Caving anyone? Over the Labor Day weekend, members of the department participated in their annual field trip. The trip was organized by the graduate students, with Mark Larson and Harry Lisabeth in charge of the logistics. First stop was to see Callan Bentley (M.S. 2004) for a detailed overview of the geology of the Appalachians. Callan, a professor at Northern Virginia Community College, graciously welcomed the group of 35 to his home located on the E limb of the Massanutten syncline. That overview provided the framework for much of the remainder of the trip. A short hike to some parasitic folds at Veach Gap followed. A long ride down I-81 followed to an exposure of the Pulaski Fault just outside of Blacksburg.

The next two days were spent at the Bat Ranch, a property in Giles County in southwest Virginia. The Bat Ranch has access to three caves: Tawney, Clover Hollow, and Smokehole. Mark Larson and Huan Cui lectured on cave formation and structure. Following the lectures, small groups departed for tours of the caves. The cave decorations were extensive. After several hours, attendees exited the caves tired, wet and muddy. A campfire was lit, stories were told, and after dinner, several grad students entertained with guitars and drums. A very successful trip. The efforts of the grad students were appreciated by all.

Birthday for a Founding Father

Galt Siegrist turned 80! Galt celebrated the occasion of becoming an octogenarian with friends on the eastern shore of Maryland. Pete Stifel, Jerry Weidner and Ann Wylie, all retired professors and members of the first group of faculty in Geology at Maryland, were in attendance. Galt, hired in 1965, served as the first chair of the department (1973-1980), and laid the groundwork for the department for years to come. All while rebuffing attempts by outsiders to inhibit the growth of the faculty teaching Geology. Galt was responsible for ‘stealing’ faculty lines from other departments, in attempts to hire additional faculty to teach Geology. He was successful with four of those. We owe much of what we have today to the efforts of Galt and his colleague in the early days. Thanks Galt, and Happy Birthday.
Geology Club News

The Geology Club is approaching its 35th year. The club, started by Willy Accame (1980), has recently been invigorated by the efforts of co-presidents Ben Belzer and Maddie White. After a brief hiatus, the club is again recognized by the University and the Student Government Association. The Club is meeting weekly, and has become active in tutoring students in geology courses. Undergraduate and graduate club members are looking to take part in a variety of adventures this academic year. They started in late September, when several club members took advantage of the early Fall weather to climb Old Rag in Shenandoah National Park. Phil Piccoli (1992) spoke to club members about the geology along the ride to Virginia, and the charnockites, unakites, nelsonites and opferkessels that contribute to the interesting geology in the park. The view from the top was spectacular!

Student Publications

Undergraduate and graduate students in the department are performing high-caliber research on a wide variety of topics. The expectation of the students and faculty is that the research makes its way into the literature. What follows is a select list of work published during 2014 where students were the first authors on the studies.

Brian Tattitch. Copper partitioning between felsic melt and CO₂-H₂O bearing saline fluids. Geochimica et Cosmochimica Acta.
Emily Seldomridge. Geochemical, Temperature, and Hydrologic Transport Limitations on Nitrate Retention in Tidal Freshwater Wetlands, Patuxent River, Maryland. Wetlands.
Stephanie Johnston. Formation of ridges on Europa above crystallizing water bodies inside the ice shell. Icarus.
Tamara Newcomer Johnson. Effects of stormwater management and stream restoration on watershed nitrogen retention. Biogeochemistry.

How can you help?

The Alumni Council feels that the alumni are in a position to be very helpful in assisting geology graduates in the following manner: 1. Assist in placing students in meaningful jobs. 2. Identify and promote specific networks that can assist graduating geologists in identifying job opportunities. 3. Encourage fellow alumni to participate in the Department of Geology functions and interests, where appropriate.

Save the dates for the following Department and University Events:
1. Senior Thesis Presentation Day (December 12, 1:00 p.m.).
2. Maryland (MD) Day (April 26th 2015, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.)

We would love to see you at those events if you would like to attend.

We would be happy to consider other gatherings: behind the scenes tour at the Smithsonian; fossil collecting along the shore of the Chesapeake with an alum and curator of the Calvert Marine Museum; tailgate at a MD Big 10 football game, are just a few possibilities. Do you have something to offer? If you have other ideas, we would love to hear them. We want and need your input.

The alumni web page is available from the web site www.geol.umd.edu. Updates to contact information can be made online through the alumni link on that page. Direct queries about department alumni issues can be made at: geo-aluminfo@umd.edu or through the Departmental Office (301-405-4065).

For information about the department as it occurs, like our Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/UMDGeology

Send comments, ideas, and feedback about the GeoTERPNews to geo-aluminfo@umd.edu.