

Rural Geography Specialty Group 2005 Report – June 2005.
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 rural 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. 2005 Membership and Finances

The current balance of the RGSG accounts is as follows

Association of American Geographers
Specialty Groups Financial Report
June 30, 2005

Rural Specialty Group

<u>Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>Balance</u>
	<i>8/31/04 Balance forward</i>			<i>3,187.48</i>
9/30/04	Dues collected for September 2004	75.00		3,262.48
10/31/04	Dues collected for October 2004	137.00		3,399.48
11/30/04	Dues collected for November 2004	100.00		3,499.48
12/31/04	Dues collected for December 2004	65.00		3,564.48
1/31/05	Dues collected for January 2005	54.00		3,618.48
2/28/05	Dues collected for February 2005	15.00		3,633.48
3/31/05	Dues collected for March 2005	75.00		3,708.48
4/30/05	Dues collected for April 2005	35.00		3,743.48
5/31/05	Dues collected for May 2005	30.00		3,773.48
6/30/05	Dues collected for June 2005	55.00		3,828.48
				3,828.48
				3,828.48
				3,828.48
	Balance			<u>3,828.48</u>

This balance does not reflect the costs associated with the awards below which are estimated to be less than \$300.

As of July 1, we have 406 members (168 non-students, and 238 students)

III. Officers

Chair –

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

Directors –

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

Carl Wilmsen (through 2007)
University of California – Berkeley
cwilmsen@nature.berkeley.edu

Christopher Merrett (through 2007)
Western Illinois University
CD-Merrett@wiu.edu

Student Director

Mary Dobbs (through 2007)
Kansas State University
birddobbs@aol.com

Secretary Treasurer

John Cromartie (through 2007)
Economic Research Service, USDA
Jbc@ers.usda.gov

Awards Director

Randy Wilson (through 2007)
Gettysburg College
rwilson@gettysburg.edu

Newsletter Editor

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

Webmaster

Melanie McCalmont (permanent position)
University of Wisconsin
Melanie.mccalmont@ptk.org

IV. Accomplishments, Activities Scheduled, Future Plans and Directions

Business Meeting: The 2005 annual business meeting was held between 11:50 and 12:50 on Thursday, April 7 in Denver, Colorado. Approximately 20 people attended. The meeting was

late in getting started because the prior session ran over its allotted time in the room designated for our business meeting. The chair passed on information from the AAG to the specialty group, but most of the time was spent discussing student participation in the specialty group and the upcoming International Rural Geography Symposium (See below).

2005 Annual Meeting: In Denver, we sponsored or co-sponsored 20 sessions covering topics ranging from rural identities to population change and economic development. The sessions were well-attended, but at the business meeting and after the conference there was some concern about too many papers within a session and not enough time for discussion. We encouraged session organizers to include time in their sessions for a discussant. A copy of the meeting minutes will be posted to the specialty group's web page.

Specialty Group Awards:

Student Paper Competition – the 2004 student paper award went to Amy Trauger of Penn State University. She was invited to attend the AAG Awards Luncheon as our guest. We only had 2 papers entered in the student paper competition this year. We discussed ways to increase participation in this competition in 2006. Some ideas included student-oriented sessions, better advertising, and more direct encouragement by members of their graduate students. (See business meeting minutes for a complete list of the ways in which we will encourage greater student participation).

John Fraser Hart Award – this award was given to Janelle Curry of Calvin College.

The 6th British-Canadian-American Rural Geography Symposium. Planning continues for the 2007 symposium. We have selected a planning committee consisting of Lisa Harrington, Holly Barcus, Chris Merritt, Laura Molley, Dick Winchell, Gundars Rudziktis, and Randy Wilson. Eastern Washington University and the University of Idaho will combine to host the symposium. This setting provides travel access along with ample field trip opportunities. The RGSG has contacted the respective chairs of the corresponding specialty groups in Britain and Canada to facilitate this planning process.

Sessions for the 2006 meetings in Chicago:

Our existing session planning strategies appear to be working. Between 15 and 20 sponsored sessions is a manageable number, so no changes were made to our existing session organizing system. Most of the discussion of sessions for next year revolved around enhancing student participation in the specialty group. We realize we have large numbers of student members, and we are seeking ways to get them more active in the group. Along these lines, we plan to organize a “New Voices” session allowing graduate students an opportunity to showcase their research alongside other graduate students. In addition, the Chicago location will likely increase participation from undergraduates, so we plan to encourage undergraduates to participate in one of the many poster sessions.