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NORAD tracks Santa -- 65th Year!

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, CO, Nov. 30, 2020 /24-7PressRelease/ -- The North American Aerospace Defense Command is celebrating the 65th Anniversary of tracking Santa's yuletide journey around the globe! The NORAD Tracks Santa website, www.noradsanta.org, launching Dec. 1, features Santa's North Pole Village, which includes a holiday countdown, games, movie theater, holiday music, webstore, and more. The website is available in eight languages: English, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, and Chinese.

The official NORAD Tracks Santa app has been updated for 2020 and is also available in the Apple App and Google Play stores, so parents and children can count down the days until Santa's launch on their smart phones and tablets. Tracking opportunities are also offered through social media on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram, as well as on partner platforms Amazon Alexa and OnStar.

Starting at 4 a.m. EST on Dec. 24, website visitors can watch Santa make preparations for his flight. NORAD's "Santa Cams" will stream videos on the website as Santa makes his way over various locations. Then, at 6 a.m. EST, trackers worldwide can call to inquire as to Santa's whereabouts by dialing the toll-free number 1-877-Hi-NORAD (1-877-446-6723) where they will either speak with a live phone operator or hear a recorded update. Due to COVID concerns, the NORAD Tracks Santa Operations Center will have fewer phone operators, so callers who do not reach a volunteer will hear a regularly updated recording as to Santa's current location. Anytime on Dec. 24, Amazon Alexa users can ask for Santa's location through the NORAD Tracks Santa skill for Amazon Alexa, and OnStar subscribers can press the OnStar button in their vehicles to locate Santa.

Tracking Santa has been a tradition since 1955 when a local newspaper advertisement informed children they could call Santa directly – only the contact number was misprinted. Instead of reaching

Santa, the phone rang through to the crew commander on duty, U.S. Air Force Colonel Harry Shoup, at the Continental Air Defense Command Operations Center, the predecessor to NORAD. Col. Shoup was quick to realize a mistake had been made, and assured the child he was Santa. Shoup then assigned a duty officer to continue answering calls. Thus, a holiday tradition was born, which NORAD has carried on since it was created in 1958. Each year since, NORAD has reported Santa's location on Dec. 24 to millions of children and families around the world.

NORAD Tracks Santa is truly a global experience, delighting generations of families everywhere. This is due, in large part, to the efforts and services of numerous program contributors.

This year's contributors include: the 21st Space Wing, 24-7 Press Release, Acuity Scheduling, Alaskan NORAD Region, Analytical Graphics, Inc. (AGI), Agingo, Amazon Alexa, Avaya, Canadian NORAD Region, Canadian Forces Museum of Aerospace Defence, CenturyLink, Cesium, Cherry Hill Programs, The Citadel Mall, Christmas in the Park, Colorado Springs Chamber & Economic Development Corporation, Continental U.S. NORAD Region, CradlePoint, Defense Video & Imagery Distribution Systems, DoD Education Activity, The Elf on the Shelf, Extended Stay America, Getty Images, Globelink Foreign Language Center, Hewlett Packard, Historic Arkansas Riverwalk of Pueblo, Lotz Of Happy Christmas, Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, Meshbox, Microsoft, Microsoft Azure, Microsoft Bing, Naden Band of Maritime Forces Pacific, NASA Space Place, Nashville Net User Group, Navy Marine Corps Public Health Center, OnStar, Package from Santa, Plantronics, Portable North Pole, Royal Canadian Air Force Band, S4, SciJinks, Shirt Stop, SiriusXM, Six String Soldiers, Slicktext, Space Foundation, Together We Stand Foundation, U.S. Air Force Band, U.S. Air Force Academy Band, U.S. Air Force Heartland of America Band, U.S. Coast Guard Band, U.S. Department of State Family Liaison Office, U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, U.S. Navy Band Northeast, U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Verizon.

GIS in the Rockies Report

33rd Annual "GIS in the Rockies" October 6-9, 2020 -- Virtual Event

*Due to state and regional COVID-19 restrictions, the 33rd annual GIS in the Rockies conference was held as a virtual event for the first time. During the months leading up to the conference, while no one knew what to expect over the next weeks or months, the Conference Planning Committee, comprised of representatives from the four professional organizations, **ASPRS Rocky Mountain Region, GIS Colorado, Professional Land Surveyors of Colorado, and Rocky Mountain URISA**, continued to meet virtually to plan the event. In retrospect, it was a wise decision.*

Pre-Conference WORKSHOPS

Workshops offered on **Tuesday, October 6:**

GIS and Python Programming Using ArcGIS Pro and Arcpy

Instructor: Lucas Kaim Thelen

Census Data for Redistricting and Planning

Instructors: Jim Castagneri & Lacey Loftin

Conference Program Overview

Note that registration for the virtual conference was only \$25 for all three days, quite a bargain for all the content available, and so convenient to attend -- no travel needed, and one could wear their pajamas if they wanted to -- who would know?!!

All the presentations had been pre-recorded, with the presenters available online during the event to intervene in case of technical difficulties and to answer questions at the end of their session. This proved to be a very smart strategy. Wednesday began with an Introduction by Conference Co-chairs **Genie Hays** and **Matt Hanks** that was a treat to watch, especially the visuals, including some aerial drone (UAS) footage over the Colorado mountains (eye candy!). Everything went reasonably well, except that after the initial session, it became difficult to move to a different room for the next session, forcing the organizers to manually move attendees as needed. Those who wanted to move

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had to either un-mute their microphones and wait their turn to speak up, or type in their request using the Chat function. This technical difficulty was caused by a glitch in the Zoom software that had not appeared during organizer rehearsals. The problem continued on Thursday, taking up much of the organizers' time. Attendees were quite patient with this process, since this was the first time as a virtual event and everything else seemed to go pretty smoothly.

Many thanks go out to our Sponsors this year:

- * **Nearmap**
- * **Quantum Spatial**
- * **WyGISC: Wyoming Geospatial Information Science & Technology Center at the University of Wyoming**

You can watch any or all of the presentations on the [GIS in the Rockies YouTube Channel](#) any time you want to, including the Keynote.

The three main days of the conference included a track for each of the sponsoring organizations: **ASPRS, GIS Colorado, PLSC, and URISA**. There were also tracks called **GIS in Government, Technology Spotlight, and GIS and Resources**. In addition, there was a **Geospatial Skills Focus Group** as well as a series of sessions called "**Talk to the Experts at xxx**" in the "**Virtual Exhibit Hall**."

The **Keynote Speaker** was **Daryl Branson**, CO State 911 Program Manager with DORA, who spoke about Colorado Next Generation 911 Updates.

Presentations included the following titles:

Geospatial Skills Focus Group

GIS in Government

- Mapping Crashes in Boulder County
- Sidewalk Repairs: Going from Paper to Digital
- Update on DRCOG's Regional Data Projects
- USGS National Digital Trails Project

GIS and Resources

- An Analysis of the Clinton Oil and Gas Fields Using Machine Learning
- Converting Symbology from Esri ArcGIS to Adobe Illustrator

Technology Spotlight

- How to Build Web App for Cemetery Management Using AGOL and Survey 123
- ArcGIS Enterprise, Hosted and Managed Cloud Strategies
- Civil 3D to ESRI Online and Back Again

ASPRS

- Buildings and 3D Modeling
- Got a Drone -- Now What? Mapping with Your UAV
- Reflections on September 11, 2001: Impact on Geospatial Practitioners
- Post-Disaster Mapping
- Delivering GIS Education: University of Denver's Response to COVID-19
- Dominica After Maria: Assessing Changes to Benthic Habitats

GIS Colorado

- Your Survival Guide to NG911
- Real-time GIS: Lessons Learned from a DIY GeoEvent Implementation
- GISCO Panel Discussion
- Identifying Climate Resilient Wildlands in Central Colorado

PLSC

- Modernizing the National Spatial Reference System
- PLSS Monument Database Development at Denver Water
- Overview of Colorado State Plane Coordinate System and NATRF 2022
- PLSC Panel Discussion: Professional Land Surveyors

URISA

- Asset Management Workshop
- Moving Data Between GIS and Other Systems
- Mapping the Certified GIS Professionals (GISPs) in the US
- Real-time Spatial Insights for Crime Management

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- Risk + Resiliency: Emergency Response Planning for Water Utilities
- URISA Panel Discussion

Virtual Exhibit Hall / Talk to the Experts at:

- GISinc
- Anatum GeoMobile Solutions, LLC
- WyGISC at University of Wyoming
- Nearmap
- Quantum Spatial
- FLO Analytics
- 1Spatial, Inc.
- CityWorks

About GIS in the Rockies:

GIS in the Rockies is the Rocky Mountain West's premier geospatial information and technology conference. The conference offers opportunities for industry professionals to learn more about geospatial technology issues and business-centric strategies supporting every vertical market touched by the geospatial industry. Historically, attendees have included representatives from local, state, and federal government, the utilities industry, environmental services, land surveying professionals, the oil and gas industry, students, educational practitioners, and retail and business marketing professionals. Whether you are a seasoned GIS professional or are new to the industry, GIS in the Rockies Conference will offer industry insights and opportunities for everyone.

Local chapters of the following member professional societies are involved in conference planning: [American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing \(ASPRS\)](#), [GIS Colorado \(GISCO\)](#), [Professional Land Surveyors of Colorado \(PLSC\)](#), and [Urban and Regional Information Systems Association \(URISA\)](#).

The conference is organized by the GIS in the Rockies Planning Committee. The planning committee generally consists of volunteer GIS professionals who currently work in the industry, although the committee is not limited to GIS professionals. If you are interested in joining the planning committee or have questions about the committee, please [contact us](#).

[Visit the Conference Website](#)

Welcome New Members!!

Matthew Emmett
Brandi Flanagan
Sara Marie Hedrick
Ryan Shields

Rocky Mountain Region Student Scholarship Program

In its continuing efforts to support and build awareness for the Remote Sensing and GIS / Geospatial Sciences, the Rocky Mountain Region of ASPRS is proud to announce its academic scholarship program for 2020-2021. The ASPRS-RMR offers scholarships to deserving undergraduate and graduate students every year. There will be at least one scholarship awarded (assuming sufficient applications are received) in the range of at least \$500 to \$1,000 each, depending on level of study (Bachelor's, Master's or Ph.D.).

The scholarships are intended for full-time students throughout the Rocky Mountain Region (Montana, Southern Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado and New Mexico) who demonstrate excellence while pursuing careers in the fields of Photogrammetry, Remote Sensing, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) or related disciplines. Both undergraduate and graduate students of any third-level educational institution within the six-state Rocky Mountain Region who are pursuing careers in these disciplines are encouraged to apply.

Awards will be presented sometime in early 2021. Preference will be given to those studies that apply sound scientific principles to practical applications in the geospatial sciences (including Photogrammetry, Remote Sensing, Geographic Information Systems, and related disciplines). Awards at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels are based on academic merit; that is, the application form does not request any personal financial data.

Student membership in ASPRS is not required to apply, but if selected, membership is required before the scholarship is awarded.

You can download the application from the "Newsletters" page at <http://www.asprs-rmr.org>

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For more information or if you have questions, send an email to news@asprs-rmr.org

Applications should be submitted by the January 15, 2021 deadline.

(Be sure to follow submittal instructions on the bottom of the application.)

National ASPRS Student Scholarship Program

APPLY NOW!
The ASPRS 2021 Scholarship Application Season
Has Officially Opened!

ASPRS is pleased to offer nine scholarship awards totaling more than **\$30,000** in value! Available to both undergraduate and graduate student members of ASPRS, these resources have been generated with the intention of advancing academic and professional goals in the geospatial sciences. ASPRS recognizes that students are the future of these rapidly evolving fields and encourages all who are qualified to take advantage of these unique opportunities.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Scholarship Applications open: **September 30 – November 15**

Letters of recommendation deadline: November 22
Anticipated Award Announcements Mid-Late January
Award winners will be honored at the ASPRS 2021 Annual Meeting

All complete applications must be received at ASPRS no later than midnight, Eastern time on **November 15, 2020**. The deadline for recommendation letters is November 22, 2020.

Details:

<https://www.asprs.org/education/asprs-awards-and-scholarships>
