



President Stahly's Message



Dear MARLS Membership,

Four hundred times zero equals zero. I know what you're thinking – we've elected a genius!! Bear with me here. According to the latest count, MARLS has 332 voting members, being defined as Active, Life, Fellow, and 126 Associate & Student Members. I'm addressing this message to Members and Student members – for a nice round number I'm going to say there are 400 of us.

Taking a look at some of the more effective associations in our communities today, and I think we'll find two common themes: One – ORGANIZATION and Two – PARTICIPATION. Lucky for MARLS, for the past 21 years we've been blessed with Kay McDonald that has gone way beyond her job description and has essentially served as the glue that holds us together. She is a big reason why MARLS remains organized and can always be counted on to keep us on course and on task.

So back to my complex math equation, four hundred times zero equals zero. The first number in that is an integer that represents us – the 400 members of MARLS. The second represents our time. The beauty of the first integer is that it is large enough to allow the second number to be a rational number and still result in a substantial product. Again, bear with me here. Let's say that EVERY member spends an average of 10 minutes, or 1/6 of an hour a week on a MARLS task. Not a lot of time even for those of us that don't have a lot of it. 400 times 1/6 equals 67. That's 67 collective hours per week that an average of 10 MINUTES A WEEK of your time helps to make MARLS a meaningful and effective organization.

Immediate ways you can donate your time and most likely feel a direct benefit in the process are:

Number 1 – attend your chapter meetings. Since I made this a priority, I'm amazed that even if the agenda doesn't have anything of interest to me on it, discussion will likely occur about a project someone is doing or has done that has presented a challenge. What I've learned from these discussions is invaluable and has directly affected the way I look at things IN A POSITIVE WAY, thereby improving the profession as a whole.

Number 2 – visit the MARLS discussion forum and participate in the discussion there. Not a lot of time required here, but things such as legislation are discussed at this site and by participating in the discussion, we are directly contributing to helping MARLS achieve several objectives identified in our Mission Statement.

Number 3 – speaking of our Mission Statement, pick 1 or 2 objectives that cover areas that you think you'd enjoy participating in. Our objectives are:

- ❖ To promote the common good and welfare of its members and the public in the profession of land surveying.
- ❖ To advance the study of land surveying and the education of land surveyors.
- ❖ To promote public knowledge, faith, and reliance in licensed professional land surveyors and their work.
- ❖ To foster and maintain high standards of professional ethics in the practice of land surveying.
- ❖ To foster and support legislation generally beneficial to the profession and to the citizens of the state of Montana.
- ❖ To promote closer relations, understanding, and cooperation within the profession.
- ❖ To establish better relations between the land surveyor and other professions interested in land surveying.
- ❖ To aid and encourage the interest of associate and student members of the association.

Out of these eight objectives, there's bound to be an area that you have a particular talent or interest in. Pick one or two and focus on them. By having a particular objective to focus on, it will make your contribution to MARLS defined and prevent it from being overwhelming.

To the **student** and **younger members**: ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT MARLS!! How does this work? How do we do this? Why do we do this? Why don't we do that? Learn how we work and GIVE INPUT. We are listening. Attend chapter meetings – I know you think you are busy, but believe me; you have more time on your hands right now than you will in a very long time! You are the next generation of MARLS – please spend your 10 minutes a week getting to know how it works and how you can help to shape its future.

And for those who are just too dang busy to donate an average of 10 minutes a week: If you are that busy, work must be picking up and the money must be rolling in!! Another aspect of what makes an organization successful is finances – so since you're too busy to donate time; donate some money. Thanks to Tom Henesh and Linda Smith, MARLS now has a "surveyor in need" fund, however, this fund needs to be grown. Consider donating to this important fund.

So, there you have it. These are ways that you can directly contribute keeping MARLS the effective and meaningful organization that it is.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as the 2011 President of MARLS. I have great pride in this organization and what it represents. I pledge to you to uphold its good name and press on to further our cause.

Dan Stahly

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dan Stahly".

MARLS President