



## URISA Members Celebrate GIS Day — November 19, 2003

The British Virgin Islands held their second GIS Day at the Fishlock Hall, Joseph R. O'Neal Botanical Gardens in the heart of Road Town, Tortola, on the 30th October, 2003. In the run up to GIS Day, 20 schools across 4 islands were visited to give a presentation on GIS and test the 10-year-old children about their geography. The winners from each school were gathered together for GIS Day to take part in a Geo-Quiz, and the four finalists were given a host of prizes.

Winner Amal Taylor from BVI 7th Day Adventist School got 14 points in the final round, and won an interactive globe along with other prizes and a trophy. Mardel Maduro from Alexandrina Maduro Primary came in second, Jamal Freeman from Belle Vue Primary came in third, and Kadian Smith of Isabella Morris Primary was the fourth finalist. As well as the final quiz, awards were given to Amal Taylor who got the most points in the written quiz (31/35) and Jamal Freeman who got full marks (18) for naming many of the islands of the BVI from a blank map.

After the quiz and the prize-giving ceremony, the Chief Physical Planner, Mr. Louis Potter, who introduced GIS to the territory, welcomed the guests. Then His Excellency, the Governor, Mr. Thomas Macan made a speech of the international importance of GIS. This was followed by The Acting Chief Minister and Minister of Natural Resources and Labour, Mr. Alvin Christopher who commented on the national significance of GIS in government. Mr. Joseph Smith-Abbot, Director of the BVI National Parks Trust, talked of the technology of GIS and how it is used, and Mr. Alan Mills, National GIS Coordinator, linked the educational value of the quiz to the need to build GIS capacity in government to give it better decision-making tools and raise public awareness of the importance of geography and their environment.

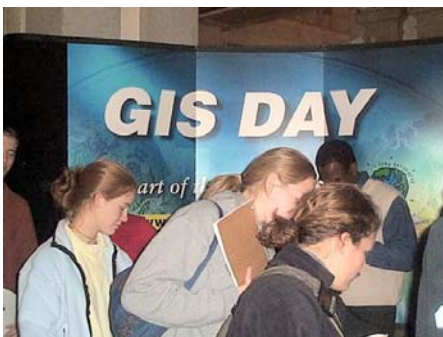
All the children had a great day learning about geography, especially their own, and the NGIS promised the schools a CD atlas of the BVI to be completed early next year.

—Alan Mills, NGIS Coordinator

The URL, below, is a link to a web page with a few pictures of the event that my company co-hosted. It was held at the Lehigh County Government Center in Allentown, PA. Participants were given a presentation with demonstrations, then they had the opportunity to “Test-drive” GIS by using an ArcReader Map that the County put together highlighting the available data.

<http://www.gtcgis.com/gisday2003.html>

— Ken Juengling



The Midwest Gateway Chapter of URISA participated in the City of St Louis GIS Day.



— Hilary Perkins, URISA Board Member, Jacobs Civil, Inc.

Wanted to let you know that I just updated our web site and it now reflects what we did today (on GIS Day). 330 kids in 7 hours, I call that a challenge! It was lots of fun though. Here's our URL:

<http://www.dalisproject.org/news.htm>

—Shoreh Elhami, Delaware County

The City of Modesto held several events throughout the day in its participation of the International GIS Day event. Our activities included a map gallery which was open to the public throughout the day.

The map gallery was held in the lobby area of our City Hall located in Modesto, CA at 1010 10<sup>th</sup> Street. This provided the general public with an opportunity to view maps at their leisure. Staff were on hand to answer any questions that the public may have had. We also held a mapping contest in which our own staff and several dozen school children participated in. The map entries were categorized into a student and adult category. Maps were voted on by the general public and our own City staff.

During our morning session City staff traveled to a Salida Middle School where they made a presentation to a sixth grade class. The presentation was designed to introduce students to GIS technology - what it is and how it is used by the City of Modesto. An emphasis was placed on the underlying fact that geography is important in our everyday lives. The students were also given an opportunity to work hands on with GIS by visiting our GIS-enabled public web site at [www.modestogov.com/gis](http://www.modestogov.com/gis).

In the afternoon, staff concentrated on our own employees by providing an overview of the current GIS system capabilities as well as a high-level overview of where we are headed with GIS in the near future. We also held two separate training classes teaching staff how to use our internal GIS-enabled web site and our desktop GIS software package.

Lastly, the City also offered a GIS Day GPS Riddle game which was (is) posted on our website at [www.modestogov.com/itd/gis](http://www.modestogov.com/itd/gis). The GPS Riddle game was actually posted on our web site approximately two weeks before GIS Day giving participants the opportunity to solve our GPS Riddle before GIS Day. Similar to the popular GeoCaching game, participants were provided multiple latitude/longitude coordinate pairs throughout our City and asked to identify the general objects located at these coordinates. Successful identification of several of the coordinate pairs also allowed participants to receive extra clues. The objects themselves provided the clues that were to help participants solve the riddle. The GPS Riddle game will remain open to players until December 1, 2003. On December 2, 2003 the City will post the answer to the GPS Riddle on our website.

Overall we felt that our GIS day efforts were a large success. We were able to present GIS technology to our community and specifically to a class of sixth grade students in addition to providing meaningful training to our own City staff on the use of our in-house GIS capabilities.

— Robert H. Beckler, GIS Coordinator

Cabarrus County GIS participated in GIS day at UNC Charlotte. I was also a part of the line webcast described below:

GIS Partnerships in Teaching and Learning  
2003 Interactive Online GIS Conference

For GIS Day 2003, which is November 19<sup>th</sup> the NC Department of Instructions and other groups are focusing on informing educators about GIS. See below for a list of participants. Last year the event was webcast. You may view last year's presentation by going to the following URL: <http://video.dpi.state.nc.us/eforums/archive.htm>. This year's will consist of webcast presentations as well as interactive video using the NC Information highway. This year's current website is under

development. You can access this year's website by going to: <http://www.ncsu.edu/sciilink/gislive>.

— *Cathy Cole, NC URISA President, Cabarrus County*

Hi!

I participated in the one held in New Orleans by Marsayes Fernandez, GIS Manager for the City of New Orleans. The morning session was with the full City Planning Commission staff and I understand it went extremely well. The afternoon session, with the executive staff of city hall attended also by one assessor, was excellent. I attended this one as a partner - the CBNO/MAC, a non-profit organization supported by private donations and grant funds - has provided \$125,000 to the city's GIS effort in order to ensure the property inventory database system was a priority for this year. We have a memorandum of understanding with the Nagin (mayor) Administration. We went 2 ½ hours and would have went more had we had time. Good presentation of city's GIS to date and very pertinent questions.

I, along with the VP of CBNO/MAC and Marsayes, attended the URISA conference in Atlanta. It was excellent, met our expectations and needs to learn GIS better as managers and funders.

— *Sandra M. Gunner, President, Committee For A Better New Orleans/Metropolitan Advisory Committee (CBNO/MAC)*



LandAmerica LERETA celebrated GIS Day for the fourth year in a row. This year we dressed in native costumes from many lands. In the photo we have Mr. World (Jeff Michelsen) in the center.

Proceeding in a clockwise direction we have Sylvia Sanchez wearing a dress from Mexico. Directly behind is Tyler Nguyen wearing a ceremonial costume from Indonesia. To the right we have Linda Schmidt wearing an Irish costume. Next is Luis Navarro dressed as a cowboy and Idelio Villanueva in a native costume from the Philippines. Then Meagan North dressed as a cowgirl. Last is William Joseph Talamaivao from Samoa.

— *Jeff Michelsen*

### City of Hamilton, Ontario CANADA – GIS Day 2003



City Map Contest entries

The City of Hamilton's GIS Services Section held their first annual GIS Day Open House on November 19, 2003. The event was designed for the City's internal staff in order to make them more aware of the tools and resources that are available to them and to demonstrate how some sections are already utilizing GIS in their everyday functions. There were presentations made throughout the day from various GIS users, as well as, live demonstrations of the City's internal GISnet site and external Map.Hamilton website (<http://www.map.hamilton.ca>). We also held a Map Gallery contest with entries from across numerous departments. Intergraph Canada Limited provided Map Gallery contest prizes as well as several other door prizes and giveaways. The attendance was great and many of the comments that we have received have supported our efforts. Overall, a great success and one we plan to surpass next year!



Manager of GIS, Al Little, introduces the first presentation

— *Al Little, GIS Manager*

Visit <http://growth-management.alachua.fl.us/gisday/gisday03.php> for information on Alachua County's GIS Day event.

— *Juna Papajorgji*

### **County of Oxford GIS Day 2003 Event Summary**

Over 125 high school students attended the County of Oxford's GIS Day 2003 Open House. County staff provided demonstrations of how they use GIS technology to provide various community services. This included internet mapping applications created by County staff, specifically the agriculturally-focused *Map Your Farm* and the soon-to-be-launched *Tourism & Recreation* site. Other presentations highlighted an on-line ambulance tracking application, a community directory at COOLoxford.ca (County of Oxford On-Line) and various methods for acquiring geographic data with an engineering focus. The event also included demonstrations of the Geography Network and the Geography Network Canada, showing students where and how they can easily access a large variety of data and maps. Local teachers are enthusiastic about the learning opportunity that Oxford County's GIS Day provides for their students.



— *Shelley Shain, GIS Analyst*

*GIS Live North Carolina: A GIS Day Success Story!*

Governor Michael F. Easley proclaimed November 19, 2003 as 'GIS Day Live' and it was a daylong marathon of GIS partnerships in teaching and learning during a statewide celebration in North Carolina. The 2003 interactive online GIS conference was Webcast live to thousands around the nation and the globe as GIS professionals, educators and students shared real-world applications using the latest GIS technologies.

All that participants needed to connect to the live stream was a computer, the Internet and Real Time Player. Test streams were available to participants several days beforehand to test system connections. School children viewed the Webcast in their classrooms and emailed questions in real time to the presenters, they also won prizes from the GIS gift table. Schools were also able to participate in scheduled two-way videoconference sessions and one school, the Abraham Lincoln High School, participated from as far away Brazil!

Also on hand were school students from the Saturday Program for Academics and Cultural Education (SPACE) that came in to demonstrate how to collect and analyze data in a GIS activity and presented live reports on their progress throughout the day as the Webcast alternated between outdoors and indoor segments.

Later in the day the Webcast switched format to an electronic forum for educators that focused on the basics of GIS for schools. Educators were able to participate in the two-way videoconferencing from selected NC Information Highway sites and this eForum was also Webcast to other educators around the world.



Some highlights of the daylong conference were guest presenters from all areas of GIS sharing a wide array of topics:

- Navigating to Mars: The Mars Exploration Rover Mission (MER) - NASA Jet Propulsion Lab
- Mapping and Predicting the Weather – Chief Meteorologist, WRAL-TV, Raleigh
- Disease Detectives - USDA Veterinary Services
- GIS Partnerships in NC – President, NC Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (NCURISA)
- School Transportation and GIS – NC Department of Public Instruction Transportation and the Institute for Transportation Research and Education
- Crime Analysis – City of Raleigh Police Department
- Redistricting and Campaign Planning – NC General Assembly and the Town of Cary
- Urban Ecosystem Analysis – CITYgreen, American Forests
- NCOneMap – NC Center for Geographic Information and Analysis
- Environmental Justice and GIS – NC Center for Health Statistics
- Careers in GIS – Panel from North Carolina State University

- and many, many more topics

**Please visit the GISliveNC website located at:**  
<http://www.ncsu.edu/scilink/gislive/>

—*Michele D. Shular - NCSU Libraries Fellow*

**To find out more about GIS Day and begin preparing for next year's events, visit [www.gisday.com](http://www.gisday.com).**

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