

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!



BONNIE D. ROERIG, R/W-AC, MAI, AI-GRS

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

I've been a member of IRWA for many years, since at least the late 1990s. The organization was recommended to me by my former mentor and others who were active in right of way valuations including those for construction of the interstate highway system in Colorado. That's a bit before my time, but that generation trained me and my contemporaries.

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

My expertise focuses on real estate valuation relative to eminent domain matters, often partial or total acquisitions of property for public projects. I enjoy the opportunities right of way work provides for application of appraisal methods and techniques to this specialized intended use.

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

I had worked on general appraisal assignments for four years, not including single-family residential assignments for lending purposes. When the firm with which I worked closed, my new position was in the firm that is actually mine today. The company specialized in eminent domain valuation work and provided me with a seemingly unlimited opportunity to learn and grow professionally.

Now, decades later, I find a very rewarding mix of "I know how to do that" with "Hmm, need to do some more research on that one."

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

I had the opportunity to serve as the Chair of IRWA's Valuation Community of Practice (COP) in 2014 and 2015. The organization was going through a restructure process at that time, and it was my honor to be able to participate on behalf of its valuation members.

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

I actually do not recall when I was first offered the opportunity to serve on the Editorial Advisory Board. I expect it might have been during the time I was Chair of the Valuation COP.

I enjoy gaining insight into current thinking relative to appraisal matters by reading submitted articles and I think it's very beneficial to participate in the dialogue that can sometimes occur. The Advisory Board, I believe, is valuable to the Association in the peer review process to help develop and expand the body of knowledge relative to right of way appraisal assignments.



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

Warning: bias alert. Of course, I'm drawn to articles focusing on real estate valuation issues and procedures, but I also really enjoy articles about successful projects in which our members have participated. Those with maps and photographs are especially intriguing. For that reason, I really like the mapping competition at our conferences. It has been very useful through the years to have the legal issues column as well, as appraisers often are involved in legal action as a result of our valuations.

What is your biggest accomplishment to date?

Well, real estate appraisal is the only thing I've done since I completed graduate school over 50 years ago. I can't even believe that myself. That, and finding a wonderful gentleman of extraordinary patience who has not only worked with me for 30 of those years, but stayed wed to me longer than that — pretty hard to beat, I'd say.

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

Hate to say this, but I'm an appraiser. We don't have any free time. Seriously, I really enjoy having returned to classical piano lessons and the practicing that entails. I've recently "discovered" podcasts (did everyone know this but me?) and I love listening to old time radio and programs with historical content. So, learning is also what I like to do with my "free" time.

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

Tough question — even if a book or movie changed your life, how many times would you want to reread or rewatch it? How long am I going to be on this island? Would I need a book on how to build a shelter and find or grow food? Practical Boat Building? How to Navigate by the Stars? Sailboat Construction for Dummies?

Books that helped to mold me include Ayn Rand's "Virtue of Selfishness," any of Thomas Sowell's books and Winston Churchill's six-volume "History of World War II." If there's electrical power and a forever generator on this island, I'd sure want all of these books on audio!



As for movies, I need more time to think about that one. That would require not only the generator but a television and speakers. And a comfy couch with fuzzy blankets and purring kitties. Getting a bit complicated for a deserted island.

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

First suggestion: attend an IRWA meeting — if we are ever able to hold those again — and gain some insight into who we are and what we do.

I would suggest that the right of way field offers an extraordinarily wide range of opportunities for individuals with various educational backgrounds to thrive and succeed. There is a place for those with engineering backgrounds; legal knowledge; basic real estate valuation knowledge, expertise and experience; personalities and backgrounds that can lend themselves to relocation; negotiation/acquisition; surveying. This profession is capable of opening its arms and welcoming young professionals from a lot of different fields. 🌟