



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers  
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**Carleton U's Chris Burn awarded distinctive Higher Doctorate of Science:** Carleton University Chancellor's Professor Chris Burn was awarded the rare designation of a Higher Doctorate of Science (DSc) in Geography from Durham University in the United Kingdom. "The award of a DSc from a British university is a great academic honour and is only earned on the recommendation of international examiners," said Burn. "Since Durham has one of the best departments of Geography in the world, it is a truly distinctive recognition of the research I have been able to undertake since 1992 at Carleton. It is a reflection of the supportive and happy working environment I have enjoyed in our Department of Geography and Environmental Studies and the excellent graduate students with whom I have worked. A higher doctorate is at a level above a PhD and awarded in recognition of a body of work that has been submitted for examination. The higher doctorates are like the old doctorates of the medieval ages, for superior distinction. Burn's primary research focus is on field investigation of permafrost environments in northwest Canada. He credits his 28 years of work with Canada's foremost expert on permafrost, J. Ross Mackay, who taught Burn to emphasize field investigations. "I have also been fortunate to work since 1997 with Douglas Esagok of Inuvik, who has a unique ability to relate Indigenous knowledge to western science," said Burn. [Carleton Newsroom](#)

**U Saskatchewan Geography Grad Kevin Dunn this year's Saskatchewanderer:** Each year, a different Saskatchewanderer travels the province and records their journey in photos, videos and words. The province's next Saskatchewanderer is Kevin Dunn. The amateur photographer and videographer has a degree in geography from the University of Saskatchewan and has been working for the City of Saskatoon for the past five years. While travelling the province this year, he'll be bringing along his drone to get some unique shots. "It shows a different perspective because it's aerial views of seeing the towns and seeing Saskatchewan from a different aspect," he said. He's especially excited to travel north to La Ronge and the Narrow Hills Provincial Park, where he's never been before, and to return to Cypress Hills. "I recently went to Cypress Hills for my first time last year, and I was just wowed," he said. "You don't feel like you are in the province anymore; you feel like you could be in B.C. or something like that." If you happen to meet him on his travels, you might find him listening to tunes from the 2000s and snacking on granola bars, licorice and sunflower seeds. If he needs a boost, he'll take a tea. This will be the program's eighth year, and once again sponsor CAA will be providing a vehicle, a CAA Saskatchewan membership and gas vouchers to help the wanderer get around. [CBCNews | Saskatchewan](#)

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**Western U's Chantelle Richmond leads First Ontario indigenous health research network:**

Ontario is now home to a new indigenous mentorship network, and Western University is the hub. The Canadian Institute for Health Research is providing funding for the just-launched Indigenous Mentorship Network Program of Ontario. The research network is currently comprised of 13 research institutions with a team of 70 researchers and community collaborators. Western will act as the provincial network's central mentorship hub. "What makes this network really special and unique ... is that we are investing in community-led research," said Chantelle Richmond, program leader and associate professor of geography at Western. Despite an increase in indigenous research in Canada, Richmond explained that health outcomes are not improving. She believes indigenous peoples need meaningful ways to participate in and lead research on health matters relevant to their communities. Richmond announced that the network will offer 17 scholarships that are worth a combined total of \$80,000 to indigenous students who will study in Ontario post-secondary institutions. Seven grants, each worth \$5,000, will be available for indigenous postdoctoral fellows and investigators with full-time status within the first 60 months of their academic appointments. An undergraduate research workshop will also begin this February at Western. This workshop is designed for indigenous undergraduate students who are enrolled in institutions participating in the Ontario Indigenous Mentorship Network Program. The focus of the workshop is to think about successful transitions from an undergraduate program into graduate studies as well as indigenous health and well-being. "What indigenous students can expect to receive out of the mentorship network is a sense of belonging and a sense of hope and a sense of inspiration," said Richmond. [The Gazette](#) | [Brinkwire](#) | [National Post](#) | [CBC | London](#)

**U Calgary's Shawn Marshall on the weather in 2017:** Predicting when and where extreme weather will hit can be difficult, if not downright impossible. Shawn Marshall, a geography professor at the University of Calgary and former Canada Research Chair in climate change, said weather events are very hard to predict and the research trying to improve that is still a work in progress. Even so, he said, scientists have recorded changes in climate due to the levels of carbon in the atmosphere, creating the conditions for a greater risk of extreme weather. "Every year won't be like 2017, however 2018 will still be one of the five hottest years ever recorded," Marshall said. Greenhouse gases like carbon and methane sit and gather in the earth's atmosphere, where they trap heat as energy. The more energy in the atmosphere, the more the risk is for extreme weather. And the amount of carbon in the atmosphere grows each year. Weather patterns and weather events have always been chaotic and always will be, said Marshall. But as the levels of greenhouse gases like carbon in the atmosphere grow, they trap heat. That heat energy in the atmosphere raises the risk of extreme weather, which is why climate change is linked to a higher risk of extremes. 'Global warming' doesn't refer to a given temperature on a given day, he added, but rather the average temperature of the planet over a decade or more: "global warming is not just the weather." [CTV News](#)

**Central Kings Steve Wohlmuth named Geography Teacher of Month by Canadian Geographic:** A beloved Cambridge schoolteacher has been named Canadian Geographic's Geography Teacher of the Month, and he's feeling out of this world. Steve Wohlmuth teaches geography to grades 11 and 12 at Central Kings Rural High School, and has been teaching the subject for over 25 years. Wohlmuth first fell in love with geography at a young age after picking up an atlas, and studying it closely, flipping through its pages as he learned about the world. "There's just something about an atlas, when you pick it up and go through it. I think it's something a lot of people can relate to," he said. He decided to take up teaching when he realized geography was a study that came naturally to him. His classes expanded five years ago from teaching typical geography to Advanced Placement Human Geography and also geology to students, which have become so popular they're offered online after school so students from different schools can partake. "We set up a live stream so I can reach students at different schools. The students have done very well, so whatever we're doing, we're doing it right," said Wohlmuth. "They're fantastic students, and really engage with the material." [Kings Country Advertiser](#)

**U Calgary's Shelley Alexander discovering that wildlife is figuring out that human infrastructure helps with the hunt:** Can wild animals learn new tricks? When it comes to recognizing and adapting to human infrastructure it often doesn't look like it: birds fly into windows, whales are struck by boats, grizzly bears are hit by trains. But increasingly, predators are showing they aren't old dogs yet. Several species have learned to use humans to make hunting easier. "Just about any predator will learn new behaviour if the reward is there enough times," says Shelley Alexander, a geography professor who teaches a class on the interaction of humans and wildlife at the University of Calgary. "But only the individuals of a species that are very resilient to being around humans will adopt a new behaviour around infrastructure." Take the case of grizzly bears and train tracks in Banff National Parks. Since 2000 at least 17 grizzlies have been killed by trains in Banff, a major dent in the local population of 60 bears. In response, Parks Canada and CP Rail, the company who built the line in 1885 and still operates the tracks, funded a \$1 million project to better understand what was going on. By attaching GPS trackers to 26 bears and analyzing their scat, researchers found the bears were attracted to the tracks for two reasons: to feed on grain that had spilled out of cars, but moreso to scavenge carrion of other animals hit by trains. The bears had discovered that when the train whistle blew, dinner was served. Scientists are now interested in understanding the long-term impacts of this new behaviour on the bear population's genetics. If that selective pressure is strong enough to give resilient individuals an advantage, they could pass on a genetic willingness to interact with humans, says Alexander. [Canadian Geographic](#)

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**U Northern British Columbia's Gail Fondahl** recently traveled to Washington to serve on [@FulbrightPrgrm Arctic Initiative](#) selection committee to choose 16 Fulbright Fellows for exchanges between the USA and seven other Arctic countries, including Canada.

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### Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Stephanie E. Chang, Jackie Z.K. Yip, Tugce Conger, Greg Oulahan and Michelle Marteleira. 2018. [Community vulnerability to coastal hazards: Developing a typology for disaster risk reduction](#). Applied Geography 91:81–88.

Nicholas Howell, Steven Farber, Michael Widener and Gillian Booth. 2017. [Effects of neighbourhood exposure definition on the association between walkability and transportation physical activity \(breakout presentation\)](#). Journal of Transport & Health 7(Supplement):S59.

Lindsay Naylor, Michelle Daigle, Sofia Zaragocin, Margaret Marietta Ramírez and Mary Gilmartine. 2018. [Interventions: Bringing the decolonial to political geography](#). Political Geography. doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2017.11.002

Marie-Bé Leduc and Anders J. Knudby. 2018. [Mapping wild leek through the forest canopy using a UAV](#). Remote Sensing 10:70. DOI:10.3390/rs10010070

Trevor J. Wideman and Jeffrey R. Masuda. 2018. [Toponymic assemblages, resistance, and the politics of planning in Vancouver, Canada](#). Environment and Planning C. doi.org/10.1177/2399654417750624

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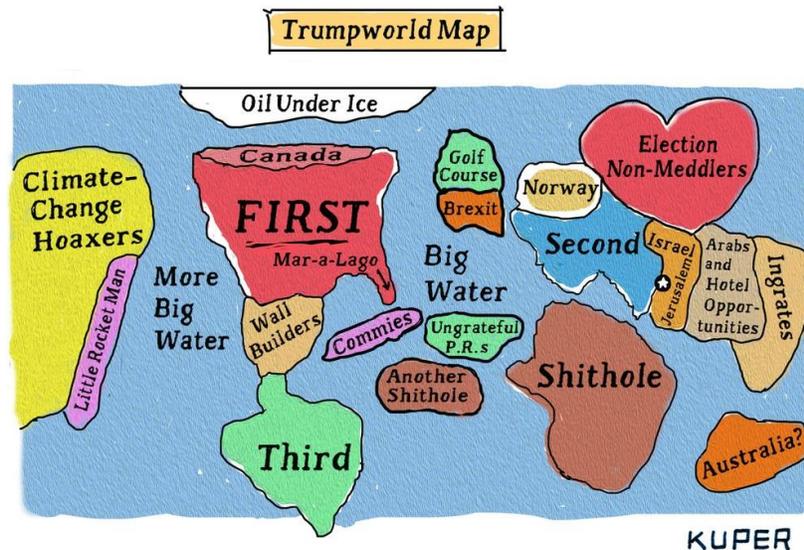
## Other “Geographical” News

**Lucky find gives archeologists glimpse into early hunting technology in Yukon:** Yukon archeologist Greg Hare says it was just luck that led him in 2016 to find a nearly 1,000-year-old hunting artifact, half exposed in a remote patch of ice. Recent radiocarbon dating confirms that the arrow blade point is one of the earliest examples of copper metallurgy ever found in Yukon. "This is one of the oldest copper elements that we ever found in the Yukon," Hare said. For thousands of years, caribou took refuge in the summer up high on the alpine ice patches to escape the heat and swarms of harassing insects. That made those ice patches good areas for ancient hunters to get close to the caribou. Some weapons would miss their marks and disappear in the snow and ice, over time building a treasure trove of artifacts now revealed by the melting ice. Archeologists have found ancient hunting tools made of wood, antler bone, and now copper. [CBCNews | North](#)

**Hopelessness and hope. Vancouver Island's Cowichan Valley grapples with housing crisis:** The Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island stretches from just north of Victoria to Ladysmith and is home to 85,000 people in a mix of towns and villages. A recent survey conducted for the Cowichan Valley Regional District showed the homeless population there has spiked by more than 50 percent in just three years. Almost 90 people were found to be living on the streets this past summer, compared with 58 in 2014. Duncan, with a population of nearly 5,000, is the largest urban centre in the region, and it's bearing the brunt of the crisis with a growing number of people living outside in makeshift camps. There were approximately 73 homeless in the city last year. Another 71 were deemed to be hidden homeless because they are either couch surfing, living in a motel or staying at Warmland. [CBCNews | British Columbia](#)

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## Some Not So “Geographical” News



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