



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers**  
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**U Fraser Valley geography student Paul Stephany in Dar es Salaam following floods:** The month before Paul Stephany arrived in Dar es Salaam, the Tanzanian city was hit by devastating floods. Office buildings were destroyed, homes were washed away, and hundreds of people were forced to abandon their communities in December 2011. “The damage was extensive. There were lives lost,” says Stephany, then a fourth-year geography student at the University of the Fraser Valley (UFV) in British Columbia. He’s one of 16 current and former UFV undergrads who have participated in, or are currently part of, Sustainable Human Settlements in Tanzania. It’s a multi-year project made possible with support from the Students for Development (SFD) program. During his internship, Stephany assisted ARU doctoral candidates with GIS community mapping to produce maps of Suna, one of the informal settlements hit hard by the 2011 floods. “Maps tell the story,” explains Cherie Enns, the project coordinator and a geography instructor at UFV. As a means of understanding and tracking how informal settlements develop over time, maps are a “visual portrayal” of the impact of flooding on a community and help identify where not to build. “For the students, it’s a life-changer,” says Enns. Paul Stephany, who is currently pursuing graduate studies at the University of Guelph, agrees. “A lot of my perceptions changed as to what our roles are in a place like Tanzania. The people that are there have so many of the skills and ideas necessary to make the changes they want,” he says. “In the long run, it was them who helped me rather than the other way around.” [UniWorld](#)

**McGill U PhD student Rania Wasfi looks into public transit users who walk to stations:** There’s an easy way to squeeze in your daily 30 minutes of recommended walking. It’s called transit. Many are already doing so, especially those who take commuter trains, according to a new McGill University study that estimated how many minutes and metres Montrealers walk every day to and from public transit stops and stations. The research, published in *Health & Place* journal in September, was led by Rania Wasfi, a PhD. student in McGill’s geography department who is studying how active transportation affects physical activity and body weight. “In our busy days, to reach the 30-minute recommended physical activity levels set out by the World Health Organization, it needs to be put into your regular schedule,” Wasfi said in an interview. The use of active transportation — which includes transit because it tends to involve walking — “provides an opportunity to introduce routine, daily physical activity into the lives of large groups of people,” she said. That means “it can be thought of as an important population health intervention tool.” Governments should look at the health benefits when considering transit investments, Wasfi said. [Montreal Gazette](#)

**U Fraser Valley U's Lenore Newman on the Canadian fruit wine revolution:** Fruit wines are becoming an increasingly popular value-added product in Canada. When properly made, fruit wines are summer in a bottle, capturing the aroma and flavour of fruits at the peak of the season and blending them into complex flavour profiles that pair well with any meal. The rising interest in fruit wines, which are also known as country wines, mirrors the rising interest in culinary tourism and cuisine in general. Canada's developing cuisine highlights wild products, seasonal flavours, and fresh local products; these qualities can be captured in a good fruit wine. For the producer, an excellent fruit wine can provide a year-round revenue stream and can help use up excess fruit at the height of the summer season. [Modern Agriculture Magazine](#)

**Western U's Jason Gilliland collaborating for community impact:** "It makes me do my job better, by working with community" claims Dr. Jason Gilliland of Western's Geography Department. Dr Gilliland's community revitalization work was featured in a video produced by the Pillar Nonprofit Network and recently debuted at their Collaborating for Community Impact forum in London. Collaborating for community impact means collaboration among nonprofit, business, government and academia. The video and conference showcased how Western faculty such as Dr Gilliland, and their students, benefit in a variety of ways by working in the community. [Video](#)

**McGill U's Brian Robinson helps explore sustainable ways to manage locust outbreaks:** Locust swarms may seem like a distant chapter from history, but these devastating insects still present a major threat in today's world. A team of scientists from Arizona State, McGill, Colorado State, and Yale universities are launching a new collaborative project to learn how human behaviour, market forces and ecological systems interact over time to affect the outcomes of locust swarms. "A lot of research looks at the deconstructed pieces of a problem, and not the larger scale," says Brian Robinson, an assistant professor of Geography at McGill. "It's important to find connections between the pieces and with our research team, we have the people in place to do that. Managing grasslands may help manage locusts, as well as minimize crop and feed loss for animals. But we need to understand how best to do these things on the ground, and how management must be adapted to different ecological and social contexts," adds Robinson, whose research focuses on how people meet their needs through use of ecosystems and on the role this plays in development in poorer regions of the world. [McGill Reporter](#)

**McMaster Centre for Climate Change helps put climate change on the map:** What are you doing to help mitigate climate change? Have you noticed the impacts of our changing climate? What are you doing to help mitigate climate change? Have you noticed the impacts of our changing climate? The [McMaster Centre for Climate Change](#) has created a website where you can share the actions you are taking and the impacts you notice. Submissions will appear on interactive maps and you may find out about interesting projects that you never knew existed. Connect with your community and help put climate change on the map — <http://www.mapclimatechange.ca/>.

**Memorial Geography graduate spotlight on Krista Jones:** Krista Jones works as a Geospatial Analyst with the Social and Economic Spatial Analysis Unit in the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, having completed her MSc in Geography in 2011. Krista is also an alumna of the department's undergraduate program; she received her BSc (Hons) in Geography and a GISciences (GIS) diploma in 2008. A lifelong lover of Geography, Krista came to Memorial knowing that this was what she would study. "Geography at Memorial is so diverse; there are so many different paths you can take within the program," she observed. "Once I had completed several courses in the geography program at Memorial I knew that GISciences was what I wanted to concentrate on." She continued working in GIS for her graduate research, which looked at the visualization of perceived spatial data quality of 3D objects within virtual globes. "My research looked at a novel type of spatial data quality and how to communicate this spatial data quality to all types of virtual globe users via a symbiotic approach which utilizes five star visualizations," explained Krista. [Memorial Geography](#)

**Trent U's Mark Skinner to lead new Trent Centre for Aging & Society:** Geography Professor [Mark Skinner](#) has been named Director of the new [Trent Centre for Aging & Society](#). The Centre has featured prominently in the University's agenda for forward-thinking research innovations. The mission of the new Centre is to provide interdisciplinary academic leadership in advocating for the diversity of the aging experience, challenging ageist policies and practices, and providing expertise for understanding and planning for aging communities.

**Do you ever wonder what the weather is like in Regina, right now?** If you do, check out the Geography Weather Station. This meteorological station is maintained by the [Department of Geography and Environmental Studies](#), at the University of Regina. The web feed is updated every 5 minutes using measurements collected atop the Classroom Building.

**U Toronto Adjunct Faculty member Paul Bedford to serve as Vice Chair of the Premier's Transit Investment Strategy Advisory Panel:** Premier Kathleen Wynne announced that the Ontario government has appointed a new advisory panel to review Metrolinx's Investment Strategy. Paul Bedford is a Member and Fellow of the Canadian Institute of Planners, with over 40 years of experience in urban planning. As Toronto's chief city planner for eight years, he championed numerous innovative planning strategies including the "Kings", a new city-wide official plan and a principles plan for the central waterfront called "Making Waves". Since his retirement in 2004, he has been appointed adjunct professor of urban and regional planning at the University of Toronto and Ryerson University. He serves on the National Capital Commission's planning advisory committee, Waterfront Toronto's design review panel and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health's property committee to help guide the long-term redevelopment of Canada's largest mental health campus. From 2006 to 2011, he served on the Metrolinx board of directors along with mayors and regional chairs of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area and developed a \$50 billion regional transit plan called the Big Move. He is also a senior associate of the Canadian Urban Institute, a frequent public speaker, writer and passionate advocate of city life. [Office of the Premier](#) | [Ontario Backgrounder](#)

**Faces of Research in the UVic Geography Department - Chris Darimont:** Chris Darimont is an Assistant Professor with the Department of Geography in the Faculty of Social Sciences. In this video, Chris talks about his research in the Great Bear Rainforest, looking at the relationship between bears, salmon and humans. [Video](#)

**U Saskatchewan's John Pomeroy on the lessons learned from the floods of 2013, 2012, 2011.....:** Canada is still recovering from the great flood of 2013 — which at a cost of at least \$5 billion, mostly in Alberta, appears to be exceeding the drought of 1999 to 2003, and the Manitoba-Saskatchewan floods of 2011 as Canada's most expensive natural disaster. These events would have been considered exceptional in the 20th century, but we are now seeing them every year in Canada and we are sharing this experience with the rest of the world. The recent example of extraordinary floods in Colorado is a horrific reminder of this. Atmospheric science tells us to expect even more extreme weather in the immediate future. There are several things we can do to reduce our exposure to and damage from floods: better prediction, avoidance and active mitigation. Advance flood warning informed by unified water prediction systems would have helped in short-term flood mitigation and a more orderly evacuation in Alberta this June. These same systems can help us plan for future flood plains, safer reservoir management, and allow us to better manage our forests and agricultural lands for long-term flood and drought mitigations. We are in the midst of rapid hydrological change now and must move quickly to prevent this decade from being the most expensive for natural disasters in our history. It will take vision, co-operation among all levels of government and national leadership to improve our flood predictions — are we up to this? [U Saskatchewan Geography](#)

## Recent Theses and Dissertations

Dominic Alaazi. 2013. [Aboriginality, homelessness, and therapeutic landscapes of home: mapping the experiences of Aboriginal Housing First participants in Winnipeg](#). Unpublished MA thesis. University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Supervisor: Jeffrey Masuda

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### Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Akin Akinwumi. 2013. [The will to transform: nation-building and the strategic state in South Africa](#). *Space and Polity* 17:145-163.

Kevin Hall and Colin E. Thorn. 2013. [Thermal fatigue and thermal shock in bedrock: An attempt to unravel the geomorphic processes and products](#). *Geomorphology*. doi.org/10.1016/j.geomorph.2013.09.022

Michael James McTavish, Nathan Basiliko and Tara Elizabeth Sackett. 2013. [Environmental factors influencing immigration behaviour of the invasive earthworm \*Lumbricus terrestris\*](#). *Canadian Journal of Zoology*. DOI:10.1139/cjz-2013-0153

Clare J.A. Mitchell. 2013. [Creative destruction or creative enhancement? Understanding the transformation of rural spaces](#). *Journal of Rural Studies* 32:375–387.

R.T.J. Phillips and Joseph R. Desloges. 2013. [Glacially conditioned specific stream powers in low-relief river catchments of the southern Laurentian Great Lakes](#). *Geomorphology*. doi.org/10.1016/j.geomorph.2013.09.030

Jocelyn Plane and Fran Klodawsky. 2013. [Neighbourhood amenities and health: Examining the significance of a local park](#). *Social Science & Medicine*.

Yolande Pottie-Sherman. 2013. [Vancouver's Chinatown night market: gentrification and the perception of Chinatown as a form of revitalization](#). *Built Environment* 39:172-189.

Jason Prno. 2013. [An analysis of factors leading to the establishment of a social licence to operate in the mining industry](#). *Resources Policy* 38:577–590.

Ricardo S. Ramalh, Rui Quartau, Alan S. Trenhaile, Neil C. Mitchell, Colin D. Woodroffe and Sérgio P. Ávila. 2013. [Coastal evolution on volcanic oceanic islands: A complex interplay between volcanism, erosion, sedimentation, sea-level change and biogenic production](#). *Earth-Science Reviews*.

Andrew M. Stewart and Joseph R. Desloges. 2013. [A 9000-year record of vertical and lateral accretion on the floodplain of the lower Thames River, southwestern Ontario, Canada, and implications for archaeological research](#). *Quaternary International*. doi.org/10.1016/j.quaint.2013.10.002

Iain D. Stewart, T. R. Oke and E. Scott Krayenhoff. 2013. [Evaluation of the 'local climate zone' scheme using temperature observations and model simulations](#). *International Journal of Climatology*. DOI: 10.1002/joc.3746

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## Other “Geographical” News

**Parents with students at university need more support:** When I returned home after my first year at university, it seemed as if my family had coped well with my absence – a little too well perhaps. Pictures that I had painted the previous Christmas had been removed from the walls and my belongings had been relocated to the attic. However, I soon realised that they had suffered more than I realised. [The Guardian](#)

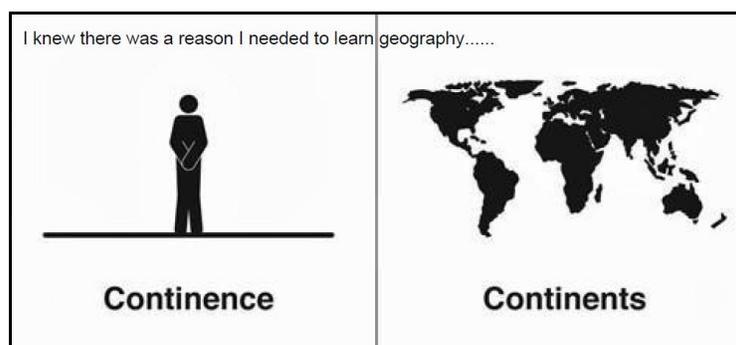
**How GPS works:** The Global Positioning System, or GPS, is pretty amazing and chances are it's playing a much greater role in your life than you realize. Anthony explains how GPS works and tells you about some pretty cool upgrades coming soon. [DNews](#)

**From federal to city mitigation and adaptation: climate change policy in Mexico City:** Climate change is projected to affect Latin America and the Caribbean as a result of increased temperatures and changed rainfall patterns. This article examines the challenges faced by the Mexico City government as it translates the federal climate change policy into successful mitigation and adaptation. It analyzes climate change impacts on Mexico and Mexico City, the federal and city's mitigation and adaptation responses, and advances and contradictions in the implementation of these strategies at the national and city levels. Similar problems have limited the effectiveness of these actions at both the federal and city levels, including the overexploitation of natural resources, a lack of climate information and monitoring systems, and the subordination of climate change strategies to the objectives of economic growth and poverty reduction. By: Fabiola S. Sosa-Rodriguez in [Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change](#)

**Northern Ontario students lobby for lower tuition:** More than 150 student leaders were in Ottawa this week meeting with politicians and advocating for lower tuition fees and a raft of other student issues. A geography student from Nipissing University said it might be harder to be a student in northern Ontario than anywhere else in Canada right now. “In Newfoundland, tuition's about \$2,500 and same with Quebec,” Corey Grist said. “In northern Ontario, tuition's more than \$7,000.” [CBC News](#)

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## Some not so “Geographical” News



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