

Focal Point

A publication of the Sacramento Chapter
of the California Lands Surveyors Association



April 2023

Guest Speaker for March:

Carl C.de Baca will present:
A Cattle Prodded Cadastral Survey
How a dead cow led to a township breakdown

President's Message

Justin Lambert, PLS
2023 Sacramento Chapter President

Happy Spring Everybody!

I hope you were all able to make it home from the conference safely. Personally, I enjoyed the conference and left feeling enlightened, excited, and interested in researching a few new things. I hope you all did as well.

It was great chatting with old friends and new, all who share a common interest in surveying. The scholarship auction was a lot of fun as always, with a couple of donations from Sacramento chapter members netting top dollar. Annette Hovorka donated a beautiful handmade quilt while Kevin Akin donated a gorgeous handmade violin as well. The best part is that all of the proceeds, over \$3,000 from those two items alone, are going towards funding CLSA student scholarships.

Thank you, Annette and Kevin. Both donations were extremely generous.

I'm looking forward to seeing you all at the next chapter meeting along with the chapter BBQ in the next month or two. More details on that to follow as we make further progress in getting it planned.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justin Lambert". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Justin Lambert, PLS

Ask a Title Officer with Tom Bollinger of Fidelity Title

Q: Can you explain what a chain of title is?

A Chain of Title is a report that lists the sequence of historical transfers of title for a specified period. The report can go as far back in time to the creation of the property.

This report is prepared by a qualified title examiner, who reviews the chain of title in the public records. The examiner will list all the transfer deeds for the period requested. The report starts with the oldest deed and comes forward to the end date of the period requested.

A Chain of Title can reveal many things, such as:

It can discover if a past party still has an interest in the subject property.

A close review of the legal description could expose an inaccurate description.

It can establish priority of liens.

It can reveal any deed restrictions.

It can show easements that are listed in the legal description.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me. Tom Bolinger, Vice President of Fidelity National Title, (916) 952-9800.

Editor's Message

This month we offer a brief roundup of the happenings at the recent CLSA / NALS conference in Reno, This excellent conference took place at the Silver Legacy Resort and Casino and was very well attended, indicating a hunger for education and fellowship after the Covid years!

We also introduce a new feature called The Rant Zone, allowing local grouches an opportunity to opine on things that affect surveyors and surveying hereabouts. Anonymity is assured, if the writer is shy or prefers the 'guerilla campaign' method of communication. If you've got a rant, we've got a space for it. Please keep it relevant and non-personal!

And to close out we have a touching note of thanks from the recipient of the Roy Minnick Memorial Scholarship.

-ED.

RECAP OF THE 2023 CLSA/NALS CONFERENCE

Silver Legacy – Reno, NV March 25-28, 2023

The 2023 CLSA-NALS Conference was held during National Surveyors Week and ran from Saturday, March 25th thru Tuesday, March 28th at the Silver Legacy Resort and Casino in Reno. It was very well attended this year with over 400 paid registrations and over 500 total attendees when speakers and vendors are included. The Pre-conference workshops on Saturday featured two separate tracks, the first was an all day class on Public Lands given by Glen Thurow and counted as continuing education credit for CFEDS certificate holders. The second track was a half day of Civil3D and half day of Trimble Business Center . The next two days were a blur of excellent classes and workshops with speakers such as Dennis Mouland, Steve Parrish, Jerry Mahun, Logan Campbell and Gary Kent. There was an excellent track that ran throughout the conference for those studying to take the upcoming LS exam. The last day which ran until noon, was entirely taken up with a mock trial put on by Gary Kent and featured surveyors playing the plaintiff, defendant, the two attorneys and the two surveyors. These are always worth sticking around for!

The scholarship auction did very well with three of the biggest items being a ukulele made by Channel Islands Chapter member and past CLSA President Matt Vernon, a violin made by our own chapter member Kevin Akin, and a quilt made by our own chapter member and past CLSA President Annette Hovorka. Those three items together fetched almost \$6000, if memory serves. Overall, the live auction reeled in more than \$27,000 to be split between the two states based on who donated what. The silent auction, which saw the largest collection of books in this attendee's memory, made over \$10K as well. This is great news for the students in both states!

Next year, the conference will again be a joint affair between our two states and will be held in Las Vegas. Hope to see you there!

Membership Summary

Currently the Sacramento Chapter has 40 members as follows:

- 24 LS
- 1 RCE
- 1 LS (non Primary Ch.)
- 8 LSIT
- 1 Affiliate
- 4 Students

In Attendance March Meeting

Justin Lambert	Rich Aviles
Annette Hovorka	Russell R. Smith
Warren Smith	Dan Beever
Mike Quartaroli	Aundrea Tirapele
Michael Chiara	Adam Foster
Bob MacKenzie	Mark Counts
Sean Davis	
Jim White	
Curt Burfield	

New Feature – The Rant Zone (Part One)

Inflation

by Aiden N. Abettin

Is it bad? Is it good? Is it inevitable? What does it mean to me? What does it mean to us surveyors? There are a lot of jokes out there on the topic of inflation. Traditionally that's how we cope with stress, make a joke, because it's better to laugh than to cry. Thank goodness humor hasn't been canceled yet, at least not totally. Some chestnuts I found on the internet: "You'll have to work like a dog, just to live like one." "Q: Why are there so many jokes about inflation these days? A: Because demand has increased following a period of low interest." "Inflation in the US is so bad right now that... Exxon-Mobil laid off 25 Congressmen." "You know what they say - despite the cost of living, it remains popular."

And so on, ad infinitum. But seriously, inflation is real problem for all of us when it creeps out of nowhere and strikes before the entire economy has a chance to adjust to the new reality. Example: the new union rates just went into effect. They were a larger than normal increase because of...gulp, inflation. So, fielding a crew now costs more than last year, but that's okay, the firm will raise their rates to compensate. Side benefit, the firm's non-union employees get a cost of living (COL) raise that's better than last couple of years. But now we union firms might be too expensive for some clients' tastes. That's just the nature of the business. But wait, there's more...

Ignoring for a moment the fact that annualized inflation rates are 8% while the raises were in the neighborhood of 5%, what's the problem? Well, the state agencies are the problem, or at least a big part of it. Where to start? That they sign you to multi-year contracts with no escalation year-to-year? That they tell you what the maximum profit is that you can make on their projects? That they take no notice of the giant lurch upward in inflation and the subsequent rate increase your company has had to implement? Or maybe it's their systematic desire to squeeze what little profit you did make right out of you by making the project drag on to the bitter end before finally accepting your deliverables. What about their capped per diem limits that are 120% of ... homelessness?

I sound bitter, don't I? Like maybe I used the topic of inflation as a ruse to take a shot at state agencies and their isolated, out-of-touch contract departments and indifferent, unsympathetic bureaucratic project managers. Okay, you got me. Guilty as charged. But really, the two concepts - runaway inflation and bureaucratic chicanery, are related. How can CalTrans or DWR require prevailing wages, which are essentially based on current union wages, and then not recognize that these go up every year, while your three-year contract has either no provision for escalation or escalation rates that are purely laughable? In what world does that make sense? Do they think that if they hold the line, rates will go back down someday? Of course, these policies are gestated in the state that wants to tax you for unrealized capital gains and wants to tax people who don't even live here anymore. Welcome to Fantasy Island.



Photo provided by Brock Adams

New Feature – The Rant Zone (Part Two)

The Worst Surveyor?

by S.N. Founde

Can you narrow it down to just one? How many poor surveys and maps have you seen? How many this month, or week or even today? How many poor surveyors have you worked with? Is it that there are really that many poor surveyors out there or is it something else? Is it an overload of work with not enough skilled practitioners and lax internal reviews going out? Is it a low percentage of skilled practitioners within the profession? It's certainly a combination of all these things and more. Are we our own worst enemy? This doesn't even include those bottom feeders that cut corners, do shoddy work and break the law because "it's not in the budget" or the conundrum of "business decision" vs "survey decision". Just recently I was shown a video of a FNG trying to pound in a rebar. My first reaction was how pathetic it was, but on reflection I realized this apprentice was being ridiculed rather than taught. I've found myself exceptionally harsh while reviewing maps and also on the receiving end of such reviews as well. How do you take reviews of your maps? Myself, not usually very well, especially initially with the thought that the reviewer is seemingly incompetent, inflexible or doesn't understand difference between technical and stylistic. I have to read through them more than once in most cases to take them constructively. On the flip side of each of these, I've seen genuinely poor maps get submitted, some of which even recorded. These maps may contain incomplete or confusing drafting, lack of information, poor boundary determination or a combination of one or more of them. I will also admit that I recently confused a reviewer with a basis of bearing that was simply copied from a previous survey and neglected to be updated. At the same time, sorting the nitpick or style comments from the technical review comments shouldn't be necessary either. Are these issues a result of poor instruction and training, lack of qualified or experienced individuals or both? In my experience, it's the least experienced individuals doing the lion's share of the drafting and reviewing with minimal supervision and training time available. How can these issues be solved? There seems to be a general disdain and distrust of our fellow surveyors, all present company excluded of course. I think the solution starts with an attitude of "building up" rather than "tearing down" each other within the profession. Public agency, private practice, submitter, reviewer, FSU, OSU, hard knocks, field grunt, office puke, all need to work towards making the profession more professional, more consistent and most importantly more valuable to the public and other professions. Really, there are plenty of engineers and architects to rip apart before we need to go at each other.



Photo provided by Matt Stringer PLS

What are They Doing Over There?

"The state-specific exams are deemed not necessary as their purpose is to make applicants aware of Nevada's laws and regulations related to professional practice."

"The Board voted to remove the requirement of 1.(b) and replace with an attestation of review of Chapter 625 of NRS and NAC in the application for licensure to expedite the licensure process for endorsement/comity licensure applicants."

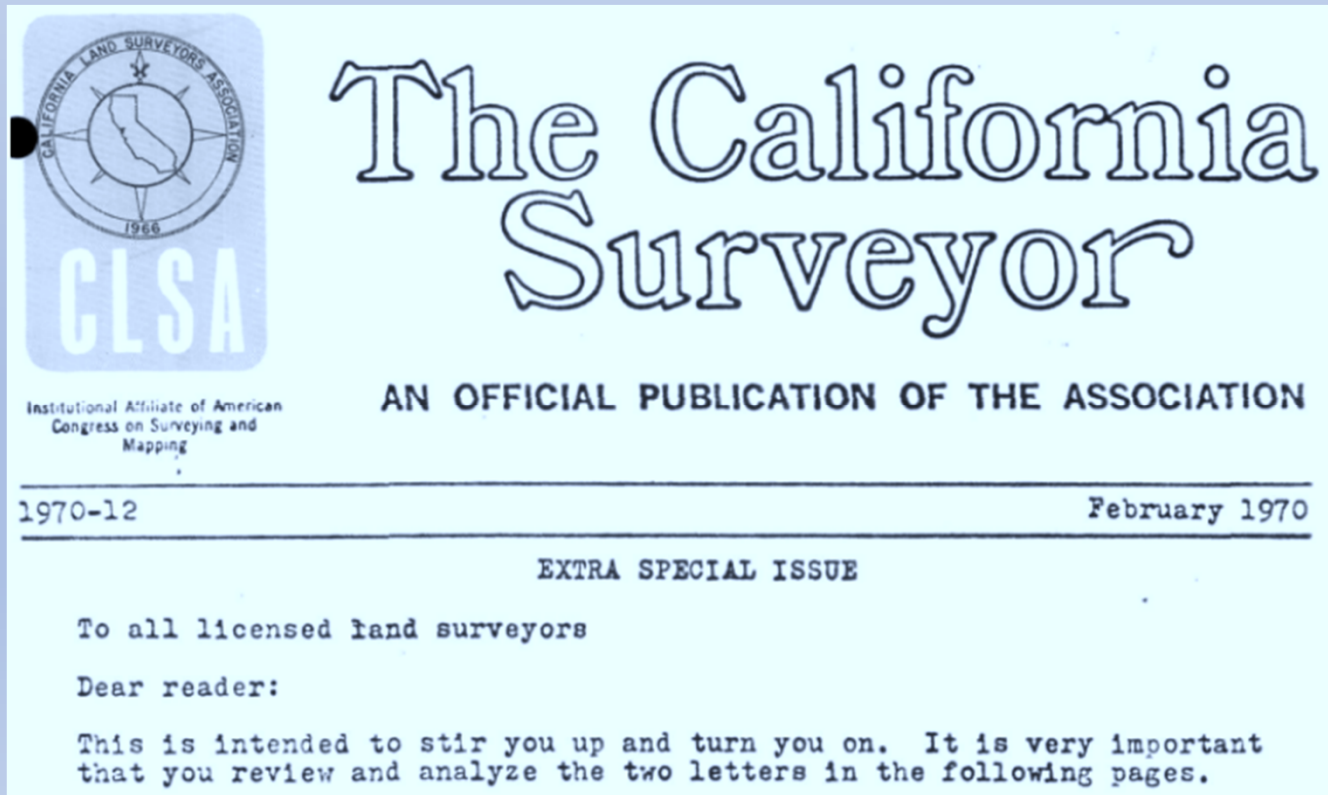
Okay – what the hell did I just read?

New Nevada Governor Joe Lombardo issued two proclamations in January that in effect, stopped every licensing board in its tracks. Each agency, department, board and commission must justify its continued existence by showing cause for all licensing requirements and provide a "...pathway for facilitating licensure reciprocity." The Governor is throwing out two options here. Justify your board's continued existence, or get rid of it. And if you can keep it in place, then provide a pathway to maximize reciprocity. And that direction led to the above (rash) decision by the Nevada Board. This is only a proposal right now. Hopefully our sister organization NALS will have something to say about this, but it smells like a fait accompli, at this point.

The moral of this story is that it pays to keep your state organization completely up to date with the goings-on of the regulatory board. We live in interesting times. Be proactive, or be blindsided.

-ED

A BLAST FROM THE PAST



The cover of 'The California Surveyor' magazine features the logo of the California Land Surveyors Association (CLSA) on the left, which includes a map of California and the year 1966. The title 'The California Surveyor' is prominently displayed in a large, outlined font. Below the title, it states 'AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ASSOCIATION'. The issue date is '1970-12' and 'February 1970'. The text 'EXTRA SPECIAL ISSUE' is centered below the date. The opening text reads: 'To all licensed land surveyors', 'Dear reader:', and 'This is intended to stir you up and turn you on. It is very important that you review and analyze the two letters in the following pages.'

Good Deeds!

Dear CLSA Sacramento Chapter,

It was an honor to be chosen as the recipient for the Roy Minnick Memorial Scholarship presented at the 62nd Annual Geomatics Conference held at Fresno State.

I am currently a Junior Geomatics Engineering student involved in several student orgs. I would part-time at the Trio Student Services Support Veterans office where I assist Veteran students like myself in the transition from military to civilian life.

I am truly grateful for the scholarship contribution, as it allows me to focus on my studies and educational goals.

Thank you for your support.

Very respectfully,



Zenia Zipp

April Fools!

REBARBARIANS EXTENDED MONUMENT WARRANTY COMPANY

HEY THERE, DID YOU JUST FILE A MAP AND SET MONUMENTS IN AN AREA RIFE WITH NEW CONSTRUCTION?

DO YOU WORK IN A JURISDICTION THAT SEEMS TO THINK YOUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTAINING MONUMENTS IS PERPETUAL?

ARE YOU TIRED OF SENDING YOUR CREW OUT AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN TO RESET MONUMENTS THAT WERE DESTROYED BY THE PROJECT NEXT DOOR?

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..... SACRAMENTO CHAPTER CLSA MEMBERSHIP

Name: _____

PLS, RCE, LSIT or EIT number: _____

Company: _____

PLS/PE use mailing address on file with BPELSG
Check this box and skip mailing addresses below. Please enter e-mail address.

Business Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Mailing address: _____ (same as business)

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: (work) _____ (check primary)

Email: (personal) _____

Phone: (work) _____ (home) _____ (cell) _____

(fax) _____ (other) _____

Chapter Membership Type (check one):

PLS Regular Member {PLS} \$40

Civil Engineer Member {Pre82CE} \$40

Associate Member {LSIT} \$20

Affiliate Member {post-81 CE, EIT, etc} \$20

Student Member {Surveying student} Regular Dues \$10

Sustaining Member {major supporter} Regular Dues \$200

2023 Chapter EARLY BIRD Membership Dues are HALF off Regular Dues if paid before March 1st, 2023. (Except Student and Sustaining Membership).

Employment type: private public student retired other

State CLSA membership number: _____ Join at: www.CaliforniaSurveyors.org

State CLSA membership type: Regular PLS Associate LSIT

Pre82 Civil Engineer Sustaining Life

Affiliate Student Out of State

Included is a \$_____ donation for scholarship fund or Chapter support. Total \$_____
Check either scholarship fund or Chapter support to allocate your donation.

Sacramento is my "primary" or "home" Chapter. No, _____ is my home.

Please include me in the Sacramento CLSA member directory (e-mail photo)

Mail form and checks to: Sacramento Chapter CLSA
PO BOX 340807
Sacramento, CA 95834

Or scan and e-mail form to: secretary.sacco.clsa@gmail.com

Comments: