



News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
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1. Wilfrid Laurier U's Ken Hewitt Comments on Advancing Himalayan Glaciers

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said that Himalayan glaciers were receding faster than in any other part of the world. Recent findings seem to contradict that claim. Kenneth Hewitt, a glaciologist from the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University, has been doing field studies in Pakistan's Karakoram Mountains at the western reaches of the Himalayan range for the last 40 years. Just back from that region, he told BBC News that he saw at least half a dozen glaciers that had been advancing since the last time he saw them - five years ago. "Dozens of smaller, high altitude tributary glaciers have advanced including seven of Biafo Glacier and four of Panmah," he says. "It means climate change is happening here too, but with different consequences." [BBC News](#) | [The Resilient Earth](#) | [Indian Catholic](#) | [Earth news](#) | [Science Magazine](#)

2. Trent U's Graham Cogley Quoted Refuting Claim that Himalayan Glaciers Shrinking Fast

The debate over global warming & "rapid" melting of world-wide glaciers and in particular the Himalayan glaciers is once again heating up. There were a flurry of reports, a few weeks ago, in the media and in particular on the BBC (UK) world-wide news service about the Himalayan glaciers melting rapidly in the face of global warming. Prof Graham Cogley (Trent University Peterborough Ontario, Canada) who has analyzed shrinkage rates of many glaciers refutes the IPCC claim that Himalayan glaciers are shrinking faster than in any other part of the world. [Right Side News](#)

3. Memorial U's Rodolphe Devillers on ESRI Canada's GIS Solutions

ESRI Canada announced that more than 37,000 students in the college and university level, and more than 72,000 students from kindergarten to grade 12 in the province's publicly-funded schools can leverage GIS to improve critical thinking, problem solving, spatial awareness and analytical skills. Geographic skills are becoming more important in the global economy," said Dr. Rodolphe Devillers, Associate Professor in the department of Geography, Memorial University of Newfoundland. "We see GIS increasingly being used in a number of fields ranging from business, science, engineering and medicine, to social sciences and humanities. ESRI Canada's education site license program will allow our students to use cutting-edge technology and contribute to GIS expansion in the province and in Canada through research initiatives and developing their own GIS-based applications." [Directions Magazine](#)

4. Barry Smit's Research at the University Guelph Highlighted in *The Ontarion*

Barry Smit, a University of Guelph geography professor and a Canada Research Chair in Global Environmental Change, is on an Arctic mission. Smit and his team of researchers are examining the effects of climate change on people living in the Canadian Arctic. The purpose of his study is to help Arctic communities adapt to changes in their environment. Among the issues being examined are changes in caribou migration routes, as caribou are a main source of food for Inuit communities. In recent years, food patterns have been altered and as a result, caribou herds are avoiding human communities and inhabiting new areas. Smit's research is a part of the Community Adaptation and Vulnerability in Arctic Regions (CAVIAR) program, an international research collective of universities and Inuit communities. [The Ontarion](#)

5. McGill U's Nigel Roulet Comments on Geo-engineering the Climate

In February 2007, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released its fourth assessment of the Science of Climate Change and concluded that human activity was changing Earth's atmosphere and, as a result, its climate. There should be. If climate change is worthy of debate, certainly the prospect of deliberate human intervention into the Earth's climate system is something we ought to talk about before someone goes ahead and tries it.

Everyone needs to become engaged and think very hard about the choices we face as we confront these two very inconvenient truths: the planet is getting warmer and we're doing precious little to stop it. Nigel Roulet is James McGill Research Professor of Biogeosciences in the Department of Geography at McGill University and a member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. [The Montreal Gazette](#)

6. Canadian Geographers Collaborate to Examine Recent “Progress in Spatial Analysis”



Editors Antonio Páez (School of Geography and Earth Sciences, McMaster University), Julie Le Gallo (Université de Franche-Comté CRESE), Ron Buliung (Department of Geography, University of Toronto Mississauga), and Sandy Dall’erba (University of Arizona) recently published “*Progress in Spatial Analysis: Methods and Applications*”.

The edited volume includes 20 chapters from leading spatial analysts that survey basic and applied research in quantitative spatial analysis. The main sections of the volume include: (1) Theory and Methods, (2) Spatial Analysis of Land Use and Transportation Systems, (3) Economic and Political Geography, (4) Spatial Analysis of Population and Health Issues, and (5) Regional Applications. The book has been published as part of Springer’s popular “Advances in Spatial Science” series. [Springer - About this book](#)

7. Memorial U’s Josh Lepawsky Ponders What to do with Electronic Trash

The old adage that one man’s trash is another man’s treasure is getting a new spin as a result of ongoing research in the Faculty of Arts at Memorial University. And helping lead the way is the Department of Geography’s Dr. Josh Lepawsky who’s interested in what is happening to Canada’s electronic waste. He has been awarded a Canadian Environmental Research Grant by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada to examine how materials designated as waste in one place become sources of value elsewhere. Although waste itself falls under provincial jurisdiction in Canada, there are federal regulations over the import and export of hazardous materials. As part of his project Dr. Lepawsky hopes to examine closed case files to determine generic patterns detailing what criminal organizations are involved and what international connections they are using. [Research Matters](#) (p. 16-17).

8. University of Manitoba's Ronald Stewart Made Fellow of Royal Society of Canada

Dr. Ronald Stewart, Head of the Department of Environment and Geography at the University of Manitoba, has been elected to the Royal Society of Canada. Dr. Stewart is a global leading expert on precipitation processes within winter storms. He plays an important role internationally, including within the Global Energy and Water Cycle Experiment. Stewart is former president of the Canadian Meteorological and Oceanographic Society and held an NSERC Industrial Research Chair in extreme weather at McGill University. [UM Geog Newsletter](#) | [RSC AGM 2009](#)

9. Mount Allison U's Brad Waters Goes National on the Copenhagen Climate Summit

Mount Allison professor of Geography & Environment, Brad Walters, was interviewed by CBC Radio hosts across Canada about the significance of the forthcoming Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen this December. "Climate change is becoming the defining public policy issue of our time," says Walters. "The meeting in Copenhagen is an historic event. Whether the international community strikes a formal deal there or not, the sheer momentum of political change it has helped to create is unprecedented, and its consequences will likely be far reaching." Using a syndicated format, CBC stations from nine cities across Canada, including Cornerbrook, Quebec City, Calgary, and Vancouver, took turns speaking with Dr. Walters by phone, with each interview being broadcast live to local audiences. [Mount Allison News Release](#)

10. Laval U's Frederic Lasserre Suggests Climate Changes Won't Lead to Cold War

Rising temperatures are causing the Arctic's ice sheets to melt, opening the door for an economic boom in the region but also posing a major threat to the survival of its indigenous peoples. The region could be home to 90 billion barrels of oil. The five countries bordering the Arctic have in recent years ramped up their territorial claims. Their claims have occasionally overlapped, as is the case with Hans Island, a source of dispute between Denmark and Canada. But according to Frederic Lasserre, a geography professor at Laval University in Quebec, a new Cold War is unlikely. "There is very little chance that these countries will develop tense relations because of these climate changes," he said, noting that they have shown a willingness to resolve their differences through negotiation. "Most of the exploitable natural resources ... are located relatively close to their shores, so they are already in the countries' exclusive economic zones" recognised by the neighbouring nations, he added. [Space Daily](#) | [AFP](#)

11. McGill's Catrina MacKenzie Presented with 2009 Theo Hills Memorial Award

Theo Hills (1925-2002) served McGill as a Professor of Geography from 1950 until his retirement in 1992. To commemorate his substantial contribution, McGill, by the initiative of the family and friends of Theo Hills, established the Theo L. Hills Memorial Fund to help support

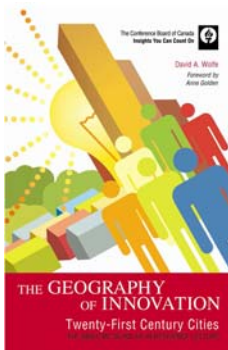
graduate student field-work research in developing areas. The 2009 Theo Hills Memorial Award was presented to Catrina MacKenzie to assist with examination of the perceived benefits and losses of living near the Kibale National Park, Uganda. Catrina intends to use her Theo Hills award to hire a local person in each of the 25 villages she is studying to record and document crop raiding incidents so that the magnitude of the crop raiding problem can be determined, to make crop raiding visible to local authorities and to determine the most affected villages. [Theo Hills Memorial Fund](#)

12. Geographer of the Week: Dr. Daniel Olsen, Brandon University

Dr. [Daniel Olsen](#) is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at Brandon University. Daniel completed his BES (Honours) at the University of Waterloo, a M.Ed. at Bowling Green State University, and his Ph.D. at the University of Waterloo (2008). His research interests are in the areas of the geography of religion, heritage tourism, religious tourism, tourism and disabilities, tourism in peripheral areas, and Mormonism. In 2009-2010, Daniel is responsible for teaching departmental courses in World Regional Geography, Introduction to Geographic Research Methods, Canada: A Regional Geography, Population and Development, and Cultural Geography. [Brandon University, Department of Geography](#)

13. Other “Geographical” News

21st Century Cities in Canada: The Geography of Innovation



21st Century Cities in Canada: The Geography of Innovation is authored by David A. Wolfe, Professor of Political Science at the University of Toronto at Mississauga. Professor Wolfe is also Co-Director of the Program on Globalization and Regional Innovation Systems (PROGRIS) at the Munk Centre for International Studies. This study summarizes the results of a five-year national study of urban industrial clusters. The monograph looks at the economic shock of the past year and how it has dramatized the changing nature of Canada’s economy and the challenges that lie ahead. Professor Wolfe tells us why cities are not only the dominant sites of economic activity, they are the leading edge of innovation that will generate the news ideas, new products, and new industries that will drive our economy in the future. Of the 15 cities studied, this book presents case studies for Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Waterloo, London, and Halifax. [Conference Board of Canada](#)

Google Street View Adds 9 Canadian Cities

Google has added nine more Canadian cities to its Street View photo-mapping service, bringing the total number of municipalities represented to 20. The search giant on Wednesday announced that Street View has been extended to Victoria, Nanaimo, B.C., Edmonton, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Sudbury, Ont., London, Ont., Sherbrooke, Que., and St. John's. They join major cities such as Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, which appeared on the service in October. [CBC News](#)

Brutus, the Leader of his North Pole Wolf Pack Emails Locations to Researchers

In July scientists from the United States and Canada put a satellite collar on Brutus, the leader of his wolf pack, on remote Ellesmere Island, only 600 miles from the North Pole. Their goal – to finally find out what these "North Pole wolves" do in the long, dark days of winter in one of the harshest areas of the world. Brutus' collar collects and stores 2 locations per day, obtained via Global Positioning Satellites (GPS). Every 4 days the collar uploads the data to ARGOS satellites that email Brutus' location at a particular time and date. Since the researchers left Ellesmere, Brutus and his pack have covered an area of 740 square miles. This summer's activities in catching and collaring Brutus, photos and video clips, as well as updates of wolf movement and other information gleaned from the satellite collar, are available on the [International Wolf Center](#) blog. [EurekAlert!](#)



14. Some not so “Geographical” News

Climategate

The Climatic Research Unit e-mail hacking incident, also known as Climategate, began in November 2009 with the hacking of a server used by the Climatic Research Unit of the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England, in the United Kingdom. An unknown individual stole and anonymously disseminated over a thousand e-mails and other documents. Climate change sceptics have asserted that the e-mails show collusion by climate scientists to withhold scientific information. The [National Post](#) printed an example of some of the exchanges. For an “interesting” perspective on climategate, check out this [YouTube video](#).



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