

Editorial

By Landon Blake

What's In This Issue

It's a year late, but the OSGeo Annual Report for 2010 has finally arrived. You have no one to blame for the delay but me. After a great deal of procrastinating and foot dragging, I finally managed to get the articles written, edited, and published. You don't want to hear excuses from me about the delay. I'll give you a brief overview of the contents of this issue instead.

Inside you'll find 2010 Annual Report items from two (2) of our software projects. The first is from the GeoTools Project, and the second is from the GRASS Project. Several of our chapters submitted 2010 Annual Report items, and they are also included. I hope you will enjoy reading about the busy activities of the software projects and chapters as I did. The annual report items help you get a clear view of how much OSGeo related activity is taking place around the globe.

We've included two (2) articles on technology related topics and an interview in this issue in addition to the



annual report items. The interview is with the former executive director of OSGeo, Tyler Mitchell. In the interview we ask Tyler for his thoughts about OSGeo as an organization. We will also find out what he's been working on since he left his formal position as executive director. I was surprised by Tyler's departure, as I know many of you were, and I feel like this was a good opportunity to get some input from an "OSGeo insider". I'd like to do more interviews in future issues. An interview with each of our current OSGeo board members seems like a good place to start.

The first topical article we included in this issue discusses recent changes to the United States patent system that were created with the America Invests Act. The end of the article talks about patents and open source geospatial

software specifically. I believe the topic of software patents is an important issue that all open source advocates should pay attention to. I hope this article will help. I commend the Economist Magazine, from which most of the material for the patent article was drawn, for their coverage of patents.

The second topical article discusses some utility code I developed for the JTS Topology Suite. The utility code allows programmers to integrate bearings, distances, and angles into the JTS world. The code is released under the GPL through the SurveyOS Project on Sourceforge, and certainly reflects my professional background as a land surveyor. I welcome suggestions for improvements to the code, as well as contributions to the code base. Ragi Burhum encourages me to use more Python, so perhaps we will take a look at some Python code in the next issue.

What's Coming Up Next

Now that work on the 2010 Annual Report is complete, I'll immediately start collection items for the 2011 Annual Report. This is a consequence of my waiting so long to finish this current issue. Still, my goal is to have the 2011 Annual Report available by the end of

the first quarter of this year.

I strongly encourage all OSGeo software projects, chapters, and sponsors to submit annual report items for 2011. I'd really like to see more participation. I will make the process of submitting the report items for inclusion in the report as painless as possible.

If you have an article on a technology related topic that you want to contribute to the next issue, please let me know.

You can send a message to the OSGeo Journal mailing list:

<http://lists.osgeo.org/mailman/listinfo/newsletter>

You can also contact me personally. My current contact information is always listed in the footer on my home page:

<http://www.redefinedhorizons.com>

Changes to the Journal

There have been some major changes to the Journal and the Journal team. Some of these changes will be visible in the appearance of this issue.

I put together this issue of the Journal using Inkscape and Scribus, both open source tools. The Journal team had used LaTeX for post-production in previous

issues. I'm not a LaTeX expert, and didn't have time to learn it. I'm comfortable using Scribus, and will continue to use it for production of the OSGeo Journal PDF files until a willing and enthusiastic LaTeX expert joins the Journal team. I hope the change in appearance resulting from the move to Scribus will be pleasing and not an irritation.

I've stepped into the main editing role, with assistance from Tyler Mitchell. This is a bit of a reversal that will continue for the foreseeable future. I was hesitant to take on more responsibility, but didn't want to see the Journal languish. I feel it is an important marketing tool for OSGeo as an organization. After a great deal of indecision about my role in producing the Journal and the role of the publication itself, I believe I've found a plan for producing future issues of the Journal that will fit my schedule. (Thanks to Tyler Mitchell for helping me sort all this out.) I've made a tentative commitment to the Journal team to serve as editor and handle post production for two (2) issues a year. The first will be the annual report, which I'll try to have published by the end of the first quarter each year. The second will be an issue focused on peer-reviewed content. I'll try to have this published by the end of the third quarter each year.

I won't even tentatively commit to anything more. I'll just say we might squeeze out a third issue in the year if we have enough volunteer support and contributed articles. Please consider joining the Journal team or submitting an article to us in 2011. If you have any questions about getting involved in either way, just let me know. I'll be happy to talk with you and walk you through the process. If English isn't your first language, don't hesitate to contribute. OSGeo is a global organization. We can polish up your articles for our English speaking audience.

Thanks

I want to extend my thanks, first and foremost, to all the people who took the time to submit annual report items for this issue. I know you guys are busy, and many of you would rather be writing code than writing report items. I appreciate your effort and hope you will do me the same favor again soon for the 2011 Annual Report.

I also want to thank all the volunteers who have helped produce previous versions of the OSGeo Journal. It has been a pleasure to work with you, and I hope you will stay involved, even in a small way.