

Rural Geography Specialty Group 2004 Report – July 2004.
By Peter Nelson, Chair

I. Mission Statement

The Rural Geography specialty group promotes research and education related to agriculture, rural development and rural land use. To fulfill this mission, we: plan sessions for professional meetings, facilitate teaching and research of the geography issues worldwide, publicize information about the role of geographers engaged in rural research, and promote interaction with organizations with similar interests, such as the IGU Rural Development Commission

II. 2002 Membership and Finances

The current balance of the RGSG accounts (as of 08/31/03) is \$3383.48. This reflects the following income & expenses:

Rural Specialty Group				
<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>Balance</u>
	Balance Forward - 08/31/02 Audit			2,787.48
02/26/03	Paper award (Albert)		50.00	2,737.48
05/31/03	Deposit received	45.00		2,782.48
08/31/03	Dues collected 9/01/02 - 8/31/03	601.00		3,383.48
	Account Balance - 08/31/03 Audit			<u>3,383.48</u>

Our anticipated expenses this year total **\$620** for student paper award participants and one winner. The breakdown is as follows:

- Amy Trauger (\$100 best paper award & \$130 registration reimbursement),
- Brian King (\$130 registration reimbursement)
- Aman Luthra (\$130 registration reimbursement)
- Gina Gerbasi (\$130 registration reimbursement)

Note that this amount is higher than our collected dues for 2003. Whether or not this rate of spending is sustainable in the long run depends on our enrollment figures for this and the coming years. In the short-term, we have a surplus which should allow us to maintain the current spending rate and/or consider hosting special guest speakers in the coming years.

In addition, the RGSG also **owes \$140** to April Luginbuhl for winning the student paper award last year and for attending the awards luncheon this year. Note that this was requested to the AAG by the Treasurer last spring, but was not sent to her in time. The request has been re-sent.

The AAG has not provided us with us with membership information this year. Last year, our membership totals were 328(174 regular members and 154 student members). Regular membership is \$5, and student membership is \$0 We have no reason to believe these membership numbers have changed dramatically from last year.

III. Officers

Chair –

Peter Nelson (through 2006)
Middlebury College
pbnelson@middlebury.edu

Directors –

Holly Barcus (through 2006)
Moorehead State University
h.barcus@moreheadstate.edu

Lisa Harrington (through 2005)
Kansas State University
lbutlerh@ksu.edu

Molly Foraker (through 2005)
Salisbury State University
mdforaker@salisbury.edu

Student Director

Melanie McCalmont (through 2005)
University of Wisconsin
melanie.mccalmont@ptk.org

Secretary Treasurer

Randy Wilson (through 2005)
Gettysburg College
rwilson@gettysburg.edu

Awards Director

Ken Dagele (through 2005)
Missouri Western State College
dagele@mWSC.edu

Newsletter Editor

Melanie McCalmont (through 2006)
melanie.mccalmont@ptk.org

Webmaster

Katie Algeo (permanent position)
Western Kentucky University
katie.algeo@wku.edu

IV. Accomplishments, Activities Scheduled, Future Plans and Directions

Business Meeting: The RGSG business meeting was held Thursday, March 18, 2004 in Philadelphia. Approximately 20 people attended the meeting. The Chair, Peter Nelson, passed on information from the AAG to the RGSG members. We elected new officers, and we discussed the future use of RGSG funds. We agreed that RGSG finances should be used to encourage student participation at both regional and national meetings. Next year, we will vote on new mission statement language to include this student emphasis.

2004 Annual Meeting: At the meeting of specialty group chairs, the AAG council cautioned against too many sponsored sessions, as this makes planning the program exceedingly difficult. Fortunately, the RGSG is not in a position of too many sponsored sessions. In Philadelphia, we sponsored or co-sponsored 17 sessions covering topics ranging from rural identities to population change and economic development. Considering our number of sponsored sessions was relatively moderate, we decided no different course of action was required as we prepare for the 2005 meetings.

RGSG Student Paper Award: Ken Dagele chaired the RGSG student paper competition, and we found ourselves in a fortunate but difficult situation. Four excellent papers were presented in this year's student paper competition. After considerable deliberation, this year's award went to Amy Trauger of Pennsylvania State University. We will hold a similar student paper competition in Denver next year, and participants will receive a \$100 travel stipend to defray conference costs. This award will be called "the Rural Geography Student Travel Fellowship."

The 6th British-Canadian-American Rural Geography Symposium. In July of 2003, 15 members of the RGSG attended this symposium in England. These members reported a very productive meeting, and are excited about planning the next meeting for 2006, as the United States will host. We discussed possible host sites at the business meetings, and have selected the University of Idaho as the preliminary choice. Harley Johanssen has agreed to be the point person for planning the 2006 event.

Sessions for the 2005 meetings in Denver: several topics were discussed for organized sessions for the 2005 meetings including (with organizer in parentheses) 1) rural methods (Peter Nelson), 2) Rural Poverty (Holly Barcus), 3) Rural Healthcare (Mike Shambaugh). In addition, Holly Barcus and Molly Foraker agreed to act as point people for organizing sessions for RGSG members not already connected to an organized session.