New York Geographic Alliance Newsletter

GeoFest is Coming! Are YOU Registered?

October 2014 - Special Edition
Geography is Worth Celebrating!

What's Happening in Geography in New York

GeoFest 2014 - October 18th

Partnering with 4H

Geography Awareness Week - FOOD!

Atlas of New York and Other Resources
Dear Susan,

I hope that the first month of school has been pleasant and productive. I know that it’s been hectic, because that is what we do.

I want to extend a special invitation to all our members to attend our annual GeoFest 2014 here at Monroe Community College on October 18th. We’ve got some great workshops lined up, and an afternoon trip to tour the historic Susan B. Anthony House in Rochester (pictured at the left). This is a chance to greet old friends and make new acquaintances. We also welcome pre-teachers! Find out the details in the article below.

We are busy working on several projects as 2014 winds down. Our module committee writers are designing lessons for a middle school unit to enhance the new Atlas of New York: Legacies of the Erie Canal. We are also promoting this year’s Geography Awareness Week. The theme is on Food in the 21st Century. What could be better? You can teach geography and have something good to eat!

We are also working with our web designers to make some important improvements on our website. It should be easier to navigate, and you will be able find the materials you need without a password. If you have any suggestions, send them to me.

Have a great October! We hope to see you here on the 18th at GeoFest.

Timothy McDonnell
Coordinator of the New York Geographic Alliance

GeoFest 2014 - October 18th

The New York Geographic Alliance is pleased to invite the teachers, pre-teachers, and informal educators of New York to GeoFest 2014. It will be held at
Monroe Community College in Rochester on Saturday, October 18th. The morning session will include a continental breakfast, a short welcoming ceremony, a three workshop sessions on a wide variety of topics: water-testing, geographic literature, updates from NYSED, lessons using the new Atlas of New York, rocketry, and lessons for Geographic Awareness Week... and much more. If you want to see a more complete listing of workshops, click here.

As a special bonus, we are taking a tour of the Susan B. Anthony House in Rochester in the afternoon. A box lunch will be included. We can only accommodate 25 people, so you need to register ASAP!

This is a day to celebrate geography. You NEED to be here! To register, please go to the NYGA Website, or download the GeoFest flyer/registration here. Invite your friends and colleagues. All are welcome!

Partnering with 4H

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One of the partnerships that the New York Geographic Alliance has forged over the last five years is a tight working relationship with Cornell Cooperative Extension, especially the 4-H Program.

Most of you probably think that this is a program for children living on farms, but that is far from the full story. They work with young people from all over the state, in both urban and rural communities. The 4-H'ers are involved in many different activities, and most of them are geographic! For example, 4-H youth learn how to use GIS and remote sensing technology. Some make maps and posters, which are displayed at the end of the summer at the New York State Fair. (Tim McDonnell, NYGA Coordinator is the "official" judge).

We are especially pleased with the relationship we have with IRIS (Institute for Research Information Services) at Cornell University in Ithaca. They hosted our 2011 Summer Institute, and Susan Hoskins has been a regular presenter at our workshops. She will be at this year’s GeoFest, demonstrating "Rockets to the Rescue," a great geographic STEM activity that you need to see.

Once we realize that geography extends beyond school walls, we can make all kinds of partnerships, including museums, industry, and historic places. Do you want to work with NYGA? Just give us a call and we'll make it work.

(Photos on Right: Devin LeBlanc, Orange County 4-H, winner of the map competition at the New York State Fair).
Do you recognize this plant? If you said potato or sweet potato, you would be mistaken. It's actually a cassava, a food staple of many tropical countries, including Brazil and the Congo. Other cultures have different staples—wheat, rice, corn, sorghum. Most people on this planet depend on these foods for their daily caloric intake. If these crops fail, thousands may face starvation.

This is just one of many challenges humanity will face as we try to feed a hungry world of over 7.2 billion. This is why National Geographic has made this year's theme for Geography Awareness Week is Food. It will be held on November 17-22, 2014. We expect that resources will be available from the NG Education website in early October. In the meantime, they recommend looking at these resources:

To complement National Geographic's extensive Food Education material, we have a new media spotlight highlighting our new map layers on Staple Food Crops of the World:

http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/maps/staple-food-crops-world/?ar_a=1

We also have an undernourishment map layer, and a new article to go along with it:

http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/news/paradox-undernourishment/?ar_a=1

Finally, and at long last, we have an update to our very popular encyclopedic entry on the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. It contains great information, good slideshow-maps and posters:

http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/encyclopedia/great-pacific-garbage-patch/?ar_a=1

Visit the NYGA website in the next couple of weeks to learn more about how you can celebrate Geography Awareness Week in your school. Better yet, come to GeoFest 2014. Dr. Gale Sookdeo will have lesson ideas waiting for you.

**Atlas of New York and Other Resources**

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The New York Geographic Alliance is proud of the resources that we are making available to educators in our state. They include lessons for all grade levels, our Erie Canal Module for Grades 4/5, the Treasuring the Erie Canal Poster, and many lessons on watershed education. You can obtain any of these materials by emailing the NYGA Office. Soon many of them will be downloadable from our redesigned website. They will also be given to participants at GeoFest 2014 on October 18th at Monroe Community College (see article above).

We also are introducing teachers and friends of geography to our newly published, Atlas of New York: Legacies of the Erie Canal. It contains 36 pages of maps and charts about the geography of New York. We want this to be a teaching tool for all grade levels. To help teachers we are now in the process of writing lessons to complement the Atlas. They will be designed for middle school, but with modifications, they can be adapted to other grade levels. There will a special double session at GeoFest 2014 devoted to the Atlas of New York.

We need teachers to help us with these projects. Stipends will be available. Please call Tim McDonnell at (585)-292-2398 if you are interested.

Don’t forget to register your school for the Geographic Bee. The deadline is October 15th. To find out how to register, go to the Bee’s Official Website! You can now do this online.

Contact Information

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Have you taken some time to enjoy the fall foliage? The Adirondacks are at peak now, and much of the rest of the state is on its way. A really great view can be seen near West Point (photo above).
We are also on Facebook. "Like Us" today!

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Yes! We recently had a third printing done of the Treasure the Erie Canal and Watersheds of New York posters in stock. Email Tim McDonnell to request your copy. It's free to all members. Not a member? No problem. Sign up online from our website and tell us you want a poster in the Comments section.

You can also reserve a copy of the brand-new Atlas of New York: Legacies of the Erie Canal. Copies are limited. Please include a check for $5 to cover printing and mailing costs.
Partnering with 4H

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