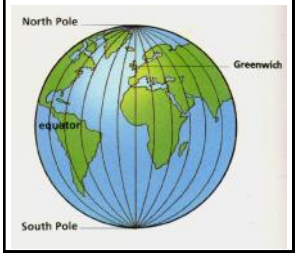
SUMMER 2014

ESRI-MUG NEWSLETTER

GIS HUMOR

Why weren't there any parallels on the map?

Because the cartographer didn't have any latitude in the map design!



MUG-TIVITIES

Esri International Users' Conference Esri-MUG Meeting to be held July 15, 2014 at 5:30 PM (Room 27A)

MUG Golf Outing is being planned for late August

Fall Meeting to be held September 2014 (Date, Time and Location TBD)

Esri-MUG 2014 Annual Conference to be held December 1-4 2014 at the Baltimore Hilton

ESRI-MUG SPRING MEETING

By Susanna K. Jackson, PMP

Esri-MUG President Chris Markel, GISP opens the Spring Meeting.

Sixty-five MUG members and Esri personnel attended the 2014 Esri MUG Spring meeting held at the Microsoft Technology Center in Malvern PA on May 21. MUG President Chris Markel, GISP, kicked off the meeting with opening remarks and general discussion items. The MUG is looking to sponsor a bicycling team in DC in September 2014 and planning a golf outing in late August.

In addition, MUG members from academia have requested opportunities to get students involved with the MUG. In response, the MUG is discussing an Academia focused Fall Meeting.

The MUG membership model continues to evolve. The Board of Directors is evaluating what formalized benefits and structure will best serve our members. Please share your ideas for member benefits with any Board Member or Officer. **See the Officer Directory on Page 7.**

After Chris's kickoff, Bob Nolan, the Esri-Microsoft Alliance Manager, welcomed the group to the Center, and offered a tour of the facility after the meeting.

Rachel Weeden, Esri, gave an intriguing preview of ArcGIS Pro. The following links provide some additional information on ArcGIS Pro

Continued on Page 4

"My attendance at the spring MUG was driven by the ability to engage in networking opportunities with the regional GIS community and to see the new and exciting things coming out in ArcGIS Pro. As an Esri partner, I am always excited to see the direction the company is taking and staying abreast of the software and technology to better consult my clients. "

Steve Ellis, GISP
PA-MAPPS Board Member

"The ability to network with other county GIS professionals and other GIS industry professionals is a key factor in attendance at these meetings. The aspect that there is no cost associated and that it is not too far from home has helped as well. It was interesting to hear some additional aspect of how AGOL is being used in other organizations as we figure out how we may leverage that technology in our own environment as time allows.

Brad M. Shirey, GISP
GIS Manager, County of Berks, IS Dept.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Earlier this year, Esri announced their involvement with the ConnectED initiative. Esri is providing ArcGIS Online (AGOL) Organization subscriptions for any K-12 school in the US.

Thousands, if not millions, of new maps and apps and GIS doers and users will be created. This gives GIS professionals, like those of us in the MUG, a great opportunity to help shape the future of our profession, our tools, and the careers of our successors.

Schools in our neighborhoods will be looking for help in using AGOL. Teachers will want to know about local sources of data they can use. Students will want to know how to analyze data and produce heat maps and presentations. They will also want to know what their next steps can be.

How can the MUG help? The MUG Board is planning our Fall Meeting, and we want it to focus on education. We don't want it to just be for educators and students, however. It needs to be about interaction between the current cohort of GIS professionals and the ones coming on the scene.

We want a meeting where we as GIS and Esri experts can interact with educators at the college level who are preparing the next generation. We want to meet the college students themselves who are looking for mentors and advice. We want to hear from the K-12 community as the next-next generation and perhaps more importantly those who shape the apps and maps we will be producing.

How can MUG members help? I'd like to hear ideas from you on what we can do for the Fall Meeting. How can we make it engaging for both professional and student? What would you like to pass on to all of these future mappers? Can your organization help sponsor or conduct a map and app contest? Can you collaborate with a local school on a story? Send me some ideas, or direct them to your local friendly MUG Board member.

We can also incorporate ConnectED involvement with GIS Day activities. Think about contacting a local school and offering to teach a lesson, or conduct a workshop on using AGOL. If you do, we'd love to hear about it at the Annual Conference.

More information about Esri's commitment to the ConnectED initiative can be found at connected.esri.com. There are already several teacher stories and student videos from the Mid-Atlantic area. Help make more.

Chris Markel, GISP
Esri-MUG President 2014

GISP CERTIFICATION—BEGINNING THE PROCESS

Making the decision to become a GISP (or geographic information system professional) is easy enough in concept. However, as with all things worthwhile, it requires time, patience, and not a little bit of effort.

There are three major components to the application: Education, Experience, and Contributions to the Profession, each with a minimum point requirement.

First, gather your background documentation (transcripts, course certificates, proof of workshop or conference attendance). These will be part of your application anyway, but they are useful in prepping as well.

It is a good idea to roughly fill out the three sections on a draft copy to see how you line up with achieving these point goals.

Identify any gaps or shortfalls in the point totals first. If you are almost there in a category— but not quite — a more thorough review of that area may bring to light relevant and claimable documentation.

Don't be discouraged if you identify a large gap, but develop a plan for filling that gap!

SCRIPTING CORNER

By Andrew R. Kuder

Welcome to the Scripting Corner!

In this initial installment I will be giving a brief overview of Massive Open Online Courses or MOOCs. With the rising cost of tuition at higher education institutions, students and professionals alike are searching for lower cost methods to receive proper educational training. MOOCs are college-level courses that are **free**, completed online over the course of a few weeks, and have varying methods of instruction ranging from self-paced courses to courses that involve traditional college lectures.

Much of the research into which MOOC is appropriate to help you complete your personal goals is just a simple online search away.

To start, two of the most well-known MOOC providers are Coursera (https://www.coursera.org/) and EdX (https://www.edx.org/).

Esri is introducing a MOOC focused on spatial analysis using AGOL beginning soon. For those interested, reserve your spot today by using the link to this course http://www.esri.com/landing-pages/training/spatial-analysis#.

So why discuss MOOCs in what is supposed to be a column specific to Python? The answer is that I, like many other GIS professionals, have repeatedly seen the benefits that Python scripting provides GIS users but have not had access to an interactive format that could provide proper instruction without a hefty price tag attached.

I researched MOOCs as a mechanism to provide that specific, interactive training not just with professionals in the scripting world but also with my own peers. Through some simple perusing I encountered multiple Python programming classes taught by qualified staff who are employed by respected colleges and universities throughout the United States.

Although not specific to GIS, I'm hopeful this introductory course can provide the basics of programming which will allow for an easy transition to utilizing Python in ArcMap. For fellow users who are interested, here is the website of the course I will be taking -https://www.coursera.org/course/interactivepython.

This specific course includes nine weeks of training and requires up to 10 hours of work per week so the time commitment is relatively minimal. Another benefit is that at the end of the nine weeks you will receive a certificate of completion which could potentially contribute to those elusive GISP credits or show your boss a good example of your self-motivation.

In future installments, I will provide feedback on the MOOC experience and do my best to include useful Python scripts that will hopefully make for an easier GIS experience. In addition, if you are an experienced Python scripter and have any interest in contributing a script, or if anyone has useful links to Python learning materials, please feel free to contact me at akuder@ak-env.com and I will share with the group in the next quarterly newsletter.

A map is the greatest of all epic poems. Its lines and colors show the realization of great dreams.

Gilbert H. Grosvenor, Editor of National Geographic

ESRI SPRING MEETING (CONT.)

Rachel Weeden of Esri presents on ArcGIS Pro

(ArcGISPro, Whats-coming).

ArcGIS Pro is slated to be released with ArcGIS Desktop 10.3, and has just launched into Beta. It's meant to be complimentary to Desktop, ties 2D & 3D views together in the user interface, and is 64bit multi-threaded.

The focus is on fast display, improved user experience, and a project-centric workflow. During the on-screen demo, the audience recognized the context-aware ribbon interface for accessing tools and properties - a change from the Table of Contents right-clicks in ArcGIS Desktop.

The 'project-centric' organization is a logical and popular approach to cataloging the maps, toolbox, datasets, geoprocessing tasks and outputs, layouts, styles and folder connections all within the project's file hierarchy.

At this first review, it appears that ArcGIS Pro will assist the orderly management of ArcGIS projects. It remains to be seen how the ArcGIS Desktop roadmap will align with ArcGIS Pro's feature-rich future.

Rachel fielded questions to that point, stating that both products will continue to be developed, and that ArcGIS Pro is not a replacement for ArcGIS Desktop.

The agenda moved on to ArcGIS Online (AGOL) user stories from Stacy Sekkes of Chester County, Pennsylvania, and Stephen San Nicolas of Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC).

Chester County was an early adopter of AGOL, starting an organizational account in 2012, with 50 users and 10,000 credits. AGOL use at Chester County is growing across functional groups such as planning, economic development, and waste management. Evolving uses are parks department rangers mapping assets in the field and an online park pavilion registration system.

WSSC uses AGOL for public facing applications showing neighborhood projects in progress, and service advisories and alerts. WSSC coordinates pavement projects with Prince Georges and Montgomery counties using an

Continued on Page 5

Stacy Sekkes (Chester County) and Stephen San Nicolas (WSSC) discuss their ArcGIS Online successes with the attendees.

ESRI SPRING MEETING (CONT.)

AGOL-based internal secure site.

Jay Boyd, GISP at Spatial Systems Associates, presented a GeoEvent Processor use case, "Using GeoEvent Processor to Assist with Campus Security". Boyd's project uses the Geoevent Processor for security call center integration. The integrated workflow includes highlighting incoming calls on a campus map, and illuminating nearby CCTV cameras that the operators can actively monitor during the event. The solution is optimized for a command center environment, with the ability to send camera feeds of ongoing events to a video wall.

Rob Pitts, GISP, PMP, at New Light Technologies talked about "Data Integration Strategies for Best Practice". See the article below and link to more information below.

Jay Boyd, GISP, presents at the Esri-MUG Spring Meeting.

The 2014 Spring Meeting wrapped up with a tour of the Technology Center. Please feel free to provide feedback for future meeting ideas to any of your Board members.

DATA INTEGRATION: CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES

Rob Pitts of New Light Technologies presents to a full crowd at the Esri-MUG Spring Meeting

At the Spring Meeting, Rob Pitts, Director of Geospatial Services at New Light Technologies, spoke about data integration. See the link at the bottom for the full article.

In recent years there has been acceleration in the collection and publishing of digital data about people, places, and phenomena of all kinds. This increased availability of data presents great opportunities for Geographers to answer new questions and improve our understanding of the world by integrating previously disparate datasets such as those describing weather, transportation, and demographics. However, integrating such diverse data remains a challenge because of the potential disparities in coverage, quality, compatibility, confidentiality, and update frequency, to name a few. Given the diversity of factors that influence successful geospatial integration, developing a comprehensive approach that considers the analytical, operational and organizational implications can be helpful to integrators and suppliers alike. To read more about common challenges and considerations surrounding the integration of geospatial data, see the link below.

http://www.sensorsandsystems.com/article/features/32223-geospatial-data-integration-challenges-and-considerations.html

ESRI-MUG TO MEET AT ESRI UC

The Esri-MUG will hold a Special Interest Group meeting during the Esri International User Conference in San Diego, California. The meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 15, 2014 from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM in Room 27A.

Topics will include a recap of the Esri-MUG Spring meeting, discussion of topics and focus for the Fall meeting and solicitation of attendee input on the Fall meeting, a review of the 2013 Annual Conference and solicitation of attendee input for the 2014 Annual Conference (December 1-4 in Baltimore, MD), a discussion of other planned social events (bike rides, golf outing, etc.) and a discussion on the membership structure of the Esri-MUG.

If you are lucky enough to attend the Esri UC, stop by to lend an ear and provide some feedback. Who knows, you might just enjoy yourself and become involved! Remember, Room 27A at 5:30 PM on July 15, 2014!

We are on the web!

www.esrimug.org

LinkedIn

Find Esri-MUG on LinkedIn and Twitter!
Click on one of the logos above to access

Are you going to be presenting at the Esri International Users Conference in San Diego this year?

If so, go to http://linkd.in/1q1ZdhQ and post the date, time and topic of your presentation to other members of the Esri-MUG!

ESRI-MUG MEMBERSHIP POLL

The membership model for the Esri-MUG has been relatively informal to date. There have been discussions about formalizing the membership through fees and documented application.

In order for such a structure to work, the MUG Officers and Board of Directors wish to hear from you. What do you value about being involved in the MUG? What element of the MUG do you feel is lacking or frustrating you? What other industry groups (either certified or user group) do you belong to? What do those groups provide as a value that you think the MUG could also provide?

The Esri-MUG Board of Directors want to make sure that members gain something from membership, so your feedback, comments, and concerns are greatly appreciated!

2014 ESRI-MUG OFFICERS

The Esri-MUG 2014 Officers are eager to hear from you!

Contact via their email below.

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ABOUT ESRI MUG

The Esri Mid-Atlantic User Group (Esri-MUG) is a multi-disciplinary organization with a membership base of users applying Geographic Information System (GIS) technology and applications in both private and public areas. Esri-MUG is committed to assisting members within its 121,000 square mile geographical extent (Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, District of Columbia, Virginia, and West Virginia) to identify and educate users regarding GIS trends, Esri product development, local/regional applications, and events of interest.

We are receptive to partnerships with other organizations (both GIS as well as "IS" oriented) at the formal and grassroots level in our effort to convey the uses and benefits of GIS. We hold one (1) annual conference for all users, as well as "local" meetings each year in partnership with Esri, our sponsoring organization.

These meetings, as well as our web site, serve to bring together our members in an interactive environment to see demonstrations of Esri product developments and demonstrate local applications of GIS technology.

Our goal is to foster collaboration among all user entities and monitor industry trends to assure that our knowledge base is as current and practical as possible. We welcome all interested members with a focus towards those using, or planning to use, Esri products as part of their overall information system design and application.

Board of Directors meetings are held via conference call the second Thursday of each month. Please join us and get involved. Contact Sue Hoegberg at 703-849-0419.