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base line

a newsletter of the

Map and Geospatial Information Round Table

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http://www.ala.org/rt/magirt

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base line is an official publication of the American Library Association's Map and Geospatial Information Round Table (MAGIRT). The purpose of base line is to provide current information on cartographic materials, other publications of interest to map and geography librarians, meetings, related governmental activities, and map librarianship. It is a medium of communication for members of MAGIRT and information of interest is welcome. The opinions expressed by contributors are their own and do not necessarily represent those of the American Library Association and MAGIRT. Contributions should be sent to the appropriate editor listed below.

Interim Editor: Laura Kane McElfresh
Cartographic Metadata Librarian
University of Minnesota
E-mail: mcelf008@umn.edu

Cataloging Editor: Tammy T. Wong
Senior Cataloging Specialist
Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress
E-mail: twon@loc.gov

Membership and Marketing Committee Chair: Erin Cheever
E-mail: erin.cheever@gmail.com

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MAGIRT OFFICERS:

Chair:
Susan Moore
Catalog Librarian/Cataloging and Metadata Coordinator
University of Northern Iowa
E-mail: susan.moore@uni.edu

Vice-Chair (Chair-Elect):
Iris Taylor
Special Assistant
Acquisitions & Bibliographic Access Directorate
Discovery and Preservation Services; LCSG
Library of Congress
E-mail: itaylor@loc.gov

Secretary:
Laura Kane McElfresh
Cartographic Metadata Librarian
University of Minnesota
E-mail: mcelf008@umn.edu

Treasurer:
Pete Reehling
E-mail: reehling@hotmail.com

Assistant Treasurer:
Sam Kim
GIS and Geospatial Librarian; Interim Biology Librarian
University at Buffalo
E-mail: skim25@buffalo.edu

Past Chair:
Erin Cheever
E-mail: erin.cheever@gmail.com

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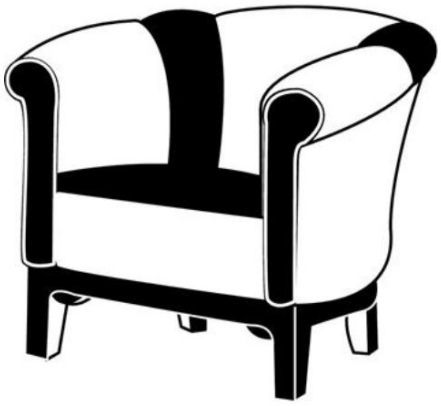
From the Chair

Susan Moore

University of Northern Iowa



I'm hoping to see many of you at the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago later in June. We have the Chair's Program from 1-2pm on Saturday on map cataloging. This could be a refresher for some and an introduction for others. The CORE Cataloging and Metadata/ MAGIRT cartographic materials cataloging interest group will be meeting Sunday morning at 8am. We have the general membership meeting Sunday at 10am with the Executive Board meeting immediately afterwards. The main topic for the general membership meeting is discussing the future plans for the round table. We have a number of committee chairships and committee member openings as well as beginning recruitment for vice-chair/chair-elect.

We've also signed up for a time slot at the ALA Connect Lounge for a huddle. This will be a 20-minute discussion that people can drop in and participate. The topics will be listed in the Scheduler and our topic is: Libraries have been grappling with the perception that "everything is online" for some time now. Map libraries are no exception. In a time when GPS is on everyone's phones, how do map collections (and the librarians who work with them) maintain relevance and space in libraries?

- What academic or local partners would benefit from incorporating maps either into a display/exhibit or in course curricula?
- What ideas do we have for unconventional community outreach to promote use of our physical maps (for example, programming with a local gaming community about using maps to help with world building?)

We'll find out what time our huddle will be after June 17th so if it fits in with your schedule, please stop by!

As always, the strength of the round table is dependent on the involvement of our members. Please let me know if there's something you're interested in.

On the Cataloging/Cataloguing Front

Tammy Wong

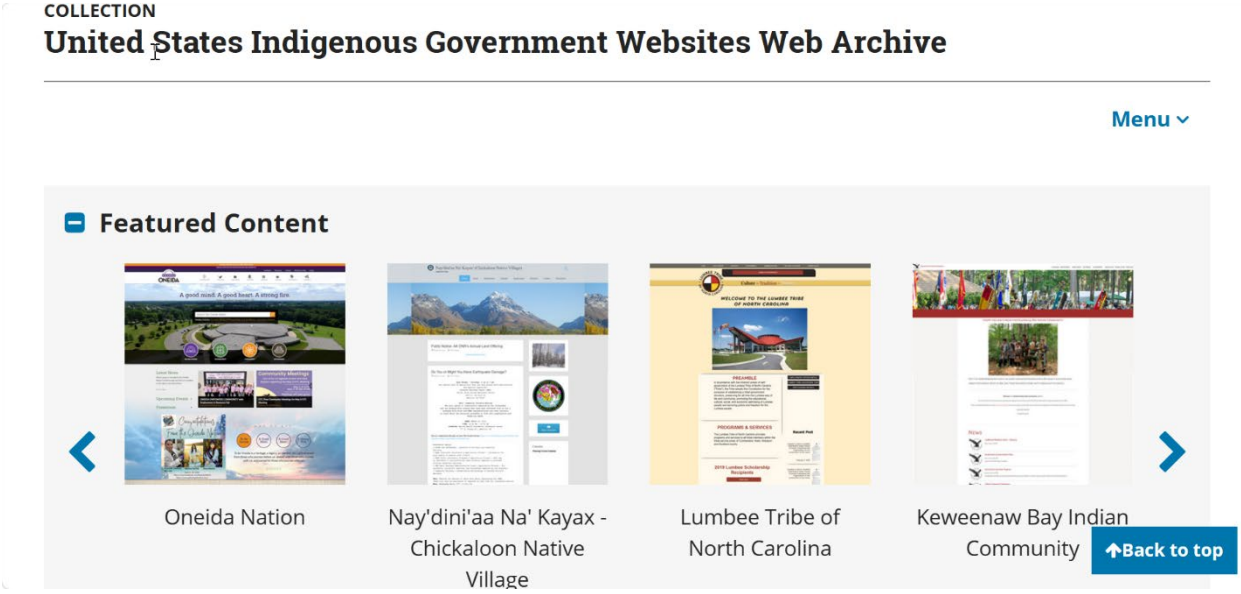
Library of Congress

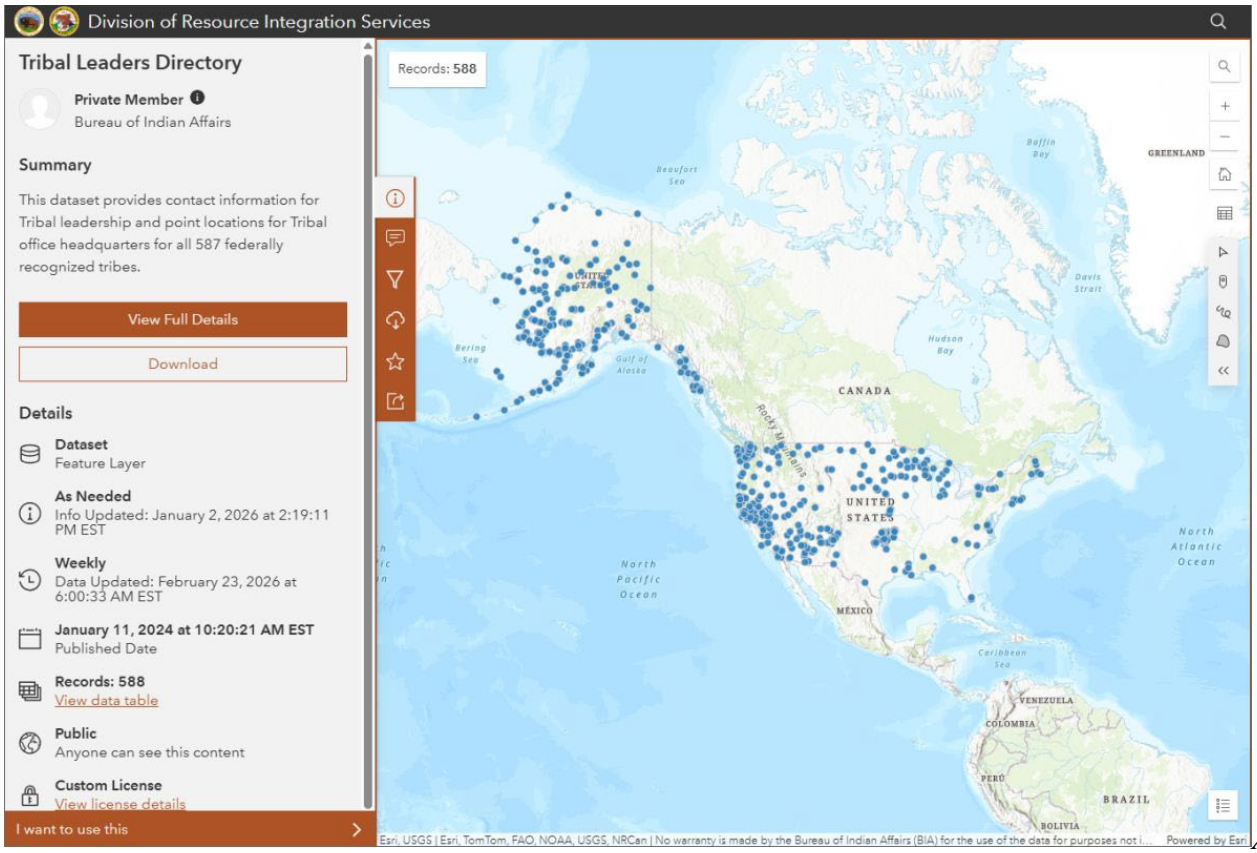
Indigenous Headings Project Progress Meeting

On May 18, the Policy, Training, and Cooperative Programs (PTCP) Division hosted an Indigenous Headings Project virtual meeting that attracted over 300 people attendees. The meeting provided information about the Indigenous Headings Project (IHP), its goals, progress, and the individuals who are working to make the project a success. The Indigenous Headings Consultants Group (IHCG), a nine-member body comprised of librarians and information professionals from Indigenous tribes and nations, presented their reflections and noted the challenge of navigating the diverse opinions in Native communities' preferences for self-identification. The work of the first phase of the project focused on updating the subject heading *Indians* to *Indigenous peoples—America*. The next phases of the project will be updating *Indians of...* headings for peoples in Latin America. A recording of the meeting can be found in the "Announcements" section of the Indigenous Headings Project page. Consult the page for announcements about updates, and tentative and approved subject lists.

U.S. Indigenous Government Websites Web Archive Launched

The U.S./Anglo (USAN) Division has launched the United States Indigenous Government Websites Web Archive. The archive provides links to information from federally and state-recognized tribal governments across the nation. The collected materials include histories of tribal governments and other significant publications from tribal and intertribal offices. You can learn more about the creation process of the archive via a March 4, 2026 *Signal* blog post, written in collaboration with the Digital Content Processing Section of the DSD Digital Collections Management & Services Division.





A geographic visualization of the [Bureau of Indian Affairs: Tribal Leadership Directory], which is also available as a downloadable dataset.

G&M hosts "Adventures in Topographic Mapping"

On February 26, the Geography and Map Division hosted "Adventures in Topographic Mapping," a Live! at the Library event held in celebration of the Library's 26th annual GIS Day. The evening featured a standing-room only keynote address from Tom Patterson, a retired National Park Service cartographer, called "From Airbrush to AI: My Career in Cartographic Relief Presentation." Next door, a tremendous display of topographic collection items from across the Library was available for viewing with participation from the Manuscript Division, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Science and Business Reading Room, and the Geography and Map Division. In the Great Hall, event attendees used watercolors to paint topographic scenes, helped build a collaborative 3D terrain model of the hills around Tombstone, Arizona, counted their pace on the 25-meter El Camino Ritmo, crafted pace beads, and completed a series of orienteering challenges.

MAGIRT at ALA Annual 2026 in Chicago

MAGIRT meetings and sessions at ALA Annual 2026

Session	Date	Start Time	End Time	Location
Huddle: When everyone's phones have GPS, how do map libraries maintain relevance and space?	Saturday 6/27/2026	9:30 AM	9:50 AM	McCormick Place ALA Connect Lounge Hall F2 Lobby
Chair's Program: How to Catalog a Map	Saturday 6/27/2026	1:00 PM	2:00 PM	McCormick Place W 193 A
Cartographic Materials Cataloging Interest Group	Sunday 6/28/2026	8:00 AM	9:00 AM	Marriott Marquis Calculus
Membership Meeting (HYBRID - Zoom)	Sunday 6/28/2026	10:00 AM	11:00 AM	Hyatt Regency McCormick Grant Park C
Executive Board Meeting (HYBRID - Zoom)	Sunday 6/28/2026	11:00 AM	12:00 PM	Hyatt Regency McCormick Superior
MAGIRT at the ALA Connect Lounge Desk	Sunday 6/28/2026	3:00 PM	5:00 PM	McCormick Place ALA Connect Lounge
Cataloging and Classification Committee (VIRTUAL)	Tuesday 7/21/2026	2:00 PM (Central)	3:00 PM (Central)	VIRTUAL ONLY - Zoom

MAGIRT social events at ALA Annual 2026

Mansueto Library Tour & Map Talk at the University of Chicago Library
Friday, 6/26/2026 2:00pm 1100 E. 57th St., Chicago, IL 60637

We will tour the Mansueto Library from 2:00-2:45 pm, followed by a map talk in the Map Collection of the Regenstein Library from 2:45-3:30 pm. Please gather in the lobby.

Getting there: The University of Chicago Library (location) is approximately 7 miles from McCormick Place, about a 15-minute drive or 40-60 minutes via public transit. It is a 50-minute drive from O'Hare (about 1.5 hours via public transit) and a 30-minute drive from Midway (about 50-60 minutes via public transit). The Map Collection is in Room 370.

Casual Pay-Your-Own-Way Dinner
Saturday, 6/27/2026 Time TBD Location TBD

Watch for details on ALA Connect!

Minutes of the March 24, 2026

MAGIRT Executive Board Meeting

Laura McElfresh, MAGIRT Secretary

University of Minnesota

Time: March 24, 2:00 PM Central Time via Zoom
Present: Susan Moore, Iris Taylor, Kristina Liv Larsen, Tammy Wong, Sam Kim, Laura McElfresh
Regrets:

1. **Call to order — 2:04 pm Central**
2. **Call for changes to Agenda — none**
3. **Secretary — Minutes from past meeting**
   a. Minutes from the January 21 meeting were distributed via email for correction and approval, then published in *base line* 47:1 (March 2026)
4. **Officer Reports**
   a. **Chair** — Susan
      i. Contacted Danielle; we can do a write-in vote for Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect. Laura put out an announcement in *base line* saying that if people are interested, contact her or Susan & we will spread the word.
   b. **Vice Chair** — Iris
      i. Iris sent out the survey in ALA Connect & only got 11 responses. The survey suggests limited interest in proceeding with MAGIRT meetings. Do we want to make our decisions based on that input?
         1. Attending ALA in person: 7 yes, 3 no; additional comments on remote attendance
         2. Tour: 3 yes, 4 no, some uncertain, 1 yes if on Friday afternoon, 1 yes if remote
         3. Post-tour dinner: 1 yes, 7 no, 2 uncertain, others had other plans
         4. Awards Dinner: 4 yes, 5 no, 1 yes if on Saturday evening, 1 maybe
         5. Future attendance at ALA conferences: 3 yes, 3 no. Other responses included "West coast", "depends on funding", 2 "maybe" (if retiring), "if virtual"
         6. Volunteer opportunities: 8 skipped the question, 1 MLS student interested in volunteering in any capacity, 1 request for more information about committees
      ii. Iris got in touch with Danielle, who suggested that in the future maybe we work with other RTs to have 1 big social event. This time maybe we might want to collaborate with GODORT. Might also revisit question of merging with GODORT. Do need to start planning for this time.
         1. Tour: Newberry Library? — We've gone to Chicago City Planning before but it required a taxi ride. (No objections to Newberry, so we'll proceed with that!)
         2. Pay-your-own-way dinner? — look for a place near hotels rather than near the Newberry

3. Awards dinner — no nominee, so we don't strictly have to have an awards dinner. We might meet up at a restaurant but will not be booking a private dining room. We'll touch base with Danielle & see how to pay (or do another pay-your-own-way). Susan will look around.

c. **Secretary/interim *base line* editor** — Laura
   i. (none)

d. **Webmaster** — Kevin
   i. *base line* is up

e. **Treasurer** — Pete/Sam
   i. We're doing fine money-wise; Sam will check with Danielle for a report.

f. **Past Chair** — Erin
   i. Not here

5. Old Business

i. ALA scheduling — Susan put in a request for Saturday afternoon Chair's program; Carto Cataloging IG Sunday morning; then big IG combo meeting, Membership, and Exec Board all on Sunday morning. (Our usual Sunday afternoon Membership & Exec Board meeting time is in a no-conflict time due to the sesquicentennial)
   1. Cataloging and Classification Committee (CCC) meeting will be virtual & will be before or after ALA Annual; Susan will get in touch with Tim about that
   2. As soon as Susan gets schedule confirmation from Danielle, she'll pass it along for Kevin to put it up on the website

6. New Business

i. Iris: looking into the future, how do we want to keep running this group? Go virtual? Combine with GODORT? (Or do we think there will be a giant influx of interest after ALA Annual?) Susan: Need to discuss more broadly than just officers. But remember, if our membership drops below 150 we will be dissolved. (We are currently at 230.)
   1. How much in-person participation is flexible, for leadership? Isn't it in the Bylaws? — Our Bylaws have not been updated in a long time. We are trying to be more flexible, but even as we open up remote options, our membership keeps declining.
   2. The Map and Geospatial vote on MARC Advisory Committee (MAC) resides with MAGIRT (OLAC also has a MAC representative) so we can't willy-nilly pick up & go elsewhere. Unclear what happens if MAGIRT dissolves or merges — would that representation go to OLAC or to WAML?

7. **Committee/DG/IG Reports**

a. **Bylaws & Governing Documents/Nominations & Awards Committee**
   i. No nominee for MAGIRT Award; no nominee for VC/CE

b. **Cataloging & Classification Committee**
   i. ACRL RBMS BSC (Bib Standards Committee) — Laura
      1. Laura gave a brief MAGIRT CCC report at the Midwinter BSC meeting on January 21st. Her report & update from that meeting are in the March 2026 *base line* (p.6).
      2. Next meeting is tomorrow, March 25th (see agenda here) & will include discussion of next steps and future manuals as the RBMS RDA Editorial Group nears completion of integrating Graphics (DCRM(G)) into DCRMR.

        a. Current plan is to do Cartographic (DCRM(C)) next, due to similarities between graphic & carto materials.
        b. Have sought public comment through a Google Form; now asking for input from the BSC floor and have provided discussion questions in their report.
    c. **Education Committee** — Kristina — Proposed Strategy for Reviving the MAGIRT Education Committee (Google Slides)
        i. As the authoritative source for continuing education in map and geospatial librarianship, and as the author of the Core Competencies, MAGIRT should build, maintain, and keep updated a master list of vetted authoritative resources.
            1. Kristina has built a GitHub markdown website for proof-of-concept. Proposes to collaborate with experts in the various knowledge domains to flesh it out, then identify gaps and work to create or find resources that address these needs.
            2. Down the road: if this idea is viable and we build the index, where does this live? Is there a way to host it on the MAGIRT website?
        ii. Third revision of the Core Competencies is "due" in 2028 — this work could inform those revisions, bring awareness of the Core Competencies, ensure that they remain relevant.
        iii. Laura suggests that we talk about this at ALA Annual (even if Kristina isn't able to be there in person — maybe a recorded or virtual presentation?)
        iv. Susan has an idea for a "Help! I'm Suddenly a Map Librarian!" webinar — would be good to build in Core Competencies
        v. Kristina will keep at this work; we can talk about it again at the May meeting, also maybe have a separate Zoom call
    d. **Geographic Technologies (GeoTech)/GODORT GIS DG** — VACANT
    e. **Membership & Marketing Committee** — VACANT
    f. **Online Presence & Publications Committee (OPPC)** — VACANT
    g. **Cataloging of Cartographic Resources IG**
        i. Meeting at ALA Annual (Susan/Laura will lead), no other report
    h. **Map Collection Management DG** — VACANT
    i. **Freedom to Read Foundation** — not here
    j. **WAML liaison report** — VACANT
    k. **CC:DA Report —** Tammy (for Min)
        i. Several proposals needing input
            1. RSC wants input on translations; adding new elements
            2. Deprecated elements based on manifestations
        ii. Announcement: RDA preconference workshop ($209? early bird) Friday June 26th, 8am-4pm. Will provide hands-on experience cataloging a variety of materials, focusing on how to use the documentation. Group exercise with experts on hand to provide assistance. Presented by PCC SCT and NARDAC.
        iii. Full report will be in next *base line*
    l. **MAC Report** — Susan
        i. MAC met February 18-19; report is in March *base line*
8. **Next meeting:** May 19th, 2pm Central
9. **Adjournment: 3:12 pm Central**

Minutes of the May 26, 2026

MAGIRT Executive Board Meeting

Laura McElfresh, MAGIRT Secretary

University of Minnesota

Time: May 26, 3:00 PM Eastern Time via Zoom
Present: Susan Moore, Iris Taylor, Laura McElfresh, Shonn M. Haren, Sam Kim, Tammy Wong, Min Zhang, Tim Kiser
Regrets:

1. **Call to order - 3:00 pm Eastern**
2. **Call for changes to Agenda — none**
3. **Secretary--Minutes from past meeting**
   a. Minutes from the March 24 meeting were distributed via email for correction and approval and will be published in *base line* 47:2 (June 2026, forthcoming). Minutes from this meeting will also be published in the June issue if I can get them together in time, September if not.
4. **Officer Reports**
   a. **Chair**
      i. PowerPoint slides on main stage at ALA conference - we get 3 slides, need to be submitted in PNG format. Current draft of slide has logo, name, & URL for webpage. Iris suggests listing out vacancies we are trying to fill. Susan will put a plug for getting involved with MAGIRT, as we are a welcoming group ("contact Susan, Iris, or Laura")
      ii. Round Table Spectacular program - Theme is Libraries at the End of the World; program is in October.
         1. Could talk about maps showing effects of climate change (melting ice caps, etc.), what's in store for the Earth with respect to plate tectonics, new rift valley forming in Africa
         2. Shonn suggests "Nuke Map": simulates the effects of nuclear war. DoD has also put out maps estimating damage of thermonuclear war in Europe
      iii. ALA Annual: Danielle contacted Susan with opportunities for MAGIRT at ALA: "Huddles"; volunteer spotlight at desk in ALA Lounge
         1. Susan has put in a proposal for "Huddles" (20 min discussions), asking for Saturday morning 6/27 at either 9am or 10am. We'll find out if/what time slot we got on June 19th. Susan will lead the discussion; Laura will take notes.
         2. Deadline is tomorrow for volunteer spotlight. They would want 2 volunteers to staff the information desk for a 2-hour slot. Iris volunteers — has to check her schedule bc needs to also work the LC booth. Susan will coordinate with Iris & then will sign them up on the spreadsheet. Tammy points out that when ALA was in DC, the Lounge desk was in a heavy-foot-traffic area — lots of visitors, a good opportunity to talk about maps & MAGIRT!

b. **Vice Chair**
    i. Traditional tour (usually but not necessarily Friday afternoon)
        1. Iris contacted the Newberry library for Friday; they were all booked up. Wrote back re: Saturday and has not heard back yet. Also looked at restaurants near the Newberry. (Need to note: Chair's Program is Saturday at 1pm.)
        2. The National Geographic museum is closed for renovations & will reopen on June 26th — surely cutting too close for us!
        3. University of Illinois: hasn't heard back from them yet either.
    ii. Dinner: not doing the private room or anything, but would like to have an informal dinner (Saturday?), MAGIRT's treat. Iris will check with Danielle to see if we can do that.
    iii. Any suggestions are welcome!
        1. Tammy suggests University of Chicago's underground storage. (MAGIRT has toured there before but it was a while back.) Tim points out that U. of Chicago's map curator, Brendan Whyte, is fairly newly arrived from the National Library of Australia. Brendan might be an interesting tour guide!
    iv. Sam talked to Danielle about repurposing funds (from the Awards Dinner we're not having) for travel to a remote site for our tour. She said this was fine, but needed clear language when reporting the non-dinner expenditure. Iris will also follow up with Danielle re: non-private-room dinner.
c. **Secretary**
    i. Apologies for having to reschedule this meeting! I did not have my stuff together last week and the meeting crept up on me.
    ii. I have created a Zoom meeting for the MAGIRT Membership & Board meetings at ALA so we can bootleg a virtual option. If someone else could bring a laptop to be the Zoom broadcaster, that would be helpful because my work machine doesn't have a rear camera. (Susan will bring hers. Also no rear camera. Min has offered a webcam.) The meetings at ALA are in a hotel (bonus: they're in two different rooms!) so we'll probably have to use a phone hotspot for wifi. We will get this done!
    iii. CCC will NOT be on-site at ALA; Tim will schedule a virtual meeting after conference (early/mid-July). MAC will meet July 22, probably after CCC. Susan will have the MAC papers available for CCC to discuss for feedback.
    iv. We will have Carto Cat IG; Chair's Program; and Membership and Board meetings on site
d. **Webmaster** — not present
e. **Treasurer**
    i. Too late for scholarships or travel grants (those have to go through ALA approval). For next year, if we wanted to do a grant for students or someone else to try & get new people to MAGIRT, we could do that; just need more lead time.
f. **Past Chair** — not present

5. Old Business — covered during officer reports

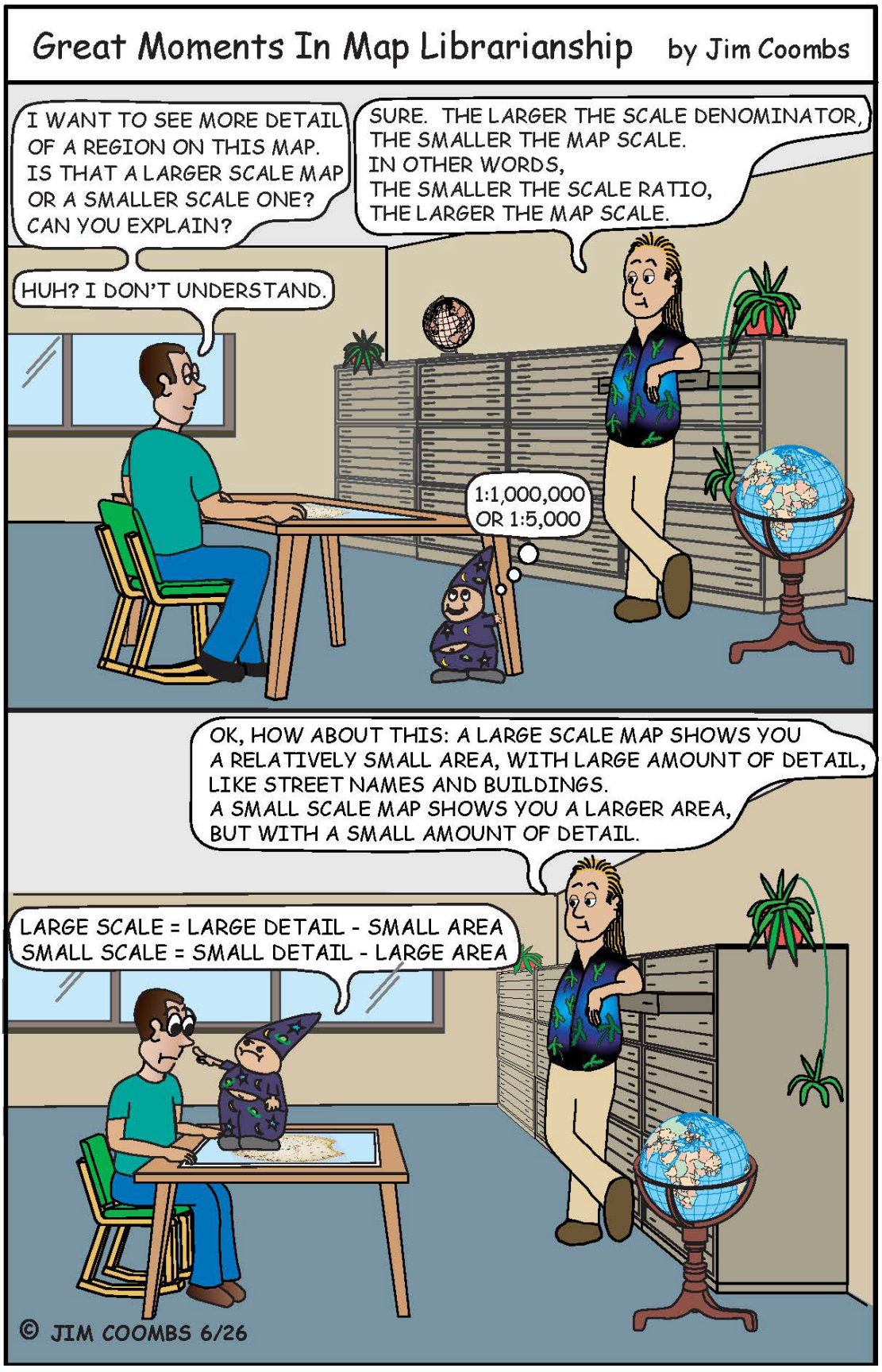
6. New Business
    i. Election Results — Laura got elected Vice Chair/Chair-Elect with a clear mandate, if not a landslide, of 2 write-in votes. She will do a year (unless it proves too much) as both Secretary/*base line* editor and VC/CE.

ii. Shonn is willing to step in & volunteer for something! We will get back to him about where help is needed the most.
iii. Should we try to re-examine some of our vacant committees and groups, perhaps merge or discontinue them? After changeover, Susan as Past Chair will be chair of the Bylaws Committee. We can look at it then.

7. **Committee/DG/IG Reports**
   a. **Bylaws & Governing Documents/Nominations & Awards Committee**
   b. **Cataloging & Classification Committee**
      i. We can have CCC in what would've been the MAGIRT Board meeting slot: July 21st 3pm Eastern.
   c. **Education Committee** (Kristina) — not here
   d. **Geographic Technologies (GeoTech)/GODORT GIS DG —** vacant
   e. **Membership & Marketing Committee —** vacant
   f. **Online Presence & Publications Committee (OPPC) —**vacant
   g. **Cataloging of Cartographic Resources IG**
      i. Meeting Sunday morning at ALA
   h. **Map Collection Management DG —** vacant
   i. **Freedom to Read Foundation** (Iris)
      i. No update currently
   j. **WAML liaison report**
      i. WAML elections are underway, including a vote on whether to hold their 2027 conference in Milwaukee (requires a vote because it is outside of WAML's primary region). Kathy will provide a report including election results at the June meeting.
   k. **CC:DA Report**
      i. CC:DA is reviewing some proposals; Min will compile a report for the July CCC meeting.

8. **Next meeting:** Sunday, June 28, 2026 at ALA Annual (Chicago) at the Hyatt Regency McCormick. We will try to offer a Zoom option but it will be very much a DIY setup.
   a. **Membership Meeting:** 10:00-10:50 am Central, Hyatt Regency McCormick, Grant Park C
   b. **Executive Board Meeting:** 11:00-11:50 am Central, Hyatt Regency McCormick, Superior

9. **Adjournment**


Great Moments In Map Librarianship
by Jim Coombs
I WANT TO SEE MORE DETAIL OF A REGION ON THIS MAP. IS THAT A LARGER SCALE MAP OR A SMALLER SCALE ONE? CAN YOU EXPLAIN?
SURE. THE LARGER THE SCALE DENOMINATOR, THE SMALLER THE MAP SCALE. IN OTHER WORDS, THE SMALLER THE SCALE RATIO, THE LARGER THE MAP SCALE.
HUH? I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
1:1,000,000 OR 1:5,000
OK, HOW ABOUT THIS: A LARGE SCALE MAP SHOWS YOU A RELATIVELY SMALL AREA, WITH LARGE AMOUNT OF DETAIL, LIKE STREET NAMES AND BUILDINGS. A SMALL SCALE MAP SHOWS YOU A LARGER AREA, BUT WITH A SMALL AMOUNT OF DETAIL.
LARGE SCALE = LARGE DETAIL - SMALL AREA
SMALL SCALE = SMALL DETAIL - LARGE AREA
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Bolivia	2024	3	100%
Ecuador	2022	5	95%
Ethiopia	2007	3	100%
Japan	2020	5	99.8%
Paraguay	2022	3	90.4%
Uruguay	2023	3	91%
Vietnam	2019	3	100%

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