

**GIS Day 2005**  
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This was my first experience at a GIS Day event. Luckily, with the speeches given by many of the people that work with GIS (Geographical Information System) it gave me some insight on the helpfulness of GIS in our ever growing society.

The two speeches that stood out for me, were Al Little (Manager of GIS Services for the City Hamilton) and Greg Marshall (Coach of the Hamilton Tiger Cats). Al Little's speech described how the city is benefiting from the services provided by GIS. He used two examples: the first was the recent tornado that hit Lawfield. Within hours of the strike his GIS team had designed a map showing where the tornado hit, where it continued off to and left, and the areas affected (i.e. damages). He also showed us a map program for the City Hamilton. With this program, you can type an address or business name and the location of your search will appear on your screen. Unlike like Google Maps or Map Quest, this program gives you the information you require, ranging from things such as price of land, hours of operation (if business), how to get there from your location and even property size. The second speech was given by Greg Marshall. He did not talk about GIS, however talked about the transition from High School to University. His speech reminded me of being in a locker room at half time during an important football game, such as the Grey Cup, and the coach giving the team "the speech"- either for a come back or to maintain the lead. He talked about time management and how it is necessary to succeed in anything. He described how working hard and persistence is the key to achieving your goals. This was quite helpful for high school students soon to be enrolling into university.

The second part of the day was the Geo caching activity in which we were divided into groups of three and given a GPS (Global Positioning System) tool to find certain locations in order to be able to answer the questions provided on the activity sheet. Unfortunately, it was relatively cold day and the majority of the group's progress was held up by it. From what I heard the groups really enjoyed the activity. They said it showed how fascinating and entertaining Geo Caching is.

The last part of the day was Mount St. Helens Activity. It involved the students working with Arcview [an interactive geographical computer program]. The activity was to create a 3D Mount St. Helens, before and after the eruption, using the data provided. The majority of the students from the various schools had only used Arcview to create 2D maps, so the change was quite a welcome. From what I saw the students really enjoyed it. Their favourite function on the 3D scene tool was the rotation button which would rotate the diagram at varying speeds.

Overall, GIS Day 2005 was a huge success! It demonstrated to students the enormous range of job opportunities available within the GIS field, not only obscure positions, but every day affairs.