

EARTH SCIENCE & GEOGRAPHY NEWS FROM OUR ALUMS

JORDAN ALEXANDER (Geography, 2007), since graduating in May, I had the opportunity to travel over the summer to Israel for vacation and to Berkeley, CA, where I was an RA in a month-long program for international high school students. I have been working since August at the Vital Voices Global Partnership, a non-profit organization in Washington DC that works to develop and strengthen the leadership capacity of emerging women leaders in developing countries around the world. It has been a great first job for a Geography major, exposing me to the dynamics of the NGO world and demonstrating its potential to effect change on the grassroots level. Maybe next year I will make some money!

CHRISTINA APODACA (Geology, 2004), I began nursing school at the University of Colorado at Denver this past Jan. I will graduate in Dec '09 with a BSN. This summer I will go through my OB clinical. I'm staying very busy with school and working, making new friends.

CHRIS ARGYROS, I am attending University of Connecticut law school in Hartford Ct and will be working this summer at the NYS Dept of Environmental Conservation on NY's environmental justice policies.

ANNA BEHRENS (Environmental Studies) moved out to Sacramento. Anna just started a job as an environmental specialist with a company called Advanced GeoEnvironmental - they do consulting and remediation projects for soil and groundwater contaminated sites, mostly assessing, designing, and cleaning up leaking underground storage tanks at gas stations and such. Suffice it to say it's much more of a "real" job than she was expecting - and says she couldn't have gotten it without her bits of geology from Vassar. She's still dancing, getting a chance to explore the west coast in all its beauty, and attempting to acclimate to post-Vassar life.

LEO BELETSKY (Geography) After taking summer courses, I entered law school last fall as a regular second-year student. A few pieces of writing I had been working on finally reached the end of the pipeline, including an article that was accepted into the American Journal of Public Health and an essay that received a prize in a health law writing competition. This summer, I was fortunate enough to get an internship at the RAND Corporation in Santa Monica, where I spent three months doing research on the impact of economic development on levels of urban violence. Having a spanking-new office one block from the beach--complete with a designated room to keep your surfboard--also helps maintain staff morale. While there, I embraced the southern California lifestyle: lived aboard a 27-foot sailboat, biked to work, and took up surfing. This semester I am studying abroad at Tsinghua University Law School in Beijing, taking classes on Chinese law in English and trying to learn as much Mandarin as I can. So far, the language is proving to be as difficult

as they say it is. Unfortunately, I do not plan to be here for next Summer's Olympic games; after a trip to Vietnam or Thailand for the winter holidays, I'm headed back to Philadelphia in January to finish my JD coursework. The hope is that a fellowship or a job will be waiting on the other side of May, 2008, but that will take some work in the coming months.

DEBORAH BERGMAN (Geography, 2007), after graduating, I drove cross-country to volunteer along the Arizona-Sonora border with a humanitarian aid organization called No More Deaths. In October I moved to Phoenix, where I am currently living and working as the Children's Legal Assistant for the Florence Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project. The Children's Project provides pro-bono assistance to all of the unaccompanied children detained by ICE for immigration proceedings in the state of Arizona. Keeps me busy, for sure, but I am really enjoying the work and seeing it pay off when we finally win a case or two every now and then.

CHUCK BOLDOC (Geology, 2005), is living in Portland, Oregon and working as a geologist for a geotechnical engineering firm. He travels around Washington and Oregon for work and enjoys spending time outside. When not working he brews beer and hikes and has a beard. He is also recently engaged. He's been showshoeing a bunch around Mt. Hood, and then sledding back down. He's looking forward to a canoe trip back in NH in late May. He just hung out with Justin Minder, he's up at U of Washington.

DELPHINE BOWRON VEITH (Geography, 1999) I am as of today finished with my first year as an MSW student at the U of Washington (hooray!). I've lived in Seattle ever since graduation. I worked for 6 years at Planned Parenthood, first in the clinic and then in the education department in a prevention/youth development with middle school youth. Then it felt like time to do something else, so school seemed a logical next step. I did an internship this past year in a hospital, and next year will be headed back to the land of adolescents, working in a high school. So as of this moment, I'm looking forward to a summer that combines vacation and temping. I have been married for three years, no kids...he's in residency, so we see each other when we can, and I hear lots of gruesome stories from the land of operating rooms. I am trying to make sense of the transition from geography to social work. What I have come to is that it actually makes lots of sense! Geography, for me, was about people in environment, and vice versa. Social work is also about people in context, it just expands on the physical environment to include everything else! So if any geography majors are wondering what to do with themselves after Vassar, this is a good suggestion in my mind.

ARIANA BRILL (Geography)

It's great to hear from the newly minted Earth Science & Geography department! You all are never far from my thoughts. I am currently in my second year of the joint JD/MBA program at UC Davis. The way the program works, I spent my first year exclusively studying law and am spending my second year exclusively studying

business. After this, I will spend two years dividing my time between the law school and the business school. Marketing is my concentration for my MBA - I was surprised to learn how many geographic concepts are present in marketing management! This past summer I interned with Business and Legal Affairs at The Jim Henson Company in Los Angeles. I have always had a strange passion for children's entertainment, so my internship was definitely a dream come true. I definitely enjoyed the culture in the entertainment industry, but I'm not sure where I'm headed next!

CAROLINE "CARRIE" BRYAN (Geology, 1973), moved from software quality assurance in California to non-profit clerical work in Missouri in 1999, and, although she misses both the ocean and the mountains, is on the whole pretty happy about it. She has worked in the Advancement Office of the Kansas City Art Institute since February 2006, and has been Class Correspondent of VC 1973 since 2003. She makes art quilts, grows tomatoes, and is totally subservient to two cats. Her geology is, as it has been for many years, limited to soil science and a keen and informed appreciation of the landscape. I was thinking of Terra Firma just the other day, and missing it.

KEBBA BUCKLEY (Geology, 1975), After Vassar, I studied fluvial geomorphology at SUNY Binghamton for a year, then went to the Hydrology Department at the University of Arizona and finished a Masters' Degree. I was a flood control hydrologist until 1989, when I opened my own stress-management and healing therapies company. I was ordained in 2000. I have an upcoming book, "Discovering the Secret Energized You". While most of my articles since 1990 have been on stress, health, and lifestyle, I am now calling more directly on my earth sciences background in writing articles on "green" lifestyle for various magazines. I am so grateful for my Vassar experience and would love to hear from people I knew there. Later this year, I expect a name change to Kebba Buckley Button, as I marry my amazing love, Ron Button. (Rev.) Kebba Buckley, MS, OM/ kebba@kebba.com

KYLE CAREY (Geology, 2005), graduated in 2007 from Duke University Nicholas School of Environmental and Earth Sciences with a Master of Environmental Management with a concentration in Global Environmental Change. Thesis title: Modeling Nitrous Oxide Emissions from Agricultural Soils using Multi-Level Linear Analysis.

Working now as Special Assistant to the Director, US EPA National Exposure Research Lab, RTP NC. Free time: shooting guns and eating tuna sandwiches.

EVAN CASPER-FUTTERMAN (Geography, 2007), I'm still living in New Orleans, where I was volunteering for six months (until Christmas 2007) supporting community organizing, mostly around public housing and homelessness. Since February, I have been working as an editorial assistant for an independent documentary film project, and continuing to do support work on a much more limited scale. I'll be back for a masters in Geography hopefully in the next couple years, but I haven't taken the GRE

yet.

CHARMAINE CHAN (Geography-Anthropology, 1993), I have to tell you that I loved all the political geography classes that I took, so I'm pleased that we have such great faculty there now, continuing on the tradition and inspiring students.

Although I'm not doing anything directly related to either Anthropology or Geography, (I am now a fourth year medical student at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine) I think the training I got gave me a wildly different perspective on looking at the world. Kudos to Vassar and to the department!

THOMAS CONOSCENTI (Geography, 2003), I decided to move back to New York and took a job as director of real estate services for the Downtown Brooklyn Partnership, public-private partnership that is helping to promote economic development in Downtown Brooklyn. I made Real Estate New York's 30 under 30 list. I live in Fort Greene, Brooklyn and I love it a lot. I may return to the West Coast in the future, but for now, NYC is my home.

JOEL DASHNAW (Geology, 2005), life is very busy for me. I'm working very hard, attending graduate school full-time, and student teaching part time during the week. I'm still at the University of Albany, earning my Master's in Secondary Education, and a certification to teach Earth Science. I am student teaching in a middle school, and it is going very well. On the weekends, I travel north to Queensbury, NY to coach a youth rock climbing team. My schedule is very full, and I don't have much free time for adventures. My program will be done December 2008, but I have been accepted into the special "Internship Option" program, so beginning next fall, I will hopefully have my first, full-time teaching job. Very soon, I will begin looking for openings for Earth Science instructors, and am most interested in working in the Hudson Valley or Adirondack region. I wish I had the free time to visit more regularly!

BROOKE DENSMORE (Geology 2002), a lot has changed for me in the past year! I got married in June to Josh Williams (a fellow native Oregonian), whom I was introduced to by Rachael Lizio-Katzen Kuryunny (VC Geology '01) in early 2004. The wedding was wonderful, and Rachael and Tom Conoscenti (VC Geography '02) were among the Ely Hall alums in attendance. After working for Congressman Jay Inslee (1st District of WA) for several years, I entered my first year of law school at the University of Washington in September 2007. I'm on the board for the environmental law society here, and am pursuing a career in energy/natural resources law. One of these days, I'll finally be able to put my geology degree to use!

RUSSELL DOVER (Geography, 1999), I have one semester left of my two master's degrees at Seton Hall University: An M.A. in international affairs focusing on international trade and development economics from the Whitehead School of Diplomacy and International Relations, and an MBA in finance. My other big news is that I'm getting married this summer to a

fellow grad student, Leticia Villalón Soler. The wedding will be in Ponce, Puerto Rico, her home town.

JOAN DUBOIS CARTER (Geography, 1962), I thought I should reply to the recent Terra Firma with a correction, a connection and a map. The correction: Although my husband enjoyed being married to a Vassar graduate, he did not graduate from Vassar, which was not coed when I graduated. Please correct my entry. I am Joan Carter. My student name was Joan DuBois. The other grad from the department was Mary Ann Kindle. She was killed in a tragic canoe accident a few years after we graduated. I think I am the sole surviving 1962 department major. The connection: At a meeting two years ago I saw a familiar face that I could not place. When we compared notes I learned it was Pat Tubbs, now Pat Greason who shared several geology and geography classes with me. I had not seen her since college. She began in class of '61 but graduated in '62. She also works for Florida DOT in a different district. We sometimes share information and project support. The map: In connection with a funding request that Pat's and my districts are supporting, our consultant prepared this map. I directed the cartography and feel it turned out pretty well. (See file: ST JOHNS RIVER shaoming version 11.jpg) [The map is beautiful, wish we could include it here!]

GWYNNE DURYEA BUTCHER (1987), there is a lot happening with our family this year. After five years living in South America (two in Uruguay and three in Brazil) we will return to the US this summer. We are finishing up our assignment here in Brasilia, Brazil, where my husband Brian, a US Army Colonel, is serving as the Defense Attaché at the US Embassy. Our two sons, Benjamin and Matthew, are enjoying experiencing life firsthand in other countries. Ben is now 15 and a high school freshman and Matt is 13 and in 8th grade. We depart for Carlisle, Pennsylvania, in June for a one-year assignment at the US Army War College after which we have been penciled in for a three-year assignment at the US Embassy in Panama City, Panama. My rock collection gets better every year!

BEN ESCARCEGA (1996), after graduating with an MBA from Thunderbird School of Global Management in 2004, I began working for Swift Transportation, the largest trucking company in America and Mexico. I have been the Assistant Terminal Manager at the Laredo, Texas terminal since June '06. It's fascinating being in the heart of NAFTA trade. Besides that, the best part of south Texas is the food. I haven't been back to Vassar since 1997 but I hope to return someday soon.

MICHELE FELLER ANDERSON (Geology, 1984), thanks for the Terra Firma newsletter. I really appreciate reading about the department, especially since I am so close to the campus that I visit it several times a year. It's a great place to walk.

KENNETH FISCHGRUND (Geology), I'm a hydrogeologist for Nassau County DPW and the majority of my time has been devoted to the installation of observation wells throughout Nassau County, NY. Some of these wells screened at bedrock, 1500+/- ft

below grade, serve as outpost wells to monitor possible saltwater intrusion into the aquifer system. Nassau and Suffolk Counties (Long Island) both obtain their water from groundwater.

ADRIANE FOWLER (Geography-Anthropology, 1994), I graduated from the University of Virginia in May 2001 with a Master of Landscape Architecture degree and a Certificate in Historic Preservation. I immediately went to work for the summer as a Rudy Favretti Fellow for the Garden Club of Virginia, documenting Bremo, a 1500-acre early 19th century plantation on the James River, identifying and mapping the historic remnants in the landscape using a combination of GPS, GIS/CAD mapping, photography, and archival and field research. Then, in September, I started an independent field project under the auspices of UVA's Benjamin Howland Traveling Fellowship in Berlin. I walked the route of the former Berlin Wall, documenting the remnants of the wall and its impact on today's cityscape, using the cultural landscape methodology I developed in my Bremo project. I am now working at OCULUS, a small landscape architecture/historic preservation/planning firm located in Charlottesville, Virginia, as an entry-level historical landscape architect. I've been working on a number of interesting projects of all sorts of scales and locations, from the Grand Canyon to Tallgrass Prairie to Mount Vernon. My work ranges from detailed planting design for historic garden rehabilitations, to large-scale GIS analysis to identify sensitive historic landscapes and define heritage areas. Over the next year I aim to get my LA licensure and LEED sustainable design accreditation. I have really been enjoying Charlottesville. I bought a circa-1878 vernacular farmhouse (in town, though it wasn't when it was built) and have been fixing it up.

ROB FRY (Geography/Anthropology, 1978), somehow my Geography background landed me in the international mortgage market. I am managing the operations aspects of the Russian American Mortgage Conduit (RAM) formed by Greenwich Financial. I live in Norwalk CT with Lise and three teenagers. Until last year I was on the AAVC Board and am on the Board of the Norwalk Youth Symphony and the Fairfield affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

NATE FULLER (Geology), Hi to all the professors and other department personnel. In so many ways you all are responsible for where I am now. Since graduating I have been through a handful of jobs including a geology related mudlogging job on an oil rig. Good pay but awful work so I have now moved on and started my own business: Climbing Skins Direct.com. Check us out on the internet! In academic accomplishments my thesis was published in the Journal of Alpine Karst a year or so ago. For pleasure I have traveled to Mexico to do some climbing in Potrero Chico, Yosemite where I climbed El Cap, and Alaska for an attempt on Mt. St. Elias. Up next I am headed back to Alaska this spring to check out Unimak, the largest Aleutian island, to try and kite-ski up Mt Shishaldin. I guess I'll have to study up on volcanology before we get there so I have some interesting observations for the

other expedition members. Hope everyone back at Vassar is doing well, I think of you all often.

GAY GILPIN JOHNSON (1946), I am still in Awbury where our kids grew up, still enjoying Awbury Arboretum next door and helped organize a reunion of all our post war kids who grew up here as neighbors. My son and I are about to explore Baja California together in April. The family manages a summer reunion of sorts each year, alternating east and west coasts to accommodate all households. Anna, granddaughter, is at VC enjoying Earth Sciences! Congratulations on much renovation in Ely!!

GREG GUIBERT, I'm never exactly sure what kind of updates you look for with these sorts of request but as luck would have it I have some new career news. I recently completed work at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Boulder, CO assisting with an assessment of the impacts climate change will have on the nation's agriculture, water systems, forests, arid lands, and biodiversity. Two weeks ago I relocated to Washington DC and now work for the Pew Center on Global Climate Change as a project coordinator, managing an effort to develop a web based tool kit and on site training events for a Fortune 500 company's efforts to reduce their employees carbon footprint.

SUSIE HARMAN CLELAND (Geography, 1966), I've just returned from a wonderful vacation to San Francisco to visit classmate Linden Hangar Berry '66 and her husband, Carl. I had been preparing for my trip by reading 'A Crack at the Edge of the World' by Simon Winchester. It is the story and background to the 1906 earthquake and I found it absolutely fascinating. I mentioned that I would love to see something of the San Andreas Fault and the very next day we drove up to Olema where we stood on farmland looking at a fence which had been split and moved 21 feet apart on 18 April 1906. The book dealt extensively with plate tectonics, a theory developed in 1967, a year after I graduated from Vassar. I was spell-bound! In 1967 I took a post-graduate year at the University of Western Ontario in Canada at the suggestion of Elaine Bjorklund and her late husband, Allen K. Philbrick. I had a wonderful time but returned to London, England, where I worked in city planning for the City of Westminster, followed by three years in housing in the Notting Hill area, marriage and four years in Fiji in the South Pacific working for a partnership of architects who designed tourist hotels. My final job was working for the London Accessible Transport Unit which developed transport schemes for elderly and disabled people across London. I took early retirement ten years ago and have had great fun studying for a diploma in Wine & Spirits, and taking classes on Ancient Greece and Rome, the Theater and Opera. My son (36) works for TimeWarner and I stopped by to see him, my daughter-in-law and my two grandchildren (6) and (3) on my way back from San Francisco. My daughter (33) is a journalist here in London. Your e-mail prompted me to take a quick peak at my senior year thesis, 'Problems of Population Increase and Mobility in Southeast England, focusing on Thetford, Norfolk as a Specific Receiving-Area'. My, what a

mouthful! Anyway, I had great fun taking part in an archaeological (Anglo-Saxon) dig at Thetford during my Junior Year summer vacation, in which I traced population change from 1000 - 1965AD! Those were the days! I was very sorry to learn of the death (4/10/2006) of Judith Penna Robinson. We were Geography students together and toured the south of England the summer after we graduated. I remember her with affection.

VIRGINIA HART, my news is not exciting. In fact it is about the same as it was last time except that I am not getting any younger. My husband, Henry, and I continue to live in the same house in Woodbury, CT. We have four children and six grandchildren. The oldest grandchild, Jennifer, is a sophomore at Vassar and loves it. I am a member of the town conservation commission, and continue my interest in Flanders Nature Center here in Woodbury. Preserving open space is a chief interest.

PAMELA "PENNY" HEALD WHITEHOUSE-VAUX (Geology, 1971), You requested corrections on your alumnae database so thought I would write. At the moment, you have my husband down and not me, which is amusing. I have noted in your list quite a number of male "alumni" who "graduated" before 1971, which is the first year of male graduates, except for the odd possible post WWII grad. I assume these names are also husbands. Here's a little update on me. After 12 years of constant back pain (9 years without a diagnosis), I finally had a spinal fusion in Sept 03. I am still recovering but improving monthly--I am told it takes 2 to 4 years. I did manage, the week before the operation, to complete my gemology degree (through the American Gemological Institute), which covered diamonds, coloured stones, grading (all stones), and gem identification. The most interesting, and difficult, exam was identifying 20 unknown stones (using refractive indices, polariscope etc), including every detail, like whether any is synthetic or a doublet. You have all day but have to get 100% (or else take it again...and again, etc). Rare is the person who gets it on the first try--I got it on my third. My sister has a small jewellery business which I sometimes get involved with. Children still keep me occupied--youngest two at 14 and 17 are still at school (Downe House and Harrow) and eldest is busy post-uni doing genealogical research. Wish I lived closer so that I could pop by and see all the marvelous changes in the department. Makes me want to come back and do another degree. I'll get back as soon as I can, hopefully before my fortieth in 2011.

ROSEMARY HEALEY PUSATERI (Geology, 1971), is writing from St. Croix, where we are staying for over a month this winter. Frank and I live on the shore of Lake George in the Adirondacks, my favorite place in the world. I feel like I am living my dream. Much as we love our home, we flee winter weather for warmer places. The geology of islands--three archipelagoes of the South Pacific earlier this year-- particularly fascinates us, yet another bonus of my geology education at Vassar.

DELILAH HECK VANSICVER (Geology, 1997), I am married with two children, and we moved to Memphis last year. For work, I am a production editor for the American

Institute of Physics working on journals of the American Physical Society. For fun, I do modern dance and play with my kids. I'd love to meet up with anyone in the Memphis area.

BENJAMIN HORST (Geography, 1999), [editor's note—yes, the editor is Ben's mom—Ben was married to Tracey Donvito in June, 2008, and they are exploring Turkey right now on their holiday] I'm working in New York City for AirAmerica, as well as a few startups and web design firms, with a little freelance work on the side. As more companies migrate from Microsoft Office to OpenOffice, that's producing a lot of work for software planners and consultants, which has been keeping me very busy. But if you're looking for assistance in this area, please get in touch--I'll always have time for Vassar friends.

MILLIE JOHNSON (Geography), I am currently living in Baltimore City. In May (2008) I will graduate from Johns Hopkins University after completing two degrees: Masters in Public Health and Master of Science in Organization Development and Strategic Human Resources. I work as an independent consultant, proficient in the areas of Organization Development, Healthcare and nonprofit management. In a few weeks, I will be leaving to work in Rwanda for a month. Upon return, I will leave to work in Russia for three months. I look forward to these experiences. My experience at Vassar has prepared me for a career as an international consultant. I treasure the memories. I am also grateful for the professors, in the Geography and Anthropology departments, who helped to prepare me for a lifetime of learning and powerful personal transformation.

LAURA JOINES-NOVOTNY (Geography), My most exciting news is 3 years old....Carmen was born in May, 2005, a late gift! And, this year, I designed a line of products [MOME:life] to organize the modern home. Simple stainless steel shapes that mix and match on a wall mounted rail. www.momelife.com Otherwise I am still a professor of architecture at Cal Poly and a practicing architect with 2 AIA award winning projects. I have 3 kids, 11, 8 and 3.

JAYANT KAIRAM (Geography) I'm currently a Peace Corps Volunteer in Cape Verde. I work in a tiny fishing village on the main island of Sao Tiago in the community development sector. Recently, I finished my first year and am hoping this upcoming one brings more by way of productivity and work-related success. Honestly, it's been tough adjusting expectations, and extremely frustrating working within the overly-broad program base of "community development mobilizer." I can say that my cultural experience has been very rewarding. My town is roughly 1,200 people. It's isolated from the rest of the Concelho because of its poor accessibility and thus suffers the corresponding deficits in education, health and employment. Yet it is a town where traditions still thrive. I don't know how much you know about Cape Verde, it's one of those forgettable countries on the map, lost somewhere in the middle of the Atlantic. Yet, despite its diminutive character it makes for a very interesting place. I like to think it all stems from its geography, that perhaps the

unique identity of the people is in part a bit of environmental determinism. I wrote a piece about the traditional musical form of "batuque" which is found on the islands (it also goes into the identity issues I alluded to earlier). It was picked up and republished in the Providence Journal a few months back.

ALLISON KOZAK (Geology, 1984), I am excited to admit that I am not working this year – my husband (Howard Yellen '82) after a year of ill health, and I decided that life is too short not to have some serious fun. So we both quit our jobs & are in the midst of a sabbatical year (or more if we can squeeze it out of our finances.) We've been spending lots of time with friends & family that we don't get to see in a normal year, and are planning a trip east timed for prime leaf-peeping that should get us back on the VC campus. Happy times!

CHINA KREIKER (Geology), My family has gone through a lot of changes during the past two years: My daughter, Time, and I moved back to America in the fall of 2006 and reunited with my partner, William Mabee. During my first year back, I served as an AmeriCorps volunteer at the International Institute of New Jersey, working with survivors of torture. Time rapidly learned English and acclimated to toddler culture in the US. After my AmeriCorps service, I decided it was time for a career change. We moved up to Connecticut, where I am currently studying to be a chef at the Connecticut Culinary Institute. In my spare time (not that I have much!), I teach Yoga at the Bloomfield Early Learning Center. I guess I've gone from Earth Science to Earth food and culture!

GINARAE LaCERVA (Geology), I am currently living in beautiful Santa Fe, NM. I am working as the Director of Sustainable Technology for a national commercial real estate company. We are currently undertaking a program to make our building portfolio greener through energy and water conservation, investment in clean-tech, recycling, more sustainable building materials, and numerous other eco-friendly measures. Hope all is well at Vassar,

ULYSSES LATEINER (Geography, 2000) I'm still working for the same biology journal publishing company in Cambridge, MA as before, but as of just this past week, I am moving from managing our diabetes/obesity journal to managing our cancer journal, *Cancer Cell*. (Coincidentally, the previous managing editor of my new journal also went to Vassar-- Caitlin Buckley '03.) Meanwhile, I am getting close to finishing my master's degree in publishing at Emerson. I should graduate in May of this coming year.

PATRICIA LEWIS SWALE (Geology, 1954), the department was very small in 1954, and Scott Warthin was the Department Head. A neat guy. In those days, it was common for first year students to comment on how the coastlines of South America and Africa seemed to fit like jigsaw puzzle pieces, a notion that was quickly debunked. That was pre-Plate Tectonics. How much better we understand our Earth now! I think I was the only one to write a Geology thesis in 1954, and I have often wondered whether there's a file somewhere that still holds the theses from that

time. [There is a fairly complete collection of the student senior theses in the department.] We didn't have the ready facilities for copying then, so the hand-typed original of my tome on the origin of the New York Finger Lakes was the only copy. Recently I was glancing through the alum directory attached to the 2004 Terra Firma and noted that my husband, Michael, is shown as a 1954 grad. Not so. I'm the grad.

RACHAEL LIZIO-KATZEN (Geology, 2001), I've spent the better part of the last two years planning and executing the sustainable remodel of a 100-year old house in Sellwood, a neighborhood in SE Portland. Justin and I brought it down to the studs and rebuilt what has become our 1200 square foot dream home. Now I'm on to the fun part - the accompanying permaculture garden, complete with bioswale. Check out the project from it's inception at <http://insideoutsideupsidegreen.blogspot.com>. I am finishing up my 5th year at The Northwest Academy, still teaching middle school science and math (though I did get a shot at a senior-level geology course last year.) The progressive school allows me academic flexibility and encourages collaboration across the curriculum; my most recent venture has been a global water deficits unit taught in conjunction with a Modern Conflicts class. I think of Vassar often, and would love to host any of my old classmates or professors who find themselves in the beautiful Pacific NW. Extra points to anyone who can convince Eliza Hotchkiss to move out here for good...

BARBARA MASON (Geography), While I have not used my Geography major directly in my life, I have certainly used it indirectly. My first husband pursued a doctorate in Comparative Religion which took us to traveling around the world (to such places as Iran, Burma and Afghanistan) and living in Sri Lanka for a year. So the cultural geography perspective was very helpful. I landed in the field of deafblind educational administration and that has led to many trainings and conferences around the world in such places as India, Slovakia, Hungary, Argentina, and Poland. Just returned from an international meeting in Scotland. On a personal side, I have an adult daughter with my first husband, from whom I was divorced. Both my first and second husband died of cancer in the past few years, so that has been tough. Health is good and I continue to work full time and live in the Boston area

TIJU KARIN MAYER (Geography), here's what this geography major has been up to in the last 30+ years. Many summers working as a park ranger at the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites. Two stints in China - one in Taiwan as part of Princeton grad school so long ago... another century really. Year one was spent teaching English at a missionary college in Taichung, the provincial capital and year two working as a translator and editor at the National Palace Museum in Taipei which houses the largest collection of Chinese art in the world outside of the mainland. A degree in Data Processing from Dutchess Community College led to IBM where I became a programmer, a move that both IBM and I agreed, after a few years, was in neither's best interests. Another stint in China, this time two and a half years in Beijing in the mid-80s building IBM China from scratch, a much better

match for me and for IBM! (Did I mention that I actually had more credits in Chinese at Vassar than in my major?) During this time I was incredibly fortunate and traveled extensively throughout Asia (as befits a geography major). Currently there is another good match in my role of technical public relations with an influencer community known as IT (Information Technology) Analysts. My main focus is IBM's largest mainframe computer and to a lesser degree, the rest of the processor hardware line. The closest I've gotten to geology is escorting analysts on tours at our chip labs where silicon is a fundamental building block and first step in the awesome process that marries innovation, technology, hardware and software into solutions like DNA mapping and E-Z-Pass and thinking refrigerators. No matter where in the world I roam, I always end up back in the Hudson Valley - - a trend that started when I came from Maryland to attend Vassar. Now I live on Shenandoah Mountain (geology majors pay attention - it's solid rock!!) and have a spectacular view to the NNW including Vassar, the Culinary Institute of America, the Mid-Hudson Bridge, Mohonk and at least 9 simultaneous fireworks shows on July 4th. My backyard is a wall of rock rising at a 40-degree slope. You are invited to come study it if there is any interest. Fifteen minutes of walking brings you to the Appalachian Trail. In my spare time, I enjoy gardening, decorating, spinning (wool) and felting. www.tiuu.us has some of my early felted creations. 20/20 laser hindsight tells me I made the right decision in choosing geography as a major. It afforded me a broad base of multi-disciplinary academic experiences that I was able to draw on as I journeyed the world and my career. I'm sure that land patterns in China and the role of government in Baltic states and a myriad other realities are more deeply felt and understood with geography as a backdrop. And could there be better memories than those of making maps in the fusty, funky back room of the observatory, studying meteorology with Scott Warthin, the royal treatment on our field trip to Puerto Rico when Hilde Diaz y Soltero (from Puerto Rico) was a geology major and ditto for our field trip to Bermuda when Susie Masters (from Bermuda) , was a geology major? Equally good memories, perhaps. But not better.

MIKE MAZIK (Geology, 2004), I've been busy since 2004. My first real job after Vassar was as a Naturalist (and eventually a Senior Staff Naturalist) at the Ferry Beach Ecology School in Saco, ME. I stayed there for approximately a year before moving on to work as an instructor at an outdoor/indoor education facility in Southern CA called Astrocamp, where I have been since January 2007. I teach a variety of physical sciences to middle schoolers, all of which focus on astronomy. We also have a ropes course and a summer camp here. I'm gearing up to take the GREs over the summer, and am thinking quite strongly about a graduate degree in Sedimentology. I was certified by NAUI to scuba dive last year and am excited to go to Catalina Island to dive up to 60 feet this coming Easter Weekend. Overall, life's been good to me.

DAVID MCCARTHY (Geography), I'm currently in my first year of graduate school at Penn working towards a master's in City Planning. I'm pursuing a concentration in Real Estate Development and Design. Classes are going well, although it is quite a

lot of work. Right now I'm studying Planning Workshop class (where we learn about how to make a neighborhood-level plan), Architecture, Urban Design, a class in sustainability, and Land Use Law. This summer I hope to work for a development firm in Connecticut, my home state. Before coming to Penn, I was working in affordable housing development for the two and a half years since I graduated. It was very interesting work, and I learned a lot from it. By the way, if any current students are interested in going to grad school for planning I would be willing to talk about my experience. They can call me or e-mail me: (203) 247-2067 or davmccarthy@gmail.com

MARTHA MCDANIEL (Geology), As one who minored in geology under the tender auspices of A Scott Warthin and having grown up in and returned to the geological wonderland of Hawaii, my interest has continued to grow over the years. For the past twelve years I've been working as assistant manager at Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve - touted by the Visitor Industry as a must-see place for all who come to Honolulu. Hanauma Bay is a double tuff crater formed @ 50,000 years ago and breached to the ocean early in its career. A generous coral reef formed across the shallower inner crater. Lowering and raising of sea level in response to the ice ages caused it to become a fossil reef though an abundance of sea life make it their home. Hanauma Bay has been a Marine Life Conservation District since 1967 and is recovering well from overuse by the Visitor Industry due mainly to strict controls established in the early 1990s. The geology of the area (Koko Head Rift Zone) and adjacent coastline has several craters and even evidence of lava flows. My job includes opportunities to lead geology hikes in the area and talking to visitors about our geology. Back in the days when I was teaching high school science, the film [Birth of An Island - Surtsey](#) was one of my favorite ways to educate my students on how our islands came to be. Surtsey erupted in 1963 and Heimey in 1973. The mid-Atlantic ridge and its activities have been very much of interest. Last summer Vassar Alumnae started advertising a trip to Iceland in August. I hesitated long enough that there were no singles left when I applied. I decided it was something on which I really wanted to blow a chunk of my retirement so I booked a double for me and my 19-year-old grandson who would be entering his sophomore year at Clark University in Worcester. Adam (LeFebvre) and I had a blast emerging ourselves in geology, glaciers, volcanoes, waterfalls and geysers! I followed this trip with a visit to my son and his family in Australia, three hours south of Perth, where the Indian Ocean and Great Antarctic Bight meet. The sedimentary, granitic and limestone caves geology was almost as exciting as Iceland. Kilauea has been in eruption since 1983 and shows no sign of stopping so I live with geology and love it! Aloha!

JULIE MERRILL DUBOSKY (Geography, 1990), after 10 years of practicing Chinese Medicine, I recently took a hiatus from the field after having three magnificent babies within only a few years time. Motherhood has become my surprisingly delightful and challenging new occupation. Best regards to all the Geography/Geology majors.

ANN MOOR JONES (1970), can't say that I have any "earth shattering" news, but life is treating my family very well. My newly retired husband Ken and I are traveling the earth more than we are studying it, but Ken is consulting part-time as a petroleum exploration geologist while I spend a great deal of time as a Master Gardener. That is a volunteer program of science-oriented people who receive training from the botany, horticulture and ag depts. at OK State Univ. There are a variety of outreach opportunities in public education, and I chair the School Program. We go out into the elementary schools with hands-on gardening and science projects. Great fun for all, and I like to think we are cultivating a few future scientists! My kids – the dancer, the financial analyst and the PR pro – are all doing well, too. I'm a lucky gal.

FRANCES MORRISON MORROW (Geology, 1966), I left the oil business in 1995 and returned to school to get a PhD in clinical psychology in 2006. I am presently living in Santa Barbara, Ca and working as a clinical psychologist in the Cottage Hospital system in the acute rehabilitation setting. My primary focus is to provide psychological services to patients with brain injury, spinal cord injury, strokes, multiple traumas, etc. I am also working with the Braille Institute and see clients who are experiencing vision loss, both partial and complete, from a variety of disabling conditions.

CRAIG NELSON (GEOGRAPHY, 1995), I live in New York and am Managing Editor for Not For Tourists (NFT). We make neighborhood city guides with detailed maps and listings for 9 different cities. We're excited to add our first international title, the NFT Guide to London coming out in late 2008. Website: www.notfortourists.com Hope all is well in Ely Hall!

DAVE PALMIERI (Geography, 1995), I am continuing to teach high school geography and world history in Boulder, Colorado. I got married on May 13, 2007 to Sandra Martinez-Zuniga. In the past two years we've enjoyed travel to the Four Corners area exploring Chaco Canyon and other Anasazi sites; Italy including Rome, Milan, and Venice; and the southern Peruvian area around the city of Arequipa.

JAY PEARLMAN, I am glad to report that I was married in September 2007. My wife Kristen and I live in Hamden, Connecticut just outside of New Haven. I am currently the Director of Business Development and part owner of Sightlines – a firm that provides facilities and financial advisory services to colleges and universities around the country. One of my most important projects involves developing a methodology for schools to measure, monitor, and benchmark carbon footprint and other environmental metrics in order to help institutions stem the causes of climate change and provide leadership to the country as a whole on greenhouse gas initiatives. I'd love to talk to any VC students or alumni who may find this interesting.

MARGARET "PEGGY" PETERSON HOTCHKISS (Geology, 1969), (a.k.a. Eliza's Mom) I received the Terra Firma newsletter today. Thank you! I chuckled when I read Eliza's note about having tea with Jill. Just this morning she e-mailed me from Oxford, saying that she was doing thesis research and then had a date for tea with a cute man. (Her British boyfriend who lives in Greece, but is in Oxford this summer.) She also said that Benny Lee is due to arrive for a visit later this month. And, she sent me a link to the wedding plans of Mark Capone and Susie Darrow. Andrew Schmidt visited her in early July and a few days later, Rachael Lizio-Katzen and her fiancé arrived for a visit. I don't know how Eliza is getting anything done on her thesis, when she is being hostess so much! I came to the Navajo Nation in August 2001 to teach middle school life science and earth science. Last year, I became our school's Instructional Support Teacher. Now I work with teachers, but I'm still in classrooms a lot. I'm also working on a TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) endorsement. My husband is a miner for San Juan Coal in Waterflow, New Mexico. (He has a degree in Latin and Greek!) Eliza just called. She said to say hello to y'all!

SARAH PITTIGLIO, I just finished up my Ph.D. in Soils and Biogeochemistry at UC Davis and am now working in the research division of the California Energy Commission looking at the effects of climate change in California. It's really exciting work and the people I work with are very inspiring. Outside of work I spend pretty much all of my time playing and coaching ultimate Frisbee. The team I play with just won nationals and as a result we get a free trip to play in Japan this March. I miss Vassar and hope everyone back in Pough-town is doing well!

KARLY PITTMAN (Geology & Astronomy, 1999), I finished my Ph.D. in physics & astro at Louisiana State University in 2005 (defended 2 days after Hurricane Katrina), finished my job at the Space Science Institute on Mars regolith modeling shortly thereafter, and did a postdoc in mineral physics/astrophysics at the Earth & Planetary Sciences department at Washington University in St. Louis. I'm now in my 2nd year of a NASA Postdoctoral Program fellowship at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory trying to de-smog Cassini Titan vis/near-IR spectra and living in the Pasadena, CA area with my new husband, Damian Crevello, VC '99. New work e-mail is Karly.M.Pitman@jpl.nasa.gov if anybody wants to get back in touch.

RYAN PLEVA (Geography), In the last year I have been promoted in my company and have actually been responsible for all Public Relations efforts for rapper/actress Eve's clothing line Fetish and Sean "Diddy" Combs' clothing line Sean John Women's. I also have been the point person in my company for organizing the Oscar de la Renta fashion shows, and work on Payless special projects- including pitching brands for their designer lines. I have had items run in People Magazine, Seventeen, CosmoGIRL!, In Style, W Magazine, Trace, People Stylewatch, Vibe, Ok! Weekly, Life & Style, and Star Magazine and a number of television programs. I have decided to pursue a Masters program in Transnational Communications and the Global Media at Goldsmiths University in London or maybe the Cultural and Creative Industries Masters at Kings College London.

DEANNE PRUSAK (Geology, 1983), after graduating from Vassar I earned my Masters in Geology at Texas A&M University in 1985. I worked for Sun/Oryx Energy for 10 years as an exploration and development geologist in Denver and Dallas. In 1996 I joined Eni Petroleum in Houston working as an exploration geologist in the deepwater Gulf of Mexico. When Eni entered Alaska in 2005, I was assigned as Alaska Exploration Team leader and am currently exploring for oil in the North Slope, Beaufort and Chukchi Seas. I travel a lot on business to Italy and Alaska. I live outside Houston on a small farm and have 2 horses I train in dressage and competitive trail. I also have 3 cats but they don't do much.

LAURA REILLY (Geography, 2004), I am currently in my second year of graduate school in the Geography Department at Portland State University. I am working on my thesis, which is on the ways in which the Brazilian community has transformed downtown Framingham, Massachusetts (which, incidentally, is my hometown), into a place which reflects Brazilian identities. I am hoping to be done with grad school this summer in time for my wedding, which will take place in August in the Columbia River Gorge. Although my fiance Lucas is not a geographer, he does greatly enjoy preparing trivia questions for the Geography Trivia night that our Friends of Geography (FOG) club hosts for the PSU community. Being president of FOG has also kept me busy this year!

MEREDITH REITMAN (Geography, 1995), I've returned to New York recently after a sojourn around the country. I'm working at WHEDCo, a social service nonprofit in the Bronx, as their Director of Research and Evaluation. It's a great job, with great people and for a great cause. Took me long enough to find a fit! Hope all's well with the department.

LIBBY RICHMAN (Geography), starting a new gig next week as Head of Production for television company Half Yard Productions in Washington DC area (leaving my post as Director of Production for another local production company). Half Yard produces for Discovery, History Channel and TLC among other networks. I'm also awaiting arrival of my 2nd child, a girl due in late April. She'll join big brother Kirk who will be 3 in June. My husband Brian Slocum and I live in Takoma Park, Maryland. Brian works for the Grameen Foundation facilitating microloans to grassroots entrepreneurs in the Middle East and North Africa, so in many ways he's in the world of Geography more so than I!

DAVID RINN, In June 2004, I left Microsoft Corporation after almost 12 years, and joined MyFamily.com as its Chief Financial Officer. MyFamily.com is a leading online subscription business and the leading network connecting families with their histories and with one another. The company is based in Provo, Utah, and Laura, Hayden (age 5), Taylor (age 3) and I are now living in Park City.

SUSAN ROGERS, thank you for sending the latest edition, renamed "Terra Firma;" it represents considerable effort on the part of several folks, I know. There seem to be A LOT of GUYS in the 1966-1969 range. [Her comments are in response to our request for clarification on the old database of alums' names and addresses.] As a student at Vassar and in Geol/Geog then, I really do not recall any male students in our classes. During the 1967-68 year, I think there might have been 50 males on campus, exchanged from Williams and Dartmouth, as an experiment. They were very noticeable on campus. The vote to become co-ed really was not over yet, even though we did vote that year not to move to New Haven to become a sister school of Yale. So--I am wondering if part of the "corruption" of the disk to which you referred might be the year of graduation?

MORGAN ROSS (Geology, 2007) Well, after enjoying the warm weather in Hawaii for a while, I decided it was time for a change of scenery. I am leaving for Maine to join the Maine Conservation Corps, where I will be doing trail construction and maintenance. I will be in Augusta for the next couple months during the training session, and then will be working at various sites around Maine through November.

JOEL C. ROWLAND (Geology), I completed my PhD in Earth & Planetary Science at the University of California at Berkeley in May 2007 and currently I'm working as a Postdoc at Stanford University.

IAN SAGINOR (Geology, 2001), I'm finishing my PhD in geology at Rutgers and was offered a teaching position at Keystone College, a small liberal arts college in Pennsylvania. I'm also getting married in August to a Mercer County prosecutor. Hope all is well at Vassar.

CATHERINE SCHLOEGEL (2000), I am currently the research director for a sustainable forestry management initiative called Ecomadera on the coastal plain of Ecuador. I work extensively with 4 communities on small household agroforestry projects and am currently designing research for large-scale native species plantations. When I am not working, I am busy watching birds, playing soccer, and swimming in the river.

KRYSIA SKORKO (Geology), I was admitted this past semester to the University of Utah. My advisor mainly studies coastal processes in the Great Salt Lake, and I've been using LiDAR data to look at alluvial channel adjustments due to the recent drop in base level. We may even do some work with beach processes and sedimentary features in the area. I think its kind of cool that my interests keep steering me back to sedimentology. It's kind of ironic- I think that if I'd gone to grad school right after Vassar, it would have been in coastal geology, and here I am... except I'm in Utah, I wouldn't have guessed that. Pretty much every aspect of the U of U is the polar opposite of Vassar, as you can probably imagine, from social aspects to academics (the geology department is VERY focused on oil), but I'm getting by. I'm escaping to California for the summer, which I'm quite excited about. Overall, being back in

school has been excellent. Studying geology again brings back a lot of fond memories from my time at Vassar.

JANET SWAN HILL (1967), ALA (American Library Association) is a 65,000 member organization. Its legislature is called Council, and includes about 100 members elected at large. I'm serving my 5th term as a Councilor at large, and have never finished lower than 5th nationally in the balloting. I've been married to the same person (James Hill) for 40 years. We have a daughter, Scottie, who is about to turn 30. My Vassar ring (which was silver) finally wore out last year (the band itself wore through and no longer could be repaired), and it had become so much a part of what I wear that I replaced it but they no longer make it in silver, so it had to be white gold. It's interesting to see just how many people notice it. One especially entertaining instance was when I was judging a figure skating competition in Minneapolis, and a much younger male judge looked at my hand and said "Did you go to Vassar?" and when I said yes, he exclaimed "So did I!" I'm still actively speaking and writing (with 7 papers to be delivered this year), and still ice skating (though this year I have joined a synchronized skating team on which I, at 61, am NOT the oldest skater -- our oldest skater is 71), and judging, though at a relatively low level.

JESS TILL (Geology, 2007), after graduating from Vassar, I spent an enlightening summer at field camp then headed to Minneapolis where I'm currently an official PhD candidate at the University of Minnesota. I was lucky to be able to create a project entirely of my own design, and even luckier to obtain prompt grant funding for it. My research is largely experimental, and combines aspects of rock magnetism, rock deformation, and study of microstructure and petrofabrics. The project involves creating synthetic rocks and deforming them in simulated shear zones, and studying the magnetic "fabrics" that result to see how they evolve with strain. I can be found every year at AGU for anyone who wants to know more or say hi. I'd like to emphasize what a good experience field camp was, and I feel that the department should strongly encourage students to attend one, regardless of whether they plan to be field geologists or not. If nothing else, the feeling of clueless wandering through barren terrain is good preparation for graduate student life. At least in the field they give you a compass.

VEDA TRUESDALE (Geography, 1999), Things are going quite well for me right now. I'm working as a policy analyst/environmental planner for the State of New Jersey. It can be frustrating working in government but overall I find it to be very interesting and engaging work. I primarily work on incorporating sustainable land-use patterns into New Jersey's state plan. I also do some work on finding policy incentives to drive urban redevelopment while ensuring that environmental justice issues are adequately addressed. My bigger news is that my husband and I now have an eight month old daughter, Florence Lee Bradburd. She was born on September 29 of last year and she's pretty much the coolest person on the planet even though she does try to eat paper. Contrary to what everyone told us, parenthood has been

much easier than we expected and we're having a blast.

LAURA A. WARD, In May, I celebrated my 10th anniversary on the bench. I am enjoying presiding over criminal cases in Supreme Court in New York County. In October, I performed my stepson's wedding. He married his college sweetheart. That was one life sentence I enjoyed handing out. If all goes as planned I will be exploring Japan in May. Over the last several years I have traveled to Europe, New Zealand, Australia, the Amazon and Mexico.

DAVID WASSERMAN (Geography, 1992), the biggest event in my life was the introduction of Sofia Ana Wasserman into the world on 1/2/06. Fortunately, she looks like her mommy! I am still based in Phoenix, AZ, but working as a freelance retail consultant. That has enabled me to really limit my time "on the road" and focus on my family. In July, I am again taking a trip to Belo Horizonte to visit Tio Moises (Sofia's honorary uncle)! I cannot believe that it has been 16 years since Prof. Godfrey introduced me to Brazil...and my wife still allows me to travel there every other year or so to do untold damage to my liver and keep my Portuguese alive and well beyond what I normally speak with my sister-in-law.

COLIN WILSON (Geology, 2006), living in St. Louis and attending Washington University. Pursuing a PhD. in geology with Jill's old professor Bob Dymek, and concentrating in mineralogy. Nothing out here but limestone, though we're taking a trip to Cascadia in May. I'm going to be headed out to the Northeast as well for field work so I might end up back at Vassar soon as well.

YVONNE YEUNG (Geology, 2007), since graduating, I've been jumping at opportunities that have allowed/paid me to go adventuring and not shower. Over the summer, I worked at a camp in the High Sierras as a cook, and, in my off-time, hiked often and therefore quickly enough to be called a little mountain goat. After that, I moved up to the shores of Lake George in the Adirondacks to work for an outdoor environmental education organization called Nature's Classroom. I took children out on nature hikes, lead teambuilding activities, and taught interactive science classes that involved getting kids to eat rocks. I am currently a member of the NH Conservation Corps, which is run by the SCA and Americorps. I'm learning how to keep warm by means of a finicky woodstove and ungodly amounts of hot chocolate, teaching environmental education in local schools, and awaiting the spring season when I'll be going crazy (in a safe manner, of course) with chainsaws and doing trailwork in parks across the state. This will last through October '08, and then, who knows...

