

From the President



Brett Wendt
SPWLA President 2017–2018

Dear Enthusiasts of the SPWLA,

As I write this I realize that this will be my last written communication as President. As with any ending, this both excites and disappoints me. I am excited to have the time to pursue other opportunities and to give back to other interests I hold. I am disappointed, as I believe that SPWLA still needs a lot of help and that I barely had a chance to effect any lasting change during my

term. After serving under seven other Presidents I am sure that most (if not all) felt they could do more than they did. The reality is that there are limited opportunities that can be pursued within a year and the majority of time is spent dealing with issues that were not on your agenda.

My major goal for the year was to make SPWLA a stronger organization when I leave than when I arrived. My platform issues to achieve this were to place the organization on a sustainable financial path and grow the membership. If I were to judge my term based on these objectives, I would admit that I failed. The Board authorized increased spending and the organization did not substantially increase revenues during the year. Membership has held flat this year which is great but still fell far short of my ambition. So there lie my disappointments. But there was a fair share of success to share as well.

One big accomplishment was the approval of the change in our Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation to officially allow electronic balloting and voting. While this may not seem like a big deal, it is huge. Our organization has developed slowly, in part because we could not make any major changes without a painful and costly snail mail campaign. With this behind us, we can move more quickly and I plan to have other significant changes up for vote before my term ends.

Another major accomplishment was the redrafting of the Charter Agreement, which has successfully aligned the concerns of our Chapters and SIG's with those SPWLA. This took up half of the year by itself. The staunchest of detractors from the previous Charter have now signed the new version, which is great news for SPWLA. There was a lot of animosity and hard feelings to deal with and I hope that trust in the Board has been restored with our Chapters. But the work is not done; so, this is not in the win column yet. We still have a large number of Chapters that have not signed, but this appears to be more out of lack of effort than over concerns. I remain confident that most (hopefully all) will sign before their grace period expires at the Symposium this June. I do not desire to announce that any current Chapters are no longer part of SPWLA as my term expires.

The final accomplishment in my top three is the outcome you are reading now. I have fought for years to expand *Petrophysics* to include more social and informational content only to find myself in a stalemate with those fighting to remove what little was traditionally carried in the publication. What I never considered was having a VP of Publications who was willing to increase their workload to manage two publications and allow both sides an opportunity to declare a win. But that is exactly what happened this year. For the first time SPWLA has the opportunity to speak directly to its members on any topic and our members have a platform to share their thoughts and ideas outside of the pure technical topics allowed in *Petrophysics*. As a result, there is no longer any excuse for lack of communication between the Board, our Chapters, SIG's, or members. I have set the expectation that every Board member routinely communicates to their constituents in this publication. It will be up to you to maintain this expectation. If Board business remains a mysterious and detached process from the membership it is because you are not requiring your elected officials to uphold your interests.

This brings me to my SPWLA career closing statement, which, I admit, is purely editorial. It is amazing how consistent national politics reflect politics on any scale in the world today. I know there are some people who are so upset with "politics as usual" that they support just breaking the system. The problem is nobody can agree on what the new system should look like. What we seem to have forgotten is that democratic processes work best when no one side of an argument "wins" outright. People have been subjected to a cultural shift where compromise is cast as a "loss" in nearly every facet of their lives. We are shifting more and more towards a model where elected official believes it is their duty to see special interest issues win over common good. I believe this is more and more how people see themselves individually. We are losing the talent of being able to represent someone else's cause without making it our own. I fear what this means to volunteer organizations like SPWLA. I see more and more "volunteers" expecting things in return for their "service". Furthermore, if they do not get things their way they either quit or become a destabilizing force on every topic that does not interest them. It takes courage to stand up for what is right and to set aside personal interests for another day.

It has been my pleasure to serve SPWLA for the 10 years that I have held leadership positions in the organization. I have enjoyed much of that time. I have met so many people who have taught and influenced me that I never would have had the opportunity to meet outside of SPWLA. I have benefitted in more ways than I can count and have enjoyed support from people I hold in high respect and regard. I encourage more people to step forward and take advantage of the opportunities I had. They are waiting for you. SPWLA needs you.

As always, I am open to any comments or ideas. Please let me hear what you think!