



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers**  
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**Memorial U's Trevor Bell Receives Funding to Engage Communities on Climate Change Issues:**

Charlene Johnson, minister of Environment and Conservation, pledged more than \$98,000 in funding towards climate change research in Labrador. Researchers from the Faculty of Arts at Memorial University will be spearheading this initiative. Thanks to the funding, geography professor Dr. Trevor Bell and Dr. Joanna Wolf, a postdoctoral fellow at the Labrador Institute will be able to follow up on key priorities identified last year. Among these items were improving collaboration among communities, researchers and governments in Labrador, engaging communities on climate change issues in Labrador and compiling existing knowledge on climate change studies in Labrador. [MunToday](#)

**Charles Hostovsky at the University of Toronto interviewed in "Homemakers":**

Chuck was interviewed for a feature article in the November, 2009 issue of *Homemakers* magazine. The seven page article "Are You Getting Greenwashed" examines the problems of eco-labeling in Canada and the many false claims of alleged green products. Chuck has been giving an eco-label audit class assignment for many years and has a paper on the topic in press. Hostovsky, C. 2009. "[Greenwashing](#)", in The Green Series: Toward a Sustainable Environment, Volume I: Green Consumerism. *Homemakers* magazine has a paid circulation of 376,000 and Print Measurement Bureau measured readership of 1.56 million, hence this article will give many Canadians guidance about reducing their personal ecological footprint. [Homemakers Online](#)

**Mapping the Geography of the Flu Virus Involves U Waterloo Co-op Student:**

Andrew Janes' most recent geography co-op term has been a jumble of secrecy and confidentiality. Janes spent his past two co-op terms at St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto studying the spread of the H1N1 virus with a team of experts. For a geography student, work at St. Michael's came as a bit of a surprise. "After growing up with a parent in the medical field, I've always been surrounded by the health world," he says, "At first I wasn't aware of the connections between geography and the medical community, but this co-op position changed the way I look at the use of geography. Most people think geographers will end up teaching, analyzing the physical environment or just making maps, but this position opened my eyes to the variety of uses for GIS and just how diverse geography can be. Geography can be used just about anywhere and using it in medicine is a great way to have a positive influence on the world. I'd like to continue apply my knowledge of cartography and geography within the medical community." [Inside Scoop newsletter for UW co-op students](#) | [UW Faculty of Environment News](#)

**Rethinking Green: Eat Global, Not Local:**

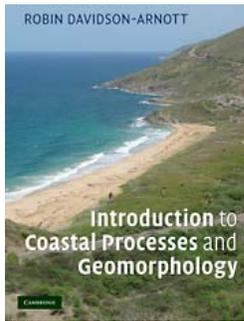
Pierre Desrochers, a geography professor at the University of Toronto, comments upon the complexity of farming under suboptimal growing conditions where there is a need to clear even more land to gain yields. "If you want to preserve wilderness areas, the way to go is modern, intensive farming and international trade". Large-capacity food transportation, he notes, is often extremely fuel-efficient. "A highly efficient container diesel-powered ship can move huge quantities of stuff ... with a tiny, tiny, tiny energy signature." And when producers do export by airfreight,

often their carbon footprint is reduced, since often they can slot their deliveries into the excess capacity available in planes that are already headed where they need to go. [National Post](#)

**Laurentian's Anne Watelet Comments on Walkerton Water Contamination Incident:** The negative side effects of the Walkerton water contamination incident continue to this day, almost 10 years after seven people died and more than 1,000 people fell sick. Bruce Davidson, spokesperson for Concerned Walkerton Citizens, spoke to Greater Sudbury and provincial officials about the importance of preventing a Walkerton-like disaster in the city. Anne Watelet, a professor of geography at Laurentian University, said she appreciated Davidson had emphasized people have to take personal stewardship over how they deal with water even on their own properties. "If you pour oil from your car down the drains on your property or nearby, it will end up in Ramsey Lake, the drinking water for many in this city." [Northern Life.ca](#)

**John Warkentin Awarded Milner Award by CAUT:** John Warkentin, Professor Emeritus at York University, was awarded the Milner Award by CAUT this year. John was one of 16 persons who handed in their resignation to what is now the University of Winnipeg to protest the firing of Harry Crowe over an opinion he expressed in a private letter that was stolen from his mail box and opened by someone else. The issue was academic freedom. They succeeded in their campaign. The arbitrary decision was reversed. [Milner Memorial Award](#)

***Introduction to Coastal Processes and Geomorphology*, by Robin Davidson-Arnott, Department of Geography, University of Guelph**



Written for students, this is the complete guide to the processes at work on our coastlines and the features we see in coastal systems across the world. The quantitative approach of this book helps to build a solid understanding of wave and current processes that shape coastlines. The resulting processes of erosion, transport and deposition and the features they create are clearly explained, with over 400 illustrations and photographs. From sandy beaches to coral reefs, the major coastal features are related to contemporary processes and to sea-level changes over the past 25,000 years. [Cambridge Catalogue](#) | [Amazon.ca](#)

**UNBC Geography Program Welcomes Zoë Meletis:** The UNBC Geography Program is excited to announce the faculty appointment of [Dr. Zoë Meletis](#) as an Assistant Professor in the Geography Program. Dr. Meletis will be joining her new colleagues in the Winter 2010 semester and will teach GEOG303/ORTM433 *Recreational Geography* (Tourism, Recreation, & Geography) and ENV5309 *Women and Environmental Studies*. Dr. Meletis' research focuses on the following themes: tourism and ecotourism development; local perceptions of environment and place; consumption (the politics of; the impacts of; alternative forms of); international development and conservation; and justice issues related to inadequate planning and environmental management. [UNBC Geography](#)

**Queen's Warren Mabee Comments on Uncertainty at Copenhagen Climate Summit:** Professor Warren Mabee, of the Queen's University Department of Geography notes that "There is more uncertainty around Copenhagen than around any Conference of the Parties I can remember; the role that the USA and China will play seems to have evolved almost overnight. This uncertainty has had the

one benefit of highlighting the countries without a firm game plan, such as Canada. The Canadian position has gone from being implicitly to explicitly that of a US shadow.” [Queen's News Centre](#)

**Jean Andrey, of the University of Waterloo Department of Geography and Environmental Management:**

Jean Andrey has been a faculty member in the Department of Geography and Environmental Management since 1989. She has been referred to by students as a "role model that all of us will strive to be like in our future work." During her upcoming sabbatical (six months January-June 2010 and six months July-December 2011), Jean plans on focusing "on two threads of research. The first pertains to weather-transportation interactions and in particular with weather-related driving risks and related interventions. The second project deals with sustainable transportation and the development of related indicators and explorations of the capacity for travel changes using scenario analysis." [Jean Andrey Website](#)

**Brock University's Alun Hughes Relieved that Historic Theal House Given New Life:** The historic little cottage looks a little out of place at Brock University's campus, dotted with hulking multi-storey concrete giants. But this charming stone cottage offers a glimpse of what the campus used to be nearly 200 years ago when a British Loyalist named Samuel Theal acquired the land in 1825. Brock geography professor Alun Hughes, a student of local history, is just thankful Theal's house is still around and has been given new life. More than a decade ago, the university had considered tearing the then decrepit building down, said Hughes, who was one of many who fought to save the cottage. [The Standard](#)

**Geographer of the Week: Laura Prazeres, University of Ottawa**



During her graduate studies in Geography at the University of Ottawa, Laura undertook research in the Yukon as part of her M.A. research on tourism experiences in northern Canada. Her thesis explored visitor experiences in Kluane National Park and Reserve in the Yukon and she presented her findings at various conferences, including the AAG's in Boston and the Canadian Congress on Leisure Research at Concordia University in Montreal. Laura was awarded an Ontario Graduate Scholarship for her research and 'best student paper' by the Tourism and Recreation Study Group at the CAG annual meeting at Laval University.

Since completing her M.A. in July 2008, Laura has remained active in her academic and tourism pursuits. Immediately following the defence of her thesis, titled *The Tourist Experience of the Northern Natural Environment*, she began working in a small rural community in Brazil as part of an internship with the Canadian International Development Agency's International Youth Internship Program. During her 6-month placement, she taught Geography at the local school, led reforestation field work, facilitated sexual health workshops on HIV/AIDS, wrote articles on ecotourism and environmental conservation for the local newspaper, and promoted youth environmental leadership through radio and visual arts programs in the community. Within two weeks upon returning from her internship in Brazil, Laura embarked on the first International Antarctic University Expedition with Students on Ice and the International Polar Year. She wrapped up her international travels with a presentation at the World Environmental Education Congress in Montreal and at the CAG's annual meeting in May 2009 on her environmental leadership work in Brazil. Following this Laura returned to the Department of Geography at the University of Ottawa where she is working as a part-time instructor.

## Recent Theses and Dissertations

Dominic Odwa Atari. 2009. "*Community Health Study in Sarnia, Chemical Valley, Ontario*". Unpublished PhD thesis. Department of Geography. University of Western Ontario, London. Supervisor: Dr. Isaac Luginaah.

Catherine Oosterbaan. 2009. "*Economic Reform and Changing Urban Landscape of Accra: The Conversion of Residential Areas into Commercial and Office Spaces*". Unpublished MA thesis. Department of Geography. University of Western Ontario, London. Supervisor: Dr. Godwin Arku.

Kenneth Porter. 2009. "*Multiscale Assessment of Urban Emissivity*". Unpublished MSc thesis. Department of Geography. University of Western Ontario, London. Supervisor: Dr. James Voogt.

Charles Priddle. 2009. "*Adaptive Capacity in Response to Revolutionary Change: The Case of Ontario's Conservation Authorities*". Unpublished PhD thesis. Department of Geography. University of Western Ontario, London. Supervisor: Dr. Dan Shrubsole.

## Other "Geographical" News

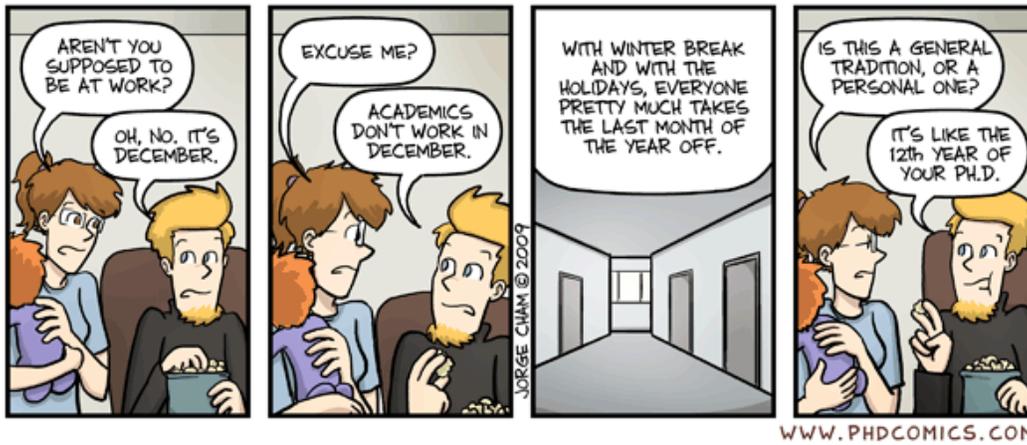
**Urban Form Case Studies:** The Ontario Growth Secretariat has released case studies of recently completed projects that illustrate key policies in the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. These projects were selected because they: illustrate density targets established in the Growth Plan; support nearby transit, encourage walking, and are mixed use; demonstrate high quality urban design and built form; are highly marketable, economically successful, and award-winning; and, are in climate zones similar to the Greater Golden Horseshoe. [Ontario Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure](#)

**Study Links Tar Sands to Pollution of Athabasca River:** The study, headed by biologists Erin Kelly and David Schindler from the University of Alberta, is [published online](#) in the international Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. "Industry studies and monitoring have grossly under-reported the extent of the pollution problem in the Athabasca for many years," says Dr. Peter Hodson of Queen's University. "Our findings show alarming levels of airborne bitumen within 50 km of two tar sands upgrading facilities near the Athabasca. The amount of bitumen released was equivalent to a major oil spill every year." [Queen's News Centre](#)

**Olympic Aversion Hits British Columbia Travel Industry:** There are signs a phenomenon known as Olympic aversion is already hitting the travel industry in B.C., even though the 2010 Winter Games are still more than two months away. Thousands of people from across the globe will flood into Vancouver and Whistler for the Olympic games but concerns about crowds and high prices are expected to stop thousands of others from visiting. In other host cities, the well-documented Olympic effect has been shown to keep people away for months before and after the Games. [CBCNews](#)

**Gravestones Talking Through Time:** Gravestones are telling the story of changes in Earth's atmospheric chemistry and rainfall. The iconic white marble headstones found in most graveyards around the world are wonderful diaries of changes in the atmosphere. By accumulating volunteers' measurements of marble gravestones of different ages around the world, scientists hope to produce a world map of the weathering rates of those gravestones and thereby deduce how the atmosphere has been changing. Participants are asked to take measurements using simple calipers and GPS, following a set of scientific protocols that are explained online. Data is then logged by participants directly into the scientific database via the project Web site. [Science Daily](#)

## Some not so “Geographical” News



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GeogNews Archives: <http://www.geog.uvic.ca/dept/cag/geognews/geognews.html>