GISCorps December Newsletter

December 2007

Other Organizations

URISA

GISCorps Partner Agencies

EWB

GSDI

MMEX

UNDP

UNHCR

UNJLC

VVAF

Volunteers for Prosperity

Relief Agency Links

Relief Web
global hub for time-critical humanitarian information on Complex Emergencies and Natural Disasters

Data/Information Links

Earthwatch Institute
Earthwatch Institute is an international non-profit organization that brings science to life for people concerned about the Earth's future.

A Message from the Core Committee

Volunteers and Friends of the GISCorps

GISCorps had another exciting year. A total of 12 projects were initiated in 2007 and five of those projects have been completed to date. These projects were a combination of remote and on-site missions in Afghanistan (two missions), Pakistan (two projects), Mozambique, Sudan, West Africa, and Biloxi – Mississippi. We also started a series of K-12 related projects in Collier County, Fl, Sac County, Iowa, and Oxford, Ohio. A total of 17 GISCorps volunteers from US, Canada, and Belgium were deployed to these missions. In the following sections of this newsletter, you will find links to their stories.

We also had active presence at URISA Annual conference and ESRI User conference this year and gave several presentations in various events and conferences.

In donation news, the following organizations and individuals have sent generous donations to GISCorps in 2007:

- BAAMA Chapter of URISA (www.baama.org)
- Environmental Systems Research Institute (www.esri.com)
- Illinois GIS User Group (http://www.ilgisa.org/) via a silent auction
- Merrick and Company (www.merrick.com)
- Ohio Chapter of URISA (www.ohurisa.org)
- Washington Chapter of URISA (www.waurisa.org)
- Several individuals…

We thank you all for your continued support of GISCorps! We are truly grateful for your continued support and are extremely excited about the opportunities that lie ahead in 2008 and beyond. We wish that the New Year brings peace and joy to all.

GISCorps Core Committee,
Juna Papajorgji, Shoreh Elhami, Mark Salling, Dianne Haley, Ingrid Bruce, Kevin Sato

P.S. Please email info@giscorps.org if you want to be removed from this list.

Deployment and Partnership News

- Healthcare Volunteers: GISCorps volunteer Tara Athan, from Alternatives to Invasive Species Inc. in California, has been working on this project since mid November. Read more at http://www.giscorps.org/hcv.php.

- K-12 Project in Collier County, Florida: GISCorps volunteer, Darryl Clare, GIS Manager of City of Cape Coral was recruited for a K-12 project in October 2007. Read more at: http://giscorps.org/collier.php.

- GIS Needs Assessment in Mozambique: In partnership with Agriculture Development International and Volunteers in Oversees Cooperative Assistance (ACDI/VOCA), Fernando Sedano of Berkeley, California was sent to Mozambique for 25 days to conduct GIS Needs Assessment. Read more at: www.giscorps.org/mozambique.php

- K-12 project in Sac County, Iowa: GISCorps volunteer Brandon Haas of NewCom Technologies, Inc. was recruited for a K-12 project in Sac County, Iowa. He will provide GIS assistance for a project called Barn Quilts. Read more at: www.giscorps.org/sac.php

- K-12 project in Oxford, Ohio: GISCorps volunteers assisted Caching Our World, a K-12 non profit organization, in conducting several events during the Geography Awareness Week. Read more at: (http://giscorps.org/cow.php).

- Second project in Hunza Valley of Pakistan: This project which was launched in October 2007 is still in progress. Carlisle Haworth, a GISCorps volunteer with TRC Solutions Inc. in San Francisco was recruited for this project and his task is to help Bernadette Baird in porting out several ArcGIS feature classes onto Google Earth environment.

- American Association for Advancement of Sciences (AAAS): This project has entered its third and final phase. Since September our five volunteers have put in tens of hours into mapping locations of various atrocities in Darfur region.

- Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI) projects: Two volunteers have been recruited for a project in West Africa.

You can read more about these projects at:
http://www.giscorps.org/proj_opp.php

URISA Announcements

Upcoming Conferences

- 12th Annual GIS/CAMA Technologies Conference
  February 25-29, 2008 - New Orleans, LA
- URISA/NENA Addressing Conference (formerly known as the Geospatial Integration for Public Safety Conference

April 7-10, 2008 - Portland, OR
- URISA's 4th Caribbean GIS Conference
  August 25-29, 2008 - Grand Cayman
- URISA's 46th Annual Conference
  October 7-10, 2008 - New Orleans, LA

What's New

- Registration Opens for 12th Annual GIS/CAMA Technologies Conference
- 2008 Exemplary Systems in Government Awards Process Opens
- Abstracts Being Accepted for URISA's 46th Annual Conference
- URISA Accepting Abstract Submissions for Fourth Caribbean GIS Conference
- New GISCorps Newsletter Posted
- Latest URISA Salary Survey Now Available

Shop for GISCorps Stuff!!

Do you find yourself in need of a new T-shirt, coffee mug, ball cap or tote bag? Do you want to advertise GISCorps and your association with the organization? Well, you are in luck! You can now find various GISCorps items at our online shop at:
http://www.cafepress.com/giscorps

Featured Project

K-12 Project - Collier County, Florida 4-H

GIS Community Development Through Community Cooperation: Collier County 4-H, Collier County School Board & GISCorps

By Darryl Clare, PhD, GISCorps Volunteer & Anna Galdames, Collier County 4-H

The Collier County GIS Community Development Project will provide the children, youth, and adults of Collier County, Florida, with access to computers, access to the Internet, and assistance with geographic information technology. Funded by an ESRI grant, the Collier County 4-H GIS Community Development Project's main goal is to help Collier County teachers to learn Geographic Information Technology skills so that they may teach their students to use the technology and better understand local and international geography.

Figure 1: Anna Galdames

Collier County GIS Community Development Project

The Collier County GIS Community Development Project is a collaborative project of 4-H of Collier County University of Florida IFAS Extension Services, Collier County School Board, the City of Naples City Council. The project was first implemented at the Collier County School Board Administration training center and was opened on a Saturday November 11, 2007 specifically for this training. There are twenty up-to-date computers, all of which are connected to the Internet. Teachers volunteered from Collier County to participate in this effort. These volunteers, along with a University of Florida 4-H Extension Agent (Anna Galdames), and a GISCorps volunteer (Darryl Clare) provided training and guidance to workshop participants.

Figure 2: Darryl Clare

Measuring Changes in GIS Computer Skills

The Collier County GIS Community Development Project helps

Collier County teachers learn computer skills through hands-on use, informal tutoring from volunteer technical staff, interaction with other computer users, and an introduction to database management. This portion measures the impact of the Collier County GIS Community Development Project on participants' computer skills.

To measure changes in their skills, participants were asked to demonstrate their abilities to do tasks in four common areas:

- General operation of the computer,

- Operate ArcView,

- Create a GIS Project, and

- Save and Electronic mail the results.

The process started with very basic tasks, such as turning on the computer and opening a file, and progressed to more difficult tasks, such as advanced map document formatting and navigating to folders. The teachers will create a map project a trained evaluator review the map product with the participant, asking the participant to create a solution to a problem. Each teacher participant will then present their results to their students and to the community during their GIS Day Festivities. Participants' computer skills will be measured over a six-month period to see if there were any changes. The first trial will be given around November 24, 2007, and the second test was in June 2007.

Figure 3: Teacher Volunteers

Community Computing Can Make a Difference

The project will show, in our estimation, that community GIS computing can have a positive impact on participants' computer, IT and Geography skills. Even without formal on-site

training programs, the Collier County GIS Community Development Project will appear to be helping community members of all ages improve their computer and GIS skills. The Collier County GIS Community Development Project will make a difference in the lives of the children, youth, and adults of Collier County, Florida, and facilitate narrowing the digital divide for residents of this growing city. The Collier County GIS Community Development Project can serve as a successful model for other programs to develop GIS technology skills through community cooperation.

Figure 4: Teacher Volunteers