

**Peggy Harshman**  
**Outgoing President's Address**  
**May 2, 2010**

In 1999, my boss, Dan Zacharski requested that I visit the Elgin Chapter of IAAP. He felt that I needed some structure in my life, I needed to get involved, and IAAP would be a great way to achieve both. Well I did what he said and I got involved. His advice turned out to be the best thing that could have ever happened to me.

How much I have changed in the past 11 years. I remember my first IDAM in 1999 at the Chicago Marriott hosted by the Greater O'Hare Chapter. I was really confused as to what actually was occurring. I remember at the luncheon sharing the table with Gayle Cinke who was talking about the International Convention that was going to take place in Chicago in July. I guess that is when I really understand the full value of my membership. Networking making new friends with people who had a profession in common with mine. Each IDAM after that first one, I have made more new friends. We share stories, laughing and even enjoying a cocktail once in awhile. This is very special to me.

I often think where would I be right now if I had not joined IAAP. Would I have stepped out of my comfort zone? Could I get up in front of a large group of people and speak without stuttering? Could I hold my emotions in a professional manner? Well the answer to these questions is no. IAAP has given me the strength to become a leader. These leadership skills have not only helped me personally but in my job. I'm sure that my recent promotion was because I am not afraid to take ownership and step forward for a challenge.

The numerous things that I have learn with the extensive training that has been available at Chapter meetings, Professional Enrichment Programs, EFAMs and IDAMs. I think that we take all this training for granted and never really appreciate what we learn until we need it. Trying to solve a problem or issue, suddenly the solution comes to us, and the problem is solved. One never knows when the training will come to use.

It truly has been an honor to serve as Division President and I look forward to a successful year ahead under Jeannette's leadership.