As is typical in Missoula, the weather is changing for the better just as our seniors reach crunch time for their senior thesis projects. Change seems to be the constant in the department the last few years. Helen Naughton joined the department, Jon Aliri has returned to teach for us, Brandon Fuller left for California and Kay Unger will take over the Chair duties starting June 1. Aside from losing Brandon, these are all positive changes from Doug’s perspective.

**Jon Aliri** has returned to the department as an adjunct instructor teaching several sections of Principles of Micro and Principles of Macro. Jon manages the UC Market so we appreciate the real world examples that he brings to class that relate directly to a firm students have experienced.

**Jeff Bookwalter** travelled to China last summer with a group of University faculty in connection with the Mansfield Center.

**Doug Dalenberg** served as the Department’s representative to the University System’s Transferability Initiative. This resulted in a new set of numbers and a new rubric for Economics courses (now ECNS not ECON). He enjoyed meeting economists from around the state during this process.

**Amanda Dawsey** presented papers in Virginia and Hawaii. Her research on credit cards was featured in *Research View*, a UM publication highlighting innovative research.

**Brandon Fuller** left us to work in the Bay Area. He continues to work for Aplia, an economics teaching support company, and we miss his energy and teaching and book recommendations.

**Stacia Graham** taught another year of Latin for Modern and Classical Languages and ran our department as smoothly as can be imagined given the cats she has to herd. Our majors rely on her for advising and candy bars.

**Derek Kellenberg** continued his active research agenda and presented a paper at the Canadian Economics Association meetings last summer. He was awarded funding to develop a new course entitled International Environmental Economics and Climate Change.

**Mike Kupilik** continued his outstanding work as University Faculty Association president and was instrumental in helping Montana State faculty organize their first union.

**New Assistant Professor Helen Naughton**

Helen earned her PhD at the University of Oregon and spent last year teaching at Oregon State University. She joined us in the fall and, with Derek Kellenberg, gives us a strong team in environmental and international economics.
Ranjan Shrestha spent the summer at Australian National University as a visiting fellow at the Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute. He presented some of his research while in Australia.

Kay Unger is excited to lead the department as our new chairperson. She presented her research paper “Student Perceptions of Educational Outcomes” at WSSA in Denver October April 24, 2008, and served as the Student Complaint Officer at the University.

Emeriti and Research Associates

Richard Barrett was elected to the state legislature as representative for House District 93. He has been a very active member in the House and served on the Taxation, Transportation and Fish, Wildlife and Parks committees.

Research Professor Richard Erb has been conducting research on the origins and evolution of the current global financial and economic crisis. Under the University’s Continuing Education MOLLI (Montana Osher Life Long Learning Institute) program he taught a course this winter called: “The Global Financial System: Can Humpty Dumpty Be Put Back Together.” He also has given a number of public talks on the same subject. Drawing on his experience as a former Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund and a paper he published a few years ago on the SDR he is writing a technical paper on the recent G-20 summit decision to support a $250 billion allocation of the IMF’s SDR.

Dennis O’Donnell was invited to teach for the MOLLI (Montana Osher Life Long Learning Institute) program this Winter and taught a course entitled “Reality Bites: The Economics of Now!” This was taught to students who would never think Jim Carrey would be cast in a movie called The Truman Show since they remember the real Truman... alas, that movie title confused everyone. Dennis has been invited back next year — tentative title: “Once Bitten, Twice Cautious: Regulatory Reform, Bailouts, and Risk Management since the 2008 Crash.” Dennis is making progress toward carbon neutrality and doing some part-time consulting on economic issues in the area of regulatory compliance versus punitive damages and other policy issues.

Thomas Power continues to be as active as always with research projects and report writing. He has been working on a project with Nobel Laureate Steve Running examining climate change, fire frequency, and its economic impacts in the Northern Rockies. He has also been churning out reports on the economic feasibility and impacts of oil shale development in Colorado, Wyoming and Utah, the cost of integrating wind-electric resources into Montana electric transmission grids, and modifying utility regulation to align utility, environmental, and conservation interests. In March he presented a paper at the George Wright Society biennial conference in Portland on "Lake Superior National Lakeshores and Amenity Supported Local Economic Vitality."

Joanna Shelton regularly attends our monthly research seminars and keeps very busy with several writing projects.

John Wicks continues to run his research seminar and keeps his students busy with his active research agenda. His passions for research and riding trains has not diminished one bit.

Derek put together a very successful year of economic research seminars that included the following:

- Trading Wastes, Derek Kellenberg, The University of Montana (10/3/2008)
- To Shut Down or to Shift: Multinationals and Environmental Regulation, Helen Naughton, The University of Montana (12/11/2008)
Welcome to the University of Montana. Tell us a bit about your specialty areas of teaching and research.

My fields of specialty are international and environmental economics and most of my research is empirical. I teach environmental economics, econometrics and microeconomics. Also, I hope to teach international economics in the future.

Where were you educated? What was the title of your dissertation?


What professors, both at the undergraduate and graduate level, influenced you most and why?

At the undergraduate level the most influential professor I had was professor Eban Goodstein at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon. He has a lot of passion for the topics he teaches and for his students. Professor Goodstein really got us involved in the subject matter through hands-on projects. At the graduate level, my advisor, Professor Ronald Davies, at the University of Oregon influenced me most. He is an exciting individual to be around because of his creativity. It is fun to talk to him, be it about economics or not. Professor Davies is an amazing researcher who works very well with other people.

What courses do you look forward to teaching in the next few years?

I look forward to teaching environmental economics because it combines something I care about very much personally—the environment—with something I think I am pretty good at—economics. I also look forward to teaching the master’s level econometrics course. It is a good challenge and I think many of the master’s students could start their nest eggs for their theses projects there.

What is your favorite thing about being a professor?

The thing I enjoy most about being a professor is seeing students’ faces light up when they figure things out. Perhaps it reminds me of the feeling as a student—I really enjoyed figuring things out. In fact, now that I am not a student I don’t have those moments nearly as often and I miss it.

Tell us about your research or a particular research project that you are involved in?

I find myself most interested in environmental and natural resource problems. In the past I have worked primarily on international environmental issues (I am still working on that research) but I am also starting to research some fisheries issues in the United States.

Where did you grow up and what hobbies do you enjoy?

I grew up in Tallinn, Estonia. So, I got to “enjoy” the Soviet childhood with the long lines and the vitamin C deficiencies. I must say, though, I enjoy the free Estonia of today a lot more! I am a runner at heart but I am trying to move over to triathlons.
GRADUATE PROGRAM

Last summer, two of our graduate students successfully defended their theses.

Caleb Lande wrote “Homeowner Views on Housing Market Valuation of Energy Efficiency: An Empirical Investigation.” Richard Barrett chaired his committee and Doug Dalenberg and Tyron Venn served as committee members.

Taylor Cook wrote “Untapped Resources: How Underdeveloped Gender Empowerment Constrains the Development Potential in Bangladesh” which incorporated some of the work she did in Bangladesh. Jeff Bookwalter supervised her work and Doug Dalenberg and Ramona Grey served as committee members.

Both fine theses are available electronically through the Mansfield Library.

Three new students started our program in the Fall: Matt Betcher (University of Montana), Rosemary Moore (University of Montana) and Kelly Smith (University of Montana). Sunny Guild, (University of Texas – El Paso) started the program in the Spring. They join Martin Twer, Steve Cleverdon, Emily Peters, Anna Iverson, Dmitri Murfin-Simmons, Ben Fitch-Fleischmann, Matt LaPalm, and Colin Sorenson who are continuing their studies. A wide variety of fascinating research is being done in conjunction with many thesis projects.

Matt Betcher was awarded the Swenson - Wicks Research Assistantship for the 2008-09 academic year and he is pursuing research that studies the determinants of happiness using a survey of Missoula residents. The continued success of the many students who have benefitted from the Swenson-Wicks Research Assistantship is testament to the talented students we have had in our program and the generosity of Matt and Janelle Swenson.

Dmitri Murfin-Simmons, Kelly Smith and Emily Peters are serving as teaching assistants.

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

Last year’s senior thesis students and their thesis titles were:

Molly Councill  Beef Prices and Their Effect on Global Warming in Montana
Ben Faulkinberry  Does Increased Public Sector Corruption Reduce Measured Economic Development?
Carl Van Haren  Relative Income and Subjective Well-being
Jennifer Hudson  Examining the Effects of Welfare Reform on Education and Job Training
W. David Nesher  The Efficacy of Parking Prices at The University of Montana, Missoula
Tim Neidhardt  Solving the Puzzle: Stock Market Spillover Effects Between Namibia and South Africa
Claire Rasmussen  An Economic Analysis of Pricing Garbage by the Bag or: Why you Should Recycle This Thesis When You’re Done With It
Brook Smith  Reservation Gaming in Montana
Kelly Smith  An A to Z Guide to Basic Economic Concepts
Christopher Streich  Agglomeration Economies: The False Promise of Clusters
OUTERGRADUATE PROGRAM (CONTINUED)

Outstanding Senior Award/Senior Recognition Day
Claire Rasmussen 2008
Sam Schabacker 2007
Meredith Traeholt 2006
Dmitri Murfin Simmons 2005
Edward Coffield 2004
Taylor "TJ" Comstock 2003
Kelsey Keen 2002
Anna Unger 2001
Akiko Furuya 2000

David R. Paoli and Monica Conrad Paoli Economics Fund
Tim Neidhardt 2007
Garrett Blackburn 2006
Varun Giri 2005
Dan Loeffler 2003

J.H.T. Ryman Economics Fellowship
Dustin Frye 2007
Taylor Cook 2007
Jordan Larson 2004
Dan Loeffler 2003
Robert Haidle 2002
Sean Murphy 2002
Joel Barranger 2002

Martin & Rhoda Farris Scholarship
Benjamin Harris 2007
Brian Vander Naald 2007
Edward Coffield 2004
Dan Loeffler 2003
Joel Maynes 2002
Brandon Fuller 2001

Outstanding Senior Thesis Award
Tim Neidhardt 2008
Garrett Blackburn 2007
Mary Olson 2006
Andrew Bissell 2005
Edward Coffield 2004

Kain/McKay Scholarship (to a junior major)
Emily Tutvedt 2008
Carl Van Haren 2007
Sam Schabacker 2006
Karen Gessaman 2005
Jessica Daniels 2004
Abigail Anthony 2003
Joel Maynes 2002
Kelsey Keene 2001

This last year we also handed out a one-of-a-kind senior thesis award — for the most creative senior thesis. This award went to Kelly Smith. Kelly’s senior thesis included a story book of basic economic concepts, illustrated by Kelly and peopled with her own unique characters, Anne and Edgar, Danberg and Nina, Orpha and her granddaughter, Hannah, and many others.

Colin Sorenson was the winner in the annual Fall Final Exam Hall Bowling Championship.

We enjoy hearing from you. Send us a note any time to give us your news. If you send us an email address (econ@mso.umt.edu) we’ll notify you when the next newsletter is posted to the website.
**PUBLICATIONS**


Derek Kellenberg has two more forthcoming articles.


**ALUMNI NEWS**

**Abigail Anthony** (BA, ’02, MA, ’04) is working on finishing up her dissertation and plans (knock on wood) to defend in early July for an August graduation. The title is “Climate Change and Meeting Peak Electricity Demand: Peak Electricity Savings from Demand Side Management Under High and Low Emissions Scenarios.” Abby is a research fellow with a New England-based non-profit called ENE, which does research and advocacy on regional and federal energy policy. She enjoys the work and plans on staying with them after graduation. Her current project is a collaborative project with an electric utility to install charging stations for plug-in electric vehicles in Connecticut and Massachusetts. They’ll be collecting data on how people charge their (soon-to-be) PHEVs, and assessing the impact on the electricity grid and greenhouse gas reductions. She remains hopeful that GM can get their stuff together and give her some cars to work with! She is still living in Rhode Island and tries to run or bike whenever possible. Last summer she rode from San Francisco to San Diego solo! She has become friends with **Henry Yoshimura** who also graduated from the economics department at UM in the ’70s and worked on his MA with Tom Powers. They compare notes and miss the big sky whenever they see each other!

**Britt Carlson** (BA, ’06) and **Kyle Stetler** (BA, ’06) moved to Seattle where Britt will start this fall at the University of Washington School of Public Health working on a Masters in Public Health. Kyle works for the Government Accountability Office (insert joke here) in the Seattle field office as a policy analyst.

**Eric Dale** (BA, ’07) is an associate revenue analyst for the Governor’s Office of Budget and Program Planning. As such, he is frequently invited to participate in a variety of panel discussions. In September, a legislative committee heard from Eric and other experts on oil prices, oil production in Montana, oil taxation and the impact higher oil prices may have on the Montana economy as part of a 16-month study of carbon sequestration.
Ben Faulkinberry (BA, ‘08) is currently living in Hanoi, Vietnam and working as an English teacher. Although he has only signed a one-year contract, if the motorbike traffic and noise don’t drive him insane by next year, Ben thinks he may stay longer. Although he misses Montana and the "Missoula lifestyle," he feels he’s found a pretty solid alternative.

John Fitzgerald (BA, ‘79) enjoyed his trip to Missoula in October to review the economics department, and found the department to be in good shape, offering high quality economics education with lots of student/faculty interaction.

Varun Giri (BA, ‘06) is still in New York City working for Ernst & Young LLP in their International Tax Services - Transfer Pricing Group. His work is a mix of economic consulting and tax compliance for multinational companies having intra-company transactions. Varun plans to begin Business School in the Fall of 2010.

Sue Holmberg (MA, ‘00) is living in Brooklyn with her husband, Tom Hilbink, who works at the Open Society Institute. They had a baby girl in October — her name is Thea Hilbink. Sue is close to finishing her dissertation at UMass, Amherst and is looking for jobs in New York.

Caleb Lande (BA, ‘06, MA, ‘08) is happily employed by the Northern Plains Resource Council as a field organizer and GNA manager. He works with two affiliate groups in Absarokee and Gardiner helping facilitate the work that the groups do in their community. A significant amount of his time is devoted to his second job duty working with Northern Plains members and Stillwater Mining Company as Good Neighbor Agreement manager. The Good Neighbor Agreement is a contractual agreement between Northern Plains, two affiliate groups, and Stillwater Mining Company. Caleb is also in the process of auditioning for the Billings Symphony. Caleb and his fiancée, Kristin, recently bought a house in Billings and are getting married on September 12. They’ve also adopted a beautiful 1-year-old Golden Retriever puppy named River.

William "Bill" Long is retiring from his position as Managing Director with the Montana Land Reliance, which he helped set up 3 decades ago. Bill received a master’s degree in the department in the early 1970s. With MLR since January 1979, Bill has extensive practical experience working with private landowners and conservation easements. In addition to assisting private landowners, his job responsibilities include fundraising, guiding the journey of MLR with the other two managing directors and the management team, and overseeing finances and investments. Bill and his wife Billie have one son, Sean. Bill divides his free time between fly fishing, hiking, camping, and bird shooting.

Chris Neher gave Stacia hope for spring when he announced the meadowlarks were back in the Bitterroot on March 31st. Doug and Chris enjoy comparing notes about being fathers of teenagers.

Theresa K. Ragsdale (BA and BS, ‘99) joined the Board of Dequenesh Mobile Health Clinic as their Vice President in May. Theresa serves as a Board Advisory member to The Health Education Project and is Co-Chair of the Education Committee of the Tucson Planning Council on the Homeless. The Education Committee sponsors the Tucson Homeless Conference each year. At the Primavera Foundation, Theresa is the Operations Supervisor at Casa Paloma’s Women’s Center, a day drop-in hospitality center and transitional housing program for the homeless in Tucson, Arizona. In what spare time Theresa has, she is a genealogist, sews, crochets, and ponders the underlying causes of poverty and homelessness. Three themes keep popping up from this pondering: life skills education in secondary schools, legislation and capitalism.
Eric Schuck (MA, 1995) was awarded a Fulbright Senior Specialist Grant to teach agricultural economics and development for the summer at the American University in Beirut. Dr. Schuck is an associate professor of economics at Linfield College.

Sam Schabacker (BA, ’07) is living in San Francisco working as a community organizer for Food & Water Watch—a non-profit that works to ensure that essential food and water resources are kept in public hands and are not privatized. Sam works with fishermen, community members, and environmentalists up and down the West Coast to stop a plan to privatize a fishery in the Pacific Ocean; they are advocating for community-based alternatives to manage the resource. Although it’s a far cry from the mountains, Sam enjoys San Francisco where he can hang out, go drinking and run around the city with Carl Van Haren.

Since September 2007, Matthew Slonaker has been working at the Senate Finance Committee for Chairman Max Baucus. He started as a law clerk working on international trade issues, and is now a policy assistant for tax-exempt organizations. While in Washington, he has been fortunate enough to see firsthand an inspiring transfer of executive power, and to play a part in our government’s legislative response to the country’s current economic crisis. He is also looking forward to the next few months as comprehensive health care reform is at the top of the legislative agenda for Senator Baucus and the Finance Committee.

Chris Streich (BA, ’08) currently attends an army intelligence school in Arizona, but plans on moving to Seattle when he finishes to get a masters degree.

Apparently Carl Van Haren (BA, ’07) just hangs out, goes drinking and runs around San Francisco with Sam Schabacker.

Brian Vander Naald (MA, ’07) is in the third term of his second year of the PhD program at University of Oregon and he’s looking forward to teaching his first independent principles of micro class this summer. He claims, the transition from class work to independent research has been somewhat painful, but he’s progressing “as well as an uncreative gentleman such as myself can be expected to progress. And while the department has tried with grit and determination to exorcize all well-rounded portions of my personality, I have been stubborn.” In addition to schoolwork, Brian enjoys free time hanging out with his significant other, Anne, biking, running, and hiking.

Brad Robertson has moved to Oregon and is a police officer in Cascade County.

Trent Taher (BA, ’07) continues to work on a wide variety of projects for Taher, Inc. He is enjoying life in Minnesota and gets back to Montana as often as he is able.

Bob White is in his 23rd year in corporate and personal finance and has been back in Montana the past 8 years as Vice President, Financial Consultant with D.A. Davidson & Co. in Kalispell. He enjoys being active in his community, serving as Treasurer of the Northwest Healthcare Foundation, past President of the Flathead Youth Foundation and current chairman of Kalispell’s Community Center Committee, which is working to establish a youth and senior center in Kalispell. His wife Laura, daughter Tory and he are also active with the Kalispell Ski Club. They also hike, bike and are regulars at Griz football games throughout the fall. Go Griz!