

**“It Takes A Community” – Theme of The
Dedication Ceremony at Beatty High School
For the Commemorative Monument to The
2000 Geographic Center of Population for
the State of Nevada**

By William T. Cuddy, PLS
Project Coordinator

This project, except for the actual GPS observation, was completed on Thursday, October 10, 2002 at the dedication ceremony held on the football field at Beatty High School in Beatty, Nevada (Beatty). The theme of the dedication was It Takes A Community. This describes the cooperative effort of the Beatty Town Advisory Board, Chamber of Commerce and High School and members of the Nevada Association of Land Surveyors (NALS). On the state and national level, the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), State Of Maryland Society of Surveyors, National Geodetic Survey and the U.S. Census Bureau lent a helping hand.

Every project has a beginning. A NALS Board of Directors meeting was held on January 24, 2002 at the Airport Plaza in Reno, Nevada. Alan Riecki (Alan), PLS, Chair of the Advance Technology Committee and President of the Southern Nevada Chapter, reported that he had looked into the state monumentation of the 2000 Geographic Center of Population for the State Of Nevada (Center of Population) as requested by 2002 State President William F. (Bill) Mueller, PLS. He determined that the actual geographic site was within the boundaries of the Nevada Test Site. He questioned if the project should continue. There was a discussion on developing an alternate site that would be close to the actual geographic site. NALS President Mueller asked Alan to develop a plan and present it at the next Board of Directors Meeting.

In May, Alan contacted the author of this article and asked if he would help coordinate the project. Alan’s research indicated that NOAA’s Ocean Service, with the assistance of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, had set a commemorative monument at the center of population for the United States in Edgar Springs, Missouri on May 02, 2001. On October 9, 2001, the Maryland Society of Surveyors, with the assistance of the Howard County Department of Public Works, set a commemorative monument for the Maryland’s center of population in Savage, Howard County, Maryland. Included in the research were the 2000 census population and geographic coordinates for each of the 50 state centers. The latter information was published on the Internet by ACSM and entitled “Proposal: Location and Monumentation of State Centers of Population Using GPS.”

Beatty was chosen as the alternate site for construction of a commemorative monument to actual Center of Population. This small rural town, population 1,500, lays 31 miles west-southwest from the actual Center of Population. The actual geographic center lies in the Nevada Test Site’s Area 18, an area inaccessible to the general public. Linda Johnsrud, Public Affairs Office (Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas, Nevada) and Michael Brown, Public Affairs Office (Department of Energy, Nevada Operations in North Las Vegas, Nevada) verified this location. General information: Beatty is south-southeast 316 miles from Reno, west-southwest 370 miles from Elko and north-northwest 115 miles from Las Vegas.

Prior to the June meeting with the Beatty Town Advisory Board, the author contacted the Board Secretary, Mary Ball; Lane (J.R.) Schultz, Beatty Economical Development Committee Chairman; Chamber of Commerce President, Marina Anderson and Beatty High School Principal, Keith Koerner, and discussed with them the NALS Center of Population Project.

On the National level, the author contacted Chas Langelon, President-Elect of the Maryland Society of Surveyors and Editor of it newsletter (The Maryland Surveyor) and asked him for information on the society’s plaque; Chas mailed a wealth of photographs. The author then contacted Dave Doyle of the National Geodetic Survey and requested information on the center of population for the State of Nevada from 1950 through 2000. This information would depict the rapid shift in state population towards the southeast. Dave Doyle directed the author to Frederick Broome, Chief of the Geographic Division, U.S. Census Bureau. Fred provided the geographic coordinates for these state centers of population. On the state level, Timothy Wolf, PLS, of the Las Vegas Valley Water District (LVVWD) contacted Ben Grissom and Pat Yeager of of the NDOT. They provided NDOT’s

adjusted HARN observations from Beatty to the North and NDOT Right of Way plans through Beatty. This information would be used for a Use Permit for a Historical Preservation Sign that would be set within the R-O-W at U.S. Highway 95 and Cottonwood Drive in Beatty.

On Saturday, May 25, 2002, James Marlett, PLS, Tim Wolf and the author drove to Beatty to meet Keith Koerner, Principal Beatty High School and J.R. Schultz, Beatty Economical Development. They visited three locations in Beatty to select a site for the HARN Station; they were Beatty Park, Senior Center and High School. Beatty High School was selected for the site because of its unobstructed view of GPS Constellations twenty-four hours a day. They also discussed the construction of a commemorative monument to the center of population and placement of a large boulder to which a plaque would be attached.

In preparation for the June 7, 2002 State Board of Directors meeting in Las Vegas and the Beatty Town Advisory Board meeting in Beatty, Nevada on June 11, 2002, the author made arrangements with David Gray, President of North American Mapping, Inc. (NAMI) with offices in Sparks and Las Vegas, and James Marlett, PLS, of Clark County Survey Department (CCSD) in Las Vegas to provide displays for the State Board and Beatty Town Advisory Board meetings. NAMI's display was an aerial photograph of the town of Beatty and CCSD's display was an enlarged section of a NGS quad-map that depicted the relationship between Beatty and the actual geographic center of population.

At the June 7, 2002 meeting of the NALS State Board of Directors in Las Vegas, the proposed budget for the project, \$2500 - \$3000 was approved. This amount would cover the cost of the brass cap and plaque, concrete and sand for the commemorative monument and per diem for the members of the Advance Technology Committee who would stay overnight in Beatty while making the GPS Observations. NALS President William Mueller suggested that all the chapters should fund the project based on chapter membership.

At the Beatty Town Advisory Board meeting on June 11, 2002, Alan Riecki, PLS, James Marlett, PLS, and the author presented NALS' Area of Cooperation / Responsibilities Plan to the Advisory Board. The plan outlined the areas of cooperation and responsibilities between the four organizations: Beatty Town Advisory Board, Chamber of Commerce, High School and NALS. The plan was approved with the aid of the previous mentioned displays. On June 25, 2002 at its regular scheduled meeting, the Town Advisory Board approved the date for the dedication ceremony, October 10, 2002 at 10:00 A.M.

Tim Wolf, as a member of the Advance Technology Committee, volunteered to design the brass cap for the HARN Station and provide a map of Nevada that shows all the county lines and seats, the outline of Nellis Air Force Gunnery Range and Nevada Test Site, location of the town of Beatty and the Geographic Centers of Population. The map was essentially important to the dedication ceremony and to a news segment that was later aired on KLAS TV – Channel 8 in Las Vegas. Alan and the author collaborated in the design of the commemorative plaque. This collaboration led to naming the commemorative monument HARN Station Beatty High School. Bernsten International, Inc. of Madison, WI produced the brass cap and the plaque was purchased from Award West in Las Vegas.

Alan in cooperation with Mary Ball, Town Board Secretary, sent letters of invitation to various government personnel requesting their presence as a Keynote Speaker. Most declined because of their duties as a Governor, Senator or Representative. Jeff Taguchi, Chairman of the Nye County Board of Commissioners, solved the problem by inviting David T. Chavez, Nye County Administrator / Manager to fill the role as Keynote Speaker. Nevada Lieutenant Governor Lorraine Hunt assigned her Deputy Chief of Staff, Susan Fink, to speak on her behalf.

During August, press releases were sent to every newspaper in Nevada. The Pahrump Valley Times, Pahrump Valley Gazette and the Tonopah Times Bonanza – Goldfield News published the news release. The Tonopah Times Bonanza also published the map of Nevada prepared by Tim Wolf and the spreadsheet of county populations from 1950 to 2000 prepared by the author.

Tim Wolf, Gregory Rivero, PLS, and the author attended the Beatty Town Advisory Board meeting on September 11, 2002. We discussed the proposed dedication program with the Board. After the meeting, Tim, Greg and the author met with Henry Hofeldt, Beatty High School Counselor, Richard Stephens, Teacher and J.R. Schultz of the Beatty General Improvement District.

Greg Rivero, who would supervise the construction of the monument, had already delivered the supplies to the site. A 4-foot length of 12 inch I.D. plastic corrugated pipe for the stem and 1.5 feet of 24 inch I.D. plastic corrugated pipe for the cap were donated to the project by Mountain Falls Acquisition, Corp. of Pahrump, Nevada and the reinforcing angle iron by V-Point of Las Vegas, Nevada. NALS donated the concrete. On September 2, J.R. Schultz augured a hole, using a Beatty General Improvement District tractor with auger. Beatty High School's shop class provided the electric concrete mixer and Harold Davies, a local Beatty resident and Greg's uncle, provided the electric generator to power the mixer. Ryan Grant and Jerome Sargent, students at Beatty High School, assisted in the concrete placement, with the permission of the Shop Class Instructor James Benshoop. Greg installed the commemorative brass cap in the finished product and took pictures. J.R. obtained a forklift from the Improvement District and set a large boulder behind the commemorative monument facing the street. He and Greg drilled the holes and attached the commemorative plaque to the boulder.

The plaque to the commemorative monument reads: HARN STATION "BEATTY HIGH SCHOOL"

THIS SURVEY MONUMENT IS A SYMBOLIC REFERENCE TO THE CENTER OF POPULATION FOR THE STATE OF NEVADA, WHERE AN IMAGINARY, FLAT, WEIGHTLESS AND RIGID MAP OF THE STATE OF NEVADA WOULD BALANCE PERFECTLY IF ALL OF ITS 1,998, 257 RESIDENTS (BASED ON THE CENSUS 2000) WERE OF IDENTICAL WEIGHT. THE STATION WAS DEDICATED TO THE PUBLIC ON OCTOBER 10, 2002.

THIS SURVEY MONUMENT WAS A JOINT PROJECT OF THE NEVADA ASSOCIATION OF LAND SURVEYORS (NALS), BEATTY TOWN ADVISORY BOARD, BEATTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, BEATTY HIGH SCHOOL (NYE CO. SCHOOL DISTRICT).

FOR SURVEY INFORMATION, GO TO THE NATIONAL GEODETIC SURVEY WEB SITE AT WWW.NGS.NOAA.GOV.

Beatty High School Business and Computer Science Class, under the direction of Floyd Isom, produced the program designed by the NALS Advance Technology Committee entitled: HARN STATION BEATTY HIGH SCHOOL – DEDICATION – October 10, 2002 at 10:00 A.M. – Beatty High School football field. The Program theme was It Takes a Community. Harold Tokerud, Principal and Moderator / Presenter, led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. The High School Band under the direction of Dale Lerbakken played the National Anthem and Nevada State Song. Keynote Speaker David Chavez, spoke on A Brief History of Nevada and Its Population.

Susan Fink read Lorraine Hunt's presentation It Takes a Community. Susan, on behalf of Governor Guinn, presented his proclamation to William Mueller (NALS), Rick Wilson (Beatty Town Advisory Board); Peggy Johnson (Beatty Chamber of Commerce); and A.J. Alvarez (02-03 Student Body Vice-President of Beatty High School).

NALS 2002 President William Mueller's presentation was NALS Past and Present. He presented a framed 11 x 17 map of Nevada prepared by Tim Wolf and a framed 8.5 x 11 NALS Letter of Appreciation to the following representatives: David Chavez (Nye County); Susan Fink (Lt. Governor Hunt); Rich Wilson (Beatty Town Advisory Board); Peggy Johnson (Beatty Chamber of Commerce); and Belinda Gary (02-03 Student Body President of Beatty High School). Governor Guinn and George Knapp of TV Channel 8 will be presented their framed map and NALS Letter of Appreciation in Las Vegas at a later date.

Tim Wolf, NALS 2002 State Treasurer, substituting for Alan Riecki, introduced the following exhibitors, all from Las Vegas, who had firm/agency signs at their table provided by Stephen Gurlides, PLS, of VTN-Nevada: Eric Denman, PLS and Nancy Peace, PLS displayed CCSN award winning Roman Survey Instruments (The Nevada Traverse, Vol. 29, No. 2, Page 3); William Avery, PLS. of Wesco Surveys displayed a variety of survey instruments and books from 1890 to 1970; Thomas Barnes, PLS, of Stanley Consultants and an instructor at UNLV and CCSN displayed a variety of instruments from CCSN: theodolites, level and total stations. Tom Mason and Lee James of H.I. Survey and Laser displayed a Ashtec total station and an automatic level; William DesJarnis of Mosen Engineering Supplies displayed a Trimble Reflectorless Total Station; and Sean Corkill of the LVVWD, assisted by James Marlett, PLS, of CCSN, displayed the latest in GPS Survey Equipment. Students of Beatty High School had an hour to observe the equipment and talk to the exhibitors. The majority of the 120 students took the time to do so. Upon closing the exhibits, the Exhibitors commented on how polite the student were!

From Las Vegas, Rita Lumos, PLS, the Chairman of the Nevada State Board of Professional Land Surveyors attended the dedication ceremony, as did the following: Jeff Ohrn, PLS (CCSD), Vern Little, PLS, and Dave

Passmore, PLS (VTN-Nevada) and Gerg Rivero, PLS (V-Point, Inc). From Elko, Eric Hearon, PLS, 2002 NALS Treasurer, made the trip to Beatty with NALS President William Mueller.

After the dedication, George Knapp, Investigative Reporter for KLAS TV – Channel 8, Eyewitness News informed Charles Cook, PLS, who made the initial contact, Alan Riecki, Tim Wolf and the author that Eyewitness News anchors Gary Waddell and Paula Francis would air the news brief at 6:00 P.M. The brief was filmed at the LVVWD on Monday, October 7, 2002. Tim and Sean Corkill spent a great deal of time preparing displays for the news segment; a portion of which were displayed on TV. Tim Wolf was the spokes person for NALS at the interview and was featured in the new brief.

As the NALS 2002 Coordinator for the 2000 Center of Population for State of Nevada Project, I thank the community: national, state, local and members of NALS for the support received in planning the project and participating in the dedication ceremony.