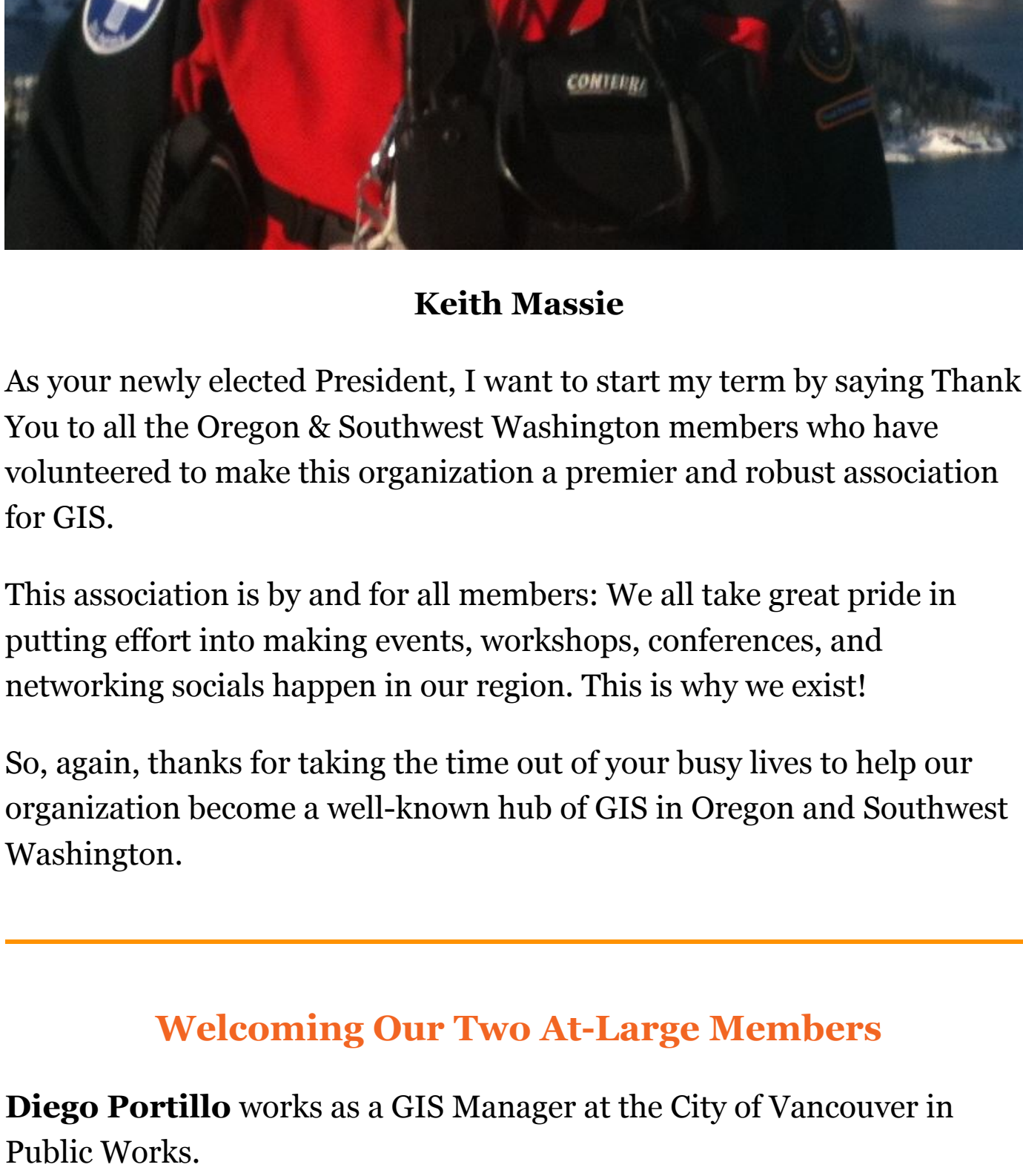


We welcome you to our 5th quarterly Newsletter! Thank you for your ongoing support and feedback on ORURISA's previous Newsletter editions. Through your valuable feedback, we received overwhelming support and some great ideas. We have incorporated your feedback into our 5th edition. We aim to explore, expand, and reshape the content of forthcoming Newsletters together, to meet the needs and add value to ORURISA membership.

We hope that you will find great value in its content and that it will aid you in your own goals to grow and thrive.

#### President's Message



**Keith Massie**

As your newly elected President, I want to start my term by saying Thank You to all the Oregon & Southwest Washington members who have volunteered to make this organization a premier and robust association for GIS.

This association is by and for all members: We all take great pride in putting effort into making events, workshops, conferences, and networking socials happen in our region. This is why we exist!

So, again, thanks for taking the time out of your busy lives to help our organization become a well-known hub of GIS in Oregon and Southwest Washington.

#### Welcoming Our Two At-Large Members

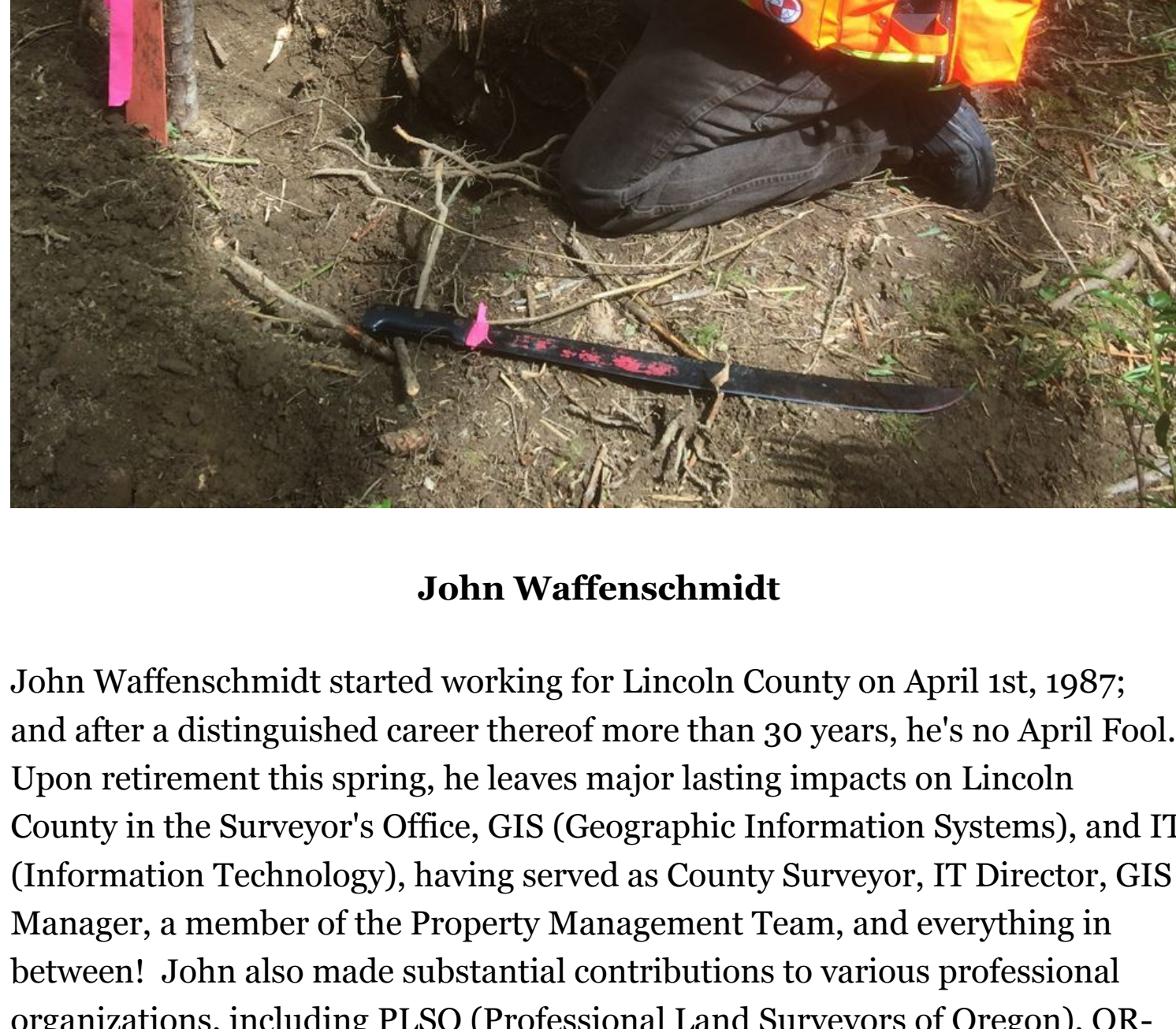
**Diego Portillo** works as a GIS Manager at the City of Vancouver in Public Works.

Message from Diego Portillo: I recently moved from Denver to Vancouver, and I wanted to continue to be involved in and with the GIS community as I was in Colorado. Serving in the URISA Board gives me that opportunity to know and connect with people in this area and learn about GIS in the PNW.

**Tiffany Turo** works for an electrical cooperative in Central Oregon.

Message from Tiffany Turo: I am excited to be a part of the ORURISA board, as it will allow me to participate in the GIS field at another level. Working for an electric cooperative in Central Oregon for the last 15 years, I hope to bring the utility perspective to the table. Equally important, I am eager to learn about the many directions GIS has taken that I do not often see. The field has become fairly niche-focused, so I see value in pulling back the curtains on the different workflows folks are using and sharing solutions that may be transferable across industries. Thank you for this opportunity.

#### Congratulations to John Waffenschmidt on His Retirement!



**John Waffenschmidt**

John Waffenschmidt started working for Lincoln County on April 1st, 1987; and after a distinguished career thereof more than 30 years, he's no April Fool. Upon retirement this spring, he leaves major lasting impacts on Lincoln County in the Surveyor's Office, GIS (Geographic Information Systems), and IT (Information Technology), having served as County Surveyor, IT Director, GIS Manager, a member of the Property Management Team, and everything in between! John also made substantial contributions to various professional organizations, including PLSO (Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon), OR-URISA (GIS), and OACES (Oregon Association of County Engineers and Surveyors).

He spent a decade land surveying in the private sector prior to joining Lincoln County. With a career spanning such a duration, he has seen a lot of change. When asked about how surveying has changed over the years and if he could have imagined multiple satellite constellations with atomic clocks orbiting the earth, John reflected on his early days. "The first distance measuring I performed was with a steel tape, but the firm soon purchased an EDM or Electronic Distance Measurement instrument," he recalled. "In a few years, the ability to measure angles and distances were combined into a single electronic instrument. While surveying with satellites was still a decade away, the advances in technology made it seem that anything was possible." Fast forward a decade, and John noted that "The Lincoln County Surveyor's Office was an early adopter of GPS technology starting in the late 1980's. The technology was new, and the computational techniques for using it were evolving rapidly. We often had to perform our surveying in the middle of the night as that is when the few satellites then in orbit were available."

Speculating about future changes, John noted that, "I think we can look to Europe, where population density has made secure monumental land boundaries an important part of land ownership. Professional land surveyors will play an increasingly important role in the transfer of land ownership going forward." While most people don't know much about land surveying, John encourages students interested in pursuing this work to speak to those in the field about the appeal of a profession based in both science and the law.

John said that the most unexpected aspect of his career was being considered (and selected) to head the County's Information Technology Department. He says that "It was not something I was aiming for. Nonetheless, I enjoyed the challenge and am proud of the work we did to assist various County operations toward achieving their goals." Working in IT called for balance with one of his favorite local activities, noting that "a walk on the beach or in the woods, can do a lot to decrease your stress level and refresh your perspective."

When asked about the most rewarding part of his career, John mentioned that "It has been the people you interact with. I have worked in land surveying, GIS, IT, and managing tax-foreclosed properties. The people in each area have different passions related to their work, but all have been interesting to interact with both professionally and personally." When asked about which achievement he's most proud, John said, "I hope that I have helped the public with their questions and made it easier for them to get the information they need." That goal has been true for all of the areas I have worked in during my career."

While keeping a low profile, John worked diligently behind the scenes earning the respect of his peers. He implemented the County's popular GIS program (which would later run on an improved IT network which he brought to fruition as IT Director). Cy Smith, a Geospatial Program Coordinator for the State of Oregon, noted, "John played a very influential role in resolving the professional boundary dispute between land surveyors and GIS professionals that arose in 2001. We are very fortunate that, with the leadership of John and Dean Anderson, and the hard work over several years of many others, we were able to develop a resolution that everyone could agree on, and that has stood the test of time." John would later serve on the statewide GIS coordination group, OGIC (Oregon Geographic Information Council) from 2018 to 2020.

It is not just with his GIS peers that John is widely respected and admired. OACES honored John with Surveyor of the year in 2017.



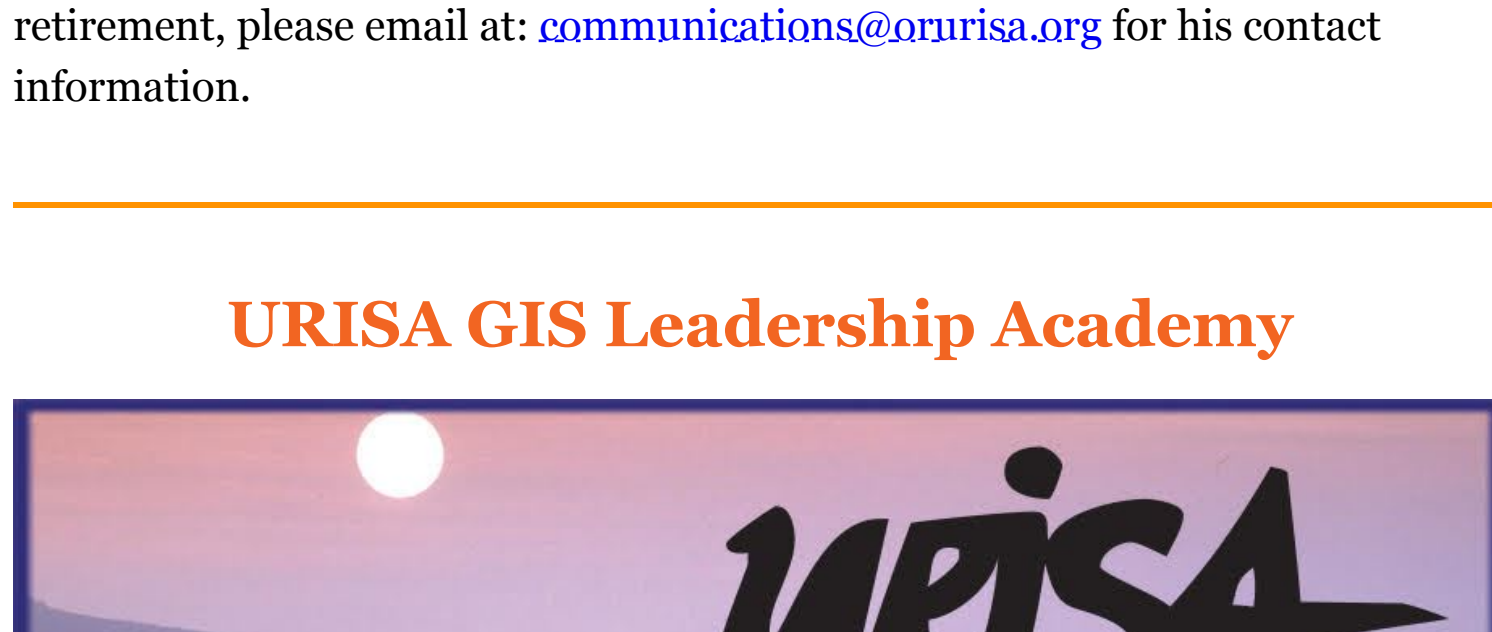
In this picture: John on the right receiving the OACES Surveyor of the year Award in 2017.



In this picture: John on the left with (Chuck Knoll of Linn County receiving the OACES County Engineer of the Year award.)

Outside of work, John has pursued adventures from kayaking in Alaska to camping in New Zealand. All are wishing him well in his retirement and many more adventures to come. When asked about future plans, John said, "My wife and I enjoy camping and boating as well as traveling internationally. We hope to explore more of the country, camping and mountain biking. Hopefully, we can go on a longer trip once the pandemic is behind us, possibly sailing in the Great Barrier Reef of Australia."

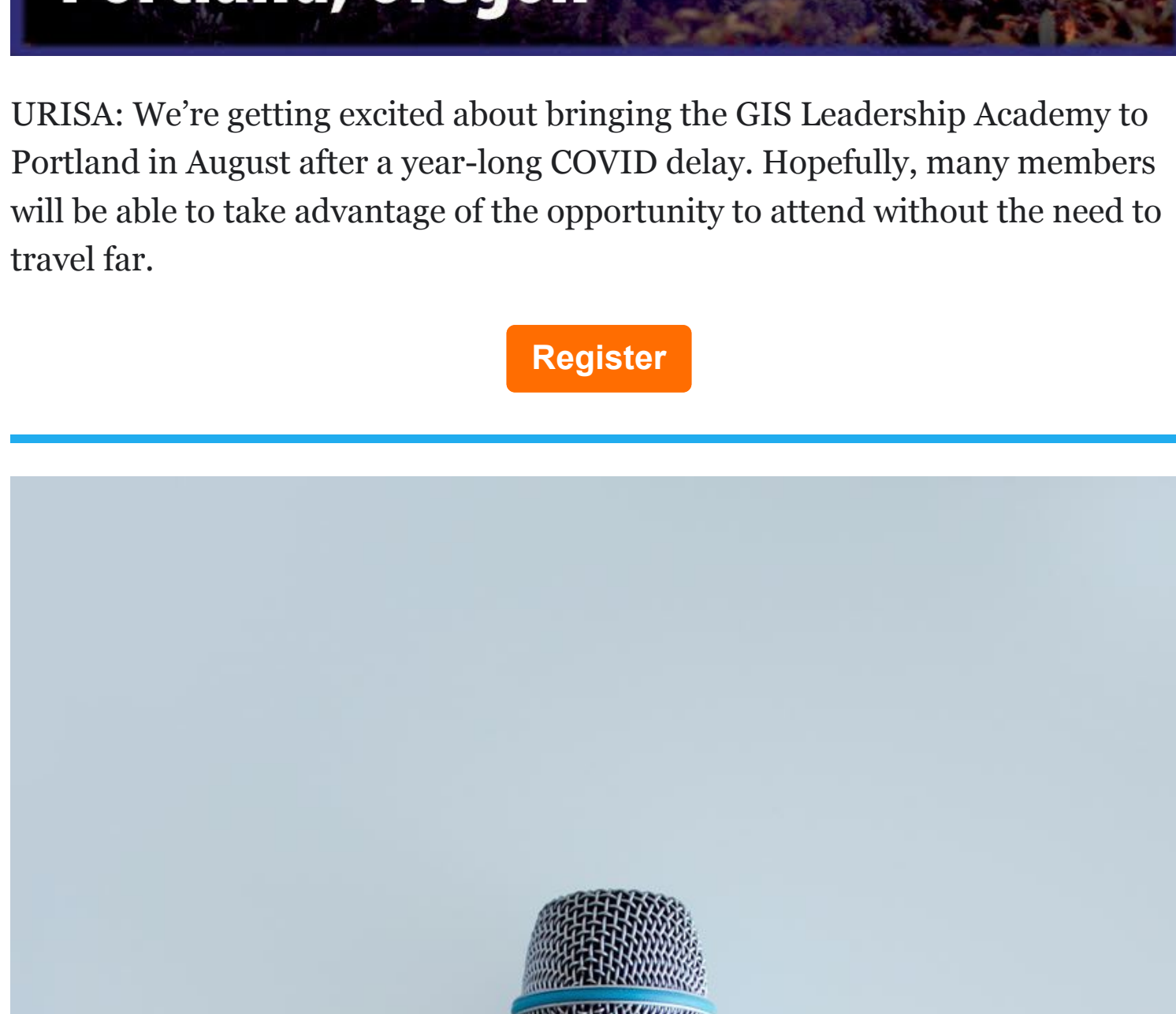
#### Author and contributor of this article:



**Eli L. Adams**, PLS, GISP Lincoln County Surveyor's Office.

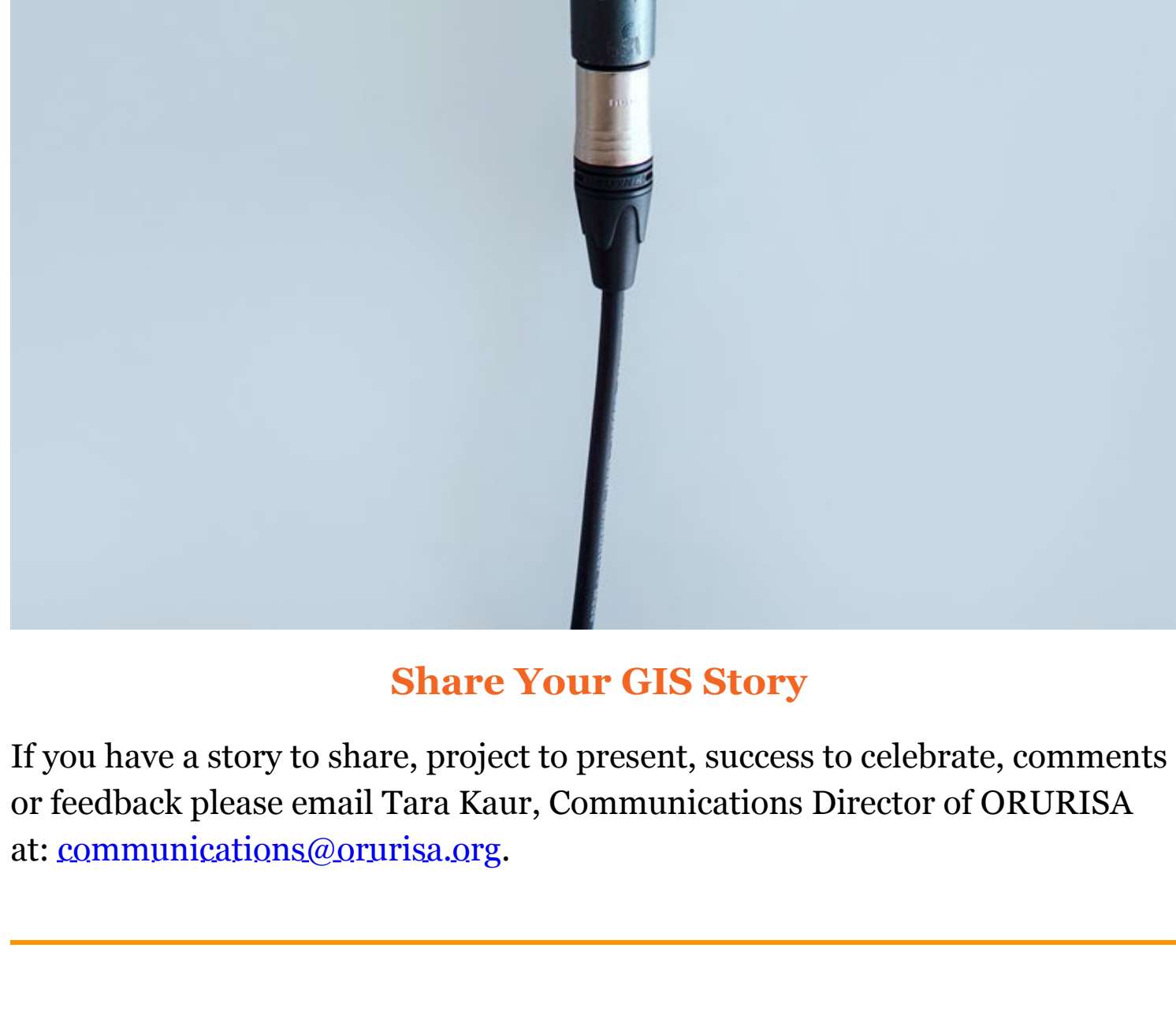
If you would like to contact John Waffenschmidt to congratulate him on his retirement, please email at: [communications@orurisa.org](mailto:communications@orurisa.org) for his contact information.

#### URISA GIS Leadership Academy



URISA: We're getting excited about bringing the GIS Leadership Academy to Portland in August after a year-long COVID delay. Hopefully, many members will be able to take advantage of the opportunity to attend without the need to travel far.

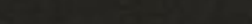
[Register](#)



#### Share Your GIS Story

If you have a story to share, project to present, success to celebrate, comments or feedback please email Tara Kaur, Communications Director of ORURISA at: [communications@orurisa.org](mailto:communications@orurisa.org).

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