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# DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY Alumni Newsletter

University of North Dakota

Summer 2004

## Chairperson's Corner

Dear Alumni and Friends,

The biggest news for the past year was the Farewell Tours of Drs. Hemmasi and Seidel. After many years of service each elected to call it a close on their formal academic careers. We held a very nice appreciation banquet for them this spring that was well attended by past students. We thank the two of them for all of their contributions to the university, department and community over the years.

We had two formal searches for replacements and were happy with the results of both hires. Kevin Romig, a soon-to-be Ph.D. from Arizona State University, will take the Hemmasi line. He has a primary interest in urban social geography, and will teach human geography, cartography and computer-assisted mapping, urban geography and planning, political geography, as well as other upper-division/graduate-level courses. Gregory Vandeberg, a soon-to-be Ph.D. from Kansas State University, will take over the Seidel line that was converted to a tenure track position, meaning that we will now have seven FTE lines (thanks to Dr. Hemmasi's hard work during his last year as Chair). Greg has a primary interest in fluvial geomorphology, and will teach global physical environment, GIS, GPS: Theory and Applications (a new course), conservation of resources, as well as other upper-division/graduate-level courses. We look forward to them joining our department in the fall. They will join us just in time to help the department revise its strategic plan (as per President Kupchella's directive), reexamine its curriculum, and tune-up the graduate program.

On a sad note, this past year also included the sudden and unexpected resignation of Dr. Judson Edwards over the Christmas break. Sudden developments on his family front necessitated his resignation from the university. We have hired a nine-month replacement for next year, and have submitted paperwork to recruit for a tenure track replacement in the fall semester. We wish Judson and his family the best in their return to Alabama.

Our computer laboratory and technical classes continue to grow. This year we implemented our Graduate Certificate in

Geographical Information Sciences (GISc), and the program has a solid enrollment. Undergraduate enrollment in courses continues to be strong, although we would like to add more majors. Our graduate enrollment is near capacity. Faculty research proceeds nicely, faculty and students have been active in regional professional meetings, and a larger number of our students obtain meaningful academic year and summer internships.

Our fall homecoming banquet has been set for Saturday, 16 October 2004. Be there or be a bison! You can also use that time to visit us in our 'new digs'. Yep, the Geography Department is moving once again. We are scheduled to move into a renovated floor in Ireland Hall (I'll bet you didn't even know there was an Ireland Hall!). Please try to keep the department abreast of your job changes and relocations. We are trying to be more proactive at maintaining a more complete alumni address and e-mail filing system, and we need your help in this regard. Please also submit personal information that we might be able to include in the next GTU newsletter.

Paul Todhunter

## Fall Homecoming Banquet set for October 16, 2004

The fall homecoming banquet will be held at the Blue Moose Bar & Grill in East Grand Forks, MN. The social hour will begin at 5 PM and the dinner at 6 PM. We are pleased to announce that Richard C. Mower, a 1986 UND geography graduate, will be the banquet speaker. Mower is Vice President of Special Projects, Bismarck-Mandan Development Association, Bismarck, ND. Tickets for the banquet are \$15 and can be purchased at the Geography Department. Please make your checks payable to GTU. If you plan to attend, please let us know by October 8th. For more information or to make reservations for the banquet, call Cindy at 701-777-4246 or e-mail: cindy\_purpur@und.nodak.edu.

## For Your Information

UND vs. Minnesota-Duluth (Homecoming/Hall of Fame) game is scheduled for 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 16, 2004. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at the Ralph Engelstad Arena Box Office.

## Feedback for the Alumni Directory

The Department of Geography continues to update its directory of the alumni for mailing purposes. If you have not done so or need to update your address information, please complete the following form and return to: Department of Geography, UND, Box 9020, Grand Forks, ND 58202 or e-mail us the information: cindy\_purpur@und.nodak.edu

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Year \_\_\_\_\_

Major \_\_\_\_\_ Degree \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/email \_\_\_\_\_

**NEWS ABOUT YOU** for us to share with other alumni in our next issue (information about your current position, significant achievements, family activities, etc)



UND Geography faculty, staff, and alumni attending the retirement banquet are, from left: Cindy Purpur, Jean Eichorst, Dr. Douglas Munski, Dr. Robert Seidel, Dr. Devon Hansen, Marilyn Larimore, Cynthia Kordecki, Dr. Mohammad Hemmasi, and Arden Nyland.

## Geography Faculty Activities

**Dr. Devon Hansen** continues to be busy with both teaching and research activities, and getting ready for the department's move to Ireland Hall later this summer. She presented her refugee resettlement study at the Canadian Association of Geographers meeting in Gimli, Manitoba. This spring/early summer two of her graduate students completed a thesis and an independent study, earning their MA degrees. As the faculty advisor for GTU, she was pleased to be part of organizing the spring retirement banquet for Drs. Hemmasi and Seidel. This summer Dr. Hansen is working with the Grand Forks Office of Urban Development to update the five-year Consolidated Plan for community development.

The academic year 2003-2004 was an important year in **Dr. Mohammad Hemmasi's** career as a teacher for more than four decades, eighteen years of those at UND. Although he intends to continue his research and teaching, he is officially retiring from UND this summer as professor emeritus of geography. This year he has been busy teaching, presenting papers, speaking to civil groups, and writing research papers. Dr. Hemmasi says he has enjoyed his years of service at UND and intends to keep close contact with his students, colleagues and the community. He will eventually reside in Illinois to be closer to his relatives.

**Professor Munski** continues to be engaged mainly in teaching geography service courses, both on-campus and through IVN, and focusing his activities upon teacher education in geography. He remains active with numerous statewide associations and recently became the executive director of the North Dakota Council for the Social Studies. He again will be one of the faculty academic advisors for Student Academic Service's summer program, Getting Started, but he is going to be spending most of this free time packing up various offices, classrooms, and laboratories as the GEOG DEPT prepares to move from Clifford Hall to Ireland Hall, that is—just south of O'Kelly Hall).

The academic highlight of 2003-04 for **Dr. Bradley Rundquist** was his promotion to Associate Professor, effective Aug. 15, 2004. Dr. Rundquist continues to gain much satisfaction from his work with both undergraduate and graduate students. This year two of his graduate students (Paul Sethre and David Brookman) completed very fine thesis projects from which professional journal publications will result. The number of graduate-level GISc Certificate students Dr.

## Retirement Banquet Honors Drs. Hemmasi and Seidel

'Thanks for the Memories,' the theme for the retirement banquet to honor Drs. Mohammad Hemmasi and Robert Seidel, was held April 3<sup>rd</sup> at the River Bend Supper Club. Although their spring academic schedules were busy, GTU members met weekly to plan the retirement event, which was in recognition of the dedication of these two teachers/mentors to the well-being of geography students over the years. Both Dr. Hemmasi and Dr. Seidel have expressed their appreciation that so many of their current and past geography students were able to attend. At the banquet, they were presented with a scrapbook of photos and e-mail greetings from alumni and friends.

Keeping with the theme, the two professors were serenaded by GTU with our own rendition of Thanks for the Memories (those of you old enough will remember it as Bob Hope's theme song). Dr. Seidel commented that while he enjoyed the musical interlude, maybe we (the GTU singers) should not give up our day jobs just yet.

Rundquist advises continues to grow (now about 15!). Professional travel took him to Manhattan, KS (regional AAG) and Philadelphia, PA (national AAG). Gardening and home improvement projects keep him busy away from work, and daughter Ella, now 2, provides much joy.

**Dr. Robert Seidel** retired from the Geography Department in May 2004. He first came to the department in 1966, and after an absence of ten years he returned to the University in 1978 and to the Department in 1988. He will continue to teach summers in the Bridge Program of Upward Bound, a position he has held for fifteen years. As Dr. Seidel and his wife Dixie plan to remain in Grand Forks, his appearance in the Department and at various departmental activities should not be unexpected.

**Dr. Paul Todhunter** completed his second year as Chair. He gave papers at GP/RMD in Manhattan, KS, AAG in Philadelphia, PA, and AGU in Montréal, Quebec. Research on Nelson County flooding, Red River flood flow frequency analysis, borehole paleoclimate studies, and seasonally frozen soils in Fargo are underway or nearing completion. This summer he will attend an AAG Healthy Departments Workshop in Seattle, do some writing, ride his bike and go to the Y more often, and teach summer school (one class will be a course on Lewis and Clark in North Dakota).

GTU created a QuickTime CD, which included a collection of photos highlighting the two retirees' careers at UND. It can be viewed on the UND geography web site. We wish Drs. Hemmasi and Seidel good luck and good fortune in their retirement.



Left: Dr. Robert Seidel and Dr. Mohammad Hemmasi

## Geography Forums

The Forum for Contemporary Geographic Issues is held on a regular basis. Every year the Department invites experts in various fields and the past graduates to share their practical job-related experiences with the university students and community members. Last year's contributors include: Dr. Andrew Wang, UND Visiting Scholar from The College of Economics, Hangzhou University of Commerce, China; Dr. Darrell E. Napton, South Dakota State University; Dr. Michael DeMers, New Mexico State University, Dr. Lu Wang, York University; Jason Janke, University of Colorado-Boulder; Kevin Romig, Arizona State University; Gregory Vandenberg, Kansas State University; David Brookman, UND geography graduate student; and James Rush, UND geography graduate student.

If you would be interested in sharing your professional or job-related experiences with our students and community, please contact us to be a speaker in one of our geography classes, at a Forum for Contemporary Geographic Issues, or the Fall Homecoming Banquet. Please contact Devon at 701-777-4587 or e-mail: devon\_hansen@und.nodak.edu or one of the other geography faculty.

## Gamma Theta Upsilon Participates in a Variety of Activities

The Psi Chapter of Gamma Theta Upsilon (GTU) participated in a variety of activities under the supervision of Dr. Devon Hansen. GTU organized an ice cream social, a Thanksgiving potluck, a Christmas party, and a spring picnic. GTU was involved in several moneymaking activities, including popcorn sales at the Memorial Union, and selling sweatshirts, polo shirts, and denim shirts with the UND geography logo. The Geography/GTU fall banquet, which coincided with the UND homecoming, was held at the Blue Moose Bar & Grill on September 29th. UND geography alumni Dr. Michael DeMers, chair of the Department of Geography at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, NM, gave the banquet address. He earned a MS in geography in 1980 from UND and a Ph.D. from the University of Kansas in 1985. On April 3rd, GTU hosted a retirement banquet in honor of Drs. Mohammad Hemmasi and Robert Seidel.

Much of the success of this year's GTU activities was due to the efforts of the officers, James Rush (President) and Heather Braaten (Vice-President). The new GTU officers elected for the next year are Cory Enger (President), John Hackett (Vice-President), and Rodney Iverson (Treasurer). Thank you to Cindy Purpur, administrative secretary, for her assistance in the planning and carrying out of all Geography/GTU events.



From left: students James Rush, Diane Holden, Kyle Glazewski, Heather Braaten, John Hackett, and Ellen Rush serenade Drs. Hemmasi and Seidel.

## Bernt Lloyd Wills Memorial Geography Scholarship Award

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Mrs. Evelyn (Bernt Lloyd) Wills on July 2, 2004 at her home in Coram, Montana. After her husband's death, Mrs. Wills continued to live in Grand Forks until 1994 when she moved to Coram to join her daughter and family. She is survived by her son James, Bismarck, her daughter Karen, Coram, and four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. The family held a private sunrise service in Glacier National Park on Sunday, July 11<sup>th</sup>. The Wills family has requested that memorials be given to the Bernt Lloyd Wills Memorial Geography Scholarship, P.O. Box 8157, Grand Forks, ND 58202.

The Wills Scholarship Award is presented to a high achieving undergraduate student who contributes to the excellence of the Department, not only by her/his outstanding academic performance, but also by being exemplary among her/his peers. This year's recipient was Erik Moe, who received a check and certificate at the Department's Fall Banquet. Congratulations Erik!

We express our thanks to Donn Burke Baker, '76 and Gerald M. Rott, '80 for contributing to the Wills Scholarship Fund. Thank you to Dr. Ann L. Ashbeck, '86, '93, Dr. Melvin E. Kazeck, '47, Theresa Cyr, '96, Dawn Swedberg, '87, for their contributions to the Geography Department Research and Development Fund. Thank you to Ben J. Ehreth, '01, Mark T. Folden, '98, Major Bruce Jones, '87, Mark & Myra Kuhn, '79, Michael W. Philipp, '84, and Steve A. Walker, '81, for their contributions to the Geography Department Fund.

## Editor's Note

The Geography Department and GTU were very pleased that so many alumni participated in this past year's department activities, especially the retirement banquet of Drs. Hemmasi and Seidel. If you have any suggestions that will help us strengthen our ties to alumni, please let us know.

If you have any comments or suggestions for items to include in the next year's newsletter, please e-mail me: devon\_hansen@und.nodak.edu.

Devon Hansen

## Geography Department on the Move

The Geography Department is scheduled to move from third floor Clifford Hall to first floor Ireland Hall in August just in time for fall classes. For those of you not familiar with Ireland Hall, it is connected to O'Kelly Hall and not accessible with its own outside entrance. We extend an invitation for all alumni to visit us in our new location by going through O'Kelly Hall's Second Avenue North doorway (across from the Law School) and following the internal signage.