



Lidar, On the Road Again

In fulfillment of its responsibility to bring readers the most compelling, varied and relevant articles possible, LIDAR Magazine attends conferences and exhibitions throughout the year, not only to keep up to date with the industry and the profession, but also to meet and converse with prospective contributors. We have enjoyed unexpected, fascinating discussions and in some cases these will turn into articles. This year, our group plans to attend more than fifteen significant geospatial events—if you're going to one, chances are we are too, providing a chance to meet up.

Sadly, we had to miss the YellowScan LiDAR for Drone 2019 user conference, which took place late March in Montpelier, France, attracting many customers of this well established UAV-lidar integrator; our very own Lewis Graham delivered the keynote. I must also mention the user conference of nFrames, the Stuttgart start-up that offers world-leading software for generating point clouds and derived products from imagery and has recently added lidar capabilities.

2019 started with Geo Week in Denver. Though this was more than two months ago, it remains etched in our memories for two reasons: its success; and the presentation, for the second time, of the LiDAR Leader Awards. Our partner in the LiDAR Leader Awards, Diversified Communications, announced that the attendance had been 1,682 from all 50 U.S. states and 33 countries. Of those in attendance, 53% were attending the event for the first time. The International LiDAR Mapping Forum (ILMF) 2019 took place as part of the inaugural edition of Geo Week along with the MAPPS Winter Conference and the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS) Annual Conference. Last year, ILMF and the ASPRS Annual Conference took place together for the

“Geo Week attendance was 1682 from all 50 U.S. states and 33 countries. The sold-out exhibition hall was packed with 104 exhibiting companies, 21 organizations exhibiting at ILMF for the first time.”

LIDAR MAGAZINE

www.lidarmag.com

2019 Vol. 9 No. 2
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LIDAR Magazine is published 8x annually by Spatial Media LLC. Editorial mailing address: 7820 B Wormans Mill Road, #236 Frederick, MD 21701. Tel: (301) 620-0784; Fax: (301) 695-1538. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without the express written permission of the publisher. Opinions and statements made by the writers and contributors do not necessarily express the views of Spatial Media LLC.

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first time while the MAPPS Winter Conference took place separately. The co-located events maintained their own technical programs but shared a single combined exhibit hall. By uniting all three events for the first time, geospatial professionals gained access to more geospatial solutions, technical education, and networking opportunities than ever before. All this happened despite the government shutdown severely impacting attendance by

“The use of lidar by the Scripps Institute of Oceanography to measure rising sea level made local TV news in San Diego.”

professionals from agencies such as USGS. The co-location of MAPPSS was significant: for Geo Week to receive this influential body’s imprimatur is no small matter; moreover, the presence of senior managers from MAPPSS member firms added gravitas to the event and enlarged participation in the exhibition and technical sessions. Indeed, the sold-out exhibit hall was packed with 104 exhibiting companies showcasing best-in-class geospatial technology solutions. Among the exhibitors were 21 organizations exhibiting at ILMF for the first time. Next year’s event will be held March 23-25, 2020, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, and we can be sure Diversified Communications will try its best to

involve even more organizations of geospatial professionals.


It was a huge privilege to co-host the LiDAR Leader Awards ceremony with Lisa Murray of DivCom and honor the winners. Further details are given in our highlight of this year’s recipients on pages 6-7.

Once again, I’ve come across more interesting articles. The use of lidar by the Scripps Institute of Oceanography to measure rising sea level made our local TV news in San Diego: kpbs.org/news/2019/jan/29/scientists-study-imperial-beach-sea-level-rises/. In the background during an interview with Dr. Mark Merrifield is the RIEGL VZ-2000 used to survey the beach and incoming breakers. And this month’s two pieces from *The Economist* are both related to Israel. The first described aerospace engineer Abe Kareem¹, who came to the US from Israel in 1977 and began work in his garage to create operational UAVs. His company, Leading Systems eventually became part of General Atomics. He could scarcely have foretold the effect UAVs are having on today’s lidar! The second reports that the Israeli precision agriculture world has discovered that people who had previously worked as image analysts in the Israeli military were particularly well suited to becoming tech entrepreneurs². Looking at geospatial imagery is enlightening...



A. Stewart Walker // Managing Editor

1 Anon, 2012. The dronefather, *The Economist Technology Quarterly*, December 1 2012, 23-24.
 2 Anon, 2019. Agritech in Israel: silicon makes the desert bloom, *The Economist*, 430(9125): 41, 12 January.



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