

2022 Blog - Final Point

By Emily Pierce, PLS, CFedS

I'm sure most surveyors have heard of the "[Final Point](#)" program created by Berntsen International, Inc. and the National Society of Professional Surveyors Foundation (NSPSF). It's a way to memorialize the work of beloved surveyors who have had a lasting impact on the profession, while supporting the future of surveying through NSPS/Berntsen scholarships.

It's a great program that provides the perfect memorial monument for surveyors who have passed – and now, for the first time, surveyors who are still with us to enjoy the honor.

Last week, the Nevada Association of Land Surveyors (NALS) memorialized living legend Steve Parrish on May 20, 2022. After nearly 60 years surveying, Steve set his own final point monument at Great Basin College in Elko, Nevada, where he was a surveying instructor. It was fitting that the monument was set on the 237th Anniversary of The Land Ordinance of 1785 which was adopted by the United States Congress of the Confederation on May 20, 1785.

Along with the final point installation, Steve was also presented with the Dorothy Calegari - Distinguished Service Award by Warren Smith, the president of California Land Surveyors Association (CLSA). This award recognizes significant contributions to the advancement of the surveying profession and/or the public that stands as a model of professionalism, dedication, and commitment of moral conduct by a professional land surveyor.

Smith made a thousand-mile trip just to present Steve with this award, underscoring the impact Steve has had in the profession. A recent article in The Traverse, the NALS newsletter gives insight into how surveyors feel about Steve Parrish. A colleague, Carl C. DeBaca had this to say:

"Everybody knows Steve Parrish. He is eminently knowable. When you shake his hand you get an accurate measure of the man, of that I am completely confident. . .

We throw around terms like "Last of a dying breed" or "Last of his generation" all too often these days, cheapening the terms till they mean almost nothing, but in Steve's case they are both true; totally, thoroughly, irrevocably, undeniably true.

This man's moral compass is exact, precise, and calibrated to the thousandth of a second. Throughout his professional career, when he has taken on a task, his approach is to see it through to completion, do it right and cost be damned."

Steve's character reminds me very much of [other surveyors I've written about](#) – surveyors that include our founding fathers. It's not just their surveying work that has withstood the test of time – it was the lasting impact of their character.

Dorothy Calegari and Crissy Wilson of CLSA shared this:

"Throughout the years Steve has selflessly volunteered his time and talent to the betterment of the land surveying profession. His mentorship extends beyond the boundaries of Nevada, as he has supported and educated surveyors across the country.

Besides what he has done for the land surveying profession, Steve has made an impact on the world by being a kind, caring, family man, with the upmost integrity. We are lucky to call Steve Parrish our friend."

Here's an overview of Steve Parrish's career –

- 1963 - Began surveying with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS)
- 1973 - Acquired Utah PLS
- 1985 – Transferred to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- 1989 - Selected as BLM Nevada Cadastral Chief
- 1995 – Transferred to private sector
- 2007 - acquired his CFedS certificate (Steve is licensed in 10 states, and is a Nevada water rights surveyor)
- 2009 – awarded BAS in Technology from Great Basin College
- 2009 - taught SUR360 (2009 BLM Manual) for Great Basin College
- Ongoing – presented workshops in 27 States and Canada, and shares his nearly 60 years of land surveying experience through workshops, consulting, and expert witness testimony.

- Steve is currently the Certified Federal Surveyor (CFedS) Panel Chairperson/Training Coordinator and County Surveyor for Alpine and Mono Counties, CA.

As surveyors, what we do is incredibly important, with impact beyond our own generation. More important, than what we do is *how* we do it. Steve Parrish reflects the ideal we all strive to achieve as human beings. I am so proud of Steve Parrish, and I'm proud to be a surveyor.







NATIONAL SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL SURVEYORS FOUNDATION

FINAL POINT

JOHN "STEVE" PARRISH

CA
PLS
5050

NV
PLS
8475

LAT N 40°50' 35.935"

LONG W 115°45' 56.358"

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