



GEOSCIENCE
INFORMATION
SOCIETY

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Ah, the benefits of working in a geoscience library. Recently I was walking down a street in Munich between two museums, and I noticed the geoscience buildings of the University of Munich. Immediately I thought of the series *Munchner Geowissenschaftliche Abhandlungen*, which I encountered several times in a previous library position. This experience also happened to me a couple years ago when I noticed that the Senckenberg Natural History Museum was close to the Frankfurt Book Fair, which I was attending. I had to go there, not just to visit the excellent museum, but also to see the home of *Senckenbergiana Lethaea*. Yeah, I know what you're thinking; get a life. Time to move on.

I wouldn't be surprised to learn that you have spent a lot of time thinking about electronic journals in the last few months, given that the geoscience societies are starting to put their journals up. This was one of the main topics at the Geological Society of America Associated Societies Meeting at the end of February in Boulder, Colorado. I represented GIS there, and the rest of this column is a report on the meeting. Much of the text comes directly from the minutes and presentations.

Introductory Remarks

Clark Burchfiel, GSA Vice President, led the half-day meeting of 15 Associated Societies. Representatives from 12 GSA Divisions held their meeting at the same time. In the afternoon, the Associated Societies and Divisions held their first joint meeting. Burchfiel began the meeting by

stating that GSA's finances are severely constrained. A 10% reduction in programs is possible. Changes for the 2003 budget will be decided in May.

GSA has asked to establish Associated status with AAPG.

Journal Aggregate

AAPG, GSA, and SEG (Society of Exploration Geophysicists) are working together to create a journal aggregate. The goal is to connect the geoscience literature electronically. The Geological Society of London, Mineralogical Society of America, SEPM, and AGI have a strong interest. Other nonprofit professional societies, both from the US and other countries, are being asked to join. Small publishers of one or two geoscience journals would fit as well. The goal is to make the geoscience literature, including the archival literature, more accessible to professional scientists, students, and members of societies through libraries, institutions, and corporations. No single society will own the aggregate. It will be a cooperative project.

Exxon Mobil has been asked to provide seed money. Each Associated Society of GSA and AAPG has been asked to consider putting its publications into the aggregate. AAPG has fully archived its publications. GSA is digitizing not just its journals, but also the special papers, memoirs, and maps. Some societies are concerned about the cost of putting up their long journal backfiles. Another concern was the retention of each society's identity in the aggregate. This problem could be solved by putting the logo of the society on each electronic document from that society.

The cost of participation was discussed. The goal is to provide revenue for each participating society, perhaps by some formula related to use and to the length and complexity of the electronic documents. Society participation in the aggregate is not binding or exclusive. For example, a society could have its e-journals in both the aggregate and BioOne.

References in the journal aggregate are expected to be linked to other journals through Cross-Ref and secondary databases (such as Cambridge Abstracts). Current awareness capabilities are also desirable. GSA has established an agreement with AGU to interlink documents, effective in July.

(continued, p. 3)

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GIS members are encouraged to contribute materials for publication. Material for the June, 2002 issue should be received no later than May 24, 2002. If possible, please send materials by e-mail.

(continued from p. 1)

Development of the online aggregate of geoscience journals is moving quickly. The plan is to hire a director by summer to set up the aggregate and develop the cost mechanisms. The aggregate might be launched by January 2004. There is a pressure for societies to participate and make the product viable before a commercial online product picks up their journals. The aggregate also brings up the question of the value of societies to their members, because often their journals are the primary inducement to membership.

Here are some key points about the journal aggregate.

* Geoscience societies must publish online to continue their mission of disseminating scientific research results in the future, and to preserve past literature. 109 organizations are affiliated with GSA, AAPG, and AGI. They produce at least 32 scientific journals.

* The aggregate is expected to increase readership, provide access to a wider audience (i.e., industry and developing countries), enhance and expedite research, avoid replication, integrate geoscience research, preserve past literature, and increase the value of scientific society journals to the greater geoscience community.

* Requirements: participation by a significant number of geoscience societies; wide disciplinary breadth; major societies working in partnership to spearhead the formation of the aggregate and bring the publications of smaller societies online; and industry support for development costs and the electronic conversion of journal archives.

* Content: all earth and space sciences; peer-reviewed, high quality journals; include non-US based journals; participation by small publishers

* Non-exclusive participation. Each society can put its journals in "GeoOne" (or whatever the aggregate is called) and other journal aggregates if it wants.

* Associated societies were asked to compile the creation costs for their journals if they want to participate.

* Initial target market: libraries, institutions, and corporations.

* Attributes of the aggregate: full-text content; searching of full text and captions; searching of all geoscience journals through GeoRef; linking of references between journals in the aggregate; linking of references to other journals through CrossRef; linking to secondary databases; ability to expand to non-journal material such as maps, books, and conference proceedings; ability to link or include all types of geoscience digital data and other geological survey literature.

* Use a vendor to build, maintain and upgrade the technology and database to reduce the risks of technology evolution and associated costs.

* Pricing structure determined by number of pages, articles or journals posted; amount and type of archive; number of users, etc.

* Cost of the package will be determined by how many journals a library or institution wants to pick up.

The aggregate planning process is occurring rapidly. AAPG, GSA, and SEG Executive Committees and Boards have agreed in principle to commit the necessary resources to establish the aggregate. The Geological Society of London, AGI, and SEPM are willing to participate. A contractual agreement between the establishing societies is being formulated. Smaller societies and noncommercial publishers are being asked whether they want to participate in the aggregate. Industry and other potential sponsors are being asked for help with the development costs. By the end of Spring, a manager will be hired to set up the aggregate, recruit participating societies, determine the pricing model, negotiate with vendors, and develop a business, technical and marketing plan. By summer, industry and other sponsors will be approached to electronically archive the back issues, bring smaller societies online, and help with development costs. Finally, the goal is to have the aggregate fully functioning in libraries in January 2004.

Virtual Student Expo

AAPG asked other sciences for participation in a Web Site where students can post their resumes and other information for use by employers and vice versa. GSA is interested. The Web site might be useful for selection of graduate students by universities.

Geoinformatics

The National Science Foundation has set aside \$50-100 million for informatics, "the application of computer technologies and methodologies to scientific results" (*Science*, June 1, 2001). Lee Allison (Kansas Geological Survey) made a presentation on a proposal to use some of this fund for geoinformatics, "the application of computer technologies and methodologies to scientific results with spatial-temporal coordinates." This venture would digitally archive data sets along with the tools for accessing and using the data. Geoinformatics is evolving from analogue data, digital data, and relational databases, to dynamic digital data, tutorials, full interactivity by the users, and then on to 3-D and 4-D visualization.

An informatics system has these features:

- * an ongoing need to populate databases and make them available
- * automatic search and access tools for distributed databases
- * online workspace, software, and tutorials
- * access to high-performance computing and large databases wherever the user is located
- * flexibility for the users, rather than the establishment of rigid standards
- * providing what the majority of users can easily find, access, understand, and use effectively
- * an array of distribution options
- * tools for data mining and visualization
- * catalogues of databases

* user-friendly, smart, interdisciplinary search engines

Distribution and archiving of data would be handled through a system of permanent clearinghouse and central repositories, long-term portals and nodes, Web sites of variable lifespans, and ephemeral peer-to-peer connections. The goal is to permit the user to "query the earth digitally" at any depth, for any time, and at any scale.

One example of a geoinformatics initiative is Chronos (interactive chronostratigraphy and stratigraphic databases). Its mission is "to produce a dynamic, global time scale to frame Earth history events and processes for societal benefit." There would be distributed discipline nodes (e.g. biostratigraphy, radiometrics, chemostratigraphy, cyclostratigraphy, and magnetostratigraphy) around a central chronostratigraphic node. This node could be connected to petrological, seismological, hydrological, and other nodes through a geoinformatics system. Perhaps the journal aggregate would be connected as well.

ICE (Information Consortium for the Earth) is preparing a \$5-7 million proposal. Competitors include pay-for-private systems and the National Spatial Data Infrastructure, from the Federal Geographic Data Committee.

Globalization Issues

Jack Hess (GSA Executive Director) spoke about establishing globalization partnerships versus internationalization, where a society just tries to get members from other countries. About 4% of GSA's members come from Canada and 8% come from other countries. GSA wants to balance the organization with the unique needs and assets of regional markets. It seeks to build strategic partnerships with other societies, hold global meetings, undertake joint business ventures with strategic partners, and develop a globally diverse membership.

GSA established an International Division in 1989. At the Associated Societies meeting, there was some discussion about one part of its mission, to create nodes in the US to be clearing centers for distribution of American journals and books to underfunded overseas institutions. Large oil companies regularly ship containers overseas, and perhaps gifts could be sent that way. Another way to facilitate the distribution of geoscientific literature would be through providing access to the journal aggregate.

GSA is working on hosting and cosponsoring global meetings. Some partnerships have been formed with the Asociación Geológica Argentina, Australian Geological Survey Organization, Geological Survey of Australia, International Union for Quaternary Research, Sociedad Geológica de Chile, and the Geological Society of London. The Middle East, the Balkans, and Southeast Asia were mentioned as potential geographic/partnership areas.

Working Groups

Working Groups were established at previous Associated Society meetings. Here are highlights from their

reports.

* The Global Working Group asked GSA to consider the possibility of having an international representative on GSA committees. There was an attempt to have a Councilor from another country, but this proved to be too difficult and expensive. Also, organizers of large-scale meetings overseas were urged to use college campuses to cut down the costs, especially for participants outside those countries.

* The Public Outreach Working Group is gathering data on outreach programs from Associated Societies, outreach from government, and outreach from individual members of societies. The information will be disseminated to education and public policy folks and presented at the Denver meeting. GSA leadership encouraged the Working Group in their efforts to help revitalize education programs within GSA.

* The Education Working Group brought up Ed Geary's presentation in November 2001 regarding the National Conference on the Revolution in Earth and Space Science Education. A "Blueprint for Change" has been issued which advocates reform in K-12 earth and space education for the next decade. A goal is to work on the state level, where curriculum decisions are often made. The full report is on www.EarthScienceEdRevolution.org.

* The Public Policy Working Group has not been active. GSA is looking into the possibility of having the Working Group work with GSA Geology and Public Policy Committee to reactivate interest. GSA mentioned the possibility of sharing the cost of another geoscience Congressional Fellow with Associated Societies.

Joint Meeting of Associated Societies and Divisions

Clark Burchfiel chaired the first meeting of the GSA Associated Societies and GSA Divisions. After the Geo-Informatics presentation, each representative from a Division or Associated Society summarized their history and how they interact with other Divisions and Associated Societies. I specifically mentioned the Union List, Awards, and the Guidebook Standards. An Executive Director from one of the societies has since requested the standards.

VICE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Our GSA Topical Session, "New Heights in Geoscience Information: Access and Technology," has been accepted as Session T44 for the GSA Annual Meeting in Denver, Oct. 27-30. There are 127 topical sessions total. Start thinking about submitting an abstract: How have new technologies and information-seeking behaviors affected how we manage geoscience information? Do you have a creative application of technology? An innovation in accessibility? Do you want to tell us about the impact of information on your geoscience community? Now's the time!

The submission deadline for abstracts is July 16 (midnight Pacific Time July 16, to be precise). Online abstract submission via the GSA website is recommended;

the abstract submission forms will be available ~April 1 at www.geosociety.org. Please contact me if you would like to talk over an idea.

The Denver region has a lot of potential for field trips at the Annual Meeting. Even though we've been here before, there are still many things to see. The field trip is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday Oct. 30. (Remember, the GSA Meeting schedule has been moved up a day this year.) I'm starting to put together field trip ideas, so if you have any preferences let me know. Mountains, plains, watersheds, museums, city tour, mines? There are interesting local sites, and some further day-trip excursions we

could make into the mountains; our biggest constraint is the weather at that time of year. Tell me what you think.

In addition to the usual activities, the Colorado School of Mines Library has agreed to host a reception for GIS, so you will get a chance to see my library in Golden. Unfortunately, the newly discovered dinosaur tracks and plant fossils just south of campus will probably be gone by October due to construction of the new Golden golf course—I'll try to find a substitute. Web resources on downtown Denver, DIA (Denver International Airport), etc. will also be available in upcoming newsletters and via Web links. ♦

OFFICER REPORTS: TREASURER

GEOSCIENCE INFORMATION SOCIETY - Final Budget Report for 2001

	<u>Income Budgeted</u>	<u>Income Actual</u>	<u>Expense Budgeted</u>	<u>Expense Actual</u>
EXECUTIVE BOARD				
President			150.00	
Vice-President			100.00	13.80
Past-President			25.00	
Secretary			450.00	632.59
Treasurer			100.00	152.20
Teleconferences			200.00	266.40
Subtotal			1,025.00	1,064.99
MEETINGS				
2001 Meeting			800.00	1,009.96
2001 Meeting: exhibits			500.00	441.72
2001 Meeting: fieldtrip	800.00	150.00	800.00	26.37
2000 Meeting			3,700.00	3,726.20
2000 Meeting: exhibits			100.00	113.63
Subtotal	800.00	150.00	5,900.00	5,317.88
DUES				
Institutional	2,000.00	2,135.00		
Personal	6,000.00	5,840.00		
Sustaining	600.00	300.00		
Retired	200.00	195.00		
Student	60.00	75.00		
Named Sponsorship	80.00			
Pooled Sponsorship	300.00	300.00		
Subtotal	9,240.00	8,845.00		

PUBLICATIONS				
Publications Manager			800.00	800.00
Directory of Geoscience Libraries	145.00	105.00		
Mailing labels	200.00	200.00		
Membership directory			1,050.00	1,030.00
Newsletter: printing			2,400.00	2,160.39
Newsletter: mailing			1,000.00	971.64
Newsletter: subscriptions	600.00	955.00		
Newsletter: back issues		90.00		
Proceedings, v.31 (2000)			1,650.00	1,640.00
Proceedings, v.30 (1999)	1,400.00	1,170.00		
Proceedings, v.29 (1998)	500.00	95.00		
Proceedings, v.28 (1997)	120.00	45.00		
Proceedings, prior volumes	80.00	90.00		
Index	15.00			
GEOINFO V Proceedings	100.00			
GEOINFO VI Proceedings	200.00	200.00		
Reprints				
Royalties				
Subtotal	3,360.00	2,950.00	6,900.00	6,602.03
REPRESENTATIVES/ APPOINTEES				
AGI Member Council rep			25.00	
AGI Gov't Affairs Program rep			25.00	
CUAC (2 reps @ \$200 each)			400.00	
Publicity Officer			50.00	
Auditor			25.00	
Subtotal			525.00	
COMMITTEES				
Archives			50.00	
Best Paper			25.00	40.00
Best Reference Work			25.00	43.60
Best Guidebook			25.00	40.00
Collection Development			25.00	
Digital Data			25.00	
GeoRef Users Group			25.00	
Guidebook Standards			50.00	16.00
International Initiatives			100.00	
Membership			100.00	
Membership brochure				
Nominating			200.00	

Preservation			100.00	
Public Affairs			25.00	
Union List of Field Trip Guidebooks			25.00	
Website Advisory			50.00	70.00
Subtotal			850.00	209.60

MISCELLANEOUS

AGI member society dues			425.00	426.00
GAP contribution			400.00	400.00
GIS International Fellow				206.07
Ansari Award	5,000.00	5,100.00	500.00	500.00
EBSCO sample issue program				
Gifts (unrestricted)	250.00	285.00		
Bank charges			50.00	44.00
Interest	500.00	335.00		
Souvenirs				
Refunds				
Subtotal	5,750.00	5,720.00	1,375.00	1,576.07
TOTAL	19,150.00	17,665.00	16,575.00	14,770.57

**Opening checking balance
(1/1/01)**

Union Bank of California
2,756.27

**Closing checking
balance (12/31/01)**

Union Bank of
California 4,715.70

**Opening savings balances
(1/1/01)**

Union Bank of California
17,376.38
Bank of America: Ansari CD
2,889.22
Bank of America: Ansari Savings
167.04
Bank of America: Bristol Fund
821.31

**Closing savings
balances (12/31/01)**

Union Bank of
California* 13,566.27
Bank of America:
Ansari CD 3,019.87
Bank of America:
Ansari Savings 4,774.67
Bank of America:
Bristol Fund 828.14

Total balance (1/1/01)
\$24,010.22

**Total balance
(12/31/01)**
\$26,904.65

Geonet listserv

Last year geonet-I transferred hosts from Indiana University to Purdue University. At that time, the name changed to GEONET. If you are no longer receiving messages from the listserv, and wish to do so, please email the geonet moderator at: carolyn@purdue.edu

Have you renewed your GIS membership yet? The Treasurer and Secretary thank those who've renewed and remind the rest that *it's not too late!* Send your renewals to Suzanne Larsen, GIS Secretary.

REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

AGI Member Society Council, Spring Meeting, March 11, 2002, Houston, Texas

The International Basement Tectonics Association request to affiliate with the American Geological Institute was presented and approved.

AGI is in good financial state for the tenth consecutive year, despite the decline in the stock market. GeoRef continues to be a major income source for AGI. Advertising revenue, publication sales, and the *Geotimes* subscriber base were all up significantly. AGI was awarded an education grant of \$1.6 million.

Major topics discussed at this session included: earth science education, federal funding for environmental and geoscience research, and the geoscience society electronic journal aggregate plan.

Michael Smith (AGI--Education and Outreach) reported on his testimony and that of 27 others to the Texas State School Board meeting, urging them to reinstate earth science as a course that counts for credit towards high school graduation. Information on the Texas situation can be found at: <http://www.agiweb.org/education/texas.html>. 49 states have content standards that include earth science (Iowa is the exception), but only 37 allow earth science to count to fulfill a high school science graduation requirement. AGI staff have recently completed a survey of the status of K-12 earth sciences education throughout the 50 states. Results can be found at: <http://www.agiweb.org/education/statesurveys/survey>.

Chip Groat followed with a short report on USGS involvement with education. The Survey does not see that it has a role in curriculum building per se, but in working with educators to make science data and products more useful in the classroom. Projects designed to work towards this goal have been set up with a school in Alabama and with the Rosebud Sioux education system. The Survey is about to hire a science education coordinator.

David Applegate and others drew a disheartening picture of the state of federal funding for earth sciences and environmental research. Further information can be found at: <http://www.agiweb.org/gap/alerts>.

AGI has done an analysis of GeoRef users; 40% of them are outside the United States. Data arrangements are in place with 16 non-U.S. geologic organizations, including Australia, Azerbaijan, England, Finland, New Zealand, and Russia.

Clark Burchfiel (faculty member from MIT and GSA vice president) presented a report on the current status of the geoscience societies' Electronic Journal Aggregate Plan. There are two goals for the plan: to continue the society mission of disseminating science research results in the future, and to preserve past science literature. AAPG, GSA,

and SEG are the core group. The Geological Society (London) has already begun the process of joining the group. The purpose of Burchfiel's report was to present the aggregate plan to the AGI affiliated societies with the goal of encouraging other societies to join the group. The current hope is that the aggregate will be fully functional by 2004 for libraries. Unfortunately, there was no time after his presentation to ask questions.

AGI has undertaken a survey of trends in the geosciences. Topics covered included university enrollment, degrees granted, employment trends, age distribution, etc. The results presented were draft only.

The AGI Member Society Council meets twice yearly, once at the GSA Annual meeting and again in the Spring, usually with the AAPG Annual meeting. In addition to speaking for and representing her/his society's interests during the meeting discussions, each member society representative is expected to prepare semiannual written summaries of the activities of his/her society. These summaries are included in the book prepared by AGI for the member representatives.

Respectfully submitted:

Charlotte R. M. Derksen, GIS representative

Geological Society of America Publications Committee, Spring Meeting, Feb. 22-23, 2002, Boulder, Colorado

The spring meeting of the Geological Society of America Publications met at GSA headquarters in Boulder, Feb. 22-23, 2002. The committee is composed of GSA staff (Jon Olsen, Director of Publications; Larry Bowlds, Managing Editor, *GSA Bulletin*; Anika Burkard, Managing Editor, *Geology*; Diane Lorenz, Production Manager); the GSA Aggregation initiative: Doug Walker, University of Kansas; the editors of the *GSA Bulletin* (Peter Copeland, University of Houston; Allen Glazner, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill); the editors of *Geology* (David Fastovsky, University of Rhode Island; Ben van der Pluijm, University of Michigan); the GSA field trips editor (Dave Lageson, Montana State University); the editor of *GSA Today* science articles (Karl Karlstrom, University of New Mexico); the editor of *Engineering and Environmental Geology* [vacant]; the books editor (Abhijit Basu, Indiana University); GSA's publishing consultant (Mary Waltham); representatives from the GSA Council (Suzanne Mahlburg Kay), from industry (Suzanne Kairo, Exxon-Mobile), and from the Geoscience Information Society (Connie Manson, Washington Division of Geology and Earth Resources); and is chaired by Hap McSween (GSA Council and University of Tennessee).

Much of the GSA's Publications Committee efforts revolve around the nitty-gritty of the peer review, editing,

and production of the various GSA journals and books. Because those issues impact, and are impacted by, geoscience information concerns, viewpoints from the geoscience information community are valued.

The Aggregate

The most important issue for us is, of course, "the aggregate"-- the efforts by GSA and other geoscience societies to offer a suite of professional journals digitally to libraries. Those efforts are progressing swiftly:

--November 2001: GSA joined with a committee of non-profit organizations interested in the aggregate.

--December 2001: Committee agrees to try aggregate, gets background information, survey data.

--January 2002: Presidents of groups agree to go forward, agree to give the project five years, and agree that must act now.

--February 2002: Corporate sponsorship sought.

--By June 30, 2002: Agreement in place between societies, business plan written, costs from providers received, start-up funds for five years secured from a sponsor. GSA has been in discussions about this aggregate with other geoscience societies, including the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, the Society for Exploration Geophysicists, the Mineralogical Society of America, and SEPM--Society for Sedimentary Geology, and others. The aggregate envisioned initially includes approximately 35 journals from these societies. It intends to provide a valuable service to subscribers with flexibility in pricing for the participants, although the fee schedules have not yet been worked out. Additionally:

--Copyright would be retained by the individual organizations.

--Organizations could withdraw from the aggregate at any

time, although the content they had contributed would remain on the site.

--Libraries would benefit by having a single license for access to many journals.

--Participants would benefit by having their content available to a wider audience, increasing the potential of citations.

--Users would benefit from hotlinks to cited literature.

Some other results of the February meeting of interest to the Geoscience Information Society are:

The GSA Bulletin backlog:

The backlog at the *GSA Bulletin* has been eliminated.

Field Guides

It was decided that GSA wants to continue to publish the field guides for the national meeting (despite the problems with the field guides for the 2001 meeting). There was a lot of additional discussion-- about field guides for the sectional meeting; field guides on the web, and perhaps even including field guides from other organizations on the website. Those discussions will continue.

Repurposing Journal Articles

Some articles from GSA journals are widely used in classrooms. It was suggested that republication of selected articles would be a valuable product. The mechanics of this were discussed. The GIS representative felt that libraries would like this as long as it was clearly identified as a collection of reprints; standing-order customers would need to be asked if they were interested.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie J. Manson, GIS Representative

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mary B. Ansari Best Reference Work Award Committee

The Mary B. Ansari Best Reference Work Award Committee nominates and evaluates reference material to determine the winner of the award, which is presented at the Annual Meeting. Titles for nomination must have been published within the three years preceding the GSA Annual Meeting (October, 2002). Everyone is encouraged to nominate titles for evaluation by the committee. Nominations should be sent to Janice Norris at janice-g-norris@tamu.edu. This year's committee includes the following members:

Lisa Fish, Columbia University (2002-2004)

Linda Musser, Penn State University (2000-2002)

Linda Newman, University of Nevada, Reno (2001-2003)

Jim O'Donnell, Caltech (2002-2004)

Sally Scott, University of Wyoming (1998-2002)

Charles Weston, University of New Orleans (2000-

2002)

Janice Norris, Chair, Texas A&M University (1998-2004)

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Norris, Chair

Best Paper Award: Call for Nominations

The Geoscience Information Society Best Paper Award Committee is beginning its work. We welcome nominations for the society's annual award for the best paper in geoscience information.

Papers published during 2001 will be considered based on the following criteria: significance, originality, scholarship, effectiveness of communication and demonstration of professional knowledge.

Committee members will begin evaluation of papers in early May. Please submit nominations to: Thelma B. Thompson, GIS Best Paper Award Committee Chair,

Government Documents Librarian, Dimond Library, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH 03824-3592
(603) 862-1132 Fax: (603) 862-3403 thelmat@cisunix.unh.edu

Best Geoscience Website Award: Call for Nominations

The GIS Website Advisory Committee will be accepting nominations for the first annual Best Geoscience Website Award. All sites related to the geological sciences are eligible. These include both scholarly sites and those geared toward the general public. In addition, both free and subscription-based will be considered though preference will be

given to sites with significant free content. The committee will review sites based on the following four primary areas: content, design and organization, technical considerations, and overall site effectiveness. Full details about the criteria are available on the GIS webpage. The deadline for nominations is June 15th. All nominations should be sent to Edward Lener (lener@vt.edu). Be sure to include a complete URL and a brief statement about why you selected the site.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward Lener, Chair, GIS Website Advisory Committee.

GIS COMMITTEES and APPOINTMENTS

Note: This is a revision of the list from the February Newsletter. There are still vacancies for ALA PARS Representative and North American Cartographic Information Society Representative. Please contact me if you are a member of either group and would like to inform the GIS membership of developments from these organizations. You do not have to go to all their meetings.

Individual Appointments

Newsletter Editor: Connie Manson (2000-)
Reviews Editor: Carol LaRussa (2000-Oct. 2002)
Publications Manager: Elizabeth Wallace (2002-Nov. 2004)
Publicity Officer: Carol LaRussa (2000-Oct. 2002)
Geonet Moderator: Carolyn Laffoon (1999-Nov. 2004)
Webmaster: Jim O'Donnell (1999-2004)

Representatives

AGI, Environmental Geoscience Advisory Committee
Julian Green (2000-2003)
AGI, GeoRef Advisory Committee
Suzanne Larsen (1997-2002)
AGI, Government Affairs Program
Marie Dvorzak (2000-2002)
ALA, ACRL Science & Technology Section
Barbara DeFelice (1998-2002)
ALA, MAGERT
Thomas Zogg (1998-2004)
Cartographic Users Advisory Council
Clara McLeod (1997-2002)
Linda Zellmer (2002-2004)
NSF, DLESE Steering Committee
Barbara DeFelice (1999-)
SLA, Geography & Map Division
Harry Davis (1998-2004)

Committees

Archives

Mary Krick, Chair (2000-2002)
Lura Joseph (2002-2004)
Lois Pausch (2000-2002)

Best Paper Award

Thelma Thompson, Chair (2001-2003)
Renee Davis (2002-2004)
Chip Green (2002-2004)
John Hunter (2001-2003)
John Kawula (2002-2004)

Best Reference Work (Mary B. Ansari Award)

Janet Norris, Chair (1998-2004)
Lisa Fish (2002-2004)
Linda Musser (2000-2002)
Linda Newman (2001-2003)
Jim O'Donnell (2002-2004)
Sally Scott (1998-2002)
Charles Weston (2000-2002)

Collection Development Issues

Charlotte Derksen, Chair (2001-2003)
James Anderson (2002-2004)
Barbara DeFelice (2000-2002)
Steve Hiller (2001-2003)
Janice Jaguszewski (2002-2004)

Digital Data

Adonna Fleming, Chair (2001-2003)
Christopher Badurek (2002-2004)
Katie Frohberg (2000-2002)
Suzanne Taylor (2002-2004)
Dorothy Tao (2002-2004)

Exhibits

April Love, Chair (2001-2002)
Dona Dirlam (2002-2004)
Barbara Haner (2002-2004)
Mary Krick (2002-2004)
Sally Scott (2001-2003)

GeoRef User's Group Steering Committee

Nancy Blair, Chair (1997-2004)
Walt Cressler (2002-2004)

John Hunter (2002-2004)
Jane Ingalls (2001-2003)
Andrea Twiss-Brooks (2002-2004)
Penny Whitten (2002-2004)

Guidebook Standards

Carol LaRussa, Chair (2002-2004)
Patricia Gaspari-Bridges (2002-2004)
James P. Mehl, Jr. (2001-2003)
Lorraine Pellack (2002-2004)
Karen Piqune (2000-2002)

International Initiatives

Claren Kidd, Chair (2001-2003)
Chip (Julian) Green (2002-2004)
Dena Hanson (2002-2004)
Shaun Hardy (2001-2003)
Dorothy McGarry (2002-2004)
Nora Tamberg (2000-2002)

Membership

Connie Manson, Chair (2002-2004)
Miriam Kennard (2002-2004)
Sally Scott (2002-2004)
Elizabeth Wallace (2002-2004)

Nominating

Sharon Tahirkheli, Chair (2002)
Martha Andrews (2000-2002)
David Lepse (2000-2002)
Clara McLeod (2002-2004)

Preservation

Kristi Jensen, Chair (2001-2003)
Regina Brown (2000-2002)
Pauline Kamel (1999-2002)
Mary Scott (2001-2003)
Susan Skinner (2000-2002)

Public Affairs

Marie Dvorzak, Chair (2000-2002)
Diane Baclawski (2000-2002)
John Hunter (2002-2004)

Union List of Field Trip Guidebooks

Lura Joseph, Chair (2002-2004)
Charlotte Derksen (2002-2004)
Angela Gooden (2002-2004)
Carol Messick (2002-2004)
John Mulvihill (2002-2004)
Jim O'Donnell (2002-2004)
Linda Rose (2002-2004)
Caryl Shields (2000-2002)
Louise Zipp (2000-2002)

Reviewers:

Regina Frackowiak (2000-2002)
Dorothy McGarry (2002-2004)

Website Advisory Committee

Edward Lener, Chair (2001-2003)
Shaun Hardy (2002-2004)
Joanne Lerud (2001-2003)
Jim O'Donnell, Webmaster (1998-2004)

NEWS FROM THE USGS LIBRARIES

by Nancy Blair

I am sure that many of you have seen newspaper articles about removing the USGS CD-ROM Open-File 99-248 entitled: "Source-area characteristics of large public surface-water supplies in the conterminous United States" from public depository libraries. The USGS is not used to media attention except when Mother Nature brews up an earthquake or volcanic eruption. The USGS has requested the Superintendent of Documents to withdraw an occasional document in the past because of inaccuracies with hardly any notice by anyone, even librarians. This time was different. The CD-ROM did get me an invitation to speak at the FLICC (Federal Library and Information Center Committee) Forum on Homeland Security: Impact of Policy Changes on Government Information Access at the Library of Congress on March 19 along with the Superintendent of Documents, Francis Buckley.

The USGS libraries have, at last, begun a scanning project. We have done 15,000+ photographs that will be available on the web in a few months. We have a contractor who has been scanning the early Professional Papers and Annual Reports, but have not yet seen the online results of the digitization. These texts will not be available for many months, but will be eventually accessible on the web.

If you use our online catalog, you will see an increasing number of catalog records for older publications and maps as we continue our retrospective cataloging project. Tommie Ann Gard at the Denver Library has been searching the web for USGS digital products, especially Open File Reports, missing from our online catalog and these are being cataloged. We are also adding cataloging for major USGS web pages as part of the Library of Congress's CORC project.

The GIS Newsletter is now available to GIS members as a PDF file. To sign up, e-mail the editor at connie.manson@wadnr.gov (Subscribers will continue to receive the print edition only.)

LITERATURE REVIEWS

by

Carol J. La Russa

In "The Indexing of Scholarly Journals: A Tipping Point for Publishing Reform?" John Willinsky and Larry Wolfson argue that it is now possible for scholars to move away from their dependence on commercial publishers and indexing services. The authors fault commercial indexing services both for their overlapping content and the gaps in their coverage, especially of electronic-only journals, and also for their high costs. They advocate adding metadata to records of scholarly activity available on the Web. The metadata would be provided by authors using a template and would follow the Dublin Core standards. The indexes resulting from the automatic search engine harvesting made possible by the metadata could be made publicly available and would bypass commercial indexing services. (*Journal of Electronic Publishing*, v. 7, no. 2, 2001, <http://www.pres.umich.edu/jep/07/-2/willinsky.html>).

In the *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, Dragomir R. Radev, Kelsey Libner, and Weiguo Fan describe their study of how well nine popular search engines are able to answer natural language questions. This was done as a baseline study because presumably current search engines were not specifically designed to process these sorts of queries. An example of a natural language query is: "What is the longest river in the United States?" They sent 700 such questions each to Alltheweb, AltaVista, Excite, Google, HotBot, Lycos, MetaCrawler, NorthernLight, and WebCrawler. They then looked at the first forty retrieved documents to see if any contained the correct answer. Scores were weighted by how close to the top the correct answer appeared and then summed. Correct answers were found somewhere in the top forty documents at least 75% of the time for all search engines. Google and NorthernLight were able to provide a correct answer for 90% of questions. They conclude "that Web search engines have strong potential as a component of a system for answering factual natural-language questions." ("Getting Answers to Natural Language Questions on the Web," v. 53, no. 5, 2002, p. 359-364).

The March 8, 2002 issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education* contains an article on book preservation that is a good introduction to the subject for non-specialists. In it Deanna B. Marcum and Anne R. Kenney explain why brittle books are a problem and how the Brittle Books Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities has tried to find solutions. One solution has been microfilming; others include mass deacidification and improvements in storage conditions to retard damage. Microfilm so far has a better record for long-term preservation than electronic formats and microfilm can be used to create electronic formats. When research materials are made available in electronic formats on the Web their use increases greatly. Therefore

libraries should attempt to digitize their most significant holdings to make them universally available. In order to do this libraries need more information on the rates of deterioration to better determine how many books are in danger. Also libraries need to cooperate on preservation decisions such as how many originals to conserve and whether to microfilm or digitize. Support will be needed from NEH and other major donors. (v. 48, no. 26, p. B20).

Michael Gorman writes in an article in the *IFLA Journal* that now that libraries have achieved their long term goal of Universal Bibliographic Control for traditional (non-electronic) library materials through the use of MARC, ISBD, and AACR2 standards for cataloguing it is time to look at applying these types of standards to electronic materials. He sees no problems in principle in doing so, although he admits there are practical reasons that will make it difficult. To simplify the problem he breaks down materials found on the Web into six categories: ephemera, commercial sites, print-derived resources, electronic-only serials, digitized archives, and original creative works. He believes that since libraries almost never catalog ephemera and commercial publications in their paper form there is no reason to do so for the electronic versions. Librarians already know how to catalog print-derived resources and their less transient nature of electronic versions make them less troublesome. He thinks that electronic journals probably need to be rethought. There may be no need for journals, issues, etc. and each article could be individually catalogued. For digitized archives like the Library of Congress's American Memory Project he sees a need for harmonization of archival cataloguing practices with those of library collections. Gorman next looks at original creative works. He is critical of metadata and the Dublin Core standards. He sees them as an over-simplification of cataloguing rules that could lead to ineffective catalogs. He believes that the best approach would be full cataloguing of those resources which are felt to be worth the effort, enriched Dublin Core records with controlled vocabulary for less valuable resources, and Dublin Core records or search-engine only access for the huge remainder electronic resources. To organize efforts for cataloguing of electronic resources he sees two possibilities: efforts at the level of national libraries and grass roots efforts at the local level. National and international agreements to encourage and coordinate local efforts might be useful. Gorman ends by expressing his skepticism for the long-term viability of electronic archives. He advocates using acid-free paper to preserve electronic texts and images despite the high cost. ("Bibliographic Control or Chaos: An Agenda for National Bibliographic Services in the 21st Century," v. 27, no. 5/6, 2001, p. 307-313).

The February 2002 issue of *American Libraries* has an

article by Karen G. Schneider about what you can do if someone steals all or part of your Web content. One solution is making a request to remove the content. Another is to wait: Web sites are so unstable that often the site will disappear quickly. You can also formally copyright your site to make it easier to prove your ownership of the content in court. ("It Takes a Thief: Coping with Stolen Content," v. 33, no.2, p.60).

Judit Bar-Ilan has developed a methodology for measuring search engine inconsistencies described in the article "Methods for Measuring Search Engine Performance over Time." Earlier studies have shown large fluctuations in the number of results retrieved by some search engines for the same search over time rather than an increase as one might expect. The traditional criteria of coverage, recall, and precision are not adequate to describe a dynamic environment. To conduct the study Bar-Ilan performed searches on the same queries once a month and recorded the total number of results for each search and downloaded the results. Bar-Ilan next looked at the technical precision (rather than subjective precision) of the results to weed out "bad documents." The study shows that some relevant Web pages appear, disappear, and reappear in search results. Other Web pages are persistent. Bar-Ilan sees a need for improvements in search engine performance and for further tests. (*Journal of the*

American Society for Information Science and Technology, v. 43, no. 4, 2002, p. 308-319).

Steward Granger discusses what kinds of infrastructure will be needed for the preservation of digital information in an article in *D-Lib Magazine*. Organizational, legal and cultural infrastructures will be necessary and will require enabling technical infrastructure to accomplish the goal of preservation. Organizational infrastructure would consist of certified archives for long-term preservation which should also duplicate holdings; collaborative structures to resolve differences between libraries and archives, research communities, and commercial entities; and centralized centers for research and development that might provide emulators, metadata tools, and data recovery services. Legal aspects include intellectual property rights issues (copyright) and Technical Protection Systems to prevent copying. Both could be obstacles to long-term preservation. The author would like to see an electronic deposit system similar to that required for books. Cultural infrastructure aspects include vendor reliability and forced obsolescence of vendor-produced systems. Technical infrastructure includes the development of standards to make digital preservation simpler and less costly. ("Digital Preservation and Deep Infrastructure," v.8, no. 2, 2002, <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/february02/granger/02.html>).

JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS

Science & Technology Services Librarian, University of Oregon, Eugene

The University of Oregon is seeking a creative, energetic and outgoing librarian to coordinate services offered through the Science Information Technology Center in the Science Library, provide reference and instruction, and develop subject collections. This entry-level position provides the opportunity to participate in a wide range of services and professional responsibilities in a dynamic environment. Duties: Supervise and coordinate the services offered through the Science Information Technology Center (ITC); work closely with teaching faculty to promote the use of the facilities, develop enhancements, and ensure that the Science ITC supports the widest possible range of curriculum and research needs in the sciences; initiate outreach efforts; help plan, select, and integrate appropriate new technologies; and work closely with ITC technical support staff in Knight Library (main library) on program development. Will be responsible for learning new systems and assisting in staff training.

Qualifications: *Required:* ALA-accredited MLS/MLIS degree, (must be completed no later than August 2002); strong academic background in the physical, life, or computer sciences or equivalent experience; knowledge of reference service, electronic information services, library instruction; experience using Internet resources and a variety

of software. Must have excellent oral and written communication skills and strong service orientation is essential.

Desired: Technology background and familiarity with Macintosh, PC and Unix platforms. \$31,500 minimum depending on qualifications and prior experience. Generous benefits and professional development opportunities. Applications received by 5:00 p.m., April 30, 2002 will receive priority consideration. Send cover letter, résumé, and names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of four references to: Ms. Laine Stambaugh, Coordinator, Personnel Development, 1299 University of Oregon Libraries, Eugene, OR 97403-1299. (541) 346-1895; (541) 346-3485 (FAX); lastamba@oregon.uoregon.edu. Electronic applications are accepted initially, but must be followed by a hard copy with signature. For complete position description, see: <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/admpers/scitech2002.html>. AA/OE/ADA-compliant institution committed to cultural diversity.

Reference Services Librarian, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD

Johns Hopkins University seeks an experienced, service-oriented librarian to coordinate and lead the reference services program in the Milton S. Eisenhower Library. Includes managing the two key reference service points in the MSE Library, being responsible for the selection of print

and electronic reference materials, managing the print and electronic reference collection, and providing leadership in the design, development, and maintenance of the library's online catalog interface and the library's website. Coordinates the Brandeis model of reference service. Trains, schedules, and evaluates the reference performance of twelve Resource Services librarians who provide service in the Research Consultation Office. Hires, trains, and supervises approximately 86 hours of students and volunteers from other library departments who provide service at the Information Desk. Works closely with the Science and Engineering Library Coordinator in scheduling, training, and staffing the Science Information Desk. Investigates and implements new methods of providing reference assistance utilizing emerging technologies, gathers service statistics and user feedback and recommends staffing and service changes as appropriate, maintains the print reference collection including selection, weeding, shelving, preservation, and binding, develops and maintains web pages relating to reference service, coordinates the e-mail reference service, works with the Public Services Congress to implement new versions of the public catalog interface of the library management system. Provides service in the Research Consultation Office and works some evenings and weekends as part of the Resource Services Department. Manages the reference materials budget of over \$600,000 and selects print and electronic resources for the reference collection. Includes supervising the departmental administrative/web assistant. Hopkins librarians have senior staff status. The Sheridan Libraries encompass the Milton S. Eisenhower Library and its collec-

tions at the John Work Garrett Library, the George Peabody Library, and the Albert D. Hutzler Undergraduate Reading Room. Its primary constituency is the students and faculty in the schools of Arts & Sciences, Engineering, and Professional Studies in Business & Education. A key partner in the academic enterprise, the library is a leader in the innovative application of information technology and has implemented notable diversity and organizational development programs. The Sheridan Libraries are strongly committed to diversity. A strategic goal of the Libraries is to 'work toward achieving diversity when recruiting new and promoting existing staff.' The Libraries prize initiative, creativity, professionalism, and teamwork. **Note: Reopened Search**

Qualifications: MLS from ALA accredited library school with a minimum of 3 years professional experience in a library. Demonstrated commitment to well-run service desks, supervisory experience, administrative skills, self-starter with ability to initiate, innovate and to solve problems creatively, knowledge of and experience with a wide variety of print and electronic resources.

Preferred Qualifications: Ability to create web sites and pages, experience with obtaining user feedback and ability to conduct training sessions. NOTE: When applying, please include cover letter with resume and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of three professional references.

For more information, see <http://jobs.jhu.edu>

Liz Mengel, Resource Services Librarian, Science and Engineering, Johns Hopkins University, Milton S. Eisenhower Library; 410-516-0809; emengel@jhu.edu



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"This report is preliminary and has not been reviewed for conformity with... [my employer's] editorial standards... Any use of trade, product, or firm names is for descriptive purposes only and does not imply endorsement by [my employer]."

That being said, I would like it to be officially known that I think AGU's draconian library e-journal pricing and use policies retchedly stink.

Most Sincerely,

Phil Stoffer, San Jose, CA

Dear Geoscience Information Society:

Admittedly I don't much like the "new" GIS logo. It is a nondenominational graphic that could just as easily belong to Rainbow Cleaners or the Concentric Circle Theatre. But the puzzling thing to me is why time was wasted on such a matter when the real (more important) issue of the organization's name continues to be ignored.

By common usage by both the public and the media, GIS means geographic information systems. It ain't democracy when 200 souls outvote the entire rest of the planet. Either the group's name or its acronym should be changed.

GSIS	Geoscience Information Society
G-INFO	Geoscience Information Society
IGIS	International Geoscience Information Society
GIA	Geoscience Information Association
GIPI	Geoscience Information Providers International
OGIP	Organization of Geoscience Information Professionals
IAGIP	International Association of Geoscience Information Professionals

Anything but GIS! Why contribute to confusion when clarification is easily achieved!

You can blame this tirade on my having seen the new GSA logo...a whimpy graphic that might just as well be selling fat-free yogurt as a reputable journal. The old seal had nobility and exuded scholarly tradition, inspiring trust. The new logo makes me think that I can soon expect to see ads for Lay's Potato Chips and hunking big SUVs in the journal any day now.

Geo-Sincerely,

Lee Walkling

DNR, Division of Geology and Earth Resources Library

GSA has a new logo and its Web site has been redesigned. See those at www.geosociety.org

Michael Noga notes that he'll miss the belt buckle. Some GIS members have noticed the striking similarity of the new GSA logo to the new GIS logo...

GIS PUBLICATIONS LIST

Proceedings of the Annual GIS Meetings (ISSN 0072-1409) \$45.00 each; standing orders are \$45.00/year. (Proceedings volumes 1 through 25 are out of print and available from: Out-of-print Books on Demand, University Micro-films, Inc., 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.)

--v. 31, 2000 *Electronic Information Summit: New Developments and their Impacts*, ed. by Sharon N. Tahirkheli. (ISBN 0-934485-33-X)

--v. 30, 2000, *Communication Divides: Perspectives on Supporting Information Bridges in the Geosciences*, ed. by Lois Heiser, (ISBN 0-934485-32-1)

--v. 29, 1999 *Accreting the Continent's Collections*, ed. by C. R. M. Derksen and C. J. Manson, (ISBN 0-934485-31-3)

--v. 28, 1998 *The Costs and Values of Geoscience Information*, ed. by C. J. Manson. (ISBN 0-934485-29-1)

--v. 27, 1997 *Expanding Boundaries: Geoscience Information for Earth System Science*, ed. by B. J. DeFelice. (ISBN 0-934485-23-2)

--v. 26, 1996 *Crossing the Bridge to the Future: Managing Geoscience Information in the Next Decade*, ed. by N. L. Blair. (ISBN 0-934485-26-7)

Proceedings of the International Geoscience Information Conferences

6th, 1998 *Science Editing and Information Management*,

Proceedings of the Second International AESE/CBE/ EASE Joint Meeting, Sixth International Conference on Geoscience Information, and Thirty-second Annual Meeting, Association of Earth Science Editors, ed. by Connie J. Manson. (ISBN 0-934485-30-5) \$ 25.00

5th, 1994 *Geoinfo V, Proceedings of the 5th International Conference on Geoscience Information*, ed. by Jiri Hruska. (ISBN 0-934485-27-5) \$ 45.00 (2 vols.)

Directory of Geoscience Libraries, North America. 5th Edition, 1997. (ISBN 0-934485-25-9) Paper. \$ 35.00

GIS Newsletter (ISSN 0046-5801) published bimonthly; calendar year subscriptions only. United States and Canada \$ 40.00; other countries (via airmail) \$ 45.00

Mailing labels: Geoscience Information Society member mailing labels: Single use labels \$ 100.00.

Send orders to:

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