



2020 ANNUAL REPORT, WESTERN DIVISION, CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF GEOGRAPHERS

Submitted: Claire Hay, President

Date: 18 May 2020

The 62nd Annual Meeting of the WDCAG was held at the University of Northern British Columbia on the traditional territory of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation. The WDCAG Executive and membership extends its thanks to Neil Hanlon for his dedication to organizing a fantastic conference and to all faculty and student volunteers.

The official registration was 114, a number reduced considerably as concerns about COVID-19 escalated in the days leading up to the conference. These concerns notwithstanding, we were pleased to welcome delegates from Alberta (Medicine Hat College, University of Lethbridge) and elsewhere in British Columbia (University of Victoria, UBC, University of the Fraser Valley, Trinity Western University, UBC-Okanagan and Thompson Rivers University). The conference commenced with 3 field trips on Friday and was followed by a keynote address delivered by Dr. Darwin Coxson, a professor in the Ecosystems Science and Management Program at UNBC. Dr. Coxson spoke of the extraordinary partnerships between researchers, local community groups, industry and government in creating the Chun T'oh Whudujut / Ancient Forest and Protected Area, a part of the world's only inland temperate rainforest in BC's northern interior. This fascinating and inspiring talk was followed by an Icebreaker with pizza and refreshments provided.

There were 20 oral presentations organized in 7 sessions, and 22 poster presentations that were delivered on Saturday March 14. The conference wrapped up with a "social" held at a downtown Prince George establishment (Trench Brewing Co.). Student presentation awards were announced at the event, and entertainment was provided by local musical trio, The Ebbs (featuring UNBC Geography faculty member Joe Shea), and a special guest appearance by the Prince George Pipe Band. A great time was had by all.

Each year, the WDCAG acknowledges the outstanding student research being conducted across the division. Awards are presented for posters and oral presentations for undergraduate, masters and doctoral levels. Student presentations were judged by faculty and winners were announced during the social. A special thank you to Greg Halseth and Chris Jackson for organizing the judging of student awards. The winners are:

Student Presentation Awards
Competition

Winner

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Undergraduate

Sam Gerrand (U Lethbridge)

Masters (co-winners)

Megan Gordon (UNBC)

Aaron Larsen (UNBC)

PhD

Kristen Kieta (UNBC)

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Undergraduate

Natalie Cook (Trinity Western
University)

Masters

Patrick Robinson (UNBC)



Annually, the WDCAG presents awards for scholarly distinction, teaching excellence and service to the discipline. This year, the following colleagues were recognized for their achievements:

- J. Alistair McVey Award for Teaching Excellence – Dr. Shivanand Balram, Simon Fraser University
- The William C. Wonders Award for Scholarly Distinction - Dr. Gail Fondahl, UNBC.

Due to COVID19 travel concerns and associated absences there was no Executive Meeting and AGM at the annual meeting. As President, I made a personal decision not to travel to Prince George for the conference. To ensure that the important business was conducted, the WDCAG Executive conducted an email meeting during the week of May 4-8, 2020. During this meeting, reports from the President, Secretary/Treasurer, Newsletter Editor and Awards Officer were presented and accepted, minutes from the 2019 AGM were presented and approved, and, the CAG Travel Grant dispersal to student groups who attended the annual meeting was approved. In addition, nominations to the Executive were accepted and approved. This is an unusual process, but one I hope allows for the business of the division to move forward. These reports will be brought forward again at the 2021 AGM meeting for acceptance by the broader membership. As noted below, there are still vacant positions within the WDCAG Executive. The biggest concern is that the Vice President position is unfilled. This position transitions to the role of President in March 2021 and it is vital that there is a continuity plan in place. The President will work to fill these positions as soon as possible.

The following members comprise the executive for the upcoming year.

President	Claire Hay (UFV) (2019-21)
Past President	Vacant for 2020-21
Vice President	TBA
Secretary/Treasurer	Craig Coburn (Lethbridge) (2019-21)
Members at Large	Steven Marsh (UFV) (2020-22) Tom Waldichuk (TRU) (2020-22) Henry Frew (Carrick House Consulting) (2019-21) Joanne Moyer (KingsU) (2019-21)
Student representatives – BC	TBA TBA
Student representatives - Alberta	TBA TBA
Western Geography	Joanne Moyer (KingsU; Human editor) Craig Coburn (Lethbridge, Physical/GIS editor)
Archivist	TBA
Awards Officer	David Jordan (TWU)
Newsletter Editor	Daniel Brendle-Moczuk (UVic)
Webmaster	Daniel Brendle-Moczuk (UVic)
BC Education Chair	Tom Waldichuk (TRU) Pam Shaw (VIU)



The WDCAG also recognizes colleagues who passed away over the year: Dr. Ken Brealey (UFV).

The 2021 meeting will be held at the University of Lethbridge, in Lethbridge, AB organized by Craig Coburn.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'CL Hay'.

Teaching and Learning Specialist,
University of the Fraser Valley
WDCAG President