

# St. Lawrence University

## Geology Newsletter

### Spring, 2005

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#### **SLUGAC 5 Report from Mark Erickson**

Well, if you were not there you should have been! Each SLUGAC seems to be better than the last. In 12 years, this event has become a meaningful part of the Geology Department's teaching/learning program, part of alumni-student networking, part of faculty-alumni interaction and of information exchange in all directions. This year 40 alumni, faculty, faculty and staff emeriti, and friends of SLU convened in Brown Hall and Bloomer Auditorium to hear presentations describing career paths, real world geologic applications, and scientific research. All the talks were excellent, and the range of topics can be found on the Geology Club Alumni web page

<http://it.stlawu.edu/~geoclub/alumni/index.html>.

I was particularly pleased by Carrie Denesha's description of highway engineering problems in Kansas. Her graphics were great and the humor of some of the situations was just right! I enjoyed and learned from every talk. Thanks to all the presenters.

Thanks also to panelists who participated in panel discussions on graduate school and on career paths in geology. Each panel included a mix of ages and genders so that most students had a model or two with whom they could identify. Many panelists were first-time SLUGACers whose participation we definitely appreciate. Margy Walsh, Brian Silfer and Ken Feathers come to mind as I write this (on the plane back from NC GSA). Old hands like Rick Standish, Dave Waugh, Andy Fetterman and Jeff Chiarenzelli kept us in line. We heard from a great diversity of view points and experiences and student questions gave everyone the opportunity to share useful experiences and advice.

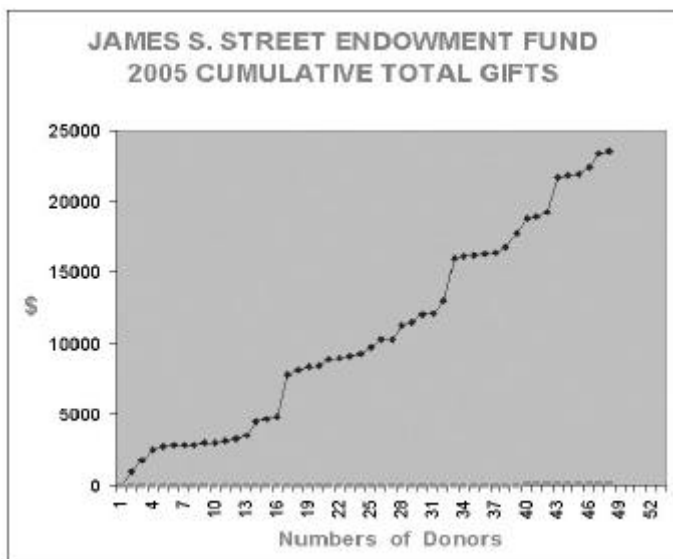
The Bloomer Lecture, describing the geologic setting and geophysical effects of the Dec. 26, 2004 earthquake and tsunami, was

excellent. Ninety-eight people were in attendance in Eben Holden for that, which was opened to the public. David Wald did a first class presentation.

Alumni and Friends then re-focused for the award of the W. T. Elberty Medal to Dean Eppler for his long term support of Geology at St. Lawrence. The following morning session included three additional Elberty Medal Awards to the other alumni who have been developers of SLUGAC from its origin. They include Roy Christoffersen, Rick Standish and Duane Eppler. The award is described on the Geology Club web site. Congratulations to the awardees. Your leadership and example of service is very much appreciated by alumni, faculty and students. Great things are often accomplished by just the sort of continuing, reliable, effort and participation that you have shown for more than twenty-five years. You give St. Lawrence and the Geology Department great dimension and visibility. At the afternoon meeting of the Geology Alumni Council the Elberty Medal Award Committee for SLUGAC 6 was chosen and can be found on the website.

The Elberty Medal is supported by funds acquired at the W.T.E. Auction. Our auction was a rousing success with donations from many alums. Most distant contributor was Tom Shaver in Washington whose parents sent us his rock hammer for auction! Other items included a magnificent mineral specimen and a collectors mint gold coin from Mike Ward, an antique SLU Banner from Scott Carpenter, Brunton Compasses from Rick Standish and Paul Meyers, USGS Folios from JME, root beer mugs from the Geology Club, several text books from Jim Street's library and other geological memorabilia. I learned that the value of my coffee mug was \$40 thanks to Steve R.'s creative packaging! The auction provided approximately \$1100 in support of the medal program.

**JIM STREET FUND CAMPAIGN – 2005  
UPDATE**



In 2005, donors to the Street Fund Campaign have included the following:

- Graham Baird
- Jay Billings
- Henry Cerwonka
- Dale N. Chayes
- Bob & Kim Delatour
- David & Marlene Egan
- Dean Eppler
- Mark Erickson
- Kenneth & Mary Feathers
- Andrew Fetterman
- Ruth Fetterman
- Andrew Fountain
- Gerald & Maureen Gould
- Heather Franco
- Susan (Agoston) Goldstein
- Michael Hayes
- Charlie Head
- F.D. and Margine Holland, Jr.
- Mike Jaron
- Frank Karboski
- Mark C. Klett
- Mr. & Mrs. John L. Kosicki
- Charles W. Kreitler
- Rob & Karen Lewis
- Tom Loomis
- Ron & Kathy Metzger
- Kenneth H. Noble
- Mike Perfit
- Andrew P. Perham
- Mrs. Adele P. Rodbell

- Alisa Scott
- Bill & Mary Scott
- William H. Sias
- Sally Street
- David Wald
- Marguerite Walsh
- Mike Ward
- Art Waterman
- Bill & Joan Watts
- David Waugh
- Don & Cindy Weeks
- Bill van Wie – Devon Energy Corp. match

THANK YOU! Please let JME know if there are errors at [meri@stlawu.edu](mailto:meri@stlawu.edu). Look for updates at <http://it.stlawu.edu/~geoclub/alumni/jimstreetfund.html>

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**NEWS FROM GEOLOGY ALUMS:**

**Jeannine (Mansfield) Fiore '97**

I am currently in the Finger Lakes Region (Bloomfield) enjoying being wife & mother. My little boy Elias is almost 9 months old. It is so nice to come back to campus and see the changes and to see that some things never change.

**Cathy Goodmen '77**

Work at N.H. Dept. of Transportation in the Bureau of Environment-processing wetland permits & Environmental assessments of DOT projects.

**Paul E. Myers '53**

Back to teaching geology at Castleton State College in Fall 05 and Scotland for Univ. of Wisconsin next summer '06. I solemnly promise to bring a huge box full of auctionable items for SLUGAC #6.

**Andrew "Dog" Owens '99**

Working as environmental consultant based in D.C. & Baltimore. Recently married (March 2005) to Christin Miller. Have a 100+ year old farmhouse & forest (very small). Groundhog family that we get to watch from our windows.

Have recently started investigating the ready-mix concrete & storm water management industries to expand clients.

**Brett Palmateer '96**

And wife Jaq hosted Mark in Denver for 2 days while he was snowed-in there in the month of April. Brett is remodeling his basement and his home

entertainment center, which I spent a lot of time enjoying til the airport reopened!! Thanks Bret and Jaq.

### **Larry Robjent '96**

Working as an 8<sup>th</sup> grade ES Teacher at North County School in Placid. Would love to see some '96ers at SLUGAC 6 (Jeep, Glenn, Brett, Drew etc....). My Dad's (Jim) friends out numbered mine 4-1.

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## **NEWS FROM FACULTY**

### **NEWS FROM DIANE BURNS:**

Yay, spring has sprung! With it comes another class sent along their way to graduation, celebrations with happy families and the slight pang of sadness that comes with having to say goodbye. While I have not been here long, I have grown fond of many of the students who have just left SLU. I wish them well and hope they find their place in the sun, whatever that may entail...

I have been fortunate enough to be asked to remain at SLU for another year – whew, saves having to move! With that, I am looking forward to offering a new course, Volcanology, in the Fall semester. It should be a lot of fun, both in prepping the class and in doing experiments to demonstrate lava flows. Along with this, I will be teaching Sedimentology and helping with the Dynamic Earth labs.

Meanwhile, the spring semester is over and a young lady's thoughts turn to...summer! I have several major projects planned, the first and foremost of which is to defend my dissertation. Along with that, I will be working with Kevin Emblidge '06 on a study of the triggering mechanisms for the landslide in Avalanche Pass in the Adirondack National Park. Kevin will be using the data and preliminary results as the basis of his senior thesis project in the coming year. I have also volunteered to redo the Geology Department's website. This website was one of the first (if not the first!) sites put up for this campus, and as such, is suffering the woes of age. The campus (and world in general) has switched to DreamWeaver software to create and maintain websites, and ours needs to be completely redone in order to be compatible. This should be fun...

Lastly, I really enjoyed meeting and chatting with the alumni who were able to make it here for SLUGAC 5! There was not enough time to get to know you as well as I would have liked, but I am glad to have met with so many former students of SLU Geology.

Take care and have a great summer!!!

### **NEWS FROM MARK ERICKSON:**

This semester has been a unique one in many ways. Elsewhere in the Newsletter I have described some of the doings of SLUGAC which was a great success from my viewpoint. Historical, Paleocology and Stratigraphy were the primary courses for the semester and four seniors did theses. There were 14 seniors in stratigraphy this year and they were a nice group of people. I'm sure we will hear more about some of them in the future. Most already have jobs; a pair are waiting to hear from grad schools.

I presented a mite paper in a lakes session chaired by Don Rodbell at the NE GSA section meeting held in Saratoga in March. The audience response was interesting to me since this is the first time that most of them had seen a fossil mite! They had to think it over for a while. At that meeting also four of our geology majors presented posters of their research and Trent Hubbard dusted off some of his senior thesis research results and arrived from Missouri to present them as well. It was great to see him.

During the semester I stayed busy with various research reports as well. John Hoganson, Bud Holland and I have been working on Fox Hills vertebrates for ten years or more and we finally got a manuscript on many of the terrestrial verts in the mail in late March or April. John and I also have a paper do out in July in the British journal Palaeontology. As a matter of fact I have six papers in press or submission at the moment, several with alumni, and there are a couple in preparation. The years since the department chair passed to John Bursnall have been really productive for me and very enjoyable, largely because there were students willing and interested in immersing themselves in real projects that could contribute to science. I am grateful for the relationship of "companions in zealous research" as the motto of Sigma Xi, the national science honor society, expresses it! I hope those of you involved have enjoyed the experience as much as I have.

I am offering my freshwater mussel course again in first summer session. That will end on July 1, then my sabbatical leave begins for the year 2005-06. Both Cathy Shradly and I will be on leave for a year. Steve Robinson will be off for the Spring Semester. As you may imagine a significant portion of the semester has been occupied by the process of reviewing candidates and conducting interviews. I believe we are leaving the department in good hands for the 2005-2006 academic year. Diane Burns will be staying on. She has been a fine colleague this year

while Dr. Owen has been on leave. It will be an interesting time.

Finally, I just returned from the North Central GSA where Scott Carpenter presented a summary of Carbon isotope data from various freshwater and estuarine clams we have worked on for a number of years. He made several interesting interpretations about Late Cretaceous glaciations and early migrations of *Homo erectus* into Java among other things. He made an excellent synthesis similar to the results he presented at SLUGAC. I went because it was in Minneapolis and there were Ordovician field trips before and after. Dave Waugh and I have been looking for additional sites containing more or less complete bryozoan colonies and we thought the Decorah Shale might be a candidate. I went on two trips and as you know if you have watched the weather this Spring, it rained for both of them. We were so busy sliding around in the gumbo both days that not much collecting got done! I did manage to extend the range of the bryozoan borer *Sanctum laurentiensis* into the Decorah Shale by finding some very nice specimens. I also managed a brief visit with Lance who is still working in St. Paul and a bit of a visit with John Hoganson of the North Dakota Geological Survey who also attended. Graham Baird gave me a tour of the U. of Minnesota campus, and we visited some outcrops that he uses for 103 lab teaching right on campus. Graham's GSA talk was also excellent, I should add.

Now, I am looking forward to alumni homecoming which will be over before you get this. Dean Eppler will be back in town for it and Dan Bissacio will be here to receive an Alumni Citation for the excellent science teaching he does related to global ecology. Keep a look out on the Geology Club web site for the proceedings.

Well, have a great summer everyone and drop us a note when the spirit moves you. Thank you to all who have contributed to the department and university in the past semester. The Street Fund continues to grow and some of you have contributed in support of Summer Fellowships which are very important to our majors. For all of your generosity we are grateful indeed. Thanks very much!

Warmest regards,  
Mark Erickson

#### **NEWS FROM STEVE ROBINSON:**

Another academic year passes and we've sent another 14 departmental graduates off into the world. I have a special affinity for this years graduates as they started at St. Lawrence at the same time that I

did. It seems like just yesterday but yes, I've been here for 4 years now!

It has been another busy year for me, and an even busier summer coming up. Camille Partin '06 and Ben Meade '06 and I obtained funding from the Asian Studies Initiative to go to China for 3 weeks this July. We plan to examine the balance between protection and development in four geological parks that have just been set up. We're traveling from Beijing, where we plan to meet with Ministry of Land and Resources officials, to the Three Gorges area, down to Yunnan Province near the Burmese border and then back to Beijing through central China. Also this summer a group of 10 students plus myself and Matt vanBrocklin are heading to Alaska in August for a course on glacial and Quaternary Geology of southcentral Alaska.

Of course SLUGAC 5 was a big hit this year, mainly due to the organizational efforts of Mark Erickson and Sarah McElfresh. It was great to see so many alumni return to Canton, and it's becoming a great event for me as I now know many of the faces.

Cheers; Steve Robinson

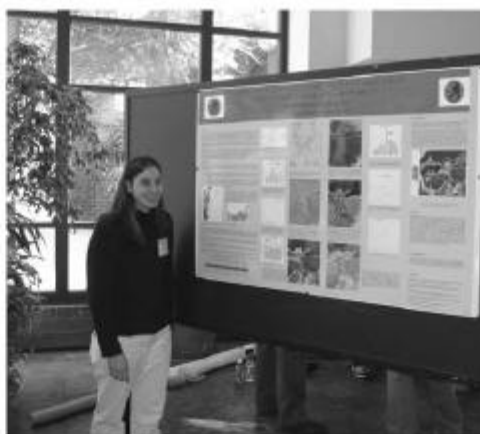
#### **NEWS FROM CATHY SHRADY:**

Hello All,

It has been a challenging year of transition and change and I'm glad to now have a year's sabbatical to work with the research I've been carrying out in Peru for the last 5 years. I hope to make at least a couple of trips there this year. I'll also be preparing to shift to teaching some of the courses John taught as he will be retiring in January and we look to broadening the department's course offerings with whomever we hire.

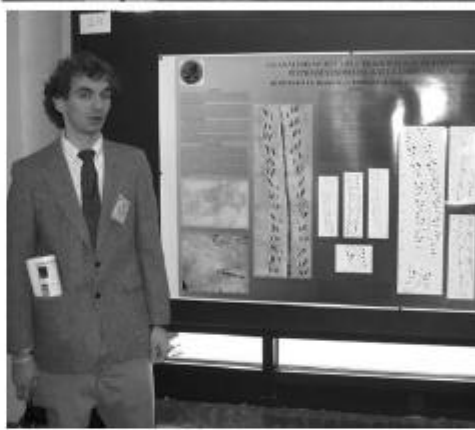
It was great to see many of you at SLUGAC; I was really impressed with what you are all doing and the great talks you gave! For those of you who weren't there: Petra (the German Shepherd puppy some of you remember) is now 4 years old and big! Teya is 8, just got braces and a pony! She has been taking riding lessons for the last 3 years and is totally in love with it, has been competing in shows, and, well, the pony wasn't planned, it just sort of happened.

All the best,  
Cathy Shradly



## NE GSA MEETING

Trisha Smrecak, Joanne Cavallerano and Matt Burton-Kelly present thesis research at NE Section GSA Meeting in March, 2005. Angus McCusker also presented a geophysics project from a course at SUNY Potsdam.



## SLUGAC 5 -- WHAT A FANTASTIC GROUP!



SLUGAC PARTICIPANTS AT THE 2005 R. O. BLOOMER DINNER AND LECTURE



Ladies of SLUGAC 5



Josh visits with Cathy  
Bill Romey presented.



Alice visits with Dean,  
Duane, and Bob at Blower Dinner.



Booth  
Platt  
and  
Sarah  
McElfresh  
(and  
Katie)

Mark enjoys  
a visit with  
the SLUGAC  
Geoladies.



DR. David Wald  
Bloomer Lecturer



The mirthful W.T. Elberty medalists



Dinner at the  
Glass Onion



Panelists  
discuss  
career  
pathways.



John Rayburn talks to students & S.R.

**Geology Newsletter Spring 2005**

**We are always eager to hear from alumni. If you have not done so in the past year or two, please fill out the form below. We'll send your news to other Alumni via the next newsletter..** (Remember – we are starting an E-Mail address list of geology alums. Please include your E-Mail address or send it to Mark at [meri@stlawu.edu](mailto:meri@stlawu.edu) to Sarah McElfresh at [mcelfres@telerama.com](mailto:mcelfres@telerama.com) )

E-mail Address(es):

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Graduate School: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If Yes, where: \_\_\_\_\_

Years Attended: \_\_\_\_\_ Degree(s) Received: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Please include any other information that you would like to include in our next mailing of the Geology Newsletter.**

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*Please return to:*  
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