

# IRWA Editorial Advisory Board Spotlight

Welcome to the section where we give our readers an exclusive behind-the-scenes look at how we run Right of Way Magazine. Our Editorial Advisory Board comprises of members who are seasoned and specialized experts within the right of way industry. They periodically review article submissions sent by the editor to determine if the material is relevant and appropriate for the magazine. The Board also ensures that the pieces published are timely, forward-thinking and appeal to both IRWA members and outward-facing audiences — the Board also serves as the voice of reason and silent advisors behind Right of Way Magazine’s success. We’re thrilled to introduce them to you in this section, which will periodically highlight a member of the Editorial Advisory Board. We hope you enjoy getting to know them a little better!



**DONALD J. SHERWOOD, MAI, SR/WA, R/W-AC**

## When did you join IRWA? How did you discover the Association?

1983 — Ms. Cleo Grounds invited me to the monthly meeting at Spring Creek Barbeque in Irving, TX. At the time, the DFW Chapter 36 had 20-25 members attending.

## What is your area of expertise within the right of way industry?

Appraisal and appraisal review, teaching.

## What originally drew you to the industry and how has your career grown since?

One of my first assignments as an appraiser was a sewer line project for the Trinity River Authority followed by helping appraise property for the Big Thicket National Park. I graduated from graduate school at Texas A&M in Land Economics and Real Estate. My original intent was to become a rural banker like my dad. However, we were required to do a summer internship and I was hired by a Fort Worth appraiser, Mr. Jim Norwood, MAI, ARA. I fell in love with appraisal, as every property was unique, and I used so many skills and I was not stuck in an office. Jim was a former appraiser with the Corps of Engineers, and I began to work in the area of eminent domain. After more than 40 years in real estate, I saw my career grow from a trainee to one of the owners of Integra Realty Resources which at the time of my retirement had 67 offices. I currently only do

consultations and appraisal review. I am also an investor in many real estate properties and have taught at both the undergraduate program and the Neely School of Graduate Studies at Texas Christian University.

## What is the most rewarding experience you've had with IRWA?

Absolutely the highest honor I have received is the naming of Chapter 36’s annual scholarship after me. This was very humbling. I also was a four-time runner-up for the Balfour Award and actually received it in 2009. I was awarded the Charles Tandy Commercial Realtor Award in 2011 and the Howard Armstrong Instructor of the Year Award in 2018. In addition to these awards, I was honored to represent IRWA in several international trips including two trips to China and Nigeria and one trip to Saudi Arabia and another to Russia in 1993.

## How did you get involved on the Editorial Advisory Board and what do you enjoy about what the position?

I served two terms as chair of the International Valuation Committee and was asked to help out by reading articles for the magazine. I really enjoy reading these articles, as it highlights members’ contributions to the industry and is often cutting-edge thoughts.

**What kinds of articles do you like to see featured in the magazine?**

*As an appraiser, I really enjoy articles dealing with valuation issues and unique problems and strange encounters. I also enjoy current issues involving case law and changes in rules and regulations so I can stay current.*

**What are your biggest accomplishments to date?**

*My greatest are my two children, Emily, who is a high school history teacher and mother to my precious grandchildren, Bennett and Ila Rose, and Sam, who is an accomplished appraiser in Washington, DC; personal achievements include my Eagle Scout Award, along with the Silver Beaver for service to scouting; my graduation from the United States Marine Corps Officer Candidate School in Quantico, VA.; receipt of the Balfour Award from IRWA and the Howard Armstrong Instructor of the Year Award; achieving my MAI designation as one of the youngest in the Central Texas Chapter of the Appraisal Institute; serving on various mission teams and as an Early Response Team (ERT) member for UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief).*

**What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

*I just finished writing my biography "Life of a Baby Boomer" (it's for sale at Amazon for \$5); I play guitar with a group of guys called "The Holy Pickers" (we play at nursing homes, civic events, Christmas parties, etc.); I enjoy hunting and fishing; I read a lot — history and current events; I love to travel with my wife of 43 years, Teresa and have been pleased to have travelled both domestically and internationally — I really like cruises; I love to do mission work — mostly construction — been on mission trips to Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Mexico (Monterrey and the border areas) and Rwanda, Africa; Serve on my church's stewardship committee.*



PawPaw with Bennett and Ila Rose.

**If you could only bring three books or movies with you on a deserted island, what would they be?**

*The Holy Bible (NIV), SAS Survival Handbook and the TV series on Bear Grylls (if I can play a movie, I must have electricity).*

**Do you have any advice for professionals just starting out in the industry?**

*Learn to live on 80% of your take home pay — save 10% and give 10% away to help others.*

*Start saving early in life — avoid debt.*

*Be the first one in the office and the last one out.*

*Learn how to develop relationships by being a friend to your clients.*

*ALWAYS tell the truth.*

*Strive to constantly hone your skills.*

*When you hit a road block, have a Plan B — be prepared.*

*Do a good turn daily.*

*Take time to relax and have fun, learn to laugh at yourself — life is shorter than you think.. ✪*



With my identical twin brother Ronnie.