



## **Geography Needed- Now More Than Ever!**

America has been “talking geography” a lot lately. Most Americans, we are told, think the country is “on the wrong course”, or has completely lost its way. Many wonder where we are right now, while others can tell you: we are between a rock and a hard place. How many times have we heard that there are very real connections between Wall Street and Main Street? Unfortunately, the current financial pinch may also make it easier to see the connections to School Street and Sesame Street as well. State revenues estimates have been revised downward and school budgets have tightened up. The Delaware Geographic Alliance has also seen a reduction- and the forecast is for more of the same. In economic downturns one of the first things to lose out is education, and particularly professional development. But we at DGA are committed to support teachers of geography. We will find a way!



Our first effort will be to stretch existing resources to meet the needs of classroom teachers. For example, this fall we were grateful to the support of Red Clay and Indian River School Districts and to St. Thomas

More Prep for hosting our fall workshops free of charge. This allowed us to save several thousand precious dollars to use in other areas. We continue to look for partnerships, sponsors and “freebies” we can pass along to our teacher members.

We know that there will be intense competition for state dollars when the budget process begins again. This fall we plan to contact our legislators in Dover in a “teach in”. Our goal will be to meet with each member of the

General Assembly to remind them of the crucial importance of geography and geographic education in charting a course to a safer and more prosperous America, and ultimately, a better world.

**Geography Awareness Week** (November 16-22) is an opportunity to remind ourselves and others of the importance of geography. How will you spread the word? You probably received the National Geographic Society’s GAW Toolkit with a poster, lesson ideas and mapping resources. DGA has also developed some great teaching aids and activities, free to download. Find these resources at [www.degeog.org](http://www.degeog.org).

### ***You can’t beat these prices!***

In these days of scarce resources, DGA members can still call on us for useful, standards-based, high-quality instructional materials- and they come to you free thanks to the support of the National Geographic Society, NASA Space Grant, and the Delaware Dept. of Education. What a deal!

### ***What’s on the website?***

Examples of topics and resources on our website:

K-3 Space images of lakes, islands, rivers and other basic landforms are with simple definitions and maps to help students build a better mental map.

4-5 Delaware’s physical features are compared with the entire US, and similar landforms in the Americas and illustrated with appropriate maps and satellite imagery.

Special sections on canals and barrier islands are included.

6-8 River systems (tributaries, deltas, oxbows, etc) come alive with stunning satellite imagery. Deserts of the US are compared with desert regions worldwide. Clear explanations and maps

9-12 Three issues-oriented fact papers are designed to stimulate discussion and relate to civics, history and economics. Three topics are included:

**Draining the Everglades** (development vs. environmental concerns),

**The San Andreas Fault** (how people react to natural hazards)

**Northwest Passage** (changing climate and its impact).

**Additional resources** include lesson plans, information on GIS for use in the classroom on GIS day, and info on the T-Shirt Wear-In.

## ***Geography Awareness Week***

### ***School Celebrations***

#### ***-What's Your Plan?***

**The William Penn High School** cafeteria will offer students “Jamaican Jerk Chicken Sandwiches”, “Canadian Hockey Half-time Hotdogs”, “Mexican Soft Shell Tacos” and “New York Little Italy Pizza”. Daily announcements will remind students of some important geographic fact, reports Kristen Taggart. Taggart serves as department chair and her teaching assignments include geography and AP Human Geography.

Schools around the state will find ways to recognize geography's important role in various ways. We'd like to hear about your plans and share them through our website or newsletter. Please drop us a note and tell us about your plans. Just email me at [maggielg@udel.edu](mailto:maggielg@udel.edu). Don't forget to take pictures!

*Maggie Legates, DGA Coordinator*



*Students at Brookside Elementary School, Newark map their data during GAW 2007.*

Ask your students to wear a t-shirt with a place name printed on it...or collared shirt if required. The shirt may be a travel souvenir, support a sports team, or promote a product so long as it bears the name of a place that can be located on a map! Count the number of students who participate and report the total to our Alliance office at [maggielg@udel.edu](mailto:maggielg@udel.edu).

Please report the name of your school district, school name, grade level, and the number of students who participated along with the teacher's name of the class. At the conclusion of Geography Awareness Week (Friday, November 21<sup>th</sup>), the class with the most individual participants as well as the school with the most participatory classes will receive *prizes*...Geographic in nature!

Results of the T-Shirt Where-In will be posted on the alliance website!

What can you do with the data? Here are some ideas:

- Have students locate the manufacturer location on the map by reading the label of the shirt.
- What patterns emerge when analyzing where the shirts were manufactured?
- How may the shirt have been transported to the place where it was sold?

#### **Statewide Geography Awareness Week Events:**

**Monday, November 17**

**Tuesday, November 18**

T-Shirt Wear-In- All Schools!

**Wednesday, November 19**

State GIS Day event at Dover AFB Museum

**Thursday, November 20**

Teacher Chat with Geographer Jerry Mitchell

**Friday, November 21**

UD Geography Dept. Colloquium

Visiting Geographer to Speak at Special “Teacher Talk”, Thursday, November 20.



Jerry Mitchell, Coordinator of the South Carolina Geographic Alliance, will speak with DGA members during Geography Awareness Week.

How useful were the forecasts of storm surge and flooding that were available to disaster planners before Hurricane Katrina? What did field research reveal about the accuracy of computer models? How can we best teach students about natural hazards and how people respond to them?

**Geographer Jerry Mitchell of the University of South Carolina will share his research with DGA members on Thursday, Nov. 20, 5:30-7:30 at Room 203 Pearson Hall on the University of Delaware’s Newark campus. This will be an informal talk with plenty of time for discussion and questions. An informal supper will be served. This event is free, but registration is required. Email the DGA office at [maggielg@udel.edu](mailto:maggielg@udel.edu) or call 302-831-6783 to let us know you are coming. No reservations accepted after November 17.**

## A Different Kind of Open House You and Your Students Are Invited!

Celebrate Geography Awareness Week by treating yourself and your students to this special Open House event to showcase GIS (Geographic Information Systems). You can learn a lot while having fun. This free activity is open to all. DGA is a co-sponsor.

**GIS DAY  
2008**

**COME VISIT:**  
EARTH BALLOON  
R12 GEOGRAPHY  
EXHIBITS  
JANE GOODALL MOVIE  
C121 AND CARGO 133  
AIRCRAFT  
FLIGHT SIMULATOR  
GPS NAVIGATION

**WHEN: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2008**  
**WHERE: DOVER AIR MOBILITY  
COMMAND MUSEUM**  
**TIME: 5:30PM - 8:00PM**

**FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC  
FOR MORE INFORMATION \* MYGLOWORLD.ORG**

**THIS EVENT IS SPONSORED BY:**

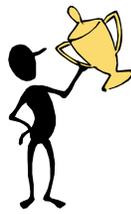
Not able to attend? Want to share GIS information with your students? Check out these resources on the DGA website under Geography awareness Week- Additional Resources!

- A special GIS slideshow for use in classrooms to explain what GIS is, how it is used by geographers, scientists, and people in business.

Under “Recommended Resources for Teachers”

- “All Things GPS”, a webpage with information about

[mywonderfulworld.org](http://mywonderfulworld.org)



# Nominations Are Now Open !

for Geography Teaching and Service awards

DGA wants to recognize excellent geography teaching,

Do you know someone who is a geography stand-out? Nominations are now being accepted from administrators and colleagues. Self-nominations are accepted as well. (Information including nomination forms is available on the Alliance website at [www.degeog.org](http://www.degeog.org). Deadline to submit nominations is December 5, 2008.

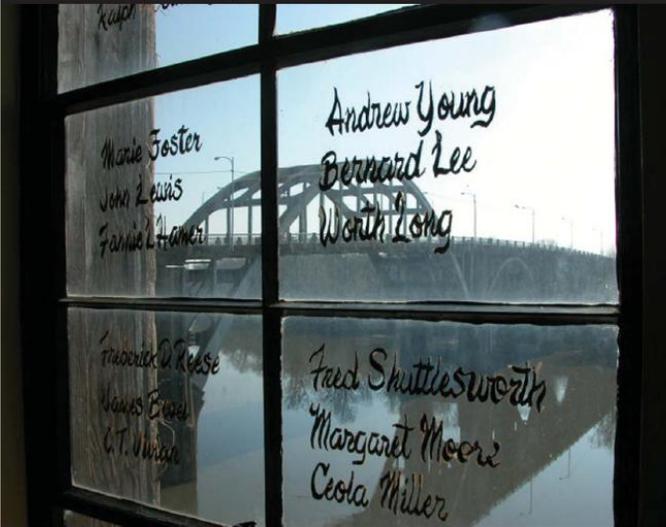
Three awards are available annually to DGA members. The ***Distinguished Teaching Award*** will recognize Delaware K-12 teachers of any subject who demonstrate excellence in classroom teaching of geography content. One of the Distinguished Teaching Award winners will be selected as Delaware's ***Geography Teacher of the Year***, and will be nominated by the Alliance for the national Distinguished Teacher award from NCGE. Travel to the NCGE Conference will be supported by the Alliance. The winner will also receive a \$500 stipend to be spent on geography-related materials for the classroom.

Guidelines for submitting the required portfolio are available on the Alliance websites. The deadline for portfolio submission will be January 16, 2009. Successful candidates will be notified.

Additionally, the Steering Committee may award the ***Alliance Distinguished Service Award*** to any member who has consistently supported and served the Alliance. The Distinguished Service Award will be presented as deemed appropriate by the Steering Committee.

DGA awards will be presented at the Alliance Annual Meeting on March 5 at the Dover Sheraton.

## "Stony The Road We Trod"



Using Geography and Alabama Landmarks to Study America's Civil Rights Movement

Lesson Plans and Classroom Resources

District of Columbia Geographic Alliance  
Visit us at [www.doga.org](http://www.doga.org)



## Coming Soon! "Stony the Road We Trod"

DGA will sponsor a special workshop exploring geographic connections to the American Civil Rights Movement. This workshop will feature extensive lesson materials developed and presented by members of the District of Columbia Geographic Alliance. Ideas for integration with other subject areas are an important feature. Lessons span the K-12 spectrum.

The workshop will be held on Saturday, January 24, 2009 at the Dover Sheraton. Registration will begin at 8:30 and the workshop will end at 3:00 pm. Due to budget constraints, space limited to 30 participants, first come, first served. Registration fee is \$30, which includes lunch and all materials.

Registration opens December 2, 2008. Information will be available at [www.degeog.org](http://www.degeog.org) and [www.ngsednet.org/dga](http://www.ngsednet.org/dga).

# Delaware?

By: Dr. Peter Mires, Contributing Editor  
[pmires@udel.edu](mailto:pmires@udel.edu)

Some place-names are synonymous with hard times, and in the current economic climate we are perhaps emotionally a little closer to real or fictitious Cannery Row and Tobacco Road. These places have associations with the Great Depression and were made famous by writers John Steinbeck and Erskine Caldwell. Go to Monterrey, California and you'll search in vain for the poverty of Cannery Row. Quite the contrary! With the demise of the institution of sharecropping, all those dead-end tobacco roads of the American South have been paved over.

Delaware has its own place-name that conjures up an image of hand-to-mouth existence. **Hardscrabble** is a Sussex County crossroads located approximately 6.5 miles northeast of Laurel. It consists of a modern convenience store and a modest collection of houses. The name hardscrabble is generally understood to mean a place that is the antithesis of agricultural productivity, which is putting it kindly.

According to Ron MacArthur of the Cape Gazette, "The Hardscrabble area is one of those Sussex crossroads that people only refer to when they bring up odd area names. Ten miles from anywhere, between Georgetown, Laurel, Seaford and Millsboro, it's a place where generations of rural families have lived on family-owned land." The most notable feature of the Hardscrabble area is the dump, a landfill operated by the Delaware Solid Waste Authority (DSWA).

Depending on your point of view, Hardscrabble's only real industry, trash, belongs to the past or the future. The place can be thought of as curator of society's residuum, or supplier of recycled materials for future utility. After all, places that had had been written off during the Great Depression, like the Pacific Northwest's "skid row," are now featured in those popular best-rated almanacs. (Can you imagine a time when Portland and Seattle were filled with down-and-outers?) I'd like to think that Delaware's Hardscrabble is just a diamond in the rough.

## Book Review

*Explorers House: National Geographic and the World It Made*, by Robert M. Poole.  
Penguin Books, New York, 2004. \$16.00.

Reviewed by Dr. Peter Mires, Contributing Editor  
[pmires@udel.edu](mailto:pmires@udel.edu)

It's instantly recognizable by its trademark yellow-bordered cover. The latest issue occupies a prominent place on my coffee table, a family tradition. My grandfather first subscribed in 1932. The magazine's regular map supplement is legendary. I'm talking, of course, of the iconic *National Geographic*, published by the National Geographic Society (NGS).

Behind the magazine, and all its more recent ancillaries, is the story of people. In its twelve decades of publication, there have been plenty of authors, photographers, cartographers, and, as the title of the book suggests, explorers. Thanks to NGS support and coverage in *National Geographic* magazine, Bob Ballard, Jacques-Yves Cousteau, Jane Goodall, and the Leakey Family became household names. Countless others carried the NGS flag forward—literally, in the case John Glenn's historic space flight.

The NGS is also a family dynasty. The name Grosvenor is intimately intertwined with both the Society and its magazine, with three generations holding the dual position of president and editor. Leadership and kinship, in fact, have been part and parcel from the beginning. The first three presidents, Gardiner Greene Hubbard, Alexander Graham Bell, and Gilbert H. "Bert" Grosvenor, were related by marriage.

As author of *Explorers House*, Robert Poole is eminently qualified. He served as executive editor of *National Geographic* magazine (retiring in 2001), had unfettered access to NGS archives, and counted as friends and colleagues many of those who have been an integral part of this uniquely American institution. This insider's take doesn't necessarily imply that he glosses over conflict and controversy. Poole acknowledges that geopolitical and social mistakes—like initial sympathy for Nazi Germany—have been

made over the years, and the magazine has had its share of infighting. The result, however, is a candid story.

I read the book with the feeling that I was leafing through someone's family album. Chapter one begins with the sentence, "You would not have known that Mabel Hubbard was deaf." It continues to describe how she met her future husband, Alexander Graham Bell, who at the time was teaching speech lessons at Boston University. The rest of the book unfolds from the point of view of an extended family and their unique relationship to "the world and all that is in it" (according to Bell, the magazine's *raison d'être*).

**Explorers House** is a deliberate and perfect title. Explorers Hall is the focal point of National Geographic headquarters in Washington, D.C. By substituting the word house, the author suggests, rightly, that this is a family home. Another house figures prominently in the story, Alexander Graham Bell's home and laboratory in Baddeck, Nova Scotia, which I had the good fortune to visit in 1976. But the most important house of all is that of the NGS member. As the author points out, *National Geographic* isn't a magazine with subscribers per se, as illustrated in that Christmas classic "It's a Wonderful Life." The character played by Jimmy Stewart proudly proclaims his membership in the NGS while dreaming of geography's power to excite the imagination.

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## Prep Time-

### *Student Teachers and their views*

Alliance member **Vicki Goettel** teaches social studies methods for education majors at the University of Delaware's Newark campus. Vicki became interested in geography through an Alliance summer institute years ago. **Darren Guido**, who joined the DGA recently, is an adjunct professor at Wilmington University. Formerly a social studies teacher, Darren is now the principal of Dover Central Middle School. Vicki and Darren share their insights as instructors on the new teachers who will soon be taking their place in Delaware classrooms.

### **High standards, Low expectations**

As Darren Guido observes, expectations of new teachers are shaped by the classes they

experienced as students. Those classes and the state content standards they have reviewed may lead perspective teachers to suspect that they do not have an adequate command of the content, and they think they will not be effective in the classroom. Many state that they only take the methods class "because it is required". Vicki Goettel reports that the students relate geography to maps, state name memorization, and lecture-style delivery of the content, partly influenced by the large lecture format of college classes. Students preparing for elementary classrooms do seem to sense that young students should begin by learning to map familiar surroundings, following the expanding horizons curriculum.

### **Classroom observations**

Student teachers spend time observing classrooms and return to methods class to share their impressions. Recently, the results have not been encouraging. According to Goettel, students find that social studies has been relegated to a sponge activity. Maps adorn the walls of classrooms, but are seldom used in meaningful ways. Trade books on geographic topics and atlases are found most often in the school library, rather than in classrooms.

### **How can we help?**

DGA has supported pre-service teacher education for many years through outreach visits to pre-service classes, invitations to pre-service teachers to attend Alliance workshops, and distribution of materials packets. We asked the instructors for suggestions on how we can extend a more helpful hand. Their suggestions:

- Continued visits to pre-service classes, stressing model lessons with hands-on activities.
- Provide good examples of integration of geography into other content areas. (Math, language arts, science, the arts)
- Extend invitations to attend workshops. Interaction with classroom teachers who "find a way" to include geography is very helpful.
- Provide information on available resources. Today's teacher-candidates rely heavily on the Internet, yet they often do not think of resources like aerial photographs. Sources of maps, posters, and teaching kits are important.
- Encourage young teachers to think for themselves and become resourceful and creative in their search for instructional materials- to move beyond worksheets and memorizing facts.

Delaware Geographic Alliance  
Distinguished Teaching Award  
Nomination Form

The Distinguished Teaching Award will be offered annually to recognize demonstrated excellence in the craft of geography teaching among our membership. Teachers may be nominated by an administrator or a peer, and self-nominations are also accepted. To be considered, an applicant must submit a portfolio displaying evidence of effective geography teaching in the areas of curriculum and assessment, professional preparation for teaching geography, classroom environment, and collaboration with peers within the school community. Application deadline is January 16, 2009. The Distinguished Teaching Award will be presented to all applicants who meet the criteria established by the Alliance as judged by the DGA Professional Development Committee.

Name of Nominee \_\_\_\_\_

School Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Current Teaching Assignment \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Nominating (If self-nominating, so indicate)

Contact information:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Briefly state why you believe this person should be considered for the DGA Distinguished Teaching Award.

You may choose to attach a letter of nomination.

Delaware Geographic Alliance  
216 Pearson Hall  
UD Geography Dept.  
Newark, DE 19716

### *Upcoming DGA Events*

#### November

16-22 Geography Awareness Week

#### December

1- DGA Steering Committee Meeting

5 Nominations for Distinguished Teaching Awards due

12- School registrations for Geography Bee due

#### January

16 Portfolios due for Distinguished Teaching award

24- Workshop-Geography and the Civil Rights Movement  
Dover Sheraton Hotel

#### February

20 Geography "Teach In" at Legislative Hall, Dover

#### March

5 Annual Awards Banquet, Dover Sheraton