

**AAG Hazards Specialty Group  
Annual Business Meeting Minutes  
Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada  
March 25, 2009**

1. The meeting was called to order by Ron Hagelman, specialty group chair. Twenty-four members were present.
2. Hagelman distributed the meeting agenda. Burrell Montz moved (Graham Tobin seconded) approval of the agenda. Passed unanimously.
3. John Cross, specialty group secretary-treasurer, distributed minutes of the 2008 specialty group business meeting. Susan Macey moved (Mathew Schmidlein seconded) that the minutes be approved. Motion passed unanimously.
4. Hagelman gave his chair's report. He reported that the specialty group has 331 total members (188 regular members and 143 student members). He indicated that this number is similar to that of two years ago, and that the numbers are increasing again. The specialty group sponsored 13 paper sessions, including two sessions of "orphan" papers organized by Susan Macey. Ninety-three sessions included at least one paper with the keyword disaster or hazard.
5. Because of a scheduling conflict, Hagelman was unable again to attend the meeting of specialty group chairs. Deborah Thomas attended in his place, and she provided Hagelman with a list of items discussed at that meeting:
  - (1) A new accounting person has been hired by the AAG Central Office to assist specialty groups which keep their funds there;
  - (2) Problems with e-mails from the AAG (including those forwarded from the specialty group chairs) are largely related to spam filters or how the e-mail addresses were entered into the database. (Let the specialty group chair know if you are aware of not getting messages in the future.);
  - (3) The AAG Central Office can now provide detailed breakdowns of information on membership records;
  - (4) The AAG has spent \$150,000 on a new content information system (fixing their website) and this may influence how our specialty group may want to host its website in the future;
  - (5) The AAG will only allow two paper submissions, including panel sessions, from any individual for future meetings;
  - (6) The AAG Central Office is encouraging specialty groups to try to upgrade the quality of their sessions over the number of sponsored sessions;
  - (7) Suggestions have been made that specialty groups may want to consider consolidation;
  - (8) The Geography around the World endeavor, in which specialty groups are asked to waive membership fees for international faculty members, continues; and
  - (9) The AAG will continue highlighting a session from each specialty group in the AAG Program, which was the Kasperson Session this year.Hagelman expressed his appreciation that Thomas attended the specialty group chairs' meeting for him and for her report.

6. Hagelman reported that four students submitted abstracts for the Kasperson Student Paper Competition this year. These four persons were selected as winners: Christopher Burton, Khila Dahal, Angela Gilbert, and Monica Zappa. Hagelman encouraged members to urge their students to submit applications next year.
7. Hagelman reported that eight dissertations/theses were submitted for consideration for the Gilbert White Award in 2009, four which were deemed sufficiently noteworthy to necessitate a second round of readings. Following the receipt of input from a third reader on these dissertations and theses, a decision was made to give the award to two individuals, who would each receive the autographed copy of Gilbert White's *Geography, Resources, and Environment* and a plaque, and split the \$500 award. The award recipients were Erin P. Hughey, University of South Florida, for her dissertation "Longitudinal Study: The Impact of a Comprehensive Emergency Management System on Disaster Response in The Commonwealth of The Bahamas" and Giselle C. Pérez, King's College London, for her thesis "Vulnerability in the Shadows: A Case Study on the San Diego Migrant Hazardscape in a 'War on Terror' Climate."

In addition, because of the high quality of two other submissions, the review committee recommended that two individuals receive an honorable mention for their submissions: A. Case Watkins, Texas State University, for his thesis "Through the Lens of Katrina: A Historical Geography of the Social Patterns of Flood Exposure in New Orleans, 1970-2005" and Anna J. Versluis, Clark University, for her dissertation "We All Live Downstream: Disaster, Land Change and Reciprocity in a Haitian Watershed."

Dr. Hughey was present to receive a round of applause from specialty group members, along with her award check and White's two volume book set. Her plaque will be mailed to her, and all of the award materials are being sent to Pérez. Hagelman told Hughey that the specialty group would feature her work, as well as that of Pérez, during its Gilbert White Award Symposia at the Washington AAG Meeting. In addition, Cross will send a letter to the director of the University of Colorado Natural Hazards Center requesting that the winners be invited to attend this year's Hazards Workshop. Hagelman thanked the ten persons who reviewed the theses/dissertations that were submitted for consideration for the Gilbert White Award.

8. Cross distributed the Treasurer's Report, which was reviewed. The specialty group had \$3,122.40 as of March 18, 2009. Income from dues and interest totaled \$992.23, while expenses of \$2,154.30 were incurred to pay the meeting registration fees for four winners of the Jeanne X. Kasperson Student Paper Competition, the two Gilbert F. White Award checks, and a contribution of \$1,000 in memory of Gilbert White to The Community Foundation, Boulder, Colorado towards the erection of the Gilbert White Memorial Flood Marker. Cross reported that expenses for this years White Award plaques were still to be paid. Susan Macey moved (Montz seconded) approval of the Treasurer's Report. Passed unanimously.
9. Hagelman reported that Deborah Thomas had been nominated for specialty group chair. With no additional nominations forthcoming, Cross moved (Schmidtlein seconded) that nominations close and that a unanimous ballot be cast electing Thomas as specialty group chair. Motion and election of Thomas passed unanimously.
10. Two individuals were nominated for the faculty director position being vacated by Macey. These individuals were Jamie Mitchem and Matt Schmidtlein. Schmidtlein was elected as director.

11. Hagelman reported that review of the records indicates three positions will be up for election during the 2010 meeting: secretary-treasurer, faculty director, and student director.
12. Plans for the 2010 Annual Meeting in Washington were briefly discussed. Cross spoke against a pre- or post-conference specialty group meeting, noting that the AAG Meeting has now grown to six days. Interest in having an organized hazards field trip or special series of sessions during the meeting was expressed. Schmidlein will organize the orphan paper sessions for the hazards specialty group for the 2010 meeting.
13. Jerry Mitchell continues as specialty group webmaster, with the website now hosted by the University of South Carolina.
14. Hagelman and Cross described the effort to erect a “sculptural flood-height marker” along Boulder Creek in honor of Gilbert F. White. While the specialty group has already contributed \$1,000, the Community Foundation of Boulder is still seeking additional contributions. Hagelman recounted his efforts to solicit a contribution directly from the AAG Central Office. AAG Executive Director Douglas Richardson communicated to Hagelman that even though the memorial was viewed as highly noteworthy and they had taken other activities to honor Gilbert White, such contributions were not made by the Central Office. Hagelman distributed copies of the correspondence that he had with Richardson, and a link will be placed on the specialty group’s website to connect to the Community Foundation of Boulder’s White Memorial website. He will also see if the AAG will make a similar connection between its website and the White Memorial website that seeks contributions. Specialty group members were encouraged to consider making their own personal contributions.
15. Phillip Clancy distributed flyers that promote the Applied Geography Conference that is scheduled for October 28-31, 2009 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. (See: <http://applied.geog.kent.edu>). Abstracts are due May 18th. As in the past, hazards geographers are urged to attend this meeting, which typically attracts about 300 attendees
16. Montz moved (Hughey seconded) adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 9:08 PM.