

# FIELD NOTES

The Geography Students' Association Newsletter

Volume 2

Issue 1

September, 2008



## GSA News

Welcome back! The GSA team is already growing and the fall semester is shaping up to be a great one.

We've got a lot of great events planned already - from the first Bzzr Garden rocking the Undergrad Lounge on September 19th to the end of the year Geogala, which returns to the classy Cecil Green Park House on March 26th.

In between, the calendar's filling up with things like putting out the third edition of Trail Six, the Geography Undergraduate Journal, a barbeque for students planning on graduating this year, a trip to a Geography conference

in Nanaimo, and more bzzr gardens and 'Wynn and Cheese' lunches, where you get a chance to share your thoughts on your experiences in the department. Our plans are only the beginning, though. This is YOUR Geography Students' Associa-



tion and we want to do what you want to see.

Are you looking for GSA field trips? Networking events? Presentations from guest speakers? More chances to relax and socialize with fellow Geography students? Give us feedback on what would make a great year for the Geography department by e-mailing us at [ubcgsa@hotmail.com](mailto:ubcgsa@hotmail.com). Even better - get involved! When you sign up for your GSA membership you'll get a chance to volunteer at any GSA event that you'd like. We're also recruiting for many positions on the exec team - check out the details on Page 2, and email us to apply.

We're looking forward to a great year! Good luck with your new classes!

## What's Up with the GSA? Upcoming Events

### We've got a busy month ahead!

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Apply to be on the GSA team</b>                                 | <b>September 2nd - September 12th</b><br>Join the GSA Exec! For more information on available positions, see Page 2, visit the GSA website ( <a href="http://www.ams.ubc.ca/clubs/gsa">www.ams.ubc.ca/clubs/gsa</a> ) or email <a href="mailto:ubcgsa@hotmail.com">ubcgsa@hotmail.com</a> |
| <b>GSA Booth at the Imagine Main Event Carnival</b>                | <b>Tuesday, September 2nd, 3-5pm, Main Mall</b><br>Visit the GSA as we let everyone know what the Geography department and the club are all about. Your first chance to sign up for your GSA membership!  |
| <b>AMS Clubs' Days</b>   | <b>Wednesday, September 17th-19th in the SUB</b>  |
| <b>Geography Majors' Night</b>                                     | <b>Friday, September 19th, 4:00pm in GEOG Rm 100</b><br>Find out how to make the most of your Geography degree and where it can lead you.   |
| <b>First Bzzr Garden of the Year!</b>                              | <b>Friday, September 19th, 5-9pm in the Geography Undergrad Lounge</b><br>Come on out for a chance to hang out with Geography faculty, staff and students and celebrate the start of school in style.   |
| <b>Day of the Longboat</b>   | <b>Saturday, September 27th and Sunday, September 28th (registration deadline September 17th)</b><br>Join Bad Latitude, the Geography sports team, as we take to the sea to compete in Day of the Longboat.   |
| Also coming up this fall:<br><b>Hopeful Grads of 2009 Barbeque</b> | Meet other students planning on graduating this spring, talk to current grad students in the department, and enjoy a delicious barbeque at the Geography building!  |
| <b>Get Learn'd Conference</b>                                      | <b>Saturday, October 4th, 2008</b><br>This conference will give first and second year students the tools they need to excel academically. Visit the GSA booth to find out more about how to be a successful Geography student.  |

# GET INVOLVED!

The GSA needs you!

Do you have ideas to make the Geography department a better place to be? Want to get involved with one of the most fun and dynamic student groups in campus? The GSA is looking for enthusiastic students to fill a range of positions, including:

- \* Sustainability Coordinator
- \* AUS Rep.
- \* SUS Rep.
- \* Sports Rep.
- \* Relations Rep.
- \* Fundraising
- \* Bzzr Garden Committee
- \* Promotions Coordinator
- \* Vice Social Coordinator
- \* GeoGala Committee
- \* Trail Six Undergraduate Journal Assistant Editor
- \* Field Notes contributors

To apply for any of these positions, or if there's another area you're interested in working on, e-mail [ubcgsa@hotmail.com](mailto:ubcgsa@hotmail.com)

## GET INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

### UBC Learning Exchange Trek Program

Share your talents, interests and skills while learning from diverse people in Vancouver's inner-city schools and non-profit organizations.

Get involved! Learn about the issues that affect the Downtown Eastside and other inner city communities.

To learn more or sign up for an orientation, visit [www.learningexchange.ubc.ca](http://www.learningexchange.ubc.ca). Orientations are filling up fast so sign-up soon!

## COURSES TO CONSIDER

Still have space in your fall schedule? Take a look at some Geography courses that might inspire you.

### GEOG 446 (3) - Global Biogeochemistry

This course examines the processes that control the planetary cycles of carbon, nitrogen and other important elements, the human perturbation of these biogeochemical cycles, and the consequences for the atmosphere, terrestrial ecosystems, and aquatic ecosystems. Topics include the carbon, nitrogen and phosphorus cycles; greenhouse gases and climate change; biological productivity and nutrient limitation in different systems.

### GEOG 446 (3) The Geography of Social Movements and Social Protest

The purpose of this course is to review some of the literature within geography and the social sciences that address the structures of social movement organization and some of the economic, political, social and cultural geographic contexts in which movements organize protest and make demands for societal transformation. Topics such as the role of social networks in protest organizing, the uses of political scale by social movements, and the transformation of urban space through movement goals and strategies will be examined. Students will be encouraged to apply the course material to a case study of their own through both research and participation in the weekly discussions.

### GEOG 447 (3) Original Research

Will provide students with the opportunity to conduct original research in one of two fields: immigration and settlement; or homelessness. While the former is located in concepts of transnationalism and international mobility the latter is situated in housing theory, planning and residential mobility. Students will be expected to conceive and undertake an empirical research project in consultation with the instructor, including: an extensive literature review; the University's ethical review process if the research involves human subjects; and submission of a major paper written to the technical standards of a geographical journal. Evaluation will be based on adherence to a plan of study, research journal, participation in WebCT and class discussion, an oral presentation, and submission of a final paper.

Other Courses that still have spaces left!

GEOG 210 (3) Vancouver and its Region

GEOG 270 (3) Introduction to Geographic Information Systems

GEOG 305 (3) Introduction to Hydrology

GEOG 327 (3) Historical Geography of Canada, I: Canada Before 1850

GEOG 350 (3) Introduction to Urban Geography

GEOG 357 (3) Introduction to Social and Behavioural Geography

GEOG 390 (3/6) Geography of Selected Regions

GEOG 391 (3) Geography of Europe

GEOG 426 (3) Historical Geography of British Columbia, I

Questions? Get in touch with undergraduate advisor Karen Young by e-mail at [young@geog.ubc.ca](mailto:young@geog.ubc.ca) or attend advising hours 10:30 to 12:30 and 2:30 to 3:30.

## SPOTLIGHT The Diaper Dilemma

BY SIAN WEATHERLEY

Driving down a dirt road, in the days when cars were scarcely seen, sat an English man with his Filipino wife and baby, luggage strapped to every possible place on the car. Little did they know, they were about to bring unimaginable change to their small fishing village. The most innocent member of their family was to carry in a piece of the outside world that had never before touched these shores: plastic, disposable diapers.

This was the case back in 1987 for the small fishing village of Capinahan, Bais City on the island of Negros Oriental in the Philippines. Houses were made of wood, televisions were nonexistent and I was that little eco-villain; one of the first to set foot in the area wearing a disposable diaper. Cut off from much of the modern world, the people in my mother's village did things their own way. They got their fish from the sea in front of their houses; their vegetables and rice from the hills behind them; and their entertainment from the people all around. When it came to things they needed to dispose of, much of it was recycled. Composting was widespread, old petrol jugs were turned into flower pots, plastic flip-flops would be used as floats for fishing nets and much of their remaining waste was burned. This posed a problem for my relatives when the time came to change my dirty diaper. They tried to burn it, but it wouldn't light. They would have thrown it into the sea, but my parents wouldn't let them. They definitely couldn't recycle it, so piles of my diapers were buried. Problem solved – for one family.



When televisions started showing up in every other house and Hugies killed the safety pin-cloth method, everyone in the village now

had the choice whether or not to do their babies 'very, very dirty laundry. Unfortunately, not everyone was as well educated on the consequences of throwing rubbish into the sea as my parents.

As more and more of the outside world began to influence this small village, greater and greater quantities of waste accumulated, and - with no rubbish clean up system in place - much of it ended up in the sea. "The mentality is that people throw their rubbish into the sea and

wait for the tides to take it away so that it's not their problem anymore," says Elizabeth Weatherley, local girl turned mother of a UBC Geography student. Fortunately, positive influences from the outside also reached the small town, bringing environmentalists from Germany to try to educate the people about pollution.

Thanks to outside efforts and the education of the public on pollution matters, a rubbish clean up system is now in place. This, however, does not mean that the problem has gone away. As the villagers wait for the rubbish truck to come by twice a week, their waste is dumped beside their houses. Due to rising sea levels, high tides are flooding homes, and while people are busy trying to save their belongings, no one thinks twice about the rubbish being taken in by the sea. So although efforts have been made, my father still comes home from a fishing trip complaining that the only thing he has caught is a dirty diaper. I personally do not know how to fix the problem, but there is one thing I do know: that diaper's no longer mine.

### GET INVOLVED ON CAMPUS

## Student Representatives to the Faculty of Arts

Want a chance to make a difference in your Faculty? The department of Geography needs a student representative to the Faculty of Arts. 24 Arts student will be selected to participate in meetings and proceedings. This includes:

- 20 third- and fourth-year students to be elected (one representative from the combined major, honours, or graduate programs in each of the Departments and Schools in the Faculty of Arts)
- 4 Arts students to be elected (two representatives from each of first- and second-year).

**Student representatives are full voting members in the meetings of the Faculty of Arts, and are appointed to committees of the Faculty.**

NOMINATIONS OPEN: SEPTEMBER 2, 2008

NOMINATIONS CLOSE: SEPTEMBER 12, 2008

Nomination forms will be available from School and Departmental offices, the Office of the Dean (Buchanan A201), Office of Associate Dean, Students (Buchanan C121) and the Arts Undergraduate Society office (Buchanan D140) starting Tuesday, September 2nd. Submit completed nomination forms to the Office of the Dean, Buchanan A201 by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, September 12. For more information, call 822-6700

## MEET YOUR GSA EXEC!



VP Academic: Eva Lillquist

**Year of Study:** 4th

**Area of concentration:** Human Geography

**Hometown:** Vancouver, BC

**Favourite Geography class:** GEOG 345, for Derek Gregory's wonderfully theatrical lectures.



VP Admin: Kate Liss

**Year of study:** getting there . . .

**Area of concentration:** Climatology and Hydrology

**Hometown:** Toronto, Ontario

**Favourite Geography class:** GEOG 402, because it inspired me to transfer to Physical Geography.



VP External: Lauren English

**Year of study:** 4th (hopefully graduating in May)

**Area of concentration:** Human Geography - Urban Studies

**Hometown:** Maple Ridge, BC

**Favourite Geography class:** It's a toss up but thus far anything taught by Trevor Barnes (particularly Geog 350) or Geog 310, I enjoyed learning how food shapes our environment.



VP Finance: Michelle Sawka

**Year of study:** Last

**Area of concentration:** Biogeography & Hydrology

**Hometown:** Victoria, BC

**Favourite Geography class:** Geog 407, because Lori Daniels rocks.



VP Grad: Sian Weatherley

**Year of study:** 4th year

**Area of concentration:** Climatology and Geomorphology

**Hometown:** Hong Kong

**Favourite Geography class:** Geog 102/103 because they give you a taste of all the wonderfully interesting things to be learned in geography.



VP Social: Janine Pham

**Year of study:** 4th year

**Area of concentration:** Human and Environmental Geography

**Hometown:** Vancouver, BC

## CONTINENTAL DRIFT

### Valborg in Uppsala

BY EVA LILLQUIST

As a former exchange student in Sweden, there were three things at the top of my foreigner's to-do list: sample some pickled herring, learn a Swedish drinking song by heart, and have the sought after experience of celebrating Valborg in Uppsala. Valborg, the Swedish holiday marking the end of the ruthless Scandinavian winter, is particularly notable in Uppsala. For one day, the little university town's population more than doubles as people from across the country congregate for concerts, bonfires, and aquavit.

That's why it was such a cinch to get out of bed that morning and bike through the brisk air for a good patch of grass to settle by the river, ready for the coveted raft race. For several weeks leading up to the day, teams of students build life-sized rafts for floating down the city's main river, Fyrisån. The builders of the rafts, cleverly



**It's not a holiday without a string of colourful balloons from a streetside vendor!**

everyone in sight. I decided not to smell of alcohol for the rest of the day and follow the remaining sailor hats to the university main building for a listen to the city men's choir, who were performing a collection of classic Swedish hymns to the general public.

Continental Drift continued on page 4

**In front of Carolina Rediviva Biblioteket, the crowd waves their caps to welcome spring.**



#### Crowds gather to celebrate the end of winter in Uppsala.

and caringly moulding their creations into Yellow Submarines and giant Ninja Turtles, seem nevertheless unhesitant to throw both themselves and their works of art into the jaws of several sets of rapids and two minor waterfalls. Most rafts finish their journeys as unrecognizable masses of Styrofoam, but the participants get a heck of a ride.

Following the race of the rafts I passed several candy and balloon vendors on the way to Carolina Rediviva Biblioteket, Uppsala's main library. The entire population of the city, it seemed, had come wearing their white, sailor-like caps, the Swedish equivalent to a high school graduation hat. After a quick speech made by the director of the university, the entire crowd lifted off their hats and waved them in the air cheering. Spring had officially been welcomed.

For most students, the end of this congregation is cue to sprint to the nearest student nation (like student clubs), purchase a bottle of champagne, pop the cork and spray



continued from Continental Drift (page 4)

Several hours of picnicking, bonfiring, and backyard barbecuing later, the excitement faded and the dawn of the next day revealed a puzzle of students passed out over park benches. While most would pick up from here for a day of well-deserved detox, for many the celebrations were just beginning. Who's up for Valborg Week? You can welcome the spring more than once a year, right?

*Eva Lillquist is a fourth year UBC Geography student. In 2008, she spent a semester studying, taking in the sights, and participating in celebrations like Valborg at Uppsala in Sweden.*



Students picnic in Uppsala to celebrate Valborg



Teams of students compete on life-size rafts on the Fyrisån

**Catch the Continental Drift!**

Do you have a great story or photo from your travels that you'd like to share with the Geography Department? Email [ubcgsa@hotmail.com](mailto:ubcgsa@hotmail.com) to submit to Continental Drift.

**UBC Farm  
DID YOU KNOW...**

- Vancouver's last working farm is right on UBC campus!

- UBC students can get involved volunteering in the fields, at the weekly markets, or teaching visiting elementary school students on the Landed Learning Project  
E-mail Ayla Harker, Volunteer and Outreach coordinator at [ubcfarm.volunteer@gmail.com](mailto:ubcfarm.volunteer@gmail.com) for more information.

- Students can conduct original research for directed studies, Honours theses, and term papers at the UBC Farm.  
Visit <http://www.landfood.ubc.ca/ubcfarm/research.php> or e-mail Gavin Wright, Academic coordinator at [ubcfarm.learning@gmail.com](mailto:ubcfarm.learning@gmail.com) for information on submitting a research proposal.

**Visit our student-run Saturday Markets: June to October**

**Saturday Market Hours: 9am-1pm UBC Farm Summer Hours: Tuesday-Saturday • 9am-5pm**



**Location:** 6182 South Campus Road (located south of 16th Ave at Westbrook Mall)  
24 hectare learning and research farm located on the UBC Campus.

*Organically-grown veggies, fruits, eggs, honey and more, straight from the field!*



**Fresh:** Harvested either on the day of, or the day before the market

**Local:** Featuring over 150 varieties of produce grown right at the UBC Farm, a stone's throw away from where it's sold – as well as produce from other BC organic farmers

**Organic:** We follow COABC guidelines for organic production, and we never use synthetic pesticides, herbicides, or fertilizers.

Find out how you can help create a future for Vancouver's last working farm



**ubcfarm**

[www.landfood.ubc.ca/ubcfarm](http://www.landfood.ubc.ca/ubcfarm)

