

IRWA MISSION STATEMENT

The international Right of Way Association will be the worldwide leader for innovation and excellence in the acquisition and management of right of way and public use.

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Right of Way TO THE RESCUE!

By Beth Smith, SR/WA

One of my favorite aspects of my job is never quite knowing how a day might unfold. In 2018, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) acquired a 12-acre property in the floodplain in Oak Creek that had previously been a greenhouse/nursery business. Due to flooding, the property had been abandoned and fallen into disrepair. The structures on the property included a duplex, a metal building and greenhouses in various states of collapse. MMSD planned to demolish

the buildings and remediate significant soil contamination on the site.

On Monday, November 5, 2018, I had a site visit scheduled with Mark Mittag, P.E., the project manager and Dick Schluge, the construction resident engineer, who would be responsible for developing the demolition bid documents. It was a chilly, overcast morning. The afternoon/evening forecast called for low 40s and rain, with freezing temps and snow in the forecast for later in the week.

I arrived first to unlock the buildings. The front door of the duplex wouldn't open, so I walked around to try the side door. There, huddled in the leaves that had blown up against the house was a small, wide-eyed black kitten. I think I was as surprised as the little guy was.

"What are you doing here?" I asked, bewildered. He hissed and flattened himself to the ground but was too small to escape. I scooped him up and put him inside my coat, where he settled right down. He was in fairly good shape and cute as

"One of my favorite aspects of my job is never quite knowing how a day might unfold."

anything.

Mark and Dick had arrived at that point and although we didn't know each other well, they seemed amused and unsurprised to learn I had a kitten in my coat. I found a bin so that I could put him in my car, safe from the elements. I decided to come up with a plan for him after we finished our site visit.

We carried on to the last structure — an arched ridge and furrow greenhouse frame a couple hundred feet away from the duplex. The heavy gauge plastic that

once covered the frame was gone or mostly in tatters. A section of arches were still covered, but just barely, and the furrows had filled up with leaves and water.

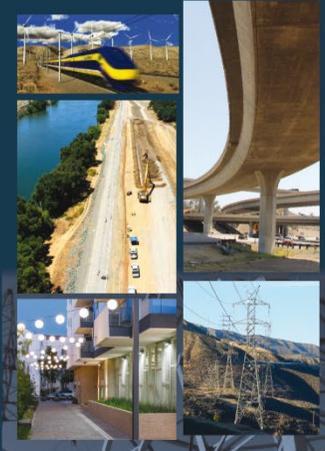
As we were walking through this greenhouse, I heard a faint *mew!* from the other side of the greenhouse. This was not surprising — where there's one kitten, often there are more. On the far side of this greenhouse were some brush piles. I walked slowly next to the piles, calling quietly and making mewling noises of my own. I heard some rustling under one of the piles, and after a while of calling and

coaxing, I was able to get a black kitten to come out. She was pretty tiny and noticeably smaller than the first kitten.

As I was taking her to my car, I then heard another very pathetic *mew!* This one was clearly not coming from the brush pile. This mewling seemed to be all around us, when we would move in any direction, it never got much quieter but never got much louder either. Turns out, the kitten was on top of the greenhouse in an area where the plastic was still intact. There was a tree that had grown up at the end of the greenhouse, which the kitten must have climbed up



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Membership Luncheon – April 6, 2022



The Old Spaghetti Factory
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Annual Joint
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C205 Bargaining Negotiations, 4/4/22, VIRTUAL CLASS (CH. 67)

C402 Introduction to the Income Capitalization Approach, 4/7/22, VIRTUAL CLASS (INSTRUCTOR TBD)

C215 Right of Way Acquisition for Pipeline Projects, 4/7/22, VIRTUAL CLASS

C102 Elevating Your Ethical Awareness, 4/8/22, VIRTUAL CLASS (CH. 67)

C413 Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions (Yellow Book), 4/11/22, VIRTUAL CLASS (INSTRUCTOR TBD)

C409 Integrating Appraisal Standards, 4/12/22, INSTRUCTOR-LED VIRTUAL CLASS

C503 Mobile Home Relocation, 4/13/22, VIRTUAL CLASS

C606 The Environmental Process, 4/18/22, VIRTUAL CLASS (INSTRUCTOR TBD)

C900 Principles of Real Estate Engineering, 4/21/22, VIRTUAL CLASS

C800 Principles of Real Estate Law, 5/2/22, VIRTUAL CLASS (CH. 7)

C402 Introduction to the Income Capitalization Approach, 5/6/22, INSTRUCTOR-LED VIRTUAL CLASS

C105 The Uniform Act – Executive Summary, 5/6/22, VIRTUAL CLASS (Ch. 46)

C304 When Public Agencies Collide, 5/9/22, VIRTUAL CLASS (INSTRUCTOR TBD)

C703 Real Property Asset Management, 5/11/22, INSTRUCTOR-LED VIRTUAL CLASS

Additional courses are listed on IRWA's website at www.irwaonline.org

Are you interested in taking a free class? Contact Kelley Kelley, or any member of the Board, to find out how you can become a coordinator.



Navigating Through Stormy Seas

Leadership through adversity

By Yasmin L. Stump, Esq.

At the beginning of the new year, I embraced the fact that I had weathered the storm. 2021 was behind me, and almost two years of the pandemic were left at the dock. Optimistically, I looked to smooth sailing ahead. Then, at the outset, 2022 hit abruptly with rogue waves.

On New Year's Day, one of my staff members informed me that she had spent all night in a hospital emergency room after a serious fall at a wedding she'd attended the evening before. Her leg was broken in two places, which required surgery and a multiple-week recovery period. Shortly thereafter, another team member called me one morning and told me the nurse at his children's elementary school just called and advised him that one of his children was exhibiting COVID-19 omicron variant symptoms and that all his children would need to be immediately taken out of

school. A couple of days later, I returned to the office after lunch, and another staff member reported that she received a call because her daughter, who had been disturbed about the noise in her classroom, lodged a pencil eraser in her ear. She had to be rushed to the emergency room. Fortunately, the pencil eraser was removed from the youngster's ear, and she emerged from the experience unscathed. My coworker and I now chuckle about the situation.

To make matters worse, the morning this article was due, one of my staff members texted me and said that he had tested positive for COVID-19. Then I arrived at the office to finish this article, only to be locked out because there was an electrical power outage in the area. My firm's server was also down, and the draft of this article had been saved on the server.

Life happens. But over the last couple of years, when unfortunate and unexpected incidents happened, they felt more overwhelming and demoralizing than usual. Clearly, the pandemic's direct and indirect effects have exacerbated our reactions to the valleys in our lives. Like most of us, I am more than ready for the coronavirus pandemic and the havoc it has wreaked across the world to end — immediately. Unfortunately, neither I nor anyone else has any control over when it will be over. And that is what is so frightening — it's the lack of control and the uncertainty. It hangs over us like a blanket, suffocating our positivity and momentum. It is difficult enough as an individual to successfully navigate life and be motivated during challenging times, but how does one do so as a leader when you are responsible for inspiring others? This question and its answer are not limited to the present time during the pandemic. Leaders confronted

Continues on Page 10

IRWA Mentor Match



This IRWA is proud to announce the launch of this exciting new member benefit that reflects our commitment to you and your professional development. This unique online networking and career development tool helps you find, connect and share your experiences with your fellow industry peers across the globe! You can simply apply to our IRWA Mentor Match program by following the four steps below:

1. START

First, complete your IRWA profile by ensuring that your contact information, professional profile picture, and bio are all up to date. You can even import your education and job history information from LinkedIn. A complete and accurate profile is crucial to the success of selecting and matching.

2. ENROLL

Next, decide whether you're looking to be a mentor, mentee, or both and sign up today by clicking on the links below:

- Enroll [here](#) as a Mentor
- Enroll [here](#) as a Mentee

Make selections for each of the program demographics to set your preferences. Demographics include: topics, venue, specialties, career stage and start/end date. Please note: Some fields are required for enrollment. The more information you provide, the easier it will be to make the best match. Keep in mind: in order to request a mentor or mentee, you must be enrolled in the program.

3. SEARCH

Then, use the Mentor Program Directory to input your search criteria. You can also take advantage of features to help you find and recruit matches:

- Track your mentoring relationships
- Participate in discussion forums on mentoring topics
- Search for helpful mentoring resources

4. CONNECT

Congratulations! You're all set. You completed steps 1-3 and are now ready for the fun to begin! Enter one or more searches. If you're unsure of the search criteria, select "Search for ALL of the selected values." The Mentor Program Directory will do the work for you and populate the results.

Next, click on the member's name who you're interested in establishing a mentor/mentee connection with. The link will bring you to their profile page. If you think it's an ideal match, look under their profile image for the Mentor Match badge, which when clicked will allow you to request a connection. If it's not a desired match, you can simply select the back button to return to your previous search results.

Let the mentoring begin!





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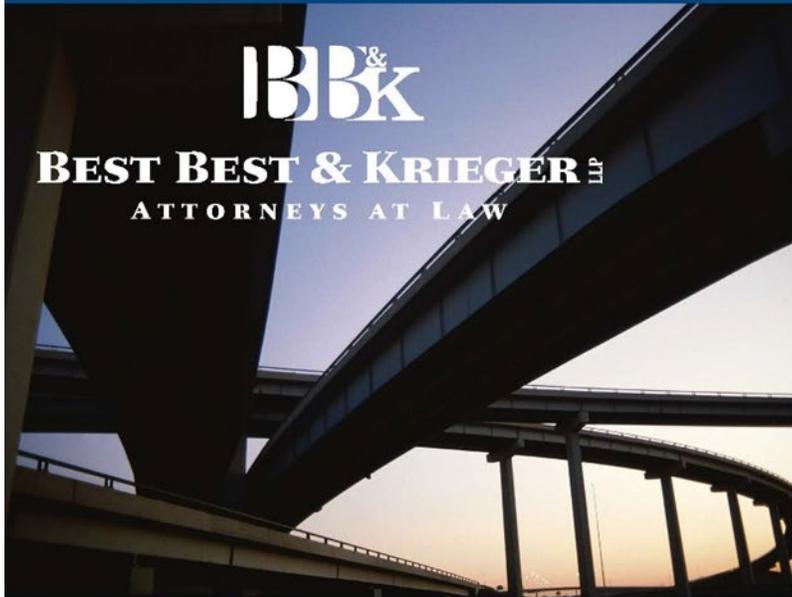
We would love to hear from you!

Hello fellow members of Chapter 57!

Would you like the Chapter to host a luncheon on your favorite topic? Do you know anyone who would like to speak at an upcoming luncheon? If so, please contact Matt Nusenow, President-Elect, at (949) 842-3191, or via e-mail at mnusenow@farallonconsulting.com.

We value your opinion and welcome your input! If you have any comments or recommendations for the newsletter, please contact Sheryn Smay, Newsletter Chair, at (951) 826-5343 or via e-mail at ssmay@riversideca.gov.

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RESCUE! (continued)

At this point, we should have been back to the office, but we were in an unspoken agreement that leaving the kitten wasn't an option. Despite being chilled to the bone, we steeled ourselves against the increasing wind gusts to focus on the rescue operation of this last helpless kitten. Even Dick, whose reaction to the first kitten was a you've-got-to-be-kidding-me look, was fully on board. But how to get him down? Though we could definitely hear him, we couldn't see him, and we didn't have any ladders.

Even if we did, the roof material was deteriorating plastic. After some trial and error, Dick and I were able to push the plastic up in a

literal cat-herding effort to coax the kitten to the end of the roof, where he ultimately leapt down to a waiting Mark, who only got a couple scratches for his efforts. This kitten was about the same size as the second kitten.

We put the third kitten in my car with the other two — upon a closer look, all three were black with faint tabby stripes. I took one more walk around the property to utilize my newfound kitten-detecting hearing powers to check for any strays left behind. I debated making a nest for them and leaving them on the site, in case their mother was around and would come back for them, however, because they were so tame, I

suspected they might have been dumped there.

I had fostered kittens before and knew I'd be able to take care of them and find them good families. When I got home with them, I put down canned kitten food, and they dove right in, growling at each other and standing in and on top of their food as kittens do. By the end of the week, they were all spoken for by coworkers. I took care of them for about a month, and by early December, they were in their new homes. And yes, Mark adopted the one that he caught when it jumped off the roof!



Beth Smith, SR/WA, is a real estate specialist with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District and a co-owner of TerraVenture Advisors, LLC. She has 23 years of experience in the right of way industry — her primary areas of expertise are property management, relocation assistance and project management. She also co-hosts the Eminent Domain and Right of Way Club on the Clubhouse App.

(Reprinted from IRWA's Right of Way Magazine: The Voice of the Right of Way Professional, Right of Way TO THE RESCUE! January/February 2022)

Stormy Seas (continued)

hardships before, and they will after the pandemic. But my experiences during the first couple of weeks of 2022 led me to ask this question and remind myself about the answer.

Not Every Disappointment is Devastating

Lately, life is constantly in flux. As business and organization leaders, it seems as if any planning is for naught. In the right of way industry, public improvement projects are started, stalled and then restarted at a breakneck pace because funding for such projects is now free flowing. In my profession, trials and hearings are scheduled, continued, converted virtually and continued again. In

professional organizations, including IRWA, in-person programs and other events are planned and scheduled and then rescheduled, converted to virtual events, a hybrid or, even worse, canceled altogether. Although these circumstances are disappointing, it is important to remember that not every disappointment is devastating. The postponement or cancellation of an event, even one that you helped plan substantially, is not life altering. When you view life through the lens of disappointment about everything that does not proceed as you wish, not only will you be discouraged most of the time, but to do so is intellectually and

emotionally exhausting. Although it may sound trite, as the philosopher Aristotle professed, "Everything happens for a reason." In thinking about my own life, I know that circumstances that were disheartening at the time often ultimately led to something grander. Without them, I would not have moved forward to new, more enriching experiences.

Relinquish the Belief You Have Control

Many people have lived life with the illusion that they have control over almost everything. The pandemic shattered this illusion. Such a belief is a mirage because in life, there is little over which we actually have control. We delude ourselves with

Industry Buzz: High-Speed Rail



High-Speed Rail Board Clears Final Environmental Hurdles to Advance Service into Los Angeles

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) Board of Directors unanimously approved the Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for the approximately 14-mile Burbank to Los Angeles project section. This action clears the way for full California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) clearance of nearly 300 miles of the high-speed rail project's 500-mile Phase 1 alignment from San Francisco to Los Angeles/Anaheim.

The Board's certification of the Burbank to Los Angeles Final EIR/EIS is a critical milestone that moves the project section closer to being "shovel ready" as funding becomes available. The section will connect the high-speed rail system from a new Hollywood Burbank Airport Station to the existing Los Angeles Union Station,

providing an additional link between Downtown Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley.

The alignment for this project section will primarily use existing railroad right of way adjacent to the Los Angeles River through the cities of Burbank, Glendale and Los Angeles. High-speed rail service along this route will improve long-term air quality, decrease rail congestion and increase mobility.

The Board certification of the final environmental document and approval of the Burbank to Los Angeles project section reaffirms the Authority's commitment to complete the environmental process for the full Phase 1 California High-Speed Rail System from San Francisco to Los Angeles/Anaheim by 2023.

The Board will consider the final environmental documents for the San Jose to Merced and San

Francisco to San Jose project sections in April and June of this year.



(Reprinted from IRWA's Right of Way Magazine: The Voice of the Right of Way Professional, Industry Buzz: High-Speed Rail, March/April 2022)

Stormy Seas (continued)

the belief that we have control because it provides a sense of security and predictability. But that security and predictability are false and never existed before the pandemic. Let go of the belief that you have control over everything.

Although we cannot control most circumstances, we can control how we choose to react to those circumstances, and that is where your attitude

becomes significant. Even when an incident is disappointing, a positive side typically exists. For instance, if an event that you were scheduled to attend is canceled, it opens up time on your calendar and becomes one less commitment that you have to fulfill. If an employee leaves your company, it provides the opportunity to add someone new to your team or distribute the former employee's assignments to another team member, who

may appreciate the new work and be outstanding at handling it.

Positivity as a leader is crucial. A leader serves as an example, and your team will closely watch how you conduct yourself. If you act fearfully, agitated or negatively during tough times, your team members will become fearful, agitated or negative, and morale will be greatly undermined. They may

Industry Buzz: Natural Disaster Relief Continues on Page 14

Governor Edwards Announces \$2.6 Billion in Army Corps of Engineers Funding for Louisiana Projects

Gov. John Bel Edwards announced the state will receive \$2.6 billion in U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Extending Government Funding and Delivering Emergency Assistance Act (Supplemental Disaster Relief). This funding will support coastal, water management and hurricane risk reduction projects throughout south Louisiana.

The supplemental disaster relief bill provides resources for Louisiana to recover further from Hurricane Ida. Through the IIJA, Congress appropriated funds to USACE to increase coastal resilience by funding flood control, navigation and ecosystem restoration projects.

"I would like to thank President Biden for recognizing the urgent need for storm protection and flood control funding after touring and seeing

firsthand the devastation caused by Hurricane Ida last fall. I would also like to commend the members of our Congressional Delegation who advocated for disaster relief.

Additionally, I applaud Sen. Cassidy and Rep. Carter for their instrumental roles in securing funds for Louisiana's coast through the bipartisan infrastructure bill," said Gov. Edwards. "Our unrelenting message has been that Louisiana's coastal crisis is a national crisis. Investments in coastal protection and restoration make life in south Louisiana possible, protect interstate commerce, and support major economic engines that supply goods and services to our entire country. Today's federal investments show that we are being heard and rewarded for our good work."



(Reprinted from IRWA's Right of Way Magazine: The Voice of the Right of Way Professional, Industry Buzz: Natural Disaster Relief, March/April 2022)



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Stormy Seas (continued)

become insecure about the future of the company and their positions and leave the company.

A sense of humor is also important when you lead during onerous times. The Mayo Clinic confirms that medical research shows humor has beneficial psychological and physical effects. Who hasn't felt better after a good belly laugh?

According to his article published in the New England Journal of Medicine in 1976, Norman Cousins, author and former editor in chief of the "Saturday Review," miraculously recovered from a life-threatening, degenerative collagen

illness due to a daily "[t]en minutes of genuine belly laugh?

According to his article published in the New England Journal of Medicine in 1976, Norman Cousins, author and former editor in chief of the "Saturday Review," miraculously recovered from a life-threatening, degenerative collagen illness due to a daily "[t]en minutes of genuine belly laughter."

A final word about attitude — don't be so hard on yourself. Although you should not abandon your high standards, do not expect perfectionism or be unrealistic about what you are able to accomplish.

Remember that you are a single individual and only capable of achieving so much on any given day. Do your best, but do not expect to perform at a standard that is unsustainable.

Practice Gratitude and Extend Appreciation

Although related, gratitude and appreciation are not the same. Appreciation is about acknowledging the perceived value of someone or something, while gratitude is the thankfulness you express for what you have been given. When times are strenuous, rather than reviewing a list of all that it wrong, I turn my attention towards being grateful for all that I have. We have

"The weather and the seas on the lake are unpredictable. They can change in an instant from fair, calm seas to stormy, rough seas. A boat captain must be prepared and equipped to navigate through bumpy seas."

about which we can be grateful.

During all times, but particularly when times are challenging, consistently and frequently express appreciation to your team members for their contributions. I make a concerted effort to always say "please" and "thank you" to my team members, as well as those with whom I work in the organizations with which I am involved. People like to feel appreciated, and particularly those who are volunteering their valuable time for IRWA or other organizations.

Prepare to Pivot

I am an avid boater and spend time during the

summer on the Brown Eyed Girl, a 26-foot Pursuit, on Lake Michigan. Perhaps surprisingly, I have learned many things about leadership through boating. The weather and the seas on the lake are unpredictable. They can change in an instant from fair, calm seas to stormy, rough seas. A boat captain must be prepared and equipped to navigate through bumpy seas. The way that I address stormy weather as a leader is to pivot and adjust to the circumstances.

Earlier, I mentioned that the morning this column was due, my office lost electrical power. The firm's server was inaccessible, and the draft of this article was on the inaccessible

server. So, I pivoted. I headed home with my laptop. Luckily, I live only a few minutes from my office, and my neighborhood was unaffected by the power outage. When I arrived home, I took a few deep, cleansing breaths, which I learned practicing yoga, plugged in my laptop and finished the latter portion of this article in a separate document. Thanks to the fast-acting utility company, electrical power was restored within a few hours, and I was able to merge the two parts of the article for completion by the deadline. As the playwright William Shakespeare once said, "All's well that ends well."

"We have many things about which we can be grateful."



Yasmin L. Stump, Esq. is IRWA Chapter 10 past president. She is the president and founder of Yasmin L. Stump Law Group, PC in Indiana and has practiced in real estate transactions and litigation, as well as been a member of the right of way industry, for more than 30 years. Yasmin has 40 years of leadership experience with business and nonprofit organizations and is authoring this column, Leadership.

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About RWIEF



The Right of Way International Education Foundation was established for the purpose of funding right of way education initiatives. The Foundation focuses on generating financial contributions

and determines how best to allocate those funds for the betterment of right of way education. Over the last few years, funds have been allocated for educational summits, creation of new courses, upgrades of existing courses, conversion to on-line

delivery methods, and leadership programs. Cutting-edge education and professional development are essential to the growth and advancement of our profession and to each of us as professionals in this fast-paced, ever-changing industry.



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