

# THE SUMMIT

## News From and For The Washington GIS Community

### WAURISA

The Washington State Chapter of  
The Urban & Regional Information Systems Association



Autumn 2006

WWW.WAURISA.ORG

Issue 5

### THE *MAP MASON* MAP VIEWER

*Matt Stull, Mason County GIS*

The residents, businesses, and employees of Mason County now have a powerful new tool to help them access spatial information. This tool is the new internet mapping website called the "Map Mason Map Viewer". The launching of this viewer marks a major milestone in the development of Mason County's GIS system. Mason County's Public Works GIS department introduced this new viewer to the public at the June 20<sup>th</sup> Mason County Commissioners meeting.

#### Accessing Map Mason:

In order to make online services easy to access, Mason County's website (<http://www.co.mason.wa.us/>) is set up with shortcut links along the left side of the main page. These links are grouped by theme, one being "Online Services." Map Mason Map Viewer naturally fits into this group, so a link for it was placed there. The first click on the Map Mason Map Viewer link takes the user to the main GIS department page. Here the user will find several resources to help them use the viewer. These resources include pages for Help, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), Site Requirements, and a Disclaimer. This page also includes a link to our Assessor & Treasurer Parcel Search. The Assessor & Treasurer Parcel Search is a text based search engine that is linked to the map viewer. To launch the viewer the user can either click the Map Mason Map Viewer link on the left side or click the button with the globe icon in the middle of the page.



Mason County's main GIS web page

See: *Map Mason*, Page 2

### PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

**With Thanksgiving just around the corner** I've been reflecting on the year passing. Our membership has grown, we've become grounded as an organization, and we are now a solid part of GIS in Washington State. I'm thankful to be a part of this group and for the opportunity to make a difference in our profession.

I hope you were able to attend the recent 2006 URISA Conference in Vancouver B.C. A few officers were able to attend the URISA Chapters Leadership Forum during the Conference, where we had a chance to hear from other chapters how they provide top value to their membership. We are planning to implement best practices learned from other chapters for our own organization.

The big news from Vancouver was being chosen by URISA as Chapter of the Year for 2006. I want to thank you our members, the WAURISA Board, and our many volunteers for helping to achieve this honor. The award reflects the recognition by our peer chapters of what we've accomplished during the past year and the solid plans that we've put in place for the future.

A key plan is a new Dick Thomas Scholarship Fund, now being developed collaboratively with other GIS organizations. The goal is to create a self sustaining system that will provide meaningful support for up and coming GIS professionals.

Another plan is to become more active in the GIS Academic Community. As a professional education organization, we need to keep in close touch with the primary source of future GIS professionals. We're asking for your help to become our liaison with schools. The knowledge and understanding of the GIS program you gained at your school makes you best qualified to be our GIS ambassadors. Your involvement will help us better define how we can be of greatest value to future GIS professionals.

Planning for the 2007 Washington State GIS Conference is well under way. We are looking for individuals and ideas to make this the best GIS conference we've ever hosted. Here is a chance to share your ideas and techniques with others, and perhaps see your experience in a new light.

We need your participation. Be a part of a professional organization that makes a difference. Board meetings are held via conference call the second Tuesday of each month. Contact me to find out more.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve,

**Rick Lortz, President**



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## MAP MASON

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### The *Map Mason* Map Viewer:

The viewer is made up of the map display and four additional user control components. When the viewer first opens, the map display is set to show the entire county with major geographic features, along with an overview map. The other four viewer components are described in the following sections.

#### Left Side – Three Tab Workspace

The first green tab is used to search for a parcel, road, or address by parcel identification number (PIN) or road name. The second gray tab shows the legend. As layers are selected and become visible on the map display, appropriate layer symbols are shown on the legend. The third beige tab shows the map layers selected and controls selecting or hiding layers. One of the first things you will notice about the layers is that they are grouped by type, like transportation. The layers tab includes “tags” for each layer to easily turn labels on and off. At the bottom of the tab is a help section, describing what all the buttons, circles, folders, and tags mean.

#### Links Across the Top

Across the top of the viewer, four handy links take the user quickly to the main Mason County webpage, the GIS Department page, the *Map Mason* Help page, or the Disclaimer.

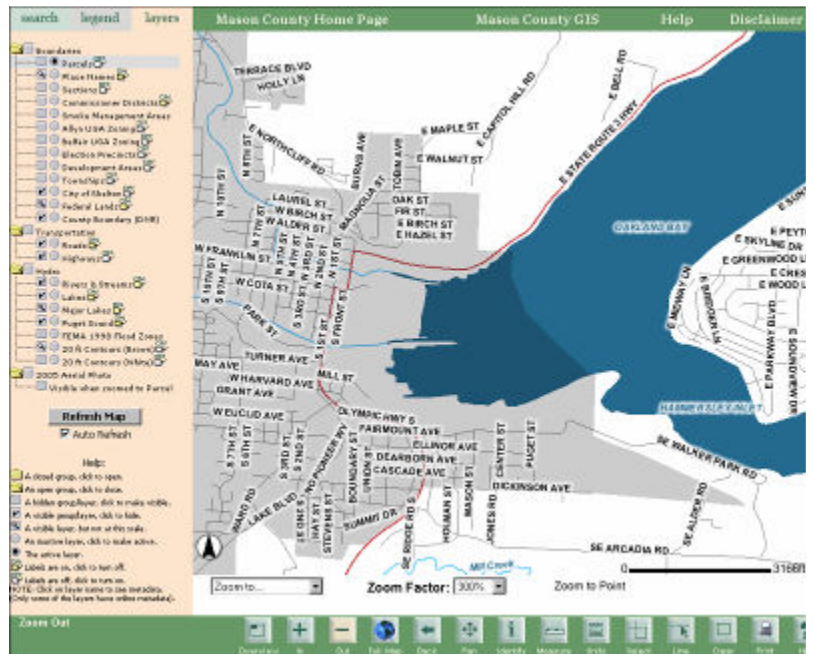
#### Shortcuts Across the Bottom

Three useful shortcuts are displayed along the bottom of the viewer. The first is a “Zoom to...” shortcut that allows the user to quickly zoom to different cities or areas in the county. The second shortcut allows the user to set the zoom factor. This works when one of the zoom tools is selected and the user clicks (not drags) on the map. The map will then zoom by the percent listed in the Zoom Factor box. The third shortcut allows the user to zoom to a specific X/Y coordinate. This coordinate can be either in Latitude and Longitude or in State Plane Coordinates.

#### Tool Buttons

The final component of the viewer is a set of tools accessed as buttons along the bottom. Most of these are standard tools a user would see in many GIS applications, like zoom, pan, select, identify, etc. Three of the tool buttons have been programmed with special behavior.

First is the Identify tool. When the parcel layer is selected this tool is programmed to execute a search in the Mason County Assessor & Treasurers database, as was mentioned earlier. The Identify tool sends the parcel PIN number to the Assessor & Treasurer search engine and the search result is displayed in a separate browser window. This tool also works in reverse; if a user is looking at parcel information using the Assessor & Treasurer search tool, he or she can click on the “View Map” button and *Map Mason* will open up and zoom in on the parcel in question. Second is the Print tool. When it is clicked, a window pops up asking the user for a map title and page layout orientation. When the map appears it is automatically formatted with a custom legend, county logo, and disclaimer. Third is the Help tool, which brings up the *Map Mason* Help page on the Mason County website.



*Map Mason* Display, Layers Control, Links, Shortcuts, and Tool Buttons

### Development Details:

The GIS Department is aware that many households in Mason County only have slow dial up access to the internet. With this in mind, the top priority in creating *Map Mason* was appropriate display speed. Several steps were taken to improve display speed. First the number of layers and the size of their data tables were minimized. Most map layers had their data tables stripped down to just one or two descriptive fields. A second step was to show more detailed map layers, like roads, streams and parcels only at larger scales.

Another development challenge was incorporating Mason County's large aerial photo image files without slowing the display too much. To solve this issue, all the images were merged into one highly compressed MrSID image mosaic file. This made the display speed of the image acceptable. The image is turned off by default and it only displays at large scales.

*Map Mason* is powered by ESRI's ArcIMS 9.1 on an HP DL380 Server running Windows 2003 Server. The ArcIMS architecture includes Internet Information Server 6.0 webserver and the Tomcat servlet engine.

### Conclusion:

Mason County would like to give a BIG thank you to the Thurston County GeoData Center staff for all their assistance on this project. By using an intergovernmental agreement with Thurston County, Mason County was able to utilize the expertise and experience of the Thurston GeoData Center staff. Their contributions included providing and setting up the template for the *Map Mason* Map Viewer, along with configuration and manipulation of the Mason County GIS data. Their support was instrumental to the success of this project.

*Questions or comments about the Map Mason Map Viewer can be addressed to:*

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Mason County GIS  
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## Skagit County Releases *Crime Map*

Geoff Almvig, Skagit County GIS

Skagit County released *Crime Map*, a new Internet map service on July 11, 2006. *Crime Map* allows interactive mapping of crime related incidents recorded by the County's 911 System.

*Crime Map* is an ESRI ArcIMS and ArcSDE based application, designed to run from a MS Internet Explorer web browser. *Crime Map* provides a user with a simple set of tools to quickly view crime incident information. *Crime Map* is accessible from a link on the main Skagit County Web Site ([www.skagitcounty.net](http://www.skagitcounty.net)).

The application can also be accessed directly at: <http://www.skagitcounty.net/Sheriff/Applications/IncidentMap/ASP/CrimeMap.asp>.

A Skagit County *Crime Map* user can search by address, road name, or case number and the system will quickly display a map showing all of the incidents that have occurred in the selected area. The user can also filter searches, to search for a specific type of crime incident, date range, law enforcement agency, or incident category (registered sex offenders, property crimes, drug alcohol problems, domestic violence, or other categories).

*Crime Map* data goes all the way back to January 1, 2002 and new crime related incidents are updated every 24 hours from 911 so that Skagit County residents can quickly know what the current and past crime trends are for their neighborhoods. The goal for *Crime Map* is to support crime prevention through public awareness. For example, if a resident learns from *Crime Map* that there have been seven vehicle prowls in their neighborhood in the last month, they may become more alert to possible theft, decide to remove valuables from their car, or purchase a car alarm.

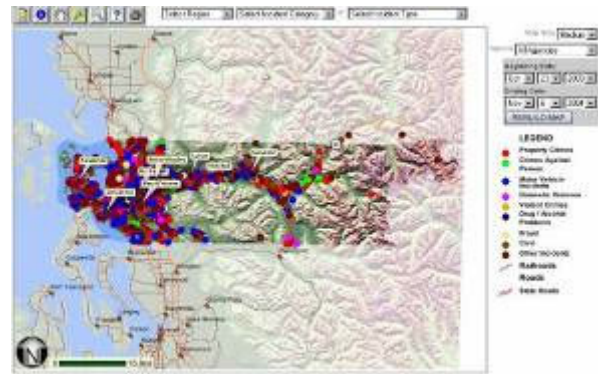
*Crime Map* also demonstrates the sheer volume of crime related activity that law enforcement agencies are faced with, to the 112,000 residents of Skagit County.

*Crime Map* is innovative in the sense that 911 crime related calls are actually plotted where they occur. More importantly, it is a multi-jurisdictional application that includes County, City, and Tribal law enforcement agencies. This allows citizens to view all crime related incidents within the boundaries of Skagit County, not just rural Skagit County. Future plans to improve *Crime Map* include providing crime trend graphs and other end user tools.



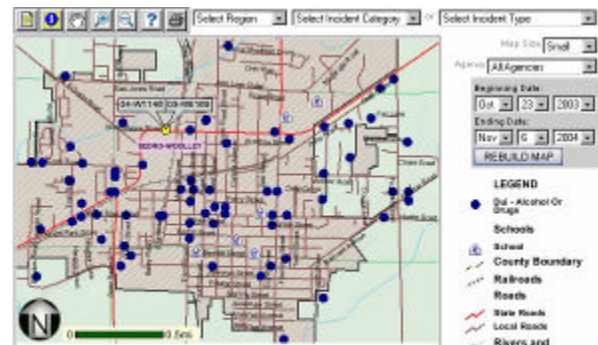
*Crime Map is Accessed from Skagit County's Home Page*

## *Crime Map is a great example of prudent government*



Displaying 4383 incidents out of 41887 county-wide from 10/23/2003 to 11/6/2004

*Main Skagit County Crime Map Web Page*



Displaying 124 dot - alcohol or drugs out of 1126 county-wide from 10/23/2003 to 11/6/2004

*Crime Map users control search by location, date ranges, and incident category or type*

*Crime Map* is a great example of prudent government. It was developed as a multi-agency and multi-departmental collaborative project that fostered partnerships, cost sharing, and resource sharing. The development of *Crime Map* was a joint effort by the Skagit County Sheriff Office, Skagit County Information Technology Department, and Skagit County Geographic Information Services Department.

Skagit County *Crime Map* would never have been developed without Skagit County Sheriff Rick Grimstead's vision and support. Geoff Almvig, Skagit County GIS Manager states "*there is no shortage of great ideas but great ideas often fall short unless someone with authority dares to believe in them.*"

Since its release, *Crime Map* has been featured in Government Technology Magazine (<http://www.govtech.net/magazine/story.print.php?id=100182>).

Skagit County has also had many inquiries from other government agencies around the United States about the application.

For more information, contact:

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## GEOMAPNW

The Pacific Northwest Center for Geologic Mapping Studies (GeoMapNW) is a grant-funded collaborative research center hosted by the Earth and Space Sciences Department at the University of Washington. The mission of the Center is to provide geologic data and expertise, to conduct geologic mapping and research, and to support the geologic research efforts of others throughout the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

### Current Research

- Geologic hazards in the Puget Lowland
- Chronology and stratigraphy of geologic deposits in the Puget Lowland
- Recent faulting and crustal deformation in the Puget Lowland
- Investigations into landform development and landscape evolution

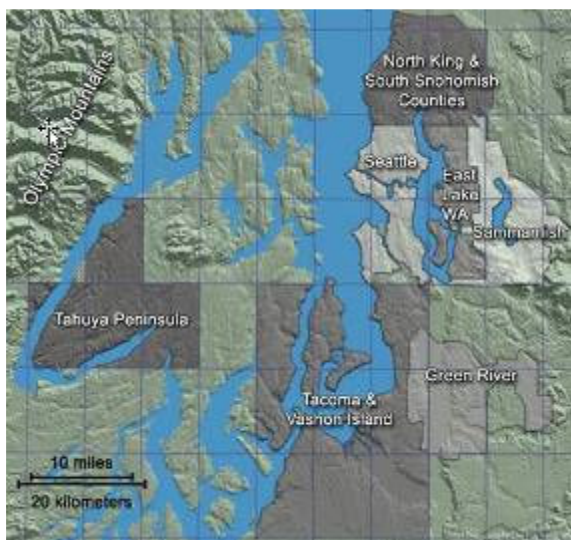
### Center Services

**Geologic Maps:** Current mapping areas include a broad swath of the central Puget Lowland, primarily at scales from 1:12,000 – 1:24,000. Current versions of published, in-press, and unpublished geologic mapping are available for viewing, downloading, or printing on the GeoMapNW website (<http://geomapnw.ess.washington.edu>).

**Geodatabase:** The Center is actively compiling a database of subsurface geologic information, acquired from public and private sources throughout the region, that currently includes layer data from more than 75,000 logs of individual test pits, borings, and water wells. The database is accessible over the Internet via ArcIMS; many of the boring log copies are now available on the web as PDF files and all logs can be viewed and copied at the Center office.

**Derivative Maps:** Using the new geologic mapping and geodatabase, the Center is now producing many derivative maps to meet specialized needs: for example, aquifer susceptibility, distribution of peat, fill thickness, depth to glacially-overridden material, and depth to bedrock maps.

**Publications:** Both citations and downloads of a variety of formal and informal publications on the geology of the greater Puget Sound region are available from our website.



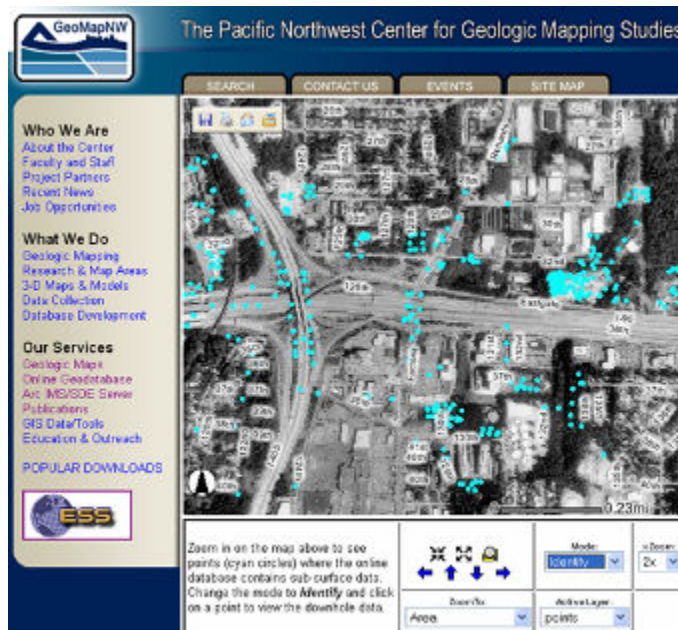
Current GeoMapNW Mapping Areas



New GeoMapNW geologic map of Seattle SoDo area showing distribution of available subsurface data (red and blue dots)

**Detailed Geologic Map of Seattle:** GeoMapNW, along with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has been remapping much of the Puget Sound urban corridor with a new integrated surface/subsurface geologic mapping approach. The improvements in the new geologic mapping compared to the old geologic mapping include: 3 to 4 times more geologic units mapped, 15 to 25% more sandy material mapped at the surface and the sandy material is widely distributed across the landscape, 25% less till or fine-grained material at the surface, 10% more land surface mapped, 3 to 4 times the level of the detail, better delineation of weak ground, data points are shown, and the data are accessible on a web site.

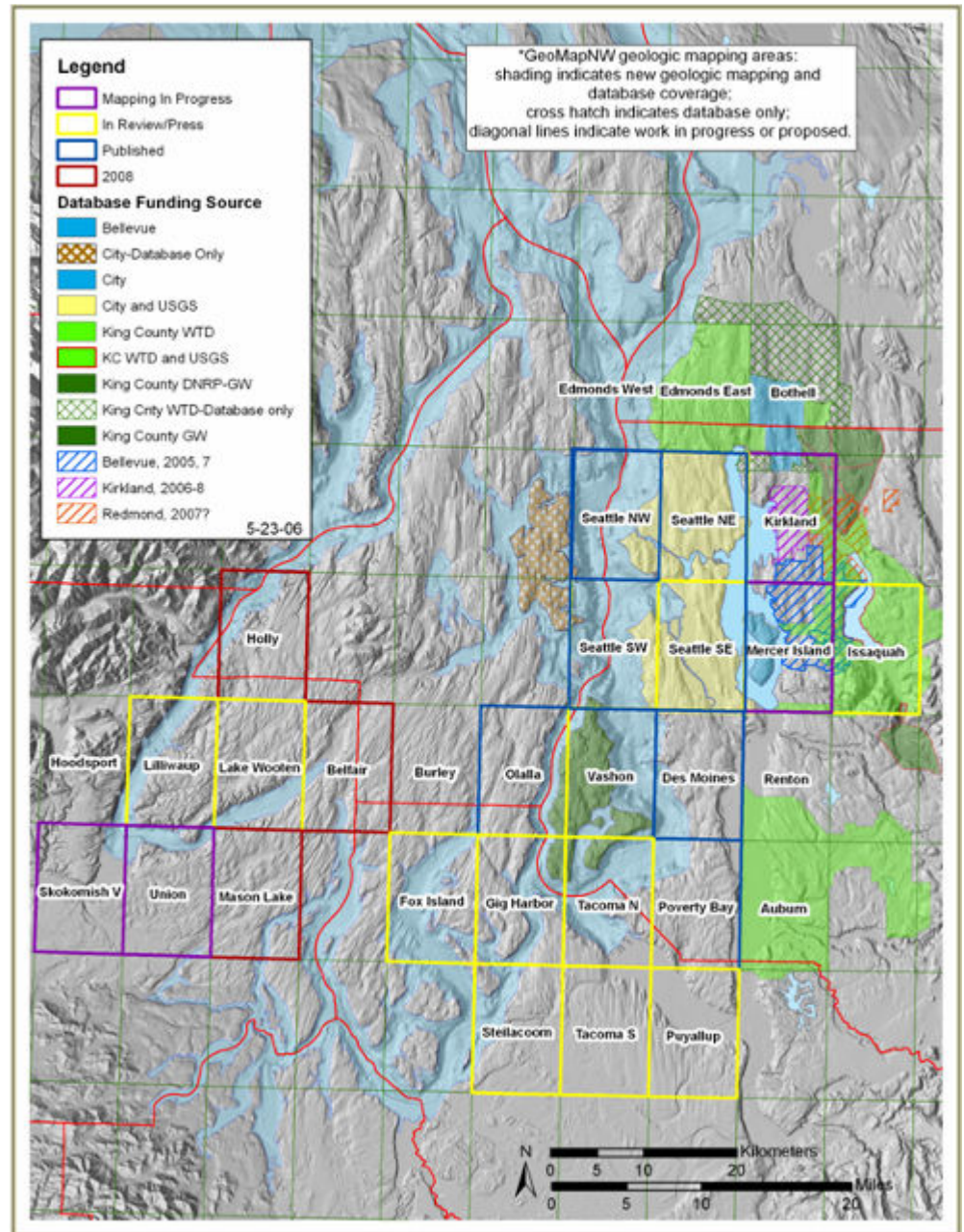
**Raising the Bar:** These new digital maps and databases provide the most current compilation of geologic data available for use by City and County engineers and planners, by consultants, and by the public for planned and future projects. They have already improved the quality and efficiency of planning, surface water, geotechnical, utility, transportation, and groundwater work. Partner City and County employees have access to downhole data, geologic data, and maps at their desktops to facilitate projects.



GeoMapNW Website Data Access

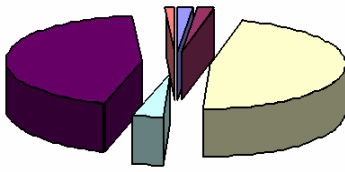
# GEOMAPNW

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GeoMapNW Mapping Areas

### Data Ownership



■	Bainbridge Island, 2%
■	Bellevue, 1.8%
■	King County, 47%
■	Mercer Island, 3.7%
■	Seattle, 44.5%
■	USGS, 1%

Multi-jurisdictional Data Ownership

**Online Data:** The data collected are available on the web and the website is constantly changing. Our on-line database gets up to 2000 hits per week from people looking at downhole data, downloading geologic maps, and accessing publications. Most of these hits are from agencies and engineering firms. We are repeatedly told that access to the database has made a positive impact on the quality of work that consultants are able to provide to their clients.

### Funding:

We are a grant supported research center, and receive no permanent funding to keep data and maps available on the internet. As a new area is mapped, that jurisdiction will need to support their data until more permanent funding can be arranged. Most of our outreach activities are done on a volunteer basis because of the importance of sharing geologic and hazard information with our technical community.

For more information, contact:

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 Web site: <http://geomapnw.ess.washington.edu>



The Pacific Northwest Center for Geologic Mapping Studies



## REFLECTIONS ON 1,000 GISPs

Scott Grams, Executive Director, GISCI

When GISCI received its first application, I had no idea that in less than two years we would fill four jumbo file cabinets and be required to rent storage space. The GIS Certification Institute (GISCI) has now certified its one-thousandth GIS professional. Applications have poured in from every corner of the globe. We have seen one applicant claim over 700 points and one applicant claim 150.1.

I have been amazed at the care and effort GIS professionals have put into their applications. Many have dug deep into their desk drawers to uncover certificates and documentation from years ago. Some had materials from their first GIS conference or user group meeting. Back then, walking in the door probably seemed intimidating. You didn't know where you stood, how much you should know, and if you were ahead or behind the curve. These same professionals have now attended dozens of these events, seeing familiar faces, and new ones who are just walking through the doors for the first time.

I have learned a lot about GIS Professionals:

1. GIS Professionals are diverse. GISPs come from GIS, planning, geography, computer science, teaching, landscape architecture, environmental science, forestry, liberal arts, and engineering backgrounds. Some never attended college. Some learned on the job or in the military. All found a home in geospatial technology.
2. GIS Professionals are stewards. The need to "give something back" is the thrust behind so many applications. The amount of volunteer and philanthropic work GIS professionals do is unparalleled. Whether it is creating community maps, helping out through GIS Corps, or organizing GIS Days at local grammar schools, GISPs want to share their profession with others.
3. GIS Professionals are pack rats...and thank heavens for that. I can't find my car keys in the morning let alone a workshop certificate from 1991.
4. GIS Professionals are passionate. Although not required, we receive dozens of letters from applicants wanting to share their backgrounds. The application only tells part of the story. Many applicants want to fill in the blanks. Maybe it is the nostalgia of collecting past information but many applicants have included eloquent, emotion-laden testimonials about what being part of the GIS community has meant to them.
5. GIS Professionals don't always follow directions. No matter how many times we say not to include staples, someone will inevitably put those two metal fangs somewhere in their application. If it could speak, our document scanner would like a few words with those GISPs.
6. GIS Professionals are smart cookies. The number of degrees and advanced degrees, from quality institutions, is astounding. I tried to battle the Board of Directions so that applications from Purdue, my alma mater, would immediately be fast tracked through the program, given a full refund, and a lifetime certification. I lost that battle.
7. GIS Professionals understand the future of certification rests on their shoulders. We put out a call for GISCI Outreach Committee volunteers and we got 50 responses. We put out a call for GISCI Oversight Committee volunteers and we got 65. The willingness for GISPs to lend their time and talent bodes well for the Institute.
8. GIS Professionals knew all along there was a GIS Profession. Other disciplines may have derided the notion of a GIS professional. I invite them to look at the consistency between skills, duties, and education for GIS professionals across a wide variety of disciplines. Although, all jobs are like snowflakes, most have dozens of traits in common no matter the sector or region.
9. GIS Professionals are not all math whizzes. I still scratch my head how 4 points and 8 points equals 25 points but we aren't certifying mathematicians.
10. GIS Professionals are part of a community unlike anything else. The primary reason GIS professionals pursue certification is because of their colleagues. Some organizations even send in a pack of six or eight applications after spending an afternoon helping each other fill them out. GISCI can have the best marketing plan in the world, but it is no match for one GIS professional talking to another in the corridors of a conference or break room on the job.

Over 1,000 applications and I still feel like we are just getting started. A few weeks ago, a staff member asked me, "Do you think when people get certified they celebrate? Do they go out to dinner with their families?" I thought about that for a second and said to her, "I don't know if they do yet, but they will someday."

Thanks for being part of GISCI.

*Reprinted From GISCI-Eye, Volume 2, Number 1 Winter / Spring 2006*

Editor's Note: As of September 29, 2006, there were 1,288 GISPs worldwide, including 33 in Washington State. For more information about the GIS Certification Institute and the GISP Program, see: <http://www.gisci.org/>



## WAURISA NAMED CHAPTER OF THE YEAR

The **Urban and Regional Information Systems Association** announced WAURISA as the 2006 Chapter of the Year during URISA's annual conference in Vancouver, BC.

URISA has 26 chapters in the US and Canada. Chapters interact with URISA on a routine basis via the URISA Chapters Relations Committee (CRC), comprised of representatives from 10 of the local chapters. Every year each chapter submits a profile that describes the detailed activity of the local chapter, as well as major challenges and key accomplishments. The CRC members review all the submitted chapter profiles, then rate each chapter based on uniform scoring criteria.

Each chapter receiving recognition during 2006 not only a provided high level of service to local chapter members, but also exhibited innovative practices or services that can be adopted by other chapters.



*WAURISA Board Members with Chapter of the Year Award:  
Greg Babinski, Rick Lortz, Steve Schunzel, Angela Johnson*

WAURISA worked in 2006 to tackle the problem of being relevant to all GIS users across the extensive geographic area covered by the Chapter. New techniques used included:

- Targeted recruitment of volunteers and Board members from across the state.
- Panel sessions at conferences designed to include representation from across the state.
- Expanding the use of technology beyond just a web site, to include an on-line GIS discussion forum, an email list covering 2500 plus GIS users and professionals, and conference calling to enable participation by volunteers and board members from across the state.
- A newsletter, *The Summit*, designed to be relevant across the state – in its first year *The Summit* totaled 44 pages, with 19 in-depth articles, profiles of 5 key GIS personalities in Washington State, plus editorials, letters to the editor, literary content, news about events, and a column each issue written by our chapter president.
- Symbolically the name of the newsletter and the chapter's award for GIS achievement (The Summit Award) reflects the iconic relevance of Mount Rainier to the state and WAURISA's commitment to be relevant for all of Washington.

For more information about URISA chapters, see: [http://urisa.org/urisa\\_chapters](http://urisa.org/urisa_chapters)



## GIS DAY AND GEOGRAPHY AWARENESS WEEK

**GIS Day 2006 will be held on November 15, 2006.**

GIS Day provides an international forum for users of GIS technology to demonstrate real-world applications that are making a difference in our society. More than 70 countries will participate in holding local events such as corporate open houses, hands-on workshops, community expos, school assemblies, and more.

**Geography Awareness Week is November 12-18, 2006.**

In 1987, U.S. President Ronald Reagan signed legislation establishing the third week in November as Geography Awareness Week. Every year since then, the National Geographic Society and other organizations have promoted the importance of geography to the public and to schools throughout the United States and in Canada during Geography Awareness Week. During that time approximately 1.5 million students have participated in geography-related activities.

## GIS IN WASHINGTON STATE – 25 YEARS OLD!

**Washington State is celebrating a momentous event in 2006: 25 years of GIS in Washington State!**

Help us to mark this historical occasion by posting anecdotes and experiences about the development and growth of GIS in our state over the last 25 years. Maybe look ahead to the future of GIS in Washington as well.

Please post your memories on the 'GIS in Washington State - 25 years and growing' Forum (<http://waurisa.org/phpBB2/viewforum.php?f=29>) of the Washington GIS Community Forum. Not a Forum member? Sign up today at: <http://waurisa.org/phpBB2/index.php>.

Thanks!

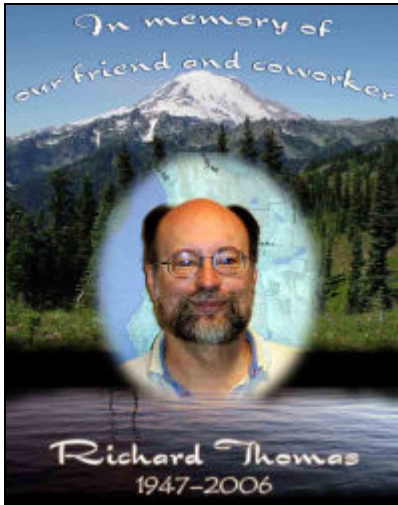
-WAURISA

## LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD

*The Summit* would like to facilitate the exchange of ideas and opinions regarding matters of importance to GIS professionals and users in the State in future newsletters. Consider submitting a letter to the editor or an essay if there is a GIS-related issue that is on your mind. Let your voice be heard. Share your ideas with the Washington GIS Community.



## RICHARD THOMAS, WASHINGTON GIS PIONEER



Richard E. 'Dick' Thomas passed away on July 17, 2006. Born in Kansas City, Missouri in 1947, Dick was raised in Seattle, where he graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in Aeronautical Engineering. He worked as a civil engineer for the City of Glendale and then for the City of Irvine, California. He moved to Redmond, Washington in 1980 and worked for the City of Bellevue, for King County, and finally for the Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District.

Dick worked in GIS for King County and later began the GIS program for the Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District. In 1998 Dick founded what is now known as the Central Puget Sound GIS User Group (CPSGUG), and continued as its guiding light until his death. No where was Dick's genius more evident than in the creation of the CPSGUG. The CPSGUG continues to this day as a 100% free, volunteer driven, highly informal, but very successful GIS user group that has continued to hold meetings almost every month and reaches many hundreds of people via its list server.

Dick also served as a volunteer and advisor for WAURISA, the Washington State chapter of URISA. He was also instrumental in the regional response by the Washington GIS community to the Tsunami disaster of 2004-2005.

He is survived by wife Ruth, son Loren, mother Mary Jane Bennett, brother Gary, and step mother Esther Thomas.

I am shocked and saddened to hear of Dick's passing. He is a true icon of GIS in the Pacific Northwest and I will miss him greatly. Dick was a friend and a mentor to so many of us in the region. It is hard to image a GIS community or activity in which he will not be participating. He advised me on many problems at the City of Woodinville and was a leader in developing the Tsunami GIS response many of us participated in with Mercy Corps. I think of Dick as a guy who was truly dedicated to bringing out the best that people had to offer in GIS, and to using the technology itself to bring out the best in the community which he served. Maybe it is a tribute of sorts, but the cps-gis list serve Dick founded is the medium we are all able to use now to communicate about his wonderful life and career.

*Glenn Brooks, Geographic Information Officer  
Global Humanitarian Data Center Project*

I've had the benefit of being Dick's GIS coworker over the past six years at the Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District. He is, in fact the originator, and coordinator of our GIS, beginning in 1998. Over the years, I've witnessed him bring GIS professionalism, growth and vision to our organization that is immeasurable. His knowledge of GIS and IT was extraordinary, which in a large way is a testament to his keeping abreast of the leading edge of know-how in the field. It's my belief that through his personal study, his great personable skills, his willingness to take initiatives, his volunteerism, his organizational leadership, commitment, and his professional standards all contributed to the man that he was, and the personal successes he achieved. I must say that it's been an honor to work with him.

*Guy Kowalski, GIS Technician  
Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District*

Dick Thomas made a difference! It has been a pleasure to know Dick Thomas as an acquaintance and inspiring advocate of GIS. I may never know the true extent of the impact he has had on me. The value of the CPS-GIS meetings to my own professional career not only came from the sharing of information, it was a way to meet others of like mind, to know you were not alone in the use and implementation of GIS. It is sad to think I will not see him at CPS-GIS, ESRI conferences, WAURISA, or other events. It is sad to think I will no longer receive email notices from "Dick Thomas" about some neat application of technology or through helping someone look for a job - that was "Dick Thomas" to me and he will always be with me. He has truly made a difference through his life.

*Tim Leach, GISP, GIS Manager  
Muckleshoot Indian Tribe*

I got to know Dick while helping set up the GIS support organization for SE Asian response and recovery. He made quite an impression on me as a compassionate, kind person who also was very good at getting things done - two qualities not always found in the same person. I will miss him.

*TJ McDonald, Software Applications Coordinator  
City of Seattle Office of Emergency Management*

This is a heavy loss. I met Dick while doing well-mapping work for the King County Health Department. He was my go-to and how-to guy for GIS. He was my inspiration in pursuing that path and was the one who nudged me into WAURISA participation. I have often considered Dick's attitude and demeanor as what I'd like to be when I grow up. We've lost a pioneer and good friend, but we've gained a beacon. With sympathy for Dick's family,

*Rick Lortz*

Anyone who has been involved in GIS in the Puget Sound area over the years or attended one of the CPS-GIS User Group meetings has had occasion to meet Dick. He founded the User Group in 1998 and had been the force behind its success for these past eight years. From our first meeting around a conference table in the Sammamish Plateau meeting room on May 29, 1998 I was taken with Dick's warmth, good humor and willingness to help others. I have enjoyed working on the user group with him and will miss him greatly.

*Nora Gierloff, Planning Supervisor  
City of Tukwila DCD*

I first met Dick when I started an internship at the City of Mercer Island under Mike Onzay during the Summer of 2000. I was very green and wet behind the ears since I had just graduated from Central Washington University. One of the great benefits of working for Mercer Island was the easy access to the Central Puget Sound GIS User Group's meetings. The group met and still meets in the council chambers at Mercer Island.

I greatly appreciated Dick for his welcome to a shy and uncertain fledgling GIS professional. He encouraged me to join the CPS User Group and list. The group and list were big helps to me when I finally found a full time and permanent GIS job. I learned a lot from him and the list. I send my sympathies to his family. Dick will be greatly missed.

*Amanda H. S. Taub, GIS Analyst  
Douglas County Transportation & Land Services*



# 2007 WASHINGTON GIS CONFERENCE

## FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

*April 23-25, 2007*

*Lynnwood Convention Center*



WAURISA announces the 2007 Washington GIS Conference, to be held April 23-25, 2007. The 2007 Washington GIS Conference will be held in Lynnwood's new Conference Center, conveniently located between Seattle and Everett.

The theme for the 2007 Conference is *Foundations for the Future*. Building on the successful 2006 conference, WAURISA plans a day of in-depth workshops, followed by two days of educational sessions, a map poster/project contest, an enlightening and inspirational keynote speaker, access to top vendors, and networking opportunities galore.

WAURISA was recently named the 'Chapter of the Year' by URISA — the Urban and Regional Information System Association. Plan to join your colleagues at the Washington GIS Conference and discover the value that WAURISA can provide as you build your own...

### ***FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE!***

It's not too early to think about being a presenter at the 2007 Conference. Papers are being solicited for a variety of technical, project, management, and student tracks. Abstracts can be submitted to: [abstracts@WAURISA.org](mailto:abstracts@WAURISA.org)

For more information: See the WAURISA Web Site:

<http://www.waurisa.org/conferences>



Attend the  
2007 Washington GIS Conference  
and earn GISCI education points!

The GIS Certification Institute will award an estimated 0.2 GISCI education points for attending the Monday workshops and 0.1 points for each day you attend the educational sessions on Tuesday and Wednesday.

For more information about GIS Certification, see:

<http://www.gisci.org/>

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King County GIS Center

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*The Summit* reaches more than 2500 readers across Washington State. For more information about the benefits of WAURISA Sponsorship, contact Rick Lortz ([rlortz@lakehaven.org](mailto:rlortz@lakehaven.org)), or any WAURISA Board member.....

## UPCOMING URISA EVENTS AND CONFERENCES:

**Integrating GIS & CAMA Conference**  
March 4-7, 2007  
Las Vegas, NV  
[http://www.urisa.org/gis\\_cama](http://www.urisa.org/gis_cama)

**Northern Rockies Chapter of URISA  
Intermountain GIS Conference 2007**  
April 2-6, 2007  
Donnelly, Idaho  
<http://www.intermountaingis.org/events.html>

**Geospatial Integration for Public Safety Conference**  
April 15-17, 2007  
New Orleans, LA  
<http://www.urisa.org/gipsc>

**2007 Washington GIS Conference**  
Sponsored by WAURISA: The Washington Chapter of URISA  
April 23-25, 2007  
Lynnwood Convention Center  
See: <http://www.waurisa.org/conferences/index.html>

**GIS in Public Health Conference**  
May 20-23, 2007  
New Orleans, LA  
<http://www.urisa.org/conferences/health>

**URISA's 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**  
Urban and Regional Information Systems Association  
August 20-23, 2007  
Washington, DC  
<http://www.urisa.org/conferences/aboutannual>

**THE SUMMIT - EDITORIAL****SERVICE FOR THE COMMUNITY**

John F. Kennedy inspired a generation with a few simple words during his 1961 Presidential Inauguration when he urged Americans to "Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country." His concept was simple: we enjoy many benefits living in our country - peace and freedom, education and opportunity, beauty and bounty - the list goes on. In exchange, he asked us to give a little back - perhaps when young by serving our country under arms or by a career in public service, by volunteering in our community, or by being productive and active citizens - the list of opportunities goes on as well.

We also enjoy many benefits as members of our community. The Washington GIS Community gives structure to our profession. The success of GIS in one agency or company is a success for the Community, because it proves the potential and encourages the wider implementation of GIS. This leads to increased opportunities for us and for the future generations of GIS professionals.

The life of Washington GIS pioneer Dick Thomas demonstrates this concept. Dick found fertile ground in Washington State to develop his GIS career at King County, the City of Bellevue, and the Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District. Dick gave back to the Community as well. His development of the Central Puget Sound GIS User Group inspired and supported many hundreds of our colleagues. His volunteer work for WAURISA further supported the Washington GIS community. His help with the regional response to the Southeast Asian Tsunami disaster demonstrated the high level of service that Kennedy encouraged.

This issue of *The Summit* includes articles about the work being done by Washington GIS professionals. Those GIS professionals support the Community as well through their volunteer efforts. The GIS Certification Program recognizes the importance of service to the Community. The success of WAURISA and its designation as URISA's 2006 Chapter of the Year is all dependent on the work of volunteers who give back a little service to the Community.

There are many opportunities for all. Take a look at the contact information on the last page of *The Summit*. Contact a WAURISA Board member, volunteer, or a representative of one of the local GIS user groups to find out what you can do...for your Community.

**THE SUMMIT— LITERARY CORNER****Geography Awareness Week is Nov. 12-18, 2006:**

"War is God's way of teaching Americans geography."

- **Ambrose Bierce**

"Wars of nations are fought to change maps. But wars of poverty are fought to map change."

- **Muhammad Ali**

"I'm from Earth. I play the whole map"

- **Ice T**

*The Summit* is published by WAURISA, The Washington State Chapter of the Urban & Regional Information Systems Association

**Newsletter Editor:** Greg Babinski

**Interview Editor:** Effie Moody

For subscriptions, content, comments, or suggestions, email:

[SummitGISNews@URISA.org](mailto:SummitGISNews@URISA.org)

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

My friend Nancy Hultquist is indeed a winner (*Summit, Issue 4, p. 5*). Your recognition of her work is an important piece in redefining and promoting geography as an engaging discipline. Nancy has engaged and assisted the growth of geographic analysis in Washington state and beyond for a long time.

I read your newsletter and the interview with Nancy with excitement for both your organization as well as Nancy's award. Nancy was a couple of years ahead of me at the University of Cincinnati and I again followed her at Idaho's Geography department. What struck me was her reference to the Harvard Computer Lab and those early computer mapping programs. I took a correspondence course from Harvard dealing with computer mapping, those horrid boxes of IBM punch cards and the anguish of hoping one didn't bend, wet, tear or drop those cards. Her mention of that stuff brought back some interesting memories.

I left academia for healthcare administration (nursing homes became an interest of mine from a regulatory perspective...and my wife being a nurse and a nursing home administrator helped a lot as well) with an abd in Geography and a continuing interest in geographical analysis (more Strabo than Ptolemy but that is ok, my math skills are somewhat elementary). I use spatial analysis in my administrative capacity and contemplate how much fuller my analyses could be had I some level of GIS training. It would be fun as well as dramatic to be able to use such knowledge in the business of long-term care.

On the Harvard piece (*Summit, Issue 4, p.11*), in 1963 I was taking a class at Long Beach State College (now Cal-State Long Beach) called 'The History and Philosophy of Geography.' Nodding recognition of Harvard and the other Ivy-leaguers problems with Geography tended toward the homosexual scandal business. I was curious then about Harvard's motto and why the truth never surfaced. Such a strange world, academe.

The problems that the Ivy-clad boys have with simple truths come back to haunt them. They should have taken some introduction to geography or world regional or culture spatial analysis classes. One only has to look at the most powerful people in the world today to recognize their limited grasp of elementary geography (let alone language skills).

Thanks again for recognizing my friend. She has given me a lot of support and interest in continuing a relationship with a discipline I formally left in 1974. She is a winner; and so is John. What a team!

Ralph Allen

Nine Mile Falls, WA

*The Summit* would like to hear from you. To encourage the discussion of issues and ideas of importance to the Washington GIS community we welcome letters to the editor and opinion essays. Letters to the editor should be a maximum of 100 words and essays should be limited to 250 words.

**UPCOMING GIS EVENTS IN WASHINGTON**

ACSM – Washington State Section  
<http://www.wss-acsm.org/>

ASPRS Puget Sound Region  
<http://www.photogrammetry.com/ASPRS-PSR/>

Central Puget Sound GIS User Group  
<http://waurisa.org/phpBB2/viewforum.php?f=24>  
 Meetings the 3rd Tuesday of each month from 1:00 to 3:00pm at Mercer Island City Hall. Contact Nora Gierloff at: [ngierloff@ci.tukwila.wa.us](mailto:ngierloff@ci.tukwila.wa.us)

Central Washington GIS User Group  
<http://www.cwgis.org/>  
 Meets the 1st Friday of each month at the Wok-About Grill, 110 N Wenatchee Ave, Wenatchee, WA at 12:00 noon.

King County GIS User Group  
[http://www.metrokc.gov/gis/KC\\_Users\\_Group.htm](http://www.metrokc.gov/gis/KC_Users_Group.htm)  
 Meets 1st Wednesday of each month at 11:00am at the KCGIS Center, 201 S. Jackson Street, Seattle WA, Conf Room 7044/7045.

Northwest Washington GIS User Group  
[http://www.acadweb.wvu.edu/gis/nwgis\\_mtg.htm](http://www.acadweb.wvu.edu/gis/nwgis_mtg.htm)

Spokane Regional GIS User Group  
<http://waurisa.org/phpBB2/viewforum.php?f=19>  
 Contact: Dave Rideout, Spokane County 509-477-7251  
[drideout@spokanecounty.org](mailto:drideout@spokanecounty.org) .

2007 NW ESRI User Conference  
<http://www.nwesriusers.org/>

2007 URISA Conference, August 20-23, 2007, Washington, DC  
<http://www.urisa.org>

2007 GITA PNW Chapter Conference  
<http://www.gita.org/chapters/pacific/index.htm>

2007 Washington GIS Conference: April 23-25, 2007, Lynnwood, WA  
<http://www.waurisa.org>

To have your GIS related event listed in future issues of *The Summit*, notify the editor at: [SummitGISNews@URISA.org](mailto:SummitGISNews@URISA.org).

To be added to *The Summit* mailing list, contact:  
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**Interested in volunteering your time to help WAURISA?**

Contact Rick Lortz or any Board member listed above.

**JOIN THE WASHINGTON GIS COMMUNITY FORUM!**

*The Summit* is not the only communications resource available to members of the Washington GIS Community. Sign up as a member of the Washington GIS Community Forum (<http://waurisa.org/phpBB2/index.php>) and access the latest news about GIS jobs, training, projects, and professional activity in Washington State.



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