Celebrate Geography Awareness Week
November 14-20th

Celebrate Geography at Every Scale
Across the nation, all around the state, and in classrooms everywhere, the week of November 14-20, Delawareans will focus on the importance of geographic literacy. It’s all a part of an annual observance led by the National Geographic Society. The idea is to bring the spotlight of public awareness to the critical importance of geographic literacy for all Americans.

Teacher Support
The Delaware Geographic Alliance believes that the best road to geographic literacy for our students is good classroom instruction based on the Delaware Geography Standards. Workshops and materials presented by DGA offer creative and effective ways to link this year’s theme, Freshwater with the standards. Four workshops will be held during the month of October (see calendar on pg 5). Workshop materials and resources will be available on the DGA website at www.ngsednet.org/dga.

2010 Theme: Freshwater
The theme selected for this year’s GAW points to the importance of water to life and development. Water shortages, pollution, and conflicts over water rights are growing problems in many areas of our nation and our world. Help build awareness and encourage students to get involved.

A Week of Geography Activities– Web Resources

Monday: Where is the Freshwater? World, National and State maps. Satellite Images

Tuesday: Water Cycles and Systems Diagrams and Animations

Wednesday: GIS Day

How can GIS Maps help us care for Earth’s resources?

Thursday: T-Shirt Wear-In Day Have fun mapping place names

Friday: How Are Places and Cultures Affected by Water? Literature, Poetry and Proverbs; Water Wisdom from the Past; Art, Music, Religion.
The Geographer’s Corner
His only hobby is travel by Peter Mires

“His only hobby is travel” has to be one of the greatest understatements by an academic geographer. I used his textbook *The Human Mosaic* in my cultural geography course, and each semester I’d read those words concluding his brief biography and smile. I knew Terry Jordan to be the consummate field researcher, and for him to relegate travel to hobby status was kind of like another Jordan saying that he liked basketball.

Dr. Jordan, the Walter Prescott Webb Professor of Geography at the University of Texas at Austin, had literally been there and done that. Once I sent him some photographs of historic cemetery architecture in Wisconsin, and his kind reply related what I’d seen to similar forms in Alaska, Soviet Karelia, and even Tahiti and Papua New Guinea.

My passport will never come close to the dozens of countries visited by Dr. Jordan, but I do have a pretty active travel schedule. After the recent Chilean earthquake I went to that thin country *with* author Sara Wheeler. A month ago I participated in the last grain race *with* author Eric Newby. Right now I’m on a Mediterranean cruise *with* Mark Twain.

**My only hobby is travel writing.** Later this year I plan to go to Antarctica *with* Apsey Cherry-Garrard and return to the Yucatan *with* John L. Stephens.

Although travel writing has been around since the days of Herodotus, it really came into its own as a literary genre in the twentieth century. Readers could share vicariously in the road trips of Jack Kerouac (*On the Road*) and John Steinbeck (*Travels with Charley*). Those drawn to foreign adventure could turn to the likes of Robert Byron (*The Road to Oxiana*) and Graham Greene (*Journey Without Maps*).

For sales, travel writing pales by comparison to popular fiction, which accounts for more than half of all books sold, but it’s not uncommon to see travel writers on the *New York Times* best-seller list.

It should come as no surprise that I’m drawn to these books. After all, I’m a geographer. What I find fascinating about them is the sense of authenticity I get from reading a first-person nonfiction narrative. Chances are that I will never own a home in Italy, so I turn to Frances Mayes (*Under the Tuscan Sun*) to see what that would be like. I won’t be making the trek from Cairo to Cape Town anytime soon, so I’ll take Paul Theroux’s (*Dark Star Safari*) word for it.

In brick-and-mortar bookstores travel writers are usually shelved right next to travel guidebooks. For me, this juxtaposition is fitting insofar as it appeals to both the globe-trotter and the armchair traveler.

After all, those of us interested in travel, and by extension geography, share the same motivation to expand our horizons to include new people and places. Whether experienced in person or through the words of others, my current guide abroad, Mark Twain, said it best: “Travel is fatal to prejudice.” I think that Terry Jordan would agree.

*Editors note.* This op-ed piece was originally written for, and circulated by, the American Geographical Society. Dr. Mires is a Fellow of the AGS and member of the society’s Writers Circle.
Our Network Works!

Tech-minded Alliance members contribute and draw power from our grid

Looking for great websites about WORLD CULTURES?

Carol Gersmehl,
NY Alliance Coordinator
recommends:
About UN World Heritage sites-
http://whc.unesco.org/en/list
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Table_of_World_Heritage_Sites_by_country
From "Material World"-
http://www.menzelphoto.com/books/mw.html
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/worldbalance/material.html
http://www.aroundtheworldin80diets.com/
http://www.npr.org/blogs/pictureshow/2010/08/10/129107806/whatieat

Make your class more interactive and fun!
Tom Gavin
Third Grade Teacher
Eisenberg Elementary

"Using google docs (it’s easy) to create online surveys and quizzes for your students! I have been using google docs to assess my students in the classroom. Once an assessment is created, students take the assessment on a computer and google docs grades the assessment. I can quickly assess student needs and identify weaknesses for re-teaching purposes.”

Here’s a video I made:
http://dl.dropbox.com/u/6446213/tgavin.com/Podcasts/googledocshd.mp4

It can also be found on tgavin.com under teacher links.

Connect and Collaborate

If you are a high school teacher teaching geography, Kristen Taggart recommends joining the APHG listserve from college board -

Check out content links at Mathematics of Cartography -
http://math.rice.edu/~lanius/pres/map/
Savannah, Georgia was the site of the annual meeting of the National Council for Geographic Education from September 28 - October 3, 2010. Six DGA members attended sessions. Varied offerings in concurrent sessions made it easy to learn new techniques and approaches. In the exhibit area, vendors displayed new software and instructional products. And who could resist the Southern charm of historic Savannah? Attendees from the South Pacific island of Palau, from South Korea, and from Germany networked with American and Canadian teachers and professors from many universities.

Delaware Geography Teacher of the Year Allen Sylvester reflects on the conference: “Conferences, especially NCGE’s, can be extremely fun and can be tremendous opportunities. Like most things though, you get out of them what you have put in. NCGE is my paramount destination of choice, but I am going to look into other conferences. Attending conferences is largely a factor of resources and accessibility. For example, it might make sense to go to NCSS when it is easy to get to, like with Washington D.C. in 2011, but not if it is relatively inaccessible.”

DGA member Wendy Harrington presented her DRC unit Regions to a large and enthusiastic group. Maggie Legates teamed up with New York Alliance Coordinator Carol Gersmehl to present another DRC unit for kindergarten and first grade entitled Thinking About Maps and Globes. UD professor of geography, Dr. Peter Rees, explored innovative methods of teaching at the college level in his paper “Putting the Region Back in World Regional Geography.” Dawn Willis attended a special workshop sponsored by the National Geographic Society that explored new ways to celebrate Geography Awareness Week. Longtime DGA geotech leader Jacqui Wilson enjoyed the chance to network with GIS enthusiasts.

The National Council for Geography Education is a professional organization of classroom teachers, professional geographers and Geography professionals who work together to advance the cause of geographic literacy. In August, 2011 the annual meeting will be held in Portland, Oregon.

DGA Members travel to National Conference

Gourmet Geographers Maintain Connections

Members of DGA have begun meeting monthly to share travel adventures, keep informed about DGA happenings, and gather important data about the landscape by sampling the fare at local eateries. The next meeting will be on November 5th at:

The Bellefonte Café & Trading Co. (804 Brandywine Blvd., Bellefonte, DE)
302-761-9175
Delaware?  By: Dr. Peter Mires, Contributing Editor, pmires@udel.edu

A significant part of the high school experience includes participation in extracurricular activities such as sports and clubs. As a freshman at Dover High School, I joined the Lamia Club. The year was 1967, and there was considerable interest in the People-to-People movement, whose raison d'être was the establishment of international sister cities.

The sister city of Dover, Delaware was Lamia, Greece. The relationship was formalized in 1963 with the exchange of gifts between the two cities, as well as the exchange of visitors, my parents and older brother included. My brother spent his junior year (1965-66) in Lamia. My parents also hosted a Wesley College student from Greece.

Over lunch some weeks ago, my dad and I were reminiscing about the sister city program and saying what a wonderful vehicle it was for geographic education. That prompted me to go through my high school yearbooks (something I only do to prepare for one of those decennial reunions).

To quote the 1968 Doverian, under the title “Clubs Promoted Friendship” is the following, “The Lamia Club’s activities included an assembly on Greek dances, a movie on the dedication of Lamia Place, a Greek dinner, and a visit to a Greek Orthodox Church. With the money raised through activities, over two hundred dollars was sent to Lamia for underprivileged school children. The Club also began a scholarship fund for D.H.S. Lamia Club members. Dover has indeed made a lasting friendship with Lamia.”

Unfortunately that “lasting friendship” faded over time. Today, most Dover residents are unaware of the excitement and enthusiasm for cross-cultural exchange that permeated our state capital forty-some years ago. (As for my brother, he remains fluent in Modern Greek and has returned to Greece many times.)

Although Dover’s sister city relationship has dissipated since the 1960s, two other Delaware communities—Lewes and Wilmington—have sister cities. Just last summer Lewes formalized its relationship with the city of Hoorn in The Netherlands, which makes sense because a Lewes landmark, the Zwaanendael Museum, is an architectural replica of the Hoorn City Hall. Wilmington, as the state’s largest city, is apparently not content to have one sister city. It has seven. In addition to Kalmar, Sweden (an understandable choice given Wilmington’s colonial past), are cities in Israel, Germany, China, Italy, Nigeria, and England.

For more on sister cities, see the website of Sister Cities International: www.sister-cities.org
Building the Geography Wing of the Rapidly-Rising DRC
(aka Delaware Recommended Curriculum)

Tucked away within the Delaware Department of Education website is a growing menu of instructional units tailored to the needs of Delaware students and teachers (see www.doe.k12.de.us–Social Studies Model Units). Authored or adapted by Delaware teachers, these units are freely available to all Delaware schools. They vary in approach, in topic, and in style but they meet requirements set by the state. Each unit must be clearly aligned to the state standards, include assessments and rubrics that reflect the depth of knowledge level of rigor demanded by our standards. Resources called for by the unit must be included or generally available without charge. In addition, unit authors are asked to include best-practice advice on instructional methods and ways to adapt to student’s needs. Ask any unit author and they will tell you—it’s a big challenge to write a unit that fits the bill. Thankfully, a lot of great Delaware teachers are working to build the DRC. And the geography wing of the structure is rising rapidly!

Dusty Shockley, Social Studies Associate at the DDOE, says that such progress would not be possible without cooperation and support from lots of individuals and organizations within the social studies community. We are fortunate to have close collaboration between DDOE and the Delaware Geographic Alliance, the Center for Economic Education, the Center for Teacher Education, and the Democracy Project. The school districts, individually and also through the Social Studies Coalition of Delaware, have provided support and funding for unit writing projects. Other social studies related organizations like the Kalmar Nyckel Foundation have contributed resources and research expertise. While many units are “in the pipeline” of editing and revision, expect to see many more units popping up on the website soon. The Social Studies Coalition of Delaware plans to sponsor all-day unit training sessions throughout the 2010-2011 school year. Check the GA website www.ngsednet.org for geography training opportunities.

Approved DRC Units in Geography as of October, 2010:

Thinking About Maps and Globes – Geo Standard 1(K-1)
Using Maps and Globes (Grade 2-3)
Landforms (Grade 2)
Places (Grade 3)
Regions (Grade 3)
Building Mental Maps of Our State and Nation (Grade 4)
Community Profiles and Connections (Grade 4)
Building Global Mental Maps (Grade 6)
Green Cities (Grade 7)
Conflict and Cooperation (Grade 7)
Delaware Health Initiative units (Grades 9-12) including these titles:
   Delaware’s Next Hospital, Cancer and the Environment, Infant Mortality,
   AIDS Plays No Favorites, the Healthiest Place, Avian Flu
Dams modify the Environment (Grade 9)
Migration Patterns (Grade 10)
Delaware Area Rivers and Streams

Chesapeake Bay

Delaware River

Delaware Bay

Atlantic Ocean

Data: Delaware DataMIL; DelDOT
Cartographer: Amanda Lawson, DGA 10/12/2010
IMPORTANT REMINDER TO SCHOOLS
With students grades 4-8

Registration Deadline for the National Geographic Bee Competition is October 15, 2010.

School principals may register through National Geographic Society Headquarters at National Geographic Bee
1145 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20036
Check www.nationalgeographic.com for registration details.

The Delaware Geographic Bee will be held on April 1, 2011.

The Delaware Geographic Alliance is an organization for you! Membership is open to all teachers, student teachers, geographers and geography professionals, parents—anyone who understands that it is vital for our youth to know more about the world.

Membership is easy: Access one of our websites, click on “Join Now” and answer a few simple questions. There is no membership fee, there are no required meetings. But there are benefits!

Join the Delaware Geographic Alliance

Some benefits of Alliance membership:
1. Good, standards-based professional development opportunities.
2. Print and web resources for teaching and learning—distributed free through state mail, websites, and workshop distribution.
3. Networking with professionals who care and who work to make a difference!
4. Travel and study opportunities.
5. Recognition for teacher contributions.