

# NREM Update

APRIL 2010

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- **NREM Alumni Awards Dinner**
- ***A Semester in Oz***  
A student's account of a semester in Australia with Dr. John Pichtel
- **Graduating Student Spotlight**
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- **Earth Week Events Schedule**
- **Donating to NREM**
- **REMINDER!**  
Earth Week is the same week as the Alumni Awards Dinner! Check page 4 to see if any of the events fit with your travel schedule!

Edited by

- Lanette Erby
- Dr. James Eflin

## NREM Alumni Awards Dinner

The annual Natural Resources and Environmental Management Alumni Awards Dinner will be held at the Ball State University Alumni Center on Friday, April 23, 2010, at 6:00 p.m. Please join alumni, faculty and students for a cash bar and dinner program as we recognize the outstanding professional accomplishments of NREM alumni and friends.

Reservations are \$26.00 per person and include a cash bar reception and dinner. The dinner entree is your choice of a bacon wrapped turkey filet, grilled salmon with pesto, or the vegetarian option. All meals include salad, rolls, vegetables, desserts and beverages. Click [here](#) to view a copy of the invitation and registration information.

### **Congratulations to this year's Awardees!**

**Jerry Sweeten, '75MA82, Award of Distinction.** Sweeten is head of Manchester College's Environmental Studies program. He was named the 2009 Indiana Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Council for the Advancement and Support of Education. He was previously director of the 160-acre Asherwood Environmental Center in Wabash County for 27 years.

**Matthew Klein, MS94, Award of Achievement.** Klein is an attorney and executive director of the Department of Waterworks, City of Indianapolis. He oversees the daily operations of Indianapolis Water, the largest drinking water utility within Indiana. Over the past 15 years, Klein has provided guest lectures on hazardous waste regulation and water pollution regulation for the NREM Department. He is Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Indiana Greenways Foundation.

**Kelly Niedermeier, '01, Award of Merit.** Niedermeier is an eighth-grade science teacher at Chief Manuelito Middle School in Gallup, New Mexico. She is also currently the Peace Corps Fellows graduate assistant at Western New Mexico University. Niedermeier and her students were recently featured in their local newspaper for researching the pros and cons of uranium mining as New Mexico considers re-opening the local uranium industry.

**Tom Reeve, MS07, Award of Merit.** Reeve is a restoration ecologist of Flatland Resources, LLC in Muncie, and is the coordinator for the White River Watershed Project, where he keeps storm water pollutants from running into the river. Reeve has led groups of NREM students in planting a demonstration wetland, and has created workshops on urban best management practices and rain barrel use.

**Steve and Lori Schwartz, Friend of NREM Award.** Steve and Lori have provided continuous transportation and assistance for the NREM Alumni Society river clean-ups. The Schwartzes have recently sold their business, the White River Canoe Company, but continue to support NREM programs.

# A Semester in Oz

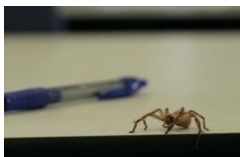
By Linsi Latimer, Senior

Twenty-nine students from majors across campus recently returned from a study abroad trip in Australia, led by Dr. Pichtel and co-piloted by Kurtis Moss.

The trip began on August 16, 2009. Although we had been airborne or in an airport for nearly two days straight, our arrival in Australia could not have been more spectacular. Many of us ran down to the beach, which was located a few hundred meters from where we stayed, to see the Pacific Ocean for the first time. Between our cabins and the ocean was Lake Ainsworth – a tea-tree-lined lake that is famous for its dark tea-colored water. The facility we stayed at was a sports and recreation centre, which meant unlimited access to surf boards, kayaks, tennis and basketball courts, and other equipment. The weather was a cool 70 degrees F with a colorful landscape that seemed alive because of the perpetually bright sun. In short, it was beautiful.



Of course, the Australia Centre isn't just about the beach; we did also have classes. In biology classes we were given the opportunity to observe the kind of creatures we would normally only see on the Discovery Channel. Among my favorites were the 12-foot carpet python found a couple hundred feet from our cabins, the "water dragons" able to swim so fast in the water it looked as if they were



running on top of it, and the cute wallabies. We were also fortunate enough to see several migrating humpback whales along the eastern coast.



Those who chose to go scuba diving saw several nine-foot, gray nurse sharks - a magnificent and humbling, experience. There were also a few pests: bull ants that liked to attack as you were sunbathing, butcher birds that thought they were roosters and insisted that the whole camp be awake at 6am every day, and "blue bottle" jellyfish that left a nasty welt on one unfortunate student. These pests were annoying, but there were several downright deadly creatures: the eastern brown snake, the funnel-web spider (death can be within 15 minutes of being bitten), and an array of sharks and sea-snakes. We were well-aware of the dangers, took necessary precautions, and no one was seriously injured.

In addition to biology, Life and Culture of Australia, a requirement, was taught by an idiosyncratic and lovable "Aussie" named Lyn Lockery. He taught us about everything from Aboriginal rights and struggles to some Aussie slang. For example, in Australia, don't make the mistake of thinking that costume or cossie refers to something from Halloween. It means swimsuit. Also, thongs are what one wears on their feet.

Trips were also a part of the curriculum. One such one was to Tenterfield, a country town rich in historical significance. We stayed

at a local bed and breakfast and felt almost at home among the farms and country folk. We also traveled to Sydney, a beautifully designed city bursting with multiculturalism where one could walk down one street and hear Chinese, Japanese, German, and French spoken at the same time. After Sydney, we took a two hour train ride to Katoomba in the Blue Mountains, where the breathtaking view we witnessed is called the "Green Grand Canyon."

The most meaningful thing I think most students took from this experience was not the shiny, new SCUBA certification card, or the hundreds of pictures, or even the knowledge accrued from classes. The most profound souvenir we all took back from Australia was how we see ourselves and the world around us. The trip instilled in us boldness, compassion, a reverence for nature, and the realization that there is so much of the world left to explore. Not only did we learn quite a bit about ourselves, but the trip shattered the sheltered little box many of us, myself included, live in as Americans. We realized that we could truly connect with people of different races, cultures, backgrounds, and languages. It was a life-changing experience and we are all better students and citizens of the world because of it.



# Graduating Senior Spotlight



## Joshua Hapner,

Graduate Student  
Environmental Education

### Creative Project:

"Designing a Series of Trails in Smith-Crisler Nature Preserve"

### Major Accomplishments:

Internship with the National Park Service in the North Cascades National Park Service Complex in Stehekin, WA during the summer of 2009

**After Graduation?** Still looking

## John Baute

Land Management

### Major Accomplishments:

Internship with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), USDA

**After Graduation?** Accepted job with the NRCS, South Bend, IN as a soil conservationist.



## Brian Drook

Parks and Recreation

### Major Accomplishments:

- Internship with Hamilton County Health Department as a Vector Control Intern
- Dean's List 2008

**After Graduation?** No job secured

## Linsi Latimer

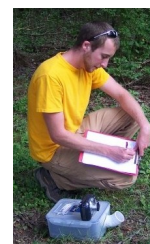
Interpretation and Communication

Minors: Energy and Biology

### Major Accomplishments:

- Two summer internships with Indy Parks doing environmental education
- Internship with BSU Facilities Planning and Management
- Charles O. Mortensen Fellowship
- Dean's List every semester
- Natural Resources Club President

**After Graduation?** Good Question!



## Cory Murphy

Park & Recreation Mgmt.  
Minor:

Telecommunications

### Major Accomplishments:

Internship at Environmental Solutions and Innovations

**After Graduation?** Still looking.

## Brian Musser

Land Management

Minor: Energy

### Major accomplishments:

One-year internship with the City of Muncie Bureau of Water Quality

**After Graduation?** None as of yet, but I intend on working for the Bureau of Water Quality through the summer until I find work.

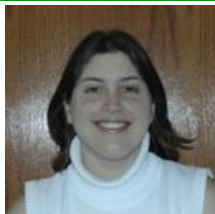
**(Continued on Page 4: Seniors)**

# Alumni Spotlight: Where are they now?

Also featured on bulletin board in NREM hallway

## Angela Brown

Joint M.S. in  
Biology and NREM;  
Land Management  
Option, 2004



### Where are you now?

At the Indiana Department of Environmental Management as a watershed specialist

### What attracted you to your job?

I had been a watershed coordinator and could relate with the struggles they faced. I wanted to be able to influence some of the institutions related to watershed management, such as drainage and septic system maintenance, on a larger scale. It has been very rewarding.

### Best Field Experience Ever

A wildlife rehabilitator gave me permission to use a couple of his live owls. I was able to get the barred owl in and out of his crate without incident. The barn owl was another story. The owl was on my arm and I was describing him to the group when he let out an ear-piercing scream! My ears were ringing, the crowd was buzzing, and I put it back in its crate before it happened again.

## Stephanie Hays-Mussoni

NREM, 1997  
M.S. Biology, 2004

### Where are you now?

At Cope Environmental Center since 1998. I started as Program Director, but have since been promoted to Executive Director.

### What attracted you to your job?

I was excited that there was finally a place dedicated to environmental education in my home town of Centerville, but I was moving to Kokomo. I volunteered and visited every time I went home, though. I finally landed a job as the first program director a year later and moved back.

### Best Field Experience Ever

I lost my boot in the pond the first time I was out with students showing them how to enter and exit in rubber boots. I tried to wiggle it free, but the more I tried, the deeper it sunk. I had to walk back in my socks! The students thought it was a riot! This year, nine years later, we found the boot floating in the pond and it was a great reminder of all the wonderful and successful pond studies since that first group.



## Heather Rickleff

M.S. Graduate, 2006

### Where are you now?

At Lava Beds National Monument with the Southeast Utah Group in Death Valley National Park. I do invasive plant mapping with GIS/GPS, bat and bald eagle surveys, weed control and habitat restoration, wildland fire crew member, and habitat restoration.

### What attracted you to your job?

I love being outside doing field work and making positive contributions to a larger project. I enjoy the national park setting and living in a quiet and remote area with people who enjoy the same type of work.

### Best Field Experience Ever

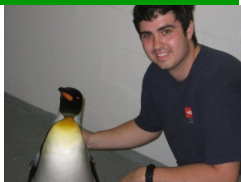
On a fire in the Tahoe National Forest, we were able to successfully complete a large burn-out operation. This involved multiple engines, water tenders, hand crews, holding crews, and igniters. We were part of the ignition team. We put fire on the ground with drop torches along a road in order to burn out down a steep slope to create a large black line so the fire wouldn't run up the slope and get more out of control. It was a great fire assignment!



## Seniors (Continued from Page 3)

### Jonathan Raichel

Natural Resource Studies



#### Major accomplishments:

I believe that a major accomplishment is anything that I have learned while in the department. In that case I feel that I have accomplished much in the four years I have been here. My internship credit for the department was earned with The Walt Disney Company where I worked in the veterinary hospital at Disney's Animal Kingdom theme park. I plan to utilize my personal growth and experiences within the department to pursue a career that will allow me to contribute my skills to their fullest.

**After Graduation?** None yet.

### Zachary Weber

Parks and Recreation, as well as Biology

**After Graduation?** No job yet

## Earth Week Events Schedule

### Monday, April 19: 6 p.m. - 12 a.m.

Movie Night at Pruis, *Fern Gully* and *Earth* (free)

### Tuesday, April 20: 3 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Enjoy several local bands at LaFollette Field during the "Celebrate Earth" concert (free)

### Thursday, April 22: 1 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Earth Day events at the Student Center in Cardinal Rooms B and C.

- Sustainable Clothing Exchange - Hello, free clothes! Bring clothes to exchange or just take advantage of the existing selection!
- The Back-to-School Store - Bring any unused school supplies to donate to this great cause!
- Giveaways - Who doesn't like prizes?!
- Vendors from BSU and all over Indiana

### Friday, April 23: 1 p.m.

Get advice from successful BSU graduates from the Natural Resources and Environmental Management Alumni Speaker Panel at West Quad. (free)

### Saturday, April 24: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Help us rid Indiana of an invasive species at the Garlic Mustard Pull at Yuhas Woods with Barry Banks from the Red Tail Conservancy. (free)

### Sunday, April 25: 9 a.m. - ?

Caving Trip through Buckner Restoration Project to remove graffiti from the walls of the cave. (free)

For more information about Earth Day events or Natural Resources Club, please email [LBLatimer@bsu.edu](mailto:LBLatimer@bsu.edu).

For more information about upcoming events, becoming involved or general information with the Natural Resources & Environmental Management Department, please contact Ms. Connie Tyner, Administrative Coordinator (information provided left).

If you are interested in being considered for membership of the NREM Alumni Society, please contact Mrs. Sue Taylor at [alumni1@bsu.edu](mailto:alumni1@bsu.edu).

The NREM Community would also like to thank everyone who helped contribute to the development of this newsletter.

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## Donating to NREM

If you would like to consider making a donation to the Natural Resources and Environmental Management Department, please visit [here](#) or use the link provided on the NREM [website](#) and click on the link for "Giving to Ball State." Below are just some of the areas that you may consider when making your donation.

Thank you for your consideration in supporting Ball State University's Natural Resources and Environmental Management program. The contribution you make to the NREM department may benefit any one or several of the accounts below:

- Funding for the general welfare of the NREM department: #6201
- The operation of the Hults Environmental Learning Center: #6203
- The activities of the NREM Alumni Society: #6204
- Funding for research projects within the department: #6216
- Funding for soil research projects within the department: #6217
- Funding for activities to aid in the understanding of soil and water conservation: #6218
- Funding for renewable energy & industrial ecology research and teaching: #6219
- NREM Scholarship: #6250
- Clyde Hibbs Scholarship: #6253
- Alex and Anna Nicoloff Scholarship: #6254
- Charles Mortensen Fellowship: #6255

For more information on giving to NREM, contact [Mark Robbins](#) at 765-285-7055 or [marobbins@bsu.edu](mailto:marobbins@bsu.edu). If you are interested in supporting the creation of a new scholarship, please contact [Dr. James Eflin](#), NREM Department Chair, at (765) 285-2327 or [jeffin1@bsu.edu](mailto:jeffin1@bsu.edu).



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