



News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
No. 73, March 11, 2010
Compiled by Dan Smith [<cag@geog.uvic.ca>](mailto:cag@geog.uvic.ca)

Vancouver Island U Geography Hosts 4th Annual Urban Issues Film Festival: In early February, the VIU Geography Department - in association with the North Island chapter of the Planning Institute of BC, the Geographic Students' Union, and Solutions - hosted the 4th Annual Urban Issues Film Festival. In addition to a variety of fantastic short and longer films, the event featured an animated and interactive session with keynote speaker, Dr. Andrew Weaver, a world-renowned climate scientist. The festival also ended with a panel of three addressing local action for sustainability. Over 100 students, faculty and community events participated over the course of the event. [VIU Geography News](#)

UBC-O Geography Student Website Reduces Food Waste and Helps People in Need: UBC Okanagan student Raja Wariach has created a website that directly connects people in need of food with farmers and orchardists who have excess to give. Wariach, a fourth-year human geography major, came up with the idea of "people-to-people gleaning" for his Community Food Security class term project. Having lived on an acreage much of his life, Wariach saw first-hand the food waste that occurs when events such as hail storms damage crops, and set out to find a way to salvage excess or unwanted food in an efficient and sustainable manner. The [website](#) was originally intended to be Okanagan specific. However, Wariach is currently in the process of expanding the website to include the entire country. [UBC-O Media Release](#)

Trent U's Peter Adams to Receive Honorary Degree at 2010 Convocation Ceremony: Peter Adams was the founding chair of the Geography Department and former Dean of Graduate Studies at Trent University. He was also the Executive Director of the Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies. Dr. Adams has authored and co-edited many books and articles, including the very recent third edition of Peterborough and the Kawarthas. In his political life Dr. Adams is a former Liberal Member of Canada's House of Commons. He was a Member of Parliament from 1993 to 2005, representing the Peterborough riding. In 1981 Peter Adams was named Peterborough's Citizen of the Year. He is a Member of the Privy Council of Canada. [Trent University News](#) | [Peterborough Examiner](#)

Trent U Geography Graduate Nancy Strickland to Receive Honorary Degree at 2010 Convocation Ceremony: A global citizen committed to international development, Nancy Strickland, a geography major, graduated from Trent in 1978. Ms. Strickland is the founding Executive Director of The Bhutan Canada Foundation which is a newly established NGO focusing on educational links between Bhutan and Canada. She started her international work with World University Service of Canada (WUSC) as a geography teacher in rural Zimbabwe and then taught in Eastern Bhutan and later in the High Arctic of Canada. In 2003, she was honoured with the WUSC Alumni Award in recognition of her consistent commitment to international development. [Trent University News](#)

UBC Graduate Ian Baird Joins U Wisconsin-Madison's Department of Geography: [Dr. Ian Baird](#) will join the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Department of Geography this fall as a tenure-track professor specializing in Hmong and other highland groups of mainland Southeast Asia. Baird, who received his doctorate in geography from the University of British Columbia in 2008 has 23 years of experience as a scholar and development worker in this part of Southeast Asia. Baird is one of the world's leading authorities on this region and its diverse populations. [UW-M News](#)

WLU's Margaret Walton-Roberts Discusses Statistics Canada Report on Visible Minorities: Statistics Canada says the number of visible minorities living in the Waterloo region will double by 2031. And people who work with and study immigrants say this region has work to do when it comes to helping immigrant settle, find work and integrate. Margaret Walton-Roberts, a geographer who studies immigration, said service providers and local governments must sift the data to better determine needs of the people arriving here from other countries. "We have a great deal of diversity within the immigrant population," Walton-Roberts, a Wilfrid Laurier University professor who heads the International Migration Research Centre, said. Educated and skilled immigrants coming to work in the region's high-tech sector will have vastly different needs than refugees or asylum seekers. Upper levels of government also want more foreign students currently attending Canadian universities to remain here after they graduate. "If that continues that is also going to be a big contributor to what happens in this region because of the universities and college that we have here," Walton-Roberts said. [The Record](#)

McMaster U Graduate Student Awarded 1st Place at 4th Annual International Women's Day Conference: Lisa Leoni was awarded 1st place in the poster presentation competition held at the 4th Annual International Women's Day Conference held at McMaster March 5 and 6, 2010. [Lisa](#) is an MSc candidate in the School of Geography & Earth Sciences working under the supervision of Greg Slater. [SGES News](#)

Carleton U's Program in Geomatics: The Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Carleton University offers [BA and BSc \(Honours\) degrees in Geomatics](#). The programs offer instruction in geographic information systems (GIS), cartography, remote sensing and image analysis, and quantitative techniques. [Geomatics at Carleton](#)

Geographer of the Week: Dr. Tony Weis, University of Western Ontario

Dr. [Tony Weis](#) is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at the University of Western Ontario. Tony completed his BA and MES degrees at Wilfrid Laurier University, and his PhD in Geography at Queen's University. Prior to accepting his position at UWO, Tony was a Senior Researcher at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Guyana.

Tony focuses his research on agrarian change/food systems/small farming; political ecology; land reform/social movements; and, Caribbean political economy. His previous and ongoing research examines how global agro-production and trade patterns are interacting with the spatial marginality of small farmers, related social and environmental problems, and struggles for land reform. Stemming from these interests, he recently completed a book entitled [The Global Food Economy: The Battle for the Future of Farming](#) (Zed Books). His research seeks to combine critical analyses of political economic structures and the historical foundations of uneven landscapes with a locally contoured approach that emphasizes the importance of peasant interpretations in understanding both problems and possibilities for change. Much of his research has been grounded in the Caribbean, especially Jamaica and also Guyana.

Other “Geographical” News

Project Torngat - Building a Map of Science: They’re not your typical cartographers. Researchers from the National Research Council’s Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (NRC-CISTI) and Carleton University have produced a map of science that aims to make it easier to navigate through millions of scientific research articles. Project Torngat is a research project at NRC-CISTI that looks to use the full-text of journal articles to construct semantic journal maps for use in -- among other things -- projecting article search results onto the map to visualize the results and support interactive exploration and discovery of related articles, term and journals. [Zzzoot](#) | [Carleton University Newsroom](#)

Glacier melting a key clue to tracking climate change: The vast amounts of water stored in glaciers play crucial roles in river flows, hydropower generation and agricultural production, contributing to steady run-off for Ganges, Yangtze, Mekong and Indus rivers in Asia and elsewhere. But many are melting rapidly, with the pace picking up over the past decade, giving glaciers a central role in the debate over causes and impacts of climate change. That role has come even more sharply into focus after recent attacks on the U.N.'s climate panel, which included a wrong estimate for the pace of melting for Himalayan glaciers in a major 2007 report. The evidence for rapid glacial melting, though, is overwhelming. The problem is no one knows exactly what's occurring in the more remote Himalayas and parts of the Andes. Far better measurements are crucial to really understand the threat to millions of people downstream. [Reuters](#)

Department of the Geographer, Army of the United States, 1777-1783: By the summer of 1777, George Washington had identified a definite weakness in the Army’s ability to produce adequate topographical data in order to plan and execute theater operations. In July of that year, Washington wrote to Congress, “A good geographer to Survey the Roads and take Sketches of the Country where the Army is to Act would be extremely useful...”. Young gentlemen of Mathematical genius, who are acquainted with the principles of Geometry, and who have a taste for drawing, would be the most proper assistants for a Geographer. [George Washington's Surveyors and Cartographers](#)

Moose Cree and Mocrebec First Nations Visualize Climate Change: A SSHRC Research Development Initiative Grant has been awarded to a team of researchers from Lakehead University’s Centre for Northern Studies. The team will work with citizens of the Moose Cree and Mocrebec First Nations. Approximately 30 community members, spanning from youth to elders, will be given digital cameras to capture images they feel represent climate change in and around their communities. “The purpose of this research and consulting with members of the Moose Cree and Mocrebec First Nations is to identify factors that may contribute to a greater understanding of how they visualize and interpret the impact of climate change on their everyday lives.” [Lakehead U Office of Communications](#)

Some not so “Geographical” News

Geographer shows 'Kansas flatter than a pancake': An American geography professor has shown the landscape of the state of Kansas is "as flat as a pancake." In fact, geography Prof. Mark Fonstad of Southwest Texas University concluded the topography of the wheat state is flatter than a pancake. To determine the flatness of a pancake, the researchers cut it in half, took a picture of its outline, and scanned the image into a computer. In a few hours, the team found Kansas is "very, very flat," with an overall curvature quite a bit less than the length of the state. [CBC News](#) | [Improbable Research](#)

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