



Editorial

>> Marc Cheves, LS

THE American Surveyor

A FOOT IN THE PAST... AN EYE TO THE FUTURE

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Tumultuous Times

If you've reached the end of 2008 feeling just a bit worn out, you're not alone. From the adrenaline highs of Michael Phelps winning eight gold medals in the Beijing Olympics to the depressing lows of an economy in crisis, and from the euphoria surrounding Obama's November election to the sobering realities of the global challenges America faces under his leadership, it is no secret we are living in tumultuous times. Now and then we need to just sit back and chill for awhile. I hope that each issue of *The American Surveyor* helps you to do just that.

Over the years, many surveyors have told me how much they enjoy our company visits and our ProFile articles. As buyers and users of the technology we feature, they enjoy learning more about the people who make the gear, as well as how other surveyors do their jobs and run their companies. So in this issue we bring you more. Find out how Darcy Detlor's path led him to create MicroSurvey Software, and how Puerto Rican-born Sam Diaz wound up becoming Chief Surveyor for Bechtel.



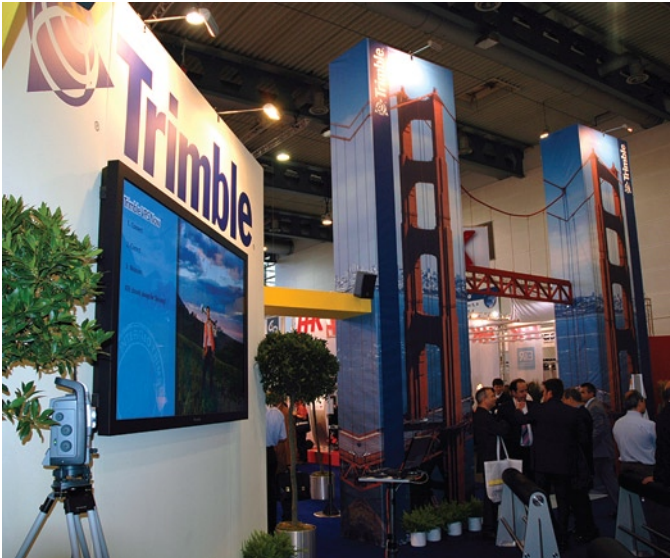
Also in this issue surveyor John Stenmark writes about some unique surveying techniques that were used to construct the new Mercedes-Benz dealership in Milan, Italy. And speaking of cars, don't miss the article by Tom Greaves on iRacing, one of the latest in virtual technologies.

As American surveyors in a global economy, it behooves us to pay attention to what's going on in other parts of the world. The annual Intergeo conference in Germany draws surveyors and other geomatics professionals from around the

globe. More than 15,000 attendees gathered for Intergeo 2008 in the city of Bremen to witness the latest in technology applications. For me personally, one of the highlights of attending Intergeo is the opportunity to visit with Hans-Hellmut Breithaupt, the seventh-generation owner of the world's oldest instrument manufacturing company, Breithaupt & Son in Kassel, Germany. Breithaupt will celebrate its 250th anniversary in 2012, and addresses niche markets all over the world. Pictured is Breithaupt's NABON 1st Order level, capable of ± 0.3 mm accuracies. While you might think that demand for such an instrument would be waning, Herr Breithaupt informed me that demand from the optical tooling crowd, such as for paper plants in Finland, is still strong. On the next page is a collage of Intergeo images.

Following our visit to Bremen, we took advantage of the geographical proximity and drove to Belgium to interview Septentrio, the premier European manufacturer of GNSS equipment. In addition to being wired in for Galileo, Septentrio conducts activities all over the planet. Here in the U.S., its boards are being used by Altus GNSS receivers. Altus CEO Neil Vancans is a surveyor and well-known industry veteran who has spent time at both Leica and Thales/Magellan. Watch for a future article about Altus and Septentrio, and a review of Altus receivers by Shawn Billings.

It's no secret that the economic downturn of the construction industry has hit surveyors particularly hard. But we're a hardy lot, and we will survive. Hopefully 2009 will bring some relief in infrastructure projects. Thank you for all of your support! We'll see you in the New Year with many good things in store. *AS*



Neil Vancans (l) and Barrie Hogarth from Altus



Optech's Brent Gelhar (l) and Don Carswell