



TERRA FIRMA

SUMMER 2010

Vassar College Department of Earth Science and Geography

Greetings from the Department of Earth Science and Geography at Vassar! I first want to report to you in this issue of *Terra Firma*--our biennial newsletter--that our beloved Ely Hall is under construction for a well deserved exterior makeover. The renovation, scheduled for the next 3-4 years, will address its structural problems, but also preserve and enhance its appearance by cleaning and fixing the brickwork, windows and roof. Please come to visit us next time you are on campus!

As many of you know, the 2008 financial crisis has had a severe impact on the higher education institutions around the nation. At Vassar, we also experienced a period of unusual turbulence which involved considerable soul searching and debate of our priorities and commitments under the financial stress. The college has reaffirmed its commitment for equal access to higher education through its need-blind admission policy, but to do so with significant cutback and hardship in other areas. This process is not over. The department of Earth Science and Geography is in a fortunate situation in that all of our eight permanent faculty members, four in Earth Science and four in Geography, are tenured and there are no projected retirements. We anticipate general stability and development of the department, but we are also contributing our share to the college by reducing budget, and cross-listing more courses for multidisciplinary programs. We believe that the strength of our department is in its integrated studies of the physical and human processes of the earth and its varied environments. Our approach is central to the pressing environmental and globalization concerns today. Although we are a small department, Ely Hall is increasingly becoming a leader on campus in exploring theories and practices in sustainability, local engagement and international connections.

We would also like to remind you that next year (2011) is Vassar's sesquicentennial celebration and a series of events will be held to acknowledge 150 years of outstanding development of the College. The department has asked our emeritus professor, Harvey Flad, to draft a departmental history to be included in a book celebrating this occasion. Once completed, we will share with you this fascinating document, by posting it on our website.

*Vassar Students above
Lake Como, Bitterroot
Mountains, Montana-
1924 Field Trip, led by
Professor Thomas Hills*



We are proud of the achievements and contributions of many alumnae/i, which over the years have sustained us in our work. The department has made good use of field work and field research monies from the Nancy Austin Wright Fund, and the newly established Mary Laflin Rockwell Fund, as testified to later in this newsletter. We greatly appreciate the many ongoing contributions our graduates make to the College and our department. This newsletter will update you on people and events in Ely Hall in the last two years. We also look forward to hearing from you. Please be sure to update contact information with the AAVC, from whom we get our current mailing information. Indeed, we always enjoy hearing news from our graduates, and even better seeing you in person when you visit the campus. Please stay in touch!

Best wishes,

Yu Zhou,

Professor of Geography and Chair, Dept. of Earth Science and Geography



Tibet at 15,000 feet.

Earth Science and Geography Field Trips



Field trips continue to be an integral part of an education in earth science and geography. This year the department sponsored day trips to the Palisades Sill, Dutchess County metamorphic zones, the Shawangunk Ridge, the Catskills, and New York City for a Vertical Farming Symposium. Closer to home, we also conducted fieldwork on the Vassar Farm, and explored the history of Poughkeepsie. We also had the privilege of taking students on longer trips: to Bermuda to study risk and coral reefs, to Tucson and the Mexico border to study immigration issues, and a senior seminar to Syracuse to study social justice and urban development. Just this academic year, Vassar students and professors logged over 10,000 miles in college vans, and more in train, plane, and automobile miles in the quest for experiential knowledge.

The Mary Laflin Rockwell Fund, established in 2007, has given our Earth Science and Geography students the opportunity for real world discoveries and hands on science. It has also proven to be a source of great inspiration for our faculty, as it supports trips which would be much more difficult without the generous support of the Rockwell family.

Top: Mike Sandstrom '12, sieving for Miocene fossils in Lieutenant's Creek, VA.

Middle: The Conservation of Natural Resources class at CSA farm in the Adirondacks.

Bottom: Sean Beckett '10, and Mary Ann Cunningham.





The Rockwell Fund has been instrumental in making the Conservation of Natural Resources class a great success. The Adirondacks field trip, October 2009, was a work-intensive (but really fun) fieldweek. Students devised and planned projects that ranged from sampling post-logging forest regeneration to development impacts on water quality to the sustainability of

organic farming in the Adirondacks. Everybody helped with data collection in other people's projects, so we all learned a great deal. Working together in a beautiful place always turns out to be a peak experience.

This year was also our first major extended field trip sponsored entirely by the Rockwell Fund: a five-day excursion to Virginia. Beginning the first day at the Great Falls of the Potomac, we saw a diabase quarry near Bull Run, crossed the Blue Ridge and visited Luray Caverns. Over the next few days we visited an abandoned manganese mine, a kyanite mine, a soapstone mine and processing plant, and a lime quarry with beautiful secondary mineralization before heading east to the coastal plain to dig for Tertiary fossils near Richmond, VA. The Retreat was the most comfortable field lodgings any of us have had the pleasure of staying in - just the right mixture of rustic and creature comforts.



Top: Jeff Walker and students at Lieutenants' Run.

Bottom: Old Dominion Soapstone Quarry.

Big Events at Ely Hall!

Scaffolding around Ely Hall.



"1889~ The Alumnae Gymnasium, first in a woman's college, was built with funds collected from alumnae and students under the leadership of professor of mathematics Achsah M. Ely, '68. Trustee Frederick Ferris Thompson contributed a swimming bath, the largest in any collegiate institution, and upstairs there was an auditorium with a stage. The building was designed by William Tubby. Vassar's department of physical education was the first such department in an American College. "

The Magnificent Enterprise, A Chronicle of Vassar College, 1961

Home of the Earth Science (Geology) and Geography Dept since 1937, Ely Hall is finally receiving a well-deserved restoration of the building envelope: Over the next four summers, the masonry facades will be completely cleaned, repaired and repointed, the roofs and skylights will be replaced with new skylights and a new copper roofing system and the windows will either be replaced or fully restored. The restoration will be mindful of the historic appearance of the building while upgrading the buildings insulation efficiency to modern standards. The restoration program was designed by CVM Facilities Renewal of Oaks, Pennsylvania who has designed repairs for numerous Vassar buildings including Josselyn House, The Chapel and the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center. The construction is being completed by Storm King Contractors of Montgomery, NY, who have worked on restorations of the Alumnae House, The Student's Building and the Van Ingen Library.

*Moving the 300 lb. slab of
Arthropycus Alleghaniensis
(trace fossil tracks.)*



Class of 2009



Geography Seniors, 2009 *Back Row:* Jordan Stone, Zara Cadoux, Chris Beach, Jeanette Roach, Cary Blum, Kathryn Thomas *Front Row:* Sarah Brown, Adam Favaloro, Hannah Ewert-Krocker, Marion Spencer, Jared Siegel

Geology Seniors, 2009
Left to Right:
Prof. Menking,
Wilson Salls,
Kira Stein,
Greg Maier,
Nate Kimball,
Matt Winnick,
Prof. Walker



Senior Theses 2009

Cary Blum, Geography

Whose Neighborhood Is it? A Case Study of Social Dynamics in a Gentrifying Residential Community Advisor~ Yu Zhou

Hannah Ewert-Krocker, Geography-Anthropology

Onandaga Sovereignty in Central New York Advisor~ Joe Nevins

Jeanette Roach, Geography

"Out of Olynpia, Out of Iraq": Geography, Direct Action, and the Anti-War Movement in Olympia, Washington Advisor~ Joe Nevins

Wilson Salls, Geology

Stable Carbon and Nitrogen Isotopes in the Casperkill Creek Advisor~ David Gillikin

Jared Siegel, Geology

Examining Monthly Relationships between Temperature, Precipitation, Snowpack, and Streamflow in the Upper Klamath River Basin over a 26 Year SNOTEL Record Advisor~ Mary Ann Cunningham

Marion Spencer, Geography-Anthropology

Exceptional People, Exceptional Space: The Segregation of West Indians in the Panama Canal Zone, 1903-1979 Advisor~ Joe Nevins

Jordan Stone, Geography

Damn Yankees: The Role of Place Identity in Public Subsidies for the New Yankee Stadium Advisor~ Yu Zhou

Kathryn Thomas, Geography

A Dialogue: the Roma and the Italian Government Advisor~ Mary Ann Cunningham

Matt Winnick, Geology

Evaluating the Freshwater Mussel *Elliptio complanata* as a Proxy for Road Salt Pollution in Northeastern US Streams Advisor~ Dave Gillikin

Senior Theses 2010

Davene Daley, Earth Science

Beach Vulnerability in Negril, Jamaica and
Green Engineering Solutions Advisor~ Brian
McAdoo

Ruth Sawyer, Geography

From Closet to Confrontation: Spaces of
Resistance Amongst Two Groups of Chilean
Lesbians Advisor~ Yu
Zhou

Nadine Reitman, Earth Science

Chemostratigraphy and Paleoecology of Upper
Silurian-Lower Devonian Limestone in the
Ammansair and Tsagaanbulag Formations at
Ulaan Shand and Tsakhir, Gobi-Altai Terrane,
Shine Jinst, Mongolia
Advisor~ David Gillikin

Jordan Thaler, Geography

Central Park to the High Line: The
Reconceptualization of Nature in the City
Advisor~ Mary Ann Cunningham

Dorien Ediger-Seto, Geography

El Campo de los Japoneses: Space, Empire and
the Elasticity of Exceptionality in Crystal City,
Texas, 1910 -1985
Advisor~ Joe Nevins

Sarah Ledford, Earth Science

The Effect of Mill Dam Ponds on the
Biogeochemistry of Small Streams
Advisor~ David Gillikin

Ian Sharma, Geography

Perceptions and
Development of the Los Angeles River
Advisor~ Brian Godfrey

Zakary Ratajczak, Earth Science/Biology

Using wood chemistry ($\delta^{13}C$) and ring width to
detect hurricane storm surges and predict future
responses of Loblolly pine to climate change
Advisor~ David Gillikin, Marshall Pregnall

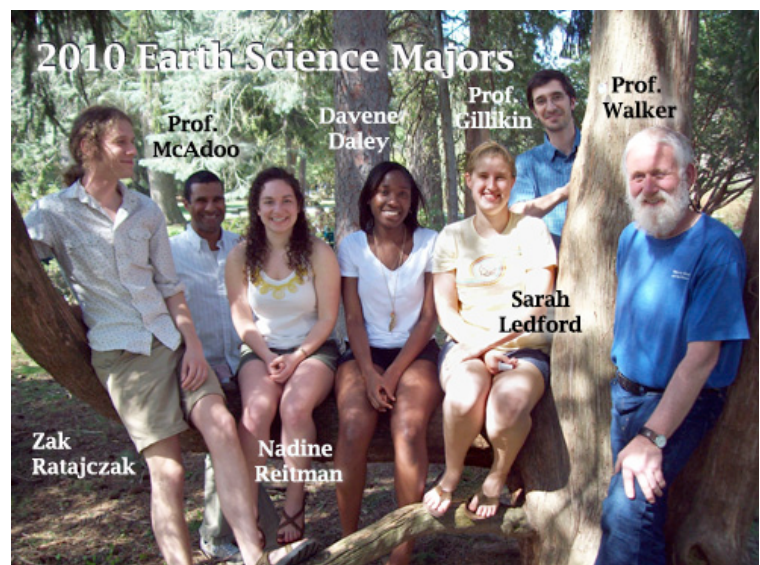
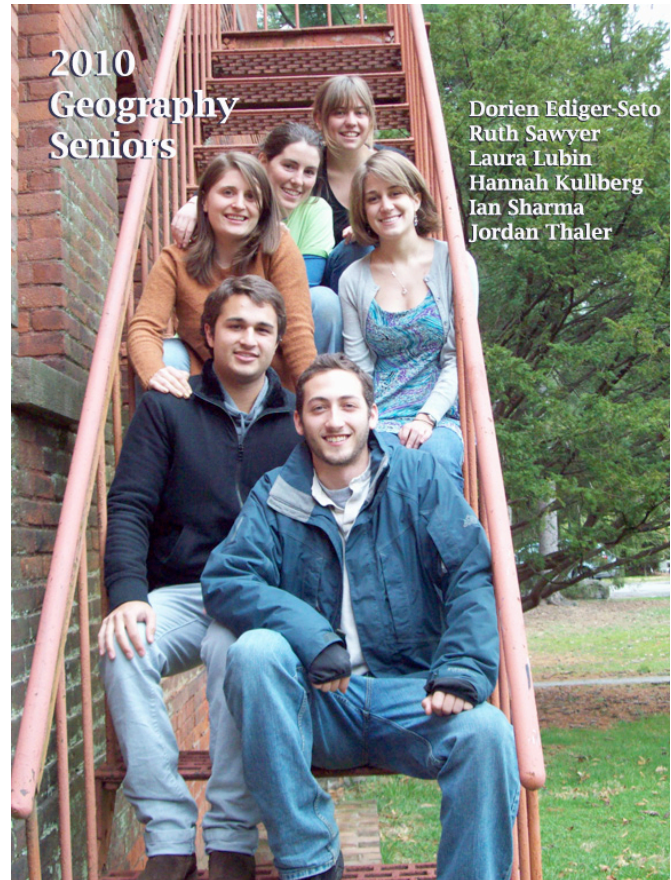
Laura Lubin, Geography-Anthropology

"The Struggle for a Choice:"
Educational Choice and Religion in Primary
Schools in the Republic of Ireland
Advisor~ Brian Godfrey, Linta Varghese

Hannah Kullberg, Geography (3:30)

The Landscape of Urban Agriculture in the
Portland Metropolitan Region: Visions, Realities
and Planners Advisor~ Brian Godfrey

Class of 2010



DARWIN DAYS at VASSAR

To honor the 150th anniversary of the publication of *On the Origin of Species*, and Charles Darwin's 200th birthday, **Darwin Days at Vassar** was initiated by faculty in 2009 as a way to foster links between the sciences and the humanities. As a part of the Museum's outreach program, the organizational effort for Darwin Days has rested here in Ely Hall. In February 2009, Darwin Days was huge, with two days of presentations by faculty and students consisting of travelogues, a dramatic reading of *Inherit the Wind*, and lectures on topics ranging from Darwinian Approaches to Literature to Evolving Robots to Understand Evolution. We also had a tongue-in-cheek Survival of the Fittest Film Festival, and highlighted the celebration with a book group and discussion on the Intelligent Design movement with Lauri Lebo, author of *The Devil in Dover*.

For 2010 Darwin Days, it was decided to bring a performance series to campus, showcasing Women in Science, all from very different time periods, but all concerned with excellence and truth in their fields. First up was Vassar alum Claudia Stevens '69, who performed her piece about fossil collector Mary Anning (1799-1847), *Blue Lias, or the Fish Lizards' Whore*. The second performance featured another Vassar alum, Frances Sternhagen, '51, reading selections from her classmate Barbara Gibbins Duffy's play, *Maria Mitchell, An Autobiography*. This had only been performed once before, at Mitchell's Nantucket observatory, and it was a delight to have it on campus. For the final performance, Kaiulani Lee returned to campus to reprise her role as Rachel Carson, in *A Sense of Wonder*, an Earth Day program cosponsored by the Vassar Greens. Ms. Lee was an inspiration and the audience in the Martel was riveted. Her play was being broadcast on PBS the same evening so it was a real privilege to have her for a live performance. This series was sponsored by the Office of the Dean of Faculty, and we thankfully acknowledge their support.

We've had two successful years of Darwin Days, and look forward to what this evolving multi-disciplinary collaboration will bring next.

Kaiulani Lee at the newly opened Walkway Over the Hudson, Poughkeepsie.



On October, Brian McAdoo and the **Oil** class, *ESCI 341*, hosted **Smoothapalooza!**

Using a biodiesel generator and fuel made from the Retreats' used cooking oil (to power the blenders) and ingredients produced within 25 miles of the Vassar Campus, we created Hudson Valley Smoothies for any passers-by who wished to learn more about the enormous carbon footprint of a typical tropical smoothie (bananas, mangoes, pineapple, etc) purchased in a chain store.

Hudson Valley Smoothie

*Nectarines from Wilklow Orchards (2 cups)

*Ronnybrook Yogurt (1/2 cup)

*Apple Cider from Wilklow Orchards (1 cup)

*Ice from the Retreat! (1 cup)

Miscellaneous

April 1, 2010 brought a new project to the Vassar campus; to alleviate the stress on the landscaping crew, a team of goats has begun working for Buildings and Grounds. The Sustainability Committee will chart the progress of the new groundskeepers, *April and Fool*.



For the last two years, the Earth Science and Geography Department has worked with Dutchess County Outreach to bring a little relief to struggling families at the holidays. We receive a wishlist from the family, and do our best to fill it. Lots of people and departments across campus do this, but none have our...unique.... wrapping paper!

NOTES FROM FACULTY & STAFF

Mary Ann Cunningham



Mary Ann's Conservation of Natural Resources trip took its third trip to the Adirondacks for October Break, and they had a great time and did really good field research projects, as well as two wonderful nights of camping in mountains in October. Her GIS class this year focused on projects contributing to a community development project on Main Street in Poughkeepsie. She taught a new research methods course, in which we gathered and analyzed lots of observations and data (landscape change, environmental attitudes, and other data), and with Meg Ronsheim (Biology) developed a new course on understanding the local landscape, with field trips around the county. She also got to work with an outstanding seminar of 19 people reading the most recent research on climate change in the Arctic, and now knows more now about the IPCC and its reports than she ever thought she would.

This past year Mary Ann has remained heavily involved in multidisciplinary projects including and around the Casperkill project. A paper on five local watersheds, a study that has involved several faculty and about a dozen students, was published in the journal *Physical Geography*, and last summer's URSI research with Laurel Walker contributed to a paper that has recently been accepted by the *Journal of Wildlife Management*. In addition, with Kirsten Menking as primary author, the Casperkill Watershed Assessment Document was published, and they're in the final stages of finishing up another Casperkill paper for *Physical Geography*. This summer the Casperkill project is expanding to include oral history, natural capital modelling, and vegetation change—all very exciting topics. Some of the work is publicized on the DutchessWatersheds.org website, on which Stuart Belli, Cat Foley, and Emily Vail led the way (<http://dutchesswatersheds.org/research>).

Mary Ann has also been working on the county Natural Resources Inventory (Biodiversity chapter), led by County Planning and Cornell Cooperative Extension, with Jeff Walker and Kirsten Menking. And finally, she's completed revisions of the sixth edition of *Principles of Environmental Science*, written with her dad, William P. Cunningham.

Harvey Flad

Harvey's retirement was anything but. He published a co-authored book, a number of articles, and gave quite a few conference papers. In the summer of 2009 he co-authored, along with Clyde Griffen, professor emeritus of history, the book *Main Street to Mainframes: Landscape and Social Change in Poughkeepsie*. A 450 page scholarly work published by the State University of New York Press as a hardbound trade edition, it was on the "best seller" list for a few weeks at our local Barnes & Noble. Harvey gave a number of readings and signings throughout the valley at local independent bookstores, as well as at well-attended events at the Institute for Ecosystem Studies and the Maple Grove historical site. He also offered comments on the book's publication process on a panel at the annual Association of American Geographers meeting in Washington, D.C. chaired by colleague Brian Godfrey. He was extremely pleased that the department gave it to our geography senior majors as the annual

graduation gift, as did the American Culture Program. During the year he also published "The Parlor in the Wilderness: Domesticating America's First Iconic Landscape," in the *Geographical Review* 99, 3(July): 356-376 and an essay in the Smithsonian Institution Click! Photography Changes Everything series titled "Photography Changes Our Perspective of the American Landscape" at <http://click.si.edu/Story.aspx?story=271>. Harvey gave a number of presentations on aspects of the Hudson River School of Art's interpretation of the regional landscape during the Quadricentennial celebrations of Henry Hudson's 1609 travels up the Hudson River, such as: "The View from Clermont: The Hudson River School of Art and the 'Landscape that Defines America'," Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial Conference, Marist College; "Mountain House Views: Hudson River School Artists in the Shawmagunks," Dorsky Art Museum, State University of New York at New Paltz; and "The Influence of the Hudson River School of Art in the Preservation of the River and its Natural and Cultural Landscape," Environmental history of the Hudson River Symposium, Hudson River Environmental Society, Poughkeepsie, NY. The latter will be published in their symposium volume early in 2011. Meanwhile, Harvey was much more excited that he and Mary had two new grandsons born in 2009!

Cat Foley '08,

Unlike her 2008 classmates, Cat opted to take the advice of her commencement speaker: She stayed at Vassar, working for the past two years, first as the Collins Research Fellow in the Environmental Studies Program and this past year as the GIS Specialist in our very own Ely Hall. "Yes, be jealous, I know you are. Not only have I been able to hang out with the coolest professors on campus I've become one of the most popular people in the department because I created The Sharing Shelf: instead of holding books as a bookshelf normally would, the sharing shelf is all food, all the time for everyone. Mmmm food." In terms of actual work, Cat provided GIS support for students and faculty, as well as having the opportunity to teach labs, advise seniors on their theses and help faculty with their research. Additionally, Cat has had the opportunity to provide content and maps for a website on Dutchess County watersheds: Dutchesswatersheds.org. Cat is pleased to announce her recent acceptance to the Environmental Science Graduate Program at SUNY-ESF.

David Gillikin

Dave had four thesis students this year who all presented their work at the Geological Society of America NE/SE Joint Meeting in Baltimore, MD (13-16 March 2010). All four, Zakary Ratajczak, Sarah Ledford, Rachel Lowenthal, and Nadine Reitman, also will be receiving Sigma Xi prizes this year.



In the Fall, he took his 161 class on an overnight trip to the Catskills to see the results of two major mountain building events that took place millions of years ago. They saw remains of the Earth's first forest, fossil tropical seas, and long-ago eroded Himalayan-sized mountains. They also spent a chilly November night camping under the stars near Colgate Lake.

In the spring, Dave's Paleontology class had a variety of interesting experiences: They visited Poricy Brook in New Jersey to collect shells that grew alongside dinosaurs, and some students found the remains of giant sea reptiles and shark teeth. In addition, Dave's class tried an interesting lab where they measured 'recreated' dinosaur footprints for foot size and stride

Dave has just accepted a tenure track position as an Assistant Professor in the Geology Department at Union College in Schenectady. Union is lucky to have him, and we will miss his energy, enthusiasm, and his family!

Brian Godfrey

This year Brian taught courses on *Global Geography* and *Urban Political Ecology* in fall; and *Brazil, Urban Geography*, and *Preserving Whose City?* in the spring. A particular highlight of the past year was working with Vassar seniors on their excellent thesis projects: Hannah Kullberg on urban agriculture in Portland, Oregon; Ian Sharma on the Los Angeles River; Laura Lubin on educational choice and religion in Ireland; and Luke Stern on photographic documentation of Main Street, Poughkeepsie. Brian looks forward to beginning a three-year term as Urban Studies director in the fall of 2010.



Professionally, Brian presented a paper on the politics of rental housing in New York City at the Mid-States Geography meeting and then at the AAG he chaired and co-organized (with professor emeritus Harvey Flad) a lively, well-attended session on "Writing Urban Historical Geography". Brian's recent scholarly pursuits have also included several essays on urban sustainability. This summer, he will be working with a Ford Scholar student on "Environmental Heritage and Sense of Place in Rio de Janeiro," as well as presenting papers on historic preservation and environmental conservation at a symposium on "Inclusive and Sustainable Rio: Cultural Diversity, Property, and the Environment" at the Getúlio Vargas Foundation in Rio de Janeiro and organizing and chairing a session on "Property Rights, Heritage, and Environment: Challenges for Urban Revitalization in Rio de Janeiro" at the Brazilian Studies Association, meeting in Brasília for the fiftieth anniversary of the capital.

Lois Horst



Lois, Administrative Assistant and Museum Curator, still gets a kick out of working in such a great department. Halfway through her eighth year in Earth Science & Geography, she finds the faculty stimulating, the students warm and energizing, and the work fascinating. She occasionally gets to help out on field trips where she always has a good time, bonding with students and learning more and more about geology. The Darwin Days trilogy of events took up much of her waking hours this spring. Lois enjoyed getting acquainted and working with all three of the actresses (see the Darwin Days article). Museum activities fill out her free time, whether it is hosting a group of elementary school kids or guiding Webelo scouts through their geology merit badges, or working with Rick Jones on new exhibits, there is always something that can be done!

The Matthew Vassar Natural History Club has been going strong for the past two years and has contributed to Lois' personal educational goals—she has now completed her Master Naturalist certification through the Cornell Department of Natural Resources. With her, and her husband Jeff's, second and third grandchildren expected this fall, Lois is busy at the loom weaving warm, soft, baby blankets. She'll be spending most of the summer at their log cabin in the Adirondacks, gardening, hiking in the woods, and paddling her canoe on the beaver pond.

David Jansson

Greetings from Stockholm! David is happy to announce the birth of Arvid Ivar Theodor Jansson on June 3, 2010. He came into the world at 11:08 pm, about 3 1/2 hours after they arrived at the hospital. He weighed about 8.5 pounds (3795 grams) and was 21 inches long (54 cm). The nights were very tough at first - Arvid didn't seem very interested in sleeping, and in fact it seemed that he had two settings: 1) nursing 2) crying (and often both at the same time), but now has finally discovered the wonders of sleep, so the nights have been much better. David is amazed and admits to being baffled by the reality of being a parent.

Rick Jones

Rick enjoys the variety of tasks involved in being the Lab Technician and Collections Manager for the department- every day brings something different. Field trips, equipment, interesting science- it's a great educational environment for a curious mind. Along with his wife, Jodi Schwarz (Biology) and 12 yr old twins, they continue to enjoy the move to the Hudson Valley and working on their 50's ranch house. As an artist, Rick continues to work on his papercuts, but finding the time to work is elusive!

Brian McAdoo



In addition to serving as associate chair for the department, this fall Brian taught *Structural Geology*, taking several field trips exploring local geology, and *OIL*, where they visited an active drill rig working the Marcellus Shale and met with local activists opposed to the natural gas exploration in Pennsylvania. In the spring, he taught *Carbon Conflicts* with Joe Nevins and *Global Decline of Coral Reefs* with Jodi Schwarz (BIOL), taking 15 students to Bermuda over Spring Break. McAdoo also lectured in and helped conceptualize the *ad hoc* college course called *Understanding Haiti*, organized by Thomas Parker and Susan Hiner in the Department of French and Francophone Studies in the wake of the January earthquake. Two students from that class

accompanied him on a National Science Foundation funded trip to Haiti in May to learn how information was communicated between sectors and stakeholders during the response and recovery phases of the disaster.

Brian continues to pursue his research into tsunamis and natural disasters. He chaired an AGU session on Integrated Tsunami Risk Research with over 40 abstracts submitted, gave lectures on the Haiti Earthquake at Vassar, Oakwood Friends School, and the Haitian Seventh Day Adventist Church, as well as invited lectures at Stanford, Yale and Syracuse. After another devastating earthquake and tsunami occurred in the South Pacific in September, 2009, he helped organize and participated in the first interdisciplinary UNESCO tsunami survey that brought together civil engineers, geoscientists, coral reef ecologists and social scientists to outline the vulnerabilities exposed by the tsunami.

Brian also accompanied senior ESCI major Davene Daley to Negril, Jamaica, where she was researching her senior thesis on Coastal Vulnerability in Negril, which he advised her on as well.

Kirsten Menking

After a challenging '08-'09 year as associate chair of the Earth Science program during Vassar's first round of financial meltdown cost-cutting, Kirsten spent a very blissful '09-'10 on sabbatical! She revised her co-authored textbook *Environmental Geology: An Earth System Science Approach*, and then re-revised it as one geologic catastrophe after another occurred during the first half of 2010. She had just finished the earthquakes chapter when the Haitian and then Chilean earthquakes struck, had just finished the volcanoes chapter when the unpronounceable Icelandic volcano began erupting, and had already finished the surface water chapter when the Nashville flood struck. Thank goodness neither she nor her colleagues had started working on the energy chapter before the BP oil spill began!



In addition to the book, Kirsten wrote up the results of her Lake Minnewaska and Mohonk core analyses, finding that the mid-Hudson valley was hit by a very strong, 900-year-long drought in the middle Holocene, during which time pitch pine expanded and fires led to landscape instability that caused enhanced erosional inputs to Mohonk Lake. Two less intense but equally long droughts characterized the early and late Holocene, making it clear that our region should not take its abundant water resources for granted.

The sabbatical year also allowed time for conferences and travel. In September of '09, Kirsten co-led a New York State Geological Association fieldtrip to look at glacial sites in the mid-Hudson Valley. At the end of October, Kirsten presented her Estancia Basin, New Mexico paleoclimate research at the Global Continental Paleohydrology conference in Jerusalem and enjoyed an 8-day fieldtrip through Israel's spectacular geology, including visits to dry waterfalls, caves in a salt diapir, and the Dead Sea. In late January '10, Kirsten and her partner, Roger Anderson, moved to Roger's house in Albuquerque, New Mexico for 5 months, where she continued her writing and also took a trip to Minnesota to present her STELLA numerical modeling course in a *Geology on the Cutting Edge* workshop on Teaching Complex Systems.

Kirsten is headed back to New York at the end of June and looks forward to getting back into the classroom after a year of writing!

Joe Nevins

Joe co-taught with Professor Tyrone Simpson and Rev. Sam Speers the popular U.S.-Mexico border trip for the Spring 2009 course ("U.S.- Mexico Border: Nation, God, and Human Rights in Arizona-Sonora"). They took 30 students on a 16-day trip that included a roundtrip train travel between Poughkeepsie and Flagstaff. This spring, Routledge published a significantly revised edition of Joe's book first published in 2002. The title of this new edition is *Operation Gatekeeper and Beyond: The War on "Illegals" and the Remaking of the U.S.-Mexico Boundary*.





Jill Schneiderman

In 2009, University of California press published *For the Rock Record: Geologists on Intelligent Design*, which she contributed to and co-edited with an old grad school friend and colleague Warren Allmon. They had a good time doing it, were happy about the way it turned out and were glad to have the opportunity to offer up geologists' voices on the subject of intelligent design. She's always been interested in issues of religion and science so it was nice to do a book that dealt with them head on.

Jill has been on sabbatical in 2009-2010~ Since her partner Meg Stewart, whom some of you know, won a Fulbright Fellowship to the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Cave Hill Barbados to do research and teach at the Center for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES), they packed up the family to Barbados! It's been a great year for all of them, and it's given her a bird's eye view of a wonderful grad program that some of our recent Vassar graduates might be interested in with its focus on tropical coastal resources, water issues, and climate change.

While in Barbados, Jill has been mostly reading and writing, becoming a 'featured blogger' for the Shambhala Sun magazine (www.ShambhalaSun.com), which is a magazine of western Buddhism. She writes a blog approximately monthly about earth processes and how they relate to Buddhist concepts. She also won a contemplative practice fellowship from the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society. This has allowed her to develop a contemplative curriculum on the subject of time from the perspective of the sciences and varied spiritual traditions, which she'll be teaching as a reading course next semester.

She's very much looking forward to resuming teaching and writing when she returns for Fall semester 2010.

Jeff Walker

Jeff developed 2 new classes this year, attracting new students for these exciting courses: Field Geology of the Hudson Valley (ESCI 181) and Soils and Sustainable Agriculture (ESCI 221). Field Geology of the Hudson Valley visited the Highlands: Breakneck Ridge, Brace Mountain, Norrie Point, Bonticou Crag, Overlook Mountain, and High Tor.

In addition, Jeff and Dave Gillikin took a very exciting departmental trip to Virginia over Spring Break, visiting quarries, Luray Caverns, and sieving for Miocene fossils in Lieutenants' Creek. Jeff also co-led (with Frederick Vollmer, SUNY New Paltz) a one-day field trip on Dutchess County metamorphism for the NYS Geological Association.



Jeff was Fall Convocation speaker in 2009, (title "The Local") and plays tenor drum in the Amerscot Highland Pipe Band. The entire Walker family plays in the piper band, and they continue to host barn dances on campus and their farm in Hyde Park.

Of his children, Peter is going to graduate school at McGill (opera); Laurel is an Earth Science-Geography major at Vassar, graduating Dec 2010, and Mary Claire is starting as a freshman at Vassar in Fall 2010.

Yu Zhou

Yu Zhou is the Chair of the department for the first time and has enjoyed the cooperation and support of everyone in the department, especially the support of Brian McAdoo as the associate chair, and Lois and Rick as the staff members in the department. There have been many interesting events and developments at Ely Hall, to name a few, the department proposed to the dean of faculty office to have a new joint tenure track position with Urban Studies on Urban and community sustainability planning, and the building is finally being renovated.

She taught three courses: *Spaces of Global Capitalism*, and *Global Asia* in the fall, and the introductory course, *Global Geography*, in the spring. It is amazing to be so "global" the whole year. *Global Asia* is a new Asian Studies course, which involved five instructors, she being the organizer and main instructor. It was a great learning experience for her and students as she collaborated with professors in religion, anthropology, and political science departments. Yu Zhou also advised three theses, one in Asian Studies, one in International Studies and one in Geography. She really enjoyed the close collaboration and watching the growth of the students.

Yu Zhou was also the chair of the China Geography Specialty Group at AAG, which meant that she had to take a leading role in organizing the groups' sessions at the annual meeting of American geographers. She is pleased to report that the China specialty group had a record number of sessions this year, and many co-sponsored by other specialty groups. The panel she organized on Asia and the financial crisis attracted many leading economic geographers. She was also instrumental in creating the first plenary session of the group by featuring an influential scholar and Washington political adviser David Lampton on US-China relations. At the AAG meeting in D.C., she realized, however, even without her effort, discussion on China is everywhere, in almost all major plenary sessions including David Harvey, Paul Krugmann, and others. She was also extremely pleased to be able to view a world map made by Ricci (the most famous Jesuit in China in the 16-17th century) for the Chinese emperor in 1603, on special display at the Library of Congress. Reading the Chinese text on this map, which recorded the findings in newly found America and the difficulties in integrating the information from various sources, she has a renewed appreciation for cultural communication and linkages throughout history.

For her scholarly work, Yu Zhou has finished two collaborative papers on China's high-tech industry and higher education which are under review in *Environment and Planning A*. Her lead paper on her NSF project was published by the *Journal of Economic Geography* and her paper on China returnee migration was published in a new book called *Diaspora in the New Media Age*, edited by Pedro Oiarzabal. Her NSF funded project is going well and she is conducting a second follow-up survey on Chinese IT industry to evaluate the impact of the 2008 financial crisis. She has been invited to be a visiting scholar at China East Normal University in Shanghai in the summer and she looks forward to bringing her family to see the Shanghai World Expo there. During this year, she has also given lectures at Marist College, the Chinatown Museum in NYC, and was involved in hosting a high-level Chinese delegation visit at Vassar to learn about liberal art education.

Warthin Museum of Geology and Natural History

...Lights! Camera! Action!

...and so began an especially interesting day in the Warthin Museum of Geology & Natural History. Last May the museum was used for a film shoot by a crew from Los Angeles who were creating footage of Dr. David Krause, Professor at Stony Brook University. Dr. Krause's fieldwork in Madagascar has produced some interesting fossil finds that were being included in a special for the Discovery Channel. Our museum was chosen as the backdrop for filming because of its vintage natural history museum atmosphere. We're waiting now to see if our bits make it into the film or end up on the cutting room floor.

Dr. Krause and crew preparing to film.



Besides its debut in film, the museum has hosted two more years of Matthew Vassar Natural History Club meetings for Vassar community children. We've participated, with an exhibit of our specimens, in the past two annual Gem & Mineral Shows at the Dutchess Fairgrounds. We've hosted open houses during the VC Parents Weekend festivities (last year we had 65 people come in to visit the museum during one weekend). We also facilitated an arrangement with Stephen Koob, a glass restoration expert from the Corning Museum of Glass, to repair and restore the beautiful Blaschka glass models of invertebrates in the biology department. These models, by the same family of artisans who made the glass flowers in Harvard's museum, were purchased in 1887 as part of our natural history collection.

New exhibits in the museum include a lovely arrangement of corals and associated information from Charles Darwin's book (1842) on coral islands and coral reef formation. This exhibit was installed expressly for the first celebration of Darwin Days on campus, which took place in 2009, on February 12th and 13th, the 200th anniversary of Darwin's birth. The new exhibit on sand coincided with a field trip to Bermuda for ENST/ESCI/BIOL 254, Global Decline of Coral Reef Ecosystems. Our Collections Manager, Rick Jones, found in museum storage a large collection of old coffee jars filled with sand from all over the world. He pulled those and some x-ray diffractometer research done by students together into an attractive and informative exhibit. The diversity in color, shape and size of the sand is fabulous! We've filled out and expanded the exhibit on meteorites, and have highlighted a collection that we found in storage: the Enzo de Chetelat collection of minerals from all over the world. This gorgeous collection, mostly from the 1960s, is a bit of a mystery to us. If anyone has any information on Enzo or the collection—we'd sure like to know!

Faculty and staff in the department collaborated with the staff of the Children's Museum in Poughkeepsie to put together an exhibit centered on their full-sized cast of the Hyde Park Mastodon. Our contributions included scientific background information, fossils, a customized map of the Laurentide Ice Sheet, and a reconstructed core of glacial sediment. It's a big hit! You should check it out if you can. And speaking of mastodons—on the retirement of one of our biology faculty, Bob Suter, we inherited the last piece of the Vassar mastodon—a foot! The museum now has on display the actual foot of the mastodon, the Circleville Mastodon, who first came to Vassar in 1903.

We recently received a gift of an amazing array of scientific specimens from the daughter of the late Dorothy Riker. Dorothy was an environmental educator whose collection ranges from fossils to minerals to natural history displays. We are busy finding the right use for these fine specimens—certainly our natural history club will benefit from having them available. We also keep an eye out for old bits and pieces of the museum collection that have wandered away to other parts of campus. We are working to corral, and curate, what we can.

Our museum assistant, Lucy Cantwell '10, just graduated--after spending four years working for us. We'll miss her, and wish her well in whatever she decides to do next. Lucy put many hours into the database that we are creating to list all of our specimens. Eventually, outside researchers will be able to find our specimens online where we will have all their locations and photographs clearly posted. This is a many-year project, but we appreciate all of the time and effort that Lucy, and other students (we have volunteer high school students, as well) have put into this work.



Over the past two years, the Museum has been visited by many schoolchildren, Boy Scout groups and home-schooled families. We did a number of tours for the Devereux Foundation, which houses developmentally challenged adults. We do see the occasional alum, reliving their days in Ely Hall. Please stop by when you're on campus, and bring any pictures, memories or stories that you have about the geology or natural history museum. We're working on a history of the museum and would love to have your input.

Foot of the Circleville Mastodon.

All of our historic wall maps are now online, for research purposes, as well as a sort of catalogue. If you'd like to take a look they can be found at:
<http://luna.vassar.edu/luna/servlet/Vassarvc1~14~14>

ALUMNI NOTES!

Gay Gilpin Johnson '46 "Our family will meet for a brief week together in Cottonwood Gulch, New Mexico where we have all been for past summers over 40 years. Right in the Red Rock country full of treasures archeological, botanical, geological, sociological, and of art and even silversmithing. One of our 4 granddaughters just graduated from Vassar PBK in a combination of anthropology and environment. I loved seeing the campus in gorgeous spring, loved the events and speakers and again wondered how the grounds manager keeps the Canada Geese population down to the few swimming around Sunset Lake behind the commencement ceremony on the bank. New to me, the outdoor auditorium was a dramatically beautiful stage for Commencement.

I've stopped in once or twice recently and like all the changes and especially the evidence that Geology includes Geography, which I used to want back in '46!"

Martha Derby McDaniel '60 "I have indulged my lifelong interest in geology by living in Hawaii with some of the most fascinating volcanic geology available. I've visited the major islands, hiking and driving to visit some of the available wonders. In high school my family was fortunate to visit the Big Island as Mauna Loa was erupting with lavas cascading into the sea. That plus my grandfather's observations of events on Molokai really hooked me. Geology at Vassar was quite different and I learned a lot, including our visit to Key West. As a high school teacher in the shadow of Diamond Head I taught Natural History of Hawaii to juniors and seniors. I left that to work for the City and County of Honolulu's Department of Parks and Recreation as a Recreation Specialist at the newly built (by the US Corps of Engineers) flood control project in Kaneohe - Ho'omaluhia Botanical Garden. I worked in the towering shadow of the Ko'olau while studying the effects of the many waterfalls, which fell with every hard rain. A trip to Macchu Pichu and the Galapagos Islands with Vassar was amazing with lots of comparison to Hawaii. I also had a chance to visit New Zealand quite thoroughly while my sister was living there. I then transferred from Ho'omaluhia to Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve in the midst of some of the most spectacular geology on Oahu. I have visited my son and family who live 3 hours south of Perth near Yallingup and Busselton on Caves Road with lots of impressive geology and caves. In August of 2007 I fulfilled a dream by traveling with Vassar to Iceland with my 19-year-old grandson, Adam. (I've vowed to always travel with a grandson.) The opportunity to stand where the Atlantic and American plates divide is awesome. We got to see Surtsey and even climbed onto the glacier near where the recent eruptions occurred. This is probably too long and it seems short to cover a lifetime of geology."

Jane Deane Clark, PhD '67, has left her position teaching geology and GIS at Albion College, to retire, with her husband Russ, to a planned environmental community in New Hampshire. He golfs, but she is not yet ready to retire, so Jane telecommutes and commutes to the Connecticut Hospital Association where she is Vice President for Data Services. She was awarded her PhD in medical geography from Michigan State University in 1988 – a little later than most of her classmates. "My career in healthcare has consistently been at the intersection of data and continuous quality improvement where I can positively affect the quality of care. Our son teaches math at the Hopkins School (celebrating its 350th anniversary this week) in New Haven, CT and our daughter is an animal scientist working at the Department of Natural

Resources in Michigan. We have two bright happy grandchildren living with their parents in Michigan. Russ and I met at NEIGC in Boston in the fall of 1964. I hope that Vassar is still attending those conferences since the outcomes can be fabulous!"

Margaret (Peggy) Peterson Hotchkiss '69, is the principal of an elementary school on the Navajo Nation in New Mexico. Her home is Saratoga, WY, but she doesn't get there as often as she'd like. "I am surrounded by fascinating geology here on the Rez--diatremes, ring dikes, palisades, gorgeous sandstone cliffs, awe-inspiring canyons, and fabulous vistas! When I was a science teacher, then an instructional coach, at the middle school in our town, I had fun teaching earth science or playing "visiting geologist" for the science classes. I miss that--but "my" teachers have invited me to visit their classes and teach their students about the local geology next year. I can hardly wait!"

Ann Moor Jones '70 "I don't have much new to add to my C.V. I have become a Tulsa County Master Gardener. There are all kinds of activities from which one can choose. I chair the School Program which coordinates 101 schools in Tulsa County. We give hands-on presentations on 8-9 programs that have to do with horticulture – or just nature in general. It's fun and very time consuming. We are all volunteers who schedule the events and then execute them in the classroom: grades K-5. Of course, the favorite program is Worms to the Wise – an experience with earthworms."

Rosemary Healey Pusateri '71 "After all these years of never working for pay in my major field, I draw on my education in our extensive travels. I continue as an environmental activist at Lake George where we live. "

Erica Kleine '73, is putting her geography education to good use by doing a lot of traveling. Erica just returned from 3 weeks-plus in Burma including a two-week cruise up the Irrawaddy River from Prome to Katha. "The trip brought back fond memories of my South East Asian geography studies under Professor Humphrey! Accompanying me was **Sarah Henry, Vassar '57**, and her husband, John, who are my summer neighbors in Orient, Long Island, where there is quite a community of Vassar alums. "

Laura Joines, '81, is a Professor of Architecture at California Polytechnic, San Luis Obispo. She is also an AIA architect with DOMU and is expanding her line of products for the home into a new website, www.DOMUdesign.com.

She also keeps busy being a taxi driver and cook with her 3 children who are now 5, 10 and 13.

Bruce Taterka, Geology '84, is teaching Environmental Science at Mendham High School in Mendham, NJ. He got remarried in September '09 and lives on the Schiff Nature Preserve in Mendham, where his wife is the director. Last year Bruce got an Earthwatch teacher fellowship to study caterpillars and climate change in the cloud forest of Ecuador, and in summer 2010, he'll be traveling to the Gulf of Mexico on a Teacher at Sea fellowship to study marine ecology (or what's left of it) on board a NOAA research vessel for 3 weeks. His daughter Maddie was accepted to the VC class of 2013, but took a gap year to travel in South America and India, and she'll be coming to Poughkeepsie this fall as a member of the VC class of 2014! "I'm looking forward to visiting Vassar more often in the next few years!"

Richard Page '87, is currently residing in Oslo, Norway since 2002, and has been employed with Schlumberger since 1992. Currently, he's assigned to their seismic exploration research center as a Technical Communications Editor. Living in Norway has allowed him to explore the

country's breathtaking unique geology & cultural landscapes. "Our center is actually located over formations that have direct ties to the Hudson Valley & upstate NY!"

Sarah Tebbens, PhD '87, and her husband, Chris Barton moved to Ohio in 2005. They are both on the faculty at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, where she's an Associate Professor of Physics, and he's a Professor of Earth and Environmental Science. They have a small farm with chickens and alpacas. Sarah and her 15 yr old son Nick climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro in March 2010, and the entire family took a tour of Vassar in the summer of 2009, which their 13 yr old daughter Kate particularly enjoyed.

Jonathan Brody '91, is still in Taiwan with his wife Li, son Ben (13) and daughter Julia (5). He started an educational software company which was acquired by a Canadian company two years ago, and he's still working with the Canadians, but slowly heading towards the exit. As a sideline, he edits and translates journal manuscripts for Taiwan academics. The papers are mostly in engineering, and Jonathan is getting a liberal arts education in everything from nanomedicine to earthquake dampening.

James Peale '91, has continued work in the field of environmental consulting, working on soil, groundwater and sediment remediation projects. Recently I've been focusing on two areas: in situ chemical reduction of chlorinated solvent DNAPLs, and incorporating sustainability elements into remedial alternative selection and design. I put the fun into Superfund. I'm still working for Maul Foster Alongi, Inc. in Portland, Oregon (www.maulfoster.com), and have two boys aged 6 and 9 who are already picking up rocks because, in their words, "they're easy to catch". Greetings to all in VC Geology!

Adriane Fowler '94, is working as a Historical Landscape Architect and is a Senior Associate at AECOM Design + Planning. She specializes in historic resource preservation planning, built heritage, and cultural landscapes, working on projects for the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and other government agencies. Her recent travels include work at North Field National Historic Landmark, Tinian, in the Northern Mariana Islands (the World War II airfield best known as the takeoff point for the Enola Gay in the bombing of Hiroshima); the St. Louis Arch grounds (Jefferson National Expansion Memorial) designed by Eero Saarinen; and documenting several National Historic Trails throughout the western U.S.

Adriane lives in Charlottesville, Virginia, almost in view of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, and enjoys participating in the area's vibrant local food movement, including gardening and canning. She is engaged to be married next year - her fiancée's current position as a MBA student at Tulane University has provided a good excuse to visit New Orleans regularly in the meantime.

Dave Palmieri '95, and his wife Sandra Martinez-Zuniga moved to Chapel Hill, NC where David is continuing to teach high school world history and US history at Raleigh Charter High School, blocks from the state capital in downtown Raleigh. Sandra is completing her masters and certification in school counseling at UNC.

Julia Sexton '95, came and visited us at Ely Hall for Alumni Weekend this summer! After graduating from Vassar, Julia received a MS in Geology from Colorado State University, and then worked for 5 years in industry, academia, and non-profit. "Yes, I worked in all three areas in 5 years! It was a great way to help me better identify what I enjoy doing." In 2003, she went back to school for a PhD in science education from Colorado State University. She loved the PhD work, as it integrated her science interests with her education and psychology interests. She received her PhD in 2008 and worked as a post-doc research associate until this year.

Julia now works as a science education research associate in the Mathematics and Science Teaching Institute at the University of Northern Colorado and as a science education research and evaluation independent consultant. Julia conducts science education research and evaluation and teaches education research classes. Along the way, she also got married; her husband is a technical writer in the renewable energy field. They live in Colorado and love the West and the mountains.

Jean Carmalt '96, has had a very full recent past, beginning with having children, two of them! now 2.5 and 1. She also recently finished up her PhD in Geography at the University of Washington, and tells Yu Zhou "I owe this in part to your influence and guidance. I still remember well the good advice you gave me as I went through the process of writing my thesis at Vassar, and it's advice that was also helpful in writing my dissertation. I hope all is well at Vassar and that perhaps I'll be able to see you at a future AAG. I'm starting a tenure track position at Drake University (in Des Moines, IA) in the fall in an interdisciplinary program on Law, Politics, and Society, but I will still be active in the world of geography because that is what drives my research agenda in human rights law. "

Doug Silin '96, has covered a lot of 'terra firma.' He and Anne (also VC '96) lived in Bangalore and worked for a legal-technology start-up company, and then moved to Hong Kong, where they've been for a couple years. Doug works as in-house counsel for the container shipping company OOCL. ("I can't think of any other job in the world where you can talk about pirates on days other than Halloween.") Although Hong Kong is a large city, it is surrounded by extensive countryside and hiking trails, and Doug and Anne hike almost every weekend. "We've also hiked and/or camped our way through the countryside of Nepal, New Zealand, South Africa, China, and Cambodia over the past couple years. Geography keeps us exploring."

As a side note, there was a recent Vassar alum gathering in Hong Kong where I met **Jessica Chong ('08)**, and asked her how Professor Walker -- "the guy with the big red beard" -- was doing. She gave a confused look, then responded: "There's a Professor Walker, but his beard is white!" I am allowed to laugh because I've got little hair left, and when I do grow out my beard, it's mostly white, too."

Greg Guibert '97, has two new jobs in Boulder, CO. He's splitting time with the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in the new Integrated Science Program where he specializes in urban climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction issues. Greg also spends time with the Institute for Social and Environmental Transition (ISET) on a large 4 country, 10 city urban climate resilience demonstration project in SE Asia. Combined, they represent a rare chance to use cutting edge climate science to support real world decision making in some of the most vulnerable and challenging environments.

Vanessa L. Condra '98, just graduated from the University of Denver Sturm College of Law with a LLM in Environmental and Natural Resources Law and Policy (she initially received her law degree from there in 2001). Her daughter, Berlyn Maxine, had her first birthday in May.

Richelle Hanson '98, has been living in Baltimore and working as a geologist for the Maryland Department of the Environment since 2000. She has a wonderful husband, Tim, and a sweet and very active, 2-year old son, Dylan. They live in a 1860s rowhouse that always needs something but love it and the neighborhood.

Benjamin Horst, '99, has just recorded his first anniversary working at Six Apart as a project manager, where he leads the development of strategic apps using their public API. (They are the blogging company behind TypePad and Movable Type.) Ben lives in Astoria, NYC, with his wife, Tracey, and they're expecting their first child this fall.

China Mabee '99, My husband and I are enjoying sleep deprivation with the birth of our second child this past March. His name is Philip Bruce Mabee.

Jay Pearlman '99, is currently living in Hamden, CT with his wife Kristen, and they are very excited to be expecting their first daughter. He is currently Associate Vice President and part owner of Sightlines – a consulting firm that helps colleges and universities better manage their facilities. Jay's most current project has been the development of their Go-Green services, which help institutions measure their carbon footprint and develop climate action plans. He's had the privilege of working with over fifty institutions, including Vassar, on this new project. Please feel free to contact him at jpearlman@sightlines.com.

Catherine Schloegel '00, continues to adventure through the wild montane forests and páramos of southern Ecuador where she works with communities and individuals on conservation. This month, she has found herself camped under the stars working alongside head-light clad local park guards to monitor rare and endangered frogs, *Pristimantis*, to be precise. Most of the time Catherine's work as Executive Director of Fundación Cordillera Tropical keeps her a bit more desk-bound than she would like, but she can't much complain for the work is intellectually satisfying and personally enriching.

"What began as a two-year position in Ecuador has somehow become four years and my heart happily tells me that this is where I should continue to be. So, next time you are in Cuenca, Ecuador, be sure to stop by for a cup of horchata tea. "

Rachael Lizio Katzen Kuryanny '01, has wrapped up her 7th and final (for now, at least) year teaching middle school math and Earth Science at Portland's Northwest Academy. She resigned as of June to, among other things, focus her energies on improving mid-level (grades 5-9) math curriculum and instruction. She has a full plate with consulting, leading student workshops, tutoring, and even potentially serving as a university supervisor overseeing the state certification of pre-service teachers. Stepping away from the classroom will provide her the flexibility to proactively manage her health, and the opportunity to introduce practical personal finance skills to a larger audience of adolescents. "Shameless plug for my math-centric blog, in which I advocate for the improved integration and application of rigorous quantitative skills: www.MathSense.tumblr.com."

She unintentionally started a jewelry business in late '08, and has been pleased, if not befuddled, by the success of her "re-purposed" (that's Portland for "used") domino & assorted game piece pendants. Her craft has even attracted some press, notably a feature in January's Oregon Home Magazine. (A profile appeared in the publication's 2009 "Green issue.") "Ever the geology-dork, I named my company "Superposition Pendants," after the venerable Steno. " (www.SuperpositionPendants.Tumblr.Com)

"The last two years of life have certainly been full, if not overflowing with the unexpected—among the most surprising, other than finding then-UK based Eliza dressed as a chicken (and my husband Justin, a 6' tall corn cob) on my back porch last August. The fact that I may have agreed not only to attend next year's 10-yr reunion, but perhaps even to extend the weekend with a group trip (should Beth etc. be successful in rallying together the entire motley crew of us '01-ers.) Geo-kids of '01, I'll see you next May!"

Chris Argyros '02, just graduated from University of Connecticut School of Law and is planning the next big move.

Brooke Crowley '02, has been kept busy since graduating. She completed a Masters in Earth Sciences, and then decided to study lemurs and the paleoecology of Madagascar, so switched departments and pursued a masters in Biological Anthropology. After a couple of years in the Anthropology department, she decided to return to a department devoted to the natural sciences, and switched departments a final time and completed a PhD in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology in December 2009. She moved to Toronto, Canada, and has just begun a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Toronto. "Life is good. I will be getting married in October, and wedding planning has taken over where the dissertation work left off. If anybody is ever in the Toronto area, please let me know."

Luke Mitchell '02, graduated from UPenn this spring with his Masters in City Planning, with a concentration on Urban Design. He's currently in Madrid, working a summer internship at a firm called Fundación Metrópoli.

Justin Minder '04, has been studying in the Dept. of Atmospheric Science at Univ. of Washington (in Seattle) since 2004, studying weather and climate over mountains, particularly rain and snowfall, and just defended his PhD thesis on June 4. Justin will be taking the summer off, to hike and climb and relax in the Cascades and Seattle, and then moving back east to begin a 2-year post-doc at Yale.

Seth Schromen-Wawrin '05, finished a masters three years ago in Urban Planning in Denmark, getting excited about public spaces, social norms, play, and comparative land use policy. He decided to initially put this to use at a non-profit trying to improve the walkability of Seattle, WA, through cartography, wayfinding, conveying qualitative importance of place through maps, and old fashioned community organizing. A few months ago Seth left this job to trek across northern Spain on the Camino de Santiago, where he is currently. As he walks, he is meditating on what will occupy him next: Community thirdplaces like bakeries, playground and park planning, alternative cartography, or grad school are drifting through his mind.

Ariana Brill '06, just finished a joint JD/MBA program at UC Davis, where she studied business strategy and intellectual property law. This summer she's sticking around in Davis and studying for the California Bar Exam, and she's planning to move to Los Angeles at the end of August "(and hopefully I'll find a job!)"

Roger Putnam '06, is currently living in El Portal, CA just outside of Yosemite National Park, where he's a work leader for the National Park Service on a variety of alpine restoration projects. Most of these projects are related to restoring proper hydrology to alpine streams and meadows that have been degraded through recreational overuse. On the weekends, he's been working on a project with the park's geologist mapping the different types of granite that compose El Capitan, and his free time is occupied with gardening, rock climbing, backcountry skiing, and going on surf trips. Roger is looking forward to applying to graduate school in the fall.

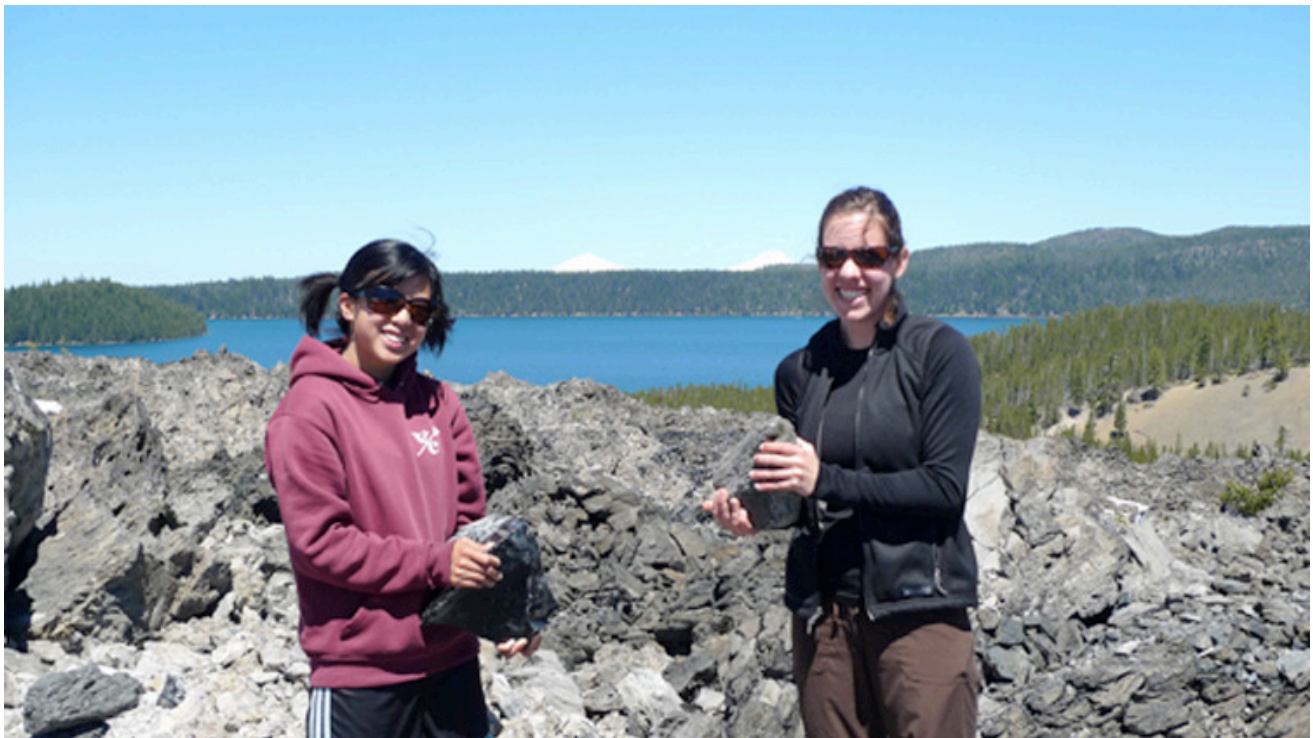
Gina LaCerva '06, has received an extremely competitive National Science Foundation Research Fellowship. She will use it to attend Cambridge University this fall to earn a Master of Philosophy in Society, Environment and Development.

Ryan Pleva '06, has been accepted into the competitive MBA program at HEC-Paris, France.

Hope Crocker '07, just graduated from Bank Street College of Education with an M.S. in Education, and is teaching 6th grade at a KIPP school in Harlem.

Lauren Johnson '07, is currently working for the Association for American Medical Colleges in Washington, DC overseeing their Human Subjects Research Protection Program. Essentially, she monitors research activity to ensure that it is in compliance with the federal ethical guidelines and assists in submitting projects to their Institutional Review Board (IRB) when necessary. She is also taking classes part time preparing to apply for a graduate program in a health related field (to be determined).

Morgan Ross '07, and Yvonne Yeung '07, have been gallivanting in the streams, mountains, lakes, and fields of the Pacific Northwest. Morgan led trail crews and then took classes in Oregon. Yvonne was an Environmental Educator in Olympic National Park. They have recently reunited, backpacking, eating chocolate, and discussing the prospects of growing up. “(No, not much has changed in three years.)” This upcoming fall, Morgan will be starting a graduate program on Watershed Management and Hydrology at the University of Arizona. Yvonne will be traveling and convincing herself to take the science classes she ignored while at Vassar before applying for grad school the following fall...or change her mind and go a completely different route. *Below: Yvonne and Morgan at an obsidian field.*



Adam Jost, '08, moved to San Francisco with Anna Payne-Tobin (Biology '08) and began working as the Paleobiology research assistant in the Department of Geological and Environmental Sciences at Stanford University. He's been working on several projects, including carbon isotopes during the Permian-Triassic mass extinction, changes in gastropod body size from the Permian through the Jurassic, and changes in foraminifera body size over the entire Phanerozoic. In September 2009, Adam spent 6 weeks in South China doing field work on limestones from the Early-Middle Triassic, and in March 2010, visited South China again to see sections from the Middle-Late Permian. This summer, he'll be starting in the PhD program at Stanford, and will be focusing on geochemical cycling during the Middle-Late Permian. “Also, last summer, Anna and I adopted a tuxedo cat named Smow!”

Abby Kreidler '08, is splitting her time between her daytime job and her non-profit work. The day job is working at an awesome multi-specialty outpatient clinic in Austin, running the Endocrinology and Rheumatology Departments. She's getting amazing hands-on training and building up a resume for Graduate School- she plans on pursuing dual Masters in Physician's Assistant Studies and Public Health.

Since graduation Abby has continued working with the Asayo's Wish Foundation, the group she traveled with to Uganda during her senior year. Abby has been back to their orphanage two subsequent times and plans on returning again next spring, to achieve her two major goals with AWF- providing proper health care for the almost 200 children and ensuring clean drinking water for the community at large. "I couldn't be happier with my life right now and am excited for what the future holds!"

Libby Murphy '08, is doing well but is busier than ever. She's about to complete a year as project manager for Hudson Valley Grass Energy (www.hvge.org), a non-profit collaboration dedicated to bringing local, renewable biomass energy to the Hudson Valley. They take left over hay and convert it to high quality pellet fuel that can be used for heat and electricity. The pellet mill is fully mobile, which means all profits go directly to the farmer! The other half of Libby's time is spent playing bass and singing in The Amendment (www.myspace.com/theamendmentrock). They are about to release a 10-song album and music video next month and have been playing gigs all over the area. Email contact@theamendmentrock.com if you would like to join our mailing list and come check out a show sometime!

Chris Beach '09, is still living in San Francisco, and very happy that he chose to move back to the Bay Area after leaving Vassar. Right now, he is playing music in two different bands, restoring classic Japanese motorcycles, and working at the Bound Together Anarchist Collective Bookstore. "When I'm not doing those activities, you'll find me riding my bicycle or motorcycle."

Sarah E. Brown '09, is currently living and working at the vegan health, wellness and spiritual retreat center The Tree of Life in Patagonia, Ariz. as an editor of the social-spiritual site GabrielCousens.com. Through The Tree, she also volunteers regularly at an orphanage in Hermosillo, Mexico playing with the children and helping the center cultivate a sustainable organic veganic produce garden.

Hannah Ewert-Krocker '09, spent last summer leading 17 high school students on a community service trip to Costa Rica and is now serving a term with AmeriCorps in a community health center outside of Denver, CO. Highlights of her new life out West include four beautiful days in the San Juan Mountains at the Telluride bluegrass festival (with fellow geo/anthro major **Marion Spencer '09**), becoming a Denver Urban Gardens "Master Composter," and finding herself in a Newsweek photo about her clinic's medical mobile unit, which serves mostly migrant farm workers in rural Colorado!

Wilson Salls '09, began a summer gig as an Urban Park Ranger two days after graduation in Fort Greene Park, Brooklyn. Though he enjoyed living in NYC, as do so many other Vassar grads, he just couldn't pry himself away from that place he'd called home for four years prior. Wilson was conveniently offered a position with Conrad Geoscience, an environmental consulting firm in downtown Poughkeepsie, and began working there immediately after hanging his "Smokey the Bear costume" in the closet at the end of the summer. He is currently still with the company working on projects ranging from groundwater and soil sampling to carbon sequestration

feasibility assessment, though he managed to squeeze in a trip to Tokyo with his girlfriend, Misho. Wilson tentatively plans to seek a Master's in Environmental Science or a related field in order to someday save the world, but in the meantime, he hopes to continue his world travels.

Matt Winnick '09, joins Adam Jost '08, in the graduate program at Stanford, in the Environmental Earth System Science department. He uses oxygen and hydrogen isotopes in authigenic minerals as proxies of precipitation to reconstruct changes in the hydrologic cycle during the Cenozoic. This month, he'll fly to Colorado to the Telluride bluegrass festival with his research group/band, then doing some field work off it. He also got an NSF scholarship to attend the Urbino School of Paleoclimatology in Italy for a few weeks in July, "so I'm pretty psyched for that." Matt and David Gillikin just published a paper, "*Evaluating the freshwater mussel *Elliptio complanata* as a proxy for road salt pollution in northeastern US states.*"

Davene Daley '10, has been accepted to grad school in Civil and Environmental Engineering at Tufts University.

Dorien Ediger-Seto '10, has received a prestigious Compton Fellowship, and she will work in Arizona with the Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project with a focus on children in immigrant detention, and the documentation of human and civil rights abuses by U.S. authorities.

Zak Ratajczak, '10, has been accepted to a PhD program at Kansas State and won the GAANN scholarship from the US Department of Education for his PhD work.

Ian Sharma '10, a senior geography major, has been accepted in the very competitive University of Washington, Seattle graduate program in Marine Affairs and will be attending in the fall.



Students, faculty and family at the newly opened Walkway Over the Hudson, *October 2009*.

See you next time~ Please stay in touch!