



# MSPS President's News and Views

Tony A. Blumentritt — August 2010



The July 30, 2010, MSPS Board of Directors meeting was three hours in length. Unfortunately, we had at least eight hours of business to address. Consequently, the board was unable to address all of the agenda items. Some items were postponed until the September meeting.

David Wall, Chair of the Department of Geography; Eric Fuller, Director of the Land Surveying program; and Ahmed Elaksher, the newly employed Director

of the Land Surveying program, visited the Board of Directors meeting and gave an update on the status of the land surveying program at St. Cloud State University (SCSU).

The University believes it needs to reduce the number of faculty by approximately 80 positions to balance its anticipated budget for Fiscal Year 2012 (which begins July 1, 2011). It is anticipated that approximately 33 positions will be reduced by attrition; approximately 30 faculty will accept early retirement; and approximately 20 faculty will need to be laid off. Eric Fuller has been given notice indicating that he will be laid off on May 8, 2011. Ahmed Elaksher may receive a layoff letter, but Mr. Elaksher has been guaranteed employment until May 2012. All programs (majors) were asked to submit documents addressing a number of key issues. The Land Surveying program submitted their report indicating the following:

1. That the program should be evaluated not just on the basis of degree completions, but also on enrollment in program courses.
2. The Land Surveying program is ABET accredited.
3. Current Minnesota licensing rules require a four-year degree and SCSU has the only four-year degree program in the upper Midwest.

4. The Land Surveying program yielded a high pass rate on the FLS and PPS exams.
5. The program has a very strong potential for growth if neighboring states change to a four-year degree requirement.

The SCSU Geography Department is taking a proactive approach to protecting the program, including meeting with the SCSU president, communication with members of the MnSCU Board of Trustees, and communication with state legislators. Other actions may be necessary. MSPS will take an active role in assisting the Geography Department in the communication referenced above. The extent of MSPS involvement is not yet determined. At this point, MSPS will probably be involved in a meeting with the SCSU president. Chris Ambourn, the Minnesota NSPS Governor, has contacted NSPS and apprised them of the situation.

The 2010-2011 MSPS budget draft was presented to the Board of Directors at the July meeting. The budget as presented was balanced, with a projected total income of \$260,550 and projected expenses of \$258,388. All MSPS committee budget requests were considered. The amount allocated for donations was cut from \$12,400 in fiscal year 2009-2010 to \$9,000 in fiscal year 2010-2011.

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For comparison, the total budget for 2009-2010 projected an income of \$267,150.00, and total projected expenses of \$266,366.00.

The MSPS Government Relations Committee presented four proposals for lobbying services to the Board of Directors. The Executive committee and the chair of the Government Relations Committee will evaluate these proposals and conduct interviews until September 9, 2010. The MSPS Board of Directors will select a finalist at the Board meeting on September 10, 2010.

Rod Squires' book on the history of the public land survey in Minnesota, "A Striking Triumph of Geometry over Physical Geography: Vignettes of the Public Land Surveys," was approved for publication. The Board of Directors voted to print 100 copies of the book. The book will sell for \$70 plus shipping and sales tax. The cost of the publication will come from MSPS reserves, and income from book sales will be placed back into reserves until the publication cost is recovered. I believe this book will be a valuable addition to the MSPS library, and I thank Mr. Squires for his efforts in authoring the book. It should be noted that Mr. Squires did not ask for any compensation from MSPS for authoring the book, and all proceeds from the book will go to MSPS. The only cost to MSPS was for publication and editing. Authoring this book was a huge effort on the part of Mr. Squires, and he needs to be congratulated and recognized for his efforts.

I know I have stated this before, but it bears repeating. The level of membership involvement that MSPS enjoys is simply remarkable. When one looks at the number of committee

volunteers, committee chairs, officers, board members, and also at the number of members who have formerly served this organization, it becomes obvious how important this organization is to its members. In my opinion, one of the worst things that can happen to an organization of volunteers is that the officers and committees work in a vacuum without any membership input on the issues which affect the organization. The responsibilities of membership in this organization have not been taken lightly by the membership. For that, all members should be congratulated. After all, this is your organization.

The kiosk at the initial point for the public land survey system in Minnesota is now completed. The initial point site grading was done by the Allamakee County, Iowa, Highway Department and the Houston County, Minnesota, Highway Department. The MSPS Historical Committee built the kiosk and made a replica of the monument originally set at the corner. Congratulations to the Historical Committee on completion of this project.

Finally, my thanks to Chapter 4 for inviting Betty and me to their annual fishing trip on Lake Winnibigoshish. Even though the weather was a bit on the sketchy side, it was great getting out on the water, and actually catching fish. The dinner that followed was delicious. It was a pleasure visiting with the members regarding their concerns on MSPS issues.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this article, please do not hesitate to contact me at [tonyb@blumentritt.biz](mailto:tonyb@blumentritt.biz).

## From the MSPS Offices...

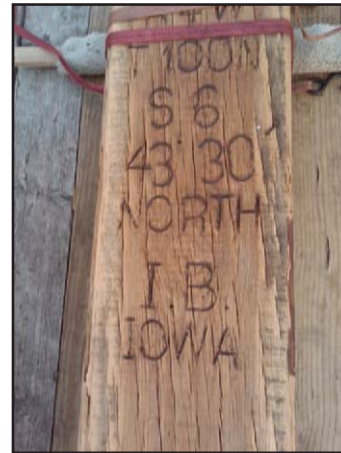
Eric Ewald, CAE, Executive Director

### Executive Director's Update

The MSPS Summer Meeting, held July 29-30 at Treasure Island Resort and Casino, was a fantastic event! There were interesting presentations from Pete Jenkins and Jay Wittstock on the "CFedS Training Experience," a detailed legislative update from Government Relations Committee Chair Rick Morey, MnDOT's Right of Way GIS Mapping by Mike Merrill and George Thibault of MNDOT, and an informative presentation from Lisa Hanni, Goodhue County Surveyor and State Licensing Board Member, regarding licensure issues including responsible charge, ethics and definitions.

In addition to the informative presentations we had a lot of fun at the networking activities and we got a sneak peek at the elements of the wayside pull-out at the site of the Initial Point of the 5th Principal Meridian Survey. Past President Ed

Otto will have a full report on this exciting project in the next issue of the *Minnesota Surveyor*. He and other volunteers were leaving from the Summer Meeting to install the monument and the interpretive signage. Below are a couple photos of the kiosk and the monument consisting of an oak that Ed felled, had milled and then he scribed it by hand. My compliments to Chapter 6 for a job very well done!



## Government Relations Committee Survey

Please note that the Government Relations Committee is conducting a survey regarding legislative issues for 2011. This was emailed out earlier; many completed hard-copy surveys onsite at the Summer Meeting. If you have not yet completed the survey, please complete it at: <http://www.mnsurveyor.com/displayemailforms.cfm?emailformnbr=143973>

The items on the survey represent those topics that the Committee is aware of and believes are of interest and importance to you. This is your chance to let the Committee know if they “got it right,” as well as to inform them of other potential issues that the Committee may have overlooked or not been aware of. As always, the Committee relies upon your guidance to know how to best serve you. Thanks for taking the time to be involved in your profession and its future.

## MSPS Roster

The 2010-2011 MSPS Member Roster will be available for viewing/download in late August. We will send a notice to all members letting them know when it is complete and will include a link to the document.

## Welcome, New Member:

Please join us in welcoming Abram Niemela of Meyer-Rohlin Land Services as our newest Training member!

## Upcoming Events

### December 10, 2010

MSPS Winter Workshop, Doubletree Hotel Minneapolis

### January 26-28, 2011

MSPS Annual Meeting, Saint Cloud, MN: Now accepting proposals for presentations for the 2011 Annual Meeting. Click here to submit your proposal: <http://www.mnsurveyor.com/displayemailforms.cfm?emailformnbr=140615>.

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