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Notes from the *American Geographical Society*

EXPLAINING THE LANDSCAPE: ERWIN RAISZ

By Peter Lewis

Here is a cartoon: One man is speaking to another. He has his hand on the other man's upper arm, perhaps giving it a consoling squeeze. He says: "You're better than ever at something we don't need done anymore." I wondered if Erwin Raisz ever heard those words.

I was at odd ends after leaving college, living in New York City. One thing I did know was that I liked books. So I took the subway down to Barnes and Noble, 18th Street and Fifth Avenue---none other, for at that time there weren't any others---applied for and got a job, and was assigned to the geography aisle in the cavernous, dusky text area at the rear of the store.

A simple twist of fate.

This was during one of geography's periodic Dark Ages. Rarely did I have company in the aisle. But the store did not ask its workers to stand at blank attention; they were encouraged to get to know their subject area, and when time permitted---which for me was almost always---to peruse the material on the shelves (the better to sell it, of course, though still...).

One day---it must have been a real slow one---I thought I'd tackle Nevin Fenneman's *Physiography of the Eastern United States*. This was typical of the out-of-print gems the store had in plenty. As I took the book from the shelf, a map that had been tucked into its

pages fell to the floor. I unfolded a work of fine madness: Raisz's *Map of the Landforms of the United States*, a world unto itself, witchy and inviting, thousands and thousands of landscape features built of pen nibs and India ink. Graduate school in geography suddenly seemed like a good idea if the tools of the trade were things such as this.

That Raisz's map had so profound an effect on me was thanks to my dad, George. A professor of geography at Boston University for decades, he never pushed me toward the field, but patiently built the subflooring, an abiding appreciation of landscape and the marvel of place. No mean cartographer in his own right, he learned mapmaking from Raisz at Harvard, when maps were still hand drawn but on the cusp of going mechanistic. He very carefully deals out praise, so consider this: He credits Raisz with being a force of nature, certainly one of the most influential geographers in the 20th century, whose characterful, inspired style pushed American cartography before the limelight. Block and Dufour diagrams, plaster relief models, expressive penwork...all were grist for Raisz's artistic cartographic coursework.

Raisz polished his cartographic skills at the Royal Polytechnicum in Budapest, in his native Hungary. He moved to New York City in the early twenties. After attending graduate school at Columbia University (where he taught the university's first course in cartography), in 1931 Raisz was hired by Harvard University. He joined the Institute for Geographical Research, housed in an elaborate villa on Divinity Ave., built by Alexander Hamilton Rice (who was also a long-serving councilor and vice-president of the American Geographical Society), and from which Raisz conducted classes and his booming cartography business. (Note that Budapest Polytechnic still has a flourishing geography department, which can't be said, flourishing or floundering, for either Harvard or Columbia, not that Raisz had anything to do with that.)

Raisz fell into my lap again the other day. I was taking a look at an article that had been recommended for inclusion in the forthcoming *Geographical Review* anthology---Preston James' 1931 study of Vicksburg---when a short piece by Raisz, written while he was a graduate student at Columbia, leapt out and bit me on the knee. It is a classic example of the *Geographical Review* making room for a young talent, and an equally classic example of the short, stunning, transformative pieces that have threaded their way through the *Review* since its inception. A selection of the article is printed below, along with a few of his wonderful physiographic symbols.

(Raisz's maps are still available---for a veritable song---to be found at: <http://world.std.com/~jraisz/>)

Awash in a Sea of Geographical Ignorance

By Alexander B. Murphy

Vice-President of the American Geographical Society, Councilor since 1993, and currently President of the Association of American Geographers

Why is America's image in the outside world at an all-time low? Maybe in part because the outside world has figured out we know so little about it.

From the halls of our schools to the highest reaches of our government, the evidence suggests that Americans have only the vaguest understanding of how the world is organized politically, economically, culturally, or environmentally. National Geography Awareness Week starting November 16 is a good reason to ask why this is so and what it is costing us.

The issue is not just whether people know the names and locations of capital cities or rivers—a common misconception of

what geography is all about. The question is whether voters and decision makers understand the geographic context within which events are situated.

Take Iraq as an example. The pre-invasion debate was characterized by geographical naiveté, both within government circles and in the wider public arena.

Iraq had been in the headlines for weeks before attention was directed to one of the country's most basic geographical characteristics: its division into three major cultural regions. And almost nothing was said about internal divisions within those regions, the "spill-over" of Iraq's ethnic and religious groups into other countries, or the relationship between ethnic patterns and concentrations of key resources.

It takes geographical blinders of this sort to make comparisons between the reconstruction of Iraq and the post-World War II reconstruction of Japan or Germany. Yet such comparisons were made, and they often went unchallenged. Is it surprising that the course of Iraq's post-war reconstruction has not run according to many people's expectations?

What of the larger geopolitical context? Few Americans know that Iraq's Islamic neighbor, Iran, is dominated by Persians, not Arabs; that the "Islamic World" encompasses everything from traditional monarchies to secular regimes; or that trade patterns provide a weak foundation for Arab unity.

Because American society is based on democratic participation by the population in decision making, it is imperative that Americans have some understanding of these things. Yet, by and large, we do not; and our ignorance puts us in a very poor position even to begin to evaluate the geopolitical consequences of current U.S. policies.

Did the Bush administration's effort to lump Iraq and Iran together in an "axis of evil" play into the hands of hard-line clerics in Iran who want to paint the United States as an aggressive, anti-

Islamic power? Did it make sense to encourage Turkey to send troops to Iraq, given the historic role of Turks as rulers in Iraq and the presence of Kurds in both countries? Whatever position one takes on such questions, we are unlikely even to ask them unless geography is part of the equation.

The United States is the only major power where it is possible to go from kindergarten through higher education without a single course in geography. Some of our most prestigious universities do not even have geography departments—an unthinkable circumstance in other parts of the world. (When I told a German professor that my alma mater, Yale, did not teach geography, he commented, “But I thought Yale was a university.”)

There is some cause for hope. Over the past decade, geography’s place in the curriculum has expanded in primary and secondary schools, and most major state universities, as well as some smaller colleges, support geography programs. At the same time, new approaches and technologies are enhancing our understanding of the evolving cultural, economic, and environmental mosaic of the planet. But much more is needed.

History might have been quite different in the 1960s if then-Secretary of State Robert McNamara could have taken a geography course at Harvard. How can we possibly steer our way through the current thicket of international challenges when much of our leadership comes out of institutions that neglect geography?

Ambrose Bierce once wrote that “Wars are God’s way of teaching Americans geography.” Perhaps it is time we found a less costly way of doing that.

Murphy is president of the Association of American Geographers and professor of geography at the University of Oregon. He gave the opening academic address at the Second International Congress of Geographers of the Islamic World Sept. 16 in Tehran, Iran.

EARTHWORKS

By Peter Lewis

A sparking and jazzy portrait of the blackout that hit New York City in 1977, stitched together in a series of compressed bursts of imagery and critical readings of events, comes from James Goodman in *Blackout* (North Point).

"I begin my story in the last hour of light," writes Goodman, of folks going about their business on a hot July evening in a sorely tried New York City, a town wracked by fiscal crises, corruption, political incompetence, Son of Sam, and a rude patch of weather.

He proceeds into the night, through a collection of short, fragmented narratives and stunning word pictures---a fine piece of choreography, as if he were matching the color values of the scenes with musical tones of the chromatic scale---culled from a variety of sources and impressively gelling into a panoptic view of the city, Bronx to Battery, out there in Bensonhurst, too.

Characters and experiences emerge from the dark, take their place on the stage for a moment, then merge back into the night: acts of kindness, generosity, patience, and good humor; acts of mayhem and meanness. Looters explain their thefts, Mayor Beame postures, Con Ed dodges, Boz Scaggs has to cancel because he needs electricity for his guitar and the Linden Woodwind Quintet also cancels because they need to read the music, but Simon Hench plays on in "Otherwise Engaged." The New York Times goes to bed, but the sheets are short; a thief feels his heart play the tango when he spies a police officer standing outside the window the thief just broke through.

As day breaks, Goodman gives a sense of the city's flammable social fabric, its packed jails, the insurance quibbles, a profile of the looters, and a brilliant walkthrough of the crisis in the electrical lines as they skipped toward darkness.

Goodman's is a complex dance of characters and events on shifting ground, which he handles like the earth itself, letting the seismic disturbances settle where they may for us to watch and wonder.

Alma Guillermoprieto presents a dignified, thrumming memoir that charts her transfiguring year in Cuba, one that led her from dancer to one of the most charringly honest journalists at work today, in *Dancing with Cuba* (Pantheon).

The story starts in New York City, where Guillermoprieto is studying modern dance with first Martha Graham and then the Apollonian Merce Cunningham. Let alone that she can write about modern dance with a revelatory fluidity; the nub here is that Cunningham offers her a chance to teach dance in Cuba, at once squelching her prospects as a performer and opening up a whole new vista. It will not be an easy road for Guillermoprieto: The bucket of cold water on her dancing ambition will be complemented by times of confusion and despair, when the romance and emotion of post-revolutionary Cuba overwhelms her.

Cuba is a cauldron: she tastes the "fragile, vaporous elegance" of Havana, but she will also experience the constant of international politics, especially the war in Vietnam: "I was incurably altered by the consciousness of living in an obscene world...Day by day I simply lost the logic of things and their pleasure." The act of revolution took hold---she caught the infectious decency of the Cuban project, in the words of a Cuban friend, "to transform this Yankee whorehouse into a real country," yet was torn by the government's suspicion of the arts, repulsed by Che's death wish, while harboring her own suicidal tendencies.

She presents both a lively, sharp history of the Cuban revolution and an intense personal confrontation with how she will conduct her days. Her writing has an odd and beautiful syncopation, unhurried and trim, artistic without affection, on the alert to question and commend: Here are struck the sparks that will result in her peerless reporting on the politics of Latin America.

Guillermoprieto writes without rhetoric or undue emotion, as she notes in the work of John Hershey; when she flays her own emotions, it is because she is utterly alive and aware and in protest.

Randy Kennedy is an intrepid and engaging explorer of underground New York City---where a good 60% of the people they ride in a hole in the ground---and the *New York Times* reporter

Kennedy writes the "Tunnel Vision" column for the paper, and here offers *Subwayland* (Perseus).

This collection of Kennedy's metropolitan subway pieces are nattily written, with both an openness---blessed in a book on subways---and a compression that keeps things moving, which can't always be said about the trains. He knows how to keep himself out of the picture, demanding that his subjects take the limelight, something columnists often have a hard time doing. He's not here to pontificate; he's here to report on the people's limousine.

Kennedy doesn't pretend that the subways are heaven, but they do allow a "kinship of the slightly oppressed," a bit of glue in the urban matrix that provides for a measure of live-and-let-live that few other cities can boast. The entertainment, he suggests, can be found in the sideshows: the performers, the bluesmen, the magicians, certainly, but also the woman who sells her short stories for \$2 a pop, or the pigeons that grab a train at Far Rockaway and ride a few stops to feast on available tidbits (and to Kennedy's credit, he never gets cute).

Keep your eyes open, watch the sheriff of Grand Central keep order: "Get your arm outta that door!" says the cop. "That wasn't that man's train. He's got reservations on the next one." Token-sucking, once "considered the single most disgusting nonviolent crime ever to visit the subway," is history, but fear not: one can still catch the fragrance at Union Square, where "the door of the women's room was wide open, allowing a fermented aroma to roll out like harbor fog."

Welcome to Mr. Kennedy's strange neighborhood. Stop daydreaming and pay attention to this "society unto itself, with its own citizenry, government, flora and fauna, customs, myths, taboos."

Rather than ride in the cart, Kevin O'Hara walks with his donkey around the coast of Ireland---"Because I want to view old Ireland from donkey level," he says, or maybe he just can't command the cart---in *Last of the Donkey Pilgrims* (Forge), a skillful piece of travel writing.

It is 1979. O'Hara is a young man, semi-fresh from Vietnam, an American in Ireland, and with an idea: take a donkey cart around the circumference of Eire. This notion comes to him in a

pub and some in attendance suggest "he'd be much like those wise men who climbed Faerymount one clear night in June, all in hopes of catching the rising moon in a burlap bag." His aunt Cella is less poetic: "I think you're a half-boiled eejit."

But not really, for all and sundry think his adventure is pretty fine---and it is. Short of funds, he figures he'll be a seanachie, a storyteller who gets the 3 B's---bed, bath, and beer---by telling tales. But his celebrity---newspapers across the country are following his progress---gets him a welcome most nights, though one woman will tell him through the farmhouse door, "I don't care if you're John the Baptist proclaiming 'the Good News,' you simple gomer! Now, get, or ye'll be gimping off, I promise."

It is a slow and marvelous journey, under dove-gray skies and beside forlorn Norman towers, through the "hollow bright fog" of sun and mist, reeling from the collywobbles of a bad bottle of stout, along a pilgrim's path of holy wells and beehive cells. Everywhere there are intimate local vignettes and good wishes: "Now, safe home, and may a gallery of saints protect you," are the chosen parting words of a morning.

It took O'Hara twenty-five years to compose this poke at Ireland's edge, time for the events to become burnished. The book is all the better for it; like the Irish fog, it's both glowing and lightly pushed by an unacknowledged melancholy.

Norwegian journalist Asne Seierstad cast a brilliance on the difficult, sometimes dreary, often still dangerous life of a bookseller in the Afghan capital, and the equal but very different tribulations



of the women in his family, in *The Bookseller of Kabul* (Little, Brown).

Having covered the Northern Alliance's push south into Kabul after the routing of the Taliban, Seierstad made the acquaintance of Sultan Khan, a bookseller who had been thrown in jail under both the communist and Taliban regimes for selling books. When it comes to literature, Sultan is a freethinker---"of the opinion that everyone had the right to be heard"---and so he paid the price. On

the home front, Sultan is not so free in his thinking, but an ingrained patriarch.

As a European woman reporter, Seierstad is in a unique position: she can spend time with both men and women. Sultan is as a complex character, easy to admire and to loathe, putting himself in harm's way to save a few bits of Afghan heritage and to fight against Afghanistan's more obtuse traditions: "All we know how to do is scream, pray and fight...We search blindly for a holy man, and find a lot of hot air." But he is hidebound by notions of honor and his dismal attitude toward women. And not from a Western perspective, as Seierstad points out, but from the aspirations of the women themselves, which she portrays with a grim vividness.

Seierstad moves uneasily between these two worlds, and it is this tension that gives the book its air of otherworldly reality: of quail fights and henna nights, the law of warlords and a day at the bath house, of the fundamental clash between the dreams of the women in Sultan's house, and those of the men.

Seierstad has the same talent for fine and sobering writing, for strange and unnerving settings, as Ryszard Kapuscinski. Here is a slice of Afghanistan today, a country all but forgotten in the rush.

From Amy Stewart comes *The Earth Moved* (Algonquin), an admirable portrait of that tireless ploughman, the earthworm.

Here is life in the detritosphere, in the leaf litter and below ground, the busy world of the earthworm, making dirt and more: "folding the ruins of a city, a farm, or a society into the lower strata of the earth." Stewart finds earthworms endlessly fascinating; she raises them on her porch, they command her affection---"When I get home from a trip, the first thing I do is go outside and check on the worms." For she is a gardener in awe at the actions of these spineless wonders as they substantially change the earth, altering its composition, increasing its capacity to absorb and hold water, bringing about an increase in nutrients and microorganisms.

Stewart keeps the information digestible, and poses all the questions we might have been afraid to ask, like why earthworms are so clean when they live in the muck. She gives readers the best of the literature; throughout her investigation, she keeps Darwin's *The Formation of Vegetable Mold, Through the Action of Worms, with*

Observations on Their Habits, close by her side for frequent reference, and she is in touch with a hardy band of oligochaetologists who give her ideas to chew on, including the possible use of earthworms to process sewage and to reclaim polluted soil.

Then there is the mystery of regeneration, which has got to be the neatest trick in the earthworm's bag (even when it dooms itself by mistakenly growing a second head). Not that the earthworm is all beneficence, for just as it kills off harmful bacteria and fungus, it can also spread them. Worms can also become detrimental to certain ecosystems, as when they are introduced to the duff of the forest understory and proceed to displace the local flora and fauna.

A nifty piece of natural history. Earthworms of the world can stand a little taller thanks to Stewart.

AGS Provides Support for Advanced Placement Human Geography

By Susan Hardwick, AGS Councilor

Brant Mellor just finished teaching the first Advanced Placement geography class in our region in early June. As a Social Studies instructor at Eugene's Churchill High School, Brant felt a bit unsure of himself when the class began last fall. Despite participating in numerous Geographic Alliance workshops and institutes, being very close to completing his master's degree in geographic education in our department, and five years of experience teaching geography and social studies, Brant worried about being able to successfully teach a university-level AP course (even to some of the 'best and brightest' students in his school).

Thanks to the work of this innovative classroom teacher – and several thousand more who have also taught Advanced Placement Human Geography at their high schools since the course was launched three years ago, the status of geographic education in the U.S. has taken another quantum leap forward in the past few years. A total of 7200 students took the College Board exam for this class this spring (up from 5500 students taking the qualifying exam only one year ago). Sights are set even higher for Year 4 of this course in the coming academic year. The leaders of professional geography

organizations like the AGS, as well as the College Board, are anticipating that at least 10,000 students will take the exam next spring.

Despite this strong start and the promise of a rich Advanced Placement future for our discipline, however, major challenges remain. After almost two decades of hard work by activist participants in the ongoing 'geography education revolution,' most of the nation's Social Studies teachers still have never taken a college or university class in geography. Encouraging some of these teachers (and others with more background in the field but who may lack the confidence to teach an upper level class in geography) to gain the confidence and mastery of geographic content and skills needed to effectively teach Advanced Placement Human Geography is no small task.

But help is on the way. To assist in this effort, a series of summer Advanced Placement Human Geography institutes, workshops, and/or mini-conferences designed to train and encourage AP geography teachers has been held every summer for the past four years. During the summer of 2003, geography AP preparation courses and workshops were held in the states of California, Utah, Colorado, Texas, New York, Virginia, and New Mexico. Many of the teachers who returned home from these gatherings were ready to take on the challenges of developing and teaching an Advanced Placement Geography course in their own school.

Other long-term support for AP teachers is on its way as well. In collaboration with the National Council for Geographic Education, AGS is stepping up to the plate to help provide two new booklets for use in AP classes. With the leadership of Catherine Lockwood, the AGS editor for the project, plans are in motion to select and publish a set of full-color reprints of some of the most useful articles in past issues of *Focus on Geography* for AP geography teachers and their students. This compilation of selected *Focus* articles will accompany a related NCGE book of readings aimed at providing teachers with a set of relevant *Journal of Geography* articles that closely correlate with AP course content.

These forthcoming publications join a number of previously published materials, including a teacher's guide for AP Human Geography (Clemons and McKnight 1999), a special AP issue of the

Journal of Geography, and a College Board *AP Geography* web site created and maintained by David Lanegran of Macalester College. These readings and curricular materials are designed to provide support for AP geography teachers. So too have numerous special sessions such as an AP workshop at the Boston NCGE meetings in 1999, workshops at the *Teaching World History and World Geography* conference in Austin in 2000, and special sessions and AP Special Interest Group meetings at the NCGE meetings in Vancouver in 2001 and Philadelphia in 2002. The College Board also organized an AP Human Geography session at the October, 2003 NCGE meetings in Salt Lake City.

Advanced Placement Human Geography is an outgrowth of the College Board's comprehensive AP program. This effort was launched in 1955 as a cooperative venture between public schools and colleges and universities (College Board 1994). The program's goal is to facilitate the transition from high school to college by supporting college-level courses in over thirty subjects offered as a part of the high school curriculum. The College Board contracts with the Educational Testing Service for the development, administration, and grading of the examinations in each AP discipline.

There are many benefits of having an Advanced Placement course in our discipline. It brings increased status to geography, long a victim of invisibility in the curriculum; provides teachers with the opportunity to teach some of the most motivated and brightest students in the school; allows high schools to develop and offer more analytically grounded geography courses and programs; and encourages high school students to strongly consider careers in geography. These benefits, along with the boost AP courses often give teachers who have labored long and hard to find ways to teach 'stand alone' geography in a history-dominated curriculum, are beginning to bear fruit in school districts and classrooms all across the nation.

The core content of Advanced Placement Human Geography was initially based on findings from surveys distributed to high schools and colleges to determine the best 'fit' for the majority of districts and schools. Under the able leadership of AP Geography Task Force Chair, Alec Murphy, consensus emerged around development and dissemination of a geography course that would

provide students with solid grounding in understanding basic geographic patterns and processes through an emphasis on developing students' ability to:

- Use and think about maps and spatial data.
- Understand and interpret the implications of associations among phenomena in places.
- Recognize and interpret the relationships among patterns and processes at different scales.
- Define regions and evaluate the regionalization process.
- Characterize and analyze the interconnections among places.

The successful work of this AP Geography Task Force led to Board College approval of an AP class in Human Geography in spring, 1996. Subsequently, the Educational Testing Service established an AP Human Geography Development Committee chaired by Alec Murphy. Core elements of the class to be taught and to be included in the exam were defined within the following content areas: (1) the nature and perspectives of geography; (2) population; (3) cultural patterns and processes; (4) the political organization of space; (5) agricultural and rural land use; (6) industrialization and economic development; and (7) urbanization. It is significant to note that no single textbook or specific guidelines for the length of the course or the order that these topics should be taught was specified. This means that administrators and teachers are able to remain flexible in the timing of the class and also have more local control over textbooks and other curricular materials used to support it.

Gaining approval of an Advanced Placement course in our discipline has been a major victory for the cause of geographic education. However, much work remains to be done to ensure the continuing vitality of the effort in the coming years. With the release and dissemination of the two new collaborative publications of the American Geographical Society and the National Council for Geographic Society, and the ongoing enthusiasm of teachers like Brant Mellor, geography's Advanced Placement future does indeed look promising.

JOHN WESTERN WINS WRIGLEY-FAIRCHILD PRIZE

“Africa Is Coming to the Cape” has been selected as the best article that appeared in the *Geographical Review* in volumes 89, 90, and 91. More than one hundred articles fell into that span of eligibility. The winning author, John Western, will be presented with the Wrigley-Fairchild prize in an AGS-sponsored session at the upcoming conference of the Association of American Geographers in Philadelphia in March 2004.

Dr. Western points out that with this award his relationship with the *Geographical Review* has come full circle. He first published in the journal in 1973, when he was a doctoral student at the University of California—Los Angeles. His article at that time, which he says started him on his career, was accepted by Wilma Fairchild, one of the two long-time editors of the *Geographical Review* in whose honor this prize was established. The other, of course, was Gladys Wrigley. That first article was seen through to publication by Sarah Myers (now MacLennan Kerr), who took over editorial duties from Ms. Fairchild. Ms. Kerr is now the copy editor of the *Geographical Review* and was involved in dealing with this article that has won the prize.

The selection committee for the Wrigley-Fairchild Prize is chaired by an AGS Councilor and is made up of authors of articles that have appeared in the *Geographical Review* before the period under consideration. In addition, one non-academic member of the AGS Council serves on the committee. The editor(s) serve ex officio. Douglas Sherman chaired the committee for this award. The other members of the committee were William P. Doyle, Ronald Forresta, James Shortridge, Paul Starrs (ex officio), Douglas Johnson (ex officio), and Viola Haarmann (ex officio).

Dr. Western is Maxwell Professor of Teaching Excellence at Syracuse University and immediate past chair of the Department of Geography.

The previous winners of the Wrigley-Fairchild Prize were Jerry Patchell of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and

Roger Hayter of Simon Fraser University in British Columbia in 2001 and Roger Alex Clapp of Simon Fraser University in 1998.

Mary Lynne Bird

PETER WATSON BOONE RETIREMENT

Peter Watson-Boone, Director of Libraries (including the American Geographical Society Library) at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM), has retired. During Watson-Boone's 13-year tenure, the UWM Libraries added 1.5 million items, a 43% increase in holdings; implemented a new online catalog; established a digitization unit; and inaugurated services such as E-reserve, document delivery, electronic full-text, and digital spatial data. Watson-Boone led the planning for the Stage IV expansion of UWM's Golda Meir Library building and substantially strengthened the Libraries' Archives, Special Collections, and American Geographical Society Library (AGSL). He was instrumental in the AGSL's acquisition of an important collection of rare maps of the Holy Land. In 1999, the UWM Libraries received a major funding commitment from the University of Wisconsin System Administration to recatalog the AGSL's vast collections.

"Peter loved geography and maps and I don't think that the AGS Library could have had a stronger or more enthusiastic ally," noted AGSL Curator, Dr. Christopher Baruth, "he saw to it that we got the resources we needed to keep our collections, programs and services strong. In the end, the campus chose to give him an antique map as a retirement gift."

Watson-Boone was active locally, regionally, and nationally in library organizations. He received the American Library Association's Isadore Gilbert Mudge Citation in 1991 for distinguished contributions to reference librarianship. Watson-Boone was university librarian at Idaho State University from 1987-90; before that, he held various library positions at California State University, Chico and UCLA. He served on the editorial boards of *Reference Services Review*, *Behavioral and Social Sciences Librarian*,

Journal of Academic Librarianship, and *Journal of Access Services*, and has authored over 75 publications, including monographs, chapters, articles, technical reports and book reviews.

Former Associate Director of Libraries Ewa Barczyk has been named Interim Director of the UWM Libraries.

Steven Burnham, UWM Libraries

***FOCUS on Geography* Editor Goes to National Science Foundation**

In August, Dr. Gregory Chu, Editor of *FOCUS on Geography* took up duties at the National Science Foundation (NSF) as Program Director for the Geography and Regional Science Program in the Division of Behavioral and Cognitive Sciences in the Directorate of Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences.

Dr. Chu has made arrangements to share editorial duties for the magazine during the time he is at NSF, since he will be working on *FOCUS on Geography* on personal time while dealing with the heavy workload at NSF. A member of the magazine's editorial board, Dr. James E. Young, has agreed to serve as co-editor for the duration of Dr. Chu's tenure at NSF. Young is Associate Professor and Chair at the Department of Geography and Planning at Appalachian State University.

Until further notice, manuscript submissions for *FOCUS on Geography* should be sent to Dr. Young at Appalachian State University, Boone, NC 28608.

Dr. Chu, who began work on *FOCUS on Geography* in mid-2002 has delighted devotees of the magazine by swiftly bringing out four solid issues in less than a year, with a fifth expected before the end of 2003. The four issues published include a special issue on Mongolia and one on Greece. Chu credits previous editor, Hilary

Lambert, for the development of the Mongolia and Greece issues, which have been several years in the making.

Parsons Collection Goes to AGS Library

The American Geographical Society Library at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee has just received a particularly significant and valuable addition to the collection.

A major part of the personal library of the late James Parsons of the University of California-Berkeley has been given to the AGS Library by his widow Betty. The donated materials have a strong focus on Colombia but also contain significant items relating to Venezuela and the Canaries. "Gifts of this type are priceless because they provide the library with the benefits of a lifetime of focused, discriminating collecting of materials that often were simply unavailable in the United States," commented AGSL Curator, Dr. Christopher Baruth. This gift further strengthens the rich holdings on Latin America at the AGS Library, enhancing what was already an important resource for scholars of Latin America.

Dr. Parsons, who received the David Livingstone Centenary Medal from AGS in 1985 for "scientific achievement in the field of geography of the southern hemisphere", was a strong supporter of the *Geographical Review* over his entire professional career and a frequent contributor to its pages. One of his one-time graduate students, Dr. Paul Starrs, has just stepped down as editor of the *Geographical Review*, after a notable seven-year tenure in that post.

AGS and the AGS Library thank Mrs. Parsons for this exceptional gift.

SUSAN MAINS WINS MCCOLL AWARD

The McColl Family Fellowship for 2004 has been awarded to Susan P. Mains of the University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica.

Dr. Mains plans to travel to Toronto to explore the experiences of Jamaican migrants living there. Her research will involve archive research on migration to Toronto from the Caribbean, in-depth interviews with members of the Jamaican community there and local community/government leaders, and the filming of interviews as part of an ongoing documentary project.

Dr. Mains earned her doctorate in geography at the University of Kentucky. She also has degrees in theater studies, social theory, and women's studies from the University of Glasgow (Scotland), San Diego State University, and the University of Kentucky. Before becoming a member of the faculty at the Mona Campus on Kingston, she was a research officer and conference director at the British Film Institute in London.

The McColl Family Fellowship was given by Dr. and Mrs. Robert W. McColl. It consists of round trip fare to any place in the world of the awardee's choosing. The awardee must secure funding for other expenses from other sources. The awardee is required to write an article based on the visit abroad that is suitable for publication in *FOCUS on Geography*.

The award to Dr. Mains is the fifth McColl Fellowship to be given. The selection committee, chosen by the AGS Council, consisted of Deborah Popper [Chair] (Staten Island College of City University of New York, Larry Ford (San Diego State University), Susan Hardwick (University of Oregon), Joseph Hobbs (University of Missouri-Columbia), John Noble Wilford (New York Times), and the two co-editors of *FOCUS on Geography* serving ex officio: Gregory Chu and James Young.

RON ABLER TO BE HONORED

Ronald F. Abler, immediate past Executive Director of the Association of American Geographers, will be honored by the

American Geographical Society at the banquet of the AAG's upcoming conference in March 2004.

Dr. Abler will be awarded the Samuel Finley Breese Morse Medal, which is given "for the encouragement of geographical research." The medal was established in 1902 with funds bequeathed to the Society by Professor Morse, inventor of the recording telegraph, upon his death in 1872. The medal was first awarded in 1928 to Sir George Hubert Wilkins, who used in "geographical research" a means of transportation unknown in Morse's day – the airplane. It has been given only seven times since 1928.

Dr. Abler has written that he is "especially grateful to be recognized with the Morse Medal because of the key role Morse played in the development of one of my long-standing interests, the geography and history of telecommunications technologies."

The American Geographical Society normally presents its awards at an event of its own, usually in New York City. However, the Centennial Celebration in 2004 in Philadelphia of the AAG's founding seems like the right time and place for a sister organization to honor the outstanding leadership Dr. Abler has given, not just to the AAG for fourteen years, but to the entire geographical community for many more decades. Hence, the decision to make the presentation before the largest possible audience, an audience made up of members of the organization Dr. Abler headed with distinction for so many years.

Mary Lynne Bird

**THE AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY JOINS AAAS
EFFORTS TO INVOLVE FAMILIES IN CHILDREN'S SCIENCE
LEARNING**

AGS supports the Partnership for Science Literacy

To help address concerns over U.S. students' performance in science and mathematics – and to involve families in their children's

education – the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) has launched the Partnership for Science Literacy, a new public outreach effort. The AGS supports this initiative.

With “Science. It’s Everywhere” as its theme, the campaign, developed with start-up funding from the National Science Foundation, seeks to empower parents and families – particularly in Hispanic/Latino, African-American, and other diverse communities – to take a more active role in their children’s science learning.

“Our message is simple: Science is a part of everyone’s life; it is all around us, every day, and it’s fun,” says AAAS chief executive officer Dr. Alan I. Leshner. “Virtually every issue in modern life has some scientific component, and so all children need at least some familiarity with science. Families can encourage learning through everyday activities, and it’s actually easy to make science entertaining.”

The campaign includes Ad Council-sponsored radio, television, and print public service announcements; national and community-specific bilingual (English/Spanish) versions of a *Family Guide to Science*, and a website designed for parents, community leaders, and teachers at www.ScienceEverywhere.org . The Partnership also includes fun science-related activities and events for the public in various cities. While national in scope, the Partnership for Science Literacy is anchored in several communities, including New York City, where science centers, museums, and other science-rich institutions are leading local efforts to bring science and families together.

About AAAS: The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) is the world’s largest general science organization and publisher of the peer-reviewed journal *Science*, and has nearly 140,000 members and 272 affiliated societies. With a mission of “Advancing Science, Serving Society,” AAAS works with scientists, policy-makers, and the public and serves as an authoritative source for information on the latest developments in science.

A VOLUNTEER EXTRAORDINAIRE

For almost six months this year, The American Geographical Society was blessed with the services of a most unusual and valuable volunteer.

Robert Mazzullo brought his Wall Street-level technical savvy to the AGS offices. While he was here, he upgraded, wired, converted, connected, virus-protected, repaired, and generally improved everything he touched. That included instructing the human beings making use of the technology.

Bob has had a long and successful career as a technical support person in the financial services industry. In early January, the firm he had been with for many years cut 40% of its staff in response to hard times in the industry. Bob was swept up in the unlucky 40%. Rather than stewing at home on unemployment insurance while chasing the few jobs that were out there somewhere, Bob decided to use his free time to help someone and to learn something about a new sector of the economy and society. He turned up on our doorstep and took on technical support for only six work stations instead of the forty he was used to handling. In between applying his expertise to our needs, Bob read constantly, dipping into our library and scanning the periodicals regularly coming in. He became acquainted with GIS and got a taste of all that the discipline of geography encompasses.

In Bob's search for a job, through AGS he attended a number of events and meetings where he encountered not only geographers but other people working in various sectors he had not dealt with before.

Happy ending: In September Bob found a job back in the financial services sector at a salary commensurate with his former position and far above anything similar in the non-profit world. In the process, he found that potential employers, including the one that finally hired him, were impressed with the fact that he had

volunteered his services while job-hunting and that he had learned something about a different sector while doing it.

Even happier ending: Bob says he found geography so fascinating that he would love to find a job that allowed him to explore the discipline and work in it.

We think we have not heard the last of him.

mlb