

2009 ANNUAL REPORT

RECREATION, TOURISM, & SPECIALTY GROUP OF THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN GEOGRAPHERS

1) Mission Statement

To provide a forum and to encourage research and teaching of applied academic aspects of recreation, tourism, and sport geography.

2) RTS Dues

Regular members: \$5; Students: \$1

3) Executive Officers and Board of Directors for 2009-2011

Chair

Daniel (Dan) Olsen
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Immediate Past-Chair

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Directors

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Leigh Miller Villegas - Student Representative
University of Colorado Boulder
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4) Accomplishments During 2008-2009

The accomplishments of RTS Specialty Group are many and include - -

- Organizing 21 paper sessions and 1 plenary session at the Las Vegas Annual Meeting;
- Awarded one best paper award to J. J. Zhang for his paper “Of Kaoliang, bullets, and knives: Local entrepreneurs and the battlefield tourism enterprise in kinmen (Quemoy), Taiwan”. Zhang is a PhD student at National University of Singapore.
- Publishing a RTS Newsletter to keep members informed on issues affecting the group as well as showcasing the achievement of various members;

- Submitting an annual report to ensure the parental organization is proud of its thirty year old active, involved, and internationally-focused, RTS specialty group.

Las Vegas AGM Sessions:

A total of 22 RTS-sponsored or co-sponsored sessions were organized at the Annual Meeting of the AAG in Las Vegas (March 22- 27, 2009). The following is a list of RTS-sponsored sessions:

- Tourism Landscapes
- Tourism and Retirement Migration: Destinations in Transition (2 sessions)
- Tourism and the Urban Realm: Utopian Communities or Spheres of Exclusivity
- Publishing Tourism Geography Research
- Heritage Tourism: Critical Issues for the Present and Future
- Kitsch (co-sponsored with Historical SG and Cultural SG)
- Indigenous Tourism (2 sessions, co-sponsored with Indigenous Peoples SG)
- Parks Gone Wild: Exploring the Boundaries of Nature Protection (2 sessions, co-sponsored with Historical SG and Cultural SG)
- Issues in International Tourism (5 sessions)
- Applied Geospatial Technologies for Sustainable Development and Preservation in Coastal Zones (co-sponsored with Coastal and Marine SG)
- RTS Plenary Session (Taylor and Francis-sponsored)
- Mobile Lives: Moving and Living (2 sessions)
- Tourism Development in China (1 session, co-sponsored with China SG)
- Critical Geographies of Tourism: Exploring the Social, Cultural and Political Implications of Heritage Tourism (1 session)

In addition, several RTS-themed papers were presented at sessions organized by the AAG 2008 Annual Meeting Program Committee. These sessions included:

- Tourism and the Identity of Places
- Travel, Tourism and Recreation (2 sessions)

Some interesting facts: There were 82 sessions in which a tourism paper was presented. Likewise, there were 23 sessions in which a recreation paper was presented. Among the 58 specialty groups (SG) of the AAG, only 19 SGs had organized more sessions than the RTS Specialty Group.

RTS Business Meeting:

This year's business meeting took place at the Las Vegas Convention Center at 11:55 am (March 24, 2009). Due to the large number of attendees we did not keep attendance record; suffice it to say that this was perhaps one of the most well attended RTS business meetings in a long time.

Some highlights at the Business Meeting:

- J J. Zhang of the National University of Singapore received the award for the best RTS Graduate Student Paper. Second place award was not given this year. We had received three papers, all submitted by doctoral students.
- Dr. Daniel Knudsen received the 2009 Roy Wolfe Award for outstanding contributions to tourism geographies.
- Several new (2009) publications, under the authorship of RTS members, were announced at the business meeting (more details forthcoming).
- David Truly presented the Treasurer's Report – as of February 2009 the RTS budget had a balance of \$3,878.87 (see Item No. 6 below).
- Election of New RTS Board Members: RTS members attending the RTS Business Meeting participated in the election of incoming Board Members. A new chair, treasurer, and five directors were elected to the Board for the year 2009-2011.
- The RTS Annual Dinner (March 24, 7:30 pm) was organized at the 777 Casino and Brewery in downtown Las Vegas.

5) Membership and Participation

The AAG listed 229 dues-paying RTS members as of April 2000 and 291 dues-paying members in January 2006. The latest update shows 247 dues-paying members.

6) Financial Report (see next page)

TREASURER'S REPORT

Recreation, Tourism and Sport Specialty Group
March 24, 2009

Balance as of April 18, 2008 **\$3,323.87**

Income:

April 2008-February 2009 \$555.00
Subtotal Balance **\$3,878.87**

Expenditures:

Awards 2008 \$98.60
Student Paper Awards \$650.00
Social \$170.57
Total Expenditures **\$919.17**

Account Balance as of April 18, 2008 **\$2,959.70**

Treasurer Notes: In the past year we had the highest expenditures to date due to the student awards, social, Wolfe award, etc. Our income will actually be more than indicated since it does not include two months. This year we only had one award so the expenditures will be less. Still with our current cash flow, we should not have to consider any changes to our spending habits over the next few years.

7) AAG Specialty Group Chairs' Meeting Summary

Note: The Chair was not able to attend this meeting due to flight delays. An update will be posted later.

8) Current concerns

1. Student awards –Although several students had expressed interest in submitting papers to compete for the awards, only three papers were received by the due date. We need much better student participation in the future. There were no submissions of student posters. This award needs to be reconsidered in the future.

2. RTS newsletter – Lorri Krebs at Salem State College is currently working to create the RTS blog. More details will follow soon.

3. RTS-themed papers not presented at RTS-sponsored sessions. For the first time, the AAG Annual Meeting organizers made it possible to conduct online search for potential papers that could be included as part of organized sessions. The RTS Chair had contacted some 60 individuals who had registered for the Las Vegas Annual Meeting. Of this, about 25 presenters contacted the Chair asking to be part of a RTS-sponsored session. These papers were included in the five sessions on Issues in International Tourism. There were three AAG Program Committee-organized sessions on tourism. These papers could have been included in RTS-sponsored sessions, however, this can be possible only if the presenters are interested in being part of the session.

9) Proposed RTS Sessions for 2010 AAG Annual Meeting

If you plan to organize a session, or are looking for sponsors or co-sponsors for your sessions, kindly contact the newly-elected RTS Chair (2009-2011):

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10) Incoming and Outgoing RTS Board Members

On behalf of the RTS Specialty Group members and the Board officers, the outgoing Chair would like to welcome the new Board members. It has been a privilege to serve this distinguished group of tourism geographers. Special thanks to outgoing members of the Board Anne-Marie d'Hauterres, Anne Soper (stays on the Board as Treasurer) Daniel Knudsen, David Truly, Lorri Krebs, Mike Pesses, and Bob Pfister. Congratulations and best wishes to the incoming Board Members! Go RTS!

End of Annual Report

This RTS Annual Report was prepared and submitted by Sanjay K. Nepal, RTS Chair 2007-2009.