

December 15, 2008

THE HEAD'S PERSPECTIVE

Alumni Reception at the AMS Meeting in Phoenix

As is the tradition, EAS will be hosting an alumni and friends reception at the AMS meeting in Phoenix from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 13, 2009. The reception will be in the Russell Room of the Hyatt Regency Hotel. It is not necessary to be registered for the AMS meeting to attend the reception. During the reception we will formally announce the *Founders Endowment* and recognize Professors Phil Smith, Ernest Agee and Dayton Vincent for their roles in developing the atmospheric science program at Purdue and their many years of service. The *Founders Endowment* is being established to support undergraduate student scholarships in atmospheric science. We hope that many EAS alumni friends will be able to join current faculty, staff, students and guests at this exciting event!

December EAS MS and PhD Graduates

Congratulations to the EAS December, 2008 MS and PhD graduates Andrew Cyr, Piotr Przybylski and Linda Sylvester! Andy is graduating with a PhD degree and his advisor is Prof. Darryl Granger. Piotr is receiving the PhD degree and his advisor is Professor James Ogg. Linda is graduating with an MS degree and her advisor is Professor Terry West. The College of Science commencement will be held at 9:30 am on Sunday, December 21. The college will be hosting a reception for graduates and their families after the commencement (about 11:30 a.m.) in the Lawson commons. EAS faculty, staff and students are welcome to attend. We wish the best of success to Andy, Piotr and Linda!

Holidays and Semester Break

We hope that you have a great holiday season, a happy New Year and a very enjoyable semester break! Spring semester classes begin on January 12, 2009.

DECEMBER 2008 GRADUATES



Andrew Cyr, PhD

Advisor: Darryl Granger

Andy's thesis was entitled, "Quantifying Relationships between Erosion and Uplift in Tectonically Active Landscapes, Italy, using Cosmogenic Nuclides and Channel Morphometry." Andy has accepted a position with

the U.S.G.S Western Region Offices in Menlo Park, California.



Piotr Przybylski, PhD

Advisor: James Ogg

Piotr's thesis was entitled, "Magnetic Polarity Zonation and European Paleomagnetic Poles for the Upper Jurassic." Piotr has a wife Kasia and is a happy father of Adam and Isabela. Piotr starts in January 2009 as a geologist at BP America in Houston, TX.



Linda Sylvester, MS

Advisor: Terry West

Linda's thesis was entitled "Characterization and Analysis of a Natural Wetland Receiving Agricultural Runoff." Linda is currently seeking employment for consulting with environmental and engineering geology firms in Michigan.



OUR RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Carleton Parker, Loran, Gerald H. Krockover, Sonia Lasher-Trapp, and David C. Eichinger, 2008: Ideas about the nature of science held by undergraduate atmospheric science students, *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, **89**, No. 11, 1681-1688.

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Robert Nowack gave an invited talk at a workshop on "Seismic Wave Scattering and Imaging" at the University of California - Santa Cruz on December 9.

ISMR MEETING

Terry West and Linda Sylvester, M.S. student, attended the annual meeting of the Indiana Society of Mining and Reclamation (ISMR) in Jasper, Indiana on December 8 and 9, 2008. They co-authored a poster paper entitled, "Analysis of a Wetland Receiving Agricultural Tile Drainage," based on Linda's M.S. thesis that she recently completed. Terry West, as a member of the Board of Directors for ISMR, also attended a planning session on December 8.

Dr. Christopher Stohr of the Illinois State Geological Survey was one of the instructors for a short course on remote sensing and related techniques. Chris Stohr received his Master's degree through EAS and LARS (Laboratory for the Application of Remote Sensing) in 1974 under Dr. West's direction.

PANEL INVITATION

Eric Riggs was invited to present, as a member of a panel of experts, to a committee of the National Research Council at the National Academies in Washington, D.C. on December 11, 2008. The panel was asked to help the NRC review the NOAA Education Program, particularly efforts to increase the participation of under-represented minorities in earth and atmospheric science.

WISP TRAVEL GRANT

Yi-Chi Wang has been awarded a \$500.00 travel grant from the Earth and Atmospheric Sciences and the Women in Science Programs. This award will assist her on the trip to Phoenix, Arizona for the AMS Annual meeting in January 2009.

Note: This will be the last newsletter of the semester. The next issue is planned for Monday, January 12.

TEAM LED BY ERIC CALAIS FIRST TO RECORD KEY EVENT THAT BREAKS CONTINENTS APART

Researchers have captured for the first time a geological event considered key in shaping the Earth's landscape.



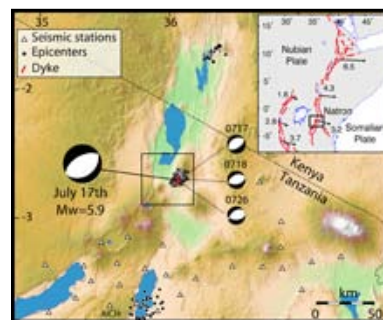
Purdue University graduate student, D. Sarah Stamps, and Tanzanian scientist, Elifuraha Saria, install a Global Positioning System instrument in the Natron area of Tanzania.

An international research team led by Eric Calais, a Purdue University professor of geophysics, was able to measure ground displacements as two tectonic plates in Africa moved apart and molten rock pushed its way toward the surface during the first so-called "dyking event" ever recorded within the planet's continental crust.

The event left a wall of magma 6 miles long and 5 feet wide wedged between the two plates. A paper detailing the event was published December 11 in *Nature*.

Dyking events have been reported in the thin oceanic crust but had never been directly observed and quantified in the thicker areas of the planet's shell, Calais said.

"Such dyking events had been included in theories, but researchers had never before been in the right place at the right time with the right equipment to record them," Calais said. "The event was preceded by a



This image shows a map of the 2007 earthquakes and dyking event in Tanzania. The black circles indicate earthquakes, and the red line shows the location of the dyke intrusion.

slow slipping of the tectonic plates along a fault line. This also had not been seen before. Faults usually slip suddenly, which produces earthquakes, but this was a very seismically quiet course of events that lasted about one week."

(To see the entire article, go to <http://news.uns.purdue.edu/x/2008b/081210CalaisDyking.html>.)

CONGRATULATIONS!

D. Sarah Stamps won 2nd Prize in the Purdue University Ecological Science and Engineering Symposium Poster Contest (\$150.00) on Friday December 5th, 2008. The title of the Symposium was "Biomimicry: Innovation inspired by nature for a sustainable world." The title of the research she presented was "Strain distribution in the East African Rift."

A NOTE FROM OUR ACADEMIC COUNSELOR Winter Commencement

There are no EAS undergraduate students graduating in December, but for the EAS graduate students earning degrees or others interested in this information: Science Commencement is 9:30 a.m. on Sunday, December 21, in the Elliott Hall of Music. The College of Science reception is at 11:30 a.m. in Lawson Commons.

Value of a Purdue Degree

The January 2009 issue of *Smart Money* magazine contains an article in which they attempt to quantify the long term value of a college education. The goal was to highlight the relationship between tuition costs and graduates earning power. They looked at earnings, factored in the tuition and fees, and then

generated a payback ratio for each school in the survey. Purdue was number 9 at 197% (Table on page 70). To compare, among the Ivy League schools, Princeton was number 1 at 132%.

Have good holidays and semester break.

Nancy

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Eric Riggs – December 29

Ling Wang – December 29

Harshvardhan – January 1

Qianlai Zhuang – January 2

Matt Huber – January 10



ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER:

This weekly newsletter is the place to look to keep up with departmental happenings, announcements (seminars, student group events, scholarship and award deadlines, departmental committees), job and grant opportunities, and anything else you need to know about the department. It should cut down on the glut of email and other forms of separate announcements – **if it is in the newsletter, we assume you know about it** and no other reminders are needed. Past issues will be available on our departmental web site (www.purdue.edu/eas/). Material for inclusion in the newsletter should be submitted to Gina Richey (grichey@purdue.edu) by **Friday noon** of each week for inclusion in the Monday newsletter.

For answers to common technology questions and the latest updates from the EAS Technology Support staff, please visit <http://www.purdue.edu/eas/resources/it>.

Also, as an additional resource for information about departmental events, seminars, deadlines, etc., see our departmental calendar at <http://calendar.science.purdue.edu/eas/seminars>.





*Wishing you
safe and happy
holidays!!!*

