

# FIELD NOTES

The Geography Students' Association Newsletter

Volume 2

Issue 3

November, 2008



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

**Come on out to our meetings, every other Thursday at 1pm in Room 215. All are welcome!**

- GSA Team Meeting**                      **Thursday, November 13th, 1-2pm**    **GEOG 215 D/E**  
Join the GSA as we welcome special guest Sally Hermansen who will explain the latest news on the proposed curriculum changes for the undergraduate program, including a possible B.A. in Environmental Geography.
- Enviro-Cleanse**                      **Wednesday, November 19th**                      **5 pm in the Undergrad Lounge**  
The sustainability team's next event gives you a chance to learn more about environmentally friendly cleaning products. Refreshments will be provided! More information can be found on page 4. **Ice Wars**
- Thursday, October 20th**                      **Registration deadline Friday, November 14th**  
Grab your friends and toques and get ready for a 'chill' night. E-mail [cheongmichelle@gmail.com](mailto:cheongmichelle@gmail.com) before November 14th to sign up.
- GSA Team Meeting**                      **Thursday, November 27th, 1-2pm**    **GEOG 215 D/E**
- Christmas Bzzr Garden**                      **Friday, November 28th**                      **4-9PM**                      **Geography Undergrad Lounge**  
Join us to celebrate the last day of classes in style. Look out for special hot mixed drinks and holiday cheer!

### Bad Latitude News from the GSA Sports Team

**BY JEREMY SANBROOKS**

A sea of green flying capes invaded the gym space of UBC Rec's (superhero and villain themed) Gladiator tournament, on October 25, 2008. Students from the geography

department united to create a force that could not be reckoned with – 'Bad Latitude' was at its finest. The geography team fiercely competed in five different events. They first conquered evil by winning the jousting event. Next, 'Bad Latitude' annihilated their enemies in the second event, 'Escape the Cape' (they attributed this success to the aerodynamic-ness and agility of spandex and headbands). The



Left: Bad Latitude stares down their opponents  
Top: Nicole Yeasting outreaches the competition to score another point for Bad Latitude in 'Escape the Cape'



next three events, 'Gothem City Maze', 'Wonder Wild One' and 'Goblin Ball', did not have the same results as the first two... However, our battered and bruised geography team fought to their bitter death, and ended up with an overall average placement. The mediocre success was celebrated with some nourishment and laughter at The Pit. Keep your eyes and ears posted throughout November with information regarding the next UBC Rec event: Ice Wars. 'Bad Latitude' WANTS YOU!

## CONTINENTAL DRIFT

### The Franz Josef Glacier

Continental Drift continues on  
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Glacial ice flows out of the cirque at Mount Cook

A visit to the Franz Josef glacier in New Zealand offers more than just a chance to see the ice processes we've learned about in introductory geomorphology classes up close. This glacier - one of the few still growing in New Zealand - is advancing at remarkable speeds (often reaching 70 cm/day), resulting in a landscape that changes constantly. What we saw on our visit was a unique set of formations; returning the next day would have revealed a different scene. Beyond the novelty of experiencing a landscape that would never be the same, though, the majesty of the huge, flowing fields of ice is something that we never could have grasped from the descriptions and images in lectures alone.



The toe of the Franz Josef glacier



Visitors examine a supraglacial channel

**BAD LATITUDE IS RECRUITING: JOIN OUR TEAM FOR ICE WARS ON NOVEMBER 20TH**

CoRec teams of 6 to 10 participants vie for the Championships title in a series of ice-themed events! Grab your friends and toques and get ready for a "chill" night. **Registration deadline: Friday, November 14th.** Come to the GSA meeting in Room 215 on November 13th at 1pm or e-mail [cheongmichelle@gmail.com](mailto:cheongmichelle@gmail.com) before November 14th to join the team.

**TRAIL SIX: AN UNDERGRADUATE JOURNAL OF GEOGRAPHY - CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS**

**The deadline for submissions to Trail Six is January 1st, 2009!**

Looking to beef up a grad school application? Want to add that extra professional touch to a resume? Have your paper published in Trail Six, the Geography department's very own undergraduate journal. Trail Six publishes undergraduate essays that touch on themes in human or physical geography. In its third year of publication, Trail Six is now being circulated through libraries across Canada, showcasing the best and brightest work by UBC geography undergrads on a national scale. Be part of the legacy and give your work the recognition it deserves!

Submissions can be sent in a word document to [geog\\_journal@hotmail.com](mailto:geog_journal@hotmail.com).

## **GRAD SCHOOL INFO SESSIONS M.A. in Human Geography with Dr. David Ley**

**BY EVA LILLQUIST**

In our last graduate info session Dr. David Ley graciously afforded UBC students a peek into the possibilities of extending a Bachelors of Geography into a Masters in Human Geography. For those of you who couldn't make it, here's a quick overview.

First and foremost, Dr. Ley emphasizes the importance of entering your Masters with enthusiasm and motivation. Many students, including himself he admits, chose to pursue an M.A. in Human Geography because they thought it would be a 'natural' transition – more natural, perhaps, than looking for other options or entering the 'real world' outside university. Doing a Masters requires having a genuine interest in research, and a drive to plunge into it with full force.

If this still sparks your interest, the next step is to narrow down your area of expertise. Pinpointing your favourite area of geography, from the social and cultural geographies of Latin America to gentrification in Vancouver, will serve very useful as you seek out programs and supervisors. Do some research, figure out the 'big names' in your field, and then express your interest by getting in contact with them. It's totally normal, and even encouraged that students get in touch with potential supervisors and establish future working relationships well before application deadlines.

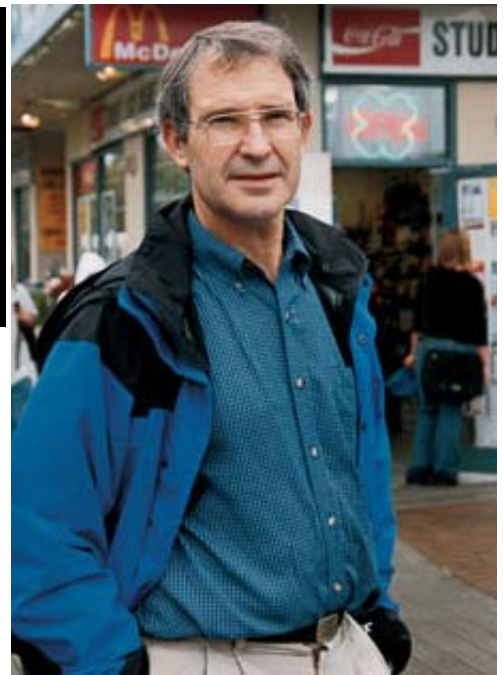
In terms of grades, Dr. Ley admits that an 80% average or higher is the typical standard for most departments. A lower average can get you a spot in a department, but it may not be your first choice. Apply for some of the top rated schools in your field, as well as a couple of second and third choices as backup. If you have your eye set on UBC's program, keep in mind

that the department is the most competitive in Canada and typically accepts only a couple of UBC Geography undergrads per year, if any at all.

Getting your M.A. elsewhere, if possible, comes with invaluable insight into the ways that other departments approach the discipline, along with the great experiences that come with living and working in a new environment. Some of the other top Geography departments in Canada include McMaster, Queens, University of Toronto, and York. However, most universities offer superior expertise in particular focuses. The University of Victoria for example, offers a very good program in the geographies of resource management.

If you're looking to study in the States, Dr. Ley recommends the University of Washington, Berkeley, Minnesota, UCLA, Ohio State, Pennsylvania State (where David Ley himself studied), among others. He also encourages students not to overlook Asian universities. NUS, the National University of Singapore, has a program that is par to UBC, and eager to accept international applicants.

If UBC's renowned program still tops your list, here's what you need to know. Along with your transcript, you must include 3 letters of reference (which don't necessarily need to be within the Geography department), along with a personal statement. It's here, in your statement, that you need to indicate your particular area of interest and your motivations for entering the field. The deadline for applications is January



15th.

Another pivotal topic discussed was funding. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada offers one-year graduate fellowships of \$17,500, which you are free to apply for more than once. Working as a teaching assistant can earn you roughly \$10,000/year on a 10-hour workweek. During the summer, some supervisors, depending on the amount of funding available, offer research assistantships that earn between \$4,000 and \$6,000/summer. The Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan is another excellent resource that provides Canadian students with opportunities to pursue studies in other Commonwealth countries.

Check out the next Field Notes for an overview of Dr. Tom Hutton's talk on the UBC School of Community and Regional Planning.

For notes from all three grad school info sessions, be sure to check the academic page of the GSA website at <http://www.ams.ubc.ca/clubs/gsa/academic.htm>

## Continental Drift (continued from page 2)



A hiker looks through the remnants of an uncovered englacial channel at the Franz Josef glacier in New Zealand

### 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.



## EVENTS IN GEOGRAPHY The Halloween Beer Garden

**BY CHELSEA DUPUIS**

The Halloween GeoPit of 2009 was a huge success!! The whole lounge was decorated with cobwebs, streamers and spooky Halloween music playing. Most people came in costume, some costumes were: a Dark Rider (Lord of the Rings), Pong, a jellyfish, transit police, a Redneck Butcher, Ms. Peacock with the wrench and a classic pumpkin. Albert Teng rose victorious with the



best costume of the night as devotee to Mao Tse-Tung and the little red book, while Chris Adderley's impressive Dark Rider get-up nabbed him best homemade costume. Josh Caulkins reprised his winning Androgynous Girl Scout persona from last year to win best female.



**ENVIRO-CLEANSE**

**Wednesday, November 17th at 5pm**

**BY CAPTAIN PLANET**

Hey Everyone, Captain Planet here! Want to learn more about how you can be environmentally friendly while keeping things clean? Here's an invite to the sustainability crew's next event. We are hosting an enviro-cleanse indo session. On November 19th, Wednesday, we have invited a representative from the Norwex Enviro Products to come and talk about their products and give us some demonstrations. Norwex has personal and cleaning products that are environmentally friendly and use no chemicals. The products will be available for order that night! Come to the Geography Lounge at 5:00pm, the representative will present for about an hour. Refreshments will be served!