

Newsletter of the Delaware Geographic Alliance

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*Two weeks of
geographic
fundamentals,
friendship
and food!!!*

Kim Carlson, ASGE '99
Kristen Wildes ASGI '99
Becky Reed, SGC '97,
ASGI '99, GATI '99

We learned as much from the
participants as they claim to
have learned from us.

Dawn Willis, Technology In-
stitute co-director

AWARDS & REWARDING TALK SUCCESSFUL SPRING DINNER

The Alliance held its annual Spring Meeting at Maple Dale Country Club on April 13, and it was one of the most successful in recent years.

Cindy Baker and her students once again supplied the decorative touch everyone enjoyed. The presentation of awards is always a highlight, and this year was no exception.

The service award this year went to two long-time TCs, both of whom were eminently deserving, Annie Neubauer of Redding Intermediate and Neil Webster of William Penn High. Both

have contributed their time and talents to the Alliance over several years.

Annie has worked in numerous capacities, principally GAW and the State Geographic Bee. Just this year she served as one of the moderators.

Neil has put most of his effort into professional development, having presented many workshops over the years; he has served several times in the important position of staff member or director of ASGI.

These winners exemplify the ideal TC.

The Alliance holds its place as the best (O.K. There's a little prejudice here.) of the state-wide subject-area organizations because of such active teacher consultants.

This year's Geography Teacher of the Year is Dawn Willis of Milford Middle School. She teaches fifth and sixth grade gifted students. Through her involvement in just about every social studies organization and in technology training and readiness to share her expertise, she has impacted literally every school in the state. She richly deserves this honor.

See **Speaker**, page 8

Alliance Lines up a Busy Summer Schedule

The Delaware Geographic Alliance again offers its popular Summer Geography Institute this July. This is a two-week residential program. The first week, July 9-14, will be held at the University of Delaware Department of Geography, Pearson Hall; the second week, July 16-21 will be held at the Virden Center, Lewes, Delaware.

This is the well-known institute that gives Delaware teachers geographic instruction, first-hand observation of some of Delaware's regions, sample lesson plans galore, and training in presentation techniques.

All expenses are covered by the Alliance, including tuition, texts and other materials, accommodations, group travel for field trips, and all group meals.

Ask any TC about the value of this institute. Most call it the best professional development experience of their careers. Perhaps the biggest bonus is to gain the Alliance and its TCs as colleagues and resources to be called on in the future. Many graduates become involved actively in the Alliance and take advantage of various institutes held by other states.

Some recent graduates - see the side bar - said this: "Two weeks of geographic fundamentals, friendship and food!!! The geography Institute helped to illuminate the geography standards. We became more confident in using and interpreting geographic information. Another bonus was the fact that we received a box full of lesson plans - many that we've actually used!

The Institute also gave us a number of maps, a Goode's Atlas and a tee shirt. our professional network,

See **Institutes**, page 6

On the Bookshelf — Reviews

Head to Toe Coverage

We have two similar and yet quite different candidates for your summertime geography reading, each an exhaustive treatment of one of Earth's polar regions.

Across the Top of the World, the Quest for the Northwest Passage, by James P. Delgado (Checkmark-Facts on File, 1999) relates the long saga of explorations aimed at finding the Northwest passage. Delgado, the executive director of the Vancouver Maritime Museum in British Columbia, has had a long involvement in participating in and leading shipwreck studies. He led an archaeological study of Roald Amundsen's ship *Maud*, the first such detailed study of a shipwreck in arctic waters. His long experience furnishes his accounts with the details of conditions that make the reader always aware of the perils the expeditions were facing.

It was only a half century after the voyages of Columbus that the search for a practicable route around the Americas began in earnest. It was of commercial and strategic interest to all the European powers.

Englishman Martin Frobisher sailed with three ships and 37 men in 1576 and found what he mistakenly thought was the entrance to the northwest passage. Late in the season, he lost his ship's boat and five men; capturing an Inuit as proof of his penetration, he barely escaped before winter closed in.

Expedition after expedition set sail for the next 250 years from Europe and met failure in the Arctic. Sometimes they were helped or guided by the Inuit, but often the locals were unfriendly. Many men and ships were lost over three centuries with little to show for their efforts.

In 1845 Sir John Franklin left England with two ships, both outfitted with specially strengthened hulls, equipped with steam engines and stocked for a three-year voyage.

It was all for naught. They crossed the Atlantic, met two whaling ships and moored their ships to a big iceberg to await favorable sailing conditions. The explorers and whaling crews spent some time together. Then, as Delgado puts it, "The Arctic closed around them, and they vanished."

Not for two years was any thought given to a search, as they had been supplied for a three-year voyage. In 1849, several search expeditions were sent out but failed to find a trace of Franklin. Not until the summer of 1850 were any traces found; they found a campsite from the first winter.

Eventually, enough was pieced together to credit Franklin with being the first explorer actually to be virtually through the passage, although precisely what disaster struck them wasn't discovered. With Inuit help, an American explorer, Charles Francis Hall, found the complete skeleton of Lieutenant Henry LeVesonté of the ship *Erebus*.

Finally, Roald Amundsen, the famed Norwegian polar explorer made the first complete trip through the passage, arriving in Nome in 1905. He prepared for years, becoming an expert navigator and sailor and selecting carefully an excellent crew of only seven. A critical decision was to employ a small ship where so many large ones had failed. The *Gjøa* was a thirty-year-old fishing sloop only 69 feet long. He had it especially strengthened and installed a small diesel engine which he described as "the pet of everyone on board."

The book has dozens of pictures, maps and illustrations and provides gripping reading.

Antarctic Odyssey, In the Footsteps of the South Polar Explorers, by Graham Collier and Patricia Graham Collier (Carroll & Graf Publishers, 1999) pursues a somewhat different organizational plan. This husband and wife team has produced a

book blending the technical and poetic. Author Graham centers his accounts around the geography of Antarctica, particularly the areas traversed by the various explorers; he provides exhaustive descriptions and maps. His approach is more geographic than historical or biographical, but if you know the stories of the famous expeditions, you will have no difficulty.

Photographer Patricia provides absolutely stunning pictures from everywhere they went on three extended visits to the continent. She records the physical features of the terrain, if that is indeed the right term, and they are among the most magnificent scenic pictures you could hope to see. She includes some of the clearest close-ups of wildlife ever published.

There are good capsule descriptions of the explorers who gained fame pushing for the South Pole: James Clark Ross, who made three early forays into the Antarctic wilderness; Ernest Shackleton, who was a member of Scott's first expedition and later led three of his own and died in sight of South Georgia; Robert Falcon Scott, who reached the South Pole a month after Amundsen and died with all his party on the return trip; and, of course, Amundsen, who was the first to conquer both the North and the South, the first to traverse the Northwest Passage and the first to reach the South Pole.

The tone of the writing and the beauty of the photographs make this a more emotional experience, but the historical information is intermixed in such a way that it requires concentration to keep the chronology of the explorations straight.

These two books together make a fabulously exciting and engrossing read, full of hardships, beauty and heroes to admire.

Alliance Members Busy at the Bee

Delaware's Geographic Bee, held April 7, at Clayton Hall, was very exciting. There were many high scorers from the original seventy contestants, necessitating a run-off to fill out the list of ten finalists to appear on the stage with Tom Neubauer as moderator.

After the early eliminations, tensions rose as it always does at the approach of the last few questions. That tension was broken once. Shawn Soviak, a Redding Intermediate sixth grader, was asked to name the most populous city of Gabon; he stood on tiptoe to reach the microphone and announced clearly and loudly, "I don't know!" When Tom shot back, "I didn't either!" the audience cracked up.

Shortly later Shawn wrapped up third place; second went to Patrick Boyer, a seventh grader from St Ann School. The Delaware champion is Ramsey Furse, an eleven-year-old sixth grader from Lewes Middle School. This young man is a veritable fount of geographic information, and he may also have profited from past experience; this is his second Delaware championship.

Ramsey will represent Delaware at the national Bee on May 23 and 24 at the National Geographic Society headquarters in Washington, D.C. All of us wish him the best.

Delaware has one hundred schools that qualify to send contestants to the State level, but so far we've not come close to having them all participate. Some efforts toward encouraging more schools to become involved are in the works for next year.

Two TCs Bring Their Students Together Becky, Maggie and 43 Young Geographers with GPS! Can You Doubt That Good Geography Was Done and Fun Had?

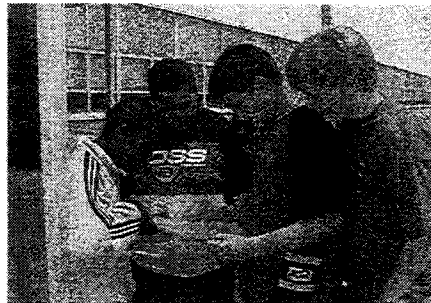
On May 16th, two TCs were able to get some of their students together for some hands-on geography.

Maggie Legates took thirty-three of her Milford Middle School students to visit Becky Reed's Gunning Bedford students. Ten of Becky's students, who comprised her Community Atlas Group, led Maggie's on a GPS (Global Positioning Systems) scavenger hunt, using four belonging to the Alliance and one belonging to Becky.



One of Becky's helping one of Maggie's

Becky's students had devised the hunt as part of their Community Atlas Group after-school meetings. A sample question is, "What do fish swim in?" Since fish swim in a school, the waypoint was the entrance to the school.



Marking the entrance of the school

The five groups competed for a typical Alliance-type prize — food! The winning team got Twizlers.

One team of girls learned a lesson about not getting too excited. They were having such grand fun figuring out the clues that they began to run from place to place and forgot to

enter at least some of the waypoints. They didn't win, but they had a great time.



Oh, never mind! Let's find the next one.



What do you suppose the clue was?
"Long may she wave?"
See Becky and Maggie, page 6

Progress Report

We recently received an unsolicited note from a TC that we wanted to share with you because it reflects the efforts of teachers up and down the state to implement the geography standards.

“A student has just enrolled in our school - his fourth for the year. His explanation of the physical processes of mountain building, erosion and silting, and how they have caused the growth of wetlands here on Delmarva indicated that he had not only been in geography classes but had in fact learned a lot. Another seventh grader in my class cited New Orleans as a poor site and further demonstrated his geographic knowledge by explaining that New Orleans' situation, however, provided optimum accessibility to the interior of the continent. My next class figured out why Mexico's population is concentrated in the center of the country while the U.S. population is near the edges. They brought natural hazards, availability of resources, access to markets and jobs, and climate into the discussion. But I was proudest of the young lady who suggested that volcanoes are dangerous but provide great soil. Not bad for 7th grade.”

The standards, the workshops, the increased content knowledge that the teachers have gained through summer institutes and geography courses are netting solid returns. Have your students made progress? Are your assessments really measuring growth of genuine learning? Maybe you can take a few minutes to have the students assess what worked well and why. We would appreciate hearing from you.

Geography Lexicography

map - the word map comes from the Latin word “mappa,” meaning cloth or napkin, because medieval maps were drawn on cloth.

atlas - an atlas is a book of maps. The word atlas was first used by Mercator, a 16th century cartographer. Mercator named his books of maps after the Greek god Atlas, who was forced to carry the Earth on his head and shoulders as punishment.

portolan charts - “charts drawn on parchment to help 13th century Mediterranean traders to find harbors along the coastline. They were portable and could be carried around instead of being kept in libraries.”

(Source: Taylor, Barbara. 1994. **Be Your Own Map Expert**, New York: Sterling Publishing Co., Inc.

The Fall Line

(<http://tapestry.usgs.gov/14fallline.html>)

Is there a pattern to the location of east coast cities? What is the reason? If you go to the U.S. Geological Survey website you will find the answer - in color.



“The Fall Line is a low east-facing cliff paralleling the Atlantic coastline from New Jersey to the Carolinas. It separates hard Paleozoic metamorphic rocks of the Appalachian Piedmont to the west from the softer, gently dipping Mesozoic and Tertiary sedimentary rocks of the Coastal Plain. This erosional scarp, the site of many waterfalls, hosted flume-and-water-wheel-powered industries in colonial times and thus helped determine the location of such major cities as Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond.” (Source: United States Geological Survey)