

# 24th International Cartographic Conference

The Escuela Militar Libertador Bernardo O'Higgins was the background for the first ever ICC in South America. Situated in the spacious Las Condes suburbs, the grounds of this military academy provided not only ample space, clockwork organisation, a splendid conference infrastructure (we have never had such good interpretation services), but also some of the trimmings of a military operation: an equestrian show in the academy grounds and gala dinner in the Lo Curro officers club, high above the city. IGM staff even performed part of the dance show.

Juan Vidal, director of the Instituto Geografico Militar, can be proud of the results. Apart from the four hundred papers and eighty poster presentations, a smallish technical exhibition and fairly big international and Chilean map exhibitions showed the newest products to emerge over the two years since the Moscow conference.

The conference structure included a plenary keynote every morning at nine, featuring among others NGA director Robert Murrett, ESRI director Clint Brown, UNGEGN chairperson Helen Kerfoot, OS director Vanessa Lawrence and ITC rector Martien Molenaar, followed by paper sessions and an in-house lunch next to the technical exhibitions, a most successful set-up. A subjective evaluation of the proceedings would be that web mapping is going from strength to strength. According to commission chair Mike Peterson, "For better or worse, the future of cartography is largely tied to the development of tools for online mapping," and he foresaw a brave new world of online cartography in which web map services were used for all online maps and spatial-data providers integrate scale-dependent spatial information as either vector or raster overlays.

User-oriented design is back in force, having being snowed under by automation in the 1980s, and the commission on spatial-data use and users is penetrating the work of many other commissions with its concepts. Grand dame Judy Olson, who pioneered much of this work, gave a masterful presentation on all the pitfalls inherent to research with human subjects.

ETH cartographers from Zurich stole the show in the atlas sessions with the functionality they are developing for school atlases and their national atlas alike. The development of new cartographic functionality for handhelds is similarly flourishing within Viennese academia. It must be an exciting time for young research-minded cartographers to work in the alpine countries nowadays.

New themes that came up in special sessions were crime mapping and map copyright, while additional meetings on mapping for early warning and crisis management were held after the conference by Professor Konecny. The Art and Cartography (A&C) working group started up in Moscow in 2007 offered some unnerving initiatives, such as how to make maps that get you lost! But art, after all, is supposed to challenge! How to map a novel, or even the whole literature of a country, was also incorporated in this A&C initiative; a special set of symbols and signatures had to be devised in order to accommodate the special requirements of this art-form and these were supposed to make possible analysis of the spatial aspects of novels. A special collage of map-use in movies had been produced by the WG, which made the whole audience feel like film stars.

The next ICC will be held in 2011 in Paris, at which world cartographers will once more converge with renewed confidence after this successful, if faraway, event in Chile.

*Editor's note: At this conference Ferjan Ormeling was awarded the Carl Mannerfelt medal, ICA's highest award.*