News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
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Geographer Derald Smith awarded Massey Medal: Retired University of Calgary geographer Derald Smith has won the Royal Canadian Geographical Society's prestigious 2014 Massey Medal for outstanding and wide-ranging career achievements in his field. "It's quite an honour, and I'm privileged and humbled," Smith said. Smith's half-century career included 35 years of teaching at the University of Calgary prior to his 2006 retirement from this institution. Post-retirement, he ran field trips for oil and gas geologists. Brian Moorman, a Fellow of the Royal Canadian Geographic Society who is a friend of Smith's, said the award is "as big as it gets for geographers." Alberta Lieutenant-Governor Donald Ethell will award the medal Monday in a private ceremony at McDougall Centre. Former students and colleagues flew in for a University of Calgary reception at the Heritage Medical Research Building on the Foothills campus. University of Calgary Geographer Chris Hugenholtz, who nominated Smith for the award, says, "The broad spectrum of his impact is unparalleled, ranging from his role in training and inspiring the next generation of geographers to his scholarly contributions spanning more than 100 peer-reviewed papers and his passion for exploring and explain Canadian landscapes – which continued well into his retirement." While Smith counts his proudest success as mentoring his graduate students and setting them on solid road in life, Hugenholtz points out he has established an international reputation for his scientific work, including: Smith has an international reputation as the leading authority on anastomosing rivers – a distinct type of multi-channeled and stable river pattern found in low-gradient conditions such as deltas. "Derald has expanded those early ideas into a new understanding of oil sand deposits in northern Alberta," says Hugenholtz. Smith is renowned for his work on distinguishing counter-point bars on meandering rivers – the one-third of a river's muddy deposits that don't contain oil – from more promising sandstone deposits. He is also recognized internationally for his pioneering work on coring sediments and ground-penetrating radar, says Hugenholtz. He says Smith's research has had an impact on other fields including ecology, biology, water management, engineering, geophysics and environmental protection. While his research has extended to sites in more than a dozen countries, "his biggest legacy is found in the generation of undergraduate and graduate students he mentored and inspired," says Hugenholtz. Calgary UToday

Okanagan College students' research leads to national exposure: Groundbreaking research often results from an unpredictable combination of circumstances. For Okanagan College students Julia Thielmann and Arianna Lapham, answering a call for student assistance in a research project had the unexpected results of participating in a study of international significance and getting the opportunity to give a presentation at the Canadian Association of Geographers conference at the University of Victoria last month. "It was such a great experience and I learned so much," said Thielmann, a second-year Okanagan College student. "I really enjoy research work now and I'm hoping to be able to do more presentations. Talking with the other conference participants and learning about their work was really interesting." "We were the only undergraduate students giving a presentation and we were definitely nervous," said first-year student Lapham. "But we did really well, and the audience was very supportive. We got lots of compliments." For Thielmann and Lapham, the excitement of the past year is taking them in different directions. Having completed two years of university transfer studies at the College, Thielmann is moving on to complete her undergraduate degree at UBC Okanagan. Lapham is looking forward to her second year at Okanagan College and is planning to take more geography classes. Led by Dr. Terence Day, College Professor of Geography & Earth and Environmental Science, the idea for the research study began with the College's purchase of magnetic lab equipment from Lakehead University in Ontario. Using soil samples collected by Day from a nine-kilometre stretch of coastline in North Norfolk in the United Kingdom, the research team sought to establish a relationship between levels of coastal erosion and magnetic materials left by waves. Okanagan College News

Western U's Irena Creed named director of The Africa Institute: Western's Irena Creed has been named director of The Africa Institute. As Canada Research Chair in Watershed Sciences, with cross-appointments in Geography and Earth Sciences, Creed is experienced working on complex global problems. Her work in Africa on a community- focused ecosystem-health project in the Lake Naivasha basin of Kenya received the inaugural Western Humanitarian Award in 2011, and her work in North America on a grassroots analysis of potential futures of the Laurentian Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin won a Western Green Award in 2013. She has served in several leadership positions, including acting director of the Centre for Environment of Sustainability and member of the Steering Committee for the formation of The Africa Institute. Western News

T**rent U's Graham Cogley aids mapping all the world's glaciers**: There are, at the moment, nearly 200,000 glaciers on Earth. They have a volume of nearly 106,000 miles cubed, and cover an area of about 453,000 miles squared. We know this in large part because of satellite data. But we know it more specifically because of the first statistical analysis of the world's glacier distribution. The survey was rushed to completion to be of use in the recently published Fifth Assessment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, where it offered insight on how the world's existing glaciers might interact with each other—and, by extension, with us. "This boost to the infrastructure means that people can now do research that they simply couldn't do properly before," Trent University's Graham Cogley, one of the coordinators of the inventory, said. Each glacier in the inventory is represented by a computer-readable outline—a digital rendering, essentially, that allows scientists to model interactions among the glaciers. Glaciers are dynamic: the big ones can fragment, the small ones can melt. And it's the melting, of course, that's of particular interest. Melting glaciers lead to rising sea levels. Which could lead, according to this new rendering of Google Street View, to something like this. The Atlantic | Livescience

U Guelph's Alice Alice Hovorka presents Jan Monk Distinguished Professor: Alice Hovorka gave the 8th Annual Jan Monk Distinguished Professor Lecture at the American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting in Tamapa Florida, April. "Feminism & Animals: Exploring Interspecies Relations in Botswana and Beyond" [Listen @ mp3] . U Guelph Geography

New in [The Canadian Geographer]

Andrea Olive. 2014. The road to recovery: Comparing Canada and US recovery strategies for shared endangered species. The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien. DOI: 10.1111/cag.12090

Tayyab Ikram Shah, Scott Bell and Kathi Wilson. 2014. Geocoding for public health research: Empirical comparison of two geocoding services applied to Canadian cities. The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien. DOI: 10.1111/cag.12091

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Martine August. 2014. Negotiating social mix in Toronto's first public housing redevelopment: power, space and social control in Don Mount Court. International Journal of Urban and Regional Research. DOI:10.1111/1468-2427.12127

Hyung-Il Eum, Yonas Dibike, Terry Prowse and Barrie Bonsal. 2014. Inter-comparison of high-resolution gridded climate data sets and their implication on hydrological model simulation over the Athabasca Watershed, Canada. Hydrological Processes. DOI:10.1002/hyp.10236

Jean-Pascal R. Faubert and Sean K. Carey. 2014. Growing season water balance of wetland reclamation test cells, Fort McMurray, Alberta. Hydrological Processes. DOI: 10.1002/hyp.10240

Sean Irwin and Doug Ramsey. 2014. Globalization and rural development: insights from a grassroots engagement with international trade. International Journal of Cooperative Studies 3:1-12.

K.B. Mao, Y. Ma, L. Xia, Wendy Y. Chen, X.Y. Shen, T.J. He and T.R. Xu. 2014. Global aerosol change in the last decade: An analysis based on MODIS data. Atmospheric Environment. doi.org/10.1016/j.atmosenv.2014.04.053

Dominic Lacroix, Trevor Bell, John Shaw and Kieran Westley. 2014. Submerged archaeological landscapes and the recording of precontact history: Examples from Atlantic Canada. In: Prehistoric Archaeology on the Continental Shelf. A Global Review. Amanda M. Evans, Joseph C. Flatman and Nicholas C. Flemming (Eds). Springer. 13-35.

Jeff May. 2014. Racial vibrations, masculine performances: experiences of homelessness among young men of colour in the Greater Toronto Area. Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography. DOI:10.1080/0966369X.2013.817970

F. Chantel Nixon, John H. England, Patrick Lajeunesse and Michelle A. Hanson. 2014. Deciphering patterns of postglacial sea level at the junction of the Laurentide and Innuitian Ice Sheets, western Canadian High Arctic. Quaternary Science Reviews 91:165–183.

Marlow G. Pellatt and Ze'ev Gedalof. 2014. Environmental change in Garry oak (*Quercus garryana*) ecosystems: the evolution of an eco-cultural landscape. Biodiversity and Conservation. DOI:10.1007/s10531-014-0703-9

Merritt R. Turetsky, Agnieszka Kotowska, Jill Bubier, Nancy B. Dise, Patrick Crill, Ed R. C. Hornibrook, Kari Minkkinen, Tim R. Moore, Isla H. Myers-Smith, Hannu Nykänen, David Olefeldt, Janne Rinne, Sanna Saarnio, Narasinha Shurpali, Eeva-Stiina Tuittila, J. Michael Waddington, Jeffrey R. White, Kimberly P. Wickland and Martin Wilmking. 2014. A synthesis of methane emissions from 71 northern, temperate, and subtropical wetlands. Global Change Biology. DOI: 10.1111/gcb.12580

Other "Geographical" News

Ancient crater points to massive meteorite strike in southern Alberta: The discovery of an ancient ring-like structure in southern Alberta suggests the area was struck by a meteorite large enough to leave an eight-kilometre-wide crater, producing an explosion strong enough to destroy present-day Calgary. Time and glaciers have buried and eroded much of the evidence, making it impossible at this point to say with full certainty the ring-like structure was caused by a hypervelocity meteorite impact, but that's what seismic and geological evidence strongly suggests. "We know that the impact occurred within the last 70 million years, and in that time about 1.5 km of sediment has been eroded. That makes it really hard to pin down and actually date the impact." Erosion has worn away all but the "roots" of the crater, leaving a semicircular depression eight kilometres across with a central peak. Schmitt says that when it formed, the crater likely reached a depth of 1.6 to 2.4 km—the kind of impact that would have had devastating consequences for life in the area. University of Alberta

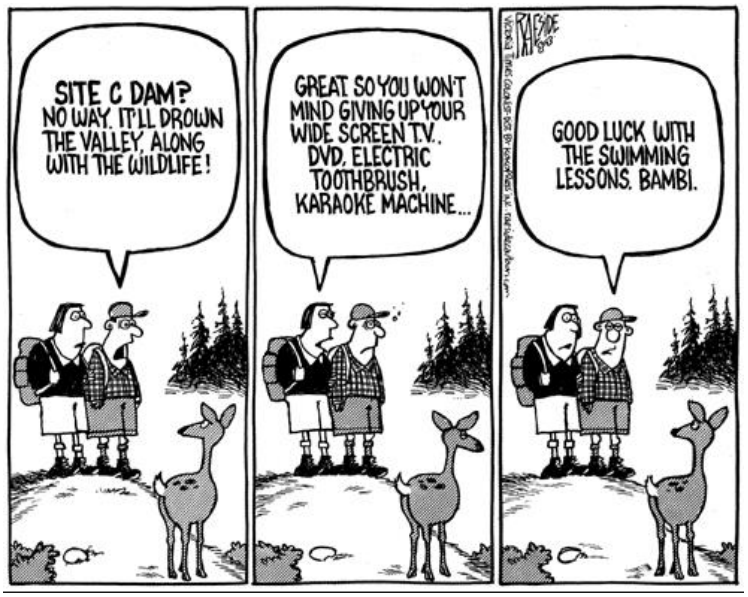
Academics Anonymous: student feedback is a waste of everyone's time: Do students have something to teach academics? Student feedback, now a feature of most university courses, can be useful – but more often it's downright biased, sexist or simply unrealistic. Most feedback boils down to whether students like the class or not, but rarely offers much about why. Students are not well-equipped to assess teaching. Their expectations are out of synch with the skill set of teachers and the university's slim resources. The Guardian

New Zealand's glacier tourism industry potentially under threat: New Zealand's multimillion-dollar glacier tourism industry is potentially under threat by ongoing glacial retreat, according to a university researcher. University of Canterbury Geographer Dr Heather Purdie said she has been monitoring Fox Glacier since 2005 and was increasingly concerned about the impact that climate-driven glacier retreat would have on glacier tourism and regions reliant on glacier-related products. Steepening ice slopes, increased debris cover and an increase in rock fall hazard were just some of the challenges facing glacier tourism operators at Fox and Franz Josef, she said. "The termini of the Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers are drawing increasingly close to their previous minimum which, coupled with thinning, indicates that retreat will continue for the near future." Adaptation to changes associated with retreat - such as steepening ice slopes - included increasing the use of helicopters to access flatter parts of the glacier and extending access tracks up valleys. However such solutions came at a cost, not only in monetary terms, but also in terms of increased environmental disturbance, Dr Purdie said. The New Zealand Herald

Overworked and isolated - work pressure fuels mental illness in academia: Academics suffering mental health problems blame their university work directly for their illness. Heavy workloads, lack of support and isolation are the key factors contributing to mental illness. The an survey, which specifically targeted academics suffering mental health problems, found that two-thirds of more than 2,500 who responded see their illness as a direct result of their university job. Over half of academics surveyed say a heavy workload is having an impact on their mental health. A lack of support is also a key issue affecting 44% of respondents, which is felt across all ages from 25-64 years. Just under half of respondents say they feel isolated, and others raise concerns around a "bullying culture", job insecurity and a culture of long working hours. A pressure to publish is felt by more than a third of 25-34 year olds. The Guardian

All the world's glaciers, mapped: There are, at the moment, nearly 200,000 glaciers on Earth. They have a volume of nearly 106,000 miles cubed, and cover an area of about 453,000 miles squared. We know this in large part because of satellite data. But we know it more specifically because of the first statistical analysis of the world's glacier distribution.

Some not so "Geographical" News



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