Coordinator’s Update: KGA Strategic Plan

The Kansas Geographic Alliance (KGA) is an organization of teachers and professional geographers who recognize the value of geographic thinking and who are dedicated to advancing geographic literacy in Kansas.

The KGA now has a Strategic Plan to guide our activities into the future. At the request of the National Geographic Education Foundation, the Kansas Geographic Alliance has developed and approved a Strategic Plan. The process of creating the strategic plan took several years and the team of Mary Beck, Denise Salsbury, Paul Phillips, and John Harrington, Jr. got the ball rolling by taking a semester long course on the subject. Several meetings of the Executive Committee of the KGA were used to gather data and ideas for the strategic plan. Dr. Jan Middendorf and her team at the Office of Education Innovation and Evaluation helped the KGA Executive Committee group go through the process of understanding both where the group has ‘come from’ and where we see ourselves heading in the future.

Our vision: the KGA will be an organization that is recognized, valued, and respected as a go to source for expertise on geography and the teaching of geography for the citizens of Kansas. We also want to see a geographically literate Kansas society will use spatial and human-environment knowledge to support and maintain a healthy environment as a base for strong communities and a vibrant economy.

The Mission of the Kansas Geographic Alliance is to promote and support geographic literacy and geographic education throughout Kansas.

Upcoming Events

**September 28, 2013**
GIS Workshop at KSU

**September 29, 2013**
KGA Executive Board Meeting

**October 9, 2013**
National 4-H Youth Science Day

**November 10-11, 2013**
KCSS Meeting in Derby

**November 17-23, 2013**
Geography Awareness Week

**November 20, 2013**
GIS Day

**April 4, 2014**
Kansas Geographic Bee in Abilene

PD Opportunity

Advancing the Teaching of History and Geography in the K-12 Classroom Using Dual-Encoding and GIS

Sat. Sept. 28, 2013
at Kansas State University
9:00-4:30pm with lunch
⇒ Learn to integrate teaching geography & history
⇒ Explore teaching with GIS
⇒ Learn to make maps online

Spots available—email Lisa Tabor at lkt7779@ksu.edu

Geography Awareness Week 17-23, 2013:
The New Age of Exploration
See final page of this copy of Insights for more Information.
Recent KGA News and Honors:

**Don Everhart receives “Chasing Rainbow” award from the Dollywood Foundation**

Don Everhart, one of the KGA’s executive board members, was presented the 2013 Chasing Rainbow Award on May 11, 2013 at Dollywood. Dolly Parton personally presented this prestigious award to the former Rolling Ridge Elementary School teacher. Dolly gives this distinguished award annually to a teacher who has overcome great obstacles in his/her life and is making a difference in the lives of children. Everhart and his wife, Cheryl, created Main Street, U.S.A. in 2002, a field trip filled with interactive geography lessons, which has reached nearly 55,000 elementary students. Dolly presented him with a monetary award to be used for this special program. Don taught in Olathe, Kansas from 1965-2001 and in Hillsdale, Kansas from 2001-2002. The award will be permanently displayed in the Chasing Rainbows Museum at Dollywood.

**Paul Phillips to retire from Fort Hays State University**

Paul Phillips, KGA Co-Coordinator and Professor at Fort Hays State University, will be retiring from FHSU after 46 years of service in the Department of Geosciences. He says he is “not retiring from geography” and plans to continue working with the KGA and teaching Virtual College courses at FHSU. When asked what he plan to do in retirement, Paul responded, “when opportunity knocks, to have the freedom to do what opportunity would allow me to do.”

**Lisa Tabor interns with the Esri Education Team in Redlands California in summer 2013**

Lisa Tabor, KGA Office Manager and PhD student at Kansas State University spent the summer of 2013 as an intern with the Esri Education Team in Redlands, California. She worked on a earth science based project writing middle school activities that incorporate the new Next Generation Science Standards, the National Geography Standards, and ArcGIS Online, Esri’s online web mapping platform.


In November of 2012, KGA Co-Coordinators John Harrington, Jr. and Paul Phillips and KGA Office Manager, Lisa Tabor, were awarded the 2012 National Council for the Social Studies Grant for the Enhancement of Geographic Literacy. These funds are enabling the offering of the teacher professional development workshop, Advancing the Teaching of History and Geography in the K-12 Classroom Using Dual-Encoding and GIS, at Kansas State University on September 28, 2013. The group will formally receive the award and discuss their workshop at the annual NCSS meeting in St. Louis on November 21-24, 2013.
Esri ArcGIS Statewide K-12 Site License for Kansas

“Today's students embrace technology outside the classroom, and when used effectively, spatial technology is an excellent tool to engage students inside the classroom as well. To support education efforts around this revolution, ESRI, the world's Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software leader, and the Kansas Department of Education have partnered to provide every public, private and charter K-12 school throughout the state free access to ESRI’s state-of-the-art GIS software, ArcGIS and training. This software will enable administrators, educators and students alike to access, visualize and analyze a wealth of information from and about their own communities and the world.”

For more information and get started with GIS in your classroom, go to:


New Social Studies Standards in Kansas

As of April 2013, new Kansas social studies standards for all grades were available. For more information and to view the new document, called the Kansas History, Government, and Social Studies standards, view:


If you have any questions or thoughts about implementation or are looking for new ideas, please contact the KGA at ksgeog@ksu.edu.

2014 Kansas Geographic Bee

The Kansas Geographic Bee will be held on April 4, 2014 in Abilene. If your school would like to register, visit the following websites for more information:

http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geobee/ and

http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geobee/how-schools-register/

Once you have registered, have your students start practicing for their school bee using the following online practice tools:

- http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geobee/quiz/today/

If you would like to become more involved, are interested in our available resources, would like to engage in professional development activities for in-service or pre-service teachers please contact the KGA at ksgeog@ksu.edu or check out our website:

www.k-state.edu/ kga/
Geography Awareness Week 2013

The New Age of Exploration

November 17-23, 2013

- The official website for Geography Awareness Week (GAW) is www.geographyawarenessweek.com
- Great classrooms ideas for implementation are available on the website, including ways to celebrate International GIS Day on November 20
- If you would like to ‘brainstorm’ about ways to engage your class, please contact the Kansas Geographic Alliance at ksggeog@ksu.edu
- Please let us know how you participated in Geography Awareness Week and we will send you a map of your choice and enter you to win an atlas, to share your GAW story with us, please visit the following website: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1I-KpfdkTknerS2A5vaZdKDemD2MykfsoJ_Yh4q0qh6M/viewform