Well, I stated before that I copy the Degenerate States from the web and other newsletters. However, the fact that the web is not edited and there is no quality control becomes clearer and clearer. This week I added many comments (I put my comments in blue.) While I try to poke fun with my comments, they do indicate that this great resource of information - more information than I ever imagined except what was available at the Library of Congress - is in the living rooms, bedrooms and studies of our homes. Yet, this information source is polluted with opinions, urban legends and false beliefs. If anyone wants to come up with the next “FaceBook” type application for the web, they should consider a search engine that is combined with a “reliability” index. Something that tells you if the site you are using is factual or fantasy.

Things at JSU are quiet. Our Dean is in China (he will be gone most of the month!). The Spring Schedule is on the web. More and more courses are being offered on Tuesday and Thursdays. I think this is mainly being driven by the students who do not come to class on Fridays. The Dean does not foresee JSU going to a Monday-Wednesday and Tuesday-Thursday class schedule anytime soon. So, we will try to meet student demand and avoid course conflicts as best as possible. However, when students complain that all their courses are on Tuesday - Thursday and they conflict, it is, ironically, student behavior that is the source of the problem.
-- Lou

Department News

Bake Sale and Blood Drive a Success
If the crowd of people is any indication, the ACS Bake Sale and Blood Drive was a success. They carefully planned the bake sale on the same day as the tenured faculty were meeting, so we were able to purchase plenty of sugar to keep everyone "wired" during the meeting. I hope we can give some numbers in the next issue of the Newsletter stating how much money they raised and how many pints of blood that were donated.

ACS Student Chapter
The JSU American Chemical Society (ACS) student chapter received an Honorable Mention Award for its activities conducted during the 2009-10 academic year. Drs. Al Nichols and Nixon Mwebi were commended for their work. Of course, the drive and determination of the students is also recognized. Congratulations to all.
University News

Jsu Drama to Present: Doubt, A Parable By John Patrick Shanley
At the Ernest Stone Performing Arts Center, Mainstage, Jacksonville State University, Corner of Church and Eleventh on October 7, 8, 9 at 7:00 p.m. and October 10 at 2:00 p.m. Adults: $10.00; Sr. Citizen & JSU Personnel $8.00; Students, Military, and youth $5.00. MasterCard, Visa, and Discover accepted, as well as personal checks and cash. Reservations Recommended - Call 256-782-5648

Free Flu Jabs!
Healthwise, your Public Education Employees Wellness Program, will be on campus giving Flu shots Thursday, October 14, from noon - 3 p.m. at TMB Auditorium. There is no cost to you or your adult dependents (must be 18 or older) if you have the PEEHIP medical coverage, PEEHIP supplemental coverage or one of the Southland optional plans. Employees will be required to show proof of insurance before the vaccination can be given (no exceptions will be made). Appointments are not necessary and vaccinations will be given on a FIRST COME FIRST SERVE BASIS.

Music Faculty Present Oct. 8 Gala Recital
Faculty members of the David L. Walters Department of Music will present a Gala Showcase Recital on Friday, October 8, at 7:00 pm in Mason Hall Performance Center. This annual event is a benefit concert in support of the Department’s Legacy Scholarship Fund. Scholarship recipients will be honored at the recital. The program is free and the public is invited. Donations to the Music Legacy Scholarships Fund will be gratefully accepted and may be made at the door.

Employment Opportunities

Note: These are sent to the Head, and I am passing them as information. I do not want ANYONE to leave. However, these might be offer opportunities that are special or these might be appropriate for a friend or colleague or former student.

South Dakota, Brookings
The Department of Geography at South Dakota State University seeks applications for a full-time, tenure-track position at the Assistant Professor level to begin August 22, 2011, in the area of biophysical geography and human interaction. For a list of qualifications and directions for online application, visit https://yourfuture.sdbor.edu

Pennsylvania, University Park
Integrated Assessment of Energy Systems and Policy and Economic or Urban Geography The Department of Geography (www.geoq.psu.edu) welcomes applications at the assistant or associate level at the intersection of two areas: (1) integrated assessment of energy systems and policy, and (2) economic and/or urban geography. We seek candidates whose work analyzes direct linkages between energy systems and policy and economic and/or urban geography. All materials and requests for additional information should be submitted electronically to Marnie Deibler (mpr5@psu.edu).
Space-Time Integration in Geography and GIScience

Every year, the Association of American Geographers (AAG) identifies a particularly timely or relevant set of themes to feature during its Annual Meetings. Last year an over-riding theme was climate change, for example, and previous years have included featured sessions on topics such as human rights, landscape and literature, sustainable development in Africa, geography of water, and many other topics.

A special Symposium focused on the research status, recent advances and research needs of space-time integration, modeling and analysis in geography and GIScience will be organized within the AAG Annual Meeting in Seattle, April 12-16, 2011. This special set of invited papers will feature many leading geography and GIScience researchers from Asia and Europe as well as from other regions of the world, and will form a high-profile international symposium within the AAG Annual Meeting.

Call For Papers: Geography and the Humanities

Special Sessions at the 2011 Annual Meeting

The Association of American Geographers is sponsoring a special set of sessions on new interdisciplinary research and practice taking place at the intersections of geography and the humanities at its upcoming Annual Meeting in Seattle, to be held April 12-16, 2011. This special sequence will feature a presentation on the evening of Friday, April 15 by internationally-known author Barry Lopez, winner of the National Book Award for Arctic Dreams. The AAG welcomes abstracts engaging topics and methods at the crossroads of geography and the humanities, broadly conceived to include the arts. Those interested in participating or proposing sessions should submit abstracts of approximately 250 words by November 10, 2010 at www.aag.org/annualmeetings, and should also send the abstract to jketchum@aag.org with "Humanities Sessions" as the subject line.

Degenerate States

More, I Didn't Know That!

A cat has 32 muscles in each ear.
A "jiffy" is an actual unit: 1/100 of a second. [See Wikipedia for all sorts of time durations for a "jiffy." -- Lou]
A shark is the only fish that can blink with both eyes.
An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.
Babies are born without kneecaps. They don't appear until the child reaches 2 to 6 years of age. [Crawling, all of a sudden, seems painful! – Lou]
February 1865 is the only month in recent history not to have a full moon.
In the last 4,000 years, no new animal species have been domesticated. [Does this exclude the deer farms in New Zealand?]
If the population of China walked past you, 8 abreast, the line would never end because of the rate of reproduction. [How do they reproduce if they are all walking? -- Lou]
The average person's left hand does 56% of the typing.
The cruise liner, QE2, moves only six inches for each gallon of diesel that it burns. [I found on-line the following: That's ridiculous. Here's the correct answer from the desk of the Chief Engineer at Cunard Liner: What is the fuel consumption? At the service
speed of 28.5 knots, consumption is 380 tons per day: this equates to 50 ft/gall. At the speed of a normal cruise ship (20 knots), QE2 can move 125 feet per gallon. Is that US gal or Imperial gal? --Lou]
There are more chickens than people in the world.
Women blink nearly twice as much as men. [No comment. – Lou]

Contact Details

If you have items of news or interest that you would like included in the Department of Physical and Earth Sciences newsletter, then contact Tracy Casey before noon on Thursdays at: tscasey@jsu.edu or phone (256) 782-5232.