



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers**  
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**Prairie Summit Registration:** A reminder that the [2010 Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Association of Geographers](#) is being held at the University of Regina, June 1-5, 2010. Early registration ends April 1<sup>st</sup>. Be sure to register before then to obtain the reduced registration fee.

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**UVic's David Lai on Toronto's Chinatown in Pursuit of Appealing to Chinese Tourists:** When stepping into Toronto's downtown Chinatown, Chinese tourists may enjoy a familiar air there, and they may even find themselves treated like VIPs by small business owners, tour guides, and vendors there. However, an important question remains unanswered -- can Toronto's Chinatown be made attractive to Chinese mainland tourists? "If we want to keep our Chinatowns strong, we have to make a great effort to involve immigrants from China, improve the living environments, expand their population bases, and increase socio-economic and cultural activities. [We also have to] protect their heritage characteristics, foster tourism and resolve drug, crimes, parking and other problems," said Dr. David Chuenyan Lai, a former geography professor of University of Victoria. [Creienglish.com](#)

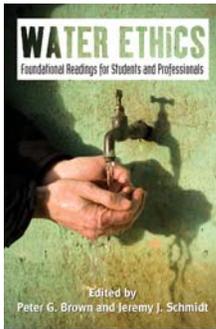
**Victoria's Chinatown and David Chuenyan Lai:** Sharing a dish of chicken feet and Chinese history over dim sum, retired University of Victoria geography professor David Chuenyan Lai says to know a man is to know his culture. For that reason, this humble scholar, respected researcher and prolific author has dedicated his life to bringing the stories of Chinese Canadians and Chinatowns to the world. At 73, Lai has earned praise and numerous awards. As he faces the final chapter of life -- Lai is undergoing chemotherapy in a battle against liver cancer -- he's about to release his 10th book. The culmination of 40 years of research, it represents the heart of what Lai believes, that if we all studied and shared our cultural history, we would live in greater harmony. [Times Colonist](#)

**WLU's Ken Hewitt on Expanding Lake Threatens Thousands in Pakistan:** A massive landslide early this year formed a natural dam in the Hunza River, creating a lake that is consuming upstream villages as it expands. If the dam breaks, a flash flood could threaten downstream villages too. The landslide also has blocked the Karakoram Highway, a vital trade link to China, cutting off 25,000 people in the Upper Hunza Valley. Though relatively rare, such landslide dams and lakes have occurred in northern Pakistan before, according to Kenneth Hewitt, a professor emeritus in the geography and environmental studies department at Wilfrid Laurier University in Canada. Two major floods were generated when similar landslide dams failed in the mid-1800s, causing tremendous destruction and loss of life, he said. [Associated Press](#)

**U Lethbridge to Award Honorary Degree to U Laval's Dr. Hank A. Margolis:** The University of Lethbridge Senate confirmed that Dr. Hank A. Margolis will receive an Honorary Degree in the Fall 2010 Convocation. Dr. Margolis is a professor in the Faculty of Geography and Geomatics at Laval University and a driving force for research into the carbon cycle of forests and wetlands. [Unews](#)

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## New Book: *Water Ethics: Foundational Readings for Students and Professionals*



Jeremy Schmidt, Trudeau Scholar and PhD Candidate in the Department of Geography at the University of Western Ontario, along with Dr. Peter Brown from McGill University, recently published a book entitled [Water Ethics: Foundational Readings for Students and Professionals](#). According to the editors of this collection of foundational essays, questions surrounding water are inherently ethical. Peter Brown and Jeremy Schmidt contend that all approaches to managing water, no matter how grounded in empirical data, involve value judgments and cultural assumptions. Each of the six sections of the book discusses a different approach to thinking about the relationship between water and humanity, from utilitarianism to eco-feminism to religious beliefs, including Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity. [Water Ethics](#)

**University of Lethbridge PhD Candidate Receives PARC Scholarship:** Ryan MacDonald, a PhD student in the Department of Geography at the University of Lethbridge was recently awarded a [Prairie Adaptation Research Collaborative](#) (PARC) scholarship for his PhD research. PARC facilitates research on the impacts of climate change on natural and social systems in the Prairie Provinces and on the adaptation strategies that will be necessary to minimize the adverse impacts or take advantage of the positive effects of climate change. [PARC graduate scholarships](#) are awarded in the field of adaptation to climate change in the Canadian Prairie Provinces. [UL Notice Board](#)



**University Calgary Celebrates 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Geography Conference:** The University of Calgary Geography Department's Annual Conference was held on Friday, March 12, 2010, with [Dr. Roger Wheate](#) (UNBC) delivering the keynote presentation entitled "*The Power of Geography, the Magic of the North.*" Graduate students received awards for: Academic Excellence Award - Tara Moran; Teaching Excellence Award - Teagan Tomlin; Outstanding Contributions to Department Community Life - Eleanor Bash and Alexander Watts; Outstanding Student Presentation Award (Doctoral) - Surendra Adhikari; Runner up - Kyle Peterson; Outstanding Student Presentation Award (Masters) - Stephanie Lapka; Runner up- Eleanor Bash; Outstanding Student Poster Presentation Award - Ryan Reynolds; Runner up - Shadan Sani [2010 Conference Winners](#)

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### **New Online in [The Canadian Geographer](#)**

Ian Walker. [Changing views in Canadian geomorphology: are we seeing the landscape for the processes?](#) DOI: 10.1111/j.1541-0064.2010.00307.x

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### **Geographer of the Week: Dr. Andreas Christen, University of British Columbia**

Dr. [Andreas Christen](#) is an Assistant Professor in the [Department of Geography](#) at the University of British Columbia. Trained in Geography, Andreas Christen did his Doctorate in Meteorology at the University of Basel, Switzerland on atmospheric turbulence and surface energy exchange in urban environments. Before he joined UBC Geography in August 2006 he was at the Department of Ecology, TU Berlin, Germany. Andreas is teaching climatology with a focus on microscale processes and field instrumentation.

Andreas's research focuses on land-atmosphere interactions, carbon cycling, and atmospheric turbulence. He uses experimental methods to investigate and measure physical and chemical processes relevant in land-atmosphere exchange in forest and urban ecosystems. Current research projects include basic turbulence and dispersion studies (exchange processes in forest canopies, urban dispersion processes) and applied approaches that link greenhouse gas exchange to ecosystem management practices. Check out his [cloud gallery on flickr](#).

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### **Other "Geographical" News**

**El Niño's Last Hurrah?:** El Niño 2009-2010 just keeps hanging in there. Recent sea-level height data shows that a large-scale, sustained weakening of trade winds in the western and central equatorial Pacific during late-January through February has triggered yet another strong, eastward-moving wave of warm water, known as a Kelvin wave. A series of similar, weaker events that began in June 2009 initially triggered and has sustained the present El Niño condition. JPL oceanographer Bill Patzert says it's too soon to know for sure, but he would not be surprised if this latest and largest Kelvin wave is the "last hurrah" for this long-lasting El Niño. [ScienceDaily](#)

**Number of High Arctic Animals Declining:** Animals in the Arctic have increased in number over the last 40 years, but populations closest to the North Pole are shrinking. The report, commissioned by the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Program (CBMP) and funded by the government of Canada, found that overall, the number of mammals, birds and fish in the Arctic has increased by 16 per cent since 1970. The biggest recovery was in the southernmost parts of the Arctic, where the number of animals

was up 46 per cent from 1970 to 2004. In sharp contrast, though, is the High Arctic, the area closest to the North Pole. The number of animals dropped by 25 per cent in the same time period, while the number of caribou was down by about one-third. [CBC News](#)

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### **Some not so “Geographical” News**



**UVic Concludes Rabbit Pilot Project:** The University of Victoria has concluded its pilot project with the wildlife damage control company Common Ground to test the feasibility of capturing, sterilizing, and finding new homes for a set number of the feral rabbits from areas in and around its playing fields—an area designated as a rabbit-free zone. The project determined that it was relatively easy to humanely capture rabbits, recruit volunteers and engage veterinarians to sterilize the rabbits. Based on what it learned through the pilot project, UVic will continue to work on a long-term plan to reduce and manage the feral rabbit population on campus. UVic’s feral rabbits are pets or descendants of pets that were abandoned on campus by members of the community. [UVic Media Release](#)

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