



## Closing Corner—Epilogue

A conversation with NSPS Past President Cavell

**I**t is March. The baton is passed. I ran my leg as President and it is now in the care of President Jan Fokens. The baton of NSPS, however, is in your hands. In fact, it is a race that never ends. As professionals, as surveyors, we must run our leg, our debt to the profession. Our colleagues depend upon us. The public depends upon us! Even when they are unaware.

### NSPS officers for 2017-18 are:

- President Jan Fokens (Michigan)
- President-Elect Kim Leavitt (Idaho)
- Secretary Tim Burch (Illinois)
- Vice President, Lisa Van Horn (Wisconsin)
- Treasurer Bob Miller (Pennsylvania)
- Past-president Tony Cavell (Louisiana)

As in every leg of a relay, there are those moments in the race where there is a lapse of concentration or a stumble, for no effort is flawless. As officers or professionals we owe our members or clients our best. As Saint Matthew recorded, “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” I apologize for stumbles and lapses during my term. The spirit was and is indeed willing but there were times when the results were less than intended. That said, I believe we enjoyed a good year. Progress was made, and we passed the baton to President Fokens in a good position.

As president I tried to follow my belief that, within reason, one should appoint good people to committees and give them concise charges, and then give them room to do their work (two heads are better than



“Our colleagues depend upon us. The public depends upon us!”

one). There were a couple of instances in which, looking back, I ought to have stepped in to correct the course and tweak their heading a bit.

One of my disappointments included getting ALL of our committees firing on all cylinders. Committee work did improve but attempts at using online applications for meetings didn't blossom for us yet. Vice-president Lisa Van Horn will assume the “cat herding” position of program director from President-elect Kim Leavitt who made good progress. Ms. Van Horn has been a successful and very active committee chairwoman, and brings good experience

into her position. So we may expect good things from committees.

We contacted the National Association of Realtors regarding its Code of Ethics, urging them to add “*REALTORS® shall not engage in activities that constitute the unauthorized practice of Land Surveying and shall recommend that counsel of a professional land surveyor be obtained when the interest of any party to the transaction requires it.*” to its Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice document.

The NSPS proposed statement is similar to an existing statement in the NAR Code of Ethics related to activities that may constitute the unauthorized practice of law. After

further interaction, and NSPS responding to a NAR request for examples of the types of activities we are concerned about, the NAR Interpretations and Procedures Advisory Board responded that it sees no reason to add the NSPS proposed statement, adding that it feels confident that NAR's overall Code of Ethics language is sufficient with regard to "surveying activities". Of course, NSPS disagrees with this and plans to readdress the issue.

**“Progress was made, and we passed the baton to President Fokens in a good position.”**

Another was a faux pas on my part. After receiving an alarm about possible liabilities NSPS was assuming via copyrights, I acted swiftly (too swiftly) like a mother hen, insisting other collegial organizations cease what they were doing. In the end, the whole affair was making a mountain out of a molehill and was set aside. Despite trying to be deliberate and asking for and receiving advice from staff and others, a little more research may have prevented me from over reacting and some loss of face. My advice to President Fokens is to never hesitate to seek advice when possible.

More significantly, there is a litany of successes of which NSPS can be proud and potential successes still under development. The list is long but I hope to fit a few into this article. It is in alphabetical order not indicating degrees of importance.

**Alaska /BLM Direct Point Positioning Survey Procedure:** NSPS reported on the effect of the DPPS proposal for establishing boundary corners for lands to be ceded to the Alaska as a result of statehood. The DPPS process uses calculated positions in lieu of monuments. A BLM official stated that "no fundamental technical issues" were found [in the committee report] related to BLM's proposed approach. A response is being developed. See: [nsp.us.com/page/BLMDPPSAlaska](https://nsp.us.com/page/BLMDPPSAlaska).

**American School Counselors Association:** NSPS sponsored a booth in New Orleans in July for the ASCA convention. It was a great

success and has spurred similar activities by several states societies. NSPS Public Relations Committee has developed a series of new brochures for this.

**Boy Scouts of America:** NSPS Seeks Financial Support for 2017 Boy Scouts Jamboree Participation in preparation for sponsoring the team of Merit Badge advisers, NSPS is seeking donations to its ongoing fund for the project. The 2017 Jamboree

will be held at the Bechtel Reserve in West Virginia. Donors should contact NSPS Executive Director Curt Sumner (240-439-4625, ext. 106; [curtis.sumner@nsp.us.com](mailto:curtis.sumner@nsp.us.com)).

**Brochures:** New NSPS brochures have been developed, and printed. The brochures are available to members, the state societies, and educational institutions. See: [nsp.us.com/page/PamphletsfromStates](https://nsp.us.com/page/PamphletsfromStates).

**CFedS:** The Certified Federal Surveyor program has relied on the NSPS for website hosting, and on-line accounting administration. A next step in its development and evolution will involve expanding the governmental agencies that show preference for certified professionals as well as the program becoming, like other NSPS certificates, in which NSPS takes a major role in the program administration with QC provided by the CFedS Panel. Progress is slow but determined to see the program continue its success. Guaranteeing a sound fiscal footing is the largest complicating issue.

**CFS:** Interest in the joint NSPS/ASFPM Certified Floodplain Surveyor certification program has been rekindled. Currently the program is available only in North Carolina. Recent discussions regarding the expansion of the program are on-going.

**Competitions:** Trig\*Star, Map/Plat, and the Journalism Competitions could always benefit from greater participation, however at their cores, they are strong programs

whose committees are always looking for ways to improve.

- **TrigStar** had 38 state winners and all participants are eligible for a \$5,000 scholarship serves as tangible incentive.
- **Map/Plat** drew 43 entries in 5 categories. See [nsp.us.com/?page=MapPlat](https://nsp.us.com/?page=MapPlat).
- **Journalism** had 8 affiliates compete in 4 categories. See [nsp.us.com/?page=Journalism](https://nsp.us.com/?page=Journalism).

**Davis Bacon Act:** NSPS sent a letter to the Labor Department regarding Davis Bacon prevailing wage rates being applied to survey crews. NSPS Government Affairs Committee constantly monitors this. See: [nsp.us.com/?page=DavisBacon](https://nsp.us.com/?page=DavisBacon) and [nsp.us.com/resource/resmgr/Davis-Bacon/NSPS\\_letter\\_to\\_Dept\\_of\\_Labor.pdf](https://nsp.us.com/resource/resmgr/Davis-Bacon/NSPS_letter_to_Dept_of_Labor.pdf)

**Disaster Relief Fund:** The NSPS Foundation has approved payments to assist individuals whose homes and families were affected by flooding. Donations are the source of funds this endeavor. See: [nsp.us.com/?page=DisasterRelief](https://nsp.us.com/?page=DisasterRelief), and [nsp.us.com/?page=DisasterRelief](https://nsp.us.com/?page=DisasterRelief).

**F.I.G. XXVII Congress and General Assembly 2022:** NSPS wants to bid on hosting the 2022 F.I.G. Congress and General Assembly. F.I.G.'s Congress and General Assembly meets every four years. The last F.I.G. meeting to be held in the US was in 2002. Perfunctory consideration was given to a couple of sites, then John Hohol and Curt Sumner met Disney hotel staff, and the Disney Event Group to discuss hosting the 2022 conference at Disney in Florida.

**Finances:** I wanted to establish the robust financial standing foreseen by Past President Warren. I am pleased that under the guidance of Treasurer Miller Strides have been made in this goal that will be ongoing. New certificate programs will help... but we still have a way to go.

**Future of Surveying Task Force:** The group met in June in Baton Rouge, NSPS assumed the "lead" for future activities of the group which was originally initiated with NCEES support. Evidence of support is strong with 16 of the original 18 organization continuing participation. Three committees were formed to focus on critical issues

which need to be addressed. This is an ideal group for participation by the Young Surveyors Network.

**HeroX Challenge:** HeroX is a company which facilitates “challenges” soliciting innovative solutions to perceived problems or opportunities. A company that builds nationwide was seeking to shorten the time required to perform ALTA/NSPS Land Title Surveys. They assumed modern technology should be able to resolve boundary issues and features quicker and more reliably than the archaic methods used by professional surveyors. NSPS continues to monitor the challenge.

**Hydrography Licensing:** A committee has been looking into the issue of whether hydrography surveys should require a license surveyor or simply a certified hydrographer, and is composing a recommended position for NSPS to take. NSPS Oregon affiliate has requested a position statement from NSPS regarding the question.

**International Property Measurement and Ethics Standards:** The international coalitions of professional organizations, agencies, and academia have developed non-binding international standards for property measurement and ethics. See: [communities.rics.org/connect.ti/ipmscoalitionmembers/view?objectId=22613029#22613029](http://communities.rics.org/connect.ti/ipmscoalitionmembers/view?objectId=22613029#22613029) and [ricstest.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/international-ethics-standards-final.pdf](http://ricstest.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/international-ethics-standards-final.pdf). Executive Director Sumner has been an active member of both groups since their inception.

**Property Records Industry Association:** NSPS and PRIA will hold meetings aimed at establishing a way to link survey plats to property records so they are used for property information (as most legal precedent would require) rather than relying on GIS data. PRIA and NSPS intend to establish a working group similar to the ALTA/NSPS Committee to work on common issues.

**Scholarships:** The NSPS Foundation awards \$30,000 in scholarships annually. See: [nsps.us.com/?page=Scholarships](http://nsps.us.com/?page=Scholarships). The Foundation always needs your support to continue and to grow in support of its mission.

**Social Media:** Take advantage of the NSPS social media outlets.

- Don't overlook your delegates, the Directors. Talk to them.

- Don't overlook the NSPS officers and staff. Contact them.
- NSPS News & Views weekly newsletter,
- NSPS Radio Hour, web radio show, [nsps.us.com/?page=RadioShow](http://nsps.us.com/?page=RadioShow)
- Twitter, [twitter.com/NSPSINC](https://twitter.com/NSPSINC)
- Facebook, [facebook.com/nspsinc/](https://facebook.com/nspsinc/)
- LinkedIn, [linkedin.com/groups/4794194/profile](https://linkedin.com/groups/4794194/profile)
- YouTube, [youtube.com/channel/UCSWFU75kRwt1FhRHxi6gLDw](https://youtube.com/channel/UCSWFU75kRwt1FhRHxi6gLDw)

**Student Chapters:** NSPS is encouraging establish Student Chapters within the respective college programs throughout the US and Territories. NSPS has created a listing of programs of which it is aware.

“...there is a litany of successes of which NSPS can be proud and potential successes still under development...”

**Template for 2022 Datums:** NSPS along with NGS and others have developed template legislation for use by the state legislatures to revise state laws legally defining datums when the 2022 datums are promulgated. This link to the NSPS website will take one to the template: [nsps.us.com/resource/resmgr/NGS/Template\\_Draft\\_-\\_Final.docx](http://nsps.us.com/resource/resmgr/NGS/Template_Draft_-_Final.docx).

**Workforce Development:** Workforce Development initiatives to create the framework for insuring the dignity of the surveying profession have been initiated in Maryland, Oklahoma, and Virginia. See: [nsps.us.com/page/WorkforceDev](http://nsps.us.com/page/WorkforceDev) on the NSPS website.

**Workshop Database:** NSPS is building a workshop speaker database for use in planning for educational activities. The list includes over 30 speakers, primarily those who are available nationwide. ■

**Tony Cavell** was 2016–17 President of NSPS, is a consulting surveyor, and works day-to-day at the Louisiana State University Center for Geoinformatics.



The Landmark Name  
**SURV-KAP**  
in Survey Products

**QUALITY BEYOND MEASURE**

**EASY ONLINE ORDERING!**

**SURVEY MARKERS CAPS & ACCESSORIES**

**SURV-KAP.com**

SATISFACTION  
100%  
GUARANTEED

**800-445-5320**