



Cartographic Perspectives

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From the President

Saint Louis, Missouri was the center of the map-making universe for three days in October. Our annual meeting brought 165 map-minded people together to share ideas about cartography. I continue to be amazed at the diversity of our collective works and the passion of our members. For me, it is the passion for map design that defines our craft. It has little to do with formal education and much to do with the more esoteric concept of talent. Talent is fueled by passion—and this combination is what makes beautiful maps, or prose, or art. Cartographers are often talented in all three disciplines. The semantic discussions of “is it a map?” or “is cartography dead?” or “is it an art or science?” all fall by the wayside when one sees a beautiful map. We know it when we see it. It is good design.

What separates NACIS from other organizations are two things: our comfortable size, and an overwhelming willingness to share ideas. As President, I’m asked about ways to grow the membership, yet I feel little reason to do so. Growth brings overhead and anonymity; neither is conducive to supporting a holistic network of map aficionados. The simple ability to all fit in one relatively small room benefits our ultimate goals of being able to meet and converse in a friendly manner. Our membership has grown steadily in recent years and now includes

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over 500 people from ten nations. Our membership is not swayed by the geographical implications of our name.

Sharing ideas is at the core of our Annual Meeting. From map design to map sales, academic cartography and the education of cartographers, map libraries and the realm of on-line mapping—all of these topics are floating around in the conversation sphere of NACIS. Student cartographers can mix with seasoned professionals and meet some of the authors who have written their textbooks. Veteran cartographers can see the work of the next generation in our map galleries and poster contests, as well as get a glimpse of the future from presenters who are sharing their latest projects.

Freelancers can network with other independent publishers or make introductions among our corporate cartographers who often hire outside talent.

I encourage all of our members to contribute to *Cartographic Perspectives (CP)*. This is your journal and it should represent the collective works and interest of the membership. We often work in relative isolation on our projects and research. *CP* provides the opportunity for us to share our work with the NACIS community, and with the world now that *CP* will be archived on-line in the coming year as PDFs going back to volume 1 number 1 published in March of 1989. Then President Juan José Valdés, and Co-Editors David DiBiase and Karl Proehl called it a Bulletin. It has since evolved into a Journal. Prior to the genesis of *CP*, NACIS

published 23 issues of newsletters entitled *Map Gap*, and eight issues of *Cartographic Information*. We no longer have these documents, and if any of our members can provide them, perhaps they can be archived on-line as well. The purpose of the on-line archive of past publications is to serve the same role our real-time Annual Meeting does—connecting people and ideas across time and space. It will be an historical outline of the creative legacy of our membership.

We don't know where the future of cartography will take us, or where we will take the future of cartography, but I can predict another lively Annual Meeting in October 2008 in Missoula, Montana. I hope to see you there.

Michael Hermann
NACIS President

The Cover

Title: What the Land Wants

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All matrix done digitally including the transfer of the sketch map to digital form. The area mapped is the East Bay, Berkeley, Aquatic Park, Cesar Chavez Park, Strawberry Creek and Hayward Fault, and Grizzly Peak. Mapped sources include medieval T-in-O, USGS maps, charts, remote sensing imagery, textual history of the aquatic park, field sketches and notes, and the stylized image of park, bell, creek, fault and causeway.

The print combines the notion of the shared or collective maps of the area, parts of which but not the whole, we access in our interactions with the place and the personal map from direct-contact with observations and notes from the specific interaction. The place itself, Cesar Chavez Park, is not isolated but connected to greater wholes through water.