

MADISON GEOGRAPHIC

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EXPERIENCE A LOCAL TREASURE IN MUIR WOODS



If you are looking for a place to escape campus crowds but have no time to leave campus, check out Muir woods. Located next to Social Science Hall between observatory drive and the lake shore path, Muir woods is an excellent place to catch a glimpse of the vegetation that existed before campus took over. The woods, dedicated to UW's own John Muir, are comprised of old Red and White Oak, Shagbark Hickory, Black Locust, and Black Cherry. Smaller, younger trees in the forest consist of Red and Sugar Maple, Green Ash, and American Elm.

While much of this vegetation is native to Wisconsin, some species such as buckthorn creeping its way into the

under-story composition. The vegetation is also threatened due to an increase of water flowing off the cemented campus looming above.

As you enjoy this special place on campus, it is important to remember how it came to be. Were it not for a group of concerned citizens, Muir woods would not exist today. When plans of a parking lot or classroom were proposed to replace the woods, numerous fought to save this green space. As a result of their action, Muir woods will always remain in the heart of campus.

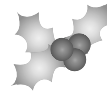
Written by Jessie Olson
Photograph by Marie Pepler

UPCOMING GEOGRAPHY CLUB NEWS AND EVENTS

Meetings:

Next semester, the UW Geography Club will continue to meet every 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month, 5:45 in the Student Lounge, 480-B Science Hall. **Our first 2003 meeting will be Monday, January 27.** Everyone is welcome.

***Happy Holidays from the Geography Club!
See you next year!***



The Holiday Question

"What do you do with a Geography Degree?"

So when we all venture home for the holidays, The Question will get asked by tons of family and friends. (At least if your family is a nosy as mine is!) So how will you answer: "What are you going to do with a Geography Major?" You could try the truth (if you know it), come up with a crafty remark, or use one of these responses that graduate students and professors gave when they had to answer:

Lindsay: "I'm going to play with dirt and water!"

Her mom: "So, you're going to make mud pies?"

Lindsay: "Yep."

- Lindsay Theis

"I was never challenged about choosing to major in geography. There just seemed to be so many applications that it was obvious I could put it to use."

- Professor Jim Knox

"Anything that I want."

- Ryan Galt

"I usually tell people I plan on winning a lot of state capital trivia contests. And then use maps to help the UN divide the world up into the 10 planned "Subjugated States of the United Nations," or SSUN."

- Adam Simcock

"Finally complete my plans for world domination. Grad school in geography!"

- Eric Compas

"Be a park ranger."

- Joy Fritschle Mason

"I was going to be a ski bum."

- Kevin Spiegel

"I think it's important to tell people that there are a wealth of jobs for geographers that don't go by the title of Geographer. For a general audience, it's probably more appropriate to talk in terms of one's particular interests in geography: urban planning, GIS, or African megafauna."

- Trevor Quinn

Collected by club members, Compiled by Marie Pepler

Professor of the Month: Thomas Vale

Thomas Vale is teaching Geography 139 (Resources and People) and Geography 127 (Physical Systems of the Environment) this semester.

Have you noticed the man who sports western-styled shirts in the classrooms and halls of Science Hall? Or have you ever had a class with the professor who is known for running back and forth along the black board to emphasize his point? If so, now is your chance to get to know Professor Thomas Vale a little more!

Thomas Vale first became interested in Geography in his undergraduate years as a biology student at the University of California–Berkeley. He took a conservation class that enlightened him to see the geographical side to the world. Today, his area of geographical interest is nature generally, including weather, vegetation, history and people. This is evident in his latest publication, in spring 2002, *Fire, Native Peoples and Natural Landscape: Humanization in North America*. Currently Vale is working on a book about the meaning of wilderness in National Parks; how the hands-off approach does not always bring about an irresponsible ethic on Americans.

Growing up in the San Francisco Bay area in California, Vale fell in love Yosemite and the grand vistas of the Sierra Mountains. He

and his wife Geraldine (Gerry) frequently travel between Wisconsin and California visiting places like Mount Rushmore along the way. But this is not the only place he enjoys visiting. In fact, Vale and Gerry have a goal to visit all counties in the 11 Western States. As of October the couple have just 12 remaining.

The two share many travel adventures together and on one particular trip to Arizona in the winter was one particularly memorable. As the two hiked down a canyon, Thomas got a bit ahead of Gerry and stopped to wait off the trail a bit. Vale thought she would be coming in a short while and after she didn't, he went back to try to find her. Gerry, on the other hand, had gone ahead as Thomas was just off the trail. It took the two six hours until they found each other.

Vale also noted that he gets lost every time he comes out of the mall. Vale claims he has never really had a near death experience and lives a "non-adventurous life," but after some probing, he did remember getting trapped on a canyon in Yosemite for several hours. He sat debating whether to climb back up a 20-foot rock face or drop down a 10-foot cliff, and eventually opted scrambled down the rocks to the base of the cliff, rather than repeat the sketchy climb up.

Vale compliments his western wear with

western food, drink, music, and movies. He enjoys "anything Mexican" when it comes to food, in fact he states "I have never met a taco I didn't like," and Dos Equis or brandy when it comes to drink. His choice of music is "classic country;" including George Strait, Willy Nelson, David Frisell and Shelly West, and Aynia. Vale's favorite movies include "High Noon," "The Day the Earth Stood Still," and "Treasure of the Sierra de Madre." Even though he says his favorite animal is the Coyote, there is more to Thomas Vale than an obsession with the west.

Vale has lived in Madison since 1973 and enjoys exploring Wisconsin's Parfrey's Glen, located 45 minutes north east of Madison. Thomas also enjoys bird and butterfly watching with his wife. His favorite bird is the Blackburnian Warbler, and Vale states "there are too many great butterflies to just choose one favorite." One of Vale's favorite books is *The Immense Journey* by Loren Eiseley. His advice to students is, "enjoy your undergrad/grad years, there is nothing like them." Lastly, Vale's favorite quote comes, of course, from the western movie "Treasure of the Sierra de Madre." Character Bandito says, "Badges?! I don't got to show you no stinking badges!"

Written by Jessie Olson

The Mysterious Doors of Science Hall

This Month's search for Mysterious Doors in Science Hall leads us to another ordinary looking door. The only difference is that this door is about 1/4 the size. If you have ever gone to see a TA on the fourth floor you have probably seen this door – it's in the hallway on your way to the North Wing and TA Alley. If you're like me, this door has made you stop more than once and just wonder ... Who was this door made for? Why is it so darn small? Could there be gnomes in Science Hall? With the help of Cheryl Murray, the Department Administrator, I went to find out just what the deal was with this Mysterious Door.

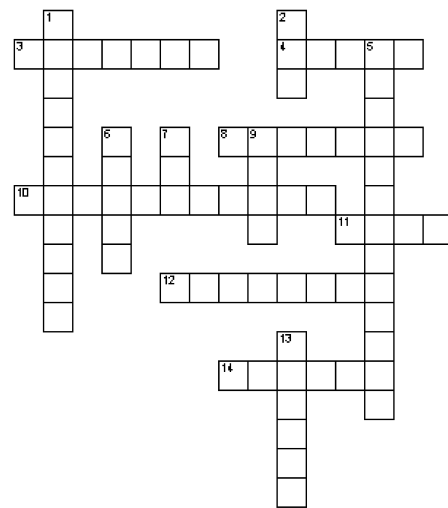
After a few short minutes of anticipation, while Cheryl tried several keys, the door was finally opened! To reveal... Janitorial storage. Although there were no gnomes, I was pleased to have this small mystery solved. As for the storage area, it was deceptively large, containing mop-heads, light bulbs, boxes and buckets – whose contents I did not dare to discover. I was also



Professor Hong Jiang taking the first daring look into what might be a gnome lair!

told that this door was, for a short time, the door to Professor Robert Sack's office, evidently the result of a Grad student prank.

Written by Aaron Reiner



ACROSS

- 3. Capitol of Libya
- 4. TA _____
- 8. Tidal body
- 10. First National Park
- 11. Will teach 312 next semester
- 12. People & Environment Undergrad Advisor
- 14. Human geographers love these

DOWN

- 1. Scattered islands
- 2. Cartographer's project
- 5. Holiday needle
- 6. Worldly book
- 7. The Geography _____
- 9. Precipitation
- 13. Geography Club meeting day