ORC Training and IRWA Sign Licensing Agreement for Online Training

By Lisa Barnes, Vice President of ORC Training, LLC

ORC Training (ORCT) is very excited to announce an agreement with the International Right of Way Association (IRWA) to license several courses developed by ORCT in an online format over the next five (5) years. This agreement will link the expertise of ORCT with IRWA’s educational and training opportunities to benefit the organization’s members.

Background

- ORC’s training division has developed or updated all seven of the real-estate related training courses for the National Highway Institute, the training division of the Federal Highway Administration, and has developed internal training courses to improve/enhance employee development;

(continued next page)
• IRWA is considered the central authority for right of way education and certification programs worldwide, and its training programs provide a foundation for right of way professionals;
• IRWA offers levels of certification for right of way professionals, including its Relocation Assistance Certification (R/W-RAC) and Uniform Act Certification (R/W-URAC); and
• IRWA currently has no online relocation assistance courses to offer its members.

Agreement

This agreement allows IRWA to license ORC Training online relocation courses, as well as other right of way subject matter content, to market under the IRWA brand. These online courses offered by IRWA will count toward certifications, including the R/W-RAC, the R/W-URAC, or other applicable certifications. These courses will also count toward recertification credit.

Initial Delivery

We have agreed to deliver four (4) online courses to IRWA in 2015, with additional courses in subsequent years. The four courses scheduled for delivery in 2015 are:

• Appraisal Concepts for the Negotiator
• Mobile Home Relocation
• Specialized Nonresidential Payments
• Special Topics in Replacement Housing

These courses use various techniques to engage the online learner – synchronized audio narration, video clips for more expansive explanation of complex topics, and interactive case studies that immediately allow the learner to apply concepts. Progress quizzes check learning along the way, and an end-of-course exam is required to measure achievement of learning outcomes.

We see this partnership as a true milestone for training in our industry – a sharing of resources to benefit right of way professionals in the public real estate sector.
Honoring Dick Moeller

Serving the Right of Way Profession for More Than 50 Years

By Bob Merryman, Senior Vice President, O. R. Colan Associates/ORC Training, LLC

When Dick Moeller joined ORC, one of the first things he discovered was that rules are sometimes more difficult to implement than they seemed when written. So began Dick’s work at ORC moving the occupants of a “fish camp” for the Everglades Restoration Project. But luckily Dick had at that time forty years of prior experience to mitigate the surprise.

Dick was born in 1939 on a farm in eastern Iowa, but farming was not what he saw in his future. The participation of the Federal government in funding highways was booming when Dick joined the Bureau of Public Roads in 1963. Real estate was needed to expand and build roads, so right of way was rising in importance.

One of his early assignments after the training program was in West Virginia. He was quickly embroiled in one of the first National Environmental Protection

Dick’s Been Everywhere, Man!
Act (NEPA) challenges dealing with available housing. The case was settled and as a result of the case he met Dick (Owen Richard) Colan, who was the Right of Way Director for the State of West Virginia. They remained friends for many years until Mr. Colan’s death in 1989.

Dick Moeller was transferred to Hawaii in 1972, where his assignment also covered territories held by the United States. Dick was asked to intervene and determine how to apply the requirements of the Uniform Act to the communal system of land ownership and titles used in American Samoa. It seems that the various villages had an informal arrangement of exchanging gifts to compensate for land lost to provide access to a village. After studying the problem, Dick recommended that the tribal system be accepted as meeting the just compensation requirements of the Uniform Act. The recommendation was ultimately approved and was probably the first waiver granted under the Uniform Act.

Leaving what many think of as paradise, the next stop in Dick’s career was the FHWA Regional Office in Baltimore. It was 1974. FHWA was overseeing implementation of the Uniform Act in the process of assisting the states in building our Interstate Highway system and the highway budget was growing. Then, on to FHWA headquarters in Washington DC to serve in various leadership roles for the agency and as Secretary of the AASHTO Subcommittee on Right of Way and Utilities.

In 2000, AASHTO and FHWA sponsored a “Scan Trip” of European countries to look at right of way acquisition practices. Cathy Colan Muth, CEO of O. R. Colan Associates, was invited to represent the private sector on the tour of four European countries (The United Kingdom, Norway, The Netherlands and Germany) to meet with right of way agency representatives in those countries. The tour led to several pilot projects in this country and some regulatory modifications.

While he has no plans to retire, he sums it up this way “…a long, interesting and rewarding career… a wonderful wife, Jane, who traveled this journey … three children and seven grandchildren that are very dear to me.” There is not much else to say!

If you would like to read Dick’s first person summary of his professional life, ORC has posted the full article at http://orcolan.com/dick-moeller.

...inspiring confidence in progress
ORC Senior Managers Meet in Fort Lauderdale, Florida

By Cathy Colan Muth, CEO

The Leadership Team of ORC met with Senior Managers in Fort Lauderdale, Florida on February 26th, 27th and 28th.

Tom Foster of Foster Learning presented a workshop on the first day based on his book Hiring Talent. Tom Foster is the Chair of Cathy Muth's Vistage group where she has been a member for 19 years. The workshop focused on the business principles taught by Elliott Jacques. "When you say you have a communication problem in your organization, it really means you have a structural problem," says Tom.

On the morning of the second day of the meeting, the Senior Managers presented the business plans for their various profit centers to the Board of Owners of the company. This was the first of two Board of Owners' Meetings scheduled for 2015.

That afternoon the Leadership Team of ORC met with the Board of Owners to review the results of 2014 and share the Strategic Plan for the current year.

On day three of the meeting, the managers and the Leadership Team went over upcoming changes required by EEOC reporting. Other topics included discussions of our current business development and proposal processes. Senior Manager Tracy Jones shared her successful approach to business development with the other Senior Managers. She has been able to grow her office from just one part time assistant to a staff of 12 agents, 3 trainees and 3 appraisers within the past four years. Input from the Senior Managers helps the Leadership Team determine best practices to implement as we grow as a company.
ORC U&I Opens New Office in Columbus, Ohio

By Richie McNally, Director of ORC Utility & Infrastructure Land Services, LLC

ORC Utility and Infrastructure Land Services LLC, has opened a new office in Gahanna, Ohio due to the continued growth of the Utility Division. The new office will support several public and private energy clients throughout the State of Ohio. The office address is 700 Taylor Road, Suite 100, Gahanna, Ohio 43230.

On the Road with Bob – Way Down South: BBQ and Camellias

By Bob Merryman, Senior Vice President, O. R. Colan Associates/ORC Training, LLC

O. R. Colan Associates has its corporate office located in Charlotte, North Carolina and the City of Tallahassee in Florida is home to ORC Training, an affiliated company of O. R. Colan Associates. The corporate office houses accounting and management, while the training office creates right of way training materials for a wide assortment of clients. Both of these facilities are located in the South, and I had the occasion to visit both offices in the last couple months. The South automatically makes me think of BBQ and neither city will disappoint in that regard.

My trip to Charlotte was to attend a strategic planning session, and provide some awareness training to the corporate staff. While it might not be readily apparent, it can be difficult for our corporate side to understand what the ORC field personnel do on a day-to-day basis. So ORC Training has put together materials that outline what a typical appraiser, or acquisition/relocation agent might do on a daily basis. My job was to walk them through our role in public projects.

Charlotte is a growing town. It is likely losing much of it southern charm, but replacing it with the activities of a financial center - (Charlotte is home to Bank of America). One of my questions to the local staff was to inquire about a good BBQ place. Everyone seems to have a favorite but Bill Spoons Barbecue seemed to be popular with nearly everyone. Bill Spoons was also a recent winner of the “best BBQ in Charlotte” award. So off I went to Bill Spoons, never one to miss a chance for some good ole down home BBQ.
BBQ in North Carolina means slow-roasted pork. It also means a tangy mustard-based sauce for the BBQ. I generally prefer beef BBQ, but I have to admit, the pork was excellent. I selected the sweet-sour coleslaw as my side, and it was equally tasty. A real surprise was the excellent hush puppies - fried seasoned cornbread. Often hush puppies are greasy balls of dough, but the ones at Bill Spoons were light and delicious. Overall it was an excellent dinner.

A few weeks later I ventured off to Tallahassee to work on an ORC training assignment. Many negotiators do not understand how the appraisal process estimates a value for a parcel. This lack of comprehension can make discussions with the property owner more difficult. ORC is developing new training to improve a negotiator’s skills in explaining these appraisal concepts to owners.

I again checked with the local personnel regarding BBQ and was informed that Piggy’s Barbecue was the likely best choice in Tallahassee. Piggy’s was just a short distance from my hotel, so I drove there after work one evening. It smelled great even out in the parking lot, so I was eager to see what they had to offer.

In Tallahassee, BBQ apparently means both pork and beef. I ordered the smoked brisket which they slice from the whole brisket as you watch, and then cross chop the slices to assure it is tender. Piggy’s had multiple sauce options, so I tried a small container of both hot-sweet tomato-based sauce and the mustard sauce. The beef was great, and both sauces were outstanding on the meat.

Piggy’s also has a wide range of side dishes that are served with the meat. I chose a sweet potato casserole recommended by the server. It was great although I imagine it was high calorie. It had lots of butter and brown sugar. Piggy’s was so good, I went back the following evening.

One afternoon in Tallahassee when we were pulling into the office parking lot, I noticed a small tree in bloom. It turned out to be a camellia bush just peaking with flowers. Camellias are a southern flowering shrub that bloom in January. Another great spot to see a wide variety of camellias is at the Maclay Gardens in Tallahassee. The Maclays were a wealthy New York family who wintered in Tallahassee. Mrs. Maclay planted and propagated over 150 varieties of camellias in her garden. It is now a Florida State Park, covering over 1100 acres. The annual Camellia Christmas Festival celebrates the blooms at the Gardens. Soon the dogwoods and azaleas will be in full bloom!