A Tale of Two Endowed Funds: There are two endowed funds directly supporting the academic activities within the Geology Department. The Susan Caroline Ferguson Memorial Lecture Fund, begun in 1982, provides monies that support all aspects of the annual Ferguson Lecture. Income not used is returned to the fund. If used carefully the fund has allowed multiple lectures in some years. This year we have already benefited from the lecture by Dr. Chris Kendall. The second is the James S. Street Student Geology Fund, begun in 1993, which supports the sort of student-faculty research endeavors that the department is noted for – field research activities, specimen-based research expenses, student travel for research or to attend professional meetings. Last year it supported student work in an ion probe lab in Australia, similar work in Arizona, paper presentations in Houston at GSA and AGU to mention a few examples. The Dean matches some of these travel funds thus giving each of us more bang for the buck as it were. Our student have given prize-winning presentations at several of these meetings. We are grateful to all who have donated to make these possible. Thank You!

But that is not the tale as it were. What I want you to realize is the way these funds behave. I refer you to the issue of St. Lawrence University Magazine that you have just received. On page 111 it notes that the Ferguson Lectureship Endowment is valued at $46,620 and on page 108 the Street Fund is at $130,829. These funds do what the donors have established them to do and they do their missions well. What I want to point out is that they have behaved differently since their inception because of the way the department has overseen them and has communicated with you about them! The Ferguson Lecture provides sufficient funding to bring noteworthy researchers to interact with our students as often as the departmental schedule allows. It does not need additional growth by gifting. We are grateful to have it.

The Street Fund is supporting our students research work to a high degree. In January, 2004, the department recognized that the Street Fund would need to grow if we were to maintain adequate support for students as St. Lawrence asked all departments to grow their student-faculty research, and we asked for your help to make it so. At that time the Fund stood at approximately $65,000, and we hoped to double it. I want to point out that the value of your gifting since then,>$35,000 over the past 5 years, plus the growth of the endowment market value, allowed us to make that goal of doubling the Street endowment. There have been some large gifts as the graph shows, and probably some that I am not privy to, but the growth has come as much from the steady accumulation of gifts in the $25 to $100 as it has from large ones. Support from alumni and friends in honor of Jim Street has been strong and consistent and meaningful. Because we started “early” to double the Fund, it has expanded along with the numbers of student researchers and projects we undertake. I point all this out so that you recognize that we do have a real understanding of the “needs” of the department over the long term and that when we have expressed those needs to you, you have responded with consistent support in a way that makes us all grateful and proud of our alumni and friends. That is representative of a trust that we shall hope to maintain even through the impending budgetary dark times that will face all of academia and “main street” alike in 2009. Study that simple graph a bit. There is reason to applaud and reason to be optimistic and reason to be grateful all in that one line! Thanks for making it so.
Let's hear from Lauren Chrapowitzy ’08

I am doing well so far, I've been here at UVM for a couple of weeks now, though classes just started yesterday. I've had about a week's worth of field work under my belt now, so I'm jumping right in. The good part is that by the spring when we do our proposals I'll have some data to work with, so it's pretty exciting. It looks like I will be working mostly on the Valcour Formation. We've found some really great outcrops to work with, especially on some of the Champlain Islands. I'm also teaching 2 intro geology labs and taking 2 classes (field geology and geochronology).

Rick Fairbanks ’72

I was married to Leslie aboard the boat in the Galapagos in March 08. We just returned from several spectacular weeks cruising along the coast of Alaska and have sailed everywhere in between Greece and Alaska in the past year. After years of leading research expeditions around the globe to off-the-way places, I finally get to see it as a tourist. My four children and Leslie’s two boys make quite a troop and all of them are recent grads making their way into budding careers with Brooke, age 15, trailing the pack. Todd graduated from Columbia in 07 and was just transferred from Tokyo to London and is in town this week as he makes the move. Margot finishes at Columbia this December and has her sights set on vet school.

I am now Professor Emeritus at Columbia and still have Ph.D. students and writing papers and proposals. The difference is that I can do this from anywhere in the world. I have started writing papers that I could not write within the constraints of funding agencies and entering areas that I did not have time to explore fully. I plan to spend more time in the fields of archaeology and medicine where I will have or will continue departmental appointments at NYU and Columbia. I am in the process of splitting my mass spectrometry laboratory into three components; Scripps, Rutgers and Lamont where former students or post-docs will take day-to-day responsibilities of the mass spectrometers, field equipment (e.g. survey boats, offshore drill rigs, sonar systems, etc.) and core and sample libraries. I spent about 50% of my day in the laboratory and that is now free time for me!! I continue heavy consulting for the mass spectrometry manufacturers and will never tire of laboratory and instrumentation automation and design work.

Geology Club is taking orders for Belt Buckles with the Geology Emblem, the cost is $35. Arrival time is mid-January and there will be a limited supply. Please contact Sean Regan (spreaga06@stlawu.edu) if you would like one.

Matthew E. Bartkiewicz ’04

I hope all is well with SLU. I am nearing completion - I just need revisions from co-authors on my third manuscript and to write my conclusions. I may have a post-doc lined up for next year in the states - we met at IAVCEI and he is keen to get me on board; unfortunately funding is pending. My brother is here and we have been traveling to the red center. I also touched the Edicarian in the Flinders Ranges.

Wade Jones '08, is pretty excited about working on the trace fossil assemblage of the Catskill Formation for his thesis with Dr. Hasiotis at KU.

Heather Franco Kaste ’97

Her husband Jim was offered and accepted a position as the environmental geo-chemist at William and Mary. They sold our house in NH, and found a cute little house that borders a state park in VA and packed up moved August. Jim is really pleased with his new position.

Their son arrived on October 18th and his name is James Francis.

Heather Scott Cunningham ’98

I am nearing completion - I just need revisions from co-authors on my third manuscript and to write my conclusions. I may have a post-doc lined up for next year in the states - we met at IAVCEI and he is keen to get me on board; unfortunately funding is pending. My brother is here and we have been traveling to the red center. I also touched the Edicarian in the Flinders Ranges.

Grant Nelson ’79 is alive and well in the Netherlands. Is working with IBM (five years), in the Netherlands (23 years), and always says that his Geology education has served me well. Both of his kids are studying Industrial Design, and plan to do some work-study in the USA at one point. The coolest thing that happened to him lately is that his mom, 81, got married (again, of course) to an old high school boyfriend this summer, in Bradford PA. He is a really sweet person, and they are both so happy. It was a very special celebration.
Howdy Fellow Geologists,

This newsletter arrives after the news of a new president at St. Lawrence. Dr. William Fox ’75 will become our 18th President replacing President Sullivan. I am personally excited about another distinguished alumni taking over helm particularly since Dr. Fox has a strong idea of our tradition in geology at St. Lawrence. His leadership comes at a time when the University, and entire country for that matter, are facing enormous financial strains and monumental challenges. I hope you will join us in welcoming him to campus and reminding him of our history and strong alumni support.

The Fall semester has flown by and, with the Winter Break approaching, we will have a chance to reflect, a bit, on where we are and how we can best serve our students in the future. We are currently examining ways to improve our program, but retain our strong core mission, within the context of changes within the University. I continue to be very impressed with the quality of our majors and the dedication they show on a daily basis to the profession and their studies in general. I am working with several this semester and it is a pleasure to see them mature into serious geologists with firm goals for the future. I particularly enjoy working with my research students and watching their projects progress.

Some very good things are happening here in the department and more are sure to follow. My hardy congratulations to Dr. Antun Husinec, whose students Rafferty Sweeney and Charlie Harman gave exciting posters at the Geological Society of America meeting in Houston in October. Evan Blumberg (’08), now a graduate student, was kind enough to attend the meeting and to present the results of his undergraduate shale geochemistry study. His talk was so well received that he had several business cards before he could leave the lecture hall! Dr. Catherine Shrady co-hosted an intensive special session focused on the Adirondacks in honor of the work and career of, my good friend and long-time mentor, Dr. James McLelland. It was an honor to participate and to help further establish St. Lawrence geology as a leader in Adirondack geology. It has been an interesting and delightful transition for me to get to know Dr. Erickson as a colleague. As you may recall, Mark was honored by the alumni in Houston and a fellowship designed to support student research was kicked off in his name. Dr. Colby Smith has been valuable member of the department taking over the classes taught previously by Steve Robinson.

My own work has been going well. I co-led two field trips for the New York State Geological Association annual meeting in the Adirondacks with colleague Dr. David Valentino from SUNY Oswego. My environmentally inclined students are steadily building a sizable database on Adirondack and St. Lawrence County watersheds. Johanna Palmer and Thomas Wright kicked off a long-term project to monitor the chemistry of streams in the High Peaks using St. Lawrence’s Peak Weekend and its Laurentian labor force. Sean Regan and Michael O’Connor will be spending part of their winter break in Ottawa analyzing Sm-Nd and Sr isotopes in support of their projects. This work will be conducted with the help of Dr. Brian Cousens at Carleton University, where I did my Master’s thesis. This spring Seamus Hannan and Forest Schwab will help me begin the process of carefully documenting and archiving the Howard E. Moore Mineral Collection. The impressive collection was generously donated to the University through the efforts of Dr. Erickson and we would like to have it displayed prominently in whatever building we occupy in the future.

Hope you all are well and have a relaxing Holiday Season!
Jeff Chiarenzelli ’81

John Post ’96 (Jeep)
I haven’t left NYC, except for vacations in 10 years and counting. You knew I got married in 2001. Looks like the Geology Dept. is doing VERY well. That is great to see. A month and a half ago I landed at Ridgetop Research. We are a small independent primary research firm in NYC. I am not lost!

Let’s see what Kevin J Sylvester ’73 has to say.

My twin daughters will be turning 16 this coming December and they are now entering Year 11 here in the UK which is equivalent to the 10th grade (Sophomore) in High School. Next year (fall 2009-2010) begins a two year program preparing them for UK University entrance which would be fall 2012.

I have attached an appropriate picture from our recent holiday in Sicily showing that the geologist and his "rock hungry" family cannot miss the opportunity to visit Mt Etna. After a cable car ride and 4X4 ride up the higher slopes (~2510m), we were almost blown away by the high winds and cool temps. Mt Etna is the most active volcano in the entire Mediterranean..an eruption about every 5-8 years.

Congratulations!!!
Brett Harvey ’02 and Hattie Shelton ’02 are married.
The last couple years have been interesting. On September 12 of this year, my daughter Emilia Lucia, was born here in Concord. She joins my two boys Daniel (11) and Benjamin (8 in December). She is doing very well, and as one of only a few granddaughters, she is getting a lot of attention. My wife, Ursula, will finish her school work this semester, and will receive her degree in teaching from UMASS Lowell.

Last year, my employer, an environmental consulting firm called RETEC, was purchased by ENSR (who is owned by AECOM). RETEC was formed by ten former employees of ENSR, so the purchase was a sort of homecoming. For me personally, it was funny because my Mother has worked for ENSR for over 20 years, so now I work in the same office building as my Mother. Fortunately, we work in different fields (finances vs. geology) so our paths only cross socially.

AECOM recently bought some additional companies, and has decided to put us all under the AECOM brand. I still work with Peter Cox ’91, and have started working with Joanne Cavallerano ’05 (now Joanne Newell). Mike Armstrong ’86 transferred to Australia in March, but I got to work with him for a few months.

In 2007 I became a Certified Professional Geologist with AIPG, and I am currently managing about ten environmental projects in Honduras and the Dominican Republic. These are primarily gas stations, but a few large tank farms are also included. From 2005 to 2007, I was involved in the judicial site inspections performed in the Chevron lawsuit in Ecuador. This was a great opportunity to see the production side of the petroleum industry rather than the waste side. I have also enjoyed the exposure to the tropical geology full of weathered clays of Honduras and karst topography of the Dominican Republic limestone formed from old coral reefs. Drilling in the limestone was challenging as we face water and air circulation loss due to subsurface voids, something I do not encounter much in Massachusetts.

In the last year I have also been involved in a volunteer water project in a small town in Honduras. The project team is a collaboration of two engineers, a geologist, Boston Rotary Club, a church group, and the elected water board of the town. They have an operational distribution system, but a poorly designed sand filter. As a result, raw river water is piped from their dam to the houses. They have one well in town that supplies clean water to public taps for a couple hours a day. We are currently looking into the feasibility of drilling two new water wells adjacent to an existing water tank on a hill outside the town. This is slight departure for me since I usually design groundwater monitoring wells.

Hello SLU Geology Alumni,
Since most of you don’t know me, I should introduce myself as visiting faculty in the Geology Department this year. I completed my PhD at the University of Cincinnati in May and was fortunate to have the opportunity to teach at St. Lawrence. I’m teaching Geomorphology and Hydro this fall and Environmental and Glacial in the spring.

As the end of the first semester draws to close, I can say that it has flown by. The enthusiasm of the SLU students is contagious, and I’m looking forward to the new classes and new challenges of the spring semester. Best Regards.

We need your help in finding the following alumni. We would like to send them a newsletter, and update our information for them. Any help you can give us would be greatly appreciated.

Josh Millard ‘94

The last couple years have been interesting. On September 12 of this year, my daughter Emilia Lucia, was born here in Concord. She joins my two boys Daniel (11) and Benjamin (8 in December). She is doing very well, and as one of only a few granddaughters, she is getting a lot of attention. My wife, Ursula, will finish her school work this semester, and will receive her degree in teaching from UMASS Lowell.

Last year, my employer, an environmental consulting firm called RETEC, was purchased by ENSR (who is owned by AECOM). RETEC was formed by ten former employees of ENSR, so the purchase was a sort of homecoming. For me personally, it was funny because my Mother has worked for ENSR for over 20 years, so now I work in the same office building as my Mother. Fortunately, we work in different fields (finances vs. geology) so our paths only cross socially.

AECOM recently bought some additional companies, and has decided to put us all under the AECOM brand. I still work with Peter Cox ’91, and have started working with Joanne Cavallerano ’05 (now Joanne Newell). Mike Armstrong ’86 transferred to Australia in March, but I got to work with him for a few months.

In 2007 I became a Certified Professional Geologist with AIPG, and I am currently managing about ten environmental projects in Honduras and the Dominican Republic. These are primarily gas stations, but a few large tank farms are also included. From 2005 to 2007, I was involved in the judicial site inspections performed in the Chevron lawsuit in Ecuador. This was a great opportunity to see the production side of the petroleum industry rather than the waste side. I have also enjoyed the exposure to the tropical geology full of weathered clays of Honduras and karst topography of the Dominican Republic limestone formed from old coral reefs. Drilling in the limestone was challenging as we face water and air circulation loss due to subsurface voids, something I do not encounter much in Massachusetts.

In the last year I have also been involved in a volunteer water project in a small town in Honduras. The project team is a collaboration of two engineers, a geologist, Boston Rotary Club, a church group, and the elected water board of the town. They have an operational distribution system, but a poorly designed sand filter. As a result, raw river water is piped from their dam to the houses. They have one well in town that supplies clean water to public taps for a couple hours a day. We are currently looking into the feasibility of drilling two new water wells adjacent to an existing water tank on a hill outside the town. This is slight departure for me since I usually design groundwater monitoring wells.
Dear Friends:

It looks like I will be teaching at SLU under my 5th president if all goes as planned. Bill Fox '75 has been appointed the 18th president of St. Lawrence, and I wish him and the University a great experience together! I hope you will offer him your cooperation, advice and your constructive criticism as you have honestly done to previous leaders of this institution. I hope he will accept your advice in the spirit that it is given.

I know that you are probably waiting for me to announce that I am history, but I have not made that decision as yet so rest easy. Additional considerations here in the department coupled with the economic state of the world suggest to me that I not be hasty in making the decision to retire. So I remain fully engaged in all the activities that seem “normal” to me. I did not get to ND this past summer although that had been in the original plan. Timing was off so I went fishing, and sometimes golfing, when it was not raining. I owe Brett for leaving his extra golf clubs with me when he graduated and Tim, Diana and Chris for those fishing rods! I am practicing for when the day really arrives!

Fully engaged means I was involved in 4 posters at GSA but was only responsible for preparing 2 of them. That was enough even with the help of my coauthors. GSA was in Houston and after the great reunion party the O'Briens threw for me last spring, I felt like I was coming home! There was a fine SLU reception planned by Cathy Shrady and I'm sure a list of attendees will be in here somewhere. I visited with people like Art Waterman '73 and Scott Pinsonault '92 with whom I had not visited in years and met Jack Christianson '67 whom I had met only once before if I remember correctly. Now that Jack is retired, I hope he will consider participating in the next SLUGAC! At this GSA we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Paleontological Society and at the Sigma Gamma Epsilon poster session we celebrated that Rafferty Sweeney’s poster, with Antun Husinec, took the best poster award. You may remember that Lauren Chrapowitzky’s poster, with Jeff Chiarenzelli, took those honors in '07!! Eta Xi Chapter already has a distinguished history, and we are just getting started as it were! Our poster on postglacial water temperatures of Grovers Pond using chironomid proxies summarized the theses of Kate Zubin-Stathopoulos and Maggie Simmons. It seemed well received by the midge workers who were present! We have a way to go with the diagenesis study that I am working on with Diane Burns but preliminary results suggest there is an important story in the Fox Hills Panopea occidentalis that Brett Palmateer did his thesis on in '95. All SLU geology faculty presented at this meeting, a first in my experience!

I was totally blindsided by Trisha Smrecak’s reading at the GSA SLU reception of an announcement by the alumni that you are creating an endowed student fellowship program in my name at St. Lawrence! I honestly had no idea this was happening so when Dean started making unusual noises for attention I was not really paying full attention. Then the surprise announcement was read. I am deeply honored by this undertaking that will support the sorts of student engagement and personal growth in our science that I have tried to encourage over the years. This can be meaningful for many students for years to come. Such a fund started now as the economy is down can grow immensely fast as the economy recovers and I hope it becomes able to support our students as quickly as possible. Thanks to everyone who is participating in this campaign! This will do what the Street Fund cannot namely provide a stipend for summer research for the student to live on. Together with the Street Fund we will have a great combinations for students! I am grateful.

My other adventure this Autumn was to travel to UND for its Homecoming. This time I was actually part of the activities. I was inducted into the School of Engineering and Mines Alumni Academy along with 3 distinguished and accomplished fellow alums from other disciplines. Then I was greatly honored to receive the Arthur Gray Leonard Medal awarded by the Faculty of Geology and Geologic Engineering. Department Chair Will Gosnold made a very kind introduction and several colleagues spoke. It was a great honor to me, made particularly meaningful because of the presence of former SLU students (now UND alumni, Brian Silfer, Trent Hubbard, Lucas Buckingham, Tanya Justham, and Matt Burton-Kelly) and many friends. Lance and friend Emily were also there which just made it perfect. I was hosted by Bud and Mardi Holland which gave us time to visit as we did not get to do last summer. The whole affair was remarkable, and I am most pleased and humbled by this recognition.

That is enough news for now. I certainly have had my share of excitement for the year. I wish each of you Happy Holidays and steady employment in these difficult economic times. We will get through them by remembering our roots and by caring for each other as much as for our own. Please let us hear from you.

Best wishes,

Mark Erickson
Notes from the Chair

Another semester has flown by! But it has held some significant events for SLU Geology.

We welcome Dr. Colby Smith, our visiting professor in geomorphology.

Carl Pierce, who was our Jeffrey Campbell Fellow the last two years is now teaching at SUNY Oswego.

And we mourn the passing of Bonnie Enslow who was our department secretary from February, 1995-February, 2005. She had been working in the Registrar’s office these past years and died suddenly of a heart attack, November 7, 2008. We were all shocked and saddened and will miss this gentle, kind person.

It was great to see many of you at GSA in Houston! Because of the distance, only two of our current students attended and presented, Rafferty Sweeney and Charlie Harmon. Raff’s poster won the SGE award! As usual, the Street Fund helped make conference participation possible for these students. So, many thanks to all of you who continue to generously contribute.

All of the SLU Geology faculty were authors on presentations at this meeting and Graham Baird ’98 and Bruce Selleck (Colgate) and I co-chaired a successful full day session on Grenville geology, focusing on the Adirondacks, in honor of James McLelland (the person responsible for luring me into geology). Thank you again to Roy Christofferson and Dean Eppler for the wonderful tour of NASA; my 6th grade daughter wowed her teachers with her report on it and I was fascinated. I hope some more of our alumni find themselves at NASA in future. What a fun career option!

Thanks to you all who organized honoring Mark Erickson with a Fellowship which you announced at our alumni get together at the conference. It meant a great deal to him and will make a difference to future generations of students.

This fall saw the completion of the Japanese garden on campus. What has this to do with Geology? Well, it originated with a class taught by Mark MacWilliams (Religious Studies) and I on Japanese gardens which took six students to Kyoto to study the gardens. Two of those students were Geology majors. One, Mike O’Connor is currently a senior. The final project was to design a Japanese garden for our campus. We took the students’ design and adapted it for the Sykes Courtyard space and, thanks to the Dolan Fund, this last piece of the Geology outdoor lab has been completed. For those of you familiar with Japanese and especially the traditional Zen-style garden, rocks play an important role. We chose rocks that are not only aesthetically pleasing and fitting for the garden but which can be used for teaching. In particular are some magnificent Gore Mountain Garnet samples. Next time you are on campus be sure to enjoy the garden’s peace, beauty, and great rocks!

We were sad to lose our geomorphologist, Steve Robinson who enjoyed directing SLU’s London program so much that he has become the permanent director of Champlain College’s program in Dublin. Given his appreciation of Irish music and Guinness, we really can’t blame him, though he is missed. Pay back for his “desertion” is that he must host any SLU Geology alum who finds her or himself in Dublin!

Those of you who graduated in ’08 will know Alexander Stewart who was our visiting geomorphologist last year. Alexander took a tenure-track position at Angelo State in Texas. He is in the National Guard and has been called up to fill a geologist position in Afganistan. He leaves in early January. We wish him a safe and interesting time. Are there scorpions in Afganistan, I wonder? In addition to geomorphology, Alexander has researched and published on scorpions which he studied when in Iraq.

Although the first stage of Bewkes renovation has begun, the economic downturn means it is anybody’s guess when there will be sufficient funds to complete it, allowing Geology to move from Brown Hall which has served us well but is in need of repair and the space really is no longer adequate. Please see the separate commentary on Brown Hall.

For those of you following the University Travel Policy changes and their affect on Geology and field trips, we are happy to report that, so long as our “big”, that is involving major distant and expense, field trips are not required for the major, we can continue to run them as before, asking students to pay for the travel to the destination and the department covers the rest out of operating budget and the special funds we have which are provided by alumni contributions. Students of particular need can apply to the department for additional funding to cover travel and, here again, the James Street and other alumni accounts are very important, they really do make a difference.

As you may have heard, the next President of St. Lawrence is Bill Fox; check out the SLU website for more info. He is an alumnus of St. Lawrence just as Dan Sullivan, our current president is and, though not a geologist, Bill remembers the Geology Department as an important one on campus. We certainly want and need Dr. Fox to continue to appreciate the importance of geology and this department. We, the current faculty and students will do our best in this regard. Should any of you have the opportunity to let him know your thoughts, I’m sure he’d be glad to hear them.

Wishing you all the very best for this Holiday Season, and as always keep in touch and visit us when you can.

Cathy Shrady
Hi all,

The cold weather and snow that are slowly encrusting the North Country bring to memory a rather different setting that I was exposed to during the months of June and July working on a paleoclimate research project in Croatia. This second year of the NSF-funded project was somewhat special for me, since I was able to bring along two of my students to join me in the fieldwork: Charles Harman and Rafferty Sweeney. I arrived to Croatia before Charlie and Raff in order to prepare all the necessary logistics, including transportation, meals and accommodation. Students and Dr. Fred Read (Virginia Tech) arrived to Croatia on Sunday, June 8, and I picked them up at the Split international airport. From the port of Split we took a ferry ride to the island of Korčula and arrived to the old town in the evening hours. We stayed and worked on the island for the next 3 weeks, with 2 days working on the neighboring Pelješac Peninsula. Students left Croatia flying from Split on Sunday, June 29 and safely returned to their homes in Connecticut and Colorado.

The research took place on the island of Korčula, which is well known by its medieval architecture and the majority of old houses built from local limestone. The rooms we rented were just a 2-minute walk from the old city walls and the birth place of a world known Venetian traveler and merchant Marco Polo (1254 - 1324), and close to numerous museums exhibiting various artifacts of the past prosperous ages. Raff and Charlie used well the opportunity, perhaps for their first time, to become active, reflective learners and they drew on daily experiences to expand and deepen what was learned in the classroom and lab here in Canton, as well as on field trips that we did around our campus, in the Appalachians, and on the Bahamas. Most importantly, for both of my students this research meant “putting a foot in the door” in terms of their continuing education.

Beginning of the school year was a bit hectic for I found out that I had to teach Dynamic Earth instead of Paleoclimateology only a few days before the classes began. Well, as my former post-doc advisor used to say, you’ve got to do, what you’ve got to do! However, I do hope that the next Fall I will get the chance to teach the deep time climate. So, in addition to un-planned Dynamic Earth with planned lab section, this past semester I’ve also been teaching my core course Sedimentology.

I presented the results of my research on Kimmeridgian-Tithonian high resolution sequence stratigraphy and chemostratigraphy at the International Association of Sedimentologists Meeting in Bochum, Germany in September, and at the 2008 GSA Annual Meeting in Houston, Texas. The former meeting I found better, for almost half of the presentations were dealing with carbonates. The meeting in Houston offered very little carbonate related presentations. The good side of the meeting was that Charlie and Raff excellently presented their research results from Croatia. Moreover, Raff received the Outstanding Student Research Award for his poster!

This Fall we had several nice seminar presentations in the Department, and I especially enjoyed a visit by Dr. Christopher Kendall from the University of South Carolina. Last summer, Chris donated me his huge carbonate collection, and it was a great pleasure to have him here in Canton and help me sorting and cataloguing the samples. He also gave the Susan Caroline Ferguson Memorial Lecture entitled “The Caspian oil Province, a continuing loadstone to the west’s Imperial interest in hydrocarbons”.

I wish you all spend this wonderful time of year with your family and loved ones,

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year!

Antun

---

Tori Kohn ’05

Life is good and I have been really busy this past fire season. I spend about three weeks in northern California on the steepest terrain I have ever seen, and then made my way to Cody for about two weeks on the gun barrel fire. We were busy on district and just finished burning in mid-November. So now I have found some down time to catch up. I was just laid-off for about two months and am really looking forward to skiing and knitting. I found a quiet cowboy and we moved in together. He cowboys for some local ranches and is an outfitter guide in the fall. He has a dog whom I have totally taken over (imagine that). Life is good in Dubois, WY, its snowing in the high country and the sun is shining all day long in town.

Greetings alumni!

This has been a busy semester for the Eta Xi Chapter of Sigma Gamma Epsilon. We were glad to have the return of Michael O’Connor ’09, Jo Palmer ’09, and Allie Wiess ’09 from their travels last spring. We began the semester offering help sessions four nights a week in the department in an effort to draw more students into the Geology Major. This saw moderate success and we will continue the sessions the week prior to Finals. Four new members were also inducted this November: David Mosher ’10, Adria Bregani ’09, Tom Wright ’09, and Michael Trumbower ’09. Many members have been busy with research projects: Rafferty Sweeney and Charlie Harman presented posters in the SGE Undergraduate Research Session at GSA in Houston this October and there will a large contingent heading to North East GSA in Portland, ME this March. Happy Holidays and best wishes!

-SGE
Season’s Greetings Friends,

Can it be the final week of classes already?!!! I haven’t even sent out a Christmas card yet… typical. So here we are knocking on the door of another holiday season. We have snow throughout most of the north country, from a dusting here in Canton to what might already be adding up to a few feet in parts of the snow belt regions and the Tug Hill Plateau. At our little farm we have maybe 8 inches, and this morning minus 18.

The Alaska trip last June went well. A great group and great trip. The weather held for us most of the time with rain coming while we were on the Glenn Hwy leaving from Matanuska Glacier and headed for Tonsina and Chitina. We set up mostly dry tents and took mostly dry tents down. With the exception of the last night tenting, it rained all that day and all that night. I would say one wet set up and take down isn’t too bad for nearly two weeks in the field. We also got to see some nice wildlife with sightings consisting of sea otters and eagles in Seward, a cow moose right in our Matanuska camp one morning; I think a black bear was spotted in McCarthy – Kennecott. But the wildlife highlight for me was when two wolverines came up in back of us while on a Worthington Glacier near Valdez. They were as surprised as us and I think less fearful. What a tough little critter they appeared to be.

In case you were wondering how well I did on my list of chores for last summer, I would have to say only OK. In my defense it was a very wet summer. I think it rained at least once every day from the end of July until almost the end of August. Whew! I like rain but it was dreary. Ended up getting all our winters wood cut but most of it was cut in a light rain. Also managed to get a deck off the back of the house and hope to put a gabled roof over that next summer. Started the new tack shed too but to this point only have a deck down with no walls or roof… and no work got started on the garage or barns. Those jobs will have to wait until spring, or later. The new addition to the horse family did well with ground training and I look very forward to continuing our work together, probably not until spring though. I did not do even one day fishing last summer. Sigh… I keep saying this but… I hope to change that soon. We are growing ice already so maybe I will get some ice fishing in before the holidays.

Well folks, I wish for you a happy, healthy, and prosperous holiday season with lots of love, lights and good spirits to go around.

Matt VanBrocklin

HAVE YOU EVER CHECKED THE GEOLOGY ALUMNI WEB PAGE??

GO TO http://it.stlawrence.edu/~geoclub/alumni/

If you have not done so, visit this site. The alumni announce news and events there. One can email Sarah McElfresh, the web master from there. One can find email addresses for friends there. If you visit, why not contact Sarah and leave your email address for her to add to the lists. Also if you are moving or the department is not mailing your Newsletter to the right address Sarah can fix that, too!

CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER!

I am sure many of you deserve congratulations but you haven’t told us so --or I have forgotten for which I apologize!! Here is news from those whom we have heard about.

Yeah, Chris Stevens ‘04 for completing Ph.D. orals on Dec. 1 at Calgary and also for winning a major scholarship!
And same to Dan Peppe ‘03 who has completed his Yale Ph. D. and is now a post doc!
Trisha Smrecak ‘06 has finished her M.S. at University of Cincinnati and gone to work at the Paleontological Research Institute! We think Stephanie Peek ‘06 has finished her M.S. as well and is continuing into her Ph.D. work at U. Wyoming, but we don’t hear from her often enough to know the details.
And congratulations to Matt Burton-Kelly ‘05 who has completed his M.S. and is embarking on the Ph.D., also at UND!
And also to Camille Parton who is on the same track.
And Joanne Cavallerano ‘05, Erik Wachtmeister ’99, Brett Harvey ‘02, and Carrie Denesha ’00 have each been married (not to each other I might add) since the last Newsletter. Congratulations and very best wishes from the SLU Geo folk.
Sean Cornell, who taught paleo for us a while back, has finished his Ph.D. magnum opus dissertation!
Congrats to Jeff Chiarenzelli ’81, Mike Perfit ‘71 and Bill Scott ‘69 who have been elected to Fellowship in the Geological Society of America.
Congratulations to Rafferty Sweeney ’09 who won the Sarton Award for best poster at the SGE poster session of GSA in October! His adviser, Antun Husinec deserves some congrats as well!
Heather Cunningham ‘ 98 has completed her dissertation in geochemistry at Mcquarie Univ in Australia.
Congrats Dean Eppler ‘74 for getting the science module into space!
Brown Hall Report

All of you know Brown Hall, the home of the Geology Department. It has always been a place that Geology majors spent many, many hours in during and outside of class, working on papers, homework, labs, stratigraphy projects (Leroy!), structure field projects, fossil collections, making thin sections, studying minerals, looking down microscopes, trying to finish Senior Theses before the end of Senior Week and much more, or just hanging out in the hall chatting or napping on the couch, or before the hall was the gathering place, the flume room and before that… well, you remember!

The Geology Department continues to be a strong department, with dedicated and excellent faculty members and wonderful students who make us proud as they finish here and become friends and colleagues. We feel we continue on an upward trajectory as a department. Brown Hall has served us all well. But it is no secret that new, up-to-date facilities do attract students, we are seeing that with the new Johnson Hall which now houses Biology and Chemistry. And we look forward to a move into a renovated Bewkes Hall. However, especially now given the recession, a change in the college administration and, perhaps priorities, there is no predicting when or possibly even if that move will take place. It all depends on available funding in the end.

We, in Geology, have been patient, but the situation is beginning to get critical. Not because we can’t operate in facilities that are well past their prime, we’re geologists after all, and can put up with all sorts of “field” conditions. But there are not sufficient classrooms in Brown of appropriate size and wired for network and internet access to meet our teaching needs. And worse, because of deferred maintenance, Brown Hall is literally crumbling around us. And, because the ultimate fate of Brown Hall has yet to be determined, one possibility being that it will be torn down after we move, and because of the financial situation of the University given the recession, there is tremendous reluctance to spend anything on even essential repairs to Brown Hall.

We are including photos of the current state of Brown so that you can see our need for yourselves. A quick overview: the roof needs replacement, merely patching each problem as it arises is no longer enough. We have multiple leaks throughout the building. We have to put buckets to catch the water and just hope that a leak doesn’t occur that might damage irreplaceable samples or maps that might happen to be laid out for labs or damage equipment. The most recent leak happened in the Sed. Pet. Lab which stores literally tens of thousands of dollars of microscopes. Because of the leaks, ceiling tiles are falling down. So far none has hit anyone on the head but it’s a lawsuit waiting to happen. Unsightly stains are all over the ceilings. Down the main hallway there are tiles missing. The parking lot immediately behind the building appears to be subsiding (What’s under there? We probably don’t want to know) and the back wall of Brown where the Mineralogy, Geomorph, Paleo and XRay labs are is literally is falling away from the building. There is a visible gap there now. Never the warmest labs, you can imagine how chilly it is in those labs now! It was 45 degrees F in there during a 103 lab exam the other day, no exaggeration. It is to the point that the condition of the building is interfering with maintaining the quality of student experience and education and it certainly isn’t helping us attract students to the major or to St. Lawrence. Recently, we had a prospective student and parents visit but were too embarrassed to take them on a tour of the department, given its current condition.

The Administration is aware of the problem, it’s just that it’s an inopportune time to invest money that the University doesn’t have in a building which may be destined for demolition. The sooner we can move into a renovated Bewkes, the better. We know it is a difficult time financially for all but if any of you can help with contributing designated funds for Bewkes renovation/Geology we would be extremely grateful. More pictures on next page.