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SIDE SHOTS

Professional Land Surveyors of Colorado

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NATIONAL SURVEYORS WEEK AT THE STATE CAPITOL

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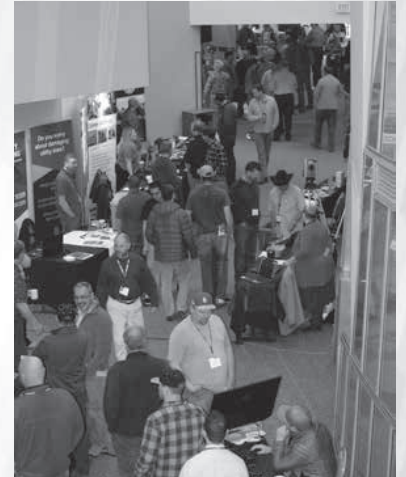
Gary Gable and class



Brian Dennis demonstrating a virtual sandbox to Adam Kelly



Charlie Tucker



Earl Henderson, Joyce Young, Scott Thompson

Rule of the Month – Defining PLS

By Earl Henderson, PLS

So, recently I had to put on a couple of different hats for some “situations” and it got me thinking about what it takes to be a Professional Land Surveyor. What hats do we wear? What tasks do we perform? For me, this is one of the great aspects of this profession. It’s not boring. Am I working inside or outside today? Am I writing reports or drafting on CAD? Am I on a treasure hunt for monuments or slamming stakes in the ground for construction? But let’s start at the beginning.

We first have to let people know we’re in business (underdog, marketer & graphic designer). Then, after some coffee (barista) hopefully the phone rings (receptionist). A potential client starts asking if we can perform some survey task for them (listener). It’s a boundary dispute with their neighbor (interpreter & counselor). They decide to hire us for the project and we exchange the contract (business man, insurance agent & project manager). First we need to do the research (historian, paralegal, title examiner & geographer). Then we need to pick which crew to take with us (employer & possibly even overlord). And which day to go (meteorologist). We head for the site but the truck breaks down (mechanic). We fix it and get there to start the field recon (botanist, dendrologist, geologist, mountaineer, naturalist, environmentalist & outdoorsman, but best of all treasure hunter). We find some potential evidence (laborer & excavator) and decide to locate it with our equipment (technician & photographer). But here comes the neighbor (politician, wordsmith & communicator) and the client with their spouse (psychologist, mediator and maybe even marriage counselor). We diffuse the situation, but on hiking back to the truck one of our crew falls (EMT). Luckily they’re okay but if not we would have had to take him to the emergency room (ambulance driver) and see that they’re well taken care of (insurance agent and HR director) or had them airlifted out (pilot-okay that’s a stretch).

Somehow though the field work gets done and the data collected. We take it back to the office to input it into the computer program (computer tech) but there’s always problems with the computers right? (IT expert). Finally though, we’re analyzing the data and evidence (dare I say “mathematician” and “geometer”? But puzzle solver, creative brain stormer & definitely legal expert.) We find some interesting insights that we want to share with our protégé (mentor) because they’re a student (teacher). Then we finalize the plat (draftsman, artist & writer) and present it to the client (philosopher) along with the invoice of course (accountant). We have to be humble in our presentation but also a bit of an egotist so they understand we know what we’re doing. But the project is done now. In a month we’ll have to collect the payment (collector, arm twister but hopefully not hardass). But in the mean time we have to maintain the office (secretary, janitor & window washer), the business (skeptic, realist but also optimist and dreamer) and our professional associations (friend, colleague & professional).

Did I leave anything out?

Now that I’ve really thought this through, maybe the best word to describe us is “certifiable”. But no matter how you want to describe it...count me in.

Be safe out there.