



News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
No. 192, September 30, 2012
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UNBC Research Shows Arctic Could be Ice-Free Within Fifty Years: New research from a UNBC graduate student shows that the arctic ice cap is melting faster than originally thought. Lyssa Maurer joined CBC Daybreak to explain why the Arctic could be ice-free in just a few decades. [Listen @ Daybreak](#)

Nipissing U Undergraduate Geography Students Share Experiences in Kenyan Footsteps: Nipissing University recently hosted Kenyan Footsteps, a presentation by Nipissing students who travelled to Kenya last year as part of an internship with Students for Development. Included in the presenters was Andrea Kocsis and Julie Kocsis. Andrea, a fifth-year geography and concurrent education student, worked on water management with professors from Moi University. She explored the usage and availability of potable water in rural communities, the effects of pesticide run-off water from farm land, and provided information to various communities of effective water gathering and usage. Julie, also a fifth-year geography and concurrent education student, taught in schools at two sites: the El-View Centre School in the city of Eldoret, Kenya, and the Emori Joi School built by Free the Children located in the South Narok District near the Maasai Mara, Kenya. In addition to this she shared concepts and strategies to work with special needs students. [Nipissing University](#)

Undergraduate Research at UNBC Documents Abrupt End to Glacier Expansion in BC: The growth of BC's glaciers abruptly ended in the early 20th century after slowly expanding for nearly 10,000 years according to a University of Northern British Columbia Geography student who began her research while studying for her undergraduate degree. Maurer and co-authors reconstructed the extent of glaciers back through time. Their data indicates that as early as 2,700 years ago, glaciers were nearly as large as they were during the "Little Ice Age," a period of cool, wet conditions 150-300 years ago, which caused glaciers to advance. "This study is a great example of the value of collaborative research," says Brian Menounos, Maurer's undergraduate and graduate supervisor. "It also highlights the mutually beneficial relationship that can exist between undergraduate students and science." [UNBC Media Release](#) | [Prince George Citizen](#)

U Calgary's John Yackel Says Melting Ice Cap will Lead to Extreme Weather: According to a geography professor at the University of Calgary, the depleting ice cover in the Arctic Ocean could lead to more cold snaps and violent storms in many of the world's most populated places. "It'll change our weather drastically," said John Yackel, a sea ice geophysicist and climatologist at the U of C's Cryosphere Climate Research Group. Yackel said the Arctic ice acts as a reflector of sunlight, helping to regulate the Earth's temperature and cool the climate. Once it's gone, more moisture from the ocean's surface will get into the atmosphere. "It will affect the jet stream," he said, explaining it normally migrates around in a circular fashion. "It will start to make lots of bends, and lots of twists and turns." As a result, he said there will be more droughts, more violent storms and more cold snaps. [Calgary Herald](#)

UNBC Geography's Don Mason on the Issues Facing Smaller Municipalities in B.C.: On CBC radio UNBC Geography adjunct faculty member Don Mason talks on CBC's "BC Almanac" on the issues facing smaller municipalities in B.C. [Listen to CBC Podcast](#)

Leslie's Tree Loss a Gain For Memorial Geographers: Tropical Storm Leslie's High Winds Damaged 150-year-old Trees in a Downtown St. John's park, creating a windfall for researchers studying lead levels in the city. Many trees — some of the oldest in the city — were knocked down in historic Bannerman Park. City crews have been cleaning up and removing the remains since Leslie blew through last Tuesday with winds up to 132 km/h. However, what was a loss has turned into a gain for local researchers at a project that has launched several studies looking at lead levels in the area. In one such study, LeadNL has been looking at trees in the park to measure how lead levels have changed in the atmosphere. Principal investigator and geography professor Trevor Bell says researchers were only taking small samples of trees because they didn't want to cut one down. Then Leslie did the job for them. "It was a really golden opportunity," said Bell. "We normally would only be punching little holes in these trees and taking out little cores." "My post-[doctoral student], Maggie Danek and myself immediately realized when we saw people cutting up these large old trees down in Bannerman Park that we can't let these go to the dump or whatever without taking a slice of them," said Bell. Now, the team has all the slices it will ever need. [CBC News](#)

UNBC's Sarah de Leeuw on Residential Schools: After midnight on September 19, survivors of residential schools in Canada were no longer be able to apply for financial compensation through a federal program. UNBC geographer Dr. Sarah de Leeuw has worked with and helped many residential school survivors in the north. She is worried that the deadline and other aspects of this process are designed to compartmentalize the pain of the past. [Listen @ CBC](#)

U Calgary's Darren Sjogren Focuses on Natural Events and Human Disasters: Natural disasters that have impacted humanity are as old as humankind, but in the age of the Internet and mass media, we're more cognizant of them than ever. "The Chinese have a record of earthquakes going back 2,000 years. Such events aren't new," says geography professor Darren Sjogren. "But our ability to communicate images and news almost instantaneously, through things like YouTube, has dramatically altered how fast we get the information. We hear about SARS and landslides and tsunamis. We're bombarded by it all the time ... It's a heightened awareness." Sjogren thinks that accounts, at least in part, for the great popularity of his course natural events and human disasters, which he's teaching for the second time this fall. Originally listed with a cap of 72 students, the class filled up within two days. That cap was quickly bumped up to 124, which has also been maxed out. [UToday](#)

U Guelph's Roberta Hawkins on Cause-Related Marketing: Many corporations are partnering with aid organizations to brand or sell consumer products, but University of Guelph research questions if what's called cause-related marketing really has much benefit. Geography Prof. Roberta Hawkins says consumer products bolstered by marketing links to good causes may be obscuring deeper issues related to those matters and the complex relationships between consumers, corporations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and aid beneficiaries. "There is a real push to simplify development issues and usually no additional information is provided," explains Hawkins. "The advertisement just has to catch the consumer's eye and convey to them that the campaign is good, but the details are lost and that can be very dangerous." [Guelph Mercury](#)

U Western Geographers Dan Shrubsole and Dr. Gordon McBean Appointed to Direct for Centre for Environment and Sustainability: Dan Shrubsole and Gordon McBean were recently appointed as co-Directors of the Centre for Environment and Sustainability (CES). In addition to their current positions, Dan will now be the Director of Academic Programs and Administration and Gordon, the Director of Research and External Relations of CES. [Western Science](#)

UBC Geographer: The September 2012 issue of the UBC Department of Geography newsletter, UBC Geographer, includes an introduction from the new Head of the department Marwan Hassan, a report from PhD student Max Ritts from the whale research station in Caamano Sound, a feature interview with Dan Hiebert, a report from PhD student Kean Fan Lim describing her participation in the 6th Summer Institute in Economic Geography in Zürich, and other items describing the activities of UBC geographers. [UBC Geographer](#)

Queen's U's Joyce Davidson on Social Pressures Women Face: The more social pressures women face, "the more likely they are to actively try to control the things they can, like the body or the home," says Joyce Davidson, an associate geography professor at Queen's University who has studied how women express themselves through their home environments. Decor projects may offer the promise of perfection for women disillusioned by their attempts to control their ever-changing bodies, Davidson adds. "The idea is that perfection might be more easily attainable if you buy the right lampshade or vase, but you're never going to achieve the right-shaped [butt]." [Globe and Mail](#)

Trent U Geography Announces Eric Franklin Bursary: A new bursary has been established, which will benefit students in the general or honours Geography programs. Established by his wife Jean Franklin (nee Simmonds) and his son, Steven E. Franklin, President and Vice-Chancellor, Trent University, and supported by family and friends. Dedicated to the memory of Eric Franklin, who emigrated to Canada in 1956, raised a family of four children with wife Jean in Aurora, Ontario, and worked in the printing profession in Ontario until his retirement to Vernon, B.C., in 1995. Preference will be given to a full-time undergraduate student in the general or honours Geography or general or honours Environmental & Resource Science/Studies degree programs. [TU Geography News](#)

U Regina Geography Launches Bachelor of Geographic Information Science: The Bachelor of Geographic Information Science (B.GISc) is a joint program between the University of Regina and the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science (SIAS). Students who complete the 1-year Geographic Information Science for Resource Management certificate program at SIAS will be given 30-hours of transfer credits at the University of Regina and may enter directly into the 2nd year of the U of R Geography program. Upon successful completion of the program, students will be awarded the B.GISc degree from the University of Regina. The Bachelor of Geographic Information Science is a unique designation that is not offered anywhere else in North America. [UR Geography News](#)

Recent Theses and Dissertations

Alex Martin 2012 "Community-Company Relationships in Forest-Dependent Communities in Northern BC: Assessing the Local, Sectoral, and Theoretical Implications," PhD Natural Resources & Environmental Studies (Geography) dissertation. University of Northern, June 20. Supervisor: Dr. Greg Halseth.

Other "Geographical" News

Climate Change Threat More Real to Those with Perceived Personal Experience: We have dramatically shrinking glaciers. We have compelling science. We have adorable polar bears treading water. But wouldn't you know it, what really makes us fret over climate change is making it all about us. A new study has found that a feeling of "personally experiencing" global warming heightens people's perception of risks related to the environmental phenomenon - and particularly those risks germane to where they live. The feeling of having a firsthand account of global warming is so meaningful, it can be

used to positively predicted concern for local risks related to climate change: think forest fires, drought, changes to animal and plant species, and public health. "People actually believing they've experienced climate change can explain their perception of risks related to climate change, above and beyond how they feel about national climate policies or their political affiliation," said Karen Akerlof. Canada.com

Some not so "Geographical" News



An Austrian-based supermarket chain is dealing with the fallout of a major PR slip-up this week after sharing photos of pre-peeled, plastic-wrapped bananas on Facebook. Billa, which advertises itself as the "common sense" grocery store, posted the photo of several bananas, peeled and then re-packaged in plastic-covered Styrofoam trays early last week. Environmentally conscious consumers immediately began attacking the product as everything from "unnecessary" to "the ultimate symbol of waste and the throw-away society," reports the Austrian Times. CBC News

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