## Coordinator’s Update

While politicians are doing battle with geography content in other states (e.g., NE, OK, and TN), the unfortunate education battles in Kansas have taken a different turn. As evidenced by the success in Nebraska last autumn and Oklahoma this spring, we may need our KGA members to help with battles about aspects of K-12 geography and state standards content in the future.

Your KGA was spoken of very highly at the Alliance Coordinator meeting in late February in Washington, D.C. One example was our three minute presentation on a 2013 Geography Awareness Week activity featuring Debra Bolton and Lynn Boitano and their Silver Rails program on High Plains Public Radio. It was a huge hit. We will be presenting at the NCGE Meeting in Memphis on August 2nd about the whole suite of GAW activities in Kansas from Nov 2013. This will be a nice opportunity to highlight all the good activities from Kansas and the efforts of Cheryl and Don Everhart (our GAW Coordinators). Knowing Cheryl and Don like I do, my sense is that they will want to have the 2014 efforts top those of 2013. And the theme of “food” is a perfect fit for an agricultural state. My bet is that Debra and Lynn will have a great time thinking about songs that communicate the cultural geography of food for their Silver Rails program on High Plains Public Radio.

## 2014 Kansas Geographic Bee

On April 4, 2014, the 100 Kansas Geographic Bee Qualifiers gathered at the Eisenhower Museum in Abilene. The first place winner, was Chinmay Patil from California Trail Middle School in Overland Park. Second place went to Aviral Misra from Prairie State Middle School and in third place was Joseph Hawker from Topeka Collegiate. Chinmay represented Kansas in the National Geographic Bee in Washington DC on May 19-21, 2014, Congratulations to all our participants!

### Upcoming Events

**July 12-15, 2014**  
Esri Education User Conference in San Diego, CA

**July 31-August 3, 2014**  
National Council for Geographic Education Annual Meeting in Memphis, TN

**September 25-26, 2014**  
Kansas & Missouri Council for History Education Joint Conference in Kansas City, MO

**September 27, 2014**  
Missouri and Kansas Geographic Education Conference in Kansas City at Park University

**November 16-22, 2014**  
Geography Awareness Week, the theme is ‘Food’

**November 19, 2014**  
International GIS Day
A Note from Debra Bolton on the Alliance Policy Meeting

With all the excitement of representing the Kansas Geographic Alliance in Washington DC, it’s hard to know where to begin this story. Well, John Harrington and I traveled to DC, each in our separate ways, arriving on a cool, crisp day in March. Our meetings took place at National Geographic Society’s offices, which include museums, gift store, conference spaces, and the historic Hubbard Hall. As was the founding goal of the Society in 1888, we were there “to increase and diffuse geographic knowledge”, or at least to help U.S. Congressmen understand the importance and relevance of geography in the classroom.

We did spend time at the Society’s offices learning strategies to help us “Speak up for Geography” as we visited the “Hill” to talk to our nation’s lawmakers. First we strategized about what TGIF will do. Our points revolved around geography and the geo-spatial technology industry, job opportunities in geography, and geography in defense especially where homeland security is concerned. Also, we did emphasize the fact that geography is the only unfunded core academic subject and talked about funding at the state-level as well.

Finally, we discussed strategies for how to follow-up with the congressmen if we were received negatively or with reservation. It was a great learning process for me. I was disappointed that Rep. Pat Roberts threw the ball in the states’ court by having his aid say, “Well, we try not to get in the states’ business…” I felt like Senator Moran’s office aid was more receptive. He listened like he was interested. Alas, he could offer nothing specific in way of support of House Bill that would fund the only core curriculum omitted: geography.

On the less-serious side, NGS treated us to an evening of a wonderful buffet surrounded by the exhibits of the museum one of which was a display of all the NG magazine covers from the beginning to now. On my last day (Alliance Coordinators had much more to do), we had a resource fair, which was full of great materials and ideas for promoting geography in the classroom.

It is an honor service as KGA’s policy point person. Thank you.
The KGA would like to recognize Michael Sibley from Anderson County Jr/Sr High School, who is attending the Choices Leadership Institute on geography this Summer. The theme is: Thinking Geographically About International Issues: A Leadership Institute. The institute will take place in June at Brown University in Providence, RI. **Congrats Michael!**

The KGA is working successfully towards our strategic planning goal to increase our work **sharing geography with pre-service teachers.** During the 2013-2014 school year, the KGA worked with students at Kansas State University, University of Kansas, Emporia State University, Wichita State University, & Pittsburg State University. Let us know if you want to discuss our adding another school to this list.

The KGA would like to recognize Thomas McBride, one our TC’s. Thomas passed away on May 13, 2014, after a short illness. Tom was born in Chicago and received a BA in history and an M.Ed. in theology and social studies from Saint Mary’s College, and in 1970 an MA in American and Russian history from Saint Louis University. The consummate teacher, Tom started his life’s work at Catholic high schools throughout the Midwest before joining the Shawnee Mission School District in 1978, where he taught until his retirement in 2004. A social studies teacher, Tom had a passion for history and government that went beyond the classroom. He spent his life educating, challenging and stimulating not only his students, but also colleagues, friends and family. After retiring, Tom was an active volunteer at the WWI Museum and the Kauffman Center for Performing Arts. A memorial gathering will be held Saturday, July 12, 12:30, at the Simpson House, 4509 Walnut St., Kansas City, MO. In lieu flowers, the family requests donations in Tom’s honor to Kansas City Hospice or Harvesters. (Information obtained from the Kansas City Star).
Dinner Honoring Debbie Restivo

Debbie Restivo, a 4th grade teachers from Frank Layden Elementary in USD 249 (Frontenac, KS), was honored on April 4th for her many years of service as a member of the Executive Committee of the Kansas Geographic Alliance. A good number of current and past members of the Executive Committee along with a few special friends joined Debbie and her husband, Tom, for a wonderful dinner of all-you-can-eat fried chicken and related fixings at the ole Brookville Hotel in Abilene. The photo in the upper-right shows Debbie holding the KGA’s “you've made a world of difference” award.

Debbie has shared the following significant moments with the KGA: “The KGA has been an integral part of my life for the past 22 years, and I will continue my efforts to geoevangelize my students. To say that my first SGI (Summer Geography Institute) changed my life would be an understatement.”

⇒ 1993: Attended first SGI, which was a two week introduction to geography, introduced Geography Awareness Week to Frank Layden Elementary School with a focus on water, and began first Geography Club for school students.

⇒ 1994: Attended a three week Instructional Leadership Institute in Washington, D.C. The focus was political geography and it was one of the best experiences of my life.

⇒ 1995: Took Geography Club to Topeka to watch Governor Graves sign the proclamation for Geography Awareness Week.

⇒ 1997: Received the Distinguished Teaching Award from NCGE.

⇒ 2008-present: Give Geography Awareness Week presentations to pre-service teachers at Pittsburg State University.

Thank you Debbie!
“Esri, the world’s leading developer of geographic information system (GIS) software, has offered a free ArcGIS Online account to all K-12 schools in the United States.” This initiative is part of President Barack Obama’s ConnectED initiative to strengthen STEM education efforts. Esri is working Amazon Web Services to provide cloud infrastructure to all schools. The state of Kansas already has a site license agreement with Esri to utilize their basic software, this is a great opportunity for teachers, schools, and students to use more and better geographic information systems software in their classrooms.

For more information, see:


http://connected.esri.com/

The Kansas Geographic Alliance offers professional development opportunities on how to use GIS in the classroom, please contact Lisa Tabor at lkt7779@ksu.edu if you would like more information.

The Kansas Council for History Education and the Missouri Council for History Education Joint Conference on “Best Practices in History Education” on Thursday and Friday September 25-26, 2014 in Kansas City, Missouri is calling for conference proposals. Activities will emphasize the 100th anniversary of WW I. See the website for more information: http://kssocialstudiesconference.com/.

KGA member Lisa Tabor received the 2014 National Council for Geographic Education Miller Research Grant for her proposal, “Educating for the Future: Workshops for Pre-Service Teachers in Using GIS in the Classroom.” Lisa will be holding workshops in the fall of 2014 and spring of 2015 to complete this research. Please contact her at lkt7779@ksu.edu if you are interested in participating.
In honor of the 2014 Geography Awareness Week theme, Food, KGA member, Lynn Boitano has provided a book review.

*97 Orchard: An Edible History of Five Immigrant Families in One New York Tenement*  
by Jane Ziegelman, 2011, Harper Paperbacks

Take one tenement building in the Lower East Side of New York City. Add five immigrant families over a time span of 72 years. Season with fascinating information about immigrant tastes and food traditions during the late 19th and early 20th centuries and you have the book *53 Orchard* by food writer Jane Ziegelman.

The book is divided into five chapters with each chapter dedicated to the food traditions, customs and immigrant experience of the five families that lived at the 97 Orchard address between the years of 1863 to 1935.

There is the common thread of the immigrant experience between the five families. When they arrived there was the pressure to assimilate to their new American home in dress, workplace and language, however, they held tight to their Old World food traditions and customs. We learn from Ms. Ziegelman that this was not an easy thing to do. The kitchens at *53 Orchard*, and in almost all tenements, were small windowless rooms that had a wood or coal-burning stove and no indoor plumbing.

Still, despite the limitations of the tenement kitchens women were able to create the same comforting dishes of their native countries thanks in part to the numerous grocery stores and vendors that lined Lower East Side streets. They carried the staples plus delicacies from home like sausages, Westphalian ham and poppy-seed oil. In addition to the grocery stores there were the specialized food crafters that are long gone, but catered to the immigrant’s food needs.

*97 Orchard* is a window into the social history and urban geography of New York City during this time. Ms. Ziegelman gives us a snapshot of the Lower East Side at different time periods and explains that the tenements replaced dilapidated single family housing and were the “first American residences built expressly for multiple families — in this case, working people.” *97 Orchard* is a book rich in stories and detail and more than fulfills the appetite of anyone interested in the history, geography and foods of the immigrant experience.
Five from Kansas Attend T3G (Teachers Teaching Teachers) GIS Institute

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are seen by a growing number as an important avenue to accomplish the intellectual integration that Common Core and the Next Generation Science Standards are calling for. ESRI, the leading GIS software firm, provides an annual institute for educators, Teachers Teaching Teachers GIS. Institute staff included the “who’s who” list of ESRI employees with a strong interest in educational issues. This year, five Kansans attended. They include:

Kjirsten Abel Ruch from Lawrence, who is a 4-H Program Coordinator for Douglas County.

Brandon Gillette from Kansas City, who is the Science Coordinator for the Kansas City, Kansas, public schools.

John Harrington, Jr. from Manhattan, who is a Co-coordinator for the Kansas Geographic Alliance and a professor at Kansas State University.

Lisa Tabor from Manhattan, who is a doctoral student in Curriculum and Instruction at Kansas State University.

Bill Welch from Wichita, who is a science teacher at Wichita North High School.

The week long institute held at ESRI headquarters in Redlands, California, provided the participants with examples of practical exercises that involve use of GIS in K-12 instruction. Discussion also include good background information on the value of GIS and ideas about how to increase the use of maps and spatial reasoning across the curriculum. The attendees were able to share ideas about possible ways to increase the use of GIS in the K-12 curriculum with ESRI President, Jack Dangermond, who spent approximately 30 minutes with the group probing for good ideas on advancing the use of GIS with school children.

The five attendees this year bring to six the total of Kansas residents that have attended T3G. The prior attendee is Steven Obenhaus who is now a UKan Teach, Master Teacher in the Center for Science Education at the University of Kansas.
We are available to present at and participate in education functions, including professional development days, please contact us for more information at ksgeog@ksu.edu.

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/

Join the KGA on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/groups/74686966116/

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KGA Insights is looking for:
⇒ News items,
⇒ Lesson plans, or
⇒ Any item of interest

Please send info to Lisa Tabor at lkt7779@ksu.edu

Check out Social Studies Central and Glenn Wiebe’s Social Studies Tip of the Week:
http://socialstudiescentral.com/content/tip-week