

# THE INTERNATIONAL VALUATION COMMITTEE



Donald Sherwood, SR/WA, Chair of the International Valuation Committee receives recognition from Past President Gordon E. MacNair, SR/WA at the 2005 Annual Education Conference in Toronto, ON.

No organization is stronger than the quality of its leadership. For the International Right of Way Association (IRWA), our strength is derived from the commitment exemplified by right of way professionals who serve on industry committees. As they focus on their respective disciplines, these volunteers provide the underlying foundation of our organization.

The International Valuation Committee (IVC) is intensely focused on their core responsibilities: examining and reporting legislative changes, practices and procedures relating to the valuation of real property, or interests in real property, for public or private use, and in measuring the economic impact of right of way acquisition, and subsequent construction, on the affected parcel and any remainder parcel.

“The long-term rewards are well worth the time invested. By each person giving a little, we can, as a group, accomplish much.”

Last year proved to be an active and productive year for the IVC. The January 2005 Uniform Act legislative changes served as a catalyst for course rewrites and educational sessions presented at the Uniform Act Symposium held in November. Partnering with the Transportation, Local Public Agency and Relocation Committees, the International Valuation Committee organized and presented 10 sessions designed to help educate right of way professionals on how the new regulations affect the day-to-day practice.

When Committee Chair, Donald Sherwood, SR/WA, is asked to recount his committee's past accomplishments, it's evident that the past is yesterday's news. In an instant, he can recite a laundry list of projects already in the works for 2006.

“Valuation of right of way work is a key element in the development of our nation's transportation and infrastructure network,” says Donnie. “Today, technological, legal and environmental developments challenge the right of way profession as never before. It has become increasingly important that the users of valuation services receive the most highly educated and informed opinions of value.”

**BY BARBARA BILLITZER**



Committee Members from left: Donald Sherwood, SR/WA; David Maturen, SR/WA; Orell Anderson, MAI; Randy Seale; and Bernard Banker, SR/WA, R/W-RAC

### What are the major responsibilities of the IVC?

**Donnie:** Our committee focuses on four major areas of responsibility – Education, Programs and Seminars, Communication, and Magazine Review. This past year we assigned all our committee members to specific tasks within these four areas.

### How would you describe your committee’s overall mission?

**Donnie:** Our mission is actually threefold:

- 1) Present top-notch programs at the Annual Conference dealing with current valuation issues
- 2) Assist in developing cutting-edge education in the specialized field of right of way valuation
- 3) Provide vehicles for communicating with our members and the public

This past year was especially challenging in that we had an excellent program in Toronto followed by the Uniform Act Symposium. A lot of hard work went into both efforts.

### What are some of your current activities?

**Donnie:** We are currently working with the International Professional Development Committee (IPDC) in the update of Course 401 – The Appraisal of Partial Acquisitions. This is one of IRWA’s signature courses. We are also working with the IPDC to standardize all of the IRWA valuation courses using the recently approved educational design template.

For the upcoming 2006 conference in Denver, CO, our committee is finalizing the valuation session topics. We’ve even started developing new topics for the 2007 conference in Sacramento, CA.

Some other projects we’ve identified for this year include the development of a Valuation Committee website, the formation of a “speaker’s bureau,” and the creation of “canned programs” that can be used at local chapter meetings.

### What types of educational sessions will you be offering at the 2006 conference in Denver?

**Donnie:** During IRWA’s Annual International Education Conference in Denver, CO, we are looking forward to offering seven different educational breakout sessions:

- Do Pipelines Affect Value?
- Mock Trial - Part 1 (a joint session with Utilities & Local Public Agency)
- Mock Trial - Part 2 (a joint session with Utilities & Local Public Agency)
- Technology, Research & Data Sources for the Appraiser
- A Study of Detrimental Conditions Impacting Value
- The Impact of the Uniform Act on Appraisers
- Right of Way & Agricultural Valuation

### What are some major obstacles you face?

**Donnie:** Our committee currently has strong representation from all 10 regions with 15 At-Large Members. Unlike other IRWA committees, a large portion of our members are independent fee appraisers who give of their own time and money to attend our meetings with no compensation.



From left: Jerry Krebs, SR/WA; Bernie McDonald, SR/WA; James Price, SR/WA; Alexander Warga, SR/WA; and David Aberdeen

While our attendance at the Annual Conference is strong, it could use improvement. Also, as volunteers, we often let our IRWA tasks slide

when given the choice of making money or working for free. Our challenge is to get greater involvement within the committee and to give everyone a small part to work on so they are not overwhelmed.

Another obstacle facing appraisers in general is the fact that the independent appraiser is aging. The imbalance in supply and demand for appraisal services that occurred in the early 1990s forced many good appraisers out of the independent work force.

### How has the demand for appraisal services been affected?

**Donnie:** Demand for appraisal services has steadily increased over the past several years, and many appraisers simply do not enjoy the right of way work and the stress that comes with intense reviews and testifying. While appraisal fees have increased in recent years, the fees for right of way work in many areas of the country lag the market compared to other appraisal assignments.

Additionally, working as sub-contractors for major providers has proven to be very challenging because of communication issues and slow payments. We hope that these issues are resolved in the near future.

### What made you originally decide to join the IVC?

**Donnie:** As a practicing fee appraiser, I first decided to join the Valuation Committee because I felt I had something of value to give to this group. Bernie McDonald, SR/WA, encouraged me to participate by asking me first to be a speaker at one of IRWA's annual conferences.

I found the experience beneficial on both a personal and professional level and was able to witness first-hand the rewards associated with IRWA involvement. I also felt I could develop a better networking group in which to expand my appraisal business.

### What have you gained from your participation?

**Donnie:** First, I have developed lasting friendships from within my committee. While we do get a lot done, we are fortunate to have a great deal of fun in the process. We communicate primarily via e-mail, however I will often just pick up the phone so I can bounce an idea off one of the committee members. My knowledge has increased significantly through my interaction with the committee members and by participating in our various educational offerings.

### How does your employer feel about your involvement?

**Donnie:** That's a really good question. As a partner with Integra Realty Resources DFW, my other partners strongly encourage my involvement as a leader within the valuation area and as an instructor. Each partner oversees a specific part of our practice, and I help in the area of right of way and general litigation work.

My involvement in IRWA has led to our success in landing some significant work, and we have seen our volume increase over the past several years. In addition to my committee involvement, our company has consistently supported IRWA on many different levels. Dan Wright served as our local chapter president last year, Greg Cook and Heather Knipstein as co-chairs of the chapter education committee, and David Harry as the chapter program chair. The national office of Integra Realty also encourages participation in all the offices in right of way work.

### What would you say is the committee's greatest strength?

**Donnie:** Our committee's background and diversity is definitely its greatest strength. We have a wide range of talent and experience and draw from one another. The assemblage factor – assembling lower value property and creating a larger, more valuable parcel is alive and well in our committee.



From left: Andrew Anderson, SR/WA, R/W-AC; Mike Jones, SR/WA; Mark Keller, SR/WA; Randall Kopfer, SR/WA; and Jennifer Logan, SR/WA

### What goals do you have for the immediate future?

**Donnie:** In 2006, we plan to develop a “Speaker’s Bureau,” to encourage more of our members to write articles for Right of Way magazine, work on the development of a joint seminar with the Appraisal Institute, find ways of increasing attendance and active participation at our committee meetings, finish the development of our website, and produce a list of “canned topics” that chapters can use for their meetings.

### What is your greatest/most recent accomplishment?

**Donnie:** Our hats are off to Vice Chair Dave Maturen and his leadership in the recent Uniform Act Symposium held in November in Anaheim, CA. Dave put on an excellent series of educational seminars dealing with:

- “Scope of Work” issues for the FHWA/USPAP/ASB
- Public Purpose v. Public Use
- How to Implement the New Federal Regulations
- Outdoor Advertising
- Proximity Damages
- Just Compensation
- Mass Appraisal Applications for Avigation Easements
- Valuation of Airport and Airport Properties
- Eminent Domain Issues for Appraisers/Attorneys.

The level of education at this education symposium was some of the best IRWA has ever had.

### How often do you meet?

**Donnie:** We meet annually just prior to the Annual Conference in June. In the past, we have also met in Washington, DC as part of the Federal Agency Update and the Chair/Vice Chair meeting.

Due to budget constraints, we were unable to meet in January 2006; however, we are looking into the possibility of an additional committee meeting for 2007.

### How many members serve on your committee?

**Donnie:** In addition to the Chair and Vice Chair, we have 10 Region Representatives (our Vice Chair also serves as a Region Representative), 15 At-Large Members and our IEC Liaison. In total, we have 27 members.

### How would someone interested get involved?

**Donnie:** We are always looking to increase our membership, thereby increasing our ability to accomplish more of the tasks that will benefit IRWA. We are especially interested in right of way professionals with valuation backgrounds (either as a reviewer or appraiser, public or private). We are in dire need of someone who has expertise in setting up a website. While the job doesn’t have an immediate payoff, the long-term rewards are well worth the time invested.

We are seeking people who are willing to commit time and resources to a small task. By each person giving a little, we can, as a group, accomplish much. For those interested in joining or seeking additional information, please contact me at [dsherwood@irr.com](mailto:dsherwood@irr.com).



From left: Bonnie Roerig; John Rolling, SR/WA; John Turpin; Harris Vandergriff, SR/WA; and Sandy Grigg, SR/WA

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