GEOSCIENCE INFORMATION SOCIETY

newsletter

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President's Column | Jenna Thompson

This summer has been one of rest and regrouping for me. I'm on study leave, which is allowing me to take things more slowly and spend time with my family as I navigate developing (and re-developing) a research project. There has been lots of camping and hiking, including a spectacular day hike at the top of Whistler Mountain with my older son, with views of Garibaldi Park's Black Tusk, the remains of an andesitic volcano that soars above British Columbia's Howe Sound. Later this month I will visit Whitehorse, Yukon, where I look forward to seeing the Carcross Dessert, a series of northern sand dunes.

GSIS will be holding our annual event online again this year with Geoscience Librarianship 101 (GL101) running Tuesday, October 27th, and Wednesday, October 28th, and the Professional Issues Forum and the GSIS Awards and Annual Business Meeting on Thursday, October 29th. The GL101 planning team is hard at work recruiting an interesting slate of presenters, providing those new to the profession (and those who are always keen to learn more!) a great introduction to geoscience librarianship. The Professional Issues Forum is an opportunity for us to discuss important issues in geoscience information work – please don't hesitate to reach out to me if you have topics you'd like to discuss with your colleagues!

The annual elections are underway, with volunteers running for both the Vice-President and Secretary positions. You can find their bios on page 15. Thank you to those who have stepped up and everyone who considered. This organization would not be possible without you. If you're interested in supporting the society but a role on the executive committee isn't feasible right now, I encourage you to look for roles on the awards and other committees as they come up.

GSIS Common Read - By Cynthia Prosser

This year's GSIS Common Read was held on July 23 via Zoom. *How the Mountains Grew* by John Dvorak was ultimately chosen after numerous suggestions and vigorous voting. After the chosen book was announced and the date for discussion set, a link to all nominated book titles was included in the GEONET announcement for any who were interested. We had a very small group this year but as per usual the discussion was interesting and ranged widely and I think I can state that a good time was had by all. Dvorak did a good job at explaining the evolution of mountain building theories through time. I can say that I now understand geosynclinal theory. While it is no longer an accepted theory and wasn't when I was in college, I never understood it when discussed in my college geology classes. It was fun to dive into the history of the continents, mountain ranges, and mountain building again.

Under the Orange Tent: Phoebe McMellon (VP Column)

For a couple of hours this past month, I traded my desk for a patch of lawn under an orange tent and volunteered to co-lead “Block Rocks!”, an educational activity for kids sponsored by the Block Island Historical Society. “Block Rocks!” was an hour-long program for kids ages 4 to 12, where children were encouraged to bring a favorite beach rock and discover how it formed, where it traveled from, and what story it has to tell.

It's a small event in a very seasonal community that is forever being tested to create, design, and run events for the 15,000+ visitors that come to our island between June and September. They come for the emerald, green water, golden sand beaches, the glass orbs; the birds, seals, and sometimes whales and dolphins; the oysters/lobsters/clams; the mudslides; and the breathtaking glacial landscape with over 300 ponds in a 3- by 7-mile island. And some come to the Block Island to learn about our history, the lessons of which can extend back several hundred years to 1661 (the year Block Island was settled by Europeans) or back 20,000+ during the Laurentide glaciation. This time, under the orange tent, it was the latter. With a folding table, some geology handouts about the rock-cycle and rock types, bins of water for enhancing the natural rock colors and patterns, and piles of rocks that included samples of the three rock types (igneous, metamorphic, sedimentary), I had the opportunity to be a geoscientist again and hopefully inspire the next generation about the science I loved.

The Block Island Historical Society (BIHS) is, at its core, a preservation and archival organization. It holds the island's documents, photographs, and objects—the raw material of local memory and discovered artifacts and history. That mission overlaps closely with what many GSIS members do every day: acquire, catalogue, summarize, preserve, and share information and knowledge.

Preparing and participating in this event pushed me to notice how much of that effort is invisible unless someone does that last crucial part of the job—the handoff or sharing of the information and knowledge. The lesson plan the BIHS staff wrote frames the whole hour around the question: what stories do rocks tell? That question is really a preservation question. A rock that no one catalogues or

Image: Courtesy of Block Island Historical Society.

asks about is just a rock; it has importance, but its value is limited. The same is true of a piece of research whether in the form of a book, article, or dataset that no one knows or is not shared. Preservation is necessary, but not sufficient. The careful and often unglamorous work of curating and preserving data, information, and research create the possibility of future discovery and understanding. But possibility isn't the same as transmission. For that information to be valuable, someone must organize, manage, and share the knowledge of both the existence and value of that resource and information, handing it to the next person to potentially use and carry forward. For a piece of granite, gneiss, and greywacke found by a little kid on the shores of Block Island, it is the same. The value and the importance of the rock was significantly increased when it was identified, catalogued, and someone took the time to share its story.

I don't think the GSIS and children's rock program have much in common on the surface. But participating in this program made me realize that it is the latter part of the work, the sharing and transmission, that is essential in allowing others to gain real value and meaning from information and resources. Volunteering under that orange tent this past month was a good reminder of which half of the job I want to make sure we are not skipping.

Save the Date! GL 101 & GSIS Annual Meeting

The 2026 Geosciences Librarianship 101 webinar is scheduled for October 28 & 29.
This is an opportunity for geoscience librarians to:

- Share insights and expertise from their careers
- Support and engage with new professionals and graduate students
- Contribute to a meaningful professional development experience

Presentations will be 30-45 minutes about resources, services, and other topics of interest to geoscience librarians and library graduate students followed by the social/networking hour.

A few of the topics this year:

- AI users in geoscience libraries
- GIS in libraries
- Managing legacy map collections

If you are interested in joining our team to plan future meetings, we'd love to have you on the GL 101 team! Check GeoNet and the GSIS webpage for news on when registration opens.

Clara McLeod, Co-chair cpmcleod@wustl.edu
Joyce M. Shaw, Co-chair joyce.shaw@usm.edu

Member News

WashU Dorm Named After Clara McLeod

Washington University recently broke ground for a new residence hall to be named after Clara McLeod and her late husband, James E. McLeod, Vice Chancellor for Students and the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. James McCleod directed the Division of Students Affairs to know each student "by name and story." Clara continues her husband's belief in students in her new WashU role as a Special Advisor and Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. The new residence hall will be completed in time for the 2028-2029 academic year.

In Remembrance - Charlotte R.M. Derksen

Charlotte R.M. Derksen passed away on March 22, 2026, after several years of Alzheimer's. She is remembered for her service to Stanford University and particularly Branner Earth Sciences Library. She is remembered for her contributions to the geoscience community and especially the Geoscience Information Society. She is remembered for her service to the Mennonite Church.

Biography

Charlotte Ruth Meynink was born in Newberg, Oregon, in 1944 and died in Shoreline (Seattle), Washington. She attended Wheaton College in Illinois, where she was the only woman in the geology program. She was the only woman on geologic field trips and had to do her fieldwork by herself when kept out of all-male summer camps. Afterwards she married Roy Derksen and they moved to Portland, Oregon. Their marriage lasted until Roy's passing in 2025.

After enrolling in the geology master's program at the University of Oregon, Charlotte did fieldwork at Elkhorn Ridge in the Wallowa region of northeastern Oregon. She completed her thesis in 1968. Then she and Roy moved to Botswana to teach with the Mennonite Central Committee. Their elder daughter Kathryn was born there and her daughter Elizabeth was born when they returned to Minnesota. The family maintained a connection to Africa through missionary work. For example, Charlotte cataloged a library in Chad in 2007.

Charlotte started her library career as a science librarian at the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh, in 1977. Roy and Charlotte moved to East Palo Alto, California, in 1979, and she became the Head Librarian and Bibliographer at the Branner Earth Sciences Library of Stanford University in 1980. The departments of the School of Earth Sciences were her primary constituency. She also served periods as the Acting Head of the Sciences and the Head of Science and Engineering Resources Group in the Stanford University Libraries.

Early Services at Stanford

Charlotte served users through regular meetings with faculty, orientations and classes, and targeted service for graduate students. She offered searches on subject databases in the dial-up era. Later she offered personal SciFinder accounts. Her library offered GeoRef access on CD-ROM and then campuswide access when GeoRef tapes were mounted.

She often offered personal reference service when she was working with collections in the stacks. She extended reference service into evenings when it wasn't usually available in the branch libraries. She would make special effort to get literature and data for graduate students. For example, she obtained an Australian thesis for a grad student who needed the data before theses were available online.

Charlotte had a special interest in geological maps. I was hired in 1982 to fill her new map specialist position. She was eager to improve the usability of the map collection. We had a rudimentary card catalog, which I maintained. In a few years, Charlotte was able to get a map cataloging position. She especially wanted to provide access to the voluminous maps that accompanied bulletins, reports of investigations, memoirs, and other reports from geological surveys and societies. She wanted to integrate the maps into the physical collection wherever possible. Charlotte's goal, as always, was to open up the literature to the users. My successors continued to increase access to the map collections including the field mapping of the Stanford Geological Survey.

Charlotte had the vision to seek support for offering Geographic Information Services in Branner Library. This action continued her interest in offering spatial information to users, leading eventually to the impressive Stanford Geospatial Center.

Collections

Charlotte once wrote in an email that "collection development both within the earth science and within the science and engineering disciplines have always been my strongest area of interest." She collected widely from government agencies, societies, and commercial publishers from around the world.

Image: Claren Kidd (left) honors Charlotte Derksen (right) for distinguished service.

The Stanford collection was recognized at the highest level of the RLG (Research Libraries Group) Conspectus. I was fortunate to collect maps at this high level when I was Branner's map specialist.

In the 1980s, Charlotte realized the importance of collecting open-file reports (OFRs) from the US Geological Survey and state surveys. She made Stanford an early repository of paper and digital OFRs in addition to the microfiche reports supplied by the federal depository program. In addition, she collected CD-ROMs and even presented a paper on earth science CD-ROMs with Jim O'Donnell at the GSA Annual Meeting in 1989.

Charlotte stressed the importance of master's and Ph.D. theses. She purchased copies of theses from other institutions when faculty and students could not get them through the usual channels. They were important because of their unpublished data. She continued her interest in theses by looking at the bibliographies in Stanford theses to identify gaps in the collection. She wanted to ensure that Stanford students could access the literature that they needed for their studies.

Geologic field trip guidebooks were a special interest to Charlotte because she recognized their value in studying the geology of an area. She searched for them from societies and collected them widely. I appreciated how she would visit exhibit booths at GSA meetings to collect and inquire about new guidebooks. She furthered her interest in guidebook access when she became the chair of the GIS (now GSIS) committee that produced the 5th Edition of the "Union List of Geologic Field Trip Guidebooks of North America." As chair, Charlotte coordinated the identification of titles holdings, and indexing by the large committee. The final work, published by AGI, was truly a major achievement by the committee under Charlotte's leadership.

Charlotte presented and wrote several papers with collection topics. She wrote analytical studies about geoscience serials, USGS publications, and monographs. She measured circulation and in-house use to estimate the value of publications to the research and student community. In a later talk and paper, she assessed the cost of geoscience literature relative to its worth to users in light of online availability.

One of her papers described the Stanford Geological Survey, a 100-year field survey program by faculty and students. The Branner Library holds the Survey's maps, field notebooks, and reports. They were all cataloged. Four hundred and fifty maps and 50 field notebooks were scanned, and now this valuable collection has been opened up to users.

Leadership

Charlotte led several GIS/GSIS committees besides the Union List committee. She was the chair of the Digital Data, Collection Development Issues, and GeoRef Advisory Committees. She was President of the Geoscience Information Society in 2000 and organized the program of the annual meeting in Toronto. She and Connie Manson published the conference proceedings.

She was often asked to represent geoscience libraries. She was the library member on the GSA Publications Committee. She had special influence as a member and later chair of the Cartographic Users Advisory Council. As the Council's USGS liaison, she developed effective relationships with the leaders of the publications program, which had much impact to geoscience libraries.

The American Geosciences Institute had a long relationship with Charlotte. She worked with AGI to publish the 5th edition of the Union List. She gathered suggestions for GeoRef's core list of journals. She served and chaired the GeoRef advisory group. She served a term on the AGI Member Society Council. Finally, she was an Assistant Editor from 2001 to 2016 when she created and enhanced GeoRef records.

Charlotte played a part in the early development of GeoScienceWorld. She led the Library Advisory Committee for the "Aggregate." Her knowledge and contacts in the geoscience information community helped get the feedback needed to get the aggregate off the ground.

Memberships and Conferences

Charlotte believed in the value of professional societies. She was an active member of the Geoscience Information Society and gave a paper almost every year at the GSA/GIS (GSIS) Annual Meeting. Besides her collection development talks, she gave a couple talks on trends and new services for geoscience information centers. She always visited the exhibits and attended talks and poster sessions of Stanford affiliates. She received gracious welcomes at the Stanford alumni receptions because of her outstanding relations with past and present students.

Charlotte was a longtime member of the Western Association of Map Libraries. She was pleased to host a WAML meeting at Stanford to show Branner Library and get presentations by interesting Stanford faculty. She was a member of ALA, ACRL, and SLA and some of their divisions. Early in her career at Stanford, she attended annual meetings of these organizations

Honors

In 2005, Charlotte was the first recipient of the Mary B. Ansari Distinguished Service Award from the Geoscience Information Society. The award honored her professional leadership, research, and service to users of geoscience information. She was a mentor, innovator, and advocate for geoscience libraries.

In 1992, Charlotte received the Distinguished Service Award from Stanford University's Committee on the Libraries of the University. She was honored for developing one of the leading earth science libraries in the country. She was honored for training many students and post-docs in the fine art of literature searching. She was known for her commitment to serving the customer.

In 1993, Charlotte was the co-recipient of the GIS Best Paper Award for "The World of Geoscience Serials: Comparative Use Patterns."

In 2003, Charlotte received the GSIS Best Paper Award for "USGS Publications: Current Access via the Web and via Catalogs."

Final Appreciation

More could be written about Charlotte R.M. Derksen's career. Two former Stanford colleagues (Grace Baysinger and Julie Sweetkind-Singer) have written an extensive memorial to Charlotte in WAML Information Bulletin, volume 87, number 3-Memorial, available at waml.org

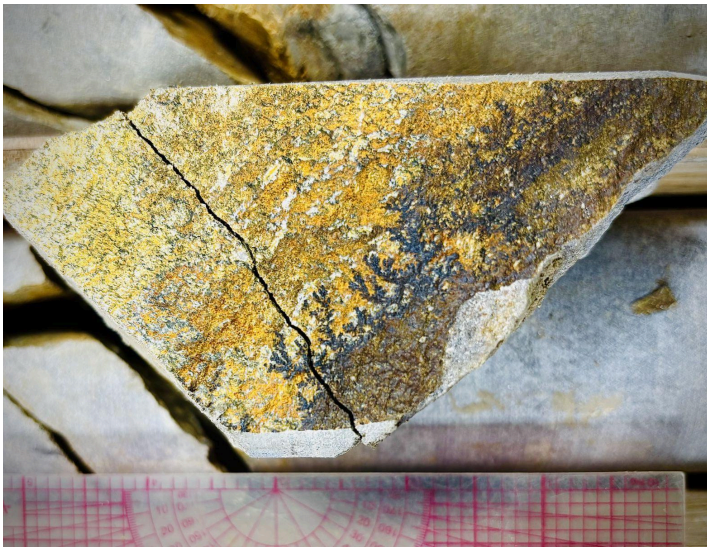
I worked with Charlotte directly for 4 years and indirectly for 8 years after I had moved to UCLA. We shared information about collections and saw each other at GSIS/GSA annual meetings and sometimes at the ALA annual meetings. At Stanford, I saw affection and respect from her user community. I saw the same affection and respect in her family after she retired to Seattle. I saw her only a few times after the retirement and noticed the gradual change in her health. We retain our wonderful memories of Charlotte's skill, enthusiasm, and care for the geoscience community.

I miss my mentor and friend.

Michael M. Noga

GeoWonders

Dendritic Iron Manganese Oxide Crystals in a Sulfide Joint



While they might appear as fossils, dendritic manganese oxide crystals form on rock surfaces where low-temperature fluids seep through veins or cracks in fine-grained sedimentary and igneous rocks. These mineral deposits create branching patterns similar to the way snowflakes form, when atoms quickly attach to edges and corners in rock fractures. The term for these formations comes from the Greek word, *dendron*, for tree.
https://sandatlas.org/dendritic-growth-in-crystals/

Iron oxide colors are generally determined by iron's oxidation states, Fe2+, Fe3+, etc., and an inexpensive source for pigmented paints, dyes, and colored concrete.

Image: Dendritic iron manganese oxide (Fe2MnO4) crystals (dark grey) within an oxidized joint in ~94 Ma granite. Core diameter is 6 cm, extracted from the Fort Knox mine in Alaska. Courtesy of Ken Papp, geologist.

Call for Nominations | Mary B. Ansari Distinguished Service Award

The Geoscience Information Society (GSIS) Mary B. Ansari Distinguished Service Award Committee is now accepting nominations for the 2026 award. Please help us honor a deserving colleague by submitting a nomination to the selection committee.

Recognizing and honoring significant contributions to the geoscience information profession, the award consists of a monetary gift and certificate which will be presented at the GSIS Annual Business Meeting on October 30, 2026. The award was established in 2005 through the generosity of Mary B. Ansari. She was an ardent supporter of the society serving as GSIS President in1990 and spending her professional career as a librarian and library administrator at the University of Nevada, Reno Libraries.

Membership in GSS is not a requirement to receive the award**.** A list of previous award recipients is available at:
https://geoinfo.org/about/awards/distinguished-service/.

Nominations should be submitted by **September 15**, 2026, to the chair of the committee electronically at cpmcleod@wustl.edu or by mail to:

Clara P. McLeod,
Dept of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences
MSC 1169-204=110
Washington University
1 Brookings Drive
St. Louis, MO 63130-4899

Please provide the following information:

- Your name and contact information
- The name, title, and contact information of the person you are nominating
- A résumé or curriculum vitae of the nominee
- A statement explaining why the nominee is deserving of this award
- Two additional letters of support from individuals endorsing the nomination

Resource Highlights

Noteworthy Resources at the Lunar and Planetary Institute

The Lunar and Planetary Institute (LPI), a scientific research institute located in Houston, Texas, and part of the Universities Space Research Association, is dedicated to study of the solar system. The library at the LPI is a unique collection of space-science-related materials including books, journals, documents, maps, globes, models, videos, images, and educational resources. The subject emphasis of the collection is lunar science, planetary science, astronomy, geology, and related fields. The following are just a few of our many unique resources:

Digitized Book Collection – This collection of online books, all free to download and print, were published by the LPI or are out-of-print books considered to be valuable resources to the planetary science community. Titles include *Guidebook to the Geology of Barringer Meteor Crater, Arizona (a.k.a. Meteor Crater)*, *The Geologic History of the Moon*, and *Basaltic Volcanism on the Terrestrial Planets*. https://www.lpi.usra.edu/publications/books/

Meteoritical Bulletin Database – This searchable international database of officially recognized meteorites and their collection areas provides authoritative information about meteorite names, descriptions, classifications, and type-specimen repositories. https://www.lpi.usra.edu/meteor/

Lunar Science and Exploration Information Portal – Featured lunar resources include Apollo Surface Panoramas, Lunar South Pole Atlas, Lunar Sample Atlas, Apollo Image Atlas, Lunar Surface Data, and information about Exploration Hardware. This rich collection of documents, images, maps, technical drawings, and data goes back to the early days of the Apollo lunar missions. Many of these resources are not available anywhere else and provide valuable information to librarians and information specialists, scientists, students, and the general public interested in lunar science and exploration. https://www.lpi.usra.edu/lunar/

Learn more about the LPI library at https://www.lpi.usra.edu/library/.

Geoscience Visual Learning Tools

3DEP as Art Series – Created by the U.S. Geological Survey, the high-resolution 3D Elevation Program (3DEP) as Art Series showcases the geologic beauty of the United States. Combined with 10-meter resolution digital elevation models, these images depict the “bare Earth” surface to enhance terrain features. These images can be used to enhance learning through vibrant imagery. Each image can be downloaded as a map with detailed elevation information, or as elevation model images only. These images are free of charge and come in poster size, report size, and trading card size.

https://www.usgs.gov/3d-elevation-program/3dep-art-series

Visual Lifecycle of a Mine – Created by the U.S. Geological Survey, this resource uses the Landsat Program to illustrate the lifecycle of a mine over 50 years of change. Watch as the landscape fluctuates from 1985-2024, including imagery, text, and diagrams of an excavated coal mine.

https://www.usgs.gov/news/featured-story/landsat-illustrates-life-cycle-a-mine

From the Archive: The intersection of geology, mining and history, by Lisa Dunn

I manage the Russell L. & Lyn Wood Mining History Archive at Colorado School of Mines. The technologies of mining are our focus, but we also collect in related areas such as mineral processing, economics, labor, and history for context. Mining and geology go hand-in-hand. Many of our mine reports and prospectus documents describe the geology of a site; mine maps can show the underlying formations and structures. It was common to use USGS topographic and geologic maps to illustrate mineral deposits and record the locations of mine shafts and mill sites.

It's my job to determine "how much" of an item is mining or geology for inclusion in our Archive. Those items that are questionable, entirely geological or historical with no connection to mining, usually belong elsewhere. However, I've inherited items that still give me pause—watercolor landscapes of the Rocky Mountain West reportedly used to illustrate RMAG publications; survey maps of Golden, Colorado; autobiographical travelogues. It took us years to identify an old gadget as a wagon pedometer (we think). Archives are still one of our best bets for preserving the rich history of geology and mining.

Upcoming Webinars and Events

Reminder: GL101 and the GSIS Annual Meeting
Reminder: Geoscience Librarianship 101 will be Tuesday-Wednesday, October 27-28, 2026, and the Professional Issues Roundtable and Annual Meeting will be Thursday, October 29, 2026
See page 4 for more information.

Association of Earth Science Editors 60th Annual Meeting
"Editing in the Age of Artificial Intelligence"
October 1 to 2, 2026 – Virtual Meeting

Mark the date! The 60th annual meeting of the Association of Earth Science Editors will be a virtual meeting, set for October 1 to 2, 2026. The program will focus on artificial intelligence (AI) issues, but there will be a wide variety of other topics included. The call for abstracts and further information about registering for the meeting will be available soon. Follow AESE on Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/AESErocks) or Instagram (https://www.instagram.com/aeserocks/) for updates. The meeting is open to anyone and provides an opportunity to network with other editors, publishers, science communicators, educators, and earth-sciences professionals. Please contact meeting organizer John Keith at jkeith@usgs.gov if you would like more information.

GSIS Elections

Elections for the next Geoscience Information Society president and secretary closed on August 28, 2026. Here are the bios of the two candidates that ran:

GSIS Vice-President/President Elect (3 year term; VP-President-Past President)
Candidate Statement: Anon Cadieux

Hello everyone! I am the librarian for the Earth and Planets Laboratory (EPL) Library at the Carnegie Institution of Washington. I have over 10 years of experience working in libraries, including public, academic, military, and federal settings, and I continue to learn a great deal in my current role, particularly around solo librarianship and science librarianship.

My interest in the Vice President position was inspired by my ongoing collaboration with the Geoscience Librarianship 101 committee since 2024. Programming like this workshop series has helped me understand aspects of my current role that I wouldn't have gained in library school or in previous positions, something I believe should be available and accessible to many information professionals.

Connections made through this kind of programming also inspired me to revive a regional science librarians group in my area, the DC Science Librarians Google group. Through it, I've had the pleasure of meeting many librarians and professionals both in-person and online, started reading groups on various topics, and am currently planning our second in-person meeting of the year.

I'm motivated to help expand GSIS programming and increase exposure for the society, as well as to pursue partnerships with other library groups to collaborate on areas related to the geosciences.

GSIS Secretary (2 year term)
Candidate Statement: Naomi Alvarez Everett

As the new Serials Librarian at Florida State University, I work closely with scholarly communication, collection development, and access to geoscience and other academic literature. My background in geography, my involvement with GSIS thus far, and my ongoing commitment to supporting the discovery and dissemination of information have given me a deep appreciation for the role that GSIS can play in connecting geoscience information professionals and supporting them with their various needs. I am interested in serving as the GSIS Secretary because I value professional service and collaboration, and would appreciate the chance to learn more about GSIS's work and mission.

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