March 2018 Newsletter   <u>View this email in your browser</u>

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Hello NYS GIS Association Member!

Welcome to your monthly newsletter. You will find highlights of upcoming events, get to know your board members, and maybe learn a little something.

Enjoy,
Communications Committee, NYS GIS Assocation

Get to know your board representative: Pete Walsemann

The interview:

1. What made you interested in taking up GIS/geospatial technology as a career and how did you end up in the field of GIS? What is your educational background?

"I am a high school science teacher by trade, with my undergraduate education in physics.I was first exposed to GIS as a component for a Toyota TAPESTRY/ NSF Science Award project I worked on that was an integrated science project mapping and studying our local municipal watershed.Based upon that exposure, I began to invest in training concerning GIS and eventually developed a high school science elective to study GIS as a problem-solving tool."

2. Can you explain your job and what you do there?

"Different from GIS professionals, my work is strictly educational.I teach high school seniors and community college students an exposure to spatial technologies course which serves as a GIS introduction.In the high school class, we have more time so we always culminate the course with local data field work for area institutions.We have mapped municipal infrastructure features like sewer manholes, fire hydrants, signage, and the typical walking trails.We even developed a cemetery burial plot system based on high precision GPS coordinates."*

3. How did you get involved in the NYSGISA board? How long have you been a part of the committee?

"I was solicited by past board members to help out. Mickey Dietrich had just been elected as President-elect at that time and the Board was in need of having a person fulfill his term as a director. This year marks my 5th and final year as a member of the Board of Directors, having had the pleasure of working with Julie Tolar, Susan Nixson, Mickey Dietrich, Colin Reilly and now Andy Mendola as Association presidents [and the rest of the great Directors and amazing Officers!] This has truly been a fun and worthwhile investment of time for me."

4. What's the most interesting project that you have worked on and why?

"Without question, our Emerging GIS initiative has been the most worthwhile. As part of a video project to illustrate how to implement a municipal GIS and how it changes, simplifies and modernizes day-to-day business, the NYSGISA solicited the small village of Croghan, New York to introduce GIS technology. This has been a great project as we are converting records from very old paper records that often refer to long since gone trees or fence-posts to modern GPS coordinates. My GIS class has been able to directly map many of the infrastructure features such as water curb-stops. There is still significant feature documentation to complete, but the next most interesting part will be to train those involved in GIS applications to manage, investigate and present the data that has been collected. It has been a great project to see things develop from the very start and to watch it mature. There is still a long way to go, but this has been the most interesting and fun project."

5. What is your favorite memory from NYGeoCon or the GeoSpatial Summit?

"The conferences are always a great time; it is such a pleasure to meet new people and renew old associations!And the speakers, workshops and technical sessions are just amazing!But the single most favorite memory was from this past 2017 NYGeoCon at Lake Placid when Susan Hoskins was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award.She truly is a deserving recipient and serves as a role model for our profession.Plus, the look on her face was priceless!"

"The part of GIS mapping that I like the most is the ability to make data relevant for decision-makers accessible. GISers can make patterns in data emerge, spatial relationships between different but related datasets tangible to those that need to see those relationships in order to be effective in their service. Making that happen is what I like doing."

7. If you could visit any one place in the world, where would it be and why?

"Golgotha near Jerusalem, Israel.This is where life begins for me."

8. Do you have any specific advice or philosophies from working in the GIS world?

"The continued advancement and expansion of the geospatial industry depends upon new talent being trained, empowered and turned loose.This industry must continue to prioritize resources to captivate the young to pursue geo-spatial careers.We will serve ourselves well if we establish pipelines from grade-school to professional credentialing and employment in the geospatial communities.If we don't, someone else will tap that population, but it will not be for geospatial benefit!"

Next Webinar: March 19, 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Riparian Buffer Assessment

Date: **Monday, March 19, 2018** — Time: **12:00 PM – 1:00 PM**

Presenter: **Jeff Pu, Ph.D. Candidate, SUNY-ESF**

Register here

Synopsis: Riparian buffers play a significant role in filtering contamination and maintaining water quality. Under stress from climate change, agricultural practices and urbanization, the extent of buffers in many areas are decreasing and under pressure from economic developments. In order to protect existing buffers, we need to know the current conditions of various environmental attributes within the riparian corridors. Traditional field-based approaches to assess buffers ecological attributes cost a significant amount of money and resource. With recent innovations in GIS and other related fields, new technologies can now be utilized in buffer assessment. These include but not limited to cloud computing, BigData, spatial statistics,

and machine learning. Incorporation of these new technologies will rapidly transform our past approaches to riparian buffer assessment. This presentation will showcase several very recent applications of how new technologies are utilized in buffer ecological assessments, as well as the benefits and implications of these new techniques.

Bio: **Ge Pu**, also known as **Jeff Pu**, is a Ph.D. candidate in water resource engineering at SUNY-ESF. His focus is looking into approaches to better monitor riparian vegetation characteristics through geospatial and remote sensing means.Jeff received his Master's and Bachelor's degrees in Environmental Engineering at Drexel University, where he participated in extensive water resource research projects in both New York City and Venice, Italy.

Webinars are Recorded

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