

# SWAAG NEWSLETTER

<http://www.sw-aag.org/>



## SWAAG Chair's Column: Breaking Boundaries

By Murray Rice, SWAAG Chair,  
University of North Texas

There is something about geography that instills in many of its practitioners a rather unique combination of frustration and hope. *Frustration*: geographers are sometimes viewed as glorified game show fact providers. Alex Trebek, please don't call me – I might be able to tell you the name of the highest point in Kansas (Mount Sunflower!), but I really don't want to. It is at times daunting to know that some substantial portion of the public at large sees geography as focused on fact collection. However, balanced against this challenge is an equally strong sense of *hope*: geography is relevant to many of the most crucial issues faced by people across the planet. We know this, because we have seen the contribution our work continues to make in so many human and physical settings. Such knowledge and conviction energize us, and we continue with our efforts.

Yet given this background, a crucial question emerges: how can we expand the community that truly understands and supports our work? One key element of the answer to this question would inevitably appear to include more and better collaboration and outreach efforts that lead to involving more people that have some substantial contact with real, live geographers. Expanding our working groups, gathering improved ideas from a broadened community, and consciously reaching out to more potential users of our expertise are all positive ways of opening up the practice of geography to our fellow citizens.

To this end, I extend a hearty invitation for us all to meet at SWAAG's 2014 annual meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico (October 23-25). Our "Breaking Boundaries" meeting theme is a timely one, for all of the reasons advanced above, and because our meeting

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

SWAAG Chair's Column: Breaking Boundaries	1
Message from the Regional Councilor	2
2014 SWAAG Meeting	2
Geographers in the Piney Woods	3
SWAAG Student Competition Winners	5
SWAAG Election Results	5
The Southwestern Geographer	5
New Appointments	6
Logo Competition	7
SWAAG Budget	8

Mountain division neighbors. A larger-than-usual meeting with enhanced opportunities for learning, interaction, and collaboration-building provides a strong incentive for us all to attend.

However, in addition to the meeting itself, I also encourage you to attend because of the venue. The broad geographic extent of SWAAG means that we often meet somewhere that is fairly central to our region (hello, I-35 corridor), but this year represents an all-too-infrequent opportunity to explore a city and state that deserves more attention. Albuquerque is a vibrant, interesting, and historical city with many inducements to simply come on out. Plus, in all honesty, how many potential SWAAG meeting sites do we have that possess honest-to-goodness mountain views? Physical geography, culture, friendly hosts, interesting conversation, and (as always), excellent food: SWAAG/GPRM 2014 will be a good time indeed.

So please plan on engaging this October with other SWAAG members and our GPRM neighbors as we participate in numerous paper and panel sessions, visit with and hear from AAG President Mona Domosh, and gather in our SWAAG business meeting to discuss new initiatives for promoting geography and breaking boundaries across the American West.

## Message from the Regional Councilor

By Ron Hagelman, SWAAG Regional Councilor,  
Texas State University

Greetings to all SWAAG members! As your Regional Councilor and current Chair of the Regional Councilors, I offer the following as a brief update on the activities of the Council of the Association of American Geographers (AAG). Regional and National Councilors meet twice a year with past/current/in-coming AAG Presidents, the Executive Director (Doug Richardson), and many of the staff members from the executive office. Although the executive office handles most day-to-day and conference-planning responsibilities, the Council is charged with oversight and promulgating new rules, awards, and initiatives.

There has been a great deal of solidarity among regional councilors of late to press the AAG for more direct support to regional divisions. In response, the Executive Director and the Council provided travel funds to regional chairs and hosted a workshop in Tampa last spring for division officers aimed at developing a best practices manual for current and future division officers. This and other information will now be shared among regional divisions on a common website hosted at AAG. The AAG also offered to assist, on an elective basis, in accounting, conference-hosting, and membership management. This allows SWAAG and its regional counterparts to have access to a suite of business tools that should streamline the management of membership records and fall conferences. Officers from regional divisions were also invited to participate in the current round of long-range planning meetings being held by the association. In short, regional divisions of the AAG remain relevant, active, and now have even more support to build, recruit, and meet regularly.

There are a number of topics of national concern that continue to be discussed in Council. Although there are mixed opinions on the trend, the AAG remains attentive to the "re-branding" of departments and programs around the country. Data are being gathered on these changes nationally and will be shared with members as they become available. The Council also remains interested in the evolving role of online education, specifically the influence of Massive Open Online

Courses (MOOCs) and the rising popularity of online masters programs (especially in the geographic information sciences). Doug Richardson has reported frequently on the association's efforts to help defend social science funding at NSF and beyond. More details on those efforts can be found on the main website ([www.aag.org](http://www.aag.org)). These are just a few of the topics being considered in Council and there are many more coming. Please go online to discover more on new initiatives, new awards/scholarships, and new events to be held in Chicago next spring.

Regional Councilors serve three-year terms and are not eligible for re-election. My term as SWAAG Regional Councilor will be up spring 2015 at the Chicago, IL meeting and SWAAG leadership will call for nominations for the next councilor at this fall's meeting in Albuquerque, NM. If your calendar permits the commitment, I highly recommend the assignment. It has been an honor to represent my colleagues in SWAAG, it has been a pleasure to get know my fellow Council members, and I have been consistently impressed by the kindness and dedication of the AAG staff. Our regional divisions represent the foundation of a growing national/international association with long-standing roots in our discipline and increasing influence over national debates relevant to geographic practice, research and education. It is a great time to serve...and quite a bit of fun to boot!

## 2014 SWAAG Meeting

By Maria Lane, 2014 SWAAG Meeting Co-Organizer,  
University of New Mexico

Please make plans now to attend this year's SWAAG regional meeting, which will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico from October 23-25. The meeting is shaping up very nicely, and we look forward to meeting jointly for the first time with our colleagues from the Great Plains / Rocky Mountain region. We at the University of New Mexico are handling all local arrangements, with our partner and co-organizer Kansas State University handling registration and program logistics. I hope everyone has now seen that registration is open, with abstracts due by September 12. Please note that on-site registration will be available as usual, but registration fees will increase substantially after October 15. For information about travel, lodging,

registration, or abstract submission, please visit the conference website: <http://www.k-state.edu/swgprm2014/>. Twitter users should also follow us at @swgprm\_2014 for updates.

### Events and Schedule Overview

Hotel Andaluz is the conference hotel, with some events also held at the Albuquerque Convention Center, just one block away. Andaluz will host everything on Thursday 10/23, including registration, afternoon paper sessions, and a reception that evening. (We are still planning a student mixer for Thursday night at a downtown brewery; follow us on Twitter for details.) On Friday 10/24, we will move to the convention center for paper sessions, with keynote speaker Scott Collins joining us at lunch, before heading back to Andaluz for GeoBowl and the two regions' business meetings in the late afternoon. We are especially excited to announce that Friday evening's awards banquet, featuring a keynote talk by AAG President Mona Domosh, will be held at the historic Albuquerque Railyards space, a renovated former rail warehouse in a revitalized part of downtown. We have an outstanding slate of field trips for Saturday 8/25, all of which will depart from Hotel Andaluz. I am told there is currently room available in all four field trips, but they will surely fill quickly, so please register soon!

### Lodging

There are still rooms available at the gorgeous and newly renovated Hotel Andaluz at our conference rate of \$118 for 1-2 guests. (If you register online, use the group code "1410UNMGEO" but if you call, simply refer to "UNM Geography.") The cutoff date for this rate is October 10, but I'm sure the block will sell out before that. If you are looking to avoid downtown hotel rates, there are many cheaper motel options for those willing to brave Route 66, also known as Central Avenue. The conference website lists addresses and rates for these motel options, along with a few other hotels in town.

### Transportation

Please note that your conference registration will include a city bus pass, good for all routes. All conference venues are easily accessible by bus, and we will provide a van shuttle for anyone who does not want to walk to the Railyards. As you can see on the map, Hotel Andaluz is only 2 blocks from the main rail station and bus depot, and Central Avenue (historic Route 66) is

the main bus corridor through the city, with multiple overlapping bus lines available for those who choose motel lodging. In addition, cab fare to and from the airport is very reasonable from downtown. Bottom line: unless you are planning to do a field excursion outside the city during your stay, I would encourage you to use public transit instead of renting a car that will spend two days parked at Hotel Andaluz.

Again, we look forward to hosting you all at SWAAG. A number of special sessions have been proposed and are listed on the conference website. Please feel free to contact me or my co-organizer Shawn Hutchinson with any questions about sessions, papers, registration, etc.

Maria Lane, University of New Mexico  
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Shawn Hutchinson, Kansas State University  
shutch@k-state.edu

## Geographers in the Piney Woods

By Darrel McDonald, 2013 SWAAG Meeting Organizer,  
Stephen F. Austin State University

Stephen F. Austin State University Geography program hosted the 2013 SWAAG conference in Nacogdoches, Texas at the end of October. In addition, SWAAG welcomed member participation in the conference and support for the meeting from the Mid-South region of the ASPRS organization. The meeting venue provided opportunities to combine sharing research accomplishments, catching up with friends and getting to know geographers and geospatial scientists from across the South. The conference started with a series of paper sessions followed by a social around the pool of the Hotel Fredonia. Music was provided by SFA faculty members Jenna Paul- and Juan Carlos Urena. Their world music selections provided a festive part for a pleasant evening of conversations and dining.



Jeana Paul- and Juan Carlos Urena

On Friday concurrent sessions offered attendees a variety of paper and poster sessions to experience a



diversity of ongoing research projects being carried out around the globe at various scales, extending from Antarctica to our own back yards utilizing interpersonal to geospatial methodologies and techniques, all with the intent to better understand our planet and its complex interactions.



Geographers attending the SWAAG 2013 social.

The lunch plenary speaker was Phil Cross, a member of the Caddo Indian Nation and the Caddo Culture Club at Binger, OK. Over twenty years, Phil has been involved with enriching audiences' understanding of the Caddo heritage. He specializes in Caddo archery and building traditional Caddo grass-thatched houses. In his presentation, Phil retraced the actions that lead to the relocation of the Caddo peoples over a 500 year period to their present reservation in Oklahoma. A series of maps provided a visual context that Phil used to expand upon the social and cultural implications of the historical events. More information about the Caddo is available in the documentary "The Removal of Caddo Indians from their Ancient Homelands," produced by Cross (Crossroads Productions (2009) Anadarko, OK).



Phil Cross

Dr. Julie Winkler delivered the plenary address Friday evening of the conference. Dr. Winkler explored two themes in her presentation: The Climate of Geography and an overview of her important contributions to climate modeling research. Dr. Winkler pointed that Geography was in a positive position at the current time

with a growing appreciation of geographers' diverse interests and collaborations. The central focus of her presentation explored her and colleagues research on understanding changing human landscapes under a changing climate through more sophisticated climate assessment ensemble models. Recent findings suggest key areas for additional research are choice of assessment strategy, constraints of climate spatial linkages and interactions, interpretations of climate projection and uncertainty ensemble models, and



Dr. Julie Winkler,  
2013-2014 AAG President.



President Winkler joining in conversations on the patio at the meeting.

consideration of landscape-climate influences.

Conference attendees also had the opportunity to take part in a geocaching event sponsored by the SFA Geography Club. It turned out to be a rousing adventure for participants. The winners of the geocaching hunt were Alicia Gray and Rebecca Prince.



Geocaching Hunt Winners Rebecca Prince and Alicia Gray.

## 2013 SWAAG Student Competition Winners

By Michaela Buenemann, SWAAG Secretary,  
New Mexico State University

Nineteen graduate students and five undergraduate students participated in the SWAAG Student Competitions, which were held during the 2013 SWAAG Meeting in Nacogdoches, TX. Congratulations to all the winners!

### Graduate Student Paper Competition Winners

1<sup>st</sup> Place: Monica Medel, Texas State University, Exploring Marijuana and Opium Fields in Mexico: The Environmental and Human Variables that Make Cultivation Suitable

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Katherine Lester, University of North Texas, Defining and Evaluating Accessibility of Mental Healthcare for Houston's Proposed Homelessness Initiatives

3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Elizabeth Rentschlar, Texas A&M University, Spatial Variability of Vegetation Recovery on a Barrier Island following Hurricanes

3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Kanika Verma, Texas State University, Role of Age and Sex in the Geospatial Skills of Undergraduate Students: An Exploratory Study

### Graduate Student Poster Competition Winners

1<sup>st</sup> Place: Rebekah Jones, Louisiana State University, A remote sensing analysis of the effects of seasonal and annual variability and tropical cyclones on barrier island surface area in the Mississippi Sound, 1972-2013

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Peng Jia, Louisiana State University, Spatio-temporal Distribution and Ecological Niche Modeling of Brucellosis Occurrences in Inner Mongolia, China

3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Jana Brady, Louisiana State University, Visualizing New Haven's Paleo-Past: Creating a GIS Database of an Archaic Weapons Factory

### Undergraduate Student Paper Competition Winners

1<sup>st</sup> Place: Martin Aucoin, University of North Texas, Farmers Markets and Foodsheds: Mapping perceptions of place in the Dallas local food movement

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Brynn Fromknecht, DePaul University, Constructing the Irish Identity in Dublin: The Politics of Preservation and 'Cultural Vandalism' in the City Center

3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Kenneth Leon, Stephen F. Austin State University, The Limiting Factors of Galveston's Capabilities of Economic Growth

### Undergraduate Student Poster Competition Winners

1<sup>st</sup> Place: Victoria Nguyen, Louisiana State University, Disappearing Vietnamese Gardens in Versailles

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Blinn Geographic Society, The Creation of the Geographic History of the Brazos Valley website, TX

## SWAAG Election Results

By Michaela Buenemann, SWAAG Secretary  
New Mexico State University

Nominations to fill the entire slate of SWAAG offices were solicited at the 2013 SWAAG meeting and via email (closed 10 November 2013). Darren Purcell (University of Oklahoma) then conducted a Doodle Poll (completed 19 November 2013). The elected officers include: Murray Rice (University of North Texas) chair (37 votes, none opposed, two abstentions), Michaela Buenemann (New Mexico State University) secretary (39 votes, none opposed), and Laurel Smith (University of Oklahoma) treasurer (37 votes, none opposed, two abstentions).

## The Southwestern Geographer

By John Tiefenbacher,  
Texas State University

Co-editors Erik Prout and John Tiefenbacher would like to announce that *The Southwestern Geographer's* 16th volume (for 2013) has been published on-line and is now available on the journal's website. The journal staff is completing the journal's migration to open-access on-line publishing by posting digital reproduction of all past volumes of the journal. The editors suggest that authors of previously published journal articles should review the metadata attached to their articles on-line and forward any changes and additions (including keywords and subject descriptions) to John Tiefenbacher (tief@txstate.edu). These data will be updated as appropriate and will assist access to readership searching on web-based search engines. Each article will soon appear in search results on scholarly search engines based upon their titles,

abstracts, and keywords and will (eventually) have unique DOI identifiers. Readers, and all users in fact, must register (though it is free) in order to access the articles from all issues. Future issues of The Southwestern Geographer will be available only on-line. Papers will become available upon acceptance and after each has been copy-edited and laid out in journal format. Each article will soon appear in search results on scholarly search engines based upon their titles, abstracts, and keywords and will (eventually) have unique DOI identifiers. Please visit the website of SWAAG to access the journal's website and for information regarding the open call for papers, formatting, and the reviewing and publication processes.

## New Appointments

By Michaela Buenemann, SWAAG Secretary,  
New Mexico State University

SWAAG welcomes the following geographers to new positions in our region:

- Samuel Adu-Prah (GIS and Environmental Modeling; Southern Illinois University PhD), Assistant Professor at Sam Houston State University as of Fall 2013
- Mohamed Aly (InSAR, GPS, GIS, Crustal Deformation Modeling, Geohazard Assessment; Texas A&M University PhD), Assistant Professor at University of Arkansas as of Fall 2013
- Nazgol Bagheri (Urban Geography, Feminist Geography, GIScience, Middle East; University of Missouri PhD), Assistant Professor at University of Texas at San Antonio as of Fall 2013
- Timothy Beach (Human Impacts on Geomorphology, Soils, Ecology, and Hydrology; University of Minnesota PhD), Professor at University of Texas at Austin as of Fall 2014
- Guofeng Cao (GIS and Spatial Statistics; University of California Santa Barbara PhD), Assistant Professor at Texas Tech University as of Fall 2013
- Matt Connolly (Physical/Environmental GIS; Texas State University PhD), Assistant Professor at University of Central Arkansas as of Fall 2014
- Anthony Cummings (Human-Environment Interactions, Global Environmental Change, Application of GIS and Remote Sensing to Natural Resource Management; Syracuse University PhD), Assistant Professor at University of Texas Dallas as of Fall 2014
- Carolina Faria (Feminist Political and Cultural Geography, Gender, Nationalism; University of Washington PhD), Assistant Professor at University of Texas at Austin as of Fall 2014
- Song Feng (Climate Change, Drought Modeling, Paleoclimates; Chinese Academy of Sciences PhD), Assistant Professor at University of Arkansas as of Fall 2013
- Russell Graves (University of Wisconsin Madison PhD), Visiting Assistant Professor at University of Central Oklahoma as of Fall 2014
- Colleen Hiner (Environmental Management, Political Ecology, Environmental Politics and Policy, Qualitative and Participatory Methods; University of California Davis PhD), Assistant Professor at Texas State University as of Fall 2013
- Jason Julian (Water Resources, Land Use / Land Cover Change, River Ecosystems, Fluvial Geomorphology; University of North Carolina PhD), Associate Professor at Texas State University as of Fall 2013
- Jennifer Koch (Land-Use and Land-Cover Change, Integrated Modeling, Coupled Human and Natural systems, GIS; University of Kassel PhD), Assistant Professor at University of Oklahoma as of Fall 2014
- Kory Konsoer (Process Fluvial Geomorphology, Sediment Transport, Planform Dynamics, River Hydrodynamics; University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign PhD), Assistant Professor at Louisiana State University as of Fall 2014
- Caitlin Lippitt (Biogeography, Invasive Species, Remote Sensing of Vegetation, Fire Ecology, Disturbances in Plant Communities; University of California Santa Barbara and San Diego State University PhD), Assistant Professor at University of New Mexico as of Fall 2013
- Sheryl Luzzadder Beach (Geoarchaeology; Hydrology and Water Quality; Geomorphology; Spatial Statistics; Gender, Science, and Human



Rights; University of Minnesota PhD), Professor and Department Chair at University of Texas at Austin as of Spring 2014

- Adam Mathews (Geographic Information Science and Systems, Remote Sensing, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles/Systems, Geography of Wine and Viticulture, Cartography; Texas State University PhD), Assistant Professor at Oklahoma State University as of Fall 2014
- Kimberly Meitzen (Fluvial Geomorphology, River Ecosystems, Environmental Flows Science and Policy, Vegetation Disturbance and Response, GIScience; University of South Carolina PhD), Assistant Professor at Texas State University as of Fall 2013
- Kim Seidler (Land Use Management and Planning, Urban Geography, Human-Environment Interactions, Environmental Assessment ; University of New Mexico MA), Lecturer at University of New Mexico as of Fall 2013
- Elizabeth Sills (Ancient Maya Archaeology, Human Environment Interactions, GIS; Louisiana State University PhD), Assistant Professor at University of Texas at Tyler as of Fall 2014
- Melanie Stine (Biogeomorphology, Geomorphology of Fire in Alpine Environments; Texas State University), Assistant Professor at University of Texas at San Antonio as of Fall 2013
- Russell Weaver (Urban Geography, Law and Economics, Ecological Economics, Political Geography and Geopolitics; SUNY Buffalo PhD), Assistant Professor at Texas State University as of Fall 2014
- Danqing Xiao (Geographic Information Science, Spatial Cognition, Behavior Geography, Volunteered Geographic Information; University of California Santa Barbara PhD), Assistant Professor at University of New Mexico as of Fall 2013
- May Yuan (Representation of Dynamic Geographic Phenomena in Support of Spatiotemporal Query, Analysis, and Modeling;; SUNY Buffalo PhD), Professor at University of Texas Dallas as of Fall 2014
- Yihong Yuan (Big Data Analytics, Human Mobility Modeling and Travel Behavior, Urban Pattern

Detection and Location Based Services; University of California Santa Barbara PhD), Assistant Professor at Texas State University as of Fall 2014

- Jadwiga (Jad) Ziolkowska (Environmental Economics, Natural Resource and Agricultural Economics, Water and Energy Economics, Desalination, Biofuels and Renewable Energy, Sustainability; Humboldt University of Berlin PhD), Assistant Professor at University of Oklahoma as of Fall 2014

## Logo Competition

By Michaela Buenemann, SWAAG Secretary, New Mexico State University

The SWAAG is pleased to announce a competition for a new logo for *The Southwestern Geographer*.

### Background

*The Southwestern Geographer* is SWAAG's peer-reviewed journal, now published online. The journal welcomes research papers on any topic written by geographers who reside in the states that comprise SWAAG (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas). The journal also invites research paper submissions by scholars residing elsewhere on any topic that pertains to the geography of the southwestern United States or northern Mexico. For more information on the journal, go to <http://www.sw-aag.org/southwestern-geographer.html>.

### Logo Requirements

The logo should be representative of *The Southwestern Geographer*; be unique; be memorable; be timeless; be aesthetically pleasing; evoke positive associations; be in vector format (e.g., psd or eps), not raster format (e.g., jpg or tif); include a graphic element (original art, not stock art); use color but also look good in grayscale; use a maximum of two different fonts of different weights; and look good in large format (e.g., poster) and small format (e.g., letterhead).

### Selection

The winning logo will be selected by SWAAG members by a Doodle Poll.

### Prize

The first place winner will receive a check in the amount

of \$200. The first, second, and third place winners will receive free registrations for the 2015 SWAAG Meeting.

#### Eligibility & Entry Fee

Everyone is invited to submit a new logo design.

There is no participation fee.

#### Submissions

Submit the logo to Michaela Buenemann ([elabuen@nmsu.edu](mailto:elabuen@nmsu.edu)) by **31 December 2014**.

## SWAAG Budget (21 October 2013)

By Michaela Buenemann, SWAAG Treasurer,  
New Mexico State University

Date	Description	Receipts (\$)	Disbursements (\$)	Balance (\$)
<b>8/31/12</b>	<b>Balance forward</b>			<b>4,274.48</b>
11/2/12	Swann - 1st Place SWAGG Grad Paper Award		(200.00)	3,924.48
11/2/12	McNair - 2nd Place SWAGG Grad Paper Award		(150.00)	3,274.48
11/2/12	Slaughter - 1st Place SWAGG Grad Poster Award		(200.00)	3,724.48
11/2/12	Jewell - 2nd place Grad. Poster Award		(150.00)	4,124.48
11/2/12	Walker - 3rd Place Grad Poster Award		(100.00)	3,424.48
11/2/12	Jackson - 1st Place Undergrad Paper Award		(200.00)	3,524.48
11/7/12	Lester - 1st Place Undergrad Poster Award		(100.00)	3,174.48
11/7/12	Whitney - 1st Place Undergrad Poster Award		(100.00)	3,074.48
11/12/12	Richman - 3rd Place Grad Paper Award		(100.00)	2,974.48
4/3/13	AAG contribution to WGB 2013	500.00		3,474.48
4/23/13	Gray - SWAAG WGB 2013		(125.00)	3,349.48
4/24/13	Sinha - WGB 2013		(125.00)	3,224.48
4/24/13	Joslin - WGB 2013		(125.00)	3,099.48
4/24/13	Sirdeshmukh - WGB 2013		(125.00)	2,974.48
5/15/13	Void CK#16758 for N. Sirdeshmukh and reissue	125.00		3,099.48
5/15/13	Sirdeshmukh - Reissue CK#16758 WGB 2013		(125.00)	2,974.48
7/3/13	Sirdeshmukh - SWAAG WGB 2013 2nd payment		(125.00)	2,849.48
7/3/13	Sinha - WGB 2013 2nd payment		(125.00)	2,724.48
7/3/13	Gray - WGB 2013 2nd payment		(125.00)	2,599.48
7/3/13	Joslin - WGB 2013 2nd payment		(125.00)	2,474.48
8/27/13	SWAGG Capitation FYE 2013	1,500.00		3,974.48
<b>8/31/13</b>	<b>Balance</b>			<b>3,974.48</b>
<b>8/31/13</b>	<b>Balance forward</b>			<b>3,974.48</b>
<b>9/30/13</b>	<b>Balance</b>			<b>3,974.48</b>

Source: Michelle Ledoux, AAG Membership Director