

# National Surveyors Week<sup>1</sup>

what's it all about?

National Surveyors Week – the annual week-long celebration of the surveying profession that takes place in March. What is the best way to use this event to the advantage of the surveying profession?

Consider having three goals of public awareness through

1. Education of the public
2. public media
3. public service

Education of the public is the number one goal of National Surveyors Week. The work surveyors perform for the benefit of the public often goes unrecognized and surveyors need to share our knowledge with them. The work being done by NSPS TrigStar volunteers is incredible and should be highlighted during National Surveyors Week. There are volunteers doing outreach to Boy Scout and Girl Scout groups and resources are available for these programs. We can expand on this and offer to speak to the local Rotary or Lions Club. They are always willing to have a speaker at their meetings. How better to promote your profession and your business than to make a public appearance?

Reaching out to the public through the media and making them aware of the surveying profession and our role in today's society is a goal whose value we all recognize. Over the last few years we have achieved this in a variety of ways including Presidential, gubernatorial, and municipal proclamations, newspaper articles, and radio spots highlighting National Surveyors Week. There is also a GPS Day, a Facebook and a Twitter. Each of these channels represents another way for the land surveying community to stay connected with a different segment of the public.

Although the annual effort of contacting the President, members of Congress, your governor and your municipal leaders may seem trivial, remember that it serves to remind them that surveyors are important. It is an essential part of the NSPS awareness campaign and serves as an introduction to our senators and representatives when we visit them on the hill. Whenever a bill, law or ordinance is being contemplated which affects the public and affects the surveying profession, these elected officials should know who to turn to for answers to their questions – surveyors, YOU!

Newspaper articles, radio advertisements, and on-line media can serve the same function for the surveying profession, keeping us in the public eye. Too often our image is hidden behind the impressions of an attorney, title agent or real estate agent. Surveyors can use the media to highlight the value of the surveying profession with our most important constituency, our clients. The best way to get an article about surveying published in a newspaper is to contact a local reporter and let them know that you have a good lead on a community interest story. If that fails to attract their attention offer to write one yourself and submit it to the paper. State societies, society chapters and even private firms have written or sponsored articles or public service announcements which serve as advertising for the surveying profession and their businesses.

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<sup>1</sup> Modified from an article by Frank Lenik, PLS (2016)

In his inaugural address on January 20, 1961, President John F. Kennedy poignantly challenged us when he said *“Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country”*. It is with this attitude in mind that we surveyors should attempt to give back to our nation and our profession and lay the groundwork for the future. Surveyors may lament the passing of the geodetic field parties of the past and the disappearance of the NGS monuments, but surveyors need to embrace the future, share expertise and volunteer for a common cause. In doing this we can prepare the foundation with which the public will turn to future surveyors and for their professional services. It will help us hone our skills and keep us abreast of changes in our own practice.