In Point of Fact —

—**Positioning Missouri for the future.** Professional land surveyors representing private firms from across the state contributed approximately $150,000 of professional services to the citizens of Missouri when they joined state and federal colleagues in August to begin the state's Height Modernization Survey. "By pushing this button, said Missouri Governor Jay Nixon on opening day of the Missouri State Fair, we will begin a process going on all across the state with global positioning stations. Surveyors, the Department of Natural Resources, and our federal and state partners will begin a process that will culminate in about October when we map the heights of everything in the state." Such data are extremely vital when keeping Missourians safe from floods. The Governor noted that "we don't talk nearly enough about such data, but when we are making decisions about which levees to fix, or who needs to be moved out of a flooded area, and how we can make sure they are kept safe, then having an accurate baseline becomes extremely important." Missouri farmers will benefit too. "The baseline data will make millions of dollars of difference for Missouri agriculture," said Governor Nixon. "Millions. Plus, we'll have data for gauging erosion and soil protection and making sure Missouri continues to be the number one agricultural state in the country." Staff with MoDNR's Geology and Land Survey Division's Land Survey program will evaluate, verify, and process the data and enter it into the national database. Mark N. Templeton, MoDNR Director, expressed appreciation for all involved saying, "Without the generous donation of time, staff and equipment provided by private land surveyors, surveying equipment companies, and the work of the various government agencies, this project would not have been possible in the foreseeable future." State and local governments can spend tens of millions of dollars each year adjusting engineering projects such as roads and buildings that are affected by the Earth's shifting surface. Accurate, reliable and up-to-date heights are essential for a wide range of activities, including managing construction and infrastructure projects such as roads, bridges, dams, and levees; alerting emergency planners to storm evacuation routes that are susceptible to storm surges; mapping flood plains to produce accurate flood zone maps; precisely controlling equipment used in agriculture, and snow removal; and allowing efficient fertilizer and pesticide use and reduce costs to counter pollution from chemical runoff, to name a few.
— by Rick Reese, MoDNR Land Survey Program representative on the Height Modernization Survey for Missouri project

—Chile miners rescue One by one, the 33 miners who have been trapped under 2,000 feet of rock in San Jose mine in the Chilean Atacama Desert for more than two months were pulled to the surface in mid-October, in a special capsule, then embraced by emotional family members as the end of their saga was beamed live around the world. The rescue operations, which involved a bumpy journey in the specially designed capsule along a 28-inch-wide emergency schaft, triggered an outburst of national pride. "Bienvenido a la vida," President Pinera told Victor Segovia, the 15th miner to emerge. In English, the phrase means, "Welcome to life." In Washington, President Obama said: "This rescue is a tribute not only to the determination of the rescue workers and the Chilean government, but also the unity and resolve of the Chilean people, who have inspired the world." He also commended those from the United States and other nations who assisted in the rescue effort, including a NASA team that helped design the escape capsule, U.S. companies that manufactured parts of the rescue drill and the American engineer who flew in from Afghanistan to operate the drill. "Chile's first astronaut is arriving!" yelled one of the rescuers, as the first man up, Florencio Avalos, was hoisted to safety.—by Juan Forero and Jonathan Franklin, Washington Post Foreign Service