Wake County’s Ideas from URISA 2003

Charles Friddle, GIS Director for Wake County, North Carolina, attended the URISA Conference this year in Atlanta. He came away from the conference with a long list of ideas for improving his department. From things learned during educational sessions, discussions with fellow attendees, and interactions with exhibitors, it certainly seems that Charles came back to his office with a lot of good ideas:

- Crime mapping – need to get involved in this
- Need to investigate ways to get GIS information into the field (mobile GIS on PCs, books, etc.)
- Formatting a map to include 3 or 4 different views of the information (data, 3D, aerial, vectors, etc.)
- I need to be more aware of what our user departments are doing on a monthly basis. Do I review their monthly reports, meet with them periodically, etc.?
- Visualization of what we are already doing is becoming more important
- Need to publish more PDFs and Acrobat files on the web
- Need to link videos or digital photographs of County construction projects with maps
- How can we support decision to open emergency shelters?
- How is Planning generating population estimates and how can we query, analyze, and compare it to other projects?
- Need standards for data format from people collecting data in the field and bringing it back to us
- Ask municipalities about the availability of digital water and sewer lines
- Could we get involved in city limit line mapping with the towns on the front end rather than waiting until its recorded?
- Should the Customer Service Team be assigned to various department without GIS staff or capabilities in order to produce maps and datasets for them rather than providing customer services to public?
- Discuss taking over some addressing functions with municipalities.
- Get someone to digitize USGS real-time stream monitoring sites and develop means to compare existing depth and flow rates with benchmarks during an emergency
- Communicate more with surrounding counties.
- New Mission – “Communicating Better” (work with other agencies, that use GIS maps who go before the BOC)
- Use of Photoshop to clean up dirty maps (Address Overlays)?
- How difficult is it to create another web interface (internally for county staff) to show things as county facilities, etc.?
- Need to get staff to research how to approach digital ortho project:
  - RFP vs RFQ
  - Total refight vs selected updating
  - Digital photography
  - Color vs black/white
  - Use of multispectral data from photography
- Is there a need for publicly-used touch screens?
- Should we start doc-linking scanned plats and/or deeds to new parcels?
- Should we link proposed highway projects?

If Charles and his staff can bring any of these ideas to reality, it would more than justify his attendance at the conference. Preparations have already begun for next year’s conference, November 6-10, 2004 in Reno, Nevada. Make plans to attend! The Call for Presentations will be available in December.
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About URISA

The Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA) is the premier professional association for those involved in improving our urban and regional environments through the effective use of information technology. Professionals in planning, economic development, information systems, emergency services, natural resources, public works, transportation, and other departments within state and local government have depended on URISA for professional development and educational needs since 1963. Through its international, national and local chapter operations, URISA serves nearly 8,000 professionals.

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Article submissions, calendar items and industry news should be sent to the attention of Wendy Francis.
URISA 2003 Review

We hope you were able to join us in Atlanta for URISA's 41st Annual Conference. From the Pre-Conference Workshops to the Closing Plenary Session,...from the Opening Reception in the Exhibit Hall to a fun and relaxing evening at Barley’s Billiards, the URISA conference had something for everyone. Attendees left the conference energized, focused, and ready to apply what they learned. (Attendees also earned .6 GISCI Education Points for attending a workshop and the URISA 2003 Conference.)

The Opening Session featured URISA President Martha Lombard rolling in on a Segway on loan from the Atlanta Regional Commission and the presentation of a number of URISA Awards, including the Exemplary Systems in Government Awards:

- **ESIG™ Winner—Enterprise Systems:** Louisville and Jefferson County Information Consortium (LOJIC)
  Submitted by: Bruce R. Seigle, Chief Information Officer, Metropolitan Sewer District, Louisville, KY
- **Enterprise System Honorable Mention:** Chatham-Kent, Ontario, Canada - Chatham-Kent Online
  Submitted by: Helen McLaren, Manager of Information Technology Services, Municipality of Chatham-Kent, Ontario
- **Enterprise System Honorable Mention:** Department of the Army - The Intelligent Road/Rail Information Server (IRRIS)
  Submitted by: Paul W. Alred, Chief, Highway Engineering, Department of the Army, Newport News, VA
- **ESIG™ Winner—Single Process Systems:** Tallahassee-Leon County, FL - Topographic Partnering Group/LiDAR Project
  Submitted by: Lee Hartsfield, GIS Coordinator, Tallahassee-Leon County GIS
- **Single Process Systems Honorable Mention:** City of Elkhart, IN - InPlant - Interactive Plant
  Submitted by: Arthur Umble, PhD PE, Manager of Water and Wastewater Operations, City of Elkhart, IN

The **Horwood Paper Critique Award** is a prize given annually to authors of papers submitted for the Proceedings that represent the best critical analysis of an urban or regional information system design, implementation or application; technology; policy or issue; or contextual environment. The 2003 Horwood Critique Prize was awarded to Sanjiv Gandhi and Mark Hoover, both with the Technology Management Bureau for the City of Orlando, Florida for their paper entitled “Business Process Reengineering through the Document Management System at the City of Orlando”. This paper describes the design and implementation of an enterprise-wide document management system. The goal of the system is to archive, search, retrieve, view, edit and efficiently manage a large number of documents from a variety of departments. The paper reviews the project’s impacts of the project on reengineering various business processes, and also outlines the challenges in implementation.

The student paper prize was awarded to Juna Goda Papajorgji, a Ph.D. Student at the University of Florida for her paper entitled “A GIS Decision Model for Detecting Substandard Housing in Alachua County, Florida.” This paper describes a GIS computerized method and decision model developed to identify and inventory substandard residences and identify areas of structural deterioration. The method was developed to automate the inventory process using property tax records.

Martha Lombard also presented a number of awards to recognize leadership and service among the membership.

**Shoreh Elhami**, GIS Director for the Delaware County (OH) Auditor’s Office, received the **Leadership Award**, recognizing Shoreh’s numerous contributions to the organization over the years. She is currently the Chair of both the Chapter Relations and the ESIG Award Committees. In addition, she has single-handedly developed the concept and plan for GeoCorps, a volunteer-based GIS group with the goal of providing short-term GIS expertise to less developed countries and communities around the world.

**URISA’s Certification Committee**, led by Bill Huxhold, has been working tirelessly for years to develop the GIS Certification Program, and was honored with the **URISA Service Award**. Because of their dedication, a rigorous and fair program will recognize individuals who use GIS skills in performing their job responsibilities. The designation, “GISP”, (GIS Professional) will be awarded to those individuals who meet the qualifications of the program. URISA, and the entire GIS community, owe a huge debt of gratitude to the entire committee, the core of which includes:
- William Huxhold, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, Chair
- Al Butler, MilePost Zero
- Will Craig, University of Minnesota
- David Dibiase, Penn State University
- Josh Greenfeld, New Jersey Institute of Technology

continued on page 4
• Ann Johnson, ESRI
• Karen Kemp, University of Redlands
• Nancy Obermeyer, Indiana State University
• Joe Sewash, State of Tennessee
• Rebecca Somers, Somers-St Claire
• Bruce Taylor, Clayton County (GA) Water Authority
• Geney Terry, El Dorado County, CA
• Barry Waite, City of Carson, CA
• Lynda Wayne, GeoMaxim
• Suzanne Wechsler, Cal State-Long Beach
• Lyna Wiggins, Rutgers University

Many others have participated in the development of the program over the years and their contributions are not unnoticed. Special recognition must also be made to the participants in the Pilot Program and the Georgia URISA Chapter, especially Mark Patterson, Pam Cote, and Art Kalinski. The patience, enthusiasm, and responsiveness of these individuals was exemplary.

The winner of the 2003 Outstanding Chapter Award is the well-deserving Ontario URISA Chapter. The chapter offers several successful and well-attended programs during the year and provides for highly professional, informative, and at the same time, fun events. The chapter’s web site (www.urisaoc.on.ca) is a great source of information and is regularly updated. The chapter’s active and cooperative work with GeoSmart, a funding program whose goal is to help smaller municipalities obtain cash and partnerships to initiate their GIS program, is commendable.

Michele Meng, Membership Manager for URISA, received the Special Service Award, which is presented to members or staff who have made special contributions to URISA.

Keynote Address
URISA was honored to welcome Michael J. Shiffer, PhD, Vice President, Planning & Development for the Chicago Transit Authority (on leave from the University of Illinois), as this year’s keynote speaker. He addressed the conference on the topic of Reshaping Mass Transit with Technology.

Awarding of GIS Professional Certification
The exciting culmination of years of committee work resulted in the presentation of the inaugural group of Certified GIS Professionals. Each GISP was presented with a certificate and officially signed the GISCI Code of Ethics. There will be much more information about GIS Certification coming to URISA members soon. In the meantime, please visit www.gisci.org.

Education
The educational sessions began after the Opening Ceremony and they were well-attended, varied, and important. Program tracks ranged from Enterprise Operations to Asset Management to Public Health to recognize the diverse backgrounds of URISA members.

Networking
Opportunities to meet and network
It has amazed me for years how one can leave a URISA Annual Conference both exhausted and energized. This year the feeling is exceptional for my almost 20 years of conferences. The conference is always greater than the sum of its parts.

The difference this year is the overwhelming sense that the new demands on government and technology are forcing a total reevaluation of roles and responsibilities in government and industry. URISA’s fundamental nature—interdisciplinary, inter-governmental, cross industry, open to all ideas—is making us the leader in a post-9/11 world where cooperation and interdisciplinary solutions must be identified and developed soon. URISA’s history of neutrality in promoting vigorous and inclusive debate is essential to our new enhanced role. Need may be the mother of invention but it is also the force that breaks down unnecessary barriers to cooperation.

URISA must and will step up to the challenge.

We have to leverage our position to do a better job of improving government’s ability to address our residents’ needs.

We can only do this by focusing URISA’s human and financial resources on developing even greater cooperation and sharing of ideas among our diverse constituency. We have to help build the trust necessary to debate and build compromises to develop viable solutions to issues facing first responders, critical infrastructure, the preservation of security and privacy, and the continuous improvement of the center of all governing issues—information management. Those responsible must have what they need to make critical decisions.

URISA conference attendees and the Board of Directors made significant progress toward this goal during a few days in Atlanta.

From the opening keynote address by Michael Shiffer, Vice-President of Planning and Development for the Chicago Transit Authority, to the exciting presentation of Mike Domaratz of USGS, co-Chair of the FGDC Homeland Security Working Group, the recurring theme was cooperation.

There were several sessions that discussed how we try to manage growth through land use laws and the need for accurate data on where we live and work. Public Health is a growing topic at URISA. There clearly needs to be a way to link health data to the management information systems used by local government. GIS is the only logical link.

Spatial information remains a major topic at URISA, but it is not GIS for its own sake, it is GIS as essential information infrastructure.

The URISA Board of Directors is taking very seriously the task of responding to the emerging social need for even greater cooperation. We are developing a major initiative to use to greatest effect URISA’s 40 years of knowledge and experience in urban and regional information systems. We are unique in our ability to tie GIS to the governing information systems on which decision makers rely.

We have already started shaping the 2004 Annual Conference in Reno, Nevada to serve as a national and international forum for information partnerships. We will have a program and events that do not just talk about cooperation, but start to build real functional networks that build on the efforts of the many groups that have been laying the foundation for nearly a decade.

One of the Board’s efforts will be taking the lead on a Summit of associations and institutions that deal with spatial information and try to set an agenda that compounds the efforts of the many to speed the application of technology to needs of local, state/provincial, and national government needs.

URISA is also exploring new partnership initiatives with individual organizations to see if we can provide greater access to knowledge and networks for our membership. This may come in the form of regional seminars, specialty conferences, or workshops and focused sessions at regularly scheduled conferences.

The Board is most impressed by the great start to our independent offspring, the GIS Certification Institute. We have successfully created a nationally recognized professional organization that can document a person’s education, training, and experience in GIS and certify that individuals are GIS professionals with a code of ethics. With the official kickoff in January 2004, we expect the initials “GISP” will become an essential part of every job description in the GIS realm.

URISA needs your participation in at least one of our initiatives. The strength and value of URISA’s response depends on your participation. The discussions and debates must be held at all levels and every place. Chapters need to seek ways to cooperate with other associations at the local level. States/Provinces need to have joint activities that are interdisciplinary. Professionals need to respond when their opinions are requested and when they can make a difference whether they are requested or not. URISA’s 40 years is living proof that every drop is essential to building a continuous stream of knowledge.
ESRI Ad
Pick up from September
 RESOURCE21
(www.resource21.com)
is an imagery provider and processing company that serves the needs of both public and private sectors. RESOURCE21 is a Mississippi-based limited liability company that was formed in 1995 by four partner companies: Boeing Commercial Information and Communication Company, Farmland Industries, Inc., BAE SYSTEMS Mission Solutions Inc., and RESOURCE21 Corporation.

RESOURC21 is located in Denver, Colorado and has site offices at the Stennis Space Center in Mississippi, and Washington DC. RESOURCE21 specializes in expert applications of state-of-the-art image processing and automated image analysis tools and processes. We provide comprehensive supervised or unsupervised image classification services, including the following:

- Image analysis of multi spectral data, including land-use classification, change detection, and impervious/pervious surface products
- Feature maps, such as vegetation
- Agricultural assessments of irrigation, disease spread, and countermeasure effectivity
- Forest inventories, such as fuel assessment
- Fusing of various image data

RESOURCE21 also specializes in the most advanced applications of feature extraction from satellite images and airborne digital sensors, including detection of targeted features, extraction of these features, and conversion of data into vector information, such as road networks. The principal product lines include the following:

- Panchromatic image sharpening
- Precise image georeferencing

- Feature extraction, such as roads and impervious areas
- LU/LC and impervious/pervious mapping

RESOURCE21 serves the agriculture industry, earth sciences community, commodities trading and logistics groups, insurance companies, national security groups, U.S. civil and scientific communities, and municipalities.

More than $100 million have been invested in market, product, and system research and development, resulting in a high degree of confidence in product value for RESOURCE21 customers.

The CivCom division is a map production and data maintenance business that service the growing needs of the $1 billion+ civil and government market for geospatial database currency. As a value-added producer of urban and land use information products, our products answer the “what and where” questions by identifying changes in important resources and infrastructure at significantly less cost and greater accuracy than other solutions. These capabilities are particularly timely, as our national-level data sets are aging, the currency needs of Homeland Security applications are emerging, and inexpensive methods to maintain the currency of our state and national-level data are becoming a priority.

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The Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) announced the award of the 2003 Cooperative Agreements Program (CAP). Approximately $1,076,000 has been awarded to 51 organizations in 29 states. This year’s awards provide funding for metadata implementation, training and outreach; clearinghouse integration with OpenGIS Services; and Canadian/US Spatial Data Development. The goal of the CAP is to encourage resource-sharing projects through the use of technology, networking and more efficient inter-organizational coordination.

The list of 2003 awardees is posted on the FGDC website at [www.fgdc.gov](http://www.fgdc.gov).

Geospatial Training and Consulting, Inc., a Business Member of URISA, announces the creation of a new instructor led course. “Topology in the Geodatabase” is a two day instructor led course available for clients on-site or open enrollment at various locations across the country. Please see the company website for class schedules and course details - [http://www.gtgis.com](http://www.gtgis.com).

PCI Geomatics is pleased to announce a significant investment in the future of geomatics. Bryon Wilfert, Canadian Member of Parliament and Secretary to the Minister of Finance, on behalf of Allan Rock, Minister of Industry, announced a $5,563,240 investment to support innovative research and development by PCI Geomatics. With this investment, PCI Geomatics will develop GeoCapacity Centres, advanced technology software applications that merge large volumes of satellite imagery and mapping data to create digital maps in near real time.

Colorado CustomWare, Inc. (CCI), a leading developer of software solutions designed exclusively for property appraisal and assessment operations, today announced the availability of RealWare Market & SPSS. The new software module, which runs on the company’s flagship RealWare platform, allows appraisal and assessment professionals to seamlessly leverage the power of industry standard SPSS predictive software to gain a better understanding of trends and streamline the process to ultimately save time and money.

The City of Indianapolis has launched a new economic development online portal which can be viewed at [http://www.indy.gov/ed](http://www.indy.gov/ed). The web-based GIS was developed by GIS Planning Inc. using ZoomProspector and ArcIMS.

Intergraph Mapping and Geospatial Solutions and the intergraph GeoSpatial Users Community (IGUC) have announced an important session themed “Open. Solutions. Exchange...” during GeoSpatial World 2004 that will address open technology and standards, demonstrate proven industry solutions and provide a platform for the exchange of ideas and expertise with users from around the world.

**People News**

**Ivan B. DeLoatch** has been selected as the Staff Director of the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC). As Staff Director, Mr. DeLoatch will provide leadership and management for FGDC operations and activities. The FGDC is a 19 member federal interagency committee that is developing the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) in cooperation with organizations from State, local and tribal governments, the academic community, and the private sector. The FGDC Secretariat is organizationally located within the Geographic Information Office of the U.S. Geological Survey. Mr. DeLoatch has over 23 years of environmental program, technical, and policy experience in the Federal, State, and private sectors. For the past year, he has served as the Acting Staff Director of the FGDC and has advanced the Committee’s ongoing efforts in pursuing the vision to build an effective and efficient NSDI.

DigitalGlobe announced Stephen Jennings has been named vice president of Marketing.

LizardTech® Inc announced the appointment of Brian Soliday as vice president of geospatial sales for the Americas. Soliday brings to LizardTech more than 18 years of leadership in the geospatial industry including vice president of sales and marketing at both Earth Search Sciences and RMSI.

Martin Morgan, chairman of Sanborn, announced the appointment of John Copple as chief executive officer for the company, effective immediately. He also announced that the company, formerly based in Pelham, New York, relocated its headquarters to Colorado Springs this month. Mr. Copple will be based in the Colorado office.

Bob Williams has returned to Sanborn to run the company’s St. Louis, Missouri, office. Williams is now senior vice president and general manager of Sanborn’s St. Louis office.

Ron Bisio has been hired as the America’s Marketing Manager for Trimble’s Mapping and GIS Division in Westminster, Colorado.

**RMSI** announced that Tripti Lochan has been appointed as Associate Vice President-Business Development, USA and is based at the company’s Newark office. Tripti is responsible for sales and business development for the Software and GIS lines of the company’s business in the North American region.

**Project Awards**

IntermapTechnologies Corporation today announced today the launch of NEXTMap USA, a program to remap the entire continental United States. NEXTMap USA includes the creation of terrain elevation and imagery data accurate to 1-meter or better covering nearly 7.9 million square km (4.9m square miles) of the United States.

NovaLIS Technologies has announced that Roanoke County, Virginia will implement its suite of land records products including Assessment Office TM, Land Development OfficeTM, Parcel EditorTM, and GATE TM.

Leica Geosystems GIS & Mapping, LLC is pleased to announce that the Larin Center (Moscow, Russia) purchased two units of the Leica ADS50 Airborne Digital Sensor for VISKHAGI, Russia’s cadastre research institute. The ADS50s will be used for the Land Registration Implementation Support (LARIS) project, mainly to obtain digital imagery of cities and rural areas and for orthophoto map production.

Transit New Zealand, already recognised for innovation in safe and efficient highway management for New Zealand state highways, is implementing a national call centre system to provide enhanced access to information on the road network. Exor Corporation has been selected to develop a Traffic and Road Information Database (TRID) to support the logging and reporting of road events and conditions using modules from the Exor road asset management suite of products.

Colorado CustomWare, Inc. (CCI) announced the successful implementation of its RealWare software in Pierce County, Washington. Pierce County is the second largest county in Washington, and will annually process more than 325,000 property accounts using RealWare.

Merrick & Company is pleased to announce a mapping contract for the City of South Lake Tahoe, California. Merrick captured LIDAR and color aerial photography to generate 1” contours, planimetric features, and 6-inch color orthophotography. The map data will be accurate to +/- 4-inches. The data will be delivered as image files, .LAS (LIDAR DSM binary format) files, and AutoCAD® .DWG files on DVDs.

Manatron, Inc. announced it has been selected to supply a comprehensive Government Revenue Management (GRM) system to Gwinnett County, Georgia.

Send announcements to wfrancis@urisa.org
Open Data Consortium Project Announces a Model Data Distribution Policy

The Open Data Consortium, a public-private partnership project funded by the USGS and private companies, has developed an historic model data distribution policy for guiding local government dissemination of public-record geodata.

“The data distribution policy developed by the Open Data Consortium will enable local governments to move responsively in handling public requests for spatial data, and will reduce barriers to inter-agency data sharing, thereby advancing the NSDI vision for a National Map, and a Geospatial One-Stop portal to map data,” said Kathy Covert, Associate Strategist for the Federal Geographic Data Committee Secretariat.

This policy model was developed through a series of collaborative dialogues with stakeholders representing diverse interests from city and county governments, state and Federal agencies, as well as private sector data service providers, universities and professional associations. A wide variety of alternatives were analyzed and considered before arriving at the recommendations in the model policy.

The policy is intended to serve as a guideline for local governments that need to formulate a data distribution policy, or make their current policy more effective. University of Illinois Professor Zorica Nedovic-Budic characterized the model policy as “comprehensive and balanced.” It is a plea for more openness, while dealing with the fact that many governmental data producers want to retain proprietary and financial control over their product (the public’s data).

67 people worked together, through the Open Data Consortium project, over a six month period, contributing their ideas and opinions in 24 telephone conferences, to forge a consensus on the model policy. An additional 50 people were involved in reviewing and commenting on interim products and final document.

The model policy addresses the major legal and commercial issues concerning public data distribution, such as, copyright, licensing, liability, security restrictions, privacy considerations, metadata maintenance, data recipients and distribution methods, as well as the controversial issue of data sales. “This has been a consensus-building success sustained by dedicated participants actively listening to each other,” said Bruce Joffe, Principal of GIS Consultants and organizer of the ODC project.

The model policy is available at the ODC website, www.OpenDataConsortium.org, along with documentation of the collaborative work process, additional data studies, data policy documents used by other agencies, and links to useful geodata information.

“The key to resolving the long-standing controversy of data sales by local government was our discovery of many superior ways to support GIS operations,” Joffe offered. These methods came from the ODC participants’ own experience and are presented in a report entitled, “10 Ways to Support GIS Without Selling Data,” also available on the ODC website. While the model policy acknowledges that selling data is counter-productive to public agency interests in distributing their geographic data, it does not prohibit such sales. Instead, it offers a method for selling data that is less of an impediment to public access than many current policies, to those agencies that still believe they need to sell their geodata.

Concluding the USGS contract with the GeoData Alliance (www.GeoAll.net) for the initial, policy-formulation phase, Joffe expressed his pleasure at working with, and learning from, the ODC participants. “Through cooperative communication, we were able to learn not only how current data policies came into being, but what were the underlying reasons.” As those root causes are addressed, there will be fewer impediments to accessing local geodata.

Phase II of the project will formulate recommendations for changing government accounting practices in order to allocate some of the benefits from using geodata back to GIS operations departments. The project will also be deeply engaged in educating the wider GIS Community about the current findings and model policy recommendations. Phase II will commence as soon as the ODC project receives adequate funding from grants, sponsorship, or contracts.

“We expect support from both government and private companies because this is a win-win-win policy recommendation,” Joffe added optimistically, “it serves local government, private data service providers, and most importantly, the general public.”

Helpful suggestions can be sent to GIS.Consultants@joffes.com or Bruce@OpenDataConsortium.org.

For further information, please contact:
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Oakland, CA  94612
510-238-9771

Now Available: Get your copy of the URISA 2003 IT/GIS Salary Survey! Call (847) 824-6300 or order online at www.urisa.org.
Street Smart Conference: Focused and Valuable

By Louise Wennberg, Chester County, PA, Conference Co-Chair

The Fifth Annual URISA GIS in Addressing Conference was held in Providence, Rhode Island, August 17-20, 2003.

One hundred and seventy five people representing municipalities, PSAPs, and various agencies from the US and Canada were in attendance. The pre-conference workshops included an update to the extremely popular URISA Addressing and IS/GIS Implementation workshop, and a NENA sponsored GIS and the PSAP workshop. This year the conference was expanded to include a third (half-day) which afforded attendees the opportunity to tour various sites in the region where GIS is a key component. Visits were made to the State 9-1-1 Center, the RI DOT, and the Hurricane Barrier Reef Project. Remarks overheard upon the return was that people wished they could have visited all three of these informative sites. In addition to the tours, conference attendees took advantage of the extra day to sight see or just hang out in the beautiful city of Providence.

This year, the conference was honored to have the Mayor of Providence, David Cicilline, deliver the opening and welcoming remarks. We were also fortunate to have two keynote speakers; Barbara Quinn from Cincinnati Area GIS (CAGIS) gave an empowering synopsis of the integrated GIS use in Cincinnati, and Raymond LaBelle from the RI 9-1-1 Center shared his pride in being the first state to be entirely 9-1-1 Phase II compliant. The United States Postal Service led a session which highlighted their commitment to exact, accurate addressing and answered many questions from the participants. The US Census Bureau continued their strong support of this Conference with three varied and well-prepared presentations. Also well received was a session presented by Verizon’s technical staff, who presented the specifics of 9-1-1 Phase I and Phase II compliance. They also offered a surprising statistic that since the explosion of cell phone usage, about 50% of the wireless calls from GPS enabled phones produce inaccurate location information. Clearly there is a lot work to do in that area and conferences such as this help to foster a dialog.

Attendees again remarked that on top of the solid program, the ability to network with their colleagues was what made their participation worthwhile. The wide array of attendees and issues from disparate areas of the country created an environment where it was easy to find answers to even the most specific of questions. The Program Committee is already looking forward to next year’s Conference in St. Louis where attendance and enthusiasm is expected to be high. We hope to see you there! The Call for Presentations is available now at www.urisa.org!

URISA ’03 (continued from page 4)

with peers were abundant. From the Opening Reception to the roundtable luncheon to the Tuesday Night Social Event at Barley’s Billiards…some valuable professional connections were made.

Visit www.urisa.org for many more pictures!

Don’t forget to plan ahead...URISA 2004 in Reno, Nevada: November 6-10, 2004!

URISA News — Volume 15, Access and Participatory Approaches

Be sure to visit the URISA website (www.urisa.org) to read through the articles in the latest online version of the URISA Journal. The 2nd volume of the special issue set is only available online. Following is the Table of Contents from this issue of important articles:

- Introduction to the Second Special Issue on Access and Participatory Approaches in Using Geographic Information
- Harlan J. Onsrud and Max Craglia, Co-Editors
- Workshop on Access to Geographic Information and Participatory Approaches in Using Geographic Information
- Max Craglia and Harlan Onsrud
- Public Participation GIS and Local Political Context: Propositions and Research Directions
- Rina Ghose and Sarah Elwood
- The Issue of Access: An Assessment Guide for Evaluating Public Participation Geographic Information Science Case Studies
- Melinda Laituri
- Reflections on PPGIS: A View from the Trenches
- Meg Merrick
- Geographic Information and Public Participation: Research Proposal from a French Perspective
- Stéphane Roche
- Digital Participation and Access to Geographic Information: A Case Study of Local Government in the United Kingdom
- Robin S. Smith and Massimo Craglia
- The Intersection of Data Access And Public Participation: Impacting GIS Users’ Success?
- David L. Tulloch and Tamara Shapiro
- Community-integrated GIS for Land Reform in South Africa
- Daniel Weiner and Trevor M. Harris
- A Framework for the Use of Geographic Information in Participatory Community Planning and Development
- Robert D. Rugg

Tuesday Night Social Event at Barley’s Billiards
What’s In a Name?
By Kim McDonough, Nashville Metropolitan Planning Commission, URISA Board Member

So, what is it with this name business? Is a name really all that important? If you look close enough, it seems very important. I have the good fortune to have one of those last names that really gives people trouble when they first try to pronounce it. I have gotten used to that to a large degree. When I am in a restaurant and hear McDougle, McDougal or Mac … Mac … Mac, I quickly respond as if the host or hostess had pronounced it flawlessly. To make things even more interesting, I have a first name that gives people pause as well. It actually is quite easy to pronounce, they are never quite sure who it is supposed to go with.

If I give someone my full first name, instead of the nickname I usually use, the eyebrows really get busy. But my name is important to me. I am careful to make sure people spell and pronounce it correctly if I am going to be dealing with them on an ongoing basis. There is also a history to my name. There is a bit of a story behind each part of it. If names were not so important, we would not agonize so much over what we want to name our children. (This is the third child so we will just call him “C”.)

Names are part of who we are.

That is one reason why it is important to me to be able to place “GISP” after my name sometime next year. For years, I have struggled to explain to people exactly what I do for a living. I have used terms such Computer Cartography or Mapping. But really, the mapping is just one component of what we are now calling the profession of GIS. I have immersed myself in a career that has had no clear definition of what it is. It will mean a great deal to me to be able to say that I belong to a group of people that a common standard of experience, education and involvement. Will it make a difference in my career? That is hard to say at this point. To a certain extent, it will depend on what we all make of it. But, for a profession that makes much of data standards, you would think professional standards would also be important. Who else is to say what a GIS professional is? If we leave the defining of our profession to every human resources department then the definition of a GIS professional will have literally thousands of iterations. GISP does not guarantee that someone is good at GIS, but it does guarantee that they meet a standard of qualifications and more importantly, have agreed adhere to a Code of Ethics. That code is probably the single most important part of certification. The Code of Ethics for GIS Professionals gives us a soul. The argument as to whether GIS is a profession or just a tool is over. We are a profession. What we make of the designation “GISP” is up to us who will place it after our given name. But remember that “GISP” is not a name that will be given to us, but one we have earned. It will become part of who we are. Let’s make sure we live up to it.

Plan to be Certified!
GIS Professional Certification will be available to URISA members and the greater GIS community beginning in January, 2004. Be sure to visit www.gisci.org to prepare!

Welcome New URISA Members
Paul Adams, Applied Technology Group
Kevin Adderly, GMB Engineers & Planners Inc
Parag Agrawal, Ohio State University
Laurie Allen, University of Pennsylvania
Carl Anderson, Fulton County, GA
Kent Asher, Rockdale County, GA
David Bailey, Town of Mashpee, MA
Ranu Basu, York University
Marc Belai, Quebec Association of Municipal Geomatics
Kirby Benz, City of Beloit, WI
Andrew Berntas, McHenry County, IL
Nina Bhattach, Fleming College
Jerome Bondal, Keck & Wood Inc
Ghislain Boullion, Genivar
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