

GEOMORPHORUM

Newsletter of the Geomorphology Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers

Issue No. 1, 2004

G. Pope, editor

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MESSAGE FROM THE INCOMING CHAIR

by Greg Pope

Geomorphology is alive and well. New “centers” of geomorphic research have joined the ranks of established ones (I’ll not name them all for fear of slighting one I might forget). Also strong is the proliferation of geomorphology “soloists”, the vast (and sometimes unsung) number of single geomorphologists stationed across the continent in small and medium-sized universities and colleges, posted at state and national offices and NGOs, or established with the numerous environmental consulting firms readily finding work. These individuals find interdisciplinary cooperation within their own institutions (for instance, with ecologists or archaeologists), in addition to their associations with colleagues at other institutions. New initiatives reported in

this newsletter attest to the strength and growth of geomorphic cooperation between “centers” and “solos”, and between geomorphology and other sciences and society.

It was five years ago that Binghamton University hosted their namesake Geomorphology Symposium with the theme, “Geomorphology in the Public Eye”. I was fortunate to take part in that meeting, a not-yet-tenured professor at a modest sized state university, attempting to make a small impact among the peers and mentors I admired. While the Binghamton series attracts geomorphologists from all walks despite the focused topics, that meeting in particular was notable for its broad based participation, representing academics, agency scientists, and consultants in private practice. In addition to the papers and posters, there was lively discussion about the future of geomorphology and the need to better communicate what we do, both to the other sciences and to society. The subjects that interested geomorphologists were also the subjects of front-page news for *The Daily Planet*: predicting environmental change, dealing with natural hazards, accommodating human impacts on the environment (and vice versa), understanding the role of surface processes in the much larger “earth system” that was becoming its own subdiscipline. It was obvious that geomorphologists could take a role, but it was decided that we needed a collective dose of PR, self injected, to sustain our visibility and viability.

Fast-forward five years, and these issues are keenly relevant. Modern environmental issues need our expertise. Geomorphologists have much to offer, be it watershed management and stream restoration (see “New Business” item 5 below), historical conservation (see *Geotimes* June 2004), coastal management, brownfields restoration, or many other items. Is the environmental profession seeking expertise faster than geomorphologists can respond? Or is it the case that some in the environmental profession are still unaware of the expertise, or even the existence, of trained geomorphologists? Efforts such as those of the joint AAG/GSA Committee on Applied Fluvial Geomorphology will help to establish qualifications and guidelines, promote broader education, and in general communicate the importance of trained geomorphologists to the greater professional environmental community in issues of watershed management. It may well serve our discipline to establish similar outreach and focus committees among other “hot” environmental fields.

Geomorphologists will gather and gab over a beer as easily as water flows downhill. Upcoming gatherings, such as the Binghamton symposium in Lexington or the various topical theme sessions and field trips at the Denver AAG (abstract deadlines are Oct. 21 and 28 for papers and posters, respectively), provide ample opportunity to mull our long-term goals and public initiatives.

It is my pleasure to preside as chair in this exciting year, the first of AAG’s next century. I’m also honored to work with

my friends and colleagues who help me with this far-flung group: Mike Slattery (TCU) and Bob Pavlowski (SMSU) on top of the to-do lists at the GSG, Dorothy Sack (Ohio), Frank Magilligan (Dartmouth), and Bernie Bauer (Okanagan) for their inherited tribal knowledge, and Allan James (South Carolina) and David Wilkins (Boise State) for their internet presence within and beyond the AAG’s geomorphology universe. Please keep me abreast of the news and views, I’ll be happy to include them for discussion in the next *Geomorphorum* and next GSG business meeting.

MINUTES OF THE GEOMORPHOLOGY SPECIALTY GROUP BUSINESS MEETING, March 19, 2004, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dorothy Sack, Chair
Greg Pope, Secretary/Treasurer

Dorothy called the meeting to order on time. Attendance was not counted, but the room was filled to standing room.

Announcements from the Chair

1) Dorothy thanked all for supporting her as chair for the GSG, at an exciting time for the specialty group and for the AAG at its centennial.

2) Dorothy expressed congratulations to GSG member Dick Marston for his successful election to Vice President of the AAG. Dick in turn expressed his thanks for the strong support he received from many GSG members. Dick also expressed thanks by co-sponsoring the reception following the business meeting!

3) From the Specialty Group Chair’s meeting –

The AAG reminds and encourages everyone to contribute to the Centennial Fund. A suggestion was made to Specialty Group chairs to consider contribute some specialty group moneys as a gift to the Centennial Fund [discussion later].

It will soon be possible to obtain a specialty group membership list through authorized use of a password. More on this as it develops. For this reason, it is important that members provide to AAG a current and valid e-mail address.

4) Dorothy thanks GSG members for sponsoring and participating in high profile sessions. The Physical Geography reception on Wednesday night [previous evening] was well attended.

5) Fritz Nelson’s Blackwell-sponsored lecture was well attended.

Specialty Group Reports

- 1) Minutes – The minutes from the 2003 business meeting in New Orleans were approved as posted on the GSG web site.
- 2) Treasurer’s report (Pope) – Shortly before this GSG business meeting, the AAG central office provided the Geomorphology Specialty Group’s financial report current as of August 31, 2003. A balance of \$7958.57 was carried over from the previous fiscal year (8/31/02). Between September 1, 2002 and August 31, 2003, the group was allocated \$1,464.25 in dues. Additional revenue was derived from sale of the geomorphology image CD (compiled and distributed by Mike Slattery), with two deposits: \$625 on January 1, 2003 and \$405 on May 28, 2003. Disbursements of \$1,526.80 went to two student research awards (\$600 total), two paper awards (\$400 total), and catering (\$526.80). The balance as of August 31, 2003 was \$8,925. With the help of CD sales, we are approaching our goal of an endowment of \$10,000 that was proposed several years ago. At present, the Geomorphology Specialty Group has the largest balance of any AAG specialty group. Discussion is invited later as to how we might use these funds. Pope and Sack spoke informally with Paul Abel (AAG accounts manager) about setting up an interest-earning fund from this endowment to sustain the research and paper awards. [discussion in section xx below]

- 3) Web editor’s report (James)

Allan James will continue as web editor/manager for the specialty group.

James proposes a meeting-based geomorphology guidebook webpage. (See new business below.)

New business

- 1) David Butler (Texas State-San Marcos) had taken the role of “specialty group historian” for the events of the centennial meeting. Geomorphology Specialty Group was one of three to contribute a display to the AAG Centennial Timeline. A motion was put forth to install Dave as permanent historian. Motion was passed unanimously. It was suggested that worthy archival material might be sent to University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.
- 2) Allan James would like to establish an ongoing series of volunteered web based “vignettes” highlighting aspects of geomorphology for upcoming annual AAG sites. Contributions are invited for “*Geomorphology of the Denver Region*”

for 2005. He suggests that contributions be creative, fun, and educational and can include maps, photographs, and other forms of information on the public domain. Suggested projects include:

- Local physiographic sketches for the region. While regional geomorphology may be considered passé by some, given the advances of plate tectonics since Fenneman, and the vastly improved mapping technologies of GI Science, there’s much room for a new synthesis in regional (mega) geomorphology in many regions of North America.
- Examples of important geographic features or processes in the region.
- Road logs for self-guided one-day trips (for instance, from Denver).

Contact Allan James for specifics on guideline submissions. Briefly, submissions should be web-ready, have cited references that do not infringe on copyrights, and authors should be willing to work with the web editor to maintain consistency and brevity.

[the above is quoted from Allan James’ Web Editor’s Report]

- 3) Financial resources and awards

Sales of the Geomorphology Images CD, edited by Mike Slattery, continue to augment the specialty group’s coffers. A deal with a publisher is in the works, wherein the CD will be packaged with a textbook, adding substantially more. There is potential to offer the images through subscription via the internet (also a benefit to textbook publishers).

The SG is now at the point where we may explore investing our funds as a sustaining endowment, in an interest-earning account. Dorothy Sack spoke with Paul Abel, AAG’s financial administrator, about possibilities. Paul responded that AAG could manage this account for us. Frank Magilligan moved that the GSG advisory board begin discussions with AAG central office to make this so. Motion passed unanimously.

Student Awards. With larger financial resources, the SG is able to increase the value of student research and paper awards. Currently, the specialty group awards one award for best student paper. The Awards Committee suggests that the specialty group could be allowed to make two such awards, by amending the current bylaws. A motion was made to amend the bylaws thus. Allan James posed a friendly amendment to the motion to increase the

value of these awards to \$250. The motion, and friendly amendment to the motion, was passed unanimously: the Awards Committee may now make two paper awards with a \$250 prize (each). Suggestion was made to increase research grants to \$250 and \$500 for masters and doctoral, respectively.

- 4) International Association of Geomorphologists
The Geological Society of America's Quaternary Geology and Geomorphology division approached the GSG (via Carol Harden) regarding the possibility of co-hosting the 2009 IAG meeting in the United States. A full proposal will need to be submitted to the IAG at the September 2005 meeting in Saragosa, Spain. While Don Friend cautioned that this would be significant work to accomplish in just one year, Frank Magilligan pointed out that we would be remiss by not contributing. Volunteers from GSG will be needed for this proposal planning committee. John Harbor, Frank Magilligan, and Carol Harden volunteered to participate on this joint committee (to be supported by GSG advisory board members). Motion was made to go forward with this joint effort, and approved unanimously.

Other IAG news – As arranged earlier, IAG will now bill the GSG and GSA-QG&G alternately for dues. IAG has funds available to assist young geomorphologists with travel to conferences.

- 5) Applied fluvial committee
Allan James forwarded news of a new ad hoc committee on Applied Fluvial Geomorphology, initiated by GSA's QG&G division. The committee aims to address professional issues in this rapidly developing field, prompted by the proliferation of new stream restoration and management projects across both private and public sectors. As issue is the need for well-trained professionals, while practitioners from a variety of trades are taking part in these enterprises.

James circulated a white paper, authored by the ad hoc committee, outlining the scope and needs for applied fluvial geomorphology. Importantly, the paper brings forth the skills and knowledge base inherent in geomorphology that are germane to these problems, which should be communicated broadly (in lieu of official sanctioning or regulation, at least for now). A motion was called asking for GSG's participation with the ad hoc committee. Motion passed.

James will be posting a survey on the GSG's web site, soliciting opinions on this issue [subsequently announced late Spring]. Further details on the works

of this committee are available at http://www.cla.sc.edu/geog/gsgdocs/FluvComm/1_Intro.html.

- 6) Journal editors' reports
Geomorphology (Dick Marston): Record number of publications last year... Much larger audience now that the journal is carried online via Science Direct... AAG members are eligible for discount subscriptions... Guest editor topic and book reviews are always welcome.
Southeastern Geographer (Scott Lecce): Welcomes papers, would like to see more physical geography and geomorphology in this respected regional journal.
AAG Annals (Bernie Bauer): Only 25 submissions in physical geographer last year, would like to see more. Acceptance rate for physical geography is around 50%, and no significant lag time, accepted papers are usually published within one year of initial submission.

Announcements

(see below)

Awards

Awards committee consisted of Mike Slattery (Texas Christian University, chair of the committee), Bob Pavlowski (Southwest Missouri State University) and Susan Millar (Syracuse University).

Chair Slattery announced that there were very strong submissions for all of this year's awards, making decisions exceedingly difficult.

(Awards announced below.)

Appointments

Awards Committee: Mike Craghan (Middle Atlantic Center for Geography & Environmental Studies) nominated to the committee. Unanimously approved for appointment.

Secretary Treasurer: Mike Slattery (Texas Christian University) nominated. Unanimously approved

Business meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00pm, followed by a reception generously underwritten by Dick Marston.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Conferences

19th International Dendroecological Fieldweek 2004 – special focus on Dendrogeomorphology, August 29-September 4, 2004, Val di Pejo, Trentino, Northern Italy. Anyone interested in Dendroecology / Dendrogeomorphology can register for the fieldweek by sending an email to Holger Gaertner, holger.gaertner@wsl.ch, not later than: July 30, 2000. Web site, <http://www.wsl.ch/staff/holger.gaertner/Fieldweek2004.ehtml>

International Association of Sedimentology
23rd Annual Meeting, Coimbra, Portugal, Sept. 15-17. Contact: Rui Pena dos Reis, Universidade de Coimbra, Dpto. Ciências da Terra, Largo Marquês de Pombal, 3014 Coimbra, Portugal; E-mail: penareis@ci.uc.pt

Association of Engineering Geologists
Annual Meeting, Sept. 25-Oct. 3, Dearborn, Michigan, USA. Contact Julie Keaton, PO Box 5204, Blue Jay, CA 92317, Phone: +1 909 337 0657; Fax: +1 909 337 6518; E-mail: aegjuliek@aol.com; Web Site: www.aegweb.org

Binghamton Symposia:

- Weathering and Landscape Evolution, October 1-3, 2004 Univ. of Kentucky, Lexington – contact Jonathan Phillips, Alice Turkington, or Sean Campbell (all at U. Kentucky). The symposium is broadly divided into three themes or sessions: Weathering Processes, Weathering-Dominated Landforms and Landscape, and Weathering Features as Geomorphic Indicators. Sept. 1 is the pre-registration deadline. Web site: <http://www.uky.edu/AS/Geography/Binghamton04/>
- Human Geomorphology Systems, Oct. 7-9, 2005, University at Buffalo – contact Chris Renschler.
- Human Role in Fluvial Geomorphology, 2006, to be determined – contact Andrew Marcus or Allan James.

Geological Society of America
Annual Meeting, Denver, November 7-10.
<http://www.geosociety.org/meetings/2004/reg.htm>.

American Geophysical Union
Fall Meeting, December 13-17, San Francisco, California, Contact: AGU Meetings Department, 2000 Florida Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20009; Phone 202-777-7333; Fax 202-328-0566; E-mail meetinginfo@agu.org; Web Site www.agu.org/meetings/fm04/. Abstract deadline: September 9, 2004 (by web registration).

2005 AGU Joint Assembly, May 23-27, New Orleans, Louisiana, Contact same as above. Web Site: www.agu.org; Abstract deadline: February 10, 2005

Land Use Change and Soil and Water Processes in Tropical Mountain Environments, Second International Symposium, December 14-17, 2004, Luang Phrabang, Lao PDR, Organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Lao PDR. Sponsored by the National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI), International Water Management Institute (IWMI), and Institut de Recherche pour le Developpement (IRD). More information about the symposium can be found at the following websites, <http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/>.

CRC LEME Regional Regolith Symposia, Regolith 2004. "The Cooperative Research Centre for Landscape Environments and Mineral Exploration (CRC LEME), Australia, is pleased to announce three symposia highlighting the state of regolith research in 2004. These symposia will be held over three weeks in three separate cities in 2004:

- Central Symposium: University of Adelaide, Adelaide SA, 10-12 November.
- Western Symposium: Curtin University of Technology, Perth WA, 18-19 November.
- Eastern Symposium: Australian National University, Canberra ACT, 24-26 November

Symposia address the strategic themes of CRC LEME. Presenters are invited to submit papers addressing the strategic or special themes by COB 24 September 2004. Early registrations are invited before Friday 29th October, after which the price goes up. Abstract submission and registration details are available on the CRC LEME web site at <http://crcleme.org.au/>

Italian Association of Physical Geography & Geomorphology (AIGeo): "Shifting lands: New insights into periglacial geomorphology", January 20-22, 2005, Clermont-Ferrand, France. Web site: <http://geo.islande.free.fr/shifting/index.htm>

Joint BGRG/BSRG Conference
Drylands: Linking Landscape Processes to Sedimentary Environments, 2-4 February 2005, Geological Society, London. All delegates planning to attend the conference should register before 1st December 2004. Registrations received after this date are subject to a 20% surcharge. Abstract deadline is 17th September. To register interest in the meeting and receive regular updates, email contact details to: drylands.2005@lboro.ac.uk. For further information, visit: <http://www.bton.ac.uk/environment/drylands/>

Seismic Geomorphology

International Conference, February 10-11, 2005, Westchase Hilton Hotel, Houston, Texas, USA. Sponsored by the Geological Society of London and SEPM. Contact: Jessica Canfor, Geological Society of London, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BG; Phone: +44 (0)20 7434 9944 Fax: +44 (0)20 7494 0579; E-mail:

jessica.canfor@geolsoc.org.uk; Web Site: www.geolsoc.org.uk/seismicgeomorphology

Association of American Geographers

Annual Meeting, April 5-9, 2005, Denver, Colorado. See

<http://www.aag.org/annualmeetings/index.cfm>.

Abstract for papers and illustrated papers due October 21, 2004, and for posters October 28, 2004. Special sessions require abstract submission to the session organizer well in advance of the AAG deadline. Special sessions announced in time for this newsletter are listed here:

Fluvial geomorphology – contact Mike Slattery, Dept. of Geology, Texas Christian University, m.slattery@tcu.edu

Mountain Rivers – co-sponsored by the Geomorphology Specialty Group and Mountain Geography Specialty Group, organized by Anne Chin, Texas A&M University, and Ellen Wohl, Colorado State University. “This session seeks to bring together those working on diverse aspects of mountain rivers in order to foster awareness of recent research, and discussion among investigators. We invite papers that focus on any aspect of mountain rivers, including watershed and hillslope processes that influence river channels, channel dynamics, as well as technological advances and management and restoration applicable to the study of mountain rivers.” Contact Anne Chin at chin@tamu.edu or Ellen Wohl at ellenw@cnr.colostate.edu.

Human Impacts – contact Bill Renwick, Dept. of Geography, Miami University, renwickwh@muOhio.edu.

Cryosphere, papers and field trips – contact Don Friend, Dept. of Geography, Minnesota State University, Mankato, donald.friend@mnsu.edu.

Fire geomorphology and ecology – To be cosponsored with the Biogeography and Water Resources specialty groups, topics on the interface of geomorphology, hydrology, and ecology in wildfires. Denver would also make an ideal location for organizing a forest-fire field trip during, before, or after the meeting, if anyone is so inclined. Contact Greg Pope, Dept.

of Earth & Environmental Studies, Montclair State University, popeg@mail.montclair.edu.

Lakes – Sessions to be co-sponsored with Coastal and Marine Specialty Group, watch for announcements on Geomorphlist.

Geoarchaeology – Interdisciplinary problems of geoarchaeology, soils, and geomorphology in archaeological and cultural ecological contexts. Invited speakers at this time include Tim Beach (“Erosion associated with Roman roads and terraces in ancient Asia Minor”), Nick Dunning (“Bajo formation in Central America”), Karl Butzer (“Rainfloods on the desert edge at Giza, Egypt, during the 4th Dynasty”), Bill Doolittle (“Safford Valley grids, Arizona”), Bill Woods (“Paleosols in Belgium”), and Martin Doyle (“Ancient erosion in Turkey”). To add your paper to these sessions, contact Tim Beach, Center for the Environment, Georgetown University, beacht@georgetown.edu.

Central Great Plains – contact Bruce Rhodes, Dept. of Geography, University of Illinois, Urbana.

International Association of Geomorphologists

Sixth International Conference on Geomorphology, Sept. 7-11, 2005, Zaragoza, Spain. Contact: Organizing Secretariat, Geomorphology, Edificio C. Facultad de Ciencias, Universidad de Zaragoza, C/Pedro Cerbuna, 12, 50009 - Zaragoza, Spain; Fax: +34 976 7611106, web site: <http://wzar.unizar.es/actos/SEG/>

[Watch GEOMORPHLIST announcements for additional calls for papers that missed this publication deadline.]

Awards and competitions

AAG has now established a fund for Physical Geography, named in honor of Mel Marcus. Announced by Executive Director Doug Richardson at the Mel Marcus presidency 25th anniversary reception previous night. Details of this award will be worked out between GSG, other like specialty groups, and the AAG.

GSG Awards

(See <http://www.cla.sc.edu/geog/gsgdocs/awards.html> for submission details. Submit all awards nominations and applications to Bob Pavlowsky, GSG Awards Committee Chair, Department of Geography, Geology, and Planning, Southwest Missouri State University, 901 S. National, Springfield, Missouri 65804-0089. Phone: Office - 417-836-8473; email: rtp138f@smsu.edu.

The GSG Awards Committee invites graduate students to participate in the specialty group's **Student Paper Award competition** at the 2005 AAG meeting in

Denver. Students must be members of the AAG and the Geomorphology Specialty Group (GSG) to be eligible for the \$250 award. Applicants for the student paper competition will be placed into special sessions organized specifically for the competition. The GSG Awards Committee will evaluate the presentations, which may deal with any aspect of geomorphology. Papers are evaluated on the research contribution to the field of geomorphology and on the effectiveness of the presentation. Students participants must register for the meeting and submit their abstract online at the AAG website (www.aag.org). After receiving a participant number (PIN) from the AAG, which could take a day, mail or email your application package to Dr. Robert Pavlowsky, the GSG Awards Committee Chair, at the address listed above, before October 18, 2003.

Two **graduate student research grants** will be awarded to help cover the costs of data acquisition, fieldwork, and laboratory analysis required to complete thesis research. The awards are \$200 to a Masters student and \$400 to a Ph.D. student. Eligible students must be members of the AAG and the GSG. Submit **THREE** copies of the research proposal (approximately 5 pages in length), and two short letters of recommendation to the Awards Committee **by February 1, 2005**.

The **Grove Karl Gilbert Award** is presented to the author(s) of a significant contribution to the published research literature in geomorphology during the past three years. Only books, refereed journal articles, or monographs will be considered with an emphasis on refereed research articles. The Awards Committee must receive these materials and any supporting documentation **by February 1, 2005**.

The **Melvin G. Marcus Distinguished Career Award** is presented to an individual who has made significant contributions to geomorphology over his/her career. The Awards Committee must receive nominating materials and any supporting documentation **by February 1, 2005**.

Publications

Gillian Lindsey, Acquisitions Editor at Routledge Reference, announces the following new books: *Encyclopedia of Geomorphology*, edited by Andrew Goudie, 2 vols, 1184 pages, December 2003, hardcover, ISBN 041527298X. Produced in association with the International Association of Geomorphologists, this is a comprehensive guide to both specific landforms and the major types of processes that create them. Advisory Board members are Basil Gomez, Alan Trenhaile, Olav Slaymaker, Paul Williams, Richard Dikau, and Piotr Migon. Full information can be found at <http://www.geomorph.org/sp/arch/item41.html>

Encyclopedia of Caves and Karst Science, edited by John Gunn (Chairman of the International Geographical Union's Karst Commission), 896 pages, December 2003, hardcover, ISBN 1-57958-399-7. The Encyclopedia includes many items on speleogenesis and karst landforms and was recently reviewed in *New Scientist*: "The book's authority stems from the huge range of topics covered by about 200 experts from around the world. ... Gunn and his advisory panel have produced a remarkably well-written, structured and designed book". Full information can be found at <http://www.routledge-ny.com/caves/>

Other announcements

From Allan James, University of South Carolina, regarding the Applied Fluvial Committee (see also item #5 in GSG New Business):

"Last March three questionnaires were posted online to determine how fluvial geomorphology is being taught in North America. The questionnaires are listed on the GSG website:

http://www.cla.sc.edu/geog/gsgdocs/FluvComm/1_Intro.html. They're a combined effort (AAG & GSA) to assess the need for and expertise of university-trained fluvial geomorphologists. If you have taught fluvial geomorphology in the past ten years or so, or if you have other field experience, please take some time to fill out the questionnaires. We are aware that the questionnaires are lengthy and take some time and thought to fill out, but it's important that we collect a controlled sample in order to obtain valid statistics. Results will be disseminated. If you are interested in fluvial geomorphology or river restoration, please visit this site and fill out the questionnaire(s). Further explanation is provided online."

From Susan Millar, Syracuse University:

"Physical geography faculty and students at the Department of Geography at Syracuse University are looking forward to the opening of a new physical geography lab facility this August. It will be housed in the Earth Sciences Building, occupying approximately 400 square feet, with three rooms, including one dedicated to tree ring analysis, a second for a fully equipped sediment and soil lab with a sedigraph, and, and the third for microscopic work and data analysis. The lab is one component of the Syracuse Geography department's further development and expansion of physical geography. Please direct any inquiries to Dr. Susan W. Millar at swmillar@maxwell.syr.edu."

From John Gray, U.S. Geological Survey Office of Surface Water, Reston.

"The Subcommittee on Sedimentation of the Advisory Committee on Water Information has on its web site a

short list of upcoming conferences. You can find it under: <http://water.usgs.gov/wicp/acwi/sos/>.

Also of potential interest, the USGS water discipline fluvial-sediment web site (undergoing some changes over the next month) at:

<http://water.usgs.gov/osw/techniques/sediment.html>.”

From **Susan Brantley**, Penn State University.

“A Systematic Weathering Science Initiative. A group of geochemists, soil scientists, geomorphologists, ecologists, and hydrologists have begun a conversation with the U.S. National Science Foundation to consider a major initiative to investigate Weathering System Science. Investigations to understand Earth's weathering engine are limited by the lack of measurement of important field and laboratory data, the inability to compare data sets due to differences in measurement technique, the inadequacy of current conceptual models of weathering for some systems, the lack of coordination among researchers, and the lack of community models. Single-PI investigations have advanced weathering science, but to achieve an integrated understanding, a new funding initiative is needed. As this initiative progresses, we will place updates on the website [<http://www.wssc.psu.edu/>]. All scientists interested in weathering are invited to participate.”

GEOMORPHOLOGY SPECIALTY GROUP AWARDS FOR 2004

Student Awards

Outstanding student paper competition received numerous entries. **Linda Martin**, University of Kentucky was the winner, with her paper, “Erosional response to land use influences in a sensitive fluvio karst environment”. Jonathan Phillips is her advisor.

Student Research Award (Master's category) was presented to **Katy Price**, University of Georgia, for her proposal entitled “*Human impact on the morphology and water quality of streams in the southern blue ridge*”. David Leigh is her advisor.

Student Research Award (Doctoral category) was presented to **Jennifer Howrath**, University of Washington, for her proposal entitled “*Carbon storage and the role of cryoturbation in high Arctic soils: Thule, Greenland*”. Ron Sletten was her advisor.

Grove Karl Gilbert Award

This year's award goes to **Anne Chin** (Texas A&M University) for her paper, “Periodic Nature of Step Pools in Mountain Streams”, published in *American Journal of Science* (Vol. 302, Feb. 2002, pp. 144-167).

Carol Harden nominated the paper. Her citation is summarized as follows:

“The G.K. Gilbert Award for Excellence in Geomorphic Research is presented to the author of a significant contribution to the published literature in geomorphology during the past three years. The recipient of the award doesn't necessarily have to be a member of the AAG or the GSG, so this year, it is a special pleasure to recognize the excellent work of one of our own members.”

“This year, we recognize the author of a journal article, published in 2002, that substantially advances theory in geomorphology... The 2002 *American Journal of Science* paper follows a set of others (in *Journal of Geology*, 1998; *Geophysical Research Letters*, 1999) in her ongoing research with step pools. While some of us may have waved our arms and mused or agreed that step pool sequences might be periodic, Anne designed the project, gathered data, did spectral analysis, and interpreted the results—hers is the careful, thoughtful research that makes new knowledge out of fuzzy ideas. Her application of spectral analysis to her own, carefully constructed, data base of step pool stream longitudinal profiles confirms the periodicity of step pools and supports the idea that they are analogous to meandering in the vertical dimension. It also provides the theoretical underpinning for a continuum of gravel bedforms that shows the transition from step-pools to riffle-pools. Anne's thoughtful work takes her conclusions yet another step—it calls attention to the fact that fluvial processes operating in high-gradient streams and bedrock channels are fundamentally similar to those in lower-gradient alluvial rivers. In addition to providing the careful and creative analysis that is the foundation of this paper, Anne does a real service by leading the reader though to the significant implications of the work. Geomorphology needs more researchers like Anne who are thinking about extending theory as they design and analyze their work.”

“Anne's step-pool research, which has become more elegant and transparent over time, meets the challenge of reducing complex, messy, real-world examples to simpler, cleaner, more globally applicable patterns. Her writing style, too, is clear, deliberate, and accessible. She writes with authority and with perspective. This is a paper students can (and should) read, not only to learn about step-pools, but also to see a model of good research and good writing. Anne's work on step-pool mountain streams is in keeping with the tradition that G.K. Gilbert established of using superior field data coupled with process-based analyses to explain fluvial forms.”

“Her step-pool research, and this paper, in particular, establishes Dr. Anne Chin as a creative intellectual leader in her field and as a geomorphologist deserving of wide recognition. The G.K. Gilbert Award is a very fitting tribute to the fine quality of her work.”

Anne’s acceptance remarks:

“I am very honored to be recognized with the G.K. Gilbert Award, by my colleagues in the Geomorphology Specialty Group. And I am especially proud to be one of our own members.”

“Carol, thank you for leading the efforts to nominate me for the award, and for your kind remarks. I appreciate them. To the colleagues who sent in support letters, please accept my sincere thanks as well.”

“As some of you may know, the paper that is being recognized tonight had been long in the making. The ideas began almost two decades ago, when I first encountered step-pool sequences in the Santa Monica Mountains of southern California. Many people since have contributed to my efforts to understand these features, and I’d like to take this opportunity to acknowledge them.”

“I owe the beginnings of my interest on this topic to the late Professor Asher Schick. Asher was visiting UCLA, where I was a student, from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. It was Winter 1985. Asher had some of us working on a field project in the Santa Monica Mountains. And it was during the course of that project that I encountered step-pools sequences. At that time, published papers on step-pools were almost non-existent. Perhaps without even realizing what I was doing, I set out to study them.”

“One of the things that fascinated me most about step-pools, of course, is their repetitive nature. As I tramped up and down the step-pool channels in the Santa Monica Mountains during those early years, I could not help but wonder, how is it possible, that these large cobbles and boulders could sort themselves out into such rhythmic sequences? And what does it mean that they could do that?”

“I developed the idea of applying spectral analysis to test for step-pool periodicities, way back then. I even collected a bit of data, and recall visiting the Statistics Help Desk at UCLA, to get advice about applying spectral analysis to stream channels. From that bit of exploratory analysis, I knew then, that periodicities would be detected in step-pools. However, at that time, there was no real concrete theoretical context with which to interpret that finding. We simply did not know enough about these features, to be able to make more meaningful interpretations at that time. So, I set those

thoughts aside, and instead, went about studying more basic aspects of step-pool sequences.”

“In the following years, I studied morphometric and spacing relationships, assessed the stability of step-pool sequences, their significance in terms of energy dissipation, and tested some theories about their origin. As many of you know, some of this work became my doctoral dissertation, which was conducted at Arizona State University under the guidance of Will Graf. Will indulged me with a freedom to fly, and provided critical input to keep me on track. He is still there, and he continues to be there in ways big and small.”

“At the same time, many colleagues from around the globe were also making important contributions to increasing our understanding of step-pool channels. Among them are Gordon Grant, Ellen Wohl, and Dave Montgomery, as well as colleagues in Italy, Germany, and Japan. Collectively, what we’ve learned about step-pool channels over the past decade or so, has been exponential, and exciting. Some of the gaps are now filled, and the edges are pushed, just a little bit farther. And ultimately, it was the result of this collective effort that had enabled me to go back to the ideas of step-pool periodicities, and make the meaningful interpretations that I did, with the paper in the *American Journal of Science*. To these colleagues, I express my deep appreciation.”

“I would be remiss if I did not mention just a few more individuals. Jonathan Phillips offered valuable insights all along, and in fact suggested a re-packaging of an earlier draft of this paper that contributed to the final version. Athol Abrahams spent numberless hours discussing step-pools with me, and continues to be a sounding board and a source of advice. Ken Gregory has also read many of my manuscripts, including this one, and offered generous comments. Dick Marston, your early work on log steps was pioneering and influential to me. And Dave Butler, his analogous work on beaver dams was also inspirational, and I thank him also for his support over the years.”

“I would like to close by going back to where I began. That is, I’d like to dedicate this particular award to the memory of Professor Asher Schick. Professor Schick taught me many years ago, that research is an inner gut fight with a problem. And this paper, *The Periodic Nature of Step-Pool Mountain Streams*, was a culmination of many years of fighting on to understand.”

“There is, however, much more work to be done. And collectively, I believe that, the best is still yet to come.”

“Many thanks again to the specialty group for honoring me with the G.K. Gilbert Award tonight. I am

especially pleased to accept it on the occasion of the centennial meeting of our association. And I thank you all for allowing me to share this moment with you.”

Melvin G. Marcus Distinguished Career Award

This year’s award goes to **Norbert Psuty** (Rutgers University). Will Graf nominated, and read the citation (summarized here):

“The Association of American Geographers Geomorphology Specialty Group presents the 2004 Mel Marcus Distinguished Career Award to Professor Emeritus Norbert P. Psuty of the Department of Geography, Department of Geological Sciences, and Department of Marine and Coastal Sciences at Rutgers University. With this award, the specialty group honors geomorphologists who have made outstanding and significant contributions throughout their careers. We pay tribute to a man who has been a pivotal scholar in modern geomorphology and coastal sciences for four decades. During that time he has touched the lives of many of us in this room with his scholarship, public service, and personal support.”

“Scholarship

We recognize Norb Psuty as a leading scholar in coastal science. He has published more than 125 articles and book chapters, along with seemingly endless numbers of other publications including books and technical reports, all fueled by several million dollars of extramural support. From his initial PhD research on beach ridges in Tobasco, Mexico, his investigations emphasized, particularly from a geographic perspective, the interactions among process, form and sediment in highly dynamic environments. An Association of American Geographers Honors Award and the Richard J. Russell Award from the AAG Coastal and Marine Specialty Group testify to the excellence of that research. His service as Vice-Chair and Chair of the Coastal Commission of the International Geographical Union reflect his international stature in the research community.”

“Public Service

Norb always found research for its own sake to be a worthy endeavor, but he also always extended basic research to solving applied problems. He served nearly 30 years as Director of the Center for Coastal and Environmental Studies at Rutgers University, a position from which he served the public interest in coastal matters. His service in leading a state effort to produce a management blueprint for the New Jersey Shore is a model for geographers in service to the public. His tireless efforts at public education about geography and geomorphology have benefited our discipline, and he remains one of a very few geographers profiled by the New York Times as a newsmaker.”

“Personal Contributions

Mel Marcus would have been pleased to see Norb receive this award. Mel and Norb share many characteristics, but two are of particular importance: an appreciation for the field experience combined with aggressive support of students. The field experience is the true power of modern geomorphology, and Norb has always seen and advertised the aesthetic beauty of land forms and processes as well as practicing science to explain them. To measure, model, describe, and explain have always been pillars of his approach to the natural world, but equally important pillars have been his immersion (sometimes literally) in his subject, and a deep appreciation of nature for its own sake. Taken together, his scholarly and public service represent tremendous contributions, but they pale in comparison with Norb’s most important and lasting contributions to his students.”

“When Norb entered the discipline of geography in the middle 1960s, geomorphology was atrophying in geology and nearly absent in geography. He was one of a very few geographic geomorphologists who carried the disciplinary torch through difficult times, allowing us all to emerge later. The enthusiasm, care, knowledge, and wisdom he invested in his students made a life-long difference for all of us.”

“The first time I saw Norb was in the fall of 1966. He as a dapper fellow speaking from a wooden stage in front of an introductory physical geography course at the University of Wisconsin, where I was a second-year undergraduate. He quickly adopted me, as he did so many students. Like them, I was drawn to his love of field investigations, and to his sense of scientific adventure. Within a year I had worked with him as a field assistant surveying glacial lake beds in Wisconsin as well as sampling near-shore sediments along the Gulf Coast of Florida, and he had given me my career. I thank him for the 38 years he has been a model, mentor, advisor, and a trusted friend. My tenure in this arrangement with him may be longer than that of most other students, but it is the typical arrangement he has had with a host of scientists who now carry on his traditions.”

“It is therefore with honor and affection that I present the 2004 Mel Marcus Distinguished Career Award to Professor Norbert P. Psuty.”

Norb thanked the GSG and awards committee, and wanted to “recognize the students who gave me inspiration”, among these Doug Sherman, Karl Nordstrom, and Jonathan Philips.