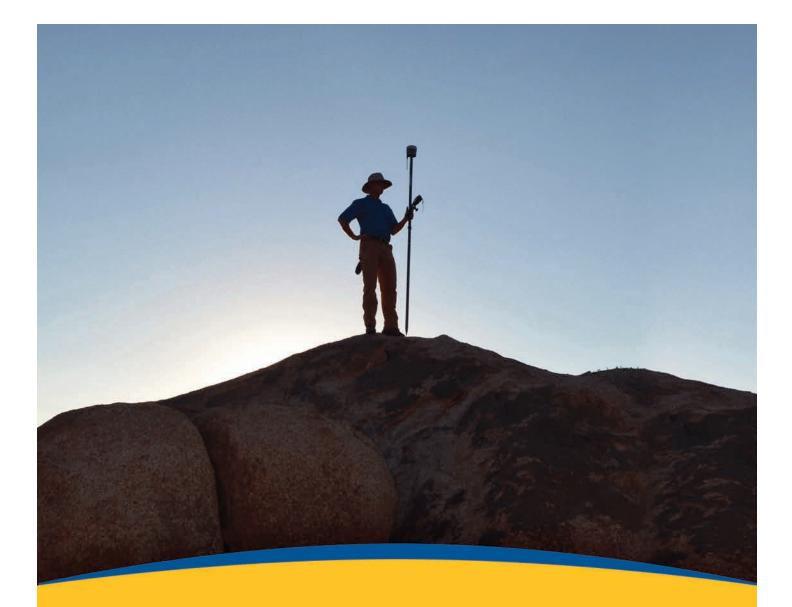


Vol. 39, No. 1



# Surveyorof the Year 2015 Albert Hertel, PLS



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A publication of the Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon

#### Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon

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## Contents

From the Editor, by Greg Crites, PLS			
From the PLSO Chair, by Leland Myers, PLS	3		
From the PLSO Office, by Aimee McAuliffe	3		
Surveyor of the Year	6		
National Surveyor Week, by Frank Lenik, PLS	9		
Auction Hits High Marks, by Gary Johnston, Auction Chair	10		
Reviving the Surveying Profession, by Pat Gaylord, PLS	11		
PLSO Award Winners	14		
2016 PLSO Conference, by Jered McGrath, PLSO Conference Chair	15		
Lost Surveyor, by Pat Gaylord, PLS	18		
Professional Listings	20		
2016 PLSO Board & Committee Chairs	21		



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# Another Conference Behind Us!



Greg Crites, PLS

n keeping with the conference "content" of this issue, I need to throw my hat into the ring. After every conference I've attended I have to sit back in wonder, shake my head and silently give thanks for yet another successful event. All of us who attended owe a debt of gratitude to the conference committee, our Executive Secretary, the BOD, the vendors, the speakers, the contributors, the student volunteers and so on! Thank you for a job well done. Anyone who has ever participated in the organizational nightmare behind holding a successful event should fully appreciate that when you're able to pull it off without any major glitches (i.e. seamless to the attendees), then, like the Velveteen Rabbit, it's become "real".

I was so pleased with the outcome of the scholarship auction. The winner of the "bag-o-cash" is one of my coworkers! He came around to my cubicle last week beaming from ear-to-ear because the prize couldn't have come at a more appropriate time. He rides one of those Italian motorcycles with a name I can't pronounce. It seems no one in Portland can even work on his bike. Nevertheless, he'd blown a fork seal and even though the broken part was less than \$100, the repair would cost him dearly. His winnings would make a significant dent in the cost of that repair. John Thatcher will appreciate this as a motorcyclist and especially as a Harley dude.

Of course, it was great to see all of my old friends and acquaintances at the conference. I could rattle off a whole slug of names but the number would fill the magazine and I don't need to do that because you all know who you are! Every time I encounter a familiar face, old memories of our "elbow rubbing" over the years come bubbling to the surface and I smile, whether inside or out. This is part of the great satisfaction that comes with having taken an active part in the PLSO for more than 30 years. Don't get me wrong, those of you who know me understand that

I'm not a very social person, but make no mistake, there is an inner reward that comes with the feeling that you may have had a hand in the course of PLSO history.

With regard to PLSO history, there is a document that I keep in my PLSO sub-directory entitled "Past Significant Board Actions, 1959 to Present." Every time I re-open that file to rekindle some long forgotten recollection, I read the names of all the folks I've known in this organization, from the Charter members on down. With few exceptions, I've known every one whose name appears on those pages! Therein lies the rich legacy that participating in the PLSO has left with me. You won't get that standing on the sidelines and I'm sorry your "worldview" is so narrow that you must limit yourself to work. After all, I don't consider volunteering for "stuff" within the PLSO as work! It's an investment in yourself! So, if you haven't stepped up to give a little back to the organization, it's time to start earning dividends and become a part!

Forgive me if I've got this wrong (it's called "age related infirmity"), but I believe it was Bill Colisch who came up to me on Thursday morning as I was on my way to a meeting and mentioned how one of my "editorials" about attending the conference had shamed him into attending! That was quite a compliment. Thanks!

PS. A special thanks to Pat Gaylord for allowing me to share some vents before the auction! It's nice to know there are others within the PLSO who share some of my frustrations! •

The views expressed herein are mine and mine alone and in no way should be construed as representing ANY opinions shared by our membership or a stance on political issues by this organization.

# **Chairman's Comments**

#### Leland Myers, PLS; 2016 State Chair

have found myself to be that proverbial person who is given more jobs because they are supposed to get them done. Well, it seems I have reached my limit. My fond desire to serve as PLSO Chair has been fulfilled and now I am serving as interim mayor of the City of Sumpter as well. It would have been useful if the mayorship would have waited for a year or two before it came about. Now I have two important jobs along with my survey work and a house remodeling job at my daughter's. Nothing like having plenty to do.

Nancy and I were the editors of *The Oregon Surveyor* for about two years in the late 1980s. I reviewed all the back issues of TOS and found that subjects and problems through all the years keep popping up and are seldom resolved. While serving as editor I attempted to present some of those subjects for discussion, some controversial and some not, with not much success. It is my hope that we can resolve some of these old problems while I am serving as Chairman, but one year is not enough time.

I have been a professional land surveyor since 1965 and my primary area of practice has been rural Eastern Oregon. I have been licensed in North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and Montana which gave me cause to learn how their survey law compared to our Oregon law. I spent a couple of years working in North Dakota but when I came

home to Oregon I dropped all four of the additional states.

I am a fifth generation Oregonian.

I was born on the coast at Oceanlake (now part of Lincoln City). Our family moved to Granite when I was two months old and my first years of school were spent in The Dalles, followed by a few months in the one room school house in Paulina. Dad's logging job took us to Mt.Vernon where I was enrolled in fourth grade through high school. Upon graduation, I then attended OSU and earned a degree in Forest Engineering. I worked for Edward Hines Lumber Co. at Burns about 1-½ years, then moved to Sumpter where I've been self-employed ever since.

I am asking the membership to present to your chapter president or vice president, Aimee or me anything that you see as problems we need to address as an organization. I will do my best to help get them through the necessary channels. PLSO needs everyone to be active with ideas and service to make us progress.

I am pleased with the way our conference in Eugene went and thank the conference committee and Aimee for such a good program. There seemed to be plenty of room for all our activities.

I am looking forward to a successful year with your help. •

## Here's to the New Year

Excerpts from a presentation by our Executive Secretary, Aimee McAuliffe at the 2016 Annual Conference in Eugene

■ Aimee McAuliffe, PLSO Exec. Secretary

A s a new Board of Directors begins their service, I would like to give a special thank you to two great people. The first being Past-Chair Lee Spurgeon. Lee is always a strong, yet reasonable voice in the room. He believes in service and the mission of PLSO. Lee, thank you for the time you have spent on the Board of Directors these past two years with me (six years total), and while I'll still get to work with you on the EGAC Committee, your absence will be felt at our quarterly board meetings.

I need to extend my second thank you to our most recent Past-Chair John Thatcher. While I still get to work with John on the board, I do want to recognize that he is a very caring volunteer who answers my emails no matter what time of night it is. He is someone that tries to practice empathy in everything he does. Thank you, John for your time as Chair.

Being this is a new year, I have been thinking of New

» continues on page 4 »



FROM THE PLSO OFFICE

#### » continued from page 3 »

Year's resolutions. Don't worry, I'm not going to bore you with my pledge to achieve weight loss but more to the point, I'm talking about resolutions for PLSO. Now, some people don't believe in them, and in looking for inspiration, I found out that only 12% of people actually stick to them. So you must be thinking why bother, right?

I like to think of New Year's resolutions as recognition of the present state of things and hope for the future. They are a way of quantifying what we want to see happen. Now, more practical people or perhaps just the business world may call this something else, probably something less romantic sounding and more apt to make your eyes glaze over when it gets brought up in a meeting. Now I remember; it's called a Strategic Plan. "A rose by any other name."

Realistically, there is a philosophical difference. While 88% of people fail at achieving New Year's resolutions, I'm going to assume it's because there was no plan. You can't wish to be healthy and then do nothing to make it happen, which of course is similar to being upset about decisions and actions being made by your organization and not taking any steps to be a part of them! For those that don't know - PLSO actually DOES have a Strategic Plan. In fact, it's even available for you to read in its entirety in the Membership Resource E-Binder, which is located in the Members Only section of www.plso.org. Created with great care, it was the brainchild of the BOD and continues to be maintained by your volunteer leaders.

If you think of the strategic plan as a table, it has four legs that keep it standing. They are the foundation of PLSO's mission to serve the professional community and public. The first leg is Membership Development. Our Membership Committee is led by Gary Anderson, who is quite prolific at coming up with new ideas or things to think about in regards to PLSO. Gary – I appreciate you always thinking of your community.

Presently, the PLSO has 552 members, with a slight increase in Associate members over last year. I find this encouraging. To our Associates that are here today, you are wanted and you are needed. Tell us where you find value in your membership, and please, get involved. The true value of professional membership is about making an impact on your career (giving back something of yourself as recompense for your rewards). Contact your chapter president and assist in meeting programming/scheduling or a Committee Chair about participating in committee activities. Whatever it is that you decide, I ask that you use your voice, because we want to hear it. For our nonmembers at the conference today, I encourage you to talk to our active members and see what they get out of their membership and how you might be a contributing part. If there is a reason why you think being a member is not important - tell us, but if the reason is because you know OTHER people will donate their time to important

legislative issues or outreach efforts, then you are still benefiting from membership. I like to think of this like drinking water from a rain barrel. If you keep taking water without replenishing the supply, sooner or later it will dry up! The more members we officially represent; the more impact we will have in reaching our goals.

The second leg of the table is Education & Outreach. Now, we talk a lot about these two items synonymously. That's because this is an important part of our future! The Educational Goals and Outreach Committee, led by Lee Spurgeon, is the caretaker of this important part of our mission. We strive to support our Geomatics programs anyway possible, not only through our scholarships, but by doing things like serving as adjunct professors or promoting the survey profession at career fairs. Most recently, our own Tim Kent fought a battle for us all in keeping the Clark College Surveying and Geomatics program open. In Tim's own words, we still have a lot of work to do to continue the program for years to come. You can count on Tim to keep us apprised of what needs to happen and it is our duty to step up to the plate and prove that we need this program for our future work force. Another way we can support Education and Outreach is to support our auction fundraiser at the conference. Bid on our silent auction items, buy raffle tickets and attend the evening banquet/auction.

Our third leg of this table is to Advance Legislative Agendas. Our Legislative Committee is led by our newly minted Chair-elect and last year's Surveyor of the Year, David Williams. Now, Dave had a true baptism by fire when he stepped into the committee chair position last year, but with the assistance of PLSO Lobbyist Darrell Fuller and the other members of the committee (which is required to be made up of a member from each Chapter), Dave was able to handle it like the pro he is. Darrell Fuller does well working with the committee and representing the needs of surveyors in Salem. For those that would like to learn more about the legislative activities of the last session and future activities, his door is always open and is more than willing to baptize you into the legislative process. I'd also like to take this moment to thank State Representative Paul Holvey from District 8 for participating at our conference.

The fourth leg of this table is Fiscal Responsibility. I work very closely with Finance Chair Gary Johnston each month. He audits our financial reports and keeps the budget straight for the Board of Directors. Both of us take the responsibility of the membership's money very seriously (as there can be grave consequences if we don't). We know you work hard and honor the trust the membership has in us to manage revenue and expenses. Yes, it's true that costs go up every year, and yes, it is a challenge if our revenue doesn't keep pace, which is why keeping reserves is so important! Many of you are business



owners, so I'm pretty much preaching to the choir. Just know that we work hard to maintain the proper balance. Our fiscal year ends on a standard calendar year, which is halfway through our membership year, ending in June. So while our 2015 fiscal year officially ended in a slight deficit, it's important to know that each new year starts with proceeds from the Conference and will be infused again half-way through with membership renewals. Those renewals are a major component of our revenue stream and if you understand and appreciate the work PLSO does, you need to be timely in renewing your membership.

Each of these legs of our table is a necessary part for creating stability. If one goes down or becomes off balance, the table can't stand. I've said it before and I will say it again – PLSO is a member driven association. In order for it to run at full steam, we need the support and participation of our membership. Going back to that New Year's resolution, if we just create and follow the plan, we will be a healthy and strong association.

As I mentioned, your Finance Chair Gary Johnston provides a budget report at every conference (and at every BOD meeting). It's important for me to acknowledge the amount of time and energy he puts into this Association. Not only does he audit our transactions every month and attend our quarterly board meetings, but he is also responsible for managing the conference auction. All this on top of community service for his church and the local food bank! Gary, thank you for everything you do. I would be lost without you.

And thank you to our members – for supporting PLSO! •

# Surveyor of the Year 2015

#### **Nomination Letter**

The five surveyors named below hereby nominate ALBERT HERTEL to be honored as Surveyor of the Year at the 2016 PLSO Conference. This letter provides the required written submittal to so nominate (PLSO Bylaws, Article 15, Section 1).

#### **Respectfully Submitted:**

J.H. Greenman, PE, PLS, CWRE (letter prepared by) Chairman, Pioneer Chapter

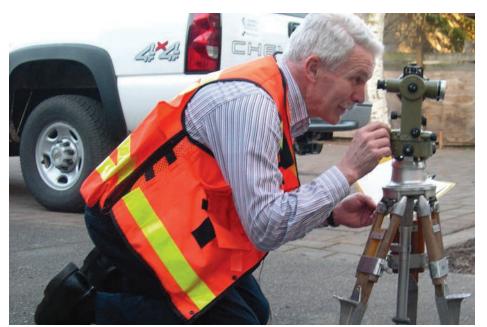
Mike Rademacher, PLS Chairman-Elect, Pioneer Chapter

James Elam, PLS, CWRE Washington County Surveyor

**Carl Clinton, PLS** *Clackamas County Surveyor* 

James Clayton, PLS Multnomah County Surveyor





## Albert Hertel, PLS

### **Biography**

After graduating from Oregon Technical Institute with an Associate Degree in Civil Engineering (Surveying) in 1968, Al Hertel began his surveying career with the engineering firm of Robert E. Meyer, under the supervision of Layne Caswell. Shortly thereafter came a four year enlistment in the US Navy, including an "all expense paid" trip to Vietnam for a year.

In 1972 when his enlistment was up, Al rejoined Layne who now had opened his own firm. As part of Layne's firm, Al has progressed from survey technician to owner. He has been involved in many projects from both the public and private sectors, from boundary and subdivision work to utility and street surveys. He received his first Professional Land Surveyors license (Oregon) in 1980. Since that time he has filed over 1,200 Records of Survey and Plats in Washington, Clackamas and Multnomah counties alone.

In 1987 Al was a founding member of Eagle GPS Survey Corporation, and worked parallel with Caswell/ Hertel Surveyors, Inc. In contrast to the local work for Caswell/Hertel, Eagle's GPS expertise brought them to 11 Western states, providing Geodetic and mapping control to many large scale projects. Eagle GPS was disbanded in 2008.

When Layne Caswell retired in January, 2000, Al advanced to President of the firm. Due to the strong reputation, built initially by Layne Caswell and steadily reinforced by Al Hertel, the company has remained strong to this day. Al puts a lot of store in his 43 years with the same surveying firm.

Al joined PLSO in Jan 1988. He has been a steady volunteer at numerous Career Fairs and has been the Pioneer Chapter's Secretary-Treasurer for the years 2013, 2014 and 2015. During that period it was his steady hand that kept the leadership of the Pioneer Chapter in line and on course. Throughout the year, his communications connect the current happenings in PLSO with the 220 PLSO members and 150 interested Associates of the Pioneer Chapter.

#### **Interview with Albert Hertel**

#### Your professional community recently voted you "Surveyor of the Year". What is your proudest moment as a surveyor?

My proudest moment as a surveyor is broken up into two stories, the first being a two part story. When I got out of the service (US Navy CBs) in 1972, my first (and, only) job was for Layne Caswell. I was on the job for only one week, and Layne took me out to a jobsite just North of Wilsonville. We hiked back into a wooded area, traversed a couple setups and then Layne got out some old GLO notes and Bearing Tree entries. We, mostly he, started looking for two trees/stumps that matched the early 1900s BTs. We found the likely candidates. The cedar stump had splintered and no scribes were left. On the fir stump, we found a pitch seam. Using a chainsaw, we made a couple vertical cuts and pealed the outer slab off, revealing the old scribes. To Layne's surprise, my attitude was..."Okay, I've been at work for a week and we found this old corner. Probably something we do every month or so, right?" Oh was I wrong.

The second part of this story came in 1982, ten years later. I went out to a jobsite North of Forest Grove, to the SW corner of the Brown DLC 40. I invited Lavern Meacham to guide me on this venture. Vern was the Washington County Bearing Tree expert at the time. We pealed back two bearing trees and found the original scribes. This time around I could hardly contain myself. Amazing, how your appreciation grows over time.

The second of my proud moments is my part in the formation and pioneering of Eagle GPS Survey Corp in 1987. We were the first private company in the Northwest to use GPS equipment as a surveying tool. This new and exciting venture took us to many of the states west of the Mississippi, including Minnesota (albeit in the dead of winter) and Texas (albeit in the heat of summer). We also spent countless hours perfecting the use of GPS in the airplane, for Aerial Photography. At one epoch every half second, we encountered so much data that the computers had to be carefully selected to handle this new volume.

## Any advice for new surveyors just getting started?

To the new surveyor out there, I say, "Get involved in PLSO early." Not in a big way. Take it easy. Volunteer for one or two things the first year. Watch out. It will grow on you. Contact a local Scout leader and ask them if they would like some help with the surveyor's merit badge. Contact a local high school math teacher, and see if they want to excite their kids with some Trig Star money. Volunteer at a job fair...telling students about Surveying...trust me, they haven't got a clue.

If you are a little reserved, don't use that as an excuse. There are plenty of excuses out there.... "some served on a silver platter" (one of my favorite sayings). Instead, join a seasoned surveyor for your first time out. They'll be glad to guide you. The next year build on your volunteer efforts. Add one more job...it's so rewarding and you meet the best of people.

## How has being a member of PLSO impacted your life and/or career?

When I was a small boy growing up in a family of 12, I always had an older brother (and five older sisters) to guide me and lead the way. That was very comfortable, but I was a tag-a-long, and not a leader.

When I went off to college, at OTI (now OIT) in Klamath Falls, I started to learn that I could stand on my own two feet. I joined the school's chapter of the Engineering Club, and in my sophomore year, I was the chapter secretary. My "toe was in the water" and no alligator bit back.

In joining PLSO, I have grown in leadership. I have been on the Curriculum Advisory Committee at PCC, been to a Boy Scout jamboree in Scappoose, given a Trig Star talk at four different high schools—multiple years, been to several high school job fairs, helped proctor the Oregon LSIT/LS test in several cities throughout Oregon, and served as the Sec/Tres of the Pioneer Chapter for several years.

Throughout all this I have gained the friendship of many colleagues, government planners and surveyors, and teachers, both high school and college.

Thank you for this great opportunity. I have been blessed by each contact that I have made.  $\, \circ \,$ 

7

## National Surveyors Week

#### What's it all about?

Frank Lenik, PLS

e've all heard about National Surveyors Week — the week long celebration of the surveying profession that takes place annually in March. But who's actually celebrating, and how? What is the best way to use this event to the advantage of our profession?

## Consider the three main goals of the program:

- Public awareness of our profession through education
- Public awareness of our profession through the media
- Public awareness of our profession through public service

The education of the public, both adult and youth, is probably the number one goal of National Surveyors Week. The work we perform for the benefit of the public often goes unrecognized and we need to share our knowledge with them. The work being done by our Trigstar volunteers is incredible and should be highlighted during National Surveyors Week. There are volunteers doing outreach to Boy Scout and Girl Scout groups and resources are available for these programs. We can expand on this and offer to speak to the local Rotary or Lions Club. They are always willing to have a speaker at their meetings. How better to promote your profession and your business than to make a public appearance?

Reaching out to the public through the media and making them aware of our profession and our role in today's society is a goal whose value we all recognize. Over the last few years we have achieved this in a variety of ways including Presidential, gubernatorial, and municipal proclamations, newspaper articles, and radio spots highlighting National Surveyors Week. There is also a GPS Day Website, a National Surveyors Week Facebook page and a National Surveyors Week Twitter account. Each of these channels represents another way for the land surveying community to stay connected with a different section of the public. Although the annual effort of contacting the President, members of Congress, your governor and your municipal leaders may seem trivial, remember that it serves to remind *them* that surveyors are important. It is an essential part of our awareness campaign and serves as an introduction to our senators and representatives when we visit them on the hill. Whenever a bill, law or ordinance is being contemplated which affects the public and impacts our profession, these elected officials should know who to turn to for answers to their questions.

Newspaper articles, radio advertisements, and on line media can serve the same function for our profession, keeping us in the public eye. Rather than being hidden behind an attorney, title agent or real estate agent, we can use the media to highlight the value of our profession with our most important constituency our clients. The best way to get an article about surveying published in a newspaper is to contact a local reporter and let them know that you have a good lead on a community interest story. If that fails to attract their attention offer to write one yourself and submit it to the paper. State societies, society chapters and even private firms have written or sponsored articles or public service announcements which serve as advertising for our profession and their businesses.

In his inaugural address on January 20, 1961, President John F. Kennedy poignantly said "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country". It is with this attitude in mind that we should attempt to give back to our nation and our profession and lay the groundwork for the future. We can lament the passing of the geodetic field parties of the past and the disappearance of the NGS monuments, or we can embrace the future, share our expertise and volunteer for a common cause. In doing this we can prepare the foundation which future surveyors and the public will turn to for their geodetic positioning. It will help us hone our skills and keep us current on changes in our own practice.  $\otimes$ 

#### » on the next page »

The National Society of Professional Surveyors Letter to the President, asking him to make the third week of March "National Surveyors Week"

## National Society of Professional Surveyors

5119 Pegasus Court, Suite Q, Frederick, MD 21704 Phone: 240-439-4615 \* Fax: 240-439-4952 www.nsps.us.com



January 28, 2016

The President The White House Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

This is to respectfully request that you issue a proclamation designating the third week of March 2016 as "National The National Society of Professional Surveyors (NSPS) is the national voice of land surveying professionals throughout Surveyors Week".

the United States.

I am respectfully requesting that you issue a proclamation for the week of March 20-26, 2016. Establishing a National Surveyors Week will call on the people of the United States to observe with appropriate ceremonies and activities the contributions to society of the surveying profession. In addition, this will invite the American people to look back at the historic contributions of surveying, as well as look forward upon the new technologies which are constantly modernizing this honored and learned profession.

The role of the surveyor has been, and remains, of vital importance in the development of the United States and to our cherished private property rights. Since the colonial days of this Nation, surveyors have been leaders in the community, Statesmen, influential citizens, and shapers of cultural standards. Former surveyors include George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Abraham Lincoln. It was the work of the surveyor that determined the boundaries of land, the greatest economic asset in the colonies that became the United States. Thomas Jefferson chaired a committee in 1784 to devise a plan for disposing of lands west of the 13 original colonies. Thomas Jefferson argued that surveying before sale was

necessary to prevent overlapping claim and to simplify deeds and registers. Thomas Jefferson reportedly wrote a plan, which was debated in Congress and in modified form was adopted as the Land Ordinance of May 20, 1785, establishing the Public Land Survey System ('PLSS'), the rectangular system that continues today in 30 midwestern and western

Today, there are over 45,000 professional surveyors in the United States. The nature of surveying has changed dramatically since 1785, as it is no longer limited to the description and location of land boundaries. Every day our States. government and free enterprise system relies upon surveying and geospatial data for the management of natural resources, economic development, the management, adjudication, and prevention of future disruptions in the home mortgage system, the development and implementation of a smart energy grid, the deployment of universal domestic broadband service, the management of Federal real property assets, emergency preparedness and response, homeland security, the delivery of efficient health care and other services provided, financed, or regulated by the Federal Government, measuring, monitoring, verifying and validating the effects of climatic and environmental phenomena, and the maintenance, rehabilitation, and enhancement of public works, transportation, and other infrastructure of the United States;

I respectfully request that you issue a National Surveyors Week proclamation for 2016 and welcome the opportunity to work with the White House staff on this important observance.

Warren, PLS President

# **Auction Hits High Marks**

#### Gary Johnston, Auction Chair

The 2016 PLSO Education and Outreach Auction was a great success in several respects. With over 250 people attending the dinner, there was inspired bidding for silent auction items until closing. Dinner had the added benefit of background music furnished by Full Funkal Nerdity, a band led by Pioneer Chapter's Chris Sherby. Finally, the live auction, led by auctioneer Sid Voorhees from Eugene, was very entertaining and kept the bidders and the audience engaged throughout the live auction. The result was that donations and PLSO auction revenues reached a new high.

Total income from the auction was \$11,673. Of this amount, \$4,687 was designated for the scholarship fund and \$1,868 was designated for outreach. The remainder will be distributed by board decision at the April meeting. In addition, the 50-50 raffle yielded \$606 for outreach and finally, assorted cash donations brought in an additional \$386 for the scholarship fund.

The auction was also supported by 14 students from OIT. They received and catalogued auction items, organized displays, and helped with other fund raising efforts. PLSO owes them special thanks for their service.

Quality donations were generously provided by PLSO members, chapters, conference vendors, the Eugene Hilton and Cabelas in Eugene. Six items were offered at the oral auction and over 70 were sold at the silent auction. Throughout the evening, bidding was very spirited and several items sold for more than the market value. This indicated that members were not only interested in purchasing unique items, but were willing to generously support education and outreach. To illustrate, special items sold during the live auction, included:

- Buff and Buff transit from PLSO sold for a 1 year term to William Eimstad for \$650
- 2009 BLM Manual signed by BLM chiefs and authors, donated to PLSO by the estate of Sue Newstetter and sold for a 1 year term to Tim Kent for \$1300
- Bag-o-Cash donated by PLSO conference registrants, sold to Kyle Latimer for \$1000
- Custom made steelhead fishing rod with reel and tackle made by John Wise with donations from Willamette Chapter members, sold to Leland MacDonald for \$800
- Grandfather clock donated by Al Hertel, sold to Joe Ferguson for \$700

The auction was a genuine success in many ways, and post conference comments will be evaluated to see what might be done to make the 2017 auction even better. Thanks to everyone for their support and participation. •



## **Reviving the Surveying Profession**

One Surveyor's thoughts on the destination of surveying

Pat Gaylord, PLS

s many of you who attended the recent PLSO annual conference may have witnessed, the fact that we have a tremendous amount of expertise about to leave the profession is very real. For those of you who weren't there, a very informal poll at a lunch with approximately 200 people in attendance revealed that nearly half were either retired or were going to retire in the next five years. The same poll of the room on the entry level side of the profession, through the first five years of licensure, revealed that we have very few following in our footsteps. Because of the venue and the informal nature of the data, this could be attributed to the fact that very few associates attended the conference or that maybe many of the older members of the organization place more value on attending. Whichever the case, the simple fact of the matter is that this dichotomy is well known nationwide and that we have a serious problem. I have heard estimates as high as 60+ for the average age of surveyors in the United States and around the world. Some estimates indicate as high as 10-12% of the surveying population is retiring each year. Many of these retirements may mean the closing of small surveying businesses that have served our communities for many, many years. Without eager young licensees who have an entrepreneurial spirit these businesses will close and the community will suffer. The coming losses of our knowledge base ranges from business practices to local knowledge of records and problem boundary areas, not to mention all the little nuances of everything we do on a day to day basis. Paramount to boundary surveying is the loss of a true understanding of how to "follow in the footsteps" for work completed before the advent of lasers and data collectors. The question is, what are we going to do about it and what are you doing to replace yourself?

The aging of our profession has been a persistent issue for at least the last 10 years. While we banter it around the average age of surveyors continues to mount. I truly believe we are reaching critical mass on this topic. In the words of Albert Einstein, the definition of insanity is "to continue to do the same thing over and over again and expect different results". That my friends is us as a profession. There is no one other than us who is going to bring more surveyors into the profession and for as long as I can remember we have been recruiting in the same way and expecting a different result. That different result would be a flood of new faces coming into the profession. Plain and simple, it's not working and at the very least it's not working well enough. While we can sponsor TrigStar contests, TwiST, career fairs, surveying merit badges and all the other things we've been doing until we are blue in the face, these are obviously not enough. It should be clear by now that to really make a difference in the number of people entering the profession and to create a sustainable supply of replacements we need many more. Without a significant influx of new faces college programs will continue to close and jobs will go unfilled. Don't get me wrong, I believe all of these things we currently do are very valuable and we should continue them, however, they just are not achieving our goals. We need to ask ourselves why and where did we go off track when it comes to creating surveyors.

My personal opinion with regards to the rapid decline of LICENSED surveyors entering the profession is the trend towards a four year degree requirement to pass the license exam. I say trend because according to the NCEES webpage for Oregon, the requirements still allow a person to enter the Fundamentals of Surveying exam without a two or four year degree after eight years of experience which equates to 12 years before a person can sit for the LS exam. First of all, twelve years is an absolute eternity in today's workplace. The likelihood of a potential candidate sticking with it all the way to licensure seems extremely small. For one thing, the financial reward is not enough to justify a twelve year investment when you can make as much or more in less time with a four year degree of another kind or investing your skills and efforts in one of the trades. I am the first to defend that you absolutely can make a living in surveying, however, a plumber, electrician or carpenter can make just as much if not more in that same 12 year time period. Furthermore, while the door may be cracked open on the experience track the reality is that without a four year degree a person has little chance of passing the exam regardless of their experience. The myth, or maybe » continues on page 12

11

#### » Reviving the Surveying Profession continued from page 11 »

the reality seems to be that you can't obtain your license without a four year degree. In many cases that is probably true depending on the individual, but I would challenge if it is really necessary to only set the bar in this way.

There are many merits to the degree track, but if we poll those who are about to exit the profession we will find that historically surveyors have not found surveying as a high school graduate who was dying to be a surveyor and went off to college to pursue it. People often discovered surveying through many other career fields such as military service, civil engineering, construction, forestry, mathematics, and many more. Many of these "discoveries" occurred later in life. After that discovery they worked, learned and eventually licensed, but likely never went back to school full time if at all. I would further challenge the four year degree concept and say that those who fit this discovery description are some extremely good surveyors track leads to one part of it and an apprenticeship leads to everything else.

When I say apprenticeship I don't mean some haphazard process by which someone comes to you and says they are ready to license so you sign their application. That's pretty much what we have now isn't it? How many of you really "know" the full breadth of experience of the person for whom you sign the license exam application? Clearly you are supposed to, but at the end of the day you must take them at their word to one degree or another. Therefore the standard continues, someone passes their fundamentals exam and after the allotted time they find the required number of licensees to sign their application and if they can pass they become an LS, though it's questionable how much or what experience they may really have in the various aspects of land surveying. What I really mean by apprenticeship is a process that is regimented and



The next step to growing the profession is self-promotion. This is a two-fold process that includes the societies as well as all of us as individuals.

who have made many contributions to our profession. They would not be here if a four year degree was the only path to licensure. Even growing up in a surveying family I was bound and determined to become a Forest Engineer and not a surveyor. Late in my college career, I made a right turn and went back to surveying. If I had been required to totally change paths and pursue a surveying degree, I probably would not have done it and would have missed out on a profession that is one of the true passions of my life.

What do we need to do in order to grow the profession again? Apprenticeship seems to be a dirty word within the surveying profession because after all, 'we are a profession' aren't we! For many, the very mention of apprenticeship brings forth visions of the blue collar worker, a member of a trade. I have never really bought into this line of thinking and after much consideration, I would challenge you that we need both a degree track and an apprenticeship track to fill our dwindling ranks. While surveying is a profession, we are not brain surgeons and there should be no reason we could not create a path to licensure using an apprenticeship model. Maybe we need to think out of the box and split the license much like our engineering counterparts. A college clearly documented (just like union programs today). It is monitored and tracked by the State or some governing body and it clearly documents what you have done and haven't done. This would be a very valuable step between where we were and what we currently have and I think we should pursue it without delay. We must find a way to get more people to enter the profession who also have a formal path to licensure that may or may not include a 4-year degree in Geomatics.

The next step to growing the profession is self-promotion. This is a two-fold process that includes the societies as well as all of us as individuals. When was the last time that you told someone under the age of 21 what it is you do and why it is important? For that matter, when was the last time you told anyone what you do with some degree of excitement that might make them or someone they know want to consider a career change? For some of you this is probably a daily occurrence, but for others it's time to change the paradigm. This means a conscious decision at parties, career fairs, on social media and with our friends in competing professions to get the word out. Not only about what surveying has to offer, but the peril that our profession faces with the looming retirements of many licensees. It is not just the peril of our profession, but that of society as well if land surveyors don't exist in sufficient numbers to do all of the various types of work expected of us. We all know that nothing gets built without us, so why not candidly point that out and promote what a cool place we hold in the fabric of the world? After the PLSO conference I posted on social media regarding career opportunities and retirements. Within hours I had four youth approach me about what the profession has to offer. Will all four of them enter the surveying profession? Likely not, but this is a great venue to get the word out to a much wider audience than any other method we have ever tried before. YouTube videos offer a great opportunity to educate friends and family about what we do and all you have to do is post it. For those four youth and their families who approached me on social media, I have been meeting with them individually about the opportunities that surveying offers. Social media is a powerful tool, but it must be used regularly and it must be followed up with face to face contact when requested.

Next, our societies must do more to promote the profession in a commercial manner. This means state societies and NSPS need to take to the airwaves in a true campaign to get the word out. It means educating Congress or others with influence who can provide grants and funding to promote a critical profession in our society. It could also mean contracting with one or more advertising agencies to create professional grade public service announcements about what our profession has to offer. PLSO tried this once a number of years ago utilizing radio announcements on Oregon Public Broadcasting and National Public Radio. I believe it was a big step in the right direction, however, the PLSO Board ran into a roadblock from short sighted members who did not agree with the chosen venue. In short order the ads stopped before they could make an impact which I believe was unfortunate because I think it was our first step outside of the "tried and true" process that still is not working. Advertising campaigns are an expensive proposition and the societies don't have very deep pockets. Building partnerships with other organizations to promote common goals would be one solution to accomplish this task. Would you be willing to pay more dues, help write grant applications or develop public service announcements? If it is important to you then you must be willing to contribute in some manner.

The last option is educating the professions and trades that depend on us. I would be willing to bet that most of the related professions such as engineering, architecture, real estate, construction and others have little inkling of the number of retirements facing the surveying profession. We as state societies need to get the word out to our clients and business associates of the possibilities that could occur with the pending retirements in our profession. We as individuals need to get involved with their organizations and speak at their luncheons, conferences and meetings about what we do and why they should support our recruitment efforts. This affects every walk of life and every public improvement project around us. Our related business' need to know what is coming and they may very well be inclined to steer some folks our way when confronted with a possible candidate that is on the fence about what they want to do for a career.

This really isn't the "chicken little" syndrome folks. We have all known this was coming for some time and no matter how seriously you have taken it in the past, the issue is fully upon us now. The results of my informal poll at the PLSO meeting are the handwriting on the wall. We must do something different to get new faces into the profession and to replace the knowledge base that is soon to retire. I urge you to seriously consider helping to form a new path to licensure that is both measurable and regulated and which parallels the college degree path. I truly believe that unless we change our course and follow a new path, society at large is in for a very rude awakening when it comes to building the infrastructure that we depend on let alone having a solid land ownership system with reliable boundaries. I urge you to take ownership in this effort and work to immediately create new opportunities to move our technicians to become our future surveyors and to replace all of us with new faces that will carry on a rich and prosperous tradition of land surveying around the world. It's easy to give lip service to the joke about Mt Rushmore being three surveyors and another guy, but who will be the next face on that mountain if we don't start diligently replacing ourselves? Are you willing to commit your time and resources to not only reinventing the path to get here, but to promoting it? These I believe are the questions of the day and time has just about run out to answer and address them.

If we don't do it, the "powers that be" will find a way to replace us with technology and I guarantee you that will not be a satisfactory outcome. More importantly, if we don't do it soon our successors will have to learn all of our lessons from scratch. Those of us with experience dealing with large agencies and the loss of institutional knowledge that ensues when key personnel retire without benefit of grooming suitable replacements can attest to the negative results. Take one-step when you finish reading this and go post on your favorite social media or whatever other method you are comfortable with and get the word out about how great your job is and welcome someone to come talk to you.  $\circ$ 

B

## **Congratulations to our PLSO Award Winners!**

#### Surveyor of the Year

Al Hertel, Caswell/Hertel Surveyors, Inc.

#### Lifetime Membership

*Given to members in recognition of distinguished service to the profession and PLSO.* 

**David Bateman** Willamette Chapter, Bateman Consulting

**Sue Newstetter** Blue Mountain Chapter (given posthumously)

#### Article of the Year

Given to the author of the best article that has been published in the Oregon Surveyor within the last year.

#### **Brian Portwood**

Bonneville Power Administration

Nominated by the Oregon Surveyor editorial team for Defining the True Title Status of Railroad Right-of-Way in the American West (Vol. 38, No. 3)

#### **Community Service Award**

*Given to one who works to help make our community better for us all.* 

#### Jerry King

Pioneer Chapter, City of Lake Oswego

Aside from being the city surveyor for Lake Oswego, Jerry is a member of the local search and rescue community. Jerry and his peers respond day and night to calls for help from the Portland Metro community.

#### **Good Humor Award**

Presented to the person who has brought humor to the work place and PLSO.

#### John Wise

Willamette Chapter, QZ Land Surveying and Lane County ECS

Any one that spends any time with John Wise soon finds out that he is a joker. He is very welcoming to new members and helps them loosen up with humor. Which is why, when they were finished laughing at his latest joke, the Willamette Chapter nominated him for the Good Humor Award. Thank you, John for making meetings fun!

#### Brush Cutter of the Year Award

*Given to an individual who keeps pursuing a goal no matter what 'brush' gets in the way.* 

#### **Gary Anderson**

Pioneer Chapter, Westlake Consultants, Inc.

Gary is an eager advocate for PLSO and the profession of land surveying. He has served on the PLSO Board as State Membership Chair and Board Chairman, and as PLSO Pioneer Chapter President. Gary has a special interest in promoting PLSO's Education and Outreach efforts. He has collaborated with the Associated General Contractors, OSBEELS, and the Oregon Utility Notification Center on various survey-related projects. He recently helped produce a video filmed at the 2016 PLSO conference which is designed to introduce students to the surveying profession. Gary currently serves on the Oregon Institute of Technology Industry Advisory Committee for Geomatics. In 2008, he was honored as PLSO's 'Surveyor of the Year.'

#### 2016 PLSO Conference Map Contest Winners

**1st Place – David Schlosser,** Northstar Surveying **2nd Place – Mike Berry,** Deschutes County **3rd Place – John Thatcher,** Centerline Concepts Land Surveying, Inc.

#### A Special Thank You

Thank you to outgoing Chair, **John Thatcher** and the 2015 Board of Directors for their time and expertise this year! PLSO would like to recognize our outgoing board members in particular:

Dan Nelson, Mid-West Chapter Jim Greenman, Pioneer Chapter Herb Farber, Rogue Chapter Derek Windham, Southwest Chapter Kris DeGroot, Umpqua Chapter Colter Hessel, Willamette Chapter

Staying on as State Chair-Elect

David Williams, Central Chapter

Staying on as Chapter President in 2016:

Mason Marker, South Central Chapter Rod Lewis, Blue Mountain Chapter

# 2016 PLSO CONFERENCE

■ Jered McGrath, PLSO Conference Chair



*From left:* Bob Neathamer, *Neathamer Surveying*; Tony Cavell, *NSPS President Elect; and* Lloyd Tolbert, *Tolbert Associates, LLC*.



*Outgoing PLSO chapter officers from left:* Mason Marker, Dan Nelson, Herb Farber, Jim Greenman, Dave Williams (*PLSO Chair Elect*), Kris Degroot.



he 2016 Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon Conference held at the Eugene Hilton Hotel and Conference Center has come to a close. A big "Thank You" needs to go out to all of this year's sponsors, vendors, attendee's, students, members of the Mid-West Chapter and countless other volunteer's that came together to make this conference a great success. The conference committee has gathered in our final closeout meeting and has now emailed the follow-up survey that can also be found at the end of this article.

This survey questionnaire is extremely beneficial to planning future conferences and for getting an understanding of your experience or what you would like to see us improve. It can be completed by both attendees and non-attendees.

We understand each attendee and PLSO member, in general, views the conference differently as it relates to their own professional practice, area of expertise and goals for future work. We on the conference committee truly appreciate the feedback we receive in this survey and throughout the year. We take the information and try to align the goals of the conference with your own and those goals directed by the Board. Sometimes it's just the "little things" that count the most, so feel free to send along your concerns or praises. We will do our best to continually make this conference about its participants and strive to push forward the agenda of the PLSO as it fosters the growth of the profession and its members.

Many positive comments were received on the program content

#### » continued from page 15 »

and improvements and suggestions for next year have already begun to take shape. We continue to build a program each year with class size in mind and after reviewing the attendee counts for each class this year we were pleasantly surprised that many if not all of the classes had an equitable distribution of attendees. We also try and stay informed on the room temperatures as classes progress but we know there were some that got out of hand pretty quickly. Event staff was very responsive but many times, the science of the AC systems just didn't keep up, and we apologize if this was an inconvenience.

Another improvement we worked on this year was food quality and portions. This is always a concern with a new venue but based on most comments we received while on site, the Hilton did a great job in the quality of the meals.

The PLSO's ultimate conference goal (as viewed through my eyes, and interpretation) is the opportunity to provide its members with 16+ PDH hours in a large group format that allows for networking and education at a competitive rate. If we can achieve this we help propel the organization forward in the coming year by providing fiscally sound operating capital.

Below is the attendee numbers and breakdown for this year's conference:

50	Associate Members		
221	Corporate Members		
10	Life Members		
41	Non Members		
12	Special/Retired		
36	Vendor Staff		
41	Speakers		
14	Students		
425	Total Attendees		

We have had past conferences with larger attendance with our corporate numbers closer to the 300s, but we have offset the lower corporate numbers with nonmembers and a few more associates. This mix of attendees ultimately gets us extremely close to our estimated number of 400–450. In comparison last year's attendee count was just over 430.



Dale Barrett, OTAK



Dan Nelson, Branch Engineering

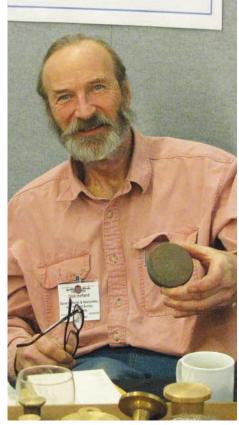


*From left: Daniel O'Conner and* Michelle McBride, *Adkins Consulting Engineering, LLP; and* Robert Fleming, *BLM* 



John Thatcher, *retired; and* Lee Myers, *PLSO Chair* 





*From left:* Andrew Plett, *OBEC Consulting Engineers;* Wendell Harness, *Harness Technology;* Mason Marker, *OIT* 

*Richard Hofland*, Hofland Survey Monumnents

When all of the bills are accounted for and numbers are final, they will be presented at the next board meeting together with the finance report. In closing, the success of this year's conference was due in part by a large collection of tireless hours of volunteering and commitments from not only conference committee members present and past but also board members and you the participant. Thank you again for your continued support in the past, present and in the future. Now let the planning for the 2017 PLSO Conference at the Sheraton Portland Airport Hotel begin. •

If you attended the conference please take the survey at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZLGP5GK

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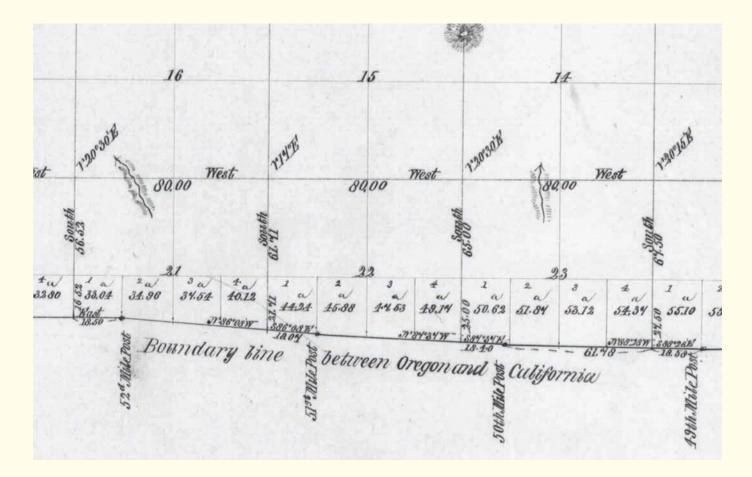
# The Lost Surveyor - Pat Gaylord, PLS

**Question:** Where in the world would you find a bearing tree like this?



### Answer:

Located on the Oregon-California border in the south boundary of fractional Section 21, T41S, R14 ½ E this bearing tree references Mile 52 of the Oregon-California border. The tree is located near Willow Valley Reservoir on the south side of Willow Valley Road, Bonanza, Oregon in Klamath County.



A n interesting note of history in this area that I discovered in my research ties to the murder of a prominent settler. The Langell Valley, approximately seven miles to the west in T41S R14E, is named for Arthur Langell. Nathaniel Langell, who was Arthur's brother (or possibly son), was one of the original surveyors of portions of T41S R14 ½ E in 1875. Nathaniel and his wife, Loretta Jane (Hensley) Langell, made their home in Jacksonville, Oregon while Arthur settled in the Langell Valley. Arthur was a rancher and a prominent member of the community and the State of Oregon. At one time, Arthur owned a tract of land nearly 12 miles in length in the Langell Valley. At the time of his death he had reduced his land holdings to approximately 3,000 acres in Oregon as well as some blocks of lots in Seattle, Washington which together were estimated at a value of nearly \$60,000 in 1894. *(see references below)* 

On September 10, 1894, Arthur Langell discovered his neighbor F. Swingle grazing cattle on ground that was owned "in part by Langell, in part by Beekman and another portion of it belonged to Langell and Beekman jointly. Beekman's interest, which had been fenced by Langell, had been leased by Swingle." (*Corvallis Times*, 1984). Upon discovering Swingle within the fenced area, Langell burst into a fit of rage, brandishing a hatchet. Langell charged his horse at Swingle shouting, "d\_\_n you, I will kill you". Swingle spurred his horse in an effort to escape, but with Langell closing fast, Swingle fired a single un-aimed shot which killed Langell instantly. (Corvallis Times 1984). Swingle was tried for the murder of Langell. Ironically Arthur Langell, the brother of a surveyor, lost his life in a land dispute over land that he and the murderer may have both had a legal interest in.

Author's note: Is there a side story here with a modern day surveyor and PLSO member named Kyle Hensley? Does he have a connection to Loretta Jane (Hensley) Langell? As of press time, this mystery remains unsolved.

Disclaimer – I am not a genealogist and the relationships between the parties has been assembled using news reports and other data available on the internet. http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~langille/news/arthurlangell1894.html http://www.foresthistory.org/ASPNET/Publications/region/6/rogue\_river/history/1/part1.htm http://www.blm.gov/or/landrecords/survey/yNoteView1\_2.php?R0153OR0730007340

19



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The State Board of Directors is made up of the PLSO Chair, Chair-Elect, Past Chair and each of the Chapter Presidents and Presidents-elect.

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