concordia University in Seward, Nebraska where we received our undergraduate degrees in honor of the Vern R. Harnapp Family. Six of our family attended Concordia over the years. We attend all of the University of Nebraska home football games before heading back to Florida. Sorry KU. It seems both programs have fallen on hard times now. I got back to Lawrence in June to tour the Reuter Organ Factory which was an impressive experience.

[vrharnapp@yahoo.com](mailto:vrharnapp@yahoo.com)

#### **Jerry Eidem** PhD 1976

I did my Ph.D. work at KU some 45 years ago. Two faculty I recall well: Walter Kollmorgen for his Socratic teaching method and Bob Nunley for his positive role as my advisor. After leaving Lawrence, I held several geography teaching positions in Ontario, North Dakota and Minnesota. Then into retailing, followed by acquiring a law degree and practicing for several

## Alumni News Cont.

years—all which allowed me to travel widely on business. Now, a recovering geographer/attorney, and happily retired in Vermont. Looking back, I only hope upcoming students will continue to have the many freedoms and opportunities I experienced. Best to all Jayhawkers!

[jerry@cybershingle.com](mailto:jerry@cybershingle.com)

### **Richard Groop** PhD 1976

I officially retired from Michigan State in May of this year. I have been here for 38 years, 13 of them as Chairperson of Geography. It's been a great place to live and work. I still go into my office most days and we plan to remain in the East Lansing area for the near future. However, in an effort to miss the worst of Michigan's winter, we will spend three months in southern Spain this year. Hello to all in Lawrence!

[groop@msu.edu](mailto:groop@msu.edu)

### **Mark Virden** MA 1976

After two weeks in Portugal, my wife and I spent a week camping with her sister in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in southern Colorado. Renting a "teardrop" camper made it interesting. I am still running Virden Associates and Consulting in health care and

housing planning and market research. All my clients are retiring so I plan to do this another year and then turn my attention to music (both writing and playing). I also plan to continue to work part-time at some endeavor using my geography skills to assist a worthy cause. Overall, outside of work, I spend my time travelling, listening to live music, movie going, reading and spending time with stepchildren and grandchildren. VSPD are you still in Montana?

[mvirden@virdenassociates.com](mailto:mvirden@virdenassociates.com)

### **Lewis A. Armstrong** MA 1975

I have published some books recently and they are found on Amazon under the titles, "Oh Not Another E-mail Story About." A variety of topics are covered including relationships, seniors, holidays, religion and several more. The stories are written with humor and also engage the reader in serious thought. I am also currently working on an autobiography. The autobiography will include my years at KU both as a student and as the Curator of Maps for the library. I still work for Web Based Resources and our website is: <http://ejw.i8.com>

[lewarmstrong@hotmail.com](mailto:lewarmstrong@hotmail.com)

### **James DeMeo** MA 1979, PhD 1986

So much has happened in my life and work over the last years, I could not summarize it in any quick email. Life is good, I live in the Siskiyou Mountains of Southern Oregon, at 4300' in a



beautiful forest. I have a private lab and

educational facility built on-site, with a steady stream of young students from around the world (strangely, few from the USA). Those with interests can review my publications -- books and articles -- at my Academia.edu webpage, to get a sense of what's cooking here: <https://orgonelab.academia.edu/JamesDeMeo> One most interesting presentation I made should be of interest to KU faculty and students, "Restoring the Life-Properties to Atmospheric Water: A New Method for Ending Droughts, Tested in the USA, Israel and Africa", at the Tenth Annual Conference on the Physics, Chemistry and Biology of Water held in Varna, Bulgaria. My Abstract, PowerPoint and YouTube of the lecture will be available from this webpage: <http://www.waterconf.org/participants-materials/2015/>

## Alumni News Cont.

Right now only the Abstract is posted up, but the PowerPoint and YouTube will become available soon. This particular Conference has invited me to speak several times in the past, regarding my findings on an unusual spectrographic signature that appears in water when it is charged up inside the controversial Reich orgone accumulator. Similar spectral reactions are being found within the "EZ" (exclusion zone) structured water which is at the cutting edge of water science today, and so I've been repeatedly invited to discuss these issues with some of the top scientists in the field. The remarkable thing is, the orgone accumulator can create those spectral reactions, and other tangible physical and biological effects, without any physical contact to the test water samples. That is heresy to conventional physics, of course, and my most recent presentation was addressing the controversial cloudbusting methods which I firstly tested experimentally at KU back in 1977-1979. As some at KU Geography with grey hair may recall, that work caused heads to explode in the KU Physics Department, as by their thinking, no positive results should have been forthcoming -- but were, indicating some unusual parameters at work in cloud growth and rains. That idea was proven out in

subsequent field trials elsewhere, as discussed in my lectures. As an aside, some may recall Joe Eagleman's course on "Unusual Weather", where my work on this same subject was occasionally openly discussed. An interesting paper on those subjects is also available from the Academia website, here: [https://www.academia.edu/3677483/Water\\_as\\_a\\_Resonant\\_Medium\\_for\\_Unusual\\_External\\_Environmental\\_Factors](https://www.academia.edu/3677483/Water_as_a_Resonant_Medium_for_Unusual_External_Environmental_Factors) American science has been laggard to accept these findings, given the political influence of the horrible anti-science "skeptical groups", who spread slander and disinformation all over the media and into scientific forums as well, retarding progress. We will some day rue that deceptive influence -- seen most clearly in the burning of Reich's books back in the 1950s -- as the trajectory of these discoveries appears to be following that of Robert Goddard's work. Anyone with a sense of history will know exactly what I mean.

My work on Saharasia also continues to attract international attention, given the current Islamic invasions into Europe -- predicted by that work to become even more violent in the near future. Of course one cannot be too definitive on such things, but that is what the cross-cultural geographic patterns and history indicate for all prior mass-migrations out of those core Saharasian regions of heavy

emotional armoring and violence. That work also got its start at KU, in my dissertation research. Presumably those with interests in that subject know about my larger book Saharasia. <http://www.amazon.com/Saharasia-Origins-Sex-Repression-Warfare-Violence/dp/0980231647> The second edition of this work, identified in the above weblink, contains an "Update" article that added significant new archaeological information further validating the findings.

[demeo@mind.net](mailto:demeo@mind.net)

**Anke M. Wells** MA 1965, PhD 1979

2015 has been a memorable year! I turned 75 (hard to believe) and although retired from public school teaching for 10 years, I continue to teach at JCCC on a part time basis. This past spring I added another activity, becoming an IEC for EF high school exchange year. Currently I am supervising two host families with students from Norway and Germany. Next year I hope to be able to help making many more students' dream of a year in America come true. Life is still full of new challenges!

[Awells17@jccc.edu](mailto:Awells17@jccc.edu)

## Alumni News Cont.

### 1980s

**Larry Chow, PhD 1982**

I serve as the President of the Hong Kong Association for Energy Economics and maintain an office after retiring from Hong Kong Baptist University in September 2014. I am still active



in the energy field in Hong Kong, commenting on energy issues in the mass media

and in various seminars.

Additionally, I continue to write a daily column on the technical analysis of the Hong Kong stock market in one of the leading Chinese financial daily newspapers ---the Hong Kong Economic Journal---of Hong Kong. I believe that by keeping on working, one can be healthy and happy. I send my regards to my former professors and fellow students of Geography at KU.

[larryc@hkbu.edu.hk](mailto:larryc@hkbu.edu.hk)

**Stu Shea MA 1983**

Been a crazy year in Virginia. Married off a daughter, son graduated college, stepdaughter changed colleges, sold house, move to apartment, built house,

then moved to new house, created my own company, and lost 43 pounds. Okay, in the second month! Actually, it's been a really busy life around



here. Working some very cool activities for the Director of National Intelligence. Actively

working some Boards for companies and non-profit associations. I am still consulting for companies selling just my own time, instead of worrying about finding business for 40,000 former employees.

[stushea@sheastrategies.com](mailto:stushea@sheastrategies.com)

**Joe Poracsky PhD 1984**

I retired from teaching geography/cartography in 2013 after 31 years at Portland State University. I continue to live in Portland despite the months of gray rainy days, the continual danger of becoming a true coffee-addict (hard to avoid with a Starbucks on every corner), and the opening of a new micro-brewery like every week (Oh no, I've got to taste another new beer?)

Among the best benefits of retirement is getting to run almost every day, though my pace is not accurately described any longer by the word "run." Jog? Trot? Mosey? Yeah, I think that last one is pretty close.

I get to read more than I have in years and usually am working on two or more books at the same time, often one or two non-fiction and one or two fiction.

Brother Cadfael is a favorite, though he has been eclipsed by Andrea Camilleri and his Inspector Salvo Montalbano and the great insights he provides to Sicilian culture.

Two mornings a week I volunteer as a middle-school teacher's aide at the Community Transitional School, a not-for-profit school for kids who are homeless or in situations with an unstable home life. A great group of kids and a really dedicated staff.

Early November it is off to Italy for two weeks with my daughter. Everyone says the weather is pretty nice then and most of the tourists have gone home, so hotel prices are down and crowds are pretty thin. We shall see. Both my offspring -- Kristina and Rome -- and their families live in Lawrence, so I get back there 3-4 times a year to spend time with them.

[poracskj@pdx.edu](mailto:poracskj@pdx.edu)

## Alumni News Cont.

### 1990s

**Joseph J. Kerski**, MA 1993

I am still working as an education manager at Esri and teaching online MOOCs and at the University of Denver. I recently had a research chapter published in a new book by Springer on GIS in education.

[jkerski@esri.com](mailto:jkerski@esri.com)

**Craig Campbell** PhD 1993

This year has been busy for the Campbells. Summer 2014 was the first time that I worked for AP College Board in Cincinnati. I stayed with my brother in Lawrenceburg, Indiana, commuting in to downtown daily for a week. You grade the same question for the entire week, but you establish a nice rapport with other graders. It was good to see Stephanie Day there. If ever in Lawrenceburg at the casino, an excellent, excellent restaurant is Whiskys. Get the ribs. In May, 2015, Betty went to Paraguay. I could not, so was jealous. While she was gone, Mickey and I visited Lexington, KY – his birthplace. Once again, I was amazed how Lexington transitions suddenly from urban to horse park rural with little suburb in between. In June, Betty's sister Lucy passed, so we again visited Utah. It was a sad

trip, but got to stay with daughter-in-law Courtney and grandchildren. Son Justin is now in the Los Angeles area with family soon to follow. He's trying to break into the Hollywood filming and directing scene. Though he has infomercial creation experience, I say good luck with that. While in Utah, we explored the new narrow-street-style Farmington Mall, north of Bountiful. Bought a tie at DI. Saw the nearly complete Provo City Center Mormon Temple made from the historic LDS tabernacle dating from the 1800s.

A main summer event was that daughter Marta lived with us for six weeks while her husband moved their stuff from Utah to the suburb of Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota, south of St. Paul. It was great to have the grandchildren around for more than a few days. We moved them north in late July. On the way, saw my other brother in hometown Indianapolis. Visited Garfield Park and yuppy-ish Fountain Square which I haven't seen in years. Also attended the new Indianapolis Mormon temple open house. Madison, Wisconsin, is amazing, impressively sited on that narrow stretch between Lakes Mendota and Monona. Also saw vibrant LaCrosse, Wisconsin, on the Black River portion of the Mississippi. I am convinced that the best travels are to be done in smaller towns - not the largest

cities. I think some of Pete has remained with me. People are nicer there, stuff is cheaper and the attractions are plenty. In the Twin Cities area, we visited Mall of America, St. Paul, and the Walker sculpture garden in Minneapolis.

In August, Betty and I attended the NCGE meeting in D.C., where I gave a paper on the historical geography of horse racing / tracks in the Mahoning Valley. I worked in DC in 1985, but now the city terrifies me. Traffic was mind-numbing and I felt a bit overwhelmed. Still, we walked the mall and saw new things not there in National Geographic intern days. With all the security railing and cement guard walls, D.C. now looks slightly worn and seedy. We have this idea of D.C. as our pristine capital. It needs a make-over.

In research, I'm still compiling a data base of nearly 6,000 varied motor vehicle manufacturing sites globally, mapping them in Google Earth with colored symbols according to size. Still not sure what will happen to this study, whether I'll do a book or a couple of articles. With literally thousands of dots scattered through Europe, the US, and East Asia, it is an astounding pseudo-interactive map. I am still Bishop of the New Castle Pennsylvania LDS congregation and probably have about 2 more years of service in that position, which was unsolicited and is unpaid. As

## Alumni News Cont.

Bishop, so far I've officiated 4 funerals, 3 weddings, and sent out 3 full-time missionaries, so it's eye opening. Wishing my best to everyone.

[cstevencampbell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cstevencampbell@sbcglobal.net)

**Mark Jakubauskas** PhD 1994

I continue in my new position at the KU Edwards campus in Overland Park as Program Director of the Professional Science Masters in Environmental Assessment for the KU Environmental Studies Program. The PSM program launched just two years ago, and now has over 30 graduate students enrolled. I also developed a graduate certificate in environmental assessment and an accelerated "4+1" undergraduate-graduate program for Environmental Studies students, and am currently launching a new Science manager Program at the Edwards Campus. I live in Lawrence with my wife Sara Taliaferro, a free-lance scientific illustrator who also teaches courses in science illustration at KU, and my twin daughters, Allison and Cecelia.

[mjakub@ku.edu](mailto:mjakub@ku.edu)

**Kelly Gregg** PhD 1994

I'm still working at Jacksonville State University, in the scenic Southern Appalachian Mountains of Northeastern Alabama. As a resident of the State of Alabama, which tends to only appear in the National Press in a very negative way, I'd like to thank the State of Kansas for taking some of the spotlight off of us! Many of the recent decisions made by your Governor and other lawmakers are so wacky, that they even mystify the people living down here! Ha! Ha! I'm on Sabbatical this semester, trying to finish up a couple of little research projects that require some travel. One of these involved a study of some primary documents related to a Jewish family who were early merchants on the Arizona Frontier, and required a trip to Phoenix and Tucson. The other project relates to the tooth-chippingly-hard Christmas cookies (Pfeffernusse) made by my Great- Great- Grandmother and passed down through the generations. Like any immigrant, when she moved from Germany to Kansas (she really hated the Prussians) she brought all her recipes with her. Most of these foodways were quickly lost, with the exception of Holiday foods - which tend to rigidly persist in their traditional forms, particularly in isolated settings like rural Kansas. Reading some old German cookbooks, these family cookies are faithful versions of those

common in eastern Germany in the 1840s. I'll be traveling this region of Germany for about a month over the Christmas season, visiting small towns, talking to bakers and eating lots of cookies. I hope I don't have to buy an extra-wide seat for the flight home!

[kegregg@jsu.edu](mailto:kegregg@jsu.edu)

**Janice Sterling** MA 1996

Through the US Army Corps of Engineers, in Hanover, New Hampshire, in May 2015, I attended a one-week RS/GIS class. Afterwards, I enjoyed a 2-week vacation in New York, D.C. and Pittsburgh in the first week. Then, in the 2nd week on VIA RAIL train from Toronto, Canada, to Montreal, Canada, and finally a trip to Kansas in September. I am still a Geographer with the U.S Army Environmental Command.

[msmapper@gmail.com](mailto:msmapper@gmail.com)

**Mike Ingram** PhD 1996

Bonnie and I were glad to see the big drought end in May, but we could have stood just a little less rain to end it. As wet as it got proved quite problematic for vegetable gardening. We had a near disaster with our onion crop but we had planted so many onions early that we saved enough of them from flooding and rotting to again put away a year's worth for cooking. We

## Alumni News Cont.

eventually came out on top garden-wise with a nice harvest into October of sweet peppers and very many large cherry tomatoes, all from volunteer plants that I let come up after the onion challenge.

The wet conditions were also a boon to all kinds of little biting pests in our yard this year. Besides all the bugs, we had several litters of rabbits infest our back yard and eventually learn the tastiness of garden fresh lettuce, carrots, and even pepper plants. After I finally responded to their assault and put plastic fencing around the core of the kitchen garden, they just ate holes through it wherever they wanted. It used to be that we had a constant parade of deer that wandered through our yard browsing away on all forms of flowers and food to be, so at least these furry visitors are a bit smaller.

For the first time ever in March we stayed several nights in Columbia, Missouri, doing so in the University's B&B. While Lawrence is still really unique, to be fair Columbia is a pretty nice small city also. In October we made a looping road trip into the Southeast. We saw various friends and relatives all along the way, basically turning around at Athens, Georgia. While there, among other things, Bonnie and I visited the exact spot overlooking the Oconee River where we met 34 years

ago. On the way back home we stayed a couple nights at Shaker Village in Kentucky and, as we had liked Columbia so much we stayed there again two more nights. The nearby Rock Bridge Memorial State Park has a very good permanent orienteering course, which we found is much easier to navigate with less foliage.

As for me, I am reading more than ever, still walking regularly, and continuing to eat a fairly healthy diet. So, on to another year! Best Wishes to All!

[drtastee@kc.rr.com](mailto:drtastee@kc.rr.com)

### **John Dunham PhD 1996**

I'm now into my eleventh year as Cartographic Services Manager for the Kansas Geological Survey, producing geologic maps and geologic GIS data for the KGS. I have one student employee working for



me on several projects – our top priorities are finishing a new geologic map of Morris

County, preparing our USGS StateMap deliverables, and updating attribution and metadata for our geology GIS data that we make available for download. Earlier this year I completed all the requirements and am now a certified GIS professional (GISP) through the GIS Certification Institute. At

home, wife Cindy (KU Geography, '84) and I keep busy running and lifting weights, and entertaining our Labrador retriever Ridley, and his new companion Ella, a black Lab puppy who came into our lives in January. Perhaps the most exciting event of our year was running the New York City Marathon in November.

[dunham@kgs.ku.edu](mailto:dunham@kgs.ku.edu).

## 2000s

### **Craig Davis MA 2001**

Hey all, hope all is well with you and yours. I am firmly into my 15th academic year at Sacramento City College and still enjoying teaching, interacting with students, and living in an ever shriveling California.



In addition to my normal duties, I was chosen to participate in the Integrated Geospatial Education and Technology Training (iGETT - <http://www.igettremotesensing.org/index.html>) over the past two years. This training culminated in our 2015 summer institute in South Dakota where I was delighted to meet and see recent KU grad Steve Foga give a presentation on using higher

## Alumni News Cont.

level Landsat data during our visit to the USGS EROS data center. On the personal front, 2015 has been an interesting and transformative year for me and my son Luka (8 years old). We have had some trying times, but also many great adventures as we transition to a different phase in our family life. Our biggest adventure was a month-long road trip that included stops in Boise, Yellowstone/Grand Tetons, Boulder, Kansas City, Lake of the Ozarks, Omaha and points in between. Besides getting to see lots of country and family, we had the chance to stop in and see KU Geography Department alums Jason Shields and Matt Lecerf in the Boulder, CO area. It was great catching up and having our kids have the chance to meet and play together. I hope to see others at this year's AAG in San Francisco - have a great holiday and a super 2016.



[DavisCA@scc.losrios.edu](mailto:DavisCA@scc.losrios.edu)

**Michael Noll** MA 1993, PhD 2000

Fifteen years and counting, I still enjoy teaching courses like

Cultural Geography, Middle Eastern Geography, and Geopolitics & Ethnic Conflict at Valdosta State University (VSU). The last academic year had some unexpected challenges in store as I served as President of our Faculty Senate and in a year that was rather crazy. We made national headlines because of a "flag incident", our President, Provost, and Chief of Staff "resigned" for various reasons within just a few months, and we are now facing the consequences of declining enrollment as more than thirty of my (non-tenured) colleagues on campus are losing their jobs by the end of this academic year. Aside from the usual work in academia, I am still serving as President of a local grassroots organization (Wiregrass Activists for Clean Energy) which currently tries to stop a pipeline that would transmit more than 1 billion cubic feet of fracked unnatural gas daily from Alabama via Georgia to Florida, and right through our county. The reason for this pipeline is simple: the Governor of the "Sunshine State" (with cozy connections to Texas-based Spectra Energy) wants to profit from LNG exports to Europe and Asia. As far as the Noll family is concerned, life is busy but good. Jonathan is a Junior at Valdosta High School and taller than his parents, Sophia is in her last year at Valdosta Middle School and enjoys playing the oboe, and Karen still works as a supervisor

in the VSU speech clinic but is now working on her doctorate. Greetings to all ... and a Happy New Year!

[mgnoll@valdosta.edu](mailto:mgnoll@valdosta.edu)

**Jeremy Dillon** PhD 2002

I have been promoted to Full Professor in the Department of Geography and Earth Science at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. I also received the David Stevenson Award for Outstanding Service to the UNK Faculty Senate.

[dillonjs@unk.edu](mailto:dillonjs@unk.edu)

**Matt Harman** MA 2005

Still in St. Louis working for Esri.



I've largely been supporting our agriculture practice, more specifically

developing solutions around precision ag. It's been exciting to be on the innovative side of a growing industry. When I'm not working ag, I run Esri's Midwest Professional Services group. In fact, I was recently recruiting at KU and was able to speak to an Intro to CS class about interdisciplinary computing with Geography! Beyond work, we've got 3 children (Bennett - 8, Campbell - 5, and Georgia - 2) that keep us moving in every direction...at the same time.

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## Alumni News Cont.

**Christopher Post** MA 2003, PhD 2006

Hello, friends! I hope you have all had a great year. Amy and I have stayed busy this past year with our toddler, Dylan, and Kiera, who is now 7 and



involved in dance and doing really well in school. We undertook

a massive renovation in our kitchen this past summer and it is the first updated and modern kitchen I've ever had, as an adult or child. Wow! It was all Amy—design and engineering—with exception to a hole in a wall for a pass-through and the countertop (contractors). I was cheap labor while also corralling Dylan or getting other work done. Last March I published a chapter in a book, *Social Memory and Heritage Tourism Methodologies*, edited in part by fellow Jayhawk Amy Potter. This chapter was the final piece in publishing nearly every component of my dissertation. Despite a few ups and downs, it feels good to have gotten out as much as possible from that project (Thanks, Pete!). Otherwise, I'm still writing, researching music geographies, and I graduated two masters students last spring, one of

which is now my PhD advisee. The picture included is me standing in front of a wind turbine which I was fortunate to receive a grant for, so it's been a point of pride lately. Things are rolling forward as I hope they are for all of you. Cheers and Happy Holidays!  
[cpost2@kent.edu](mailto:cpost2@kent.edu)

**Naeema Alhosani** MA 2005, PhD2009

I continue as an Assistant Professor of Cartography in the Geography & Urban Planning Department at the United Arab Emirates University. I also continue as Assistant Dean for



Student Affairs. I have been to 7

conferences this year including one in the Philippines and one in Minneapolis, Minnesota. I published 4 refereed articles and wrote a book entitled *Geoscience Course Grade 11*. I delivered various guest lectures and organized several workshops. I was awarded the College Award for Excellence in Teaching and the University-Industry Research Collaboration Award.

[naeemam@uaeu.ac.ae](mailto:naeemam@uaeu.ac.ae)

## 2010s

**Emily Fekete** PhD 2015

This year I was offered a job as a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Geography Department at Oklahoma State University. Kevin, Mulligan, and I moved to Stillwater in mid-July and we are settling in well. My new position



at OSU involves teaching a 2-2 course load as well as being the

undergraduate advisor and being responsible for the promotion of the OSU geography department. I am continuing to research social media and the internet and recently have had papers published on race and online sites of consumption in the *Geographical Review* and two papers on cyberwar and cyberterrorism published in *CyberOrient* and co-published with Barney Warf in *Space and Polity*. I look forward to co-presenting the Space and Polity paper with Barney at the AAG in San Francisco! See you there!

[emilyfekete@gmail.com](mailto:emilyfekete@gmail.com)

## Alumni News Cont.

**Danielle Golon** MA 2012

I am a contractor to the USGS working as a Science Communications Specialist for the Land Processes Distributed Active Archive Center at the USGS Earth Resources Observation and Science (EROS) Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.



[Danielle.golon@gmail.com](mailto:Danielle.golon@gmail.com)

**John Kelly** PhD 2013

I am now an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography and Earth Science at the University of Wisconsin - La Crosse (UWL). I teach human geography courses, and continue



to do field-based research on

indigenous territoriality and protected areas in Mexico and Central America. La Crosse is a Mississippi River city that rather resembles Lawrence. I was fortunate to attend two terrific mapping conferences in August and October: the ICC (ICA) meeting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil,

and NACIS in Minneapolis (see the photo of my son Luke examining a NACIS globe). Any cartographer, geographer, or map lover is encouraged to come to future ICC or NACIS gatherings.

[jkelly@uwlax.edu](mailto:jkelly@uwlax.edu)

**Erin Garity** MA 2014

I am living in Leavenworth, Kansas and now work for The Nature Conservancy as a Conservation Advisor.



[egarity@gmail.com](mailto:egarity@gmail.com)

**Kyle Purdon** MA 2014

After graduating my wife Kelsey, our pup Phog, and I moved to Broomfield, Colorado and I started working as a software engineer at The National Snow and Ice Data Center in Boulder. Around that



time Kelsey and I started building a house right on the front

range in Arvada, CO which will

be completed in November. I recently began a new career as an Application Engineer with Bitly in Denver. This new job has me traveling to New York around once a quarter which is quite the change of pace from the Rocky Mountains the rest of the year! We are enjoying our new life in Colorado and our door is always open if you find yourself in the area.

[kylepurdon@gmail.com](mailto:kylepurdon@gmail.com)

**Zach Adamz** MA 2015

I am currently at the University of Texas at Austin working on my PhD in Asian Studies. My research is FLAS and POSCO funded and I have presented at 3 conferences (regional) this semester and have 2 more in the spring (national).

[Zmadamz01@gmail.com](mailto:Zmadamz01@gmail.com)



**GO KU!**

*In Memoriam:*



William “Bill” Woods, a professor emeritus from the Department of Geography, and a former director of the Environmental Studies Program, passed away on September 11, 2015. Woods joined the community of KU in 2005 where he served as director for the Environmental Studies Program until 2008 and as a professor in the geography department until 2014, when he retired with emeritus status.

He was a recognized world leader through research on Amazonian “dark earth” soils — islands of fertility in otherwise nutrient-poor soils. He is remembered as a man of good humor who shared his wealth of knowledge with both students and colleagues alike. He will be sorely missed by the Geography Department.



James “Jim” Merchant, Jr. passed away on February 27, 2015 in Lincoln, Nebraska. Jim began his career as a senior remote sensing specialist with the Kansas Applied Remote Sensing Program at the University of Kansas Space Technology Center. He went on to serve as an assistant professor of geography at the University of Kansas from 1986 to 1989.

In 1989 Jim moved to Nebraska to accept a position as associate director of UNL’s Center for Advanced Land Management Information Technologies (CALMIT). His teaching and research interests focused on remote sensing and GIS in natural resources management and environmental assessment.



William “Brett” Anderson, 43, of Norman, Oklahoma passed away on October 27th after a courageous battle with cancer.

Brett graduated from the University of Oklahoma and then continued with his Masters at Kansas State and his PHD in geography from the University of Kansas. He went on to become a professor at Eastern Illinois University.

He loved the outdoors; walking his furry friend Midnight, and was a music enthusiast and avid sports fan.



# **ANNOUNCEMENT**

## **NEW EVENT!**

There will be an Alumni Reception at the Oread on Friday, April 15, 2016 from 5:30 to 11:30 p.m. Please RSVP by April 1. A web form is available on our website at [www.geog.ku.edu](http://www.geog.ku.edu)

**May you have a safe and wonderful  
2016!**

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