

Pacifica



Newsletter of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers

Lake Tahoe (Michael Pretes photograph)

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ABOUT APCG

Founded in 1935 by a gathering of geographers including graduate students and faculty from universities, normal schools, and junior colleges, and a few individuals from government and industry, the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers has a long and rich history promoting geographical education, research, and knowledge.

Members gather at the annual meetings for social and intellectual interaction. They receive the annual *Yearbook*, first published in 1935, that includes abstracts of papers from the meetings and a number of full length peer-reviewed articles. Members also receive the biannual newsletter *Pacifica*, first published in Fall 1994. Since 1952 the APCG has also been the Pacific Coast Regional Division of the American Association of Geographers (AAG), serving AK, AZ, CA, HI, ID, NV, OR, WA, BC, and YT.

President's Column, Michael Pretes Pacific Region Geographers & Challenging Times Ahead

Dear friends, I hope you are all doing well and staying healthy during these challenging times. The Association of Pacific Coast Geographers (APCG) is a geographic community, and we are here to help and support each other. That is the primary reason for the existence of our association! In these difficult times, with many students, faculty, and staff sheltering at home, with families to care for, with financial uncertainty, with travel plans cancelled, and with universities closed or working only online, we are probably not thinking too much about the APCG. Yet we are here to help! If you are new to online teaching, you may need resources and other forms of assistance, and you can turn to your fellow APCG members for that. Some of our members have published online textbooks and other course materials that they are willing to share, and others may have online lectures, photos, and other activities and resources that can be shared as well. And if you are stuck at home and need some geographic collegiality, please reach out to me or any APCG member! Sometimes just chatting with someone else who is going through the same situation can be helpful and a good way to deal with stress. That's what we are here for! The APCG has a listserv that can be used for communication, and please feel free to use it, or contact APCG leadership directly using the emails found on our website.

The American Association of Geographers (AAG) is increasingly recognizing the importance of the APCG and other regional divisions. The APCG, although a separate, independent geographical society (and recognized as such by the AAG, the only one of the nine regional divisions to have that standing) also serves as the AAG's Pacific Coast Division. We are currently (and historically) the largest of the regions based on membership. We were founded in 1935 as the first professional geographic ... continued on page 3

Feature Article 1 — Youth Visitor Trends in Four Pacific Coast US National Parks

John Crowell, B.S. 2019, Geographic Information Science, University of North Alabama

Recent media reports have suggested that members of the "Millennial Generation" (those born between 1981 and 1997) and "Generation Z" (those born after 1997) are less inclined to visit national parks, compared to older generations. My research, conducted over two years at four Pacific Coast national parks, aimed to determine whether the number of Millennial and Generation Z visitors to national parks is truly declining, and, if so, why. Are young people interested in visiting national parks, or are competing recreational attractions, such as video games and other computer-based activities, leading to a decline in younger park visitors? Data on the age structure of national park visitors are not readily available, and media reports are largely based on anecdotal evidence. In my study I collected quantitative and qualitative data at four national parks—Mount Rainier, Olympic, Crater Lake, and Redwood—in the Pacific states of Washington, Oregon, and

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Announcements

APCG 2020 Conference Cancelled

It is with deep regret that the APCG Executive Council has voted to cancel this year's APCG conference, which was originally scheduled to take place in October in San Marcos, California. We did not come to this decision lightly. Of the many factors we considered, the most important is our members' health and safety. Most medical professionals are uncertain about the impact of the novel coronavirus COVID-19, with the American Medical Association predicting a second outbreak of the virus from October–December of 2020. The California State University system, including the San Marcos campus that was to be our host, has shifted to online teaching for the fall semester and is limiting access to the campus where our meeting was to be held. Many universities have reduced or eliminated travel funding, with a number of them restricting faculty and student travel for research. We would encounter difficulties in serving buffet-style meals and even distributing coffee and water, with restrictions on the number of people in each conference presentation room. The upshot is that many APCG members would not have attended this year. This is by no means unprecedented — the APCG suspended meetings for three years during World War II, as we are reminded by APCG Memory Counselor Bob Richardson, and other longer-time members remember the 1994 Northridge meeting, thrown into chaos as the epicenter of a 6.7 Richter earthquake, which had 43 papers presented (140 attendees), in contrast to 110 the previous year in Berkeley (350 attendees). Sometimes nature and human actions take their toll and require adapting.

We considered holding a virtual meeting, but decided against this option, as we expect that many members will already be stressed and suffering from virtual meeting fatigue. We also recognize that personal interaction is an important feature of our meetings and something that cannot be duplicated online.

If you would like to present at a conference during the 2020–21 academic year, there are many options, and we can recommend the California Geographical Society meeting to be held in Oakland, California, in April 2021 (exact dates to be determined, see <http://calgeog.org/conferences>), and the American Association of Geographers (AAG) meeting to be held in Seattle, Washington, from April 7–11, 2021 (see http://www.aag.org/cs/calendar_of_events/aag_annual_meetings). Both of these meetings are within the APCG region. If you would like to participate in a virtual meeting this year, the Applied Geography Conference will be held online from October 18–20, 2020 (see <https://www.appgeogconf.org/2020-conference.html>). There will be other virtual meetings — just search online for them; geographers are hardly alone in our COVID-19 wariness.

California State University – San Marcos will host our meeting in 2021 (exact dates to be determined, but mid-October seems again likely), and we look forward to a strong showing at that meeting and seeing you all there! Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington, will be our host in 2022. The location of the 2023 meeting is still under discussion, but a Bay Area venue may be a possibility. If you and your institution want to host a future meeting, please contact any member of the APCG Executive Council and we will explain the procedure to you.

APCG officers will continue on for one more year in their positions in order to provide some continuity during these disrupted times. Details of Presidential addresses and such are to be sorted out presently.

The *Yearbook* will be published during the 2020–21 year, and we especially encourage submissions from students. In place of the usual conference poster and paper presentation awards, this year we will offer awards for the best papers published in this issue of the *Yearbook*. More information will be sent out on the APCG List Serv and posted on the website. *Pacifica* will also be published as usual. In the meantime, we hope that you and your families and friends are all staying well!

— Michael Pretes & the APCG Executive Council

Don't Forget: Please add the 2021 APCG Meeting to your schedule (on your 2021 calendar)

Conference registration will open in July 2021, with abstracts due in early October 2021. Please contact the conference planning chair, Elizabeth Ridder (eridder@csusm.edu) with questions or concerns. These are necessarily changing times so improvisation is the rule. Updates will appear in the Fall-Winter *Pacifica* APCG newsletter, and on the APCG WWW-site.

Please visit the APCG and conference websites for further conference information and registration details.

Conference website:

<https://www.csusm.edu/liberalstudies/includes/apcg.html>

APCG Membership: <https://apcg.wildapricot.org/join-us>

Conference Registration: <https://apcg.wildapricot.org/event-3619242>.

Updates, meeting details, and abstract submission: <https://www.csusm.edu/liberalstudies/includes/apcg.html>

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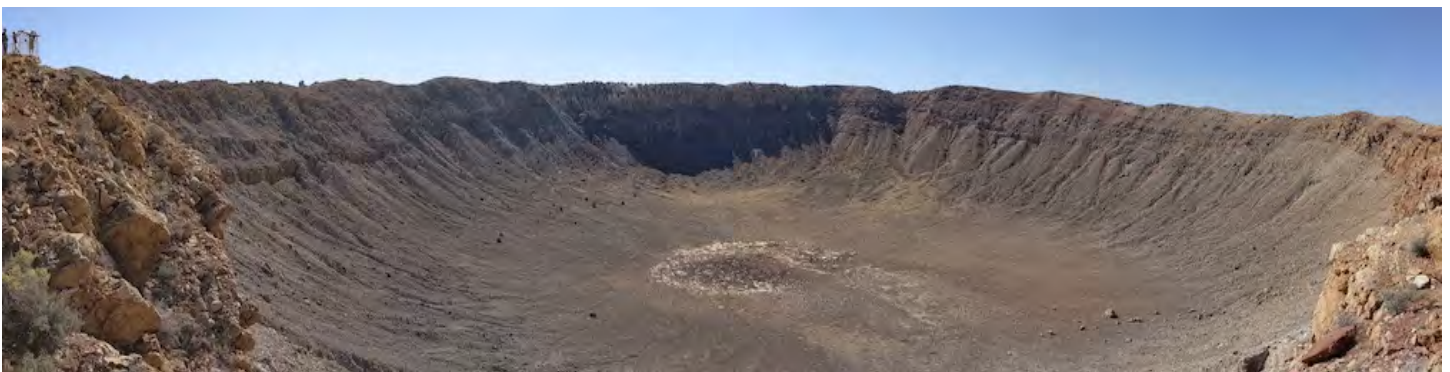
President's Column, Michael Pretes

association in the western United States (there were earlier organizations, such as the now-defunct Geographical Society of the Pacific, but they were largely devoted to supporting exploration). One of the reasons for our founding was the AAG's resistance to holding any of its annual meetings anywhere in the western half of the country. Given that most geographers lived in the East and Midwest, and given that transcontinental train travel was slow, this is not surprising, yet it limited participation for western members. It took the AAG 54 years to host its first meeting west of St. Louis! That took place in Santa Monica in 1958, and was followed by Denver in 1963, San Francisco in 1970, Seattle in 1974, and Salt Lake City in 1977. By the 1970s the West was recognized as a part of the AAG.

The 2019–20 AAG President, David Kaplan of Kent State University, made enhancing the AAG's regional divisions one of the signature items of his presidency. To that end, he put together a task force to address regional concerns. That task force had 13 members (I was one of them, and Yolonda Youngs, our Regional Councilor, was another). The task force held several meetings and conducted surveys to assess the situation. Currently the AAG provides many free services to the regions, including providing regional conference insurance, use of the Eventbrite license, childcare subsidies at the regional meetings, use of the PayPal license, use of Zoom licenses, and, perhaps better known, financial subsidies to the regions as well as student awards. The task force recommended more recognition for regional leadership, increased financial support, better promotion of regional conferences, and other forms of assistance. These are all likely to be implemented soon, and you will hear more at our own annual meeting.

One of the biggest issues identified in the survey was low attendance at the regional meetings. Only 21% of APCG members stated that they attend the APCG meeting every year, compared to 34% for the Southeast (SEDAAG) and 27% for the Southwest (SWAAG). Why this low attendance? 51% of APCG members said that cost was an issue, 37% said timing of the meeting, and 35% said distance was a factor (no surprise: we are by far the largest region by area). 38% said that prioritizing other meetings was a consideration, and I'm happy to state that this was the lowest for any of the regions! As to what could enhance the regions, 18% of AAG members said that getting more institutions involved was the most important factor. And what could the AAG do to enhance the value of the regions? 26% said more funding. APCG's priorities over the next few years will be to get more universities involved in our meetings, and to provide greater financial assistance so that more students and faculty can attend.

And speaking of meetings, you will have seen the announcement in this issue of *Pacifica* concerning the cancellation of our 2020 meeting. Given the uncertain outlook in terms of both health and funding, I feel that this was the right decision. California State University – San Marcos, which was our venue for this year, has graciously agreed instead to host the 2021 meeting, and Western Washington University in Bellingham will host in 2022 (also graciously!). So plan on attending those meetings. We will keep you posted through *Pacifica*, the APCG website, and the List Serv, with updates. In the meantime, stay healthy and safe, and don't forget to turn to your fellow geographers for support if needed.



CALL FOR PAPERS: *Yearbook of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers*

The *Yearbook of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers* is currently accepting submissions for Volume 82, to be published in August-September 2020, despite the pernicious effects of coronavirus. The journal focuses on the publication of research relating to any aspect of the geography of the Pacific Coast region, broadly defined. However, it also maintains an international perspective, and research that lies outside of the region is also encouraged for potential publication. The *Yearbook* especially welcomes submissions from junior faculty and graduate students as well as retired geographers seeking to provide continuing perspectives on the region.

All submissions to the journal are peer reviewed. Submission guidelines are available at the APCG website: [Publications | The Association of Pacific Coast Geographers](#)

While the 2020 (Volume 82) *Yearbook* is mostly full at this point, there is limited space available for this number or you may submit now for potential publication next year. Submissions or questions should be directed to: Craig S. Revels, Central Washington University, Editor, *APCG Yearbook* revelsc@cwu.edu

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Pacifica is a publication of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers, a regional division of the Association of American Geographers. The newsletter appears two times a year in fall and spring. The deadline for submission of announcements and reports for the Spring issue is April 1, and for the Fall-Winter issue is a fortnight after the conclusion of the annual meeting. Visit <http://www.apcgweb.org> to read about the organization, find a new member application form, and a link to our online membership and donation site.

The Association of Pacific Coast Geographers is an independent organization as well as the regional division of the American Association of Geographers.

APCG member dues are:
Regular \$25; Student or Retired \$15

Contributing \$30 or more (any contribution over \$25 is tax deductible).

A second (Joint) member may be added to any of these categories for another \$3. Second (Joint) members receive a ballot but not another copy of the Yearbook.

Dues are paid for the calendar year. Unless indicated otherwise, checks dated before November 1 will be credited to the current year, while those dated after November 1 will be credited to the next year.

Only current year members receive the *Yearbook*.

Current members will be sent a membership renewal notice near the end of the calendar year.

Regional Councilor Report — Yolonda Youngs, Idaho State University

Greetings APCG! My name is Yolonda Youngs and I am your Regional Councilor to the AAG. I hope this issue of *Pacifica* finds you well and staying healthy. My three-year term started July 1, 2019. Many thanks to Sriram Khé for his exceptional years of service as the former Regional Councilor and his help as I transitioned into this new role (from APCG Secretary, 2015–2019). My first report covers the AAG Council fall 2019 and spring 2020 meetings with highlights that especially pertain to the Pacific region. This report carries some exciting news about renewed support from AAG for regional divisions as well as timely and important information from AAG as we move through this unprecedented time of COVID-19 challenges.

First, a little background on the roles and duties of the Regional Councilor for those who are new to the APCG. This position acts as liaison to help facilitate communication, initiatives, and planning between AAG, APCG, and the other regional divisions of AAG. The duties of the position are divided between national and regional tasks. On the national level, the primary role of the Regional Councilor is to serve on the AAG Council, which is comprised of the AAG President, Past President, and Vice President, as well as Regional Councilors (9 members) and National Councilors (6), and a Student Councilor (1). The Council serves as the governing body of the AAG, establishing committees and determining Association policies and procedures. The APCG Regional Councilor serves on AAG ad hoc committees. I am currently serving on the International Councilor committee and the Regional Task Force of the AAG (along with APCG President Michael Pretes). The Regional Task Force is a short-term committee organized by AAG President David Kaplan to strengthen the work of regional divisions of the AAG. Dr. Kaplan published a detailed description of the Task Force goals in his President's Column of the AAG Newsletter here <http://news.aag.org/2019/12/going-local/>. The International Councilor committee is another initiative of Dr. Kaplan, focused on creating a new position in the AAG Council and expanding the voice of international members of the AAG. The Regional Councilor attends two AAG Council meetings per year and the APCG annual meeting. On the regional level, the Councilor serves on the APCG Executive Council, presents a short verbal report at APCG's annual meeting about important AAG activities that could affect the region, writes two reports per year for *Pacifica*, and reports on the status of departments in the region to the AAG Council.

Fall 2019 AAG Council meeting:

The meeting was held for three days in November 2019 in Washington, D.C. AAG President David Kaplan (2019–2020), Vice-President Amy Lobben, and AAG's new Executive Director Gary Langham lead the meeting. Over three days, we discussed a variety of topics including updates from each of the nine regions of the AAG, AAG finances, specialty and affinity groups, Task Force updates, publications and editorial boards, communication and member services, AAG honors and awards, and the annual spring meeting planned for Denver. This was also AAG Executive Director Gary Langham's first AAG Council meeting. He brings leadership experience from his previous position as Vice President and Chief Scientist at the National Audubon Society. He seems enthusiastic and appreciative of the work of geographers. He presented the Council with some exciting ideas for AAG moving forward, including renovating AAG's Meridian Place building in Washington, D.C., redesigning and launching a new AAG flagship website, and new ways that the AAG can better serve its members. Of particular interest to APCG members, this Council meeting included extensive discussions about the health of AAG regional divisions and ways that the AAG can support and improve regions, relations, and regional meetings. David Kaplan discussed Regional Task Force ideas as well as a recent survey of AAG regional members. Notably, AAG can provide regions with a variety of support services including conference insurance, website hosting, and financial advice. The Task Force and AAG Council are working to expand knowledge about those services to members and make them more accessible. Kaplan attended the APCG 2019 fall meeting in Flagstaff and shared with the Council how much he enjoyed the conference and the opportunity to meet more APCG faculty and students. The Fall 2019 AAG Council meeting minutes are available on the AAG website here: http://www.aag.org/cs/about_aag/governance/council_meeting_minutes

Spring 2020 AAG Council meeting:

AAG canceled this year's annual meeting planned for April in Denver, Colorado, moving to a virtual meeting platform from April 7–11 due to travel restrictions and other challenges associated with the covid-19 outbreak. This is the first time that AAG cancelled a meeting since World War II its first virtual meeting. Although it was regrettable to miss the in-person meeting and activities, AAG reports that the virtual 2020 meeting was a success financially and logistically. AAG Executive Director Gary Langham and AAG Executive Council leadership made key decisions to move the conference online and place AAG in a cutting-edge position for large, professional associations holding some aspect of their conference as a virtual meeting. AAG's Climate Action Task Force offered ideas and structured suggestions that could be scaled up to increase virtual participation outlets at the annual meeting and lessen AAG's environmental impact. AAG is planning to hold future meetings in Seattle (2021), New York City (2022), Denver (2023), and Hawai'i (2024). The AAG Council met virtually April 6–7 using Zoom. AAG 2020 elections resulted in several APCG members winning posts including Dr. Amy Lobben as AAG President and Dr. Kate A. Berry and Dr. Daoqin Tong as a Nominating Committee members. AAG Council discussed a variety of topics including regional reports, AAG finances, specialty and affinity groups, Task Force updates, publications and editorial boards, communication and member services, AAG honors and awards, and AAG's three-year strategic plan.

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Summer 2020 and Fall 2020:

The AAG Council will hold a special and additional third meeting this summer, in June, to address AAG policy needs, new task forces, and regional fall meetings in response to the evolving Covid-19 pandemic. I will attend this virtual meeting and coordinate communication and plans between AAG and APCG, especially in terms of regional support that AAG can offer APCG concerning the Fall 2020 APCG meeting planned for CSU – San Marcos. There is an ongoing discussion and information sharing network between the AAG Regional Councilors about planning for fall conferences as virtual or in-person events or potentially cancelling and rescheduling to another date. In addition, AAG created a new Covid-19 Task Force Regional Subcommittee that is providing decision support and communication to the regional divisions. As your Regional Councilor, I am helping to coordinate communication and resources between AAG Council, other Regional Councilors, APCG Executive Council, and the CSU San Marcos planning committee.

Finally, AAG is eager to hear about the health of geography departments this year in terms of majors, programs, student funding, and faculty and student recruitment and retention. There may be additional resources that AAG can bring to the table to help strengthen programs and departments. I will be sending out a survey in the coming months to APCG geography department chairs that can move this initiative forward. If you have any questions about AAG Council, concerns, or would like more detailed information about topics mentioned in this report, please email me at younyolo@isu.edu.



Panoramic view, Trinidad Bay, California (photograph by Michael Pretes)

Feature Article 1 — (Crowell)

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California. These four parks served as case studies in order to determine the trends in Millennial and Generation Z visitation and the factors accounting for these trends, and to assess generational recreational preferences.

A recent debate in recreation studies and environmental geography is whether technology-driven recreation, such as video games, social media, and activities like Pokémon Go, is reducing the number of younger visitors to national parks in the United States. According to popular media outlets such as CNN (2015) and *The Economist* (2013), America's national parks are struggling to attract young visitors. National Park Service data indicate that visitation to US national parks is increasing (except on a per capita basis, where it is declining), but these data do not usually reveal the actual age of the visitors. The use of electronic devices as recreation is identified as a primary factor in the decline in visitation of United States national parks since 1988 (Pergams and Zaradic 2006, 2008). The studies of Pergams and Zaradic document a decline in total park visitors per capita, but do not include data on the ages of visitors. Though their studies suggest that technology-driven recreation is a leading factor in visitation decline, they say nothing about whether this is especially true for Millennials and Generation Z. A 2013 report in *The Economist* notes that although data are scant, in Great Smoky Mountains National Park the share of summer visitors aged 61 or over rose 10% during a survey conducted in 1996 and increased by 17% in a similar survey in 2008; the share of those 15 and under fell from 26% to 22%. Little to no research has been done on the age of visitors since 2008, and there is no clear quantitative data to support a decline in Millennial and Generation Z visitors. And yet this issue is important, for as Hungerford and Volk (1990) and Duda et al. (1998) have noted, exposure to the outdoors in such places as national parks is crucial in educating young people about the environment and the human impacts on it.

I used three methods to collect data about Millennial and Generation Z visitation to national parks. First, I conducted a survey using Qualtrics survey tools and distributed through social media including Facebook and Twitter, in order to determine what kinds of recreational activities are most popular, and to assess the level of interest in survey respondents in visiting national parks.



Figure 2: Park Ranger and a Generation Z visitor, at Crater Lake National Park

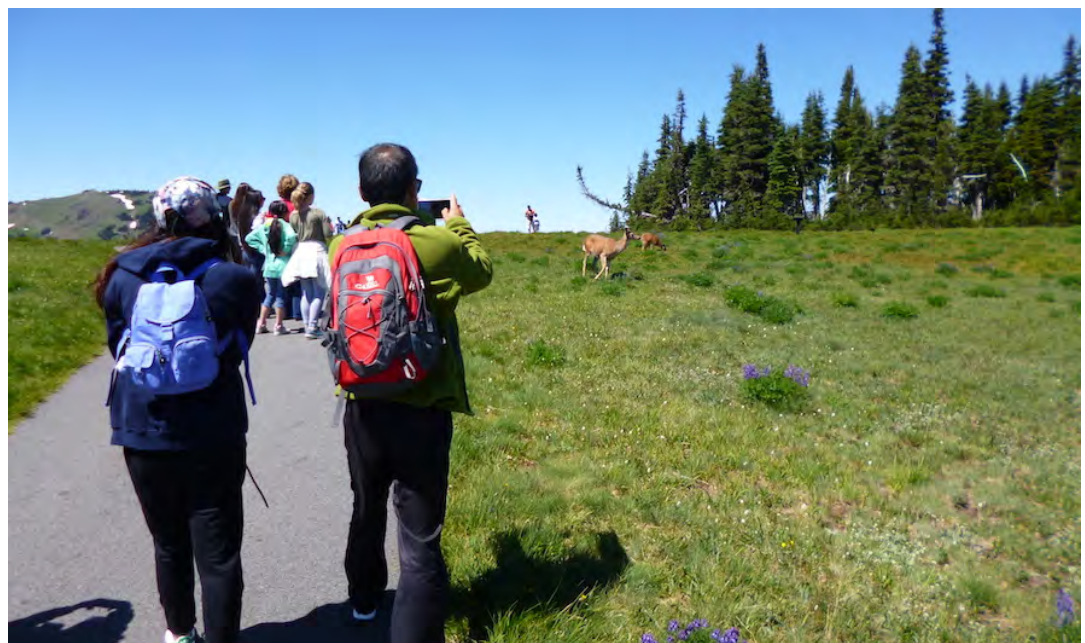


Figure 3: Visitors photographing wildlife at Olympic National Park, Washington State

Feature Article 1 — (Crowell)

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Together with my faculty mentor Dr. Michael Pretes, I conducted field work at the four national parks mentioned above. These were selected because, though all on or near the Pacific Coast, they have different geographical features, different amenities, different visitor numbers, and some parks are close to a large city while others are not. These four cases, then, represent most of the differing components of national parks and therefore avoid any selection bias in the choice of cases. During these visits I interviewed park rangers and operators of local businesses to assess their perceptions of visitor age trends. These semi-structured interviews were my second research method and resulted in substantial qualitative longitudinal data on visitors. I also counted visitors (my third research method) at selected visitor centers and at other locations, including trails and parking lots, in these four parks (at different times of day and scattered over several days in the summers of 2017 and 2018) and identified the number of visitors assessed by estimates of their ages as in the Millennial or Generation Z categories. This resulted in extensive quantitative data about the numbers of park visitors and their ages that allows for comparison across the different parks as well as providing overall data about visitor age trends.

Results suggest that younger visitors (Millennials and Generation Z) do continue to visit national parks in large numbers. Aggregated data across the four parks and over the two years of study found that 22% of park visitors were Generation Z, 34% Millennial, and 44% “older” generations. Younger visitors (Millennials and Generation Z) constituted a total of 56% of park visitors, compared to constituting 48% of the United States population overall. When asked what their preferred recreation option was, 12% of younger visitors identified visiting a national park as their first choice (behind beach, big city, and cruises, but above resorts and “other”). When asked why they didn’t visit a national park, only 10% said they were not interested. Reasons given for inability to visit included not enough time, too far away, lack of information, and too expensive. When asked whether they would prefer to visit a national park, play video games, watch Netflix/Hulu, or engage in extensive social media, 70% of younger visitors said they would prefer to visit a national park. Interviews with park rangers and local business owners supported these results and confirmed the continued interest of younger people in visiting national parks.

Overall, my results suggest that younger visitors continue to visit national parks in large numbers. Moreover, video games and online activities do not seem to be a major deterrent to national park visitation; the largest deterrents for younger visitors were lack of time and lack of proximity. Disaggregated data further suggest that proximity to a large city was not a factor in the number of young visitors to national parks. Finally, some interview results indicate that park visitors may be bypassing visitor centers and instead are using only online resources for park information. Other students at the University of North Alabama are now investigating this last point and one of them shares further results in this issue of *Pacifica*.



Figure 4: Park visitors of diverse ages and nationalities, Olympic National Park

Feature Article 1 — (Crowell)

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CNN. 2015. Does the National Park Service have a youth problem? *Cable News Network*, 19 March 2015. Accessed online 24 October 2019.

Duda, M.D., S.J. Bissell, and K.C. Young. 1998. Wildlife and the American mind: Public opinion on and attitudes toward fish and wildlife management. Harrisonburg, VA: Responsive Management.

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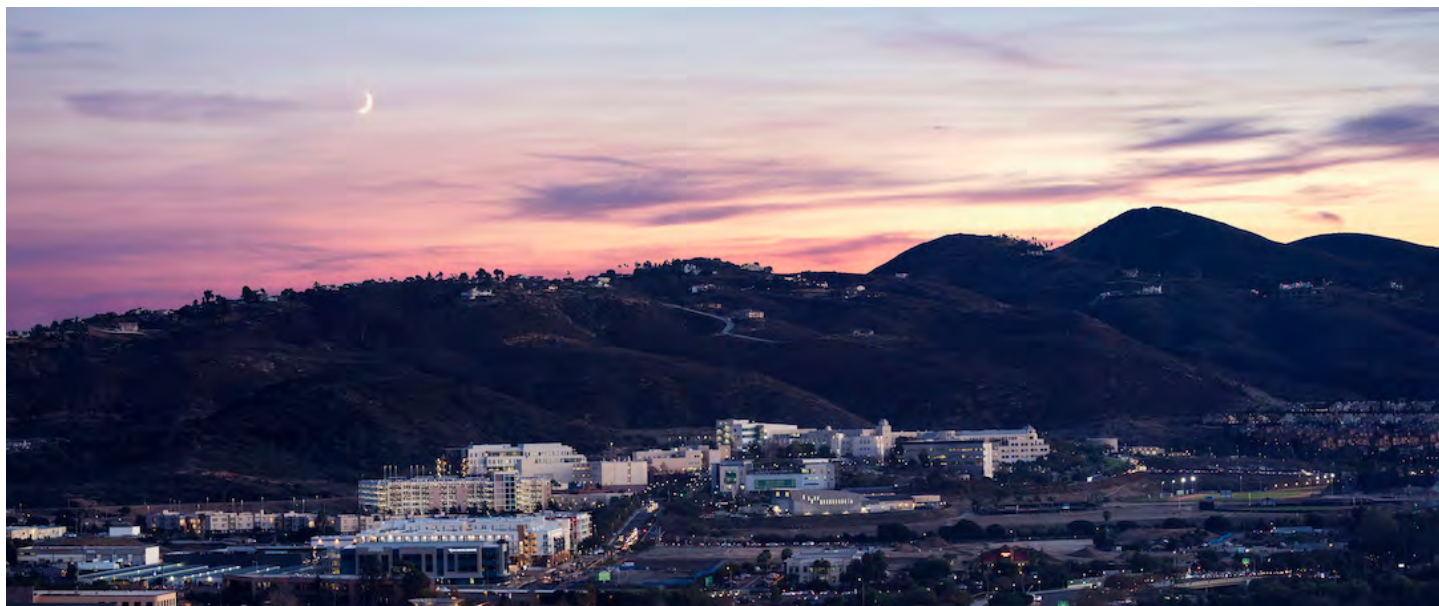
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Figure 5: Young hikers cresting Trail, Olympic National Park

• I thank my faculty mentor Dr. Michael Pretes for his help with this project. I also thank the University of North Alabama Department of Geography Freddie Wood Endowment, the University of North Alabama College of Arts and Sciences, the University of North Alabama Center for Student Research, and the APCG, for research and travel assistance. Some of the results discussed in this article were presented at APCG meetings in Chico 2017 and Reno 2018.

• John Crowell is a 2019 graduate of the University of North Alabama with a B.S. degree in Geographic Information Science. He is currently a Geospatial Analyst with Wisser Imagery Services in Birmingham, Alabama.



Campus View, CSU San Marcos (North County, San Diego)
courtesy of campus Public Information Office

New Members

Welcome to these 114 new members who have joined since Spring 2019 (*asterisk denotes a former member who has rejoined). Most joined in conjunction with registering to attend the Flagstaff meeting.

Heather Agnew*
Taylor Allen
Ovidio Alvarez
Gabriel Angulo
Jasmine Arpagian*
Sabrina Barlow
Timothy Beach*
Daniel Beene
Darren Bingham
Raju Bista
Joseph Bogart*
Shelly Bruhnl
Brendan Cabe
Natalia Cachora
David Carlson
Daniel Clark
Kathleen Cook-Bowen
Peter Crank
Prudence Crawmer
James Cunningham
Hannah Daugherty
David Diaz
Coline Dony
Michelle DuBreuil
Cheryl Duran
Rachel Ellis
Kaylyn Ells-Ho'okano
David Folch
Daniel Foley
Joe Gallegos
Brian Garcia
Steven Gehrke
Fiona Joy Gladstone*
Xi Gong
Marta J. Graves*
Davis Griffin
Kerry Grimm
Autumn Harry
Dawn Hawley*
Meghan Heffernan
Cyril J. Hegel*
Ryan Heintzman
Martha Henderson*
Bethan Heng*
Alexander Hibbert
Anthony Hilly
Olivia Hinton

Shelby Hockaday
Charles Holloman
Allan James
Philana Jeremiah
Geoffrey Johnson*
Maggie Jones*
Drew Kapp
Alder Keleman Saxena
Do Khym
Solana Kline
Ryan Tuong An Koyanagi
Victoria Kundert
Kangsan Lee
Michael Lewis
Yan Lin
Diana Liverman*
Elena Louder
Renee Louis*
Casey Lynch*
Janardan Mainali
Chase Mathis
Heather J. McAfee*
Laura McCann
Sophia Melfi*
Dugan Meyer
Michelle Mohr
Edwin Nahavandi
Atsushi Nara
Dylan Nascimbeni
Lise Nelson*
Patrick Oberle
Özlem Ayse Özgür
Lora Phillips
Jessi Quizar
Ivy Rea
Zachary Reese
Dawn Reimer
Jon Rex
Jonathan Rossiter*
Dereka Rushbrook*
Melissa Ryan
Walter Ryce
Mackeen Safi
David Saldana
Cory Sanchez
Jason Sanstrom
Alark Saxena*

Erik Schiefer
Sydney Shaw
Shelby Smith*
Karen Sonksen*
Peter Soule*
Amanda Stan
Rachel Stilley
Selima Sultana
Matthew Toro
Nathan Treacy
Tera Trujillo*
Antonio Vallejo
Lily Villa
Amber Villa
Georgia Weiss-Elliott
Matthew Welker*
Tyrel Wilson
Xiaozhe Yin
Alexandra Yost
Xuan Zhang

Feature Article 2 — Sources of Visitor Information in US National Parks

Charles F. Holloman III

Undergraduate Student, Geography, University of North Alabama

Visitors to national parks derive information about what and where to visit from a variety of sources, including brochures, guidebooks, visitor centers, and—increasingly—from social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TripAdvisor, Yelp, etc.). Is social media taking over as the primary source of information about national parks? What implications do shifts in information sources have for park managers? The purpose of my research is to determine what sources of information visitors are using, and what trends might appear within different park user demographics. No scholars have yet conducted a study focusing directly on sources of visitor information in United States national parks.

Recent media reports suggest that the rise of social media has caused some national parks to see exponential growth in visitation, to the point where it is physically damaging the more popular parks (National Public Radio 2019). Though park visitation is continually increasing, visitor centers could experience a decline in visitation due to all necessary information being available online. Scholars have looked into some aspects of information sources for national parks (e.g., Cessford and Muhar 2003; Levin et al. 2017; Moyle and Croy 2009; Ngoka and Ngoka 2013) but this research is either outdated (predating the extensive use of social media) or conducted outside the United States (mainly in Australia and Africa). Some scholars have examined national park outreach, and how to get international tourists to visit United States national parks (Uysal et al. 1990) but this research was conducted before the rise of social media. The few studies on this topic are all over a decade old, meaning none of them account for what could be considered the most powerful information source that drives visitation to national parks. According to National Public Radio (2019) “visitation to national parks and recreation areas has increased by 37% since Instagram was first founded in 2010.” And, in reference to the effect that social media has had on visitation, recreation ecologist Ashley D’Antonio noted that “there hasn’t been a study done yet that’s been published that’s been able to show a direct cause and effect” between social media and national park visitation (Adirondack Wilderness Advocates 2019).

My project is meant to be the first step toward determining what role that the Internet and social media has in visitation to national parks by asking: 1) Is social media becoming the primary source of visitor information at United States national parks? 2) Do different types of visitors (such as visitors of different ages) use different sources of park information? and 3) How does the rise of social media use affect national park management?

I used two methods to collect information about sources of visitor information in United States national parks. First, I conducted field work, together with my faculty sponsor Dr. Michael Pretes, at Great Basin National Park in Nevada, in June and July 2019. This park was selected because of its remote location, meaning that visitors clearly intend to visit the park, and are not just stopping by because of proximity to a city or Interstate highway. During the field work I conducted semi-structured interviews with thirteen park rangers and the park superintendent, asking about interactions between park visitors and park rangers, and about the use of visitor centers. I also examined visitor center layout and infrastructure at the two visitor centers in the park. Second, I conducted a survey analyzed



Figure 1: The author interviewing a visitor center ranger, Great Basin National Park, Nevada



Figure 2: Visitor Centers and interpretive materials help travelers from afar grasp the possibilities of what they are about to see

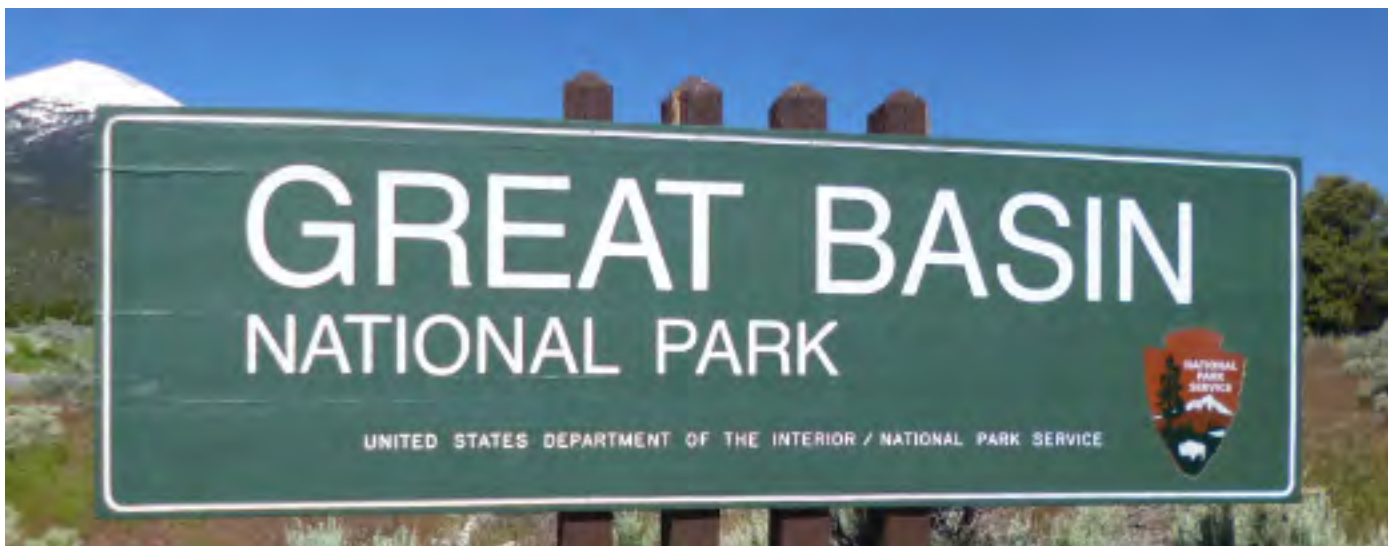


Figure 3: Even Great Basin National Park, a 1970s addition to the NPS, makes its presence felt

Feature Article 2 — (Holloman)

...continued from previous page

using Qualtrics software that was distributed through social media including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. This twelve-question, closed-response survey asked about visitor characteristics and about sources of visitor information including questions about interactions with park rangers, use of visitor centers, use of print materials, use of websites, and use of social media sites. It was open to anyone with access to social media, not just Great Basin National Park visitors. As of this moment 128 responses have been recorded. These two methods give both broad (through the survey) and deep (through interviews) information about sources of visitor information at national parks.

My initial results suggest that visitors of all ages continue to visit national park visitor centers, and talk to park rangers, in large numbers, suggesting that social media complements, but does not replace, in-person and printed information sources. Park rangers and the park superintendent were unanimous in stating that, based on their observations, most park visitors visit park visitor centers and engage with rangers. Survey results confirm this personal and historical view. The 128 survey respondents were about equally divided between generations (25% Generation Z, 35% Millennial, and 40% older generations). Most respondents had visited at least one national park in the United States; the largest response group visited more than six parks. Almost twice the number of respondents used the national park or other website instead of a social media site (40% compared to 23%). Less than five percent of respondents did not use any printed materials in planning their park visit. Respondents indicated that using a park website (36%), or speaking to a park ranger (30%), were more important sources of information about attractions and activities compared to social media (20%). Park visitors nevertheless indicated that cell phone service in parks was important to them, but WiFi access less so.

Overall, these preliminary results suggest that visitors to United States national parks are not acquiring the bulk of their information, in both planning and visiting stages, about national parks through social media. Instead, most park visitors still recognize the importance of visiting visitor centers and speaking to park rangers. When online sources are used, park websites, or general Google searches, were more important than social media sites (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TripAdvisor, Yelp, etc.). As noted on Phys.org (2015), interactions between visitors and park rangers in Australian national parks resulted in greater visitor satisfaction, emphasizing that personal contact is still important. This is undoubtedly the case in the United States as well, as my initial results suggest. Park managers should therefore continue to maintain and enhance visitor centers and similar facilities, and to increase the number of interpretive park rangers at these facilities.



Feature Article 2 — (Holloman)

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Adirondack Wilderness Advocates. 2019. Facebook.com. May 28. [facebook.com/permalink.php?id=233190700408486&story_fbid=771314799929404](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?id=233190700408486&story_fbid=771314799929404).

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- I am grateful to my faculty mentor Dr. Michael Pretes for helping me with this project. I am also grateful for support from the University of North Alabama Department of Geography Freddie Wood Endowment, the University of North Alabama College of Arts and Sciences, the University of North Alabama Center for Student Research, and the APCG, all of which supported aspects of my field research and conference travel. Some of the results discussed in this article were presented at the APCG meeting in Flagstaff 2019.
- Charles Holloman is an undergraduate student in the Department of Geography at the University of North Alabama. He will graduate in May 2021.



Wheeler Peak, Great Basin National Park
— second highest peak in Nevada, 13,065 feet (3,982 m) —

Candidate Statement, APCG Vice President (2021–2022)

**Kris Bezdecny, Assistant Professor, Department of Geosciences & Environment,
California State University, Los Angeles**

PhD, Geography and Environmental Science & Policy, 2011, University of South Florida
MA, Geography, 2003, University of South Florida
BA, History, 1998, Metropolitan State College of Denver
BS, Mathematics, 1997, Metropolitan State College of Denver

Thank you so much for nominating me for Vice President of the APCG! I received my PhD from University of South Florida in 2011. I began working as an assistant professor at Cal State LA in Fall 2015, and I've been an active APCG member since 2016.

My research focuses on uneven geographical development in urban spaces – or, how we reinforce sociospatial inequities in city-spaces at the neighborhood, local, regional, state, national, and global scales. My work is a hybridization of political economy/ecology and sociopolitical/sociocultural analysis. My first research thread right now is on the policy behind the 2015 California Drought, and how it disproportionately impacted urban spaces and the narratives of individually “doing our part” — and the disconnect with the actual water load on the ground before and during the Drought. My second primary thread focuses on the evolution of the relationship between urban globalization and urban theming taking place in the guise of branded communities, with a focus on the case study of Celebration, Florida. This is something we also see in less extreme forms as we watch gentrification and “hipsterization” in communities tie into global branding as part of changing the neighborhood landscape.

In the classroom, I facilitate the senior thesis research of all geography students at Cal State LA, which includes research projects in environmental geography, urban geography, and GIS – mostly focused on issues of environmental justice, social justice, transportation access, and community development. I actively supervise several master's thesis students each year.

I try to provide additional support to geography through our institutions for the discipline. For the past two years, I have been a Board Member of the Qualitative Research Specialty Group of the AAG; for the past three years I was Treasurer of the Los Angeles Geographical Society, and this year I was named President of the Los Angeles Geographical Society. In my time attending APCG meetings I have participated as a judge on the Awards Committee twice, at the Portland and Flagstaff meetings.

As APCG Vice President, I plan to build on the foundations of our most recent Presidents, and focus on increased visibility of geography throughout the APCG region. I would build on the outreach campaigns already in progress, particularly to K-12 schools and non/alt-ac professionals. As a geographer for 20 years this year (!), I am still amazed at the number of “geographers in hiding”: people who do geography, but don't have the name to attach to it, or geographers who are working across a wide variety of academic disciplines and professional positions that aren't called “geography” or “geographer.”

I also want to continue the work of targeting underrepresented departments in our region, particularly the students at these departments. APCG is an amazing opportunity for them to plug into an amazing network of researchers in a way not fully possible during the whirlwind of AAG. In addition APCG can build on previous work to help increase the awards we fund each year as a continuing avenue to target underrepresented departments. This is not just money — though while we have a robust number of awards, this is a case where more is always better — but also doing the very best we can to ensure we have applicants for all our awards each year. I tell my students frequently that they are what the future of geography looks like, and our awards system is one of the fastest ways to make that future a reality today, while continuing to do the slower, harder work of creating a more pluralistic geography at all levels and institutions.

Much of this work would not be possible without working with the other AAG regions and AAG. Brian Pompeii, David Kaplan at AAG, and particularly Mike Pretes have done an amazing job plugging APCG into the ongoing discussions between the organizations, and I would be remiss to have those connections fall apart during my time as VP.

Finally, I want to thank all of you for welcoming me into the APCG family 4 years ago, when I first began attending meetings! I worked with the Florida Society of Geographers as a member, presenter, and Managing Editor of *The Florida Geographer* as a graduate student at USF. I also took students to East/West Lakes during my one year teaching at Wright State. What made them special was that they were smaller than AAG, which meant more community – and more discussions and interactions between geographers of every stripe and calling. I also found them to be very supportive of both students and faculty. It only made sense for me, 4 years ago, to bring students to APCG in Portland. I see this as paying forward the experiences I had had as a student – while giving my students an opportunity to interact with a broader array of geographers and present their work in a more community-oriented space. Whether elected VP or not, I plan to continue to support our APCG community as best that I can for the foreseeable future, as it has supported my students and me.

Candidate Statement, APCG Vice President (2021–2022)

Michael W. Pesses, Professor of Geography,
Antelope Valley College

PhD, Cultural Studies, Claremont Graduate University
MA, Geography, California State University, Northridge
BA, Anthropology, University of California, Los Angeles

I am honored to be nominated for the position of APCG Vice President. I attended my first APCG meeting as a CSUN masters student over a decade ago and made connections and friends that I maintain to this day. The relatively small gatherings combined with top notch discussions on a variety of spatial subjects have made this event one I look forward to each year.

My path to becoming a geographer has not been direct, nor exactly as I had planned. A career as a field archaeologist led me to a career in GIS which, thank goodness, led me to the masters program at CSUN. It was there that I realized I was better suited to a life in academia than in the industry jobs I had held up until that point. And thanks to the incredible faculty, I also realized that I was above all else a human geographer. I had planned on going straight into a geography PhD program, but being a new dad and new homeowner at the start of Great Recession in Southern California put those plans on hold.

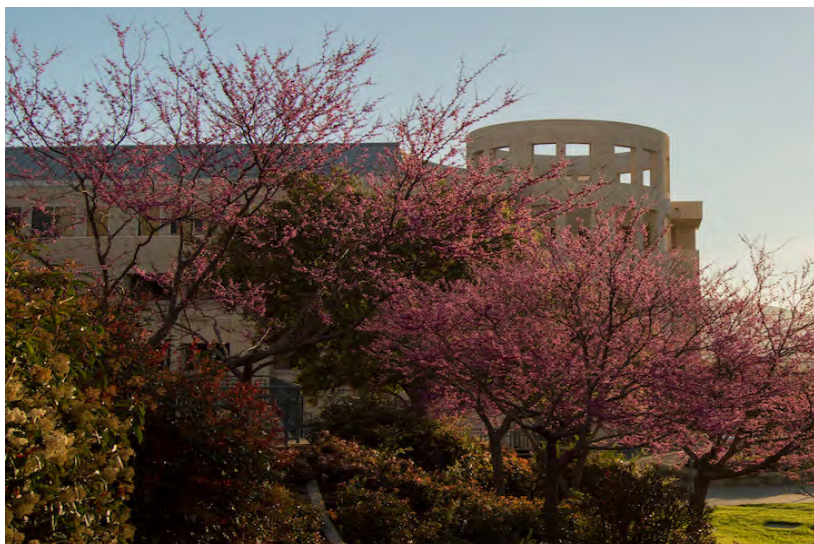
I was incredibly fortunate to get a tenure-track position at Antelope Valley College in Northern Los Angeles County at that same time, however, and have worked there ever since. Eventually I was able to go back to grad school and earned my PhD. While my doctorate is in cultural studies, my dissertation is a work of human geography that involves participant observation of four-wheeling along the Rubicon Trail of Northern California, as well as a sustained exploration of spatial theory to question how we perceive nature.

I am currently finishing a monograph on cinema and the automobile to explore why we struggle to abandon cars even if they are environmentally destructive. I am also working on a paper that combines classic landscape reading in Flint, Michigan, with an analysis of the surreal fact that Foucault was repeatedly discussed by local officials during the peak of the water crisis.

As Vice President, I would like to reach out to more institutions to encourage participation from faculty and students who might not normally think to attend academic meetings. As someone who works in the California Community College system, I know how hard it can be to get to these meetings. Institutional funding can often be non-existent; in recent years I myself have had to foot the bill to attend, as it is seen as non-essential!

At the same time, our outreach to such schools is minimal. With rising costs of education, community colleges are the only option for many students. If we sincerely wish to develop and nurture a diverse discipline, we should be reaching out to the institutions in which future geography students are attending and figuring out ways to get them to our meetings. Many community college students are still trying to figure out their path through college and are often very excited by what geography has to offer. These first- and second-year students might not have research to share (though many community colleges are building robust undergraduate research programs) but they can benefit, as I know I did, by seeing how geography is applied to a variety of problems. The community feel at my first APCG meeting in Long Beach got me excited about geography way more than my first overwhelming and imposing AAG meeting. Our transfer students are an incredible resource in filling university programs with bright minds and I would love the opportunity to make our region a leader in the cultivation of future geographers.

CSU San Marcos campus at dusk, with flowering plums in full display.



From your Memory Counselor, Bob Richardson:

Contributing Members

Many thanks to the following Contributing members for 2020 (39 in all — sixteen from last year have yet to renew). Of the 219 members who have already renewed or joined for 2020 as of April 5, 2020, 17.8% are Contributing Members, slightly up from last year. The extra they have paid for their membership (\$1,170 more than if Regular members) helps to pay for the President's Awards and regular travel grants for student presenters.

Clark Akatiff	Leslie Hassett	Lily A. House-Peters
Daniel D. Arreola	John P. Jones, III	Kenneth Madsen
Gregory S. Bohr	Rajrani Kalra	Peter F. Mason
David L. Carlson	Sriram Khé	Janice Monk
James Chin	Larry Knopp	John P. Preston
Robert W. Christopherson	James S. Kus	Michael Pretes
Richard Cocke	Sheryl Luzzadder-Beach	Robert T. Richardson
William K. Crowley	Alexander B. Murphy	Christine Rodrigue
Robin Datel	Doug R. Oetter	Robert A. Sauder
Vincent J. Del Casino, Jr.	David A. Plane	Jeffrey P. Schaffer
Dennis J. Dingemans	Michael Pretes	Paul F. Starrs
Tracey Ferguson	Jan Ford	Donald E. Vermeer
Richard Francaviglia	Barbara Fredrich	James (Jim) Wickes
Kathryn (Katie) Gerber	Dorothy E. Freidel	Joanne Scott Wuerker
James W. Harrington, Jr.	Elena Givental	

Special Fund Contributions

Since the Fall–Winter 2019–2020 listing, which cut off on November 16, \$4,580 in new contributions have come to our Special Funds, as follows: \$400 to the Women's Network Travel Grant fund, \$1,730 to the Larry Ford Fieldwork Scholarship in Cultural Geography fund, \$145 to the Latina/o American Travel Scholarship fund, \$150 to the Indigenous Student Travel Scholarship fund, \$100 to the African Descent Student Travel Scholarship fund, \$50 for the Margaret Trussell Scholarship fund, \$1,025 for the Eugene Hoerauf Scholarship fund, and \$880 in General contributions. All donations made since July 2016, whether by check or PayPal, are now logged into our apcg.wildapricot.org site, in case you want to check your contributions. Thanks to the following for their support:

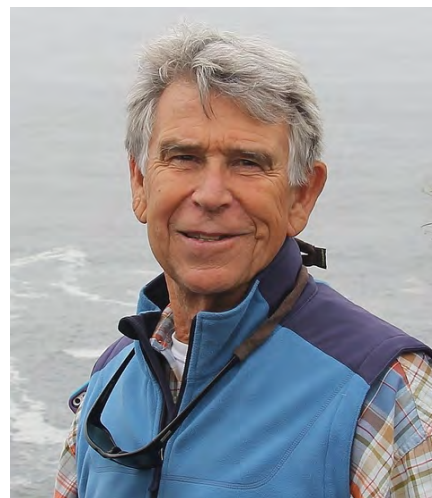
Anonymous	Jan Ford	Michael Pretes
Marvin W. Baker	Barbara Fredrich	Robert T. Richardson
James Chin	Dorothy E. Freidel	Christine Rodrigue
Janet Collins	Elena Givental	Robert A. Sauder
William K. Crowley	Lily A. House-Peters	Jeffrey P. Schaffer
Stephen Cunha	Kenneth Madsen	Paul F. Starrs
Robin Datel	Peter F. Mason	Donald E. Vermeer
Dennis J. Dingemans	Janice Monk	James (Jim) Wickes
Richard A. Eigenheer	John P. Preston	Joanne Scott Wuerker

Flagstaff Update

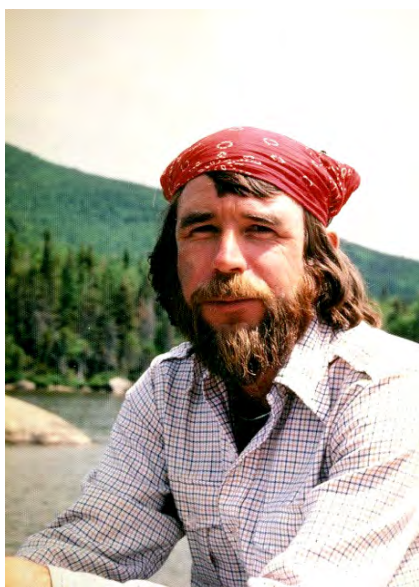
In the last issue I said that the Flagstaff meeting was running a profit, but the precise amount wasn't yet available. With my brain numbed by sheltering in place, I'm not sure I can figure it out now, but here's what I've got: For the current fiscal year (started July 1) and all the bills paid, the conference is \$1,397.41 in the black. In the last fiscal year they were \$367.72 in the red, because of a \$475 deposit for the Museum of Northern Arizona and one registration (net after PayPal fee). So I believe the Flagstaff Annual Meeting overall netted \$1,029.69. Well Done, Northern Arizona University people! I really enjoyed working with Denielle Perry through all of this—she is great.

In Memoriam - Lester 'Les' Rowntree, 1938–2019

Geographer Lester Rowntree was most at home exploring landscapes, to both appreciate and protect their cultural and ecological diversity. As a gifted educator, he enthusiastically shared what he learned and inspired his students to engage with the natural world. Les (the name he preferred) was an environmental geographer by training who loved nothing more than to walk in the oak woodlands, sail across the San Francisco Bay, or climb in the Sierra Nevada or the Cascades for the sheer joy of it. He made his impact on the disciplines of geography and environmental studies through teaching at San José State University, writing textbooks, scholarly articles on the cultural landscape, and a lifetime of research and activism working with California's natural environment. He was a superb mentor for geographers of any age, making time for long discussions, careful listening, and wise advice. Les passed away on August 30th, 2019, in his Berkeley home after a long struggle with cancer. He was 80 years old.



As a scholar Les was most known for a series of important essays on cultural landscape interpretation. He and his wife, UC Berkeley archaeologist Meg Conkey, co-authored an influential paper in 1980 titled “Symbolism and the Cultural Landscape” that appeared in the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. Another influential piece was the 1996 essay “The Cultural Landscape Concept in American Human Geography” which appeared in *Concepts in Human Geography* edited by Carville Earle, Kent Mathewson, and Martin Kenzer. He was a prolific textbook author. In the 1980s he joined geographer Terry Jordan to co-author *The Human Mosaic: A Thematic Introduction to Cultural Geography*, a project he worked on for seven editions. He then collaborated with Martin Lewis, Marie Price, and William Wyckoff for over twenty years on two world regional geography books, *Diversity Amid Globalization: World Regions, Environment, Development* (seven editions) and *Globalization and Diversity: Geography of a Changing World* (six editions). The books introduced a thematic structure for world regions while conceptually linking areas through globalization processes. The most recent edition of *Globalization and Diversity* was published in 2019. The best part about working with Les on these books was the way he approached it, with joy, high energy, purposefulness, and a dash of irreverence.



Although he wrote about the world, Lester Bradford Rowntree was a native Californian who cared deeply about his home. Born by the Pacific Ocean in Carmel on December 22, 1938, he spent his youth in what he called a “quaint village of artists, bohemians, and other interesting folk.” In the post-war years his parents moved to Berkeley, where his father was a member of the Berkeley Fire Department. Les attended school there, graduated from Berkeley High School, and was elected class president. His college years were restless as he struggled to find a subject that would keep his attention as much as the mountains and the sea, and toward the end he’d fondly recollect summers spent in fire lookouts and hanging out with climbers at the fabled Camp 4, near Yosemite Falls (photo at left dated early 1970s). He took time off, served in the US Army, and was eventually stationed in Germany where he wrote for *Stars & Stripes*. His time in Europe introduced him to Austria and the Alps, which he returned to for his doctoral dissertation research. After being honorably discharged from the army as a conscientious objector, he eventually returned to California and San José State University where he

earned a BA in Geography in 1966. He then went to the University of Oregon where he earned his MA (1970) and subsequently, a PhD (1971) with a dissertation titled “To Save a City: Urban Preservation in Salzburg, Austria,” (ProQuest, 7122128).

With PhD in hand, he returned to San José State University (SJSU) to teach. For over thirty years he taught in the Departments of Geography and Environmental Studies, introducing thousands of students to his passion for environmental geography and landscape interpretation, and steering a long list of students to graduate studies. While at SJSU he chaired the Department of Environmental Studies from 1995-2005. That department, established in 1970, was among the first of its kind in the country. He retired from SJSU as Professor Emeritus in 2005 to focus on his writing, activism, and love of the outdoors. He held Visiting Scholar and Research Associate appointments at the University of California, Berkeley since 2005.

Perhaps the most personal scholarly project of his career was *Hardy Californians: A Woman’s Life with Native Plants*, which was published in 2006 by the University of California Press. A monograph by the same title was first published in 1936 by (Gertrude) Lester Rowntree, Les’s grandmother, with whom he shared the identical name. His grandmother lived in the Carmel Highlands and was a pioneering expert on California’s native flora. Les took enormous pride in re-introducing his grandmother’s path-breaking work to a new generation of ecologists and botanists. He also enjoyed writing popular environmental essays for *Bay Nature*. Two excellent examples of the teacher/scholar writing to a broader audience are: “[When it Rains it Pours: Atmospheric Rivers and Drought](#)”; and “[Forged by Fire: Lightning and Landscape at Big Sur](#)” in which he returns to his lifelong interest in the impact of fire on the landscape, which was the theme of his Presidential Address to the APCG.



Even though teaching required a long commute to San José, Les eventually returned to the Berkeley Hills to live in 1987 with his wife Meg Conkey, who at that time was appointed to the Department of Anthropology as a Professor of Archeology at UC Berkeley. Their home was regularly filled with visiting scholars, friends and family. Summers often included research, especially at Meg’s field site in the Ariège, north of the French Pyrénées, with frequent travel to a family summer home in Maine. Les and Meg also shared a devotion to Cal sports and regularly attended women’s basketball and men’s football games. Les passed away in his home with a view of the ‘hardy Californian’ native plants that filled their garden. He is survived by his wife Meg, daughters Erika and Alicechandra, three

grandchildren, and his brother Rowan and sister Pat. Memorials were held in the Chancellor’s suite at UC Berkeley’s Memorial Stadium before Thanksgiving 2019, and in Carmel just before Christmas.

— Marie Price and Paul F. Starrs (text minimally corrected from AAG “Memorials & Tributes” site)



From your *Pacifica* Editor, two notes in conclusion:

1. If you're handy with compositing and use of InDesign (Adobe), please consider taking on the role of *Pacifica* editor; I agreed to do this for two issues, and my term is complete. I can pass along all files, and my predecessor, Lily House-Peters, created a fine design that is a functional template.

2. Beyond that, apologies for what may seem like tardiness for this newsletter. Well, it IS late, but the previous draft version was full to the brim with sincere and enthusiastic references to the CSU San Marcos meeting, and expressed no small pleasure at the venue in North County, San Diego, an area I explored widely while working on my *Field Guide to California Agriculture*, with co-author Peter Goin. (It's an area replete with old avocado groves, fruit orchards, and smallholder agricultural operations, though admittedly more and more prone to fall under the chainsaws and survey markers of future subdivisions in the Southland.) And once the full implications of sheltering-in-place, teaching "remotely" (on-line, that means, but our administrators aren't especially fond of that terminology), and being homebound for twelve weeks, now, it took some time for the APCG Executive Council to suss out how we were going to deal with a meeting in the shadows of COVID-19. When the CSU system (23 campuses, nearly a half-million undergraduate students) concluded that there would be a minimum of in-person classes, that took the 2020 San Marcos meeting out of the realm of possibility, and, as Yolonda Youngs notes in her AAG Regional Councilor discussion, the AAG and other professional organizations are deep in the same quandaries. Once the Executive Council saw venues dimming, the conclusion was, no meeting in October was likely to succeed, and the decision to skip a year, keep the meeting in San Marcos, and hope for the best (for all of us). There are signs of hope, and not just in the statue of César Chávez, seen here on the San Marcos campus.

— Best wishes to you all, and stay safe. // Paul F. Starrs, acting editor

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campus scene, CSU San Marcos

