



# SPOTLIGHT ON ERNEST "ERNIE" FRANZOY

## **Describe your professional career. How did you first become interested in the right of way industry?**

I was employed by Mountain Bell Telephone company in the construction department when I was offered the position in the engineering department. I was told I was selected because I was bilingual, which was an asset for living and working in New Mexico. I didn't know anything about right of way, so you could say I was sort of thrown into the position, but it didn't take long for me to accept the challenge.

## **How did you hear about IRWA and how long have you been with the Association?**

I heard about the Association, then known as the American Right Of Way Association, through upper management at the phone company. I joined Chapter 53, Region 9, in 1973.





**What are some leadership positions you've held within the Association?**

I've held most of the positions in my Chapter and am currently the Nominations and Elections Committee Chair. I have served as Region representative to the old Membership Committee and the International Nominations and Elections Committee as well as Region vice chair and Region chair.

**Can you share one of your favorite IRWA memories?**

There are too many memories to pick just one, but most are from attending the Annual International Education Conferences and the Region forums. The friendships and working relations that I have acquired are, in my mind, irreplaceable.

**How has IRWA enriched your career and life?**

A lifetime of knowledge and friendships!!! Although I retired from U.S. West in 1993, I remain active in both my Chapter and the Region. Also being the "senior" member of my Chapter, I enjoy being a mentor to the younger members of the Chapter. I have always looked forward to the Annual International Education Conference.



**What is the best piece of advice you've ever received?**

I guess it was from my dad when I finally left home! "Life is tough, but if you work hard, are honest and treat folks like you want to be treated, you can succeed in anything in life you try."

**One last question to end this interview on a fun note: if you could have lunch with anyone from history or fiction, who would it be and why?**

I'd want to meet Lou Gehrig, who played for the New York Yankees and was called the Iron Horse. Even through his disease, he played the game as if he didn't have a care in the world. That takes courage, guts and perseverance!!! 🍀

**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 Vivian Nguyen at [nguyen@irwaonline.org](mailto:nguyen@irwaonline.org).