

President's Message for July 2003



BAAMA is a mission-driven organization that is growing in dynamic ways.

The mission of BAAMA is to be the primary forum of the San Francisco Bay Region geospatial community that provides education for professional development; networking opportunities; leadership, coordination, and representation- and has fun doing it!

Let's start with the "... and have fun doing it!" - I ate the last hamburger at our June 21st picnic in Lake Chabot Park. About three to four dozen of us (there was no door to stand at with a counter) enjoyed sunshine, a perfect day in the park, and good conversation. The calm waters of the lake were great for boating. A 10-pound fish was caught. For more entertainment, we played volleyball. In short, the BAAMA Summer Picnic was fun. We also held two BAAMA pub nights: one in San Francisco in March 2003 at Gordon Biersch and one in Berkeley at Beckett's in September 2002. My favorite social event for this year was the Holiday Party in December at Beckett's in Berkeley. Consequently, we have extended networking opportunities so they happen at education sessions and these networking social events.

We represented the geospatial community's interest in protecting CERES by writing letters and contacting our local legislators. BAAMA's web site hosted a soapbox for members and others to view our letters. BAAMA also stimulated others in the state to write letters to save CERES from the budget-cutting ax.

We have demonstrated leadership by coordinating with other organizations to grow the geospatial community. Our education sessions have had an outreach component to encourage those who are not GIS professionals but have a need to use GIS technology to learn about GIS applications in diverse areas such as earthquakes, asset management, and surveying. Board members have created relationships with about 10 professional organizations where there is a mutual interest in developing uses of GIS technology.

Our five education sessions for professional development have attracted over 600 people. This is testament that GIS professionals and those interested in using GIS technology from diverse backgrounds are seeing BAAMA as the primary forum of the geospatial community in the San Francisco Bay Region.

Another way to stay connected with BAAMA is through our web site (www.baama.org). We update the events calendar each month. We also listen to our members with occasional polling. Finally, we provide other services for our growing geospatial community such as resume posting and web collaboration through the newly created BAAMA Bulletin Board and Listserv services.

GIS Day gets better each year. We appreciate USGS for hosting this regional event for the second year. We had over 60 poster entries and some great posters won the prizes. The education sessions were top-notch and well attended.

Those of us who were able to attend the ninth annual California GIS Conference (CALGIS) in Palm Springs during these challenging economic times, when many organizations cut or eliminated their travel budget, enjoyed excellent educational sessions and quality networking time. We appreciate Lee Ann Garcia, SoCAL (our southern California partner), and the planning committee who presented a well-organized and fun conference. While our attendance was lower than we would have liked, we did cover our expenses. We believe that this statewide conference is an important service during the best of times and the worst of times. Our 10 th Annual CALGIS Conference in San Jose promises to be the best-attended conference ever- with your support.

My days as the BAAMA President have ended, as of 30 June 2003. I will be remaining on the BAAMA Board. As of 1 July 2003, the BAAMA officers for 2003-04 will be:

- Jeff Kapellas, President
- Phil Beilin, Vice President
- Jeffrey Fiore, Treasure

- Scott Gilliland, Secretary

As I bid you farewell, I want to thank the current BAAMA Board, Advisory Board members, and our membership for giving me great support during this year. BAAMA has grown dynamically as a mission-driven organization. Thanks to you, our membership has grown to nearly 1,000, up from about 700 one year ago. Have you sent in your membership application and payment? If not, please do so today.

We have openings on the BAAMA Advisory Board for any member who would like to become one of the “movers and shakers” for our geospatial community. Contact our Jeff Kapellas, BAAMA President for 2003-04, if you are interested in helping BAAMA continue to grow in dynamic ways.

George A. White
BAAMA President (2002-2003)