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2004 - 2005**

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Field Notes

Volume V, Issue IV

June 2004

Enhance your Learning

by Patrick Hannon, C.S.T. II
STC President

Every position is necessary: Everyone from the Administrative Assistant to the Payroll Clerk, from the Professional Surveyor to the Survey Technician.

When I started in the surveying business, I fell into it just as I've heard from many others. And like many others, I continue to work in this field. I didn't choose to be a Survey Technician, but I did choose to continue working in the profession, making it my career choice.

Whether or not that decision was made consciously, any Survey Technician who has received this newsletter has made the decision to make surveying a career. As any professional will lament, a career is a continual learning process. A career in surveying is no different.

We all may have our own ways of accomplishing any given task. As one who views the roll of the Survey Technician as a career, I constantly look for ways to do my tasks more effectively. I know in speaking to other Survey Technicians, the way I accomplish certain tasks are more effective than how others accomplish those tasks. Other Technicians have better methods than me in other areas, and I am still learning. This is why most people network with their peers – better ideas.

The Professional Surveyors of the MSPS created the Society in order to network with each other. This process made them better in their own careers. The Society supports this idea for Technicians as well. That is why the

Experiences

by Jim Fink, C.S.T. III

I was recently asked to do an estimate for a survey job outside of what I consider our normal geographic area. Our geographic area seems to have been expanding recently, but this estimate was way out of that area. It involved a crew flying to an island, getting on another plane and flying to another island, and then hiring someone to boat or fly them to a less inhabited third island where they would spend part of the next six weeks. We probably won't get this job, just because of travel costs involved with sending a crew that far from home, but most of

MSPS created the Survey Technician Council. The members of the MSPS value their Survey Technicians and want us to learn and grow within our own careers.

In order to take advantage of this opportunity, we as Technicians need to work together to provide programs and methods to enhance our learning experience. I've heard from a number of Technicians that they "know everything they need to know". That may be true for some individuals who work in a limited capacity. With that train of thought, those individuals will be passed over and left to work in the same limited capacity until the growing demands of technology put them out of a job.

We are here to provide you with the opportunity for growth. This is the mission of the STC. This is why we exist. The quality of what we can provide is dependant on the involvement of our members. A dozen people coming out to the business meetings is a great start. Every organization needs to have someone taking care of the business end. But the programs the STC provides depends on much more than just "taking care of business". This is why we need you to get involved.

To get involved, you don't need to be a CST (Certified Survey Technician). You don't need to attend most meetings. You only need to have a desire to get involved. This can be doing research, making calls, arranging locations for meetings or speakers, talking to other Technicians, or creating flyers for our events. You don't need to commit to any length of time longer than you feel comfortable. But we can't do it without your input.

Let's hear from you!

our guys have had fun thinking about it. This would truly be a career making job for the guys involved. By career making, I don't mean that it will move them up on the corporate ladder or anything to that affect, but it will be something they will remember and tell stories about for the rest of their lives.

In the time I've spent in the field, I never had a job quite like that. I have had jobs that I remember fondly, or in some cases not so fondly, that I still talk about every so often. My favorite job to remember happened over a two month period back in 1990. I had only been in surveying for a couple months at the time. We were hired to locate about 80 PLSS corners in northern lower Michigan.

(Continued on page 2)

June Meeting

June 15, 2004

6:00 p.m.

Holiday Inn Express
Fenton, MI**August Meeting**

August 17, 2004

6:00 p.m.

Bass Pro Shops
Auburn Hills, MI

In order to accomplish goals we have set for ourselves, the Board of Directors has proposed adding positions to the Board of Directors and is calling for a vote on the following Amendments to the By-Laws of the Survey Technician Council.

Official Notice to all Associate and Affiliate Members

Your presence is requested and you are officially notified as required by Article VIII of the By-Laws of the Survey Technician Council.

By a unanimous decision of the Board of Directors, two proposals to amend the By-Laws of the Survey Technician Council will be voted on at the regular business meeting on Tuesday, August 17, 2004. The business meeting will start at 6:00 pm. and will be held at the Holiday Inn Express in Fenton.

The first Proposed Amendment is to Article V, Section 1: Directors, item A.). The Proposed Amendment will change the number of Directors elected at large from six (6) to nine (9). If this amendment is passed, the three Directors positions will be available for election this November. The person receiving the most votes will be elected for a three-year term. The person receiving the second highest number of votes will hold office for two years, and the person receiving the third highest number of votes will hold office for one year. After these initial terms, there will be three Director positions available each year, the term of which will be for three years.

The second Proposed Amendment is to Article V, Section 1: Directors, item C.). The Proposed Amendment will add a position to the Board of Directors. This voting position will be that of Immediate Past President.

The Proposed Amendments will be available for review at the meeting. According to the By-Laws, a simple majority of the membership present at the meeting is required for the amendment of the By-Laws.

Experiences

(Continued from page 1)

The survey took place in mid winter, so the snow and the temperatures did not make what I normally consider optimal conditions. To make things interesting we were also using some new fangled form of surveying called GPS.

The thing about GPS back then was apparently there was not a full constellation of satellites up yet. This meant the observations lasted about two hours, and better yet, they took place at night. We did recon during the day to find the corners, check witnesses, and draw a location sketch for the guy going back to that corner later that night. If the corner was in a wooded or brushy area we used 25 foot extendable rods to mount the antenna on. We would tie the rod off with guy lines and use an old theodolite to assure the antenna was centered over the monument. Most of the corners were off the road so we used snowmobiles to get to them. After dinner and a nap we would go back and run GPS observations anywhere from 8 pm until 4 am, depending on the satellite configuration for that night. We'd get a few hours sleep after getting back to the hotel and then do it all over again the next day. I think all of us worked between 70 and 80 hours that first week. Things calmed down after that and we worked it out so we had a daytime recon crew and a nighttime GPS crew.

Other than the magnitude of the job itself, there were a lot of small things that made that job memorable for me. One night I was set on a control point on top of a hill that I had to snowmobile about a mile and half from the truck to get to.

I was about 20 miles from everyone else. We were running two two-hour sessions that night, and I was on that point for both sessions. The temperature was about 5 below so I had a fire going to stay warm. I stayed busy and almost as warm just by gathering fire wood. I had been there about an hour when I heard another snowmobile coming. All kinds of thoughts were going through my head at the time. I was in the middle of nowhere at eight o'clock at night. No one else should have been there. I was standing in the middle of the trail with a load of wood in one arm and an ax in the other hand when the snowmobile came over the hill. You have to picture this, but I'm kind of a big guy and I wear a full beard in the winter. At the time I wore an old Carhartt coat with a hooded sweat jacket. I guess the shock of me standing there was worse for them than it had been for me wondering who was coming. When they saw me they both hollered at the same time and the snowmobile went over on its side. When I realized it was a couple of our guys we all got a laugh out of it. It seems that I had one to many cables in my pack, and one of the guys didn't have his. This was just one of several memories from that job. Maybe future issues will allow time to share some of the others.

I have no doubt that any of us that have spent any amount of time in the field have stories about jobs that we were on we would like to share with others. I love hearing these stories, and I'd be willing to bet many of you would enjoy reading them. If you have a story you'd like to share please put it on paper, or computer, and send or email it to me. We will see that it gets into a future issue of *Field Notes*. What good are experiences like these if your fellow surveyors can't share them with you?

"Field Notes" is published by the Survey Technician Council of the Michigan Society of Professional Surveyors. The views and opinions expressed by individual authors is not necessarily shared by the Publisher. Articles submitted to this newsletter become the property of the Publisher and may be edited to fit space limitations. All inquiries may be submitted to:

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