

February 2026



The Coastal Compass

IRWA Chapter 56 Delmarva

Letter from the President

Dear Members,

The year 2026 is upon us and already moving quickly! This time of year, often brings opportunities for both reflection and redirection, and I would like to share a few updates and thoughts as we look ahead.

Planning for the Fall 2027 Forum is underway. A venue has been selected, and the committee has begun developing preliminary ideas for the event.

While there has already been significant discussion, we are always eager to hear unique ideas or suggestions from our members. Please feel free to reach out directly to Sarah Day, Terri Lawson, or myself with your thoughts—the sooner, the better.

Our Vice President and Education Chairperson has been exceptionally busy expanding our education offerings while also rebuilding our previously depleted account coffers. Many thanks are due to Laura Peretiatko for her dedication and tireless efforts, much of which happens behind the scenes. Laura is also continually seeking volunteers to serve as virtual class proctors. This role allows the proctor to attend the class for credit at no cost. Please consider reaching out to Laura to both thank her and learn more about these opportunities.

Nominations for the 2027 officer positions will be coming up very soon, and we will be appointing a chairperson to oversee that process. If you are asked to serve, I encourage you to consider saying “yes”. As a volunteer-based organization, even a small contribution from each of us helps keep the workload manageable for all.

Additionally, the Region 4 Spring Forum is right around the corner—just over “the hill” for many of us—in Hershey, PA, also known as “Chocolate Town.” The forum will take place April 29 through May 1. I hope you will plan to attend. Additional information is available on the hosting chapter’s website at www.irwachapter9.com.





Chapter 56 News

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Membership:

It's that time of year again for us to renew our memberships if you haven't already.

Chapter 56 Fall 2027 Regional Forum:

Mark your calendars to attend the 2027 Fall Forum in Dewey Beach. You don't want to miss all the fun! If you would like to join in on the fun organizing the forum, please let us know. We'd love the help.

Announcements:

Board & Brush Team Building in Camden, DE coming soon in April 2026. Look for an email from Laura Peretiatko (laura.peretiatko@delaware.gov) for more information.

Chapter Meetings:

Next chapter meeting is March 9, 2026 @ 12:00 pm. Virtual and in person in the DelDOT Dover Administration Bldg., in the Smyrna/Clayton Conference room.

Website:

Check out our website to see the most current happening in the chapter along with the upcoming education classes, forums, and regional conference. www.irwachapter9.com.

Coming Events:

2026 IRWA Region 4 Spring Forum

Wednesday, March 29, 2026—Friday, May 1, 2026 in Hershey, Pennsylvania

IRWA's 72nd Annual International Education Conference

Friday, June 26, 2026—Monday, June 29, 2026 in Omaha, Nebraska.



2025 Region 4 Fall Forum Memories

Fall 2025 Forum Recap – Annapolis, Maryland

Chapter 56 was well represented at the Fall 2025 IRWA Forum hosted by Chapter 52, held in Annapolis, Maryland this past September. Jim Roscoe, Laura Peretiatko, and Debbie Kukulich attended on behalf of Chapter 56, while Christine Riviezzo participated in the two-day Course 219.

Following check-in at the hotel, the forum officially kicked off with an evening opening reception. This provided a great opportunity for attendees to mingle, reconnect with colleagues, and network with right-of-way professionals from across the region.

On Thursday, Jim, Debbie, and Laura attended the all-day **Intelligent Infrastructure Symposium**, which featured a diverse and informative lineup of presentations. Morning sessions included:

- **Loudoun County: Lessons from the Past, Present, and Future**
- **Condemnation with Clarity: Valuation Standards & Risk Mitigation for Infrastructure Projects**
- **Purple Line – Project Overview & Right of Way Needs**
- **Innovation in Property Valuation**

After breaking for lunch, the symposium continued with equally engaging afternoon topics, including:

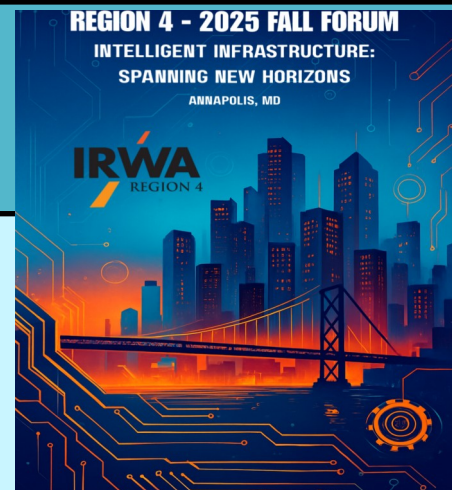
- **WMATA Northern Bus Garage Electrification**
- **Montgomery County Bus Rapid Transit Network – Regional Innovative Accelerator**
- **Environmental Due Diligence for Property Acquisitions: Phase I & II Environmental Site Assessments Explained**

Following a full day of thought-provoking discussions and knowledge sharing, attendees were more than ready to unwind. That evening's dinner was graciously sponsored by **Chapter 14** and held at a Brazilian Steakhouse, offering a relaxed and enjoyable setting to continue conversations from the day.

On Friday, Jim, Debbie, and Laura attended the **Region 4 Business Meeting**, where several important topics were discussed. These included reports from the Region officers and committee members, Chapter reports from across the Region, and updates currently being implemented by IRWA Headquarters related to Member Services and the IRWA website. Chapter Education Planning was also a key topic, during which **Chapter 56 was recognized for having a robust education plan with more class offerings than any other Chapter in the Region**. Additional discussion included information on the upcoming **2026 International Conference**, which will be held in **Omaha, Nebraska in June 2026**, as well as the announcement of the **next Forum in Spring 2026**, scheduled to take place at the **Hershey Lodge in Hershey, Pennsylvania**.

After the business meeting concluded, several Region 4 members stayed to attend **Chapter 14's Annual Crab Feast and Cornhole Tournament**, sponsored by **Stantec**. For those who attend the event, it provided a fun and memorable closure to a productive forum.

Overall, the Fall 2025 Forum offered valuable educational content, meaningful regional collaboration, and excellent networking opportunities. Chapter 56 looks forward to continuing to participate in future IRWA events and bringing these insights back to our membership.



Chapter Member News:

Chapter 56 is excited to announce Braxton Dees received his R/W-AC Certification.

R. Braxton Dees, MAI, R/W-AC is from Live Oak, Florida. He attended the University of North Florida in Jacksonville and received his BA in Corporate Finance. Braxton began his career in banking as a Branch Manager for SunTrust Bank and eventually a commercial lender. Braxton has over 20 years' experience working in the appraisal industry. He started in credit and compliance at SunTrust Bank in Atlanta, GA. Braxton moved to Salisbury, MD in 2011 (wife Stacie is from Salisbury). He joined W.R. McCain & Associates in 2012 and is now President of the company after acquiring the business from William McCain, MAI, MBA in 2019. Braxton received his MAI designation from the Appraisal Institute in 2016. Braxton is a past President of the Delaware Chapter of the Appraisal Institute. He is married to Stacie Dees and they have two children, Nathan (16) and Allie (13).

Chapter 56 is excited to announce Benjamin Bauer received his R/W-AC Certification.

Benjamin Bauer is with W.R. McCain & Associates.



Congratulations!



Right of Way in the News

The Tale of Two Cups

Have you ever read an article that rings true and you identify with it? The Tale of Two cups is that. Gordon E. MacNair's article about his journey of leadership is one that describes leadership from being on top of the world to becoming humble after the bright lights have been refocused to others. How leadership is a visible symbol of status, yet the symbols can be deceptive and even masking the truth about leadership and its legacy. It reminds us the position you hold is not the person you are.



Take a few minutes and read the article The Tale of Two Cups article by GORDON E. MACNAIR, SR/WA, AACI, P.APP appears in the link below or in the January/February 2026 Right-of-Way Magazine.

https://www.rightofwaymagazine-digital.org/rightofway/library/item/january_february_2026/4314515/

Colorado DOT Completes I-25 Greenland Wildlife Overpass

Colorado's Department of Transportation recently constructed a Wildlife Overpass near Larkspur. It is recognized as one of the largest wildlife overpass in North America.

Colorado's DOT estimates more than 100,000 vehicles a day travel this area along with large and small animals crossing it as well. It is Colorado's hope to reduce the wildlife-vehicle crashes with this overpass. It is a safe transportation option for both humans and wildlife which helps to protect critical habitat and Colorado's amazing outdoor spaces for future generations.



Can you imagine being a part of such an incredible project. Knowing you have been involved in the creation of a wildlife crossing allowing big and small game animals to cross a very busy highway safely and knowing you made a difference.

To read more about this article, check out the January 9, 2026 Right-of-Way Magazine Weekly Buzz or the AASHTO Website.

[Above photo by the Colorado DOT]

Professional Development and Enrichment Opportunities

IRWA Chapter 56 Upcoming Virtual & In-Person Education Opportunities



Virtual:

Course 501 – Residential Relocation Assistance – Offered
Feb. 26 & 27, 2026—Cyndi Whelpley & Leslie Findlay

Course 218—ROW Acq. For Electrical Transmission Projects
— offered **March 24, 2026**

SR/WA Study Session and Exam— offered **April 8-10** — **Clyde Johnson**

Course 105 – The Uniform Act Executive Summary – offered **May 4, 2026**
—**Cyndi Whelpley and Krista Chambers**

Course 207 – Practical Negotiations for U.S. Federal and Federally Assisted Projects - offered **May 5 & 6, 2026— Cyndi Whelpley / Krista Chambers**

Course 100— Principles of Land Acquisitions—offered **June 1, 2026**



Professional Development and Enrichment Opportunities

IRWA Chapter 56 Upcoming Virtual & In-Person Education Opportunities



In-Person

Location: Delaware Department of Transportation, Dover, DE

Course 900 – Principles of Real Estate Engineering
– **March 2 & 3, 2026— Tim Solinski**

Course 901 – Engineering Plan Development and Application
– **March 4, 2026—Tim Solinski**

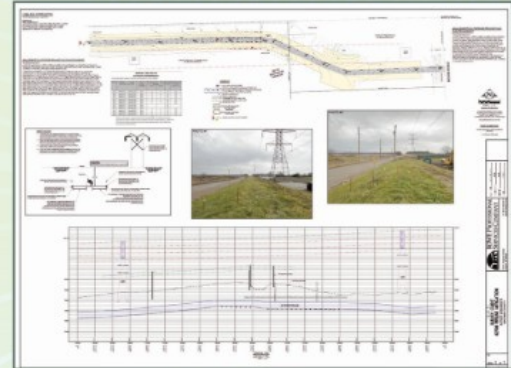
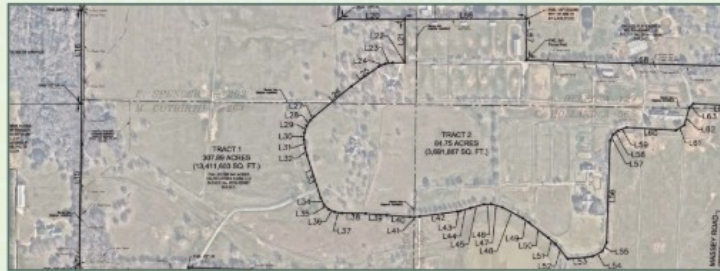
Course 902 – Property Descriptions
– **March 5, 2026 —Tim Solinski**

Course 802 – Legal Aspects of Easements – **April 21, 2026 (*Tentatively*)**

Course 803 – Eminent Domain Law Basics for Right-of-Way Professionals
– **April 22 & 23, 2026—Ken Feaster (*Tentatively*)**



24th Annual Right of Way Mapping Competition



Enter your map today!

Sponsored by IRWA's International Surveying & Engineering Committee, this annual competition will be held in conjunction with IRWA's 72nd Annual International Education Conference in June of 2026 in Omaha, Nebraska.

Winners will be announced in Right of Way Magazine and at the Annual Education Conference, where winning maps will also be displayed. Winners will receive recognition at a national, regional or local IRWA meeting.

Eligibility: Anyone can enter, however, each entry must be sponsored by an IRWA member. Members may sponsor multiple entries. Maps must be associated with the right of way profession including related disciplines.

Prizes: The Grand prize winner will receive a complimentary registration for IRWA's 72nd Annual International Education Conference. In addition, a cash prize of \$250 will be given to the individual winners in the following categories: Transportation, Oil & Gas, Electric & Utility, GIS, SUE Mapping, Engineering and Industry General.

Rules: One entry per person in each category. A map may only be entered in one category. Each entry shall be a standalone single sheet. Maps and entry forms must be submitted digitally using Adobe pdf files. Entries under the transportation, oil & gas and electric & utility categories must be maps/plats prepared for, or in support of, boundary/right of way line retracement or acquisition. This includes, but is not limited to, property or right of way survey maps and plats. Entries under the GIS and industry general categories shall be maps or exhibits related to highways, pipelines, utility lines, telecommunication lines (or associated facilities) prepared for general purposes such as public hearings, presentations, conceptual plans, etc. Examples include, but are not limited to, ownership exhibits and aerial photos (with or without overlays), etc.

Judging: Entries will be judged on overall presentation, orientation and the effective use of graphics, legends, symbols and innovative methods

Disclaimer Information: If contractual confidentiality precludes submission, the title block can be cleared of all pertinent information and state "Prepared for Competition due to Jurisdictional Confidentiality."

24th Annual Right of Way Mapping Competition

Deadline: February 25, 2026

IRWA Sponsor _____
Entrant's Name _____
Company Name or Agency _____
Address _____ City _____ State/Province _____ Zip/Postal _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Category

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| ☐ Transportation | ☐ Oil & Gas | ☐ Electric & Utility | ☐ GIS |
| ☐ Industry General | ☐ SUE Mapping | ☐ Mapping | |

Email PDF entries to:
rnichols@mspdesign.com

Chapter 56 Officers, Committee Chairs, & Industry Committees

President: James Roscoe

President Elect / Vice President: Laura Peretiatko

Secretary: Sarah Day

Treasurer: Cheryl Thomas

Two Year Director: James Roscoe

One Year Director: Michelle Glackin

Membership Chair: Maureen Zito

Professional Development Chair: Ann Heidrick

Education Chair: Laura Peretiatko

Website Development Chair: Roland (Rusty) O'Toole

Electric & Utilities Committee: Debbie Kukulich

Real Property Asset Management Committee: Laura Peretiatko

Environmental Committee: **Vacant**

Oil & Pipeline Committee: Rich Larkin

Public Agency Committee: **Vacant**

Real Estate Law Committee (Eminent Domain & Compulsory Expropriation Purchase Update): **Vacant**

Relocation Assistance Committee: Terri Lawson

Surveying & Engineering Committee: Ashley Freeman

Transportation Committee: **Vacant**

Valuation Committee: **Vacant**



We are looking for members who are interested in becoming subject matter experts in their field by stepping into the vacant Industry Committee roles. Please reach out to Jim Roscoe or Laura Peretiatko if interested in representing Chapter 56.



Sponsorship Opportunities:

NEWSLETTER SPONSORSHIP \$200

An Annual Sponsorship of \$200 places your company logo on our bi-monthly newsletter.

An Annual Sponsorship of \$500 places your company logo on our bi-monthly newsletter as well as a direct link your company's webpage on our Chapter webpage.

NEWSLETTER AND WEBSITE SPONSORSHIP \$500

Newsletter, Website, and Diamond Forum Sponsorship \$1,000

An Annual Sponsorship of \$1,000 places your company logo on our bi-monthly newsletter, our website and gives you Diamond level sponsorship for our Forum.