

**Minutes of the Third Business Meeting of the Animal Geography Specialty Group**  
Friday April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011 – Seattle, Washington

The meeting opened at 11:50am with 21<sup>i</sup> in attendance including board members Shari Wilcox Adams (acting convener), Stella Capoccia, and Suzi Wiseman (acting secretary). Chair Monica Ogra and board member William Lynn attended virtually via Skype videocam.

1. The Chair welcomed the meeting and reported that the AnGSG was promoting research by sponsoring 12<sup>ii</sup> sessions at this year's AAG meeting, by the inaugural graduate student paper award, by developing the bibliography and by the newsletter. However the group was not yet working through subcommittees as much as originally hoped.

2. The Chair congratulated the winner of the graduate student paper award: Shari Wilcox Adams of The University of Texas Austin for her paper *On the Trail of the Devil Cat: Hunting for the Jaguar in the United States and Mexico*. The Chair thanked Jody Emel and Jennifer Wolch for providing the seed money for the award of \$250, and recognized Bill Lynn and Julie Urbanik for joining the Chair on the award review subcommittee.

3. The Chair provided an update on the budget and membership. The group has a current balance of \$678 (minus \$250 for the graduate paper award). We currently have 112 members (64 student and 48 non-student).

4. Motions to amend the bylaws

- a) A motion was introduced to amend the bylaws to enable electronic elections. RATIONALE: The current bylaws guiding nominations and elections to the AnGSG board do not contain language that regarding procedures for absentee or electronic voting. The proposed changes are offered with the goal of creating a mechanism to allow participation in elections by members who are unable to attend the annual meeting. In addition, it is suggested that limited business meeting time should not be spent tabulating votes at the expense of discussion.

FORMER:

2. Nominations and Elections

a. Notification of open positions will be made to all AnGSG members at least three months before the annual business meeting.

b. Nominations will be made from the floor at the annual business meeting, with elections to be held at the same meeting.

c. Members need not be present to be either nominated or elected. A member may submit a nomination to the Board thirty days prior to the meeting if attendance is not possible.

d. All Board members will assume office at the end of the annual business meeting, following their election.

NEW:

2e. *Members who are unable to attend the annual meeting may vote electronically, with the understanding that only one ballot (total) may be submitted per member.*

*2f. Votes will be tabulated by 2 members of the Board who are not standing for election. If such members are not available, up to 2 general members who are not standing for election may tabulate votes on behalf of the group.*

*2g. Newly elected Board members will assume office following tabulation and public announcement of the election results. [replacement text for 2d, in existing bylaws above]*

These amendments were passed unanimously.

- b) A motion to reduce potential confusion by removing the term “staggered” from Article 5, Section 1d:

Wording of motion:

**FORMER:** The graduate student officers serve staggered one year terms with the option of each to run for a second year for a maximum of two years of service.

**NEW:** The graduate student officers serve one year terms with the option of each to run for a second year for a maximum of two years of service.

This amendment was passed unanimously.

- c) A motion recognizing the success of the graduate student officers’ compilation and production of the recent newsletter strengthened the expectation that these tasks would be the responsibility of the student officers in future.

**RATIONALE:** The bylaws regarding the expectations of Graduate Student Officer are unclear and do not reflect verbal and informal agreements between board members regarding newsletter-related activities. While our current practice positions the Chair in a supervisory role, the Graduate Student Officers are expected to take leadership in promoting participation from other AnGSG members (particularly student members), from whom contributing articles or other relevant materials may be solicited. In recognition of the key roles that Graduate Student Officers have played in producing the first 2 issues the newsletter, we propose that responsibility for newsletter-related activities be formally reflected in the bylaws as follows (new text is marked in italics):

**FORMER:** Graduate Student Officers. The graduate student officers serve staggered one year terms and should serve no more than two consecutive terms. The AnGSG Graduate Student Officers shall:

- i. Encourage student participation (e.g., through a newsletter article or website column)
- ii. Assist in organizing special sessions, workshops, competitions

**NEW:**

- i. Compile materials necessary to produce Specialty Group newsletter
- ii. Encourage student participation (e.g., through a newsletter article or website column)
- iii. Assist in organizing special sessions, workshops, competitions

This amendment was passed unanimously.

## **5. Elections to the Board**

Positions open for election had been previously notified by email to the listserv and proxy votes collected. Discussion included the reading of the bylaws relating to the duties of the communications officer. Following a call for further nominations, Meg Selby nominated herself for the position of student officer. Votes were taken by the distribution of voting sheets that were distributed, completed and gathered and were to be tallied after the meeting. In 2012 at least four board positions will become available as the terms of the chair, secretary/treasurer and student officers will terminate.

## **6. Committee Reports**

### **i. Bibliography and Newsletter**

Stella Capoccia had already reported to members on the recent edition of the newsletter of which she was chief editor, in the panel session immediately before this business meeting.

She and Suzi Wiseman reported that a reworks account had been established for the group, which currently holds over 1200 citations, many with links to the abstracts and full text. However considerable work remains to annotate and categorize these, remove duplicates, etc. Searchers would be able to share these citations, develop their own bibliographies from the database and export them in any generally recognized bibliographic format for use in their own accounts, such as EndNote. Elise Kuszlaba had provided some assistance with this recently, and Paula Decker offered to join the bibliography subcommittee.

### **ii. Communications/Publicity**

a) Following problems with the effectiveness of AAG specialty group listservs and groups establishing their own websites, the AAG has advised it is investigating systems whereby all specialty group listservs and websites would be hosted within the AAG. Discussion noted that this may not be desirable if access to such websites would be restricted to currently paid AAG members.<sup>iii</sup>

It was suggested that the group's facebook page be updated regularly with notices to make them more publicly accessible since so many students seem to use this resource. However not all members use facebook, so an official AAG site would still be necessary.

b) The communications officer explained the concept of the Zazzle Store to place an AnGSG logo on items for sale. While the logo suggested by the communications officer

depicting pawprints walking across the AAG logo would look good on such items as mugs, it did not suit t-shirts. It was suggested that it may be better not to dilute the message of such a young specialty group by having more than one logo at first, so possibly a motto with a small version of the logo would be more suitable for a t-shirt. No suggestions for a new logo or motto were forthcoming during the meeting.

iii. **Undergraduate Student Paper Competition**

Mona Seymour proposed that a similar competition to the graduate student paper competition be developed to encourage undergraduates. Rather than waiting a year for a subcommittee to develop a firm proposal and seek funding, it was suggested from the floor that perhaps \$50 of the existing graduate student award be re-allocated to an undergraduate award. The major purpose of this was to encourage undergraduates, raise student and faculty awareness of the animal geography specialty group, and provide incentive for individual departments to offer travel or other support to winning, or possibly simply to competing students. While a formal motion was not developed, there appeared to be general consensus to this proposal.<sup>iv</sup>

It was suggested and generally agreed that graduate students should review the undergraduate submissions.

Stella Capoccia, Shari Wilcox Adams, Mona Seymour and Rosemary-Claire Collard<sup>v</sup> offered themselves to work on a subcommittee to develop this proposal in time for the first undergraduate award to be offered for AAG 2012.

Kristen Conway-Gomez offered her services on the graduate student award subcommittee.

The meeting adjourned at 12:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Julie Urbanik and Suzi Wiseman

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<sup>i</sup> 21 in attendance at the start, two of whom left at 12.09pm, but a few (about 5?) filtered in around that time. I'm not sure whether the sign-in sheet reflects the original 21, or some of the later comers. They didn't all choose to stay to sign when any latecomers were invited to do so at the end.

<sup>ii</sup> 13 were listed in the newsletter, but 14 were listed under a search of the final program

<sup>iii</sup> When the same question was raised at the Biogeography Specialty Group business meeting the next day, their incoming chair David Cairns reported from the Chairs' business meeting that the AAG had confirmed that such websites would be publicly accessible.

<sup>iv</sup> The biogeography specialty group provides separate awards for PhD students and Non PhD students (ie Masters and Undergrads. Despite stiff competition, recently an undergrad won this award)

<sup>v</sup> Rosemary-Claire Collard [rccollard@geog.ubc.ca](mailto:rccollard@geog.ubc.ca)