

# CONTACT

WHEATON COLLEGE  
GEOLOGY  
DEPARTMENT

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## WHEATON GEOLOGY

### CONTACT

#### Good Friends

As promised (or threatened), before you is a second issue of our news sheet. I was delighted to have received encouragement from some of you in response to the Spring '88 issue. In fact, I appreciate you so much that you should be acknowledged. Harold Beaver of Baylor's Geology Department passed along the impression that now is a good time for students to become geology majors in anticipation of the employment opportunities that must accelerate in the next several years (AMEN). Rich Aram with Phillips Petroleum is a true Wheaton Geology advocate. Rich has provided us with excellent teaching slides, good advice, and he sent inspiring letters to President Chase and the Wheaton Alumni newsletter. I also received an interesting paper on modifying the geologic time scale from Phyllis Renzett! of the U.S.G.S.. John Nielsen (now in Alaska), Cordelia Eroman Barber (former Wheaton College instructor) in Washington state, Richard Arnt (of Cal State-Fresno), and Bruce Sidebotham (geotechnical engineer in South Carolina) have all taken time to convey their good advice and blessings upon us. Thanks again folks, we need you, and we would like to hear from the rest of you too.

The Geology Program now has officially installed seven members of an Advisory Council. These individuals have agreed to serve a three year term as key facilitators in Geology's revitalization. We ask the advisors to contribute whatever time they can spare to aid in four major ways:

1. The recruitment of students as geology majors (need #1).
2. The raising of financial support for student scholarships and/or an endowed faculty position.
3. Career, curriculum, and grad-school counseling.
4. Taking our case before College administrators and trustees.

Our present Council consists of:

Paul Ribbe of VPI in Blacksburg (Geology)

Ed Cording of University of Illinois in Champaign  
(Engineering)

Pete Vagt of Warzyn Engineering in Itasca, IL  
(Environmental/Hydrogeology)

Leon Long of University of Texas in Austin  
(Geology)

Frank Roberts of Delaware Valley Christian School  
in PA (Geology, Education)

Walter Eckelmann of Roanoke, TX (Geology,  
Petroleum)

Pierre Biscaye of Lamont Doherty Observatory in New  
York (Geology, Oceanography)

This new group has already had a positive influence on our situation. A homecoming visit from Leon Long, with help from Pete Vagt, became an opportunity to do some friendly lobbying on our behalf. Pete Vagt is contributing as guest lecturer in my Environmental Geology class. Frank Roberts has continued to be unique in his high school education of Christian young people in various aspects of geological sciences. We reaped the harvest of Frank's effort this Fall in the person of David Caldwell, a well-prepared freshman major from Delaware Valley.

"So, everything is vastly improved and we can sit back and watch Wheaton Geology carry on." I wish and pray that this was true. Quite on the contrary, our majors program is and will be in critical condition for at least five more years. We need your help now more than ever, as you will see from our enrollment status below. What you can do for the program is the same list of activities mentioned above for the Advisory Council. The biggest needs are majors and finances to attract majors with scholarships. Geology is the only science program at Wheaton with no scholarships available. I have tried and am still trying to find donors to support students, but three or four decades of neglect are hard to overcome.

## Students and the Geology Major

We now have only four geology majors, essentially one per class. These are mostly good students. Two of them recently went to field camp with other schools. Each did well compared to majors with more advanced course backgrounds from other big-school programs. Our majors vary in their commitment to the Wheaton program. It is very hard to generate loyalty when it is obvious that things are not right overall. We would have two more majors, but one student changed to a less challenging discipline and the other is forced to transfer to a state school on the basis of financial need.

We realize that some of our student woes are in common with the national trends. However, the other two Geology programs at evangelical schools - Calvin and Olivette Nazarene are holding their own with a solid core of majors, and solid institutional support. What's the difference between Wheaton and the other two colleges? As many of you know, neither of the other two were the object of an attempt to destroy them. We continue to suffer the consequences of our misfortune of seven or eight years ago. I do appreciate the concern of some people on campus for our situation. Our dean, Patricia Ward, has particularly struggled with how to enable us. Tangible aid is yet to come (soon, hopefully). Geology at Wheaton needs special treatment as a realization that we are the only undergraduate major in imminent jeopardy. Although our general education classes are packed beyond capacity, we still have only two faculty members, lowest number in the College. It seems that creating new, exotic programs is a higher priority than tending to the health of a venerable, ailing one. Geology as most of us know, needs no justification as a major. Our tradition and distinction among evangelical schools stand out. In all deference to my colleagues in other disciplines, Literature, History, P.E., Poly Science, Economics, Biology, Bible, etc. may be well established at Wheaton, but they are like many other departments in Christian liberal arts colleges. Please forgive me for reciting this same litany of ills, but there are those who may not be aware of our situation, and others may need a little extra incentive to get involved.



Before leaving this topic, let me outline our recruitment problems and also some positive measures to counter them.

Problems with recruiting new students (outside the College):

1. Continued anti-Wheaton, anti-science attitudes of many evangelicals (the onslaught of "creation-science" dogmatism is injuring the Body of Christ);
2. the national down trend in science, and geology in particular;
3. past administrative mistakes - Wheaton Geology's loss of reputation;
4. no scholarships to attract outside students.

Problems with recruiting undecided students from within the College:

1. Low numbers of scientifically-oriented (and prepared) students;
2. low exposure (image) of Geology among scientifically-oriented students;
3. understaffed/overworked faculty - it shows;
4. same as (4) above- no scholarships;
5. limited departmental activities, such as field trips (due to #3);
6. other personnel problems.

Efforts to reverse the above problems include:

1. A promotional video available by January;
2. more brochures mailed to high schools, etc.. I apologize for the overly artsy pattern which somewhat obscures the printing inside the brochure. Future printings will be cleaner;
3. promotional messages in each of the lecture sessions of introductory physics, chemistry, and biology as well as in education classes. My object here is to let science - or teaching-oriented students see Geology as a viable option;

4. solicit scholarship funds from companies and individuals;
5. continued input to administration to justify an additional faculty member;
6. contacting you about our needs;
7. prayer.

#### Faculty Activities

I am thankful for a nice little boost granted the program by the addition of Pete Worland to teach three Physical Geology lab sections for me. Pete is a staff member with the Navigators in Lisle, IL. He has an M.S. in Engineering Geology from Purdue and worked previously with the Illinois Geological Survey on industrial minerals. Unfortunately Pete is only with us for one semester, and that, in order to allow me time for promotional work.

Jerry Haddock is the only one around who has had significant experience curating the department's rather large, ancient and jumbled collections, especially minerals and fossils. Jerry's time is generally consumed in teaching. Recently he has taught one section of Physical Geology in the Spring with several lab sections Fall and Spring, World Resources, Oceanography, Mineralogy and its lab, Environmental Geology and Paleontology (last year). Paleo has been down graded to a 2 hour, half-semester course. We now also offer a half semester each of geochemistry and geophysics. Both of these are my babies and constitute only a subtle taste of the subjects. I am also responsible for one section each of Physical and Historical Geology, their labs, Structural Geology and lab, Sed./Strat. and lab and Environmental Geology. We would also like to offer Petrology-Petrography in a year or two.

Other than the above, Jerry continues to lead our field trip to the Illinois River each Fall. He has also been able to attend the Tristate field trip for the past two years.

At the top of my activities list is becoming a father for the fifth time! Kyle David Greenberg was born September 8 at 6 lbs. 3 oz. Although number five, Kyle is our first biological child. This is to say our other four were all adopted. What a pleasant shock after seventeen years of marriage. God is good and has a splendid sense of humor.

Of lesser note is my continued work on anorogenic granite magmatism, geochemistry of Proterozoic metasedimentary and igneous rocks, and the beginnings of other projects. Thanks to a Pew Foundation mini grant, I initiated a structural-stratigraphic investigation of the slates and quartzites near the College's Science Station in the Black Hills. This work is in cooperation with Tim Lincoln of Albion College in Michigan. We hope this project can be joined by undergrad majors. I may be able to extend the scope of this study to similar terranes in Wisconsin and North Carolina during the coming summer. There is a major grant proposal (to the American Chemical Society's Petroleum Research Fund) in the works for two years from now. C. Pat Ervin of Northern Illinois University and I intend to complete a gravity study of the Wolf River batholith in north-central Wisconsin. Other activities include my last year as a board member of the Institute on Lake Superior Geology, steering committee participation in the new "Association of Christian Geologists", a special division of the American Scientific Affiliation, and team teaching part of a new interdisciplinary science course for non-science majors.

#### Other Important Stuff (for lack of a better heading)

I organized it, but ten other faculty members helped to carry it out successfully. All six sessions of "The First Wheaton Consultation on the Integration of Science and Scripture" have been completed with the desired results. We had a small number of attendees representing clergy, teachers, youth workers and other ministry leaders. Interaction between registrants and faculty was excellent. I have no doubt that we need to offer this series again.

Many, perhaps even most of you spent some part of a summer in the Black Hills at the Science Station. The old Station lives on, but it too could use your help. Now days the College has no summer classes required of any students, except in geology. The lack of summer requirement and lack of geology majors has made Science Station registration a tenuous situation. In 1986 only 23 students participated in the Black Hills classes. Expenses were not met by tuition income. The last two years we have just about broken even. Our problem here is also in attracting students who might otherwise stay home to work, play or opt for one of the other summer programs. Again, you the Black Hills alumni can help out by contributing funds toward scholarships to attract students who may need even small financial incentives to join us out west. Honey Rock has had the good fortune of a large donation for scholarships.


Not being a Wheatie myself, I am left with the disadvantage of not knowing the vast majority of you. I am a teacher and a scientist, not a professional support raiser. It is therefore difficult for me to ask anyone for money. Please forgive my doing so, and forgive me for the frequently negative tone of parts of this letter. I do hope that our nation and Wheaton College begin to realize the critical position of science and earth science in particular. I leave you with my thanks and the names of key college administrators who would (not?) be overjoyed to receive your thoughtful letter and/or phone call. Add to these names, the twenty or so trustees of the College. Their names and addresses are available in various pieces of the alumni propaganda you receive.

Dr. Patricia Ward, Dean of Academic Affairs

Dr. Ward Kriegbaum, V.P. of Academic Affairs

Miss Marilee Melvin, V.P. of Alumni Relations

Dr. Richard Chase, President

  
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Jeffrey K. Greenberg  
Assoc. Professor and  
Coordinator of Geology

JKG/mj