

From the President



Jesús M. Salazar
2019–2020 SPWLA President

This is my last column as SPWLA President and as a member of the board after three consecutive years of service. I wish I had better news for you. The pandemic that the coronavirus has brought upon us has changed the world we live in and even the way we behave around people.

I'm disappointed that we had to cancel the 61st Annual Logging Symposium in Banff, which I was looking forward to, but the safety and well-being of our members is our first priority. Given our status as a nonprofit organization we had to be very careful about prematurely canceling the symposium. We were already committed to a contract with the venue, which could have meant that the SPWLA was on its way to lose south of half a million dollars. We received several emails from concerned members asking us to cancel the symposium; however, we were patient enough to wait until force majeure could be called on and cancel the Symposium at no loss for the Society. This was a bittersweet feeling because while we were happy not having to pay for an event that never happened we are also sad because this is the first time in 61 years we have canceled an Annual Symposium and for the losses that Banff will sustain this year. As any other organization during these times, individual or business, we expect financial losses at the end of

the year since the Symposium is our main source of income and the Society has already incurred minor expenses associated with the Symposium. It's the same situation around the world due to COVID-19.

I cannot say enough words to express my gratitude to the 2020 Symposium General Chairman Kevin Pyke and his organizing committee. Kevin was instrumental in securing an excellent venue, organizing all the activities around the symposium, and finally helping us to steer out of the contract. Kevin is the kind of volunteer that makes our SPWLA community great. At this point, most people who already registered for Banff should have received an email from the Fairmont Hotel confirming the cancellation of their booking and a refund of the Symposium registration fee from the business office. If you have not received it, please contact the hotel directly for the former and Sharon for the latter.

Dissemination of new technologies and knowledge sharing does not stop. Most of the technical work by authors whose abstracts were accepted for the Symposium had already been completed before we went into lockdown. Therefore, we decided to keep the dates, albeit a bit relaxed, to submit final manuscripts. As I've said to colleagues, the technical papers prepared for the 2020 Symposium will be published on www.spwla.org and www.onepetro.org, with or without a physical conference. We've been brainstorming on the best way to bring the Symposium to your home via video conferencing, taking advantage of all the technology at our hands. Vice President of Technology, Michael O'Keefe, explains in his column the model we will implement for the online Symposium.

These difficult times are pushing us to come up with innovative solutions to deliver value to our members. The COVID-19 pandemic caught us a little bit off guard. In our February board meeting we were arguing about catering options for lunches during the Symposium or whether we should start at 9 or 8 in the morning, weeks later we were debating about canceling the symposium, then with the sudden collapse in commodity prices we are now worrying whether we're going to have a job.

At the end of the day what matters is our health, if we're healthy we can innovate and generate wealth to survive, human kind has been doing it for more than 5,000 years and we'll continue to do so as long as we're healthy. Please renew your membership to take advantage of all the benefits during quarantine. Many educational benefits (\$1 technical papers, free full issues of *Petrophysics* journal for the last 5 years, free webinars, events' discounts, etc.) that will improve your knowledge and will allow you to be more competitive in the job market to navigate the imminent industrywide downturn.

When I joined the board as VP Technology in 2017 I thought it was going to be a one-and-done kind of thing. But the longer I spent on board meetings the more I understood that I needed more time to make a difference in the organization. Since the beginning of my tenure in the board I been involved in projects to modernize the SPWLA. We implemented the app for the symposium, created a Newsletter for social content, included the symposium papers in Elsevier's Scopus Database, implemented DOI for all SPWLA's papers while increasing numbers of papers published in *Petrophysics*, and established metrics for staff compensation based on Symposium, membership, and advertising income. We continue our collaboration with URTeC, led by AAPG, SPE, and SEG—SPWLA is one of the endorsing organizations. This year, we received an honorarium for our participation in 2019 and also showcased the best five papers on petrophysics of unconventional reservoirs from the past Symposium and plan to do the same this year. By the time I became President I spearheaded the revamping of the SPWLA Bylaws and Amended Articles of Incorporation. I'd like to summarize the salient points of the changes we made to of our constitution, namely,

- Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) policies to avoid any kind of discrimination, chapters have followed through updating their constitutions to include D&I policies. Female membership is still lagging, at 14%, but has improved when compared to

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11% in 2016.

- New Conflict of Interest policy to avoid collusion within the Society. We don't want the SPWLA to be the springboard for anyone's business or self-promotion. Our goal is to educate and serve our membership.
- Set experience requirements for key positions such as VP Technology and Publications to ensure a high standard technical program for the Symposium and a world class technical journal, *Petrophysics*.
- Set term limits for continued service on the international board to push directors to take the lead of the Society after 5 years of service and run for president or step aside for new blood.
- Created the Young Professional Technical award to recognize outstanding work by young petrophysicists, the future technical leaders of the discipline.
- Set clear rules for award nominations and recipients and to recognize the service of members no longer in the discipline.
- Foundation of the Social Media Committee to increase our presence in social media and the imminent digital transformation.
- Chapters are following our lead by modernizing their bylaws and we've been assisting them on the matter, that's the case for France, Japan, and the Society of Core Analysts.

We successfully selected Boston as the venue for the 2021 Symposium. I commend the Boston Chapter, specifically Paul Craddock, for leading the way in presenting a proposal that was unanimously selected by the Board of Directors. This year we were also busy with the growth of the Society by supporting the foundation of a new chapter and a new special interest group (SIG). The Central European Formation Evaluation Society (CEFES), a chapter of the SPWLA, and the Hydrocarbon Reserves SIG. Both created by the initiative of volunteers now serving as their officers. At the same time, we reinstated the Texas A&M University student chapter.

I believe that staying connected to the membership is key to attracting new members, so we brought back a moderate budget for board travel, mostly used by regional directors to visit chapters within their regions. I visited several chapters in the US and around the world at no cost to the Society. However, due to coronavirus I canceled my visits to the University of Houston (UH), Colorado School of Mines (CSM) and the Boston Chapter but I managed to serve as a judge in the student paper contest qualifier for UH and to teach a class at CSM using video conferencing for both. Other Directors also visited chapters near their region. Directors have been sharing and resharing their activities on various social networks to keep everyone informed about SPWLA activities and events. Now we have a larger social media presence and increased the number of followers on LinkedIn. The new social media committee has been instrumental in this growth (see Fig. 1). We have continued with (almost) bimonthly Happy Hours with the YP group in the Houston area, which has helped members to network, make new connections, and for students and those in transition, to meet potential employers, and meet potential sponsors and exhibitors for our events.

One final project I'm working on is adding more transparency in the selection of committees' members and volunteers in general. Before the end of our term, we will be launching the interactive volunteer tab on the SPWLA website. Members will be able to express interest in participating in committees, technical reviewers, paper contest judges, and regional distinguished speakers. Their email will go into a list and will be provided to the officer in charge of coordinating the committee/initiatives. This will be your opportunity to contribute to the organization.

I'd like to congratulate the incoming board for being elected by the membership. This year we have an excellent turnout compared to 2019. Last year a total of 589 (24%) members cast a ballot, compared to 732 members this year (38%), close to a 25% surge in votes. I'm excited about the diversity of the new board—we now have the fifth woman elected President and a good mix of officers from operators, service companies, and consultants. I also want to congratulate the recipients of the 2020 Awards. We have one gold medal award this year and for the first time we are bestowing the YP Technical Award to three outstanding young scientists from academia and industry.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the SPWLA's International Board of Directors, the headquarters' staff, chapters, SIGs, YP, students, sponsors, exhibitors, and the wonderful volunteers that selflessly devote time to the SPWLA and for supporting me during my tenure. I enjoyed these three years working with three different boards of directors with different ideas and personalities, which allowed me to learn and understand the needs of the membership. It is important to mention that I had an advisory committee of Past Presidents that I reached out every now and then to hear their opinion about the SPWLA and how I can make an impact. Thank you to David Kennedy, Thaimar Ramirez, and Luis Quintero. I feel proud to have worked with such a great group of professionals.

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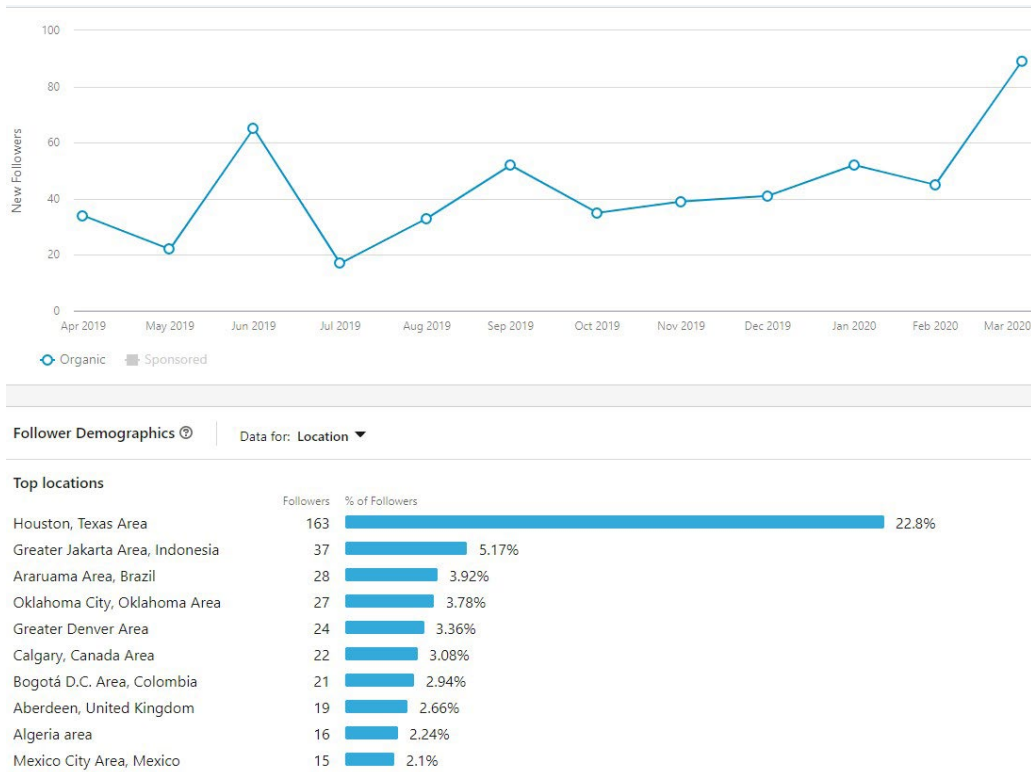


Fig. 1—The number of followers added to the SPWLA Social Media account on LinkedIn in the last year. We have experienced steady growth in the number followers from the US and different places around the world (source: LinkedIn Analytics).

This is what the SPWLA is about, the leading organization to promote the advancement of petrophysics and formation evaluation as we’ve been doing it for 61 years and counting. We ought to continue to thrive in the ups and down of the industry. The SPWLA needs to continue its modernization, I’m leaving the leadership in the very capable hands of Jim Hemingway a super veteran of the SPWLA. For those of you who don’t know, the commitments and responsibilities of the office of President do not end here. The immediate Past President serves as the Chairman of the Awards and Nominations Committees, so think about who you want to nominate for next year’s awards or if you want to run for a position in the board, you know how to find me. In the following years, the Past President is involved with the SPWLA Foundation to raise funds and evaluate candidates for scholarships. I look forward to working with other Past Presidents in this noble endeavor.

Closing with a picture with my officemate for the last 6 weeks, my son Marcelo Jeremiah, soon to be 5. He’s been a good sport and very happy that dad works from home everyday.

Stay connected my friends,
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