

National Geographic's Giant Map Returns to Colorado as Part of the Pikes Peak Library District's Summer Reading Program Activities

This summer, children across the country will be looking for something to keep them busy. Parents, grandparents, and others who want to engage young minds, will turn to the public libraries in cities and towns to take advantage of the summer reading program. This summer, the Collaborative Summer Library Program (<http://www.cslpreads.org/>) for children is entitled "One World, Many Stories" and the program for youth has as its theme "You Are Here". Yep – geography! The Colorado Geographic Alliance is working to help librarians across the state be ready to connect literacy and geography. We are developing resources and programs that can be adapted for a variety of situations.



Galileo School of Math and Science, Colorado Springs, September 2009

We are counting on you, as dedicated geography educators, to reach out to your library and find out what kind of support might be of interest. Could we help you connect with someone in the area who could conduct a program on geocaching? Is your library looking for a speaker on globalization, the spread of pine bark beetles, or the food network in Colorado? Would you like a set of National Geographic maps to display at your local library? Let's make sure that we take this opportunity to 1. share the excitement of exploring geography with children and youth who are participating in the summer reading program, and 2. introduce librarians to the resources available through the Colorado Geographic Alliance website and other geography-related institutions.



Through a special arrangement with the National Geographic Society, the Pikes Peak Library District has been able to secure a two-week visit of the North America Giant Traveling Map. Check the COGA website in the next few months for locations and times. Maps are not usually available during the summer because they are being refurbished and cleaned, so we are grateful to be able to have one in the state during this time. If you have been thinking about hosting one of the Giant Maps (<http://events.nationalgeographic.com/events/special-events/giant-traveling-maps/>) and would like to experience one first hand, this is your chance! Contact Pikes Peak Library District Children's Librarian Jennifer Rodman, jrodman@ppld.org if you would like to serve as a map monitor during the tour.

One World, Many Stories

Geographers in the Classroom



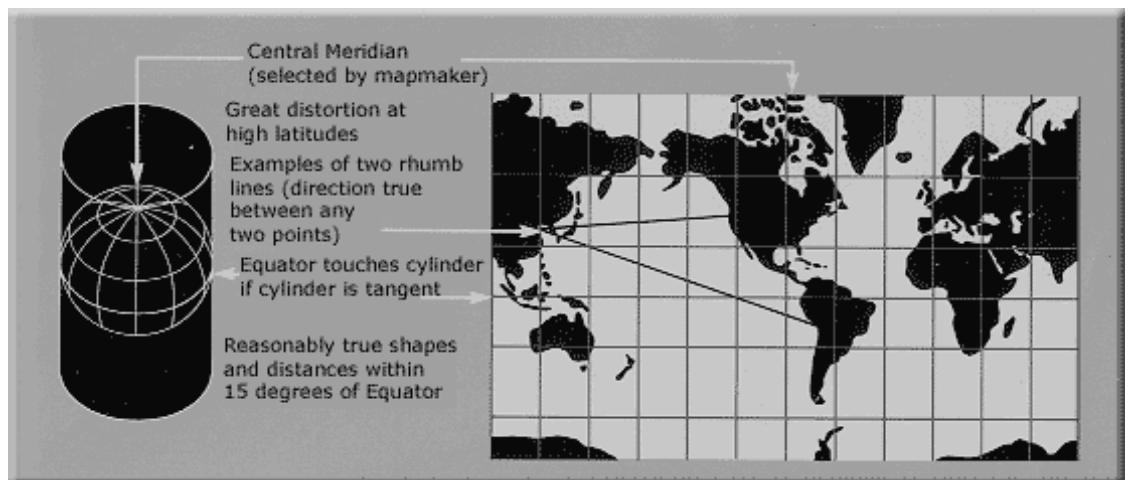
David Havlick, a geographer interested in sustainable development, conservation, and historical geography, took his expertise to kindergarten in January. Mrs. Bay's class at Steele Elementary School in Colorado Springs welcomed him and his maps to their classroom.

I arrived at Mrs. Bay's kindergarten class at 8:00 am on a chilly January morning, loaded with maps, inflatable globes, and other supplies I hoped would captivate the kids as I talked to them about maps and geography. As they huddled around me at the start of class, I noticed all the kids were still in their winter coats and mittens – as it turned out, the heat hadn't come on that morning so the classroom was only about 50 degrees. What better way to keep young students alert?

As I talked about different kinds of maps and how each could be useful, I was quickly impressed not just by how much these five- and six-year olds already knew, but also how well and eagerly they engaged with my questions. When I asked, *What do you think you'd want to learn from looking at this map of Rocky Mountain National Park?* hands shot into the air and responses poured in: "Where you can camp," "Maybe where you can go to see wildlife or pretty mountains," and "How to find a bathroom!"

We discussed a topographic and bathymetric map from Alaska, a Colorado highway map, a map that shows the hundreds of shipwreck locations along the Outer Banks of North Carolina, and then I pulled out the globes. "That's a type of Earth map!" they pointed out. When I

pressed them to clarify the difference between a map and a globe they didn't flinch: "A map is flat, but a globe is round." It turned out Mrs. Bay had showed them all about it – she had peeled an orange and pressed the splayed peel flat, voila, globe becomes map, distortion (er, disarticulation) and all!



<http://egsc.usgs.gov/isb/pubs/MapProjections/projections.html>

When I returned at the end of the day to fetch my daughter, Mrs. Bay excitedly showed me into the classroom, where an entire corner of the room was filled with twenty-two fully inflated globes. She planned to use them as instructional tools before sending them home with each child in a couple weeks. And sure enough, last week my daughter arrived with globe in hand. She proceeded to regale me with a song about all seven continents, choreographed with the globe and accurate gestures at each landmass in its turn.

I already find myself thinking about what lessons I can bring into her first-grade class next year. If you haven't made your way into an elementary, middle, or secondary school classroom in recent memory, I encourage you to change your ways! They do study geography each year, don't they? It seems like an annual habit worth forming.

Winter Counts: an online exhibition

Looking for new ways to examine time and space? Check out the Smithsonian's online exhibit on Lakota Winter Counts: http://wintercounts.si.edu/html_version/html/index.html

The Lakota, a Native American group living in the Plains region of the United States, have a tradition of keeping winter counts (*waniyetu wowapi*), or calendars that mark major events over a single year. Rather than occurring on a specific date, each Lakota new year in Lakota history begins with the first snowfall of the season. Learn more about the Lakota and see galleries of hundreds of winter counts at the Smithsonian's online exhibition, including one from the Denver Art Museum's collection.

What were the results of the summer institute regarding academic standards?

The work conducted by a dedicated group of educators at the Colorado Geographic Alliance Summer Institute has helped jumpstart the Colorado Department of Education's efforts to communicate information about how to incorporate the new academic standards into professional development and orientation programs. Brenda Barr, State Social Studies Content Specialist and Assistant Director of Academic and Instructional Support, appreciated spending time with geography teachers and administrators.

“Understanding how people in the classroom are looking at the standards has helped us develop an approach for supporting schools and districts across the state as they work to incorporate this new transformative way of thinking about student preparation.” Look for tools to help you in your classroom at

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/UAS/StandardsImplementation.html>

and under the COGA website at:

<http://www.uccs.edu/~coga/resources/standards.html>.

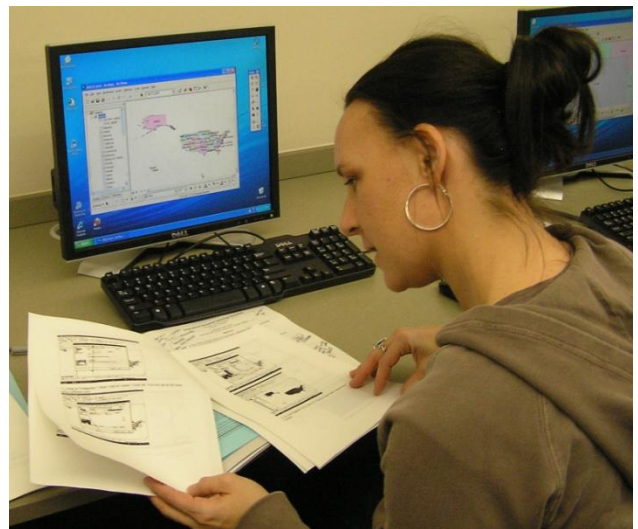


Photo by Joseph Kerski

National Council for the Social Studies, from Colorado to Washington DC

Thanks to everyone from the Colorado Geographic Alliance who supported the hard-working organizing committee as Denver hosted the 90th annual conference of the National Council for the Social Studies. Next year's event will be in Washington, DC from December 2 – 4, 2011. NCSS is now accepting proposals for presentation. ***In order to encourage more***

geography-focused proposals, the Colorado Geographic Alliance will pay registration and provide a travel stipend for up to five COGA members who submit and have geography education proposals accepted. Please note that the deadline for proposals is February 22, 2011. For more information, visit the NCSS website at:

<http://www.socialstudies.org/dc2011proposals/openconf.php>.



Continued Opportunities in Geospatial Technology in the Classroom



Introducing students to the basics of geospatial technologies offers a variety of ways to explore geographic knowledge in the classroom and on field trips. The Colorado Geographic Alliance continues to benefit from investment by Joseph Kerski and Esther Worker of Esri, Inc. in increasing the knowledge of teachers, administrators, and other educators in how to ensure that our students are well-prepared for whatever the next generation of remote sensors or geographic information scientists develops. Several introductory workshops have already been held this year. However, if your school or district is interested in hosting a

geospatial technology workshop for a whole or a half-day, please contact the coordinators at coga@uccs.edu. Check the COGA website to see video of the 2010 workshop in Pagosa Springs, <http://www.uccs.edu/~coga/curriculum/technology.html>. We would also like to hear from educators who would be interested in undertaking a workshop on “Geospatial Technology Part II” during which we would work with teachers to develop lessons incorporating technologies such as GIS, GPS, and Google Earth.

In addition, COGA is working with schools across the state that have an interest in expanding their offerings in geographic information technology. These programs range from stand-alone GIS classes to teachers who are using GPS and electronic mapping regularly in their classrooms to career and technical education programs developing around GIS. We would like to create a space where the best practices in all these areas could be shared and discussed. If you have a geospatial educational effort or program underway, or would like to talk with someone who is already started on this path, please email coga@uccs.edu and put Geospatial Technology in the subject line.



Photos by Joseph Kerski

Thanks to Esri, Inc., for continued dedication and inspiration in providing geospatial technology resources to educators at all levels. We look forward to having an enthusiastic and creative core of teachers in Colorado ready to provide a foundation for supporting academic standards that incorporate geographic tools and technology such as maps, globes, satellite images, and geospatial software to describe space and uses of space.

Congratulations to . . .

Waleed Abdalati, who will take a break from teaching geography to serve as NASA's chief scientist to advocate for NASA science and to work with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the Office of Management and Budget. Abdalati previously directed the Earth Science and Observation Center at CU-Boulder and is an associate professor of geography. He also is a fellow of the Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES), a joint venture between CU-Boulder and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. His research focus is on polar ice cover.

Michelle Pearson, who was named Colorado Teacher of the Year. Michelle, a social studies teacher at Hulstrom Options Middle School in the Adams 12 district, was recognized as state teacher of the year for her outstanding contributions to education in and out of the classroom. She is a leader in technology education, U.S. history education, and Asian studies.

University of Colorado at Boulder's Department of Geography doctoral program, which was recognized as highly rated according to an in-depth National Research Council (NRC) study. The rankings are based on 20 indicators ranging from number of students in 2005, to faculty publications from 2001-2006, to graduation rates, to faculty honors and awards, combined using a lengthy and complex statistical analysis process. Two CU-Boulder programs received overall rankings as high as second in their fields: geography (ranked in the top 4 percent of 49 programs) and aerospace engineering sciences (in the top 6 percent of 31 programs). Other geography programs ranked at this level include those at UCLA, UC-Berkeley and the University of Wisconsin at Madison. <http://www.colorado.edu/news/r/7646a697cf877a07efc8ee69f44e47fa.html>

What happened during Geography Awareness Week?

Donna O'Brien reported that in Adams 12 Five Star Schools in Thornton, the Learning Services Department held its second annual Geography Awareness Week luncheon. The room was decorated with globes and student work representing inquiry into geographical themes. Food represented either the participants' ethnic roots or a country to which they had traveled (or hoped to travel). Food ranged from Greek stuffed pastries to Mexican chili rellenos to the Republic of Boulder spicy chili. Throughout the luncheon, geographical trivia was played. People talked about their travels and home towns. It was a great success and plans were made to continue this annual tradition next year.



Photo by Donna O'Brien

But what if your curriculum did not include talking about water in the middle of November? No problem - for resources dedicated to this topic, please visit the Colorado Geographic Alliance website at http://www.uccs.edu/~coga/nat_geo.html where you will find a variety of lesson plans, resources, and organizations to augment classroom conversations. This National Geographic site on the environment provides additional perspectives - <http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/freshwater>.

National Council for Geographic Education Map Gallery Contest

The 2011 NCGE Map Gallery Committee invites you to submit a map for display during the 2011 NCGE Conference August 4 to 7 in Portland. All GIS maps are welcome. The maps will be judged by a panel of peers, with the exception of the People's Choice Award, which will be voted on by the conference attendees. Best Cartographic Design will be awarded to the map that artistically employs the elements of cartography without compromising use and functionality. Maps will be judged on fundamental cartographic principles including figure ground representations, visual hierarchy, color selection, typography, symbology, and overall aesthetic appearance. Best Analysis will be awarded to the map that is most effectively designed to display the results of spatial data analysis and that presents the information in an unbiased way, allowing the viewer to extract his or her own conclusions, utilizing the map as a tool. How can you and your students participate?

Create an awesome map – size must be ANSI D or smaller.

Save the map as a *.pdf.

Create a map abstract and collect all the important information.

Complete the submission form online.

FTP your map's *.pdf file to the server.

The Map Submission Deadline is May 15, 2011. Additional information is available at:

<https://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?hl=en&formkey=dFZ0UjhSWEF6aUdmZWM3Q3RIR1RoRGc6MQ#gid=0>



Strategic Planning Efforts Continue

You might recall that the Colorado Geographic Alliance, along with all geographic alliances around the country – yes, there is one in every state, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico – are undertaking assessment and planning. This process will help ensure that Gil Grosvenor's goal of geographic literacy for American students will continue. Grosvenor, who recently retired as Chair of the National Geographic Society, began the grass-roots nationwide geography education program in the late 1980s that has evolved into a nationwide alliance network of dedicated teachers and professors. Now, in the wake of 21st century developments in elementary, secondary, and higher education, the alliance network requires thoughtful nurturing and encouragement. Do you have a perspective or skill that could contribute to the planning process? We are seeking individuals who have a knack for assessing systems, for creating long-term structures and governance systems, for fundraising, for integrating higher education and local school districts, for moving geographic concepts into educational settings, or for communicating with the public. These and many other talents will be needed over the next few years as the Colorado Geographic Alliance looks toward the future and brings the talents of geography educators to students throughout the state. Email coga@uccs.edu with your interest and put "Strategic Planning" in the subject line.



Giant Maps Available for Your School or District!

If you are interested in reserving a giant map of North America, South America, Asia, Africa or the Pacific from National Geographic, please visit the website for details: www.nationalgeographic.com/giantmaps. Then check with the Colorado Geographic Alliance to see how we might help you finance this event. Email the coordinators at coga@uccs.edu and put “Giant Map” in the subject line. For more details about the map’s visit in Colorado Springs, see a slide show at http://www.uccs.edu/~coga/news_events.html.

Resources for Egypt and Beyond

Here are some references that you might find of use as students struggle to understand what is happening in Egypt and the Middle East. For additional maps, articles, and lesson plans, please visit our website and click on “Curriculum” and “Resources”. www.uccs.edu/coga

History and Current Issues for the Classroom, The Choices Program, Brown University

The pro-democracy demonstrations in Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries have threatened the authority of dictatorships in the region. These historic events are profoundly affecting the people of Egypt, the Middle East, and countries of the world—including the United States. This free lesson introduces students to the protests in Egypt, helps them consider the role of the media, and asks them to analyze the role of the United States in Egyptian politics.

In this lesson students will: Identify the causes of the demonstrations in Egypt. Explore the role of traditional and social media in the uprising. Consider the U.S. response to events in Egypt.

http://www.choices.edu/resources/twtn_egypt.php

Facts about Egypt

Investigate why tourism has been so important to Egypt. Check out these background sites:

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/eg.html>

<http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/countries/egypt-guide/>

Recommended websites from Sarah Theobald, a study-abroad student who spent the fall of 2010 at the American University in Cairo

<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/>

<http://sarthanapalos.wordpress.com/2011/01/31/a-guide-how-not-to-say-stupid-stuff-about-egypt/>

<http://www.facebook.com/album.php?aid=268523&id=586357675&fbid=493689677675>

Colorado Summative Assessment in Social Studies to be Developed

Working with a broad group of organizations and individuals, the Colorado Geographic Alliance participated in an effort to influence the development of the new state assessment system, which followed on the heels of the adoption of state standards by the Colorado Department of Education in December of 2009. Explaining to the State Board of Education and the Colorado Commission of Higher Education why social studies should be part of the summative assessment system (currently limited to English language arts, math, and science), social studies educators drew on personal experiences and national trends. There are still hurdles to overcome, including funding, test framework, and implementation timing. For background on the assessment process, visit the “News and Events” section of COGA’s website at http://www.uccs.edu/~coga/news_events.html.

Share your Viewpoint

National Study on the State of Social Studies Teachers

Do you teach social studies in kindergarten, elementary school, middle school or high school? We are sure that there are more than 339 teachers who do so in the state of Colorado. Time is running out for your observations to be recorded as part of a research project entitled **National Study on the State of Social Studies Teachers**, developed by university faculty members of the National Council for the Social Studies. The purpose of this project is to develop an accurate picture of social studies in the K-12 curriculum. The Colorado Council for the Social Studies and the Colorado Geographic Alliance are the Colorado co-sponsors for this project. To participate in the survey, review the consent form at <http://www.uccs.edu/~coga/>, paste the survey link into a new browser <http://www.surveymshare.com/s/AIAKJVD>, and be sure that your view is counted.

TELL Colorado

A variety of educational organizations in the State of Colorado recently launched the second TELL Colorado survey. This is an opportunity for educators to anonymously share their perceptions of teaching and learning conditions in their own schools. The results from this survey are intended to help guide school and district improvement - and to drive state level policy. Schools and districts that reach the 50 percent participation threshold will be able to access their own data after the survey window closes. This is valuable data that can lead to very rich discussions about improvements for the school and/or district and enhance unified improvement planning efforts.

Please visit the website (www.tellcolorado.org) to view the survey instruments and other supporting documents, such as recommendations from the coalition on how to use or how not to use the data. If your school(s) did not receive codes, then the Help Desk is now open. Individuals may contact the Help Desk via the website (www.tellcolorado.org), email (helpdesk@tellcolorado.org) or phone (1-888-280-7903). Phone lines are open 7:30am to 4:30pm on Monday through Friday. The survey window closes Monday, February 28, 2011.

Nominations for Geography Educators – Due April 1, 2011

If you are interested in nominating a geography educator who has done excellent work for an award in areas such as teaching, scholarship, or lesson plans, please visit the National Council for Geographic Education's website for details:

<http://www.ncge.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3286>.



Colorado Geographic Alliance Newsletter
Department of Geography and Environmental Studies
University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
1420 Austin Bluffs Parkway
Colorado Springs, CO 80918