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IMAGIN Forum 2003!

By Tara Holmes and Barbara Saunders

"ENJOYABLE"
"INFORMATIVE"
"GOOD FUN"
"WELL-ORGANIZED"
"EDUCATIONAL"

These are all words that are music to the ears of a conference organizer. Thankfully, they are also words that were heard throughout the 2003 Conference "Geography on the Move: A Network of Knowledge". Numerous vendors, sponsors, speakers and most importantly, attendees, have expressed their satisfaction with this year's conference. It was indeed three days full of learning, networking and fun.

From May 4 to May 7, the Kalamazoo Radisson Plaza Hotel played host to over 300 IMAGIN members and supporters from across Michigan and the surrounding areas. Noted industry professionals shared their knowledge and experiences. As the GIS industry continues to grow and mature, this exchange of ideas and information is essential to the continued success of the many programs statewide.

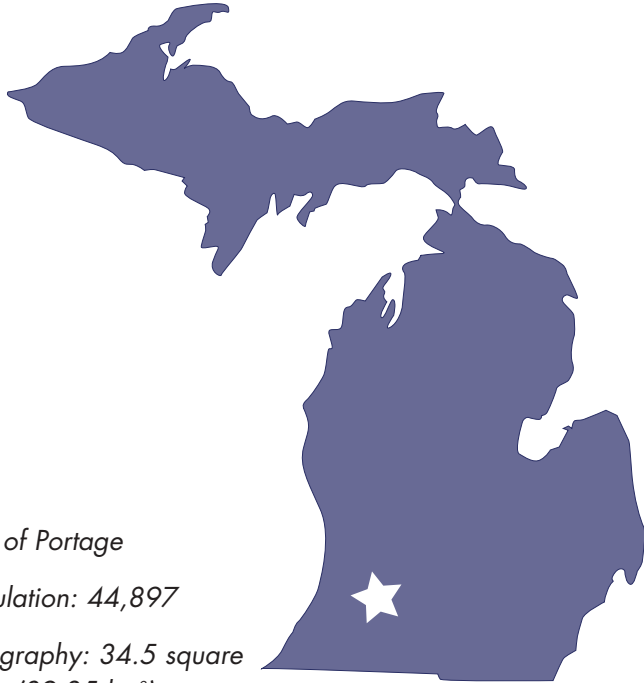
On Sunday night the IMAGIN Board of Directors and the Events Committee co-hosted the second annual Vendor Appreciation Night. This event was held in the cozy confines of Webster's. Fireside chats and the piano playing in the background set the atmosphere for a lovely evening to thank vendors and sponsors for their continued support.

On Monday morning a selection of pre-conference workshops were offered that were intended to get everyone thinking about the industry from both a technical and an administrative aspect. The workshops covered a wide range of topics including Publishing GIS Data, Introduction to Remote Sensing, ArcGIS Tips and Tricks, and GIS and Photogrammetry Procurement. Based on feedback from those attending the sessions, there was a wealth of knowledge to be shared, and the presenters did an excellent job trying to incorporate as much as possible into the 2 hour long workshops. Many thanks go out to InfoGeographics, the Center for Remote Sensing and GIS at Michigan State University, PlanSight, and Spatial Marvels for putting on the workshops.

The conference was kicked-off on Monday afternoon with a short video provided by the Kalamazoo Convention and Visitors Bureau. The video showcased Kalamazoo and all of

Who's Doing What in GIS and Spatial Technology?

By Karl Klemm



City of Portage

Population: 44,897

Geography: 34.5 square miles (89.35 km²).

Formerly Portage Township, located directly south of Kalamazoo, Portage is home to the largest pharmaceutical manufacturing campus in the world (Pfizer Inc. - formerly Pharmacia - formerly Upjohn).

Number of Staff: 1

STATUS OF THE PROGRAM

The City of Portage GIS efforts began in 1992 when a 1:1200 (1" = 100') topographic and planimetric survey of the City was conducted and delivered in AutoCAD format. This base map was a valuable dataset but was underutilized in a CAD environment. In 1997, Michael Stampfler, Portage City Manager, made the decision to make the leap from CAD to GIS by creating a GIS staff position within the Department of Community Development. Shortly after, the City administration applied for and was awarded an ESRI Community Development Livable Communities grant. This grant included one license each of ArcView and ArcInfo software as well as various extensions and data, and has served as the foundation for the City's GIS efforts.

Since this time, the City has been active in developing datasets and has been actively incorporating GIS in daily processes

across every city department. Currently, there are over 50 layers that are maintained including base, cadastral, and utilities. In addition, GIS applications are used by personnel in Community Development, Assessors office, Transportation & Utilities, Streets, Fire, Police and the Parks Departments.

GIS data dissemination is accomplished via different methods. Initially, ArcExplorer was used to roll out GIS layers but this was found to be too awkward and difficult for many users. Now the preferred method of data delivery is via a web browser. Due to the fact that the City contracts with a third party for the City Internet site, another data hosting agreement seemed to make sense for disseminating GIS layers. The City went with a cost-effective customized ArcIMS solution developed and hosted (on a Linux server in Minnesota) by PlanSight LLC. to host city GIS data. Because PlanSight significantly streamlined the ArcIMS application, the site enjoys increased speed and responsiveness.

The public website application has been very successful, averaging over 125 daily visits in 2003, and is used by developers, engineers, realtors, neighborhood organizations, non-profit entities, school administrators, and the general citizenry of Portage. A separate staff version of the web site is password protected and has additional tools for selecting parcels, generating labels for public notices as well as additional parcel look-up tools based on property owner names. The public version can be seen at www.portageci.com (click on "GIS mapping").

NEW INITIATIVES

The City is actively updating its digital orthophotography. Aerial photography is frequently requested by the general public, and the new digital imagery files are used in virtually every City infrastructure project as well as a majority of the site plans for private development. The City digitally captured its first set of orthophotography in 1997. Since then, color orthophotography has been captured in 2000 and 2002 at 1-foot (30.48 cm) pixel resolution. The next flyover is scheduled for spring 2004. In addition, the city is pursuing a solution to scan, rectify and mosaic contact prints from 1974 and 1989 flyovers to add to their digital archive collection.

WHO'S DOING WHAT continued on page 4

IMAGIN FORUM 2003 *continued from page 1*

the unique attractions the city has to offer. The mayor of Kalamazoo, Mr. Robert Jones, graciously welcomed us to the city following the video. IMAGIN President Sharon Vanderbout also greeted the attendees and provided us with an update on the past year's activities of the IMAGIN Board, reminding everyone that IMAGIN operates on a volunteer basis and that the participation of the members is fundamental to the success of the organization. She also provided a quick introduction to the different IMAGIN committees and their members, and put forth an invitation to new volunteers. The Events Committee Co-Chair, Barbara Saunders, presented last minute conference details.

Education Sessions were well attended on Monday afternoon as presenters discussed topics ranging from Crime Analysis and Homeland Security, to Natural Resources, Cartography, and Adding Value to Your GIS. The Student Paper Competition also occurred Monday afternoon. The Education and Quality Committee did a fantastic job of making some enhancements to the Competition. This year there were both undergraduate and graduate submissions, written criteria for submitted papers, and a concentrated effort to work closely with the colleges and universities throughout the State to promote the Competition. Their efforts certainly paid off, as the committee was able to arrange a wealth of prizes for the competitors. Special thanks goes out to Intergraph, ESRI, and CDM for providing such generous prizes. Hopefully IMAGIN can maintain this momentum and continue to attract more entries.

This year the student presence continued to be strong. The final attendance numbers show that there were 339 attendees. Students represented nearly 10 percent of that number.

Arriba! Arriba! If you missed the conference then you missed the festivities as IMAGIN celebrated Cinco de Mayo with a Mexican themed reception. This provided an excellent opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new ones while dining on tacos and fajitas and enjoying margaritas and Corona beers. Congratulations to Woolpert on winning the booth-decorating contest. They truly went all out with piñatas, sombreros, maracas, and even a game complete with Mexican themed give-a-ways! Woolpert took home a gift basket full of Cinco de Mayo goodies in appreciation for their spirit.

On Tuesday it was back to work, with a full day of educational sessions. At lunchtime IMAGIN welcomed Nancy Obermeyer, Associate Professor of Geography at Indiana State University, who has been involved with the GIS Certification effort.

Nancy informed us about the current status of the URISA\GISCI effort, explaining the advantages and disadvantages of certification and what it could mean for IMAGIN members!

During lunch, awards were handed out in the Student Paper Competition, Map Competition, as well as the annual awards recognizing excellence in GIS. Once again the Education and Quality Committee did a fantastic job organizing the awards. Congratulations to each of the winners:

GRADUATE PAPERS (STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION)

- 1) Jaymie Meliker - University of Michigan ("Hydrogeological Influences on Spatial Variability of Arsenic Levels in Drinking Water")
- 2) Naruman Wiagwang - Michigan State University ("A Deforestation Analysis of the State of Rondonia Brazil: A Case Study of Bom Futuro National Forest")
- 3) Dante Gideon K. Vergara - Michigan State University ("Towards the Development of a Spatially Unbiased Landscape Fragmentation Index")

UNDERGRADUATE PAPERS (STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION)

- 1) Nicholas Daum - Michigan State University ("Piping Plover in Michigan")
- 2) Jason Hempel - Eastern Michigan University ("GIS and its Applications within Law Enforcement")

BEST COOPERATIVE PRESENTATION (MAP GALLERY):

- 1) Tom Woiwode, director of the GreenWays Initiative, the Community Foundation ("Greenway Vision & Grant Locations"); in cooperation with Ann VanSlembrouck, SEMCOG; Norm Cox, The Greenway Collaborative; and Nancy Krupiarz, Rails to Trails Conservancy.

BEST DATA INTEGRATION (MAP GALLERY):

- 1) Mike Conley, Commonwealth Association, Inc. ("Phase I – Detroit Metropolitan Area Commuter Rail System")
- 2) SEMCOG Data Center ("Developed Land, 1990 to 2030, and Remaining Developable Land after 2030")

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Member News

Charles R. Bristol, P.E. is pleased to announce the creation of a new company - Bristol Technical Services - designed to provide senior professional consulting services to organizations throughout the Midwest. Formerly with Camp Dresser & McKee, Charlie Bristol brings over 30 years of experience in utility GIS implementation, water resources engineering, and the integration of GIS and data management technologies with municipal engineering applications.

New contact information for Charlie is:

Bristol Technical Services
1325 Balfour • Grosse Pointe Park MI 48230
Phone: (313) 282-6339 • charlie@bristoltech.com
Web: <http://www.bristoltech.com>

Grand Traverse County has hired Deborah F. Veen as a GIS Intern to work on various County projects including the Framework Project and the next addition of the Plat Book. Debra has a Masters of Environmental Science Degree with a concentration in GIS from Indiana University.

Also, the 2nd Edition of the Grand Traverse County plat book developed through the GIS Division has been released. A new feature in this edition is the inclusion of the 1997 orthophotography for the County.

From the Nominating/ Governance Committee:

Thanks to all members who cast their ballots for the Board of Directors. Eight of the fifteen Board seats were up for election this year and the ballots have been counted. The winners are Steve Aichele, Scott Ambs, Chris Blough, Charlie Bristol, Ken Kaiser, Janice Moses, Sharon Vanderbout, and Ann VanSlembrouck. The elections and the Annual Meeting were moved this year to coincide with the Conference, allowing members to cast their ballots at the registration desk and attend the Annual Meeting on Wednesday morning. Board officers were elected at the Annual Meeting with the current officers being re-elected. They are Sharon Vanderbout-President, Steve Aichele-Vice President, Scott Ambs-Treasurer, and Ann VanSlembrouck-Secretary. There will be seven Board seats up for election next year. Please consider running if you are interested. You may contact Ken Kaiser, Frank Sobie, or Bill Rowe of the Nominating/Governance Committee for more information.

WHO'S DOING WHAT continued from page 2

This past fall and winter the City undertook a project to migrate the sanitary sewer, storm sewer and water data to personal geodatabase format. Leveraging the new functionality in the personal geodatabase and ArcGIS 8.3, all editing of utility data now takes place in an ArcGIS environment. Over 6,000 as-built drawings were scanned and have been linked to their associated utility feature. A MapObjects application enables City engineers, field staff and other users to easily look up utility information. This tool allows many users who are not located in City Hall to quickly access and print as-built drawings.

A storm sewer update project is scheduled for this summer to update the City's 1992 storm sewer structure inventory via a combination of GPS field collection and as-built drawings. The City will utilize its Leica sub-meter GS50 GPS receiver that will be used to collect points for stormwater catch basins and manholes. Additional attributes and elevations for pipe segments and leaching basins will be gleaned from as-built drawings.

SOFTWARE

- 1 copy ESRI ArcGIS 8.3 with ArcInfo
- 6 copies of ESRI ArcView including multiple extensions (Spatial Analyst, Crime Analysis, Zoning Analyst)
- CAD - Microstation/Autocad
- ESRI MapObjects LT

LESSON LEARNED

Our parcel, sanitary sewer and water utility data was rubber-sheeted to best fit the base map. In a perfect world, the rubber-sheeting process would have been replaced by building the data from an accurate set of GPS controlled points.

Having the web site hosted by a third party is a good approach for communities interested in reducing the associated costs of software, hardware, maintenance, and Information Technology personnel. The City's responsibility is only to provide the data to the host vendor.

Karl Klemm can be reached at (269) 329-4429 or klemmk@portagemi.com

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- 3) Lori Fuller, USGS ("Determining Water Quality by Relating Secchi Disk Transparency to Remotely Sensed Imager for Michigan's Inland Lakes")

BEST ANALYTICAL PRESENTATION (MAP GALLERY):

- 1) Jason McKinley, Universal Map ("Mapping Pasty Distribution")
- 2) Ron Mann, Washtenaw County Drain Commissioners Office ("J.J. Knapp Drainage District")
- 3) Jason Taylor and Jeff Lewis, North Arrow Technologies ("Thompson Road Corridor – Sub Area Plan")

BEST CARTOGRAPHIC DESIGN (MAP GALLERY):

- 1) Xiomara Cordoba Lepczyk, LIAA ("Grand Traverse Bay Watershed")
- 2) Xiomara Cordoba Lepczyk, LIAA ("Leelanau County Road Map")
- 3) Susan Moore, SEMCOG ("Southeast Michigan Region Map")

The IMAGIN-Woolpert Jim Living Scholarship was presented to Lori Fuller of Michigan State University.

The Jim Living Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Donald F. Belanger in recognition of career-long dedication and commitment to the IMAGIN organization, its geospatial professionals, colleagues, members, and the public that it serves.

The IMAGIN GIS for Everyone Award was presented to the Washtenaw County GIS Program in recognition of its work to make GIS data and analysis accessible to other organizations and to the public.

Following a long, but informative day of conference sessions, attendees were invited to step away from GIS for a couple of hours to enjoy a delicious dinner and listen to a presentation by David Thomas, an instructor with Western Michigan University and formerly of the British Royal Air Force. Mr. Thomas entertained the audience with his stories about the aviation industry and his personal mission to change the way pilots are trained in North America. In keeping with what has become somewhat of a tradition, Charlie Bristol, one of the IMAGIN Board Members, entertained the audience as he handed out the door prizes that were donated by Exhibitors as well as by several local businesses in Kalamazoo.

Bright and early on Wednesday morning, the IMAGIN Board of Directors held their annual meeting, followed by their regular board meeting. Congratulations to both the re-elected and newly elected board members. The many different means by which to cast your vote resulted in one of the highest voting turnouts for IMAGIN.

Wednesday's schedule was changed this year to highlight the panel discussions that are always a popular event with attendees. The panel discussions engaged both the audience and the presenters in lively debate and dialogue.

The Events Committee would like to thank everyone who attended the conference and helped to make it a success. The Committee appreciates the time taken by those who filled out a conference survey. A completed survey will be randomly chosen and a free registration will be awarded. IMAGIN Staff and the Events Committee use the information from these surveys to plan for future conferences. Planning for next year is already underway, with a goal to improve on the wonderful time had by all in Kalamazoo. A lot of time and effort into planning the conference, but it also fun and rewarding for those involved. Fresh ideas and opinions are always sought and would be more than welcome from new Committee members.

Have a great summer, and hope to see you at the 2004 conference!

Tara Holmes of the City of Birmingham can be reached at (248) 644-1800 or tholmes@ci.birmingham.mi.us

Barbara Saunders of DTE Energy can be reached at (313) 256-6653 or saundersb@dteenergy.com

**The seventh semiannual
meeting of the
ESRI Northern Michigan Users Group (ENMUG)
is scheduled for July 29, 2003.**

**This meeting will be hosted by
Charlevoix County at their
offices in Charlevoix.**

All are welcome to attend.

**For more information see the group's website:
<http://www.infogeographics.com/enmug>**

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IMAGIN is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization comprised of individuals and organizations interested in the use and application of geographic information system (GIS) technology in Michigan. Our members are committed to improving the quality and availability of digital data necessary to make good use of GIS. We believe that cooperation and open communication are necessary to achieve these objectives.

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IMAGIN
2843 East Grand River Ave #230
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(888) 298-1002
(888) 298-1003 fax
www.imagin.org

Sharon Vanderbout, IMAGIN President

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