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.

Coordinator's Update

Paul Phillips and I have been busy listening to our leaders at the National Geographic Education Foundation (NGEF) and working with the KGA Executive Committee to plan activities for the current budget year and into the future. We held our major meeting of the KGA leadership team in January and had a very full and successful meeting. We continue to plan activities that will help current and future teachers bring geography content to their students. In late February, Paul and I were in Washington, DC for a fund raising intensive and then the annual meeting of alliance coordinators. During that meeting we shared information about our efforts across the state in providing geography information and resources to pre-service teachers and about how we are helping agricultural science pre-service teachers recognize the power of teaching with maps.

While in Washington, we learned about the across the board changes at the National Geographic Society designed to invigorate efforts across the Society; these changes created three major themes: Inspire, Illuminate, and Teach. As you might expect, the geographic alliances are a part of “Team Teach.” Two major NGS quotes/ideas from the meeting are: “We believe in the power of science, exploration and storytelling to change the world” and “We teach kids about the world and how it works, empowering them to succeed and to make it a better place.

As a part of the ongoing shifts at NGEF, there is a goal to have all geographic alliances (including the KGA) take part in a shared activity each year that happens in the geographic region covered by each alliance. This change will begin with the 2015-16 budget year and involves a “BioBlitz.” The goal is to have children get outdoors and be involved in scientific observation. We’ll be working on one or more programs in Kansas to get students into natural areas in May 2016 to record any/all wildlife they observe. If you are interested in helping the KGA meet this goal, please contact me at:

jharrin@ksu.edu

Thanks!
Mary Beck, a long time KGA member, and Executive Committee member has been identified as the Elementary Teacher of the Year for the Seaman school district. She will now be considered for 2016 Kansas Teacher of the Year.

Congratulations Mary!

Team Teach wants students with “ASK”: Attitudes  Skills  Knowledge

As a part of the ongoing changes at National Geographic related to alliance programs,, there has been an effort to solidify the education mission around “ASK”: attitudes, skills, and knowledge.

**Attitudes:** curious, responsible, empowered & persistent

**Skills:** observe, communicate, solve, and work

**Knowledge** of: Our Living Planet, Critical Species, New Frontiers, and Our Human Story

National Geographic Education has a new site of teacher resources on building foundations in geo-literacy: [http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/new-teachers-preservice-education-geoliteracy/?ar_a=1](http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/new-teachers-preservice-education-geoliteracy/?ar_a=1). Check out headings such as:

- Why Teach Geo-Literacy?
- Connecting Kids to Their World
- Teaching Geo-Literacy at K-5, 6-8, and 9-12
- Education Programs
- Extracurricular Activities
- Mapping Resources for K-12
In November I had the opportunity to visit our friend Dr. Nikos Lambrinos at the Hellinic Digital Earth Center of Excellence at Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, Greece. Nikos was a participant in the 2000 KGA Summer Geography Institute and still holds the record for the longest distance travelled to attend a KGA event.

Dr. Lambrinos currently is focusing on two major areas in geography education. He conducts GIS - GPS Seminars to train teachers in web mapping and interactive mapping. These seminars include a focus on training teacher volunteers to serve as mentors to their peers in Northern Greece. At the Center for Geography, Dr. Lambrinos facilitates combining history with geography through educator collaboration in developing geo-centered maps for history classes. Also like here, he shares the challenge in seeking funds for geography education.

In 2009, Dr. Lambrinos was part of a team that won a gold medal for a set of eight maps on Western Europe at the International Conference of the International Cartographic Association in Santiago, Chili. The award was for best cartographic technique and the best pedagogical piece. The project, ‘The Making of Wall Maps for Primary and Secondary Schools in Greece’, was developed through the Institute of Pedagogical Education of Greece. The project involved educators from 10 universities and Dr. Lambrinos was one of four involved in the pedagogical portion. The University of the Aegean oversaw the total project.

Dr. Lambrinos pointed out that goal was to make the map legends informative, easy to use and helpful for classroom teacher instruction. For example, on the map below note the climate graphs for rainfall and shaded water drops representing seasonal totals of rainfall. One need not know Greek to appreciate the visual richness and effectiveness of the legend for this map. Congratulations Nikos!!!
New Resources for Teachers: The Cartographer’s Dilemma

A project from the US Department of Education funded Fulbright-Hays Group Projects abroad to Nigeria, India, Bangladesh, and Chile.

The learning objects currently here are photos and represent a fraction of the total, and many additional photographs will be added in the coming months. In addition, we expect to add video clips in the next year. All are indexed according to descriptive keywords (e.g. livestock, transportation, mining), geography specific keywords (e.g. economic, cultural, landforms), by general place name (e.g. Chile, Nigeria, Bangladesh) or by specific place name (e.g. Concepción, Simla, Ibadan) All can be downloaded in high resolution and are free of charge and free of copyright restrictions for any type of classroom and educational use.

http://www.uni.edu/gai/fulbright-hays-learning-objects and http://www.uni.edu/gai/fulbright-hays/

[click here for the introduction and country information] [click here for the learning objects and country list]

Please note that the country specific pages have thumbnail images for all the images for that country, but the search function will pull keywords from all four countries.

If you want to go straight to the country specific pages please go to:
India— http://www.uni.edu/gai/fulbright-hays/india
Bangladesh— http://www.uni.edu/gai/fulbright-hays/bangladesh
Chile— http://www.uni.edu/gai/fulbright-hays/chile
Nigeria— http://www.uni.edu/gai/fulbright-hays/nigeria

“Certainly travel is more than the sights; it is a change that goes on, deep and permanent, in the ideas of living” --Mary Ritter Beard
KGA members Paul and Pat Phillips share the following exciting and geographically provoking experience of a trip they took last year...

**Exploring the Roof of the World**

**Ten Days in Tibet**

Last July friends would ask, “What plans do you have for retirement”. I would say, “I have no plans other than to take advantage of opportunities”. That’s why when asked if Pat and I would like to travel to Tibet in April of 2014, we immediately said yes. Then reality hit. Pat and I are both over 70, don’t do serious exercising, would be climbing thirteen flights of stairs at Lhasa’s Potala Palace (11,450 ft.), and overnighting in a tent at Everest Base Camp (16,900 ft). We began to wonder if all this was wise, especially with oxygen levels on the Plateau at 60% of sea level amounts. The advice given to us could have come directly from Bob Marley, take a Diomox pill a day and “Don’t worry be Happy”. The advice was sound. – we avoided oxygen associated altitude sickness.

Be advised that visiting Tibet comes complete with bureaucratic complexities. We were told to avoid mentioning Tibet when applying for our Chinese Visa. The tour operator actually provided an alternate itinerary to accompany our visa application forms. Obtaining our Chinese visa was just the first step. We also needed a document giving us permission to visit Lhasa, and before boarding the Lhasa train, had to sign a Passenger Health Registration Card. Finally, to travel beyond Lhasa required an additional permit from the Chinese Government.

Having successfully threaded our way through the above complexities, we made the trip to Tibet, and spent a wonderful ten days exploring: “The Roof of the World”. Hearing of our adventure, the first question is, “what were your impressions”? Before continuing I must make these disclaimers. First, the Tibetan Autonomous Region is quite large, more than three times the size of Texas, and we

Visit the KGA website at [www.ksu.edu/pga](http://www.ksu.edu/pga) to read the rest of this great adventure!
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/

KGA Insights is looking for:

⇒ News items,
⇒ Lesson plans,
⇒ Book review,
⇒ Professional development opportunity, or
⇒ Any item of interest

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

We are looking for column suggestions. What topics would interest you to see in Insights? Tips and resources? Technology? Please share your thoughts and if you would like to write a column. Contact Lisa Tabor at lkt7779@ksu.edu.

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