



Dear Alumni and Friends:

It is my pleasure to introduce this year's issue of the *Outcrop*, filled with news of Geobadgers from around the country. The hurricane season of 2005 had a profound effect on many of our alumni working in the energy industries along the Gulf Coast. Board of Visitors member Maitri Venkat-Ramani offers her reflections as a New Orleanian whose life was disrupted by Katrina (page 23) and Jay Nania describes the challenges he faced as a member of BP's Humanitarian Assistance Team in the aftermath of that storm (page 21).

The highlight of the year in Madison, of course, was the West Wing Dedication and the Alumni Reunion that took place in May. Photos and a description of the festivities can be found on pages 6 and 7. The citation for Richard Alley, who spoke at the Friday afternoon technical conference and received our distinguished alumni award at the Saturday banquet, is included on page 10.

The completion of the West Wing was possible thanks to the generosity of many alumni and friends. Of the total construction and remodeling costs of about \$5 million, a total of \$1 million came from those who contributed over the last five years to the Building for a New Millennium Campaign. In particular, I'd like to acknowledge the sixteen major individual and corporate donors whose contributions at the "naming level" supported the library, new or remodeled labs, classrooms, and meeting areas. These donors are listed along with pictures of the named areas on pages 8 and 9. This project was conceived in 1998 by former Chair, John Valley, who secured the first \$4 million from WARF, the Department, and the College of Letters and Science as a challenge to match alumni gifts. We owe the success of the Building for a New Millennium Campaign to the dedicated fundraising efforts of former Chair Clark Johnson, the Board of Visitors, led by Ken Ciriacks with assistance from Jay Nania and Anne Lucke of the UW Foundation. Clark Johnson and Ben Abernathy (who served as Building Committee Chairman starting in April 2003) worked extremely hard throughout the construction process, interacting closely with the builders, identifying and solving a variety of problems, participating in the design of new and remodeled labs, and keeping the project within the available budget by careful monitoring and evaluation of alternatives to reduce costs.

The retirement of Dave Mickelson at the end of the spring semester was another landmark event. The celebration of his career in the fall (page 39) provided an opportunity for a lively gathering of Quat alumni and friends from across the country. While Dave has retired from classroom teaching, he is still leading field trips including a UW Alumni Association one to Iceland, scheduled for September 2006 (page 40).

Other exciting events in the department included the arrival of Professor Eric Roden (page 41), whose new geomicrobiology lab is now up and running on the 3rd floor of Weeks III. Other new labs made possible by the West Wing addition include Huifang Xu's nanomineralogy lab (page 52) and the ion microprobe (picture on page 50). Clark Johnson and Brian Beard's work on biogeochemical cycling of iron isotopes was featured in a *Science* article and is the subject of this year's *Outcrop* cover story (pages 11 to 13).

Sadly, 2005 brought the loss of a number of good friends of the department. The "In Memoriam" section (pages 25 to 29) includes tributes to former faculty Norman Newell and Charles Guidotti, to alumni Jim Parks, Tor Nilsen, Bob Sneider, and Gerard Bond, and to long-time supporter Lewis Austin Weeks, the only child of Lewis G. Weeks.

Finally, while we normally restrict news in the *Outcrop* to events of the previous year, we've broken with tradition to share last month's announcement of Mary Anderson's election to the National Academy of Engineering. You can read more about that on page 16.

Best regards,

Jean Bahr
Professor and Department Chair

Gifts to the department in 2005

Thank you for remembering us.

Gifts toward the end of the year may have been recorded for 2006

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