



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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