



DEPARTMENT OF
GEOGRAPHY

College of Arts and Sciences

Geography Newsletter

November 2021

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November Happenings

We are in the final leg of the Fall 2021 semester, with finals coming up next week as we write this.

On Friday, December 3, MS student **Stephanie Grace** will defend her thesis proposal entitled "Perceptions of Urban Water Insecurity in Langa Township: A Case Study." Her advisor is **Dr. Thomas LaVanchy**.

With not much else on the December schedule, what happened this month?

On Monday, November 15, **Dr. Michelle Brym**, Professor of Geography at the University of Central University, gave a colloquium presentation titled "The Role of Places of Worship in the Spatial and Functional Integration of Immigrant Communities: A Focus on Ethiopian Orthodox and Chinese Methodist Communities in the OKC Metropolitan Area."

That week was Geography Awareness Week (see pages 4 and 5), and GTU hosted a Team Trivia Night on Wednesday, November 17 in SSH 035.

On Friday, November 19, MS student **Mark Mahar** successfully defended his thesis proposal, titled "Why Do They Stay? Problematic Toponym Change across the United States."

While not a departmental event, the OSU football team finally notched another big win over rival OU in the Bedlam game on Saturday, November 27. They had already clinched a spot in the Big XII championship game, but had they lost to OU they would have played again for the championship. Instead, OSU will battle the Baylor Bears for the title on Saturday, December 4 at 11 AM on ABC. Go pokes!

Faculty Fieldwork

Dr. Carlos Cordova did field work in Russia this October as part of his sabbatical activities. He worked with archaeologists on the geomorphology of a late Antiquity/early Medieval site in the region of Perm, Russia. The site is covered by forest as seen in the pictures. The project considers the study of migrations of peoples from the area of the Urals across Europe and the environmental and climatic conditions that accompanied the social and economic changes in this region during that time.



Faculty Research

Dr. Bill Doolittle (Chair of Geography and the Environment at the University of Texas at Austin) and **Dr. Steve Stadler** (Emeritus Professor of OSU Geography) have published “Smooth Sailing: Wind, Weather, and Viking Voyages” in Vol 126, pp. 146-149 of *Research Outreach*. This journal publishes research summaries from a wide variety of disciplines. The work stems from Professors Doolittle and Stadler serendipitously booking the same cruise from Rotterdam to the Shetlands, Iceland, Greenland, the Canadian Maritime provinces, and ending in Boston (July 2019). Their research puts a physical geography lens on the Viking voyages based on summer weather and boat technology. Interested folks can see the article online at [Research Outreach](#) or see a close approximation outside of Room 339 SSH.

Behind the Research



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Research Objectives

Using oceanic and climatic data, and documentary and empirical evidence, Professors Doolittle and Stadler challenge the current narrative regarding Vikings and their voyages in the North Atlantic Ocean.



GeoBowl Team Competition

On Wednesday, November 17, three 4-person teams competed in the GeoBowl competition put on by GTU. The questions were very challenging but ultimately the team of “Three Sydneys plus Alex” (below left) edged out “The Smartie Pantz” (right) for the win. Both teams received very nice gift packs.



Dr. Jon Comer moderated the event, with Drs. Alyson Greiner, Rebecca Sheehan, and Tom Wikle judging. PhD student Clayton Lucas kept the score and PhD student Jim Pendred served as room monitor. PhD student Brice Zoungrana organized the event and MS student Stephanie Grace assembled the questions.



Geography Awareness Week

The department sponsored a table near the union and library to make campus aware of geography. Below, PhD students **Belem Carrasco Galvan** and **Brice Zoungrana**, and undergraduate major and Geography Club President **Gabby Boyd**, show off some swag on a beautiful mid-November day.

