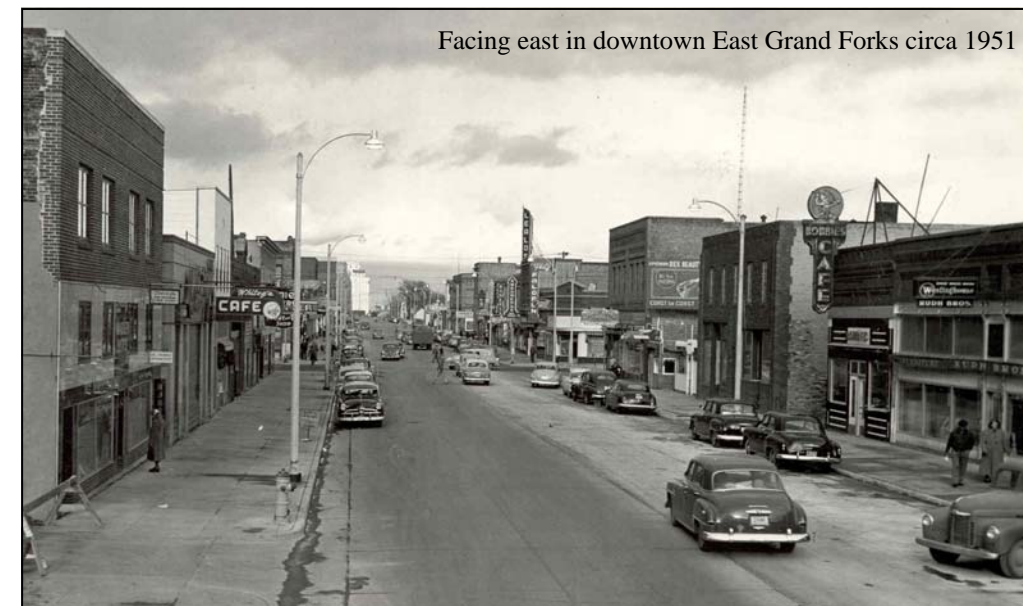


Memories

1956 50 Years of Engineering Excellence 2006

Filling a Need: The History of Floan-Sanders, Inc.



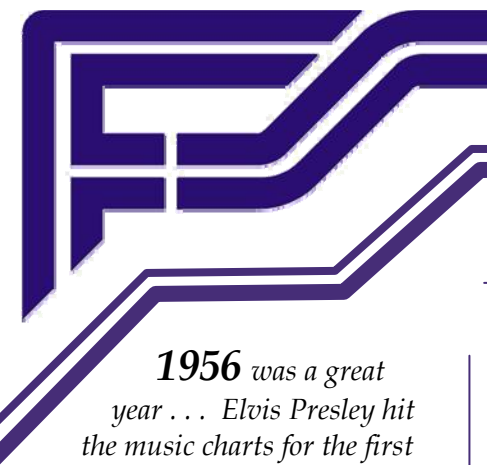
It was 1955 and the City of East Grand Forks was facing some major utility projects. The City's water treatment plant had been built in 1912 and was badly in need of updating. There was no real wastewater treatment system to speak of (most waste water was discharged directly into the Red River) and the council could see the need for new housing developments in the next few years.

With no engineering department, city leaders knew they would have to hire a consultant to assist them with these major projects. The trouble was, there was no civil engineering firm in East Grand Forks at the time. So a few city leaders took the initiative and approached Don Floan, an employee of Lium Burdick Consulting Engineers, a

firm in Grand Forks, to see if he would consider opening his own company in East Grand Forks. He agreed and in 1956 Donald L. Floan, Consulting Engineer opened for business above Red River Motors on 4th street in downtown East Grand Forks.

The company's first project was to design a sewage disposal system for the community, complete with a lagoon and pumping stations. The second big project was to update the city's water treatment plant. Smaller projects for Polk County and neighboring townships also kept the small staff busy in the early years.

"I had some good people



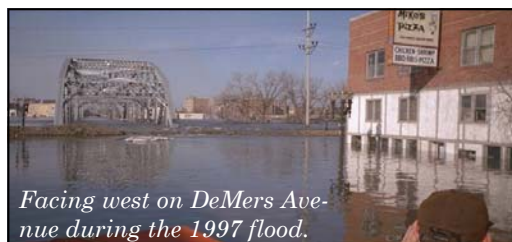
1956 was a great year . . . Elvis Presley hit the music charts for the first time with Heartbreak Hotel, Republican incumbent President Dwight D. Eisenhower defeated Democratic challenger Adlai E. Stevenson, and Donald L Floan, Consulting Engineer opened for business in East Grand Forks, Minnesota.

Since then, there have been a lot of changes around the world and in our own region. The one thing that hasn't changed is Floan-Sanders' commitment to the communities it serves in northwestern Minnesota.

We are proud to be celebrating 50 years of engineering and surveying excellence and are especially proud of the role we've played in the development of East Grand Forks, Fisher, Warren, Fertile, Warroad, and other neighboring communities.

This publication was created to share our memories of our region's history, as well as honor some of the people who played key roles at Floan-Sanders. I hope you enjoy looking back with us and I hope we can continue to serve this great area for another 50 years.

- Greg Boppre, President



Sanders, Inc. as well as the entire community of East Grand Forks. Challenged and exhausted by the months-long flood preparations and intense last week of the flood fight, Floan-Sanders staff could only watch in disbelief as the floodwaters overtopped the community's levees and inundated the entire city, including their own offices.

There was no time for rest, as recovery work began immediately. As the City Engineer, Floan-Sanders staff was intimately involved in the community's recovery and long-term planning, which included a Corps of Engineers flood protection project.

Sanders remembers the chaos and intensity of the flood recovery work. "We'd have FEMA bring in a contract on Friday afternoon for a temporary housing mobile home park and on Monday we'd have the plan sets finished so it could be bid on Tuesday."

East Grand Forks' flood recovery and the \$410 million flood protection project (a joint project with Grand Forks, ND) consumed much of Floan-Sanders staff time in the years following the flood. Now, however, the project is nearing completion and the firm is looking ahead to new challenges.

Looking Ahead

As the company celebrates 50 years of existence, new faces are leading the

way. Greg Boppre replaced Gary Sanders as Company President in 2003 and Brad Bail replaced Dean Wieland as Vice-President. Sanders and Wieland are in the process of retiring, although one can still find them doing work on Floan-Sanders projects here and there. Doug Herzog, Mark Lambrecht, and Mike Korman make up the rest of the Board of Directors.

Floan-Sanders continues to work with the Small Cities Grant Program and is currently working on projects for Shelly and St. Hilaire, MN. The company opened a second office in Warroad in the fall of 2004 to better serve their clients in that area. East Grand Forks is still home to their main office and that building was recently expanded and remodeled.



Greg Boppre and the Corps review plans for the flood protection project, 2003.

After 50 years of engineering and surveying projects in this area, it is easy to see that Floan-Sanders, Inc. has played a crucial part in the history of East Grand Forks and northwestern Minnesota.

"It's truly amazing to have been a part of so many important projects in this region," Sanders reflects. "It's gone by fast." ♦



The Faces Behind FS: Dean Wieland

Born in Crookston in 1944,

Dean Wieland graduated from Lafayette High School in Red Lake Falls in 1962. He attended UND, and worked part-time at several jobs including surveying for Don L. Floan Engineering. After graduating with a degree in civil engineering, Wieland went to Topeka, Kansas and worked for the State's Dept. of Transportation for six years.

He returned to the area in 1973 and worked for the City of Grand Forks and part-time for Floan-Sanders. Eventually he became a full-time employee of FS, and then a partner in 1980.



Wieland during the 1979 flood fight.

Now partially retired - "What you build in 20-25 years you don't get out of right away," he explains - Wieland enjoys traveling with Mae, his wife of 39 years, including trips to Hawaii and China. He also took a safari in Africa with his son. Both his children - son Andy and daughter Suzi - are engineers. Wieland also has four grandchildren. ♦

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The Faces Behind FS: Donald L. Floan



Born in 1925 in a farmhouse eight miles from Fertile, Minnesota, the founder of Floan-Sanders spent his early years attending a one-room school with no running water or electricity. After graduating from Fertile High School in 1943, Don joined the Army with ambitions of flying fighters or bombers. With too many pilots at the time, he instead entered the B29 flight engineering program and spent most of his time in the service in school in Texas and Oklahoma.

After the war he attended UND, graduating in 1949, and worked for Lium Burdick Consulting Engineers for \$2.48 an hour until opening Donald L. Floan, Consulting Engineer in 1956. He never let go of his dream of flying and bought an airplane as soon as he was able - in the late 1950s - and got his pilot's license. "I took a lot of neighborhood kids up for their first plane ride," he remembers with a smile.

After retiring from Floan-Sanders, Don started a computer software business - Simplicity Systems - with his son Mark, specializing in software for land surveyors and engineers.

He's now retired from that venture as well, and enjoys his time with family: his wife of 59 years Betty, their three children - Linda, Sherrie, and Mark, 6 grandchildren, and a new great-granddaughter. He continues to contribute to his community, most recently volunteering at the Senior Citizens Center setting up a computer lab and teaching computer basics. ♦

working for me," Floan remembers. "Jim Vigen, Walt Forney, and later Gary Sanders - if it hadn't been for those people, there wouldn't be a Floan-Sanders."

Adding a Partner

In 1965, Floan needed an inspector for a major street project on the north end of town. He hired Gary Sanders, who was working as an inspector for Polk County at the time. Sanders eventually graduated from UND with an engineering degree and went to work for the City of St. Paul, MN. But a year later, after Vigen and Forney left the company, Floan tracked Sanders down and offered him a job again, this time as an engineer. Sanders accepted and later became a full partner. The company changed its name to Floan-Sanders, Inc. in 1972.

The 1970s saw the company focusing on downtown urban renewal in East Grand Forks. The project originally stretched for 10 blocks east of the Sorlie Bridge, but eventually concentrated on the Holiday Mall area. Floan-Sanders staff were also getting extensive experience in flood fighting as the 70s brought numerous floods, the one in 1979 being the most significant.

The firm became so skilled at



Construction of the East Grand Forks Water Treatment Plant in 1958.

writing damage survey reports that Sanders and Dean Wieland, who had been working for the company for several years, decided to open an affiliate firm in Grand Forks to assist that community with flood reporting and recovery, along with other engineering needs. CPS, Ltd. opened in 1979 and continues to provide engineering and surveying services to northeastern North Dakota.

Changing of the Guard

In 1980, Don Floan officially retired from the company that bore his name. Mark Floan (Don's son), Dean Wieland, and Sanders bought out Floan's interest in the company and continued his tradition of excellent service despite new challenges.

"The 80s were tough years," Sanders explains. "There just weren't a lot



Construction of the EGF Swimming Pool in 1963

of projects to do and we were pretty young."

Then, the Department of Trade and Economic Development for the State of Minnesota started the Small Cities Grant Program. Within a few years, Floan-Sanders was busy again assisting the smaller communities in northwestern Minnesota obtain grants for utility projects and upgrades. "The secret to our success was simple," Sanders notes, "We didn't charge anyone anything until we secured them a grant to do the project."

The company became especially skilled working with the grant program and has handled an estimated \$25 million in these types of projects since the program's inception, completing projects in Alvarado, Warroad, Fisher, Argyle, and Fertile, among others.

"The biggest project for us during that time was probably the airport expansion in Warroad," Wieland remembers. "That was a \$7.5 million project."

As these communities became familiar with Floan-Sanders staff and the quality of their work, they began to rely more and more on the firm to handle their engineering needs. Many communities simply chose to



Urban Renewal Project on the 200 block of Demers Ave.

make Floan-Sanders their Consulting City Engineer, an arrangement that was mutually beneficial.

"Being able to work with a community on a long-term basis helps us be more efficient," explains Greg Boppre, who's been with the firm since 1984. "We are familiar with their infrastructure, we know their staff, we understand what the community's priorities are and how best to help them accomplish their goals." Currently, Floan-Sanders serves as the City Engineer for nine different communities in northwestern Minnesota.

River City

The Red River Flood of 1997 was a turning point in the history of Floan-

Gary Sanders and Dean Wieland celebrate the opening of Floan-Sanders new office space at 1600 Central Avenue NE in 1988 with a ribbon cutting ceremony. Also pictured are employees Kelly Sanders and Monica Arvidson and EGF Chamber members Jim Richter and Gary Christianson.

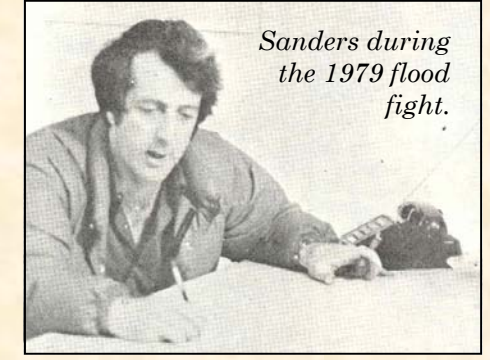


The Faces Behind FS: Gary Sanders



Born in Bemidji in 1941, Gary Sanders grew up in Park Rapids and graduated from Crookston High School in 1959. He started working for Polk County during the summers - running a survey crew, and doing inspection and testing of road projects - while he completed his schooling. He spent a couple of years at Moorhead State and then graduated from UND in December of 1966. During the summer of 1965, Don Floan hired him to handle the inspection of a large street project on the north end of East Grand Forks. A few years later, Sanders' name was added to the company's.

Sanders met Dean Wieland in college during the fall of 1966 and they worked together part-time for Don Floan while in school. That was the beginning of a long and successful partnership. "I don't know anybody who's gotten along better than Dean and I," admits Sanders.



Now almost retired (he's finishing up some work on the EGF Flood Protection Project for FS), Sanders spends most of his time in Florida with his wife Sherrie, where he enjoys the warm weather and lots of golf. ♦