

Chapter News

Volume 6, Issue 1

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Famous Quotations:

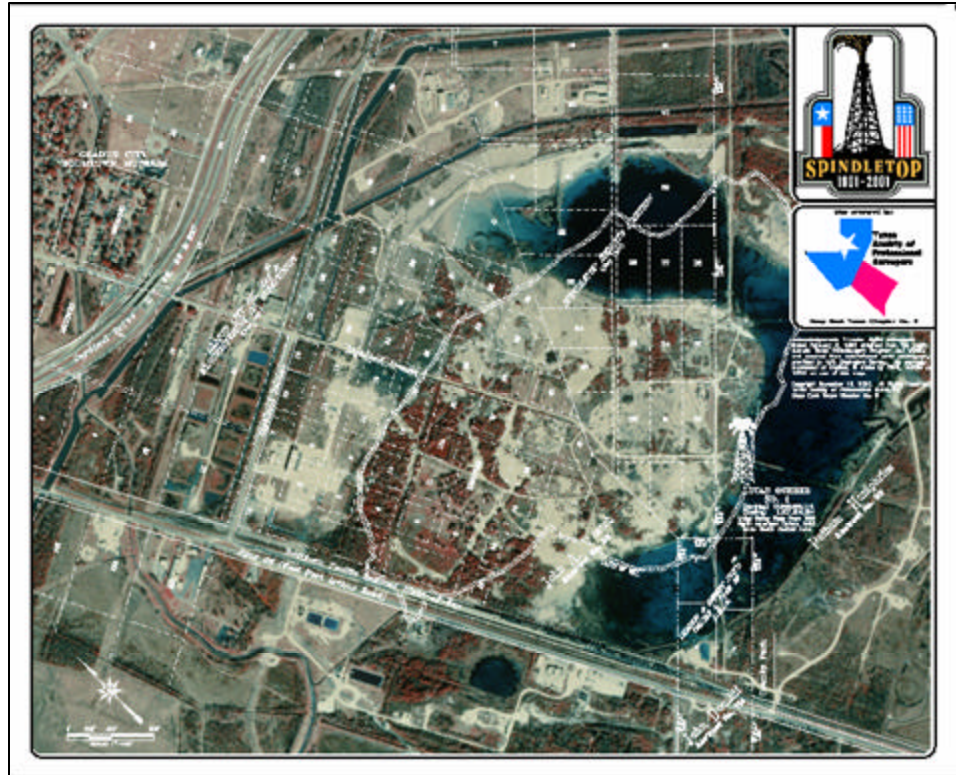
- **Amelia Earhart:**
You haven't seen a tree until you've seen its shadow from the sky.
- **Yogi Berra:**
No wonder nobody comes here-it's too crowded.
- **George Armstrong Custer:**
There are not enough Indians in the world to defeat the Seventh Cavalry.
- **Anonymous:**
The only weapon that becomes sharper with constant use is the tongue.
- **George Bernard Shaw:**
If all economists were laid end to end, they would not reach a conclusion.
- **Plato:**
Good people do not need laws to tell them to act responsibly, while bad people will find a way around the laws.
- **Anonymous:**
The grass may be greener on the other side of the fence, but you still have to mow it.

Spindletop 2001 Blows In !

January 10, 2001 saw the culmination of the chapter's yearlong effort to help Southeast Texas commemorate the centennial celebration of the Lucas

Gusher at Spindletop. A re-enactment of the historic event took place with actors in full costume and a giant

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President's Column

By Nedra J. Foster (email: nedrajo@exp.net)

Out of necessity surveyors become historians to some degree. As we muddle around in the past trying to figure out the lineage of any piece of ground, interesting stories are often uncovered. Here's a tale about a couple of survey partners...

When examining a General Land Office county map on Jefferson or Hardin County, one will see along the Neches River the proper configuration of 'one-half fronting' on the leagues. Two surveyors working together laid out most of these in 1835: John Allen Veatch

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Spindletop-One hundred years of history

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plume of water gushing out the top of the full-scale replica derrick at the Gladys City Boomtown Museum. The crowd of an estimated 20,000 + people stood in eager anticipation of the blowout. Just like it happened 100 years ago that day, the first signs of the impending explosion of gas and oil was the rumble heard from the earth below. The crowd was not disappointed as the rumble turned to a full roar with a geyser of water, simulating the oil, spewed hundreds of feet into the air above, returning to the earth in a spray that christened the crowd below.

Country western star and local hometown hero Tracy Byrd entertained the crowd prior to the action and former President George Bush gave a speech in honor of the occasion. The museum was opened to the public where they could walk through Gladys City visiting the shops, saloon, livery stable and other establishments set in early 1900's.

Chapter member and museum volunteer Joe Breaux manned the Nelson-White Surveyor's office at Gladys City where visitors could view the workings of these early day surveyors. The chapter had plenty of memorabilia stock on hand for sale to the public including

the commemorative Spindletop Oil Field map (see picture) and replicas of the brass survey disk members placed marking the site of original location of the famous oil well.

Just six days earlier, the chapter met in the Log Cabin Saloon at Gladys City where local historian and noted author Judy Linsley gave a presentation on the history of Spindletop and the effect



it had on Beaumont and the world. John Huntsberger, in full early day oil field roustabout costume, entertained the crowd with his banjo and songs from those early days. TSPS President Dennis Walker along with TBPLS board member Art Osborn and his wife Dottie were in attendance as well. Beaumont Enterprise writer Andrea Wright and

photographer Jennifer Reynolds recorded the event.

Saloonkeeper for the night, Gilbert Johnston "bought" a round for the entire house, root beer and crème soda for all wishing to partake. Members dined on a delicious meal of country-fried steak and cream potatoes with gravy along with fresh green beans and sourdough biscuits, finished off with hot blue berry cobbler. Just like the old days.

Before adjourning for the evening, Past-President, Lequin Hilderbrand presented certificates to several chapter members for service during the past year. Current president, Nedra Foster presented a framed Spindletop Oil Field commemorative map to Judy Linsley for her interesting and informative speech and a Lucas No. 1 Gusher commemorative brass disk to John Huntsberger for his lively banjo playing performance.

Although the celebration and festivities have finally come to a close, anyone wishing to purchase either the commemorative map or disk may contact Joe Breaux (email: wjbreaux@yahoo.com) at 409-898-5813 or Richard Worthey (email: rworthey@wortech.com) at 409-866-9769. The map is an 18 x 22 color aerial photograph overlaid with the survey and subdivision boundary lines and shows the location of the Lucas No. 1 Gusher and adjacent out-

Summer Camp for Student Surveyors

The Surveying Education Foundation of Texas and the University of Texas at Tyler present Surveying and Mapping Summer Camp 2001, June 3-8, 2001- Tyler Junior College Campus. Open to high school students who will graduate this spring or who will be

senior during the 2001-2002 school year. The camp, designed to introduce young people to the surveying and mapping profession, is free of charge to the students.

For complete information, includ-

ing an online application, visit the camp web site at:

<http://eng-tech.tyler.cc.tx.us>.

For more information, call Patti Williams at (903) 510-2365.

President's Column (continued)

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and David Brown, one a medical doctor and the other a murderer. Look in the southwest corner of a league for the initials of the surveyor, which is the file number in the GLO, and indicates there are original English field notes (both of them have notes filed in books JAV, DB and also W). You can see from the initials that these two surveyors leap-frogged coming down the river and laying in these leagues.

Of course they were also examining the land with self-interest in order to make the most beneficial choice as to where they wanted to take the quantities of land entitled to them. As colonists the Mexican government would give them each a league (4428.4 acres) and a labor (177.14 acres) of land. When a colonist presented himself to a land agent requesting a grant, he received a labor if he intended to only farm and a league if he only intended to raise stock – if he would be both a farmer and rancher, he received a league and labor. Naturally most folks intended to do both!

But on to the story... John Allen Veatch came from a preacher's family, growing up in Indiana and Kentucky. His father was also a member of the Indiana legislature. He received a good education with background in medicine, geology, and botany. In 1829 at the age of 21 he traveled south to New Orleans where he taught school, married and had a family of his own. The lure of the land caused him to immigrate to Texas in 1833. In 1835 he presented himself to Jorge Antonio Nixon requesting the land grant that he was entitled to as a colonist. In picking out his land, he split his certificate – placing part in Jefferson County southeast of the ravine of Tevis (which happened to

be the remaining land on the Spindletop Dome) and part in what became Hardin County adjoining Stephen Jackson's League (which happened to be on the Sour Lake Dome). Coincidence? I think not! Veatch spent several years around Bevil and Town Bluff where he practiced medicine and surveying.

One of David Brown's current descendent, Shirley Stephens Martin (former school counselor at McArthur Junior High School and married to Jack T. Martin, former basketball coach for Lamar State College) began doing research on her family. Her research on her great-great grandfather's brother, Robert F. Stephens, led to the discovery that he had fled South Carolina in April of 1833, after murdering his wife. He ended up settling in San Augustine as David Brown and became a prominent land surveyor.

David Brown took his league and labor of land where Beaumont now spreads out (the courthouse is in the Brown league).

During this 1830's era of history, there was much land to be acquired in Texas, and all sorts of folks were drawn here. Some with dreams of what they were coming to and some with demons being left behind. If you think about it, every generation since settlement has had vast opportunities in Texas if people are willing to step out and take the risks. Aren't you proud to be a Texan?



June Meeting Announced

A Joint Meeting of TSPS Chapters 6, 8, and 9 will be held Saturday, June 16, 2001 at the Lower Neches Valley Authority facility on the south end of Sam Rayburn Lake near Jasper. The beautiful facility offers an enclosed area with restrooms as well as an outdoor pavilion.

To get there, head north on Highway 96 from Jasper to Road 255. Head west on Road 255 until you reach FM 1007. Then head north on FB 1007 for about two miles and look for the signs.

The meeting will begin at 12:00 noon with Dr. Robert Baker from Texas A&M University speaking on the history of the timberlands of East Texas.

Around 2:00 PM, a late lunch of catered barbecue with all the trimmings will be served. Al Hargraves (936-632-2729) from Lufkin Chapter 8 will be in charge of food and will need in RSVP before the meeting. Cost is anticipated to be from \$8-10 per person.

Fun and games following lunch until time to go home. Beautiful setting - great speaker and topic - a fun time with your cohorts. Don't miss this FUN event!!

From Austin...Chapter Representative's Report

By Lequin Hilderbrand (email: lequin.hilderbrand@lpcorp.com)

The First Quarter Board Meeting of TSPS was held in Austin on February 17. Nedra Foster, D. D. Shine, Richard Worthey and Lequin Hilderbrand represented this chapter in various capacities, including a voting voice for each of you.

Outside the year-end business and the review of the proposed 2001 budget, the agenda items that seem of more relevance to our chapter are SURPAC, the ongoing title insurance debate, the Sunset Commission review, and the definition of a model relating to surveying and GIS applications.

As always, SURPAC headlines practically every gathering at the board meetings. Many question the logic, i.e., paying my senator or representative to do what is right. The answer is simply that this is the nature of the beast; a cost of doing business. We have many issues before the State legislature although much of the focus is targeted at the elimination of the sales tax requirement. My question to you would be "Do you enjoy playing bookkeeper for the State of Texas"? If we are to be pardoned, we have to open the checkbook.

As to the title insurance survey waiver, Stewart Title, who is basically spearheading this campaign, has support of commissions around the State that have no tie to the surveying, real estate or legal communities. A very fair and balanced proposal has been presented to the insurance commission but is now being opposed by Stewart Title and others. Interestingly, all but two title insurance companies support the same plan as proposed by TSPS. We

will continue to monitor this issue and keep you advised as to the outcome.

As many of you may be aware, the Texas Board of Professional Land Surveying falls under review by the Sunset Commission this year. What does this mean? In Southeast Texas, layman terms this means that TBPLS as we know it may or may not continue to exist. If so, do not be surprised by questionable changes within the rules and regulations. When state boards and commissions are under the scrutiny of a sunset review, their objective is quite simple: justify their existence. If you follow any political bodies at all, you know that many illogical environmental laws were conceived prior to or during Sunset Commission reviews. On the other hand, if the TBPLS is dissolved, under what authority would we then be governed? Ideally we would expect the answer to be the engineering board but, then again, this is politics. There are certainly advantages to being partnered with an engineering board, such as numbers and the professionalism associated therewith, however there are discerning issues, such as unbalanced membership representation on the board. We will monitor this matter closely and advise you of the results of the commission.

A growing concern and debate not only in Texas but around the country is that of surveying and mapping versus the use of GIS. The question before the board and others is basically "What is surveying and mapping and at what point does information or services not fall under the auspice of surveying"? The root of the concern

grows from the California ruling that all GIS users, when providing resemblance of any mapping or boundary information, be directly supervised by a licensed or registered professional surveyor. TSPS has passed a motion to adopt the NCEES Model Law with Addendum that, generically speaking, says any boundary defining service, or that which requires certification or is furnished as a survey product, must be administered by a licensed or registered professional surveyor. Certainly, there are more issues but the general concept is as above stated. Working in an entity that depends on both surveying and GIS, as well as GPS, I can personally attest the internal conflicts that sometime surface. Our position is simply the intent of the work or project.

Lastly, we have a Statewide concern of education. Educating our young people; educating our technicians and paraprofessionals; educating our licensed and registered professionals. Ironically one strong argument presented by Stewart Title in the title insurance debate is that most title or mortgage surveys do not adhere to the minimum standards of professional land surveying. Sadly that is a very good argument against our profession and our efforts. There is also the issue of relying on educational seminars as a revenue generator. Who is responsible for what? Who shares in the revenue and who is liable for the costs? These are only two of the many questions surfacing in an already heating issue. Our chapter, for example, depends on our annual seminar for granting of scholarships and other chapter

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Chapter Board Meeting Report

The local Chapter Board of Director held their quarterly meeting February 8th. Among those items discussed and action taken are:

1. Spindletop activities:

- Joe Breaux will order 50 additional disks with 30 going to Gladys City and the chapter retaining 20 for sale.
- The commemorative maps will be distributed through Region V to area schools. Maps will be made available as needed for possible educational programs.
- Joe Breaux (read Suzanne) will frugally frame and mat a map for display to help with marketing at Gladys City Boomtown and at Energy Museum if possible.
- Will attempt to have an area to market the disks and maps at October state convention, perhaps in historical booth. Will also display chapter award from Spindletop Commission.
- The commemorative maps and disk will be placed on the chapter website for sale to members and the public.

1. August seminar:

- Richard Worthey has graciously agreed to be man in charge. Others volunteering for this committee are Lequin Hilderbrand and Steve Butz.
- Possible topic: GPS issues with Michael McGuiness of Global Positioning Solutions. The seminar would focus on practical application of GPS, both in the field and office.

1. NGS Calibrated Baseline and Control Network Project:

- Steve Boucher in charge. Having trouble getting response from NGS.

1. Scholarships:

- Lequin Hilderbrand will send notice to each area school counselor of scholarship availability.
- Offering five \$500 scholarships per semester for surveying students at Austin Community College, Tyler Jr. College, Texas A & M CC, Basic and Advanced Shortcourses.

1. Awards at state convention:

- Will make greater effort as chapter to nominate people from our area for these awards. Consensus is that we have viable candidates for each slot.

1. March 8 Chapter Meeting:

- At Eellee's (former Patrizi's/Post Oak Grill location), 6 p.m. Program will be presented by Robert Young of Frontier Surveying – motivational speaker and will also be addressing the ups and downs of beginning a GIS business.
- Mary Chruszczak will be coming to bring us up to speed on October state convention and request our volunteer help.
- Robert Seipel has been invited to address SUR-PAC needs.

1. Possible New Project:

- Joe Breaux suggested Habitat for Humanity need for survey help with four lots (immediate need). Also have 32 lots in platted subdivision that need surveying but more long term. Discussion and questions but no firm commitment yet.

Minutes of Meeting

The Chapter held its quarterly meeting, March 8th, at Eellee's Restaurant with 30 members and guests in attendance. Guest speaker, Robert Young from Frontier Surveying and DGPS Mapping in Corpus Christi, shared some of the challenges and opportunities of dovetailing GIS work into a conventional survey business. Very informative and interesting meeting.

We were honored to have Rob's wife, Ivy, and his father, Willard Young of Ft. Worth, in attendance. East Area Chapter Representative, Mike Parker of Lufkin, also was in attendance at the meeting.

Mary Chruszczak of Houston, Chairman for this year's convention in Galveston, tantalized us with some of the plans for the October meeting. She also extended an invitation for our chapter to be 'hands-on' helpers in any and all of the organizational aspects of the meeting. Since we are an adjoining chapter, they would like for us to accept responsibilities in the events. Anyone interested in helping in any way (and there are THOUSANDS of ways), should let Mary know of their willingness.

Each chapter is being asked to prepare an exhibit of their local chapter history in commemoration of the fifty-year anniversary. Put on your thinking caps.

October is not as far off as one may think and the state convention will be here before you know it. For anyone who has not attended one, it is always exciting. Being so close, local members will not have an excuse as to why they missed it. Everyone is encouraged to attend. You won't be disappointed.

**TEXAS SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL SURVEYORS
- DEEP EAST TEXAS CHAPTER NO. 6**

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Sighting on 2001

We're on the Web!
www.tspd-6.org

Calendar of Events

June 16; Joint Chapter Members Meeting
Lake Sam Rayburn beginning 12:00 noon.

July; SURVEYING II - The Advanced Course
Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, Texas. Sponsored by TSPS and TAMU-CC. Chapter scholarships available. Contact Lequin Hilderbrand or Nedra Foster.

July; Quarterly Chapter Board of Directors Meeting
Details to be announced.

August 25; Fourth Annual Heart of the Big Thicket Seminar
Local chapter sponsored seminar. Time, topic, speaker, and place to be announced.

September 1; Election of Chapter Officers
Election of officers for 2001. Ballots mailed out to members August 15th. Must be received by September 1st. New officers to be announced in September newsletter.

September 10; Annual Chapter Members Meeting
Date Tentative. Details to be announced. Installation of Officers.

October; Annual TSPS Members Meeting
State TSPS convention in Galveston.

October 14; Annual Chapter Sporting Clays Shooting Event
To be held at the 100-in-1 Gun Club on Hwy. 421 in Lumberton. *Details to be Announced.*

From Austin...

(Continued from page 4)

events. If we are forced to share the profit, we fail in our commitment to grant five scholarships each year.

These are all issues that we will be watching closely in the near future and issues that we will keep you advised of.

As typical, Richard Worthey and Lequin Hilderbrand cannot make a road trip without some form of unplanned excitement. Ask about it at the next chapter meeting.