

Nurturing our Relationships

Guiding the Association forward on a shared path

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It's a beautiful day in Nashville, and I'm sitting in the Green Hills Starbucks writing this final article for Right of Way Magazine as the outgoing International President of IRWA. I find it ironic that the tiny Bluebird Café, the ultimate venue for upcoming singer songwriters in the entire country, sits quiet and unassuming in the afternoon light less than a mile down the road. The Bluebird was the place where I proved myself as a Nashville musician, and performing there was one of the high points of my musical career. And here I sit with my laptop and my latte, looking back down the road (literally) to the end of that special time in my life and preparing myself to embrace another noteworthy ending—the close of my final year of International leadership in IRWA.

Any review of the past year has to begin with a short list of the Association's major accomplishments, which, happily, is not short at all. We began in early July with a leadership retreat attended by the International Executive Committee and key staff members where we established a collaborative team in which everyone leads. We also used that time to update our mission and vision as an Association, and to create a new Three-Year Strategic Plan that will take IRWA to the next level. As part of that plan, we identified several key project areas, including education, member value, and succession planning, in which to best focus our energies going forward.

Here at home in the United States, we completed MAP-21 URA statutory updates to all our relevant IRWA education products, and helped the Federal Highway Administration to roll out a new Uniform Act Discussion Group on our own IRWA Member Network. We continue to develop closer partnerships with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, working with their Real Estate, Utilities and Outdoor Advertising Directors. We are putting the finishing touches on our innovative program offering industry-specific pathways to our SR/WA Designation. Our IRWA legacy courses are being reviewed, revised and corrected, and we are exploring alternative educational development and delivery methods by working with partners like



Consumer's Energy, Warren Doyle and O.R. Colan Training. We also presented a new video capture concept of Course 105, The Uniform Act Executive Summary, which will set the bar for the next generation of IRWA online education.

Elsewhere in North America, we re-established IRWA's connection with the Appraisal Institute of Canada and together, we are developing a program that will bring more value to the members of both professional groups. We are also well underway with our new IRWA initiative to increase collaboration with the Chapters within Regions 8 and 10, paving the way for our first Canadian field office. Another very exciting development is the establishment of IRWA Mexico Chapter 85. The careful nurturing of our

relationships with these amazing professionals over the past few years has flourished into our direct collaboration with the Government of Mexico on Land Use Policy. It has also given us an unparalleled opportunity to offer education and training throughout Latin America.

Around the globe this past year, IRWA has continued to lead the way in infrastructure real estate. In September, we helped our German friends at the Institute for Underground Technology celebrate their 20th anniversary, and we marked the occasion by collaborating with them on an educational certificate program which will formalize IRWA's foothold in Europe. In March, I was able to attend IRWA South Africa Chapter 83's Annual SARWA Conference in Pretoria, and experienced first-hand the amazing work they are doing in the industry,



Establishing new Chapters and building collaborative partnerships at home and across the globe, Lee meets with members and industry alliances in, (clockwise from upper left) Mexico, South Africa, United States, Germany and Canada.



as well as the substantial progress they have made with the South African Government in securing the accreditation of IRWA education and credentialing. And by the time this article is published, I will have traveled to China, where we will sign a formal agreement with the China Real Estate Valuers Association for the training of land use consultants in China's Ministry of Land. What a whirlwind — and that's just the past 12 months!

I was elected to the International Executive Committee in Calgary, Alberta at the 56th International Education Conference in 2010 and subsequently served under four superb International Presidents, including Ken Davis, SR/WA, Randy Williams, SR/WA, Pat Petitto, SR/WA and Lisa Harrison, SR/WA. They, and many of the past Presidents before them, have been incredibly generous with their guidance and advice. Their examples taught me lessons that became invaluable during my tenure as International President, and they will remain guiding forces in my life long after my service on the IEC has drawn to a close.

Something that I am particularly proud of during my term on the IEC is the

“Consummate Collaborator” tagline bestowed upon me on the September/October 2014 cover of Right of Way Magazine. Any success I've enjoyed in the area of collaboration is in large part due to the team of very special, open-minded, talented and generous partners who have surrounded me on the IEC. Together, we built consensus and continued to guide the Association forward on a shared path—one that is not likely to waiver or veer off course in the foreseeable future. The result is that the next IEC will come out of the gate on day one focused, united and ready to do business. I think that's something we can all be proud of.

Congratulations and my heartfelt thanks go to incoming International President Wayne Goss, SR/WA, as well as the other incoming International Officers, including President-Elect Mary Anne Marr, SR/WA, Vice President Jerry Colburn, SR/WA, Treasurer Jeff Jones, SR/WA and IRWA General Counsel Eric Finn, Esq. I also send best wishes for much success to our new IEC Secretary, as selected by the Board of Directors at the 2015 Annual Conference in

San Diego. And to our incomparable Executive Vice President Mark Rieck and his extraordinary IRWA staff, “Thank you” is completely inadequate. I can only say that none of us could do any of this without you.

I am filled to the brim with gratitude for the journey, for the extraordinary people I've been able to walk with and for the good work we have all done together along the way. Don't get me wrong—I am not going anywhere. I am still enthusiastic and dedicated to serving IRWA, the industry and my clients. But when the time comes, I will be ready to step back and let the next generation lead. That's because I know they are going to be awesome.

Thank you, IRWA members, for the opportunity to serve as your 2014-2015 IRWA International President. 🌟

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