Rutgers Geography News 2006-2007

Note from the Chair

The 2006-07 year has been notable in so many ways for the Geography Department and, in the midst of the everyday commitments of travel, subcommittees and guiding committees, mentoring, lecturing, research and writing, it's enormously gratifying to reflect on how much each member of our faculty and staff has provided to the year's progress.

When considering contributions to the Rutgers Geography Department, it's hard to overlook the enormous contributions of **John E. Brush** and we mourn his loss this winter. As a former faculty member and chair, he continued to have an enormous interest in the department. One of his most notable legacies is the department's significant map holdings named in his honor, the JE Brush Map Library, the department's speaker series made possible by the John Brush Fund.

While our incoming class of graduate students has only recently been named, John would have been pleased with our continued recruitment of some of the brightest and most motivated students in the discipline. As we welcome our newest graduate students, we extend our congratulations and best wishes to this year's Ph.D., masters and undergraduate degree recipients.

Among undergraduate news, the Andrew Hill Clark Award--the award for outstanding undergraduate scholarship--was awarded to **Natalia Sardo** at the Geography Department's award luncheon in Lucy Stone Hall this spring. Kudos were also given to RUGS (Rutgers Undergraduate Geography Society) officers, **Nick DeStefano**, President, and **Samantha Fisher**, Vice President and incoming president. Our undergraduate director, **Roger Balm** has seen firsthand the increased interest in geography among undergraduates. The program has graduated over 125 undergraduate majors in just the past five years and minors have almost tripled. Roger's burden (happily) continues to grow!

Robin Leichenko, Graduate Director, reports another remarkable collection of incoming graduate students for this fall. Among accolades for past graduates, **Julie Silva**, our graduate faculty, **David Hughes** (Human Ecology) and **Jasbir Puar** (Women's Studies), have been awarded tenure in their respective departments. The Geography Graduate Project (GGP) hosted a speakers series again this year and included notables such as **Dmitri Ioannides**, **Norbert Psuty**, **Andrew Pleasant** and **Melanie McDermott**.

Our faculty is growing! This summer we welcome **Trevor Birkenholtz** and his wife, **Jessica Vantine Birkenholtz**. Having recently received his Ph.D. from The Ohio State University, Trevor's research on water and water technologies on social systems in South Asian adds an exciting dimension to the department's outstanding collection of research and teaching specialties. This fall, Trevor will teach Water Resource Management including the history and geography of water development. (See more about Trevor and Jessica inside!)

This coming March, we will host our 4th MaGrann Conference entitled Land Use Transitions in the Tropics. **Tom Rudel**, of our graduate faculty, **Laura Schneider**, core faculty, and **Jessica Kelly**, PhD student in geography, are organizing and directing the effort and have already begun hammering out the details. Professor Schneider also coordinated this April's Livingston College Global Futures Symposia which boasted speaker **Lisa Curran**, Director of the Tropical Resources Institute, Yale University.

Among new staff members, the department welcomes **Theresa Kirby**, recently with the National Marriage Project and the Sociology Department. In addition to a background in grant development and publication coordination, Theresa plans to use her experience with outreach and development to expand our interactions with alumni, former faculty, members of the university and the greater community.

I thank our entire staff for their tireless work: **Betty Ann Abbatemarco** (undergraduate and graduate programs), **Michelle Martel** (computing manager), and **Mike Siegel** (staff cartographer, newsletter editor and archivist).

was awarded the Nystrom Award for Best Dissertation in Geography at the recent Association of American Geographers meeting in San Francisco. Two members of

All the best,

Dave

Geography Department Welcomes New Faculty Member

Trevor Birkenholtz received his Ph.D. degree from The Ohio State University in March 2007. His dissertation research, funded with a Fulbright-Hays DDRA, focused on the political economy of access to and control over groundwater resources among smallholder irrigators in Rajasthan, India. Specifically, Trevor's research focuses on the effects that new groundwater lifting and irrigation technologies have on mediating the already fraught relationship between farmers differentiated by caste and class, and between farmers and the state. His research attempts to understand these interactions within broader shifts towards market-led development, which are occurring globally.

Before joining Rutgers, Trevor was Visiting Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies at Oberlin College in Ohio. He taught three courses there during the 2007 Spring Semester. He was also awarded an Oberlin College "Grant-In-Aid" to undertake new research which will investigate the relationship between urban private tubewell construction, private water tanker provision, and government water supply networks in Jaipur, India. Specifically, he is trying to understand in what ways differential access to water in urban South Asia is leading to new forms of individual adaptation and new forms of social inequality. These adaptations are occurring within recent attempts by state and non-state agencies (e.g. Asian Development Bank) to rationalize water provision via market mechanisms. He will be in India June 2007.

Birkenholtz received his B.A. in Geography from the University of Iowa in 1997, where he was also a student hydrologist for the U.S. Geological Survey. Before beginning his graduate studies he was the GIS Coordinator for the City of Oregon City, Oregon.

At Rutgers, he is interested in continuing his research on the politics of water and water technologies in rural and urban South Asia. He plans to move to the Garden State in August with his wife, **Jessica Vantine Birkenholtz**, and their canine companion, **Rocky**.

Jessica is finishing her Ph.D. from the University of Chicago's Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations. Her work focuses on the intersection of Hinduism with the production of identity and place in Nepal. This summer she is a teaching assistant for second-year Sanskrit at the University of Wisconsin-Madison's South Asia Summer Language Institute (SASLI). Over the next year, she will focus on writing her dissertation with the aid of an Andrew W. Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship.

Trevor and Jessica are looking forward to getting to know the Rutgers community.

Rutgers Undergraduate Geography Society

A Year in Review by Nickolas Destefano-Blum

Tobler's Law states that, "Everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than distant things." Well that couldn't be more true this year for RUGS. I'm not taking Tobler's Law literally here, just as a figure of speech. Never have things been so close at hand but so distant at the same time. We experienced the last year of Rutgers University with separate colleges. We witnessed war, new immigration policies, and the start of Campaign 08 for

President of the US. Everything we do and everything that we have accomplished we have tried to relate to Geography and geographical issues. But life likes to make geography relate to us near and far every day. However, it was easy for us to see that it was year of construction, deconstruction, and a marathon to carry the RUGS torch onto the class of 2008.

Our year started off in a flurry with a mixture of members, a few meetings, some movie nights and some pizza of course. We maintained about 12 members, 10 of which were usually at a meeting. We were proud to boast many non-geography majors interested in our activities and helping out with our events. We were able to discuss with them how geography relates to everything including their interests. Myself, **Samantha Fisher** and **Hope Mohamed** held the reigns as President, VP, and Treasurer. We also had a non-major **Amy Paz** step up and fill in as Secretary in Brian's absence for the semester. We kept meetings fun, watched movies with different geographical perspectives, like *National Treasure, The DaVinci Code*, and *The Day After Tomorrow*. Each movie was followed with some fun Q & A, like "What is address of the White House?" (I shouldn't say this, but some people didn't know). But back to the point, we had a great time.

With the help of **Sean DiGiovanna** and the graduate students, we helped run the regional meeting of the American Association of Geographers here at Rutgers. We had a great time helping out and attending the many interesting sessions and talks presented throughout the two days.

This year we were also proud to co-host an event with NJPIRG. We screened "An Inconvenient Truth" to about 35 guests in our Cartography Lab B-266. The event was picked up by MTV News, who came and covered the event. Many thanks go out to **Kristen Gaiser** the NJPIRG Coordinator for Livingston College who contacted the department and got this great event set up quickly and effortlessly. We were able to publicize a little bit and show others how issues covered in an "Inconvenient Truth" were geographically related to our future. We also opened up our first solo website: http://www.eden.rutgers.edu/~georugs/, which helped keep people informed and allowed us to easily post vital information.

Dave and Nick exchanged gifts at our luncheon honoring geography students receiving degrees

The second semester went a bit awry. We had some officer changes as well as a big slow down towards the end of the semester. We are proud to say however, that our shoe drive went semi-successful with about 40 pairs of shoes being donated to Africa on Rutgers' behalf. The money from the shoes will go to helping families obtain sustainability kits including water wells and farming supplies.
We also donated the money from last year's Camel for Kenya Campaign to the Kenya National Library. Through the help of **Dr. Monica Nyamwange** from Geography Department of William Paterson the check will be delivered this summer. We also decided as a group to donate fifty dollars to a Children's Schoolhouse Literary Program in Africa to help buy the necessary books for children's education. We thank Dr. Nyamwange for directing us to this as well.

I would like to say congratulations to all of the Class of 2007: including **Natalia Sardo**, the Andrew Hill Clark Prize recipient. And I wish the best for Sam who will be holding the reigns next year. And many thanks to **Catherine Dusalt** (Geography), **Lindsey West** (Sociology), and **Parker Horne** (Criminal Justice) for agreeing to fill in as temporary officers so that the year can get a start uninterrupted. Also many thanks to **Dr. Roger Balm** for his assistance, encouragement, and representation as the Undergraduate Director. Many thanks to **Betty Ann Abbatemarco** and **Theresa Kirby** for helping us publicize and obtain necessary meeting and storage space. And many thanks to **Dr. Dave Robinson** who was our advisor, professor, and friend to us in a tumultuous year. May next year's crew have great luck and a great time, and don't forget to find some members and remember your alumni. Have a great summer and may that include some great geographic adventures.

Graduate Geography Project (GGP)

2006/2007 was another good year for the GGP. We lost a few active members to research abroad, but welcomed a great

Closing tidbits... We embraced the opportunity to provide input into the new undergrad curriculum, holding a well-

group of new students who jumped right into things. Meeting attendance and overall involvement in department and grad student activities grew throughout the year (thanks, in part, to ingenious meeting scheduling). We are definitely looking forward to carrying this momentum into next year.

Alexis Buckley continued to pour much of her time and energy into the Speaker Series lectures as coordinator. This year we welcomed **Dr. Dimitri Ionnides, Dr. Norbert Psuty, Dr. Melanie Hughes-McDermott**, and **Dr. Andrew Pleasant**. We are already growing excited for next year's invitees, for whom we've been able to streamline nominations and voting using our new GGP Sakai webpage.

Rutgers hosted the Middle States Regional AAG Conference this year. We had a great turnout despite severe storms in upstate New York. Thanks to the many volunteers from our department who helped make sure all panels ran smoothly. Also, congratulations to **Jim Meyers** and **Kevin Peters** on their awards for outstanding research, and to **Adam Steinberg** for winning a spot on the Middle States Geography Bowl team (which went on to take the title in San Francisco at the AAGs). Speaking of San Francisco, a large group of grad students traveled to the AAG Annual Meeting, many of whom also presented their work in paper sessions and on posters. The time out west included our yearly party held at the Edinburgh Castle Pub where a sizeable group of current students, Rutgers alumni, and faculty gorged ourselves on the city's best fish and chips.

attended meeting of past, present, and future TAs and a number of undergraduates. The discussion was highly productive and generated feedback and suggestions that were well received by the faculty curriculum committee... We continued our occasional grad student seminars, which offered a chance for us to informally gather and learn about each other's work, ask questions, and practice putting our research into plain, understandable language (a seemingly endless struggle)... Lastly, we bid farewell to the pink floral couches in the lounge and gratefully welcomed brand new furniture.

A final thanks to this past year's officers and good luck to the crew in 2007/08!

Note from the Undergraduate Director

Another academic year has sped by and we have seen another 25 seniors graduate from our undergraduate program this past May. They will be moving on at a time when career prospects have seldom been brighter for geographers as various agencies of government, as well as the private sector, increasingly seek out those with strong spatial data management skills and fluency in GIS and cartographic techniques.

We in geography have strong faith in the value of a liberal arts degree and hope that our graduates, going out into a world where the United States remains dangerously out of step with the global community in important ways, will be international advocates of peace, fairness and good governance. It is always a particular pleasure of mine to award course equivalency for Rutgers Study Abroad and other international programs since it represents a small but significant step towards this goal.

Meanwhile, within the geography major, significant changes are being made to further shape and streamline our curriculum, including the addition of section meeting for larger classes and the implementation of study “tracks.” These tracks will embody those themes for which the department already has a strong and growing reputation, such as the study of globalization and human-environmental interactions. Within the introductory courses, we are making important progress in embedding progressive political perspectives that will give our graduates a broader and clearer perspective on the world of the early 21st century.

To those just joining our program, a warm welcome. To those moving on, we wish you every success and ask that you please keep in touch with us, letting us know where you are and what you are doing. Only in that way can we build a community of Rutgers geographers that grows over time.

Roger Balm
Undergraduate Director

List of degree recipients and award winners

View some snapshots from our luncheon in honor of students receiving degrees this year.

Faculty News

Roger Balm writes: I spent much of last summer on a fellowship that took me to Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and Belize to study aspects of current Maya culture and to tour several important archaeological sites, including Palenque, Tikal and Uaxactun. A short article based on my summer work, "Disinterment and the Magically Real" is forthcoming in *Middle States Geographer*. Also forthcoming is a contribution to the *Encyclopedia of Women in World History* (Oxford University Press), "Indigenous Culture: Mesoamerica." My continued interest in art and geography took me back to Latin America this past June, to Ecuador. June, 2007 marks the 150th anniversary of the landscape painter **Frederic Church's** journey through Ecuador sketching and painting features described by the German geographer **Alexander von Humboldt** (1769-1859), most notably the volcanoes Cotopaxi and Chimborazo. Church's massive painting "Heart of the Andes" (in the Metropolitan Museum, New York) was based on scenes from Ecuador and was instrumental in shaping the 19th-century national imagination regarding the geography of South America. Using materials and methods similar to those of Church I revisited these volcanic landscapes to produce some oil sketches of my own in an attempt to gain insights into his work.

Robert M. Hordon is continuing his service as a member of the Executive Committee of the American Institute of Hydrology (AIH). The AIH was formed in 1981 as a non-profit scientific and educational organization. It is the only nationwide organization to offer certification to professionals in all fields of hydrology.

The original fields of interest included, as expected, ground water and surface water. Water quality was added a few years ago, and more recently, a new field called "hydrologic technician" was created to enable those individuals who work in the obviously important area of measuring and acquiring hydrologic data in conjunction with the appropriate instruments to become certified. This new program has just begun and presumably would be attractive

"*Heart of the Andes*" by Frederic Church, 1859

to those technicians in the U.S. Geological Survey, related state agencies, and private firms to be recognized and certified (by experience and exams) for their professional skills.

As one of many individuals who work with hydrologic data on a regular basis, this new program that has been discussed by the Executive Committee for well over a year has been a very satisfying experience for what hopefully would become a useful addition to the membership in the AIH.

Skeleton of a saguaro cactus in Arizona

Ken Mitchell became a grandparent for the third and fourth times this year when **Isabel Anna Mitchell** and **Kate Elisabeth Mitchell** joined their respective older siblings, **Caroline** and **Colin**. There will now be plenty of opportunities to get reacquainted with the world through the eyes of children - always a fascinating, indeed humbling, experience. The lecture/conference circuit continues to provide ample opportunities to explore new places, as well as reinvestigate some old ones. During the past nine months Ken's travels have been mainly within the USA. A week in southern Arizona in January introduced him to Bisbee and the locally-set novels of **J.A. Jance**, as well as Biosphere II – whose futuristic experimental domes sit more or less idle in the desert north of Tucson, together with the flood and fire ravaged canyons of the Catalina Mountains and neighboring "sky islands".

States AAG conference in New Brunswick, the Annual Conference of the New Jersey Association for Flood Plain Management (Somerset, NJ), and the AAG meeting in San Francisco. The Flood Plain conference provided opportunities for graduate students **Jim Jeffers** and **James Riely** to gain exposure to the extended community of NJ hazard interest groups while serving in support of the conference staff. Former RU students **Charles Kelly** and **Jim Kendra** (now newly tenured at the U. of North Texas) joined Ken for meals in San Francisco. Later this summer he will travel to Bern, Switzerland to deliver a keynote address at an international conference on the politics of disasters. Since Bern was the first city on the mainland of Europe that he ever visited, some 43 years ago, he is curious about the changes that have occurred there and will spend some time poking around old haunts. Ken will be on sabbatical leave during 2007-8 when he hopes to catch up on writing projects that have been too long in gestation. He hopes to return inspired and energized for further adventures beside the Raritan.

Joanna is working to make opportunities in international programs available to more students and faculty

The department of geography has long been aware of the tirelessness of fellow faculty member **Joanna Regulska**.

Joanna has served as Department Chair and Graduate Director and has been an active core faculty member since 1982. We were pleased to see Joanna's service here at the university and her ongoing interest in global awareness featured in Rutgers University's *Focus Magazine* this spring. As noted in the article, Joanna is the chair of the women and gender studies department, director of the Local Democracy Partnership at the Center for Comparative European Studies, and, most recently, the School of Arts and Sciences' Director

Ken visiting San Xavier Mission near Tucson

During term time Ken guest lectured in Rutgers courses and gave talks at the Regional Plan Association meeting in New York, the Global Change Program at Penn State, the Mid-of International Programs.

In addition to her other roles at the university, Joanna continues to be a source of enormous energy for our department--bringing her global perspective to the very heart of our operations! One of her quotes from the *Focus* article rang so true to the philosophy she brings to her work here--as a researcher, a teacher, and a colleague--"It's not that globalization is somewhere out there, beyond us," Regulska said. "It *is* us. We are creating it. In many ways, we are the driving force."

(from Patricia Lamiell's article "New director of international programs lends her global expertise to the School of Arts and Sciences," *Focus*, May 30, 2007)

Dave Robinson writes: As is the case every year, this past one has been filled with many an academic pursuit. I continue to enjoy the multitude of opportunities passing my way. This includes my snow cover and applied climate research, the state climate office, service to the climate community, department chairing, and teaching.

The Global Snow Lab continues to be supported through a series of research grants, and remains a component of the National Climatic Data Center's Applied Research Center. For the first time, the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report includes a cryosphere chapter, for which I served as a contributing author. In addition to our continued monitoring of hemispheric snow extent (http://climate.rutgers.edu/snowcover), we have also embarked on a project to rank snow storms in ten regions of the US.

I continue chairing a National Academies committee that is addressing issues associated with the stewardship of all of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administrations (NOAA) environmental datasets. I also sit on the American Meteorological Society's Applied Climatology committee, the steering committee of the National Integrated Drought Information System, and was recently honored to be appointed to NOAA's Climate Working Group, the lead advisory committee to this agency regarding "all things climate".

New Jersey's weather and climate never fails to keep me busy. The state climate office maintains an active web presence (http://climate.rutgers.edu/stateclim), and each day we fill multiple requests for information. I also sit on a number of state environmental committees and working groups, and lately I am off giving a talk on the very newsworthy issue of climate change to public and professional groups of all types around the state. Recently, we launched a major upgrade to the NJ Weather and Climate Network web site (http://climate.rutgers.edu/njwxnet), while the never-ending task of securing sufficient operating funds for the network continues.

With the evolving organization of the university and severe budget cuts, never has a year of chairing kept me more occupied with meetings and paperwork. I can't thank the department staff and faculty enough for their efforts in keeping our department so very healthy. Finally, I managed to teach two courses last fall, The Climate System, and NJ Geography. It's always enjoyable being around our graduate and undergraduate students!

It's hard to believe, but next fall will find both of my sons in college. Doug, a geography major, will be a senior at Millersville University and president of their geography club. Drew will be attending my alma mater, Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA, where he intends on majoring in political science.

Rick Schroeder spent much of May 2007 in Tanzania where species at the Joint Workshop on NASA Biodiversity, Terrestrial Ecology, and Related Applied Sciences at the

he has been studying the political-economic, social and cultural changes accompanying a recent wave of South African investments in that country. His research is focused on northern Tanzania, where South Africans are heavily involved in gold and gemstone mining, trophy hunting and photographic safaris, and commercial agriculture among other economic pursuits. The sweeping pattern of such investments in a country that was once one of the staunchest opponents of apartheid is a continuing source of controversy.

Laura C. Schneider writes: I just returned from the Southern Yucatán, where I spent three weeks in the field looking at the effect of fire dynamics on the spread and spatial configuration of invasive species (bracken fern). The purpose of the trip was two fold: first, to determine the locations of local fires to validate MODIS fire products. Usually, during April and May, which is the end of the dry season, farmers in the region prepare their parcels for cultivation by cutting old secondary growth forest and burning it. Most of the fires are small in scale (1 to 2 ha) so it's important to validate if remote sensing products like those produced by MODIS can detect such dynamics. The second purpose of my trip was to collect soil samples of parcels affected by bracken invasion under different times of establishment and fire frequencies and soil samples from near areas not affected by the invasion. The objective is to test the effects of invasive species on soil nutrient cycles, specifically Phosphorous.

One of the localities where Laura conducts research in Mexico

Most of the work I do in Yucatán is supported by NASA Land-Use/Land-Cover Change Program. As part of this grant, I was invited in August 2006 to present my research on Invasive University of Maryland. The results of my work will be published in a chapter of a forthcoming book, edited by **Andrew Millington** and **Wendy Jepson** and entitled *Land Change Science in the Tropics: Changing Agricultural Landscapes*. The title of my article is "Plant invasions in an agricultural frontier: linking satellite, ecological and household survey data" and it shows how local level data of social drivers and ecological constrains could identify some of the difficulties of data aggregation when modeling land change.

As part of my work on land change in New Hampshire, I was invited to the All Scientists Meeting of the Long Term Ecological Research Network, which took place in September 2006 in Estes Park, Colorado. The purpose of the meeting was to follow up on how to develop a research agenda for social science in the network. The discussions resulted in a draft to be included in the new research framework of the LTER for the National Science Foundation. In terms of our project in Grafton County, the results of our research looking at land-use legacies on current landscape patterns were presented in a special session at the last annual meeting of the AAG in San Francisco. The session looked at ways to link social and ecological systems and to find theoretical and empirical frameworks to bring together socio-ecological approaches. This summer, I expect to finish the manuscript from this work and submit it for publication, now that we have finally finished digitizing historical records from 1860 to 1930 and putting them in GIS! Also some of the results of recreating land-use history in the region are used by researchers at Cornell University looking at ways to estimate C budgets in the North East of USA.

Through new interests by the University to enhance faculty collaboration, **Professor Michael Carr** from the Geology Department invited me to explore research possibilities with colleagues at the University of Costa Rica and to participate in a geological field trip in January 2007. The trip was sponsored by the National Science Foundation. As a result of this trip I am planning a week trip to check the possibility of doing land change research in dry forests of Guanacaste Peninsula.

Last but not least, I am co-organizing the next MaGrann Conference with **Tom Rudel**, of the Department of Human Ecology and **Maria Uriarte**, assistant professor of ecology at Columbia University. The title for the conference is *Land-Use Transitions in the Tropics: Beyond Case Studies*; so far we have been able to get matching funds from Columbia University and the Moore Foundation. The conference will be held in spring 2008; we are still working on a detailed agenda, so more to come!

2008 MaGrann Conference Abstract

Kevin St. Martin writes: Over the last year I have been fortunate enough to work with very supportive colleagues and graduate students, devote time to several research projects, and even get to travel a bit.

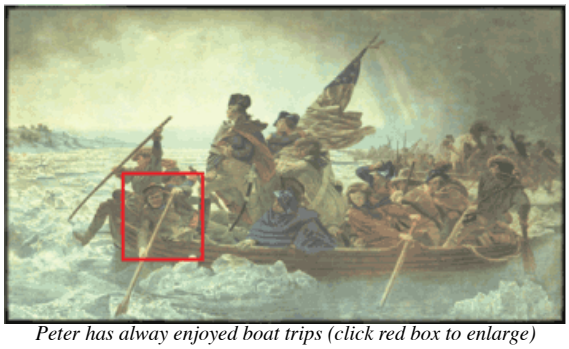
Peter Wacker writes: Spent early May in 2006 on a river trip (Rhone) in southern France with a diversion to **Paul Bocuse's** first restaurant. Paul was there to shake hands and the food was wonderful. Unfortunately, the deal included three days in

Amongst other things, I have been working on analysis, presentation, and publication of the "Atlas Project" which was funded by NOAA and attempted to broaden the representation of both fishing communities and fishers themselves through a participatory re-mapping of the fisheries of the Northeast. The goal of the project was to create a series of maps depicting community utilization and inhabitation of the marine environment.

Results from the project are having a significant impact at a variety of levels. For example, the maps have contributed to the recent development of a grassroots organization, the Area Management Coalition (AMC). The AMC is struggling to make fisheries management more area-based and community-centered and they are using the Atlas Project maps to propose alternative management schemes that account for community territories. Also, I was invited to participate in a recent national level workshop focused on "Using Case Studies to Advance a Practical Framework for Ecosystem-Based Management in Marine Systems." This agenda-setting meeting underscored the need for greater access to maps depicting human dimensions of the marine environment. I have since submitted a proposal to develop a web-based tool that would implement online the method I developed for the Atlas Project. The *Communities at Sea Mapper* would make such map production interactive and universally accessible.

The maps have also garnered some attention internationally. I was a keynote speaker at the "Sea Use Management and Marine Spatial Planning" workshop held at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. The Atlas Project maps were well received and my presentation is currently under review for a special issue of *Marine Policy*. Finally, for community outreach, the maps (and I, see photo) have appeared in a booth at the *Working Waterfront Festival* in New Bedford, MA.

Paris tracing some locations in the Da Vinci Code. Early June was spent getting a total knee replacement and rehab and therapy. Early December was a cruise on the *Paul Gaugin*, from Tahiti to various islands in French Polynesia. In Tahiti I met **Nicholas Rutgers** (yes, the descendant of THE Rutgers) and discussed Rutgers football. Last February was the other knee replacement, rehab and therapy. The joke here is that "why do people have both knees done at once?" The answer is that once you have one done you'll never be back for another. I am currently co-editing "Mapping New Jersey," trying to finish another book, acting as an officer in numismatic organizations, trying to get some gardening and fishing done, and sipping vodka martinis on my patio. Retirement, as you can see, is pure hell.



Peter has alway enjoyed boat trips (click red box to enlarge)

Graduate Student News

Za Barron is conducting her fieldwork in Maryland on livelihood strategies and resource management related to morel mushrooms. Za and **Marla Emery's** research was featured in a Washington Post article entitled The magnificent morel

Gwangyong Choi was selected as one of the Rutgers DOG (Department of Geography) Teaching Excellence Awardees in the 2007 academic year. Since the summer of 2003, he has taught several geography courses such as Earth Systems (101); Transforming the Global Environment (102); Space, Place & Location (103); Climate Change (270); and Introduction to GIS (321). He said, "I am so honored to take this wonderful award, even though there are many other excellent TAs in the department. I really appreciate all the support I have received from the faculty, staff, and my graduate student colleagues in the department." Recently, he was also recognized as the 3rd place winner in the Student Paper Competition within the Climate Specialty Group at the 2007 American Association of Geographers annual meeting. At the AAGs, he presented a paper titled "Climatology and variability of Northern Hemispheric seasonal onsets and durations." He is planning on defending his dissertation in late summer 2007.

Stella on a field trip during the AAGs

Danielle Hartman writes: It has been a good year for maps! She had a small map published in the National Geographic Collegiate Atlas of the World. For bookimages see: http://www.nationalgeographic.com/samplecollegiate/ The map is at: http://www.comcarto.com/samples/fultonferrymap.pdf)

Her class project "New York Global Island" map was added to the Places and Spaces virtual exhibit. (http://www.scimaps.org/dev/map_detail.php?map_id=146)

At work, she recently completed a complex map of New York that identified every office and landmark. (http://www.comcarto.com/samples/GVAWilliams_1_sm.gif) She also developed an interactive map showing the water quality impacts of development on the Dubai waterfront.

In her extracurricular activities, Danielle made her NYC stage debut as a modern dancer at the Jewish Community Center in Manhattan. The multi-media piece "Moving Lines" mapped video projection across the dancers' bodies.

Jessica Kelly writes: The National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant has afforded me the opportunity to study the impacts of gender, land tenure insecurity, and human migration on forest cover change in rural El Salvador. In the dissertation, I am combining data and ethnographic accounts from household interviews with analysis of time series remotely sensed imagery to contribute to the growing body of literature on human drivers of environmental change. I have returned from the field just recently to begin analysis and write-up. Teaching continues to be one of my favorite activities, both here at Rutgers and at Keystone College in LaPlume, PA. On a personal note, I married my sweetheart, **Carlos Santos** in a quiet civil ceremony in January.

The 2005-2006 Awards for Excellence in Teaching and Graduate Research and Service reception was held on April 27, 2006, at the Zimmerli Art Museum. The Graduate School-New Brunswick presented Geography graduate student **Benjamin Neimark** with the Dissertation Teaching Award- a prize given to a graduate student to facilitate the development of a course devoted to their PhD research project. Ben's exciting new course will be given in the spring of 2008 is entitled, *"Geographical Issues in Science, Technology and the Commercialization of Biodiversity."*

Ben in Madagascar

Adam Steinberg presented his paper on the redevelopment of the Old Post Office in St. Louis, Missouri at the 2006 AAG Middle States Division meeting. This past winter he worked as a research assistant for Professors **Bob Lake** and **Kathe Newman** as they studied the redevelopment of Camden, New Jersey: Among other things he mapped government-owned vacant lots in Camden's Lanning Square neighborhood. In April he was on the winning team at the 2007 AAG Geography Bowl in San Francisco. And in May he completed his requirements for a master's degree. In the fall Adam begins work on his doctorate and TAs for the first time.

geography computing

The Department of Geography has two computer labs. Every year the department obtains a portion of the University student computing fees to equip and update the labs and borrowable hardware (laptops, etc.). The computers and equipment are used for geographic instruction and student research.

2007

Currently our Teaching Lab (Lucy Stone Hall B266) provides 22 Dell/Windows student computers and one instructor computer connected to a multimedia projector that displays onto a 60" screen. Recently purchased equipment in the Teaching Lab includes, three 22" wide screen flat panel displays. Wide screen displays allow students to more easily analyze and edit large images such as maps and high resolution aerial photos. The Geography Research Lab (Lucy Stone Hall B235) contains eight Dell/Windows computers and one Apple/Macintosh with video editing software and video digitizing hardware. Recently added to the Research Lab is an auto-feed document scanner that makes it easy to convert multi-page documents into PDF files. This allows instructors to provide digital files to students rather than printed copies of readings.

In addition to general purpose software, the labs offer ArcGIS for Geographic Information System (GIS) work, Erdas Imagine for remote sensing, Idrisi Andes for GIS and remote sensing, Photoshop for image editing, and Adobe Illustrator for drawing digital maps.

Lab computers must be upgraded frequently to keep current with geographic software requirements. This year's planned upgrade includes nine new computers for the Teaching Lab. Computers removed from the lab will be recycled into offices within the department to replace older computers. The very oldest, which are more than 8 years old, are sent to Rutgers Surplus (a division of RU Property Management), removed from our inventory, and then sold to the public at their store. (For more information about the store call (732) 445-2255.)

Alumni News

Tony Brazel is Acting Director of the new School of Geographical Sciences which was formed July 1, 2006. He serves on several projects that are ongoing at ASU sponsored by NSF - Decision Center for a Desert City, Central Arizona Phoenix Long Term Ecological Research, and has written many articles on the subject of climate, cities, and ecology over the past year for these two large projects. He is a member of the Board on Urban Environments of the American Meteorological Society and a member of the scholar committee of the International Association on Urban Climate.
Cricket O'Neill is currently working for NBC Universal on the HD Expansion as a Broadcast Senior Integrator, and I have been working on my fiber certification. She and her husband Bruce have just purchased their first home.

Chris Capko writes: Currently Married to wife Lisa and have a 20 month old daughter named Katelyn. I am employed by ADP (Automatic Data Processing) as a sales associate in the Major Accounts divison. Of course I have a mobile GPS in my car and still tell people how I used to digitize locations manually in college to make maps.

Wendy A Mitteager (PhD 2005) writes: I am finishing up my third year as Assistant Professor of Geography at SUNY Oneonta. I love it! It is a small teaching college and I am in a department of 6 professors. Can you believe that I am teaching Urban Geography? I actually love it and it has become my favorite class. I also teach Intro Geography, Geog of NYS & the NE (where I get to ramble on about the NJ shore), Tourism Geography, Air Photo Interpretation, and Airborne Remote Sensing (where I help students plan photo missions and develop independent research). My research has continued in urban coastal issues although lately I have been focusing on New Orleans. I took two extended trips to New Orleans since Katrina and spent my time both volunteering and doing research, including a photo mission. Both times I brought a group of 15-20 students and we did everything

Julie Tuason writes: I am currently working as a Grant Specialist-Environmental Education for the Texas Watch Program, River Systems Institute, Texas State University at San Marcos. From 1996 to 1999, I was an assistant professor in the geography department at Southwest Texas State University, and then from 1999 to 2001, I moved over to the University of Texas at Austin. Unfortunately, I was struck with a disabling illness (bipolar disorder) and was unable to work for four years. It was one of those disastrous career stoppers that strike some of us, but we pick up the pieces and walk on, \"slowing down to the speed of life,\" and realizing how blessed we are with what we do have as opposed to what we don\'t. I have a lively 12-year-old daughter named Sasha, whose dad is **John Tiefenbacher** (who is also a Rutgers alum and my good friend). I also volunteer time to run a group called Thesis Therapy for geography graduate students, and I am staff advisor to a student group, Supporting Women in Geograph y (SWIG), here at Texas State. My life is smaller and quieter than I had ever expected it to be at this stage, but life is good.

Carl Walp writes: I have been married to my beautiful high school/college sweetheart for 14 years now. Together we have two wonderful boys ages 10 and 4. We now own a home with lots of yard space for the kids in the town of Brunswick (how\'s that for coincidence?) outside Troy, NY. Following graduation in May 1992, I was offered a position with the New York State Department of Transportation in Albany, NY. The position was for a digital quadrangle compiler in the Mapping and GIS Section. After two years of compiling, I spent six years as the unit\'s editor. From there I transferred to the Photogrammetry Section as a design-scale highway corridor compiler. Just this past summer I have been transitioned to the Section\'s Aerotriangulation Unit where I now assist in the preparation and setup of all the project files for our highway mapping jobs. This includes image scanning, retrieving and processing airborne GPS, and project creation, among other things. In my 14 years at

from mucking houses to building a new community center. It was a life-changing experience and I even brought home three (!) dogs that were rescued after the hurricane. I have also been heavily involved in other service activities. I really enjoy volunteering my time in the community. I bought a 4 bedroom house in the city 2 years ago and live less than 5 minutes from campus. My big backyard is perfect for my pups! I am very happy here in Oneonta. I am close to my hometown (Cooperstown) so my mom, sister, and friends are nearby. I miss you all and to my astonishment I actually miss New Jersey!
Email: mitteawa@oneonta.edu
Website: http://employees.oneonta.edu/mitteawa/

Fenni Pan writes: I'm in the Navy now. I want to see the world. I'm stationed in Italy, near Sardinia. It's isolated but beautiful, and it's in Italy! I've been to Rome, Milan, Venice, and even Corsica. Right now our ship is visiting the newest independent country Montenegro. As soon as I get my citizenship, I hope to become a navigational officer.

Kathleen Schlueter writes: I worked at Hammond World Atlas Corp. from July 2005 to March 2007 as a junior cartographer. While there I assisted in working on many projects. A few printed publications are \"Atlas of the Bible Lands\" and \"Hammond Atlas of the Middle East and North Africa\". Both of which I am very proud to have worked on.

In March I started work at ALK Technologies as a Network Editor. I am still in training but in soon I will begin to help update and maintain data for the company\'s GIS products-CoPilot and PC Miler.

NYSDOT, I have had the privilege of working with three other alumni from the Banks, as well as some New Jersey transplants like myself. I feel truly blessed with the things in my life, from my great family to a job I love to do every day, and I can honestly say I owe it all to the Rutgers Geography Department. If not for them, I\'d probably be stuck in a job that I don\'t like, in a field of study for which I don\'t feel any passion. Luckily, I found them and that fueled my passion for geography and cartography.

Jim Wiley writes: I am currently in Yap, the westernmost of the four Federated States of Micronesia in the western Pacific. I just arrived here for a short stay after visits to Saipan and Palau, with Guam to follow. Basically, I am here to learn about the problems such small places encounter when confronting globalization. It is part of a larger project involving small island states from several parts of the world. Since this is my first visit to Micronesia, the material I gather here will also contribute to the Geography of Australia and the Pacific course that I teach at Hofstra (where I am completing my 16th year, though I am on sabbatical right now).

Other activities have included guest lecturing stints for the American Geographical Society in the Aegean region (last fall) and in Brazil (March 2007). Those were cruises and are always great fun, if a bit fattening.

I have finally moved off Long Island and returned to NJ, living in Piscataway not far from the campus. So I hope to be more active in the department in the future.

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Information for the Geography newsletter should be sent to the editor, Mike Siegel <misiegel@rci.rutgers.edu>

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