

Geography Awareness Week 
November 16-20, 2009

Canadian Geography Rules Using the *I-Way*

“Canada is the first country to make extensive use of the Internet in a national geographic awareness program” says Barry Wellar, director of Geography Awareness Week, Canadian Association of Geographers.

The Association has taken advantage of the widespread use of computers in Canada, and in just three years created a totally new way of promoting greater appreciation of the day-to-day importance of geography to every person in every place, anywhere in Canada. The first major innovation was to use theme days to build a foundation for the program.

According to Prof. Wellar, “Every person in this country is affected every day by the weather and climate, the need for water, the need for energy, the need for transportation, and the need for food and health services. Those topics are our theme days, and a panel selects 10 outstanding websites for each theme. The 50 websites selected each year provide extraordinary insights into how geography affects individual lives, the efforts of governments, and the activities of businesses throughout Canada.”

In addition to developing an innovative way to tell Canadians about geography, the program has quickly achieved recognition for the new ways that it is using the Internet as a teaching, research, and business tool.

“In this day and age rapid change is the name of the game in education, government, business, entertainment, and so on, and for us the Internet Way or *I-Way* for short is the way of communication”, says Prof. Wellar.

“We created an Applied Geography Showcase, a GeoSkills Showcase, and a GeoSkills Resources Guide, and all materials are posted on the Association’s website. That makes the materials readily available to anyone, anywhere, who has access to a computer. This country has a huge amount of geography, and the *I-Way* is a marvellous means of telling the story of Canada’s human and physical geography, and also illustrating the significant societal and scientific contributions made by geographers in education, business, and government.”

To learn more about how Canadian geography rules by using the *I-Way* during Geography Awareness Week, please follow this link: cag-acg.ca/en/geography_week

Questions about Geography Awareness Week may be sent to Dr. Barry Wellar at: wellarb@uottawa.ca.

