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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Jan Heagy

We have arrived at the half-way point in 2010. It has certainly been a time of unanticipated surprises for me. In April, I undertook some additional duties and projects. This has allowed for considerable personal growth and an opportunity to develop additional time management skills. I imagine many of you have similar stories to tell.

So this is a great time to take stock of what GSIS has accomplished to date, what we need for the rest of the year, and finally a few thoughts on future directions.

Accomplishments to Date

As you will see from the various committee chair and representative reports, we have been making progress in a number of areas. In addition, we have been active in the AGI Member Society Council, our website has been updated, the 2007 and 2008 proceedings have been published, our newsletters are timely, and plans for the annual conference are moving ahead.

Next Steps

We need the following positions filled:

- Publicity officer
- Information Resources Committee chair and members
- Membership Committee chair and members
- Nomination Committee members
- Preservation Committee chair and members

We are planning a professional issues roundtable for the annual conference. Some topics we might cover include:

- ◆ Managing more with less
- ◆ Innovation in the workplace
- ◆ Your ideas?

Topics for our annual Business meeting might include:

- ◆ GSIS membership development
- ◆ Creative initiatives for GSIS
- ◆ Your ideas?

Looking Ahead

As part of ExxonMobil's summer intern program, the library science graduate

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vacant

The digital GSIS Newsletter is published bi-monthly in February, April, June, August, October, and December by the Geoscience Information Society. Subscription is free to GSIS members. The annual non-member subscription rate is \$40. Please contact the GSIS Publications Manager for paper copy subscription prices. All correspondence regarding dues, membership status, and address changes should be directed to the GSIS Secretary. GSIS members are encouraged to contribute content for publication. Material for the August 2010 issue should be received no later than August 10, 2010. Please send submissions by e-mail to jdombrow@uwyo.edu.

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students interning in the Technical Information Center interview the staff. When it came to my interview, I encouraged our interns become active members in their professional organizations. This is a great way to develop networks, build new skills, and test new directions. Combine active involvement with a passion for the profession and you have a great recipe for engagement – whether you are just entering, mid-career or ready to mentor your successors.

With that said, please send me your comments, ideas and, of course, let me know if you are interested in volunteering for GSIS openings! <Jan.b.heagy@exxonmobil.com>

VICE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Kay G. Johnson

Jan Heagy and I consulted about sessions for the upcoming annual conference, and I have submitted the registration forms for all of the non-technical session meeting sessions, the executive board meeting, business meeting, reception/awards/silent auction, and a round table session where we will discuss professional issues of interest.

I will be following up on some of the great ideas Janet Dombrowski has given me regarding field trips. More information will be forthcoming as available.

My job of late has been one of crisis management – long hours with short-staffing trying to meet budget and other deadlines while the departments and companies we work with are short-staffed as well and less able to provide customer service. As all of us have been doing, I have been thinking a lot about the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and its ramifications on the environment, the local fishing and tourism industry, the economy of

the Gulf States, the future of offshore drilling, and on BP. This is crisis management or perhaps mismanagement to the extreme. The Deepwater Horizon rig exploded on April 20 just fifteen days after the Upper Big Branch Mine in Montcoal, West Virginia exploded. The fuel for both explosions was high amounts of methane; ignition sources are unknown. I know it is the least concern in a case of lives lost, environment damaged, and livelihoods ruined, but these are also two more black marks for the mining and fossil fuel industries. My heart goes out to the families of the workers killed in the explosions. I wonder how deep the blame will go and how far the threads of crisis management will expand. BP must be held accountable, but I regret that the head of BP, Tony Hayward, was known for being an affable, low-profile geologist. So, what do these rambling thoughts have to do with GSIS? Not much, but my thoughts and concerns are for those of you who live on or near the Gulf. I am thankful that many of us are not directly affected, yet, by these industrial accidents. I live in Appalachia only 2.5 hours from Montcoal, so coal mining is a hot-button issue here. My mother-in-law grew up near Charleston, WV and her father died in an industrial explosion when she was young. All of us are indirectly affected, and that includes the Geoscience Information Society. It will be interesting to see what talks are held at the GSA Annual Meeting on these events and what impact there will be on the fossil fuels industry and associated geoscientists.

**CONFERENCE NEWS
2010 GISIS/GSA ANNUAL MEETING
DENVER, OCT. 31-NOV. 3**

I. Round Table Topics & Format – You Decide!

A GISIS three hour “Round Table” session is scheduled for the upcoming annual conference and we need your feedback on what professional issues and format this session should have. As Jan mentioned in her President’s column, topics may include:

- ◆ Managing more with less
- ◆ Innovation in the workplace
- ◆ Your ideas?

Topics

What issues are foremost in your mind? Are your purchasing deals through consortia falling by the wayside or expanding? Are we marketing ourselves effectively? Do you have research to share? What excites or bothers you about the geosciences information field?

Formats

There are many ways to hold a session. With **traditional** round tables, topics are set in advance and everyone can either discuss the same list of topics in their small groups or each table may focus on a different single topic. In the “**speed dating**” model, a facilitator or expert stays at the table and everyone has five or ten minutes to discuss set topics before rotating to another table either as a group or in some random or semi-random fashion. There is probably a better name for this model. An **unconference** is totally participant driven. I have also heard the term “Birds of a Feather.” Participants find a topic of mutual interest to discuss. Either the traditional round table model or a “speed dating” model could work for this.

What professional topics are you interested in? What session format(s) do you prefer?

Send your ideas to Jan Heagy:
Jan.b.heagy@exxonmobil.com

II. GISIS Technical Session

Planning is underway for our technical session, **T79. Geoscience Information Services: "Peak" Performances**. As of press time, we have secured commitments from two invited speakers and are pursuing a third. This means that we need nine or ten more speakers to make this session go.

Please consider submitting an abstract for either an oral or poster session. The session description reads: Geoscience information providers apply their expertise to add value to information and deliver exceptional services for library users in complex and diverse roles, such as consultation, contract negotiation, metadata description, instruction, and website development. This is intended to be interpreted broadly – all types of geoscience information users... all types of information... all types of providers...

The **deadline for abstract submission** is midnight (Eastern time) **August 10**. Submit your abstract using the online form at <http://gsa.confex.com/gsa/2010AM/top/papers/index.cgi?sessionid=26089>. The technical session is *tentatively* scheduled for Tuesday morning (confirmation of session time will not happen until *after* August 10).

III. Fellowship Deadline Extended

Members who are not residents of the U.S. or Canada have until July 10 to apply. See the website for details.
<<http://www.geoinfo.org/fellows.html>>

IV. Geoscience Librarianship 101 Seminar

The Annual Geoscience Librarianship 101 Seminar is scheduled to be held in Denver on **Saturday, October 30, 2010**. Sponsored by the Geoscience Information Society in conjunction with the Geological Society of America, experienced geosciences librarians will share their expertise in sessions presented on collection development, reference and instructional services, and map librarianship and GIS. Following these sessions will be an opportunity for open discussion and feedback.

Participation is open to all professional librarians, information specialists, and students in library and information studies. To request additional information, contact the Geoscience Librarianship Coordinator, Clara McLeod, telephone 314-935-4817, email cpmcleod@wustl.edu.

V. Call for Technical Session Convener for Minneapolis 2011

The 2011 GSA/GSIS Annual Meeting will be held in Minneapolis from Oct. 9-12. The GSIS technical session convener is responsible for proposing a theme, identifying co-sponsors, securing commitments from two or three invited speakers, and encouraging participation by GSIS members. Planning is done in consultation with the GSIS President and Vice-president. During the session the convener introduces speakers, facilitates Q & A, and keeps the session on track. Ideally, the 2011 convener will attend this year's meeting and work with the convener to better understand the process. Please contact Janet Dombrowski <jdombrow@uwyo.edu> if you are interested in serving in this capacity.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Ellen Ast
Student
Portland, OR

Diane Dawson
University of
Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, SK,
Canada

Louise Deis
Princeton University
Princeton, NJ

April Kobayashi
USGS
Denver, CO

Lizbeth Langston
Science Library
University of California, Riverside

Scott McEathron
TR Smith Map Collection
University of Kansas
Lawrence, KS

Karin Mills
American Geological Institute
Alexandria, VA

Sarah Perrin
Student
Vancouver, BC, Canada

Natalia Schoeck
Degenkolb Engineers
San Francisco, CA



COMMITTEE REPORTS

Guidebooks Committee Midyear Report, June 2010

Guidebook Standards: Louise Zipp and Thelma Thompson are working at disseminating guidebook guidelines to organizations that are going to run earth science field trips this coming year. In January Louise transferred responsibility for eastern Canada and the northeastern U.S. to Thelma. Louise is now covering the midcontinent: OH, IN, MI, IL, WI, IA, MN, NE, ND, SD, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Nunavut. Louise built a large database of more than 100 organizations and conferences in that region. So far she has sent out 16 emails to those groups. There seems to be less field trip activity than expected for this spring and early summer. Louise is also discovering many organizations without websites, or with websites lacking current information. Louise re-checks the list every 2-3 weeks. Thelma has added a few more organizations to the Northeastern database, and has sent out approximately 10 emails; she is also noting less field trip activity. More volunteers for this project would be helpful, specifically for the Rocky Mountain, Southwest, and West Coast regions.

Best Guidebook Award: Erin Palmer, Linda Musser, and Jody Foote are working on the selection of the best guidebook. They sent out requests for nominations via Geonet, and they are in the final phase of selection.

Gaps Project: Lura has maintained the Guidebook Waiting List for AGI GeoRef. Very few people have reported new guidebook titles being added to their collections. Surely geology librarians are continuing to add guidebooks to their collections! Please remember to report the new titles to Lura Joseph <luraj@illinois.edu>. Work on the

spreadsheets has slowed; hopefully that can be resumed later this summer.

Respectfully submitted,
Lura Joseph
Chair, GSIS Guidebooks Committee

Ansari Best Reference Work Award Committee Mid-Year Report

Committee members include Edward Lener from Virginia Tech, Angelique Jenks-Brown from Binghamton University, and Dennis Trombatore from the University of Texas at Austin. The GSIS Mary B. Ansari Best Reference Work Award Committee accepted nominations in May 2010 for the 2010 award. The committee is in the process of reviewing nominations for the award.

For the review process, each committee member gives each monograph up to 10 points for 10 criteria. The evaluation criteria are: uniqueness, comprehensiveness, usefulness, quality, authoritativeness, organization, illustrations, competition, references, and audience. The scores are averaged to produce a winner. These are the 2010 award nominations:

- * Encyclopedia of Earthquakes and Volcanoes
- * Evolution of Matter
- * Handbook of Gold Exploration and Evaluation
- * Manual of Mineral Science, 23rd Edition
- * Metamorphic Rocks
- * Michigan Geography and Geology
- * Ocean: An Illustrated Atlas
- * Petroleum Engineering Handbook
- * Planetary Crusts
- * Treatise on Geophysics

The winner will be announced in the next two months on the Geonet listserv.

Respectfully submitted,
Angelique Jenks-Brown (chair)

MEMBER NEWS

News from the Geology Library, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana

Life is getting more complicated at our library: in early spring, we were told to accelerate our move because we are losing one of our two full time staff to an early retirement offer. We went into a flurry of activity and had over 100 boxes ready to transfer, and more material ready to box from the two smaller rooms. We were just ready to start work in the larger two rooms. Then silverfish were found in the map room and rest of the library, and the library was quarantined for three weeks...no materials in or out.

They lifted the quarantine on June 10. The next day, they condemned part of the building...including most of the library stacks and the map room. This is due to a structural problem related to the original 1908 construction of that portion. So, we can't go back there, even to retrieve material for patrons, and we don't know how long this is going to last. We sincerely hope your spring/summer is going better.

Lura Joseph
Geology Librarian
University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana
June, 2010

"Let it go. This water lives in Mombasa anyway."
Out of Africa, the movie

LITERATURE REVIEWS



Carol J. La Russa

Gerke, J, & Maness, J. (2010). The Physical and the Virtual: The Relationship between Library as Place and Electronic Collections. *College and Research Libraries*, 71(1), 20-31.

Gerke and Maness examined 2006 LibQual+™ data from the University of Colorado at Boulder to try to determine which factors effect patron satisfaction with electronic information resources. The library system of the University of Colorado consists of a large, older, unrenovated library (Norlin) and five newer branch libraries. Users of Norlin Library had a lower mean perception of electronic resources than branch library users. Users' perceptions of the library as a physical space seem to affect their perceptions of the library's electronic collection. There still seems to be a role for the library as place. The study also found a positive correlation between use of the library web site and the perception of electronic resources. There seemed to be no correlation between discipline and perceptions of electronic resources.

Hillesund, T. (2010). Digital Reading Spaces: How Expert Readers Handle Books, the Web and Electronic Paper. *First Monday*, 15(4).
<http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/viewArticle/2762/2504>

The author looks at the different ways people, especially scholars, read in print and electronic environments. A section describes the history of the technology of reading from scrolls to codices to modern books. When books were scarce they were read intensively.

Also, scrolls were designed to be read continuously (from beginning to end). Extensive reading came with the availability of more reading materials. The author also notes that legibility and accessibility of the information in printed books was improved by the use of titles, chapters, tables of contents, indices, etc. This made discontinuous reading easier and more effective. Online reading behavior tends to be shallow and discontinuous with lots of jumps to linked materials.

Hillesund conducted fourteen semi-structured qualitative interviews of ten humanist scholars to learn about their reading styles. The author found that most expert reading is sustained and discontinuous. The scholars seldom read a scholarly book or paper from front to back. They may scan for keywords or use the index to find areas of interest. A scholar might read the introduction of a paper and then the conclusions. Many works are discarded as irrelevant. Only a few are selected for sustained reading.

The author looks at the conditions necessary for immersive reading where the reader is very involved in reading the materials. The technology, whether book or screen, must offer minimal disturbance to the user. Printers have developed fonts and layouts to do this but computer screens tend to be less suited for this. Technological limitations related to resolution, backlighting, fixed screen position, etc., combined with software design that includes distracting sidebars, panels, icons, links, etc. make immersive reading more difficult on computer screens.

Study participants indicated that distractions are also caused by email and class management software that are accessed from their computer. The computer becomes a symbol of things undone and therefore a difficult place to do serious reading. Participants noted that while working with

paper texts they usually used a pen, pencil, or marker to make annotations and mark text. They also noted that they needed to look at different parts simultaneously, which is difficult to do in the current computer environment. Therefore they download and print articles they have found relevant after scanning them online.

The author concludes that although more and more texts are being brought to digital platforms there is still a need for formats that provide an easily readable long-form text. The two major challenges are to “replicate conditions for continuous imaginary reading,” and to “create favorable conditions for sustained reflective reading.” Handheld devices seem to be effective for the first challenge. For the second challenge web browsers should have additional software to provide additional formats for sustained reflective reading. A read only mode and study mode with note-taking capability that works with word processors should be included.

Lindsey, D. (2010). Evaluating Quality Control of Wikipedia’s Feature Articles. *First Monday*, 15(4).
<http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/viewArticle/2721/2482>

Lindsey examines the quality of articles that have been chosen to be Wikipedia “featured articles.” The criteria for selection is supposed to be exacting. There should be a “thorough and representative survey of the relevant literature on the topic” and the prose should be of a professional standard. The selection process relies on anonymous volunteers. The author contacted 160 experts and asked each to evaluate a Wikipedia featured article. Twenty-two usable responses were received. The results showed that featured articles are of uneven quality. The evaluators thought that twelve met the

featured article criteria. Even these articles sometimes still had factual flaws. Some of the failed articles seemed to be written at a level expected from high school students or university undergraduates.

In the conclusion, the author cites research that suggests the featured status is closely correlated with longer article length. He suggests that outside experts should be consulted in the featured article selection process. Also, as a public service, scholars ought to amend Wikipedia articles.

Fournier, J., Lane, C., & Lyle, H. (2010). *Designing Campus Learning Spaces: A Report of Students' Current and Future Needs*.

http://www.washington.edu/lst/news/2010/techsurvey_report

In this report done for the University of Washington the authors describe findings about students' use of computers and campus learning spaces. A survey of students (both undergraduate and graduate) was conducted that included questions on technology use (types of computers used), use of computing centers, possible futures for campus public spaces, and demographics. Next focus group sessions were held where students were asked to describe ideal working environments for working alone and in groups.

Survey results indicated that campus computing labs have varying issues with crowding, noise, lighting, and room for study materials. 40% of students own desktop computers, 85% laptops, 2% netbooks, and 7% both a laptop and a netbook. 7% owned neither a laptop nor a netbook. Although most own a laptop, many do not regularly bring them to campus due to weight and fears of theft. Students also need access to campus computers because they can't afford the expensive computer programs needed for

their classes. Students listed four features as important for learning spaces: electrical outlets for charging laptops, etc.; quiet areas; evening access; and comfortable furniture. They wanted natural lighting, printing, large tables, and collaborative study areas.

When asked about group study areas, focus groups said they wanted areas for four to six people with room for materials and with a laptop projector. They wanted the areas to be partially or fully enclosed with glass walls. Mixed use areas should include environmental clues to encourage group or individual use of sub-areas. Focus group members wanted drop-in computers for quick use with nearby printers.

Oxnam, M. (2010). Collaboration and the Power of Partnership in Science-Engineering Libraries. *Journal of Library Administration*, 50(3), 253-263.

Oxnam describes the collaborative project known as TRAIL (Technical Report and Imaging Library), which digitizes collections of technical reports. One of their projects is the digitization of the United States Bureau of Mines Bulletin series. Technical reports have presented many challenges to libraries. Dissemination to libraries has been uneven and erratic leaving many gaps in library collections. There is limited bibliographic access to them in standard indexes. Knowledge about technical reports collections is at risk as librarians retire. Reports are in a variety of print and microform formats, some of which may be disintegrating. Libraries and bibliographic utilities usually only catalog them at series level. This results in lack of use which makes them vulnerable to discard or offsite storage without sufficient cataloging for retrieval. Most technical reports are not available electronically and are difficult to obtain through interlibrary loan. Finally,

changes to the Federal Depository Library Program have raised concerns about long-term access to this material.

Although digitization of technical reports collections has been shown to greatly increase use, federal agencies have been slow to digitize their older materials. Because of this, and the challenges noted above, there is a need for libraries to go beyond their individual collection management policies and make decisions with greater thought to the national picture. TRAIL was established to coordinate stewardship and access to technical reports collections. The author characterizes these efforts as having features of a “gift economy” in which no money changes hands and the benefits are in the form of social or cultural capital. TRAIL provides multiple possible roles for participants: content organizer, contributor, scanning partner, digital archive, print archive, interface provider, and central processing.

The typical workflow is as follows: a content organizer begins with their own collection, identifies gaps, and uses their social capital to acquire missing items. This collection is shipped to the University of Arizona Library for MARC cataloging of each technical report. Items are then barcoded and shipped to the University of Michigan Library for scanning. The resulting scan is deposited in the Hathi Trust. The second set is verified and missing items are sent to the designated print archive.

This project allows researchers greater access to technical reports, maximizes return on federal research funding, and allows university libraries to consider removing technical reports series from their collections.

(The TRAIL website url is <http://digicoll.manoa.hawaii.edu/techreports/index.php?c=1>, ed.)

Dougherty, W. (2010). The Google Books Project: Will it Make Libraries Obsolete? *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 36(1), 86-89.

In this opinion piece, Dougherty states his concerns about the Google Books Project. He points out that the project is not particularly innovative. Other projects including JSTOR, Project MUSE, and Internet Archive have similar aims. He questions whether Google, a company that is only twelve years old, can meet the scholarly goals of the project. He mentions inadequate metadata, known problems with scanning, and classification errors. (Google uses BISAC which is also used by book stores rather than Library of Congress subject headings.) He has concerns about system reliability, citing past Gmail outages. He also has concerns about the proposed Google Settlement, especially about “orphan works.” His final concern is about what happens when Google goes away. He notes the existence of the Hathi Trust (run by U.S. academic libraries) which is preserving Google Books data.

West, J. D., Bergstrom, T.C., & Bergstrom, C.T. (2010). The Eigenfactor Metrics™: A Network Approach to Assessing Scholarly Journals. *College and Research Libraries*, 71(3), 236-244.

In this article the authors describe a bit about the methodology for computing Eigenvalues and the associated Article Influence Scores for scholarly journals. Eigenvalues are calculated by how well a journal is linked by citations to other journals using data from Thomson Reuters’ Journal Citation Reports. The most linked get the highest Eigenvalue scores. *Nature* received the top score of 1.992. This means a researcher randomly following citations would spend 1.992% of his time in *Nature*. The Article Influence

Score is similar to the Thomson Reuters' impact factors. It is calculated by dividing journal's Eigenfactor Score by the number of articles in the journal and then normalizing the score so the average article in the Journal Citation Reports has a score of one.

Article Influence Scores and impact factor scores are highly correlated, but there can be exceptions as well. Different disciplines have different citation patterns. Eigenfactor Metrics look at the proportion of citations going to a particular journal rather than the absolute number. Disciplines which average a large number of citations per article inflate their Eigenfactor Score. Article Influence Scores correct for this. Also, Eigenfactor Metrics are calculated over a five year window instead of the two year window used by impact factor scores. This raises the scores of fields that commonly cite older articles. Also, Eigenfactor Metrics exclude self-citations.

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Proceedings of the Annual GISIS Meetings (ISSN 0072-1409)

\$45.00 each; standing orders are \$45.00/year.

-v. 39, 2008 [published 2009], *Libraries in Transformation: Exploring Topics of Changing Practices and New Technologies*, ed. Lisa Johnston [978-0-934485-67-8]

-v. 38, 2007 [published 2010], *Geoscience Information: Making the Earth Sciences Accessible for Everyone*; ed. by Claudette Cloutier.

-v. 37, 2006 [published 2008], *Geoscience Information: Keys to Discovery*, ed. P.B. Yocum [978-0-934485-68-5]

-v. 36, 2005, [published 2007], *Collaboration for the Dissemination of Geologic Information Among Colleagues*, ed. by A. Fleming [0-934485-38-0]

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