



# NEMO Newsletter

Quarterly Newsletter of the North East Map Organization

NUMBER 40

OCTOBER 2000

## From the Bridge

**W**e have tentatively confirmed the NEMO 2001 meeting to be held at Mount Holyoke College on June 7-8, 2001. Nancy Kandoian is working this out with the college. Jim Walsh will be putting the program together, and many of us remember our visit to Tufts when Jim was there.

Having lived in less planned societies such as Swaziland I was amused by the subway Map of New York. The edition with the seven languages in the legend. Under traveling with children;

“When accompanied by an adult, up to three children under 44 inches tall ride the subway free.”

I wondered, “do they have a measuring stick?”

Also under subway entrances you’ll see globes outside of most subway entrances. If the globe is green it means that the entrance is staffed 24 hours a day. A red globe indicates the entrance is closed or restricted in some way. Read the sign posted above the stairs if you see a red globe.

**Captain Ernie Woodson**

University at Buffalo Libraries

## New York State *Urban Areas Atlas*

A new mini atlas of New York’s urban areas is being produced. Designed as a companion piece to the 1998 state atlas, the new *Urban Areas Atlas* will include detailed maps of 11 metropolitan areas. Measuring 8 ½ x 11, the *Atlas* can be stored in a pocket in the back of the state atlas. The *Urban Areas Atlas* was originally to be published in 1999 but production was delayed. To avoid further delay, the number of areas to be mapped was reduced from 25. MAGIS hopes to restore these areas in future editions.

Publication of the *Urban Areas Atlas* is expected before the end of the year. Individuals with the 1998 *New York State Atlas* will automatically receive their companion *Urban Areas Atlas* upon its publication. For more information go to:

<http://www.dot.state.ny.us/magis/magis.html>

## Call For Papers - Nemo 2001

**P**lans for NEMO 2001 are well underway. Nancy Kandoian has been in contact with the conference people at Mt. Holyoke College and it is looking good as meeting place. The Conference Planning Committee is still looking at Thursday-Friday, June 7-8, 2001 as the meeting dates. Stay tuned for final confirmation and details!!

The purpose of this item is to solicit papers, people, ideas, suggestions for NEMO 2001. If you have a topic or paper that you would like to present; if you know of someone who has a topic or paper that would be of interest to the membership; or if you have ideas or suggestions for presentations and/or field trips, please let me know. Please submit your information to:

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The NEMO 2001 Planning Committee will review all suggestions and will be in touch with you. Please take a few minutes to think this over and submit your ideas to me by the end of December 2000. Your participation and cooperation are essential in making the program one of the best. Thank you in advance for your help.

**Jim Walsh**, Captain Elect  
and NEMO 2001 Planning Committee Chair

*“So geographers, in Afric maps,  
With savage pictures fill their gaps,  
And o’er unhabitable downs  
Place elephants for want of towns.”*

Jonathan Swift. 1667-1745  
*On Poetry: A Rhapsody* (1733)

## What I Did on My Summer Vacation...

by Richard Gelpke

This summer I had the great good fortune to be able to spend a month on the road camping and visiting across the country from Massachusetts to Arizona and back. As a 'map-freak' I certainly couldn't travel without the latest accouterments. Paper maps, atlases, camping guides, etc. BUT the most fun was the GPS, the laptop, mapping software and enough battery in the van to be able to run the stuff all day. Talk about a cell phone as a distraction; just try to put the laptop next to you on the seat and have the live map moving on the GPS screen or a big arrow dancing along the road you are traveling on the computer monitor!

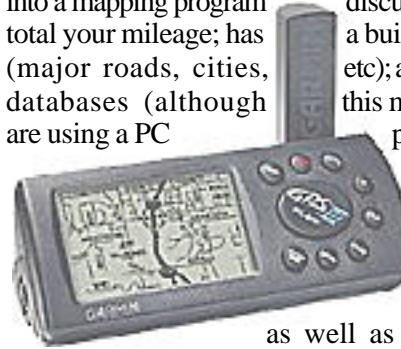
Along with the digital camera, this "medium tech" stuff is now readily available and the cost is quite reasonable if you have a reason to use it more than once or twice a year. The really neat aspect it is that the interfaces are now becoming quite good so that you do not need to be a computer geek or a cartography expert to get a good deal of benefit from this newly available technology. I want to take this opportunity to give you some ideas about what I am using and the costs. I am not pushing any certain brands here but I will mention the specific units and software that I use. The similarities, especially with the "low end" GPS units, are quite remarkable now.

I use a *Pentium II* laptop (PC), running at 266 mHz and a reasonable hard drive to keep the logs from the mapping and to download the images from the digital camera. It doesn't take a lot of space for either.

As I drove along I would take pictures with the digital camera during the day. In the evening I would download them into the laptop—it works well even in the tent with a battery. I did this because you can easily forget why you took some of the shots; I would rename the files each day so that I didn't wind up at the end of the trip with several hundred to do at one time. The best part of the digital camera is the delete button. We tend to be loathe to throw away prints or slides after having paid to develop them. If it is important you can actually take GPS readings at the very place you take the photos so you can locate them on the map. You can buy a digital camera now for several hundred dollars; comparable with film based cameras. I am told that digital cameras are now selling film based cameras by 60-40. I use an Olympus. They come with software to download into a PC and touch up the images.

**The GPS:** I originally started with the low end *Garmin* (GPS 12 and the 45 XL...). Their web site is found at <http://www.garmin.com>. These are now around \$100-150 per unit and give you good locations (latitude-longitude). My experience is that now with selective availability turned off (since May, 2000) you come within a tennis court size of your actual location; often within 5-10 feet. That is really

pretty good. For some more money (to me, worth it) is the *Garmin III Plus* (around \$350). It has a readable screen and has a number of other useful features. It will track your location on a readable screen; download your location into a mapping program discussed below; give speed, total your mileage; has a built in map of the country (major roads, cities, etc); and can accept other map databases (although this may not be useful if you are using a PC program). It can be



powered by a cable from the cigarette lighter (what do they call these now??) as can the PC. Garmin, as well as other manufacturers, now offer GPS units that contain very extensive map databases within the unit itself which obviates the need for the laptop and separate software. This may be a good alternative if the laptop is not available or you don't want to carry all that stuff. You will, however, need access to a computer to upload the different databases that you want.



If you are going to use one of these units for any length of time you definitely need a power cable since they tend to eat batteries. You will also need a download

cable to send info from the GPS to the computer (and vice versa). Garmin has a combined cable that does both; a must if you are going to run the GPS for any but a few moments to collect a location.

Incidentally I also use an inverter (12 v battery output to 110 for the computer) that plugs into the cigarette lighter and runs the computer all day. It costs about \$30 for one of these. I have used this for a long time and it works great. You need to make sure the connection is plugged in securely since the 'plug-ins' don't tell you if the connection is made. It may be that the first you realize the computer is not plugged in is when it (the computer) says it is out of battery power and ready to shut down!



### Current Officers (2000-2001)

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**The software:** I use a number of packages for different types of traveling. For the long days where you might be crossing several states, it is hard to beat Delorme's *TopoUSA 2.0*. It is a set of 6 CDs that cover the US (only!). It has a great deal of detail about topography, culture, roads, etc. This is not the USGS topographic maps. It is a different series created by Delorme itself. I would recommend you visit their website (<http://www.delorme.com/>). It costs around \$100 for all the CDs or \$50 for each of the regional ones; now there are specialty ones available (fly-fishing, parks, etc)



I also use several other packages, but for different purposes. I have had very good luck with MapTech's (<http://www.maptech.com>) *Terrain Navigator* series of CDs. These are the scanned USGS topos. They have just dropped the prices dramatically. It used to be that just Massachusetts was around \$100 but you can buy all of New England and NY for \$150—competition has just worked the way it was supposed to. National Geographic and Topo! both offer similar products as does Delorme. Delorme's first version scanning was unsatisfactory and I have not experience with that product recently.

**Laptop:** what can I say here except the obvious. The faster the processor and the better the screen the more enjoyable the experience. This is a mobile application in the sense that it is not at home but rather in the car. You will not plan to carry the whole mess with you in the field but you can, of course, download the points you recorded with the GPS unit alone. What you will not need is a lot of disk space. The GPS log files or the waypoint files from the unit takes very little space. I used a Fujitsu laptop and have found it to be very satisfactory. Indeed the only complaint I have is the weight of the battery; that accounts for about 2/3 of the total unit. This machine is fast enough so the screen scrolling is very fast and queries (where is ...?) are equally acceptable.

**Why do all this?** If you are content to simply observe the scenery then there is not point here. But if you are like me, I want to know the name of that hill, the stream we just passed, what is over the next hill. The fascination for where I am is just too much fun to pass up. I also want to know the names of these places. I definitely still collect all the road maps as I go along but the computer and GPS are neat additions to any trip.

Please do let NEMO know of your experiences with a GPS and we can share other ideas as well.

## Carto Clips

NEMO members **Eliza McClennen** and **Herb Heidt**, both *MapWorks* Cartographers, presented at the September 12 meeting of **MGIC**(Massachusetts Geographic Information Council) in Boston. The meeting focused on "Getting from GIS to High Quality Maps." Their talk was "Taking Control of Design in GIS: the Cartographers' Perspective." Touching on the cartographic work they contributed to the recently published book *Mapping Boston*, and various municipal open space and land use projects, the Cartographers encouraged looking beyond the default design options in computer mapping/GIS programs to create more meaningful map displays. From title wording, symbol/color selection, text labels, legend design and general layout they gave suggestions on how a little extra thought and effort can go a long way in improving map comprehension and readability.

—submitted by MapWorks

The **Osher Library Associates** had their annual meeting at the University of Southern Maine on Tues. Oct. 3, with a meeting, reception, and a lecture by David Bosse, Librarian at Historic Deerfield, Mass. He spoke on "Charting the American Coast in the Early Republic: Matthew Clark, John Norman, and the American Pilot." It's in connection with the Osher Map Library's exhibit (that we all saw in June) on "Charting Neptune's Realm." Info on upcoming events: (207) 780-4850.

—submitted by Nancy Kandoian

## WWW Map Resources

"Maps and Geographical Information Systems Resources on the World Wide Web and In Print : In Order by Category"

<http://www.albany.edu/~ls973/newmaps.html>

This page is a selected list of links to maps and GIS resources, including: Organizations, Atlases, Electronic Discussions, GIS (Government, Educational, Commercial Sites, etc.), Geography, Geospatial Data Resources, Global Positioning Systems, Journals, Local Geographic Information (by Place Name), Maps.

—submitted by Lorre Smith

## A House Divided: Maps of the Civil War

The Harvard Map Collection is having an exhibit of Civil War maps, curated by Bonnie Burns, the GIS specialist, who until recently mapped Civil War battlefields for the National Park Service. The exhibit will run from Sept. 15, 2000-March 1, 2001.

<http://www-hcl.harvard.edu/maps/civilwar/>.

—submitted by Joseph Garver, Harvard Map Collection

*"Exurbia" is the mostly rural residential area beyond the suburbs of a city.*



November 12-18, 2000

*Here Today, Here Tomorrow—*

*A Geographic Focus on Conservation.*

[www.nationalgeographic.com/gaw](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/gaw)

See notice on page 4

Thanks to Nancy Kandoian  
for the reminder



## For Your Information

What a nice surprise to see that the latest issue of *Kids Discover* magazine, Vol. 10, No. 9, (Oct. 2000), is devoted to—*MAPS!!* Its chock full of all things cartographic, including brief explanations to terms such as *latitude*, *longitude*, *scale*, and *coordinates*, a “Map of Mikey’s Room” complete with legend to all the cool stuff Mikey owns, a centerfold showing effects of projection on maps, LOTS of historical cartography information, etc.!! Heck, even us **adults** could maybe learn something here so you may want to pick up a copy for display in your local library or make your map librarian aware of this title. Dr. Peter O. Muller, Chair of the Geography Dept. at the University of Miami served as maps consultant for this issue. Go to:

<http://nba.com/subscriptions/fm/kidd.html>  
for subscription and purchasing information. Have fun!

—Submitted by Paige Andrew

14th Annual

## Geography Awareness Week

November 12-18, 2000

“What in nature do you appreciate? Clean air? Fresh drinking water? Wildflowers? Conservation is about balancing some of the needs of people—places to live, work, play, go to school—with the need for a planet that will be healthy for years to come. Conservation helps us protect what we want to be here tomorrow for others to enjoy. Conservation and geography are closely linked. As geography helps us to better understand our planet’s complexity, conservation enables us to become better protectors of its biological and cultural diversity.”

[www.nationalgeographic.com/gaw](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/gaw)

## The NEMO Newsletter

Number 40

October 2000

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We invite and welcome contributions and suggestions. Please submit all materials to the editor using e-mail, 3.5” PC or Macintosh disk (in Word, RTF, or ASCII format), or by sending a typewritten document. Newsletter submissions and questions on submissions should be directed to:

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**NEMO** (North East Map Organization) is a group dedicated to serving as a unifying body for all who use, produce, collect, and market maps and cartographic information in the North-east; increasing communication between all interested in maps; and working with state, regional, and national organizations and government agencies in dissemination of maps and cartographic information. NEMO’s principal region is CT, DE, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT.

**Subscriptions** are included with membership in NEMO, which is fifteen dollars per year. Back issues for the current year will be included with new memberships.

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