

SOUTHLAND GEOGRAPHIC NOTES



Los Angeles Geographical Society Newsletter

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IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 President's Column, Upcoming Events
- 2 Recent Geographical Society Lectures
- 4 In Memoriam
- 6 GeoPuzzle
- 7 2006-2007 Lecture Schedule
- 9 Membership Form

Coming Up:

Free public lectures on geographical topics are offered once a month from September through May (except for January). Invited guests, featuring students & faculty, present research topics, travelogues, & other interesting geographical topics from the U.S. & around the world. Lectures are usually held on the first Friday of each month at 8:00 PM in Franklin Hall, room 101, at Los Angeles City College, 855 North Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, California.

September 8th: *New Zealand's Magnificent Nature*. By Matt Ebiner

October 6th: *The Geography, People, and Culture of Pakistan*. By Asad Hasnat.

October 31st: Due date for T-Shirt design contest. (See page 7 for more information.)

November 3rd: *California Weather and Climate: From Tranquility to Severity*. By Jeff Brown

December 1: **Annual Banquet (mark your calendar now!)** *Exploring Tibet – Roof of the World*. By Yonni Schwartz.

(See page 4 for more Banquet information).

President's Column

Hello Everyone. The summer has passed quickly. It seems like just yesterday that we were having the May meeting with two interesting full sessions of student presenters. Read about that on page 3. We have an exciting program this year at LAGS starting with Matt Ebiner's talk on New Zealand September 8. Matt will also be leading a field trip to New Zealand in January 2007 for El Camino College. On October 6th Asad Hasnat from Pasadena City College will be talking about his native country of Pakistan. November 3rd we will continue the weather theme we started last year with a talk about California weather by Jeff Brown. Yonni started our lecture series for 2006 with a slideshow on Nepal. His lecture was well received. He will come back on December 1st to talk with us about Tibet at our annual banquet at Taix restaurant. Plan to come to the banquet. Besides Tibet we will have good food, a raffle for the scholarship fund and we will discuss the results of the t-shirt design contest (page 4) and the election of council members. If you would like to help us run LAGS please consider running for the council. We are a great group of people to work with and we could always use new talent.

A big thanks again to Zia Salim for getting this newsletter together. The next newsletter will come out in October. Thanks to all the council members who have been working hard to keep LAGS going. Check our website at <http://www.LAGeographic.org> for more information about what we are doing. LAGS is alive and well and we are looking forward to an interesting and informative 54th year in 2006/2007. Be sure to join us for geography in LA.

Kris Jones. President LAGS

Recent Lectures

April – Thai Project 2005: Rural Education and Sustainable Agricultural Training – by Nancy Prado Tapia

The Los Angeles Geographic Society hosted a lecture by Mr. Greg Lee with the goal of recruiting volunteers for a Rural Environmental Education Enhancement Pilot Program (REEEPP) that integrates academics into an educational setting to promote socioeconomic growth in Thailand.

Thailand is a constitutional monarchy in Southeast Asia, and the only Southeast Asian country not colonized by foreigners.

In 1997 there was a crash in the Thai economy that has led to the population in the poorer Northeast region to return to farming. The goal of REEEPP is to help improve the agricultural economy by creating awareness of self sufficiency through academic programs. The training would consist of principles of geography that are intended to create individual awareness of the environment that could be used to cultivate small family farms and be used as small business.

The REED program is a “Community based educational program integrating academics, job readiness skills, community service, and environmental stewardship with life-long learning”. The pilot program was launched at Na Fa Elementary School in Thailand’s Nan Province in 2004 and proved to be a great success. The academic programs are given to children at the elementary school grade level in a curriculum that consists of “ Green School”, “Habitat “ and “NASA CERES S’COOL”.

Green school is the first part of the training that is intended to create an awareness of the environment by reducing consumption and waste material. The children are taught how to recycle, reduce and create a “Trash Bank” where they are given funds –depending on the quantity they recycle – that are later used to buy books. This teaches the children the benefit of recycling and how to save both their environment and their

money.

“Habitat” is the second component of the REEEPP program. It teaches the children the context of their natural environment and how to sustain it. The goal is to help them understand the interconnectivity of nature to support all life and the important relationship human beings have with nature. The children were able to create a Habitat garden by using the habitat methods taught and interacting with the living organisms using space, water and food.

“S’COOL” is the third component of the REEEPP program. NASA created a program named “CERE’s” which is an acronym for Clouds and the earth radiant energy system. S’COOL stands for Student Cloud Observation On-line. This program is intended to help identify what type of cloud formation and how many layers forms overhead at a specific time and place in order to calculate how much energy is being deflected and therefore be able to accurately calculate their energy budget. The children who are part of the REEEPP program, are thus part of the NASA program. The satellites used by NASA don’t help much in the description of the clouds which is why volunteers are needed to record the type of cloud, height, and transparency. They are also required to record the temperature, direction of the wind using a hand made anemometer and the inches of the precipitation with rain gauges made out of water bottles. The children and the teacher are taught how to measure the cloud’s height practically using proportions and record the temperature by a barometer made out of bamboo. Through this exercise the children are also taught the importance of precision because all the observations need to be recorded at the exact time the satellite is overhead.

The purpose of the lecture was to inform and also to recruit volunteers for phase II of the pilot program. The volunteer team leaving from Los Angeles will follow up and build on the accomplishments of the last group. The language barrier was an obstacle for both the students and the volunteers but the enthusiasm of the volunteers, the host families, and the students overcame those barriers.

continued on page 5

May – Student Presentations and Posters from Southern California Universities -- by Suzanne Robinson

On May 5th 2006 the Los Angeles Geographical Society met for its final spring meeting to do what it does best, showcase the diligence and achievements of geography students in the Los Angeles area. The evening began with an award ceremony honoring one outstanding community college student and one outstanding undergraduate student. Jeffrey Smith of El Camino College, who was awarded the LAGS community college scholarship, was unable to accept the award in person because he was conducting field research with his professor. Meanwhile, Nicholas Vaughn of California State University, Fullerton who was awarded the LAGS scholarship in the undergraduate category, was recognized for his unique and exemplary academic record.

There was a wonderful variety of presentations on topics from many sides of the geographical spectrum, from the Revitalization of Anaheim to An Assessment of Feature Extraction Techniques from High-Resolution Satellite Imagery for the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Of the six presentations I attended three whose topics were, the Saguaro cacti population in California, Plastic Pollution in the Pacific Ocean, and Availability of Organic Food in Los Angeles.

Saguaro Cacti of the Whipple Mountains of California, presented by Robert O'Keefe of California State University Northridge, was based on a three-month study of saguaro cacti in California. California is not traditionally thought of as the domain of this large, well-known species of cactus, however, there have been reports of this cactus in California near the Arizona border which date back to the 1920's, and they have been plotted on state maps as early as the 1970's. What I found most interesting about this lecture was the formulation of the hypothesis and the methods used for data collection. In addition to illuminating the way in which geographic principles are applied to actual fieldwork, this lecture also exposed me to some on the jargon of this area of study.

I also attended Non-Point Source Plastic Pollution in Los Angeles & San Gabriel Rivers and the

Central Pacific Gyre, by Veronica Rojas, which consisted of two parts. The first half of the presentation was a series of maps based upon data gathered from the sampling and analysis of several periodic trawls in an area of the Pacific Ocean known commonly as the "garbage patch" between California and Hawaii. While this evidenced the increasingly urgent issue of plastic as pollution in nearby waters, I found most interesting the presenter's description of the type of work that goes into the creation of the maps. The second part of the presentation highlighted the environmental impact of such pollution to birds as well as simple photosynthesizing organisms. Here I saw some of the possible conservation and political impacts of geographic research. Of particular interest was the conflict that arose when the presenter indirectly

exposed the identities of the plastic companies responsible for the pollution, by placing the names of the cities associated with the pollution on the maps. It seems the geographer must walk a strange tightrope between science and politics.

The final presentation I saw entitled Socio-Economic Influences on Organic Food Distribution in Los Angeles County, written by Mariana Jordan-Viola, Meredith Dorneker, and Anne Hough of the University of California, explored the access to the organic food chain Whole Foods. The presenter examined the socio-economic factors related to the mission statement of Whole Foods. She cross-examined their stated criteria for possible Whole Foods locations with the census data in the areas of race, education and economic affluence. I was intrigued by this sociological approach to geographic research, which used geographic data to challenge the statements made by a large corporation.

I found the whole evening quite informative on both a personal and academic level. The formal presentation of hypothesis, observation and conclusion gave me a chance to witness the practical applications of the scientific method as well as providing a solid framework from which to construct future research papers. I became

continued on page 4

continued from page 3

acquainted with some of Geography's jargon, much of which was related to specific geographical technology and procedures geographers use to make sense of this world, such as: slope, aspect, and spatial location. Most thrilling, however, was the social implications of the research conducted by each of the students who presented. I began to see how the field of geography can make significant contributions, to conservation, the equal distribution of resources, legislation, the shape of urban and suburban landscapes, and many other facets of modern life; to provide a minimally biased illumination of the interaction between humanity and its environment.

Annual Banquet

The Los Angeles Geographical Society will return to Taix French Restaurant for its Annual Banquet to be held on Friday, December 1st, 2006. Our featured presentation will be by Yonni Schwarz, President of Peaceful Edge Adventure Tours, entitled Exploring Tibet - Roof of the World. There will also be socializing and introduction of the Officers of the Los Angeles Geographical Society. Dinner is available only by advance reservation and payment, which must be received by November 15, 2006. Look to our next newsletter issue for more information about our annual banquet, but mark your calendars now! We look forward to sharing the company of old friends and new for a night of exploring distant lands.



T-Shirt Design Contest!

The Los Angeles Geographical Society is excited to announce its first ever T-shirt design contest. This is your opportunity to get your artistic and/or photographic abilities to work! The design can include original art work (i.e. text or drawings) or photographs and must incorporate a Geographic theme. See page 7 for official rules and have fun designing!

In Memoriam

Rose (Shoshana) Sokol, a long time member of the Los Angeles Geographical Society, passed away earlier this year.

Mrs. Sokol's college education had been interrupted by the political strife and religious persecution in her home country of Poland. She immigrated to Canada in the 1930's and a few years later her uncle in Los Angeles sponsored her admission to the US. She struggled to survive on her own eventually accepting the tremendous loss of her entire family, except for two brothers, to the Nazi brutality of World War Two.

After meeting and marrying her beloved husband, Jacob Sokol, M.D. in 1942, she devoted the next 25 years to raising their two daughters and working as a part time Hebrew school teacher. Both daughters still live in the Los Angeles area with careers in school counseling and medicine.

Mrs. Sokol began her study of geography at Cal State Northridge as a 60+ year old student! She loved the college environment, the students, the professors and the challenging curriculum. The years she spent at CSUN were among her happiest. She became involved in the geographical society through her professors at CSUN. Rose enjoyed the informative meetings and presentations, the outings and the annual holiday banquets. The L.A. Geography Society is composed of people who are receptive and warm to all. Their inclusiveness was greatly appreciated by Mrs. Sokol, especially when she became a widow.

Because of Rose Sokol's positive experience at CSUN and her love of learning, a scholarship has been established in her memory in the Department of Geography. The scholarship is awarded to a returning mature student with an American citizenship, committed to majoring in geography. For those of you wishing to honor her memory with a donation, please send your gift to the CSUN Foundation attention Ms. Anne Robison. The endowment is known as the "Shoshana Sokol Geography Award".

continued from page 2

Organizations have donated computers to the program, and PowerPoint slideshows have been created so the children will be able to learn PowerPoint and see the information from the lectures in that manner. Earth Systems Science, Inc - an educational nonprofit founded by Mr. Lee - and the Los Angeles Geographic Society collected book donations for the school's library, and ESSI raised funds that were used to purchase books chosen by the teachers. The Rural Environmental Education Enhancement Pilot Program (REEEPP) integrates academics into an educational setting to promote socioeconomic growth in Thailand. This program supports the academic growth of children by interactive environmental exercises in a different language, while still having access to information in their own native language. To volunteer or for more information on future trips and training sessions log on to www.neighborhoodlink.com/org/rtcth

Travel to New Zealand
Jan. 9th - Feb. 1st, 2007

New Zealand ranks as one of the world's most beautiful countries with snow-capped mountains, active volcanoes, deep fjords, thundering waterfalls, lush forests, exploding geysers, soothing hot springs, mysterious caves, and wild coastlines. L.A.G.S. board member Matt Ebner will be leading a Study Abroad Program to New Zealand from January 9 to February 1, 2007, and all are welcome to join.

The itinerary especially focuses on the nature of New Zealand, with seven national parks to be visited: Fiordland with a boat cruise through stunning Milford Sound, Westland with Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers, Mt. Cook with the highest mountain in the country, Tongariro with volcanoes and the most famous day hike in New Zealand, Abel Tasman with beautiful golden beaches and an excellent coastal hiking trail, Mt. Aspiring with temperate rainforests and waterfalls, and Paparoa with fascinating limestone geology. There will also be wildlife encounters, including a whale-watching cruise, glow-worms, and rare yellow-eyed penguins, all seen in their native habitat. As one of the world's

adventure capitals New Zealand offers optional activities like glacier hiking, bungee jumping, and jet boating. There are also cultural activities included in the program, such as a Maori feast and dance performance, a visit to the Cadbury chocolate factory, the national museum in Wellington, and free time in New Zealand's cities: Christchurch, Auckland, Dunedin, and Queenstown.

New Zealand is one of the world's most pleasant countries to visit since it is English-speaking, friendly, safe, uncrowded, clean, and better value than most European countries. The trip takes place during New Zealand's mild summer, with temperatures usually in the 60s and 70s.

Organized through El Camino College, the program is designed as a learning experience with participants earning college credit for Physical Geography and Physical Geography Lab. Ebner will lecture some mornings about physical geography topics, but most of the 3-week program consists of excursions to experience New Zealand's spectacular environments. It is not necessary to be a current student, and all ages are welcome. The 2005 Study Abroad program had participants ranging in age from 19 to 70. A medium level of physical fitness is strongly recommended.

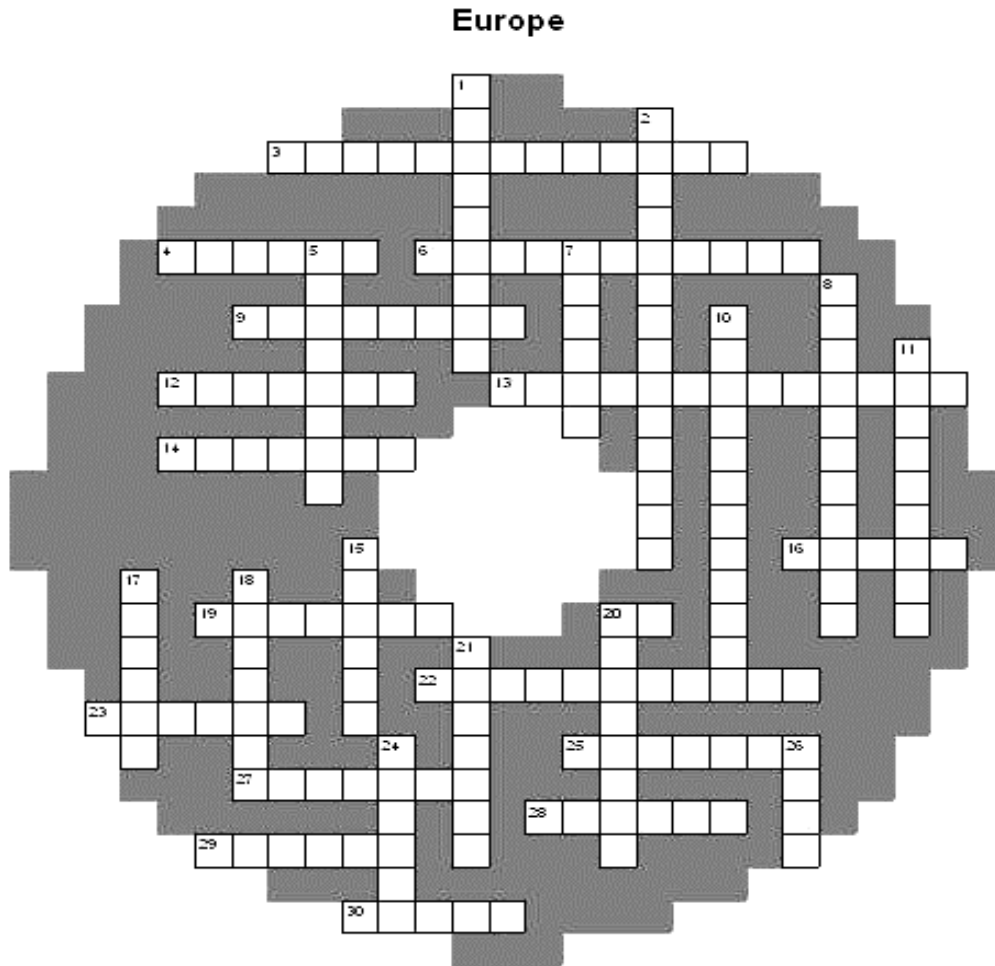
The program cost is \$3895, including airfare, accommodations in 3-star hotels, ground transportation by private coach, admission fees, many excursions, full breakfast daily, and some dinners. Airline taxes are extra. Group size is limited to 25 and a \$300 deposit should be paid by September 22 to reserve a place. There is also an opportunity to stop over in Fiji on the return for an additional cost.

Program leader Matt Ebner has been teaching geography since 1986 and has previously led study abroad programs to New Zealand and Ireland. He has also led tour groups to Ecuador and Western Europe and has traveled all over the world. He is scheduled to lecture on New Zealand at our September 8 meeting, and the 6-page trip brochure will be available there. For more information, contact Ebner at 310-660-3369, mebiner@elcamino.edu, or visit his website at www.elcamino.edu/faculty/mebner.

GeoPuzzle

Get out your atlases (or find one online) & enjoy solving this geography-oriented puzzle.

Special thanks to councilor Marla Conti for this challenge.



Across

- Spanish possession off the coast of Africa
- Country with oil wells and wind farms in the North Sea
- Bilbao is a seaport on this body of water
- Italian island in the Mediterranean
- Country with its capital on an island
- Vaduz is the capital of this small country
- Walloon and Flemish speakers live here
- Island nation near Sicily
- Gulf between Finland and Sweden
- River in northern Italy
- Home of Gouda cheese
- Capital city where President Kennedy once erroneously declared "I too am a doughnut!" - the shape of this puzzle
- Catalan is the official language of this 180-square-mile microstate
- Landlocked country at the center of Europe
- Gotland and Oland are Baltic Sea islands belonging to this country
- Capital of Portugal destroyed in 1755 earthquake
- River of Paris

Down

- Northernmost European capital city
- Gertrude Ederle was the first woman to swim across it in 1926
- Sea off the east coast of Italy
- Islands belonging to Denmark, settled by Vikings in the 9th Century
- German, French, Italian, and Romansch are its national languages
- England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland
- Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom since the treaty of Utrecht in 1713
- Pre-modern Europe's great east-west super-highway
- London River
- French island in the Mediterranean
- Mountains that divide Spain and France
- Cologne is a city in this country
- Mont Blanc is in this country
- They are found in Italy, France, Austria, and Switzerland



**Los Angeles Geographical
Society
54th Annual Program
Fall 2006-Spring 2007**

Free Public Lecture Series

*Los Angeles City College, 855 N. Vermont Ave, Los Angeles, CA
First Friday of the month (unless otherwise indicated), 8-9 pm, Franklin Hall,
Room 101*

Complimentary refreshments after the lecture.

FALL 2006	SPRING 2007
<p>September 8 <i>New Zealand's Magnificent Nature</i> Matt Ebiner Geography Professor, El Camino College</p>	<p>February 2 <i>Pyramids, Sacred Caves, & Ballcourts: An Illustrated Short Journey Through the Maya Realm and Beyond.</i> Sergio Garza PhD Student, University of California: Riverside</p>
<p>October 6 <i>The Geography, People and Culture of Pakistan</i> Asad Hasnat International Student, Pasadena City College</p>	<p>March 2 <i>Teaching Techniques in the Geography Classroom</i> Greg Lee Geography Professor, Pasadena City College</p>
<p>November 3 <i>California Weather and Climate: From Tranquility to Severity</i> Jeff Brown Graduate Student, Cal State Los Angeles</p>	<p>April 6 <i>Namibia: From Sand Dunes to Wildlife with a Desert Ecology Class</i> Cristy Brenner Geography Professor, Saddleback College</p>
<p>December 1 <i>Annual Banquet Tibet:</i> Yonni Schwartz PhD Candidate, Lecturer, President of Peaceful Edge Adventures, National Forest Service</p>	<p>May 5 <i>Student Presentations and Posters from California Colleges and Universities</i></p>



Los Angeles Geographical Society

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Dr. Richard F. Logan Scholarships
McKnight-Clemons Scholarships
Free Monthly Public Lectures
Local Field Trips

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Please send Newsletter submissions and
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times per year.

Los Angeles Geographical Society T-Shirt Design Contest

Contest Rules:

1. All T-shirt designs must be submitted to the Los Angeles Geographical Society via email by October 31st, 2006.
2. The design must be submitted in JPEG format with a minimum of 200 DPI.
3. T-shirt designs will be used on short sleeve T-shirts only.
4. Designs are limited to one side and may be either for the front or back of the T-shirt.
5. All entries must include original art or photographs. We will not accept any designs that feature:
 - Existing registered trademarks (i.e John Deere, Chevrolet, Spiderman logo)
 - Tobacco, firearms, alcohol and/or sexual connotations
 - Distortions of the Los Angeles Geographical Society's emblem
 - Previously copyrighted materials
6. Only one winning design may be selected from each participant, but each participant may submit up to three designs.
7. The winning T-shirt design selected will become the property of the Los Angeles Geographical Society.
8. The winner will receive a free dinner at the Annual Banquet, a free T-shirt and the choice of a one year membership subscription to the Los Angeles Geographical Society or a \$50.00 prize. The winner will be announced at our Annual Banquet on December 1st, 2006.

Submit to:

Los Angeles Geographical Society at
lags@lageographic.org. Please include "LAGS T-Shirt Contest" in the Subject line.
Include: Original art/photograph in JPEG format, & Designer's name/phone/email
For questions, please contact Cesar Espinoza at
cespinos@csulb.edu or call (213) 453-4410

