GEOMORPHORUM

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

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SPECIALTY GROUP OFFICERS 2007-08

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Translational Research and Geomorphology

An interesting issue emerging in national-level conversations about research is the importance of what is being labeled “translational research”. This is already a major theme in health-related fields, with significant funding from the National Institutes of Health, and I have been hearing this phrase more and more in conversations about research across other areas of science and engineering.

So**,** what is translational research, and is it a useful concept for those of us working in Geomorphology? Adapting from a description provided by the NIH, Translational Research in Geomorphology might be described as follows (text adapted from http://nihroadmap.nih.gov/clinicalresearch/ overview-translational.asp):

To improve human welfare and sustain local-to-global scale environmental systems, scientific discoveries in geomorphology must be translated into practical applications. Such discoveries typically begin as basic research involving theory, work in the laboratory or field, or modeling, and then progress to applications in environmental protection and management. Scientists are increasingly aware that this translational research approach of moving between basic science and applications is really a two-way street. Basic scientists provide those focused on applications with new tools and with assessments of their impact, and applied scientists make novel observations about the nature of landforms and geomorphic processes that often stimulate basic research.

This may sound like a new way of describing what we have long known as applied geomorphology, but there is more to it than this.

First, it makes explicit that applications are a legitimate and valued part of the range of outcomes that we might expect from basic research. Given the sources of funding that support our basic research, it is not unreasonable to expect that some (but not all) outcomes help improve human welfare and the management of

environmental systems. Certainly the strong emphasis on "broader impacts" as a criterion in reviewing NSF proposals is an indicator of the expectation that this agency has for a translational component in research it funds.

Second, it emphasizes the value of the interactions between basic and applied work. Applied work can help generate important and novel new research questions just as basic research can produce outcomes that inform solutions to applied problems. There is a lot to be gained from increased interactions between geomorphologists focusing on applications (often in government agencies and the private sector) and those engaged in basic research. Not least of which is the generation of new basic research questions that might not have been apparent without the observations or challenges of applied work.

Third, it suggests that the training of new geomorphologists might include skills in translational aspects of research. Our traditional courses sometimes mention applications but rarely provide students with specific opportunities to explore how geomorphologists use their knowledge and skills in applied projects as individuals or in interdisciplinary teams. Our students would benefit from experiences that get them involved in deriving basic research from applied problems, and in translating their research findings in to improved applications. Given that more of our students end up in applications work than in basic research, training that includes a strong translational component would make our students more employable and better prepared for common and important career tracks.

Fourth it suggests that in the various ways in which we evaluate professional geomorphologists (e.g., the tenure and promotion process in academia) we should recognize the value of spending some time and effort in exploring the interactions between applications and basic research, and in developing translational skills in the next generation of geomorphologists.

I would encourage you to think about the implications of "translational research" ideas for the applications, research, teaching and other professional activities you are involved in as a geomorphologist. I happen to think translational work is the right thing to do, regardless, but there is also likely a lot to be gained in being ahead of the crowd in developing and emphasizing the translational research aspects of our programs.

Jon Harbor

2008 AAG MEETING

http://aag.org/annualmeetings/2008/index.htm

The 2008 Annual Meeting of the AAG will be held in Boston, April 15th-19th. The call for papers is already out, and abstracts may be submitted online between August 1st and October 31st, 2007.

Special Sessions.

The Geomorphology Specialty Group (GSG) is enthusiastic about sponsoring a limited number of special sessions of interest to geomorphologists. To be an official GSG session please contact the GSG Chair with your session proposal (email to jharbor@purdue.edu). Please note that the AAG requires that all special sessions sponsored by a specialty group be approved by the specialty group chair.

Awards.

Graduate Student Paper Competition

The Awards Committee of the AAGs Geomorphology Specialty Group (GSG) invites students to participate in the Graduate Student Paper Competition at the 2008 AAG meeting. Graduate students from all branches of geomorphology are encouraged to submit an application and present a paper. Separate awards can be given for Masters and Ph.D. students. Students must be members of the AAG and the GSG to be eligible for the award. Applicants for the student paper competition will be placed into special sessions organized specifically for the competition. The GSG Awards Committee will evaluate the papers based on their research contribution to the field of geomorphology and on the effectiveness of the presentation. The award will be presented at the GSG business meeting and at the AAG awards banquet. Student participants must be registered for the meeting and submit an abstract online at the AAG website. The call for papers is at www.aag.org/annualmeetings. After receiving a participant identification number (PIN) from the AAG, mail (preferred) or E-mail your application package to Scott Lecce, GSG Awards Committee Chair, Department of Geography, East Carolina University, lecces@ecu.edu. Materials must reach Dr. Lecce by October 24, 2007. Send any queries via E-mail.

The application package must include:

(1) a simple cover letter indicating PIN and graduate degree status

(2) three copies of the standard 250 word abstract required by the AAG

(3) three copies of an 800-1000 word extended abstract.

Other GSG Awards

In addition to the student paper award, the GSG presents other awards and honors at the AAG Meeting:

- Reds Wolman Graduate Student Research Award
- G.K. Gilbert Award for Excellence in Geomorphic Research
- Melvin G. Marcus Distinguished Career Award

Visit the Geomorphology Specialty Group website at www.aag-gsg.org for further details about these awards. Please contact Dr. Scott Lecce about nominations and proposals. In 2008 the deadline for submission of relevant materials for these other three awards is January 1, 2008. (The deadline for the graduate student paper competition is aligned with the October conference registration deadline because participants must be registered for the annual meeting to present their research.)

MINUTES OF THE 2007 BUSINESS MEETING
San Francisco, 18th April, 2007

Anne Chin, Chair
Jon Harbor, Secretary Treasurer
Anne Chin called the meeting to order at 8:00 pm.

I Announcements from the Chair

From the Specialty Group Chairs Meeting

There are now 53 specialty groups in the AAG, and the attendance at this year's AAG meeting is 6500, of whom 15% are non-geographers, and 23% are from overseas locations. The AAG list serve is now up and running and we are encouraged to use this as a way to communicate. In addition, AAG now automatically charges student members of specialty groups $1.50 to cover the costs of tracking membership data.

The AAG is encouraging specialty groups with non-trivial carry forwards in their budgets to consider spending a significant part of the carry forward in ways that benefit the group, rather than continuing a trend of accumulating funds. (Note – the Geomorphology Specialty Group placed a significant portion of its accumulated funds in to an endowment this year to provide a steady stream of funding in future years to help support the costs of GSG awards.)

Blackwell Lecture on Geomorphology and Society. This year's Blackwell Lecture will be on River Restoration, by Matt Kondolf, and all are encouraged to attend.

Past President's Address. This address will be given by our own Dick Marston at the AAG Awards Banquet.

Physical Geography Reception. There will be an annual reception for Physical Geographers on Friday evening of the AAG meeting, sponsored by the GSG and other specialty groups. All are encouraged to attend.

II Specialty Group Reports

Approval of the Minutes
The minutes of the 2006 business meeting were published in Geomorphorum. A motion to approve the minutes as published was made and seconded, and passed by acclamation.

Treasurer's Report
Since the last GSG meeting we have had income (dues) of $1,941 and expenditures of $1,000 to help sponsor the Physical Geography Reception and to support web development costs (the GSG officers decided at the Chicago meeting to approve $600 to support student assistance for the GSG web page). This leaves our balance at $10,861 compared to $9,920 a year ago. As decided at last year's meeting, $8,000 of our accumulated balance will be placed in the Mel Marcus Fund with the interest to be transferred annually to the GSG to support our awards.

Website Report
(presented by Dorothy Sack on behalf of Mike Urban)

We have established a permanent domain name for the site (www.aag-gsg.org). There were two primary reasons to do this. The first was to ensure that the name of the site reflected the content and the character of the Specialty Group. The second was to make the site portable. Whenever the maintenance of the site moves to another web editor and server location, the URL addresses of the site pages will remain fixed. This way, bookmarks and links to the site will not become obsolete.

Considerable effort has been put in to simplifying the code for the site, while retaining the overall look of the site. This reduces the amount of time it takes to maintain and update the site, standardizes the look of the pages, and decreases the number of graphics necessary to view the site. These are also important considerations for making the site readable to the tools employed by disabled users and assuring compatibility with the wide range of browsers people use.

Tracking statistics are now kept for the site, and yield some interesting insights. From July through December of 2006 there were 1,578 unique visitors to the website. In the first three months of 2007, there were 1,214. There is a huge spike in visitation following notification on GEOMORPHLIST that the latest *Geomorphorum* newsletter is available. There are at least two distinct groups of visitors to the GSG website. The first cluster is the group of (primarily American) academics accessing the site. They are "repeat customers" and make multiple visits over the period of record. A high percentage of these visitors bookmark the main page of the GSG website (59% in 2006 and 33.5% in 2007). It is unclear who exactly the other cluster of visitors is. Every month they equal the total number of yearly repeat customers but are harder to track down because they represent a slow but steady trickle of visitation.

The vast majority of all visitors come from the U.S. and most of the rest are from English speaking countries. The *Windows* operating system (95% of all users) crushes the *Macintosh* (3.8%) and while most people (61%) still use *Internet Explorer*, over 31% are now using the *Firefox* web browser. Over 95% of all web searches resulting in hits to the GSG site originated from Google. Most hits occur between 10am and 2pm on either Mondays or Fridays.

III Special Business

Website issues

There was discussion of possible continued development of the website. Suggestions included:

- Addition of an introductory page for students and non-specialists to address the question "What is

Geomorphology?" and to highlight current issues in the field. Possibly linked to a "Who are we / What is it?" button on the main page.
- Link AAG abstracts to the website, and over time work on an archive of past abstracts and special sessions.

The initial appointment of the web site editor was for a one year term with $600 to support student assistance for the site. Input was requested concerning the appropriate length of term for a GSG web editor and the mechanism for selecting a web editor when a term expires. After discussion a proposal was made that

1. The chair shall appoint a new web editor when the term of the previous web editor is completed.
2. The term of a web editor shall be 3 years (enough time to make some changes and test and run the site, but not long enough to be a burden on any individual).
3. The same web editor can be reappointed by the chair.
4. The web editor appointment is subject to termination by the chair and advisory board at any time.
5. An annual request for funds to support the work of the web editor shall be made by the web editor, and the final amount allocated shall be decided by the chair and advisory board.

A motion to approve this proposal was made and seconded, and passed by acclamation.

GSG Award Issues

Deadlines. The deadlines for the Gilbert and Marcus Awards are currently February 1st, however an earlier deadline would allow more time to process and decide on these awards. A motion to approve moving the deadline to January 1st and to allow the chair of the awards committee to move the deadline earlier at his/her discretion was made and seconded, and passed by acclamation.

Active Period. Clarification was requested with regards to the length of time that a nomination is considered to be active (i.e., it does not need to be resubmitted to be considered again). Nominations will be active for two years, including the initial submission. So a nomination will be considered for two award cycles: when it is first made, and also in the following year's competition.

Student Award Amounts. The GSG bylaws set the student awards at $200 for the Master's level, $400 for the Ph.D level, and $200 for student paper awards. We are now giving out larger awards and need to amend our bylawys to reflect this. A motion to approve amending the bylaws to set student awards at $400 for the Master's level, $600 for the Ph.D level, and $250 for student paper awards was made and seconded, and passed by acclamation.

Plans for the 2008 Annual Meeting

The GSG would like to encourage continuation of our traditional special sessions in areas including Fluvial, Human Impacts, Aeolian, Environmental, Periglacial/glacial and Soils. We would also like to encourage additional cross-cutting, innovative and timely sessions in a variety of formats. Examples might include Sustainability and Geomorphology, Teaching and Learning Geomorphology, Geomorphic Patterns and Processes in 2050. Members might also think about proposing panel sessions, such as The Lone Geomorphologist (strategies for building a successful career as the only geomorphologist in your organization) or Voices of Experience (ten questions from early career geomorphologists answered by senior figures in the GSG).

IV Other Announcements

IAG / Google Earth (Mike Slattery). The publications committee of the IAG met to discuss ways to increase the visibility of IAG. One idea was to get Google Earth to do a "worlds greatest landforms and processes" set of images. Google Earth has agreed to do this and fund the work at their end. Geomorphologists need to provide the photos and text to go with this. Look for an announcement in geomorphlist soon with more details.

Publications. Requests were made for submissions to Geography Compass (a new electronic review journal aimed at students), Geomorphology, the Journal of Mountain Sciences, and Earth Sciences Reviews.

Conference Announcements

Binghamton: GSG members are encouraged to attend the upcoming Binghamton Conference (see announcement on page 8).

GSA: There will be a special topical session on river channel changes and anthropogenic impacts at the upcoming GSA meeting, with the possibility of a GSA Special Publication.

AAAS: Please submit ideas for special symposia for the annual meeting of the AAAS to Jim Knox at the University of Wisconsin. This is a great place for hot ideas that will interest a wide range of scientists.

V Appointments

Awards Committee. Michael Craghan was thanked for his service to the Awards Committee on completion of his 3-year term. Alice Turkington from the University of Kentucky has been appointed as the new member of the Awards Committee.

Secretary-Treasurer. Scott Leece was nominated to be the next Secretary-Treasurer of the GSG. The nomination was seconded and approved unanimously.

VI Awards

Graduate Student Paper Award (Masters Level):
Brooke Saari, University of West Florida. *Post-hurricane interactions between vegetation dynamics, dune recovery, and physical gradients on barrier islands*

Graduate Student Paper Award (Ph.D. Level):
Mark Lange, University of Southern California. *Patterns of flow at a tidal river divergence, Sacramento River, California.*

Reds Wolman Student Research Award (Masters Level)
Gwenda Schlomer, Missouri State University. *Geomorphic response of a North Carolina Piedmont watershed to Early American settlement as revealed in overbank floodplain deposits.*

Reds Wolman Student Research Award (Ph.D. Level)
James Riley, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. *Flow dynamics and channel morphology at natural confluent meander bends.*

Grove Karl Gilbert Award for Excellence in Geomorphologic Research
Basil Gomez, Indiana State University. *The potential rate of bed-load transport.* Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 2006, Volume 103 (46) p.17170-17173 (http://www.pnas.org/cgi/reprint/103/46/17170).

AAG Geomorphology Specialty Group
2007 Grove Karl Gilbert Award for Excellence in Geomorphologic Research
Award Citation by Frank Magilligan

In a career marked by a progression of outstanding papers measuring and documenting the processes and rates of sediment transport, Basil Gomez has clearly outdone himself with this recent paper "The potential rate of bed-load transport" published in one the most high-ranking and prestigious scientific journals, the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) (Gomez, B., 2006. The potential rate of bed-load transport. *Proceedings National Academy of Sciences*. 103 (46):17170–17173).

This paper builds on over 20 years of meticulous laboratory and field analyses that span the globe from Europe to New Zealand and all across the United States. Throughout this brilliantly conceived and articulated paper, one easily sees these previous research efforts guiding its scope, direction, and thrust. Moreover, besides embodying the culmination of decades of research on sediment transport, it further represents Basil's quest for developing a broader universal law for bedload transport rates. As Basil notes in this seminal article, despite more than a century of effort by innumerable sedimentologists, engineers, and geomorphologists, it has not yet been possible to reliably predict bedload transport rates. This conundrum has existed because of the time consuming nature and expense of detailed measurements, but also because of the dynamic conditions of the channel bed during these often rapidly varying flow conditions. Basil obviates these problems by creatively turning the question around; rather than focusing on how much bed material is actually being transported, he addresses an even more fundamentally important question – how much material is the channel capable of transporting? He accomplishes this by incorporating an empirical, particle-size-dependent term for bedload transport efficiency into existing formulations that have been shown to be relatively successful in predicting bedload transport in gravel-bed rivers. Based on the limited existing data relating to conditions in gravel-bed rivers under which the constraints on sediment supply and availability can be relaxed, Basil reexamines the contention that there is an upper, particle-size-dependent threshold to bed-load transport efficiency.

This is a truly remarkable paper and I am unaware of any other physical geographers having published in this journal that ranks as one of the most prestigious within the broader sciences. In this era where geomorphology has evolved into earth systems science where physics and attention to first-principles have become paramount, this paper greatly embodies that recent shift, and its great to see a geographer leading the charge. Because of this paper's profound quality and its potential to be a classic, one could easily see this as a crowning achievement to a perfect career. But we all know that Basil still has his best years to come, and that this paper is just a mere expression of what Basil has so capably accomplished now. We all look forward to the next series of impressive papers.

2007 Grove Karl Gilbert Award for Excellence in Geomorphologic Research
Award Acceptance by Basil Gomez

Frank, thank you for your kind words and for nominating me for the G.K. Gilbert Award.

In 1976: Microsoft Corp. and Apple Computer Co. were founded; Cray manufactured the first supercomputer; and California outshone France in a blind tasting. The UK experienced drought – and this was the year I chose, for my undergraduate dissertation, to investigate 'Bed load transport in a small Devon stream' (however, with only baseflow to contend with the trap was easy to install!).

Like others I thought that field measurements might help bridge the gap between theory and application. However, it took me more than three decades to appreciate that, as William of Occam stated, "Entities should not be multiplied beyond necessity" and show R.A. Bagnold's reasoning was correct. Working with data that pertain to the general (as opposed to a boundary) condition, Panos Diplas also has demonstrated that bed load transport efficiency scales with sediment size. My own work on this topic has been supported by NSF and stimulated by extended conversations and field work undertaken with Dallas

Childers, Mike Church, Bill Emmett, Dave Hubbell and Gar Williams.

I thank the AAG Geomorphology Specialty Group for this award.

Melvin G. Marcus Distinguished Career Award
John (Jack) D. Vitek

AAG Geomorphology Specialty Group
2007 Melvin G. Marcus Distinguished Career Award
Award Citation by
W. Andrew Marcus and Richard A. Marston

It is with great pleasure that, on behalf of the Geomorphology Specialty Group, we present the Melvin G. Marcus Distinguished Career Award to Dr. John (Jack) D. Vitek. The following comments reflect our thoughts, as well as those of co-nominators David Butler and Rick Giardino.

Jack Vitek's contributions to geomorphology are varied and wide. Particularly notable in the context of a GSG award is that he is one of the co-founders (along with Richard Kessel and Colin Thorn) of the AAG's Geomorphology Specialty Group and served as its first chair in 1980-1981. As such, he is responsibility for creating the venue that provides a gathering place and sense of community for our discipline in geography. Over the life of the specialty group, Professor Vitek's foresight and commitment thus has led to participation by 1000s of geomorphologists in the AAG, 100s of special sessions to devoted to geomorphology at AAG annual meetings, and the sustaining presence of a central entity that represents geomorphology to geography and to the world-at-large – the Geomorphology Specialty Group.

Dr. Vitek's contributions to geomorphology through the journal *Geomorphology* are equally impressive. When he took over the senior editorship along with Adrian Harvey in 1994 after Marie Morisawa's tragic death in an automobile accident, the journal was in its early days. Dr. Vitek had to fight an uphill battle to bring credibility and readership to the journal. Remarkably in hindsight, many individuals believed a journal dedicated to geomorphology would harm the discipline, feeling it would reduce our visibility in publications targeted to wider audiences (e.g., *GSA Bulletin*, the *Annals of the AAG*, *Water Resources Research*, etc.) and reduce our presence and impact within the broader earth sciences and geography communities. I remember specialty group meetings in which members argued against the founding of a specialized geomorphology journal. In contrast to this dire vision, however, *Geomorphology* as a journal and geomorphology as a discipline have thrived. Professor Vitek's efforts to recruit widely throughout diverse disciplines have led to *Geomorphology* being a highly regarded outlet by geologists, geographers, hydrologists, and ecologists, as well as being a journal with broad international readership; along with *Earth Surface Processes and Landforms* it now shares the highest impact rating among journals with a geomorphic focus. Moreover, rather than harming geomorphology, the presence of the journal has served to legitimize the discipline and has drawn many new recruits from cognate disciplines to participate in our field. Dr. Vitek's willingness to give of his time to nurture this journal through its infancy has been a major contribution to the entire discipline of geomorphology.

Jack Vitek also played a major role in establishing the Binghamton Symposium as the premiere venue for bringing together investigators from diverse research fields under the umbrella of geomorphology. He attended the first symposium that was organized by Marie Morisawa and Don Coates, has attended almost all the symposia since that time and, starting in the early 1980s, has served on the Binghamton Steering Committee for over two decades. Most recently, he has served as the Editor for Special Issues of *Geomorphology*, which means he edits every single Binghamton symposium issue.

In addition, Jack Vitek has made major contributions to geomorphology, environmental and earth sciences, and all higher education through his work as an administrator. At Oklahoma State University, he recently stepped down as Interim Executive Vice President and Provost for Academic Affairs, a post he held for one year. In addition, he has served as Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (seven years – including two as interim), Assistant and Associate Dean of the Graduate School (10 years), and Coordinator of Environmental Sciences (10 years) at Oklahoma State University. In these capacities, he has been an important figure in insuring that the geomorphology and geography remain strongly represented and supported within university initiatives. Geography at Oklahoma State University recently initiated a Ph.D. program while he was Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. In his "retirement," he now serves as Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies at Texas A&M University.

Remarkably in light of his extensive service and administrative duties, Dr. Vitek has authored 33 refereed publications and nine book chapters, as well as writing or co-editing six books. This total does not include the wide range of professional reports resulting from geomorphological consulting, teaching, and research, or the many recent Binghamton Symposia which he edited in his role with the journal *Geomorphology*. His work is eclectic, ranging from basic research on rock glaciers, alpine streams, soils, and rock polygons to applied research on disaster response, to writings on educational methods in geomorphology and the academy. One of the Binghamton volumes that Jack co-edited (with Don Coates) was the 9th Symposium on *Thresholds in Geomorphology* ; which has been cited by Hart (Allen & Unwin 1986, Table 15.1 on page 200) as one of the 42 "major landmarks" volumes in geomorphology. Jack authored a chapter for Keith Tinkler's 19th Binghamton Symposium (published in 1989) that remains one the

best articles on the history of geomorphology in North America. Lesser known to North American geomorphologists, but equally useful, is a 1989 article coauthored by Jack Vitek and Dale Ritter titled "Geomorphology in the United States," published in the 10th Anniversary issue of *Transactions of the Japanese Geomorphological Union* in a special issue dedicated to the history of geomorphology. Figure 1 in this article presents the most effective diagram we have encountered documenting the chronological development of geomorphologic paradigms. And Jack's work on rock glaciers (e.g., Giardino, Vitek and Schroeder, 1987) remains as foundational reading to this day.

Professor Vitek also maintained an active teaching role throughout his career. He has served on 40 Ph.D. committees and ~50 master's committees. Moreover, many of our colleagues in geomorphology and geography were mentored as junior faculty by Jack Vitek, including Dave Butler, George Malanson, Rick Giardino, Sue Berta, Richard Marston, and Steven Walsh. Under Jack's tutelage, these individuals received early and important guidance on how to conduct research, carry out field studies in complex terrain, navigate the pit falls of the academic environment, and develop strategies for effective publishing and editing.

The field of geomorphology has been immensely enriched by Jack Vitek's remarkable contributions. In a career that balances research, administration, and education, he has made service to geomorphology a cornerstone of all his activities. Professor Vitek's tremendous research and service contributions have already resulted in his being an elected as a Fellow of the Geological Society of America, as a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (Section E, Geology and Geography), and as the recipient of the 2001 Binghamton Geomorphology Symposium Achievement Award. Clearly, Jack Vitek's contributions to the discipline will be long-lasting, both through his own work and through his efforts to partner and mentor other geomorphologists - a process that continues to this day. It is for these reasons that Jack Vitek is awarded the 2007 Association of American Geographers Geomorphology Specialty Group's Melvin G. Marcus Distinguished Service Award.

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AAG Geomorphology Specialty Group
2007 Melvin G. Marcus Distinguished Career Award
Award Acceptance Speech
John (Jack) D. Vitek

I humbly accept this award from the AAG Geomorphology Specialty Group. Let me begin by thanking my colleagues that nominated me…Andrew Marcus and the support that he received from Dick Marston, Rick Giardino and Dave Butler. I have many fond memories of Mel Marcus at AAG meetings and the contributions that he made to the organization. One way to learn is to emulate those who you believe are leaders because of the way that they treat people. I was lucky in that I had such good role models around me as I formulated who I was and hopefully would become.

None of what I have accomplished is possible without Peggy, my wife of 41 years, for letting me do **my** thing for so many years…her patience with me makes her a saint. She endured years of camping so our sons could experience what I was doing in Colorado.

Why geomorphology? While working as a cartographer at Northern Illinois University, I met Harold McConnell. He convinced me to go to Iowa to earn a PhD because I could teach the Maps course he was stuck with and the quantitative perspective would suit me because I also had a math major. So in 1967, I went to Iowa and at the same time Harold moved back to NIU so Neil Salisbury got stuck with me as a student. Neil was a great advisor – he gave me the freedom to pursue any topic and encouraged me; especially to attend meetings and be an active part of organizations.

I attended my first AAG meeting in 1970 – in San Francisco – a wild town to say the least for those of us leading sheltered lives in Iowa City. No specialty groups existed. Establishing this specialty group, however, was not easy. Two years before the AAG recognized groups as formal entities, Colin Thorn, Dick Kesel, and I approached the AAG for permission for such group meetings. The need for such a meeting in the late 70s was obvious. Other than posters or in regular sessions, geomorphologists were a minority within the AAG and needed such a meeting to form bonds.

Whereas the Binghamton Geomorphology Symposium was in its first decade (started in 1970), it provided a fall venue for geomorphologists trained either in geography or geology. Several events exceeded 400 attendees with the early focus of those in attendance being

geomorphologists trained by geology programs. Don Coates and Marie Morisawa laid the foundation for almost 40 years of interesting sessions on all aspects of geomorphology.

I remember Don Coates saying to me at one meeting – six of Art Strahler's students were in attendance. I calmly replied….Neil Salisbury had 12 of his students there! When you reflect upon who the significant geomorphologists who were giants in the field of geography– Mel Marcus, Duke Winters, Neil Salisbury, Don Johnson, Nel Caine, Ross Mackay, Jim Gardner and others quickly come to mind. The boom in the late 60s and early 70s resulted from a new generation of student – one using a variety of techniques for data collection and analyses that propelled the science of surface processes forward.

From meeting in a room reserved for papers at which none were given, the concept of the specialty group evolved. The group allowed scholars with similar interests to plan within the AAG for better meetings and to establish lasting relationships. Let me regress a bit…..

Raymond Specht, a geography faculty member at Wisconsin State University – Stevens Point, demonstrate to me and others the value of research while we were undergraduates. From one class of 30 students, 7 went on to PhDs. Dr. Lloyd Black, a name probably unknown to many is this room, was a Geographer in the 60s for the State Department, who became the Department Head of Geography at Northern Illinois University in 1966. As I watched him run the department, he taught me that everyone associated with the department was absolutely essential for it to function – a lesson that I never forgot and used during 20 years of service in a variety of administrative positions. Experiences at SUNY Buffalo with Perry and Susan Hanson (1971-74) followed by 4 years at the University of Michigan – Flint helped me establish goals in teaching and research. I moved to Oklahoma State University in 1978 at the encouragement of Bob Norris, a colleague from graduate school days in Iowa who thought I would enjoy the department. As a family we enjoyed Stillwater and OSU. Steve Walsh got to OSU in 1977 and we became great friends and colleagues. Two years later, Dave Butler and George Malanson were hired. We had a great group in physical geography and grew together. Once they left, however, I was lured into the Geology Department because the Geography Head kept canceling the geomorphology course, a course needed by undergraduates in geology. But I was also lured into full-time administration and spent 10 years as the Associate Dean of the Graduate College, and 7 years as an Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, followed by one year as Interim Executive VP (or Provost). I approached all positions from the basis – how can I help you, rather than how can you serve me. Norman Durham, Graduate Dean for 24 years, also taught me about the politics of administration or interaction with students and faculty to serve them. Outside interests were also interested in being served and often complicated the solutions.

When Marie Morisawa died tragically in a car accident in 1994, she had already talked to Femke Wallien at Elsevier (unbeknownst to me) about me to be her successor as an Editor of Geomorphology. I was stunned but figured if she would trust me with her "baby," I could not say no. But after 4 ½ years, in which the journal went from quarterly to monthly, the position became incompatible with service as an Associate VP for Academic Affairs. Fortunately, with oral agreement from many personal friends, I twisted Dick Marston's arm and he has taken the journal to heights only dreamed about by Marie and I. While I continue to serve as an Editor for Special Editions, I still approach each article with a perspective – can I help make it better for the reader.

And I guess that lessons learned early by watching those who I considered great scholars and people are the real reason why I stand before you today accepting this award…..remember, it is not about you on the journey but about those you serve, be they students, colleagues or friends……you can make a difference and you also make great memories of the fun along the way. I could tell you about all the fun but too many colleagues would shoot me!!

Again, thank you Andrew for considering me worthy of receiving the Mel Marcus distinguished career award.

BINGHAMTON
GEOMORPHOLOGY SYMPOSIUM 2007
Complexity in Geomorphology
October 5-7, 2007, Duke University

History. The Binghamton Geomorphology Symposium held its first conference in 1970 on the topic of Environmental Geomorphology. Since then annual symposia have been held on a range of topics, and are often described as one of the best conferences each year for geomorphologists.

Binghamton Symposium 2007: Complexity in Geomorphology. When we look at the Earth's surface, what do we see? Do landscapes operate with straightforward relationships between forcing and response, or do they suggest nonlinear feedbacks leading to the emergence of large-scale structures? Do complicated arrangements of flow, sediment transport, and vegetation imply complicated causes, or do we look for simple interactions that give rise to self-organized patterns and complex dynamics? For many geomorphologists, the answers to these questions have been shifting; perspectives arising from complex-systems research have opened up new ways of understanding surface processes.

The speakers list for this symposium brings together geographers, geologists, and engineers using complex-systems concepts and techniques to address geomorphological questions. Participants will learn about state-of-the-art modeling and data-analysis techniques,

and the advances in our understanding of surface processes they are facilitating.

Additional meeting and registration information and can be found at the symposium web site: http://www.nicholas.duke.edu/geomorphology/index.html. The symposium will host an international cast of speakers and we encourage participation in poster sessions, a pre-meeting field trip to the Atlantic coast, and lively discussions.

Binghamton Geomorphology Symposia Beyond 2007

The 2008 Binghamton Symposium will be held in Austin, TX (final date to be determined) on the topic of Fluvial Deposits and Environmental History. Symposium Organizers for the Austin meeting are Paul Hudson, Karl Butzer, and Tim Beach.

The Binghamton Symposium Steering Committee is always pleased to consider proposals for future Binghamton meetings. We are especially eager to receive your proposals for 2009 and 2010. Binghamton Symposia typically begin with registration on a Friday in early-mid October, sometimes with a field trip; followed by a full day of papers on Saturday and papers on Sunday morning. Evening "mixers" and banquets are frequent activities, but are not necessary to mention in a proposal. Complete information on "How to Propose a Binghamton Geomorphology Symposium" can be found at: http://geography.uoregon.edu/amarcus/Binghamton2006/BGS-proposal.htm. Proposals are welcome from all areas and disciplines affiliated with Geomorphology. Please submit your proposals to the Steering Committee Chair, Dave Butler, at db25@txstate.edu.

GSA Pre-Meeting Field Trip
"Geoarchaeology of the Clary Ranch Paleoindian Sites, western Nebraska"

One-day (October 26, 2007), pre-meeting field trip associated with the annual Geological Society of America meeting in Denver (1 bus to get to the ranch + suburbans to get out to the sites). Lunch included.

This trip will visit two Late Paleoindian sites in the Ash Hollow drainage, a major tributary to the North Platte River in western Nebraska. These two sites are contemporary and are believed to represent complementary dimensions of a single settlement and subsistence system. One is a bison processing area; the other a camp. Emphasis will be on interdisciplinary research in the basin and at the archaeological sites, including geomorphology and early-Holocene stratigraphy in the basin, paleoenvironmental reconstruction using several lines of evidence, and Paleoindian archaeology. We will investigate two or three cutbank exposures and make a visit to a local museum (Ash Hollow Cave) as well.

Journal Editor's Report - Geomorphology

The Elsevier journal *Geomorphology* continues to grow in size and exposure. Over 33,000 pages have been published in the journal since the initial issue in July 1987. Over 4000 pages were published in 2006 alone and more are planned for 2007 and 2008. Between July 2006-June 2007, over 300,000 full-text PDFs of articles from *Geomorphology* were downloaded worldwide from Elsevier's Science Direct site. The Science Citation Impact factor was 1.698 for calendar year 2006 (vs. 1.784 for ESP&L), up from 1.508 in 2006.

Geomorphology publishes peer-reviewed works across the full spectrum of the discipline from fundamental theory and science to applied research of relevance to sustainable management of the environment. We also welcome manuscripts that review the geomorphic literature on a given topic and short communications on new developments. Our journal's scope includes geomorphic themes of: tectonics and regional structure; glacial processes and landforms; fluvial sequences, Quaternary environmental change and dating; fluvial processes and landforms; mass movement, slopes and periglacial processes; hillslopes and soil erosion; weathering, karst and soils; aeolian processes and landforms, coastal dunes and arid environments; coastal and marine processes, estuaries and lakes; modelling, theoretical and quantitative geomorphology; DEM, GIS and remote sensing methods and applications; hazards, applied and planetary geomorphology; and volcanics.

In the July 2006-June 2007 reporting period:

- 314 manuscripts were submitted to the journal (not including special issues), up 16% from 2005-06 and 47% from 2004-05.
- Manuscripts were submitted from 33 countries. Most accepted papers were from the USA, UK, and Italy. The largest percent increase of papers accepted was from France. The largest percent decrease of papers accepted was from the USA.
- The four most frequent topics among manuscripts accepted were hazards/applied geomorphology, fluvial processes and landforms, hillslope processes, glacial processes and landforms
- Average number of days between the date the manuscript was received and the first editor was assigned = 2.7
- Average number of days between the date the manuscript was submitted and the first reviewer was assigned = 3.4
- Average number of days between date reviewer agreed to do review and the date the review was completed = 36
- Average number of days between the date the manuscript was received and the first decision = 72 days
- Average number of days for authors to revise and resubmit = 85

- Average number of days between acceptance of manuscript and article in final version appears on web = 53
- Average number of days between acceptance and article appears in printed issue = 245
- The rejection rate was 34% for manuscripts submitted in this period, but by the time final decisions are made, the rejection rate will rise to about 40%.

In the July 2006-June 2007 reporting period, 13 special issues were published:

- *Linking Geomorphology and Ecology* (guest editors Michael Urban, Melinda Daniels, and Martin Doyle
- *Mountain Rivers Part 1: Watershed Scale Processes and Channel Morphology* (guest editors Ellen Wohl and Anne Chin)
- *Sediment and Geochemical Budgets: Papers in Honor of Professor Olav Slaymaker* (guest editor Michael Church)
- *37th Annual Binghamton Geomorphology Symposium (2006): The Human Role in Changing Fluvial Systems* (guest editors L. Allan James and W. Andrew Marcus)
- *Sedimentary Source-to-Sink Fluxes in Cold Environments* (guest editor Achim A. Beylich)
- *The Hydrology and Geomorphology of Bedrock Rivers* (guest editor Paul Carling)
- *Mountain Rivers Part II: Channel Processes* (guest editors Anne Chin and Ellen Wohl)
- *Geomorphic Instability and Change* (guest editor Adrian Harvey)
- *Drylands: Linking Landscape Processes to Sedimentary Environments* (guest editors Joanna Bullard, David Nash, and Colin North)
- *Monsoon Rivers of Asia* (guest editors Zhongyuan Chen, Avijit Gupta and Hongfu Yin)
- *Human Impact and Geomorphology in Tropical Mountain Areas* (guest editor Gerard Govers)
- *Studies in Weathering and Slope Movements* (guest editors Domenico Calcaterra, Mario Parise and Cliff Ollier)
- *36th Annual Binghamton Geomorphology Symposium (2005): Geomorphology and Ecosystems* (guest editors Martin Thoms, Chris Renschler and Martin Doyle

The “Top 25 Hottest Articles” (most often downloaded) are listed on the journal’s website and updated quarterly. In surveys of authors, *Geomorphology* ranks high in “refereeing speed and standards, production speed and services, physical quality, impact factor, and reputation.”

Richard Marston, Co-Editor-in-Chief

Geomorphorum is issued twice a year by the Geomorphology Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers. The purpose of this newsletter is to exchange ideas and news about geomorphology, and to foster improved communication within our community of scholars. The editor of Geomorphorum welcomes news, comments, and suggestions from all members of the geomorphological community. Issues of Geomorphorum are posted on the website of the GSG; new issues are announced through the Geomorphlist listing service currently maintained by David Wilkins at Boise State University.