

MISSOURI SURVEYOR

A Quarterly Publication of the
Missouri Society of Professional Surveyors

Jefferson City, Missouri

March 2024



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2024

March 13, 2024

USPLSS Webinar via zoom

May 1, 2024

Board Meeting
Lodge of Four Seasons, Lake Ozark, MO

May 2-3, 2024

46th Annual Spring Workshop
Lodge of Four Seasons, Lake Ozark, MO

July 6, 2024

Zoom Call, Board Meeting
MSPS Office, Jefferson City, MO

August 12-14, 2024

Review Course
Location TBD, Jefferson City, MO

October 3-5, 2024

67th Annual Meeting and Convention
Margaritaville Lake Resort
Osage Beach, MO

December 7, 2024

Zoom Call, Board Meeting
MSPS Office, Jefferson City, MO

Cover: Clayton Engineering crew; a Wild NA2 with an inverted level rod and a custom hook on the end to measure bridge pile cap elevations for a MoDOT project.

Donald R. Martin, Editor



Notes from the Editor's Desk

Donald R. Martin



"I get by with a little help from my friends." Ringo's old lyrics make a suitable theme for this edition of *Missouri Surveyor*. The usual fine contributions from members, associates and friends came through once again to grace our pages. I think it best that I recognize them:

Brief emails and phone calls resulted in a veritable bounty of information for the newsletter. Mike Flowers was the protagonist, writing and looping in Jackie Walters of the Land Survey Program. Add in some activities by the MSPS Board of Directors and Sandy Boeckman and *voilà*, words and images for two articles: *Robert E. "Bob" Myers Land Survey Building* by Mr. Flowers and *Norman Brown's "Final Point" Celebration* featuring the photographic artistry of Ms. Walters. It was pretty much the same story with *Capitol View – A Look at Surveying Legislative Matters*. Prompt responses from Representative Don Mayhew and lobbyist Lynne Schlosser and we had the latest news in governmental affairs. A plea to Austin DeSain was made and next-thing-you-know, we have a cover photo and graphic news about *Clayton Engineering: The "SAINT LOUIS" Sign*.

Before any of the actions mentioned above took place, Chris Ferguson sent a masterpiece of an article on the heels of our last edition's publishing. Boy, was it worth the wait since then! The anchor feature for this edition is, *"Yellow Sheets" and the origins of Missouri's National Forest*. It is a tale driven towards detailed activities for a specific purpose, nested in the broader contexts of people, period (era) and place...it's like a James Michener novel! Thank you for the contribution, sir.

This issue brings the mixed emotions of sorrowful goodbyes accompanied by joyful recollections as we note the passing on of three of our bests – Past Presidents Bob Lewis and John Stevens, and a giant of our industry, Eric Seiler. It is our honor to include news of their going on. They were all wonderful friends of surveyors and surveying; thank you each.

Tucked neatly within our pages are announcements which are certainly worth your consideration. Look for: *Save the Date – 67th Annual Meeting*, a call for Director (as in "Board of...") and Awards nominations with *We're Looking for Someone Like You*, the *Surveyor's Review Course* in August, a *Mark Your Calendar* notice for the *Spring Workshop*, a note about the *Surveyors Rendezvous 2024*, and a *Now Available* to introduce a new resource on the MSPS website, *A Collection of Information for the Katy Trail and Rock Island Trail in Missouri* by Steven E. Weible. Don't miss any of those!

Don't overlook in our early pages the news of the recognition of an MSPS giant, Mr. Dan Govero. *An Award of Distinction; Govero wins Missouri Community College Association Honor* is a local media report of a well-deserved honor bestowed on a charitable supporter of education in his region, Mr. Govero. Now surveyors from Missouri know of Dan's contributions within our organization, our registration board, and continuing education for professionals. But it is nice to see news of his good deeds beyond our "world". Not only may Dan's efforts be an inspiration to our own senses of service and charity, also this is an example of news we wish to share in *Missouri Surveyor*. If you are a surveyor or know of a surveyor similarly recognized for noteworthy actions in your/their communities, share that with us. Let's celebrate the contributions of one another!

Well, I best break-it-down and bunch-it-up so I can start getting ready for the next edition ...I'll get back with ya' then... 🇺🇸

Donald

THE MISSOURI SURVEYOR

Published quarterly by the
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	4 issues	1 issue
Full Page	650.00	200.00
Half Page (horizontal or vertical)	400.00	150.00
Quarter Page	250.00	100.00
Professional Card	50.00	N/A

COPY DEADLINE

March Issue — February 1
June Issue — May 1
September Issue — August 1
December Issue — November 1

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The Missouri Surveyor is published quarterly by the Missouri Society of Professional Surveyors, to inform land surveyors and related professions, government officials, educational institutions, contractors, suppliers and associated businesses and industries about land surveying affairs. Articles or opinions appearing in this publication do not necessarily reflect the viewpoints of MSPS but are published as a service to its members, the general public and for the betterment of the surveying profession. No responsibility is assumed for errors, misquotes or deletions as to its contents. Articles may be reprinted with due credit given.

President's Message

Bob Anderson, PLS



As we approach the end of another Midwestern winter, albeit a quite mild one with a brief but frigid exception, we prepare for the return of chirping birds and blooming flowers of springtime. Spring brings with it the hope of anew, a fresh outlook for the year to come. We brush off the gloomy outlook of winter and embark on another year in our journeys. As surveyors, we gird ourselves for the bustling seasons of spring, summer, and fall.

Before we strap on our plumbobs and take to the field, I would like to take a moment to recognize some of the people who influenced our industry that are no longer with us. A great debt of gratitude is owed to those who have continued to build upon the foundations that were laid so long ago. Unfortunately, we lost two past presidents over the last year. Bob Lewis (MSPS President 1984) passed away December 2, 2023. Bob served Warren County as their county surveyor for 60 years. John Stevens (MSPS President 1996) passed away January 14, 2024. John surveyed for the U.S. Forest Service for 42 years. We also lost a pillar of our surveying community, Eric Seiler, Sr. Eric assumed control of Seiler Instruments after his father and built it to the flourishing business many of us frequent to this day.

One aspect of surveying that I greatly appreciate is the balance between past, present, and future. Our industry is unique in the way we must stay grounded in the past. We must keep an eye on the past to follow in the footsteps of the surveyors that precede us. At the same time, we have much to be excited about when looking at the future. Be it the developing technology like drones and scanners (hopefully soon we'll be able to get robot dogs with scanners mounted on them!), or the opportunity for young surveyors to put their stamp on the industry. Despite the average age of surveyors in Missouri continuing to climb, I find encouragement in many areas for future Missouri surveyors. Our *Young Surveyors Committee* is very active and growing. I hope to see it continue to grow – by the way - you don't have to be a licensed member to join the committee. So, if you have any young surveyors that are working towards licensure, please encourage them to join the committee. I saw many young faces in the crowd at the annual meeting last October. I think Missouri is doing well at striking a balance of requiring a basis of education without making it too onerous in order to obtain a license to practice. This approach should bring in applicants who may be dissuaded by extensive education requirements. In the end, as the current generation of surveyors' careers come to an eclipse, there is a bright future for the next generation. 🇺🇸

Bob

67th Annual Meeting

of the

Missouri Society of Professional Surveyors

OCTOBER 3-5, 2024

MARGARITAVILLE LAKE RESORT
OSAGE BEACH, MISSOURI

Save the Date

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2024

Mapping Missouri Presentations on the early surveying and mapping of our State.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2024

Stump the Experts Bring your questions to stump a panel of experts.

Incorporating UAV Technology in my Business...Is

Now the Time? Is it time to invest in UAV technology? How? What will it cost?

Will it make money? How do I make better use of my current UAV?

Missouri Survey Standards The standards and corner documents.

How is the USPLSS as applied to Missouri different from other states?

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2024

Artificial Intelligence and the Surveyor AI is already

impacting surveying. In the future it will be as impactful as GPS. Learn how AI can be used in your business...now and in the future.

In Memory of Robert “Bob” Lewis

Mr. Robert “Bob” Lee Lewis, Sr., of Wright City, MO passed away on Saturday, December 2, 2023. He was born on February 25, 1935, in St. Louis to the late John Charles and Irene Lewis (nee: Wright.) Robert had reached the age of 88 years.

Bob was united in marriage to Debra Lewis (nee: Ford) on April 6, 2015, in Rolla, MO, they spent 39 years together and were married for 8 of those years. Together among them, there were four children, Robert “Bobby”, Jr., Randy, Robyn, and Tracy.

Bob was the longest elected official of Warren County for over 59 years. He graduated in 1961 with a BS in Civil Engineering, he later became the majority owner of Lewis-Bade, Inc., an engineering and surveying firm in Warrenton with offices also in Montgomery City. Serving as Warren County Surveyor for 60 years, he had restored over 400 original government land corners which were lost or destroyed and added thousands of surveys to the County’s survey record books. Robert was a member of numerous professional organizations: the American Society of Civil Engineers, National Society of Professional Engineers, Missouri Society of Professional Engineers, Missouri Society of Professional Surveyors (President, 1984), Missouri Association of County Surveyors (a founding member; held all offices), and the National Association of County Surveyors. He was also a dedicated member of the Lions Club (Distinguished Service Award recipient), the local Elks Club (charter member), and a member Shiloh United Methodist Church in Foristell. Robert served 15 years on the Wright City School Board and was the Class Agent for the 1958 first Jr. College Class of College of the Ozarks, where he made a lasting impact on the lives of many. Among many awards, Bob was also honored with the Meritorious Award for Distinguished Achievement from the College of the Ozarks. Bob was an avid pilot and he loved to ski whenever he had the opportunity. He was the Basketball Player of the Year at Missouri School of Mines and Metallurgy, Rolla and a member of the Jackling Jocks. He was also a member of both Wright City and College of the Ozarks Alumni Association.



Those that are grateful for having shared in Bob’s life are his beloved wife, Debi Lewis; his loving children, Robert “Bobby” Jr., (Pam) Lewis, Randy (Cynthia) Lewis, Robyn Dalton, and Tracy (Joey) Dorman; his cherished grandchildren, Desirae’ Lewis, Robbie (Alaina) Lewis, Kyle (Mackenzie) Lewis, Cassandra Waldron, Gavin Waldron, Ariel (Jonathon) Eversmeyer, Allison (Brett) Pearson, Rilee, Madison, and Mitchell Scheer, Ashley (Dalton) Koch, Cody (Madysen) Rebstock, and Austin Dorman; cherished great-grandchildren, Otto Lewis, Avery, Harper, Reece Eversmeyer, Aubrey, and Bennett Rebstock; dear sister-in-law, Carol Lewis. Robert was preceded in death by his parents, John and Irene Lewis; his late wife, Alice Lewis; his siblings, Margaret Gueltzau, Elizabeth Czeschin, Catherine Schreckengast, John C. Lewis, Jr., Evelyn Lewis, Charles Lewis, Mildred Lewis, Helen Lowe, and Mary Trusty; one grandson, Chad Scott Lewis. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, uncle, cousin, and friend to many. A Celebration of Life service was held on December 8, 2023, at Faith Christian Family Church followed by burial at the Wright City Cemetery. 🇺🇸

MSPS Remembering a Past President

PLS Bob Lewis of Wright City was *President* of the Missouri Society of Professional Surveyors in 1984. He was one of a corps of leaders in the first 30 years of MSPS (then the Missouri Association of Registered Land Surveyors – MARLS) that set the standard for leadership of our organization as well as our chosen profession. Like his peers of that era guiding this association, Mr. Lewis was an accomplished surveyor and successful businessman while helping forge the shape of Missouri’s surveying community through the force of his own good example and his own good reputation.

Mr. Lewis continued as an active member of MSPS after his presidency, easily recognized at conferences due to his height. Lanky and long-legged, he stood out. I recall once meeting someone from Wright County who when he learned I was a surveyor, proudly proclaimed, “I know Bob Lewis! He surveyed my land. Wore me out walking the line with him! I had to almost run while he just moseyed along taking those long steps!”

MSPS members too remember Mr. Lewis. Our good leader, good friend, good surveyor. He will be missed. 🇺🇸

In Memory of John Allen Stevens

John Allen Stevens of Rolla and former of Poplar Bluff, Missouri, passed away on Sunday, January 14, 2024, at his home after battling kidney cancer.

John was born on September 23, 1947, in Waynesville, MO to the late Floyd and Betty (Binder) Stevens. He graduated from Rolla High School in 1965 and was a Licensed Missouri Land Surveyor from 1978 until retiring in 2010 from the United States Forest Service, Mark Twain National Forest district.

He married Janet (Handegan) Stevens on April 6, 1974 in Greenville, IL. They had two children, Julie (Stevens) Hirtz and James Stevens.

In retirement, John spent his time watching his grandkids play football, baseball, basketball, swimming, piano, track, and cross country. John also served faithfully as a volunteer librarian at St. Patrick's School and was also involved in Boy Scouts.

John was preceded in death by his parents, Floyd and Betty Stevens; and grandson, Nathanael Hirtz. He is survived by wife, Janet Stevens; daughter, Julie Hirtz (Paul Hirtz); son, James Stevens; grandchildren, Landon, Kathryn, Connor, and Mason Hirtz; and sister, Susan (Stevens) Carter.

A celebration of life and prayer service for John A. Stevens was held from January 27, 2024 at the St. Patrick Catholic Center in Rolla.

The family asks that memorial contributions be made to St. Patrick Catholic School Library where John and Jan volunteered and spent most of their retirement days loving on the kids and improving the school library. 🇺🇸



MSPS Remembering a Past President

The Missouri Society of Professional Surveyors lost a good friend and Missouri lost a great surveyor recently. John Stevens of Rolla passed away on January 14th. John was the *President* of the Missouri Society of Professional Surveyors in 1996; he was recognized that same year as the *Missouri Surveyor of the Year*. He practiced surveying on behalf of the United States Forest Service from 1968 through 2010 upon his retirement. Renowned among his peers for his mastery of cadastral surveying and the preservation of the United States Public Land Survey System throughout the fields and forests of the Ozarks, he remained a well-regarded leader within Missouri's surveying community.

John was a reliable presence at MSPS meetings. Easily recognizable by his pensive stare and attention during discussions, he was amiable and quick to offer a warm handshake and good advice between sessions. A true expert in the recovery and re-establishment of the corners of our sectionalized lands, he enjoyed the mix of technical precision, mathematics and history found in surveying. From memory he could recall the computations and procedures for the most complicated challenges of land surveying – particular favorites being section breakdowns.

John was a charter member of the Rolla Area *Old Surveyors Club*; that's how they refer to themselves. Really, they are the core of a surveying brain-trust of subject matter experts for cadastral matters. When they gather as a group, they remember a veritable hall of fame of their members who have passed on. Now they will remember John, as will so many in the Missouri Society of Professional Surveyors. A most capable surveyor, and a good man of faith, family, and friendship. 🇺🇸



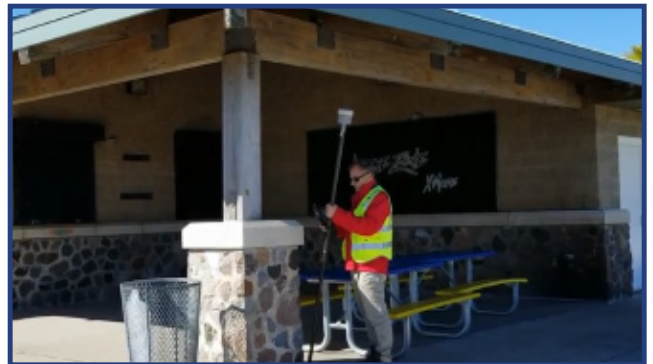
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In Memory of Eric P. Seiler, Sr.

Eric Paul Seiler Sr., loving husband, father and retired *CEO of Seiler Instrument*, passed peacefully in his home on January 7, 2024. Eric was born to Eric H. and Dora Seiler on March 1, 1928, in St. Louis, Missouri. He will be deeply missed by all who knew him. He was 95.

Eric loved deeply and fiercely. He loved the mountains, being in the country, Germany, traveling, salting his food, a good glass of wine, playing golf. But most of all, he loved his family.

Returning from his first tour of duty to Japan in 1948, Eric met Elaine Doerbaum at an ice-skating rink. “I saw the most beautiful lady in an ice-skating rink. She didn’t know how to ice skate at all! So, I thought I would help her. And she said yes!” The two were married in 1950. They always made a great team, whether in raising children, traveling the world, or winning at bridge. Eric’s second tour in 1953/54 was to Japan again and this time, Elaine could join him because he was a Sergeant. For his two tours of duty in 1946 and 1953, he was given the opportunity to go on an *Honor Flight* with his grandson Kurtis as thanks for his service. He finished his service in 1955 honorably as a Staff Sergeant.

Favorite travels included seeing the Sphinx in Cairo, Mexico and the Caribbean on several occasions, and their many trips to Germany. As the family grew, they annually hosted a summer reunion at the Lake of the Ozarks. Most recently, Eric and Elaine traveled to the Dominican Republic in February of 2023 with family and friends from the company. Throughout life he explored his love of mountains and climbed to Base Camp of Mt. Everest and summited Longs Peak in Estes Park, Colorado. He got a hole in one on two occasions during his golf “career,” though he would be the first to tell you it was more luck than skill.

Mr. Seiler was a renowned leader in business, industry and technology within his community and across the nation. He proudly carried-on his father’s legacy at Seiler Instrument Company. Devoted to the business and its employees, he successfully built up the business from struggling, to thriving, to accomplished. He then went on to write the company and family history in a book titled *Precision*. In that great tale of legacy, lore and love, Eric left us with these wise words of business success and family security:

“We must always be on guard for the unexpected, remembering that the only thing for certain is change itself. To be successful, we must anticipate changes and be ready for them. If we do this, we have a wonderful opportunity to leave a legacy to our children in the form of a company that thrives on vision, integrity, skill, hard work, and a spirit of service.”

He is survived by wife of 73 years, Elaine, their 3 children Eric Jr. (Nancy), Louise (Tom), and Tom (Teri) and their 6 grandkids Kurtis (Kate), Eric 3rd (Clarissa), Nicole (David), Matt (Annie), Sam, and Tanner. He was lucky enough to meet his four great-grandchildren, Theo, Autumn, Sage, and Everett. Eric is preceded in death by his mother, Dora Seiler, and his father, Eric H. Seiler.

This great man of family was also a great man of faith. For over 50 years he was a member of Webster Groves Presbyterian Church. Understanding the man that he was is understanding that his legacy isn’t only found within his company, but in the way he inspired his children and grandchildren to improve upon the world that he has left behind. 🇺🇸



Eric Seiler with his son Tom (r).

MSPS Remembers a Surveying Benefactor

While his obituary rightly focused on Mr. Seiler’s devotion to faith, family and friends, MSPS remembers how well he served fraternity, our fraternity of surveying. Through the products he produced and those carried from others, Eric contributed to countless success stories in our community. His contributions go beyond selling us our tools. Seiler sustained us, supported us, and in some instances “saved” us through charity and contributions. Seiler was a major contributor to education by direct donations to universities and colleges. His generosity provided the tools needed by students of surveying, mapping and drafting. He also supported the professional societies throughout many states. Our own events have been beneficiaries of this support.

So, while all reflect on Eric’s successes in a life devoted to faith, family and friends, MSPS members honor his service to fraternity – our fraternity. Thank you, good friend, for all you ever did and have done for us. 🇺🇸

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Award of Distinction

Govero wins Missouri Community College Association Honor

by Kevin Carbery, Jefferson County Leader, November 30, 2023

Dan Govero received the 2023 Missouri Community College Association's Award of Distinction for his work on behalf of Jefferson College.

He received his award Nov. 9 at the Missouri Community College Association annual conference in Kansas City. Govero, 79, of Festus, president of Govero Land Services in Imperial, said he was shocked to learn he won the award.

"It was pretty much a surprise," he said. "I didn't know they put my name in."

According to the Association's website, the award goes to "individuals who have demonstrated sustained service and commitment to their local community college."

Jefferson College President Dena McCaffrey said Govero deserves the recognition.

"Dan has been a friend of the college for a very long time," McCaffrey said. "Not only has Dan worked on a variety of projects on our campus, but also in the community through several civic organizations. He also has been very supportive of the (Jefferson College Foundation) through various contributions."

Jefferson College said in a written statement that Govero "has volunteered his surveying and engineering services and has been a major supporter of Jefferson College for more than 20 years. He has donated more than \$39,000 in professional services toward campus building and grounds improvements, and has given more than \$57,000 in monetary gifts to the college. His company, Govero Land Services sponsors every fundraiser, and Dan actively participates in all college community outreach events. He also volunteers on the Jefferson College Engineering Advisory Committee to provide valuable employer feedback to the engineering programs for continued improvement.

Govero, a Festus High School alumni who graduated from Ranken Technical School of Mechanical Trades after serving in the National Guard Corps of Engineers from 1965 – 1969, said he did not have a chance to attend Jefferson College.

"When I graduated from high school in 1962, it wasn't there," he said, adding that Jefferson College was established in 1963.

He said once Jefferson College arrived, he felt it deserved the community's support.

"I'm a big supporter of Jefferson College," he said, "We've donated financially and donated work for it. We've hired people from the college."

"(The college) is big for our county. It supports the community and helps the county grow by having an educated community. It's been good to have this asset in the county." 🇺🇸



From left: Blake Tilley, the Jefferson College Foundation executive director; Dan Govero, and Dena McCaffrey, Jefferson College President, at the 2023 Missouri Community College annual conference where Govero received the organization's Award of Distinction.

Capitol View

A Look at Surveying Legislative Matters

The 2nd regular session of 102nd Missouri General Assembly is underway. Reports are full of tales in chambers of dysfunction and defiance; deliberation is needed. MSPS members are being apprised of issues and where they stand through our “Weekly Reports” from our lobbyist Lynne M. Schlosser.

As a supplement to the regular reports, Ms. Schlosser has kindly drafted the following narrative for our pages:



The 2024 Legislative session kicked off Wednesday, January 3. As of the second week of February, there have already been 2108 bills filed, 1401 in the House and 707 in the Senate. The House and the Senate have until March 1st to file legislation.

With it being an election year, it is hard to know how this session will play out, but if the first three weeks were any indication, expectations are low due to the continued disfunction and rising tensions in the Senate. This session, MSPS has initiated legislation renaming the land survey headquarters as the “Robert E. (Bob) Myers Building”. Rep. Don Mayhew filed the bill in the House – House Bill 2399 and Senator Mike Bernskoetter has filed the bill in the Senate – Senate Bill 1282.

MSPS is supporting legislation creating the Missouri geospatial advisory council, House Bill 2191 and Senate Bill 1039. The advisory council is charged with assisting and advising the state in ensuring the availability, implementation, and enhancement of a statewide geospatial data infrastructure common to all jurisdictions through research, planning, training, and education.

MSPS will be keeping a close eye on legislation that could impact surveying, the profession, licensing, or other related measures important to members. Some examples of bills we are watching are legislation that deals with the use of drones, changes to professional licensure requirements, modifications to underground facilities statutes (MO 811), and fees for geographical information system data sunshine requests.

*Lynne M. Schlosser
MSPS Lobbyist*

Robert E. (Bob) Myers Building

As in recent sessions, MSPS supported legislation benefits from the leadership and guidance the House of Representatives’ own PLS, legislator Don Mayhew of Dixon. Representatives Mayhew states:

“This year I have filed HB 2399, which seeks to rename the building housing the headquarters of the land survey program to the “Robert E. (Bob) Myers Building”. In 1969 the Missouri Land Survey Authority (LSA) was created (now known as the Land survey Division of the Missouri Department of Agriculture).

(continued on next page)

Capitol View

A Look at Surveying Legislative Matters (continued)

Bob was chosen to lead that program as Missouri's first State Land Surveyor, and served in that position from 1971 till his retirement in 1997.

“Bob was instrumental in the creation of the land survey repository, minimum standards, and the State Plane Coordinate system and many other things we surveyors take for granted. If you have ever done any

work in any other state you know how important, and how rare our repository and land survey division are. There are few people in the State who have had such an impact on our profession as Bob. I am honored to have the opportunity to offer this bill to remember Bob and all he did for our profession and the people of the State.”

Don Mayhew, PLS, PE,
State Representative Dist. 124

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 2399

102ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE MAYHEW.

5040BL011 DANA RADEMAN MILLER, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To repeal section 60.570, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof one new section relating to the headquarters of the land survey program.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 60.570, RSMo, is repealed and one new section enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as section 60.570, to read as follows:


60.570. 1. The permanent headquarters of the land survey program shall be at or near to the principal office of the Missouri state geological survey. Until such time as other headquarters can be obtained by the land survey program, the state geologist shall provide such space in the state geological survey building as may be available. No department shall charge any fee over or above the amount paid to the office of administration for utilization of the building. The land survey program may also establish and maintain regional offices in the metropolitan areas of the state for the storage and distribution of local survey record information.

2. The building that occupies the permanent headquarters of the land survey program [may] shall be renamed and referred to as the "Robert E. (Bob) Myers Building" with an appropriate plaque placed on the outside of the building at the main entrance. The plaque shall be provided by the Missouri Society of Professional Surveyors with installation to be paid by the state.

✓

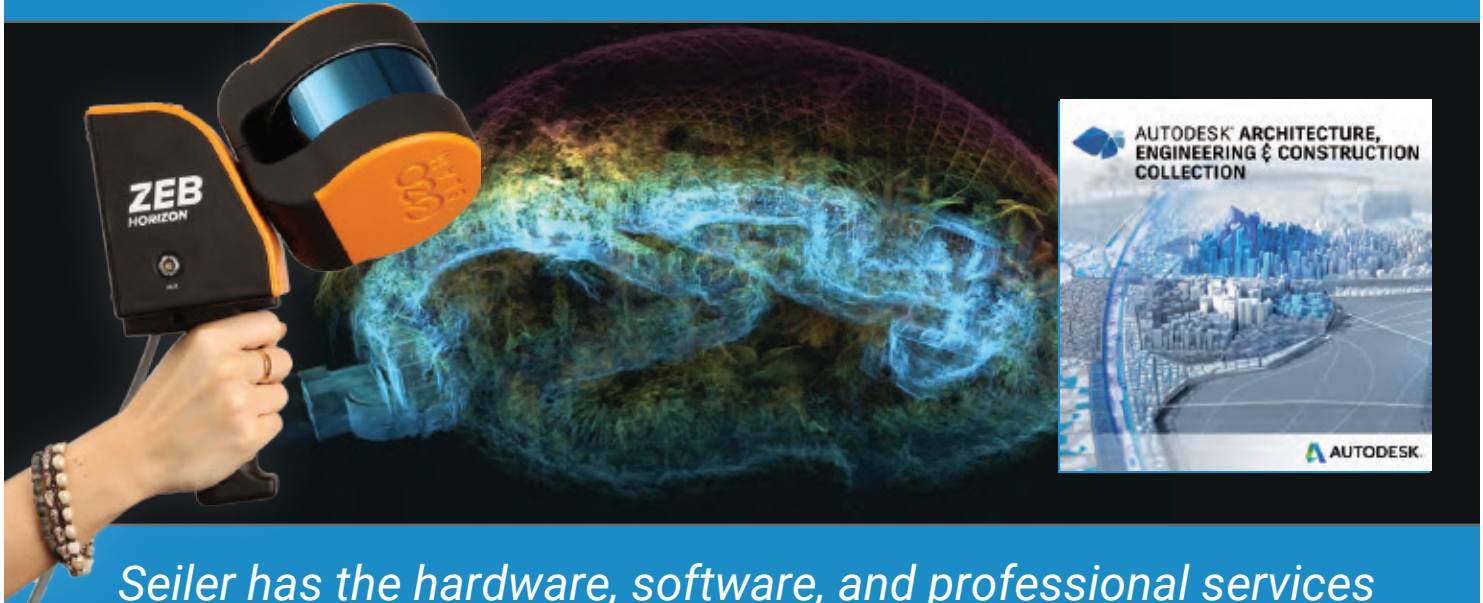
HB 2191 – Geospatial Advisory Council

Sponsored by Representative Tim Taylor of Bunceton, serving District 48, HB 2191 will establish the “Missouri Geospatial Advisory Council”. The bill’s summary identifies a primary role of the proposed Council as, “...to sponsor and publish surveys (information gathering; not land surveys) and to solicit or develop proposals for projects related to state geospatial data infrastructure.”

Representative Taylor spoke with *Missouri Surveyor* regarding his sponsorship of the bill. Reflecting on his background as a first-responder, it was during his tenure with the Columbia Fire Department that Rep. Taylor personally saw the impact of GIS. “It is crucial for the dispatching of safety and protection resources. I see GIS as an enhancement of 911.” He described the benefits of having such a Council, particularly in guiding us to breakthroughs against structural and administrative barriers to collaboration. “This Council will provide leadership, assuring citizens receive the prompt help they rely on from the state, counties and cities.” 



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Robert E. “Bob” Myers Land Survey Building

by J. Micheal Flowers PLS 1898

Robert Emmett Myers, PLS 134, was the first and longest serving “State Land Surveyor” for Missouri. Born February 1, 1930 in Webster Groves (St. Louis) Bob grew up in a family surveying company. A 7th generation surveyor experienced in his youth working for his father and grandfather, both who served as St. Louis City surveyors. He was a 1948 graduate from Washington University earning a BS degree in civil engineering. After serving his country for two years in the Army, he returned to St. Louis and was employed by Horner & Shifrin Company as a professional engineer and surveyor. He left Horner & Shifrin to work for his grandfather/father’s company in St. Louis. This company became Myers-Keller & Beyers, an engineering and surveying company until 1971.



Bob was active in legislation to require licensure for surveyors and the creation of the Missouri Association of Registered Land Surveyors (MARLS). MARLS was the impetus for the development of the Land Survey Authority created by legislation 60.510-60.610, passed in 1969 from which the Land Survey Program was born.

In 1971 Bob was appointed as the State Land Surveyor by the State Land Survey Authority members. The office/program was located in Rolla. With a mere staff of three people including Bob, he began to carry out the functions and duties of the State Surveyor per RSMo 60.510. For the next 26 years he developed this new office becoming the most admired land surveying program in the United States. Under his leadership the following were accomplished:

1. Statewide land survey records repository.
2. Issuing the 1st set of codified state regulations creating the “Minimum Standards for Property Boundary Surveys”.
3. The transfer from the Land Survey Authority to the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geology and Land Survey.
4. Revision and new language for RSMo 60 changing methods for the reestablishment of lost corners and restoring the office of the county surveyor.
5. Promulgating survey standards for geodetic control, and the filing of USPLSS corner documents with the Land Survey Program office.
6. Serving on the Missouri Boundary Commission for resolving the boundary between Missouri and Nebraska and the boundary of McKissick’s Island.

After retirement in 1997, Bob continued with consulting as Land Related Technology. Bob received numerous awards over his career including: MARLS Surveyor of the Year, MSPS Robert E. Myers Service Award named for him and subsequently given annually to a MSPS member, MSPS Lifetime Achievement Award, and Washington University School of Engineering Alumni Achievement Award in 2001.

In 1984 the Land Survey Program was consolidated and moved to a new home adjacent to the Missouri Geological Survey Building. The building was an industrial type used to house the core for the geological survey. Over half of the building was remodeled for Land Survey offices, camera room, land records repository and a records vault in the basement. The Land Survey Program continues to use this building for all Land Survey Program activities.

In 2013 legislation sponsored by Representative Robert Ross PLS 2005019227, was passed to revise RSMO 60.570 naming the Land Survey building after Bob. It included language that said “may name”, therefore because Bob was still living, no action was taken to name the building. Bob died in February 2019 at the age of 89 years.

This year legislation sponsored by MSPS, SB1282 and HB2399 would revise RSMo 60.570 to state the building “shall” be named the Robert E. “Bob” Myers Land Survey Building located in Rolla, Missouri. Please get behind and support these bills in order to give honor and appreciation for Bob’s surveying career and accomplishments as Missouri’s first “State Land Surveyor”. 🇺🇸



This building is dedicated in loving memory to

ROBERT E. “BOB” MYERS, PE, PLS (1930-2019)

**MISSOURI’S FIRST STATE LAND SURVEYOR 1971-1997
DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVANT TO THE LAND SURVEY PROFESSION**

As a Professional Land Surveyor, I dedicate my knowledge and skill to the betterment of human welfare.

I pledge: To engage only in honorable endeavor;

To do my utmost to raise the standards of the land surveying profession;

To believe that success as a land surveyor is a worthy ambition, but to seek success based only upon justice and right;

To live according to the laws of man and the highest principles of professional conduct;

To place service to others before personal profit, the honor of the land surveying profession before personal advantage and the public welfare above all other considerations.

In humility and with admitted need for Divine Guidance, I make this pledge.

A Missouri Society of Professional Surveyors funded plaque is proposed; Executive Director Sandy Boeckman suggested the words of the Surveyor’s Oath as tribute.

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A Collection of Information for the
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By Steven E. Weible

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Monday, August 12

SURVEYING MATH (Bring your NCEES-approved calculator)

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- ◆ Coordinate Geometry
- ◆ Surveying Math Applications
- ◆ Errors

Tuesday, August 13

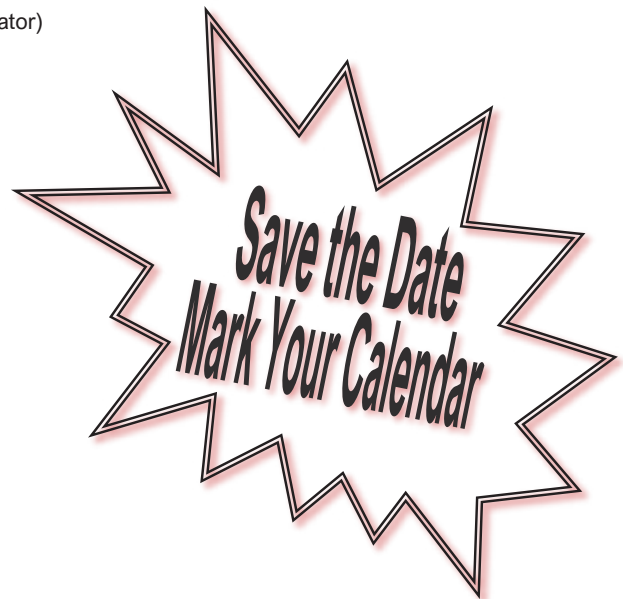
SURVEYING FUNDAMENTALS

- ◆ State Plane Coordinates
- ◆ Horizontal and Vertical Curves
- ◆ GPS & GIS
- ◆ Legal Aspects
- ◆ Riparian Boundaries
- ◆ Boundary Descriptions

Wednesday, August 14

EMPHASIS ON MISSOURI

- ◆ Surveying Standards
- ◆ Board Rules
- ◆ Missouri Statutes
- ◆ RSMO Chapter 60
- ◆ The USPLSS for Missouri



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Mike Flowers, PLS, Former State Surveyor, Rolla, Missouri

Dr. Dick Elgin, PLS, PE, Archer-Elgin Engineering, Surveying & Architecture, Rolla, Missouri

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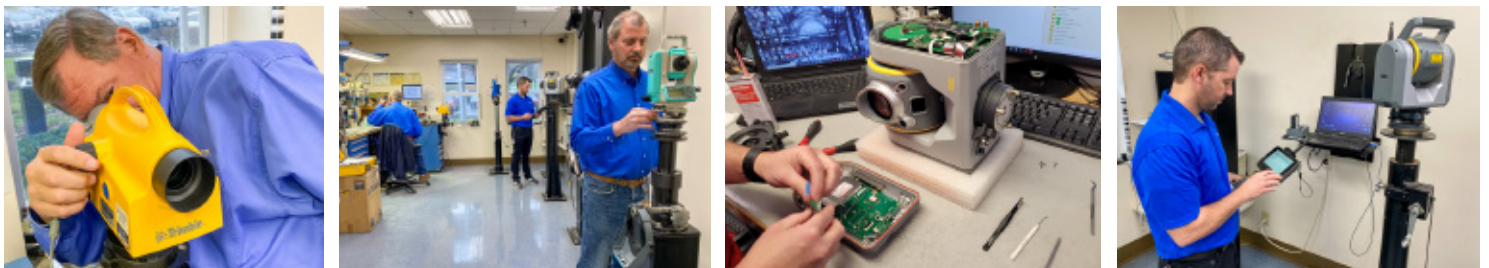
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Norman Brown's "Final Point" Celebration

Family and friends gathered in memory of surveyor Norman Brown on October 7, 2023 at his final resting place near Doolittle, Missouri. Hosted by Norman's widow Roberta and The Missouri Society of Professional County Surveyors, the celebration was appropriately called the "Chaining in' [of] Norman's Final Point." Thanks to Jacqueline Walters of the Department of Agriculture Land Survey Program, readers get to witness the event with these photographs.



Norman's headstone. On the stone's base to the right is the National Society of Professional Surveyors "Final Point" bronze cap. "Final Point" is a project of the Professional Surveyors Foundation. The survey markers of this program are a way to honor surveyors who have passed on, with part of the purchase price funding an endowment for surveying scholarships.



Close-up of the bronze cap "Final Point."



State Land Surveyor Scott Faenger presenting Norman's daughter Birdie with a replica cap.



Mrs. Roberta Brown and the “Final Point” with all of the surveyors who gathered to honor Norman that day.



Dr. Richard Elgin was a graveside speaker at the “chaining in.”



From the Missouri House of Representatives, surveyor Don Mayhew shared recollections of Mr. Brown.

(continued on next page)

Norman Brown's "Final Point" Celebration *(continued)*



The chaining party assembles; "How we gonna do this boys? L to R, Duck Bader, Ray Riggs, Loyd Todd and Jamie Elliot.



Ray Riggs (l) and Duck Bader (r) offered viewers their best side as the spirit of Norman Brown walks the line.



Norman's former chainman and our former State Land Surveyor Mike Flowers sharing some of his "Norman Brown stories."



Norman Brown look-alike Loyd Todd of Ozark, Missouri. Guests were encouraged to wear their boots, flannels and bib overalls.



Friends and family in solemn reflection looking on. 

“Yellow Sheets” and the origins of Missouri’s National Forest

by Chris Ferguson, February 2022

The Roaring Twenties passed the Ozarks leaving little prosperity in its wake. Instead, a region more affected by the First World War, the resultant Spanish Flu pandemic, and a lingering agricultural recession braced itself for the Great Depression which took much of what little remained from an already poverty-stricken land.



Typical Missouri Ozark homestead circa 1930's (USFS Photo)

Even nature itself, it seemed, was punishing the Missouri hills. Dust Bowl conditions from the Texas Panhandle to Kansas turned the Southern Plains into a vast desert and acted as a furnace, superheating the vulnerable countryside to the east over prevailing winds. ¹

Southern Missouri had long suffered from over-harvesting of timber. Railroad tie companies, iron furnaces, lead smelting, the consumer demand for lumber for frame construction and firewood for heating homes nearly stripped the region bare of logs for over 70 years. The mills, mines, and connecting railways were by then nearly all gone or abandoned, leaving only subsistence farming as the means of survival for those who remained. Meanwhile, wildfires ignited the snags and slash left behind, smoking out nearby towns for weeks at a time. ⁶

Conservation was yet to be widely accepted, and one resource vital to the region that had been washing away for decades was soil. In fact, much of the Ozark topsoil had long ago flowed into the Lower Mississippi valley, with the added silt filling up the river channel and contributing to the largest destructive flood disaster in the Nation's history. ²

The time to act was at hand, and while the U.S. Forest Service had made initial inroads to acquire small parcels of ground for reforestation, state and local politics remained resistant to allow any Federal purchases of land. Finally, the tremendous amount of abandoned and tax delinquent property brought about by the Depression threatened the very existence of the few remaining viable Ozark communities.



A Dust Bowl "Black Roller" approaches a Kansas town (PBS/Wikimedia picture)

The Weeks Act of 1911 allowed the United States Department of Agriculture (the Forest Service's parent Agency) to purchase property largely to protect watersheds, while the Clarke-McNary Act of 1924 enabled the Department to work cooperatively with state officials for better forest protection. Prior to then, there was no way for the United States Government to purchase or own land it had previously patented to settlers.

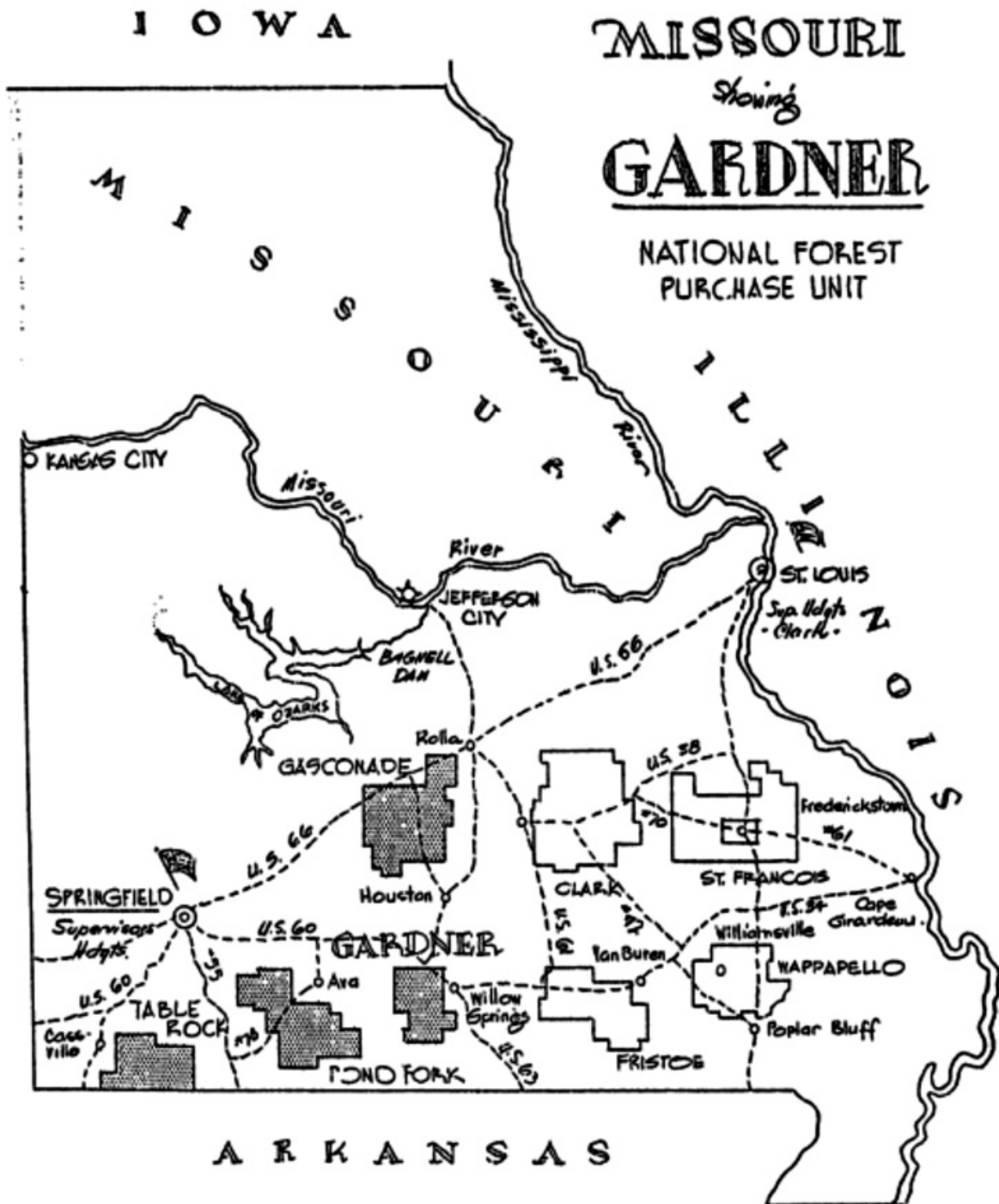


Yazoo, MS in the Spring of 1927 (Mississippi Encyclopedia photo)

But little headway occurred until concerned Missouri citizens joined together and lobbied the State Legislature for the Enabling Act. After undergoing a few amendments throughout the 1920's, eventually several substantial Purchase Units were designated allowing the Department to buy back significant amounts of land comprising the bulk of today's 1.5-million-acre Mark Twain National Forest. ^{3,6}

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“Yellow Sheets” and the origins of Missouri’s National Forest (continued)

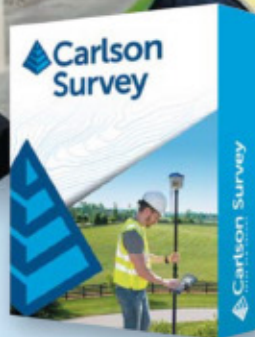


Period map showing the Gardner Purchase Unit (now Ava Ranger District) among others in the “original” Mark Twain Forest. Unshaded portions shown were known as the Clark National Forest at the time, both being combined, and the Mark Twain name retained in the 1970’s. A later portion north of Jefferson City was granted to the Forest by the University of Missouri known as the Cedar Creek unit.

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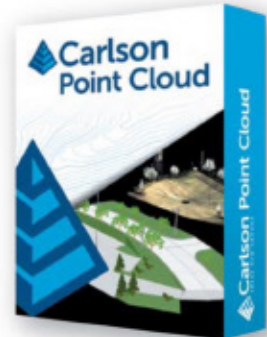
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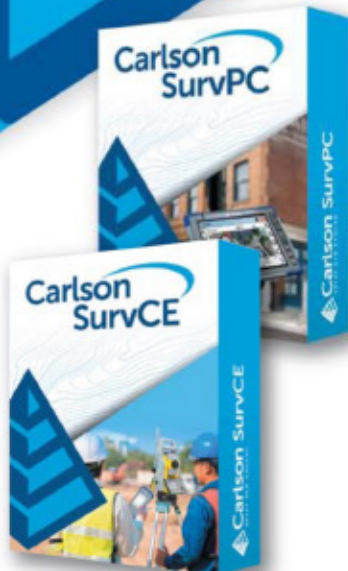
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“Yellow Sheets” and the origins of Missouri’s National Forest (continued)

To begin management of this great endeavor, President Franklin Roosevelt designated the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) to augment permanent Forest Service personnel trickling in from the Milwaukee Headquarters Office and from out west. The CCC has been hailed as one of the most successful New Deal programs and was headed for a time by General Douglas MacArthur. Perhaps the General saw the potential in keeping career military officers on the payroll commanding the camps along with the added benefit of preparing nearly a million men of the Greatest Generation through discipline and hard work for future combat across the globe. ⁴



Figure 2. Cut-over and burned area on the Gardner Purchase Unit, Mark Twain NF, 1941.

In the 7 or so years they were present in Missouri, CCC crews in the Clark and Mark Twain Forests employed over 100,000 Missourians, planted more than 43 million trees, fought thousands of forest fires, cleared 1600 miles of roads, built 240 bridges along with numerous ranger stations, trails, recreation facilities and fire lookout towers, and strung dozens upon dozens of miles of telephone lines to places that never enjoyed phone service before. All this was accomplished for a basic pay of one dollar per day with food and shelter (sometimes meaning surplus Army tents) provided. ⁶

In all, this was a pivotal time in what became called “the American Century”, the result of which began to change our country socially and economically in ways far beyond the reach of this article. But what do “Yellow Sheets” have to do with that, one may ask?

For lack of a better definition, they are the receipts of the work done by the CCC. For another of their duties was to search for thousands of Public Land Survey System corners. It soon became obvious that the

only way to manage those great expanses of National Forest was to know where it was located.

While early requirements were for complete boundary surveys prior to obtaining “Federal Acquired Lands” (such as Weeks Act purchases), that was found to be impossible in short order. Some counties had good county surveyors and decent recordkeeping; others were poor at best if they even had a surveyor at all.

Good rural surveyors were as scarce then as today, and there was no mechanism in place to contract the work regardless. The Government would have to settle for simply clearing the titles, often paying back taxes to local collectors, and rely on the published GLO plat area to inventory the new National Forests. And perhaps, if they were fortunate, find a few of the corners to define the perimeters of their work.

It became incumbent upon the Rangers to locate their boundaries. Although Forest Rangers had to possess a very basic knowledge of surveying principles to gain the job, there were no qualified survey technicians or professionals in the Agency. Only the General Land Office (precursor to today's Bureau of Land Management) even had cadastral surveyors on the payroll and would almost never commit them outside the original government surveys still being performed in the Far West and Alaska.

Even on horseback, a single Ranger could not cover enough of his District to make much of an impact. Instead, he relied on District staff and - more and more as time went on - the CCC to find the long-ignored Section and Quarter Corners.

Armed with little more than a typewritten copy of the GLO notes, a monochrome "topographic" map (usually without contours), and maybe a timber cruiser's staff compass and chain or tape, these young men marched out into the wilderness in search of the elusive corners they were instructed to find.

One can only imagine the disappointment when, after circling around for hours, there was little left but maybe a forlorn rockpile and perhaps a stump. Many of the trees deemed useable timber had been cut long ago, and often only post oaks and cedars were left standing. Unfortunately, CCC enrollees were not gifted with the time-honored surveyor quality of "a good imagination", and when they found some collected stones but no standing green trees matching the GLO description (plus maybe an added 10" in diameter for aging) they were usually inclined to deny what they found was a GLO corner. Maybe that was for the best.

They carried timber cruiser books (leather booklets with ring binders) and a pencil to make notes of their findings on USDA-FS Form 874-9 (Rev. May 1918) affectionately known as "Yellow Sheets" which had prefilled lines and blocks on a thin 4" x 8" canary colored piece of paper to identify the corner and accessories, as well as a place for a sketch and other remarks on the reverse.

(continued on next page)



CCC recruiting poster of the era.



Life in an early CCC Camp (USFS).

“Yellow Sheets” and the origins of Missouri’s National Forest (continued)

Form 1000
(Revised May 1934)

U. S. Department of Agriculture
FOREST SERVICE

PROPOSAL FOR SALE OF LAND

NOTE.—Read carefully.—In making purchases of lands under the Weeks law (36 Stat., 961), or the Clarke-McNary Act (43 Stat., 653), the Secretary of Agriculture desires to deal directly with owners wherever practicable, regardless of the size of the tract. Optioned lands will not be considered. In most cases agents can give no practical assistance. Lands chiefly valuable for agricultural purposes are not desired and should, so far as possible, be eliminated from proposals. Lands will be purchased only on the basis of an accurate survey by horizontal measurement, and at a specified rate per acre. A proposal on the basis of a lump-sum price for the tract can not be considered. In general, it is desired to make purchases of lands free of reservations. However, under some circumstances, purchases may be made subject to the reservation by the owner of the timber or minerals, under rules and regulations to be agreed upon at the time of the sale.

Fremont, Missouri
(City or town) (State)

(Street)

(SAMPLE) January 30, 1940
(Date)

The Forest Supervisor,
Forest Service,
U. S. Department of Agriculture,
(Address) St. Louis, Missouri

DEAR SIR:

I, John Oelrich
(I or we) (Name)

(If corporation, "A corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of _____, having an office and principal place of business at _____")

_____ of Fremont,
State of Missouri, hereby propose to sell to the United States all that certain tract or parcel of land situate, lying, and being on the watershed of
Big Barron Creek
(Name minor watershed—creek)
a tributary of Current River in the Township of
(or less) (Name of principal watershed—river)
Oak Grove, in Ripley County and State
of Missouri, and ~~inserted~~ known and described as follows:
All of Sections 33 and 34, T. 25 N., R. 1 E., 5th P.M.
(Insert complete description by metes and bounds, grants, lot numbers, or other legal description, such as section, township, and range. In case of small tracts, state also distance and direction from nearest post office)
3 miles southwest of Bennett, Missouri

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1934

8-2248

Standard realty form used by the Forest Service as filled in. Note the highlighted requirement that a survey would be done prior to sale (it never happened through tens of thousands of transactions).

If a corner had sufficient credibility, a Location Poster was nailed to a nearby tree and a tack was punched through the tag showing where the corner was in the Township. This poster was a 4 inch square steel tree tag painted taxicab yellow. Some are still found attached to the remains of downed timber or are even sometimes detected with a metal locator after being on the ground for decades.

Since the Forest Service was often a “belt and suspenders” outfit, the original from the field often was copied in ink, and if that were not enough, later typewritten and all 3 copies kept loosely together. They were filed in the far-flung District Offices in small towns across the southern half of the state with other property records.

One must admire the tenacity of these young men, many gathered from St. Louis and Kansas City who likely had little previous experience in the woods at all, much less so with looking for submerged rockpiles, identifying trees and measuring ties in links. Although they missed plenty in their searches (stumphole recognition seems beyond nearly all of the enrollees’ abilities for instance), it’s acknowledged that if they didn’t find the corners that they did, many might have been “lost for the ages”.

On that note, it must be theorized that they were given very literal instructions of making positive identification in the “conclusive evidence” category before considering a corner to be original GLO. For instance, most would reject a found stone if they observed no standing trees, even though the stumpholes were located 80 years later. No written record of their directions remains.

Form 874-9—Revised May, 1918
 U. S. Department of Agriculture
 FOREST SERVICE
 NATIONAL FOREST
 CORNERS OF THE PUBLIC SURVEY
 T. 34N R. 1W Mer. 5
 Corner common to Sections 2 and 3
 Corner consists of a pin post in place
 State condition good
 Dimensions above ground 4 feet
 Sketch grooves, letters, figures, or notches on proper face or edge.
 CARDINAL POSITION DIAGONAL POSITION
 Mound of _____ is located _____
 Pits are located _____
 Sketch markings of Bearing Trees (or Rocks) in proper box and fill blanks below, giving bearings from Corner to Trees and Distances in Links.
 Species _____
 Diameter _____
 Bearing _____
 Distance _____
 Do you believe this to be a genuine Land Office Corner? yes
 If not, why? _____
 H. H. Thomas Jr.
 (Date) 8-11-34 (Signature) (Title)

T. 34N R. 1W Mer. 5
 (Make sketch of topography near Corner)
 Metal Location Poster is on a Pin post
8 inches diameter, on the North
 side of Post which is the
 from which this Corner bears _____
 chains distant.
 Give any further facts which will aid in finding this Corner again.
There is a poster 4 chains North of this corner on the South Side of Highway 32 just east of the Highway Dept's Building
This corner is the S.E. corner of the Highway Dept's Fenced in area.

Front and reverse of a typical yellow sheet. “JF” under the signature meant “Junior Forester”, a recent college graduate. Note a declaration of certainty of GLO credibility but no recovered accessories and some uncertainty of whether it was a Quarter Corner or Sixteenth Corner.

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“Yellow Sheets” and the origins of Missouri’s National Forest (continued)

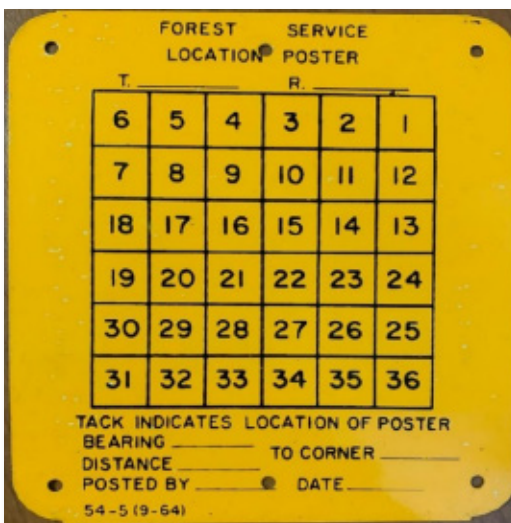
In time, the CCC was disbanded with the Second World War approaching and a much greater need for able-bodied men elsewhere. Following the war, the Forest went through several periods of downsizing and consolidating, and these yellow sheets were stored in attics, garages, and sheds. Some were gathered when the Forest finally hired surveyors of their own, and were important artifacts kept in old-style brown engineer field books (known here on the Forest as “search books”) when Forest survey staff went looking for GLO corners. Thousands aided in recovery during the Mark Twain’s “concrete monument era” (c. 1965-1975) of marking corners. Maybe a handful of clever county surveyors knew of these too, as some are referenced in their findings.

When much of the Forest’s surveying efforts became contracted through private surveyors, available yellow sheets were among the items “loaned” for the duration of a particular project for that surveyor’s reference material. As survey staff size shrunk to its lowest, all yellow sheets were kept at the Forest Supervisor’s Office (SO) in Rolla, and more trickled in as they were discovered while remodeling or closing District Offices. It’s extremely doubtful all were safely recovered, as there are often location posters still encountered in the field with no accompanying yellow sheet.

In the interest of providing these valuable records to the public and to ensure they would not be once again misplaced and perhaps even disposed of with some other reorganization of the Forest, former South Zone Forest Surveyor John Stevens (now retired), and the author met with Missouri Department of Natural Resources – Land Survey Program (LSP) personnel about the prospect of scanning the yellow sheets in 2009. State Land Surveyor Darrell Pratte (now retired) suggested filing them with the Corner Document records. Carol Payne was the Section Chief of the Repository and would become the custodian of the scanned images. Technical Specialist Jamie Elliott was tasked with being the first to scan and catalog the vast amount of material. Originals were to be returned to the Rolla SO after scanning.



An original cruiser book with a blank Yellow Sheet.



A Location Poster. In rare, unused condition.

Little did they realize how much work that would be! The initial delivery in early 2010 consisted of metal file drawers, wooden recipe card boxes, and even cardboard containers full of yellow sheets and corner cards (an internal 5” x 8” card that served much like a modern Certified Land Corner Document). The original load nearly filled a pickup truck to capacity. LSP staff were astonished, but diligently began work to catalog the images.

Afterwards, even more records trickled into the Rolla SO and were quickly delivered to the LSP. Indexing continued until 2016, when the flow finally subsided. According to current Repository Section Chief Jacque Walters, there are now 27,170 images of yellow sheets and corner cards housed in the Corner Master Index and can be found online at <https://apps.mda.mo.gov/mocornermasterindex/> where they are arranged by Township/Range/Section and augment the records available to search for corners in many sparsely surveyed areas of the Mark Twain Forest.

It was debated several times to make a widespread announcement heralding the addition of the yellow sheets to Missouri's PLS community, and most times was decided to wait until the work was done. A few brief messages were released (like the one worded for the general public which follows) from the Agency.

But before time escapes us, now may be as good as any since it's unlikely many more yellow sheets will ever be found. Here's to wishing all of you the best in your corner searches, and if you should by chance work on a part of the National Forest with no modern corner documents but only a yellow sheet, go armed with the knowledge of how they got there! 🇺🇸

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Supervisor’s Office
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Rolla, MO 65401
(573) 364-4621

Website www.fs.usda.gov/mtnf



News Release

Media Contact: Cody Norris
Voice: (573) 341 7405
Email at csnorris@fs.fed.us
Release No.: FY FY170726-037

How our Forest got its corners, and how you can find them

ROLLA, Mo. (July 26, 2017) – Mark Twain had many sayings. One famous saying attributed to him is “Whiskey is for drinking; water is for fighting over.” Along with water, land ownership has historically been a point of contention. Missouri has a long history of land surveying to prevent such feuds; and in recent years, much of this information has been made available digitally to the public through the combined efforts of Mark Twain National Forest and Missouri Department of Agriculture.

For decades, the Mark Twain National Forest was the sole possessor of *Form 874-9 – Revised May, 1918*, also known as “yellow sheets”. These old documents hold information regarding government land corners (the points from which land boundaries were identified) in 29 counties across southern and central Missouri. The history of land boundaries follows closely with the history of the Mark Twain National Forest. Here is a timeline of these changes:

Early 1800s: Government Land Office (GLO) contractors set across the unsettled areas of the Missouri Territory, subdividing the frontier into 1-mile sections and marking corners as they went. They kept field notes in journals to track their progress. This was rugged work; and it set the foundation for two centuries of land records.

1870s: Citizens of southern Missouri began an era of extensive logging of the state’s native oak, hickory, and pine forests. Lumber mills were commonplace. Land boundaries from GLO surveys were important for business and were only occasionally perpetuated by County Surveyors of the era.

1920s: Many mills had closed, as much of the state’s native forests had been logged. In the late 1920’s and early 1930’s, the people of the state became concerned about the condition of idle and sometimes abandoned lands in the Ozarks region. Much land within the present National Forest boundary had been stripped of timber, burned, and over-used as pasture or tilled until its productivity was seriously impaired. Abandoned lands contributed nothing to the local economy or tax base. Frequent wildfires and erosion were serious problems and the land needed extensive rehabilitation.

1934-1935: Eight separate purchase units embracing 3,313,705 acres, were established in 28 counties to create land that would be managed by the Forest Service for timber and watershed restoration.

1939: President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed four of the eight purchase units as the Mark Twain National Forest. The purchase units involved were: Gasconade (Rolla, Houston), Pond Fork (Ava) Table Rock (Cassville), and Gardner (Willow Springs). On the same date, the Clark National Forest was established by Proclamation. The units involved were: Clark (Potosi, Salem); Fristoe (Winona, Doniphan, Van Buren), LaMotte (Fredericktown), and Wappapello Lake (Poplar Bluff).

1930s: At the height of the Great Depression, Civilian Conservation Corps employees set out to verify land boundaries, equipped with just crude maps and typed copies of the original General Land Office (GLO) notes. Most of the GLO surveys dated from the 1820's or earlier. These men were charged to find, verify, and re-mark any found Section Corners, Quarter Corners, and other monuments set by GLO surveyors a century earlier. Defining boundaries was very important to the newly formed Forest and its mission of land conservation.

Late 1930s: The various administrative units that now make up the Mark Twain dispatched personnel to find and catalog the condition of corners in the Proclamation Boundaries of their respective units. To document this, they used the "yellow sheets".

1940s - 2009: For decades, and through several reorganizations, these "yellow sheets" served as the bridge between modern times and the original efforts of Missouri's first surveyors.

The "CCCs" of the Great Depression had the benefit of viewing many of the land corners in a time when much more of the evidence (from the GLO's notes of the 1800s) was still intact and not disturbed by man nor ravaged by fire or storm. This helped these hardy workers do such a credible job, that their documentation served the Forest for a very long time. Many of the location posters or "tree tags" found today are over 80 years old and are well-referenced in the "yellow sheets".

1960s: The Forest added state-licensed Land Surveyors to the staff to meet legal requirements of Missouri and the Agency. The aging "yellow sheets" remained in what later became District Ranger Stations of today's Forest. Sometimes they were discovered in oil houses and old garages of closed offices.

1990s: With the advent and spread of the internet, a need began to arise to have digital records of land corners. Although zone surveyors assigned to Districts often knew where to access these records, they were not readily available to private surveyors working for the public adjacent to the Forest. Unfortunately, this lack of information often led to erroneous corners being set even though reliable evidence existed, causing innumerable conflicts with adjacent landowners.

2000s: Discussion between land management agencies and surveyor groups in Missouri focused on ways to best digitize land corner information and make it available to the public. With attrition of manpower and closures of several administrative sites across the Forest, the "yellow sheets" and other property records began accumulating in the Mark Twain National Forest's Supervisor's Office in Rolla.

2009: Surveyors Roger Mallott (now on the Superior NF), John Stevens (now retired) and the Mark Twain National Forest's current surveyor, Chris Ferguson, met with DNR-LSP survey personnel in late 2009 to arrange the transfer of paper documents to DNR-LSP for digitization. Even after the initial bulk was digitized, old records continued to trickle in after being discovered, packed away in various offices; continuing to strengthen the fidelity of the digitized records.

2010-2016: Cadastral Surveyors Terry Throesch and Chris Ferguson delivered nearly ten thousand records to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources- Land Survey Program, now part of the Weights and Measures Division of the MO Dept. of Agriculture.

Thanks to the efforts of both the MTNF and the State, after several years of processing, the finished product is a fully-indexed database which increases government efficiency and provides easy access for the public. This information can now be found online at the [State of Missouri's Land Survey Index \(https://apps.mda.mo.gov/molandsurveyindex/\)](https://apps.mda.mo.gov/molandsurveyindex/). 🇺🇸

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Clayton Engineering: The “SAINT LOUIS” Sign

Photos courtesy of Austin Desain, February 14, 2024.



(above) Clayton Engineering crews mark locations for the new ‘SAINT LOUIS’ letters at the Cervantes Convention Center Expansion in St. Louis. (below) A rendering of the final product.



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