

THE

VOL 33 NO 4  
AUG/SEPT 2010

# OREGON SURVEYOR

A PUBLICATION OF THE PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYORS OF OREGON



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## THE OREGON SURVEYOR

Volume 33, No. 4  
August/September 2010

### Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon

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## The Lost Surveyor

*From the back cover*

**LAT 45° 15' 05" N  
LONG 121° 54' 18" W**

**Answer:** From a distance I could tell it was no tree I've ever seen, so when I got a little closer I discovered what it really was. This is a close up of the top of the tree. It's a cell tower made entirely of metal and plastic. It's located at the west end of Champoeg State Park in Marion County, Oregon where the Pioneer Summer Picnic was held.



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# From Your Chair

■ By Tim Fassbender, PLS

It's that time of year for the kids to go back to school. One of the first assignments I remember in grade school was to write an essay on "what I did during my summer vacation." Back when we were very young, summer vacation was thought of as being June to September. Now it is somewhat shorter—if at all. I haven't had a summer vacation since I was 14 years old. Growing up in Junction City, Oregon in farm country, I started working on the farm when I was 8 and to this day, I still work on a farm during the summer (along with surveying full time). Have you noticed how diversified surveyors are? Is it because we prepare ourselves for alternative incomes when times get lean?

I have to ask, "Is it time for surveyors to go back to school?" I've spoken over the year about how the profession has changed in the way we collect field information. Machine control has entered into the construction of roads. GIS, mostly via the internet, has gathered momentum to become an industry within itself. And then there is planning, we work with it every day, we even write planning applications, why complain about it? Why aren't we being more aggressive with reaching out into these fields and others that we have experience and expertise in?

A few firms have embraced GIS technology and provide ESRI Shapefiles for consultants. This helps both the consultant in receiving accurate information for their work and the surveyor with keeping involved with an evolving technology that has its roots in surveying. This is a discipline that surveyors have the ability to be even more involved in if not carving out a sizeable amount of work for themselves in providing GIS products themselves. It just takes a little business planning to gain a foothold here.

Machine control technology needs a data base that should be, and better be, created by a surveyor (we know that isn't always the case). Contractors love the idea of using machine control where practicable. We know the problem is the accuracy of the database and where they got it. We should first fully understand this technology and its strengths and weaknesses, then reach out to the construction industry and offer our services to enable them to use machine control and supplement its short comings with our construction staking services. It just takes a little business planning to gain a foothold here.

Some of you who work in firms that have a planning department work hand-in-hand (hopefully) with your planners on your projects. You may understand what a planner does and what they need from you, but I doubt that you fully understand all the codes, rules and laws that they utilize, just like they have no idea what aspects of codes,



rules and laws we utilize. However, the primary surveying firm in Oregon consists of one to five people. If the small firm doesn't provide their own planning services for their client's land use projects then they need to consult with a planner. In today's world almost 50% of a surveyor's work is within the planning arena, so why not become schooled in this area to provide a full service for your client? It just takes a little business planning to gain a foothold here.

You may have noticed that I've completed the past three paragraphs with the statement "It just takes a little business planning to gain a foothold here." At the beginning of my article I wrote, "Is it time for surveyors to go back to school?" I wasn't suggesting that you go back to the halls of learning to obtain a degree or more PDHs. What I was asking is, during these hard economic times do we need to look at the surveying industry and broaden our expertise and services? Being a survivor of the 1980s I saw over five years of almost no survey business in the southern Willamette Valley. We lost a lot of talented professionals during those times. Now well into the second year of the current recession I'm seeing the same scenarios play themselves out once again. We do not have the luxury of losing any more talent.

I want our profession to grow, prosper and attract young professionals to take us into the future. I believe that PLSO, through all the talent it has among its members, can give guidance, or at least help with this task. If we look at the businesses around us that are surviving and take their business plans and diversify ourselves, we could and should strengthen our business plans to become a very successful profession in which those who want to become surveyors will. We cannot afford status quo any longer. Most of you have suffered enough already in this recession. There is no better time than now to start talking more about the surveying business instead of the business of surveying.

So, what did you do during your summer vacation? I worried about our profession. ◉

# THE OREGON SURVEYOR

The Oregon Surveyor is a publication of the Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon (PLSO). It is provided as a medium for the expression of individual opinions concerning topics relating to the Land Surveying profession.

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## CONTRIBUTIONS OF MATERIAL

The Oregon Surveyor welcomes your articles, comments and photos for publication. PLSO assumes no responsibility for statements expressed in this publication. Send prospective materials to Lisa Switalla, lisa@llm.com.

## EDITORIAL DEADLINE

All editorial copy must be submitted by the first of the month preceding publication.

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# Editor's Note

■ By Oran Abbott, PLS, oranabbott@gmail.com



Summer is over! Well, maybe only if you are involved in school. Do we have more or less time in the summer, or is it just the weather that is different? I was going to write this article on a Friday but had a weekend conference to attend. Then my mother-in-law was admitted to the hospital on Saturday and I returned to town on Sunday to visit her and still make it to my wife's choir concert that night. The weather looks good to be out in, maybe I should just retire. Oh yeah, I am supposed to be retired.



I was reminded the other day, how fortunate we are to have an excellent publications committee reviewing our journal and a conscientious publisher. While reading the latest issue of *American Surveyor*, I discovered that out of the 64 printed pages in the journal, only 24 pages are usable content. The first 12 pages and the last 12 pages are printed twice. Four main articles in the contents are not printed. Yikes!

At our most recent Pioneer Chapter meeting, our guest speaker proved very interesting to numerous surveyors. Our speaker was Richard Foster, who works for AEC Consulting Group and focuses on Business Development (of course, he was retired and so was the owner). His presentation included some questions we should be asking to grow our businesses. He related that as an employer there are six areas we should be addressing. My answers below relate my current "retired" status.

- A. **Inventory Performance:** Fair
- B. **Employee Turnover:** None
- C. **Direct and Indirect Labor Costs:** Politics, then Service
- D. **Material Costs:** Going Up
- E. **Payables and Receivables:** Always a problem, but less now
- F. **Utilities, Telephone and Insurance Costs:** Why are they going up?

He of course could not answer all of the problems, but C and F are currently big ones for me.

In the meeting we also had a lively discussion on the ORS 290.250 to rename the word "monument" the first two times it appears in the statute. The definition of "monument" refers to what is permanent. Does that mean we have to file a Record of Survey when we set line stakes for a fence? It is not conclusively decided on what to do.

Some of my ideas come from reviewing other surveying publications such as the *Nevada Traverse*, which recently had a photo of the Curta Calculator on the front cover. This was the last good hand-held mechanical calculator before the electronic calculator. I did not know that the design of this mechanical calculator was completed in the Buchenwald Concentration Camp during the Nazi Germany era by Curt Herzstark. Fortunately he got a patent in his name before it went on sale. During the 1950s and 1960s (the last one sold in the early 1970s) the Curta Calculator became well known as the only hand-held calculating machine around. Now it has become a collector's item.

So, even if you are good at math you may still become a collector's item if you do not keep up with the times. What did I say about retiring? ☺

# View from the PLSO Office

■ *By Mary Louise VanNatta, CAE;  
PLSO Executive Secretary*



## New Chance to Make PLSO a Priority

**D**id everyone have a bad year with the economy? So many of the surveyors I talked to this year have said this wasn't their best year. They have been looking for ways to increase their business through a combination of cutting back on expenses, taking on extra work (sometimes in other areas) and doing more business promotion. With any hope, the coming season will be more successful. Until that time, it is important to let your professional organization be a partner in your coming success.

This fall, you will be getting your membership renewals for the coming year. The membership dues have remained the same for many years and it is still one of the best values; about \$12 per month for Corporate members, a little under \$7 for Associate and retired members, free for students. Your PLSO leadership knows that students' introduction to the organization is one of the best ways to help them in their careers and to help them become engaged in PLSO when they become licensed.

One of the key questions asked in the recent PLSO survey was: Would you recommend PLSO to a colleague?

The results of this question are the most important to the organization. Being willing to recommend your professional association to a colleague is a great vote of confidence in your organization. As of press time, the survey said that over 80% of the respondents would be likely or very likely to recommend PLSO to a colleague. Less than 5% would be unlikely. The rest were somewhere in the middle.

What do these statistics tell us? For those who are likely or very likely to recommend PLSO to a colleague, we can assume that the organization is meeting their needs. From research and comments we learn that this includes social and educational needs. Of concern are those members who would not recommend PLSO. It is impossible to please everyone, and while the numbers are small, the PLSO staff and leadership are committed to take care of any issue that a member has.

If you are interested in helping advise PLSO on its membership development projects, please let the PLSO office know at [office@plso.org](mailto:office@plso.org) or email Shaun Fidler at [spf@lanpacific.com](mailto:spf@lanpacific.com). ◉



## Save the Date

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**Salem Conference Center, Salem**

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# PLSO Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

## June 19, 2010—Sunriver, Oregon

### ATTENDEES

#### Officers

Chair	Tim Fassbender
Chair-Elect	John Mathews
Past Chair	Gary Johnston
Executive Secretary	Mary Louise VanNatta

#### Board Members

##### CENTRAL (1)

Scott Freshwaters, President  
Parneli Perkins, President-Elect

##### MIDWEST (2)

Renee Clough, President  
Jeremy Sherer, President-Elect

##### PIONEER (3)

Joe Ferguson, President  
Lee Spurgeon, President-Elect

##### ROGUE RIVER (4)

Stephan Barott, President-Elect

##### SOUTH CENTRAL (5)

Mason Marker, President  
Allen Hart, President-Elect

##### SOUTHWEST (6)

Walter White, President

##### UMPQUA (7)

Randy Smith, President

##### WILLAMETTE (8)

Past Chair, Gary Johnston (alt. for Jack Burrell)

##### BLUE MOUNTAIN (9)

Bob Butler, President  
Michael Posada, President-Elect

#### Committee Chairs

EGAC: Gary Anderson

Legislative: Scott Freshwaters

WestFed: Greg Crites

Conference: Tim Kent

Geocache/OSBEELS: Dan Linscheid

Professional Practices: Bob Neathamer

#### Guests

State Rep. Gene Whisnant (Dist 053)

Jean Ferguson

#### Absent

Jack Burrell

Craig Claassen

Russ Dodge

Lee MacDonald

Ron Quimby

### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am by Chair Tim Fassbender. Welcome and introductions were made.

#### Review and Approve Agenda

The agenda was reviewed and approved.

**Change in agenda:** Guest Speaker, Representative Gene Whisnant was in attendance. He is running for his fifth term from District 53 in the Sunriver area. He facilitated getting ten bills passed last session. He asked PLSO to help him understand the proposed legislation it supports. He thanked Scott Freshwaters for introducing him to PLSO.

### CHANGE IN AGENDA ORDER

#### Legislative Report—

Freshwaters provided a legislative report. The committee met June 18 from 1–4. The committee discussed: Right of Entry, Title search, and the Corner Preservation Fee. The committee voted against pursuing the Lien law. Instead they decided to promote an educational program on writing a better contract. Also a modification to the term “monumentation” in 209.250 was discussed. Perkins asked who will police this process? Linscheid said we can’t police it the way it is now because people say they are not setting a “permanent monument.” A discussion about how the proposal would benefit the profession was held. Mathews brought up the expectation of expertise in the profession. Freshwaters said Fred VanNatta provided an update on the board reorganization and he has not seen any move to take OSBEELS and put it in another governing body. Rep. Whisnant suggested our bills become a committee bill and they will have a

better chance. Johnston reminded the Board to contact their legislators in order to introduce PLSO and bring surveying concerns to them.

#### Minutes of the April 24, 2010 Meeting

Minutes of the April 24, 2010 were discussed. VanNatta presented the minutes.

MOTION: Linscheid moved, Clough seconded the minutes be accepted as presented. Motion passed.

### REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

- VanNatta reported that the total assets as of May 31, 2010 were \$137,559.78
- There are 714 members with membership increasing about one per week.
- The PLSO office, Shaun Fidler and others are working on a membership survey.
- Committees are being monitored.
- Statewide press releases were sent out on TwiST and Trig-Star.
- Staff continues work updating social media sites and has finished up distributing the BLM manuals.

### REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Fassbender reported that they videotaped the FEMA workshop. How much credit members would get for online training should be reviewed. Sherer said we should not place cost burdens on the chapter and to make sure that we don’t discourage people from going to the workshops. Linscheid said there are a lot of PDH violations. Fassbender will have more details about it at the next meeting. Kent expressed concerns about videotaping, reminding the board that we must obtain permission from the speakers. Ferguson said many people

*Continues on page 8*

don't go to seminars or do self study (however, many do attend seminars regardless of PDH credits). Neathamer and Linscheid reminded the board about how few "self study" PDHs can be claimed toward license renewal (OAR 820-010-0635).

*Tim's Blog:* He received many emails on his blog. There are some concerns on how the GIS community is representing the profession. A discussion about GIS ensued.

## REPORT FROM THE CHAIR-ELECT

Matthews reported that Joel Smith from Chemeketa is resigning his position. CCC will be phasing out their technology program and they will offer second year classes just this year and that will be it. Smith told Matthews that he is adamant about providing a program in the Valley as a means for recruiting new people to the profession. OIT will be expanding to the Wilsonville campus. Neathamer said PLSO needs to express support for OIT in this effort. A discussion about school programs was held. This will be an intricate process. Anderson was disappointed to hear Smith's news. He would have liked to have known this was coming. It was unfortunate that we weren't more engaged with this school so we were aware of the decision. Barrot commented that Umpqua has a lot of students.

## CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Deferred due to time constraints.

## BUDGET

Johnston reported we are backsliding a little, but are in good financial shape. We were reminded that most of PLSO's income is received between November and January. Johnston asked the Chapters to begin considering what they want in their upcoming budget. Kent asked if there is an expected amount to make for the conference? We have netted 52k one year and 30k another. Johnston would

like to see at least \$30k in earnings from the conference. He also would like to see the cost kept low enough that we could attract more people. The conference budget for 2010 is \$133k and the expenses last year were \$102k.

## LUNCH AND PRESENTATION

Our presenter was Liz Taylor, Events Coordinator for Sunriver Resort. Members of the board who chose to attend toured the conference facilities.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

Johnston provided an update on plan areas:

- *Inspire Members.* We should continue to make personal contact with potential members. We can share meeting information on the PLSO website as well as with the local newspaper. We can incorporate social events with meetings.
- *Conduct Outreach.* Perform outreach during career days and job fairs, TrigStar, partnership with the Boy Scouts, booths at trade shows and speaking at conferences.
- *Advance Legislative Agenda.* Develop a list of legislative proposals for 2011, coordinate with stakeholders, obtain consensus, and prioritize.
- *Foster Excellence.* Support surveying programs at community college, share problems with members at chapter meetings.

## NEW BUSINESS

**Membership development—** Fassbender wants a fall meeting theme to be "Bring an Associate to the Chapter Meeting Month."

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Scholarship—

Hart said they are waiting for the packets and information. Johnston noted that Ferguson has been acquiring donations from the Pioneer members. Ferguson commented that he should have a report for the board available by the next BOD meeting.

### Twist—

Kent reported that Twist has been postponed. We had 20 paid registrations promised, but had only 7 registered. PLSO will do more to promote this valuable program including getting the information up in fall 2010 for the 2011 program.

### Trig-Star—

Ferguson reported we were down in schools but maintained about the same number of students tested as in previous years (230). Our state champion has taken the national test and we will know the results in July. We need to catch the teachers much earlier. Next year we will have everything ready to go in the fall, but chapter members are needed to support and administer the program.

### EGAC—

Anderson reported he is still pleased with what we are doing through this committee. Scholarship opportunities are available for students. He provided a printed synopsis of some of the scholarships offered for Geomatics students. He met with VanNatta to talk about other ways we can outreach to the community.

**Legislative—**Report provided earlier.

### PLSO Liaison to OSBEELS

- Anderson noted that you should respond to the OSBEELS board quickly if you get a notice. Also keep track of your classes and PDHs.
- Of the 35 eligible to sit for the exam, 32 showed up and 14 passed.
- There was a notice from the Dept. of Revenue that OSBEELS sent out letters that people were compliant with the Oregon Tax Codes. Some discussion ensued about the apparent fiscal irresponsibility of this mailing.

**Webmaster—**Parsons was not present.

### Membership—

VanNatta proposed to do a survey of members online. We will also be doing some calls of members—so called

“how are we doing” calls. Ferguson, Anderson, Johnston, Barott and R. Smith said they would help.

#### **Professional Practice—**

Neathamer shared comments earlier.

#### **NSPS—**

Tolbert was not in attendance. The question about why people weren't enrolling as NSPS members was asked. Cost was one factor. Posada said that some companies do not want to pay for NSPS, plus PLSO and other state association dues. Concerns about the loss of a national voice were shared by Kent.

#### **WFPS—**

Crites said the most important issue facing our profession at the moment is the withdrawal of NSPS from ACSM. The marketing study that was done is on the ACSM website and everyone should read it. The railroad monumentation bill is one example of the huge fights we face in the national arena, a battle that individual state societies could not mount without national help. WestFed is concerned about what this means. Posada asked if merging has been a discussion. Crites said it has, but they do a lot of different activities, although some efficiency may be found. Kent asked “who is going to be our national voice?” It is premature to weigh in on it now, until we see the committee reports from NSPS due out in September. Crites believes it is important that we have national representation, but we need to care about what it will look like.

#### **OSBEELS Liaison to PLSO—**

Linscheid noted that of the 60 law enforcement cases only 16% were surveyors and most were related to PDHs. Five were right of entry. OSBEELS needs a new person on the board to replace Sue Laslow. They lost one of the three full time investigators. They are looking at reducing fees.

#### **PLSO Liaison to OACES—**

Freshwaters said the OACES conference was held this week.

Boundary line agreements were discussed. He said Chuck Pearson noted that in Portland, Metro requires tracts in lieu of easements.

**Oregon GPS Users Group (OGUG)—** John Minor was not in attendance, but they had their meeting on June 18. It was well attended. Discussions revolved around LiDAR, GIS, the ACSM/NSPS split, and updates to OPUS.

**Constitution and Bylaws—**No report. Bacon was not in attendance.

**Publication/Oregon Surveyor—** Oregon Surveyor articles are due Monday, June 21.

#### **Other—**

Fassbender anticipated presenting proposed changes to part of the operating manual at the September Board of Directors meeting.

#### **ADJOURN PLSO BOARD MEETING**

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:58 pm ◊

### **PLSO Conference Committee Meeting**

Thursday, October 14, 6–7:30 pm

WHERE: The PPI Group Office, 6015 NE 80th Ave, Portland

### **Survey Research—What, Where, and How**

Friday, October 15, 8am–12pm

WHERE: Pilgrim Lutheran Church, 4244 SE 91st Ave, Portland

### **PLSO Board Meeting**

Saturday, October 23, 2010, 10:00 am

WHERE: Location to be determined

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

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# ACSM Government Affairs Update

## August 2010

### Surveying Services For LOMAS To Be Reimbursed By The Feds

#### Fairness in Flood Mapping Act of 2010

Legislation was recently introduced in the House that would provide reimbursement for certain services relating to an approved letter of map amendment. The Bill is entitled the Fairness in Flood Mapping Act of 2010; its number is H.R. 5722. The relevant section of the Act is as follows:

#### SEC. 2. REIMBURSEMENT RELATING TO AN APPROVED LETTER OF MAP AMENDMENT.

(a) In General—If an eligible entity incurs expenses for the services of a covered service provider in obtaining a letter of map amendment that is approved by the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency in whole or in part, the Administrator shall reimburse the eligible entity for the expenses incurred with respect to the part approved.

(b) Applicability—Expenses incurred by an eligible entity for the services of a covered service provider in obtaining a letter of map amendment that is approved by the Administrator in whole or in part shall be eligible for reimbursement under subsection.

(i) if the approval was obtained during fiscal year 2003 or thereafter.

(c) Definitions—In this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) COMMUNITY—The term ‘community’ has the meaning given that term in section 59.1 of title 44, Code of Federal Regulations.

(2) COVERED SERVICE PROVIDER—The term ‘covered service provider’ means a surveyor, engineer, or other similar service provider, but not a legal service provider.

(3) ELIGIBLE ENTITY—The term ‘eligible entity’ means an owner of property, a lessee of property, or a community.

(4) LETTER OF MAP AMENDMENT—The term ‘letter of map amendment’ means a letter of map amendment as described in part 70 of title 44, Code of Federal Regulations.

The sponsor of the bill is Congressman Steve Driehaus, a Democrat from the 1st District of Ohio. We strongly support this bill and will work closely with Congressman Driehaus any way we can to pass the legislation. Look for more information on the Fairness in Flood Mapping Act in future Government Affairs Updates

#### Lobby Day Congressional Visits

By now many of you should have made your Lobby Day visits, or at least scheduled your visits with your Congressional Representative and Senator. If you already had your meetings, send us an e-mail to let us know how they went. You can download the materials you need from the ACSM website at [www.acsm.net](http://www.acsm.net)

#### USGS Coalition News

The USGS Coalition met recently and there were several key issues discussed. The Coalition will host a Congressional Reception and Exhibition on Sept. 20 on Capitol Hill. During the Reception, the Coalition will present its Leadership Award to Congressman Mike Simpson (R-ID) and Congressman Jim Moran

(D-VA) for their work in support of the USGS. Past recipients of the award include Rep. Norman Dicks in 2008 and Sen. Lisa Murkowski in 2009.

In other USGS news, the USGS is offering several opportunities for Coalition members to work with the USGS on outreach programs. For example, the USGS is looking for Coalition member co-sponsorship of its *USGS Congressional Briefing Series*. Other proposals by the USGS include: joint press release with Coalition members, articles written by USGS staff in Coalition member organizations’ in-house publications, and tours of the USGS headquarters for the Coalition or Coalition members.

#### STEM Coalition News

ACSM has recently joined the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education Coalition and we signed on to a letter from the Coalition to Senators in support of the America COMPETES Act. The America COMPETES Act, which already passed the House, bolsters America’s competitiveness by strengthening the science, technology, engineering and math education fields at all levels. It gives support for basic research and development programs in the STEM fields in elementary and high school.

Also, as part of STEM Education Coalition, we join over 1,000 diverse groups representing all sectors of the technological workforce – from knowledge workers, to educators, to scientists, engineers, and technicians. Through our affiliation with the Coalition, we hope to be able to secure Trig-Star funding by finding broad support for the funding with STEM Coalition members who can, in turn, help us gain support in Congress. ◉

### JUST IN CASE—

Reports of incidents involving “surveyor impersonators and questions/suggestions related to the issue can be sent to:

Curt Sumner, LS  
Executive Director, NSPS  
[curtis.sumner@acsm.net](mailto:curtis.sumner@acsm.net)

# 2011 Scholarship Auction Support

## *We need your donations!*

■ Gary Johnston

The 2011 scholarship auction will be held on January 20, the second day of PLSO's annual conference in Salem. Even though January seems a long way off, it is time to begin assembling items for this event. Whether contributions are large or small, they all bring needed support to this important fundraising effort.

Auction items will be organized and displayed on January 19—the first day of the conference. The silent auction will be conducted throughout the day and evening on January 20. The entertaining oral auction will be conducted for a limited number of unique items that night after dinner. The evening will conclude with the award of some large raffle prizes—but you must be present to win.

At the 2010 conference, PLSO members provided about 80 items for the silent and oral auctions. Total auction proceeds in 2010 added \$9,570 to the PLSO scholarship fund. It was an excellent effort during what was a difficult financial year. Scholarship awards for the 2010–2011 school year were not available at this writing, but be assured that several surveying students are receiving key financial assistance thanks to the generosity of the PLSO membership.

Items for the 2011 auction can be provided by individuals, or through the combined generosity of several people. Businesses or services may be donated or provided at cost. Chapters might consider pooling donations from many individuals into one larger gift.

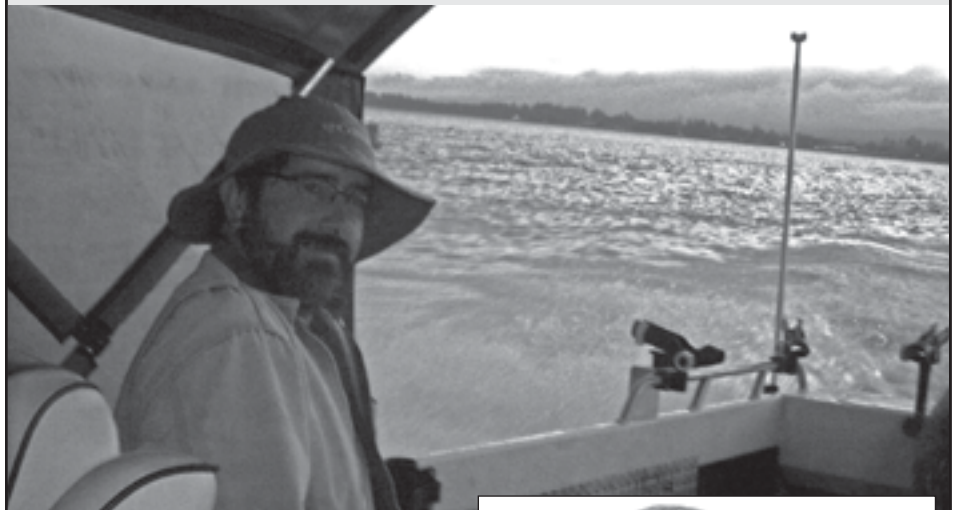
There is really no limit to what might be a good auction item. Popular examples from past events have included vacation or travel packages, art, quilts, woodcrafts, gift baskets, sporting goods, kids games, electronics items, survey supplies, maps and

historic survey equipment. Some of the best contributions result from their unique or creative character, whether handmade or uncovered in a specialty shop.

Start looking for ideas that are unique to your chapter area or suit your talents. Help make this a memorable auction event to support the education of future surveyors. ◉

## 2010 Scholarship Auction Item Greatly Enjoyed by Winners

■ Gary Anderson



These photos are from the 2010 PLSO Scholarship Auction Fishing Excursion donated by Westlake Consultants, Inc. Pat Gaylord (pictured above) purchased the trip and his son, Mitchell (pictured right), caught our one “keeper” Coho. We put in at Chinook Landing on the Columbia River and fished from Tongue Point to Ilwaco, WA. Len Schelsky (Principal at Westlake Consultants) was our guide/captain, Bruce (Len's friend) was the deckhand and I, it seems, was just along for the boat ride (having only caught a tiny/spiny Sculpin and some sunshine). Mitchell also snagged and landed a crab (which was too small to keep). A great time was had by all. ◉



# Enough Is Enough

■ Paula Abbott

*Disclaimer: The Editor of The Oregon Surveyor is innocent. I pled my case for the families related to Professional Land Surveyors for this article.*

Each day the mail is opened with trepidation. The radio is listened to with more announcements that are similar to those in the mail. It does not matter whether it is from the public sector or private sector the results are the same...“This is to inform you that your taxes, your fees, your rates, your registration, your membership, etc. will be increased.”

All sorts of semantics are used to say you will pay more. Why the big jumps in taxes, doubled fees, rate increases such as 14–16 percent and more? We are told their revenue is down and to maintain normal services the increases are necessary. It is so easy for impacted families to figure out the formula, but there is seemingly no connection by those making the increases.

Hello! It goes like this, your revenue/income/profits are down because the people who supplied it are not working, companies have closed, and there are those with limited work hours or wages, and so on, and as a result you have less money. The response, charge more to these people. These are the ones who no longer have the funds (known as money). It is no longer business as usual; “normal” is gone. The public is sent the messages of spending more to help the economy. There is no money for them to spend.

Those making the increases are “killing the goose.” They are oblivious to the true reality. This seems especially true when the reported message of semantics to everyone from the media is the economy has bottomed out, the slow down/recession is over, and everything is coming up roses. What they did not tell us is that the roses are like those on the former *Adam’s Family* television series—no flowers or leaves, just stems and thorns.

We also have a difficult time matching the media accounts with the daily personal experiences as more companies close and friends, family, and others experience the true results. We wonder why they are discussing the use of plastic bags, bike paths, fish (except to eat them), etc., and think these people must be on another planet.

I was told the other day that the rates have to go up because of inflation. What? Deflation is real, and so I asked for clarity on the inflation, and they could not answer. There are economic principles that do not change. We do not break the principles, the principles break us. In a market economy there is supply and demand. It is quite simple, particularly at this time of year, with the growing and harvesting that is occurring. If there are green beans available, and the price per pound is good, I will purchase them and preserve them. However, if the price is too high, I will not purchase them. If enough people do not buy, either the price will come down to a level where people start buying or the farmer will have excess unpurchased beans. If there are numerous people wanting to buy and the supply becomes limited the farmer may raise the price and if the people want the product badly enough they will purchase it.

Now however, the economic scenario is different than I have ever seen for the public or private sectors. The beans are sitting unpurchased. The frustrated farmer raises his prices, telling the buyer they must purchase the beans at the increased level even though in reality the buyer does not have the means to do so. This is happening to the buyer in almost every facet of their lives. An exception is that PLSO has some reasonable opportunities to take advantage of.

Meanwhile, more mail arrives, asking to participate in a \$600 conference here, a \$200 fee here, etc. We wonder, who are these people that are doing business as usual? Sending their wares to people in an industry heavily impacted by a down market (that means non-growth economy), who are trying to feed their families, keep the lights on, and so forth. Let’s see, \$600 may buy six months of electricity, or six trips to the grocery store, help pay a mortgage payment, and the list goes on. Priorities...home or conference is the question. Well, that is easy to answer,—the conference material goes in the recycling, while thinking, “What can they teach me when they are that out of touch?”

However, they cannot help others the way I can. For example, a woman needs help with her lawn mowing; what is easy for one can be difficult for another. In appreciation for receiving the help, she gives a bag of her fresh green beans to the family. An older man needs help cutting a tree in his yard. This is easy to respond to—give him the needed assistance in appreciation for being a WWII veteran in the Atlantic Campaign (he actually deserves much more for his sacrifices).

We can be the blessing to the hurting families in multiple ways. Often things that are really simple are a big encouragement. Be the blessing. We all have numerous talents and skills to offer. An added blessing for us is that often these contacts later turn into recommendations for jobs. We also need to respond to those in the public and private sectors, who continue to peddle their snake oil of increases, telling them it is past time for them to wake up to reality, stop killing the goose, stifling Yankee ingenuity, and that enough is enough. ◊



# Letter to the Editor

■ Robert G. Dean, President, Dean Surveying, Inc.

I read with interest and approval the article in June/July 2010 *Oregon Surveyor* by Gary R. Kent, PS entitled, “Understanding and Applying the Written Intentions of the Parties in Boundary Resolutions.” I was especially pleased to read in his opening statements the following: “In order to resolve boundaries with confidence and integrity, the surveyor must have a strong knowledge of the boundary and case law in his or her state.” I could not agree more.

However, let me offer a word of caution to any members who may have occasion to survey in Washington from time to time. There has been a landmark ruling by the Washington Supreme Court in *Berg v. Hudesman* 115 Wn. 2d 657 (1990) to the effect that extrinsic evidence is always admissible to explain the writings regardless of the presence of an ambiguity. They said, “Determination of the intent of the contracting parties is to be accomplished by viewing the contract as a whole, the subject matter and objective of the contract, all the circumstances surrounding the making of the contract, the subsequent acts and conduct of the parties to the contract, and the reasonableness of respective interpretations advocated by the parties...We thus reject the theory that ambiguity in the meaning of contract language must exist before evidence of the surrounding circumstances is admissible. Cases to the contrary are overruled.” They called this principle of interpretation the “Context Rule.”

Berg is still the law in Washington and it has been upheld and refined and applied to various aspects of the law, including to boundaries. Surveyors are affected also. No longer is it enough to apply the description to

the ground —now, we must also apply the ground to the description.

To many of us, this comes as a relief. We no longer have to fret that the title company took all references to our monuments out of our description before recording the deed. We can comfortably apply the context rule in the spirit of ORS 93.310 (6). When the description refers to a map, and that reference is inconsistent with other particulars, it controls them, if it appears that the parties acted with reference to the map. That is, if it appears that the parties acted with reference to the uncalled for monuments then the uncalled for monuments will control over the bearings and distances cited in the recorded deed.

This is intuitive to many of us who are aware that very few people out

there know how to read a deed description. How often has a client handed you his deed and said something like, “This is my deed. It has all the latitudes and longitudes on it but I don’t have a GPS.”? Don’t tell me that property owner acted on his land with reference to his deed description.

Gary Kent also alluded to various ways surveyor organizations have kept their members apprized of changes in case law. In Washington, you can research case law on line at [legalwa.org](http://legalwa.org). You can also go to <https://www.lswa.org/store1.php> and purchase the outstanding new book by Jerry Broadus, *Washington State Common Law of Surveys and Property Boundaries*.

Jerry inscribed my copy, “Survey forever!” ◊

## New MobileMapper 100 GPS Unit from Ashtech

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Ashtech has just released a brand new, state-of-the art GPS unit, the MobileMapper 100. It can provide 50 centimeter accuracy with WAAS, nearly decimeter accuracy with CORS post processing, and centimeter accuracy with the RTK option. All this with either the built-in antenna or an external antenna.

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# Eleven Years of Annual Surveying Student-Corporate Dinners

Thank you  
PLSO Willamette  
Chapter!

■ *Michael J. Olsen, Assistant Professor, Oregon State University, michael.olsen@oregonstate.edu*  
*Robert J. Schultz, Professor, Oregon State University, robert.schultz@oregonstate.edu*

On May 17, 2010, the Willamette Chapter of PLSO held their 11th annual Student Surveying Appreciation dinner meeting at Oregon State University. The event was well attended by 47 students (18 from OSU Civil and Construction Engineering, 22 from OSU Forestry Engineering and 7 from Chemeketa Community College) and 26 professionals (15 private sector, 4 government, 7 academic), for a total of 73 people, which is a typical attendance for this event. In the past, students from the Linn Benton Community College have also attended.

meeting was conducted by Jack Burrell, Chapter President. This was a great opportunity to expose the students to a professional meeting in how matters were conducted and what was of interest in the profession.

Following the meeting, William Baierski, PLS, CWRE who is the survey team leader for Engineering and Design for the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department discussed several land surveying projects he has been involved with as a professional surveyor. The students were excited to see the opportunities that he has had to work in some of the most beautiful, remote parts in Oregon. He also discussed



Photos by Nancy Brickman

Special thanks for continual support should go to David Evans and Associates (DEA) with program suggestions and student door prizes and to the PPI group for equipment support and student door prizes. Student dinner costs covered by the PLSO Willamette Chapter have exceeded \$10,000. This is a great effort at OSU for surveying student recruitment and retention.

The evening began with a demonstration by the PPI group, where students were able to learn about GPS and other surveying equipment. Booths were setup advertising available educational programs in surveying, which included the OIT ABET-ASAC Geomatics program. Next, students and professionals were able to converse during dinner. This gave the students a unique opportunity to ask about geomatics in an informal setting. It also gave the professionals an opportunity to meet students for recruiting purposes and to tell them about their exciting experiences. After dinner, the business portion of the

the importance of the profession and the critical role of surveying in managing our state's natural resources.

At the close of the meeting, door prizes were given through a raffle to the students. These prizes included gift cards to several stores and Garmin GPS navigation systems.

On behalf of the students, we would like to again thank the Willamette Chapter of PLSO for their dedication to the students and recruiting the best and most-eager minds to the field of surveying. The meeting was a great opportunity for students to get exposed to the various opportunities available in the surveying field. It provided the students with the opportunity to talk informally with professionals who could give them unique insights into their experiences as they have progressed in their careers. We appreciate this and other outreach efforts and encourage other chapters to look for similar opportunities to help recruit more students to our field. ◉

# PLSO Midwest Chapter Celebrates Orville Caswell 50th PLS Anniversary

■ *Tim Fassbender, PLS*

On a beautiful Tuesday afternoon in July, the Midwest Chapter of PLSO celebrated Orville Caswell's 50th anniversary of holding a Professional Land Surveyors License. Under the guise of a chapter summer barbecue, chapter members, spouses and guests gathered to surprise Orv.

Orv was instrumental in organizing the Midwest chapter. A year after PLSO was formed in the Portland area, Orv met with the founders to begin the formation of the Midwest Chapter. Prior to that, Orv would talk or call other surveyors practicing in the area when he had questions or concerns. In those days surveyors reluctantly talked to each other. Orv began to break that barrier so when PLSO came to town the chapter naturally took off.

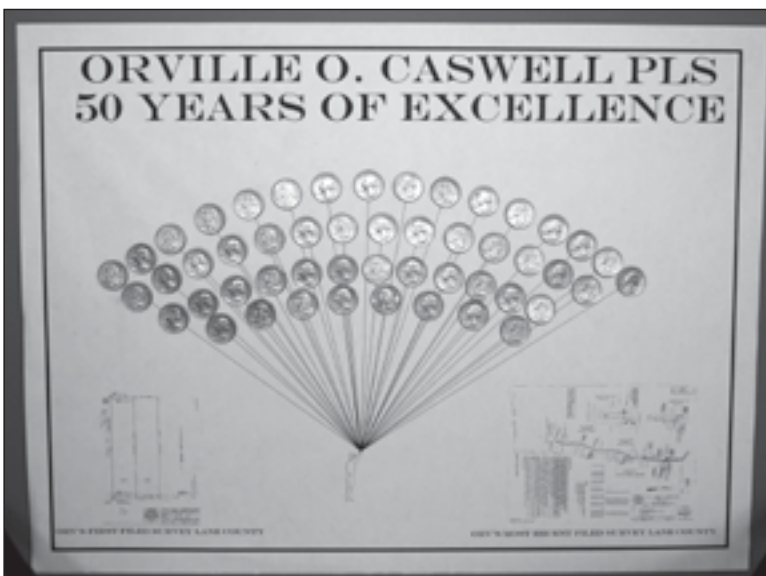
Orv served as chapter president then moved onto Board of Directors Chair for PLSO. The work Orv has done behind the scenes is important to many. He constantly strives to help fellow surveyors with their survey problems. He was instrumental in the Midwest Chapter in developing programs with local survey problems to help all of us understand each other's problem solving techniques. When I was striving to become a licensed surveyor, these programs were invaluable in understanding that there is more than one way to come to the correct answer. Orv also taught us that you may never have enough research or look



for enough evidence to solve that pesky boundary problem. That is what a true professional is all about, never leave anything unanswered or to chance.

I had the great pleasure to work for Orv when I came out of OIT. Those years are still the best years of my survey career. We can go to school and obtain a degree but nothing can give us an education in surveying like working for a surveyor who cares about their profession and passes on their knowledge to the next generation. Orv also said to me when working on a project that he would feed out enough rope to see how far I could go but would pull on it before I fell off the cliff. To this day he is still doing that for the Midwest chapter. At a chapter meeting we can discuss issues until we feel we have a handle on it, then Orv will speak up and make the most obvious statement that will make you slap yourself and ask, "Why didn't we think of that?" That is what experience brings to the organization and why we can't afford not to listen to it.

We are very fortunate in PLSO to have many of these professionals among us. Our greatest challenge is to try to fill their shoes for the generation following us. Orville Caswell has made us in the Midwest Chapter better surveyors and we thank him for that. PLSO is a better organization because we have many Orville Caswells in it and we will always owe them a great thank you. ◉







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# Making your Voice Heard

■ *Emilee Baker*

In the last month, the PLSO leadership has made efforts to reach out to our members through surveys and phone calls. PLSO wants to find out what our organization can do to meet your needs. Volunteers have been in the process of making member calls to reach our members directly for any comments and/or concerns.

PLSO volunteer leaders worked this summer to reach as many members as they could by phone; we appreciate everyone's participation in our member calls. If they were not able to reach you by phone we always encourage our members to contact the PLSO offices or your local chapter leaders for concerns and suggestions to get the most out of your membership.

We have also posted a brief online survey for us to get a better grasp of who our members are and what is important to you. We have had a great response so far to our online survey and have generated some constructive

feedback which we appreciate and will use to strengthen our association.

This brief survey covers a wide range of topics, from basic demographic information, to more in-depth questions about what matters to you. Here is a glimpse of some of our results so far.

The statistics, as of mid-August, show that 74% of our licensed surveyors (that participated in the online survey) have been a surveyor for over six years, 82% are a "C" (corporate) class member, and that the majority (39.7%) of the members are between the ages of 56 and 65.

- 96% of the surveyors have participated in an Annual Conference.
- 90.1% have participated in a local chapter meeting.
- 71% participate in local chapter educational events and workshops.

When we asked members what their primary reason for joining PLSO was, our most common answers included:

- "To stay current with the surveying profession in Oregon"
- "Professional networking, information, helping to promote survey related ideas"
- "Continuing Education"
- "Professional Development"
- "Earning PDHs through the PLSO conference"

When asked: "How likely you would be to recommend membership in PLSO to a colleague?" over 50% of the members surveyed said they would be "Very Likely" to recommend a membership.

We would like our organization to provide optimum value to our members and hope to see 100% of our members recommending our organization to others. However we cannot change this unless we get your feedback! So do us a favor and make your voice heard, take a few minutes to fill out our online survey and help us make the most of your membership. ☺

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# Laying the Groundwork

■ Bill Miller—Reprinted with permission from the author

## Lt. Henry Abbot had great news for his parents.

“I am assigned to duty on the Pacific Rail Road Survey,” he wrote. “This is, I suppose, the best possible place I could be in. It will connect my name with this most important public work.”

Barely three months after graduating from West Point military academy as a topographical engineer in 1854, 23-year-old Abbot was clutching his dream assignment.

He would be second in command of an expedition that would determine the best route for a railroad line from the Sacramento Valley of California to Oregon’s Columbia River.

It was part of a grand plan to build a transcontinental railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean.

At the end of his journey, he would prepare a detailed report to Congress. In addition to precise elevation and topographic data, the expedition would keep detailed records of weather, plants, animals and any American Indians encountered.

“Of course I have to be very careful and also I have to exercise considerable judgment,” said Abbot, “As this report depends in part on me.”

For months, he read everything he could find on California and the Oregon Territory. He practiced navigation techniques and explored anything he thought might help him on the expedition.

In May 1855, Abbot sailed from New York harbor for Panama, sharing “the best stateroom on board” with his commander, Lt. Robert Williamson. After crossing the Isthmus, they boarded the steamship “*Golden Gate*” which arrived in San Francisco on the afternoon of May 30.

It took 11 days for the survey party of 27 men, riding a pack train and pulling a single cart that carried scientific instruments to arrive at Ft. Reading, near today’s Redding, Calif. The fort is named for Maj. Pierson Reading, a California volunteer during the war with Mexico, and not for the city’s namesake, Benjamin Redding.

“The trip has been enjoyable, so far,” wrote Abbot, although the scorching sun was enough to “melt a tin soldier.”

Entering Oregon, south of Klamath Lake, the party broke off into detachments and for the next five months, Abbot explored the territory from the Klamath Basin, through Central Oregon, the Cascade Mountains, and the Rogue and Willamette Valleys.

Lt. Williamson became ill less than two months into Oregon. He left the expedition and from Ft. Vancouver, returned by ship to San Francisco. This may have been the beginning of the tuberculosis that would ultimately kill him.

Abbot, now in command, safely rode south through the Rogue Valley in October. It was a dangerous time because the last of the Rogue River Indian Wars was underway.

In his diary, descriptions of the area are sparse.

*“Good road to Ft. Lane. ... Level road to the Mt. House (near Ashland) ... Traces of Indian. Hills like Benicia [Calif.]. Few trees.”*

When he returned to Washington, Lt. Williamson was still so ill, it was Abbot who prepared both of their reports.

Abbot would have a distinguished career, rising to the rank of brigadier general before dying at age 96, but it was his very first assignment that has engraved his name in history.

Abbot will always be remembered for the railroad survey—what he called, “this most important public work.” ◊

---

Writer Bill Miller lives in Shady Cove. Reach him at [newsmiller@yahoo.com](mailto:newsmiller@yahoo.com).

### IF YOU GO

The Williamson-Abbot report was published in 1857 and became the basis for subsequent surveys in Western and Central Oregon. The expedition’s data was an important reference for David Loring in 1883. His survey through the Rogue Valley was the final piece that would complete the railroad from Portland to near the California border, and eventually beyond, although the tunnel through the Siskiyou, recommended by Abbot, proved to be impractical. Amtrak’s route through Klamath Falls and north through the Willamette Pass to Eugene and on to Portland, also lies in the footsteps of the Williamson-Abbot Expedition. There are a thousand places to go. Just remember, when your tires bounce over the tracks, Henry Abbot got there first.

# Knife Sharpening

■ Bryce Towsley—Reprinted from the April 2009 issue of American Hunter

A knife is one of the most important tools a hunter takes into the woods. But, any knife is only as good as its edge. A dull knife will make any job difficult and frustrating and can actually be dangerous. One of the most useful skills any hunter can develop is the ability to properly sharpen a hunting knife.

The key to sharpening a knife is in maintaining a constant angle between the knife and the abrasive sharpening medium. Some craftsmen can do this by hand on a bench stone, but for the most part sharpening a knife free-hand is a lost art. The best approach is to use a kit that includes a clamp that will hold the knife blade and guide the matching sharpening stone to maintain a constant angle. Among the best known are Lansky, Gatco and DMT.

Clamp the knife securely in the fixture and do not remove it until the sharpening job is complete. Select the angle best suited for the way the knife will be used. The higher the angle number the stronger the edge will be, while the lower the number, the longer the knife will stay sharp. For most hunting knives, about 20 to 25 degrees is a good choice.

The first step is to recut the blade's angle. This is building the foundation for the sharpening job and must be done correctly for a good outcome.

Select the coarsest stone available and using plenty of pressure, stroke it on the knife blade, moving the stone in and out perpendicular to the blade's edge. Move up and down the blade edge to cover the full length. Overlap your work as you move

along the blade by about a third of the stone's width.

Continue until you can feel a defined burr on the other side of the knife edge. This burr must be along the entire length of the blade. This indicates that the stone is contacting the edge of the blade and has rolled it over. Use the sensitive tip of your finger to feel the burr, but only move your finger ninety degrees to the blade edge. Never run your finger along the burr as that will result in blood leaking out and you saying bad words in front of your kids.

Once you have a defined burr along the entire blade, the angle is properly cut on that side of the knife. Flip the knife over and work the other side until you raise a burr. Remember; never remove the knife from the fixture before the job is complete.



After both edge angles are properly cut, switch to a medium grit stone. Work the side with the burr first, starting with moderate pressure and stroking the stone ninety degrees to the edge, moving up and down the blade while overlapping the area you are working. Each "pass" will include many strokes of the stone, perhaps a hundred or more. Work one side, then the other, using the same pressure. As you complete the second side and flip the knife over to work the side you started on, decrease the pressure. Continue this for at least three complete passes on each side, ending with light pressure on the stone as you polish the edge.

The type of steel will determine how many strokes and passes are needed. Carbon steel sharpens easily while some types of stainless steel are much tougher and may require several passes.

The hardness of steel is measured with the Rockwell scale and the higher the number, the harder the steel. The harder the steel, the more resistant it is to the abrasive and the longer it will take to sharpen the knife.

Now switch to a fine grit stone and repeat for at least three passes on each side, decreasing the pressure with each pass.

It is possible to create a sharp edge with a "fine" grit stone, but for the best edge switch to an ultra fine stone and continue. Remember, you are working a very delicate edge on the knife blade so use some finesse and a light touch for the final passes. The goal is to simply polish the blade to a very fine edge. If you use too much pressure it can roll

the edge over, which will ruin your sharpening job.

I test the sharpness by shaving the hair on my arm. But, the politically correct and lawyer-approved method is to slice the edge of a sheet of paper.

I believe that a knife is truly sharp when it will cause the hair on my arm to “pop” off as the edge contacts it and the knife will shave my arm smooth in one pass. But, again, I can’t recommend this test.

One trick to shortcut the end process is to move the ultra fine stone up in the clamp to the next higher angle. For example, if you are sharpening at 20 degrees, move to the 25 degree slot. Then polish the edge carefully with the ultra fine stone. This “dual angle” approach results in a faster edge that is very sharp. But use a delicate touch, as it becomes even easier to roll the edge and ruin all your work when you increase the angle.

When using the knife in the field the edge will become dull. It can be brought back with a steel or ceramic sharpener. But each time you do that it moves the edge back a little further into the angle and sooner or later you will find it very difficult to get the knife sharp. That’s when it’s time to clamp the knife in a fixture and repeat this process. If you use the same fixture and clamp the knife in the same place it should be fast and easy to recut the angle. But, you must again re-cut until you have the burr on the opposite side before switching to the next grit. There are no shortcuts on this, the most important step. ◉

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Visit Bryce Towsley’s web site at [www.brycetowsley.com](http://www.brycetowsley.com)

## Ax Sharpening

■ Bryce Towsley—Reprinted from the April 2009 issue of American Hunter

**A** hunter should also know how to sharpen an ax. This is usually done freehand rather than with a fixture. It’s best to clamp the ax in a vise, but you can get by with laying the ax on a table with the cutting edge hanging over.

A very dull ax or one with a lot of dings and chips in the edge may require that you use a file to repair the edge. Always try to maintain the original angle. Watch how the color changes in the steel as you file. That indicates where you are removing metal and if the angle is correct.

Work both sides of the blade equally and be cautious that one side does not have a different angle than the other. The width of the angled edge on the blade is an indicator of the sharpening angle. Make sure that the width of the angle is the same for both sides and that it is constant for the length of the edge.

Then switch to a bench stone and use plenty of oil. Use the coarse side of the stone first and work the stone back and forth, ninety degrees to the edge. Move along the edge, overlapping by one third of the stone until you have worked the entire length of the ax blade. Watch the color and texture of the metal on the angle to insure that you are maintaining the correct angle that you are honing the leading edge of the blade. To see the edge you must wipe it clean with a paper towel, as the slurry of oil and grit will mask your work. Do this often to be certain that you are maintaining the correct angle.

After several passes with decreasing pressure with the course grit, switch to the fine grit side of the stone and continue to work both sides of the blade edge with decreasing pressure until the ax is sharp.

I remember an old advertisement for a sharpening tool that showed a bearded man shaving with an ax. It might work for him, but I value my throat too much to try that. I use a piece of paper and cut from the edge to judge the sharpness of the blade. ◉





# The Life and Times of Ellen Frieda Mason

## Ellen Frieda Mason, 1918–2009

*Our columnist, Bert Mason, Jr., takes a break from telling us his stories to highlight the life of his wife, Ellen. Behind all Bert's great surveying tales and discoveries, Ellen was there to support his work and blaze some trails of her own.*



Ellen Frieda Nelson was born on September 6, 1918 at Mrs. Jordan's Rooming House in Lone, Oregon.

After a brief stay, she moved to the family ranch where she lived with her father, Alfred H. Nelson, her Mother, Berth Viola Nelson, her brothers Norman Ira and Alfred H. Jr. Nelson, and her sister, Clara. Her home was about seven miles northwest of the town of Lexington, and about seven miles northeast of the City of Lone.

There, she developed rapidly, and at the age of about five years, evinced a strong propensity toward the study of science, especially to the study of the physics of falling bodies. Her study involved a series of experiments, only one of which was performed. It involved dropping her kitten, upside down, from a second-story window of the big farm house to learn if it could really turn over in the air, as she had been informed. Since she could not see the actual impact from her upstairs window, she assumed, from the fact that the animal had streaked full-speed toward its home in the distant barn that her informant had been correct, and further experiment was unnecessary. This decision was further augmented by the following lecture from her brother, Norman.

While her brothers and Clara attended the one-room country school, a mile down the dusty county

road, Ellen was denied that experience about which to brag in later years. She was home-schooled by her mother, who held a teacher's certificate from the State of Oregon.

When Norman and Clara reached high school age, all four children were enrolled in school at Lone. There was no bus service, so now the kids had a car, which was a great attraction among the student body.

Ellen was a good student, receiving high marks in everything on her report cards—especially in spelling. In fact, her marks were so good that she was almost immediately skipped from the fourth grade to the fifth grade. Her spelling was good enough that she failed winning the county spelling contest by only one word—a word which she had spelled correctly, then erased and spelled it incorrectly.

In high school she was easily the most popular girl. She was a very pretty girl—clean, neat, well dressed, modest, and friendly to everyone. She loved to play and tease, and flirt a little; she was a fun person. She also was on the women's basketball team during all four years. When she played basketball, she was no wall flower; she was a tiger at side center, missing several games because of broken nose and broken collarbone.

After graduation from high school, she attended one year at Oregon State College, majoring in Home Economics. She felt that she was wasting her time; she felt that she knew more about preparing chickens and other foods for the pot than the teacher did.

The following year, she transferred to the University of Oregon where she apparently majored in attending football games, street dancing, serpentine, partying and socializing. Upon further recollection, she mentioned a course in advertising and another in golf.

Except for returning to Eastern Oregon during wheat harvest to cook and drive a bulk truck from harvester to elevators, she moved to Oak Grove, where she lived with her parents and worked as a waitress at the old Oak Grove Diner on McLaughlin Boulevard. It has been suspected that she may have made the move because Oak Grove was 200 miles closer to the Meier & Frank downtown store than was Lexington.

At the onset of war with Japan in 1941, she went to work at the Kaiser shipyard at Vancouver. She worked there as an Office Assistant in the Personnel Office of the Assembly Division until January of 1944.

In February of 1944, she was inducted into the US Marine Corps Women's Reserve and went to Camp LeJeune, North Carolina for boot training and Motor Transport School. It is suspected that she was given Motor Transport because she was the only girl in her platoon who could double-clutch and down-shift a loaded truck on a down-hill grade. Contrary to most reports of Marine boot training, she apparently found it a hoot. She was apparently in excellent physical condition before she arrived there.

She requested duty on the West Coast and was transferred to Santa Barbara Marine Corps Air Station, considered the Country Club of the Marine Corps. There, she drove just about every type of vehicle that the Marine Corps owned (excepting tanks). At the time, she complained, as did all good Marines; but in later years her service seemed to have been the highlight of her life. She never tired

of telling about her adventures at Santa Barbara. There were the usual dances and beach parties and moonlight walks on the strand; but there was also the work.

There was the time when she drove a dump truck, filled with fresh garbage, to the dump. On top of the load were six prisoners from the brig to assist in the unloading. With the garbage safely unloaded, the prisoners climbed back in the bed and hammered "GO" on the cab. Ellen hit the throttle and let in the clutch. The bed shot skyward, dumping the prisoners in the pile of wet garbage because she had forgot to fasten the latch.

Then there was the time when she drove a huge van filled with new furniture to the Colonel's residence. The Col.'s house sat well below the street, and the driveway was very steep. (They did not worry about snow and ice in Santa Barbara.) The prisoners who had stowed the new furniture in the garage, had some concern about a little girl's ability to get that big van safely to the street; so "Seabags" was elected to drive it out, even though Ellen was the only person authorized to drive.

Anyhow, the prisoners climbed back into the van. The climb would be a steep one, so Seabags put it in low-low gear, revved the engine to a whine and let in the clutch. The van seemed not to be climbing the hill, so he stepped even harder on the throttle. The van shot back through the double garage doors and over the pile of beautifully finished and milled kindling left behind them. Seabags, unfamiliar with the transmission had put it in reverse instead of low-low. Ellen never did say who told the Colonel.

And then there were the wonderful clothing shops and restaurants in Santa Barbara; it was truly a wonderful place to serve one's country.

She was discharged from the Marines in February of 1946 and returned to Oregon and to meet again with Bert Mason Jr. after eleven long years apart. They became engaged and were married in a garden wedding at her parents' home in Oak Grove on June 15, 1947.

*Continues on page 24*

In September of that year they drove to Syracuse, New York, where her husband was enrolled in the New York School of Forestry at Syracuse University.

At Syracuse, they spent the winter in a trailer park owned by the University and maintained for married students' housing. The trailer was an 8 x 24-foot Navy surplus unit, to which they added a 4 by 8-foot storm porch for storage and protection from the wind. The trailer was equipped with a single cold-water faucet at the tiny sink, a three-burner kerosene cook stove with an excellent oven, a kerosene space heater, and a davenport which folded down to a double bed. The dining table and its cushions could be made into a single bed. The bathroom, toilets, laundry and a small grocery store were combined into a small building about fifty yards from her trailer. Any "night soil" had to be carried to the communal building for disposal.

At times, during the winter, the wind would come howling down out of Canada to sweep across Lake Erie to dump its load of sub-zero cold upon the helpless trailers; but Ellen didn't worry—she had a brand new electric blanket, received as a wedding present six months before. But Ellen complained about the cold. It was attempted to explain to her that the electric blanket was not a heating pad; it was intended only to replace the body heat lost through the covers. But Ellen was cold, and she did not give a hoot in Hades what the blanket was intended for; she wanted heat! On the following morning, even her companion admitted that he had felt a little uncomfortable because she was not providing enough heat to keep him warm. The blanket was defective. It was immediately boxed up and sent back to the factory at nearby Ithaca, NY. Fortunately, unseasonably warm weather prevailed for several weeks until the blanket was returned. That night, the temperature dropped to well below zero; but she cuddled in superb warmth, even though the unwired foot of the blanket was frozen to the trailer wall and the pillows were frozen to the other wall, which bore a quarter-inch thick coat of frost above her head.

Ellen had been filled with apprehension all the way to Syracuse, about the prospect of living in a trailer. On arrival, she had scrubbed the place from floor to ceiling and wall to wall; she had painted the kitchen, and had hung pictures, and had made monkscloth

bedspread, curtains and seat covers trimmed with strings of little red balls—all by hand for we had no sewing machine. She created a home of her own; and, in a letter to her mother-in-law she declared that she had never been so happy in her life.

In June 1948 they returned to Oak Grove via a tour of Quebec, Montreal, Boston, New York City, Thomas Jefferson's home, thence straight West to Yellowstone Park and home. There, her husband resumed his employment with a Portland engineering firm as photogrammetrist and forester, and she commenced her career as investment councilor. Driving up River Road, she spied a little white house sitting all alone in a large cow pasture. She exclaimed, "Oh, that's the house I want!" They bought it on three quarters of an acre for \$10,000. Next, she partook of a free breakfast at Homewoods on the Willamette, and put down \$200 on an apartment; they ate free Sunday brunches on that for about thirteen years. She saw an ad in the paper for a four-place airplane at Troutdale for \$5,000. They bought that, flew it for fifteen years and sold it for \$9,500. She saw an ad in the paper for a half-acre lot on an island in the San Juan Islands for \$5,000. They bought it, built a two-bedroom cabin on it, occupied it for 31 years, and sold it in 2007 for enough to keep them at Homewoods for the rest of their lives (if they did not live too long). And she lived in the little white house on the hill for 62 years.

In February of 1949, Frieda Elizabeth made her appearance, to be followed in October of 1951 by Christopher Kendall Bertell. Actually, he had been named Kendall Bertell before his birth, but when it dawned on her that he had been born on Columbus Day, the Chris was added to his birth certificate to the relief of all concerned. Ellen was a busy little beaver for the next 17 years, when they both flew the coop.

In his work, Bert was frequently out of town, sometimes for several weeks at a time. During these periods, Ellen became the business manager. The research and field work were managed by Peter Neketin, a Registered Land Surveyor who was with us for many years. She handled the business side of the operation far more efficiently and effectively than did her husband—he was much more interested in doing the work than in getting paid for it. She revised



.....  
*She handled the business side of the operation far more efficiently and effectively than did her husband—he was much more interested in doing the work than in getting paid for it.*  
.....

the bill collecting system. In reviewing the books, she found two long-overdue bills directed to subdivision developers. She pulled the invoices from the file and drove to the office of each of them. There, she listened impatiently to their tales of woe. One was leaving on the following day, taking his son to Eastern Europe to see the old family home. The other, coincidentally, was also leaving on the following day, taking his family to Hawaii for a vacation. Coincidentally, each of these trips would have to be canceled if the bills were to be paid. When each was out of tears, she carried on a brief one-way conversation with him—she could be quite convincing when the tiger within her was unleashed. She stomped out of each office with a check in hand; and we never had a problem collecting from either developer again.

Among Ellen's happiest days were the summer weekends at Center Island when she hosted the Annual Flyout of the Mulino Chapter of the Oregon Pilots Association. As many as eight planes, carrying as many as 24 people came for a weekend of corned beef, fresh crabs, clams, potluck and Ellen's specialty-giant cinnamon rolls. It was exhausting, but she loved it.

In 2008, she suffered a number of unexplainable falls. After each, extensive tests indicated that she was in excellent physical condition; but her doctor recommended that she move to Homewoods. Here,

the falls continued until she moved to Haven Corner, a beautiful foster home on the hill at Oregon City. There, despite the best of care, her condition continued to deteriorate until she passed to her reward on October 11, 2009.

She asked that her body be cremated and that her ashes be interred in the Nelson family plot at Lexington, Oregon. ◊

### *Disaster Relief Appeal*

## **NSPS Foundation Disaster Relief Help Available**

With the recent weather-related disasters across the United States, the NSPS Foundation stands ready to provide assistance to our fellow surveyors when disasters strike.

Disaster Relief applications are being accepted, whether the applicant is an NSPS member or not. The primary requirement is that the geographic area where the applicant resides, must have been designated a disaster area by a federal, state, or local government authority. Those requesting funds will need to submit a copy of the declaration of disaster along with the request for funds. If no government authority declares an emergency, other supporting evidence of the loss may be considered.

Completed applications and supporting documents will be accepted by regular mail, fax (240-632-1321) or email.

Please feel free to contact Bob Banzhoff with any questions at 240-632-9716 (extension 113) or [bob.banzhoff@acsm.net](mailto:bob.banzhoff@acsm.net).

## **Help Build Up the NSPS Foundation Disaster Relief Fund**

Donations of any amount are being accepted to the fund as we try to build it back up after disbursements are made. You can make checks payable to the NSPS Foundation Disaster Relief Fund and mail to NSPS headquarters. Thank you in advance for your support of the Foundation and your fellow surveyors.

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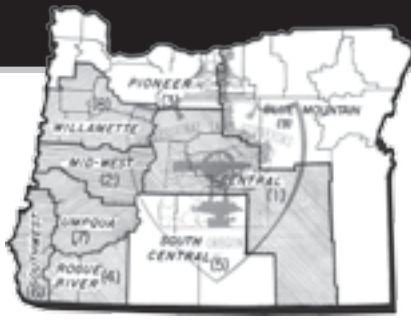
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# News from the Chapters

## Umpqua #7

■ Brent Knapp, Secretary/Treasurer

### May 10, 2010

**Chapter President:** Randy Smith  
**Location:** Elmer's Restaurant, Roseburg  
**Called to Order:** 6:30 pm | **Adjourn:** 8:15 pm  
**Attendees:** 12 members, 5 students, 1 guest

#### Approval of Minutes

April's minutes were approved. Motion to approve coming from Ron Quimby and a second from Romey Ware.

#### Reports

**Legislative:** The Legislative report was given. There is a proposal to take Right of Entry (ROE) out of ORS 672 and place it in ORS 209. The legality of notification by letter was discussed. Romey Ware mentioned that notification by a letter would be sufficient notification, but would not be mandatory. Corner preservation fees were discussed. A proposal of a \$10 increase is feasible due to the strained economy. The role of the Surveyor and machine-controlled construction was discussed. Boundary Line Agreements stirred the chapter into a great discussion. Leonard Herzstein suggested arranging a meeting with the Planning Department in order to educate and work together.

**PLSO Board Meeting:** Randy gave a report from the State Board meeting:

- All of the new BLM Manuals are sold out. The Board broke even with sales.
- Corporate membership was discussed as well as the tier membership system.
- The proposal for an outreach coordinator was discussed.
- Vic Banks gave a presentation to the board on his success as LSAW's Outreach.
- State Chair Tim Fassbender has a blog.
- Committee reports will be available via SKYPE.
- Chemeketa CC is working on starting a Surveying degree program.

- Denny Demeyer, Washington Surveyor, will float a canoe down the Columbia River to commemorate the 1811 route by the David Thompson Columbia Brigade. A presentation was made to the Board. Randy passed around flyers from that presentation to the Chapter. The Board passed a motion to donate \$1000 to DeMeyer.
- Quimby gave mention about OACES' concern of Low Distortion Position. Also, a discussion of property being conveyed on the face of a plat is occurring with the County Surveyors.

#### News from the Chapter

- Nancy Stockhoff gave a report on the Harold Stockhoff Scholarship Golf Tournament. It was a great success.
- A thank you to all of the participants in the 3rd annual UCC Engineering and Surveying evening was given.
- Leonard discussed Douglas High School's participation in Trig-Star and thanked the UCC students for their help.
- Romey motioned for a summer recess with regular meetings resuming in September. All in favor.

#### Presentation

Ken Hoffine gave a Law Enforcement committee report. A current case that is before the Board was discussed and Hoffine provided copies of the case and supporting documents, together with maps, for the chapter. As always, the Chapter thoroughly enjoyed the presentation and thanked Ken for his work at the Board. ☺

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## NSPS Foundation



# NSPS



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Each marker is a beautifully engraved, solid 4" diameter bronze marker. It is personalized with the name of the surveyor being honored, with the latitude and longitude of his/her resting point. It is available with a high polish or brushed finish.

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got good coordinates  
on it. Can you tell me  
what kind of tree it is?

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**LONG 122° 54' 18" W**

Answer on page 1

