

THE LONE STAR

A URISA Texas Publication

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President's Message

Greetings:

We started the Texas State Chapter of URISA, "URISA Texas" several years ago. As we publish our maiden newsletter I would like to reflect on years past and provide some context on our beginnings, where we are today and (dare I say, ambitious) plans going forward!

I would like to begin by acknowledging the key role that **Brian King** (Freese & Nichols, Austin) played as the original founding member with the help of just a handful of enthusiasts from another, very active chapter of GITA – NCT GITA in the DFW area. Thanks to the forward thinking mindset of **Tina Hansen** (City of North Richland Hills) and **Jennifer Moore** (Bartlett & West Engineers) among others within NCT GITA that they decided to merge with URISA Texas and create one strong statewide chapter under the broad auspices of URISA. This is around the time I heard of Brian's efforts and got involved. Needless to say it's been a fun and enjoyable ride so far.

Living in a state as big and diverse as Texas there is a lot of potential for an organization like ours and we are just beginning to tap into it. Our mission reflects our intention of being a premier GIS community in the state of Texas by providing an engaging platform that our members can leverage to network and collaborate with their peers, stay on top of the latest advancements, and foster career growth and development.

We have strived to provide that experience through our monthly [Virtual Speaker Series](#) presentations. But we can do more. We have not always been as active and consistent as we aimed to be. However, with the influx of new energy and volunteers (**Tina Rust**, HNTB, **Chris Akin**, Dunaway Associates & **Olesya Powers**, City of Mesquite), we are continuing to expand into hosting other events including Mappy Hours (casual gathering and peer to peer networking) and instructor-led [workshops](#) from renowned experts in the field.

Going forward our goal is to expand the footprint by standardizing these offerings on a regular basis and in other areas of Texas providing geospatial professionals with opportunities for career development, networking and quite simply...having fun!

To help accomplish all this and more we need a lot more hands (and ideas) on deck! If you are passionate about doing your bit for the Texas GIS community this is your opportunity to get engaged and energized!



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Please feel free to reach out to us (urisatexas@gmail.com).

In closing, I would like to offer special thanks to two key figures in our journey that have been a constant presence and supported us all the way – [Dr. Philip Davis](#), Professor of Computer Science at Del Mar College and Principal Investigator [UAS Technology Education Consortium \(UASTECC\)](#), and [Bill Hodge](#), Executive Director, [GISCI](#). We couldn't have done it

without their invaluable and selfless guidance and support all these years in the evolution of URISA Texas.

I hope you enjoy reading our first newsletter!

Warm regards,
Sumant Mallavaram (Esri)

Asset Management Workshop –

Coming to North Central Texas this October!

By: Tina Hansen

The URISA Texas Chapter is hosting an Asset Management Workshop – a certified URISA Workshop – on Friday, October 14, at Brookhaven College. If your agency, public or private, is challenged by increased demand, regulatory requirements, and infrastructure needs, you may want to look at how an asset management program can help you. This workshop will focus on several aspects of developing an asset management system that works to improve performance, reduce long-term costs, and maximize return on investment in infrastructure assets. [\[Register here\]](#)

Allen Ibaugh, CEO of Data Transfer Solutions (DTS) and Past President of the URISA Board of Directors, is our instructor for the Asset Management Workshop. He has given this workshop many times to personnel from transportation, water, and a host of other facilities-support agencies. Allen brings his invaluable knowledge and experience to this important Workshop.

How to get your program started? Allen recognizes the many issues faced in putting together an asset management program. These can range from questions about data collection, software, and implementing best practices to concerns about changing work flows and maintaining data and skill sets. Allen offers an approach he calls “working the problem backwards.” It begins by laying out all the parts of the program starting with specific outcomes (for example, “what reports?”) and works to fill in with needs (like “where are my data gaps?” or “what data and people will be needed to support the program?”).

This workshop is an excellent introduction to building an asset management program. It provides information and tools to help meet the challenge of improving business performance and effectiveness. Topics include items such as Strategy and Planning, Software Solutions, Evaluation and Performance Measures, Life Cycle Costs – and more.



Upcoming Conferences and Workshops

Conferences

SWAAG Conference - October 20-22, 2016

The Southwest Division of the Association of American Geographers are holding their annual meeting in Denton, TX. The conference will be hosted by the Department of Geography and the Environment at the University of North Texas. For more information visit: <http://www.sw-aag.org/2016-meeting1.html>

TNRIS - Texas GIS Forum, Austin, TX – October 24-27, 2016

TNRIS will be hosting their annual 2017 Texas GIS Forum October 24th to October 27th. This year's guest speakers include Oceanographer Robert Ballard, and Feminist Geographer Nazgol Bagheri. Don't forget to submit your piece for the Poster Contest. Agenda and Training details are available at <https://tnris.org/texas-gis-forum/2016/>

GIS-PRO, Annual URISA Conference, Toronto, Canada - October 31 - November 3, 2016

GIS-Pro is almost here! Join URISA for the 54th anniversary of this special event in Toronto, Canada. For more information visit: <http://www.urisa.org/education-events/gis-pro-2016-urisa-s-54th-annual-conference/>

Common Ground Alliance 811 Excavation Safety Conference & Expo, Orlando, FL – March 14 -16, 2017

GIS has a huge importance in the management of underground utilities and assets. For the third year running, GITA is proud to have its members present many of the GIS talks at next year's Common Ground Alliance 811 Excavation Safety Conference & Expo. For more information visit: <http://cgaconference.com>

SCAUG & LA RS/GIS Conference, Baton Rouge, LA - March 27-31, 2017

The location for the annual 2017 SCAUG Conference has been decided. Next year history will be made as not one, but TWO fantastic geospatial organizations collaborate to produce this event. More details to come.

For more information visit: <http://www.scaug.org>

ESRI Petroleum GIS Conference, Houston, TX - April 12-13, 2017

The 2017 ESRI Petroleum Conference will be held in Houston. Mark your calendar and don't miss out on your chance to gather with industry leaders. Learn about the latest technology, best practices, and industry trends.

For more information visit: <http://www.esri.com/events/petroleum-energy>

NENA Conference, San Antonio, TX – June 3-8, 2017

Next year the 2017 NENA Conference & Expo will be held in San Antonio. Join thousands as they discuss and collaborate on current issues and the most advanced technologies and solutions.

For more information visit: <http://www.nena.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=641831&group=>

ESRI UC, San Diego, CA - July 10-14, 2017

ESRI UC 2017 has been announced! The call for paper submissions is now open. More details to come. Visit

<http://www.esri.com/events/user-conference> for more details



Workshops and Training

Asset Management: Planning, Strategy and Implementation, Farmers Branch, TX - October 14, 2016

URISA Texas is sponsoring Asset Management, a URISA Certified Workshop. The class will be held at Brookhaven College in Farmers Branch. This workshop will focus on several aspects of developing an asset management system that could help improve performance, reduce long-term costs, and maximize return on investment in infrastructure assets.

For more information and to register, please visit: <http://urisetexas.org/event-2330184>

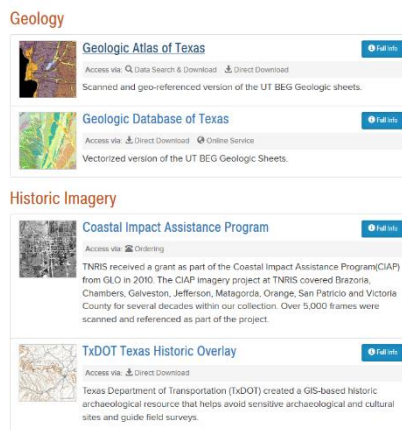
TxEGR - Texas Emergency GIS Response Team - TBA

The Texas Emergency GIS Response Team, is a volunteer based response group providing GIS services for emergency situations, planned training, and special events in the state of Texas. If you are interested in joining the response team, please visit <http://www.texasegrt.org/egrt-training.html> to see when the next training session will be available. David Allen, EGRT's Regional Coordinator, will be presenting about the organization at this year's TNRIS conference in October.

Data Sources: Focus on TNRIS imagery in historic and archaeological reporting

By: Tina Hansen

The Texas Natural Resources Information System (TNRIS) is the principal Texas state archive for natural resources data. It serves as a central clearinghouse and referral center for many kinds of data, including aerial imagery. Its imagery datasets are available at multiple levels: State, County, Quad and Quarter-Quad. Tina Rust, a planner for Environmental Planning at the Plano, TX, offices of the HNTB Corporation, uses TNRIS imagery every day in support of road and highway planning and engineering. Her research provides the preliminary archaeological and environmental information necessary in transportation-related projects.



A sample from the TNRIS Data Catalog

Tina Rust and the staff historian, Anna Simpkins, are responsible for preparing the historic and archaeological reports for the entities requesting them, including TxDOT, DART, and state counties. To start her research, Tina begins by locating features in her study area with the help of TNRIS orthoimagery. She views their product as good quality imagery. Also, while other sources may be “prettier”, they are rarely more recent than available TNRIS orthoimagery.

For her archaeological research, Tina will usually start with county data and then select for multiple years. She will couple this with historical imagery from the TxDOT Texas Historic Overlay, matching quads of the same date. The quads are useful since they often

planning



indicate locations such as for a cemetery or house. Tina notes, however, that the Texas Historic Overlay has the drawback of bringing together quads from all available years in one image, so the Overlay user needs to determine which quad is for which date. In addition to the Overlay, historic imagery covering several decades may be purchased from TNRIS if the project is in one of the coastal counties. One helpful point is that it's all in UTM so there is no dealing with conversions.

With this imagery and using map tools, Tina is looking for disturbed land along proposed roadway projects. They tell the story of where old roads once were, the location of old structures or foundations, and possible pre-historic sites. This helps her identify areas that need to be tested in the field. Her findings are documented along with any environmental restraints such as

wetlands and historic structures. Tina's and Anna's work - compiled from many different sources and often from tests in the field - provide the content for the reports necessary to meet local and state planning requirements.

The links for imagery noted in the above article:

TNRIS data: <https://tnris.org/data-catalog/>

TNRIS downloads: <https://tnris.org/data-download/#!/statewide>

TxDOT Texas Historic Overlay: <https://tnris.org/data-catalog/entry/txdot-texas-historic-overlay/>

TNRIS historic imagery (for purchase): <https://tnris.org/order-data/>

Also - USGS topo maps: <http://nationalmap.gov/historical/>

Interesting Links

URISA Texas members come from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. Their paths often allow them to come across interesting material. We are pleased to share the following with you in hopes that it may be of help or interest to you.

- [City Maps: A coloring book for adults](#) by Gretchen Peterson
- [2016 ESRI Storytelling with Maps](#) Contest winners
- [The Great British Coloring Map: A coloring journey around Britain](#) (in association with Britain's Ordnance Survey)
- Podcast discussions on [geography & geospatial technologies](#)
- USGS [Historical Topographic Map Explorer](#)



Introducing the URISA Texas Board of Directors



Sumant Mallavaram, GISP – President Sumant Mallavaram, GISP, has a Master’s degree in Environmental Engineering and a background in water resources planning. Mr. Mallavaram is part of the Natural Resources team at ESRI focusing on the energy (O&G) sector and is based out of the San Antonio office. He is actively involved in helping energy customers in strategizing and leveraging ArcGIS as a location platform to empower the entire business life cycle of well drilling operations touching on all business units including land, geosciences, operations, EH&S and community engagement. Mr. Mallavaram is certified in Ersi’s ArcGIS Desktop, a member of URISA and American Water Resources Association (AWRA).



Brian King, GISP, RPA, CFM – Past President 2012-2015 and current Vice President Brian King, has been involved in geospatial science since 1999. He has a master’s degree Geographic Information Systems and a Graduate Certificate of Geospatial Intelligence (GEOINT), from the Pennsylvania State University and the United States Geospatial Intelligence Foundation (USGIF). Mr. King is a Registered Professional Archaeologist (RPA), having 15 years of experience in the field of archeology, and a Certified Floodplain Manager. He earned a BA in Anthropology from the University of Kentucky in 1997 and an Associates of Architecture from the Lexington Community College in 1993. Mr. King is currently employed by Freese and Nichols, Inc. since 2011 and has worked for other engineering and cultural resource management firms since 1999. Over the years he has gained experience in drafting

and design tasks in areas of floodplain modeling and mapping, remote sensing, Lidar processing, land development, hydrology and hydraulics, residential sites, and highway projects in the state of Texas. Other areas of expertise include ModelBuilder, Mobile GIS applications, Amazon EC2 web mapping, ArcSDE, and engineering and archaeological reporting writing. He am one of the original members involved to form the statewide Texas URISA Chapter. He currently serves on the NISGTC BILT advisory board and is the outgoing URISA Chapter Advisory Board (CAB) appointee. Mr. King is a member of the international Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA), the GIS Certification Institute (GISCI), and Texas Floodplain Management Association (TFMA).



Tina Hansen, GISP – Treasurer Tina Hansen, came to GIS in 1995 from a background in computer application development and software quality assurance, having worked for EFA Technologies, Inc., and then for the State of California Department of Corrections (DOC), Information Services Branch. Her work at EFA and the central I.T. branch of the California DOC provided experience in application design - with a focus on needs assessment and requirements analysis, application development, and contract/proposal review, development, and coordination. With GIS, she combined her interest in geography and maps with her technical background in computer applications. She received a Graduate Certificate in GIS from the University of Texas, Dallas, and was awarded a GISP certification in 2009. The last eighteen years she has worked in local government, specializing in city government spatial data development, integration, and



management needs. She is currently a GIS Analyst for the city of North Richland Hills, TX. Tina has been involved in the Dallas/Fort Worth GIS community since 2000. Having served on the executive committee in several capacities for the North Central Texas Chapter of GITA (Geospatial Information and Technology Association), she is now among those working to build a strong URISA Texas Chapter.



Jenni Moore, GISP – Secretary Jenni Moore, has been involved in GIS since 2005 and received a GIS Certification from University of Texas at Arlington in 2008. She is currently employed with Bartlett & West and has worked in the Rail Division since 2011 where she plays an integral role in developing business workflows, automating processes, evaluating and implementing enterprise GIS systems, and managing projects overall. Prior to this, she had developed trusted relationships with clients and communities via delivering quality service and map production for various engineering and consulting firms. She is an active member in the local GIS community of the Dallas/Fort Worth area.



Tina Rust, GISP, RPA – Chapter Advisory Board Representative Tina Rust moved into GIS in 2003 from a background in cultural resource management. For over 15 years, she conducted archaeological excavations for the National Park Service and private consulting firms throughout the southeastern US. Over the last 13 years, she has specialized in GIS for county and regional government planning, E-911 emergency management, and environmental planning. She is currently employed at HNTB Corporation, an architecture, civil engineering, and construction management firm in Plano, TX. As the chapter advisory board representative for URISA Texas, she is involved

in supporting over 25 chapters across the US which are active in providing professional GIS education and training on a regional and statewide basis.



Chris Akins, GISP – Events Coordinator Chris Akin manages Dunaway Associates' GIS division and has over 15 years of experience in the development and management of geospatial projects, strategies and processes. His strategic and technical expertise allows him to seamlessly act as a liaison between clients, technical specialists, and senior management. Chris received a Bachelor's in Geography with a GIS emphasis degree from Texas A&M University and a Master's in GIS for Business and Service Planning from the University of Leeds, England. Chris is a certified GIS Professional (GISP) and is on the URISA Board of Directors as the Chair of the Chapter Advisory Board. He is also a Past President of the New England URISA.



Olesya Powers – Board member at large Olesya Powers discovered the world of GIS in 2008 and received her Honours Bachelor of Science from the University of Toronto in 2011. She went on to work with World Wildlife Fund – Canada as part of the team that developed the foundation's freshwater health assessment report. In 2013 she received her Graduate Certificate from the Geomatics Institute at Fleming College in GIS – Cartographic Specialist. Olesya accepted a position with CCCMaps (formerly Rand McNally Canada) as a cartographer and was involved in the publication of several road atlases. She is currently a GIS Technician for the city of Mesquite, TX. Additionally, she is a member of the Texas Emergency GIS Response Team (TxEGRT) and has worked events such as the Dec 26, 2015 tornado recovery.



URISA Texas Events!

Keep an eye out for these upcoming events:

- URISA Texas Monthly Speaker Series
- Mappy Hour
- 2016 Board Elections

Visit our events [page](#) for more details.

Thank you to our Sponsors!

URISA Texas would like to thank Dunaway Associates as well as Freese and Nichols for their generous donations.



Would you like an article, event or GIS related group included in the Lone Star? Contact us at urisatexas@gmail.com

