



SPOTLIGHT ON KOBY GODWIN, SR/WA

Have you heard the one about an Edmontonian and a South African walking into a Calgary bar? No? Well, that's the moment my IRWA involvement dramatically shifted course. But before we get there, let me tell you a little about myself.

After starting a career drafting and working on urban planning with a municipal engineering firm, I joined the IRWA when I began working for the Alberta Government in 2006. With encouragement from a colleague, it didn't take long for me to start getting involved and I began my time as editor of the Edmonton Chapter 62 newsletter. As I was brought into the executive, I was taken by the passion and knowledge that was displayed by the members throughout Alberta.

When I attended the Annual Education Conference in Calgary in 2010, I was truly amazed at how many people were in attendance and how dedicated they all were. At some point that week, I ended up sitting at the hotel bar with a delegate from



South Africa. What began as a conversation about the World Cup turned into the moment when my direction with the IRWA changed. Even though we were from opposite sides of the globe, it amazed me how similar the right of way issues were for each of us. Of course, there were differences: in Edmonton we don't have to deal with a sugar cane crop burning under power lines, while they don't have issues with frozen ground. But we both have to navigate through difficult terrain and deal with regulatory issues. These similarities linked us together and the thought of meeting and engaging with this new group of IRWA members inspired me to do more.

This pushed me to become more involved with Chapter 62. I moved through the executive and finished my Presidency in 2015. I also became the Region 10 representative for the International Transportation Committee. Then I undertook the biggest challenge of my IRWA career: becoming a co-chair of the 2018 Education Conference in Edmonton. I could fill this entire magazine with stories, tidbits and things I have learned from that journey. It really was a once in a lifetime experience.

I am very proud to say that my current role is Vice Chair for Region 10, covering Western Canada. If all goes well, I will look to finish my time with the Region in 2022. Thankfully, I have amazing support from Region 10 and even more importantly, from my family through the long days, nights and weekends that volunteering can take. My fantastic family—my wife, Carlene, and my kids, Kira and Blake—has supported me when I have needed it the most and cheered me on when I have succeeded. They have also enjoyed tagging along for a trip or two!



With their support, I have been able to push forward on my main goal of having our course material updated to keep pace with the needs of our members. I was lucky enough to help contribute to the effort to create a Canadian Oil and Gas Course that was badly needed. In the future, I am hoping to help move us toward new advances and innovations in course presentations.

I believe that you get out of life what you put into it, and the IRWA echoes that. There are so many great people to meet, interesting experiences to draw from and knowledge to be gained. You just have to reach out and go for them. I have tried to seize each opportunity that has come along, even if that meant learning some hard lessons. For example, at a Region team building event, it became apparent I need to work on my escape room tactics!

In my downtime from the IRWA, I play board games with my very competitive family, chase around our pup, Rocket, and relax with our cats, Mookie and



Jinx. I also love to do some of the stereotypical pastimes of a Canadian: curling, playing hockey, camping and throwing axes. Any extra time gets devoted to my side passion of sketching whatever takes my fancy. Maybe by retirement, I can come up with a plan for it to be profitable!

Before I sign off, I wanted to say that I am humbled and honored to be chosen to be highlighted by the IRWA for this article. It truly means the world to me to be featured and tell you a little about my life in the IRWA. It is greatly appreciated. ✨

Member Spotlight is a wonderful place to introduce yourself or to celebrate a fellow member's contributions to the IRWA. For more information or to submit a member for consideration, please contact Ethel Navales at navales@irwaonline.org.