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Become a member of the NYS GIS Association and Attend the Annual Meeting on November 15th in Saratoga Springs

More Info on Page 16



NYS GIS
association

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2011

Inside this issue:

25th Annual GIS/SIG Conference	1
Geospatial Summit	2
President's Corner	4
Conference	6
Communication	6
Education	7
Legislative	7
LightSquared Controversy	7
Marketing	8
Membership	8
Regional Coordination	9
GISP	10
By-Law Changes	10
Member Focus	11
SPOTLIGHT: Twist Workshop LiDAR Webinar	12
Events	16

GIS/SIG, Western NY GIS User's Group Celebrates 20 Years



By Carol Goodman Zollweg
NYS GIS ASSOCIATION Communications Committee Chair

This past April marked the 20th conference hosted by the GIS/SIG. The conference had nearly 200 attendees and presentations ranged from technical how-to sessions to descriptions of various projects, all using GIS, of course. Over lunch everyone played GeoJeopardy, where each table has the chance to win unique prizes for figuring out the correct description for over 20 slides that are played continuously on three screens. This feature of the conference is always a big hit and gets people at each table talking to one another and is a wonderful ice breaker.

In addition to the annual conference, GIS/SIG puts on three programs evenly spaced throughout the year. Each program consists of an informative presentation and a catered lunch and lasts about two hours so there is time for networking.

Mike Ross, president GIS/SIG had these observations to offer as to what has made GIS/SIG such a success:

1. Hold events on a regular schedule (e.g. annual conference, third week in April, June event: third week in June, etc)
2. Hold board meetings every month even if you think there will be nothing to talk about.

3. Keep a mailing list of everyone who has ever expressed any interest in the organization and use that mailing list to announce events. The GIS/SIG mailing list has over 850 names.

4. Encourage speakers to announce their presentation to their colleagues. For example, if the city foresters come and give a talk about a tree inventory in GIS, encourage them to invite all the people they know who might be interested in that topic but wouldn't necessarily come to a GIS event.

5. Find the best caterers in the area for lunch and have something different every time.

15) Which New York State Park is this?



An example of a slide from GeoJeopardy.
Answer on Page 16!

For more information on GIS/SIG:

<http://www.gis-sig.org/>

GEOSPATIAL SUMMIT

2011 Summit a Great Success!

This year's NYS GeoSpatial Summit proved to be rousing success! Held at the beautiful, Welch-Allyn Lodge in Skaneateles, the event opened with a reception the night before which included wine tasting sponsored by

Anyelas Vineyards (<http://www.anyelasvineyards.com>),

music by **Loren Barrigar**

(<http://www.lorenbarrigar.com/>), and an interactive session led by **Learnon Dalby**, former president of the National States Geographic Information Council on emerging geospatial topics facing the country and the geospatial community in New York.



The next day's speakers included: **Adena Schutzberg** of Directions Magazine, **Max Baber** from US Geospatial Intelligence Foundation, **Alyssa Wright** of OpenGeo, **Kyle Schmackpfeffer** from ITT Geospatial Systems, **Nicholas de Monchaux** from UC Berkeley, and **Mike Dobson** of TeleMapics LLC.

Adena started the day rolling by

leading the 133 attendees through a series of questions on Location Based Services (LBS) and using the answers provided to give each of the attendees to a greater understanding of LBS as well as the real rationale for its growing popularity in the private sector. Mike Dobson closed the presentations by providing his perspective on the real facts about crowd sourced data and the best model to use to take advantage of it (the presentation is available at (<http://nysgis.org/pages/events.aspx>)). The final panel discussion raised some very interesting ideas for the attendees to think about on their way home!

The Association wishes to thank the NYS Office of Cyber Security for co-hosting this event. It also wishes to thank the United States Geospatial Intelligence Foundation (USGIF) for providing a grant to the Association to insure the Summit's success. In addition, the Association would like to thank each of the Summit's sponsors and underwriters (see inset to the right).



Finally, the Association wishes to thank each of the Summit Committee members for all their fantastic ideas and tireless work that they put into this year's Summit to make it a success!

Sponsors:

Reception – Pictometry and Cedra;

Lunch – Esri and Bergmann Associates; and

Breakfast & Breaks – Wendel, AppGeo and TomTom.

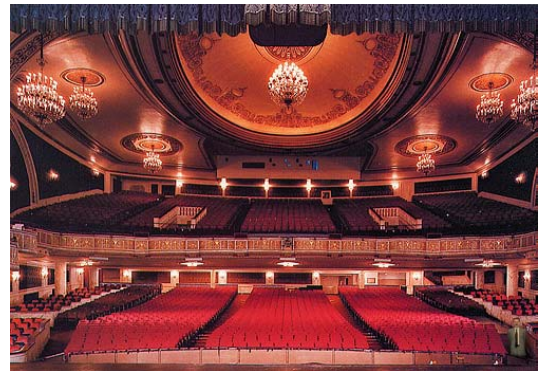
Summit Underwriters - Buffalo Computer Graphics, C.T. Male, Fountains Spatial, GIS SIG, MRB Group, Oswald Associates, and Waypoint Technology Group.

GeoSpatial Summit

New York State

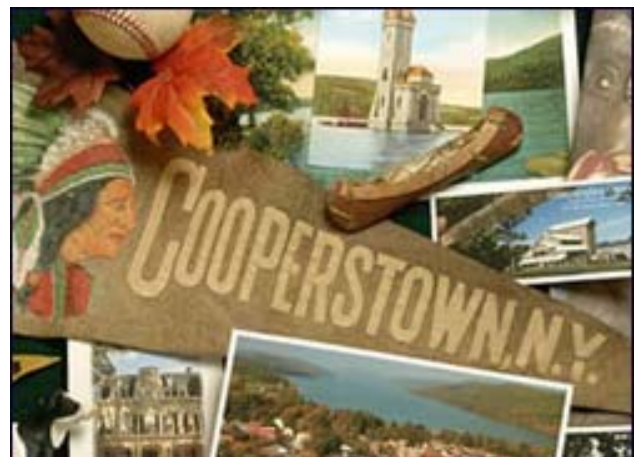
Through the Years...

2006-2011



"Highlight of GeoSpatial Summit 2011 is meeting the speakers and hearing their presentations. All great folks with lots of insights." - Don Meltz, Stockport, NY

The GeoSpatial Summit is a great event; 2011 was even better than last year. The speakers are very high quality and the topics are intriguing. Plus it's a great opportunity to network with your colleagues." – Kate Buss, GISP



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As I noted in my January letter, the Board of Directors, the Committee Chairs and I began our terms last November by engaging in a strategic planning process. The eight areas where we agreed to concentrate our efforts in 2011 were established. Here's what the Board and Committee members have accomplished in those areas:

1. Providing professional development opportunities

- a. The Association held a webinar on March 23, 2011 on "Working with LIDAR Data using ArcGIS & 3D Analyst (available for viewing on the Association's website: <http://nysgis.org/pages/Video.aspx>).
- b. The Association's Education Committee is now developing panel discussions for the 2012 NEARC Conference on "What it takes to be a valuable GIS employee in 2011/2012." We are hoping to have 2 separate panels — one on Educators Day (geared for educators) and one during the main conference (geared for practitioners). Panelists will be brought in from across the northeast and will include the private and public sectors as well as academia.

2. Tracking and engaging in discussions on the survey legislation

- a. The Association's Legislative Committee actively engaged both the NYS Association of Professional Land Surveyors (NYSAPLS) and the NYS Society of Professional Engineers on the legislation introduced by NYSAPLS to revise New York's surveying laws. Even though this legislation failed to pass in the 2011 session, the Association was able to persuade NYSAPLS to include exemptions in it for GIS professionals. ***This is a major step forward for geospatial professions in New York*** and we look forward to working with NYSAPLS in the coming year to further refine the language in their bill proposal.

3. Continuing to co-sponsor the Geospatial Summit and the State Conference

- a. In February, the Association obtained a grant from the US Geospatial Intelligence Foundation to assist putting on the 2011 Summit at an affordable rate for attendees (rolling back registration to 2008's rate!). This was key to enabling the Association and the NYS Office of Cyber Security to co-sponsor this year's very successful Summit in Skaneateles.
- b. The Association has taken an active roll on the NYS GIS Conference Advisory Committee in planning for the 2011 with SUNY Environmental Science & Forestry (ESF). In 2012, the Association will begin hosting the conference on its own to reduce conference operating expenses and better meet the needs of New York's geospatial community.

4. Participating in the education of children on GIS

- a. The Association is making great strides towards bringing GIS to K-12 across the state. The Association is taking advantage of an Esri program to provide software across the state to K-12 and other youth organizations such as Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, 4-H, etc. Step one was accomplished when the New York Institute of Technology signed Esri's license agreement on behalf of New York State. We now are in the midst of developing an implementation plan and hope to be able to make the technology and training available to schools across the state in the not too distant future.

5. Providing a conduit on communication for the NYS GIS Community

- a. The Association's Communication Committee introduced several new and/or improved ways to communicate with New York's geospatial community:
 - i. A new web site (www.nysgis.org) was developed and is in the process of upgrading it to better serve our members.
 - ii. A Twitter account (https://twitter.com/#1/NYS_GISA) was established. It has over 540 followers and has sent out 410 tweets keeping its followers abreast of the latest in geospatial news.
 - iii. Similarly, a Facebook page was created (<http://www.facebook.com/NYSGISA?v=wall&ref=sgm>) and has numerous posts on it as well.
 - iv. Finally, the Association has joined "LinkedIn" (<http://www.linkedin.com/>).

6. Providing additional networking opportunities

- a. The Association held meetings in Albany in April and Skaneateles in June.
- b. We continue to try to incorporate more networking opportunities at the Summit as well as the NYS GIS Conference.
- c. We'd love to hear other networking ideas that you may have as well.

7. Increasing support to regional GIS organizations

- a. Association Board members have attended LIGIS, Adirondack Users Group, Lower Adirondack Users Group, Capital District Metro Group, and GIS SIG meetings over the last five months.
- b. In addition, the Association is working to formally strengthen our relationships by establishing memorandums of understanding with each of those groups as well as the Western NY GIS Users Group.

8. Increasing membership and member involvement in Association activities

- a. This year the Board voted to move the start of the membership year to July 1st (previously, it was Jan. 1st). This allows members to take advantage of the opportunity to join by attending our spring events (such the Summit) and also insures that membership will be at its highest during the legislative session.
- b. The Association has involved the New York geospatial community through a survey on the proposed changes to the GISP requirements as well as the Association's annual survey.
- c. A membership drive is being conducted by the Membership Committee.

With a lot of hard work, the Association has been able to get a lot accomplished so far in 2011. However, there is so much more to accomplish. The bottom line is that only you can help us achieve these goals by signing up for membership (at: <http://nysgis.org/pages/join.aspx>) and getting involved in a committee of your choice. The time is right. Step up to the plate and make a difference in New York's geospatial community!

Bruce Oswald, President
NYS GIS Association



Association Background

The NYS GIS Association is a growing non-profit organization for New York professionals involved in GIS, Global Positioning Systems (GPS), land information systems (LIS), remote automated mapping and related geospatial technologies.

The organization is designed for those involved in the GIS community to exchange knowledge and ideas regarding important topics facing the industry in the coming years. The NYS GIS Association promotes a forum for open discussion regarding the direction of the GIS profession.



WHERE IS IT?!

Answer in the next NYS GIS Association Newsletter

Previous Issue:
Niagara Falls

Conference Committee

2011 NYS GeoSpatial Summit – This year's Summit in Skaneateles proved to be extremely successful in spite of these difficult economic times thanks to the hard work of the Summit Committee members, a grant which the Association received from the US Geospatial Intelligence Foundation and the support from sponsors and underwriters (<http://www.nygeosummit.org/sponsors.html>).

2012 NYS GIS Conference – In January of 2010, the Association signed a Memorandum of Understanding with SUNY Environmental Science & Forestry (ESF) to partner with ESF to enhance the quality of the New York State Geographic Information Systems (NYS GIS) Conference. After working with ESF for the 2010 Conference and the upcoming 2012 Conference, the Association's Board of Directors has decided that the fee structure charged by SUNY to manage the

conference was inhibiting the ability to bring the best and most affordable conference to its geospatial community. Accordingly, in May of this year, ESF was notified by the Board that the Association was ending its partnership with ESF after the 2012 Conference and moving forward with the conference on its own with the contracted assistance of a professional conference organizer. In addition, the Board offered ESF the opportunity to compete in the bidding process for a conference organizer.

Nevertheless, the NYS GIS Association is committed to working with ESF on the 2012 conference with the goal of having the best event possible and 2012 and working to create even better events in the years going forward!

Jeff Volpe
Verne LaClair
Bruce Oswald

Communications Committee

The Association would like to welcome our new Communications Committee, chaired by Carol Zollweg. The purpose of this committee is to coordinate the public face of the organization including the website (nysgis.org), Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and this newsletter.

The website's home page is updated periodically with events of interest to our members. As we streamline our work flows the website will get updated even more frequently and you'll see Facebook items and Tweets alerting you to these updates where you'll find more details about these events. To follow the NYS GIS Association on Twitter or Facebook see the home page, nysgis.org.

Also in the works is the development of an online membership database where you can keep your email and contact address up to date and print a report of your participation in NYS GIS Association

for use in applying for your GISP certification or re-certification or as documentation for other purposes. There will also be a members-only section where you can participate in member-only activities.



TWITTER



FACEBOOK



LINKEDIN

Carol Zollweg
Danielle Bargovic
Don Meltz
Jake Needle
Sheri Norton
Vijay Sambandhan

Education Committee

First Training Webinar Held this Spring!

The NYS GIS Association held its first training webinar, *A Simple Example of Working with LiDAR Data using ArcGIS & 3D Analyst*, this spring. We were fortunate to have Barb and Dave Tewksbury of Hamilton College present a PowerPoint presentation demonstrating how to convert a sample LiDAR data set to an elevation raster using ArcGIS and 3D Analyst. A recording of the webinar is available at the Association's website at <http://nysgis.org/pages/Video.aspx>. Barb has made the exercise and data used in the webinar available at the Cutting Edge website: <http://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/gis/activities2/48283.html>.

There were more than 100 participants in the Webinar, hailing primarily from New York State. Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Vermont joined us, as well, representing such agencies as the FAA, USDA, USGS and the North Dakota Public Service Commission. We're looking forward to another webinar for 2012. If you have any suggestions let us know! Right now, we're looking into a webinar on GIS and ROI (Return on

Investment).

Progress on the Esri Statewide Site License for Schools & Youth in New York State.

Alex Chaucer (Skidmore College) and Amy Work (IAGT) of the Education Committee have been spearheading our effort to bring Esri software to K-12 schools and youth organizations in New York State. As of June 2011, 12 states, the District of Columbia and 40 districts, including New York City, have developed an agreement with ESRI to provide free access to software, training and support. Given the tough economy and the belief that education is fundamental to the future, each licensee agreement will provide professional and curriculum development to support the use of GIS in education.

Chaucer, Work and others have been meeting regularly to formulate a plan for implementing a program for NYS through NYIT (New York Institute of Technology). They've been working with Chris French and Charlie Fitzpatrick of Esri and representatives of NYIT to produce documentation of how the implementation will occur and the process of reporting expenses and results.



Ann Deakin

Eileen Allen
Shazia Bee
John Borst
Alex Chaucer
Susan Hoskins
Robert Jones
Susan Nixon
Rich Quodomine
Amy Work

Legislative Committee

The Legislative Committee has been quite active since the fall of 2010. Joe Jones became chairman of the Legislative Committee, with Bruce Oswald and Ben Houston as committee members. Numerous discussions and meetings have been had with the legislature, the NYS Association of Professional Land Surveyors (NYSAPLS) and the NYS Society of Professional Engineers (Engineers) to discuss the proposed NYSAPLS legislation.



Joe Jones

Ben Houston
Bruce Oswald

(Continued on page 15)

LightSquared Controversy

A significant national focus recently has been the LightSquared LTE proposal for a broadband system that will interfere with existing GPS systems. This affects not only the geospatial community, but a range of sectors including aviation, surveyors, maritime navigation, and so many others.

Lis DeGironimo, on behalf of the NYS GIS Association Board of Directors, submitted comments to the FCC expressing dissatisfaction with the proposed system. You can view the letter on the Association's website.

In a nutshell, "GPS is a national utility that should not be jeopardized. LightSquared must bear the cost of preventing interference emanating from their equipment. If there is no way to prevent this interference, they should not be permitted to operate."

MAPS

Maps go in all directions, they all come in many sections.

From place to place they travel by all the pictures taken in the sky.

Road to road, street to street blisters appearing on peoples feet churches, buildings, bus coach and fire stations all these things are all open to the nation.

Whether you go to the picnic site, golf course or the links.

When you drive through agricultural land it always seems to stink!

So you will have to think about the cost before you start getting lost.

**Danielle,
Liverpool College**

[http://
www.sln.org.uk/
geography/pop/
General/other%
20poems.htm](http://www.sln.org.uk/geography/pop/General/other%20poems.htm)

Marketing Committee

The Marketing Committee spent the first part of 2011 creating draft framework documents for Board review dealing with both corporate sponsorship and branding. In late spring, the committee published the 2011 Annual Survey, and the initial results were presented at the general meeting in Skaneateles in June. The survey, which has been conducted annually for the past several years, continues to provide the Association and the Board with key information regarding both the state of our industry and the perspective of our members, and it helps us chart our priorities for the ensuing membership year.

In this year's survey, the highest rankings on what the Association should be doing included taking action on legislative activities and providing new geo-

spatial training opportunities. Eight-four percent of respondents felt it was important or very important to have access to continuing education, and eighty-eight percent felt it was important for the association to support and/or sponsor continuing education. Eighty percent indicated regional meetings are their preferred venue for networking, and a majority (51%) said they would like to see more webinars and conference call opportunities.

Meanwhile, we still face a range of challenges: only sixty percent of respondents were even members of the Association:

- Only 1 in 3 respondents felt they

Continued on page 16



Membership Committee

The Membership Committee has focused on encouraging student participating in the Association and regional user groups. In particular, we hope to showcase projects in the NYS GIS Association newsletters. Utilizing the NYS GIS Clearinghouse, we have targeted people using the technology in a membership drive this past spring. We are also reaching out to undergraduate and graduate students at the many universities around the state to encourage participation in NYS GIS Association.

Individuals can register as either a Professional (\$10) or Student (\$5). You can join using the Association website (<http://nysgis.org/pages/join.aspx>) or by requesting a form from the Member-

ship Committee or the Association's Secretary.

Benefits of joining can be found on Page 10!

Anyone can join—whether you consider yourself a GIS professional or have only recently been introduced to the technology. Our members are also active with the regional GIS users groups—a great way to learn more!



Sheri Norton

Katherine Barnes
Christa Hay
Razy Kased
Deborah Parker
Carol Zollweg

Regional Coordination Committee

Lis DeGironimo
Dorothy Nash



The NYSGISA is pursuing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the established regional user groups. Board members have met with the leadership of LIGIS, and GIS/SIG; and have held discussions with the Lower Adirondack and Western NY GIS Users groups. We'll keep you posted on our progress!

The **Adirondack** GIS Users Group held meetings in December 2010 at the Adirondack Ecological Center in Newcomb and on August 17th at the SUNY ESF Ranger School in Wanakena.

The **Lower Adirondack** GIS Users Group held its first meeting of the year in April hosted by Saratoga County. Guest speakers included Jonathan Cobb, Lisa Andrews, Shannon Glazer and Sheri Norton. Topics ranged from GPS and iPad applications to community and wildfire inventory projects.

In May, the **Long Island** GIS (LIGIS) UsersGroup held their 1-day spring conference at the Brookhaven National Laboratory. 70-80 people attended the event which included presentations on new features in ArcGIS 10 by Matt Martini from ESRI, as well as an extensive discussion of changing marshland in Jamaica Bay by James P. Browne, Town of Hempstead Department of Conservation, and a presentation on GPS from Jonathan Cobb from the Waypoint Technology Group.

The **Western NY** GIS Users Group held a free GPS workshop in June. Jonathan Cobb shared the latest trends in the GPS industry, as well as the latest GPS equipment.

The **Metro-Albany** GIS Users Group met in May in Colonie. Daren Morgan of the NYS Association of Professional Land Surveyors (NYSAPLS) updated the group on the latest version of the survey legislation. Eric Newman from Waypoint Technology gave a GPS presentation, and Linda Rockwood from Mohawk Valley GIS gave a Manifold GIS presentation.

GIS/SIG held their 20th annual conference in April (see full article on Page 1).

If your organization has met, we'd love to hear about it! Upcoming meetings and other special events are posted on the Association's website, through Facebook, and Twitter, as well as the NYS GIS List Serve email notification.

GISMO Comes of Age!

Twenty-one years ago the MetroNYC GIS users group was a gleam in Jack Eichenbaum's eye. Last year the group formally affiliated with the NYS GIS Association, setting the stage for an (optional) dues paying joint membership in both organizations. GISMOites have gathered several times since last summer with a wide range of presenters and topics:

- **Jiin Wen**, GIS Director for the NYC Economic Development Corporation explained the role of mapping in revitalizing city businesses, including a comprehensive survey of piers and waterfront in NYC neighborhoods including Red Hook, Long Island City and the South Bronx.
- **Sam Wear**, Assistant CIO for GIS/Westchester County, provided expert overview of emerging trends for disseminating spatially-enabled data. He also discussed his four-year (part-time) deployment with USGS and provided insight on local to Federal data sharing.
- **Baruch Heinoch**, President/G.G. Sytems Ltd, co-chairs the US-Israeli GIS group with GISMO stalwart Zvia Naphtali. He was able to join us in December and share experiences on tracking bird migrations across (sometimes hostile) borders. Jack Eichenbaum
- **Alan Leidner**, former Assistant Commissioner for Citywide GIS/NYC Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications, explained his role as Northeast Regional Information Exchange Broker on the US Department of Homeland Security Homeland Infrastructure Foundation-Level Database (HIFLD) to the Regions Project.
- **Chris Goranson** and **Sayone Thihalolipavan** discussed their experiences with structured crowd sourcing, training teenagers and grad students with cell phones to map alcohol-related ads in selected NYC neighborhoods.

The next GISMO meeting will focus on a Federally-funded 2010 survey of regional data resources in selected NY/NJ/CT counties surrounding the five boroughs. This project was initiated as part of an ongoing Regional Catastrophic Planning initiative in the tri-state area.

Why Join?

- Become a part of New York's only statewide professional GIS association.
- Keep abreast of the latest GIS events.
- Network with other geospatial professionals.
- Promote professionalism and certification within the GIS community.
- Expand the use of GIS in other professions.
- Impact legislation and other issues affecting GIS in New York State.
- Accumulate Professional Contribution and Education credit for GISP Certification
- Discounts for workshops and other events

GISP Committee

By Jim Daly, GISP
Suffolk County GIS Coordinator
Suffolk County Dept. of Information
Technology - GIS Division
Jim.Daly@SuffolkCountyNY.gov
*Re-printed with permission from the Fall 2009 Long Island GIS
User Group "Coordinates" Newsletter*

Let's face it, today we live in a world where a good deal of emphasis is placed on professional credentials. And for almost six years now, GIS professionals have had the opportunity to improve their credentials with a "GISP" designation after their name. Since January, 2004, GIS professionals have been able to apply for the GISP designation which is a federally protected registered trademark owned by the GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) based in Park Ridge, Illinois. URISA is the founding member of the GISCI. The latest count shows there are now 4,600 GISPs worldwide and I happen to be one of them.

I first considered the idea of applying

four years ago but I held off because I didn't see the immediate benefits to having the designation. However, last year I noticed that the GISCI Registry was approaching 3,000 GISPs and gaining national and international acceptance among GIS professionals. It was then I decided to join the movement and at the same time add a more professional look to my business card.

THE APPLICATION

To receive the GISP designation, you must show proficiency in three areas; 1.) Educational Achievement, 2.) Professional Experience, and 3.) Contributions to the Profession.

Continued on Page 13

Dennis Wischman

Katherine Barnes

Christa Hay



By-law Changes Committee

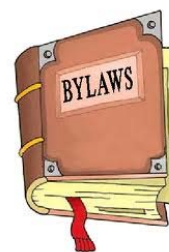
This year, at the behest of the Board, I was tapped to be the Parliamentarian of the NYS GIS Association. My duties are to review all By-law changes, clean up the By-laws by proposing what are known as "housekeeping items", and by understanding and helping others to understand Robert's Rules of Order, or at least the simple, practical application thereof.

If you have By-law amendments you would like to see brought to the floor, please send them to me for review and edit by Wednesday, October 3rd, so that they can be published 30 days ahead of the NEARC/NYSGIS conference.

Among current discussions include: NYS GIS Association reimbursement policy, committee restructuring, a memorialization-of-past-action policy and clarification of proposed amendments at the last NYS GIS conference.

If you would like to participate in the By-law Changes Committee, please contact me via email:
rquodmine@dot.state.ny.us

Rich Quodmine



MEMBER FOCUS: Dale Morris

Erie County Department of Environment and Planning

Q: How long have you worked for the County?

A: I've been employed in the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning for about twenty-eight years. Before that I was employed by the Town of Amherst and the Erie/ Niagara Counties Regional Planning Board.

Q: What have been a few of the challenges you've faced?

A: My background is in Regional Planning (Masters Degree from Cornell University). As my planning career evolved, I started devoting more and more time to digital mapping and this is what ultimately led to my full-time position as Erie County's first Director of Geographic Information Services.

When I first began working with digital mapping, we used the DOS based versions of MapInfo. For someone who was not trained in computer technology or GIS, it was a challenge just to get maps produced that rivaled the "ink & mylar" maps our staff was producing at that time. We then moved to ArcInfo Workstation, running on a SPARCstation- another whole world of computer technology that I had no background in! In that environment, it was quite a challenge to keep up with the rising expectations of spatial analysis that our customers were beginning to demand.

The other significant challenge encountered in these "early" years was making people understand what GIS, or geo-spatial analysis involved, and getting them to understand that GIS is more than a digital "coloring book" to make pretty maps. Unfortunately, this is occasionally still a challenge. The larger current-day challenges center more on budget issues and keeping up with the rapid pace at which GIS technology is evolving.

Q: What is the most fulfilling project you've completed?

A: There are a number of projects where GIS tech-

nology has made a difference in Erie County. Among the most significant of those are the times when the GIS staff were deployed to the County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during a crisis. The first time we were deployed to the EOC was an education, and we had to prove to the EOC managers that GIS technology could help them.

The initial reception was rather cool, but this soon turned around and there was a demand for our services. Now, the GIS presence at the EOC is established, and the expectations of the services we can provide during an emergency event have been raised. It's an interesting and rewarding challenge. Other fulfilling projects would include building a relationship with Niagara County, and ultimately helping them build their enterprise GIS on the backbone of Erie County's existing investment in geospatial technology. Finally, our online mapping technology has proven to be invaluable to the citizens and business community in Erie County. This system supports the daily operations of numerous businesses, and we feel that we are sharing in their successes.

Q: What direction is GIS heading for Erie County?

A: We continue to seek in-roads into the operations of the County departments, planting the "GIS seeds" wherever possible. I would like to see more use of geo-spatial technology throughout County government, as during these difficult financial times it can contribute to making government more efficient and effective. I think browser-based applications are the direction we are headed in this mission-making it more affordable to deploy geospatial technology in ways that are very specifically focused on user needs and easy to use. I also think that we will be doing more and more with mobile technology - equipping the staff in the field with geospatial technology that at one time was only available on their desktop computers. It's a much more efficient, effective, and accurate way of doing the County's business.

SPOTLIGHTS

TwIST'ing the Summer Away: Teachers Learn Innovative Mapping Tools for use in the Classroom

By: Amy Work

To help celebrate the 10th year of the Teaching with Spatial Technology (TwIST) Workshop, teachers from across the country traveled to Auburn this past June to attend the annual workshop held at Cayuga Community College. During this 3-day workshop, educators from middle schools, high schools, and community colleges learn the basics of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Global Positioning System (GPS) and how to integrate these technologies into their teaching environments.

"Teacher training workshops like this are happening all over the country," said Amy Work, Education Coordinator for the Institute for the Application of Geospatial Technology and coordinator of the workshop. "In addition to our workshop, there are two

other opportunities this summer for educators to learn about GIS and GPS in the Finger Lakes Region."

During TwIST educators learn GIS and GPS by working on a real-world project that has been established through a partnership with a local organization. This year, TwIST partnered with the Auburn Business Improvement District to explore the way-finding signs in Auburn that direct tourists to places of interest. Existing and potentially new sign locations were mapped this year for the Merry-Go-Round Theater and Emerson Park, Casey and Falcon Parks, the Schweinfurth and Cayuga Museums, and Willard Chapel.

(continued on page 14)

LiDAR Webinar

On March 23rd, Barb and Dave Tewksbury of Hamilton College's Department of Geosciences presented a NYS GIS ASSOCIATION-sponsored seminar, "A Simple Example of Working with LiDAR Data using ArcGIS & 3D Analyst".

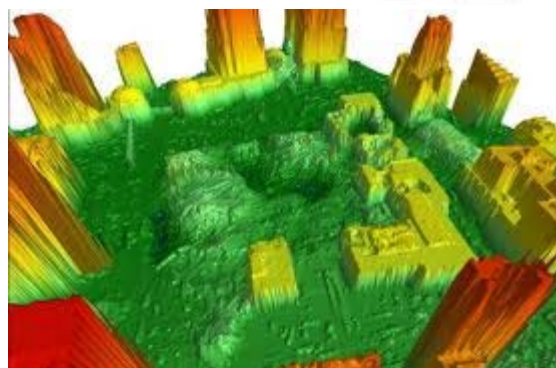
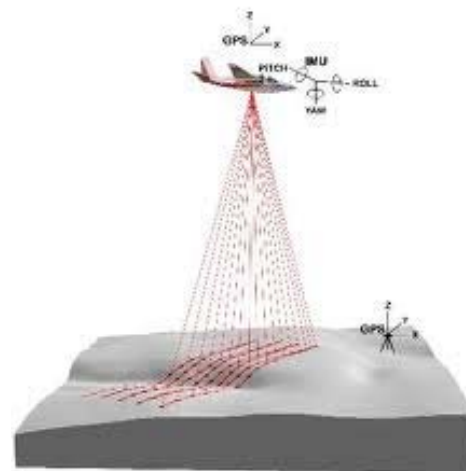
The webinar demonstrated how to convert that sample LiDAR data set to an elevation raster in ArcGIS. Attendees were able to download the data set and the step-by-step instructions to work with after the Webinar. Although designed to use ArcGIS 10, an ArcGIS 9.3 version of the exercise was also available.

WHAT IS LIDAR?

Light Detection and Ranging technology is a remote sensing system which records terrain features using pulses of laser light. This method of viewing terrain began about 50 years ago, with rapid advancement in the past fifteen years as computer capabilities have progressed.

Applications of the result are wide-ranging, such as preliminary archaeological investigations before ground intrusion and for defining safe landing zones on the moon.

Sources: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LIDAR>,
<https://www.e-education.psu.edu/lidar/book/export/html/1798>



World Trade Center after September 1, 2001

GISP CERTIFICATION EXPERIENCE (Continued)

Continued from Page 10

Achievement must be claimed and self documented by you, the applicant, in each of these areas. And this is how the application is set up – in these three areas where each area has a minimum number of “points” required for you to qualify. The formula for how you receive “points” and how many you need is explained clearly in the instructions. Be aware, though, you may not have enough points in one or more of these areas to qualify for GISP right now. However, I strongly suggest you fill it out anyway so you can see where it is you have to concentrate to obtain the points necessary to qualify for GISP in the future.

At first glance, the application does look a bit daunting, but don't be discouraged. The instructions are clearly written and a must read before you begin. Then I suggest reading through them again! This will give you a clear idea of what documentation you should be on the look-out for in the days ahead before you start filling it out. I'm not the best records keeper for this sort of information so I realized I would need some time to gather my documentation. I dedicated a folder to the application about two weeks before I began to fill it out. As I located documents, I threw them in it. This made it easier when it came time to start filling in the blanks without having to get up to locate information at every question.

I filled out a good portion of it in less than two hours with the information I had gathered so far. Then I had to spend about another hour of digging through old file boxes, making copies of certifications and calling schools for transcripts. I followed that up with about one more hour to complete the remaining blanks and review the application pack one last time. So with less than four hours of my time dedicated to filling out the application, I attached a check for \$250 and submitted it to GISCI in December of 2008 and received my certification in January 2009. With it came a GISP certificate, a shiny GISP pin and the privilege to use the GISP designation after my name

for the next five years. Yes, you do have to renew every five years, so keep that GISP file folder alive and keep adding your new documentation records in it for easy renewal.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Was it difficult to apply for the GISP? No, I didn't think so. But it will take you some time, though. Above all, don't expect to have all that you need to fill it out and mail it in the next day. For instance, I had to wait five days for my college transcripts to arrive. You may have to wait a day or two for your boss to sign the employment letter certifying your GIS job status. But if you're moderately organized with your files, filling out the application should only take about 3 hours of your time and \$250 of your money. Not bad when you consider that other professional designations require extensive course work, exams and much larger application fees.

LIGIS CAN HELP

Keep in mind that attending GIS conferences or writing a GIS article is considered “points” towards your GISP certification. So start racking up the points by attending the Spring and Fall LIGIS Conferences (be sure to sign in) and/or submit GIS articles for the LIGIS newsletter, “Coordinates”. Just make sure you keep these “points” documented. (Hey, I'm earning points towards my GISP renewal for this article under “Contributions to the Profession”!)

GISP IS WORTH THE EFFORT

With the very reasonable effort considered, the GISP Certification is a fantastic opportunity to improve your credentials as a GIS professional at an affordable price! So, don't wait. Now is the time for you to apply for your GISP certification. I hope to see your name on the GISP Registry web site real soon. Look for the application on-line at http://www.gisci.org/application_materials.aspx

Good Luck! - Jim

Twist Workshop (con't)

(continued from page 12)

The work that the attendees complete during TwiST is shared with Auburn Downtown BID and the Cayuga County Office of Tourism to help improve way finding signage for visitors to Auburn and the surrounding area. "The TwiST data is great solid, very valuable information for our pursuit of establishing user friendly, welcoming way finding signs that will enable visitors to visit all of our wonderful historic sites, restaurants and businesses. Their work will help make this long time goal a reality and is very much appreciated, plus they were a joy to work with", said Connie Reilley, Executive Director of the Auburn Downtown BID.



Twist 2011: Working with field data back in the lab.

"For educators, using GIS and GPS in the classroom is a way to encourage their students to think critically about the topics discussed in class," said Work. Whether a teacher wants to explore crime or traffic accidents in a community, or map out invasive species, GIS enables students to have a visual and statistical understanding of the data they are looking at.

"I'm surprised by how easy using GIS and GPS can be. I know it can get more complex, but it's pretty user friendly. I will definitely be using this in my classroom," one teacher commented about the TwiST.

By educating our youth, they will have the power to change the world and solve global and local issues that are impacting our world. GIS and GPS is just one tool to engage students in better understanding the world around them.

Amy Work
GIS Analyst and Education Coordinator
Institute for the Application of
Geospatial Technology
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Twist 2011: TwiST participants collecting way-finding sign data.

Legislative Committee (con't)

(continued from page 7)

The initial draft legislation for 2011 was similar to that proposed previously (which seemed to require a licensed surveyor to perform GIS and mapping activities). After a number of discussions requesting changes to the bill, a meeting was arranged in Albany.

The meeting with NYSAPLS, Daren Morgan and officers occurred in November 2010. It was a good meeting and we were able to articulate our position on having NYSAPLS legislation (roughly based on the NCEES model law) modified to include the NCEES model rules (which provide exceptions in the law for the practice of GIS activities by non-surveyors) the draft bill was modified to include the model rules in their legislation.

The meeting with the PE Society (which has opposed the legislation for many years) was held in February. It was also a good meeting, and, once again, both sides were able to clearly articulate their positions and express how they would be moving forward in regards to the legislation and will strongly lobby against the bills.

NYSAPLS had obtained sponsors for the legislation in both the Senate and the Assembly for the 2011. As a result, the bill was introduced.

It was at that point we took a closer look at the NCEES model rules and saw that they were really either outdated or too narrow to meet New York's geospatial community's needs. We've spent considerable effort modifying the rules and have submitted additional changes back to the NYSAPLS. These modifications have been rejected by NYSAPLS.

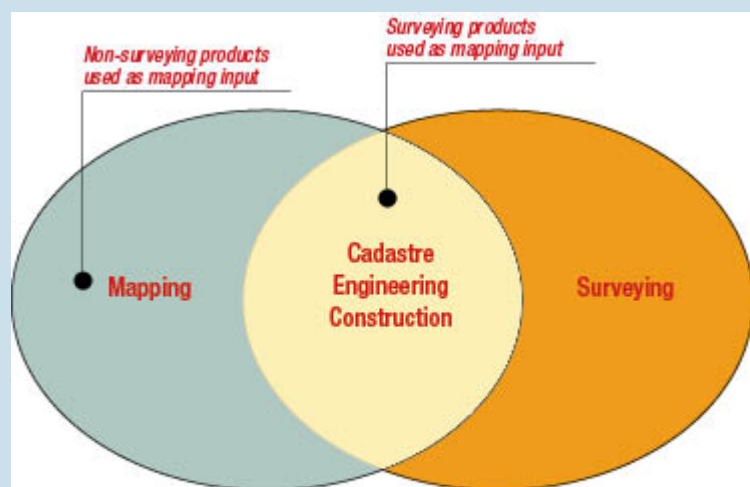
We have obtained a significant breakthrough in 2011 with the changes to NYSAPLS legislation and will be working on tweaking our recommendations for legislation if it is reintroduced in 2012.

The legislation bills **A07110 & S04603** were read and never came out of committees. We anticipate legislation will be reintroduced in 2012 **so stay tuned**. In the meantime, members are encouraged to review the full document of proposed changes posted on the NYS GIS Association's website.

A Broader Perspective of Surveying and Mapping

New York State's struggle mirrors conflicts in other states. A terrific article by J. Allison Butler was recently published in the August 2011 issue of [Professional Surveyor Magazine](#) positing "Can Mapping Exist Separately from Surveying?". While the discussion centers on a dispute particular to Florida, the problems and ideas are certainly pertinent throughout the country and to New York State.

"I am not asking for a division of the marketplace, like two street gangs dividing a neighborhood. I am asking for a shared marketplace with a valid and recognized role for each participant. "



Mapping and surveying professions overlap but are not the same. Surveying products are one source of data used for mapping; non-surveying sources are more common. The applications wherein surveying is the proper source of mapping data include cadastral, engineering, and construction.

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If you have ideas for Newsletter content or would like to submit an article for inclusion, feel free to contact Sheri Norton at nortons@co.warren.ny.us

EVENTS

Lower Adirondack GIS Users Group Meeting

August 16, 2011

Washington County, NY

Adirondack/North Country GIS Users Group Meeting

August 17, 2011

Wanakena, NY

URISA 49th Annual Conference

November 1-4, 2011

Indianapolis, IN

New York State Society of Professional Engineers Fall Professional Conference

November 4-5, 2011

Albany, NY

NEARC 2011 Annual Conference

November 13-16, 2011

Saratoga Springs, NY

4th Annual GIS Educators Conference

November 13, 2011

Saratoga Springs, NY

New York State Society of Professional Land Surveyors Annual Conference

January 9-11, 2012

Saratoga Springs, NY

New York State GIS Conference

Spring, 2012

Syracuse, NY

GeoJeopardy Answer:
Chimney Bluffs

Marketing (con't)

(continued from page 8)

were keeping their heads above water, while the remaining fifty percent say its simply an ongoing challenge

- Less than twenty-four percent of our respondents were certified GIS Professionals, even though sixty-five percent felt that one of the primary reasons to join the Association was to be a part of a professional organization. While a majority (54%) felt GISP certification was NOT needed for their personal careers, that same majority (57%) felt it WAS important for the profession as a whole.
- Finally, almost ninety percent of the survey respondents felt it was critical or important for the NYS GIS Association to reach out to other professional organizations.

An in depth analysis of the survey results and their implications will be posted on the new website.

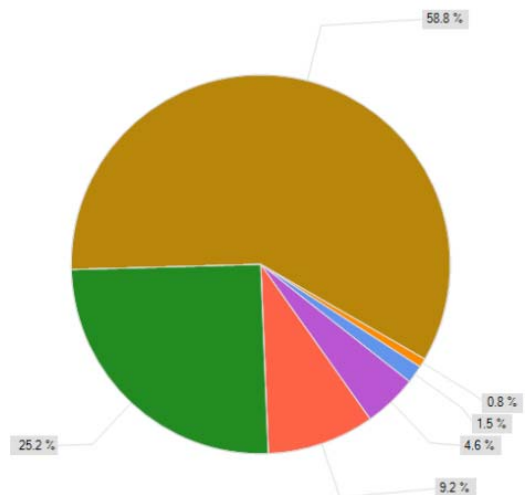


Figure- showing our membership profile with the largest portions going to the government, private sector, and academia respectively.

Ben Houston

Lisa Andrews

Jake Needle

Julie Tolar

Mike Zoltek