

Focal Point

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



March 2024

The March 2024 meeting will be held at Logan's Roadhouse in North Natomas on March 7!

Come join us for a round table discussion of issues affecting CLSA and the Sacramento Chapter.

President's Message

**Annette Hovorka, PLS
2024 Sacramento Chapter President**

Tara

March always reminds me of my Irish roots. Why wouldn't it? Everyone and everything seem to be Irish for nearly the whole month. Of course, like any holiday that survives time, it is not exactly celebrated as it would be where it originated. Little things, like the color for St. Patrick is blue and meals on that day would be more like Christmas. (Side note: I love corned beef, just the same, and who doesn't like a wee dram.) Still, it stirs the heart and the memory of days gone by.

Tara is the name of the location for where the stone of destiny was, and the kings of Ireland were crowned there. (In Gaelic, it means hill.) My Irish ancestors traveled from Ireland to Canada. Like many, they were seeking a new life. Like many immigrants, they equated success in that new life by land ownership. The idea of how important it was preserved in literature in characters like Scarlet O'Hara.

Surveyors play not a small part in helping to bring this dream to life then and now. When it comes to bringing improvement to the lives of communities, surveyors are the bookends of those efforts, in at the beginning and properly preserving the work in the end. Sometimes, like the celebration of St. Patrick's Day, I think we could feel like the actual recognition and celebration of our efforts are lost.

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The **Focal Point** newsletter is a publication of the Sacramento Chapter of the California Land Surveyors Association. Check us out at <https://www.sacramento-clsa.org>

Who's Who in the Sacramento Chapter for 2024:

Annette Hovorka PLS	President
Kris Scott	Vice President
Andrew Tapley PLS	Secretary
Laird Nelson	Treasurer
Cameron Clark PLS	Board of Directors Representative
Andrew Tapley PLS	Board of Directors Representative
Sherry Toutges PLS	State TrigStar Coordinator
Carl C.de Baca PLS	Editor Focal Point (He's back...)

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- Full page ad \$400/year

You can post job ads in the Focal Point for \$100 and they will run for a maximum of 1 year. And, you can take home one of our attractive slate CLSA coasters for a \$10 donation!

Contact the Focal Point editor at focalpointeditor@gmail.com

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THE RANT ZONE by B.A. Scrivener

Plats to accompany legal descriptions: these could only have been spawned in the Fifth Circle of Hell. How something so helpful and benign could turn into such an evil document bears some scrutiny. Let me say this though: Only in California!

First, please show me the particular passage of state law that requires a description to have an accompanying plat. What's that? Having trouble finding one? Next, please go to that imaginary piece of legal code and read me the section requiring that it contain every piece of annotation, street names, record information, adjoiner parcel data while being perfectly legible on an 8-1/2X11 sheet of paper. And don't forget distinct line types and symbol requirements all delineated in a Legend? Beg pardon? There is no such passage? I'm shocked! I thought for sure that all the ridiculous, insulting redline comments I have received over the years from municipal and county surveyors and state agencies, would have been predicated on state law.

If you have practiced in the Sacramento area for at least twenty years, you might recall the big fight over corner records and records of survey started when an interim county surveyor rejected a corner record, arguing that the information shown on the plat would be more appropriately shown on a Record of Survey. This led to the term "Mini Record of Survey" describing any over-zealous corner record, being tossed about for a while. Of course, the BPELS, as it was known then, said after reviewing the facts of the case, a county surveyor can neither reject a corner record nor require a record of survey. And now, we find ourselves regularly creating "Mini Records of Survey" via plats to accompany, at the direction of these same county surveyors and agency review staff. What gives?

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<http://www.plseducation.org/PDFs/2024%20Preliminary%20Program.pdf>

THE RANT ZONE *(continued from page 3)*

I would prefer my plats to contain minimal information and to serve only as a graphic representation of the description. I would prefer my plat never having potential for a latent conflict with said description and I would prefer that anyone needing to gain an understanding of what was being described read the description and look at the picture to see what it describes...period. For years I have deliberately left my plat devoid of annotation without a problem. I place a note at the end of the description saying “See Exhibit B, plat to accompany description, attached hereto and made a part hereof”. This should make it clear that the plat does not stand-alone by any definition. And on said plat I place a note saying “This plat is for illustrative purposes only – see the description, of which this is a part, for course and area information”. Also, by adding those two notes, my interpretation of §8761 is that the plat requires no stamp and signature. It is not a stand-alone document.

To no one’s great surprise, our friends the agency reviewers know better than the practicing professional regarding this and all other matters and so, professional opinion is merely a matter of opinion, and is routinely overruled. The upshot is that private land surveyors are prevented from staking out the moral and ethical high ground on battles such as these because at the end of the day, the agency can simply sit on your unsatisfactory (according to them) exhibit until your client screams to high heaven. Then you give in, knuckle under and do it their way in the interest of expediency. And the next time you submit a document for review, the agency will add a few more requirements to the process because, well, I’ll just say it – they can. Afterall, redlines equate to a job well done.

Sacramento Chapter, CLSA

Minutes for meeting of February 8, 2024

The meeting of February 8, 2024 was held at Logans Roadhouse in Natomas and called to order by President Annette Hovorka.

The following were introduced during self-introductions:

Annette Hovorka, Adam Foster, Curt Burfield, Russ Smith, Kris Scott, Jonathan Rohrs, Morgan Thacken, Stuart Rager, Sean Davis, Michael Chiara, Andrew Tapley, Jim White, Roger Perez, Laird Nelson and Dan Beaver.

President's report:

1. Introduced herself as guest speaker for the night and introduced new 2024 officers.

Vice President report:

1. No report provided.

Secretary's report:

1. Andrew Tapley reported that the January meeting minutes can be found in the Focal Point Magazine.

Treasurer report:

1. Laird Nelson reported that the chapter bank account was at \$6300 and there are currently 29 chapter members.

Director's report

1. Directors Andrew Tapley and Curtis Burfield reported that the quarterly CLSA Board of Directors meeting was held at the Holiday Inn Oakland Airport and that the following occurred:
 - a. Installation and swearing in of 2024 Officers occurred.
 - b. There was discussion on reasons for difference between CLSA membership entrance fee of \$25 and membership reinstatement fee of \$15. Motion was made to make them the same at \$25 and motion carried.
 - c. There was discussion at B.O.D. meeting about a You Tube video of an NSPS Townhall meeting discussing the Model Law Standards being circulated by NSPS. There was concern among some who saw the video that NSPS was taking the position that a GISP is, or should be, allowed to perform services that fall within the domain of Land Surveying. The conversation was tabled to allow interested parties to watch the video and review the documents being circulated.

Continued on page 6



Morrow
Surveying, Inc.
LAND SURVEYORS

Minutes for meeting of February 8, 2024 (continued)

The NSPS Model Law Standards documents can be found here:
<https://nsps.us.com/page/ModelStandards>

The You Tube video of said townhall can be found here:
<https://nsps.us.com/page/ModelStandards>

Newsletter editor:

1. No report provided.

Scholarship Committee

1. No report provided.

50/50 Raffle

1. Total raffle pot is \$607 (\$303.50 take home for winner) with 42 cards left.
 - a. Annette Hovorka drew the Queen of Hearts
 - b. Andrew Tapley drew the Three of Hearts

Annette Hovorka spoke on Small Team Development and then opened up the floor to further discussion.

Meeting was adjourned by President Annette Hovorka.

Editor's Message

Well my long walk on a short pier is over and so I am back at the helm here after exactly zero missed editions. I am still looking for contributions to this fine newsletter and I believe that President Hovorka will be announcing the roll out of an incentive plan to all you Hemingways and Faulkners. Contribute a piece, get a libation! Sounds good to me.

-Ed.



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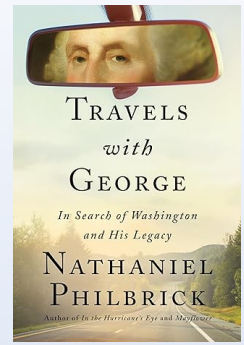
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Book Review

Travels With George by Nathaniel Philbrick

Contributed by Carl C.de Baca PLS



Since 1879 the U.S. has celebrated President's Day, in honor of our first president, George Washington. So many years have passed since he took the reins of a

divided country and through the strength of will, the ability to compromise and The resistance to widespread desire to make him into a monarch, that we mostly only recall the myths now: cherry trees, wooden teeth, crossing the Delaware on Christmas night, et al. Lately, if we know any thing at all about him is that he was just another plantation operating slave owner and any good he may have perpetrated on behalf of the country is outweighed by that sin. America, and the whole world now routinely judge historical figures by our current standards, and not by their contemporary cultural and societal standards. You throw out a lot of babies with the bathwater when you do that. It is abundantly clear that he struggled with the concept of slavery. Enough -

I decided to spend the President's Day weekend reading a book that came out a couple years back by an author who specializes in history and usually in sea tales. I have developed a distinct fondness for this writer and when I picked up this book, I knew it would be good. The author is Nathaniel Philbrick and the book is called "Travels with George, In Search of Washington and His Legacy." I have a stack of unread books and this one was in the middle of the queue but as the holiday approached, I decided to move it up to the top. Not only because we celebrate his birthday on this holiday, but also because the two aging imbecile frontrunners in our current election cycle are so far from being statesmen as to defy belief. I needed a reality check. I needed to see what statesmanship was all about.

In his first two years as the young nation's first president, George took a series of trips and visited many of the newly united states. He traveled light and tried to avoid as much fanfare as he could while getting a chance to see and meet the people of this country. That we would hang together and develop as a nation was definitely **not** a sure thing at that time, and he knew it. The Federalists of which Washington and Hamilton were the leading lights, wanted a strong central government. The anti-federalists wanted power to reside in the states. They were led by Jefferson and Madison. They had many supporters, especially in the southern states. It was George's job to bind these factions together and push the country forward. It is safe to say that he did that, and much more during his eight years in office.

Using John Steinbeck's seminal "Travels with Charley" as inspiration, the author decided to take similar journeys in 2018 and 2019 with his wife and his dog as the president had done in 1791 and 1792. He visited many of the same towns, villages, taverns and bridges, plus museums and monuments, all the while musing on what Washington was facing at the time. It is a great story and at the end, the reader is surely left with a greater appreciation of the man that George Washington was. And for me, I feel like if we had all read this book and others like it, perhaps we would have settled on better candidates to vie for the privilege of being our next president.

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2024 National Surveyors Week



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Global Surveyors' Day

March 21



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President's Message *(continued from Page 1)*

The preservation of the history, traditions, and efforts of our culture is a key reason why we have an association. Like time spent with my grandparents, the opportunity to share with each other stories, instructions, and ideas is necessary to make sure that our community understands where we have been and where we want to go.

This is the reason why it has always been important to me to support the organization and to participate in its activities. As president this year, I am hoping to share the enthusiasm I feel for these efforts. Like surveying, I cannot accomplish this without you!

Wondering what you can do? First, showing up at the meeting is a great contribution. It allows us to hear your part of our story and you get to hear others. You can also contribute by writing articles for our newsletter or offering a presentation for a meeting. I hope to see you soon!

Annette Hovorka, PLS
2024 Sacramento Chapter President

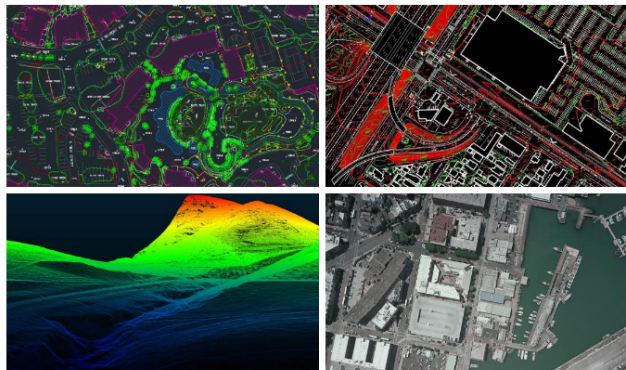
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