

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Credit: http://www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/shuttle/flyout/multimedia/gallery/tribute_endeavour.html

REFITTING ASPRS

The Board of Directors has been laying the foundation to streamline the governance of ASPRS. Meanwhile, the staff have been working on four top priorities: 1) improving conferences; 2) fixing the business model and distribution of the journal; 3) modernizing the member database; and 4) getting better control of our many websites. On the conference front, perhaps you have already heard good things about UAS Mapping 2014 last October or the Pecora/ISPRS meeting in November. For the journal, we changed institutional pricing to be more in line with the market, and soon you will be able to access an improved and complete electronic version online. Although the member database may not sound exciting, when the modernization is complete we will be able to communicate with members more effectively, and they with each other. We will also roll out major website changes, adding capabilities like those showcased in uas.asprs.org.

Happy New Year – Happy New ASPRS!

To begin the New Year I invite you to take a journey with me. Some may say that ASPRS and its members have been on a journey for the past 80 years, but that lately the sailing has been rough, the ship has taken on water, and we've made little progress. Well, that's about to change. ASPRS is setting off on a new journey. We are charting a new course. Let's see if I can convince you to come on board.

Over the past nine months ASPRS has been hard at work refitting our ship and retraining our crew. The Board has begun repairs to the unwieldy governance structure, while Headquarters has begun making repairs in operations. For specifics, please see the sidebar. When these repairs are complete in the spring of 2014, our ship will be ready for sea once again. In anticipation, ASPRS seeks students, scientists, engineers, and business people to join the complement of women and men who choose to make this ship their professional home – who will call this ship “my ship”.

What's in it for you, the world's imaging and geospatial experts? Great rewards, including mem-

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PHOTOGRAMMETRIC ENGINEERING & REMOTE SENSING



JOURNAL STAFF

Publisher Dr. Michael Hauck

Editor Russell G. Congalton

Technical Editor Michael S. Renslow

Assistant Editor Jie Shan

Assistant Director — Publications Rae Kelley

Electronic Publications Manager/Graphic Artist Matthew Austin

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ASPRS HAS A NEW REGION!

During the Board of Directors meeting for all of ASPRS, the Southwest US Region was dissolved and their territory was re-assigned to the Northern California Region. The next piece of business was the renaming of the newly expanded Region to the Pacific Southwest Region.

For those of you unfamiliar with the geographic coverage of both the old Northern California and Southwest US Regions, our new Region includes the entire states of California, Nevada, Arizona and Hawaii.

The next piece of business will be the adoption of new by-laws and the election of a new slate of officers to govern the new Region. That will be followed up with an election early in 2015.

The officers of both the old Northern California and Southwest US Regions would like to extend a big THANK YOU to all who have involved in the leadership in the last few years and those involved in overseeing the formation of the new Pacific Southwest Region.

Letter for the Executive Director

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bership in an organization that values quality workmanship, adherence to principles of managed precision and accuracy, dedication to detail, and the deeply seated notion of giving to others what the profession has given to us.

Take a look around. There is no other professional organization that offers this to people with our skills and capabilities. Doesn't it just make sense for you to be a member of that kind of organization?

You may be thinking, "Is there really a need for me to be part of this group?" Indeed there is; the need for this organization may be greater than it ever has been before. The growing commercialization of geospatial information over the last decade has created a deep societal dependence upon the work of our members. Our contributions may be unknown and unappreciated by most citizens and policy makers, but they are necessary to the functioning of modern society.

As a member of ASPRS you will have a much greater opportunity to inform people about what we do. Society needs us, our expertise, our standards, our publications, our support for education, and our professional engagement. Our members understand and expertly address the big issues of our time – from agriculture to defense, from climate change to transportation planning, and from water resources to energy management, to name just a few.

Even as the work of our members has become increasingly important, the challenges faced by members have also increased. Members face cheap labor outsourcing from abroad, broken government contracting models, gaps in our educational system, the ever-constant pressure to lower costs, and the urgent need to innovate business models. Globalization and commoditization challenge traditional services and products, while, ironically, the new technologies we create to stay competitive also disrupt our existing businesses. We face these and other challenges in common, so we are stronger if we identify them and address them together.

Getting our ship ready to sail on its most important voyage

in many years is taking some time, of which we have precious little. The tides and currents around us are flowing at a rapid pace. Our ship's design is outdated. Nonetheless, our members know how to fit a ship for sailing, and they are busy making the necessary changes. (See sidebar.) Even the officers have rolled up their shirt sleeves and are doing carpentry, sheeting sails, and hauling supplies on board. We are almost ready. Within a few months, our plan is to set sail from Tampa, the site of our annual meeting.

Where shall we sail? Should we simply allow the wind and tide carry us where they will? Of course not! Should we chart a course for a known land and prove that we can reach a shore that others have found before us? Perhaps. Or, will we instead boldly point the helm into uncharted waters in search of something entirely new, unknown, and possibly tremendously rewarding?

Consider the example of HMS Endeavour, which set sail in 1768 on a mission to explore Terra Australis Incognita ("unknown southern land"). After she nearly sank on the Great Barrier Reef, Lieutenant James Cook beached her for repairs. Cook wrote, "...it was happy for us that a place of refuge was at hand, for we soon found that the ship would not work..." Endeavour proceeded to sail around the Cape of Good Hope and complete her journey home. The spirit of HMS Endeavour lives on today. Over 200 years later her namesake also circled the earth – but this time from space – OV-105 Space Shuttle Endeavour.

Those who sail with ASPRS on our new endeavor will be in for an adventure in all senses of the word – anticipation, challenge, excitement, exhilaration, education, and perhaps even fame and fortune. We promise not only an adventure, but also the chance to accomplish something that is bigger than any one of us can achieve on our own.

New frontiers await us in the next 80 years, I am certain of it. This ship is sea-worthy, but it needs a good complement of passengers and crew. Please, board the ship with me and let us sail together toward a bright future.

Dr. Michael Hauck, ASPRS Executive Director