Hello once again from the WIU Geology Department! It has been an eventful year for both the Geology Department and the WIU community with regard to personnel changes.

Our newest faculty member, Dr. Amy Brock, left the university last May. She married last summer (in Yosemite National Park!) and took a position at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga to be closer to her husband’s place of work. We miss Amy and enjoyed our three years with her as a colleague and friend. We wish her all the best and look forward to seeing her at geologic conferences in the future.

Our most senior faculty member, Dr. Jack Bailey, is currently teaching his last semester at WIU. Jack will retire at the end of this year and we are currently conducting a search for his replacement. While we have received some wonderful applicants for the position, it will be impossible to replace Dr. Bailey’s wealth of knowledge about Earth history, paleontology, and the development of geologic thought. Jack is our go-to guy in the department for everything from fossil identification to debunking “scientific creationism” to how to do anything on your Mac. He will be sorely missed.

WIU will have a new president in July, 2011. Dr. Al Goldfarb will be leaving the university and our new president will be Dr. Jack Thomas, our current Provost and Academic Vice President. We wish President Goldfarb all the best in his retirement and look forward to working with our new president this summer.

Finally, our most recent addition to the WIU Geology Department is now suspended from the ceiling of the Geology Museum (see photo spread inside). Bob Johnson has outdone himself with his most recent creation, a life-size opthalomasaurus that he has named “Opie”. Come see him in person if you are in the area.

Steve Bennett (SW-Bennett1@wiu.edu)
Alumni Newsletter Editor
Leslie Melim

Between research and field camp, I kept pretty busy this year. Spring was mostly tied up in teaching Geol 113, Energy and Earth Resources, for the first time but I managed to make it to Texas for the Astrobiology Science Conference. This was my first meeting with the Astrobiology crowd. A bit different but lots of fun.

Field camp took up a good chunk of summer but I still made it out to New Mexico for some research. Randy Gustafson and I spent several days on the scanning electron microscope and then did a flying trip through White Sands National Monument and Carlsbad Cavern on the way back to Macomb. Running down the front of a large sand dune is really a lot of fun...but don't try it when the sand is soaking wet. It felt like someone grabbed my feet and I went splat, face down on the dune. Unfortunately, I ended up with a cracked rib but still went caving the next day.

It was strange this summer, I didn't work on my house for the first time in 10 years! It has been completely remodeled! Since I really don't want to start redoing my own work, this year I worked on building furniture for my woodworking therapy sessions. I have done a full coffee table and end table set with a dining room set in the planning stage.

Two students worked with me during the year:

Randy Gustafson started a project comparing the fossil distribution in pool fingers to other pool features. We spent a week in Albuquerque using the scanning electron microscope and found lots of nice little microbes... more than we expected to, actually! He is now working on the petrography and writing up the results. It will be a nice comparison to a similar project done by Randi Liescheidt, '09.

John Chawula finished his senior project on "Classifying Cave Pools in Carlsbad Caverns National Park, New Mexico" and presented it at the North-Central and South-Central Geological Society of America Joint Meeting in Branson, MO.

Papers and Talks (undergrad co-authors underlined):


Sara Bennett

I’m well into my second year as a geology instructor. I must say the fourth time teaching Geology 110 is definitely less stressful. I find that knowing the types of concerns the students have makes anticipating and answering their questions much easier. I continue to puzzle out possible ways to demonstrate concepts during lecture and I am open to ideas if you have some you wish to share.

Last summer my family took a trip to Acadia National Park in Maine. It was great for this Midwesterner to see and hike over the glacially striated, pink granite found in the park. The two boys played in the ocean surf as it surged over buff colored, shell rich sand in one of the little coves located in the park. Wish I could attach a sound bite of the surf. The down side to the trip wasn’t necessarily the long drive out to Maine but the terrible eastern seaboard traffic and myriad tollbooths. Yikes! I was able to collect a sample of the granite to bring back with me (not found in the park of course!) and have it in my office. Hope you all have found neat things to liven up your workspace too.
Bob Johnson

Opie is on display! (choir breaks into Hallelujah chorus) With the painting and hang test complete, he was moved to the museum the day before the big snow storm. When we returned two days later, friends from the GIS Center, Visual Production Center and the Geology department helped raise and secure him to the ceiling. This was well-planned-out and surprisingly took less than 15 minutes. Photos can be viewed on Geology’s Facebook page. A big thank you to all the people who have helped and contributed their support throughout the project. But we’re not done yet...

Part 2. The squid. Opie might get hungry, so it seems fitting to prepare a school of squid for him to chase and eat. The plan calls for a dozen or more 18 inch-long model squid to hang just out of reach. The prototype model is progressing nicely and molding and casting should begin soon.

On the home front, my daughter Nancy gave birth to a lovely baby girl in early November, Cynthia Elizabeth. Mom, baby and family are all doing well.

There was no Heart of Illinois Stunt Championships in 2010 so I went to the Broken Arrow 23 championships in Buder Park, St. Louis instead. Again I was triumphant in a field of one (sigh). The weather was very cool and damp but the contest was fun. With the return of Spring I’ll be out on the practice field. The goal is to fly the intermediate/advanced pattern by September. Wish me luck.

I have also been flying a bit of R/C. Micro electric models are fun, relaxing and inexpensive. They come ready to fly, complete with batteries. No, I’m not giving a sales pitch but I think these planes are just too cool.

Kyle Mayborn

Life here in the WIU Geology Department is going great. I had another relatively big group in Mineralogy this year with eleven students and expect a bigger group next year. It is quite exciting to see our number of majors increase. This has also meant that I had to increase the number of hand samples and thin sections for Petrology in order to have enough for everyone. This has provided an excellent occasion to reevaluate and improve the labs. The increase in majors has also meant larger field trips. Last Spring we took a group of seventeen students to central Wisconsin to look at Precambrian rocks and structures. I say we because with such a large group I decided to talk Dr. Bennett into going to help with the driving.

Research wise, I have recently submitted a paper to the journal Computers & Geosciences. The paper is a description of an Excel based program I have written to model mafic magma crystallization. Hopefully it will be accepted. Last December I restarted work on a different computer program which uses the composition of coexisting minerals to determine the composition of their parental magma. This is a project that Jason Warren (‘07) and I started working on for his senior project. I am also continuing my work on the Mellon Igneous Complex in northern Wisconsin. Current student Tim Garvis and I went down to Washington University in St Louis to use their electron microprobe to analyze olivine and plagioclase from some of the Mellon Complex gabbros. Part of the expense for the probe time was paid for by the Geology Foundation, so I want to thank all of our alumni who have so generously given to the department. Your contributions help us provide high quality research opportunities for our current majors.

On a personal note, Mari’s speaking career has gained momentum this year. She is usually off speaking to various women’s groups a few times a month, although some recent minor knee surgery has momentarily slowed her down a bit. Christina is a senior at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan but it looks like she will end up being a super-senior and need an extra semester to graduate. I think that many of us can relate to needing that extra semester. I’m sort of in a transitional time when it comes to hobbies. I still enjoy disc golf tournaments, trail running, and yoga, but I would not be surprised to see myself trying something different soon.

I hope that all is going well for you. Please send me an email, I would love to hear how everyone is doing (KR-Mayborn@wiu.edu).
**Peter Calengas**

Greetings! This has been an eventful year! I’m pleased to report the department has increased its majors count! The faculty are very busy teaching, and we are in the process of hiring a new faculty member to take the place of our retiring Dr. Bailey - a hard task at best. On top of that, the economic situation in the State of Illinois makes the task of hiring, travel, etc. even more difficult.

Your support over the last year has been a great benefit to our students as we were able to support our scholarship, as well as provide funds for student travel to professional meetings.

I am still consulting on the economic geology of industrial minerals and continue to teach my online Environmental Geology course.

Please stop by the department if you are in the area! It is always a pleasure to talk to you. Have a great year and hope to see you in Macomb!

**Diane Edwards**

It’s been a fantabulous year in the Department of Geology! I’ve learned so much – ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS remember to estimate mileage on the high side for field trip reserved vehicles. ☺ It was amazing to watch all the plans for 2010 Summer Field Camp come together. It’s incredible what cooperation, fortitude, a positive attitude, a little imagination, humor, and some “winging it” can accomplish. I’m sure our attendees will remember their experiences for the rest of their lives. The faculty members still reminisce about their very own field camp experiences. On that note, please look carefully at the photo Dr. Bennett has included in this year’s newsletter of Field Camp 1981 to see if you are one of the attendees or recognize some of the other students. Please feel free to email Dr. Bennett (SW-Bennett1@wiu.edu) if you recognize any of the faces, okay?

There are countless itty-bitty things I do on a regular basis here in the Geology department to help our students succeed in their academic careers. All the way from finding a Band-Aid for a cut finger to locating the right supplies needed for an Undergraduate Research Project. It’s a pleasure to serve our students and a delight to see the rapport our majors have with faculty.

On a personal note, when I’m not working, I keep busy spending time and attending functions with the grandkids – ages 1-16; see adjacent photo. In the center is my husband, Steve and granddaughter Olivia (1) on my lap. To the right of me and then clockwise are Graham (13), Jack (7), Caleb (9), Fischer (14), and Ryan (16).

Dear alums, your valued support of everything we do & what we’re about is almost beyond thanks. A huge round of applause to you all!

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Evidence of Pennsylvanian-age masons found during our Fall field trip in southern Illinois! (I probably shouldn’t joke about this, I’ve recently seen this type of “evidence” passed as science on the History Channel.)
Jack Bailey

The time has finally come for me to move on. I will retire from teaching at the end of the semester. Looking back, I consider my 35 years at WIU to be the most rewarding of my lifetime, and I’m grateful to each of you for sharing those years with me. I sincerely hope I have contributed in some small way to your professional success. And, I especially want to thank you for your kindness, generosity and continuing support of the Geology program at Western.

To the frequent question, “What are your plans after retirement?”, my usual response has been, “I’ll have the rest of my life to figure that one out.” A big challenge might be how to spend the additional time without spending additional money. But fortunately, my bucket list is not extensive. For the time being, my plans are to remain in Macomb among the good folks (and fellow geezers) of the Geology Department where I will continue doing paleontological research in my cozy new office. I still have two projects in progress and three or four new ones I hope to begin soon. So, for the next few years, you’re likely to find me still haunting the hallways of dear old Tillman Hall, coffee cup in hand. Stop by for a visit when you’re in town.

Stay Cool, Y’all,
Jack

“Retire from work, but not from life.” – M. K. Soni

“Retirement means no pressure, no stress, no heartache…unless you play golf.” – Gene Perret

Steve Bennett

I hope everyone has had a great year since receiving our last newsletter. As a life-long Green Bay Packer fan, 2011 has started out great for me! If you are a Bears fan, I offer my condolences….NOT! Now if only my Dodgers could get back to the World Series.

As you have already probably read, the changes around the WIU Geology Department have been many during the last year. One change that hasn’t been mentioned yet in this newsletter is the new look of the Department’s web page. It has been a long time coming, but WIU has transitioned to a web-based program for the management of their many web pages. I had to rebuild our entire web site and, with some wonderful editorial suggestions from Diane Edwards, was able to come up with a site that I hope you will find easy to use and pleasant to view. If you have any suggestions for changes/additions to our web site please send me an email (SW-Bennett1@wiu.edu).

Professionally, I have been busy serving on numerous committees on and off campus and I continue to serve as treasurer of the Illinois Groundwater Association. I still teach Hydrogeology, Introduction to the Earth, Oceanography, and Geologic Field Methods during the course of a year. In Geologic Field Methods I completed the transition from hand-drawn inked maps to creation of maps using GIS software (ArcMap). I still have some kinks to work out in some of the exercises but I am pleased to offer our majors exposure to GIS software within our program.

As you may know already if you received an alumni survey form in the mail last summer, this year the Geology Department is conducting a program review. These are conducted every seven years and, due to a change in WIU policy, we were asked to bring in an external reviewer to look over our program this time. The reviewer gave us high marks during his exit interview and we are looking forward to receiving his written report so that we can make our program even stronger. I would like to thank those of you that took the time to complete and return the alumni survey. The results were summarized and included in the self-study document that our external reviewer was provided prior to his visit.

As you can see from the photo of me above, our family vacation took us all the way to Maine last year. I did my summer geology field camp in Maine during the summer of 1987 and have wanted to get back there ever since. It was a great trip that included stops along the way at the Indiana Dunes, Niagara Falls, the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, and Gettysburg. While it was a great trip, the traffic out east is crazy! This summer we’ve decided to head west again and will be visiting Yellowstone and the Tetons. While Sara and I have been there before during summer field camp (with some of you!), neither of us have been there when we were free to roam at will. This summer we plan to get a lot of digital photos to use in our classes. We in geology have a great profession don’t we?

Have a great year and please keep in touch.
30 Years Later: Field Camp 1981

We love to look at the group photos of past Geology Summer Field Camps that we display on the Geology Department office wall. Unfortunately, we don’t have a list of all the names of the students in this group photo. If you can identify any of the people in this photo please email the names to Geology@wiu.edu. We’d love to add a caption to this photo. Thanks!
“Opie” the Ophthalmosaurus

“Birthed” from Bob’s workshop….

Out into the fresh air….

Moving “swimmingly” down the sidewalk….

Stalking unwary museum patrons….

Hoisted into position….

The newest attraction of the WIU Museum of Geology is ready for the public!

Bob rocks!
Undergraduate Research Presentations

The Geology Department had a strong showing at the Annual Thomas E. Helm Undergraduate Research Day. Five students presented their research, two of which have also presented this research at GSA meetings.

Andrew Armstrong poses with his poster entitled “Determining the Mineralogy of two Gabbroic Rocks using the Frantz Isodynamic Magnetic Separator”. Andrew was advised by Dr. Kyle Mayborn.

Randy Gustafson poses with his poster entitled “Petrographic Analysis of the Mineral Lake Intrusion, Northern Wisconsin”. Randy was advised by Dr. Kyle Mayborn.

Matthew Mayerle poses with his poster entitled “Preliminary Map of Late Neogene and Younger Sediments the Western Portion of the Overton, NE Quadrangle, Nevada”. Matthew was advised by Dr. Amy Brock. Matthew had previously presented this research at a National GSA Meeting.

Meagan Graham poses with Provost Dr. Jack Thomas (left) and President Dr. Alvin Goldfarb (right) by her poster entitled “Oxygen Isotope Analysis of the Mormon Mesa soils in Nevada”. Meagan was advised by Dr. Amy Brock.

John Chawula poses with his poster entitled “Classifying Cave Pools in Carlsbad Caverns National Park, New Mexico”. John was advised by Dr. Leslie Melim. He also presented this research at a regional GSA meeting.
Donations

The Geology Department would like to thank the individuals and organizations listed below for their donations. Your generous gifts have allowed us to provide scholarships, defray student costs of field trips, purchase scientific equipment for use in undergraduate research, and cover registration fees and travel expenses of students presenting research at geologic conferences. Again, thank you!

AT&T Foundation
(Matching for T. Gordon)
Timothy Aten ('85)
Thomas Bartels ('72)
Michale Bingham ('75)
Dennis Bomke ('76)
William Branson ('66)
Peter Calengas
John Carl ('85)
ChevronTexaco
EOG Resources Inc.
(Matching for K. Perez)
ExxonMobil
(Matching for W. Jardine & G. Rust)
Terry Gordon ('74)
Charles Gnuse ('91)
Todd Hall ('96)
Sandra Jankowski-Rose ('78)
William Johnson ('85)
Philip Kaminski ('07)
Marvin Klusman ('67)
Scott Koza ('01)
Marathon Oil Foundation
(Matched for S. Koza)
Willard McCracken
Robert McGaughy ('81)
Margaret Morton-Davis ('77)
Devon Pavlek ('00)
Kim Perez ('76)
Petersen Environmental LLC
Harley Ponsler ('74)
Spencer Quam ('77)
Stanley Robinson ('77)
Robert Roe ('72)
Ginny Rust ('04)
Mark Severson ('75)
Stephen Shafer ('83)
Shell Oil Co. Foundation
(Matching for K. Woody)
Penny Silzer ('85)
Holly Stein ('76)
Craig Stevens ('80)
Sheri Stevens ('93)
Kenneth Stringer ('85)
Timothy Tessendorf ('75)
Dorothy Tynal ('83)
Eric Tyrrell ('85)
WIU Geology Club
Kristin Woody ('00)

Map of locations of our alumni
(no names on the map, just an arbitrary number by each point)

Thank You
Recent Field Trips

(Left) Dr. Melim, her Stratigraphy and Sedimentation students, and the Fall geology field trip students enjoyed the geology at the view atop Camel Rock at Garden of the Gods State Park during a beautiful autumn day.

(Right) Dr. Mayborn and students in his Spring 2010 Structural Geology and Petrology courses pose next to the famous Van Hise Rock located near Rock Springs, Wisconsin.