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# Product Matters!

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## Comments from the Chair

### Progress and Volunteerism

by Kevin J. Howard

#### Progress

In this column, I'll present to you the progress that the Section Council has made on our major initiatives. Then I'll spend some time discussing volunteerism as it pertains to our section.

As I described in the last newsletter, it is the intention of the 2003-2004 Council to continue focusing on both the research and risk management initiatives begun in prior years, as well as to continue to focus on our core activities.

We have created the spring meeting sessions for San Antonio and recruiting for those sessions is in the final stages. Our spring program coordinator, Keith Dall, has summarized the sessions in this issue of *Product Matters!*

Under the careful direction of Mary Broesch, our annual program coordinator, the sessions for the annual meeting in October have been created and scheduled, and we are in the initial stages of recruiting.

The 2004 Product Development Actuary Symposium has been scheduled and planned. A detailed announcement of the symposium can be found on page 15. In addition, the section will co-sponsor a pre-symposium seminar for the illustration actuary. The other sponsors are the American Academy of Actuaries and the SOA.



Outgoing Product Development Section Council Chairperson Noel Abkemeier (left) receives a glass-blown bicycle as a gift of appreciation from incoming Chairperson Kevin Howard.

A researcher has been chosen for our first research project, "Analysis of Product Guarantees" and a Project Oversight Group (POG) has been formed. The council has been working on prioritizing the next couple research projects that we'll sponsor and fund.

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## Volunteerism

All of the efforts listed here are accomplished through volunteers with the support of SOA staff. Most of the volunteer work is accomplished behind the scenes. So, to begin this section on volunteerism, I want to thank all our section members who toil away behind the scenes. They are the folks who are on the research, survey and experience studies committees. They present at seminars and at the spring and annual meetings. They write articles, write exam questions, grade papers and help govern the SOA.

Ultimately, a volunteer who chooses to give something back to the profession supports every benefit you receive as a member of the SOA.

Now that last comment is pretty obvious. But if you're like I am, you tend to lose track of how the behind the scenes activities are accomplished.

In the last newsletter, I stated that I would be continuing to ask for help. (I actually used the word "beg"). There are several initiatives under way both in our section and the SOA that will require new volunteers. Our existing volunteers are very committed, but their available time is precious and limited.

Please consider volunteering. Feel free to contact any council member or me. Check out the "Get Involved" page on our Web site. We will be happy to discuss the benefits of volunteering and help you match your skills and interests to the projects. □



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