



President's Message April 2009



Dear MARLS Membership,

It is an honor to address all of you during this first presidential message. What a time we are presently in; we have our first black president in U.S. history which coincides with Abraham Lincoln's 200th birthday anniversary. If not for Lincoln there may have never been an opportunity for this historic occasion. President Lincoln had many difficult decisions during his presidency leading our country through some of its darkest days. President Obama will also have many very difficult decisions in an attempt to get our economy flowing.

The economy is on the minds of surveyors throughout the country as I have heard while visiting with surveyors from across the country and largely the northwest. While in Salt Lake City, Tacoma and Boise over the last month I had the opportunity to attend many meetings and seminars. The atmosphere has been the same everywhere - what can we do to hold our heads above water; how long will the economic downturn continue; will my 401 retirement have more than \$401 when I retire; and, will the stimulus money make it to my neck-of-the-woods. I am not naïve enough to believe that I have any answers to those questions, but common sense tells me that diversification, willingness to adapt and conserving cash flow will help one get by.

Many surveyors are slow for the first time in years. This slow time would be the perfect opportunity to be more actively involved with the things that make our profession one to be proud of. Take the time to become more active in your chapter meetings, help out with and sponsor a Trig-Star school, go to Helena and participate in the legislative process, join the MARLS Forum and discuss the issues that affect us all, volunteer for a Committee Chairman, be a Professional Land Surveyor mentor, be a Big Brother or Sister, support a Food Bank, clean up a highway or donate your time to a food kitchen. There are many ways that we can show our professionalism and they do not all have to directly impact Land Surveying.

My recent participation with neighboring associations has given me many reasons to be proud of many of the members of our organization. I want to thank Debi Anderson for her continued leadership in the NSPS railroad legislation, Dick Smith for his leadership in WestFed, Rick Gustine for his continued representation of us in the legislature, Kay McDonald for the realized and unrealized work she does on our behalf, and the Board of Directors and Committee Chairs for their dedication to the membership.

We realize that many members were unable to attend the conference in Salt Lake City, yet the need for professional development hours looms over all of us. Thus, we have scheduled a one-day seminar in June during the time of our Board of Directors meeting in Helena. We are also considering a second seminar in September if there is a need and interest from the membership. Take the time to visit the forums and let us know what kind of continuing education seminars you would like in the future. We are actively looking for speakers and topics for seminars and our conference next year. We encourage your ideas and input.

Let's all think spring and improved success for the coming year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kurt Luebke".

Kurt Luebke
MARLS President