

KGS SPOTLIGHT ● Nikki Potter

I started at the KGS about eight years ago as the Librarian and Archivist, and I had some large shoes to fill when I got there. While I could never duplicate my predecessor's talents, I have managed to carve out my own space and responsibilities at the Survey, which keeps me on my toes. In addition to preserving the library and archive, I maintain the Lynn Watney Core Lab and our core repository. I have various projects my students and I work on, such as digitizing aerial photographs so we will become the largest repository for digitized Kansas aerials as well as digitizing Lynn Watney's archive for other scientists to have access to his research. In addition, with recent renovations to the core lab, my core students and I have been working on a backlog of core and identifying "mystery" core with new information. We've also been trying to photograph more of our core so researchers have access to our core remotely. I'm proud to say we have made great strides in these areas. Throughout the year, I collaborate on other projects and classes at the Survey, KU, and other universities. My overall goal, since I have access to such vast material, is to find the connection between our paper-based collection at the Survey and connect it to our physical samples, therefore constructing a more rich database. This also will, hopefully, reduce the duplication of testing, which will allow us to conserve our samples for other projects.

Before my start at the KGS, I was a pastry chef and earned my



Nikki in the Alps (above) and during a KGS field trip (below).

associate degree in hospitality with a pastry certification; however, that did not completely satisfy me (though I know others at the Survey don't complain about the goods I bring in). I went back to school and earned my BGS from KU in History, Women Studies with a minor in Business. From there I traveled north to Ann Arbor to earn my Master of Science in Information from the University of Michigan.

In my spare time, I travel as much as possible, whether it's exploring the unique wildlife in the Galapagos Islands to kayaking in the Adriatic Sea. When traveling, my husband, Kyle, and I try to stay with locals or venture off the beaten path to get more of a feel for the place and culture. I find it fascinating to learn others' perspectives about the happenings around the world and their own country. Also, that's where we get recommendations for the



really good local food. And as much as I love the history and culture behind many of these places, let's be honest, I'm really in it for the food.

Another activity I enjoy is volunteering. While I assist humans-in-need organizations throughout the year, my passion lies with animals. I work with several rescues

(Continued on page 7)

Nikki *(continued)*

throughout the county to help transport animals from kill shelters or from poor living conditions to fosters, non-kill shelters or even forever homes. Along the way, it's not unusual for some of the animals to find temporary homes with me until they find their permanent home. My two dogs, Mercedes and Lili, aren't always happy about having to share their space, but we always make room.