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Our Vision
To enhance public confidence in and recognition of the practice of surveying and geomatics.

Our Mission
To regulate the practice of surveying for Albertans.

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The fundamental purpose of professional legislation is to regulate professions in the public interest. This legislation establishes standards, procedures and controls to protect the public from incompetent or unethical providers. Moreover, professional legislation promotes quality, and balances the rights and responsibilities of the professionals, the service users, and the public.

Professional self-governance is not a right, it is a privilege but only when the public interest is served. The powers of self-governance are delegated by the government on behalf of the public through professional legislation. If the public loses faith in a self-governing profession, that profession may be subject to increased government oversight or even lose its exclusive right to practice in its area of expertise.

A reformation to professional self-governance is occurring; it has swept through the international community and is becoming more prevalent in Canada. There are several examples of the changing professional governance landscape which may be relevant to Alberta Land Surveyors’ Association (ALSA) members.

Specifically, in the September 2008 ALS News, there was an article entitled: The End of Self-Regulation of the Legal Profession in England. The legal profession in England was reportedly reformed by appointing a new Legal Services Board to become the single independent oversite regulator of legal services. It was surprising that the board was appointed entirely by the government and not the legal profession.

In July, 2016 Quebec’s professional regulatory body for engineers (Ordre des Ingénieurs du Québec or OIQ), had its power of self-regulation revoked and was placed under trusteeship of the provincial government. This change was based on a recommendation from the Office des Professions, the authority that oversees all of the province’s professional regulatory bodies. In addition, the professional authority released a press statement that said “the effective delivery of activities of regulation of the profession and the financial stability of the OIQ are seriously affected, to the point of putting into question the capacity of the OIQ of carrying out its primary mission of public protection.”

More recently, the British Columbia provincial government passed the Professional Governance Act that made comprehensive changes to the governance of five professional regulators for engineering and geoscience, forestry, agrology, applied biology, and applied science technology under the authority of the new oversite body called the Office of the Superintendent of Professional Governance. Although the intent of the new act was to impact the resource sector, it will clearly apply to all sectors.

The new act was based on recommendations from an independent professional reliance report prepared for the province by Mark Haddock in June 2018. His report stated that due to several “high profile environmental protection and resource management issues, including the Mount Polley Tailings Storage Facility breach and the contamination of the Hullcar Aquifer, have drawn public scrutiny and brought to light decreased public confidence in some of the professional reliance regulatory regimes.” Under this new legislation several recommendations were presented:

- increase public representation and institute a merit-based nomination process for council;
- set common ethical principles;
- require competency and conflict of interest declarations from qualified professionals;
- strengthen professionals’ duty to report unethical conduct of other professionals;
- provide whistle blower protections to those who report; and
- enable professional regulators to regulate firms.

Overall, the new act created significantly more government oversite and control across these professional bodies.

There are several other recent examples of professional regulatory reform in Canada. The Cayton Report from British Columbia’s Professional Standards Authority regarding dental surgeons observed that they should focus on compliance, performance, and accountability. Upon acceptance of the report, the BC Ministry announced that they were setting up a steering committee to examine the recommendations pertaining to all regulated health professions in BC.

Public cynicism is the primary reason why professional regulatory reform has grown. Some of the public may view members of the professions as an exclusive club or an elitist group forming part of an established authoritarian institution.

Further erosion of public and/or government trust in professional institutions is the appearance that professional bodies are not able to separate their regulatory roles and their self-interest roles. These concerns are clearly outlined by the Honorable Justice Cote in his address to the Alberta Land Surveyors’ Association annual general meeting in April 2006 entitled Ethics and the Professional Land Surveyor. He suggested that it was critical to “keep separate the functions of the professional organization
which deal with things like professional discipline, breaches of the code of ethics and so on, on the one hand, and the self-interest of the profession on the other.”

If we consider self-discipline from the general public’s perspective, it could be viewed as a conflict of interest, protectionism, or even self-serving actions. Justice Cote provides an example of the police discipline process run and manned by the police department. Here, the concept appears contradictory and far from transparent.

With a membership as small as the ALSA it becomes an issue of significant concern. It is difficult for the public to accept that members could be completely unbiased when administering discipline because they may be acquainted and compete on projects for profit. This issue was addressed in the Cayton Report and it was recommended that the relationship between the regulator and member be one of “mutual respect and distance.” The report also highlighted that “it cannot do so if its Board is elected by registrants and partially subject to their control.” Moreover, the report suggested that it was difficult to have an objective relationship where members are tied so closely financially and have personal contact via professional association. Although ALSA members believe they can act with impartiality, the public will likely always suspect some amount of prejudice.

When trying to earn public trust there are other factors to consider. Specifically, registration requirements, scope of practice, complaint resolution, continuing competency, and quality and standards. Therefore, we must examine whether we are doing enough in these areas to ensure transparency and attempt to negate the perception of self protectionism.

Nonetheless, we should not view the movement as entirely negative. In fact it may present an opportunity for our profession to evolve so that we can meet the changing values and demands of society.

In April, 2019 at the ACLS/PSC meeting in Halifax, Hal Jans and Peter Sullivan presented a session on governance and responding to change. Their presentations raised many questions about the future roles of the professional surveyor. Firstly, how does the competency profile of the land surveyor evolve to meet the changing needs of society? Secondly, will we continue to be boundary surveyors or do we evolve into land administration and spatial data management specialists? Thirdly, how can the land surveying profession continue to meet its regulatory obligations and maintain trust in society given its demographic profile and jurisdictional structure? Lastly, should we move towards a national or regional collaborative approach to the administration of practice review, complaints and discipline, and continuing profession development? In summary, these are all relevant and important questions that must be considered when attempting to understand the changing perception of professional governance. Therefore, I urge ALSA members to approach the issue with an open mind and a creative thought process.

Council identified the issue of professional governance as one of its top strategic priorities. In the next six months, Council will gather information about professional governance to determine what action should be considered. As such, we must examine how we address discipline, qualify new members, ensure competency, and create standards to adapt to the changing needs of society. Most importantly, we must maintain and develop an open and honest dialog with the government and industry to ensure that we have a seat at the table. As former APEGBC President Dr. Michael Wrinch, once said: “Self-regulation is a privilege, not a right, and it is incumbent on us to remain vigilant and ensure that we are acting to fully deliver on our duty to protect the public.”
“What I am not so sure of is how many of us have a clear vision of what our place will be in the future. Without our collective actions to protect and expand our domain, others with little knowledge or respect for what we have done, and can do, will continue to undermine or attempt to deregulate more and more of what has been, by tradition, appropriately exclusive to us.” (www.xyht.com/surveying/land-surveyors-our-place-in-history/).

I found this statement to define exactly where we are as a professional association and the importance to Alberta Land Surveyors to re-define our profession. At first this sounds very self-serving to land surveyors, but after giving it more thought, what has been exclusive to us, is our protection of the public and protection of land boundaries that serve the public now and in the future. Land surveying has played an important role in human society for as long as there has been a human society. The profession of land surveying is unique due to its long and complex history. The understanding of the history of land surveying and how our profession has contributed to the evolution of society through the years can help us comprehend the current state of the land surveying profession and make decisions now for our profession in the future.

Very few people really understand what land surveyors do and how our services impact daily life. Our skills have been key in the development of societies around the planet and the physical infrastructure since ancient times. Land surveyors place monuments in the ground and create documents that maintain a system of records to show boundary lines that are retraceable well into the future. In other words, we are boundary historians keeping invaluable records for the future. As land surveyors we are trained and qualified to do this.

Many land surveyors in history have been leaders and explorers. As the world expanded and developed, it was surveyors that led the way. Many did so passionately and often at risk to their lives to explore new territories. Throughout time, many wars have been fought and people have been killed as a result of disputed boundaries. Society and people have taken boundaries very seriously not only in the past but today as well. As land surveyors, we become very important when neighbours disagree about their boundaries. Our biggest challenge today is to have the land surveying profession viewed as an important and necessary profession.

**Land Surveyors through Ancient Times:**

Boundaries have enjoyed a long history including mythology and Judaic-Christian history.

There are numerous references in the old and new testaments of the Bible concerning boundary stones, markers, landmarks and boundaries. Some include Deuteronomy 19.14, Proverbs 22.28, Proverbs 23.10 and Job 24.2.

Egyptians were the original land surveyors with a recorded land register in 3000 BC and completing farm boundary re-establishments following the annual floods of the Nile River. A rope stretcher using simple geometry was used in the re-establishment of boundaries along the Nile River. The Egyptians also found a need to create precise and accurate plots for the purpose of taxation. Egyptian wall paintings have depicted workers measuring with a knotted line which was similar to a more modern surveyor's chain.

The Great Pyramid of Giza was constructed around 2700 BC with almost perfect squares and north-south orientation. The Great Pyramid of Giza has its base sides of approximately 230.34m on each side with an error no greater than 30mm according to J.H. Cole in 1925, who was commissioned to determine the exact dimensions of the pyramids. This affirmed the skill in the art of surveying that the Egyptians had back then. It has been stated that the Great Pyramid of Giza is of a highly intelligent design that clearly demonstrates advanced geodetic, astronomical and astrophysical knowledge.

Around 1200 BC, during ancient Babylon, a limestone tablet known as the Babylonian Kudurru was set in the ground for boundaries. It has been noted that this is the earliest example of a boundary stone. It was inscribed with the description of the property, the name of the surveyor and the owner, and the ownership history. This stone also contained lengthy curses for anyone who would deny the owner's right to the land or move the stone. This represents one of today's common land surveying practices of placing a boundary marker at the corners of surveyed boundaries.

By 500 BC, the Greeks had adopted many of the surveying techniques from Egypt. Greek mathematicians including Thales and Pythagoras traveled to Egypt to study geometry, and then returned to Greece to impart their knowledge on mathematicians and surveyors. Legendary figures, including Aristotle, Plato, and Archimedes made the city of Alexandria a great centre of science, surveying, and related endeavours.

The Greeks developed the science of geometry for precise land division and standardized procedures for conducting surveys. They also developed the dioptre (dipoter in Greece) as an early piece of surveying equipment. The dioptre was a sighting tube attached to a stand. If it was fitted with protractors, it could be
used to measure angles. The dioptra was replaced as a surveying instrument by the theodolite.

The Roman Empire recognized land surveying as a profession and land surveying enabled many feats of engineering that defined the Roman Empire. One of the advancements in the Roman profession of land surveying was the organization of a surveyor’s guild. A guild was an association of artisans or merchants who oversee the practice of their skill and craft. These were organized in a manner that combined a professional organization, a trade union, a cartel and a secret society. A guild often required grants of letters patent from a monarch to enforce their trade and their members. Although this sounded self-serving, guild members found guilty of cheating on the public would be fined or banned from the guild. Back then, the Romans viewed the land surveying profession as serving the public and those who showed unskilled practice and/or unprofessional conduct were disciplined by the guild.

Boundary lines and boundary markers were very important during the Roman Empire. They realized that stable boundaries were important to peaceful existence between neighbours and reducing conflicts. In Roman religion, “Terminus” was the god who protected boundary markers. It was believed by having faith in the god would bring peace to the community and stability to its boundaries. A festival called “Terminalia” was held on February 23rd of every year. Siculo Flaccus (ancient Rome land surveyor and writer in Latin on land surveying) recorded the ritual. During the festival, adjacent property owners would meet at common boundary stones and the ceremony would have an offering of cakes, honey and wine. Then a pig or lamb would be sacrificed, and the blood and bones deposited near the site.

**Middle Ages:**
Along with many fields of study, land surveying languished during the middle ages. The Domesday Book (1086 AD) was written in the aftermath of the Norman Conquest of England (11th Century invasion and occupation by an army led by the Duke of Normandy who was later referred to as William the Conqueror).

The Domesday Book was a record of the “Great Survey” of much of England and parts of Wales by order of the Duke of Normandy (King William). The main purpose was to determine taxes owed during the reign of King Edward and assess land distribution following the Norman Conquest. The accuracy of the Domesday Book does not live up to the accuracy found in modern standards or even the accuracy achieved by the earlier Greeks and Romans.

**Colonial Times:**
France and Great Britain needed detailed maps to back up their land claims in the new world. This led to new and more advanced surveying techniques.

The colonial times led to the career of one of the most well-known historical surveyors: George Washington. A young George Washington got his start as a land surveyor in western Virginia at the age of 17 and was an avid surveyor and advocate for the land surveying profession throughout his life. In 1796, the Surveyor/President George Washington announced the appointment of the first U.S. Surveyor General. Washington is now eternally sculpted in Mount Rushmore, Keystone, South Dakota.

**The Land Surveying Profession in the Future:**
How do we portray land surveying as an important profession that serves to protect the best interests of the public and get that information out to those members of the public that we serve?

Professional governance concerns are resulting in provincial governments having more say in how their professional associations are regulated and operate. In November 2018, the BC government passed the Professional Governance Act. This act will consolidate government oversight of the five professional regulators for engineering and geoscience, forestry, agrology, applied biology, and applied science technology under a new Office of the Superintendent of professional governance.

The Alberta Government has a professional governance webpage (https://www.alberta.ca/professional-governance.aspx). On their professional governance webpage, the ALSA is listed along with a link to the Land Surveyors Act.

The Alberta Government does list the professional governance’s responsibilities that include (I only listed two, but the rest are on the website):

- Developing legislative standards designed to protect the well-being, safety and property of Albertans.
- Ensuring that the public interest is served, through the appointment of public members to Professional Regulatory Organizations (PRO) councils, boards and committees.

In order to protect the well-being, safety and property of Albertans, the ALSA should have the authority to prohibit and eliminate the unauthorized practice that occurs in the practice of land surveying. When new technologies are used for boundary purposes it should only be under the supervision of a commissioned land surveyor. The ALSA can work with the Government of Alberta to define those clearly in legislation in order to protect the well-being of Albertans as the government has stated on their professional governance webpage.

This year there will be a Professional Governance Review Think Tank that will research risks and trends in self-governance and make recommendations based on that research and what the ALSA wants to have. A new Unauthorized Practice Review Committee will develop a process deal with unauthorized practice and how to handle different situations that arise from unauthorized practice. The Future Committee has been given the term of reference to prepare documents that look at new survey products, technologies and standards to protect the public from unskilled users including for example: UAVs (RPAS), line locating, terrestrial laser scanning, and others.

Amongst the three committees, the ALSA will hopefully find a process to deal with unauthorized practice, especially due to new technologies that are readily available to the public and how our professional governance should address the concerns with protecting the public’s best interest from unauthorize practice and due to technology.

As an association we will have to redefine what our duties are as professional land surveyors based on advances in technology and the future of our self-governing profession. As land surveyors, we need to portray land surveying as an important profession that serves to protect the best interests of the public and get that information out to those members of the public that we serve and government.
I have to admit I haven’t been a big fan of strategic planning. When I was at university, I read a book called The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning by Henry Mintzberg. I can’t recall whether the book was on the formal reading list but I read it anyway. Perhaps I was drawn to it because my Policy class (read Strategic Planning class) was so convinced that strategic planning was the answer to everything.

According to Amazon’s summary of Mintzberg’s book… Mintzberg concludes that the term is an oxymoron -- that strategy cannot be planned because planning is about analysis and strategy is about synthesis. That is why, he asserts, the process has failed so often and so dramatically. Reviewing the so-called “pitfalls” of planning, he shows how the process itself can destroy commitment, narrow a company’s vision, discourage change, and breed an atmosphere of politics. In a harsh critique of many sacred cows, he describes three basic fallacies of the process -- that discontinuities can be predicted, that strategists can be detached from the operations of the organization, and that the process of strategy-making itself can be formalized. Mintzberg devotes a substantial section to the new role for planning, plans, and planners, not inside the strategy-making process, but in support of it.

Instead, I was a fan of Sam Walton – the founder of Wal-Mart. In those early days of Wal-Mart, Sam would try anything and everything. “Sam Walton was always looking to make progress and improve. He was constantly trying new things and experimenting. Many of those experiments led to big sales numbers, and some were bold enough to get the whole town talking about it.” Experimenting and observing what others are doing do not come out of strategic planning exercises.

I have a Dilbert cartoon in front of me. It reads:

**Pointy-haired boss:** Before we make our business plan for the coming year, let’s see how well we stayed on plan last year.

**Pointy-haired boss:** We ended up doing nothing that was in our plan. Just like every year.

**Dilbert:** Why don’t we skip it this year?

**Pointy-haired boss:** It would be irrational to have no plan.

Finally, I am reminded of a quote from the last of the Harry Potter films. “when have any of our plans ever actually worked? We plan, we get there, all hell breaks loose.”

In spite of my “down with strategic planning” comments so far, I am about to head into Council’s third consecutive year of strategic planning meetings and I am actually looking forward to it.

**Why?**

When I look back at last year’s strategic planning/priority planning exercise, I think we accomplished quite a large number of our tasks. And remember — this was before the termination of the ministerial order was announced – which took more time and energy than anyone could have imagined or planned.

The 2018 strategic plan was ambitious with seven objectives identified for the year – each objective supported by a couple of key action items.

1. Work on alternate funding models for the ALSA.  
   - Seek clarification from the 2018 new business motion to refer  
   - Communicate and educate the membership on the alternate funding models through the Friday Email, ALS News on how Council arrived at the three alternatives  
   - Form a committee on alternate funding models

While the outcome on alternate funding was not what the committee had hoped for, each of the three action items were completed. They gave it their best shot and turned it over to the membership for discussion and debate. Democracy won.

I have heard some people say that they hated to see the alternate funding recommendation get voted down when there was so much hard work and effort put into it. They were right. There was a great deal of hard work and effort put into it. However, like Sam Walton trying new things in his stores, some worked, some didn’t and some failed spectacularly – regardless of the amount of work and effort put into it. The important thing is to keep trying new stuff.

2. Improve communication between Council and committees  
   - Have all committee chairs come to December 2018 Council meeting  
   - All terms of reference provided to committees be SMART  
   - Educate Council and committee members on their roles and responsibilities

The first and third bullet points were done and I expect these activities will carry on into the future – not as a strategic priority but just as part of the way we do business. The second bullet point was not done. SMART is an acronym that stands for “Spe-
When I look back at last year’s strategic planning/priority planning exercise, I think we accomplished quite a large number of our tasks. And remember – this was before the termination of the ministerial order was announced – which took more time and energy than anyone could have imagined or planned.

1. Explore development of a public communications strategy
   I have to admit this is an area where we didn't get a lot of traction this past year. It is important and I expect that some variation of this action item will be part of the 2019 strategic plan.

2. Explore development of a public communications strategy
   Review and update ALSA financial policies
   • Roles, responsibilities and relationship between DOS, ALSA and the membership
   • Review Surveys Act and provide recommendations
   • Define “surveying” and who is allowed to do it
   • Consider offering Part 1 and Part 2 examinations twice per year
   • Engage with Land Titles and other regulatory authorities to develop a solution to the problem of dormant plans
   • Develop position papers
   The ALSA financial policies were updated and published to the membership on the website and in Council Report. The roles and responsibilities between the DOS, ALSA and the ALA membership took a twist this year with the notice of the termination of the ministerial order. Having said that, Council did engage a consultant to prepare a discussion paper. Council has now approved that discussion paper by Izaak deRijke and it is available to the membership. This discussion paper will help the ALSA with its discussions with Alberta Environment & Parks on the next priority action item – review the Surveys Act and provide recommendations. Define “surveying” and who is allowed to do it had some ups and downs this past year but I expect that the new Unauthorized Practice Review Committee will pick up where this term of reference left off last year.

3. Explore development of a public communications strategy
   Review and update ALSA financial policies
   • Conduct a salary and membership charge-out questionnaire
   • The Council Liaison for each regional area with membership and communicate two ways with Council
   • Provide a regular update in the Friday Email
   • Update the ALSA website
   • Land surveyors historical website
   The salary and membership charge-out rate questionnaire was conducted. The results have now been published. Council assigned a liaison to each regional area (outside of Edmonton and Calgary) and I think most Council liaisons met informally with their group at least twice. The feedback from this event has been positive and was included again in the 2019-2020 budget.

4. Explore development of a public communications strategy
   Review and update ALSA financial policies
   • The Council Liaison for each regional area with membership and communicate two ways with Council
   • Provide a regular update in the Friday Email
   • Update the ALSA website
   • Land surveyors historical website
   The historical website was updated. Some data had not transferred over when the site was converted to a wiki-style site. As history continues to happen in the land surveying profession, this site is in constant need of updating.

5. Explore development of a public communications strategy
   Review and update ALSA financial policies
   • Update the ALSA website
   • Liaise with Law Society, realtors, municipalities with respect to...
changes to the real property report

• Compile a list of potential stakeholders, identify the key players and weight them accordingly
• Continue to liaise with existing stakeholders
• Use a different approach to liaison/communicate with the Director of Surveys Office
• Liaise with the rest of government

The RPR Working Group liaised with their stakeholders through a questionnaire to those involved in real estate conveyancing.

The list of potential stakeholders was not done. It is not a difficult task but was one of those things that got left behind as other priorities and tasks moved to the front of the list.

The ALSA has had regular ongoing meetings with Alberta Environment & Parks since meeting with the deputy minister and assistant deputy minister back in September. These meetings have been beneficial and I think are leading to what will be a positive outcome.

The ALSA continued to try to liaise with government although it was difficult as the now former NDP government got into election mode. We did manage to meet with the Minister of Service Alberta and the Deputy Minister of Environment & Parks. We had ongoing discussions with Alberta Labour about the status of our regulation amendments but, alas, no luck. We have already requested meetings with the ministers and deputy ministers in the new UCP government and have already managed to schedule a couple of meetings with them.

7. Meet ALSA statutory obligations

• Monitor industries who are practicing land surveying who is not an authorized land surveying and inform them of applicable legislation and consequences (March 2019, Registrar)
• Handle complaints and discipline matters (Registrar/Discipline Committee, ongoing)
• Assess and examine articling pupils prior to receiving their commissions (Registration Committee, ongoing)
• Ensure continuing competency of practitioners (Practice Review Board, ongoing)
• Provide communication back to Council on complaints and inquiries (Administration, for each Council meeting)

These are all of the tasks which are part of our statutory obligations. It is easy to say that there is nothing strategic about them. They are the things that we do day-after-day and year-after-year. But they are strategic and having them on the list reminds us that they are strategic. They are priorities. They do cost time and money. They are actually the things by which government and the public will measure us against – and the public is the group that we are supposed to be protecting.

I wanted to go through this is exercise with you because I believe it is important to take a look and see whether we did the things we said we were going to do – unlike Dilbert’s pointy-haired boss. We actually did quite a large number of things that Council identified as a priority last year.

What will the plan say this coming year? As I write this, the updated plan is yet to be determined. Nevertheless, there will be some action items that will carry over from last year and be updated; some will drop off and some will become a part of the ALSA fabric.

Sometimes I get asked about being at the ALSA for as long as I have. If it was the same thing – year-after-year – I think anyone would get bored. However, each year, there is a new Council and new ideas and new priorities to get done.

Like Sam Walton, who was constantly experimenting, some of these ideas will take flight and soar while others will be duds. The fun will be in trying new stuff. It turned out all right for Wal-Mart and it will work out too for the ALSA. Besides, we’ve been at it longer.

SALARY SURVEY RESULTS

The 2018 salary survey is now available in the MyMember section of the ALSA website. Login and go to My Committees and then click on your member category.

Please note that the salary survey contains a large amount of detailed information and the text is very small.
A Surveyor’s Life

Dick Bassil, ALS #318 was interviewed by Angelika Gawronski, Shaw TV at the Leduc #1 Energy Discovery Centre, Devon, Alberta on January 14, 2011 in the ALSA Exhibit “Making Their Mark: The Land Surveyor’s Role in the Peaceful and Orderly Development of Alberta”

Gawronski: Sir, let’s just start from the very beginning. Tell me a bit about how you ended up in the field of land surveying.

Bassil: Well as I say the start was the first job out of school and I ended up as a rodman for a surveyor with Calgary Power up in the Kananaskis area. We were surveying to revert a creek to fill an earth fill and dam for the Calgary Power water system along the Bow River. I had in mind to go to university to take geology and ended up at the University of Manitoba. In the second year of an engineering course it was usual to take a surveying course in the summer for a few weeks and I got very interested in that. I enjoyed that and came back to Calgary to get a summer job.

The Department of Highways, as it was known in those days, with the provincial government was looking for a, I think they called it, survey helper. So, it was all done by telephone. I forget what they called it, the employment office in those days but I got a call to meet a surveyor on the main street down in Calgary, right at the corner of the old Land Titles building. This fellow drove up with a cowboy hat on. I happened to be standing beside another red-headed engineering student and we got talking and we were there for the same crew. This fellow by the name of Morley Kolomyjec got out and said are you two birds ready to go to work. We said I guess so and we headed for Medicine Hat.

We each had a little suitcase and he said it looks like the first thing we have to do is get some sleeping bags. So, we stopped in Medicine Hat. I think I bought the cheapest one I could find. We headed north of Medicine Hat on what is known as the Schuler Highway and what is known now as Highway 41. He was in the process of starting to do the survey of Highway 41, starting at the northeast of Medicine Hat.

So, the first thing we came upon was this about five white billowing tents because the wind was screaming and these typical government, I guess they were twelve by fourteen-foot wall tents. We were invited to throw our luggage into one of them and the sleeping bags. Then we went further north to meet what was the assistant surveyor at that time and he is one of the older land surveyors still practicing now, Murray Ingalls. We started right then. I started as a chainman. That was the start of what followed, being in the articles system under Morley Kolomyjec and retired 37 years later.

Gawronski: In 37 years you get to see a lot of things. Things you want to see, things you don’t want to see. Let’s talk a bit about the progress you have seen and got to experience in the field when it came to the technology. Let’s start with the 1960s to the present.

How has really the technology changed and changed drastically, you know, from the sixties to where we are today?

Bassil: Well in the sixties we were still with the government crew. We were still using typical equipment for measuring. A 200-foot steel tape to measure distances. Theodolites of the day, which were relatively new by that time, particularly the Wild make. They were internal reading theodolites and pretty good for that time. I didn’t experience too much of the open vernier-type that you might see in the exhibit here but it was measuring 200 feet at a time. In my case, it was all on the prairies in the heat and you had to be careful with what you call the systematic errors in measuring. So, you had to make sure that the measurements were all reduced to a good measurement for temperature and sag in the tape but that went on for a few years. Nothing really changed in the way we did things. We did things with bearing and distance and do plans on the basis of that and field notes.

It wasn’t until, for myself at least, the early seventies and the late sixties I guess that things really ballooned. Things were really happening and I guess we understood that it was through the space program and so on but electronic measuring distance instruments became available and I was fortunate to get one of the first in government to use. It was an MA100. It was an infrared system that was very precise but it was difficult to get good readings that were valid. You made sure that you weren’t bouncing it off of a license plate or something and get a wrong distance. So, that was a big change for me and I always felt fortunate to be involved in that change and had the opportunity to use that equipment as well.

I never did experience the use in the field of GPS, which we’re all using now as lay people really but the younger members of course went through that big change in the later seventies and getting into GPS and a different way of measuring all together.
**Gawronski:** Were you surprised with the progression and how it went from field notes and writing to using satellites from outer space to find locations?

**Bassil:** Yes, it was an incredible change. We were talking on the way out this morning and thinking about our fathers going from horse and buggy to the Model T and what kind of a change that would have been for them but, as technologists, technicians and professionals, it was an exciting time for us and personally I felt very fortunate to be involved in all of that excitement.

**Gawronski:** Would you say that through that evolution I guess of your apparatuses, did it change the role that a land surveyor had? Did it make things easier? Did it make things more complex?

**Bassil:** Well it reduced the size of the crews. When I started we usually had a mounder. He dug the pits around the iron pin that was placed. In those days we were still digging pits to mark the corner. We had a mounder. We had two chainmen and a rodman and an instrument man and then the land surveyor that was running the crew. Then we would have a cook along to do the cooking. So, yah, the crews of course changed considerably and maybe you can talk to this better than I can.

You know today you see a one-man crew who is out. I think when you get talking to Lou (Breton) here, I can remember Lou probably being the first one in this area running a one-man crew. He was always ahead of technology in my view. I was on the Whitemud freeway the one time and he was off on a berm and here he was all by himself. He had EDM equipment all over the place and prisms and I knew that there wasn’t anybody else around because Lou was doing it all by himself. He had EDM equipment all over. We used to get our mail regularly wherever we were camped and I got this big package in the mail one morning. We were camped out at Edson and by this time we were in trailers. We were out of tents by this time and we had moved ahead and tried to keep up with the oil patch. So, government got some trailers but anyway, the mail had a great big package, which we called files that were sent out to us to do a project or a job. I spent a couple of days, while the crew was working on other things, looking at this file. I noticed that it had a bit of a history and in fact two or three other land surveyors in the department had been involved in this file. It had never gone anywhere and I started to realize that there might be something to be concerned about.

At any rate, the file showed that a couple of land surveyors ahead of me, previous five years or more, had been run off the property with what was referred to as an elderly lady with a long firearm. She had been upset for quite a number of years. So, I thought well the first thing maybe we should do is take my assistant and visit her the night before. So, we drove way back in the bush and got to her gate. Her homestead was about half a mile. It was in the middle of a section, which made it confusing for improvements in the homestead era and her buildings were old, old homestead buildings.

So, we walked in about half a mile. There was a gate and some cows and about three big dogs came out to meet us. I looked at my assistant and the next thing we knew this little old lady, white-haired lady, I don’t know, she must have been in her nineties, came out to meet us with this huge rifle. So, we exchanged, I forget just what we exchanged, but we tried to explain that we wanted to talk to her about some surveying that we had to do on her property and she got right into it. She said, you are not going to be doing anything here. She said, look at the wall there. They have been shooting at me. There were holes in the mud walls on her log cabin and so on. It didn’t sound like it was too serious. To us it just sounded like she needed to talk to somebody.

So anyways, she ended up inviting us in and she said, would you like a cup of tea. We said, we’ll have a cup of tea and I said but we do want to explain why we have to get on your property. So, she propped this big 44-40 rifle with an optic barrel and if you know anything about that, that is an old-timer with a big, big cartridge and the shells were all over the kitchen table. I don’t know how long they had been there because she didn’t know that we were coming but anyway, we had a pretty good conversation and a cup of tea. We got into things that were quite personal for her with her family that wanted her off the land. I think that she was way ahead of everybody. She was way ahead of the government and she knew what was going to happen when we did the survey and sure enough and I felt badly after.
**Gawronski:** You guys must have to be, obviously not just bushmen, not just nature enthusiasts as you guys are in the bush all the time but also have people skills because you will run into men, women, people of various backgrounds that you know could try to stop you guys. Would you say that that is a big skill set for a surveyor as well?

**Bassil:** Yes, it is and it is one of the things that our profession spends a lot of time on. That first contact and public contact. We have legislation that allows the land surveyor to do his duty on private land but that isn’t taken professionally as just bullying in there and going ahead. So, there are a lot of sensitive things to do right at the start, which can be very helpful later on. It is a difficult area with the amount of work to do and today’s society.

**Gawronski:** Great story. Let’s start talking a bit about your experience with Chief Nelson and the fact that through your line of work you were able to essentially walk into a whole new world and experience a whole new group of people living here amongst us and maybe get an insider view from what normal people usually don’t get. Tell me a bit about that opportunity and how unique it was to just be able to enter a reserve and see what their day-to-day life is like.

**Bassil:** Well that happens a lot with our members as dealing with the aboriginal group but this was one of the first ones for me. Again, I was a gung-ho land surveyor wanting to get the job done. We were doing what we call a control survey in the area of Pincher Creek. It was to do with a surveying and mapping program. By this time, we were into coordinates and so on and before me, John Deyholos, another land surveyor with the department, had put some survey control in the area. When you did that in those days, you used high points. So, I get down there to do this work for the Town of Pincher Creek. It was a project with the government and the municipalities and realized that one of the monuments was on the Peigan Reserve and the high point was actually north, just almost straight north of Brocket. There is a bit of an outcropping there and a very high prominent point, which I wasn’t surprised that John had picked that point to put a control marker on. You get lots of nice sightlines out of it and you can measure for miles.

So, anyway we left camp and gung-ho again, barged in on the reserve and walked into the band office and was introduced to Wilma Big Mustache, the band manager. I thought this could all be done in about an hour and I said I would like to speak to the chief if I could. She said, well, he is not here today but he’ll be back tomorrow. I said, well, I could be back tomorrow and she said well that’d be fine and she didn’t really give me a time. She just said come back tomorrow.

So, I waited until about mid-morning and I went into Wilma Big Mustache again and she said yes, the chief is in. I had a bunch of maps and everything and wanted to explain this whole project to him and tell him why we had to get up on that point. So, I barged in and I was invited in. He very politely introduced himself and greeted me in a very nice way. He said, I understand that you want permission to go on our land and I said well I do and I am with the province, which I don’t think helped but anyway he said, well, what do you need. So, I go into this long song and dance with him about how important this project was for the people of Alberta.

I was still standing by this time, still thinking that I’d just get something and go. He just sat up in his chair and he says, well now, why don’t you sit down and he said we’ll talk about the way that it really is. So, that prepared me then for a long, long discussion on his culture and his people and the responsibility he had for his people and his land and I respected that and I actually enjoyed it. It was done a very nice way.

He signed a pink piece of paper and he said, I have no problem with you going up there. He said but I want to tell you that my son is buried on that same point. He signed a pink piece of paper and he said but I want to tell you. He very politely introduced himself and greeted me in a very nice way. He said, I understand that you want permission to go on our land and I said well I do and I am with the province, which I don’t think helped but anyway he said, well, what do you need. So, I go into this long song and dance with him about how important this project was for the people of Alberta.

**Gawronski:** I have that all the time. I think it is going to be wham bam thank you ma’am, out the door and then you actually, when you take that moment to stop and to like immerse yourself into something, you come out feeling so much more, you know, knowledgeable and so much more aware. Is one of the big highlights of it is that you guys do get to not only, you know, work the land, see the land but you get to meet the people on the land?

**Bassil:** Yes, the people are a big part of it and in a lot of cases when there is a problem, in most cases they need a listening board and even though you are taking it on the chin verbally, when they are done they usually shake hands and say, get on with your work and stay on the trails and that type of thing but it’s a people thing to a large extent.

**Gawronski:** Okay, I have one more thing that we need to talk about. Speaking about people, some of the people that you meet on the land that you are surveying are the people that you work with. You guys have some quirky characters in the field, some gentlemen and some women who perhaps, you know, start out in the field and they end up in a totally different realm of life. You had such an experience with a young gentleman that you hired. Tell me a bit about the people, the surveyors and how they can start in one area and end up completely on another side, another end of the spectrum.
**Bassil:** Well one of the things that the surveying industry does is that it gives great jobs to university students and they are great kids to have out to work. They are all full of pee and vinegar and by nature they are usually outdoor people but some of them are maybe not so outdoorish.

The other thing that happens in government is that we used to get messages or e-mails, not e-mails, memos from the higher up, the Director of Survey for example, Mr. Youngs at that time or Dave Holmberg. So and so has got a son and he needs a job for the summer. Good kid, would you like to take him? Of course, I did on a number of occasions.

In this one instance, the son was the son of another land surveyor with the department and this young fella came out and he was seventeen. He was right out of high school. He was about 220 pounds and six feet tall and strong as an ox but he was pretty green, especially for tents and outdoor cooking and so on but anyway. He was fairly clumsy but he would work hard. He would just work very hard and when you’d dig pits with him, he’d have dirt all over the place. Normally when we dug pits in those days, there would be two guys to a set of pits and then you’d move on but if he was digging the pit right next to you, your pockets would be full of dirt and your face would be full of dirt. It was just flying, so it wasn’t long before nobody would dig pits with him and he’d dig alone.

If you cut bush with him you had to watch where he was. He had to be at least three tree lengths from you; otherwise, he’d drop a tree on you or trimming or limbing or whatever. He was just gung-ho, sweating, working hard and a real good kid. After he left me, after about two years with me he left and went with another land surveyor that was working in the foothills and the word got around quite quickly that Velo had chopped two toes off while cutting bush and nobody was a bit surprised at this you see. Anyway, lost track of him after that.

Many years later his dad passed away and I went to his dad’s funeral. On the way to the funeral, I remember hoping that I would meet Velo because he had a big family and it was a mixed family coming from Europe but I had hoped that Velo would be there. Sure enough, in the church I spotted Velo up at the front, very distinguished looking, glasses and I said, boy times have changed. I could hardly wait for the reception and for the reception, the fellows behind me here will know Ilmar Pals. He was an Estonian and he was a good guy but the church said the reception is over at Ilmar’s place and you are going to drink his homemade wine and have his favorite sardines and that was typical of Ilmar. He was great to be partying with.

So, anyway, we get to the reception and I could hardly wait to get up to Velo and shake his hand. He looked at me and he kinda tilted his head and I said, I don’t know whether you remember me but I said, I am Dick Bassil and he said, I remember you. So, we got talking a bit about some of the things that we had done surveying. I said to him and what are you doing now? He said, well, at the moment I’m the head orthopedic surgeon at the big hospital in Minnesota. I said to him, that is pretty hard to believe and he cracked up.

**Gawronski:** The fact that he went from chopping his toes to maybe attaching body parts to people. It was a great story.

**Bassil:** Yes, very clumsy, to an orthopedic surgeon. It was a great story. Human interest.

**Gawronski:** Total human interest. Do you think that he gained anything from those years surveying that may have helped him in this surgical field?

**Bassil:** Oh, we taught him a lot. We helped him along.

**Gawronski:** If it wasn’t for you guys in surveying, they wouldn’t be having a head surgeon there of his nature.

**Bassil:** Yes, and we hope we taught him something too.

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University of Calgary

JHH John Deyholos Memorial Scholarship - Kate Pexman
$3,000 annual scholarship to a continuing undergraduate student in the Department of Geomatics Engineering at the University of Calgary. The award is based on grades earned in ENGO 455: Cadastral Surveys and Land Registration Systems (minimum B+ grade required) and a minimum grade point average of 3.00. In memory of John Deyholos who was one of the founding directors of the J.H. Scholarship Foundation.

Thank you so much for awarding me the John Deyholos Memorial Award. As a geomatics engineering student and an athlete on the University of Calgary Women’s Volleyball Team, I know how important time management is in order to be successful. I will be entering graduate school in fall 2019 and this award will help to fund the next steps in my education.

University of Calgary Scholarship

J.H. Holloway Scholarship Foundation - Dawood Nadeem
$3,000 annual scholarship to a fourth year student in Geomatics Engineering based on academic merit and participation in university activities.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for the J.H. Holloway Scholarship in Geomatics Engineering. I am an undergraduate student in my penultimate semester of finishing my fourth year in geomatics engineering at the University of Calgary and have had the pleasure learning about such a diverse, technical and fascinating field. Although I graduate this year, my goal of pursuing a higher education is becoming true. I hope to gain valuable work experience in this field and return to pursue a master’s degree in geomatics engineering with the aim of becoming a researcher in remote sensing and GIS. By awarding me this financial assistance, you have given me great help in paying my educational expenses, which allows me to focus more on the importance of university education that is to learn, grow, aspire and give back to this wonderful university and community. Your generosity has inspired me to continue to work hard, learn and contribute to the geomatics engineering field and department at the University of Calgary, as well as give back to the community. I hope one day I will be able to help students achieve their goals and education, just as you have helped me. As Winston Churchill once said: “We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.”

An SOB* in Banff!
*Surveyor on a Bike
Can a study of legal services regulation in Scotland have relevance for regulators in widely different professions? Should regulators be concerned about approaches and recommendations that are not specific to them? Anyone interested in professional regulation will have noted increasing government interest in this area, including reviews of health professions regulation, professional reliance, complaints processes and all that has traditionally fallen within the province of self-regulation. Government interest, to the point of abolishing regulators, should cause Canadian regulators to take note.

The most recent and far-reaching review of regulation approaches and content is that of legal services regulation in Scotland, entitled Fit for the Future: Report of the Independent Review of Legal Services Regulation in Scotland (“the Report”)(5). Though focused on one sector, the issues and recommendations are easily transferable across most areas and are worthy of careful consideration by all committed to “public interest” regulation.

The report invokes the need for regulators to anticipate the dramatic changes happening in their respective industries and professions.

The report goes much further than the concept of “Right Touch Regulation.” To enable and support high quality professional service delivery, the report calls for a single “sector-wide” regulator with responsibility for all (legal) service providers. A unitary body would eliminate varying standards for entry and professional conduct and inconsistent approaches to oversight. One entity would also eliminate many challenges faced by small regulators, which often lack human and technological resources.

There are several key themes in the report.

Setting Expected Outcomes
The work of a regulator should be premised on meeting required outcomes. Those outcomes should specify the purpose and expected impact of regulation. Most of the proposed outcomes for legal services regulation are of broad application and would require a regulator to:

- enable access to the profession including choice and diversity;
- offer accountability in protecting the public and consumer interest;
- secure the confidence and trust of the public; and
- enable future growth of the profession
- A commitment to these outcomes, which are called “regulatory objectives”(6), has had some uptake in Canada(7), but is far from the norm.

Risk-based and Principled Regulation
Regulation, in its structures and approaches, should be principled, risk-based and proportionate. Regulation should embody the Better Regulation Principles (familiar to those with an appreciation of approaches in United Kingdom), which add the concepts of consistency, accountability and transparency to the other objectives. To ensure their adoption, these requirements should be embodied in governing legislation, while allowing the regulator to articulate the specific details. In discussing proportionality the report notes:

“This would not be a one size fits all model, as clearly the arrangements for each of the professional areas should be appropriate and proportionate to the business carried out by those professional groups.”

Innovation
Regulators should assume a role in encouraging/enabling innovation by creating and supporting an environment where innovation is encouraged. This is in stark contrast to the present where innovation is often stifled by “the outmoded or necessary limitations of the regulator’s structure” (p. 20).

Governance and Independence
Many regulators are grappling with a range of governance issues, including board size, constitution and selection processes. (8) Related to this is how professional regulation maintains its independence in the face of changing and increasing expectations of the profession and government.

The recommendations in the report are revolutionary, at least from a Canadian perspective. They advocate for an approach to regulation (with responsibility from entry-to-practise to departure from the profession) that is unquestionably independent from government. To accomplish this complete separation, the report recommends that the accountability of a regulator would be to the Legislature and the regulator would be subject to audit (by a body similar to an Auditor-General). To accomplish this several core concepts must be adopted:
There must be complete separation of regulatory and representative roles;

The Chair of the Board should come from outside the profession and be appointed by a parliamentary/legislative committee, with a specific term and removal only for cause;

There should be an equal number of professional and non-professional members of the Board, resulting in a slight plurality of non-professional members;

The Chair and Board members should have experience in corporate governance;

There should be a statutory requirement to establish links with the profession and the representative bodies and to work proactively with the profession to improve practice and ethical standards and enhance public trust in the profession.

Complaints and Discipline
The discussion of complaints handling is another area where the proposals should have widespread interest as they describe approaches to addressing public concerns about professional behaviour. Recognizing current complaints processes as “legislative”, i.e. entrenched and not ‘fit for purpose’ for either consumers or professionals, the recommendation is that complaints handling should be driven by consumer principles with the ability to develop appropriate, flexible and fair sanctions along with fair compensation and a simple process for appeals. The details are obviously complex, but the notion of a process that allows for flexibility is very appealing.

Entity Regulation
One aspect of the report that will be of significant interest to professions where practice occurs in firms/groups, is the discussion on “entity regulation.” The benefits for both the profession and the public that would derive from regulating an entity delivering professional services are outlined and the benefits of allowing various combinations of services to be provided under one roof are highlighted. The entity would be responsible to the regulator for the quality of services, management, supervision, quality improvements and maintaining an internal complaint system. Regulators would require a “fitness to be an entity” test before being allowed to deliver services. Finally, entity regulation would not be in lieu of individual regulation, but would be in addition, to provide better mechanisms to deal with professional behavior. The details will be of significant interest to regulators in Canada which are at various stages of implementing models of entity regulation.

Conclusion
Because of the practical and principled approaches that are outlined, the report is worth a careful read with wide distribution among regulators and those interested in professional regulation because of the practical and principled approaches that are outlined in it. No doubt in jurisdictions where deeply entrenched interests will be affected, the report will be controversial. The government sponsored reviews and actions we have seen to date have already begun to bring on some discomfort among regulators. The report’s analyses will allow an objective reader and a thoughtful regulator to contemplate and address the need for change, regardless of the regulatory model and before governments commission their own studies which are likely to come to similar conclusions.

(7) See the ROs of the Nova Scotia barristers’ Society at www.nsbs.org.
(8) See Grey Areas No. 230.

ADDRESS CHANGES

If an Alberta Land Surveyor, surveyor’s corporation or surveyor’s partnership fails to notify the Registrar of a change in their current mailing address, email addresses and telephone numbers within twenty (20) business days, a fine of $50 per business day shall be payable to the Association to a maximum of $500.00.
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New Alberta Land Surveyors

#1028 - Christopher Dusyk
• Received his commission on March 8, 2019.
• Articled to Robert King, ALS and Robert Pinkerton, ALS.
• Graduated from SAIT.
• Experience is primarily in oil & gas sector, legal and construction surveys throughout Western Canada.
• Interests include fishing, snowmobiling, dirt biking or anything outdoors.
• Married to Caitlin and they have one child (Caiden).

#1029 - Zachary Prosper
• Received his commission on March 8, 2019.
• Articled to David Amantea, ALS.
• Graduated from the University of Calgary.
• APEGA engineer-in-training.
• Experience is primarily in municipal survey including condominiums, subdivisions and RPRs. Has experience with rural surveys including subdivisions and right-of-ways.
• Interests include snowmobiling, hunting, hockey, soccer and basketball.
• Married to Melissa.

#1030 - Patrick Myette
• Received his commission on March 15, 2019.
• Articled to Mark Knott, ALS.
• Graduated from the University of New Brunswick.
• APEGA engineer-in-training.
• Enrolled in the geomatics engineering program straight out of high school on the advice of a university recruiter not knowing in the slightest what land surveying was.
• Started in the summer of 2010 as a student and returned for the following two summers
• Work experience has been with Midwest Surveys Inc. since January 2013.
• Grew up in Truro, Nova Scotia.
• He and his spouse Kara spend their free time camping and skiing in the mountains, fishing and traveling to the east coast to visit friends and family.
• This spring they started building their first house in Edmonton.

#1031 - Bradley Middlemiss
• Received his commission on April 10, 2019.
• Articled to Robyn Graham, ALS and Luke Dixon, ALS.
• Graduated from the University of New Brunswick.
• APEGA P. Eng.
• CLS Commission
• Began surveying career in offshore oil & gas in the Gulf States and West Africa gravitating towards dimensional control surveys.
• Moved to Newfoundland in 2012.
• Moved to Edmonton in 2014 with Michelyn where he began land surveying.
• Experience is in a variety of sectors, including municipal development, oil & gas and construction surveys.
• Enjoys being outdoors in any capacity, being a hike, snowboarding, mountain biking, camping or enjoying the backyard.

#1032 - Evan Thompson
• Received his commission on April 16, 2019.
• Articled to David McArthur, ALS and Ben De Jong, ALS.
• Graduated from the University of Calgary.
• APEGA engineer-in-training.
• Experience is primarily in municipal surveys.
• Employed with Pals Geomatics since 2012.
• Interests include hockey, golf, baseball and spending time with family.
• Engaged to Shelby and they have one child (Easton).

Annual Register of Members
For up-to-date contact information, log on to the ALSA website.
The Annual Register was published on June 14, 2019.
A link to the Annual Register can be found: https://www.alsa.ab.ca/Portals/0/PDF/Member_Resources/Directories/Annual%20Register%20of%20Members/20192020_Register_of_Members.pdf?ver=2019-06-14-095332-583.
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Understand the Impact of Your Profit Per Sale
Make Sure You’re Dedicating Your Resources to the Right Clients

By Jill J. Johnson, MBA

Few enterprises truly understand the actual profits generated by the individual sales they make. Most metrics for sales effectiveness are monitored by reviewing top line revenue results. Yet the most critical determinant of ongoing business viability is understanding what revenue actually drops to the bottom line after all costs have been taken into account. You must understand what profit is generated by sales to each of your clients. Then consider the benefits and vulnerabilities the cumulative impact these sales mean to your business. Knowing the breakdown of the profitability by the individual sales to your clients can have a significant impact on your ability to achieve your business goals.

1. Understand the Impact of the Profit Per Sale
There are many expenses that go into determining profitability for a company. The same is true for determining the profitability of a sale. Each sale has multiple components impacting its final profit. You should consider your total cost of goods sold, including investments in promotion and delivery expenses. Factoring in the costs associated with the staff time required to generate a sale is a must, too. Unfortunately, few companies consider all these expenses when developing their marketing and sales strategies. Whether you are working on growing your business or you are struggling financially, the impact of the true profits generated by each individual sale takes on greater importance.

2. Know Your Profit Per Client
Frankly, not all clients are worth the effort to generate the sale. Sometimes your growth goals for your business mean you also are growing beyond clients you have historically served. This transition period is a very vulnerable point for any enterprise. It is also very stressful because you might be wrong and wind up losing a client that could have provided even revenue value if you have not been afraid to maximize your relationship.

Carefully study the costs associated with serving each client. Perhaps you have long-term clients you like personally, but if you have not taken the time to explore the costs of the sale, their value to your business may have changed dramatically over the years. Before abandoning these clients, try to identify options to trim your expenses without jeopardizing your quality. But it may be time to move on if they are not generating any real profit to your company.

3. Review Your Customer Segments Revenue
Using a target marketing approach to grouping your customers into similar client segments provides you with a more detailed understanding of what is working and what is not. The key to effective target marketing is to focus your sales activities and expenditures toward those type of customers who can best be served by your enterprise, who will stay with you over the long-term and who will generate solid profitability.

4. Evaluate Individual Sales Profitability
There are two ways of looking at your sales profitability data. One is by the individual clients. The other is by combining clients using some specific target marketing components. Grouping clients by similar characteristics makes it easier to identify trends in the data that you can use to assess the profitability of each of these major segments.

There are many options for grouping your customers into segments. For a B2B client, you could group them by their industry sector, number of employees, location, etc. For a B2C customer, you could group them by where they live, personal attitudes, age, family size, income level, etc.

If Client Segment A generates solid profits for you, but all of your marketing efforts are being devoted to Client Segment B who are barely break-even, the choice is obvious. You must retool your marketing and sales activity to attract more prospects from Client Segment A.

5. Monitor Individual Client Profitability
A complete review of the mix of your customers and sources of sales will reveal your potential vulnerabilities if market conditions change. It is not enough in today’s complex and competitive marketplace to look only at your total overall sales. If you have one customer who generates more than one-third of your sales, you are in an extremely vulnerable position if you lose that client to a merger, change of staff or if it goes out of business. Controlling and monitoring your client profitability and cost of sales allows you to take corrective action before your business’s survival is at risk. This takes on even greater importance if you are overly dependent key clients for your profitability.

6. The Impact of Pricing on Profitability
A close companion to client profitability is understanding the impact of various pricing strategies on the perceived value of your goods and services, and how they

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Jill J. Johnson is the president and founder of Johnson Consulting Services, a highly accomplished speaker, an award-winning management consultant, and author of the bestselling book Compounding Your Confidence. Jill helps her clients make critical business decisions and develop market-based strategic plans for turnarounds or growth. Her consulting work has impacted more than $4 billion worth of decisions. She has a proven track record of dealing with complex business issues and getting results. For more information on Jill J. Johnson, please visit www.jcs-usa.com.
Make Sure You’re Dedicating Your Resources to the Right Clients

Intertwine in attracting the customers who will buy from you. Engaging in discounted pricing strategies often attract customers who are buying from you based on price, not your value. If you are in a service-oriented business, this can be a slippery slope. You may get clients who keep you busy, but who do not generate the profits you need to build a sustainable enterprise or build your net worth. It is a delicate balancing act, but one you must realistically consider given your business objectives.

7. The Impact of Strategy on Profits

You must also consider the financial consequences of your business direction and your vulnerability to setbacks. This assessment allows you to make better business decisions and to set a more realistic strategic vision for your organization. “Finding a lane” or picking your niche through target marketing must also incorporate a true understanding of the costs of reaching them, as well as their ability to add to your bottom line in a meaningful way.

2019 Strategic Plan

Council has approved the Alberta Land Surveyors’ Association’s 2019 strategic plan.

Council recognizes that the work on these priorities will start now but that the initiatives will take a number of years to complete.

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<td>• Identify any disconnects between research and what ALSA wants to have (March 2020)</td>
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<td>• Set additional financial policies and provide clarity on fees and budgets (January 2020)</td>
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<td>• Review committee and Council structure to align with strategic plan and expedite decision making and maximize resources (September 2019)</td>
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<td>• Develop a method to effectively deal with multi-year initiatives (March 2020)</td>
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<td>• ALSA staffing succession planning</td>
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<td>Future of Surveying</td>
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<td>• Review the Surveys Act and make recommendations for changes considering current and new technologies (October 2019)</td>
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<td>• Look at new survey products, technologies and standards to protect the public from unskilled users including for example UAVs, line locating, terrestrial laser scanning, sensors, augmented reality, RTN and so on.</td>
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Mark Sampson  BBA, FCIP
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mark_sampson@ajg.com
Recently, I was subpoenaed to appear as a so-called expert witness in a civil trial involving a landowner and a non-land surveyor who allegedly staked out and marked a property line when doing a rough grade. The landowner/plaintiff wanted me to confirm that her contractor was, in fact, a non-land surveyor and not authorized to engage in the practice of land surveying. The landowner/plaintiff also subpoenaed an Alberta Land Surveyor to testify.

I am writing this to comment on how land surveying and Alberta Land Surveyors are perceived rather than the outcome of this particular case.

The case was scheduled to be heard in the afternoon after the court had heard all of the family law cases on the docket for the day. If you think you have it bad, listen to case after case of family hardship and turmoil and applications by one parent or the other (or grandparents) for temporary guardianship orders or permanent guardianship orders. The lawyers and the judge are dealing with issues and making decisions that will impact a baby’s or child’s welfare for the rest of their life. Perhaps that is why putting some lath in the ground and marking it with “P/L” is not seen as serious an issue as land surveyors do.

Anyway, the judge decided that the case could not be heard that day. There were too many witnesses and not enough time in the court’s day. It would have to be re-scheduled for another day. But the judge was a practical person. She decided that the most appropriate use of everyone’s time (that of the judge, plaintiff, defendant and us witnesses) was to hold an informal preliminary hearing. The judge wanted to see if she could help identify what the real issues were.

The plaintiff, who represented herself, made an issue of the non-land surveyor allegedly marking the property line and doing so incorrectly. This is where things got interesting. The judge knew that land surveyors put pins or markers in the ground and, in fact, this had been done when the area was originally subdivided decades before. The judge sincerely believed that anyone could then come along and find those monuments and accept them as the boundaries between the properties. The Alberta Land Surveyor presented information to the judge (it wasn’t testimony because it was an informal hearing) that an Alberta Land Surveyor is still the only person who can re-establish boundaries. Thereafter followed a quick thumbnail explanation of things like hierarchy of evidence and disturbed and destroyed monuments and even offsets. Think elevator speech for a two-story building!

The judge accepted our information and didn’t challenge it by looking up what was actually written in the legislation. However, I did notice her shaking her head incredulously a couple of times finding it hard to believe what we were saying was correct. The judge’s thought was that anyone and everyone can find their survey monuments and accept them as their boundaries.

In the end, the judge helped guide everyone involved to realize that the real issue was not the property line and who said where it was but the grading itself and the cost of the landscaping. Here was another interesting observation about the justice system. The judge certainly let it be known that she did not think this type of complaint was the best use of the court’s time and encouraged everyone to find a solution outside of the courtroom. The judge was not going to deny the plaintiff the right to bring forward her case but it was not difficult to read between the lines. When the defendant announced to the judge that he was prepared to find a middle ground solution, the judge turned to the plaintiff and explained that, if this matter was to go forward to a hearing, the court would look very favourably on the person who acted reasonably and tried to find a solution.

At that point, at the end of a long day, I left the court. By the time I got home, the landowner/plaintiff emailed me to say that had reached an agreement.

Here is what I learned.

1. Boundaries are important to land surveyors. They are important to landowners when they are in a fight with their neighbour. Boundaries are not as important when listening to child welfare cases all day.
2. Even learned people like judges do not understand land surveying, boundaries and monuments. When we speak to people, we often assume they do. The people we are speaking to also assume they know about such things. They don’t.
3. It doesn’t matter how right you are – or how much you are convinced you are right. The court wants to find a middle ground; an acceptable solution. What will make everyone equally unhappy? The same approach applies to discipline cases too!

I wasn’t looking forward to spending my day in a courtroom. I didn’t really do very much that day. But I learned some really good lessons.
Plan Errors
ED OH, ALS

Introduction
Due to rigorous regulations, today’s plan production process is getting more complicated. At the same time, clients are expecting faster and cheaper delivery. It’s a classic project management dilemma where one is expected to deliver a high-quality product at the lowest cost. In general, we are adapting to the challenge. However, it has become apparent that some of our members could do a better job preparing plans. In the past few years, I sensed that overall plan quality is slowly degrading but I did not realize the intensity of the downward trend until I joined ALSA committees. I was surprised by how often plans were submitted to Practice Review Board and the Registration Committee (project report from articling students) with errors. What is happening?

The Current CAD (Computer-Aided Design) Trend
Days of paper plan production are gone like the VHS. With the technological advancements and digital submission requirements, it would be impossible to operate a business without CAD technology. We use CAD as a drafting and calculating tool. Today’s plan is not only compiled from in-house data but it is a product of combined information from government sources and third-parties. On top of that, the technology is constantly changing. New hardware devices and software programs are constantly introduced and some of us are struggling to keep up with the changes.

Common Plan Errors
Based on CCR records, during:
• Phase 1, 51% of the plans reviewed had at least three drafting errors on them.
• Phase 2, the number of plans with at least three drafting errors on them dropped to 18%.
• Phase 3, 51 products have been reviewed and 11 of them (22%) have at least three drafting errors.

Plan preparation is becoming an assembly line where emphasis is on production. Too often, digital information is copied and pasted without being correctly updated and checked. Additionally, CAD blocks are pre-made and inserted repeatedly over and over to save time. This seems like a good practice but again, the blocks need to be appropriately updated and adequately checked. One common mistake that results in serious plan errors is that a plan is sent out of the office without actually being checked. Often these mistakes are made by technicians who do not have the necessary experience and are working with insufficient supervision.

Specifically some common mistakes are:
• A plan is missing details and dimensions.
• A detail does not match with the body of the plan.
• Symbols and abbreviations are used inconsistently or are missing from the plan legend.
• Third party digital data is used inappropriately.
• Evidence descriptions are incorrect.
• Miscommunication among office staff.

Plan errors are often referred to as drafting errors but the fact is, it is a combination of drafting and checking errors. It is not solely one person’s fault. For example, a typical company has a drafting, checking and project management team. Everyone has a role to perform but it is an Alberta Land Surveyor’s responsibility to ensure they work together and produce an acceptable final product.

Under our Code of Ethics section - “Duty to Personnel,”
An Alberta Land Surveyor:
• Shall assist students, trainees, and employees to obtain instruction in the practical, ethical, and theoretical aspects of surveying.
• Has a particular obligation to ensure that students and trainees receive instruction in the art, practice, ethics, and profession of an Alberta Land Surveyor.

We are doing a good job training in areas where we are more comfortable such as survey procedures for field staff. However, we don’t necessarily concentrate on the entire plan preparation process. The most common method of training office staff is by pairing a new staff member with a senior staff member until the new staff member is deemed competent. Based on my observation as a PRB member, we need to think beyond this traditional way of training. The PRB expects that you will continuously work to improve your plan preparation and checking process and an ALS will ensure all plan requirements are met. While it would be unrealistic to ask an Alberta Land Surveyor to teach staff how to draft a good plan, it is expected that an Alberta Land Surveyor sets up a proper quality control system to facilitate production of an acceptable plan.

The expectation of the PRB is that:
• Checklists are developed and used.
• You will continuously work to improve your plan preparation and checking process. To accomplish this, you might consider holding regular meetings with all drafting staff to ensure everyone understands what each item on your plan checklist means.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 43
This remark made by the Carstairs Museum in 2017 is an example of the many positive comments made by museums that hosted the Alberta Lands Surveyor’s Making their Mark traveling exhibit. Indeed, the Collections Subcommittee of the Historical & Biographical Committee does not collect old survey instruments and other survey artifacts to keep them in a storage room. The purpose of the subcommittee as stated in their terms of reference is to “gather, document, preserve and share historical survey artifacts and information with the purpose of educating the public about: the importance of well-defined property boundaries, the role of the land surveyor and the function of the Alberta Land Surveyors’ Association.”

While the Association has several survey artifacts on display in the ALSA office, it is not a public museum. The committee educates the public about boundaries and the role of land surveyors by supporting survey exhibits in other museums and institutions throughout Alberta. The travelling exhibit, created for the ALSA centennial in 2009, is still traveling. During 2018 it was at the Onoway Museum from February to April, the Claresholm Museum from May to September, and then at the Grand Prairie Museum until May 2019. It will then move to the Breton Museum until September 30 followed by the Morinville Museum to December 15, 2019. It has been a tremendous success story having been on the road for ten years in Alberta.

Several ALSA artifacts are on display at the Whyte Museum in Banff as part of the Gateway to the Rockies ongoing exhibition in the Heritage Gallery. Early surveyors in the Rocky Mountains such as A.O. Wheeler are highlighted. ALSA survey artifacts are also at the Leduc #1 Energy Discovery Center and are used by the Fort Heritage Precinct at Fort Saskatchewan for elementary school programs on Alberta and Canadian history.

In 2019-2020, more emphasis will be made to display more of the artifacts in the collection along with stories of land surveying in museums and other public places in Alberta. Arrangements can also be made to loan artifacts to corporate offices. Artifacts in a storage room do not educate the public about boundaries and the role of land surveyors.

Most of the Collections Subcommittee’s time is spent cataloguing and maintaining the collection of surveying artifacts. The software used is PastPerfect which is used by over 10,000 museums in the world to catalogue and administrate artifacts. The ALSA collections policy establishes the policies and guidelines for the acquisition, accession, deaccession, loan, sale, care and use of the collection of the Association.

During the 2018-2019 year, a well-presented historical display of monuments and artifacts was donated to the collection by WSP. The monuments and artifacts were obtained and assembled over the years by Stewart Weir. Over the many years of his career Charlie Weir had a strong interest in survey history and kept this display in their corporate offices for the field crews to evaluate evidence. The display is currently in the ALSA library.

The Alberta Historical and Educational Foundation for Land Surveying (commonly called the Surveyors Historical Foundation (SHF)) also receives donations of historical survey artifacts, which are entrusted to the ALSA collection. Under a memorandum of understanding between the ALSA and the SHF the two bodies work cooperatively to achieve the common goals of preserving and publicizing the history of land surveying in Alberta.

If you have survey items that you are willing to donate, please contact any member of the collections group or Brian Munday. Not all items can be accepted as storage space is limited, however there is still a need for several items that are of particular value or that are not currently in the collection. Also, if you have not done so already, take in the travelling survey exhibit at the locations noted above or visit the Gateway to the Rockies exhibit at the Whyte Museum - we think you will be pleased and appreciate

ALSAsurveyartifactsandondisplayattheWhyteMuseuminBanffaspartofthe“GatewaytotheRockies”ongoingExhibition. Photo: Gord Olson, 2011

Surveyor’s Tent Part of Making Their Mark, the ALSA Traveling Exhibit, on display at the ALSA AGM in Banff in 2009. Photo: Gord Olson
MAKING THEIR MARK

The Making their Mark travelling museum exhibit is at the Breton Museum this summer.

the value of the collection. Finally, if you are interested in old survey instruments and survey history, we invite you to join us. Although most of the work of the committee is carried out in the ALSA office, volunteers outside of the Edmonton area can also help by using the internet to research the history of the artifacts to enhance future displays.

Since the revised inception of the Historical & Biographical Committee in 1999, one of the main priorities of the committee was acquiring oral histories of retired members of the ALSA. Over the years, this has become more important as time has gone on and some of these past members have passed away.

In 2018, an Interviews Subcommittee was formed under the H & B Committee whose sole task is to not only perform these retired member interviews, but also to interview many active members and the newly commissioned candidates. The questions asked are certainly not very onerous. The objective of these interviews is to record the history of each land surveyor and to add to the historical record of the Association through its members.

To date, approximately 88 interviews have been conducted, with many more planned in the coming months with the added help of new members to this subcommittee. If a member of the Interview subcommittee contacts you to participate in this worthwhile endeavour, please participate. If you have any questions at all, please contact the Subcommittee Chair, Les Frederick.

Monroe Kinloch, ALS (Hon. Life)
Does your financial advisor have your best interests at heart?

This is a bit of a trick question. Everyone would like to think that their financial advisor is looking out for their best interests – and most are. It may be more shocking to investors that most advisors aren’t required by law or regulatory standards to put their client’s best interests first. In fact, estimates generated by investment industry research firm, Strategic Insights, suggest that only approximately 1,200 of the 50,000 financial advisors are held to a fiduciary duty, requiring them to put their client’s interests before their own.

This issue was at the core of a grassroots movement (one that was supported by many industry professionals) to require – by law – all licensed financial advisors to put their client’s best interests first. The Canadian Securities Administrators looked at this very seriously, before reaching the conclusion in mid-2018 that they would not impose the higher standard on all financial advisors.

It seems hard to imagine that anyone could be bold enough to oppose the creation of an industry-wide standard that required a group, one which considers themselves professionals, to put their clients first, but they did, and their arguments prevailed. So, it remains only individuals licensed as portfolio managers that hold a fiduciary duty – or, in other words, that are bound to act in their client’s best interest.

Where does that leave investors who don’t work with a portfolio manager? Well, it leaves them with the standard referred to as “suitability.” Any advice provided to you, the client, must be suitable for you. If you pause to think about this for a moment you will start to understand the differences. But let’s go through a couple of examples, where suitability and best interests may not coincide.

Let’s take Investor Joe. Joe is in his 40s and has a small RRSP and a small TFSA. He is busy with work and kids and doesn’t have much time to fuss about his investments and doesn’t intend to touch them for at least twenty years. Advisor Rich (pun intended) suggests Joe buy an index-based mutual fund, indicating that over long periods of time it has been difficult for active managers to beat the benchmark indices. Joe willingly takes this advice and buys the index fund, Rich receives a trailer fee each year for selling the fund, and everyone is happy. Except that Advisor Rich could have sold Investor Joe an exchange-traded fund, that replicates the same index, with much lower annual costs to Joe. But in this case, Advisor Rich would not have received the annual trailer fee and his income would be lower. Suitable – yes. In Investor Joe’s best interest – no.

Let’s look at another, slightly more complicated situation. Investor Sue moves her investment portfolio to a new advisor after her previous advisor retired. Sue is in her 60s and has a portfolio worth over $1.5 million that she has built over her lifetime. She owns substantial positions in the Canadian banks that have appreciated over time and have large capital gains associated with them. She will retire and begin drawing on the portfolio in just over a year. Advisor Rich encourages her to go into a portfolio program managed by his financial institution that is designed for moderately-conservative investors who will need to generate an income. To enter the program, she will need to liquidate her portfolio and a new set of holdings will be allocated to her account. Investor Sue agrees. The portfolio is liquidated triggering large capital gains, while she still has a high income from employment, and the funds are moved to the managed program. Advisor Rich now begins collecting a trailer fee, with higher payments to him than are available on some other investment options. Did the advice received meet the suitability standard – probably. But was it in Sue’s best interest to liquidate her portfolio at that point in time? My answer would be no.

Why did this happen? Much of it is driven by that age-old thing – money. Firms want advisors to put client money into programs they run. That way they not only earn management fees, but it also makes it harder for the client to leave their institution and go somewhere else. The second consideration for firms is risk. We have all heard stories about rogue brokers who traded excessively, or took foolish

I recommend that you ask your advisor three questions to help discern whether the advice you are receiving is merely suitable or in your best interest:

1. Are there other options that you considered before recommending this one?
2. How do you get paid on each product/program under consideration?
3. What is to the duty of care that you owe to me as a client? Is it suitability or a best interest standard?
risks with their client’s money, leaving the client financially ruined. These in-house managed programs help trap the client assets, while also reducing the firm’s risk of having a bad apple.

In order to get the advisors to go along with what is good for the firm, they may create incentives for using these in-house programs. Advisors also get a secondary benefit: as they turn the day-to-day investment decisions over to someone else, it frees more time for them to attract and work with a larger client base. So, everyone wins, right?

But what about you – the client? Where do you factor into these calculations? Given these incentives, how do you protect yourself from advisors putting their needs (and their firm’s wishes) ahead of yours?

I recommend that you ask your advisor three questions to help discern whether the advice you are receiving is merely suitable or in your best interest:

1. Are there other options that you considered before recommending this one?
   The answer should generally be “yes” if you are with a full-service broker or a mutual fund advisor. The advisor should be able to explain what each of these options is and why they decided against each one.

2. How do you get paid on each product / program under consideration?
   I had a boss who often said “tell me how someone is paid, and I will tell you how they will act.” And there is certainly some truth in that.
   If the option being presented to you is the most financially beneficial for the advisor, perhaps you should review the rejected options to ensure the reasons they were dismissed were valid – and not just convenient.
   People often find it awkward to ask their advisors questions about their personal compensation, but you have the right to know the incentives that are provided to your advisor!

3. What is the duty of care that you owe to me as a client? Is it suitability or a best interest standard?
   A hint may be in their title. If an individual holds a fiduciary duty, the description is spelled adviser (with an e) as opposed to advisor (with an o). Adviser with an “e” is a regulated title, which brings with it certain duties and responsibilities. It is a subtle difference, and one that most people would never notice.

   Although I stand by the belief that good advisors hold themselves to a best-interest standard, even if the rules don’t, there are implications to investors. If it should ever become necessary to initiate legal action against your advisor, it will be a much harder case to prove, due to the lower duty of care. The proposed legislative changes may help and are clearly intended to protect investors, but I also believe that it is difficult to legislate criteria that push towards a best interest standard. Every situation is different and it is an impossible challenge to create a laundry list of factors that define the right outcome in every situation.

   So, how to proceed? At the end of the day, you need to be smart, ask questions and do not assume that everyone is working for your best interests. Or, make sure you are working with an adviser (note the “e”) who is bound by a fiduciary duty to act in your best interests.

Julie Brough, CFA, CFP
Executive Vice President & Portfolio Manager
Logan Wealth Management
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Odds and Ends

SCOTT WESTLUND, ALS
Director of Practice Review and Boundary Panel Manager

In the past eight years I have written more than 30 ALS News articles and I’ll admit, coming up with an idea for an article is sometimes very difficult. Normally, I pick a topic and explore it. However, I have come across several smaller odds and ends that don’t seem to fit within their own article. Accordingly, I’ll put some of these odds and ends together here.

Research – A key to solving/avoiding boundary uncertainties
A recent Boundary Panel project involved an investigation into uncertainties within Plan A2 in Calgary. This area was originally surveyed by McVittie in 1889. As part of the project research, the investigator obtained copies of 17 historical RPRs on the block in question. These RPRs did not show any original evidence from 1889 and according to these RPRs, at least three different methodologies were used to establish boundaries in this block.

As part of the field investigation, six wooden posts were located. As part of the office research conducted for this investigation, the Director of Surveys Office was asked if they had any information pertaining to plan A2. The DOS Office provided the following (this is an excerpt from a 1987 letter from the Director of Surveys Office to Wolley-Dod):

Figure 1: Excerpt from a 1987 letter from the Director of Surveys Office to Wolley-Dod

Note the statement: old McVittie plans contain errors and proportioning should not be attempted. Although this information was readily available (we just had to ask), the historical RPRs obtained indicate that proportioning between block corners (placed in the 1980s) was the most common method of lot establishment in the block being investigated. Following the advice provided in Figure 1 drastically alters the location of the boundaries in the block being investigated. Also noteworthy is that the existing foundations, some dating back to the early 1900s, seem to be a uniform distance from property lines established using the original evidence and following the advice included in Figure 1.

Field notes
In the past few years I have seen a dramatic improvement in the quality of the field notes being submitted as part of CCRs. In phase 1, the average “score” for field notes was around 84%, in Phase 2 and 3 the average has increased to about 89%. In my experience, good field notes facilitate better evidence assessment. Many of the field notes being submitted in Phase 3 have been recorded digitally and contain photos and comprehensive evidence reports that include extensive details about the monuments found and information on the extent of search for lost monuments. In Phase 1, it was common to only see a point number and Fd. I. Mound Pits recorded in the notes or random found no mark notations. Now evidence reports often include information about the relationship between the mound, pits and the post, for example:

Figure 2: Excerpt of an evidence report provided as part of a CCR

Additionally, I see many more people recording details like, swept with metal detector, dug 0.6 x 0.6 at point 15, found no trace of rust or post hole, found no mark. This is excellent. If field crews record more information on the condition of found monuments this enables the ALS to confirm that the monument found by the field crew is the monument they expected to find. Recording more information on the extent of search for lost monuments enables the ALS to confirm where the search was conducted and enables them to confidently show found no mark on a plan. Note that in the Figure 2 example,
the monument will be restored (the spike will be replaced with an iron post) when conditions permit.

**Redundant dimensions**

When preparing right-of-way plans, it is standard practice to place monuments on one boundary and provide a width to define the location of the other boundary (when the width is less than 45.72 m). This practice is in accordance with Section 45 of the *Surveys Act*. However, I have recently come across a few situations where both sides of a right-of-way or road widening are posted and the information shown in the legend or on the plan could potentially cause confusion.

For example, please refer to Figure 3 and 4. In both examples, I believe the actual location of the posts would supersede the note about the 60.00 perpendicular width and 9.88 road widening. These notes may provide an indication as to the intent but in a situation where this information conflicts with what is on the ground, it may cause unnecessary confusion. I’d encourage everyone to have a close look at how these type of situations are labelled on the plan to avoid any future confusion.

**Closures – A key plan checking tool**

The Practice Review Board looked at seventy products as part of the 120 Continuing Competency Review (CCR) Phase 3 files reviewed this past year. Just over 20% of the products examined contained several obvious drafting errors. Seven (10%) of the products examined did not close. Completing a closure seems like an easy way to detect drafting errors. Indeed, Part D Section 1.5 of the *Manual of Standard Practice* suggests that “each and every figure on a plan shall be checked for mathematical closure.” Closures can be checked at any time but I’d recommend computing a closure near the end of the plan checking process after all of the plan revisions are complete but before the plan is ready to be issued. The closure should be done using the information shown on the plan.

Another seemingly obvious suggestion is to look at the plan just before it leaves the office. I was recently sent two different RPRs that did not include any dimensions around the buildings. The dimension layer was inadvertently turned off when the digital file was created. I suggest taking a quick look at the plan attached to the email to avoid the embarrassment an oversight like this causes.

**Concluding remarks**

I am seeing significant improvements in the quality of products submitted as part of a CCR. However, drafting errors continue to be a common issue and there continues to be around 15 files per year that are identified as needing a comprehensive review for some reason or another. The focus of the CCR program continues to be educational and the feedback received from those who have been reviewed suggests that this is the case. If anyone has any comments they would like to share, please feel free to do so.

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The purpose of this article is purely educational. Opinions expressed herein are those of the author, and not necessarily of the PRB.

A Refresher on Plan Corrections

“The proactive approach to a mistake is to acknowledge it instantly, correct and learn from it.” - Stephen Covey

Despite our best efforts, at some point during our land surveying careers, many of us will need to correct a plan that is registered at the Land Titles Office. With any luck, these will be minor omissions or defects and not a result of survey error. The Practice Review Board often sees plans with drafting errors and recommends that the plans be corrected. The following summarizes the steps required to correct drafting errors and other minor defects on registered plans and provides an example of a recent set of plan corrections that I completed to resolve a double posting.

Authorization to correct a registered plan comes from Section 92 of the Land Titles Act which states “when there is an omission, clerical error or other defect in a registered plan, the Registrar may correct the plan if

(a) the Registrar is satisfied that the correction will not adversely affect any person, or
(b) where the correction may adversely affect a person, that person has consented to the correction, and the Alberta land surveyor who signed the plan or, if the Alberta land surveyor is deceased, retired or otherwise unable to act, either the Director of Surveys or an Alberta land surveyor appointed by the Council of the Alberta Land Surveyors’ Association has consented to the correction.”

The Land Titles Procedures Manual SUR-8 provides further instruction. “In order for the Registrar to correct an omission, clerical error or other defect in a registered plan pursuant to section 92 of the Land Titles Act the following will be required:

a) A Document Registration Request Form (D.R.R.).
b) A letter from the Alberta Land Surveyor containing the following information:
   i) A detailed explanation of the nature of the error or defect and the corrections to be made. The corrections can either be in a list form or marked on a copy of the plan trimmed off to sheets no larger than 11 ½ x 14 inches;
   ii) A statement that no improvements have been made (e.g. fence, driveway, garage, setback requirements, utilities) relying on the incorrect information on the plan and that the correction will not create any encroachments or have any other adverse affects;
   iii) Advise whether the corrections affect any other registered plans;
   iv) A statement that no monuments have been moved or removed;
   v) A statement that no property boundaries are being altered or moved; and
   vi) Consent from the owner(s). Note that this consent is usually required where areas or distances are to be amended.”

I had the pleasure of resolving a double posting that I discovered during a routine road widening survey. It was a straightforward situation and, like other surveyors before me, I showed the two found posts in a detail on my plan clearly labeling the accepted post as the N¼ 31 with a tie to the second newer post that was placed in error. The situation is shown in Figure 1.

Though there was an apparent agreement between all surveyors working in the area as to which was the correct post, the correct action to take was to remove the incorrect post to avoid confusing landowners and members of the public.

In this case, I contacted the Director of Surveys Office to request permission under Section 50(3) of the Surveys Act to remove the incorrect monument. I included a summary of my research, field work, and list of the affected plans with details of how other surveyors had dealt with this double posting. The Director of Surveys Office conducted their own desktop review and agreed to grant permission to remove the post once written agreements from all other affected ALSs had been received. Contact with other affected ALSs was coordinated through the Boundary Panel and each of them promptly committed to correcting their plans. Two affected plans, including the one that placed the incorrect post, were prepared by ALSs that had since retired so I requested permission from the Council of the ALSA to correct the plans on their behalf.

With permission from the Director of Surveys in hand, I headed out to the field on a beautiful fall day to remove the incorrect post at the N¼ and check the surrounding evidence. I discovered a second double posting at the intersection of a pipeline right-of-way with the government road allowance which is shown in Photo 1. With permission from the Director of Surveys to remove the newer incorrect monument, I added the necessary details and updated dimensions to the affected plans.

Photo 1: Double Posting with the original iron post placed in 1968 on the left and the second iron post placed as a re-establishment in 1980 on the right
After my plan corrections were registered, I provided copies of my corrected plans to the other affected ALSs. They were able to update dimensions and/or add details referring to the removed monument on their plans using the method outlined in SUR-8 and referring to the instrument number of my plan correction in their letter accompanying the DRR.

So, don’t be dismayed if the letter you receive from the Practice Review Board in response to your next CCR encourages you to complete a plan correction. It can be as simple as marking up the required changes on your plan, writing a short letter to the Registrar, and paying the $30 LTO fee. Even the double posting I described turned out to be quite straightforward to resolve. For more information, see Resolving a Simple Double Posting in the December 2016 edition of ALS News.

Sara Spence, ALS

Figure 1: This detail was added to the plan which placed the incorrect post

Russ Barnes and his wife Lila

**PRESIDENT'S AWARD**

RUSS BARNES
Professional Ethics – Are They Important?

“The Businessperson’s Creed is: Profit, Product, People and Principle in that order. The professional must exactly reverse the order of importance of these four criteria to read: Principle, People, Product and lastly, Profit.”

G. K. Allred

The recent scandal involving SNC Lavalin, the giant engineering and construction firm, takes me back to the 1990’s when I was chair of Commission 1 with the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG). Commission 1 - Professional Practice was charged with re-writing the FIG Ethical Code which had originally been adopted in 1983. We set out to solicit input on ethical principles from the 72 national associations who were members of FIG plus 16 Canadian associations. Interestingly we received replies from 9 Canadian associations but only 16 national organizations. Virtually no input was provided on the issue of bribery which we know is quite common in many developing countries.

That in itself is perhaps not so surprising as there was very little evidence of bribery at that time, even though it was fairly well known that it was a common practice in many Asian and African cultures to offer ‘enticements’ to settle minor inconveniences.

In 1985 when asked to prepare a paper on ethics in the survey profession for a Colloquium on Survey Education at UNB, I had a difficult time finding any reported examples of gross ethical situations, despite the fact that there had been a major ethical breach that had led to the impeachment (actually resignation) of an American president. I had to resort to a 1975 novel for an illustrative quote of an ethical breach in the banking system.

Going back even further to an ALS seminar held in 1980, the ethical discussions of the day seemed to relate to competitive bidding, questionable advertising and stealing clients and personnel from another firm.

In about 1978, then ALS President, John Deyholos, prepared a Model Code of Ethics for the Canadian Council of Land Surveyors, essentially consolidating all of the codes of ethics from the 10 provincial survey associations. This code with many of its subsections was eventually used to prepare the ALSA Code of Ethics with the expanded commentary.

The new FIG code dealt with broad principles, treading softly on many issues but emphasizing that ‘a detailed code of professional conduct must rest with each member association, which has the responsibility to implement and enforce such a code.’ I note that even the ALSA Code of Ethics deals rather softly (but adequately) with the issue of bribery with a statement that ‘An Alberta Land Surveyor . . . shall not influence improperly any public body or official, and shall not state or imply that such influence is possible.’

In some of the recent presentations on the subject of professional ethics that I have made to Eclipse College, I have made reference to SNC Lavalin based on various news articles when the bribery of Libyan officials first became public. In 2015 SNC was charged with the bribery of public officials in Libya between the years of 2002 and 2012 to the tune of $48 million as well as defrauding Libyan public agencies of a further $148 million.

SNC is the largest engineering and project construction company in Canada with 50,000 employees worldwide and nearly 9,000 in Canada.

In 2013 the World Bank banned the company from contracts based on bribery in Bangladesh, Cambodia and India, and just recently the former President and CEO pleaded guilty to bribery charges in the awarding of the $1.3 billion contract for the construction of the McGill University Health Centre project.

The most recent scandal was triggered by an allegation in the Globe and Mail that the Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau pressured the Attorney General, Jody Wilson-Raybould to overrule the decision of the Director of Public Prosecutions denial of an application by SNC Lavalin to be granted a Deferred Prosecution Agreement (DPA) which would relieve them of the criminal charges filed against them in 2015.

The CEO of SNC Lavalin claims that their corporate culture has changed and that all offending employees are no longer with the company but their desire for profit has replaced the principle of acting in the public interest.

Ethical breaches in the survey profession appear to be minor compared to some of the other cases that are in the news today but the consequences, as can be seen in the SNC Lavalin case can be very serious. Unfortunately, this is hitting close to home, we must be vigilant of ethical concerns.

A professional practice may be a business but a professional is also held to the highest ethical standards.

Professional ethics are important!

G. K. Allred, ALS (Hon. Life)
There were twenty-one candidates who attempted the exam, of which six candidates were successful. The exam consisted of five scenario-type questions where students had to demonstrate their understanding of land surveying and how it applies to the real world.

The exam was graded out of 99.5 marks, to correct for a typo in the condominium section of the exam.

The highest mark for the examination was 81%, the lowest mark was 0%, the overall average was 63% and the median was 66%. The following table illustrates the average mark per exam section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Average Mark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Real Property Report</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Subdivision</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condominium</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence Assessment</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The real property report question was answered well by most pupils. However, more than 50% of the pupils struggled with the requirements for updating an RPR and are therefore encouraged to review these requirements with their principals.

The subdivision question examined the pupil’s knowledge of the subdivision process and boundary re-establishment in a pre-1912 plan of subdivision. Pupils were asked to subdivide an existing title, creating a new title for each of the lots described therein. Generally, this question was well answered but many candidates had difficulty re-establishing the back of lot corners along a lane.

The condominium question focused on what governs unit boundaries in a condominium. The part of the question that pupils had the most difficulty with was explaining how boundaries can be defined and how to depict them on a condominium plan.

The evidence assessment question provided the pupils with a mixture of plans from 1900 – 1960 and asked them to determine the boundaries of a title in order to facilitate the staking of a new building. Successful candidates were able to evaluate evidence and weigh it based on the hierarchy of evidence, knowledge of evidence types and examination of the plans provided.

The focus of the road question was understanding what governs the boundaries of a 1940s subdivision lot and what intersections are required when widening a road within a 1940s plan of subdivision. Pupils struggled with determining what re-establishments and postings were required.

Supplementary questions within each section tested candidate’s knowledge on statutes, the association and our bylaws. The registration committee was pleased to see that candidates did well on professional ethics questions and encourages pupils to closely review the ALSA Bylaws, Land Surveyors Act and the Competition Act in preparation for future exams.

The Registration Committee would also like to take this time to remind pupils of their responsibility to adhere to the Written Exam Procedures and Conduct, as outlined on pages 11 and 12 of the Pupil Handbook. Failure to adhere to these procedures resulted in serious consequences for a candidate in this last session.

Plan preparation is becoming an assembly line where emphasis is on production. Too often, digital information is copied and pasted without being correctly updated and checked.
1991 Eliminate Redundancy and Provide Consistency

The 1991 Annual General Meeting was the last one for Ken Allred after serving fourteen years as executive director and secretary-treasurer. In his final report, Mr. Allred reported that there were no seminars in 1990 although the Survey Law in Canada seminar series was held throughout Canada from November 1989 to January 1991. Mr. Allred also took time to mention that the association was instrumental in the publication of Vision of An Ordered Land written by the late Dr. J.G. MacGregor, a recently deceased honorary member. In the matter of public relations, Mr. Allred indicated that the association had developed two sets of display boards, with five different themes, which were used extensively in home and garden shows, career days and trade fairs across the province. Finally, Mr. Allred reported that a public relations study was in its final stages and would presumably be the subject of future discussion and more advanced public relations strategies. He noted that virtually every telephone inquiry received by the ALSA office related to real property reports.

From the ALS News Vault
Survey Evidence and Real Property Reports

The Practice Review Board recently completed a comprehensive review of the current practice of Alberta land surveyors in the preparation of Real Property Reports. This review was performed by the Professional Audit Branch as a special project and was initiated to compare the relationship of methodology used by the membership since the last review, and the provisions of the Manual of Good Practice.

Although emphasis was directed at researching and inspecting the quality and adequacy of field evidence used in the preparation of Real Property Reports, several other deficiencies were noted and brought to the attention of the land surveyors involved. The Board received a number of letters from practitioners with their return of amended Real Property Reports. Some of the comments bear discussion since it appears that certain conceptions or attitudes are not entirely consistent with the principles intended to be adhered to in the preparation of Real Property Reports. No attempt is made here to publicly chastise any land surveyor for his comments or actions, but rather to share in the benefit derived by discussing them.

"In our opinion it is better in some cases to use closer evidence, secondary in nature (i.e. Lot Bar or Closer IP) than to theoretically compute and establish the location for missing Block Corners from distant evidence."

"Insufficient evidence is used because sufficient evidence is not available. We are not guilty of an inadequate search for evidence; only guilty of not showing the extent of our search."

In many instances, surveyors are showing only the evidence used in the preparation of the Real Property Report even though other positions were investigated and no marks were found. On the surface, these documents appear to be incomplete and suitable notations should be shown on the plan at these locations to indicate the absence of an acceptable monument. In some cases, it is suspected that land surveyors are reluctant to show a definitive Fd.No.Mk, because a proper search was not performed. This supposition was more or less confirmed by the Inspector of Surveys while conducting field inspections on some of the Real Property Reports submitted. Many additional monuments were found that should have been used in the re-establishment process.

The Board agrees that in the absence of monuments at governing block corners, other secondary evidence such as lot bars can and should be used. However, they should only be used if their position can be verified as being undisturbed in relationship to other acceptable evidence, including other monuments and physical lines of occupation that reasonably date back to the original survey. Upon accepting this secondary evidence, the land surveyor must show the relationship back to the required block corners in order to complete the portrayal of the method of re-establishment. Real Property Reports are intended to be "stand alone" documents, and the information shown thereon must be clear and concise in order to satisfy the requirement that the subject lot boundaries were in fact re-established in accordance with the Surveys Act.

"I have tried to adhere to Chapter 10 of the Manual of Good Practice when performing Real Property Reports. However, in talking to various other surveyors it seems to me that the main criteria for evaluating Real Property Reports is finding four iron posts anywhere in the vicinity of the project."

"We tie in three or four posts and determine how well it fits the registered plan. We do not feel that strict compliance with the Surveys Act is necessary in all cases. We would adopt a more rigorous procedure if a post was going to be planted."

The Practice Review Board is of the firm opinion that "sufficient evidence" cannot be measured by the sheer number of iron corners in order to complete the portrayal of the method of re-establishment. Real Property Reports are intended to be "stand alone" documents, and the information shown thereon must be clear and concise in order to satisfy the requirement that the subject lot boundaries were in fact re-established in accordance with the Surveys Act.

President Syd Loeppky told the membership it had been his goal to advance the stature of the professional land surveyor. Earlier in the year, the University of Calgary had announced the establishment of a cadastral chair and Dr. Alec McEwen had been appointed to this position. This was the accumulation of many years of lobbying and the Alberta Land Surveyors’ Association along with British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba had pledged $50 per member.

Mr. Loeppky also announced that Council began the term under a new committee structure designed to eliminate redundancy, provide for consistency and allow committees to be chaired by non-Council members. In his address, Mr. Loeppky also indicated the need for a central repository for real property reports to be controlled by land surveyors. He also urged ASSMT members and land surveyors alike to support the initiative of a Registered Survey Technologist designation.

The only recommendation at the 1991 Annual General Meeting was an amendment to the Manual of Good Practice to indicate that a surveyor shall file a plan within two years of the establishment of any monument – this plan to be called an "establishment of monuments" plan.

HISTORY

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posts found. Each situation is different and must not be quantified in this manner. The fundamental objective is to determine the location of a property boundary from the best available evidence. Whether this exercise requires two monuments or six monuments, is a decision to be assessed by the land surveyor during the course of his survey. It must be remembered that a boundary can exist in only one location, albeit that different surveyors should agree upon that location within normal tolerances if the same evidence were used.

Some practitioners feel that greater tolerances are acceptable due to the nature and use made of a Real Property Report, and therefore, the evidence can be of a lesser quantity and quality than if a subdivision survey were being performed. This is misleading because insofar as general public perception is concerned, only one boundary exists and the dimensions shown by a land surveyor in relation to it are considered to be absolute. Land surveyors should govern the conduct of their practice from the parameters outlined by statute and not from the actions of the few isolated practitioners attempting to gain a competitive edge by not adhering to prescribed standards.

"It is my view that a Real Property Report is essentially a document provided for the use of individuals not learned in the technical terminology or methods used in land surveying."

"The Real Property Report, in my opinion, is an improvement over certificates, but keep in mind that it is also a product and in our society, it is the consumer who decides what products he will buy."

The inference in this instance is that some land surveyors feel all relevant data, information or apparent procedures need not be shown on Real Property Reports, or that a different product may be acceptable because certain outside influences or economic factors dictate it. The consumer may decide whether he is willing to purchase the service or not, however, the standard of this service is the responsibility of the profession. Minimum standards have been adopted by our membership, and any product that does not meet these standards tends to create confusion in the minds of both the consumer and other land surveyors.

In my opinion, the primary concern of most consumers is cost, and their secondary concern is the quality of the product. It seems that only in the case of a boundary dispute, usually precipitated by the location or mislocation of an improvement, does a consumer become genuinely concerned with quality. He will naturally rely on the product he previously purchased to substantiate his claim and becomes bewildered upon learning that the document may not have been prepared in accordance with accepted standards.

On the other hand, the land surveyor is frustrated because other practitioners seemingly produce a less than adequate product at a lower cost and are not held accountable for their actions. As a result, the "other" land surveyor is placed in a "no win" position of either succumbing to the temptation of also producing an inferior product, or continuing to offer a reliable product without any buyers.

The answer of course, is to have all Real Property Reports prepared to a standard that meets or exceeds the minimum adopted. Land surveyors could then expect to compete for business on a level playing field, and consumers could expect to rely on a consistent product that would withstand the scrutiny of others.

Although the Real Property Report review indicated that approximately 33% of all Real Property Reports submitted were deficient in some manner, I believe the general overall quality has improved since the initial review was conducted two years prior. Land surveyors, who have attended interviews with the Practice Review Board on this matter, have been receptive to the suggestions put forth by the Board to improve their product, and this action can only translate into a more consistent and acceptable Real Property Report. However, I believe we still have much further to go before it can be said this objective has been completely met.

This Guardpost article was originally published in the January 1991 issue of ALS News by Norm Mattson, ALS.

LOOKING FOR PAST ISSUES OF ALS NEWS?

Available on the ALSA website under Member Resources – Publications – ALS News
It is with great sadness that the family of Richard (Dick) announce his peaceful passing on March 24, 2019, surrounded by his loving family after a twelve year battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife of fifty-two years, Jill; children Allan Bassil, Christopher (Barbara) Bassil, Jennifer (Darryl) Kaluzniak; grandchildren Wil, Kaelan, Heidi, Teaghan, Noah, Landan, McKenzie and Kyler; his sister Ann, niece Tracey (Jeff) Siderius as well as numerous nieces and nephews. Dick enjoyed many years of retirement with Jill, travelling in their fifth wheel and enjoying their grandchildren, whom he adored. Dick was guided to the end of his journey under the expert and compassionate care of Doctors Megan Sellick, Pablo Amigo, Amanda Brisebois, and Social Worker Kim Crowe-McKinney. We cannot find the words to express our gratitude for the inspired, tireless, kind and attentive labours of the nurses of the Grey Nuns Palliative Care Unit for providing all human comforts for which he, his wife, family and friends will be eternally grateful. The family would also like to thank Doctors Howard Evans and Adrian Fairey for the kind and compassionate care they so generously gave to Dick since 2007. As Dad would say, "Give 'er."

Richard Merdin “Dick” Armfelt
Former Member
1934-2019

It is with great sadness that the family announces the passing of Richard Merdin (Dick) Armfelt on February 21, 2019 in Salmon Arm BC at the age of 84. Dick was born on November 12, 1934 in Athabasca AB to parents Hans and Helen Armfelt. He leaves to mourn his partner Ellen Huget of Salmon Arm, grandchildren Lindsay (Paul) Breda, David (Danielle) Armfelt, and Kaylan Armfelt (Justin Smith), great grandchildren Brielle and Alessia Breda, and daughter-in-law Julie. Dick will be greatly missed by his siblings Jack, Karen, Gerald (Ann), Larry (Margaret), Raymond (Allison), and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and their children. He was predeceased by his wife Kayla (2002), sons David (1981) and Russell (2016), and brother-in-law Chris Bradfield (2015).

Dick grew up west of Baptiste Lake, attending Winding Trail School from grades 1 to 8, then completing grades 9 to 12 in Athabasca. He graduated in 1952. In 1954 he attended the Provincial Institute of Technology and Art (now SAIT), taking surveying and drafting. He articled under the mentorship of G. Palsen, the Alberta Land Surveyor for the province. Taking and writing countless courses and exams from the U of A, he received his Alberta Land Surveyor commission on June 5, 1961. Some of his notable work involvements were the large tract of farmland at LaCreté AB and the Provincial “Head Smashed in Buffalo Jump” historical site.

On June 10, 1961 in Lethbridge, Dick married Kayla Park. They resided in Edmonton where sons David (1962) and Russell (1963) were born. In 1973 Dick and Kayla bought Long Beach Resort near Sorrento BC. He helped manage the resort and also worked various jobs, one being carpenter helper with his friend Shel Herrick.

After Kayla’s passing in 2002, Dick sold the resort and moved to Salmon Arm. While still operating the resort, he and Kayla, with assistance of many other talented individuals, started having his father’s letters, which were written in Danish, translated and edited. In 2009, these letters were published in his book All I Need Now are Some Chickens, a Cow, and a Wife, which has been regarded by family, friends, librarians, and historians as one of the best. Retirement time was spent on family genealogy, amassing a family tree dating back to the early 1800s. He especially enjoyed jigsaw puzzles, reading, and many trips and outings with Ellen.

In living memory of Roy Wilkins, a tree will be planted at Fish Creek Provincial Park.
YOUR 2019/2020 ALSA COUNCIL

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The ALSA affirms that Council members are the governors of the Association, providing leadership and direction for the Association’s affairs. ALSA also affirms that Council members are responsible for encouraging volunteerism and helping ALSA to achieve its mission and aims.
This will cover the laws and procedures that guide the decisions that ALSA committees can make.

August 28, 2019

More information and registration details will be available shortly.