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Features: Winter 2025

Feature Editor: Emma Slayton

Happy Fall WAML! This time of year is especially busy for Map Librarians, with the calendar full of renewed interest from students with the Fall semester, GIS day, and the WAML conference.

Please email me at eslayton@andrew.cmu.edu if you have an idea for a feature topic, highlight an exhibit, be interviewed for the Features, or have any news that would be relevant to the WAML community!

Hello from new features writer

As this is my first issue as features editor, I wanted to introduce myself. I became a map and GIS librarian at Carnegie Mellon University in 2017, where I helped build a GIS program from the ground up and focus on fostering critical spatial literacy. My path into GIS grew from her background in archaeology, storytelling, and spatial research, leading me to use mapping and visualization to understand how people navigate and make sense of space. I value community engagement through groups like WAML and love helping students critique and design maps, encouraging them to question assumptions and communicate their ideas more effectively. I am very much looking forward to learning more about the WAML community by learning from you all what you would like to share!

GIS Day

As many (if not all) of you are aware, GIS Day is an international celebration of geographic information systems and the power of spatial thinking, bringing together librarians, students, educators, researchers, industry professionals, and community members to explore how location-based technologies shape our world. This makes it one of my favorite days of the year!

Many of us in WAML work hard to make GIS Day a success at our institutions. For example, at CMU we have been growing our GIS day planning over the past 4 years,



expanding our network in Pennsylvania by connecting not only to those who work within libraries but also students, researchers, local government employees and technical experts. This year, more than 170 attendees from CMU and the broader Pittsburgh community gathered for the University's largest GIS Day yet, a day-long symposium featuring panels, research presentations, networking, and hands-on engagement with local data organizations. Organized by Spatial Data Librarian Jessica Benner and others, the event emphasized building community, improving access to spatial data, and supporting students as they develop GIS skills and connect with industry professionals. Highlights included a panel on data access, an open house with regional partners, student research posters and maps, and a showcase of GIS projects from across the region, illustrating the growing impact of GIS on scientific research, public policy, climate resilience, and civic innovation. You can learn more about it by visiting CMU Libraries [GIS Day website](#) as well as view our students' work in the [Map Gallery](#).

I would love to write a longer feature on the success of GIS Day at various institutions, to show what success looks like for different communities and to inspire others for next year's planning (you can never get started too early). If you would like to have your GIS Day planning process or event highlighted here, please reach out to eslayton@andrew.cmu.edu.

Open Opportunities

The American Geographical Society Library Research Fellowship program is intended to help bring to the AGSL scholars who reside beyond commuting distance of UWM, and whose research would benefit from extensive use of the Library. Projects may span cartography, geographic thought, exploration, historical geography, or any topic well supported by AGSL collections. Fellows receive up to \$2,000 for a 4-week residency and must complete a short report; application details are available on the AGSL website.

Deadline for applications December 7, 2025. Those interested can [apply here](#).

Webinars & Meetings

The next **Geo4Lib Community Meeting** will happen on **December 10, 2025** at 1:05 Central Standard Time. The meeting will focus in part on [Allmaps](#). Allmaps is a service for georeferencing IIF maps. The Geo4Lib community will share updates



and explore how they are using Allmaps. You can join the meeting through this [zoom link](#).

Washington (Online) December 11, 2025. Hosted by the [Washington Map Society](#), this Zoom meeting is presented in partnership with the [California](#), [Chicago](#), [New York](#), [Philip Lee Phillips](#), [Rocky Mountain](#), and [Texas](#) Map Societies. Anyone interested in participating in the meeting must RSVP to John Docktor at [washmap\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:washmap(at)gmail.com) in order to receive the meeting ID and passcode. Meeting will start at 7:00 PM Eastern Time, 6:00 PM Central Time, 5:00 PM Mountain Time, and 4:00 PM Pacific Time. Tom Harper (Lead Curator of Antiquarian Mapping, The British Library) will speak about an Overview of the British Library's New Map Exhibition, "[Secret Maps](#)".

IIIF Online Meeting will take place on **January 27-29** and is free to attend. The Online Meeting is intended for a wide range of participants and interested parties, including digital image repository managers, content curators, software developers, scholars, and administrators at libraries, museums, cultural heritage institutions, software firms, and other organizations working with digital images and audio/visual materials.

Upcoming Events and Conferences

IIIF Online Training is hosting a 5-Day Course **April 13-17 2026**. These cover working with the Image and Presentation APIs and annotating images using a combination of asynchronous learning, Zoom meetings, 1-on-1 help sessions, and a dedicated Slack channel that remains active following the course. You can [register here](#).

The Society of California Archivists (SCA) 2026 conference will be held virtually from **April 14-17, 2026**. The conference theme will be Shifting Ground: Preserving Memory Amid Upheaval. In an era of significant change, archival institutions are confronting unprecedented threats from forced austerity and the militarization of local law enforcement to environmental catastrophe and rapid technological shifts.

Geo4LibCamp will be in 2026 hosted by the University of Texas at Austin **June 9-11 2026**. More information to come soon. Geo4LibCamp is a hands-on meeting for anyone interested in how libraries can manage and support the use of maps and spatial data. This event is often attended by map librarians, metadata specialists, application developers, geospatial professionals, and educators.



Cartography and Geographic Information Society (CaGIS) 2026 will be held in St. Louis **September 8-11, 2026**. CaGIS supports research, education, and practice to improve the understanding, creation, analysis, and use of maps and geographic information to support effective decision-making and improve the quality of life. The theme of the conference is Balancing technological innovation with human expertise. Topics of interest will include geospatial algorithms and workflows, artificial intelligence and machine learning, cartographic standards and practices, and ethical and societal impacts of maps and geospatial data.

Extended Abstracts Due March 15th, 2026

Publications Of Interest

Oxford Bibliographies has published a new issue on **Geography Education, GIS, and Libraries**. This bibliography surveys North American literature on how libraries support geography and GIS education, offering resources on competencies, pedagogy, the evolution of GIS services, and the diverse educational roles of library GIS professionals. Libraries have expanded GIS- and data-focused positions that fill key curricular gaps in areas such as cartography, data visualization, and remote sensing, strengthening spatial literacy across campuses. Through curating spatial data and tools and teaching communities to use them critically and ethically, libraries continue to play a central role in advancing geography and GIS education. You can [access the bibliography here](#).

The State of Map Librarianship: Shaping, Strengthening, and Sustaining the Future of the Profession. This upcoming special issue for the Journal of Map & Geography Libraries will cover perspectives on the current and future state of the profession, emphasizing idea exchange, shared challenges, and opportunities for collaboration. The journal will explore how advocacy, partnerships, funding strategies, and strengthened professional networks can support the long-term vitality of map libraries and collections, especially amid shifts like AI and tightening budgets.

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