



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

### Season of Thanksgiving

We are fast approaching the Holiday Season. Before the last treat is handed out on Halloween night, merchants have Christmas items on display. Do we as a Nation now dismiss Thanksgiving?

I am thankful for my family, my friends, my freedom, and my job. We all should be thankful for some aspect in our lives. What are you thankful for?

I am very thankful for my family and the joy they bring. I am blessed to have a son and a daughter. I am thankful for my wonderful wife and her children from a previous marriage; they have graciously accepted me as part of their family. Yes, I am blessed and so thankful!

I am thankful for my friends. In 2001 I entered the Right of Way profession for the second time as a contract Land Representative. Contract work required travel and being miles away from family and friends, which was stressful but at the same time provided the opportunity to meet many new friends across the country, people who were willing to pass along their knowledge and new ideas to make the travel easier and more enjoyable.

I am thankful for my job. Today, in Oklahoma and across the country many are looking for work, many cannot find work in their profession, and some have given up on the search. Companies, especially those in energy related fields, continue to make budget cuts. As someone who experienced the slowdown in the late eighties and early nineties I am thankful to have a job. Be thankful if you are working and be mindful of those who are not.

I am thankful for the many freedoms we enjoy— freedom to choose our profession; freedom for landowners to say, “No!”; freedom to move about the country and work without persecution; freedom to vote and chose our representatives to make laws. Without freedom, the government would not need Right of Way professionals to design and negotiate routes, prepare mapping, prepare documents and obtain easements and fee parcels for powerlines, pipelines, roads, bridges and their related facility. And because freedom is not free, I am thankful for the many men and women who serve to protect our freedom.

It is the Thanksgiving Season—what are you thankful for?

*Rick Park*  
*President, Chapter 33*



**Rick Park**

## NEXT CHAPTER MEETING

The next chapter meeting is scheduled for **November 13, 2015**. It will be held at Ingrid’s Kitchen located at 3701 North Youngs Blvd. Oklahoma City, OK 73112. The meeting will begin at 11:30 am. We look forward to seeing you!

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE!**

## IRWA CHAPTER 33 MINUTES OF MEETING

President **Rick Park** called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Membership Chair **Sasha Jbara** was not in attendance so Chapter Secretary **Sean Harrison** reported 40 members and 9 guests for a total of 49 present. Attendees introduced themselves and their guests. The membership discussed the published minutes of the **May 8, 2015** meeting. **Lori Vernon** moved to accept the minutes as shown. **Russell Verba** seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as published.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### TREASURER

Treasurer, **Chris Gomez**, reported balances of:  
 \$ 33,210.44 in the checking account,  
 \$ 11,376.36 in one CD, and  
 \$ 32,985.68 in another CD for total liquid assets of  
 \$ 77,572.48 for the chapter.

### MEMBERSHIP

Membership Chair, **Sasha Jbara**, was not in attendance.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PDC Chair, **Tamara Benson**, reported: Annette Owens and Victor Vaughn Salamy achieved their SR/WA designations.

### EDUCATION

**Kevin Stout** will no longer be serving as Education Committee Chair. The Chapter is seeking volunteers to fill this position.



### YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Young Professionals Committee Co-Chair, **Lacie Jones**, reported: Next event will be a volunteer event and is yet to be determined. Stay tuned.

### NEWSLETTER

**Ed Opstein** is retiring; **Luda Dyachenko** will be stepping in as the new editor.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media Committee Chair, **Lacie Jones**, encouraged everyone to “like” our Chapter’s Facebook page.

### PIPELINE

Pipeline Committee Chair, **Trevor Smith**, was not present.

### UTILITY

Utility Committee Chair, **Russell Verba**, had no report.

### OLD BUSINESS

No old business was discussed.

### NEW BUSINESS

The Chapter is seeking volunteers for the committees.



**Rick Park** discussed the Executive Board’s conversation during the conference call held on September 11, 2015. During this conference call the question came up of who should be on the Chapter’s bank account. Currently, the bank account includes the president and the treasurer; Steve Benson’s name is also on the account. There was a discussion about keeping Steve Benson’s name on the account or removing it. It was also proposed not to take the vice president off the account, so that the vice president does not have to be removed from the account for a year and then added back on.

The 2016 Spring Forum will be held in Cancun, Mexico March 8-11. Course 200 will be offered on March 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> and Course 213 will be offered on March 10<sup>th</sup>.

There were no door prizes at this meeting.

The next meeting is set for November 13, 2015, location TBD. **Bart Waits** moved the meeting to be adjourned. **Lori Vernon** seconded the motion. Membership approved the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM.

**ATTEST:** Chapter 33 Secretary, Sean Harrison.

2ND ANNUAL "ALEX E. SOUDER INVITATIONAL"

A four-man golf scramble held in October at the **Buffalo Rock Golf & Gun Club** was a hit! Prizes were awarded for 1<sup>st</sup> place, 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Closest to the Hole and Straightest Drive. There were also door prizes and a grand prize give away. At the luncheon, **Tamara Benson**, the Chapter's Professional Development Committee Chair, presented **Victor Vaughn Salamy** with his SR/WA certificate.



ROW ACQUISITION IN SAUDI ARABIA—BY ED OPSTEIN

OOPS! All wrong. Whatever ideas you might have about what the right of way business might be in Saudi Arabia, they are probably quite inaccurate. During my two weeks of teaching four IRWA courses for Saudi Aramco at their impressive facility outside of the City of Dhahran, I learned a few key lessons:

- They appraise and negotiate the purchase of the right of way (it’s not just given by the King)
- Land is privately owned, developed, and sold with considerable speculation
- Projects have been cancelled because the ROW costs were going to be too high.
- If they can’t negotiate a purchase, they go through an expropriation (condemnation) process in



Ahmed busy at his desk just like us. Note his IRWA Certificates.

the form of a hearing through local councils (we call them “commissioners”)

- The Saudi Aramco facilities and systems are not only leading-edge, the staff speaks in terms of whether a situation fits their “business model,” applies to the current cost-benefit analysis, and other leadership tools (they also use English in all internal email)
- They relocate people/businesses affected by a project (for one project, two complete villages)
- Dealing with encroachments is a common problem
- Best of all, the people at Saudi Aramco are welcoming, smart, fun, and dedicated professionals

The participants were interested in learning how it could be applied to their work.

All of the students and most of the Saudis at Aramco have studied at universities either in the US or in England. They don’t let social differences get in the way of building relationships.

Safety, integrity, community, and similar ideals are prominent aspects of their operations. “Not one death, ever” is always on their agenda. Compare that with the death rate in the Bakken field of one person every six



Dinner with some of the group. Attending was David Burgoyne, SR/WA who taught classes the week before I arrived.



The Exploration and Petroleum Engineering Building at Aramco. This is the location of the company’s Land Affairs Department.



Participants in one of the courses.

weeks for the past three years. For Aramco employees, one traffic ticket eliminates the possibility of a promotion for the next year. A more serious issue raises the possibility of losing their job.

We often say we’re in the “people business” and that’s true everywhere. The work of IRWA in other nations is helping connect people, enhance professional development and opportunity, and serve communities while building critical infrastructure. It’s all good, and you’re part of it.

## 2015 CHAPTER 33 NEWSLETTER

### NEGOTIATION TIP

Ed Opstein, SR/WA,  
R/W-NAC, R/W-RAC

We sometimes say about infrastructure projects, “*you can’t build it without the land.*” That’s one reason why right of way people are so important. But, when it comes to good negotiation practices, “*you can’t reach agreement without some trust.*”

Trust is earned by establishing rapport, being reliable, sharing information, demonstrating integrity, showing competence, and caring about the other person. Think about the people you trust, especially the “professionals” in your life like doctors, lawyers, clergy, accountants, and even mechanics or contractors. The ones you trust the most are the ones who have the most of these qualities.

Regardless of how much people disagree, at some point they must trust each other enough to sign an agreement. If you don’t build trust with the people you deal with on a project, you won’t build anything else.



We are on the web!  
[www.irwach33.org](http://www.irwach33.org)

## THANKS TO OUR ADVERTISERS!

If you are interested in advertising in the 2014-2015 series of Chapter 33 Newsletters, please remit a check for \$75.00 made payable to IRWA Chapter 33 to Lacie Jones, Meshek & Associates, PLC, 1437 S. Boulder Ave. Ste. 1550, Tulsa, OK 74119.

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Two new on-line courses are now available through the IRWA to advance your professional development:

### Appraisal Concepts for the Negotiator —

The course is designed to assist negotiators in focusing on appraisal issues that are important during the negotiation process, which can enhance the agent’s ability to effectively negotiate with property owners. Topics include sales verification, realty and personalty, larger parcel, highest and best use, consistent use, damages, and approaches to value. Participants will apply these concepts through interactive exercises and case study scenarios. Progress quizzes at the end of each lesson keep the learner engaged, and the student’s learning is evaluated with an exam at the end of the course.

### Mobile Home Relocation —

This class is designed to cover the intricacies and special challenges in relocating occupants of mobile homes. Topics discussed are relocation planning and advisory assistance; eligibility and relocation payments; moving and related expenses (real property or personal property); and computing replacement housing payments for mobile home occupants.

## CONGRATULATIONS

To Judy Stout for her SR/WA Recertification and to Sean Harrison for his R/W-NAC Recertification!!!