



Editorial

>> Marc S. Cheves, LS

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Growing a Dream

It's that time of year again when temperatures drop and calendars load up. Those of you in the cooler latitudes are already watching the leaves turn and reaching for heavier coats, a reminder that the holidays will be here before we know it.

Speaking of holidays, we've got lots of handsome high-quality map reproductions that make terrific gifts. There are more than a hundred maps in our website "store," and many yet to be posted. If you don't see what you like, e-mail us from the website with specific requests. Most orders are filled within 24-hours. Visit www.theamericansurveyor.com.

On the Go!

Speaking of calendars, our own travel calendar remains busy. Coast to coast and around the world, a lot is happening in our industry. We recently had a chance to visit with Fons de Wolf, owner of Pythagoras Software (pictured below), and David Atkinson, owner of Western Latitudes, the new U.S. distributor for both Pythagoras software and Pentax instruments in Denver. The latest Pentax instrument interacts with the software and provides improved two-way communication. Western Latitudes provides turn-key sales



Fons de Wolf,
owner and creator
of Pythagoras
Software.

THE American Surveyor

A Four in The Past... An Eye To The Future

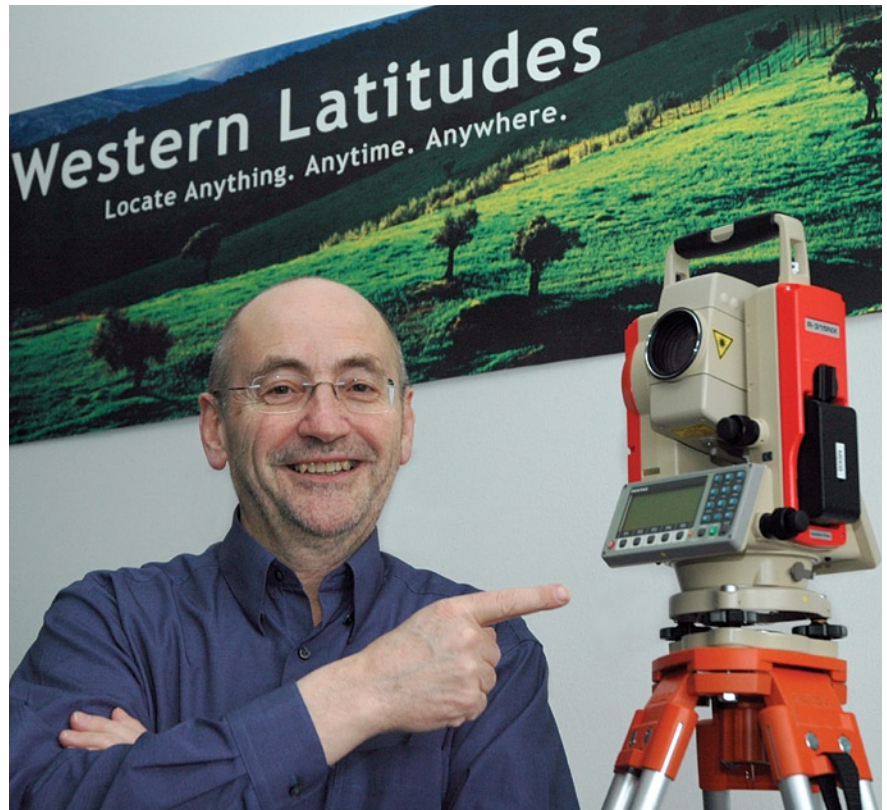


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and suggestions
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think.

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Fons de Wolf with newest Pentax total station

and support for a variety of solutions for surveyors and mappers.

The “People” Side

We always like to share the “people” side of a company story with our readers. Back in Belgium in 1991, Fons de Wolf left a career in electronics to pursue his dream of owning a software company. The 59-year-old de Wolf, with an EE degree and a Masters in electronics had been involved with computers since 1972. His most recent engagement had been a four-year stint with the European Space Lab. His brother-in-law is a surveyor, and together, they discussed the need for a better software package. It took two programmers one year to create the first product. The company has been profitable since 1993, and currently has seven software developers in the Ukraine, and three full-time and one part-time developer in Belgium.

Seventeen Languages

The company now has nearly 5,000 users worldwide, with software

available in 17 languages, (four in Mac format). Up to 32 DTMs and 34,000 raster images can be incorporated and imported into a single drawing. The user can clip, add vectors and do heads-up digitizing. Horizontal and vertical alignments can be easily imported. The current version is 10, but version 11 will be out shortly, and will use ODBC to add GIS functionality, including thematic maps and notification letters.

The extension language is Visual Basic, and thirty macros are available so far, with more to come. COM objects include DTMs, spirals, curves and more. Moving maps are included and real-time cuts and fills are possible. For those wishing to really dive in, the source code is available. Pythagoras VBA is a subset of Microsoft VBA and is 95% compatible. de Wolf noted that 5 percent of his sales go toward the license from Microsoft to use VBA. For more information on the new Pentax R-300X instrument and Pythagoras software, see Joe Bell’s column in this issue. *A*