



Compass Quarterly



Carolina URISA Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 1

Winter 2008

Officer's Address

As I move into the office of President I look back on last year, naturally. 2007 was a big year for Carolina URISA. We saw a lot of changes and identified a lot more to be made in the future. Most important have been the changes aimed at fortifying the chapter's set up and making it more flexible at the same time. Online registration and account management, a new web site, equipment purchases, GIS Day sponsorship program and another great conference were some of the achievements made. CURISA would like to thank all members because it is our strong membership that helps makes these things possible. Please continue to support us and we'll continue to serve you.

Speaking of membership, January marks the time for membership renewals. CURISA depends on our membership renewals to maintain our mailings lists as well as provide operating funds for conferences and other services. Your membership can be renewed online (see section on last page for details) and if you already have an online account with CURISA it will be even easier....if you remember your password! Simply select the 2008 Membership option that applies to you and you're off! While we are dis-

cussing membership, please consider becoming a member of International URISA. They have tons of resources available to members and have been instrumental in championing GIS causes such as certification and important policy and legislative issues.

And that brings me to my next comment...GISP re-certification. The first GISPs were certified in 2003 and with 2008 here, some of us will need to begin thinking about this. If you will need to be re-certified in 2008 or 2009 (every five years) you begin to think about whether or not you have the points. Most likely, most of us gain the required additional training or education by just doing the things you have to do to stay up to date with changing technology. Please review the GISCI website for further information.

Looking forward to 2008,

Kristian Forslin, President



Inside this issue:

Officer's Address	1
Calendar of Events & Chapter Contacts	2
Member Spotlight	3
Featured Articles	5
URISA & GISCI Corner	7
Officer's Meeting Minutes	7
Membership Renewals	8

Chapter News:

- New officers and advisory board members take office.
- CURISA sponsors three GIS day events, plans to sponsor more in 2008
- Membership renewals are due for the 2008 calendar year—see last page for details!
- 2008 conference planning is already under way—mark the date and location: September 7-9 in Concord, NC
- CURISA officers will be in attendance at the SC GIS conference—see Calendar of Events for more info.

Calendar of Events



SCARC 2008 GIS Conference; Greenville, SC; February 4 - 6, 2008 (<http://www.scmapping.net/conference.htm>)

University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (UCGIS) Winter Meeting 2008; Washington, DC; February 7 & 8, 2008 (<http://www.ucgis.org/winter2008>)

North Carolina Geographic Information Coordinating Council (GICC); Raleigh, NC; February 13, 2008 (<http://www.ncgicc.com/Meetings/tabid/138/Default.aspx>)

URISA's Integrating GIS & CAMA Conference; New Orleans, LA; February 25-28, 2008 (http://www.urisa.org/gis_cama)

GeoSpatial Infrastructure Solutions Conference; Seattle, WA; March 9-12, 2008 (<http://www.gita.org/events/annual/31/index.asp>)

ESRI Southeast Regional User Group Conference; Jacksonville, FL; April 14-16, 2008 (<http://www.esri.com/events/serug/index.html>)

American Planning Association 100th National Planning Conference 2008; Las Vegas, NV; April 27-May1, 2008 (<http://www.planning.org/nationalconference>)

North Carolina Geographic Information Coordinating Council (GICC); Raleigh, NC; May 14, 2008 (<http://www.ncgicc.com/Meetings/tabid/138/Default.aspx>)

NC Local Government Information Systems Association (NCLGISA) 2008 Spring Conference; Wilmington, NC; May 28-30, 2008 (<http://www.nclgisa.org/conference.htm>)

Belong to a local users group?

Advertise your next meeting here. Email <mailto:kristianforslin@ncrr.com> with your event.

Chapter Contacts

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Advisory Board

Pat Bresnahan; Richland Co., SC
 Ted Cisine; Cabarrus Co., NC
 Cyndi Hendricks; Brunswick Co., NC
 Jeff Armstrong, WK Dickson, Inc

Advisory Board

Brian Ritter; Pickens Co., SC
 Julia Harrell; NC DENR
 Tim Muhs
 Kelly Laughton, The Davenport Group



Member Spotlight



Each installment of the Compass Quarterly will feature an interview with an active member of Carolina URISA. This quarter CURISA asks one of our advisory board members, Kelly Laughton from The Davenport Group, a few questions...

Please tell the readers a little about your career.

I am an IT and GIS consultant with Davenport Group. We are ESRI business partners who provide consulting expertise in system architecture, and design innovative data storage solutions to support GIS. My background includes 10 years in local government managing IT and GIS, and 10 years in private sector IT designing databases and supporting and training end-users. While working for Henderson County I had the opportunity to represent the NC Association of County Commissioners on the Local Government Committee of the NC Geographic Information Coordinating Council, and I chaired the LGC from 2001-2006. Through the LGC and the GICC I worked to promote local, state and federal collaboration and data sharing, and helped develop NC OneMap.

What do you most enjoy about your present job?

I enjoy helping clients architect the right IT environment to support and sustain a successful enterprise GIS. Flexible, scalable storage architecture is critical in today's IT, and data availability is a key component. As GIS becomes more central to the organization data and systems must be available 24/7/365 to meet the growing demands of end users. This is not easily achieved using traditional storage technology. Therefore I design solutions based on 4th generation storage architecture and enabling technology that completely changes the way we manage data. I take a holistic approach to network design and the end result is high availability, reliability and redundancy. Our clients love the results and that makes my job rewarding.

What other GIS or local government positions have you held and where?

I worked as the IT Director at Henderson County and prior to that as the system administrator for the City of Hendersonville. While at Henderson I had the opportunity to work on many exciting GIS projects, including centralizing GIS as part of IT, migrating from a strings-based system to ESRI technology, implementing online map services and data distribution via the web, and integrating GIS into central permitting and other areas of county government.

What is your educational background?

I have a bachelor's degree in politics and public affairs, a masters degree in Management, and a masters in computer resources and information management.

What has been the biggest change in GIS since you began your career?

During the 10 years I have been involved in GIS, it has dramatically transformed government service delivery and the expectations of our citizens, thanks in part to tools now available to virtually everyone via the Internet. GIS is now in the mainstream and GIS technology very much in demand. Consequently our federal, state and local governments are investing more in GIS, valuing GIS resources, and making the preservation of GIS assets a priority.

What are your primary areas of interest when working with GIS?

My primary interest is in enterprise GIS and the successful integration of GIS into the IT infrastructure. GIS is no longer about isolated databases with small groups of users. Today's GIS is built around web services. Building GIS on a service-oriented architecture requires the support of your IT departments. So it's really important to get the IT and GIS folks working together to ensure a successful GIS.

How did you first learn about GIS and how have you become more involved in GIS over the years?

Kelly Laughton



Kelly joins the CURISA Advisory Board in 2008. We are glad to have her and are sure she'll make an impact as we go forward with new initiatives.



We are looking for interesting subjects for our next interview!

This is an excellent opportunity to showcase someone's talents, learn from and about fellow members, and share with CURISA members.

If you know someone who you would like to see interviewed and hear what they have to say about CURISA, GIS, etc., please email the editor at: <mailto:kristianforslin@ncrr.com>

(Continued on page 4)

Member Spotlight...Cont'd

(Continued from page 3)

I was introduced to GIS while managing IT in the late 90's. When GIS reached critical mass at my organization there were stakeholders in multiple departments, not just in the department where GIS originated. So at that point it became essential to integrate GIS into the county's IT infrastructure so that GIS folks in IT were free to support the needs of all departments (and outside agencies) without being restricted by one department's mission. IT's mission was to provide technical services to customers throughout county government. GIS had the same objectives. So integration into IT was the logical next step.

Do you have any advice for people who are interested in a career in GIS? If so, what is that advice?

Get involved in regional activities and pursue an education in GIS. I believe a GISP certification will be essential for professionals going forward. Become aware and engaged in the activities of CURISA Learn everything you can about NCOneMap and other collaborations that promote the use of geospatial data.

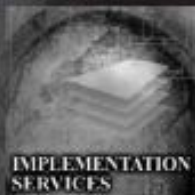
Who's next?

Who would you like to know about? Put someone on the spot and volunteer them to be interviewed. We'll be gentle.

Send in your victim's name to: <mailto:kristianforslin@ncrr.com>

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Featured Article

Strategic GIS Priorities are Revolutionizing Business for Richland County, SC

Richland County, South Carolina

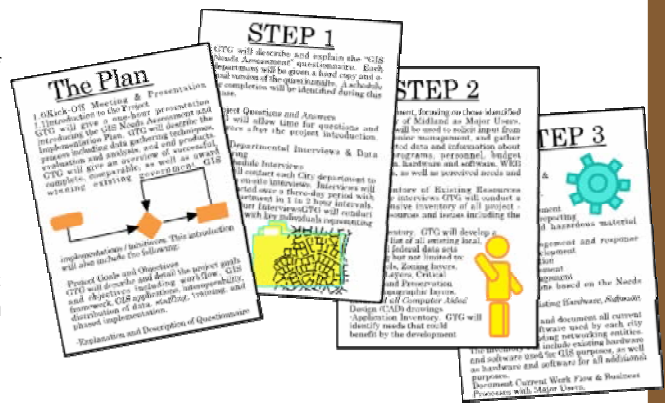


The list of GIS priorities and objectives in Richland County, South Carolina, is long and complex. The list of accomplishments over the past 8 years is even longer. It's impossible not to be impressed by the ways GIS has helped the county produce major results for its citizens over and over again.

But the purpose of the Richland County GIS program is surprisingly straightforward.

"We want GIS to be at the core of everything the County does. We want it to improve every workflow, every decision, every process," said Brian Fitzgerald, Richland County's Senior GIS Systems Engineer. "And we want to establish a foundation of geographical information to support the decisions we make on behalf of our citizens."

It's an ambitious goal, but one history would suggest is highly attainable for the County.



GIS was a new technology in 1999 when Richland County enlisted Geographic Technologies Group's support in developing a strategic plan for the emerging science. Over the years, GTG has worked with Richland County to keep the plan current.

"Richland County has been very impressed with the detail and professionalism exhibited by the GTG team," said Patrick Bresnahan, Ph.D., Richland County's Geographic Information Officer. "They pull together our enterprise vision by meeting with all of our department directors and senior staff, and we have never been disappointed or let down by them."

GIS professionals in Richland County believe in planning and are, in fact, on their fourth revision of the strategic plan first done in 2000.

"It's invaluable to us as we decide how to set priorities, quantify our financial needs and decide where to focus our time," Fitzgerald said.

Having a clearly articulated direction is especially valuable given the County's governance structure for GIS. They use a hybrid model, with policy-level functions carried out in the IT department with its half-dozen GIS professionals, and data stewardship responsibilities distributed among user departments.

"In IT we make decisions on software, hardware, contracts, and policies and procedures, and we handle data collection and training. We feel that GIS, at its core, is an information system and belongs in IT. But individual departments make their own maps and maintain their own data; we in IT facilitate the use of the technology in every department," Fitzgerald said.

County officials believe the structure works well and furthers their goal of bringing GIS to even the most mundane tasks. GIS has won the support of workers at every level of the organization, and many external users.

The County has even begun licensing data and charging for maps in an effort to mitigate some of its costs and avoid subsidizing private enterprise. "We want to make the information available while protecting the County's investment in data development," he said.

(Continued on page 6)

Featured Article

Fitzgerald says he can cite dozens of examples of how GIS has revolutionized the way business is done in Richland County. "One of the high profile successes we've had involves our Business Licenses Department. Historically, the County outsourced this function to the City of Columbia, but the systems we had put into place as a result of our strategic plan supported the County's efforts to take that function back. Because we had accumulated all of the spatial data, we were able to geocode against our SDE and put the business license points on a layer for everyone to use."

"The Business Licensing staff doesn't know what's happening in the background, but when they issue a license, it appears on the map, so they can take their laptops into the field and see on their navigation systems where current licenses are held," he said.

"It's a great example of how embedding spatial functions into core business processes creates significant improvements."

Recent GIS priorities have included:

- A multi-year digital orthophotography project with aerials taken in the winter (leaf-off) and summer (leaf-on) between 2007 and 2009 to update key infrastructure data layers and compare changes in land cover (water, trees, etc.).
- Converting parcel information to digital layers. "The parcel layer is the basis for our capacity to create, maintain and distribute information on tax, zoning, voting, assessment, garbage pickup and complaint management," Fitzgerald said.
- Building a central database of zoning designations that can be used with GIS to create zoning maps. Several different departments in the County currently keep track of zoning data.
- Continuing to improve and expand the County's online mapping service. "We offer a great service already, but there are other needs we'd like to address, for example, allowing citizens to easily see on a map which voting precinct they're in, and who their council and school board representatives are. We'd also like to institute an online service request."
- An AVL program. The County wants to allow moving assets to be monitored via GPS and wireless communication technologies. Historical information can be collected and maintained for each asset and later analyzed to determine efficiency gaps.
- Updating flood zone maps; this project is part of FEMA's nationwide project to update flood insurance rate maps. Richland County will provide data to create more spatially accurate flood zones incorporating Flood Insurance Study data, including cross-sections, base flood elevations, and elevation reference marks.

"We definitely have a lot going on. Some of it is very high profile, some is strictly in the background," Fitzgerald said. "The great thing is, everyone benefits, from the power users to the employees and citizens who know absolutely nothing about GIS, and everyone in between. The investment we've made over the past 8 years has paid off many times over."

Geographic Technologies Group

1202 Parkway Drive

Goldsboro, NC 27534

Phone: 1.888.757.4222



The Compass Quarterly would like to see [your](#) articles!

Submit your GIS, local government and IT articles to the CURISA newsletter so you can share your knowledge with fellow members and help the newsletter grow. It is a great way to have staff recognized for their achievements outside of the office and can gain notoriety for your department.

Best of all...it's FREE for members!

URISA and GISCI Corner



URISA's 2008 ESIG Award Application is Available...<http://www.urisa.org/node/974>

URISA Announce Registration & Call for Presentations - Annual Conference...<http://www.urisa.org/news/press>

GISP Resources from GISCI... http://www.gisci.org/gisp_resources.aspx

New Jersey Endorses GISCI Certification...<http://www.gisci.org/News/news.aspx>

**59 New Certified GIS Professionals (GISPs) Announced on November 25, 2007.
1,869 = Total Number of GISPs**

142 in North Carolina & 38 in South Carolina for a total of 180.

Congratulations to CURISA members who have recently gotten their GISP:

Una Freeman—Surry Co., SC

Trevor Lovin —Cherokee Co., NC

Officer's Meeting Minutes (condensed)



Highlights from the most recent Carolina URISA officer's meeting November 16, 2007 Burlington, NC:

- CURISA leadership plans to proceed with an 'On-Demand Workshop Program'. The initial step will be to sue a comprehensive survey of how the program should be structured, what workshops it will include, where they should be held, etc.
- 2008 Conference planning is underway. The 2008 CURISA and CGITA conference will be held in Concord, NC at the new Concord Convention Center / Embassy Suites near the Lowe's Motor Speedway on September 7-9. The format will be different this year with the first full day being workshops that are included with your registration.
- CURISA membership renewal is expected to begin at the first of the year.
- CURISA is on track to make a 2008 donation to GIS Corps of \$250. CURISA also sponsored three GIS Day events across our region! Western Carolina University, Wake County and Monroe County held events and CURISA provided funds to award prizes and provide refreshments. We plan on taking sponsorship applications in 2008 due to the high demand.
- The 2009 NC GIS conference was also discussed so new board members know CURISA's role in the event.
- CURISA decided to sponsor the SCARC conference in Greenville, SC at a \$250 level.

Next meeting: TBD

Location: TBD

If interested in attending, please contact: <mailto:kristianforslin@ncrr.com>



Membership Renewals

It is easier than ever to become a member of Carolina URISA!

The officers have adopted a new online registration system through a company named Thriva. Now, individual or corporate members can create a CURISA account and register online. Options exist to use a credit card, pay by check (electronic or by mail, or set it up to bill you later. Members can also manage the details of their account by logging in and changing passwords, addresses, etc. This same online method will be extended to conference registration as well when the time is right. CURISA hopes that this service will be a big help to our members.

The links are accessible through the CURISA website <http://www.carolinaurisa.org> or follow the ones below.



Individual Membership: <https://secure.thriva.com/Reg/Form.aspx?IDTD=807616&IDRPH=1209107>

Corporate Membership: <https://secure.thriva.com/Reg/Form.aspx?IDTD=807616&IDRPH=1209106>

Your membership helps CURISA continue to serve the community!

Your advertisement will reach over 200 members specifically targeted in the Carolinas. Members range from local and state government agencies to private companies who need your products and services.

We will accept 1/2, 1/4, and 1/8 page general business ads as well as submissions for any of our newsletter features, such as Featured Articles and the CURISA Toolbox.

Our rates are reasonable and we can accommodate most special requests. If interested please email <mailto:kristianforslin@ncrr.com> for a media kit.



Remember...All members, including corporate members, can submit one featured article per year. This is a great way to address an experience you would like to share and earn GISP certification points.



Officers

Kristian Forslin—Editor

Katie Brewer- Calendar of Events

Contributors

Kelly Laughton —Member Spotlight

Geographic Technologies Group-Featured Article

Members



End of Newsletter