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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

GeoInfo IV: From June 24-29 about 350 information professionals and interested geoscientists from over 40 countries converged in Ottawa for the Fourth International Conference on Geoscience Information (GeoInfo IV). Countries represented in preregistration for the Conference were (approximate number of attendees listed in parentheses): Algeria (13), Australia (8), Austria (1), Belgium (1), Brazil (1), Canada (151), Chile (2), China (5), Columbia (1), Czechoslovakia (3), Cyprus (1), Ecuador (1), Ethiopia (1), Finland (1), France (6), Ghana, (1), Greece (1), India (5), Indonesia (1), Iran (2), Italy (2), Ivory Coast (1), Japan (1), Mexico (1), Netherlands (4), New Zealand (1), Nigeria (1), Philippines (1), South Africa (3), Spain (1), Sweden (2), Switzerland (1), Thailand (3), Tunisia (1), Uganda (1), United Kingdom (7), Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (1), United States (63), Vietnam (1), and Zambia (1). Obviously, it was an international conference in the true sense of the word.

The conference was hosted by the Canadian Geological Survey. Antony Berger chaired the 22-member Organizing Committee and David Reade served as its Secretary-Treasurer. Local arrangements for the conference can only be described glowingly-- the fantastic opening reception at the Chateau Laurier Hotel, the memorable reception and banquet at the Canadian Museum of Nature, the thrill of having the site of the conference be the same as the Canadian Government's recent debate on the Meech Lake Accord, and the wonderful closing luncheon at the National Arts Centre. At the Canadian Museum of Nature, we had

the privilege of viewing the fabulous Pinch Mineral Collection, which is not yet open to the public.

There were three plenary sessions and after that 21 technical sessions running concurrently, three at a time. Some of the recurring themes I heard from the sessions I attended were that we are awash with data; that we are only in the very early stages of the electronic revolution; that in this new information age that librarians will assume a role of teachers, navigators, and developers; and that after a certain number of years, it's often cheaper to recollect data than to store it. The conference proceedings will be published as a Geological Survey of Canada open file report. In addition, there were poster sessions and exhibits. The following GIS members were on the program: Barbara Chappell, Charlotte Derksen, Kit Fuller, Barbara Haner, Susan Klimley, Joanne Lerud, Rusty Lotti, Michael McGarr, Jim O'Donnell, Ghassan Rassam, David Reade, Unni Rowell, Patricia Sheahan, Dena Fracolli Stepp, Rosalind Walcott, and Richard Walker.

The conference was sponsored by GIS, along with the International Union of Geological Sciences, the Australian Geoscience Information Association, the Geological Information Group of the Geological Society of London, and DMR Group Inc. were sponsors of the Conference. GIS contributed \$3000 toward assisting participants from developing countries to attend. According to David Reade, GIS sponsored one participant from China and helped pay the registrations for some other third-world attendees. David will give us a formal report, which will be published in a later Newsletter.

For me GeoInfo IV represented one of the most enriching experiences of my professional career. I wish to thank Tony Berger, David Reade, and all our friends in Canada who made this Conference happen. At the closing luncheon it was announced that GeoInfo V will be held in Prague, Czechoslovakia in 1994.

Executive Board Meeting: A brief Board meeting was held over breakfast on June 27 at GeoInfo IV. Mary Ansari, Marie Dvorzak, Joanne Lerud, Michael Noga, Janice Sorensen, and Louise Zipp attended. The meeting was called so that Marie Dvorzak could get the Board's input on plans for the anniversary dinner

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The GIS Newsletter is published bi-monthly in February, April, June, August, October, and December by the Geoscience Information Society. Subscription to the Newsletter is \$30 per year and is included in the Society's annual membership dues. All correspondence regarding dues, membership status, and address changes should be directed to the GIS Secretary.

GIS members are encouraged to contribute materials for publication. Research articles and technical reports should be submitted to the Editorial Board for review and possible publication. Information reports, officer and committee reports, publication notices, job announcements, and other news items should be submitted to the News Gathering Editor.

Material for the October, 1990 issue of the GIS Newsletter should be received by the editors no later than September 15, 1990. If possible please send materials on IBM-compatible disc (Wordstar, Wordperfect, or ASCII format).

in Dallas. I briefed the Board on CUAC's decision to access its member societies \$50 each so that CUAC can have a budget for such basic things as postage, stationery, and paying for room rentals.

Annual Reports: A reminder to officers, committee chairs, and representatives that your annual reports are due to me by September 20. Send a copy to Connie Manson for the Newsletter.

### VICE-PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

GeoInfo IV: Congratulations to the Canadian organizers for hosting a great meeting. The meeting was well planned with interesting sessions on a variety of different topics. Enhancing the meetings were stimulating discussions from the conference attendees. Mary Ansari has provided a summary of the meeting in this Newsletter. As a bonus I got to meet many GIS members (especially those from other countries) for the first time.

GSA News and Information, August Issue: Again this year I have asked that GSA mail the August News and Information issue, which contains information on all aspects of the meeting and details for registration, hotel accommodations and transportation, directly to you. This will save considerable time and should help members get the hotel reservations they want.

#### Update on the Dallas Meeting:

Arbuckle Trip - In the April and June Newsletters, I had asked for an expression of interest in a GIS trip to the Arbuckle Mountains. Since not enough members expressed an interest, there will be no GIS sponsored Arbuckle field trip.

GeoRef CD-ROM - One of the presentations at the GIS data base forum will be on the new Silver-Platter CD-ROM of GeoRef. After the Forum, the American Geological Institute will sponsor an information demonstration of GeoRef in the same room. This will be an additional opportunity to examine the features of GeoRef's CD-ROM version. AGI staff will be available to answer questions.

GSA's Joint Technical Program Committee (JTPC) will meet in Boulder August 10 and 11. Every summer representatives of the GSA divisions and associated societies meet at JTPC to determine the program and make final decisions about scheduling. At this meeting, JTPC members will decide which papers will be accepted, in what sessions they will be presented, and when each session will be scheduled. For those who have volunteered abstracts, you will be notified in late August if your abstract has been accepted.

Because of the timing of JTPC this year, it is not possible to include any abstracts in the August Newsletter. The abstracts for the symposium are now being reviewed and will be printed in the October Newsletter. All abstracts accepted for the GIS technical session and poster sessions will also be included in the October Newsletter. If you would like additional information on the meeting, please contact me.

### GEOSCIENCE INFORMATION SOCIETY

1990 Annual Meeting, Oct. 28 - Nov. 1, Dallas, Texas  
Revised Preliminary Schedule

#### SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1990

1 pm - 5 pm GIS 1990 Executive Board Meeting

#### MONDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1990

8 am - Noon GIS Symposium: "Geological Societies and Information Transfer in the Electronic Age"

1:30 pm - 5 pm GIS Business Meeting

#### TUESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1990

8 am - ? GIS Technical Session\*

8 am - 11 am GeoRef Beginners Workshop

8 am - Noon GIS Poster Session

3:30 - 5:30 pm Collection Development Issues Committee (previously, "Cost of Geoscience Literature")

6 pm - 7 pm GIS Reception

7 pm - ?? GIS 25th Gala Dinner (reception and dinner will be held at the Hyatt Regency)

#### WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1990

9 am - 12:30 pm Field Trip: Information Resources at the Dallas Research Laboratory, Mobil Research & Development Corp.

1:30 pm - 4 pm GeoRef Advanced Workshop

4:30 - 6:30 pm GeoRef Users Group Meeting

#### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1990

9 am - 11 am GIS Database Forum

11 am - 12 noon AGI Demonstration: GeoRef on CD-ROM

1 pm - 5 pm GIS 1991 Executive Board Meeting

\* Session length will depend on the number of papers selected.

The final schedule will be in the October Newsletter.

## LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Dear Editor:

I am casting a wide net to make sure that I have identified any evaluative studies or investigations that have been done on geographic indexing and on retrieval of geographic concepts from online bibliographic files and would like to ask your help. If you know of any sources or have suggestions for people I should contact, I would very much appreciate hearing from you.

I am writing a dissertation on Access to geographic concepts in online bibliographic files--Effectiveness of current practices and the potential of a graphic interface. The research is based on an analysis of the geographic indexing of 100 documents on the geology and geophysics of the Mediterranean region. The test file consists of duplicate indexing for each of these documents from two online bibliographic files: Petroleum Abstracts and GeoRef. Each of the documents in the test file contains a map of the study area. I am digitizing these maps and will compare the associated indexing and free-text terminology for the geographic areas with the map representations.

I have searched in vain, so far, for any research, evaluative study, or investigation of online retrieval or indexing of geographic concepts. Gilreath mentions problems with the retrieval of geographic concepts in his book, Computerized Literature Searching (Westview 1984), p. 85-86. Pruett discusses the problems of geographic retrieval in her talk, "State of the art of geoscience libraries and information services" (3rd International Conference on Geoscience Information, 1986). Stark discusses the problems of coordinate searching on GeoRef in the GIS Newsletter, February 1986. Geographic terminology is not specifically addressed in the guides to thesaurus construction (i.e., ANSI Z39.19, Lancaster's Vocabulary Control of Information Retrieval, and Aslib's Thesaurus Construction: A Practical Manual, by Atchison and Gilchrist) except to point out that the broad term/narrow term relationship in this case is a whole/part relationship rather than a genus/species relationship. Fugmann, in his article, "The 5-axiom theory of indexing and information supply," (JASIS, 1985) refers to geographic concepts as one of a set of individual concepts that are identified by proper names and are therefore relatively predictable for information retrieval. But, other than my own article published in Resource Sharing and Information Networks, 1989, I have not found any study that either compares geographic indexing structure and practice among bibliographic files or evaluates the results of online retrieval by geographic location.

It is always dangerous to assume that nothing has been done because there are so many studies that are either published in non-core journals or internally or not at all. Also, the geographic aspects of online

retrieval may be included in broader studies which I have simply missed. Therefore, I would like to ask the help of the readers of this bulletin.

Please contact me if you know of any studies on geographic indexing and retrieval that I have missed. If you are particularly interested in this area and in the possibility of developing a graphic interface to supplement word-based retrieval, I would like to hear from you also.

Thank you for your help.

Linda L. Hill, Doctoral candidate (on leave as Assistant Director, Petroleum Abstracts)  
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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Charles G. Groat has been named Executive Director of the American Geological Institute.

Dr. Groat has been director and state geologist of the Louisiana Geological Survey since 1978. He has held numerous academic posts, including chairman of the Department of Geological Sciences, University of Texas, El Paso (1976-1978). He has been active in many professional societies, including the Americana Association of Petroleum Geologists, the Association of American State Geologists, the Geological Society of America and the Society of Mining Engineers of AIME. His areas of research interest are energy resources and coastal resources.

In accepting the position as AGI's executive director, Dr. Groat noted that he is eager to work at the national level on matters that are significant to both the geoscience profession and the national interest, particularly education.

Dr. Groat will begin his official duties at AGI July 16.

### GIS HISTORICAL NOTES

Remember back in 1981 when the USGS Open-File Reports suddenly became available as GPO depository items? Well, that was neither altruism nor accident. It was the result of hard work by the GIS, ALA, SLA, and WAML representatives to CUAC (the Cartographic Users Advisory Council).

The USGS is interested in hearing from end users on what material they would like to see in a CD-ROM format. This could include material already published or material which you feel lends itself to this format. Send your ideas and comments to:

Dr. John Aaron  
Office of Scientific Information  
U.S. Geological Survey  
904 Sunrise Center  
12201 Sunrise Valley Drive  
Reston, VA 22092-9998

Check Your Holdings: During a recent map inventory at UC Riverside, it was discovered that all the maps from the Goldfields area of Nevada had gone AWOL. We were left with empty packets. (Fortunately, they were still available from the USGS, so they could be replaced).

But you might not be so lucky. As mining in the west has increased again, so has map "erosion". You might want to check your maps from important mining areas.

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## PUBLICATIONS

### The GeoRef database is now available on CD-ROM!!

The full GeoRef database, 1785 to current, is now available on 2 CD-ROM discs. It is distributed by SilverPlatter and uses SilverPlatter's powerful and easy-to-use software, with Boolean searches by author, subject, publication year, and key words or phrases.

It is available for annual lease by subscription. There is a discount for subscribers to the Bibliography and Index of Geology (BIG), there is a reduced introductory price, and there is a free 30-day preview.

(The American Geological Institute may require for-profit organizations that currently search GeoRef online and that subscribe to the CD-ROM to pay additional usage fees.)

To subscribe, contact:

SilverPlatter Information, Inc.  
One Newton Executive Park  
Newton Lower Falls, MA 02162-9927

or  
SilverPlatter Information, Inc.  
10 Barley Mow Passage  
Chiswick, London W4 4PH, England

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	US & Canada	Outside US \$ Canada	US & Canada	Outside US & Canada
Introductory Price (to Aug. 15, 1990)	\$ 2,400	\$ 2,640	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,980
After Aug. 15, 1990	2,600	2,860	1,950	2,145

The National Geophysical Data Center and World Data Center A for Solid Earth Geophysics maintain an earthquake strong motion archive of over 13,000 digitized and processed accelerograph records dating from 1933 to the present. The comprehensive database is contained in SMCAT (Strong Motion Data Catalog), a data inventory software package for IBM-compatible personal computers. The data are available on either magnetic tapes or floppy diskettes. The strong motion archive is frequently updated. For information on content, price, and availability, contact:

National Geophysical Data Center  
NOAA, Code E/GC1  
325 Broadway  
Boulder, CO 80303  
303/497-6764  
Fax: 303/497-6513  
Telex: 592811 NOAA MASC BDR

The Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) will soon release an upgraded version of Current Contents on Diskette. The upgrade will incorporate several enhancements including KeyWords Plus, which will expand searching capabilities beyond title words and author-assigned keywords. For more information, contact:

Customer Services Department  
Institute for Scientific Information  
3501 Market Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19104  
1-800/336-4474

The New OSHA Excavation Regulations has been published by ASFE/The Association of Engineering Firms Practicing in the Geosciences; it sells for \$7.50. To order, contact:

The Association of Engineering Firms Practicing in the Geosciences.  
8811 Colesville Road, Suite G106  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

ARC News is a new, free quarterly on mapping and Geographic Information Systems; it would be of interest to planners, foresters, scientists, cartographers, geographers, engineers, and others who use spatial information. To subscribe, contact:

Karen Hunter  
Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc.  
380 New York Street  
Redlands, CA 92373

The Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys has announced that it will begin distributing lists of its Public-data Files (PDF). These are unpublished documents, usually comprising raw data, and have not undergone peer review or staff editing. In many cases, these PDFs are later released as published reports. They are not available on standing order nor on exchange. The prices for the individual PDFs vary according to reproduction costs.

For a list of these reports and ordering information, contact:

G. M. Laird  
Resource Information Section  
Alaska Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys  
3700 Airport Way (DNE Building)  
Fairbanks, AK 99709-7005  
907/451-2760, or, 474-7147

### GIS HISTORICAL NOTES

The relationship between GIS and GeoRef goes way back. In 1971, AGI invited GIS to form a GeoRef advisory committee to provide liaison with GeoRef users, but this was not entirely successful. In 1974, a GIS committee was created at AGI's request to evaluate the effectiveness of GeoRef. And finally, in 1983, the GIS User Group, officially a GeoRef Advisory Committee, was formed to establish priorities.

### JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

LIBRARIAN (PHYSICAL SCIENCES), USGS  
LIBRARY, Reston, VA

Salary: GS-9 (\$24,705-32,121 per annum), or, GS-11 (\$29,891- 38,855 per annum)

Duties: Works as one of a team of service-oriented reference librarians in the USGS headquarters library in Reston, VA.

Participates in all aspects of reference, including reference desk duty, collection development, online and CD-ROM database searching, and outreach activities.

Qualifications: Completion of 24 or more semester hours in the geosciences in an accredited college/university, or 4 years pertinent experience working with the geosciences, plus MLS or combination of education and experience required by Civil Service Qualification Standard for professional librarians; training or experience in reference work; skill in working effectively with staff members and library clientele.

Contact: For a copy of the official announcement, H-90-242 or Recruiting Bulletin 90-12, that includes the 'KASOCS' (Knowledges, Abilities, Skills, and other characteristics) to be addressed in the application, please contact:

Carol H. Messick  
Chief, Reference & Circulation Section  
U.S. Geological Survey Library  
950 National Center  
Reston, VA 22092  
phone: 703/648-6089 or FTS 959-6089

Completed Personnel Qualifications Statement (SF-171) and KASOCS should be sent to:

Recruitment & Placement Section, Personnel  
U.S. Geological Survey  
215 National Center  
Reston, VA 22092  
phone: 703/648-6131 or FTS 959-6131

Applications must be received by close of business August 30, 1990.

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### MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

JULIE RINALDI, her husband Tom Popenuck, and their children Gillian and Jonathan are pleased to announce the birth of their newest family member, Elizabeth Anne, on April 12, 1990. Mother and daughter are doing well, and Julie is looking forward to returning to the Earth Sciences Library at UC Berkeley August 13th so she can get some rest.

## MEETINGS AND COURSES

The North American Cartographic Information Society (NACIS) will hold its 10th annual meeting in Orlando, Florida, October 24-27, 1990. NACIS is an interdisciplinary organization whose goal is to promote communication, coordination, and cooperation among the producers, disseminators, curators, and users of cartographic information. The membership includes professionals from government, academic, and private organizations.

The theme of this year's meeting is "Changing Cartography in the 90s". The program topics will include:

- cartographic activities in Latin America and Canada
- cartographic education
- cartographic laboratories
- mapping of water resources
- cartography and the media
- cartographic software
- geological mapping
- geographic information system
- navigation, atlases, and map library technology.

There will be a mixture of contributed papers, keynote speakers, invited papers, panel discussions, poster displays, exhibits, workshops, and field trips. The deadline for submitting abstracts is July 15, 1990. For program and registration information contact:

Dr. James F. Fryman, Program Chair for NACIS X  
Department of Geography  
University of Northern Iowa  
Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0406  
319/273-6245, or 319/273-2772

The National Water Well Association is a co-sponsor of the "FOCUS conference on eastern regional ground water issues," to be held Oct. 17-19, 1990, in Springfield, MA. Fifty papers will be presented addressing critical issues in eastern regional hydrogeology. For registration information, contact:

National Water Well Association  
6375 Rivershade Drive  
Dublin, OH 43017  
614/761-1711

Short courses offered by the National Water Well Association:

Analysis and design of aquifer tests - Sept. 10-13, 1990, Dublin, Ohio

Basic ground water modeling (on a PC): Transient flow in 2-D and 3-D - Sept. 12-14, 1990, Dublin, Ohio

Comprehensive ground water contamination management: A short course for environmental professionals in industry - Sept. 25-27, 1990, Baltimore, Md; Nov. 14-16, Orlando, FL

Corrective action for containing and controlling ground water contamination - Sept. 17-19, 1990, Ontario, Canada

Introduction to ground water geochemistry - Sept. 17-19, 1990, Ontario, Canada

Safety at hazardous materials sites: A hands-on workshop - Sept. 24-28, 1990, Valhalla, NY; Oct. 29-Nov. 2, 1990, Valhalla, NY

The geologic modeling of depositional environments and its application to the ground water professional - Sept. 3-6, 1990, Charleston, SC

Treatment technology for contaminated ground water - Sept. 19-21, 1990, Ontario, Canada

For information on these and other NWWA courses, contact:

Vaughn Shelton  
Education Department  
National Water Well Association  
6375 Rivershade Drive  
Dublin, OH 43017  
614/761-1711  
fax: 614/761-3446

### GIS HISTORICAL NOTES

By the end of 1971, the USGS had ceased publication of all its abstracts and bibliography series. The Bibliography and Index of Geology, produced by GSA from the AGI tapes of the GeoRef data files, was then the only English language index to geoscience literature available.

## THE HIGH PLAINS DRIFTER

The High Plains Drifter was not on the High Plains at all. The HPD attended the GeoInfo IV Conference in Ottawa at the end of June and benefitted greatly from the papers, field trip, tours, workshop, and just plain conversation. Just so the loyal readers may know other amazing trivia for those games that begin at midnight (now what does that mean?), I present the following:

1. Canada will soon be challenging the Japanese import success: What Japan did for cars, Canada will do for David Reade's BBQ sauce. You read it here first.
2. Inquiring minds want to know how many Canadian Centennial t-shirts were purchased by Jim O'Donnell.
3. There were more flags at the Ottawa Convention Center than were at Frontier Days in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

The HPD may go look for the plains of Australia OR New Zealand. Those folks seem to have a similar sense of humor. Perhaps my new column could be the DUPD (Down Under Plains Drifter). Send your cards and letters requesting my immediate departure from this Newsletter to the Editor.

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