Department News

Lisa Amati was Mardi Gras Queen in the downtown parade

Chris Kelson received funding from Barrick Gold

Lisa Amati received an NSF grant for trilobite studies

Bill Kirchgasser published his opus on Late Devonian goniatites from New York State

Mike Rygel and three students were featured in a CBC documentary about the Joggins Fossil Cliffs World Heritage Site in Nova Scotia

Frank Revetta celebrated his 81st birthday

Five faculty, fifteen students, and our department secretary attended NEGSA in Portland, Maine, where we collectively gave 13 presentations

4th Annual Rock & Fossil Fair and Road Show attended by >200 people

Three students had internships last summer at Barrick Gold in Nevada

Two students had internships in Alaska

Birth of Jim Carl’s grandson, Lochlan James Morrison

Although the recession has made finding a job increasingly difficult, Eric Kahrs (Dec. ’08) was hired by GeoServices of Houston, Texas, and is now working on oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico. Shona Arduine (’07) and Nate Pierce (’08) recently were hired by Op-Tech Environmental in Massena. Others are finding it’s a good time to pursue advanced degrees. Jeremy Boula (Dec. ’08), Dan Ingersoll (’09), Allison Jaielt (’09), Jamie Salg (’08) and Katie Henderson (Dec. ’08) began work towards an MST here at SUNY Potsdam. Kyle Ashley (’09) was accepted at the University of Vermont to study structural and metamorphic petrology, and began a paid research position there in June. Josh Sovie (’09) returned to Elko, Nevada as an intern for Barrick Gold, and in the fall will be pursuing a degree in geophysics at Boston College. Seven other recent graduates are still examining their options.
Many of our undergraduates are currently involved with summer research projects. Amy Smith ('10), John Armitage ('11), and Nick Middlebrook ('11) are working with Lisa Amati, as she begins her NSF-funded research on trilobite localities in Oklahoma, Virginia, Michigan, Ontario, and the Hudson Valley of New York. Evan Morris ('10) is working with Frank Revetta on a gravity survey to locate oil and gas fields in Steuben County, NY. The day after graduation, Mike Rygel led a group of students to Nova Scotia for a ten-day field trip. Undergraduate students Ryan Brink ('10), Erin Sheldon ('10), Dan Slane ('11), and Emily Stephan ('10) remained in Nova Scotia with him to continue work on the Joggins Fossil Cliffs World Heritage Site. As this newsletter goes to press, Ryan is on a wilderness expedition in Alaska.

Your donations, used mainly to support student travel on field trips and the annual NE GSA meeting, are greatly appreciated. You can support our geology students directly by visiting http://secure.potsdam.edu/giving/ or by mailing a check made payable to The Potsdam College Foundation to: The Fund for Potsdam, 44 Pierrepont Avenue, Potsdam, NY 13676. Please be sure to indicate that you wish to restrict your gift toward Geology. Along with our general foundation account, we also have two endowed accounts to which you may wish to donate. These are the Neal O'Brien Student Research Fund, and the Frank Revetta Geophysics Lab Fund. You may either specify a certain account or just give to the general foundation account. Thank you in advance for everything you do to help our students.

We are still looking for business cards from alumni to place on our newly renovated display.

Faculty & Staff News
Lisa Amati
Our Geology Club has had another great year. As usual, we could not have had a successful High School Science Lab Day, Science Olympiad and Rock and Fossil Fair without their help. We have been thrilled to be able to use money from SGA this year thanks to the efforts of last year’s executive committee, especially Jackie Gondeck.

Last fall, I was disappointed that I couldn't participate in Field Geology because it overlapped with another of my courses, but I look forward to attending the Field Geology trips this fall. I attended the annual meeting of the GSA in Houston in October, where I oversaw the Paleontological Society student poster contest.

I love teaching Ancient Life online over Winterim. The class started while I was still in Michigan visiting my family and friends. This Spring, I taught Environmental Geology for the first time. It was a fun mix of Geology and Environmental Studies majors. I learned reams of new information about air and water pollution, alternative fuels, and gas shale, and hope to be able to use it in other classes in the future.

My group in Principles of Paleontology this semester was wonderful. I finally have the class organized in a way that works well, and I think it showed. We don’t have a textbook for the class because I think they are all useless, but I found some really great reading assignments instead (well, I think they're great).

The Fourth Annual Rock and Fossil Fair was our biggest ever, with more than 200 people in attendance. One of the many geology students who helped noticed that not a single kid cried during the entire three hours! Just a note to anyone thinking about having a kids’ party in the future – do NOT buy a piñata from China – they are made of cardboard and do not break no matter how hard you whack them.

For Northeast GSA this year, three students and I managed to put together a research project in three months. I had to attend a meeting during the poster session, but the students knew the material so well, I was not hesitant at all to leave the presenting to them.

The same three students, Amy Smith, John Armitage and Nick Middlebrook, have started our big, NSF-funded research project with me this summer. The study is in conjunction with professors and students at three other universities. Fieldwork started with Nick and I
traveling to Oklahoma to look at the sedimentology and paleontology of the Bromide Formation (Late Ordovician). John, Amy, Nick and I then went to Virginia to visit some outcrops and learn about changes in the environment in the southern portion of the Ordovician Taconic Foreland Basin. The SUNY Potsdam portion of the larger study is changing environments and faunas during the Late Ordovician in New York and Ontario, and we will begin that fieldwork in July.

In the middle of our field extravaganza, I will attend the North American Paleontological Convention in Cincinnati to present a paper and participate in two fieldtrips to wonderful collecting localities. Unfortunately, the trip is too expensive for all four of us to go, but I hope to be able to take all of my students to the annual GSA meeting in Portland, Oregon in October.

I have had to put research on the trilobites of the Potsdam Sandstone on hold temporarily while we get the NSF research underway, but a Childhood/Early Childhood Education major specializing in geology will be studying them in the fall.

I hope you’ve all had a wonderful year. Please come back and visit us all soon.

Rob Badger

We had a good fall field season, which included a weekend Friends of the Grenville field trip in the Paseco Lake area for Structure class. The students had a good dose of Evil Dave from SUNY Oswego, who led the trip. After admonishing everyone for making too much noise at the campground, he took delight in throwing unopened cans of beans into the fire to hear them explode. Evil indeed. But the geology was excellent and our students learned a lot about shear fabric, foliation and pencil lineations.

During our winter break, student Kyle Ashley (’09) spent a week at Carleton University running Nd/Sm isotopes on some of the basaltic dikes here in the Adirondacks that I’ve worked on, and some of the basalts from Virginia that I continue to work on. Both sets of rocks are Neoproterozoic in age (~570 Ma), but both yielded Grenville model Nd/Sm ages (1.1Ga). I’m interpreting these as the separation age of sub-continental mantle, from which the magmas evolved, from lithospheric mantle. The timing was great, as I was just finishing a paper on the Virginia metabasalts, and was able to incorporate that new data.

As others have reported, NE GSA in Portland, Maine went very well, with all five faculty, three spouses, our department secretary, Roberta, and fifteen students. There are four brewpubs in Portland, and we visited three of them. As has been the custom in recent years, we all had dinner together, at one of the brewpubs, of course. That evening happened to be the night before my birthday, so Roberta conspired with the waitress to bring out some cake and ice cream with a candle, along with 24 spoons. Very nice. We highly recommend Sebago Brewing.

The meeting ended at noon on a Tuesday, and Carolyn and I took off for Virginia, so I could tie up a few loose ends of my research there. A noon start for a 700+ mile drive was not appealing to us, so we stopped in Southington, Conn. to visit my sophomore year roommate and his family. Wayne three times since graduation, once at my wedding, once at his wedding, and once at our 25th reunion. He has two teenage sons, so I took them each a rock – what else? A chunk of anorthosite and a chunk of garnet gneiss from Barton Mines. They acted interested as I explained what each was and how
they were formed. Wonder if they threw them in the woods as soon as we left.

Fieldwork in Shenandoah was rather miserable. A cool light rain and blowing fog, with very poor GPS reception. I’d wanted to be there before leaves came out on the trees so I’d get better reception, but that was rather fruitless. On the drive home, on a three-lane 65 mph stretch of I-81 near Harrisburg, we witnessed a horrendous motorcycle accident right in front of us as a car in the fast lane pulled into our lane, wiping out the cyclist who was in front of us. Tires screeched as semis and cars all around swerved to avoid the bouncing cyclist and his skidding bike. Amazingly, no one was rear-ended and the cyclist, though badly injured, survived. We should have just stayed in Maine.

Older son, Dan, finished his program at UC Davis, and now has a Master of Brewing certificate. He is currently a trail supervisor leading a group of Americorps students doing trail work for the Great Basin Institute in Nevada. Younger son, Dylan, finished his freshman year at UVM, majoring in ecological agriculture. He has planted hops on the family land in southern Vermont this summer and they are growing well. I guess I’m going to be a hops farmer in retirement. This summer, Dylan is working on the Long Trail for the Green Mountain Club. Carolyn and I both agree our kids are having too much fun.

Please keep in touch. We love hearing about your travels, family and jobs.

Robert Greene
For those of you who don’t know me, I’m the department secretary. I have the distinct pleasure of working for the most awesome faculty on this whole campus! But, not only do we have the best faculty, we have the most amazing students. I get so attached to them and then I get so sad when they graduate! But, I wouldn’t trade it for the world.

For those of you who do know me, not much has changed. Jack bought me a 4-wheeler this summer so now we each have one. We took a trip to Pennsylvania this summer to ride on trails in the Alleghany Mountains. How beautiful! It was so much fun, I cannot wait to do it again.

I have started working toward my master’s degree in mental health counseling at St. Lawrence University. It will take me about 9 years to complete (it’s a 60 hour program) because I will only be taking one class at a time. But, that’s okay because I love it here and am in no hurry to leave. In the fall, I will also be starting to take geology classes (because geology rocks!). I will be taking Physical Geology with Dr. Kelson. I am wicked excited!

Well, that is all I have for now. I miss you terribly and I love to hear from you, even if it’s just to say “hi.” So, keep me posted either on Facebook or by email.

Chris Kelson
Greetings! Well, another very exciting and productive year within the Department of Geology has gone into the record books. To recap some of the highlights …

I am happy to report maximum (and in some cases, above maximum!) student enrollment in each of my Mineralogy, Geochemistry, Physical Geology, and Geologic Resources classes. Each class has been filled with energetic, enthusiastic, and hard-working students, which makes my job teaching them that much more enjoyable! It’s also very rewarding for me personally to have several students from my Physical Geology courses declare Geology as their major while they are taking the class, and the department as a whole benefits greatly by their decision to join us. This is the second year that my Geologic Resources class has been taught, and once again the class took many wonderful field trips to places such as the Balmat zinc mine, Benson iron mines, Ducharme Quarry (Quebec), Lewis wollastonite mine, and several other locations within St. Lawrence County. Not only do the students get to see first-hand where different geologic materials come from and how they are recovered and/or processed, but they also receive detailed insight from staff geologists while visiting each site. What wonderful learning experiences!
I recently published a manuscript entitled “Geochemical and geochronological constraints on mineralization within the Hilltop, Lewis, and Bullion mining districts, Battle Mountain-Eureka trend, Nevada” in the preeminent journal on metallic ore deposits *Economic Geology*. This publication, which embodies almost six years of work and cost nearly $90,000 to complete, represents the first and only research done on a major portion of the Battle Mountain-Eureka trend of precious and base-metal mineralization within north central Nevada and will set the stage for future work in the area. Prior to the start of the project, I spent three years working in, and published my research on the Hilltop gold deposit within the same area. All together, I've been working on establishing the geochemistry and geochronology of mineralization within this part of north central Nevada for 12 years. This latest publication in *Economic Geology* is my eighth publication documenting my research within that particular portion of the Battle Mountain-Eureka trend. In support of this research, I recently gave two invited talks at Colgate University and Hamilton College.

My research area is located immediately north of the gold mine where students Josh Sovie ('09) and Dan Ingersoll ('09) interned last summer (2008) and where Jake Beaudoin ('08) interned the summer before and now currently works. Last summer, Dan helped me for eight days doing fieldwork and collecting samples for a different project that I am currently working on and which Barrick Gold Corp. is generously supporting. In related news, I am pleased to report that two other alum, Vinny Schlageter ('08) and Doug Eck ('08), have accepted full-time employment offers from Barrick and are currently working at the Goldstrike mine near Elko, Nevada.

Three students working with me presented their research at this years’ Geological Society of America (Northeast Section) meeting in Portland, Maine. Their projects included a geochemical study of tributary water draining into Black Lake, NY [Margaret Zee ('09)], petrological study of felsic pegmatite dikes in St. Lawrence County, NY [Josh Sovie ('09)], and a geoarchaeological study of ballast from a 16th century Spanish shipwreck in Pensacola Bay, Florida (Amanda Wohlberg). Kyle Ashley ('09) and I are piecing together a manuscript detailing our geochemical investigation of V-bearing rutile from St. Lawrence Co., and junior Kristen Remington and I are working with Balmat geologist (and alum) Bill deLorraine ('74) on petrologically and isotopically characterizing a specific lithologic unit from the Balmat zinc deposit. Another student, Ryan Dockstader, will be determining the mineralogy and hopefully, the age of clay within the matrix of a breccia pipe from the Hilltop gold deposit in Nevada.

On a personal note, my wife, Christa, is keeping equally busy teaching Accounting within the School of Business at SUNY Canton, and her gift basket business, Raquette River Gift Company, has enjoyed great success. Our son, Nicolas, is now in Kindergarten, and daughter, Alison, is fully mobile and talking (well, sort of).

Until next year!

**Frank Revetta**

First, I would like to thank all those alumni who have contributed to the Frank A. Revetta/New York Power Authority Geophysics Laboratory located in the basement of Timerman Hall. The laboratory has surpassed our expectations in its usefulness to the Geology Department and College. It has been very useful in teaching Geographic Information Systems, Geophysics, Earth Science, Seismology and Hydrology. It is also a perfect resource for presenting PowerPoint presentations, and showing DVDs and videos to our classes. The computers in the lab have access to many seismic field stations so students may study local seismicity as well as teleseisms. The seismic pier in the lab houses a complete seismic station consisting of three broadband short period seismometers and three broadband long period seismometers. We also have an old Press Ewing long period vertical seismograph, an AS1 seismograph, and a Personal Seismograph for teaching purposes. Several seismic field stations are available for studying local quakes and we are experimenting with using wind power to operate these stations. This past year many of the students and faculty attended the Geological Society of America meeting at Portland, Maine to present our
I presented my usual research in my study of local seismicity, gravity surveying, and useful teaching techniques. Students Evan Morris, Dan Ingersoll and Zach Ducharme presented posters on the interpretation of detailed gravity surveys in northern New York. The Scranton gravity high was studied again by testing proposed models of the high by computer techniques. The possibility of large earthquakes occurring in the active Charlevoix Zone in the St. Lawrence Valley in Canada and causing damage in northern New York was also presented by Ryan Brink and Margaret Zee. One of the most successful presentations was a poster by Kathleen Wolfe who, by the way, works in the Registrar’s office at the College. Her presentation was on the AS1 seismograph, an inexpensive ($600) seismograph capable of detecting earthquakes from around the world. The seismograph makes detection of earthquakes available to elementary and secondary schools and colleges. We had at least 10 attendees, mostly teachers, asking where they might purchase the seismograph and one person wanted to use it to study local earthquakes in their research. I am attaching (Fig. 1) a seismogram recorded by the AS1. The earthquake was of magnitude 7.3 and had its epicenter at the Kuril Islands. The AS1 detects the quake and the free software AmaSeis enables one to obtain the distance, identify the phases, calculate magnitude and conduct a Fourier Transform of the earthquake. I am also attaching (Fig. 2) a seismogram of a local quake detected by our seismometer in the New York Power Authority dam. This event is important since it’s events like this that led to the NYPA support for the Geophysics lab.

This past year, I also attended the Seismology Society of America meeting in Kingston, Ontario, Canada where I presented a poster on our new laboratory. Most of the attendees were very impressed with the lab and paid very high compliments to us at the College for having such a facility.

Most of you know that our top priority here at the College is in teaching, which is done with research. We also take great pride in serving the community in as many ways as we can. This year I presented a talk on Earthquakes and our Seismic Network to the St. Lawrence County Mineral and Rock club. I also presented a series of Planetarium shows to the local community, and I am presenting a series of videos and DVDs at a Geoscience Theater. The planetarium shows have been well attended by students and the public. I am also helping Kim Hill, a former graduate, to install an AS1 seismograph at Potsdam High School. I’m still active within National Association of Geoscience Teachers as their treasurer. Roberta Greene, our secretary, compiles and sends the news bulletins of their meetings and we are very grateful to her for outstanding service.

Since most of you had my courses, you know very well my philosophy of teaching, which is essentially a hands-on approach. I’m still using the same approach, which I think works well with students. My Environmental Geophysics course consists of conducting geophysical field surveys in the area on projects for local residents. This past year we conducted resistivity surveys for three families to determine depth to bedrock and groundwater. We will also be studying an archaeological site near Lake Placid by conducting detailed magnetic, resistivity, seismic, and ground penetrating radar surveys at the site. I continue to have the students detect the buried metallic drums on campus and to map the subsurface geology at the soccer field by seismic and
resistivity surveying. Recently, I purchased a metal detector for use in the field. Already, students have put this to use to find keys lost in the deep snow of last winter.

The seismology and plate tectonics course also uses a hands-on approach. Most of the activities deal with seismogram interpretation of local and distant quakes, fault plane solutions, and probability of earthquakes occurring in an area. The geophysics lab is used a lot in the course to study the seismic waves passing through the earth, earthquake detection, and conducting Gutenberg-Richter plots. Location of epicenters is done both by hand and computer techniques. Experiments are done in class on why we have earthquakes by using an earthquake machine. Demonstrations on how earthquakes are detected are shown with the Personal Seismograph and the MacBook, which actually detect earthquakes and study the waveforms with SeisMac. A new portable seismograph is also used to detect local aftershocks that occur after large local quakes. All in all, the students receive an education that is hands-on, active, challenging and practical. One student, Joshua Sovie, has decided to attend Boston College to work on his master’s in seismology.

In the past, many of you have worked with me with the support of the Undergraduate Summer Research Program at the College to conduct gravity surveys in New York. This year, I am continuing to do more gravity mapping with student Evan Morris. Evan is conducting detailed gravity mapping in Steuben County, hopefully to discover gravity anomalies that may aid in the exploration of oil and gas in the area. We have chosen Steuben County on the advice of oil and gas geologists as a good prospect for locating oil or gas fields.

Even though I spend most of my time at the College, I usually spend my leisure time with my family. I have two daughters and sons-in-law and two grandsons. One daughter is a teacher of French and Spanish and lives in Wallingford, Connecticut. Her husband, Ismail Orabi, is a professor of engineering at the University of New Haven. One of my grandsons (Ismail) is studying engineering at the University of Virginia, following in his father’s footsteps. The other grandson (Abraham) is in premedicine at the University of New Haven. He is presently conducting research with a Yale University professor and has already presented results of his research at Northwestern University and Yale University. My other daughter lives nearby in Massena, NY and works in Admissions at Clarkson University. Her husband, John Wicke, is active in politics and presently serves on the College Council.

Well, I can’t think of anything more to say except, keep in touch with us and visit us when you can. We are always glad to see our former students and look forward to it. We also like to know how you are doing and hope for the best.

Mike Rygel

In terms of courses, the 2008-2009 academic year was one of relative stability after several years of dramatic change. Historical Geology is now a more rigorous, 200-level course with lab exams that force mastery of mineral, rock, and fossil identification and the basics of geologic maps and structures. In addition to the daylong Historical Geology fieldtrip to Alexandria Bay, I now run an overnight Honors fieldtrip that resurrects the old Kirchgasser-O’Brien stops at Clifton Park, Petrified Gardens, Saratoga Springs, Cherry Valley, the angular unconformity at Catskill, and the redbeds along NY 20/23. Last fall, I took the Sedimentary Geology class (formerly SPS I), on a three-day trip to Pennsylvania to look at the Taconic and Acadian clastic wedges in the Valley-and-Ridge. The Geographic Information Systems class is coming along well. This year, I moved to a project-based approach and had students compile a bedrock geologic map of NY, and used GIS to help the folks in Archaeology determine what factors may have impacted the early settlers at the Timbucto site in the Adirondacks. The day after graduation I departed with a group of students for a 10-day course called the “Geology of Nova Scotia.” This will hopefully be the first of a yearly “Geology of ….” series that rotates through Nova Scotia, New York, and Pennsylvania. These extended field trips, combined with the new Field Geology course, will do a reasonable job of substituting for a field camp.
The summer of 2009 has been a busy one in terms of undergraduate research. I hired Ryan Brink, Erin Sheldon, and Emily Stephan as research assistants to help complete the PRF-funded project in the Cumberl and Basin of Nova Scotia. We were in the field from May 18th through June 24th, returning to the lab to work up the results in July and August. Dan Slane will be working with me on a F-USRP Grant to look at the sedimentology of the Catskill Formation in north central Pennsylvania. Dan was trained with the rest of the team in Nova Scotia, and then he and I completed his fieldwork in early July.

I had a very good (lucky) year in terms of presentations and publications. Undergraduate students Kyle Ashley ('09), Erin Sheldon, and Emily Stephan did a great job presenting their research at the NEGSA meeting in Portland, ME. In January, I served as the speaker for the Canadian Society of Petroleum Geologists University Outreach Lecture Series and gave talks at five universities in Ontario. If you have time and brain cells to kill, some of my recent work has been published in the Journal of Sedimentary Research (August 2008, January 2009), Sedimentology (October 2008), as well as chapters in Sedimentary Basins of the United States and Canada (Elsevier, 2008) and Resolving the Late Paleozoic Ice Age in Time and Space (GSA Special Publication 441, 2008).

**Jim Carl**

I wish to announce that I have become an opera fan! Susan and I have regularly attended performances of the Metropolitan opera, thanks to live HD transmission on selected Saturday afternoons at the Roxy Theatre in downtown Potsdam. For the first performance last fall, the local theatre hired two students, dressed them in tuxedos and placed them out front to welcome folks to the performance. Crane graduate Rene Flemming was the star attraction, and extra chairs had to be added to the aisles. The transmission is wonderful, the sound loud and accurate, and the cameras give a close-up view that rivals the best seats in the Met. We get backstage interviews with the singers as they leave the stage from Act I, and the cameras remain to watch the workmen change the scenery. However, I don’t see many in the Met audience munching a $6.00 bag of popcorn, and the Roxy’s bathrooms are probably in the same condition when you used them as students.

Our “children” are in their 40s, and we weren’t the only ones surprised when our second oldest son, John Morrison, and daughter-in-law, Beth (also the name of our daughter) Nodland had their first baby last April—Lochlan (very Scottish) James Morrison, named for me. Given our four married children, this is grandchild #5, and Susan and I are still reminiscing about the wonderful visit to their home in Bismarck, North Dakota, and the efforts made by the parents to accommodate us. As we traveled about, little Lochlan shared the back seat with me under the illusion that I understood baby talk and the importance of sharing small rattles and dripping chew toys. We made a 3-day trip into the country once owned by a young, inexperienced owner of a cattle ranch – Teddy Roosevelt in the badlands in the western part of the state. We stayed in a log cabin and had to shoo 15 buffalo out of the driveway of the ranch owner who cooked both dinner and breakfast.

I enjoyed examining the sites of Mandan and Hidatsu villages that hosted the Lewis and Clark expedition that first winter. These Indians became the object of trade by the American Fur Trading Company that, in the 1830s, erected Fort Clark on the Missouri River. John is an archaeologist, working for a company that examines construction sites for artifacts. We strolled over the pockmarked ground where
domical, earthen hut villages had been erected. We visited a reconstruction of Fort Mandan (1805) and the site of nearby Indian villages. About midway on our trip, John received a call that graves had been discovered in the city of Mandan, across the river from Bismarck. A reservoir was under construction, and bodies had appeared under the blade of a bulldozer (there had been no surface evidence). John had to gather his team and examine the site. Turns out they were European graves (probably late 19th century), not Indian, and the excavation was permitted to continue after the graves were moved. Beth made all of our travel arrangements that included a meal (with hundreds of other folks) at an outdoor pavilion overlooking a badland ravine. Huge, inch-thick steaks were delicately prepared by impaling them on pitchforks and dipping them into 4-ft. diameter vats of hot sunflower oil. Were they good? Do ranchers know how to prepare beef? Does Rob Badger like Vermont and beer? Does Roberta know how to prepare beef? Does Rob Badger like Vermont and beer? Does Roberta know how to prepare beef? Does Rob Badger like Vermont and beer? Does Roberta know how to prepare beef?

I hope your summer is a pleasant one.

Jeff Chiarenzelli
I hope this note finds you all doing well and enjoying your careers and life in general. It has been an eventful and busy year for my family and I. I still see and hear from several of your classmates. In particular, Ian Hamelin ('02) has started a new career with RPI working in their brand new multi-million dollar EMPAC building. It is an amazing facility capable of supporting state of the art research in the acoustical arts and sciences. I heard from Mrs. Samara Sears ('03) who is looking at options for graduate school in Michigan. Brian Norensky ('03) called me from Albany, New York where he works on the permitting of quarries and mines. I’ve also heard indirectly about some of you and bumped into many of you locals – Bill Hull ('03), Josh Dishaw ('03), Pat Loveland ('03), and Evil Wayne Fletcher ('03).

I will be taking a break from teaching next year and will focus my efforts on consulting work in Alaska and New Mexico, and perhaps a number of other areas if the work materializes. I see Drs. Bill Kirchgasser, Frank Revetta, Neal O’Brien, Jim Carl, and Rob Badger frequently and am happy to report they are still the same generous and kind people as you knew and loved (have to say that or Rob will withhold beer when I visit him at home). I also see Lisa Amati, Chris Kelson, and Michael Rygel frequently and hear they are doing a great job. However, most of all, I hear that Roberta is the glue that sticks the department together these days. I visited Janet Bullis just a few days ago and she is doing fine. She lost her husband of many years, Ira (Peter), but is surrounded by her daughters and family.

Wishing you all the best.

Bill Kirchgasser
Greetings to alumni and friends of the Geology Department. In my fifth year since retirement from teaching, I am still hanging out in Timelman,
working on fossils and helping the staff organize the collections and museum displays. After some forty years, the magnum opus, with the late Michael House from England, was published by the Paleontological Research Institution in Ithaca as House and Kirchgasser, 2008, Late Devonian Goniatites (Cephalopoda, Ammonoidea) from New York State, Bulletins of American Paleontology, Number 374, 1-285, 35 plates. All of the illustrated and described specimens now reside in six cabinets in the New York State Museum in Albany. For the next year or so I will be packing up the reserve collections stored in B-4 (“B” as in basement) to be added to the stratigraphy collection at the museum.

Next up is to publish in the Journal of Paleontology the parallel work on the late Devonian conodonts of New York, collaboration with Gilbert Klapper (Univ. of Iowa/Northwestern Univ.) since the mid-80s. Work continues on Genesea Group fossils in collaboration with Gordon Baird (SUNY Fredonia), Jeff Over (SUNY Geneseo) and Carlton Brett (Univ. of Cincinnati).

Last fall, I donated my Devonian fossil collection to the College. Many colleagues and friends and some alumni attended a dedication ceremony and reception in the Hallway Museum. The collection comprises several hundred specimens collected during trips around the world to Devonian meetings/fieldtrips starting in England in 1967. The Kirchgasser Collection is housed in the Paleo Lab and parts will be on display in the museum.

On the personal level, it has been a difficult year. My younger daughter, Karen, was diagnosed with breast cancer in June and was pulled back from Washington to her Foreign Service post in Moscow. She completed treatment in April and is living at home in Washington and working at the State Department. Betsy’s cancer has returned so she is now back on chemo. I am pleased to report that she is doing well. I celebrated my 70th birthday in February; Betsy’s will be in July. My older daughter, Alison, traveled in July from her home near Boston to play in the violin section for the Orchestra of Northern New York’s Pops Concert. Betsy is past president and currently vice president of the ONNY board of directors. Please keep in touch. We love to hear from you.

Neal O’Brien
My retirement seems to be more like a “permanent sabbatical” since I’m concentrating solely on research everyday. Thanks to funding from research funds from my friend (who has a big grant to study gas/oil source rocks) at the University of Oklahoma, I’m able to continue my study of primary migration routes and fracture patterns in unconventional gas shales (Barnett and Woodford), using mostly SEM and EDX. We now have EDX capability here, which provides a lot more research potential for the students. I am also cooperating with a retired chemist (associated with Brookhaven Lab, Long Island) on oil migration/origin in the Monterey fm (Calif). My wife and I are grandparents again (Finn is a year old). I’m still making rustic furniture as a hobby. Broom making is on hold – since they haven’t sold well (must be the economy). I only made them for fun anyway. Our department is very active and students are involved. Please write.

Brad van Diver (written by wife, Bev)
Brad is doing quite well. He has regained some of his long distance vision in his one eye that had the retinal hemorrhaging last; he still can’t see to read. He swims a couple of times a week, walks a couple of miles around the premises, and tries to take one longer hike each week. He gave a slide show on Mt. St. Helens and other volcanoes to Armchair Travel here last weekend, which was very well received. Coping with slides is very difficult for him, but it is a chore that brings back many fond memories. He recently completed two wooden chess sets for grandchildren. Difficult, but doable. Friends recently visited from the Buffalo area and we went with them to Chattanooga, TN for a brief look at that area. The drive there was very scenic along the Oconee, a rafting river. We hope to visit family ourselves in Buffalo in May, and Brad’s son, Thor, and his two sons will visit us in June. So we are keeping as active and busy as we can. Thanks to Netflix we watch a lot of movies and particularly enjoy the documentaries with their truly amazing photos.
We would like to give special thanks to all of our donors. Without you, we could not be the department we are today.

Our students get firsthand field experience and get to go to professional meetings to present their research, which we would never be able to afford without your generosity!!!!

Your donation dollars at work: below are some of our students who were able to present their research (thanks to you) at the Northeast Geological Society of America meeting in Portland, ME (March 2009):

Whether it's five dollars or five thousand, we are EXTREMELY GRATEFUL to all of you!!!!!

Thank you so much,
Dr. Robert Badger
Mr. & Mrs. Nathan Berube
Mr. Steve Bond
Mr. Bruce Bouck
Mr. & Mrs. Bradley Brown
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Burke
Mrs. Gail Browning
Mrs. Vanessa Chisholm
Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Cooper
Dr. Daniel Cottrell
Mr. William De Lorraine
Mr. Michael DiPietro
Mr. Doug Dominy
Dr. Jutta Dudley
Dr./Mrs. Don & Janet Fiesinger
Dr. Annabelle Foos
Mr. & Mrs. William Fox
Ms. Carol Frost
Ms. Debbie Gale
Ms. Roberta Greene
Mr. Ian Hamelin
Mr. Harold Hatfield
Mr. Dean Herrick
Mr. Frank Hess
Ms. Holly Hiscock
Dr. William Kirchgasser
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Levin
Mr. William Lilley
Ms. Amy McKeown
Mr. John Mead
Mr. Michael Nadiak
Ms. Betsy Northrop
Dr. Neal O'Brien
Mrs. Lisa Orabi
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Paestella
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Pickard
Mr. Stanley Pike
Dr. Frank Revetta
Mr. & Mrs. George Robinson
Mrs. Dawn Rodrique
Dr. Michael Rygel
Mr. Daniel Slane
Mr. & Mrs. William Stiles
Mr. Steven Sturgen
Mr. Michael Whitton
Mr. Dave Wiegand
Mr. Mark Zerniak

Left: John Armitage, Amy Smith, and Nick Middlebrook
Below: Erin Sheldon

Left: Ryan Brink and Margaret Zee
Below: Evan Morris

Left: Emily Stephan
Department Awards
Every year we give several awards to deserving students. We added a new one last year, and two this year. Here is a list of the awards, their criteria, and this year’s winners.

Department Scholar
Given for superior academic achievement.

2009 recipients: Dan Ingersoll and Kristen Remington

Jessie McNall Award
Miss McNall served as Science Department Chair for many years prior to her retirement in 1946. She established an endowed fund with the Potsdam College Foundation in order that scholarship awards be given to sophomores for excellence in science, especially if preparing for teaching.

2009 recipient: Brad LaPoint

Alice Williams Geology Award
Dr. Alice Williams taught earth science, general science, and astronomy for 38 years, from 1937 until her retirement in 1965. Affectionately known to her students as “Rocky,” her extensive rock and mineral collection makes up a significant portion of the department’s current collection. The Alice Williams Geology Award is presented to a student who performs outstanding service to the Department of Geology.

2009 recipients: Emily Stephan and Kyle Ashley

Tony Dunn Award
Anthony P. Dunn (1958-1986), class of 1980, was an outstanding geology graduate of SUNY Potsdam who died during geological exploration in the mountains of his beloved Alaska. The Anthony P. (Tony) Dunn Award is presented by the faculty, in memory of Tony, to a student deemed to have similar qualities of scholarship, character, and love of geology.

2009 recipients: John Armitage, Ryan Brink and Josh Sovie

Eric Hutchinson “Budding Geologist” Award
Eric Hutchinson was a geology major from the class of ’03 who tragically died in a drowning accident in 2007. The award is given to a freshman or sophomore who, in the opinion of the faculty, shows outstanding potential for academic success in geology at SUNY Potsdam. This award was established in 2008. Eric’s parents and brother presented the first award last year.

2009 recipient: Dan Arcadi

Outstanding Geology Minor
This award is presented to a student minoring in geology, in recognition of their superior academic achievement and outstanding depth of participation in upper level scholarly activities. This is a new award.

2009 recipient: Amanda Wohlberg

Outstanding Elementary Education Major receiving a concentration in Geology
This award is presented to an Elementary Education Major who is concentrating in Geology, in recognition of their superior academic achievement and outstanding depth of participation in upper level scholarly activities. This is a new award.

2009 recipient: Valarie Dana

Golden Trilobite Award
This award, personally created and designed by our own Dr. O’Brien, is given to the student with the highest average of lab exams in Historical Geology.

2009 recipient: Nick Middlebrook

Sigma Gamma Epsilon
Induction into the SGE Honor Society requires junior status and a GPA of 3.25 or higher.

2009 inductees: John Acker, Ryan Brink, Gregg Marcinkowski, Evan Morris, Daniel Slane, Emily Stephan
Alumni News

1960's

Don Fiesinger ('66) retired from Utah State at the end of this academic year. We wish him well in his retirement. He and his wife, Janet, were in Potsdam during the second weekend of July for reunion. We greatly appreciate their initiation of, and frequent contributions to, the O'Brien Student Research Fund.

1970's

Dan Cottrell ('70) was in Potsdam this year for reunion and the summer festival. It was great to see him and to show off the Revetta Geophysics Lab, which he has generously supported.

Dr. Peter Rosen ('70) is an associate professor teaching at Northeastern University in the School of Earth & Environmental Sciences, while also serving as a Coastal Geologist with GEO Plan Associates conducting environmental planning and consultant services.

Dennis Pennington ('71) is a water quality manager for Wissahikon Valley Water-shed Association. He lives in Maple Glen, PA.

Bill Lilley ('74) returned last fall to give us a talk entitled, “So you want to be a Geologist” covering the various aspects of his geologic career.

Bill DeLorraine ('74) recently gave a talk to our Geologic Resources class entitled “High Grade Metamorphism and Remobilization of the Balmat Zn Sulfide Deposits, NW Adirondacks, New York.”

Chip Giordano ('78) is now a grandfather, welcoming grandson Charles Jr. into the family. He wants to know why Steve Potter ('78) hasn’t been up to see him.

Jim Agnew ('78) is still Senior Seismologist and Section Chief at the of the California Dept. of Water Resources and is currently collecting older seismic equipment to set up a “museum” of formerly deployed seismic instruments used by the State Water Project (SWP).

1980's

Rob kayaked with Alan Liptak ('82) & his son, Dan, last summer. Dan is engaged to a senior Crane student.

Dave Lennox ('82), retired from teaching Earth Science at Norwood-Norfolk, and now teaches in the local BOCES program. He organizes the Middle School Science Olympiad that we host every March, so we see a lot of him in the late winter months.

The Watertown Daily Times recently ran an article on yoga teaching and practice by Andrea Malik ('84). Andrea teaches some non-credit courses here at SUNY Potsdam. She teaches Tae Kwon Do for adults and children separately, Cardio Kickboxing, and The Perfect Blend: Yoga, Martial Arts, QiGong. Andrea continues to run the black fly program in Colton.

Shaun LaLonde ('88) works for the NYS Adirondack Park Agency as a soil & water engineering specialist.

Mike Whitton ('89) missed his 20th reunion because he was an exhibitor at Syracuse’s annual Rock and Mineral Show. We expect to see him at the St. Lawrence County Gem and Mineral Show on August 22nd & 23rd.

1990's

Tom Ellifritz ('91) was back in New York last fall, joining us on the Friends of the Grenville field trip. He is living in southern Missouri, we have no idea why, and still has a ponytail down to his butt.

Adam Schoonmaker ('91) catches up with us every year at the NE sectional meeting of GSA. He is on the faculty at Utica College.

Joanne Antibus ('93) has been teaching high school Earth Science in Bluffton, Ohio for the past 14 years. She is now looking to begin graduate school, slowly at first, at Bowling Green State University so she can get back into geology research. It’s never too late!
We heard from Sandra (Goralski) Kerr ('95) after a lapse of several years. She works for the Government Accountability Office in Washington, DC in the Natural Resources and Environment team. She’s married to David Kerr and they have a stubborn 3-year old son named Alexander.

Kim Hill ('96) continues to teach Earth Science at Potsdam Central School. She brought a lively group to High School Science Lab Day, and also fielded a team for the Middle School Science Olympiad. She brings her little boy, Charlie, with her, and we’re hoping to see him in our classrooms in 16 years or so.

We received a postcard recently from Andy Bentley ('98) and his wife, Jamie, from the bottom of the Grand Canyon. They moved to Idaho last summer so he could pursue a PhD in outdoor recreation.

Adam Wheeler ('98) continues at SUNY Potsdam as an Instructor in the Wilderness Education Program and SUNY Potsdam Leadership and Challenge Center Coordinator. He and wife Heather just had their second child, a son named Colden after the peak of the same name in the Adirondacks.

Ryan Zeigler ('98) is a research scientist at Washington University, specializing in the petrographic and geochemical characterization of lunar samples of Apollo and lunar meteorites. He also does petrologic modeling using the Magpox and Magfox programs of John Longhi.

2000’s

Carl Pierce ('00) is teaching Geophysics at SUNY Oswego. He still works with Frank Revetta from time to time.

Dylan Canales ('00) runs a rock and mineral shop in New Mexico, and also does contract work at New Mexico Tech. He usually returns to northern New York once a year, and stopped off to see me a few weeks ago.

Sean Metz ('01) has been teaching high school Earth Science at Brighton High School near Rochester for the past five years, and also serves as coach of the girls JV field hockey team, boys modified lacrosse team, assistant coach for the alpine ski team, and advisor to the Brighton Radio Station Club. He received a Masters in Teaching degree from SUNY Brockport, and somewhere along the way found time to get married.

Sean Ellison ('02) continues as Earth Science teacher at Norwood-Norfolk Central School. He and his wife have three kids.

Angie Ross ('02) has been on campus a fair amount lately as she finishes her Master’s degree at SUNY ESF, and has presented her research to folks in the Biology Department.

Ian Hamelin ('02) was married last summer. A job as a traveling roadie doesn’t sit well with married life, so he is now doing sound engineering at RPI in Troy (see note by Jeff Chiarenzelli).

Brad Smith ('03), structural engineer with The Thomas Group, returns to northern New York every fall recruiting at a job fair at Clarkson. He always visits us to encourage our students to look into geology positions with his company.

Rabecka (Bourke) Koons ('03) now works for the Land Restoration Program, Waste Management Administration with the Maryland Department of the Environment. She was married in 2005, and, besides working full time, is taking courses at Johns Hopkins toward a Master’s degree in Environmental Engineering and Science.

Amber St. John ('03) works as a lab technician in chemical hygiene at Endyne in Plattsburgh. She stops by to visit from time to time.

We received a cute photo of Kayleigh Grace Pominville, newborn (Jan 16) daughter of Christina Shimaitis ('03).

Jim Jepson ('03) married long-time squeeze Mary last August; they honeymooned in the rain at Lake Durant.
When Corning decided to get a new SEM, Mark Mack ('04) put in a good word for us to get their old one. It now resides in the old photography lab, next to our existing SEM that many of you have used. This new (to us) machine can do energy dispersive analysis, so we are very glad to have it, particularly Neal O'Brien, who regularly does cartwheels down the hall. Mark's cousin, Chris Mack, is a freshman geology major here at Potsdam.

Darren Schnare ('04) finished his masters in Planetary Geology at the University of Tennessee, and is now working at Corning with Mark Mack.

Ryan Adams ('04) spent the spring laying in the sunshine of Puerto Rico, and then decided to bicycle across the United States. He stopped by in mid June on his way west.

Bill Sheldon ('05) and Kyle Crossett ('06) met up with the Honors Historical Geology Field Trip and took them on a tour of the Pallette Stone Quarry near Saratoga Springs. Both are working in the aggregate field.

Andy Stafford ('06) and Katrina Bannon ('06) are getting married this October. Both work for Groundwater and Environmental Services in Patterson, NY.

Mark Neuroth ('07) spent the last year jumping out of helicopters in Alaska exploring for precious metals. With the economy in the tanks, he was back in Potsdam, in the spring, considering an environmental engineering degree at Clarkson. But, he's back in Alaska now.

Holly King ('07) is head pastry chef at Scoopicino's here in Potsdam.

Forrest Pennington (Dec. '07) is now in Perth, Australia. We're not sure what he's doing, but it can't be good.

We continued to see Patte LeMieux ('08) this year, as she was working on her MST degree here at SUNY Potsdam. She did her student teaching this spring, and graduated in May. She was hired to teach summer school at Carthage this year.

Ben Squier ('08) is now working for Specialized Engineering, co-owned by Dave Wiegand ('86). Dave tells me they have a nice padded room to keep Ben in.

Ryan LaDuke ('08) works for Kleinfelder, out of their Newburgh office. He sees Bill Sheldon and Kyle Crossett frequently.

Jake Beaudoin ('08), Vinny Schlegeter ('08) and Doug Eck ('08) are gainfully employed with Barrick Gold in Elko, Nevada.

Kelley Tiedt ('08) works for AMRI (Albany Molecular Research Institute) in Albany.

Nate Pierce ('08) and Garrett Lee ('09) spent last summer working for Greens Creek Mine in Alaska. Garrett returned to finish his degree, while Nate landed a job with Op-Tech Environmental in Massena.

Anne Bruno ('08) and Danny Krysak (minor '08) both went to the University of Buffalo last fall, but after one semester, both decided they needed a break from academia. Danny will be returning to UB in the fall, Anne is studying Medical Lab Technology at Broome County Community College.

Trista (Brouse) Schloop ('08) married her beau Jason Schloop last October, and they are expecting their first baby in December.

Jaime Salg ('08) got a job working at the St. Lawrence Zinc mine until it shut its doors. She has now chosen to come back to Potsdam and is getting her master's degree in Secondary Education.

Eric Kahrs (Dec. '08) landed a job with GeoServices, a contract mudlogging business for oil drilling companies based in Houston, Texas. He sent us an email from the drill rig in the Gulf of Mexico, about 150 miles south of New Orleans, to announce that he and his wife are expecting their 1st child. He reports the job is “challenging.”
How would you like to own one of our new Geology Mugs? Only $6.00 (plus $2.00 shipping fee). Make checks payable to “SUNY Potsdam Geology Club.” As always, thank you for your support of our department!

SOME PHOTOS TO BRING BACK MEMORIES
Can you identify everyone?

1974 Whiteface Trip

1986 Field Trip

Geology Department Faculty & Staff

Rob Badger, Lisa Amati, Christopher Kelson, Roberta Greene, Frank Revetta, Neal O’Brien, Mike Rygel, Bill Kirchgasser

2007 Plattsburgh Field Trip

Seated: Patricia Burgin, Megan Healey, Trista (Brouse) Schloop, Allison Jaillet, Dr. Amati, Doug Eck, Michelle (Mills) Haines, Jamie Salg, Patte LeMieux, Zach Ducharme.
Standing: Forrest Pennington, Rod Lafave, Steve Bond, Ben Sterling, Austin Haines, Tyler Rand

2009 NE GSA, Maine

Seated: Gabby Whitney, Roberta Greene, Evan Morris. 1st Row standing: John Armitage, Zach Ducharme, Margaret Zee, Ryan Brink, Erin Sheldon, Emily Stephan. 2nd Row standing: Josh Sovie, Nick Middlebrook, Dan Slane, Kyle Ashley, Dr. Kelson, Ryan Dockstader, Dr. Rygel