GIS EVENT: We had an event on campus in October that also responded to a long deserved recognition. Family and friends of Bill Elberty, also Professor Emeritus, gathered in the Launders Library to dedicate the William T. Elberty, Jr. GIS Laboratory. Bill’s impact on both Geology and Geography at St. Lawrence was dramatic, representing a life-long commitment to his students and the University as expressed through these disciplines. In the process, he created the Geology logo and established the GIS lab with help of alumni gifts and his leadership. The endowed GIS Lab is named in his honor by gifts from family and friends who carry on the tradition of leadership. Many thanks.

REPORT OF STREET FUND ACTIVITIES FOR 2006 – 2007
Continued support of the Jim Street Student Geology Fund by alumni and friends of Geology has been important to us again this Fall. The data of the graph tell only part of the story, speaking to the sustained giving by generous donors who build the base of this Endowment and we deeply appreciate that support and the confidence you have in this program. As you see from other items in the Newsletter, students have used income from the Street Fund to conduct research over the summer and to present results of their research at the Annual GSA meeting in Philadelphia in October. Will Hackett, Rob Menard, Wade Jones, Kate Zubin-Stathopoulos, and Emily Mroz, presented posters at the meeting and all were well received. Several other students attended the meeting and the Fund assisted with some of their expenses as did a gift from alumnus Ron Budros. Students are presently beginning to plan for 2007 field work and theses and the Street Fund gives strength to that planning in part because it provides a safety net in case students’ grant or Fellowship proposals are not rewarded. At least they know that their thesis is not completely at the mercy of a decision-making body that does not realize that without field data most theses will not happen! Thanks to those who contribute for making these things keep happening for our students!!

JME

STREET FUND GIFTS
Since the Last Newsletter
Mr. & Mrs. John L. Kosicki ’67
Michael Perfit ’71
Mike Ward ’72
Russell L. Barnes ’73
Neil Sammis ’74
Tom Shaver ’76
Jeff and Valerie Chiarenzelli ’81
James Billings ’87
Heather (Franco) Kaste ’97
Sally Street and Severn Brown
Bud and Mardi Holland
R. Eleanor Fettermen
ExxonMobile 3 x 1

GSA ’06 EVENT: The Geology Department hosted a reception on the first evening of GSA as we have been doing since the new meeting schedule took effect. People seem to like the arrangement very much so we may stop paying for a flagpole in the Alumni meetings room on Monday nights and stay with the Sunday night food and conversation that we have recently done. Let us know your opinion. Above you see the reception attendees. I’m the plump one in the front row trying to cover up Andrew Fettermen! Quiz – one person in this group announced retirement – do you know who? (Answer on page ten.). One highlight of the meeting was award of the Neil Miner Award for Excellence in Geologic Education to Professor Emeritus, William D. (Bill) Romey. Bill has had a larger impact on Earth Science education than anyone I can think of in the past 50 years, and he is justly deserving of this, the highest award one can earn in this profession. Congratulations, Bill!

Robert Menard ’07 and Carl Pierce at GSA in Philadelphia.

Wade Jones ’08, Katie Zubin-Stathopoulos ’08

Will Hackett ’07 presented at GSA in Philadelphia.

Emily Mroz ’07, Trisha Smrecak ’06

Bill Romey Sr. & Bill Romey Jr.
Greetings to all of you!

This is my first newsletter article as a new faculty member at St. Lawrence University and it is a pleasure and honor to compose it. As a graduate of the Geology Department, it is fascinating to return a quarter century later and help train the next generation of St. Lawrence University geologists. My teaching responsibilities include our introductory course, Dynamic Earth, mineralogy, and geochemistry. I am very pleased to help make geochemistry a part of our curriculum.

For those that don’t know me, I began teaching five years ago at SUNY Potsdam after a number of years working as a field geologist in the Canadian Arctic and as an environmental scientist for various regulatory and research organizations. The practical experience I have gained has proven to be very valuable in the classroom. Currently I am working on research problems involving groundwater quality, environmental justice in Alaska, detrital zircon geochronology of Adirondack metasedimentary rocks, the origin of retrograde slate, the origin of some unusual ultramafic rocks, and some interesting local mineral occurrences.

Recently I was fortunate enough to attend the dedication ceremony of the William T. Elberty Spatial Analysis Laboratory and thought about how what Bill started years ago has grown in importance and relevance to all of our work. We have an excellent GIS program here and most of our students use it as an essential tool to compliment their research. In addition, I had the pleasure of meeting up with Dr. William Romey at the Geological Society of America meeting where he was presented with the Neal Miner Award from the National Association of Geology Teachers. A number of our students attended the meeting and gave some very interesting presentations based on their own research.

I would like to express my gratitude to my colleagues (John, Diane, Mark, Steve, Carl, Cathy, Matt, and Sherrie) for their help and support as I find my way on campus. I also encourage each of you to keep in touch and visit when possible.

Best wishes for the holiday season!

Jeff Chiarenzelli

Hello everyone.

Just a brief note to pass on some news. Dean and I have bought a house. We are now the proud owners of a small cape in Amherst. It has a big deck and some wonderful old trees in the back yard in addition to all the normal stuff inside.

We will be moving in on October 21, and we have spent the past few weeks painting and trying our hand at a small demolition project. We got a brand new stove today, I just need to figure out how to use all the buttons (I’m not used to those fancy electric controls). What fun!

Bonnie J. M. Swoger, “99”

Good Luck, Bonnie, enjoy.

DID YOU KNOW?

Hot lava cooled and cracked some 900,000 years ago and formed basalt columns 40 to 60 feet high resembling a giant pipe organ. This area located between Yosemite and Kings Canyon national parks in California, is known as Devils Postpile National Monument.

http://www2.nature.nps.gov/geology/Didyouknow/

Ed Cavallerano “03”

I am teaching two summer courses now, and am very pleased with my students. They are an active group, and very engaged in the content. I am getting a poster ready on diagenesis in penguin eggshells for GSA in PA this year. In other news, I am wrapping up a project I started with Paul Zimmer 2 years ago, and am editing a paper (for Rocks and Minerals) on the Chateaugay Mine. We saw Ed at GSA where he gave a very interesting poster on biogenesis in the Antarctic based on his MS work.

Booth Platt ‘00

This fall was a big one for wedding’s, Booth Platt and McKenzie Barnes were married on the west coast and now are living in Michigan. McKenzie finished her medical training and Booth has finished his masters degree at SUNY –ESF. He is now an expert on aquatic and semi-aquatic mites of Central, NY. His data will help us profile paleoenvironments using fossil mites in future projects.

Great job, Booth!
Seasons Greetings Everyone,

It has been a wonderfully encouraging fall semester for the Geology Department and if all the semesters of my term as Department Chair are like this one, I'll be happy (and amazed!). As you may know, there have been many changes but they are working out in a very positive manner. John Bursnall retired at the end of the spring semester. He is around the department quite a bit doing geology-related things but is enjoying being a jock now. He continues to help coach rugby, and now the squash team and has taken up white water kayaking in addition to the touring kayak which he still has not removed from the top of the car. He insists that despite the cold and snowflakes he may still get a paddle in. All this doesn't allow nearly enough time to ride his motorcycle. Michael Owen took a job in Syracuse at the end of last fall but stays in touch.

Steve Robinson just received tenure and promotion to associate professor- no surprise there but an important benchmark, none-the-less. He has contributed a great deal to the department and now we can confidently look forward to many more years of the same. Jeff Chiarenzelli has joined us. We were very lucky to “steal” him away from our friends and colleagues in the SUNY Potsdam Geology Department. He taught Geology 103 and Mineralogy this fall and will be teaching Geology 103 and Geochemistry in the spring. His expertise in both hard rock geology and geochemistry with an environmental emphasis is rare and will certainly strengthen our curriculum. We have also been fortunate to have with us Carl Pierce as a Jeffrey Campbell Fellow. This is a fellowship designed to encourage members of under-represented groups who are finishing their Ph.D’s to try out teaching at the University level. Carl is no stranger to the North Country, having received his undergraduate degree from SUNY Potsdam and being a member of the St. Regis Mohawk tribe. He is doing a wonderful job of further expanding our curriculum and the opportunities of our students by teaching courses, both practical and theoretical, related to geophysics.

The new science center is getting closer and closer to completion and architects for the renovation of Bewkes are being interviewed. The current plan is that Geology will move into and share Bewkes with Physics. This would give us new, better and more space which we will design ourselves to best support our departmental goals. As we understand it, the funds for this renovation have not yet been raised so if any of you know anyone who would like to contribute…. please have him/her give me a call or talk directly to Development! This move will only help with our upward momentum as a department.

The GIS lab was dedicated to Bill Elberty and a lovely plaque with the Geology Department logo hangs there- a fitting tribute to Bill who was responsible for bringing GIS to St. Lawrence. It was nice to see his family and friends there. It was crowded! He was someone who touched many people’s lives in important ways. I still miss wandering over to his office for a dose of his wisdom and the twinkle in his eyes.

It was lovely to see some of you at GSA in Philadelphia. We were pleased that 11 of our majors attended the meeting and 5 of them were presenting! We have had an excellent Friday seminar series and our majors have done outstanding jobs of making PowerPoint presentations on their research, summer internships/jobs. We have a very active and impressive group of students (as always of course, after all- you were among them once!). Our new website is coming along, I think you will be pleased when you see it. It should be released sometime in the spring. We have had a record (in my memory) number of students register for our spring introductory-level geology courses which is a very positive sign.

So, we in the Geology Department, have much to be thankful for this year and much to look forward to in the new year. I hope each of you can say the same. Please keep in touch with us, visit when you can and all the best for the holidays and new year!

Cathy Shrady
Holiday Greetings to All!!!

While I certainly cannot believe that it is the end of the Fall Semester already, it will be a welcome respite from this very hectic semester. Began this year with a bang – literally – as I demonstrated a volcanic eruption for the ISEI (Integrated Science Education Initiative) Open House at the Wachtmeister Field Station. This wonderful facility was part of the exhibit as well, as it is a laboratory, classroom and green building all rolled into one. We had many visitors and received many, many positive comments on the demonstrations as well as the Field Station. Thanks again to the Wachtmeister Family for making this happen for St. Lawrence!

In addition to classes, taking students to the GSA and presenting some preliminary work on a Virtual Field Trip Website (Jordan – you are famous!), I have been directing one of the seniors on his thesis. Brian’s project is to look at a statistically significant population of sand grains derived from dune, rivers and beaches with the SEM to determine if V-pits (impact points on the grains that are shaped like V’s) can be used as depositional environment indicators. Brian is very excited about this study and continues to work hard to determine the answer. I, too, am very interested in the outcome – I think it will turn into a stellar piece of research for him!

Here’s hoping that all of your travels end safely and your lives are full.

Cheers,

Diane

Maureen (Jones) Jackson “97”

Time here just slips by and sometimes life gets flying by before we put on the brakes.

Things here have been busy – we are expecting baby number 2 in mid-September. Actually on Jeff’s (husband) birthday. We are hoping no hurricanes are bearing down on us then. We will see. We found out this is a boy too – last one! Owen is 3 ½ already and a true geologist in the making. I am still working at Worsley and that has been keeping me busier than ever. It is fun though. At times, Jeff and I get to work together – he works for one of our emergency response contractors.

My parents were just down here for a vacation – they are doing well. Ready to move down here though. They are getting tired of NY and the winters. In a few more years. Still trying to swing a vacation to come up to SLU and visit. It has been a long time.

Well, just wanted to write quickly. Procrastinating at work! Tell everyone I say hello.

News from Noah Noyes “06”

Things here in Vermont are good. Teaching is going well.

Here is a brief update on several other SLU geology alumni in Lamoille County (we have 4). Angus McCusker is doing well, is now married and working on several GIS projects for his business. Nate Page “02” is living in Stowe, working as a Geologist.

Lee Rosberg “05” is newly married and just became a father to a baby girl, Coria. He is working at Tatro Brothers Construction and Smugglers Notch Nordic Ski center in the winter. He and I are entering our second year as co-coaches of the Lamoille Union nordic ski team.

Kevin Emblidge ‘06 & Bill Olsen

2006 NYS GIS map competition Third Prize Winners: Landslide Susceptibility Model of the Adirondack High Peaks, NY.

Tim Loveless ‘04 wrote to say that he is interning at JW Operating Co., a small oil and gas company in Dallas. Gordy Jenner ‘07 works for this company and we haven’t heard from him in ages! Tim is also interning as a petrophysicist at Hunt Wallace. He hopes to get some grad school experience and to stay in the oil and gas business.
I want to thank everyone for the warm welcome to the Geology Department here at St. Lawrence University. This is the first time I have actually had to structure and teach a class all on my own and the support I have received from the faculty, students and staff has been outstanding. I feel very comfortable here and I know that I could thrive here in the North Country.

Let me tell y'all a little about myself. I received my Bachelors in Geology at SUNY Potsdam in 2000. While attending GSA in Denver 1999 I was recruited by the Department of Geology and Geophysics at Texas A&M University where I received my Master of Science in 2002. (This is where I picked up these southern terms like y'all and fixin to.) When finishing my master’s thesis in near surface geophysics, I was offered to stay for my PhD and do research on humanitarian de-mining. The project required us to design a multi receiver super metal detector with increased discriminatory capabilities in regards to Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) remediation. Since then, I have used near surface geophysical techniques for forensics, archaeology and many engineering applications as well as geologic studies.

I am very impressed with the enthusiasm of the students here. I enjoy watching their eyes light-up when they are learning how to collect data in ways they haven’t been exposed to before. They have treated me with great respect along with the staff and faculty. This reflects great credit upon the students, Geology Dept. and St. Lawrence University as a whole. I thank you all for this wonderful opportunity.

Warmest Regards,
Carl J. Pierce, Jr.

I hope this message finds you well in Canton and enjoying another fall semester.

Things are good here in Kansas! I am really enjoying K-State and I have started off a good semester! I am a teaching assistant for introductory geology labs, and I really enjoy it. My Master's thesis is still in its infancy stages, however I do have a topic nailed down. I will be mapping paleofluvial channels in the Lake Bonneville basin in western Utah using remote sensing techniques - I am really hoping I can do some GPR work. My advisor is Dr. Jack Oviatt, and we will be traveling out to Utah in the early part of next summer to do fieldwork.

Also, a few weeks ago Hess, the oil company, came here to K-State to interview students for summer internship positions. They interviewed 14 students, and wouldn't you know it, I was one of two students from K-State to get one of those highly coveted (and lucrative) internships (Hess only offers 12 total every year)! Although I know I interviewed well, I didn't really think I would get a position, as I was competing with K-State students who have had a lot more petroleum experience and coursework. So needless to say, I accepted the internship position (only after consulting numerous K-State faculty members about how it would conflict with my Master's thesis). Luckily, my fieldwork was planned beforehand to be early in the summer, while the internship would be later in the summer. Scheduling the two will work out.

I have never ruled out the oil industry as a career, but coming from St. Lawrence it was never really on my radar. Therefore, I am really looking forward to working for Hess in Houston for three months and hopefully figuring out if it is for me.

I do admit I miss mountains and trout streams - unfortunately Kansas really has neither! I am headed to Wyoming this weekend with the K-State geology club, so hopefully I will get some fly-fishing in. I want to see if the Ben Meade Specials work on Rocky Mountain trout.

Say hi to everyone in the department for me if you get a chance, and have a good one!

Cheers,
Ben Meade
It's great to hear from SLU folks, I'm sorry I haven't been in contact as much as I should be; it's been awhile alright, but believe it or not even after being out of college for 2 years it still never fails to amaze me how little free time the real world leaves you for yourself. I believe last time I wrote was right after I had graduated from my Masters Program at Oneonta and had begun working for the Louis Berger Group in Florham Park, NJ. I have been there for 2 years now, mostly sediment and surface water sampling, however recently I have been slowly working my way up the ranks to construction oversight, report preparation and small scale project management. I have been fortunate enough to work on large projects such as Meadowlands, and a few other Superfund sites throughout the tri-state area which always prove to be high profile. I have also been involved in projects for the NYC Public Schools Commission which have allowed me to work in all 5 Boroughs of NYC. Last quarter I won the Berger employee of the quarter for my work on the Xanadu project smack in the middle of the Meadowlands just behind Giants Stadium.

Most recently, and by far the most notable of my accomplishments in recent months is my ongoing work in Afghanistan doing geotechnical oversight of soil borings along a 105 kilometer road between Keshim and Faizabad. In fact I am sending you this message from the Berger base camp just South of Herat which is in the northwest section of the country. The entire project falls under the supervision and funding of the USAID, Rehabilitation of Economic Facilities and Services project. I arrived in Kabul via UN sanctioned flight and from there have traveled by UN flights and truck to my current location where I am undergoing training and preparation for my primary assignment on the Keshim to Faizabad Roadway Project. Far northern Afghanistan is by far the safest of area in the country and I feel quite comfortable working under Berger's supervision. All transport vehicles are fully armored and guards are assigned to every section of roadway construction. The duration of my work here should be three months, but that could change either way depending on the progress of working a team of drill rigs down mountainous dirt paths that really aren't even suitable for cattle at this point. I feel the experience I can gain from this work will be quite rewarding both with regard to technical experience as well as helping to do my part to facilitate the establishment of infrastructure to a country desperately in need of food, clean water and medication. Berger has already completed a series of roads linking major towns in southern Afghanistan, which many foreign aid groups including the UN has been shipping supplies across at an ever increasing pace. Take care and wish everyone my best. We are very glad to say that, since writing this, Tavis has completed his work in Afghanistan and has returned safely. He visited SLU and presented a talk on his work to geology majors at Friday seminar. Thanks Tavis.

DID YOU KNOW?
The granite from which the presidents’ carvings, at Mt. Rushmore National Memorial in South Dakota, were created is two billion years old (Proterozoic Era).

http://www2.nature.nps.gov/geology/Didyouknow/
Myron Getman “94” I understand I'm a missing alumnus!

You might be interested in knowing I'm actually doing research! Granted it isn't fossils but it is something pretty important in my line of work -- asbestos.

I currently have two papers out that I'm a co-author on: "Trees as reservoirs for amphibole fibers in Libby, Montana" and "Evidence and Reconstruction of Airborne Asbestos From Unconventional Environmental Sample (in press and I don't have a link for it). I originally got involved with the Libby situation when I was working in a commercial laboratory. It's a horrible and interesting situation. Do a Google on it sometime if you aren't familiar with the problem. The short story is the Libby Vermiculite mine was a largest in the world and it was "contaminated" with fibrous amphibole minerals (tremolite, winchite, richterite, and everything in between). As a result, the mine contaminated the entire town and then tried to obfuscate things when people started dying. Libby is now a superfund site.

I've also done two presentations on my own research (I'm currently working on the paper and will be the primary author with my boss as co-author): “Heating of Amphibole Asbestos: When is it No Longer Asbestos?” which was presented at the July 2005 ASTM Conference and “Slightly Overcooked: The Two-Faced Ways of Crocidolite” which was presented at the March 2006: EIA Conference. I'm also beginning work on more research regarding the effects of heating on asbestos (6 regulated minerals that is) and I'll be presenting my results at the 2007 EIA conference in Charlotte, NC. I'm also now a voting member of INELA (Institute for National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation). I'm debating about getting involved with their Asbestos committee. I'm still playing music in my band, The Flying Buttresses and I'm still lifting weights and home brewing beer and mead.

That's all for now.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW MEMBERS OF ETA XI CHAPTER OF SGE!

Shown here after the induction ceremony are Tedd Rama, Kate Zubin Stathopoulos, Sarah Fuller and Ellen Doble who are new members of our chapter as of December 8th.

Things are going ok here. I am trying to get caught up with everything after being out in the field for 5 weeks and then going to Ft. Yukon to visit the family before winter sets in.

The job I had on the Seward Peninsula was very interesting. I never had to opportunity to wander around the tundra so I was intrigued by tussocks, patterned ground and all those other great permafrost features I had only read about or seen in books. I had a fox come by at lunch one day and get about 20 ft away. The animal was looking to steal my sandwich until I spotted it. My job was heading up a soil sampling program. The company was collecting samples for chemical analysis so we were using an auger to collect material from the C horizon in several areas. Carrying an auger (essentially an ice auger modified for soil) was a bit taxing but I quickly got in shape. There was also a hard rock drilling program going on so I got to learn a bit about that end of exploration geology. I may be helping out with another field program next month, locally. Unfortunately, this and my search for permanent employment will keep me from GSA this year. I am co-author with a recent graduate who is now at Missouri State. (Dulce Cruz) She is doing a paper about using Google earth as a teaching tool. It should be of interest. I helped her with part of the study in my labs last spring.

I am busily applying for jobs. My sense is that I can teach as an adjunct out on base through the University of Alaska and possibly other universities with extension programs. There really seems to be a need for science adjuncts and I am in the process of applying. Grete has settled into a job with the provost. Give all my best. Trent Hubbard ’94
Mark Erickson says “Season’s Greetings to all and a Happy New Year.”

I hope this finds you well and looking back on a year of accomplishment. I certainly know there are some of you who feel that way because I’ve had lots of letters and emails from you. Work and families and weddings and graduate studies all seem to be going well for SLU geologists, and of course that gives me a good feeling as well! Thanks!

My sabbatical ended late in August and I find I am still readjusting to the classroom after so much freedom- and students are readjusting to me as well. We have a very good group of majors presently, and I am looking forward to working with those whom I have not yet had in a class. The Paleo class had to show how tough they are this year as it rained serious rain much of the time, but they still have had specimens enough to grind and peel for various exercises and identification. The Imax was closed for renovation as well so we skipped the museum this year in favor of a field trip with Carl Brett from the U. of Cincinnati set up by Trisha Smrecak who is now a grad student there. D. Waugh slogged through the rain with us as well. Fine experience.

I spent a week in North Dakota this Fall in place of the one I intended to spend just at the time mother died last Spring. It was focused on the shark paper that I have been working on with the ND Geological Survey for several years. We made excellent progress on the Systematic Paleontology which is the most demanding section of the monograph. Rays, skates and bony fish remain but the sharks are nearly done. January should see them completed.

I have been working on Ordovician and a Cretaceous gastropod papers that are also remnants of my sabbatical. They are going well but there seems never to be time to focus on them uninterrupted! That makes it a start-stop sort of progress. Several former students and I continue to collaborate on work that emerged from their senior theses. Dan Peppe and I with John Hoganson have a paleoclimate paper using Fox hills leaf data from my Emmons County site and we have added Trisha Smrecak’s thesis data from the Hell Creek Fm taking our information all the way up into the Paleocene Fort Union Fm. There are some significant results from their work. Matt Burton-Kelly is being very proactive about his studies of Cambrian trackways and trace fossils in general. He has a paper in review in a major journal on his thesis data and we plan another as well. He is at UND working on his Ms. Dan Peppe is at Yale working on his PhD using magneto stratigraphy to establish a Paleocene chronostratigraphy for leaf assemblages in the Ft. Union Fm. Also Booth Platt and I just got notice today of the publication of the Elsevier Encyclopedia of Quaternary Science – the last word on Quaternary Geology at about $1300 for the 4 vols!!—in which we have a contribution on oribatid mites. So things are moving along steadily on the research front and I am enjoying immensely maintaining a learning relationship with former students!

GSA was in Philadelphia this year and I arrived around 11PM Saturday after driving in the rain from Tim and Diana Bouchard’s wedding in Connecticut with Chris Stevens who had been an usher. Wedding was beautiful. Kate and Wade’s paper at 8 AM on Sunday brought things back to reality. They did a nice job presenting on epizoans on Grewing- kia. Rob Menard presented on river piracy in St. Lawrence Co., his thesis research, as well. I was occupied every minute. The SLU reception hosted by Cathy Shrady was a great success (I think there is a photo in here somewhere of the crowd that attended). No one wanted to leave when it was time to abandon the room! Our students did us proud and I think they learned a lot as well. (By the way answer to question pg. 1 is Jay Fleischer announced his retirement).

Now I turn myself to one of the outcomes of the GSA namely the planning of the next SLUGAC. It was decided to return to a Fall venue for the meeting and next Fall is the triennial – probably early in the semester before all the university functions take over. I expect I will have help with this from the alumni and development offices as things go forward. Keep your eyes on the departmental web site for all the pertinent information and be in contact with Sarah McElfresh <mcelfres@telerama.com> who will be informed on the schedule as it develops. Get on her email list if you can for all updates. This promises to be a big one and it will likely be my last so I hope many of you can make it. Well that’s more than enough of me. Lance is doing well, still in St. Paul, MN. I still get to Vermont to fish now and then. Got a new roof on the house in Canton this fall and have to do the same at camp next year. I will be in ND with students in June, but otherwise should be available to be a fishing buddy if needed – just drop in! I always look forward to seeing old friends and there is usually a room free at my place. Have a great 2007 and keep in touch. Happy Holidays! Mark
Hello and Happy Holidays SLU Geo-folks,

I will leave any big department news for the faculty and keep my letter light and seasonable. The holiday season is fast upon us once again bringing a quick smile to my face and a warm feeling inside. I love this time of year. Shucks! I love all of our seasons here in the North Country. Each season has its particular qualities that make my heart feel light. At this time of year the holiday lights along the streets of snow choked villages and the cozy homes tucked in with snow give me that child like feeling of peace and love and of time standing still… if only for a moment. I like having to slow down in my travels because blowing snow makes visibility tough, sometimes giving me the illusion of being isolated from the world outside my car while drifting snow piles up across my path. There are few pleasures as fine as a crackling fire making the stove "pop" and "ping" while emitting a soft orange glow into a dimly lit room while it snows and blows in a fury outside our windows. At this time of the semester things are beginning to wind down and our geology folks - both faculty and students alike - will soon be enjoying a much deserved break from projects and exams and deadlines. It is a time for me to catch up on maintenance of equipment and to gather up maps, compasses and other tools of geology preparing for another round come spring semester. I have come to welcome the annual ebb and flow of the departments needs. Almost like the changing of seasons, the semester changes have become a welcome friend that reminds me of what needs to be addressed for the next cycle to begin smoothly. Soon the halls and labs will be quiet and hollow and I will be left alone with my thoughts and chores and maybe some holiday music. After a busy semester of support to faculty and students with their field work and projects momentarily behind them it is a fine way to wind down and prepare for a new start. It is at this time that I reminisce about days gone by. My mind wanders to landscapes of the past, to students that I have had the privilege of developing friendships with, many of whom I may not see again and over time even forget their names. I miss you all.

I will leave you my friends with a North Country weather report. Seems another mild winter season may be upon us. It is early yet and hard to say for sure but the past few winters have been mild at best by North Country standards. For a winter enthusiast it has been a disappointing several years. I enjoy a multitude of winter activities and hope old man winter flexes his muscle and we get a good white washing of snow and cold that carries through until April. It's a safe bet that I am in the minority concerning my winter wishes but I think there may be a few of you out there who feel the same, even if you don't admit it openly. Here in Canton there has been several days where we have gotten a good dusting of snow only to lose it and get another dusting a few days later. We have been enjoying occasional light snow over the past several weeks now. Fortunately for me, our small farm near Harrisville is located on the northern fringe of Lake Ontario's Snow Belt. Last year we never did get much of a base due to periodic warm spells from time to time. We did enjoy several good snow falls last season however and had accumulations upwards of two feet of snow on several occasions. A light snow year by our standards but better than nothing. Shirley and I are ready for this coming snow season for the most part. Good thing! Though Canton has received no more than a dusting so far this season, at our farm there has been accumulations of 4 plus inches on several occasions. The horses and Johnson, our steer, are all set with 80 or so large round bales remaining for their dining pleasure, all neatly placed in rows in our farm yard. They have already dined on over a dozen bales this season and with snow covering the ground don't forage much with hay handy. I really enjoy bringing a bale out to the pasture as the horses and Johnson race around the tractor, bucking and cutting and running excitedly. Our strategy has been to bring two bales out every 4 or 5 days (two round bales last about that time with 6 large critters feeding). This way all our pastured friends have easy access to hay, even the ones low on the pecking order. Most of our winter's wood is cut and stored in our woodshed also, all ready for the stove. We cut much of our wood during the winter months and so you can find me out back in the woods several times a month until the snow gets to deep to deal with it. I enjoy any excuse to be in the woods and cutting wood is no different. Being ahead of the game and having most of this season's wood already up makes it a lot easier to enjoy the chore at hand. Well friends, I have gone on and on enough for one setting. I wish for you a healthy and happy holiday season, from my world to yours; Peace on Earth and good will toward all. Bless you all.

MVB
Hello again from Canton;

It’s been a busy time since the last newsletter, so let me fill in some of the details. I spent my semester sabbatical at the Geological Survey of Canada (GSC) in Ottawa last Spring semester. I managed to get a lot of work done, as well as work with the GSC developing a permafrost monitoring network for the western Canadian Arctic. Summer was spent on an academic trip to China, as well as a vacation trip to Newfoundland (now there’s some fantastic geology!).

I was up for tenure this semester (yes, this is my sixth year at SLU!) and am pleased to announce that the committee has recommended me to the President for tenure. Thanks for all of you who wrote letters for my case, and thanks also to the entire department for their ongoing support. I firmly believe we have one of the best and most active departments on campus, and I’m proud to be part of St. Lawrence and the Geology Department.

Next year I’ll be away from campus again for the year…this time to run the London abroad program. My girlfriend Catherine and I will be heading over there in July ’07 and staying for a year. I’ll miss hanging around Brown Hall and all my friends, but this is an opportunity too good to pass up. I was born in England and feel that I’ve somewhat lost touch with the place over the past few years, so this is a great opportunity to reconnect. But, before I head off there I’m taking a group of students to the Yangtze valley in China to look at environmental issues to do with dam construction. It’s part of a course co-taught with faculty from the Philosophy Department looking at Environmental Ethics and Issues in China.

Now we’re all trying to survive the end of semester rush in order to relax over the winter break. I hope everyone has a happy holidays, and please keep in touch.

Cheers; Stephen Robinson

People We Have Heard From: It turns out that we are missing the opportunity to get news of some in the Newsletter because of the new format so I thought I would mention a few items that happen and fall through the slats. Some of you are parents and have not been acknowledged yet and you may even be working on number two before we mention number one! Jack Egan (ex Dave and Marlene) is getting to look like he may be a hockey player if they ever have ice in Texas! I have not heard from Larry Robjent in a while but I am thinking he and Jess have diaper duty down to a science by now. Peter Dufault and Erin are pros, I’m sure, congratulations! Jeanine (Mansfield) is beyond that already and Sarah’s Elizabeth (Zimmerman-McElfresh) may be as well. Time flies so fast it is hard to follow all the birthing that’s going on! New Larries are always welcome!

I have had letters or emails from Doug Waters and Trent Hubbard in Alaska. I saw Matt Burton-Kelly, Tanya Justham and Lucas Buckingham at UND when I was in ND in Sept. Heather Cunningham is doing a volcanology PhD down under and we need to hear more from her. Had a note from Mike Perfit who is RIDGE Distinguished Lecturer, an NSF sponsored lecture series to describe ridge volcanics to the general public this spring. He will be at AGU, I imagine, presenting along with a dozen or more alums, Chris Stevens, John Rayburn, Don Rodbell, Pete deMenocal, Brad Linsley, Dan Peppe are just a few who may be there. Hope someone has an SLU reunion! Saw Doug Jennings this Fall on his way back to Corning, NY, from a meeting in Quebec City. Doug runs a quality control lab for Corning Glass. Notes from Jordan Davis, John Rupp and Joanne Cavalerano say they are doing OK in the env. consulting business but John took a leave when invited on a one yr cruise around the world!. Tori Kohn still does fire fighter work for the gov’t in Wyoming and had a very busy year. Tori should look up Alice Hart who is working at the park service museum in the Tetons. Already had a great photo Christmas card from Hank Cerwonka, who has been doing serious photography in Colorado. Anna Burke is doing envir. geol in the Albany area and says she is learning lots. E-mails from Glenn Kays in the Saratoga area and Andrew Solod in Golden, CO. say they are both busy with environmental issues of one type or another.

We missed visits by Frank Karboski, Brian Silfer and Charlie Head that I can recall easily. I find lots of alums being brought to campus by their high school offspring who are on the college search. I seem to miss them because of weekend visits, but if you call me at home or email me with advanced notice I would love to visit and show you around to the new “digs” on campus. St. Lawrence is attracting great students these days and there is much good going on here! Keep stopping by, it’s always good to hear from you.