

### ❖ Dana Geary

The spring of 2001 was extra busy, but an interesting time because of our search for a new faculty member in “geobiology with expertise in marine microfossils.” All of our work paid off when Clay Kelly joined the department. I am very excited to have a new paleontological colleague here. Clay’s interests and expertise combine well with my own; we look forward to lots of interesting research and teaching opportunities.

My primary research activities were oriented towards our Lake Pannon project (see “Ancient Lake Pannon,” page 20). Colleague Imre Magyar visited for two weeks this summer, when we continued our morphometric work on cardiids and organized our thoughts for a talk at NAPC (North American Paleontology Convention). The meeting was in Berkeley in July and was quite enjoyable. Having spent much of my childhood in Berkeley (at my grandmother’s house), it always brings back memories—to hike the hills, smell the eucalyptus, and gaze out at the bay.

Hilary Sanders continued her PhD work on the congeriid bivalves of Lake Pannon, and gave a presentation on their evolution at NAPC. Hilary intends to finish her thesis in the summer of 2002. In the meantime, she is teaching this spring at Lawrence University in Appleton.

Jim Freiheit continued his study of the genus *Strombus* in the Dominican Republic, and presented some of his results at NAPC. We began a collaboration with Stephen Schellenberg to determine growth rates and test for ecophenotypy using trace elements in Jim’s snails. As of this writing, his MS thesis is nearly complete, and we are working on plans for his PhD research.

Paul Mayer continues his thesis work on Devonian stratigraphy and paleoecology, while also working at the Milwaukee Public Museum. Paul gave a presentation on his work at NAPC.

Former Weeks postdoc Jay Schneider left Madison in the fall for a teaching job at George Washington University. We wish him well!

Postdoc Gwen Daley (see her report on page 29) continues her work on a Florida Pleistocene sequence of shallow marine shell beds. Gwen’s paleocommunity analyses have uncovered two distinct assemblages with a transitional or intermediate assemblage lying stratigraphically between them. She has a paper in press in *Palaios* describing these communities. With the help of four undergrads, we are now exploring several issues related to these differing paleocommunities. Christine Pagelsdorf is collecting landmark morphometric data on samples of *Chione* from the two communities, to examine whether intraspecific variation is consistent

with paleoenvironment. Holly Schultz is quantifying several aspects of the preservation of shells, in order to test for taphonomic differences between assemblages. Martha Kutter is doing grain size analyses as well as drilling out samples for stable isotope and trace element analyses. And Summer Ostrowski is pursuing several paleoecological questions relevant to the two communities, including types of epibionts and boreholes. Summer presented some of her work at GSA in Boston.

On the home front, 2001 was a big year. Rob was granted tenure in the Zoology Department. Molly began kindergarten and Sarah started second grade. All is well.

### ❖ Clay Kelly

Please see “New Faculty” for Clay Kelly’s report.

### ❖ Louis J. Maher

I taught Geol. 101 (General Geology) and Geol. 722 (Quaternary Pollen Analysis) in the spring. During the fall I did Geol. 101 again and helped Basil Tikoff with Geol. 202 (Introduction to Geologic Structures), one of the new majors’ courses. Geol. 202 involved a lot of field trips, both local and out of state. I really enjoyed the excursion to the Badlands and the Black Hills. The weather was perfect, the geology was excellent, and my very capable Geol. 101 TAs handled the lectures I missed in Madison.

Eric Grimm, an old friend and colleague from the Illinois State Museum, mentioned that he was finding pollen fluctuations in a number of his sites in Illinois that appeared to match an anomalous interval in my diagram from Devils Lake. The curve of pollen from ash trees rose when spruce declined at the end of the glacial period. Then ash abundance dropped drastically while spruce pollen increased for a time before ash continued its postglacial rise. In the original Devils Lake C-14 chronology, the zone of low ash pollen dated from just after the destruction of the Two Creeks Forest by the Great Lakean ice advance that deposited till over the forest bed along Lake Michigan. The total influx of pollen during this interval was quite low in Devils Lake which suggested a time of cool wet weather. I have always been proud of the Devils Lake C-14 dates that were done by Margaret Bender at the Center for Climate Research’s C-14 lab here in Madison in the late 1970s. They were dates run on the bulk sediment, but the 4-inch diameter cores allowed the sample to come from an interval of just a few centimeters, and the smooth curve of increasing age with depth looked very convincing. But in recent years Accelerator Mass Spectrometry (AMS) has allowed a tiny organic sample,