I was very fortunate this year to be invited to many State Meetings. I attended the following in January, February and March of 2019, Wisconsin, Maine, Illinois, Minnesota, Montana, Washington, Iowa and Hawaii. It is a wonderful experience to get to talk to so many members in such diverse areas. It amazing how they are so alike and yet so different. I must give some kudos to a few things I saw.

While Maine did not have a large attendance their 125 or so members raised over $10,000 for scholarships at their auction. I was impressed on how well they did with not only with getting donations but with opening their wallets and spending money on the raffle items. One member purchased some books for $350 only to put them back into the auction and then rebuy them for another $300, (apparently he felt they were worth more than what he initially paid). Montana, while I am not sure how much they made, was so impressive with games, auctions and prizes that I thought I mistakenly entered a Ducks Unlimited Banquet vs a surveyor’s banquet. In addition to a raffle and auction Wisconsin for years has had a Trivia Contest and this year the trivia contest itself raised over $16,000 for the foundation. In comparison some states had either no raffle or auction to raise funds for their scholarships. Washington had by far the best Banquet food I have ever had, Hawaii had the best weather and had a combined conference with GIS professionals. Great going Hawaii on working with other like organizations and sharing ideas and skills with each other. The one thing I did notice is that some states had a great booth for NSPS while others had little or nothing there to hand out. If the States Director ids not sharing information, who will?

I would like to suggest that as a condition of any officer of NSPS attending a meeting they should have at least 15 minutes to talk to the whole group or an hour for a presentation so members can learn more about all the wonderful things NSPS is doing. I have created a power point for just such a propose and you all invited to use it.

I do have some changes in mind for this upcoming year and hope to have your support. NSPS leadership and all our directors need to be more proactive and not just waiting to put out the fires after the fact. Looking forward to a great year ahead of us.

Respectfully,

Lisa Van Horn
NSPS President Elect