

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I begin this column with my sincere wish for a speedy recovery for all of our members who were affected by the hurricanes, earthquakes, and fires this year. These are difficult circumstances to traverse and, for some, can be life changing. Regardless of where you live or what troubles may have fallen upon you, know that our thoughts and prayers are with you.

I am relieved to tell you that our headquarters office and staff were not directly affected by hurricane Harvey. Although the building where our office resides did suffer first-floor damage, it was open within the week. Our office space had a few leaks but did not suffer permanent or irreplaceable damage. Sharon, Stephanie, and their families are all safe and their property is intact. We are all grateful to have this fortunate outcome. I thank both Sharon and Stephanie for their quick return to work and their dedication to seeing SPWLA running as usual under these difficult conditions.

The Board held a meeting the week before Harvey and I am pleased that we have made some early and significant progress. Here are the highlights from the meeting:

- *Guidelines for Selection of Best Chapter Award.* In the past, there were no set requirements and the selection process was a poorly defined Board decision. We have now adopted a process where Chapters will need to nominate themselves for the award and supply the Board with reasons to select their chapter. This should allow greater consistency in the process and increase the meaning of being granted the award.
- *Campaign Policy for Candidates Running for BOD Positions.* This grew out of the use of social media and targeted solicitation that occurred during the last election process. The election process has always relied on the position statement from the candidates as the sole means of communication to members from candidates. Yet, there was nothing making this formal. Now there is.
- *Budget Adopted for Distinguished Speakers Program and Student Paper Contest.* Both of these programs are expensive, but the Board believes that these are the critical programs that serve our members and chapters. We believe they want us to continue to support and develop these programs even in financially challenging times.
- *Tiered Membership Dues.* For professionals earning less than \$40,000 per year, full membership in SPWLA will be reduced to \$40. It is the intention of the Board that having a lower cost for joining SPWLA will encourage professionals working in

countries that offer substantially lower wages an incentive to join. The Board anticipates a growth in membership in the Asia Pacific and Latin American regions as a result of this action.

- *Adopted Language and Content for a New Charter Agreement.* This will undergo a brief legal review and I expect to be rolling out the new charter about the time that this message goes to print. I know that just the mention of the charter will make some members cringe, so I will take some time to explain things more fully on this subject.

The charter is a necessary step that was identified nearly four years ago. Without a charter there is no document that establishes a relationship between SPWLA and its suborganizations. Without the charter, essentially anyone could use SPWLA's name and logo for any purpose they wanted and we would have little legal recourse to stop them. By establishing a legal relationship with our suborganizations, we can legally identify when someone does not have a legal right to use our identity. The charter does not need to go beyond this purpose to meet its base objectives. Neither the old version of the charter nor the new one sought to change the original legal relationship that existed between SPWLA and our suborganizations prior to the existence of the charter. The charter simply formalizes that our suborganizations are independent organizations that may use the SPWLA name and logo under license and that SPWLA is the parent organization in the relationship. No suborganization has contested this part of the charter and it has remained unchanged from version to version.

The following items were contested in previous charter versions and have been changed in the new one:

- The previous charter required suborganizations to adhere to a strict and limited name structure. This meant that chapters, such as the Denver Well Logging Society, London Petrophysical Society, Formation Evaluation Society of Australia, and so on, would be required to change their names. This is a very contentious matter. Under the new charter, suborganizations can keep their names and simply append "a Chapter of SPWLA" to be in compliance. This meets the objective of name and brand recognition while allowing flexibility to retain traditional names.
- The previous charter required that suborganizations charge event fees for all suborganization events and prohibited suborganizations from charging any dues for membership in their organization. Both of these items have been removed from the new

charter. Suborganizations would have the freedom to pursue any business model they feel best serves their members.

- The previous charter penalized non-SPWLA members financially by imposing 150% surcharge for non-SPWLA members to attend any suborganizational events. Furthermore, the suborganization had to provide SPWLA with detailed attendance records for their events and remit 50% of the nonmember fees collected to SPWLA. In order to compensate the chapters for this additional effort, SPWLA offered an addendum to the charter, which allowed a subvention of the dues collected for SPWLA members affiliated with the suborganization as a rebate. All of this requires additional work, transfer of money in both directions at different times, and accounting for both parties. As a result, only a couple of suborganizations who have signed the charter with these conditions have attempted to comply with it. The new charter removes both the surcharge requirement and the subvention. No money will be exchanged between organizations in the new charter.
- The new charter still tries to incentivize suborganization members to join SPWLA but does not penalize them if they choose not to. This is done by formalizing the local chapter members, designated as “affiliate members” in our bylaws, who are not members of SPWLA within the SPWLA registration process. These affiliate members will be required to register annually with SPWLA using our annual enrollment process. There will be no cost to do this. This will allow SPWLA to maintain membership both internationally and locally. Suborganizations will no longer need to maintain their own membership and contact lists. SPWLA will do this for them. In exchange, suborganizations will only allow SPWLA registered affiliate members and SPWLA members to attend their events. Furthermore, affiliate members will not be allowed to vote or serve in any capacity within the suborganizations. Suborganizations will solely be officiated by and organized by SPWLA members.

It is my intention to be transparent with SPWLA members on what we are trying to do with this process. While this may cause additional turmoil and discussion if we get things wrong, I believe that this will be worth the pain the Board may feel. Our members must regain some trust that the Board is working in the best interest of *all* levels of the Society. For too long, we have operated as a

two-level society with each feeling they could probably live without the other. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is in everyone’s best interest to accept that we will be stronger if there is only “us” to worry about and not a “them”. We need to set aside differences; allow each side to thrive and flourish; and recognize that we all benefit from our individual successes. It is not the easy path, but it is the one I will remain committed to for the remainder of my term.

In closing, I will be attending the Annual Regional Symposium in Japan this month. I am excited to have the opportunity to attend this longstanding event for the first time and I expect it to be one of the highlights of my SPWLA “career”. Discussions are currently underway among the Middle East Region chapters to hold a regional event similar to the one held in Japan. I am confident that they will be as successful in getting this kicked off and that future SPWLA presidents will have the opportunity to attend it in the future. I encourage the European and Latin American Regions to pursue similar joint events to build these broader regional sharing opportunities. I see great potential for SPWLA at every level.

Regards,
Brett Wendt
2017–2018 SPWLA President