



NEWSLETTER

October 2009

Edited by Jack Berkley

Greetings from the Chair...

2008-2009 has been a productive year for the department. Despite the precipitous drop in the state and national economies we are operating on a static budget platform compared to last year, but have so far experienced no cuts. Travel and equipment money from the dean, however, have been frozen in light of a widely reported draconian cut to SUNY by Governor Patterson. President Hefner assures us that we will not incur personnel cuts, although budget shortfalls mean that many new faculty searches have been put on hold. We are still holding at six full-time, tenure track positions plus one highly talented full-time instructor, Kim Weborg-Benson.

Student enrollments are holding steady at around 40 total, with the number of B.S. Geology students now challenging the long-time enrollment champions, B.S. Earth Science Adolescent Education. Add in our Geochemistry and Geophysics students and Earth Science students are now in the minority. This may in part reflect the new job opportunities in metals and

fossil fuels industries (among others) that have sprung up in recent years.

After many months of planning, we now have a new full-color glossy recruitment brochure that emphasizes the new opportunities for geoscientists and the many features of the department that can propel students toward success in a variety of fields. The cover features Gary Lash who has been lighting up the world of natural gas acquisition with his earth shaking (not literally, we hope) research on black shale gas targets in the Appalachian fields [see GGL's blurb below]. Gary, along with university administrators, has formed a Black Shale Institute on campus, which initially has resulted in the donation of crucial core samples to the department. Among other benefits, this institute cannot hurt in our student recruitment efforts.

Progress on the new STEM building includes an architectural mock-up that depicts a somewhat narrow two-story building trending E-W across what is now the Houghton parking lot south of our building. It will sport an astronomical dome on its eastern end, something I have been advocating for some time. We are still up in the air about how much of the new building space we will occupy or utilize. We recently (August 2009) submitted an

NSF proposal to obtain an analytical SEM and advanced computerized Nikon microscope lab, equipment that – if purchased – will likely eventually find its way to the new building. The venerable Houghton Hall is still scheduled to be renovated by gutting its interior and replacing the old fixtures with gleaming new spaces to match that of the new building (the two will be connected; not sure how yet). So if you want to see Houghton the way you remember it from your fabulous college days, better visit soon.

Speaking of which, during our recent Homecoming we were visited by alums Paul Fein (BS Geology, '69) and wife Barbara, along with Ben Cole (B.S. Geology, '96) and his wife Denine Hopkins (B.S. Adol. Earth Science, '96), plus Brian Deissinger (BS Geology, '05). Paul was honored at a special ceremony Friday 10/9 in the Houghton Lounge to dedicate a new illuminated mineral case showcasing minerals collected by Paul's father Murray [see photos]. We later headed out to Ann Deakin's cozy country home and feasted on traditional beef-on-weck and other goodies. We are always happy to have alums and friends visit the department, and are continuing to upgrade our database of alumni information. Please check out the last page of this letter for instructions on how you can send these data to us electronically.

Best wishes to all,

Jack Berkley, Chair

Faculty News...

Gordon Baird

This past year, Baird assisted with preparation of a major field trip, linked to the North American Paleontological Convention in

Cincinnati, which was run between June 26 and July 02 this past summer. This field excursion was directed to the examination and analysis of Middle and Upper Devonian sections in Kentucky, Ohio, and Michigan. Baird prepared portions of several component field reports and assisted with the running of the trip.

For two years, his research efforts have been devoted to one key local geological project. This is the reconstruction of end-Devonian geological events in northwest Pennsylvania, mainly in the Meadville, Titusville, and Oil City area. This involves locating or revisiting numerous sections across Crawford County and adjacent areas of Pennsylvania. Three students assisted in the endeavor; Justin Schwab, Katie Dvorak, and Shirley Pulawski all mapped and trekked through the gullies as part of Directed Study projects. This led to their inclusion as co-authors on presented papers at meetings this past year.

On October 8-10, 2009, as part of the 150th anniversary of the successful drilling for oil by Edwin Drake at Titusville, the Pennsylvania Geological Survey hosted the Field Conference of Pennsylvania Geologists at Titusville. Baird was field trip leader for the portion of the geological field trip covering bedrock issues at this meeting. Shirley Pulawski is a co-author on the main report; Shirley, as well as Scott McKenzie (Mercyhurst College, Erie), Jeff Gryta (University of Pennsylvania: Edinboro), Jeff Over (SUNY Geneseo), and Joe Sullivan (Buffalo Geological Society) are co-authors of descriptive sections and assisted in crowd management at stops.

As faculty liaison to the S.U.C. Fredonia Geology Club, Gordon took

students to the New York State Geological Association intercollegiate meeting at Lake George in late September, 2008 and to the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh in February, 2009.

Walther Barnard

During the Spring 2009 semester, Barnard devoted his fifth sabbatical leave (first to be spent entirely at home base) to the revision of the third (and final) volume of the second edition of his trilogy, *MAUNA LOA—A SOURCE BOOK: Historical Eruptions and Exploration*. The text of this third volume, originally published in 1992 as *The Post-Jagggar Years (1940-1991)*, was expanded to incorporate more recent events and research on Mauna Loa Volcano, and, like the earlier volumes, was reformatted into two columns for easier reading. New photographs were included; personal commentary was expanded where appropriate; and a new index was prepared. New or substantially revised chapters included “Aftermath of the 1984 Eruption”, “The 2004 Stirring of Mauna Loa”, “Awaiting the Next Eruption”, “Monitoring Mauna Loa”, “Observatories on Mauna Loa”, and “HVNP’s Kahuku Acquisition”. As a complement to the now completed second edition of the *SOURCE BOOK*, his earlier *Mauna Loa – A Potpourri of Anecdotes* (1996, revised 2003) was once again updated, expanded, and re-indexed. He expects to produce a commercially-prepared, screen-printed CD-ROM (with six-page insert), poly-wrapped in jewel case, containing PDF files of the *SOURCE BOOK*, *vol. 1* (2002), *From 1778-1907* (xii + 382 p.); *vol. 2* (2004), *The Early HVO and Jagggar Years (1912-1940)* (xiv + 462 p.); *vol. 3* (2009), *The Post-Jagggar*

Years (1940-2009) (xi + 494 p.); and *MAUNA LOA--A Potpourri of Anecdotes* (revised 2009, viii + 212 p).

He continues to write biographical sketches of his notable kin for publication in a family newsletter. Those published in the past academic year include “The Brothers Wilson, founding members of the American Rock Band *The Beach Boys*”; “Harriet Elizabeth Beecher Stowe (1811–1896), writer and humanitarian”; “Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887), Presbyterian and Congregational clergyman, orator, reformer, and patriot”; “The Children of Lyman Beecher (other than Harriet Elizabeth and Henry Ward)”; “B. F. Goodrich (1841-1888), industrialist, founder of B. F. Goodrich Co.”; “Anson Jones (1798-1858)—Last President of the Republic of Texas (1844-1846); Texas Secretary of State, Senator and Congressman; Minister to the United States; and Surgeon in the War for Texas Independence”; and “William Hubbs Rehnquist (1924-2005), 16th Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court (1986-2005), Associate Justice of the US Supreme Court (1972-1986)”.

Ann Deakin

Ann is taking 8 students to the 25th Annual New York State GIS Conference in Lake Placid in late October. She was recently appointed to a term on the NYS GIS Partnership Award Committee, which reviews and recognizes GIS partnerships in NYS that exhibit originality, innovation, broad scope, and significant cost savings. She mentored students in research and community service activities with the Verona Beach State Park, the Town of Portland Cemetery, the Chautauqua Area Regional Transit System (CARTS), and the Chautauqua County Soil & Water

Conservation District. She also supervised two internships with the Chautauqua County Department of Health and Bergmann Associates. Ann is currently doing GIS analysis in support of the Town of Portland Planning Board as they develop their Comprehensive Plan.

GIS minor **Travis Acker** (B.S. Geology,'09) is a GIS analyst with Cattaraugus County Real Property and GIS Services. Much of his work has been in support of flood relief in the Gowanda area.

Gary Lash

Lash continues to work on various aspects of the Devonian shale succession of the western New York and Pennsylvania region of the Appalachian Basin. Most recently, he has been involved in an analysis of the stratigraphy of the Marcellus shale in the subsurface from eastern New York to central Ohio and south through Pennsylvania into West Virginia and western Maryland. This work, focusing on development of a sequence stratigraphic framework of these deposits, has revealed the Acadian foreland basin to have been much more tectonically active than heretofore thought. Lash is working with several operators who are involved in the Marcellus and Rhinestreet shale plays, and he has recently become involved in a stratigraphic study of the Horn River Basin, British Columbia.

Kim Weborg-Benson

This year Kim continued the after school enrichment program known as Science Plus+ with the SCI 325 class. In response to a parent newsletter call for enrichment programs from the

community we went to Fredonia elementary both semesters. The feedback from the students involved, the elementary students we served, their parents and the Fredonia Elementary Principle was all extremely positive and we will continue the program there in 2009-2010.). Over the winter break she offered a Science Plus+ program at Chautauqua Lake Central School with volunteers from the high school chemistry class as assistants. Through exposure to an enriching teaching experience it is hoped that the high school students may consider a career in science education at SUNY Fredonia

This spring Kim was a featured panelist in the "Learning Through Service" panel discussion as part of the Engaging in our Community series. She discussed the community service aspect of two classes she teaches. The SCI 325 class which conducts the Science Plus+ after school enrichment program has developed a successful partnership between SUNY Fredonia Elementary Education majors with science concentrations and Fredonia Elementary School.

The SCI 302 class brings a science showcase to the Dunkirk Boys and Girls Club each semester. This involves a variety of hands on activities for the children that also teach science. Fall 2008 they did the "five senses" and Spring 2009 the focus was on the science of sound. The response from the children has been very positive. The director of the Boys and Girls club gave Kim's name to the VISTA coordinator here in Fredonia and they are now working together with the NSTA Student Chapter to bring more science programs to the Boys and Girls Club.

Kim also served as advisor/mentor to Jessica Deisenberg

who did an exhibit for the Annual Student Research and Creativity Exposition. Her poster presentation highlighted her work in the program in the Science Plus+ Program.

Also, Kim continues to serve as the Science Education Partnership Outreach Coordinator and have made connections with several area schools. Once our semester was over in May she continued with a “mini” Science Plus program with presentations at Silver Creek and Bemus Point Elementary schools. Kim is planning an event which brings the Rock and Mineral Club from Westfield here to the Geoscience department. She is working with the coordinator of the Chautauqua County summer enrichment program for district schools to offer a course for high school students here at SUNY Fredonia called SUNY Summer Science. The program already in place offers a variety of courses but only one, field biology, dealing with science. The coordinator is excited about another science offering. This is an opportunity to work with area high school students and enhance their interest in science and hopefully generate an interest in science at SUNY Fredonia as we bring them to the campus to work with college faculty.

Kim will also work to bring a SUNY Fredonia, Dept. of Geoscience presence to the Conservation Field Days this year. This event from the Cornell Cooperative Extension brings over 1000 students from Chautauqua County to Long Point State Park to hear about topics related to conservation and the environment.

Mike Wilson

Mike Wilson continues to work with Bill Boria (B.S. Geophysics, '85, M.S. Geology, '91) on projects for the

Chautauqua County Health Department, notably the Water Net project (<http://www.fredonia.edu/org/waternet/>) that monitors county water resources. Water Net interns this past year included Jeff Brayer (B.S. Adol. Earth Science, '09), Sarah Stryker (B.S. Geophysics, '09), Katie Boyle and Tim Dillon. Katie and Tim continue this year; Jeff is now employed in limestone aggregate mining where he is learning all aspects of the business, and Sarah is now a grad student at Texas A & M in oceanography.

Currently Mike is also working closely with several alums to raise financial support for geophysics equipment and has received very helpful guidance on seismograph capabilities from Marty Terrell (B.S. Geophysics, '98). Marty now leads the research team at Exxon-Mobil for quantitative seismology.

Wilson conducted several public service projects last year, such as the class project in Hydrogeology to locate a water supply well site for the new Grape Experiment Station in Portland, NY. He continues to research and consult on nuclear waste issues such as the geologic stability for dry cask storage at the Vermont Yankee Power Station on the Connecticut River, and erosion issues for the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority site at West Valley, NY. He also continues to help many not-for-profit organizations.

Wilson recently contributed to a short report on the alleged water well contamination by hydro-fracing of a nearby petroleum well. The incident was complicated because both the water and gas wells were hydrofaced to stimulate their respective productions.

ALUMNI NEWS... Additional photos can be found on the Fredonia GEO Alumni web page:

Mark Brien (B.S. Adol. Earth Sci., '04) currently resides at 573 W. Washington St., Bradford, PA 16701. He can be reached by e-mail at markbrien@yahoo.com.

Christopher Cahill (B.S. Geochemistry, '93) was promoted to Assoc. Professor with tenure at George Washington University in 2007. He spent academic year '08-'09 on sabbatical at Cardiff University, Wales as a Fulbright scholar and at Argonne National Lab as a visiting fellow. "Research wise, things continue to progress around all things uranium. Recent DOE funding success ensures this will continue for some time."

Ben Cole (B.S. Geology, '96) and **Denine Hopkins** (B.S. Adol. Earth Science, '96) live at 158 Torry Drive, Hamburg, NY 14075-3842. Ben continues to work for Ecology and Environment, Inc. and he currently is working on the well-known PCB clean-up project on the Hudson River.

Mark Domagalla (B.S. Geology, '79; M.S. Geology, '81) I graduated with a M.S. in Geology in 1981. At the end of the summer of 81, I packed my bag and drove to Denver to start a career. I remember toasting my first job offer with Bill and Stacy Metzger there.

In 1981, I began working for Gulf Oil Corporation in a significant petroleum producing area in the Williston Basin and lived in Casper, Wyoming. I was directly responsible for generating oil prospects and producing

economically available hydrocarbons in the eastern half of Montana. I worked on all aspect of exploration, from concept to production and included geologic and geophysical mapping, land and lease acquisition and well site geology. Chervon Corporation acquired Gulf Oil in 1985 and terminated nearly 20,000 employees worldwide.

Thereafter, I worked on NYS Secondary Education certification. I also continued my research of the Lockport Formation (the subject of my master's thesis) with the University of Rochester. I then worked on a portion of the "Big-Dig" project in Boston. This project required a plan to upgrade Boston's municipal waste water treatment plant on Deer Island. The plan called for drilling a 20 foot tunnel nine miles through the bedrock under Massachusetts Bay. I had a very fortunate opportunity to work offshore on an environmental drilling rig in Massachusetts Bay collecting geological data. I also worked for various environmental consulting companies in Connecticut and New York.

In the late 1980s I began work at the NYS-DEC Region 4 Schenectady office at the Division of Environmental Remediation, Bureau of Spill Response. I worked on hundreds of petroleum contaminated sites, as well as on groundwater aquifer and drinking water protection. Some of the more significant projects included the cleanup on a sole-source aquifer serving a community of over 150,000 people, protecting private and other municipal drinking water wells, responding to floods and other natural disasters.

After 10 years working in spill response, I transferred to Rochester to continue my career with the DEC. I took the 'Kodak Project' assignment at

the NYS-DEC Regional Office in Avon, New York. New York State is responsible for administrating the investigation and cleanup activity of inactive hazardous waste sites within the state. Kodak Park has four listed inactive site and was the largest chemical manufacturing company in the northeast. I had direct oversight of the groundwater investigations and installation of several groundwater remediation systems at Kodak Park. I served in this position for eight years.

I am currently working in the DEC Bureau of Solid and Hazardous Materials. I am responsible for all the groundwater related responsibilities at all landfill facilities in an eleven county area of New York. I review and approve applications for hydrogeological investigations and environmental monitoring at all the major landfills. My regional office is responsible for over half of all the active landfills in the state.

I am an avid artist, naturalist, craftsman and create unique works with oil, pen and ink, wood, glass, clay and other media. Recent endeavors include building wooden kayaks, crafting furniture and Native American pottery-making. I produce wine at home and occasionally enter the better vintages in State Fair Wine Competition. I activity contribute to the New York State Academy of Mineralogy with contributions to the relevant aspects of geology, mineral industry and the history of mineral science, mining and collecting in New York State. I have driven Formula Ford race cars and have competed nationally and I continue to be an avid downhill skier.

Contact: Engineering Geologist II, DEC
Division of Solid and Hazardous
Material
6274 East Avon-Lima ROad

Avon, New York 14414
madomagala@aol.com
madomaga@gw.dec.state.ny.gov
(585) 225-5426 (work)

Joe Haberfield (B.S. Geology, '75) has been with the Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection since 1987 after a former life as a petroleum geologist. Joe works as a hydrogeologist in all aspects of Florida's injection well program – regulation, permitting, and technical evaluation. "Our 'deep' injection wells are about 3000 feet deep and mostly used for municipal wastewater and desalinization concentration disposal. We also have plenty of underground water storage projects, referred to as aquifer storage and recovery. Lately I have taken on the task of learning about carbon dioxide disposal or sequestration as utilities in Florida may have future requests for these wells." Joe's contact info is: Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection, 2600 Blair Stone Road, MS 3530, Tallahassee, FL 32399-2400, Ph. (850) 245-8655, e-mail: joe.haberfield@dep.state.fl.us.

David Johnson (B.A. Earth Science, '97) & **Cheryl Butler** (B.S. Adol. Earth Science, '93): Dave is currently working for Nussbaumer & Clarke, Inc. in Buffalo, NY as an Erosion Control/Stormwater Quality Specialist. He is both a Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control (CPESC) and a Certified Professional in Stormwater Quality (CPSWQ). He was recently named as the Town Engineer for the Town of Eden, NY where he resides with his wife Cheryl. Cheryl has been teaching high school Earth Science for numerous districts in New York State and is currently tutoring while taking

care of their two young children. Contact info:

9691 Knoll Road, Eden, NY 14057

Dave's email:

daveysprocketbrew@yahoo.com

Cheryl's email:

cjohnson51369@roadrunner.com

William Metzger (ancient Fredonia faculty member). The Metzgers, Bill and Stacy (B.S. Geology, '79, M.S. Geology, '81) send greetings from Forest Grove, OR. "We have lived in this beautiful place for the past 15 years, surrounded again by grape vineyards and wineries. Shades of Western New York. Stacy received her Doctor of Optometry degree from Pacific University here and has been practicing for 11 years. Time seems to fly by! Bill is retired and keeps busy by consulting with several model railroad manufacturers, almost on a daily basis. Our kids, David and Megan, have both recently moved to southern California and are starting their careers in the film/TV industry. Bill's older kids, sons Mark and Greg, have stayed "back east", Mark in Burlington, VT and Greg in Jacksonville, Florida. Stacy and I look forward to getting the newsletter and hearing from old friends."

Address: 3231 Circle Crest Drive
Forest Grove, OR 97116.

Peter R. Miller (B.S. Geology, '81; M.S. West VA Univ., '84) worked for an oil-gas exploration company in WV and TN for 2 years. He has been working for the NYSDEC since 1985 doing pretty much the same thing, cleaning up spills of mostly petroleum products and some hazardous waste in the subsurface. Pete works in the same building with another alum, Mark Domagala (B.S. Geology, '80). Pete's address is: DEC, Div. Of

Environmental Remediation, Bureau of Technical Support, 6274 East Avon-Lima Road, Avon, NY 14414. Phones (585) 226-5434 and FAX 226-8139, e-mail: prmiller@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Mia Painter (B.S. Geophysics / Geology, '97): "My husband (Ben Chandler, Sound Recording, '96) and I welcomed our 2nd baby into our lives during a peaceful, planned homebirth on March 28, 2009. Zac Chandler, now 6 months, loves his big brother, Wes, 3 3/4 yrs old; and the feeling is mutual. After a 4-month maternity leave I went back to work at Schnabel Engineering. I have been working on all aspects of geophysical projects from planning to field work and analysis to invoicing the client. All our projects are "shallow" and generally related to geotechnical investigations, dam remediation or new dam site investigation, and/or geotechnical forensics (e.g., there's voids beneath my floor that use to be slab-on-grade, help!). I've been enjoying the variety of work and challenges of complex projects (and pumping breastmilk while onsite has had its own challenges, too!). While I work, Ben is the main parent, though he finds time to work part-time at a restaurant, doing carpentry projects, and with a filmmaker-friend doing sound."

Mia and Ben recently moved to a new house at 499 Vernon Street, Media, PA 19063, phone (484) 444-0860.

Charles "Chuck" Polgar (B.S. Geophysics, '08) is preparing a master's thesis proposal under Dr. David Steer at the University of Akron. He will be analyzing seismic data from the Ural Mountains in Russia. Staff at Akron tell us that "...Chuck has proven to be an excellent TA and graduate student and

has interacted well with faculty and other students. He will be a TA for Field Camp II this coming summer (2009)."



Reginal W. Spiller (photo above; "Reggie", BASS, Geology, '74) presently serves as Executive Vice President for Exploration and Production at Frontera Resources Corporation in Houston Texas. Prior to his employment he was the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Gas and Petroleum Technologies at the United States Department of Energy, where he managed the development and demonstration of advanced technologies for natural gas and petroleum exploration, production, and delivery. Prior to joining the Department of Energy, Reggie was the International Exploration Manager for Maxus Energy Corp., where he identified projects for oil and gas exploration and production in Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. In addition he worked both domestically and internationally for Elf. He began his oil and Gas Career with Exxon USA in Houston Texas. Spiller holds a M.S. in Hydro Geology from Penn State and a B.A.S.S. in Geology from the State University of New York at Fredonia. He is married and has two children. Reggie

can be reached at: Reginal W. Spiller, executive VP, Frontera Resource rspiller@fronteraresources.com 713-585-3202.

Lynn Wentland (B.S. Adol. Earth Science, '04) is working on her 4th year as an earth science / environmental science / principles of science teacher for the Clark County School District, Las Vegas, NV. She is also working as a shift supervisor at the local CVS Drug Store. Lynn says that she misses "all my science professors at Fredonia."

FUNDRAISING...

Thank you to all alums who have sent us donations – large and small – recently, and over the years. Unless you designate otherwise, your contributions to the department go into the **Geosciences Alumni Fund**. Recently this fund has been used to:

- 👤 *Fund students to attend major conferences (including NYSGA and PA Assoc. of Geologists)*
- 👤 *Augment student academic awards, including the Textbook Scholarship, to assist students meet rising educational costs*
- 👤 *Purchase teaching and research materials not always covered by the department budget*
- 👤 *Did I mention that it also funds this newsletter?*
- 👤

You can mail checks directly to the College Foundation:

**College Foundation:
University Advancement
SUNY Fredonia
Fredonia, NY 14063
c/o Ms. Judith Tenamore**

Make sure that you designate your gift for the **Alumni Fund, Department of Geosciences**. OR, you can send it to

Chairperson
Department of Geosciences
SUNY Fredonia
Fredonia, NY 14063
Ph. 716-673-3303
email: berkley@fredonia.edu

Thanks, Again!
AND...

Please keep in touch. You can do so by filling in the Alumni Information Form on the Alumni Page of our web site:
<http://www.fredonia.edu/departme nt/geosciences/geoalums.htm>

OR...

Take advantage of the "Facebook-like" tool now available through the Alumni Office. It's called

FREDConnect

You can access it through:

<http://alumni.fredonia.edu/FREDC onnect/Registration/tabid/181/Default.aspx>

MAJOR STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES 2008-2009

MacDiarmid Award

(outstanding senior); Katherine Brown, B.S. Adol. Earth Science and Mary Ann Thomas, B.S. Adol. Earth Science;

Willette Award (outstanding junior), Katie R. Boyle, B.S. Geophysics and B.S. Geology;

Hoefner-Orgren (outstanding freshman), Heather L. Smith, B.S. Adol. Earth Science;

Mara Award (faculty select), Sarah Stryker, B.S. Geophysics;

Eikenberg Award (outstanding pref. female major), Katie R. Boyle, B.S. Geophysics and B.S. Geology;

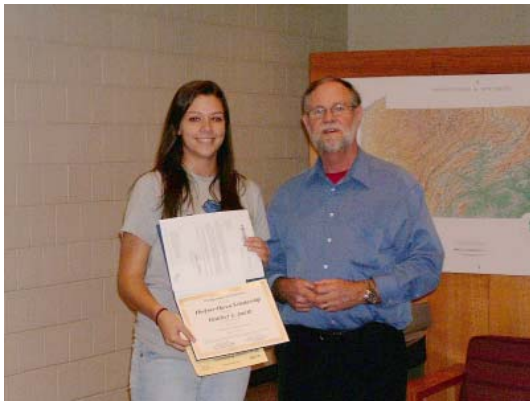
Spatial Studies Award, Ryan Hollamby, Environmental Sciences.



Mary Ann Thomas and Kathryn Brown, this year's MacDiarmid winners



Dr. Berkley with Katie Boyle, Willette winner



Heather Smith, Hoefner-Orgren winner as outstanding freshman



Sarah Stryker being presented with the Mara Award, "Faculty Select"



Katie Boyle is the 3rd recipient of the Florence Eikenburg Award (she also won the Willette!)

You can see more photos on the [Alumni Page](http://www.fredonia.edu/department/geosciences/index.asp) of the Geosciences Web Site: www.fredonia.edu/department/geosciences/index.asp

A Final Fund-raising Appeal from Dr. Michael P. Wilson...

From one alum to another: Some information about support from alumni and friends . . .

Over the past two years I was encouraged by several alumni and friends of the department to be more forthcoming about discussing department needs and support opportunities. My time here from 1967-73 (AB Secondary Ed Earth Science '71, and MS Geology '74) and again from 1984-2009 caused me to overlap with most alums and to have the opportunity to meet many of the few with whom I didn't overlap. Anyway, my slowness in asking for help from my alumni peers mainly reflects my newness to a role as fundraiser. I see this current writing as likely a one-time request, but you can reread it via the web site as many times in the future as you can stand.

I feel a little like I did when I arrived back in 1984 and walked into Ken Fahnestock's office (108). It was now my office. I felt confident, matter-of-fact, and humbled simultaneously. Similarly, Dr. Peterson's geophysics instruments were now "mine". I kept them going until they could be repaired no more . . . as some of you know, the fellow who repaired Worden gravity meters literally died and was last of his kind. Hmmm . . . I may yet truly disassemble the gravimeter. I have a delicate grasp but no dust-free room. So, fundraising is new to me, a little like opening the innards of a gravity meter and deciding how far to go, but any staff here in geosciences will confirm we need support.

We need several kinds of support. In 2000 we identified locally that the numbers of high school students entering college science, math, engineering and computer majors (including geology) was greatly declining, and then the 2002 October issue of *Geotimes* identified similar trends. We need any help you can give us to steer majors to us. Please try to remember that this department has a long history of helping students make a transition from high school to graduate school. SUNY Fredonia is still characterized by having many first-generation college students and a very supportive environment in and out of the classroom. The college has added many amenities for better student living conditions . . . and the food services are excellent! The campus safety record also remains excellent.

Another kind of support you might provide is a master class. The master class concept was initiated here in performance majors, such as Music or Theater Arts programs. In a master class the guest is somewhat isolated with just a few students in a classroom. The students and the guest can then explore issues of advanced subject content, tutoring, and discussion of professional practice guidance to the extent the guest feels comfortable.

Fredonia is privatizing. Alums are still surprised to hear us say that. It has been occurring for many years. State support accounts for less than 14% of the operating budget. The construction fund is the main state support we have. Private colleges in the state receive Bundy aid, which is state support. We need endowments to compete with their endowments so that we can continue to provide open access to diverse students. I asked our Foundation last summer "if alums want to know what the college most needs, what do I say, what is the official need?" The reply was that **we primarily need**

scholarship support at this time. The recent market decline hit our scholarships hard, and we need more of them anyway.

Our department also has several capital project needs. As mentioned earlier in this newsletter, several of us submitted a proposal for a SEM and advanced microscope lab, and we have been approaching alums to purchase a seismograph. Please contribute to these projects if you can. We have already received about \$15,000 toward the seismograph, about half of what we need.

Another issue is how much to give. Something very important is to recognize that any amount helps more than you may realize. Our rankings by independent reviewers, such as news magazines or foundations, are partly based on percent of alumni who make contributions, irrespective of amount. Those rankings help to attract students and other funds.

What do *I* give? It depends on how successful I am with outside income, how much family support I need to provide during family crises, how the market is doing, and many other factors. Sound familiar? Last year I had a very good year. I stopped consulting from about 1996 through 2005; I had too many grants and other activities. Ironically, it was a group of not-for-profits that caused me to restart consulting. 2008 was a good year; I provided over \$4,000 cash to the Foundation for students, and approximately another \$2,000 in direct payments to students for research services in little chunks. These supports were in addition to any Research Foundation grants or other supports for students, which amounted to large sums.

What support other than scholarships does Fredonia Geosciences need? Philanthropy needs to provide a feeling of satisfaction to the giver, so you tell me. What way of giving will provide you personally with a sense of satisfaction, accomplishment, arrival, pride, excitement? I provided the Award for Spatial Studies to help guarantee the future of a cross-disciplinary program and I helped fund the Eikenburg Scholarship to honor an “underrepresented” person’s quest for self determination. What do you want to support? Purchase instrumentation that will stimulate student interest in an area of your interest? Endow a travel fund for international personal travel by a student so they can take a foreign internship? Endow a travel fund for group travel to Iceland or New Zealand or western Canada or US parks? Help us to construct educational displays or interactive displays? Provide students with books or mineral specimens? One semester I taught an intro physical-geology course with about 25 students and I cleaned off my book shelves and provided every student with their textbook that they could keep or sell after the course. You decide what you can provide, but whether it is a master class, a \$20 check, or an endowment, we need it and will appreciate it. Please contact Karen West at the Foundation with questions about giving (karen.west@fredonia.edu, or 716-673-3321).

Mike Wilson

