



SPARTAN GEOGRAPHER

Department of Geography

College of Social Science

Michigan State University



Geography faculty and staff at the Departmental Retreat in August, 2009. The retreat was held at the Wheatfield Inn near Williamston, the former home of The Sheik, famous professional wrestler from the 1950s and 60s. Almost all faculty were able to attend and most agreed that the day was a success. Individuals in the picture are identified inside cover.

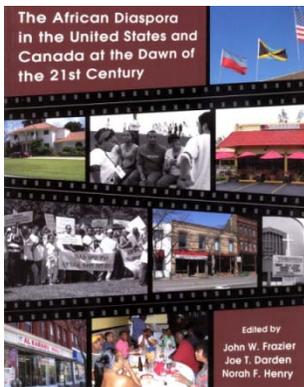
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- 1 – Nathan Moore
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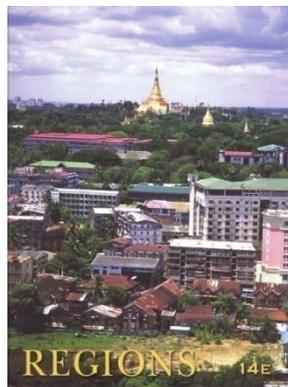


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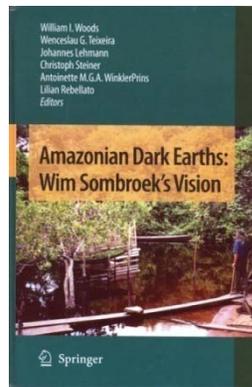
Recent faculty publications:



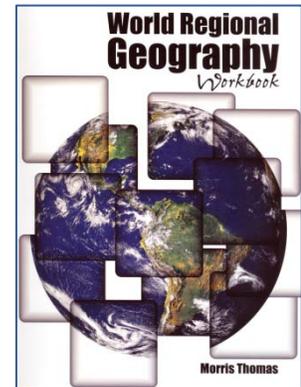
Joe T. Darden



Harm de Blij



Antoinette WinklerPrins



Morris Thomas



Message from the Chair



It has been a busy year for the Geography Department. Last fall we welcomed three new faculty members: Bob Hitchcock, formerly with the

Anthropology Department at MSU who has “nature-society” interests on several continents; Lifeng Luo, a climate modeler, formerly a post-doctoral researcher at Princeton; and Nathan Moore, also a climate modeler formerly working as a research associate at MSU. (Please see their full bios on pages 9-10). We also searched for a remote sensing person but budget cuts and hiring freezes arrived before we could identify a successful candidate. While the budget picture at the University is not encouraging, we hope to renew the search for that position in the near future.

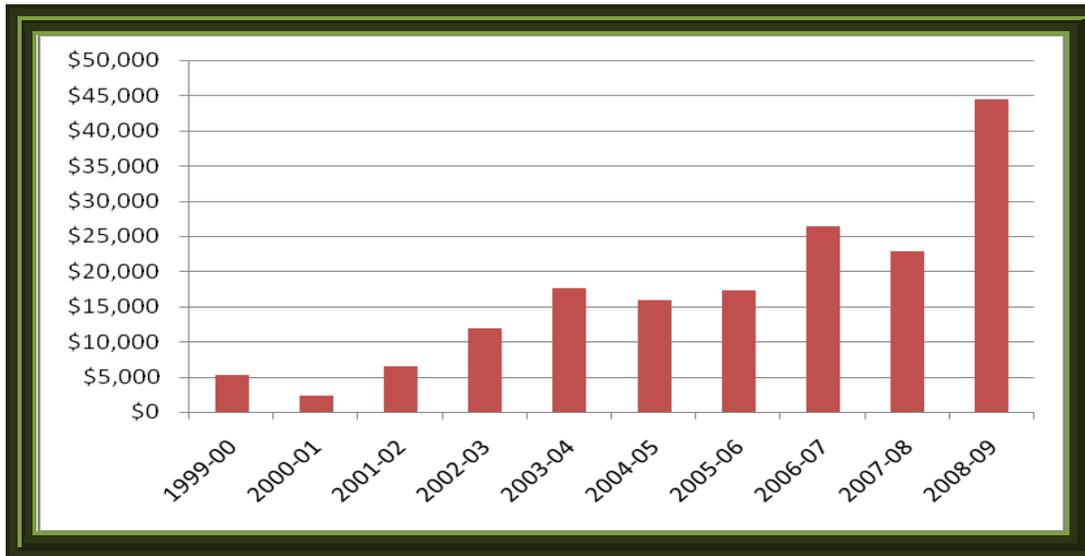
We also celebrated three faculty milestones: Alan Arbogast was successfully promoted to Full Professor, Sarah Nicholls was granted tenure and promoted to Associate Professor,

and Sue Grady was reappointed as Assistant Professor. Congratulations to them!

We spent much of the summer and fall preparing for an external review of the Department. In August we held an all-day retreat to plan for the review, lay out the outline for a self-study document, discuss problems and solutions to problems in the Department, and set goals for the next few years. By January, the self-study document was complete and approved by the faculty and ready for the review team. The three reviewers will be on campus at the end of April 2010 and their recommendations will form the basis for a departmental strategic plan, a project for next summer and fall.

In spite of these distractions and the difficult budget situation, faculty and students in Geography continue to pursue valuable and significant research, teach great courses, and perform service and outreach to the profession and the community. I congratulate them on their hard work and optimism!

Richard Groop, Chair



**Contributions to the Geography Department in the last ten years.
Thanks to all the donors!**



Faculty News

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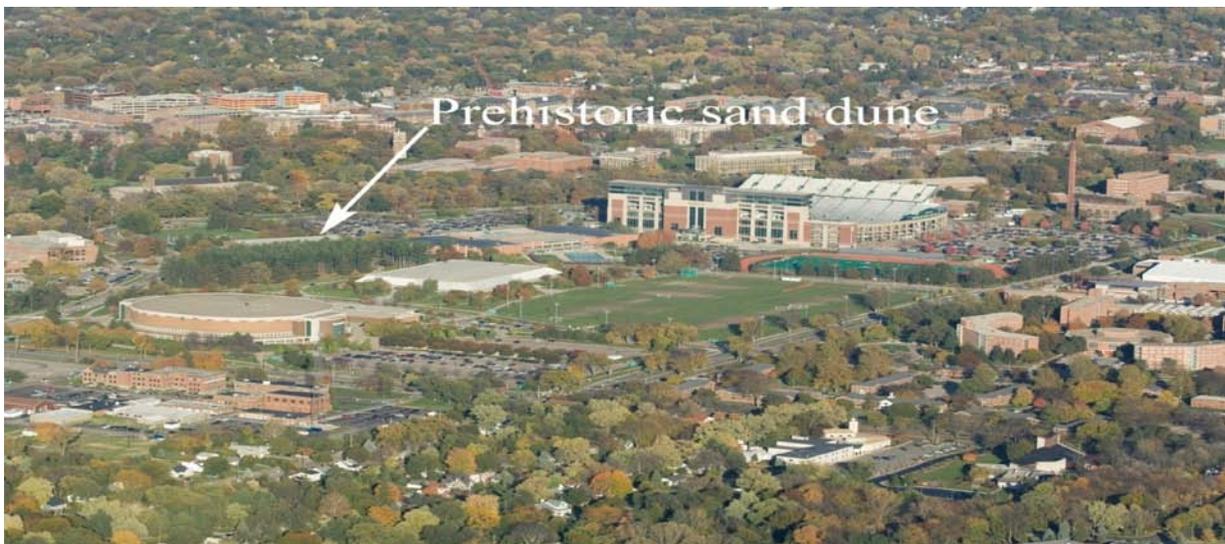
Soji Adelaja, Director of the Land Policy Institute and John Hannah Distinguished Professor in Land Policy, has been involved with a number of state, federal and international agencies in the areas of land policy, renewable energy, place science, New Economy growth modeling, political economy modeling and regional prosperity strategies. Soji was on a White House panel of national scholars to discuss possible uses of the assets received from banks paying back bailout monies. He is a member of Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm's Great Lakes Wind Council, which supports

the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor & Economic Growth on issues related to offshore wind development in Michigan.

Soji has testified before state legislative committees on New Economy initiatives and has presented his research at LPI's popular series of Legislative Forums in Lansing. He has further presented his research findings before key stakeholders, including the German Marshall Fund, the Council of Michigan Foundations, Michigan Townships Association and the Michigan Association of Planning, Local Future (a nonprofit organization devoted to solving global problems), as well as before international audiences.



Alan Arbogast and several colleagues from Anthropology were featured on the MSU News site in September, 2009. They analyzed a large sand dune located just south of Munn ice arena and determined that the dune formed about 16,000 years ago in a barren, wind-swept landscape as the glaciers were receding to the north. The dune is a rarity in southern Michigan and, since being planted with pine trees in 1914, is one of the only unmodified natural places on the campus.



Alan Arbogst's sand dune just north of Munn Ice Arena. Note the new façade on the west side of Spartan Stadium.



Guo Chen joined an MSU Chinese Delegation of ten faculty members on a sponsored trip in May 2009 to visit Sichuan University and Nanchang University in China. She gave a presentation on comparative urban studies at both universities. In June, Guo visited Sun Yat-Sen University where she led a group of undergraduate and master's students conducting a 900-household survey of households exposed to urban expansion in Guangzhou. Geo Grad student Jia Feng also joined the fieldwork as a research assistant. This survey project will form the basis of future collaborative work on projects addressing urban expansion and social and environmental vulnerabilities in major metropolises in China. In September, Guo hosted a visiting scholar, Dr. Xiaolong Luo, Associate Professor from Nanjing Institute of Geography & Limnology, Chinese Academy of Sciences. His research interests are primarily in urban and regional development and metropolitan governance in transitional China.



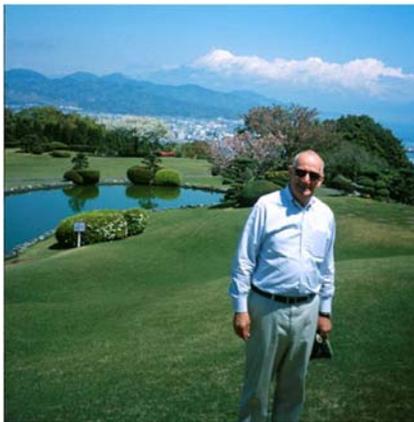
Kenneth Corey became the first recipient of the Dr. Gill-Chin Lim Global Award. With this award, the Consortium on Development Studies (CODS) recognized Dr. Corey as a "genuine global figure in the field of planning." The Award is given in memory of the late Dr. Gill-Chin Lim and in honor of his work on the study of humanistic globalization. The Award ceremony was held at Hanyang University in Seoul, Korea, and carries a cash grant of \$10,000, supported by

Dr. Gill-Chin Lim's family. Throughout 2009, Ken worked as a member of the Comprehensive Intelligent Development Strategy (CIDS) Project, funded by an 18-month grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration to MSU's Center for Community and Economic Development. The Project is designed to build strategic development planning capacity and understanding among the regional planners of the Eastern Upper Peninsula, Northwest Michigan, and Northeast Michigan. Corey continued his research and writing with MSU co-author and colleague Dr. Mark I. Wilson on electronic business and electronic commerce, and on Singapore as a benchmark for information technology cities. His scholarship also included the completion of a book chapter on "Planning and Implementing Capital Cities: Lessons from the Past and Prospects for Intelligent Development in Future – The Case of Korea."

Harm de Blij One of the pleasures of the public-lecture circuit is running into MSU graduates some of whom were in geography classes as long ago as the 1960s, my first decade in East Lansing. One marvels at the wide dispersal of Spartans, from Tulsa, Oklahoma to Tampa, Florida and from Larkspur, California to Lisbon, Portugal. And many of them are in direct or indirect touch with MSU, follow the teams, and are well aware of the university's growing accomplishments and stature. It's always a pleasure to describe our Department, its already-too-small Geography Building, the burgeoning faculty and international linkages – and its leading position in the profession. On "the tour" during 2009 I visited four universities and colleges in Mississippi including the "other" MSU, two in Massachusetts (where Tufts University



presented me with the Jean Mayer Award for Global Citizenship), and others in Florida, California, Russia, and China (Hong Kong this time). As many of you will know, the associated travel is becoming less pleasant, and to be sure that you don't miss an assignment, it is often advisable to put an extra day between departure and date of appearance. That complicates logistics, especially internationally, but the message remains crucial. Geographic literacy is a matter of global importance.



Harm in the hills outside Tokyo.

An itinerary from Hong Kong to Anchorage via Xiamen, Shanghai, Japan and the Kamchatka Peninsula produced some memorable moments: buying a violin in Xiamen (for \$40 complete with case), trying it out in the store and attracting a small crowd that wanted to hear “American tunes;” the horrifying air pollution in Shanghai; the remarkable five-hour immigration procedure in Nagasaki aboard the ship from China entailing fingerprinting, medical check, financial disclosures, equipment inspection and other refinements – followed by an announcement that those staying aboard (not including me) would have no email, cell-phone, regular phone, television, radio, or other “detectable” service during the journey

onward. The official reason: fear of North Korean guided missiles honing in on shipboard electronics. On the Kamchatka Peninsula I learned of what must be one of the bleakest places on the planet: a city called Petropavlovsk. A valued security outpost during Soviet times when Russian citizens were rewarded for being willing to live and serve there, it is today a desperate place, its population of nearly 250,000 in 1991 down to 128,000, abandoned and (as I heard time and again during my Q&A at the college) ill-treated by Moscow, with disrepair the norm and huge piles of snow stratified by volcanic ash and soot impeding circulation. No surface roads lead anywhere from Petropavlovsk; all external links are by sea and air. Living expenses are sky-high (see some pictures on my web site, www.deblj.net). My new trade book *The Power of Place: Geography, Destiny, and Globalization* (Oxford University Press, 2009) was reviewed in the PG and several international journals and elicits some remarkable email, especially relating to the map that is its central issue. The fourteenth edition of *Regions* (Wiley, 2010), co-authored with Peter Muller, appeared in October. Bonnie and I continue to divide our time seasonally between Cape Cod and Boca Grande; my daughter Tanya and son James, both born in East Lansing, live in Tallahassee and near Washington, DC respectively, amid menageries to which they have been accustomed since childhood.



Adrienne Domas, visiting instructor and Co-VU coordinator, has been elected to the Meridian Township Planning Commission and is now a

regular TV personality on a public access channel.



Kyle Evered delivered a paper, "An Alternative Geopolitics to the Global Challenge of Opium Poppy Cultivation: Seeking an Ecological Solution" at Moscow State University's Global Studies Conference in May 2009. He also attended the annual Middle East Studies Association meeting in Boston in November 2009 where he presented a paper titled, "Listening to Turkey's Farmers: Rural Perspectives on Structural Reforms and the European Union." Kyle was also awarded three grants: a Research Travel Grant from MSU's Muslim Studies Program; an International Development Research Initiation Grant from MSU's CASID (Center for the Advanced Study of International Development) and WID (Women in International Development) programs; and a Course Development Grant from CASID and WID for his proposed course on Geographies of Language and Religion. This course will be offered for the first time in the Spring semester of the 2010-2011 academic year.



Kyle at MSU (Moscow State University)

Andrew Finley was selected as the recipient of the 2009 Young Investigator Award from the American Statistical Association's Section on Statistics and the Environment. He received the award for his innovative



work on hierarchical spatial models for large natural resource databases, optimization and application of nearest neighbor techniques for use with remotely sensed and ecological data, and for software algorithm development.



Kirk Goldsberry was named a Lilly Teaching Fellow for 2009-2010. His project is titled "Visual Literacy for Geographers: Graphic Communication for Geographic Information." The Lilly program, now in its 18th year, is designed to advance MSU's continuing efforts to support excellence in teaching and learning. It provides a cohort of up to 8 assistant professors in the tenure system from across the disciplines with an opportunity to engage in a year-long exploration of university-level teaching and learning with their peers. Previous Geography Lilly Fellows are Antoinette WinklerPrins and Alan Arbogast.



Arika Ligmann-Zielinska
My first year at the Department of Geography was very enjoyable. I concentrated my efforts on developing new courses and extending my research program within the realm of coupled human and natural systems. To contribute towards the modeling curriculum within our department, I introduced a new graduate-level seminar, entitled *Human-Environment Modeling*, which brings together concepts from complexity theory and agent-based systems, along with a good dose of different spatially-explicit modeling applications. The course was positively received by the student community and is planned to be offered on a regular basis.



In 2009, I continued my research on behavioral representations of human decision-making and its impact on land use systems. The joint appointment with Environmental Science and Policy Program provided me with opportunity for collaboration with scientists from other departments. Together with scholars from the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, we set up a research group that studies ecological, social and economic linkages within lakesheds in the State of Michigan. Our long term objective is to develop a comprehensive modeling environment of aquatic landscapes, which could serve as an exploratory tool for both educational purposes and policy analysis.



Julie Winkler is the lead PI on two new NSF grants. The first project builds on previous work on low-level jets in the central United States with former graduate student Claudia Walters, and in addition to

Julie and Claudia, also involves climatology faculty member Sharon Zhong. The second project is funded by NSF's Dynamics of Coupled Natural and Human Systems Program and includes geography colleagues Jeff Andresen and Sharon Zhong, MSU faculty from the departments of Agricultural Economics, Computer Science, and Horticulture and colleagues from Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland and the Ukraine. The five-year project will use the international sour (tart) cherry industry as an example to develop and evaluate an integrated framework for conducting climate change impact assessments for international market systems. The sour cherry industry was selected because of its sensitivity to climate extremes and the limited adaptation strategies characteristic of

any industry that has long planning horizons and long-term investments. Last October Julie enjoyed a visit to her alma mater, the University of North Dakota, to receive the Department of Geography's first ever Alumni of the Year award. Julie presented a colloquium as part of the university's homecoming activities and was the speaker for the Gamma Theta Upsilon awards banquet. Julie recently was awarded the American Meteorological Society Charles Franklin Brooks Award for Outstanding Services to the Society for "extraordinary leadership of the Education and Human Resources Commission, outstanding service as editor of the *Journal of Applied Meteorology and Climatology*, and distinguished mentoring of colleagues, students, and Society volunteers." Julie received her award at the AMS Annual Awards Banquet on January 20, 2010 in Atlanta, Georgia.



Antoinette WinklerPrins continues as Graduate Program Coordinator and has been keeping busy investigating Amazonian Dark Earths. In 2009 she published a chapter in and

co-edited a book with Bill Woods, Wenceslau Teixeira, Johannes Lehmann, Christoph Stein and Lilian Rebellato, entitled *Amazonian Dark Earths: Wim Sombroek's Vision*. The book is an edited volume of papers initially presented at a symposium she organized in honor of the late Dutch soil scientist, Wim Sombroek, at the World Congress of Soil Science in 2006. In addition, she conducted research on the topic in the Brazilian Amazon with MSU graduate student Steve Aldrich and Brazilian colleague Newton Falcão, in March 2009. The project is funded by NSF and is



investigating the formation of these unique soils in homegardens in Santarém, Pará, Brazil. She was recently elected as Regional Councilor for the East Lakes Division of the Association of American Geographers for a three-year term.

Catherine Yansa was featured in an article in *Science News*, November 21, 2009 on extinct giant beavers. Yansa and colleagues analyzed carbon isotopes from an unearthed fossil in Wisconsin to determine diet and other characteristics. They estimate that the creatures lived about 15,000 years ago, were about twice the size of modern beavers and that they ate plant material rather than tree bark. Changing climate and other ecological factors probably doomed the species.



Catherine and Friend.

Jiaquo Qi spent part of the year exploring western China where conservation and business exploitation interests are in conflict. Preservation of the natural environment is a growing concern in the country. Supported by programs at NASA and UNESCO, Dr. Qi organized an international workshop on environmental issues in Central Asia hosted by the Space Agency of Kazakhstan in Almaty, Kazakhstan, from September 19-25, 2009.



Jiaquo Qi in Dunhuang, Gansu Province in China



Qi and Friends



New Faculty

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Robert K. Hitchcock is Professor of Geography and is a core faculty member in the Center for Global Change and Earth Observations (CGCEO) at MSU. Originally trained as an anthropologist,

Hitchcock has carried out spatially oriented research and development work in Africa, Latin America, the Pacific, and North America. Over the past four decades, Hitchcock has served as an international development consultant, social specialist, remote sensing specialist, and advisor to governments and international agencies on issues relating to resettlement, land use planning, indigenous peoples' rights, and community-based natural resource management. Much of his professional career has been spent working on issues relating to the San (Bushmen) of Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. He serves currently as the Co-President and member of the Board of Directors of the Kalahari Peoples Fund, a non-profit 501c3 organization that assists poor people in southern Africa. Hitchcock's research and applied work focuses on human rights, international economic development, and the environment, with particular reference to indigenous peoples, refugees, and small-scale farmers and herders in Africa, the Middle East, and the Americas. Some of his work involves the analysis of remote sensor data on settlement and land use systems. He is a board member of the Kalahari Peoples Fund (KPF), the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), and a member of the advisory board of the Trust for African Rock Art (TARA). He is also a long-time member of the Panel of Environmental Experts of the Lesotho

Highlands Water Project (LHWP), one of Africa's largest development projects. Currently Hitchcock is working on climate, risk, and decision-making in southern Africa and the Great Plains regions of the U.S. He teaches courses on Africa: Social Science Perspectives, economic development, human ecology, and grant-writing for graduate students working in international arenas and is interested in developing new courses in cultural geography and nature and society.



Lifeng Luo joined the faculty of Department of Geography at MSU in August 2009 as an assistant professor. Before I moved to MSU, I worked as a research scientist in the Department of Civil

and Environmental Engineering at Princeton University for six years after receiving my Ph.D. from the Department of Environmental Sciences at Rutgers University. My research interests are primarily in the field of hydroclimatology, a multidisciplinary field with strong links to hydrology, climate science, water resources, and even ecology. More specifically, I am interested in understanding how the land and atmosphere interact through hydrologic processes and how this interaction affects the variability and predictability of the climate system at different spatial and temporal scales. Understanding the processes that govern land-atmosphere interactions, developing the ability to predict the variation in the hydrological processes, and determining their usefulness for resource management are the fundamental science priorities of my research. My past research includes the development and



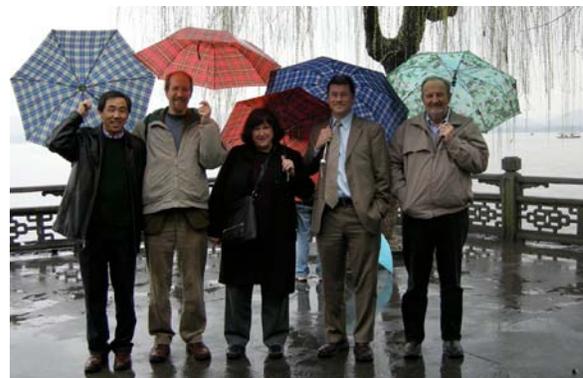
validation of the North American Land Data Assimilation System (NLDAS), development of real-time drought monitoring and seasonal prediction capability. I also participated in the Global Land Atmosphere Coupling Experiment (GLACE-2) and the Hydrologic Ensemble Prediction EXperiment (HEPEX). During the first few months at MSU, I have been working on developing long-term research plans, writing research proposals to NOAA, and writing papers based on research results in early 2009. I have also been preparing two courses that I will teach during 2010, *Introduction to Meteorology* and *Severe and Hazardous Weather*. At MSU, I had opportunities to meet with many faculty members and discuss opportunities for future collaborations. In the next few years, one of my new research directions is to study hydrologic extremes such as droughts, floods, hurricanes and winter storms, and how they change in the changing climate.



Nathan Moore received his PhD from Duke University in 2004, where he studied interactions between irrigation and precipitation in the

Texas High Plains. Following postdoctoral work at MSU on East African climate and on land-atmosphere interactions in the Amazon, he was jointly appointed to the Department of Geography at MSU and to the Department of Environmental and Resource Sciences at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, China. Prior to his doctoral study, Dr. Moore worked at the USGS in Reston VA, and served in the Peace Corps. Dr. Moore's teaching spans courses on introductory meteorology, climate modeling,

and interdisciplinary research. His research focuses on integrating climate research with land use, remote sensing, and human geography with a focus on regional climate change. Current and past research topics have focused on Great Plains irrigation, East African crop yields under a changing climate, deforestation impacts in the Amazon, tsetse flies and climate in Kenya, and (more recently) land use change in China. Dr. Moore's unique joint international position provides an opportunity for the study and comparison of climates, land use, agriculture, and human systems. Dr. Moore is interested primarily in putting the pieces together for climate/land/human interactions, and is eager to research novel land use/land cover change issues that affect climate in almost any location.



Jiaguo Qi, Ashton Shortridge, Pam Gray (Dean's Office), Nathan Moore, Dick Groop in China during Nathan's interview process with Zhejiang University.



2008-2009 Awards

Our spring awards ceremony and GTU initiation was held April 24 in the atrium of the Radiology Building on campus. Twenty-two undergraduate and graduate students were initiated into Gamma Theta Upsilon, a record number of inductees. In addition, **Jessica Crawford** was awarded the Daniel Jacobson Scholarship in Cultural Geography; **Corey Steimel** and **Alexander Walters** shared the Undergraduate Geographer of the Year award; and **Carolina Santos** was named the Graduate Geographer of the Year.



Corey Steimel, E. James Potchen, and Alexander Walters.



Jessica Crawford, winner of the Jacobson Scholarship with her parents.



Carolina Santos, graduate student of the year with E. James Potchen.

SPRING, SUMMER AND FALL 2009 UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES

- Bowers, Sara
- Cole, Catherine
- Cole, Chelsea
- Coraci, Joshua
- Goins, Jenna
- Hardy, Marcus
- Klotz, Eric
- Mack, Daniel
- Marshall, Amy
- Monroe, Jennifer
- Nolen, Ryan
- Paltelky, Alyson
- Roberson, Jay
- Skiles, Jonathan
- Steimel, Corey
- Stevens, Joshua
- Tomczak, Luke
- Turton, Alex
- Walters, Alexander



GRADUATE STUDENT DEGREES COMPLETED IN 2009

Aichele, Stephen, PhD (Jeffrey Andresen), “The Effects of Suburban Land-Use Change and Climate on Watershed Hydrology in Oakland County, Michigan, 1975-2005.”

Aldrich, Stephen, PhD (Robert Walker), “Largeholder Deforestation and Land Conflict in the Eastern Brazilian Amazon.”

Baylis, David, MS (Kyle Evered), “Frames of Mackinder and ‘The Muslim Question’ A Critical Geopolitics of US Geographical Imaginaries Regarding Environmental Security in Uzbekistan.”

Campos, Annalie, PhD (Adesoji Adelaja), “Do Local Roads Matter? Linking Local Roads Spending to Decentralization in the Detroit, Metropolitan Area.”

Crombez, Kathleen, MS-GIS (Ashton Shortridge)

DeVisser, Mark, MS (Joseph Messina), “A Climatically Driven Space Time Model of Glossina-morsitans Habitat and Distributions – the Identification of Dry Season Reservoirs.”

Gruley, Joel, MA (Kyle Evered), “Framing Darfur: Representations of Conflict, People and Place in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, 2004.”

Harding, Scott, MS-GIS (Ashton Shortridge)

Hobbs, Trevor, MS (Randall Schaetzl), “Characteristics and Origin of Silty Kettle Bottom Deposits in a Sandy Northern Lower Michigan Landscape.”

Howell, Anthony, MS (Guo Chen), “Population Migration and Labor Market Segmentation: Theory and Empirical Evidence from Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Regions, Northwest China.”

Knapp, Anthony, MS (Igor Vojnovic), “Immigrant Place Entrepreneurs and Urban Development in Houston’s Chinatown Districts.”

Maffeo, Robert, MS-GIS (David Lusch)

Shadbolt, Ryan, PhD (Jay Harman), “Climate Trends and Associated Synoptic Patterns of the Southern Appalachians.”

Vandeusen, Jessica, MS-GIS (Ashton Shortridge)

Zukas, Nathan, MS (Kyle Evered), “Liminal Ecologies: Backpackers, Expats and the Production of Koh Tao, Thailand.”



Carolyn Fish, Geography PhD student, received a Student Travel Award from the Association of American Geographers GIS Specialty Group to attend the International Cartographic Association meetings in Santiago, Chile last fall. Carolyn was also elected as the Student Director of the AAG's Cartography Specialty Group.



Courtney Gallaher, Geography PhD student, has been awarded a Kenneth E. and Marie J. Corey Research Enhancement Award by the College of Social Science, MSU.



Carolina Santos, Geography PhD student, has received a renewal of a NASA Earth and Science Fellowship in the amount of \$30,000.



Sigismund Wilson, Geography PhD student, was awarded a Graduate School Dissertation Completion Fellowship from MSU for fall, 2009.

Alex Shackleton, Geography undergraduate major, was a featured interviewee in the



Spartan Magazine, September 28, 2009. Alex is the "long snapper" on the Spartan football team, a specialty skill that has earned him a scholarship after joining the team as a walk-on. Asked why he became a Geography major after trying several other fields of

study, he replied, "To tell you the truth, I love the program. I haven't had a professor that I haven't liked. I've never enjoyed going to school until I became a Geography major. Now, I actually enjoy going to school and waking up in the morning and going to class."

Jay Thomas Roberson, former Geography undergraduate major, was awarded a posthumous BS degree in Geography in August, 2009. Roberson would have been



eligible for summer semester graduation but he drowned while on a fishing trip in Banff National

Park in Canada. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police investigated his death as "mysterious" but as of this writing, no charges of foul play have been made.



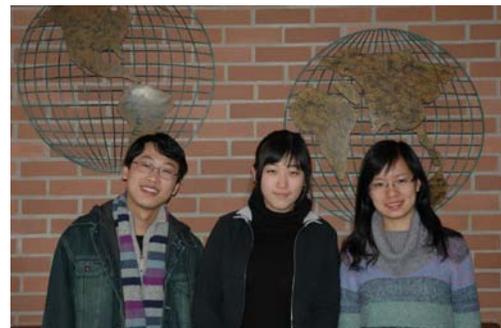
GEO CAMP

The Geography Department conducted its fourth GEOCAMP field experience for incoming graduate students August 27-29, 2009 at MSU's Kellogg Biological Station in Hickory Corners. It involved four faculty members (Antoinette WinklerPrins, Alan Arbogast, Dave Lusch, and Lifeng Luo) and a graduate assistant (Carolyn Fish). We used feedback from previous experiences, especially 2008, to adjust this year's camp. Seventeen (of 21) new students participated in a series of field activities including: (1) departmental orientation; (2) a geocaching exercise with GPS units; (3) lecture and field trip on the landscapes of Michigan; (4); a trip to Van Buren State Park to explore the Lake Michigan dunes; and (5) a visit to downtown Grand Rapids to consider the changes in that city. Despite awful weather (substantial rain most of the time), the students reacted very positively to the camp. They unanimously agreed that they enjoyed the experience and they recommended we continue it in future years.



Geocamp – geography students and participating faculty in the dunes.

The Geography Department is in its second year of involvement in a University-wide program known as 3+N, a collaborative agreement with Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, China. Outstanding Zhejiang students can spend their senior year at MSU and credits earned will apply toward a Master's degree that can be earned in subsequent years. Geography has had four 3+N students and all are thriving in the program.



Hui Xu, Ying Tang, and Chenxiao Ling



Daniel G. Cole (MA, 1979). As of last June, I have been the president of the Canadian Cartographic Association at their annual conference in Acadia University in Nova Scotia. At the 2010 conference in Regina, Sask., I will become the past-president. Meanwhile, I have been working for the past two years on co-editing a book with Imre Sutton (retired, Cal State Fullerton), titled **MAPPING NATIVE AMERICA: Cartographic Interactions between Indigenous Peoples, and Government and Academia**. It has about 4 dozen authors (including fellow MSU alum **Bill Gribb**) and about 3 dozen chapters, and it looks like it may see print by the end of 2010. For part of my job at the Smithsonian, I have been developing the Ocean GeoPortal (with lots of help from ESRI) hopefully to be deployed late next month.

Peter DeForth (MA, 1971). I have spent most of my career since leaving East Lansing in federal service in various agencies. If anything, I practiced applied geography, never taught school, and have had an interesting life. I am currently working for Riverside Research Institute in Arlington, on loan as a Senior Advisor in the Department of Defense. I occasionally visit with Ole and Ann Gade in Boone, NC and have seen Ken Haddock a few times. I am heading west this fall to my 50th High School reunion in Montana.

Meleia Egger (MA, 2007). I finished my Peace Corps service in December and will be traveling until March. As of now, I am enjoying my birthday in Zanzibar. When I get home, I will be looking for a job in New York City.

Ole Gade (PhD, 1972). Hi Spartan Geographers. Having retired in 2003 from 33 years of work at Appalachian State University, I am thriving in my role of an independent (hardly retired) researcher. Initially continuing with my focus on North Carolina (the 625 page "North Carolina: People and Environments" 2ndEd, was published in 2002). Moving to a new major project arena, historic cartography, in 2005 I presented my initial research offering 'Treaty atlases and the evolution of historical - geographical knowledge: A case study of the Guyanas' to the 22nd International Conference on the History of Cartography in Berne Switzerland in July, 2007. Feeling a need to return to my home community and state I published a small local, but colorful, volume: "Biking the Country Roads of Watauga With Ole Gade and Roni Ellis" in 2008. This spring I launched a major new project: "Our Land in Trust: The North Carolina Land Conservation and Preservation Movement." Ane and I have spent the past several months traveling the state in our meetings with the 24 state's regional/local land trusts. With a project funded graduate assistant I am able to maintain office space at my old department, for which I am thankful. We hope the book will be out sometime in spring of 2011. In the meantime the historic/cartography project continues. Ane and I will be spending a couple of months in Madeira learning Portuguese this coming spring. Ain't retirement just hell!! I can truthfully say that Larry Sommers continues to serve as my model. Our best to you all.

Darren Grafius (BS, 2004). I'm still doing graduate school at the University of Iowa, working toward my doctorate which I expect to earn in about one more year. I'm



continuing the studies in geography I began at MSU, studying carbon and biomass at alpine tree lines and their linkages with global change.

Beth Myers Graham (MA, 1997). I have worked for Dames & Moore, now part of URS Corporation, a global engineering company since 1997. I am a Practice Leader in the Environmental Assessments group and a technical resource for URS personnel worldwide. I also manage a group within the Cincinnati office. I have been very active in the local Commercial Real Estate Women chapter in Cincinnati focusing on all aspects of land use. My geography skills from MSU (and my BGSU undergraduate program) have helped with spatial analysis via an environmental filter! I have been fortunate to grow and consult for several Fortune 500 companies (with the added bonus of traveling all over). I have been married to Jeff Graham since 1996. We have two children: 7-year old Keegan and 4-year old Malone. We reside in my hometown of Cincinnati.

Dave Jones (MA, 1968), **Julie Hidegkuti Jones** (MA, 1969). Both Julie and I are semi-retired and have been doing a lot of traveling, both domestic and international. We particularly enjoy the Exploritas/Elderhostel programs and are slated to take a little 70-day Exploritas cruise primarily in Southeast Asia and ending in South Africa in December.

Audrey Joslin (MA, 2008). I hope you are doing well. I just started the geography PhD program at Texas A&M University in College Station this fall (2009) with an NSF Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship (IGERT) award

focused on Applied Biodiversity Science in Latin America.

<http://biodiversity.tamu.edu/traineeship.html>
So far, so good!

Martin "Marty" Knorr (MA, 1964). I applaud the recent issue of the Spartan Geographer! It is indeed gratifying to see that my old department is alive and very, very well. Your short biographies of past faculty members under whom I studied was especially heart-warming. Many memories of those long ago years have flooded back to me. You have done justice to Drs. Paul Morrison, Larry Sommers, Clarence Vinge, Georg Borgstrom and others. I took my Masters degree in 1964, met my wife at MSU, and pursued a Ph.D. at the same time. While I did not successfully complete the dissertation, I did teach geography for several years before switching fields. I had an opportunity to become a librarian at Harris-Stowe State University in St. Louis, MO--the merged, historically white and black city teachers colleges going back to 1857 and 1890, respectively. In June, 2007, I retired after 38 years with the institution, 35 of those years as Director of Library Services and Head Librarian. Since then I have taken up quilting--an intensive labor that needs a good eye and a fine sense of locational relationships. My best to Harm de Blij.

Kelly Norman (Sylvester) (BA, 2008). I have been working at Prater Chiropractic Wellness Center in Kalamazoo, MI as a Nutritional Counselor and Chiropractic Assistant for about a year and a half. I got married in October and have a baby boy on the way!



Robin Pearson (MA, 1981). I am formerly Robin Landfear and have fond memories of the Geography Department and Friday afternoon colloquiums with Dr. Groop. Thanks so much for keeping in touch with me. I will be retiring from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources where I have worked for approximately 27 years. I have held several jobs with the DNR my first being in GIS and airphoto interpretation and mapping which was only possible thanks to the excellent courses I received from Dr. Groop and other professors. Please pass along my regards to all who might remember me and who would have been in the program around 1979 - 1982.

Stuart Pyper (MA, 1963). MSU Department of Geography certainly prepared me for a variety of life experiences. Each time I get the Spartan Geographer I look for names of my professors: Larry Sommers, Dieter Brunschweiler, Harm deBlij, and my advisor, Clarence Vinge. After leaving MSU, I attended officer training school in the US Air Force. Since I had a graduate degree in Geography and a degree in Education, I was assigned to the Air Intelligence School at Lowry Air Force Base in Denver where I taught air photo interpretation and other geography subjects for 2½ years. From there I was assigned to an intelligence squadron in Vietnam. When I returned to the states I took a job as a junior high school teacher in the Denver area where I was able to teach young minds my favorite subject of geography for 8 years. I then became a middle school principal for the rest of my working career. Since retirement, I have once again returned to my love of geography as my wife and I have travelled frequently in the world. One of my greatest joys now is to volunteer at

the local elementary school where my grandchildren attend and each week I make a brief geographic presentation to the fourth grade class which is known as "Around the World with Mr. Pyper." I feature a city or a country a week as the kids receive a cultural geography experience that is otherwise absent from their curriculum. My email: stupyper@comcast.net

Charles Rader (PhD, 1995). Charlie and Nancy Rader are well. Nancy is employed with the State of Minnesota in the newly reorganized Minnesota Geospatial Information Office (MnGEO). She continues to coordinate, support and develop online access to spatial data. Charlie continues in various roles at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. He is currently serving as chair of International Studies and teaching Introduction to International Studies, Africa, Europe, GIS Theory and Methods, GIS Modeling and Analysis, and Digital Image Processing. He has been building cedar strip canoes to provide diversions from work. Velcro, our 15 year-old schnauzer-mutt, is still a trooper.

Hae Un Rii (PhD, 1983). I am currently a Professor in the Department of Geography Education, College of Education, Dongguk University in Seoul, Republic of Korea. I am also the Dean for the College of Education and Graduate School of Education since January, 2009. I also serve as a member of the executive committee of the International Council of Monuments and Sites, a non-governmental organization for cultural heritage and conservation.

Rick Sambrook (PhD, 1992). As a result of a national level search, Dr. Rick Sambrook became Department Head at Eastern



Michigan University as of July 1, 2009. Considered among the oldest combined geography and geology departments in the United States, the country's largest graduate historic preservation program also is housed within the department as well as an accredited undergraduate urban and regional planning program. EMU's geography and geology department is comprised of 18 tenure-track faculty members and a full time Lecturer. The historic preservation program celebrated its 30th anniversary this fall semester, and we enjoyed a successful site visit by the planning accrediting body. As department Head, Sambrook will teach courses in the department's tourism concentration, as well as continue to offer field courses in Ecuador - including the Galapagos Islands. Recently, Rick teamed up with MSU Geography alumni Dr. David Zurick to write a chapter, "The Geographical Imagination," in a cognitive psychology text, *Spatial Perception, Spatial Cognition: Mapping the Self and Space*, that will be published in 2010 by Cambridge University Press. Rick's wife Stephanie Wilson Sambrook will join him in their new home in Ypsilanti this spring, when daughter Kirsten graduates from High School in Richmond, Kentucky. Rick and Stephanie's son Everett was married to Emily Robinson in June 2009. They both live in Hyde Park, Illinois, where Emily is attending the University of Chicago. Everett Alden Sambrook is attending the Adler School of Professional Psychology in downtown Chicago.

George Stankey (PhD, 1971). Thanks for the last issue of the Spartan Geographer. I particularly enjoyed the special feature by John Hunter paying regards to the "fallen comrades." All of these professors,

including John, were at MSU during my 2-year Ph.D. program (1966-68). Ian Matley was my thesis adviser, Duke Winters a close friend. Sad to reflect on the loss of all these fine folks, but they helped provide a wonderful academic as well as personal environment for my time at MSU. I am now retired after 20 years with the Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Station in Missoula, Montana, 10 years with the Pacific Northwest Station in Corvallis, Oregon, 6 years on the faculty of the College of Forestry at Oregon State University, and nearly 5 years teaching at the tertiary level in Canberra and Sydney, Australia and with the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service. I live on the Oregon coast, about an hour west of Corvallis.

Chuck Stuermer (BA, 1954). I graduated in 1954 with a degree in Geography and Cartography. I was immediately drafted after 2 weeks in the Michigan State Highway Department drafting state highway maps. I was placed in the Army map corps and sent to Korea for 14 months. After two years in the army I worked for Abrams Aerial survey in Lansing for four years before entering a career in teaching school, first in Potterville, then Maple Grove (Lansing), and then Clio where I spent the next 26 years as 5th grade teacher and principal. I retired in 1990 and moved to Oregon where I taught 7-8th grades for 6 years in Christian Schools. I am presently on a citizens committee for improving education in Roseburg, Oregon, pitching horse shoes all over the state & riding a motorcycle for CMA(Christian Motorcyclist Association) as well as teaching Church History at my church. I finally printed my American History book from the information I used while teaching



5th grade in Clio. Over 50% of my kids tested in the 95th percentile on the state Social Studies test each year, after I had my book completed in notebook form for them. It has been a great ride.

Narumon Wiangwang (PhD, 2006). This is Nok. I've been in Thailand working

primarily for the same department and guest teaching at some universities. Here is my contact information: Narumon Wiangwang (Ph.D.), Information Technology Center, Department of Fisheries, Royal Thai Government. I hope all is well and I miss MSU and everyone in Geography.



Special Features

Baruch Boxer. After retiring from Rutgers in 1999, was a visiting scholar for nine years at Resources for the Future in Washington, working on China water science and policy. Since 2005, I am a visiting scholar in the Civil and Environmental Engineering department at Stanford, working on several aspects of technical communication issues in Chinese water engineering work in Africa.



Jay R. Harman writes: The 2008-2009 academic year was my last one before I officially retired on July 1, 2009. As in the previous academic

year, I taught a reduced load of courses consisting of Environmental Ethics and one section of Research Design, both small seminar classes with abundant opportunities for student-faculty interaction. In addition, I had the pleasure of coordinating yet another trip to Great Smoky Mountains National Park in May, 2008, this time with an enthusiastic group of GEO faculty colleagues and graduate students. In

between, I continued to work on a manuscript that seems to be drawing to a close. At this point, I am unsure whether I will attempt to publish it or just circulate it in future sections of Environmental Ethics.

Obviously, such an option assumes that I will remain involved in the teaching of that course in the future; it is being offered both semesters 2009-2010 due to growing demand, and future offerings are possible, depending on need and my inclination. In addition, through collusion among certain graduate students my arm has been twisted to offer yet another plant geography experience to the Smoky Mountains in May, 2010; by rough count this one will be the 4th "final" trip down there.

While having had the good fortune of a teaching career spanning more than 40 years does not imbue me with special insight about either college teaching or college students, retiring from it certainly does prompt considerable reflection about what my career has all amounted to. Unfortunately, the intended beneficiaries of



our work (students and colleagues) seldom come right out and tell us when we have made a difference, and as a result we faculty are often deprived of information that would help us honestly answer such a question. Instead, end-of-career assessments are often based on flawed but more-easily-obtained input, such as publication counts and awards received, that in my view fail to measure our true impact. That, I maintain, amounts to nothing less than the extent to which we have left others better off. Based on bits of student reaction I have received over my career, I have no doubt that the single most valuable educational experience I have ever offered has in total been my field trips to the Smoky Mountains. Students sometimes years later have been in touch with me about that experience, describing it as "the highlight of their undergraduate years" or sometimes as "career changing," words that I find humbling. As often as I have asked myself just why it has struck such a chord, I still fail to understand it. Perhaps it speaks more to the beauty of the place, the pedagogical value of field instruction in general, or even to the often-amazing chemistry of the particular groups I took down there than to anything I ever did. Perhaps, too, it says something about the under-appreciated value of field instruction in our courses in general.

Second, I have been deeply touched by the reaction from students that my course in environmental ethics has generated; the number of favorable comments and unsolicited testimonials from former students has far exceeded anything from any other course I have ever taught on campus, even the largest ones. I think students, perhaps like us all, are hungry for conversations about ethical matters, a need that this course seems to have inadvertently

filled. Such a reaction has made that course a joy for me to teach, and I look forward to continuing my involvement in it at least a while longer.



John M. Hunter - The road to East Lansing began in Scotland and a personal tribute to Harm J. de Blij.

In 1966 when I was teaching at Durham University (UK), I received an invitation from the Centre of African Studies of Edinburgh University (Scotland) to participate in a seminar entitled *Markets and Marketing in West Africa*. I was tempted because, among other reasons, Durham and Edinburgh were near-neighbors, a mere 100 miles apart on the North Sea coast conveniently linked by the London-Scotland express, euphemistically known as a night-sleeper train. I presumed that I had been invited because of my recent publications on the West Africa Forest Zone (in the Institute of British Geographers and the Royal Geographical Society) but, alas, I had never conducted any research on markets *per se* (although I recognize them as intrinsically fascinating). I began to reflect that, during my last year of research before leaving Ghana in 1964, I had turned from the forest to the northern savanna and focused on hunger and blindness. I realized that experientially I knew that the 3-day market cycle was a major organizing feature of life in areas of dispersed settlement. The 3-day periodic market cycle, I thought, had to be pre-Christian, pre-Islamic. It was a survival mechanism in areas of seasonal hunger and food shortages. It revealed spatial and temporal synchronization that offered shortest walking distance to market on a pre-arranged, predictable basis, on any given day. It therefore maximized short-



term economic exchange of small amounts of food-stuffs and other rural products among marginal, environmentally stressed populations. So I prepared a map of a 20-mile wide area west of the Red Volta (Nangodi Chiefdom) that illustrated this indigenous survival system. It was not mainstream econometrics but would provide legitimate seminar admission. Subsequently, I purchased a train ticket to Edinburgh and my fate was sealed. I did not know it, but I was on my way to meet Harm de Blij, at which juncture my life took a sharp turn. At the seminar, I met Harm who, in a pleasant brief conversation during break, elicited some information and then surprisingly concluded by inviting me to send a copy of my *curriculum vitae* to MSU where he served as the Associate Director of the African Studies Center. I was impressed with Harm but the swiftness of his decision left me unsure if the offer to apply was more an act of impulsive generosity than measured invitation. Based on my uncertain reaction, I did not submit the c.v. However, some three weeks later, I was awakened in Durham City by a trans-Atlantic telephone call from de Blij asking "Where is the c.v.?" Duly chastened, I mailed it, and was shortly invited for interviews by Larry Sommers, Chair of Geography, and by Charles Hughes, Director of the African Studies Center. The position was jointly funded and administered. As befitting joint appointments, I made separate presentations to faculty constituent groups: geographers and Africanists. I enjoyed the advantage of a common language with fellow geographers, but the Africanists represented nearly a dozen academic disciplines, with their own issues and concerns. The visit to MSU was a miracle of efficient compression in candidate scrutiny. There were key

interviews separately with the Chair of the Geography Department and the Director of the African Studies Center. Through hallways noisy at change of classes, every intervening step in the itinerary was utilized in meeting someone or other who had pertinent questions. I enjoyed the challenge. Unlike small medieval Durham, MSU's huge campus began to resemble a kaleidoscopic maze where I could only follow the guide in wonderment. When our path eventually led higher, to senior administration, in rapid hierarchical progression, to the Dean of Social Science and the Dean of International Studies and Programs, there were brief but cordial encounters in quiet carpeted offices. The interview process finally culminated, as it did in those days for new faculty, with an ushering in to the papal-like presence of President John Hannah. As large as the University had grown by then under his inspiring leadership, he still believed, at least symbolically, in hands-on command. I was quickly marched in, awed and grateful for the hand-shake. By comparison, in 4 years of military service I rarely saw and never personally met my highest commanding officer who was a full Army General living a mile away.

The warm hospitality which I received at MSU moved me. Marc Swartz, the Africanist anthropologist, invited me to Thanksgiving at his home, my first such dinner. In England, Autumn Harvest Festival, a quiet church service, does not really compare. During my visit I stayed in a riotously crowded Kellogg Center over the Thanksgiving weekend, and discovered college football. The Spartans, with coach Duffy Daugherty, George Webster, Bubba Smith, and other future NFL stars, were facing another power-house team, Notre



Dame, under coach Ara Parseghian. I had no knowledge of American Football but, as a hotel guest, I witnessed its addictive rallying power. I had to leave for Durham before the game started and, as my plane headed towards Detroit, it passed directly over the Roman-style battle unfolding below. I later learned that the game had resulted in a tie. However, in purists' eyes, Parseghian held the ball instead of gambling for victory in the closing minutes. de Blij's post-game response was to send the Notre Dame coach a shoebox full of outmoded neckties from 'Goodwill Industries.' I captured the Spartan spirit that day, and it was a lasting infection. In 30 subsequent years I never missed a home game, except to do research in Africa.

It was fortunate that I decided to attend the seminar in Edinburgh and entirely due to de Blij's faith in me, and persistence, that I took the road to East Lansing and a new life as a Spartan Geographer. By July 1967, I sailed up the St. Lawrence Seaway via Quebec to Montreal with wife and two children and our beloved dog, a Border collie from the Durham Moors. Canadian Rail completed the journey, taking our carriage to Sarnia (Ontario) and Port Huron (Michigan) directly to Lansing. In order to offset travel costs, Larry Sommers allotted me late summer teaching that also helped me to get my feet wet early. At MSU I saw immediately that de Blij was a leading influence in the Department, especially among younger faculty. A role model, yet not replicable. Dynamic and charismatic, he gave lectures with intellectual force and exuberance. His courses on Africa would captivate 300 to 400 enrolled students. He wrote text books, and launched his own weekly television program on the MSU

channel. Its titles were "Geography of Africa" and "Political Geography." Viewers saw connections that opened their minds and changed levels of awareness. Some might have quibbled on minor aspects, but de Blij always addressed the big picture and its ramifications. That was his gift. For me, he made the Department a special place at a special time. It is 42 years since my most fortunate encounter in Scotland. For me it was indeed truly serendipitous and of lifetime value. I can therefore write unabashedly in appreciation of our Hannah Distinguished Spartan Geographer, Harm de Blij and his role in bringing me to MSU.



We regret to report the death of **Judy Slate**, former undergraduate secretary in Geography. Judy was with the department for most of the 1990s. She died in her home state of Texas in December of 2008 following a long illness.

Michigan State recently issued its annual *Research Calendar*, a publication of the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies. The calendar highlights "hot" research areas at MSU with prominent faculty featured. This year, six geographers were featured: **Jiaguo Qi** (satellite images and agricultural change in China); **Cynthia Simmons** (social organizations and land cover change in Brazil); **Julie Winkler** (electronic atlas of atmospheric stability and humidity in North America); **Joe Messina** and **Ashton Shortridge** (improving accuracy of geographic information); and **Bob Walker** (protecting rainforest ecosystems in Brazil). Bob's photo was even featured!



**Claudia Brown,
Office Supervisor
and Business
Manager**

In September I started my third year at MSU. I like this department a lot, and I have learned quite a bit about Geography, mostly by osmosis. For instance, I know the words “fluvial” and “choropleth” now. My job is to supervise the staff and to take care of the General Fund money for the department, all of the money that we take in and spend except grants and gifts, including the budgeted GEO accounts for the MI Ag Experiment Station and MSU Extension. I appoint the faculty and academic staff and make sure that they are paid. I am an Environmental Steward for Geography, sharing information about energy usage, waste reduction, and recycling at MSU, which is a BIG topic this year (“Be Spartan Green”). I am taking the lead for the department in the MSU EBSP Project, which is the updating of all of the major finance, HR, and reporting software packages at MSU. The Go Live! Date for EBSP is January 1, 2011, which will come sooner than we like to think. During the all-staff training for the project, I will work as an “EBSP Coach,” helping in the computer labs and answering questions at my desk. In my spare time, I sing in small and large groups, do volunteer work, and look after my Mom, who is in assisted living. My husband, Tom Hanf, has his Master’s degree in Geography from Miami University, and he works at MDOT as a planner in the Project Planning Division, Environmental Section. We like to travel and go to movies and plays. This past year we went to St. Louis and saw many of the Abraham



Lincoln sites in IL and IN, to celebrate his 200th birthday. I hope that everyone enjoys “The Spartan Geographer 2010,” and considers sending in some information to be included next year.



**James T Brown
UNIX System
Administrator**

After a three year stint in Colorado where Jim worked for the University of Colorado and NOAA's Climate Diagnostics Center, Jim had the opportunity to move back "home" in the Fall of 1996 and has been a proud member of the Geography Department's IT team ever since. Jim earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Computer Science from Michigan State in 1992 (has it been that long already?) and although he sometimes misses the bright sunny skies of Colorado, he absolutely loves being back home in Spartan Country! Jim splits his time between Geography, Fisheries & Wildlife, and the Michigan Climatological Resources Program where he makes sure all of the high-tech servers get the tender loving care that they need to be able to continue to run smoothly. Often hidden behind the scenes, Jim likes to think the “less of me that you see, the better” as that typically means that the servers are operating as they should. As long as it doesn't involve shoveling snow, Jim loves the outdoors and for the most part, enjoys what Mother Nature is able to toss at him here in the state of Michigan. As a lifelong “weather-geek,” Jim figures there aren't too many things better than watching a good thunderstorm, except of course, maybe witnessing the Mighty Spartans beat the hated Wolverines! Go Green!!!



Special Features – Geography Staff

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**Tamsyn Mihalus,
Sponsored
Project Support**
During my 31st
year at MSU, I
joined the

Geography staff in 2005. I am responsible for pre- and post-award sponsored project administration. It has been an enjoyable learning experience, having not had much previous experience with Federal funding sources. Working with the faculty is challenging, sometimes frustrating, but always interesting. The realm of external funding is constantly changing which means no dull or boring days. I was born a tiny baby in Owosso, Michigan. Eventually, I grew up, graduated from MSU, and met and married Mike. Also a graduate of MSU, he is a TV Producer/Director at WKAR-TV Channel 23. Among other things, he produces “Quiz Busters.” He is a Civil War buff as our bulging bookcases can attest. Our daughter, Sarah, has abandoned us to continue her education at what I say is the most expensive school in the land, Trinity University in Washington D.C. She is pursuing a degree in Economics with a minor in Political Science. This fall, she studied abroad in Oman, where among other things she did an independent study project entitled “The Opportunity Cost of Marriage for Omani Women.” Wow! My favorite all-time trip was the Great Alaskan Adventure during the summer of 2001, where we walked on a glacier, visited with Mary Shields, saw Mt Denali on a clear day, and hiked in a temperate rain forest. The Traverse City Film Festival has been an annual must-do for us since its beginning in 2005. In my spare time I quilt, read, and enjoy snowshoeing when there is enough snow.

**Wilson Ndovie,
Windows Systems
Administrator,**
joined the
Department in
February of 1998,



four months after he migrated to this country from Malawi. He currently holds a Master of Science in Information Systems degree from Central Michigan University which he obtained in 2004. Wilson is primarily responsible for Windows and PC management. Apart from analyzing systems and advising management on various computer issues, he supports a wide range of Windows users including faculty, staff, and computer labs. He also administers and manages several Windows servers. Procurement of IT related equipment is another area where Wilson is very actively involved. Wilson is married to his lovely wife Beata and together they are blessed with four children. In his spare time, Wilson loves outdoor games such as volleyball, soccer, and a little bit of basketball. He is also actively involved in his local Church. Wilson became a US citizen in 2006. Currently, he enjoys summer since that time of the year gives him an opportunity to explore much of his new country, the USA. Last summer, he and his family made a long journey to Edmonton Canada by road. On the way back, they passed through the badlands and paid a visit to the attractions of Mount Rushmore. There is still plenty to see in the USA. Wilson and family hopes to see more in the years to come.



Special Features – Geography Staff

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Judy Reginek, Assistant to the Chair, came to MSU in December, 2000 as a new employee at MSU. She was



hired into the Department as the receptionist-gopher; but she continually took on more responsibility and with a retirement among department staff, she has moved from the front door of the department to the front door of the Chair. One of her biggest accomplishments was supervising the move of the 57 year-old department from the Natural Science Building to our newly remodeled Geography Building in 2005. Keeping the Chair on track is a small portion of her role in the geography department. As a jack-of-all-trades, she handles whatever special projects come along, from formatting documents, organizing social gatherings, scheduling world travel, to overseeing building remodel projects and maintenance. Judy's farming background comes in handy when herding PhDs and construction crews. Judy's husband, Greg, is a builder and shares her outside interests, including their family (5 daughters, 2 sons-in law and 3 grandchildren), life on the farm, gardening, windsurfing, fishing, and skiing.



Sharon Ruggles, Graduate Secretary (for the past 20 years!) I enjoy the challenge of helping students with the application process

through to graduation. This involves a lot of paper and forms and personal contact. I handle the Student and Temporary Labor

payroll, processing employee hires and the submission of work hours. I also monitor class overrides, building key access and Geography building room scheduling. In my non-GEO time I enjoy the never ending projects of home ownership, sewing Christmas stockings and baby quilts for friends and family and trying to keep up with several nieces and nephews. I graduated from MSU in 1987 with a B.S. in Psychology, minor in Economics. Favorites: *Six Feet Under* (great ending), *The Sopranos* (not so great ending), *Project Runway*, NPR, *Newsweek*, *Time*.



Cathy Sernick, Climatology Support

I started working half-time in the Geography Department/Michigan Climatological

Resources Program in

June 1987. Our office has many original weather records for Michigan and surrounding states, some dating back to the 1800's. One of my main duties is to provide historical weather data to lawyers and insurance claims adjusters. I enjoy working with different clients who are always happy when they realize our office can "assist" with their weather issues. After almost twenty-three years in this office, you can bet I enjoy what I do! I live in East Lansing with my husband of 26 years, Larry, our cat Champ and our dog Sparty. Our children, Alex and Rebecca both live in Santa Monica, California. My favorite activities include travelling to California, spending time with my family, and shopping.



Thanks to all of you who contributed to the various Geography Department funds and scholarships. We are making continued efforts to increase our departmental contributions to enhance our programs and benefit students. Please consider donating to one of the Geography Department funds listed below.

Send checks to:
Department of Geography
Michigan State University
116 Geography Bldg
East Lansing, MI 48824-1117

Please specify the desired fund.

Ian Matley Memorial Fund

Established to bring guest speakers to campus to enrich the geographic education of students and faculty.

Marjorie and Lawrence Sommers Geography Graduate Fellowship for International Research and Travel

A graduate fellowship to be awarded yearly for Masters or PhD students to support international research and travel.

GTU/Geography Endowment Fund

Established in 1999 by Robert and Dorothy Thomas to fund geography-related student activities.

Harold A. "Duke" Winters Scholarship

To support graduate study in Geography at MSU.

Jay R. Harman Undergraduate Scholarship in Geography

To support undergraduate study in Geography at MSU.

Geography at MSU Fund

Established in 2001 to promote the MSU Department of Geography, including related advertising, fundraising, travel, and similar expenses.

Geographic Field Experience Fund

Established in 2001 to fund student field experiences, including field trips, primary data collection, course related field experience, and transportation and lodging expenses.

Geographic Literacy Fund

Sponsored by Harm de Blij, this fund promotes the field of Geography to students.

E. James Potchen Awards in Geography for Graduate and Undergraduate Students

Established in 2008 by Harm de Blij to fund yearly cash awards for outstanding graduate and undergraduate students based on GPA, progress towards degrees, and other quality indicators such as field work and research.

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We also encourage you to keep in touch and provide your contact information. We have been working very hard to update and correct our e-mail and mailing lists. Please notify us whenever you have a change of mailing or e-mail address. This and past newsletters can be viewed on-line at our website, <http://www.geo.msu.edu/aboutus/newsletters.html>

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