South Dakota State University
Department of Geography

Head’s Column: George W. White

I now am well into my third year as Head of the Department of Geography. Changes have continued as we faced some challenges and were presented with new opportunities. All in all, we are still growing and prospering with everyone's efforts. Throughout the Newsletter, you will see what we have been doing, but I would like to underscore some of our activities here.

After 27 years, Joan Bruinsma decided to retire. She was a constant in the department and will be sorely missed though we wish her a happy retirement. Delora Bennett is our new secretary. She joined us in late October and quickly fit right into the flow of our activities. Don Berg also retired but continues to be active, not only attending events but also remaining as advisor to Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU) for another year. Trisha Jackson joined us as a new faculty member and spent the fall semester becoming familiar with SDSU and meeting many new people. Many individuals, like Thomas Schumacher, Jim Rice, and Doug Malo have not only welcomed her warmly but helped her to set up her soils research on campus. Trisha is also trying to convert one of our rooms into a soil laboratory. When completed, it should enhance our physical geography program.

Trisha also has assumed an important role in our introductory physical geography courses and laboratory experiences. Together with Darrell Napton, Bruce Millett, Orv Gab, and the teaching assistants, they are continuing to enhance the introductory physical geography courses and their labs. The growth in enrollments in these courses is indication of their success.

Our graduate teaching assistants in 2011 were Garrett Battleson, Suzanne Cotillon, Eric Forrette, Rupesh Giri, Tejaswi Giri, Kim Johnson, Jordan Long, Paul Mantz, Chris Mitchell, Joe Murray, Mat Peters, Jim Sampson, Nicole Siebrasse, Ashley Swartos, Saroj Thapa, and Frank Whitebird. We appreciate all their hard work!

In April, many of us attended the annual meeting of the AAG in Seattle, Washington. In June, the professors and Paul Mantz travelled to Romania to visit our Romanian colleagues at "Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University in Sibiu. While there, we presented papers at the Second Romanian-American Scientific Conference. Many of the papers will be published in GeoCarpathia. In October, two of our Romanian colleagues, Nick and Damaris Pleșia, visited us at SDSU. They then joined our field training experience with our teaching assistants on a trip that went through the Sandhills of Nebraska to Denver and then north along the Rocky Mountains into Wyoming and through the Black Hills. While on the journey, we took a break for a day to attend the annual meeting of the Great Plains Division of the AAG. Bob Watrel is the Secretary-Treasurer for the division.

Also during Fall 2011, we conducted a search for a new faculty member. We successfully recruited Hilary Hungerford from the University of Kansas. Her interests are in community development, water provision, and sustainability, especially in West Africa. She has conducted extensive fieldwork in places like Niamey, Niger and has previously lived in Benin and Ghana. Hilary will join us in Fall 2012.

March 29th-30th, 2012 will be the 43rd Annual South Dakota State Geography Convention. In addition to having the AAG President, we have a number of other speakers presenting on a range of interesting topics. I only have attended two Conventions, and it's an outstanding event. I look forward to the upcoming one and hope to meet a number of alumni there.
New Additions

Dr. Trisha Jackson

Journeying two states north of her roots in rural Kansas, Dr. Jackson discovered rural South Dakota looks familiar. After joining the Department of Geography as an assistant professor in August 2011, Dr. Jackson has discovered that her background in soil science and food systems fits in well at a land-grant university. So far she has made connections (with complementary lab access) with several departments so she can get right to work on research while setting up her teaching and research space in Wecota. Dr. Jackson comes to SDSU after completing master’s and doctoral degrees at the University of Kansas. Prior to this, she completed a Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Geography at Texas State University.

During the Fall 2011, Dr. Jackson taught Physical Geography, Weather and Climate (GEOG 131), but she is teaching two more lectures for the spring semester: Physical Geography: Natural Landscapes (GEOG 132), and Human Impacts on the Environment (GEOG 490/590). In the future, she would like to teach Climatology, Soils and Geomorphology, and other physical geography classes based on the needs of students.

Her research interests involve (1) developing novel detection methods for environmental toxins, (2) detecting toxins, especially those adversely affecting human health, and (3) discovering novel solutions to toxin problems using soil processes. For her future research at SDSU, Dr. Jackson is working to develop a scientific collaboration in Brazil to study terra preta, a very fertile soil which potentially can be used to filter toxins out of water.

Regarding the new lab space in Wecota, Dr. Jackson says, “I can’t wait to get my hands dirty – figuratively and literally. Soils research is an excellent way to bridge human and physical geography. What better way to entice geography students to do research projects with me and become well-rounded geographers.”

Authors: Kim Johnson and Suzanne Cotillon

Delora Bennett

The SDSU Department of Geography welcomed a new face to its faculty this fall semester. Delora Bennett was hired as the new Administrative Assistant to the faculty and students that are making their way through the program.

Ms. Bennett, hired October 2011, was born and raised in Colman, SD but has spent the last 30 years in Brookings. She finds the new position exciting and challenging. She feels she has big shoes to fill as we say good-bye to Joan Bruinsma, but she is up to the task, and is looking forward to assisting staff with events such as the AAG meeting in New York City, mid-terms, finals week, and this year’s SD State Geography Convention!

When Delora is not busy with the Geography Department, she stays busy gardening, tending to her flower beds, scrapbooking, consulting for Scentsy and Tupperware, and is an active member of her church.

After losing her mother to cancer in 2005, and several other family members over the years, Delora became active with the American Cancer Society. She regularly participates in Relay for Life and Daffodil Days. Delora has served on the Brookings Relay for Life committee for many years, and was Chair of the committee for three years. She participated as an advocate by going to Washington, D.C. (one of 14 South Dakotan’s on the delegation) for the National Relay for Life.

Delora finds much joy in her two grandchildren, Tynan, and Kiera born to her son Lance and his wife Stacy (SDSU alum). When asked what she thought she would be doing in 5-10 years she thought probably looking forward to the golden years, spending more time with the grandkids, possibly traveling to historical centers of the US and catching up on reading Danielle Steel books.

Delora has long enjoyed Geography. While never pursuing it academically she was always the navigator on family trips, and always had a fascination with maps. She is excited to be a part of the Geography Department and loves the interaction with students and being support staff to the faculty.

When asked if she had any philosophies on how she leads her life she had this to contribute – Always put your best foot forward, and do it right the first time!

Author: Anya Hartpence
Trip to Romania

In June of 2011, five SDSU geography department faculty members and one geography student visited Romania for twelve days to strengthen a joint agreement between SDSU and Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University in Sibiu, Transylvania. Those who traveled from SDSU included geography department head George White, professors Janet Gritzner, Geoffrey Henebry, Darrell Napton, Robert Watrel, and geography master’s student Paul Mantz.

Gracious Romanian hosts from Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University toured the SDSU group around much of Romania, and even included a stop in Bulgaria. The robust travel itinerary allowed the SDSU visitors to experience Romania’s diverse demographic, political, economic, urban, cultural, environmental, and agricultural characteristics. Destinations on the trip included Sibiu, Bucharest, Constanța, Sulina, Brașov, Sighișoara, Murfatlar, Tulcea, Magnalia, and Ploiesti in Romania and Balchik in Bulgaria. At these locations SDSU geographers were able to observe the Black Sea Coast’s economic ports and aquaculture, the Danube Delta, an abandoned factory responsible for excessive pollution, the birthplace of Dracula, the state-operated Murfatlar Wine Institute, and a special symposium of the Romanian Geography Society on mountain tourism in the town of Vaideeni. The Second Romanian-American Scientific Session was held on June 13 at Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University and featured presentations by both American and Romanian geographers.

Throughout this trip SDSU and Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University geographers encountered a variety of cultural features and natural environments. As they traveled from Bucharest to the Black Sea Coast and then through the Carpathian Mountains, they were able to examine land use and agricultural patterns that were both similar and different from South Dakota. Although Romania is only slightly bigger than South Dakota, it has a diverse population of over 22 million people. The contrast in culture and traditions were something to observe through the duration of the trip, as there was a pronounced variation in culture between regions in the country.

The continuing collaboration between the two universities looks to be promising and can facilitate sharing of knowledge and efficiency in teaching and research activities. SDSU geographers are particularly interested in the physical geography laboratories at Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University. These laboratories are very specialized with much equipment and copious amounts of materials. They are ideal for hands-on learning experiences for students.

Directives from the agreement include recognition of joint research projects, professor and expert exchanges, courses, joint publications, and exchanges of methods for work and academics. Potential future projects include such topics for study as the effect of avalanches on the tourism industry, small-scale farming, and the percentage of homegrown food’s impact on households and the economy.

Author: Paul Mantz
To the Rocky Mountains and Back Through the Black Hills

The SDSU Geography Department, including faculty members, teaching assistants and the two geographers of the Romanian delegation from Sibiu, Transylvania, conducted field research in four different states last October. Dr. Darrell Napton organized the trip and wrote an accompanying field guide, *From the Plains to the Mountains*. The field trip provided an opportunity for physical geography lab instructors to explore both the physical and human landscapes of South Dakota, Nebraska, Colorado, and Wyoming.

Over the course of eight days the students and faculty members explored places to develop a knowledge of how physical and human processes combine to form contemporary physical landscapes. The major field trip stops included the following: the Niobrara River Valley (Day 1) where four different biomes exist in one place, Nebraska Sand Hills and Scotts Bluff National Monument (Day 2), regional AAG meeting, Denver (Day 3), Red Rocks and Estes Park, Colorado (Day 4), Wright, Wyoming a coal mining community and the Powder River Basin coalfields (Day 5), Wind Cave National Park, Custer State Park (Day 6), Homestake open pit gold mine, Devils Tower, Wyoming (Day 7), and the South Dakota Badlands (Day 8). Students were able to see the concepts they teach about in their weather and climate and natural landscape labs and observed many of the interconnections and processes that result in changes to the Earth. Chris Mitchell, a physical geography 131 and 132 TA, said of the field trip that, “Our field work allowed us to experience concrete examples of the systems, landforms, and earth we discuss and explore in lab. Collaboration and witnessing geography in the field will give us more tools to use in the lab and create an exceptional education for our students.”

Ultimately, the field experience allowed lab instructors for both weather and climate, and natural landscape labs to create new activities to stimulate the minds of their students as well as allow the instructors themselves to think critically about the world around them.

Authors: Kim Johnson and Suzanne Cotillon

Deals Tower National Monument, an igneous intrusion located in the Black Hills, Wyoming.
Great Plains-Rocky Mountain Division Meeting of the AAG

This past October 6-8, 2011 the University of Colorado-Denver hosted the annual meeting of the Great Plains-Rocky Mountain Division of the Association of American Geographers. A large portion of South Dakota State University Geography Department faculty and students along with a contingent of visiting Romanian colleagues from Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University attended the meeting, which was attended by a total of 162 registrants. The conference featured an opening address by AAG past-president Dr. Carol Harden. The address was entitled An Andean Enigma: Which practices promote environmental services? Current AAG president, Dr. Audrey L. Kobayashi presented the luncheon address: Geography and Social Justice in Tough Times. These two presentations proved to be the first of many interesting presentations at the conference as 58 papers and 16 posters were presented and three panel sessions were held, along with fieldtrips and the geography bowl.

Although the South Dakota State University team put up a good effort in the bowl, the University of Colorado at Boulder ultimately came out victorious.

A SDSU faculty member, Dr. Trisha Jackson, presented Land Use History as a Predictor of Heavy Metal Soil Contamination which examined soil samples from Lawrence, Kansas and their toxic metal composition by use of X-ray fluorescence. Professor Jackson gave an excellent presentation that attracted the audience’s attention and provided insight into heavy metal contamination and soil quality.

This meeting provided a diverse venue for those with geographical interests to gather and share knowledge. Next year, the 67th annual Great Plains-Rocky Mountain Division meeting will be held at the Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, from October 11-13. Make sure to mark your calendar.

Authors: Paul Mantz and Garrett Battleson

Annual Meeting of the AAG in Seattle, Washington, April 12-16, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presenter</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>Janet Gritzner</td>
<td>Little Towns on the Prairie: Ready, Get Set, Go.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jordan Long</td>
<td>Mapping and Monitoring Louisiana’s Mangroves in the Aftermath of the 2010 Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicole Siebrasse</td>
<td>Enhancing Geographic Education at South Dakota State University.</td>
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<tr>
<td>George White</td>
<td>Challenges and Accomplishments of Master’s Granting Institutions.</td>
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Geography Awareness Week in Brookings

In celebration of Geography Awareness Week (November 13-19, 2011) and GIS Day (Nov. 14, 2011) students from the Geography Department at SDSU initiated a number of projects to promote geographic literacy in South Dakota. In addition to presentations at EROS (see article below), students designed posters, PowerPoint presentations, K-12 curriculum, and made presentations at Mckleson Middle School (Brookings). South Dakota Geographic Alliance Operations Manager, Emily White, also made presentations to K and 2nd graders at Hillcrest Elementary (Brookings). The highlight of the week’s events was the “Wheel of Geography” game developed by the students and set up in the SDSU’s Student Union. Contestants and passers-by spun the wheel and were asked to answer a geographical question from various categories. If they answered correctly, they won a cool geography-themed prize. There were also displays of student posters and a table of free giveaways filled with maps, literature, and National Geographic magazines as well as handouts with information about the Geography major offered at SDSU. The event was a lot of fun, and it was a great opportunity to present geographic themes in a community-oriented way. [Funding for this event provided by a grant from the National Geographic Foundation.]

Author: Emily A. White

Geography Awareness Week at EROS

As part of the 2011 Geography Awareness Week, Claudia J. Young, Dawn L. Siemonsma, Jennifer A. Oeding, Ryan C. Longhenry, and Stefanie Bohms – graduate students at SDSU and employees at the United States Geological Survey (USGS)/Earth Resources Observation and Science (EROS) Center in Sioux Falls, South Dakota created a geography module to complement the EROS Center Visitor tour. It was designed for children from kindergarten through middle school age. The goal was both to focus on geography at educational level and to show the use of geography in daily activities.

On October 20th, 2011 the new geography module was presented at EROS to a group of over 50 kids and 15 parents from the Iowa Home School Association. The children were between 2 – 15 years of age. The module consisted of a ten minute interactive presentation, which provided a brief overview of geography and why it is important. Different examples demonstrated how geography can be used. Following the presentation, the visitors were encouraged to participate in the hands-on activities which helped to show that learning and applying geography to everyday life can be exciting and useful. They included a memory game using satellite imagery from Earth As Art, puzzles of relief map images, a “Treasure Hunt,” and a “Know Your World” magnetic global map, to connect continents, cities, rivers, and animals to the right location on the map.

The presentation and the games were very well received by the children and their parents, as well as the EROS Outreach team. Currently, there are plans underway to incorporate the presentation and interactive games developed by the five SDSU students into future EROS Visitor Tours.

Authors: Claudia J.Y., Dawn L. S., Jennifer A. O., Ryan C. L., and Stefanie B.

Claudia Young at the “Wheel of Geography”.

Stefanie Bohms shows an interactive display board.

Dawn Siemonsma talks to a group of schoolchildren.
42nd Annual South Dakota State Geography Convention 2011

Held on March 24th–25th, 2011, the Convention featured a number of distinguished speakers from around the country.

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<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
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<th>Presentation Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>John Fraser Hart</td>
<td>University of Minnesota-Twin Cities</td>
<td>Tobacco: a Dirty Weed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenneth C. Dagel</td>
<td>Missouri Western State University</td>
<td>Crossthreading: The Role of Geography in Landscape Appreciation and Energy Use</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robin Datel</td>
<td>California State University, Sacramento</td>
<td>Around the World in Thirty Blocks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harley Jesse Walker</td>
<td>Louisiana State University</td>
<td>Coastal Disasters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenneth E. Foote</td>
<td>University of Colorado at Boulder</td>
<td>Memorialization of U.S. College and University Tragedies: New Spaces of Mourning and Remembrance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Owen Furuseth</td>
<td>University of North Carolina at Charlotte</td>
<td>21st Century Urbanism, the Latinization of American Cities: Lessons Learned from Charlotte, North Carolina</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kyle Ezell</td>
<td>Ohio State University</td>
<td>Why I’m Thrilled that I Majored in Geography (And Why You Should be Too)</td>
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POSTER AWARDS at the Convention

1st – GIS-Based Highway Safety Metrics Implementation and Evaluation, Adam Wellner, SDSU– Civil & Environmental Engineering (Recipient of $50 Gift Card from Pearson (publishers))

2nd – “Them Boys Were Here Alright”: A Study of Community, Cultural Identity, and Economics Within Douglas County, Minnesota, Kimberley M. Hoppe, University of North Dakota

Waiting for the Guests: Paul Mantz, Riley Forsyth, Tim Bents, & Jesse Lapsley

Bruce Millet & Owen Furuseth (University of North Carolina at Charlotte), Convention Speaker

Cristina Madrigal-Zamora presents Convention Speaker Kenneth Dagel, with an award of appreciation.

Darrell Napton

Ken Foote (University of Colorado at Boulder), AAG President & Convention Speaker

Harley Jesse Walker (Louisiana State University), Convention Speaker
Fritz Gritzner & Kyle Ezell (Ohio State University), banquet speaker

Robin Datel (California State University, Sacramento), Convention Speaker & Don Berg

GeoBowl players Joshua Bucher, Paul Mantz, Eric Forrette

Aashis Lamsal, Student Presenter

GeoBowl players (L- R) Jesse Lapsley, Tim Bents, Riley Forsyth, Ross Bell, Jordan Long, and Cristina Madrigal-Zamora
Stuart Kool in the foreground
South Dakota Governor Dennis Daugaard & Brookings Mayor Tim Reed Proclaim March 25, 2011 John Fraser Hart Day!!!!

Text of the State Proclamation

Birthday Cake with John Fraser Hart’s name misspelled in Nepali.
Executive Proclamation
State of South Dakota
Office of the Governor

Whereas, John Fraser Hart, Professor of Geography at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, Navy Veteran of World War II, and a great supporter of the state of South Dakota; and,

Whereas, Professor Hart presented 38 out of 42 meetings of the South Dakota State Geography Convention, and helped establish the annual event as a national professional meeting; and,


Whereas, Professor Hart authored or co-authored ten books on geography and numerous professional journal articles, with special emphasis on rural and agricultural related subjects, and provided insightful ideas from his research about the changing nature of Corn Belt farming; and,

Whereas, Professor Hart provided a model of how to conduct field work, introduced generations of South Dakota State University (SDSU) students to the joy of regional geography, demonstrated effective professional presentation styles to SDSU students, spent countless hours interacting with SDSU geography students, and demonstrated how an irrepressible sense of humor can support professional achievement; and,

Whereas, Professor Hart is being honored at the 42nd South Dakota State Geography Convention for his dedication, selfless service, and leadership:

Now, Therefore, I, Dennis Daugaard, Governor of the state of South Dakota, do hereby proclaim March 25, 2011, as

JOHN FRASER HART DAY

in South Dakota.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the state of South Dakota, in Pierre, the Capital City, this Twentieth-second Day of March in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Eleven.

Dennis Daugaard, Governor

Attest:

Jason M. Gant, Secretary of State
43rd Annual South Dakota State Geography Convention 2012

Join us for this year's Convention, which will be on March 29th and 30th, 2012 in Brookings, SD. We are pleased to have the President of the Association of American Geographers, Audrey Kobayashi, attending our convention as a guest speaker. In the table you will find a list of guest speakers and the titles of their presentations.

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<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
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<tr>
<td>Audrey Kobayashi</td>
<td>Queen's University</td>
<td>Spatial Justice and its Contradictions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark W. Rosenberg</td>
<td>Queen's University</td>
<td>Access and Utilization of Primary care: A Canadian Success Story or Failure? Lessons for the US Health Care Debate</td>
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<td>John Fraser Hart</td>
<td>University of Minnesota-Twin Cities</td>
<td>The Lakeshore Cottage Belt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donald Friend</td>
<td>Minnesota State University-Mankato</td>
<td>Nuclear Waste Disposal in the USA and Around the World: What's in Everyone's Backyard?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kari Forbes-Boyte</td>
<td>Dakota State University</td>
<td>Contested Realities of Space</td>
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<td>Mikhail S. Blinnikov</td>
<td>Saint Cloud State University</td>
<td>Freeways or greenways? Political ecology of Russia's new wave of environmental movements</td>
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<td>Niall Hanan</td>
<td>SDSU-Geographic Information Science Center of Excellence</td>
<td>An ecology of climate, management and sustainability in Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donald J. Berg</td>
<td>South Dakota State University</td>
<td>Where is the Dust Bowl?</td>
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The Council for Geographic Names Authorities (COGNA)

COGNA held its 5th Geographic Names Conference in late October 2011 in Honolulu, Hawaii. Janet Gritzner was invited to present at the conference a paper highlighting her work on patterns of stream naming in the coterminous United States. The conference theme for 2011 was "Geographic Names of Indigenous People" and featured speakers on such varied topics as naming traditions in Hawaii, restoring bushman toponyms in South Africa, and shared geographic knowledge among Athabascan speakers. One of the other components of the five-day conference was an all-day toponymic tour of the Island of Oahu and the official meeting of US Board of Geographic Names, a board that makes decisions on contested geographic names.

Author: Janet Gritzner

2011 ESRI International Users Conference

The 2011 ESRI International User Conference convened in San Diego, California, July 11-15. Attending from SDSU were Janet Gritzner, Bruce Millett, Mary O’Neill, and Doug O’Neill. Jordan Long, a graduate student in Geography, was awarded a 2011 User Conference Internship to attend and assist ESRI staff in registration, monitoring sessions, and logistics. The award included conference registration, hotel accommodations and small stipend for meals. Jordan Long is the third student from the Department to participate in the program. Other recipients included Devendra Dahal and Brad Stricherz. The conference hosted over 14,000 GIS professionals from around the world, offering a plethora of technical workshops, paper sessions, and plenary events by the ESRI development teams, prominent scientists and leaders in economic development.

Author: Janet Gritzner

Jaqueline McGlade, Executive Director of the European Environmental Agency
# Student Graduations

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<td>Garrett Battleson</td>
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<td>M.S.-B</td>
<td>C. Gritzner</td>
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John Howard: Friend of Geography in 2011

The Department of Geography presented John Howard, an Instructional Designer, with the Friend of Geography award for all of his hard work and extra efforts in helping the Department put materials for its courses online, especially for its Physical Geography labs.

John took his undergraduate degrees in Speech Communication and Geography from the University of Wisconsin, and his graduate degree in Communication Studies from New Mexico State University. He began teaching communication courses at El Paso Community College in 1995, and began teaching completely online in 1998.

Since that time, from positions of Director of Online Learning, Title V Activity Director, Distance Education Coordinator, and Instructional Designer, he’s trained literally hundreds of faculty in online teaching strategies at seven colleges and universities. He has Certifications in Distance Education, Online teaching, Online Course Design, and Instructor Training for Online Teaching from the University of Wisconsin, LERN, and the University of Texas. He is active in organizations focusing on educational technology, and the chair or vice chair of several national committees also focusing on educational technology or technology issues. He has presented at many national conferences focusing on online learning/teaching. John has been at SDSU since 2005 and is currently in Instructional Design Services.

Robert W. Hill: Friend of Geography in 2010

The Department of Geography chose Robert Hill to be the recipient of the Friend of Geography award in 2010. As the Planning, Zoning and Drainage Director for Brookings County, South Dakota, Robert has been active in employing SDSU Geography students as interns at Brookings County.

Retired from the U.S. Army, Robert once taught classes for Central Texas College (Pacific Branch) while stationed in South Korea. He received his B.S. in Geography (2001) and then his M.S. in Geography from South Dakota State University (SDSU). Students also are benefiting from Robert’s expertise by taking his online course Principles of State, Regional, and Community Planning (PLAN 471) during the Spring Semester 2012 through SDSU.

Robert has engaged in many interesting activities in his career. For example, he has been involved in siting three wind tower projects, MinnDakota, Buffalo Ridge I and Buffalo Ridge II Wind Farms are currently generating 162 megawatts of clean energy. Currently a 300 megawatt Natural Gas Energy Conversion Facility, with an associated transmission pipeline is under construction in his county.

Robert was a member of the Pipelines and Informed Planning Alliance (PIPA) Protecting Transmission Pipeline (PTP) Team, representing the National Association of County Planners (NACP), as an affiliate of the National Association of Counties (NACo) from 2008 to 2010. He has given presentations at American Planning Association Conferences on Wind Energy Systems in New Orleans, LA, and Pipeline Ordinances in Boston, MA, and the National Association of Counties and Pipeline Safety Trust Conferences on Pipeline Ordinances in Portland, OR and New Orleans, LA.
Successful Careers: Joan Bruinsma

Joan Bruinsma started her career with the SDSU Geography Department in August of 1985. She said it was okay if the readers didn’t do the math (She may have said this for the author’s benefit as the author was counting on her fingers and toes). It wasn’t her first stint with SDSU. She also worked for the Electrical Engineering program as well in the mid 1970’s though she ended up preferring her tenure with the Geography department. (Author’s note: wouldn’t you rather work for the Geography Department too?)

She was born and raised in Estelline and has three daughters. She still resides in Estelline and has no plans currently of running off to Florida or Arizona. She now has three grandchildren that she enjoys spending as much time with as she can. Since she started her life of “leisure” in retirement, she has been farming, reading, quilting, cross-stitching, and taking cross-country trips with her daughters and grandkids on camping expeditions (Author’s note, retirement sounds exhausting)! Camping is a newly acquired hobby for Joan. She is not sure why she didn’t start it sooner with her family. They have taken to it and the whole family enjoys it!

When Joan was asked if she loved geography classes in school, she exclaimed “That was so long ago!” But she said she always loved maps and atlases. She always had an appreciation for where things were in relation to other locations. But “geography” was wrapped up in social studies, civics, and history; she didn’t appreciate the true meaning of geography until she came and worked for the department.

I prodded Joan to dish out crazy stories about the department and students of the past. She humbly said that only Opheim had stories . . . well, and some of the students. She claimed not to know anything about that. But she does have some driving horror stories after making the commute from Estelline to Brookings (25 miles one way) over the last 26 years. Tales of black ice, freezing rain, fog-thicker-than-pea-soup, getting stuck in slush . . . but never hit a deer in all those years! Hopefully her luck continues on that count.

Joan said of her former job; she was going to miss the faculty, miss the students, and miss all the different people and personalities. She said she would never miss the commute, not that she minded it, but that she was not going to miss it!

Asked if she had any life philosophies to pass along to next coming generations, she had these tidbits to share, that they were the way she lived her life:

Always do the best you can. Work to the best of your abilities.

Remember there are always several sides to each story.

Most importantly, listen.

Joan’s legacy with the department is a lasting one. She has influenced students with her kindness and dedication over the years. Has kept wayward students on the straight and narrow (this mostly applies to the author of this story), has assisted the faculty with innumerable endeavors, has also been employee of the month, and the recipient of the Friend of Geography Award in 2004!

We are grateful for the services Joan has provided us over the years; we were lucky to have her and are sorry to see our friend in geography go. We do wish her good luck in all her future undertakings, and hope she knows that she will always have a special place in the Geography Department.

Author: Anya Hartpence
Alumni News

Claire Anderson, B.S. in 1977, retired, worked for the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) in St. Louis, Mo. for over 30 years. Two children, Pam and David. One grandson. Wife, children, and daughter-in law are SDSU Alumni. GO JACKS!

Peggy E. Year, B.S. in 1978, M.S. in 1981, with husband, Rob Dump, are publishers of six weekly community newspapers in Northeast Nebraska, residing in Hartington, Neb., since 1992. Three children, two attending the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, and the youngest graduating from high school in May 2012. When not involved with family and work, volunteers on the Hartington Park Board, and is on the board of directors for the Hartington Community Development Corporation and the Corps of Discovery Welcome Center.

Troy A. Du Bois, B.S. in 1994, married in 2001, 3 children, enjoy camping and anything outdoors, family is very involved in church events and mission works, works for South Dakota Development Center.

Roger Peck, B.S. in 1994, Macy’s, married Kelly, son Michael, wife co-owns a pet store in Burnsville Mall in Burnsville, Minnesota.

Pamela Anderson, M.S. in 2006, presently works as a GEOINT Analyst for the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA), St. Louis.

Alumni Spotlight

Jordan Graesser is an assistant researcher with the Geographic Information Science and Technology (GIST) group at Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL). Graesser graduated from SDSU in 2008 with a M.S. in geography, worked at the U.S. Census Bureau for two years, and has been employed at ORNL since October 2010. His research projects range from human settlement characterization and image-based population estimates, to large scale land cover trends.

Recently, Graesser has focused on urban land cover work in response to a rapidly urbanizing world that has spawned unprecedented growth in informal urban settlements (e.g., slums or shantytowns). Researchers in the GIST group have studied these neighborhoods and the application of remotely sensed imagery to characterize human settlement patterns. Specifically, Graesser worked alongside colleagues to develop a classification framework to map urban classes in developing nations. They use various spatial and contextual statistics from high resolution imagery to exploit building information and neighborhood patterns. The high resolution building information also allows the GIST researchers to improve estimates of urban populations, and provide detailed, accurate information about different types of human settlements around the world.

Since graduating, his research has largely been internationally focused. In addition to his work on human settlement characterization, Graesser worked on projects that involved land cover change analysis of refugee and Internationally Displaced Person camps, image-based population estimates in Haiti and Pakistan, and large scale land cover change. His work as also afforded him some international travel. In 2010, he conducted a GIS workshop in Delhi, India while employed at the Census Bureau.

Graesser had the opportunity to supervise two SDSU geography students (Paul Mantz and Jordan Long) this past year. Graesser commented, “It was a great experience to work with the current SDSU students, and hopefully they were able to achieve their goals. The ORNL is a great place to learn. It is nice to see motivated students from the department pursue opportunities such as this.”
Alumni Spotlight (continued)

Jim Sturdevant says that Dr. Mark Okrant’s 1977 Human Geography course at SDSU must have planted seeds in his soul. Looking over the past 34 years, he realizes that he’s been “doing human geography” the whole time, applying studies of the world, its people, communities, and cultures across space and place. Through Dr. Okrant’s encouragement, Jim moved to Oklahoma after earning his B.A. in Geography, enrolled in graduate school at Dr. Okrant’s alma mater, Oklahoma State University, and completed his Masters in Geography in 1979. His research focus was on the human side of geography and regional planning. Jim then worked at the USGS EROS Center until 2007 as a researcher, program analyst, manager, and eventually Deputy Center Director. During his years at EROS, he became more and more interested in organizational development, management, and leadership. Regarding remote sensing, he was most interested when the satellites’ sensors focused on human impacts on the landscape. For nearly five years now he has worked at POET, the ethanol company in Sioux Falls, directing a large and complex cellulosic ethanol project. His job is to orchestrate diverse groups of people in multiple organizations, inside and outside of POET, to accomplish common goals—which he considers to be a very human activity. Meanwhile, since 2005, Jim has been working on a Doctorate in Leadership from the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis. He is now an “ABD” (all-but-dissertation), and his dissertation draft is in final review. It’s a qualitative study on the impacts of leadership education. Jim says that the educational principles, flexible curriculum, and caring faculty of the SDSU Geography Program awakened his special interests that he still pursues today.

Lynn Hohensee graduated SDSU in 1971 with a Bachelor of Science degree in double major of journalism and geography. He held corporate communications/community relations positions for Shell Oil Company in Louisiana and Texas for eight years. In 1981, he joined Conoco (now ConocoPhillips) in Houston as editor-corporate publications and later served as senior coordinator for marketing communications and senior coordinator for speaker services. In February 2003, Hohensee formally retired from ConocoPhillips after 22 years of service. In his final position with ConocoPhillips, he served as the regional director-public relations for company’s Gulf Coast Business Unit headquartered in Lake Charles, from March 1999 to September 2002.

Lynn now owns and operates LEH Communications, LLC, a communications consulting company in Lake Charles, La., specializing in marketing communications and public relations support for small, medium and large businesses and non-profit organizations. Through LEH Communications, Lynn has been under contract with the West Calcasieu Port (www.westcalport.com) where he has served as port director since June 2006. Lynn also is a member of the management team of Temple Mountain Energy (www.templemountainenergy.com), a Vernal, Utah-based oil sands company. From 2005-2009, he held a contract position with the United Way of Southwest Louisiana serving as Coordinator, Housing Initiatives and continues to provide communications consulting services to the United Way. He continues to serve in a communications consultant capacity with the United Way of SWLA.

Paralleling his civilian corporate communications career, Hohensee pursued a 28-year public affairs career in the U.S. Army and U.S. Army Reserve. He is a graduate of the Department of Defense Information School and the U.S. Army Command & General Staff College. He retired as lieutenant colonel in 1999.

Locally in Southwest Louisiana, Hohensee is a member of the Alliance/Southwest Louisiana’s Economic Development Network and sits on the Chamber/Southwest Government Affairs/Infrastructure Committee and the Education & Workforce Development Committee. He serves on the Ports of Louisiana board of directors and the Calcasieu Parish Workforce Investment Board. He is president of the Board of Councilors at CHRISTUS St. Patrick Hospital and leads the administration committee for the Calcasieu Waterway Harbor Safety Committee. He is a member of the Propeller Club of Southwest Louisiana, where he serves on the organization’s higher education fund-raising committee. He is on the advisory board for the Department of Mass Communications at McNeese State University and serves on the boards of directors for the Boys Village. At the state level, Hohensee serves on the board of directors for the Ports Association of Louisiana.

Hohensee and his wife, Marie, a native of New Orleans, reside in the Moss Bluff area of Lake Charles and have one daughter who lives in Geneva, Switzerland. In 1973, Lynn returned to SDSU as Weary Willie, which is an experience that he truly valued as a SDSU alumnus.
SDSU Geography Graduates at EROS

South Dakota State University (SDSU) and the United States Geological Survey’s Earth Resources Observation and Sciences (EROS) Center have formed a partnership to provide opportunities for professional development and collaborative research in the fields of geography and remote sensing. As a result, many SDSU Geography Alumni pursue careers at EROS.

To provide some insight on what can be accomplished with a geography degree from SDSU, we have asked EROS SDSU Geography Alumni to share some of their recent endeavors.

Over the last year Adam Case has worked on the NLCD (National Land Cover Database) and NGP (National Geospatial Program) projects. More specifically, he was a member of the nationwide NLCD 2006 Accuracy Assessment team that analyzed and assessed the accuracy of the NLCD 2006 land cover products. He has also helped develop a process, and produced a Woodland/Green Tint product derived from the NLCD 2001 Canopy data for the new US Topo Maps as part of the NGP.

Working as a contractor for ASRC Research and Technology Solutions at EROS, Bruce Pengra has been supporting the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) office. His work is diverse with library research, writing, cartography, data collection, and visualization. He periodically travels to Africa and the Middle East to conduct workshops on using maps and satellite imagery in a series of atlas publications that UNEP supports – UNEP, Atlas of Our Changing Environment. In the past year he has been to Ethiopia, Rwanda, Zambia and Egypt. He was lucky/unlucky enough to be in Egypt the week that the uprising came uncorked.

Chris Barnes graduated with his PhD in November 2010 under the supervision of Dr. David Roy. He is employed as a Principal Scientist on the Land Cover Trends project. His work is on the use of remote sensing and advanced computing methods to study the impact of land cover and land use change on the Earth’s radiative energy balance and the continental scale climate implications.

Gayla Evans has spent the last 27 years developing expertise in lidar elevation modeling, vector and raster image processing, and project management. Presently, she is project lead for the National Elevation Dataset (NED) and responsible for daily operations, status, and future innovations of this multi-resolution elevation dataset at the Center. Lidar data are the priority source data for the NED adding currency, improved horizontal and vertical resolution and impressive detail to the NED layers.

Jeff Eidenshink is the Deputy Director at the EROS Center. Over the past year he has worked to implement a new Strategic Plan for EROS and prepare the Center for the launch and operation of Landsat 8, the next in the series of Earth observation satellites.

Jon Dewitz is the National Land Cover Database (NLCD) quality supervisor. In the last year he was responsible for providing QA/QC for all NLCD 2006 products, creating a seamless mosaic of these products, and working with a first class NLCD mapping team to help create and publish NLCD 2006. NLCD 2006 is the first wall to wall change map at 30 meters resolution for the United States. Jon is also leading a project for the Fish and Wildlife service that will map wetland and undisturbed grasslands for waterfowl nesting habitat over the larger prairie pothole region.
Kari Beckendorf is working with S. Boyte (SDSU Geography Graduate '09) on the Northern Great Basin Cheatgrass Project. For the last several months she has been processing multiple datasets (gridded weather data, soils data, and phenological metrics) that will be used to help with the application of cubist models to make annual maps of cheatgrass. These cheatgrass maps will then be given to Bureau of Land Management (BLM) personnel so they can identify landscapes vulnerable to cheatgrass dieoff and invasion.

As the Land Processes Distributed Active Archive Center (LP DAAC) Work Manager Roger Oleson is responsible for managing a multi-disciplinary team in the distribution and support of NASA's ASTER and MODIS Land Remote Sensing Data. His role includes the management of contractor scope, schedule, and budget in support of USGS objectives.

This past couple of years Ron Hayes has been the Calibration Validation (Cal Val) lead for the Landsat 8 (L8) mission. The Cal Val team is responsible for designing algorithms for the Image Assessment System (IAS) that will evaluate the sensor data from the Thermal Infrared Sensor (TIRS) and the Operational Land Imager (OLI) on the L8 satellite. They also analyze pre-launch Thermal Vacuum (TVAC) test data from the L8 sensors, to ensure they meet requirements prior to launch in 2013.

Ron Smith primarily works in the international realm. The main project he supports is the Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET). The FEWS NET project monitors the drought and/or flooding potential for several countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Central America and South Central Asia. The project monitors these conditions via remote sensing techniques and field reports. The remote sensing products used to monitor the FEWS NET regions include MODIS imagery which are used to calculate the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) to monitor the vegetation, Satellite derived Rain Fall Estimate (RFE) and a number of other climate parameters (i.e., temperature, evapotranspiration and humidity).

Steve Boyte integrates remote sensing with ecological models to assess rangeland performance in the Intermountain West in collaboration with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). He developed ecosystem performance anomalies for the Owyhee Uplands that the BLM used to help realign grazing allotments. He also modeled cheatgrass extents and cheatgrass dieoff areas in the northern Great Basin. A significant portion of Steve’s time is spent writing for scientific publications and presenting research at conferences.

Tom Loveland is a USGS senior scientist and leader of the USGS-NASA Landsat Science Team. The team is currently focused on the upcoming launch of the Landsat 8. He is also leading the National Climate Assessment study on the impacts of climate change on land use and land cover, and is a member of a team designing a global land cover monitoring system. Tom also serves as the co-director of the SDSU-USGS Geographic Information Sciences Center of Excellence.

The National Elevation Dataset (NED) is the primary elevation data product of the USGS. The NED serves as the elevation layer of The National Map, and provides basic elevation information for earth science studies and mapping applications in the United States. Scientists and resource managers use NED data for global change research, hydrologic modeling, resource monitoring, mapping and visualization, and many other applications. Zheng (Jane) Zhang’s work is to evaluate candidate lidar datasets and to process and incorporate digital elevation data into the various NED layers, specifically process them to 1/9 arc-second (about 3 meters) NED.
EROS Researchers Teach Geography at SDSU

Besides their work at EROS, they are involved in teaching activities at SDSU. Roger Auch, Kari Beckendorf, Norman Bliss, Dean Gesch, Dave Meyer, and Birgit Peterson shared their knowledge and experience with students during the spring semester 2011 when they co-taught a special topics course entitled Applied Physical Geography (GEOG 490/590). The course was sponsored by Dr. White. The lectures involved different topics such as fire science research. Kari and Birgit taught the class the basic principles of fire ecology and then introduced the students to several remote sensing applications used to map, monitor, and detect fires. Another topic was applications of soil data in ecosystem research taught by Norman and included information on soil survey methods, the structure and use of the Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database, and applications in biogeochemical modeling. Further topics were anthropogenic geomorphology and climate change related to sea-level rise by Dean and global and U.S. land uses in relation to biophysical conditions presented by Roger.

Activities of the Graduate Teaching Assistants

Suzanne Cotillon joined the department in August 2011 for a Master’s Degree. She first came to SDSU to do an internship at the GIScCE followed by an exchange program during the fall 2010. Suzanne graduated in Agronomy Engineering, with a specialization in Natural Resources Management in July 2011, from "Ecole Nationale Supérieure Agronomique de Toulouse" (ENSAT) in France. She is currently working as Teaching Assistant for 132 Natural Landscapes Lab. Her research interests include biogeography, dynamics of coupled human and natural systems, and land-use changes. Suzanne went to the GPRM regional meeting in Denver, Colorado, and to the AAG meeting in New York to attend presentations that will help in her thesis research pursuits.

Rupesh Giri, currently pursuing my master's degree in Geography, joined the department on January 2011. Originally from Nepal, he came to United States in January 2008. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in Environmental Management form SDSU. He is currently teaching Physical Geography Weather and Climate Lab. His research interest is remote sensing with an emphasis on forest cover mapping and monitoring changes in forest cover.

Kimberly Johnson joined the Geography department in August 2011 after completing her Bachelor’s in Political Science at Northern State University in Aberdeen, SD. Her research interests include political geography, feminist geography, human geography, and women’s suffrage. Kimberly is currently teaching Physical Geography Weather and Climate lab. She attended the AAG Rocky Mountain-Great Plains meeting in Denver, Colorado this past fall as well as the AAG meeting in New York City in February. She will be working with Chris Mitchell on conducting research for a research paper to be presented in Romania this coming summer.
Jordan Long is working on a six month student research assistantship at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee after completing a two year internship at USGS-EROS. As part of his internship at ORNL, Jordan is researching urban development, population dynamics, and formal and informal settlement characteristics (i.e., urban morphology) in numerous cities worldwide. He is concurrently working on his master's thesis involving land cover and land use change dynamics of the Philippines' mangrove forests and will present his results at the 2012 AAG national conference in New York City. In March of 2011, he co-authored a paper titled "Mapping and Monitoring Louisiana's Mangroves in the Aftermath of the 2010 Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill" in *Journal of Coastal Research* with researchers from USGS-EROS.

Paul Mantz continued his research interests in Southeast Europe and participated in a SDSU geography department visit to Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University in Sibiu, Romania. Paul took part in internships with Oak Ridge National Laboratory’s Geographic Information Science and Technology Group in Oak Ridge, Tennessee and with U.S. Department of State in the Office of The Geographer and Global Issues in Washington, DC. Paul was also awarded funding from NASA via the SD Space Grant Consortium. He attended the AAG Rocky Mountain-Great Plains meeting in Denver, Colorado this past fall and then the AAG meeting in New York City in February.

Confiance Mfuka is an Agricultural Engineer (Bsc), with a specialization in Natural Resources Management from the University of Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of Congo). He is currently working on a NASA-USAID/CARPE-funded Graduate Research Assistantship at the GIScCE, while pursuing a Master’s Degree in the Geography Department. His research interests include Natural Resources Management using GIS and Remote Sensing technics with an emphasis on forest cover mapping and forest cover loss monitoring. He attended the Rocky-Plain Division AAG Meeting in Fall of 2010.

Chris J. Mitchell is still conducting research on place perceptions of South Dakota among South Dakota teachers. He is currently teaching Physical Geography: Weather & Climate (GEOG 131) labs for the department. During the fall of 2011 he taught GEOG 131 and 132 (Physical Geography: Natural Landscapes), assisted with coordinating lab activities for the new GTAs, and assisted Dr. Bob Watrel with the day to day operations of GEOG 200 (Introduction to Human Geography). Chris attended the AAG Great Plains Rocky Mountain Regional Conference in Denver, Colorado, and helped conduct field research to help enhance the curriculums for the two introductory physical geography courses. Chris recently began teaching the Physical Geography labs and working with Dr. Erin Fouberg at Northern State University in Aberdeen, South Dakota. He attended the AAG National Conference in New York in February and will be working with Kimberly Johnson on conducting research for a paper to be presented in Romania this coming summer. Chris still has research interests in political geography, cultural geography, historical geography and geographic education.

Nicole Siebrasse continued to serve as a GEOG 131 Physical Geography Graduate Teacher Assistant in the Fall of 2011, and now currently teaches both 131 and 132 Physical Geography. After co-authoring the physical geography labs in 2010, Nicole attended and presented at the following local, regional, and national conventions: National Council for Geographic Education in Savannah, GA; SDSU Technology Fall Showcase; SDSU Teaching and Learning Center Showcase; 42 Annual SDSU Geography Convention; and Association of American Geographers in Seattle, WA. In addition to her teaching and curricular responsibilities, she invests her efforts in numerous research areas, including: Cultural Geography, Sports Geography (Tennis), Regional Geography, Geographic Education (Curriculum), and International Travel. To pursue her interest in cultural and regional geography, Nicole traveled extensively across Europe (14 countries) and into Asia (Turkey) during the spring of 2011.
Activities of the Geography Faculty

Donald J. Berg, retired effective May 22, 2011 after 34 years in higher education, with 24 years at SDSU, but has continued his connection with the Department through membership on two master’s degree defense committees last summer, and the development during the fall semester of GEOG 343 (Environmental Disasters and Human Hazards) for online presentation in the spring 2012 semester. He continues as the faculty sponsor for the Delta Zeta Chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon. He was also invited as one of the speakers at the forthcoming 43rd annual SD State Geography Convention in March; his presentation, entitled: “Where Is The Dust Bowl?”, will posit that the infamous Dust Bowl of the Dirty 1930s was focused initially on the northern Great Plains, but has been overlooked in the popular mind for a myriad of factors. He submitted a revision of an entry on “South Dakota” for the Encyclopedia of Global Warming and Climate Change, 2E, SAGE Reference, and contributed an essay for a forthcoming publication of the SD Humanities Council on “What Makes A South Dakotan?”

Charles F. “Fritz” Gritzner is enjoying retirement. He continues to coordinate the State Geographic Bee and is teaching courses (three each year) to retirees through the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) program. His current research focuses upon so-called “ghost” lights in North Carolina, which is home to nearly one-third of the nation’s total. His book on the lights will be published by the University of North Carolina Press.

Janet Gritzner has initiated several new research projects in the past year. She is studying the decline of population in Great Plains towns over the last 80 years and is looking particularly at changes in form and function of the little towns of South Dakota. Dr. Gritzner has taken a new direction in her work on hydrologic modeling in the Prairie Pothole Region. She is now using IFSAR DTM’s and ORI radar imagery to identify wetland features with the objective to enhance the data provided by National Wetland Inventory. She will be traveling this spring to Texas to research shellcrete (tabby-like material) distributions in the vicinity of Corpus Christi and Aransas Bay. She and MS graduate student, James Sampson continue to supply mapping and geocoding support to the SD Department of Health.

Bruce Millett is working as a consultant on a new two-year project funded by U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The title for the project is “Modeling the Effects of Pattern Field Tiling on the Hydrology and Ecological Functioning.” The model Wetlandscape will be used simulate the effects of tiling on wetland complexes embedded in farmed landscapes differing in environment and management. The goal for the project is to provide data on the impact of tiling northern prairie wetlands and to provide placement recommendations to minimize impacts to wetland function and ecology. Bruce attended and presented his research on prairie wetlands and climate change at the 2011 Eastern South Dakota Water Conference at South Dakota State University. He currently preparing a paper for review to the journal Nature Climate Change titled “Evidence for climate warming and wetland drying in the North American Prairie Pothole Region.”

George W. White continued to pursue his research interests in culture, ethnicity, and nationalism. He co-authored an article entitled “Nationalism in geography classroom: Challenges and opportunities” in the Journal of Geography. The fourth editions of one of the textbooks that he co-authors, Contemporary World Regional Geography, also was published. He co-authored a chapter entitled “Traces of Power: Europe’s Impact on the Political Organization of the Globe” for the book Engineering Earth: The Impacts of Megaengineering Projects, edited by Stanley D. Brunn. For 21st Century Geography: A Reference Handbook, edited by Joseph P. Stoltman, George wrote a chapter entitled “Europe: Transnational organizations.” He also attended the AAG Meeting in Seattle, Washington, the NCGE Meeting in Portland, Oregon, and the Great Plains-Rocky Mountain Division Meeting in Denver, Colorado. George also organized his department’s trip to Romania in June 2011.
Darrell E. Napton continued his research on U.S. land change with his EROS Land Cover Trends team. He submitted Land Cover Changes and Driver Summaries, a 200 page distillation of the top land cover conversions and the hypothesized driving forces associated with each for the 83 ecoregions in the conterminous U.S. for four time periods. This massive document is the result of more than 10 years of study. Darrell also coauthored Ecoregional Differences in Land Cover and Land Use Change in The U.S. Northern Great Plains, 1973-2000 (Great Plains Research 21, Fall 2011, 231-243). Two of his four co-authors are SDSU geography graduates Roger Auch and Kristi Sayler. His article "Rural Regions and Innovations" was his contribution to the recently published Geography for the 21st Century (Sage). Finally, last fall Darrell wrote "From the Plains to the Mountains: Physical Geography Field Trip Guide," to accompany the physical geography field trip through South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming, and Colorado. Everyone had fun on the trip as they learned about the area. He also presented "Land Conversion and Landowner Adaptation in California’s Oak Woodlands: 1973 to 2000" at the annual meeting of the Association of American Geographers held in Seattle, a city he very much enjoyed visiting. Last summer he presented "Agricultural Land Change in the Northwestern Corn Belt, USA 1972 to 2007" at the Second Romanian—American Scientific Session. During the year Darrell also reviewed more than a dozen manuscripts and grant proposals.

Mary E. O’Neill continues to serve as the Principal Investigator for SouthDakotaView (http://sdview.sdstate.edu), the South Dakota component of AmericaView (http://www.americaview.org), a program to promote the application of remote sensing in the classroom and everyday workplace. In early summer 2011 she team-taught a four-day Geospatial Technology for Educators workshop at the USGS EROS Center near Sioux Falls. The workshop provided information on how remote sensing, GIS, and GPS can be used to enhance K-12 curriculum in areas such as earth science, geography and physics. Plans are underway for a similar workshop at EROS May 29 – June 1, 2012. Mary is also working with EROS on a project designed to enhance the geographic information system (GIS) capacity of the U.S. Agency for International Development Mission in Uganda. The objectives of the project are to help the Mission develop a spatially driven methodology for analyzing and managing its portfolio/budget decisions and supporting its efforts to do the spatial targeting required of it under the Feed the Future initiative. GIS-based analyses will be used to develop appropriate spatial models and assess the suitability of the data available to feed the models. O’Neill, along with Eric Wood and Gray Tappan from EROS, travelled to Uganda for 10 days in May 2011 for consultations with USAID and Government of Uganda officials and for locating possible sources of data necessary to fulfill the project objectives.

David Roy led the NASA funded research project on Web-enabled Landsat (http://weld.cr.usgs.gov/) and with his postdoctoral researchers, Ph.D. students and international collaborators published seven papers in the Journal of Geophysical Research, Remote Sensing Letters, Remote Sensing of Environment, and Landscape Ecology. He had three new NASA funded projects funded Changing Field Sizes of the Conterminous United States - a Decennial Landsat Assessment, Enhanced Web Enabled Landsat Data (WELD) Access, and MODIS-Landsat data fusion for high spatial resolution multi-annual wall to wall burned area mapping of the conterminous United States. David continues to be a member of the NASA MODIS science team; a member of the Global Observations of Forest Cover – Global Observations of Land Cover Dynamics (GOFC-GOLD) Fire Implementation Team, and a member of the NASA Land Cover Land Use Change Science team. This year he presented at satellite remote sensing oriented science meetings in the USA, Australia, South Africa, and Europe.

Bob Watrel continued his research interests in electoral geography of the United States. He authored two pieces on the -Great Plains in the 2008 Presidential Election" and -Micropolitan County Voting" in the Atlas of the 2008 Elections. 2011, edited by Stanley Brunn et al., published by Rowman & Littlefield. He was a discussant on a panel entitled -Geography and the 2010 and 2012 U.S. Presidential Elections“ at the 107th Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers in Seattle, WA. He also presented a paper on -Geographic Scale and Sectionalism in United States Presidential Elections: The Case of the American South, 1872-2008” at the 2nd Romanian-American Scientific Conference, which took place at Universitatea „Dimitrie Cantemir” București Facultatea de Geografia Turismului Sibiu in Sibiu, Romania. Bob was elected President of the SDSU Faculty Senate and is serving a one-year term for the 2011-2012 academic year. Also in the fall of 2011 he became the faculty advisor of the Nepalese Student Association and he was reelected for a three-year term as Treasurer of the Great Plains/Rocky Mountain Division of the Association of American Geographers.
Recognizition occurred at the annual awards banquet. Several retirement gifts were railroad themed, including a collage on the former Santa Fe Railroad (now BNSF) (above) and a bouillon/finger bowl used in full service dining cars, especially on long distance trains (right).