



*cartographic perspectives*

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***from the president***

At the beginning of 2000 Anno Domini (I am trying to avoid the M-word) we in NACIS have much to celebrate. The information age has ushered in what can best be described as a new golden era of cartography while NACIS flourishes and turns twenty years old. That our society is so youthful is a little surprising, to me, since it has been a constant and influential presence throughout my entire career.

I first heard about NACIS back in 1986 when I got a call from Greg Chu, a fellow alumnus from the University of Hawaii, Department of Geography. With the eagerness of a friend recommending a must-read book or a hot investment tip, Greg urged me to attend the upcoming NACIS annual meeting in Philadelphia. He described NACIS as "a new mapping society with friendly members who hail from a wide variety of backgrounds," or words to that effect. At the time, I was the Cartographic

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**NACIS WEB SITE**  
**www.nacis.org**

Laboratory Manager at the University of Utah, overdue for a family visit back east, and so I followed Greg's advice and attended my first NACIS meeting.

As it turns out, the Philadelphia meeting portended a sea change in my career. I presented a paper about what is now quaintly called "traditional" shaded relief production; the virtues of Badger versus Paasche airbrushes, using tortillions, and a revolutionary new drafting film with a rice starch emulsion that could accept graphite with subtlety and satiny smoothness. This was exciting stuff for me. However, in the same session as myself, Ron Bolton presented a paper about NOAA's successful adoption of computer-assisted shaded relief production. Not surprisingly, I was alarmed by what I heard—the digital barbarians were about to sack traditional cartography of its artistic heritage! My reaction was, admittedly, a tad overwrought, but it typifies what everyone experiences when familiar habits are challenged, even when the new ideas are clearly superior. Fortunately, we adapt, and thanks in part to what I learned at Philadelphia, I am now an enthusiastic participant in today's digital terrain visualization renaissance. There is an unused roll of Dupont Cronaflex UC-4 drafting film in my basement if anyone wants it.

Considering the great changes that have affected cartography and its related fields since the inception of NACIS two decades ago, it is remarkable how our society has remained an anchor of relative stability. Other organizations should be so fortunate. While there have been many changes to NACIS over the years, they have tended to be appropriate in scope and implemented in a sustainable manner. Much of NACIS's success in dealing with change can be attributed to our long-serving Executive Officers—Sona Andrews, Chris Baruth, and Susan Peschel

(informally known as "the Home Office")—who have provided much needed continuity as elected board members and officers, such as myself, come and go. We owe each of them a debt of gratitude and sincerest hopes that they continue to serve.

The following summarizes recent developments that have shaped NACIS:

### ***Cartographic Perspectives***

I'll start with the journal you are reading now, which, you may have noticed, is a little thicker than issues in the past. This is to accommodate the new topics that are influencing our profession: during the past two years sections on cartographic techniques and an essay were added, and, most recently, an online mapping section has been included, edited by NACIS Vice President, Jeremy Crampton. The net result is more pages, which has necessitated the switch from saddle stitch to perfect binding, hence the flat spine on this issue. This not only gives *Cartographic Perspectives (CP)* a more refined and substantial appearance, but it makes specific issues identifiable when shelved. Starting this year, one of *CP*'s triannual issues will be published in full color—a logical addition considering our business.

Before moving on I want to acknowledge the many volunteers that make this journal a reality. Mike Peterson particularly deserves our thanks for helping to guide the development of *CP* since 1991, serving as Editor since 1997, and, for graciously agreeing to serve as Editor for yet another year. Mike is assisted by a competent team that includes: a guest editor (following in the footsteps of Pat Gilmartin and Trudy Suchan, Mark Monmonier will be relieving him for one issue this year);

Assistant Editor, Jim Anderson; four section editors; and, the fourteen people who comprise the

Editorial Board. Our thanks go out to all of you. Steve Holloway has contributed the third of his series of four custom-designed covers exploring the concept of land tenure/stewardship through maps. Expect to see similar themes, from Steve and others, adorning future covers of *CP*. Finally, and most importantly, I want to express our appreciation to Jim Anderson and Louis Cross at Florida State University for producing and printing *CP*—issue after issue. Like the steadfast presence of the "Home Office," the journeyman's expertise that Jim and Lou bring to publishing *CP* is a key component to NACIS's success.

### **Awards**

The character of NACIS can be gauged by the contributions and achievements of every member. At last year's annual meeting at Williamsburg awards were presented to four noteworthy individuals:

Ron Bolton, who retired last year from NOAA, received the "NACIS Service Award" for his ongoing contributions to NACIS. Ron was one of the earliest members of NACIS, serving as Executive Director and as President twice (his second term was due to most unusual circumstances, ask him about it sometime), and he has had the distinction of presenting 21 papers at 18 consecutive NACIS meetings—society records that may never be broken! Ron, we wish you well in retirement and hope to see you at many more NACIS meetings to come.

Adele Haft, from Hunter College, The City University of New York, received the first-ever "*Cartographic Perspectives Award*" for her article "The Poet and the Map: (Di)versifying the Teaching of Geography," which appeared in *CP 33*, Spring 1999. The \$500 *CP* Award, presented annually for the best article in *CP*, was voted on by

the CP Editorial Board. Congratulations Adele!

In the 1998-1999 NACIS Student Web Map Contest, Jacqueline Shinker, University of Oregon, and Nathaniel Vaughn Kelso, Humboldt State University, each won \$500 first place awards for their entries in Animation and Interactive Mapping categories, respectively. If you didn't see the "live" demos of the winning websites at the Williamsburg meeting, the url's will be posted on the NACIS website. Jacqueline and Nathaniel's work in this pioneering medium is quite exceptional, which leads me to the next subject, [www.nacis.org](http://www.nacis.org).

### Website

Today, the benefits of NACIS membership are manifested primarily through traditional means; attending the annual meeting and by receiving issues of CP. In order for NACIS to touch our professional lives on a more continual basis, we are looking beyond the "bricks and mortar" concept of a professional society and exploring ways to add value to the NACIS website. Thanks to the efforts of Jeremy Crampton, who serves as the NACIS Webmaster, Chris Baruth, and Mark Harrower, new content has been added to the site. Perhaps the most useful item is the membership list (<http://leardo.lib.uwm.edu/nacis/memrept.html>), which is complete with names, titles, street addresses, telephone and fax numbers, and email addressees—a kind of online Rollodex for NACIS members only. The *Cartographic Perspectives* section ([www.nacis.org/cp.html](http://www.nacis.org/cp.html)) has been expanded to include an index of issues, abstracts, and links to selected articles. Finally, the aforementioned Student Web Map Contest ([www.geog.psu.edu/~harrower/NACIS/intro.html](http://www.geog.psu.edu/~harrower/NACIS/intro.html)) will enter its second year under the direction of

Charlie Frye, with Mark Harrower and Trudy Suchan serving as judges again. Students can enter the contest at any time by simply sending url's by email. The contest is designed to promote student design and technical excellence in this dynamic new mapping medium, while at the same time introducing tomorrow's cartographers to NACIS.

### Membership

The results of last year's membership drive are encouraging. Individual and student membership jumped 19 percent from 292 to 347 between 1997 and 1999. Moreover, the Williamsburg meeting set new participation records with 50 papers, roundtables, and workshops offered, and, 170 registered attendees, 70 of whom were first timers! At Williamsburg, when I wasn't coaxing laptop projectors to work, I informally polled the new attendees about how they became acquainted with NACIS. Most, but not all, said that they learned about the society through word of mouth, which helps to explain why NACIS is such a congenial organization—our friends and colleagues come to the meetings. Most heartening of all, the diversity of mapping interests represented at Williamsburg was broader than ever. Many members have contributed to bolstering NACIS's membership, apparently on a person to person basis, and deserve acknowledgement for your efforts. I would particularly like to thank my predecessor, Cindy Brewer, who has been an effective advocate for increasing the society's membership for many years.

### Knoxville Meeting

This year we can look forward to the next annual meeting in Knoxville, Tennessee. Jeremy Crampton will be serving as the program chair (in addition to his many other

NACIS duties). He will be assisted by Will Fontanez and Jim Minton, from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, who are on the local arrangements committee and very keen to present their hometown to the entirety of NACIS. Adding to the excitement, since this year will be the twentieth anniversary of NACIS (or N2X, get it?), we are planning to commemorate the occasion with some kind of gala event. Board member, Donna Genzmer Schenstrom, is open to your suggestions and will be proposing ideas at the Spring Board meeting in Chicago this April. Whatever we decide to do, all indications point toward another memorable NACIS gathering, so please mark your calendars for October 11-14 in Knoxville!

I will conclude this message, which has grown lengthier than I intended, by simply observing that Greg Chu's description of NACIS fourteen years ago as "a new mapping society with friendly members who hail from a wide variety of backgrounds," still applies.

*Tom Patterson*  
President, NACIS