



Compass Quarterly



Carolina URISA Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 3

Summer 2008

Officer's Address

It's the summer issue and I have to be honest...I *seriously* dislike this time of year. It is obviously the heat that does me in and anyone can tell you that I'll get mean as a hornet when I get overheated. Having an opportunity to be near the water in Beaufort, NC, on occasion, is really the only thing that gets me through the summer. That and air conditioning. Oh, and ice cream...that definitely helps. Outside of that, I am pretty grumpy and miserable. You can forget about field work too, because it is doubtful that I will participate, unless it truly is a matter of geospatial life or death. Those utility features will still be there in the Fall.

It is during summertime when I truly wish my duties as a GIS Coordinator held a little greater importance and a broader scope. By that I mean significance, in terms of "make-the-world-better" issues like air quality, climate change, drought management, public transportation, traffic reduction, and land conservation to name a few. Sure, we all make government or our organization a bit more efficient, but can you say it improves your little corner of the world? Some of us can say that because we use GIS in fleet management to save gas and reduce emissions, or maybe in using digital plat submissions to reduce paper usage. Some of us can say that we help because we work in agencies that are actually charged with this sort of activity. Other folks in our profession do not have the job flexibility, or latitude to take on projects like these. Some work with subject matter that may not, well..... matter, environmentally that is.

This may all sound depressing, but my point is this: In the GIS profession we are presented with incredible opportunities and tools for getting things done and we should do what we can to realize the full potential available to us. Talk to your supervisor and take the time to peek out a little pet project. Obviously, a great way to gain approval is if it helps your organization along the way. Make it a small project, but be sure to think 'big' because the most important part is measuring the impact your project has in various areas of our field.

If you do take on a project like this, I can assure you of two things: 1) You will feel very good about yourself and your accomplishments, and 2) We will want to hear all about them at a CURISA conference and right here in our newsletter. So get to work!

Oh, and don't forget to register for the 2008 GIS in the Carolinas Conference! I look forward to seeing you all there.

Kristian Forslin, President



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Chapter News:

- Registration is open for the 2008 conference on September 7-9 in Concord, NC. See page 9 for registration details or visit www.carolinaurisa.org
- The Call for Presentations has gone out to all of our members. Send in your abstracts!
- Vendors/exhibitors: Don't forget that the conference will have a special track for vendor demonstrations! Contact a CURISA or CGITA officer to reserve your time slot.

Calendar of Events



SC Chapter of the American Planning Association (SCAPA) Summer Conference; North Augusta, SC; June 27, 2008 (<http://www.scapa.org/>)

North Carolina Property Mappers Association 2008 Mapping School; Greenville, NC; July 28 - August 1, 2008 (<http://school.ncpma.net/>)

ESRI Users Conference; San Diego, CA; August 4-8, 2008 (<http://www.esri.com/events/uc/index.html>)

NC Geographic Information Coordinating Council; Raleigh, NC; August 13, 2008 (<http://www.ncgicc.com/Meetings/>)

2008 CURISA & GITA Conference; Concord, NC; September 7 -9, 2008 (<http://www.carolinaurisa.org/pages.php?mode=Events>)

IAAO 74th Conference on Assessment Administration; Reno, NV; September 7-10, 2008 (<http://iaao.org/events/AnnualConference.cfm>)

NC Arc Users Group (NCAUG) 2008 Fall Conference; Carolina Beach, NC; September 17-19, 2008; (<http://ncaug.com/>)

ESRI 2008 GIS for Health Conference; Washington, DC; September 28-October 1, 2008 (<http://www.esri.com/events/health/index.html>)

URISA 46th Annual Conference & Exposition; New Orleans, LA; October 7-10, 2008 (<http://www.urisa.org/conferences/aboutannual>)

Belong to a local users group?

Advertise your next meeting with CURISA or get a sponsorship grant. Email <mailto:kristianforslin@ncrr.com> with your event.

Chapter Contacts

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Advisory Board

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 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 newest members, David Weisgerber from Polk County, NC a few questions...

Please tell the readers a little about your career. (Where do you work? What do you do for that organization? How long have you been there?)

I am the GIS Technician for Polk County Local Government. I am a "one-man-band" here and have been for roughly 5 years.

How are GIS resources structured within your organization (departments)?

Polk County, being one of the last counties to embrace GIS, is still very much "ignorant" of GIS and its potential. With that said... "if it's a map (or an aerial image), it is David's job".

What is a typical work day like?

A typical work day is often like juggling cats over a full bathtub. They don't want to be juggled, they REALLY don't want to be dropped, so they panic which increases the odds that they will be dropped... which won't really hurt them any. Typically, I start each day with emails which most often decide the rest of the day. I fulfill data requests, prioritize special requests, answer website questions, etc. After emails, assuming website is up, no new projects needed, no older projects still undone, etc... I work on parcel maintenance. If, by some miracle I ever get caught up on parcels... I always have new 911 data to consume, a sex offender layer to update, etc. For a break from parcels every now and then, I rename assessor building pictures and upload them onto the webserver, update ROD images (deeds/plats) onto the server and rename/upload older scanned deeds/plats. Sprinkle in some random, drop everything, IT service calls... that's my day.

What do you most enjoy about your present job?

This one is easy. I got the pleasure of building everything that is GIS here from scratch. It is mine. It will evolve and grow, with or without me, over time and I may never get any credit or recognition, but I built it. I know it, my family knows it, my friends know it. I will always have that.

What other GIS or local government positions have you held and where (public or private)?

Unfortunately, I always manage to create a position without a title. I was a "truck driver" for the NC Forest Service for roughly 8 years. The last few years there, I hardly ever got behind the steering wheel since I was mapping the forest in Atlas GIS and Arcview 3x. I did all the GPS work as well as all IT functions for the offices. When I first got hired on with Polk County, I was a "database technician" for 911 addressing. During that year, I handled all 911 addressing functions while covertly laying out the foundations of our present day GIS.

What is your educational background?

I have dual AAS degrees in Information Systems Technologies and Computer Programming. Multiple certifications in GPS and GIS and I am two forestry classes away from a third AAS in GIS/GPS Technologies.

How has your college experience prepared you for a career in GIS?

Most all my college classes were taken after the fact. Meaning I taught myself and then needed papers to justify my staying where I was. That being said, teaching yourself something tends to leave many "gaps" in the learning. College has been a HUGE help in filling in those gaps. It also excels in teaching people to look at problems from other angles, to "think outside the box".

What influenced you to choose this career and at what point did you choose it?

It chose me. I am a "fixer". I see a need, I try to fill it. It is what I am. Back in 1997(?), the supervi-



David Weisgerber



David has been the man in the driver's seat for Polk County GIS for around 5 years. He has truly done his part to bring Polk County out of the 'dark ages' and embrace GIS technology.



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

...sor at the Forest Service moved to a new position in Raleigh. GIS was new, sexy, extremely technical, complicated...and he was the only one who knew how to use it. So I took the HUGE box of books home and started reading. I never intended to leave the forest service (I LOVED THAT JOB) and I certainly never intended to work at a desk for a living. But here I am.

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

General understanding of GIS as a whole. Mind you, it still has a long way to go, but it has come a LONG way. As I mentioned before, in 1997 GIS was this extremely expensive (ok, THAT hasn't changed...) thing that could do amazing things but only PHD's could comprehend its mysteries. Then, in 2006 I read an article of how Google Earth (everyone groan at once) was destroying Santa Claus for millions of children because they were going online to "see" the North Pole and there was nothing there! Just the fact that children knew to use that resource made me truly aware how far GIS had progressed.

What major projects are you working on now or have just completed?

End of last year saw the launching of our new... EVERYTHING! A new county wide, digital parcel layer, a new public GIS web application, a new internal web application, two new servers housing the above, running our new SDE/SQL systems. It was a HUGE year for me!

What professional GIS organizations are you a member of?

CURISA; NC Property Mapper's Association; MRGAC (Mountain Region GIS Advisory)

How long have you been a member of CURISA? What do you like most about the organization?

While I have had my eye on them for years while wishing I could join, I only recently was able to do so. What I like best? The level of expertise and experience found within. I have always been impressed with CURISA.

As a member, where would you like to see CURISA go as an organization? How can we serve our members better?

I am too new to really respond here, but I DO know that CURISA is heard when speaking and is respected as a group. I'm proud to be a member.

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

Never stop learning. Never learn the word "impossible". "I" feel that my strong IT background has vastly assisted me in the GIS field. More and more, IT seems to be sucking in GIS. It is worrisome as it is understandable.

What is the easiest, most effective way for someone to contribute to the GIS industry (locally or regionally)?

Volunteer. Make the time.

What tasks do you predict local government GIS professionals will be tackling in 2016?

Defending their positions.

If you could suggest one area for GIS users to study up on for the future, what would it be?

Web site design; Programming

What is your favorite movie of all time?

Blazing Saddles

What is your favorite hobby?

Camping/Fishing with the kids

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Member Spotlight...Cont'd

(Continued from page 4)

Where were you born? Tell us a little about your childhood.

Somewhere in CA. (Dad was in the Navy). We bounced around a lot until we hit Va. Beach where I did most, if not all my school years. I had some great friends. I dropped out of school in my senior year... bounced from job to job until I finally joined the Army (who sent me off to get my GED). I am a combat veteran, honorably discharged. After the Army, I had some tough years until I joined the NC Forest Service. The best job I ever had. I LOVED fighting fires across the country.

What was your first job?

Washing bathrooms at KOA campgrounds... (AMAZING what people will do in those!)

What is the best thing about your life right now?

My kids

If someone made a movie about your life, what would they call it? Who would you want to play you?

"Go down fighting"; Sam Elliot

Who is the person closest to you?

Who's next?

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

Send your suggestion to: <mailto:kristianforslin@ncrr.com>

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My wife, Bobbie Jo.

Featured Article

GEOGRAPHY IS...

Greg Babinski, GISP

Geography is a Flavor. The observant GIS professional may have noticed that Starbucks has begun using the phrase 'Geography is a Flavor' in the marketing material that it displays in its stores. Starbucks uses this phrase to educate customers that coffee and tea varies in taste based on the location of origin. This educates customers and encourages them to try different coffees. 10 or 15 years ago, French and Italian roast were the two most common pseudo-geographic identifiers for coffee. Today, most coffee connoisseurs favor Costa Rica or Ethiopia, Kenya or Sumatra, or beans from some other region of the world.

Within the world of business and law the concept of 'Geographic Indicators' is emerging as just as important for many products as brand names, trade marks, and marketing slogans. Just as a brand name represents intangible value for a product, so too the geographic origin of a product adds significant value. Many geographic indicators have had both commercial and legal status for many years – wine is a classic example, with strict requirements for a bottle to be labeled Napa Valley, Mosel, or Beaujolais.

As international trade has expanded, the value of geographic indicators has become even more important. The European Union has begun a movement to extend the application of geographic indicators even further. For example, the EU now contends that champagne is a sparkling wine that is produced only within the Champagne district in France, and that no wine produced anywhere else should be called champagne. Likewise, the EU contends that cheddar is a cheese that originates only in an area around the village of Cheddar in England, and that no other cheese should be called cheddar. How will Napa wineries or Wisconsin dairies respond?

Despite challenges for corporations, geographic indicators can help local business and agriculture. Idaho potatoes and Washington apples are both strong positive geographic indicators. Napa Valley and Walla Walla are both internationally known wine regions in California and Washington. The organic foods, sustainable agriculture, and the Green movements each promote knowing where your food comes from and advocates buying from local producers.

The Fair Trade movement leverages geographic indicators to help third world agricultural producers build more value for their local products within the world economy to help break chronic cycles of poverty and migration.

What does this trend mean for us as GIS professionals? Certainly geographic awareness is part of our nature. We can help the businesses and agencies that we work for leverage their geographic advantages. Geography is the most fundamental asset that any municipal jurisdiction has and GIS can help identify the opportunities that location provides.

Geography is...all around us. Look for it in a store in your neighborhood.

Greg Babinski is the Chief Editor of The Summit, the newsletter of the Washington Chapter of URISA. He works for the King County GIS Center in Seattle. (contact: greg.babinski@kingcounty.gov; 206-263-3753)



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 GISCorps Working on Myanmar (Burma) Cyclone Recovery Efforts...<http://www.urisa.org/node/1042>

Opportunity to Submit Comments on ASPRS Guidelines for Procurement of Professional Aerial Imagery, Photogrammetry, Lidar & Related Remote Sensor Based Geospatial Services...<http://www.gisci.org/News/news.aspx>

58 New Certified GIS Professionals (GISPs) Announced on May 25, 2008.
2,251 Total Number of GISPs World-wide. 161 in North Carolina & 42 in South Carolina for a total of 203.



Congratulations to CURISA members who have recently gotten their GISP:

Beth Canada —OWASA

Raj Pardasani—Hydrostructures

CURISA Corporate Members

Palmetto Rural Telephone Co-Op (Engineering Dept.) - Robert Carlock, James Henderson and Danny Colson

Duncan Parnell—John Williams, Mike Withers, Daryl Huffman and Clay Pate

The Davenport Group—Kelly Laughton

Avioimage—Robert Akers, Brandon Goings, Stuart Phelps and David Hlorgbe

Palmetto Rural Telephone Co-op (Engineering) - Robert Carlock, James Henderson and Donny Colson

Surdex—Ken Hill, Ronald Hoffman, Ed Turner, and Kimberly Bahorich

Officer's Meeting Minutes (condensed)



Highlights from the most recent Carolina URISA officer's meeting May 9, 2008 Concord, NC:

- 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. Check out CURISA website for more information as it becomes available <http://www.carolinaurisa.org>
- Final menu selections for the conference were chosen and the group approved a vendor social on Monday evening.
- Fees were set for the 2008 conference. There has been an increase in the fees, but registrants get a lot more for their money this year due to all of the included workshops.

Next meeting: September 7-9

Location: Concord, NC

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



The 2008 Conference

Carolina URISA & Carolina GITA

Are pleased to announce the Call for Presentations

Concord Convention Center / Embassy Suites – Concord, NC

Carolina URISA & Carolina GITA invite you to share your knowledge and special projects with others by submitting an abstract for presentation. We plan to stage another successful conference this year with high hopes for another big attendance turnout. Last year we were joined by close to 200 of your colleagues, showcased 20+ presentations, and had an exhibit hall with 20 vendors ready to demonstrate their products and services. Your involvement with the conference will earn points towards professional certifications as well.

All presentation abstracts received by August 1, 2008 will be reviewed and considered for the conference. Conference presentations will be scheduled for 30 minutes or 1 hour, but we request the presentation be able to fill the time given. The conference will feature three tracks this year, two of which will be general and intended for educating registrants on applications of GIS. A third track will be reserved for vendor demonstrations and is specifically designed as a showcase for specific products or services (once registration opens these slots will be first come, first serve).

Please submit your abstract and your contact information including name, address, phone numbers, and email if you would like your presentation to be considered for the 2008 conference.

Projectors and screens will be provided and internet access is by request. Presenters are encouraged to submit a copy of their presentation before the conference, however they can also be brought to the conference on removable media (CD or thumb/flash drive)

The conference will also need program track moderators and other volunteers to help things go as smoothly as possible.

- ✓ Enterprise GIS
- ✓ Transportation Systems
- ✓ Asset Management
- ✓ GIS and Public Health
- ✓ GIS Management Issues
- ✓ Metadata Management
- ✓ ArcGIS Server / SDE Implementation
- ✓ GIS Architecture Specs
- ✓ Data Sharing Issues
- ✓ GIS and Public Policy
- ✓ GPS Applications
- ✓ Mobile GIS
- ✓ Aerial Photography
- ✓ GIS & Land Surveying
- ✓ Other Topics of your choice

Please submit presentation titles, or abstracts to:

Kristian Forslin, VP CURISA
kristianforslin@ncrr.com

Conference Registration

Your registration for the 2008 GIS in the Carolinas Conference will include one mini workshop on Sunday and two half-day workshops on Monday (all workshops have limited capacity, so register early!). We will not be offering any one day registrations this year.

The Sunday evening mini workshops (for individuals) and the vendor demonstration slots (for exhibitors) on Tuesday will be offered on a first come / first served basis once registration opens. Both of these have limited availability. The vendor demonstration slots are not part of the registration process. If your company is interested in reserving one of these slots, please contact Kristian Forslin at kristianforslin@ncrr.com.

Conference registration will be handled online. The process is easy, straightforward and allows your organization to be invoiced in order to accommodate various purchasing department procedures. You may access the online registration system and see the preliminary program through the CURISA website at www.carolinaurisa.org or you can visit the following links directly:

Individual Conference Registration

(Regular, Student, Presenter)

<https://thriva.activenetwork.com/Reg4/Form.aspx?IDTD=807616&RF=1209104>

Conference Exhibitor/Vendor Registration

<https://thriva.activenetwork.com/Reg4/Form.aspx?IDTD=807616&RF=1209103>

If you are a vendor and have someone else within your firm (purchasing, marketing, etc.) perform the registration process, please be aware that they will need to set up an account with us. However, they will need to be certain not to register themselves for the conference and make sure they register the actual attendees of the conference.

Check in and walk-up registrations will be handled at the registration desk during normal registration hours.

Registration fees will be as follows:

Early individual registration—by 8/21	\$195
Late individual registration—after 8/21	\$220
School/Student registration (no workshops) - Register up to 5 students for Tuesday only	\$225 / per school
Presenter full registration	\$100 / per person
Exhibitor / Vendor booth (includes electrical outlet and 2 full registrations)	\$450 / per booth
Extra attendee for exhibitor / vendor	\$100 / per person



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.



Contributors

Officers

Kristian Forslin—Editor, Officer's Address

Katie Brewer- Calendar of Events

Members

David Weisgerber —Member Spotlight

Greg Babinski—Featured Article



End of Newsletter