
Subject: 2005 IDL Christmas Card

Posted by [ronn](#) on Thu, 22 Dec 2005 01:12:14 GMT

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Hello Everyone,

The 2005 Christmas project is a genetic algorithm (GA) that solves for Santa's optimal flight path. The program uses the cities.dat file in the IDL distribution. Some unique features of this project is that the actual great circle distance is used by the algorithm and multiple GA parameters can be changed by the user through a simple GUI. The final route is then displayed in an object graphics window with the sunlit earth for December 24, 2005 shown. The sleigh is marked by a red glowing ball (Rudolph's nose?) which follows the path chosen by the GA. As time progress the sunlit part of the earth is updated with the three different twilight zones (astronomical, nautical and civil) distinctly displayed.

The code is quite complicated so you can download it from here (look at the bottom of the page).

<http://www.kilvarock.com/freesoftware/objects/objects.htm>

Just extract the files somewhere in the IDL path and type `santasroute` at the IDL prompt. Feel free to pass it around for others to enjoy.

Thanks Again and Merry Christmas!

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Use these books to upgrade your IDL skills.

"Application Development with IDL"

"Calling C from IDL, Using DLM's to extend your IDL code". SECOND EDITION includes C++ and debugging!

"Power Graphics with IDL, A Beginner's Guide to Object Graphics",
