NEW INITIATIVES—

ANNUAL SPECIALIST MEETING EVOLVES TO SPATIAL UN-CONFERENCE

After 25 + years of hosting annual thematic specialist meetings in Santa Barbara, the Center for Spatial Studies is venturing forth with a new format for these meetings of the minds. Beginning in December 2015, for every alternate year the meeting will morph into a highly interactive *problem-driven un-conference*. The theme of the inaugural 2015 Un-conference is **Spatial Information for Human Health**; it will be held on the University of California, Santa Barbara campus from December 7–9 and will consist of a balanced blend of workshops, breakout sessions, panel discussions, posters, debates, tutorials, and a lively challenge session. Attendance is now closed, but we will post information about it on http://spatial.ucsb.edu/.

SPATIAL DISCOVERY PROJECT

The **Spatial Discovery Project,** administered by the Center for Spatial Studies and the UCSB Library, is funded by a private grant to address the challenges that libraries and researchers face in trying to discover and link spatial data via metadata on diverse platforms and in a variety of environments.

Information of any kind very often has a *place* component—it is located somewhere or is about some place. This component can act as an integrator for diverse disciplinary perspectives on the same topic. But given the variety of problem areas, information systems, programs, and world views that are involved in the storage and use of this information, it is a major problem to connect one source of information about a place with other relevant sources of information about that place. After two days of intense brainstorming at a June specialist meeting, the project aims to **(1)** develop and test a technical protocol enabling researchers to easily identify spatial data located across disparate web-accessible databases, repositories, and catalogs; and **(2)** promote the evolution of the "spatial university" through expanding awareness and adoption of spatial data and analysis in research and teaching. Further, the Interdisciplinary Research Collaboratory, recently established at the library, will promote increased integration of spatially-framed instructional and research activities across disciplines through targeted collaborative programming and outreach.

SPATIAL COFFEE HOUR

The first of a new series, the **Spatial Coffee Hour**, was held on January 14, on the subject of Ecology. Nineteen colleagues from the various ecological research communities on and off campus were assembled for a powerpoint-free discussion, defining areas of possible collaborations in future research.

On May 6 the second in the Spatial Coffee Hour series discussed the role of spatial thinking and computing in the arts and the opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration

ESCHOLARSHIP ARCHIVES CREATED FOR NCGIA, CSISS, AND SPATIAL@UCSB

The Center announces the launch of its archival document collections at http://escholarship.org/. eScholarship, an online library of downloadable University of California publications, is now home to more than 500 documents associated with the research and education initiatives of the following:
Center for Spatial Studies (2007–);
Center for Spatially Integrated Social Science (1999–2013); and
National Center for Geographic Information and Analysis (including Varenius) (1988–1999).
The collections feature technical, program, position papers, meeting reports, special publications, and curricula and other educational resources. Each document is accessible (in perpetuity) by a unique permalink. All materials submitted to eScholarship are automatically deposited in the California Digitial Library's Merritt Preservation Repository, ensuring their long-term security.

This project was carried out by the Center under the direction of Professor/Researcher Emeritus **Donald Janelle**, with technical support from Ph.D. candidates, Kitty Currier and Jessica Marta-Kenyon; eScholarship support from Katrina Romanowsky; and advice, assistance and guidance from Werner Kuhn, Andrea Ballatore, Karen Doehner, and Sherri Barnes and Jon Jablonski from UCSB's Davidson Library.

The intent of this year-long effort has been to:
- provide the community with reliable access to one of the primary collections of geographic information science;
- remove the risk associated with the uncertain sustainability of program-based websites; and
- position these resources for integration within the broader literature to help document a period when geographic information science was taking flight.

The Center is interested to know about similar projects or plans by other organizations to document long-term programs in geographic information science and related fields; please direct information to Werner Kuhn (kuhn@geog.ucsb.edu) or Don Janelle (janelle@geog.ucsb.edu).

Center Visitors 2014–2015

The Center for Spatial Studies welcomes opportunities to collaborate with scholars from other disciplines and universities in projects involving some aspect of spatial thinking and computing.

The **Visiting Scholars Program** was particularly active throughout the 2014–2015 academic year. **Yasutaka Tominaga** (Ph.D. candidate, Osaka University, Japan) spent 6 months at UCSB developing his application of spatial econometrics and geographical information system in the study of international security. **Julia Metelka** (Ph.D. candidate, Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario), spent her time at UCSB examining the spatial epidemiology of Japanese Encephalitis in Nepal. **Alexander Zipf** (Chair of GISscience, Heidelberg University) conductedresearch on the quality of spatial data in volunteered geographic information (VGI), in particular, comparing the role of community culture and mapping behavior between the United States and Europe/Germany. **Marije van Amelsvoort** and **Lisanne van Weelden** (Professors, Tilburg University, The Netherlands) worked primarily with Mary Hegarty in exploring common interests in the design of visual representations and cognitive effects of this design. **Alex Borgida** (Rutgers University) worked on establishing a long-term collaboration on various aspects of measurement, ontologies, and information integration. **Michel Zimmer** and **Marc Thiemann** (undergraduate students, University of Bremen) interned at the Center, programming a Python API for the core concept "networks," to enable the of query geographic data using a general API without the need of actually knowing GIS software. **Christian Freksa** (Chair of Cognitive Systems, University of Bremen) spent a month on campus exploring opportunities for collaborative projects. **Christian Czotscher** and **Thorben Schiller** (M.A. candidates, University of Bremen), worked on their theses, Czotscher focusing on the desktop interfaces and the administrative components of the system, and Schiller on the mobile aspects of UCSB Interactive Campus Map. **Christoph Hölscher** (Professor of Cognitive Science , ETH Zürich) worked on wayfinding studies with colleagues in Geography and Psychology. **Markus Knauff** (Professor, Department of Psychology/Cognition Research, Justus-Liebig-Universität Giessen) visited the center and worked on a review article on human spatial cognition with Dan Montello, visitor Christoph Hölscher, and Mary Hegarty.

New Personnel—

Antonio Medrano
Post-doctoral Research Fellow

Antonio Medrano completed his Ph.D. (UCSB Geography Department) in December 2014, researching spatial optimization methods for corridor location for new transmission lines and developing new algorithms for the difficult computation of sets of spatially diverse shortest path alternatives and of multi-objective shortest paths, with an emphasis on parallel computing in order to handle problems involving big data. Now a Post-Doctoral Researcher at the Center, Medrano is working with the UCSB Library to coordinate an integration of spatial data protocols into the campus ArcGIS Online offering, as well as to establish a "collaboratory" for implementing good spatial analysis practices for on-campus research outside of the Geography Department.

Scheduled Events, 2015–2016

Oct. 20	ThinkSpatial Brownbag Series **Mark Buntaine**, Bren School, UCSB; *Geospatial Impact Evaluation*
Nov. 10	**W. Randolph Franklin,** Rensselaer Polytechnic University
Nov. 17	**John O' Donovan & Byungkyu Kang,** Department of Computer Science, UCSB
Nov. 24	**Martin Raubal,** Institute of Cartography and Geoinformation, ETH Zurich
Dec. 1	**Lucia Jacobs,** Department of Psychology, Berkeley
Dec. 7–9	**Spatial Un-conference:** *Spatial Information for Human Health*
Jan. 14–15	Visualization of Uncertainty Project Meeting
TBA	Graduate Student Tech Lunch Series
TBA	Lightning Talks
June 2	spatial@ucsb.local2016 *Spatial Information for Human Health* Corwin Pavilion