



Article from

Product Matters

February 2016

Issue 103

Chairperson's Corner

By Jeremy Bill

I can remember it like it was yesterday. I was walking down the street in Toronto during the Life & Annuity Symposium in the spring of 2013. I was visiting with Tim Rozar about an upcoming actuarial event that I was organizing for my company, and Tim was graciously sharing his insights from a similar event he had organized for his company.

At the end of the conversation, Tim casually asked: "Have you ever thought about running for the Product Development Section Council?" I soon found out that Tim was the vice chair of the Product Development Section and that the council was working on filling the ballot for the upcoming election.

In all honesty, I had never really considered running for council membership prior to that point. I had done a little speaking at SOA meetings and had written a couple of articles, but I didn't really know much about the council or the work that it did. I asked Tim for more information and let him know that I would consider running if there was still a need for candidates.

I ultimately decided to put my name on the ballot, since it sounded like they were pretty desperate for candidates (why else would they ask me to run when I didn't really know much about the council?). When the ballot was released, I was surprised to see that there were six candidates on the ballot to fill the three open spots on the council for that term! As I reviewed the list of other candidates, I found that many of them were already very involved with the activities of the section and were already making some great contributions. At the time, I felt a little relieved: it looks like they've got some great candidates, so they won't be needing me!

Shortly after the elections, I got a call from the Society of Actuaries. I was surprised (if not shocked) to hear that I had been elected to a three-year term of the Product Development Section Council. I felt very honored to be elected. I also felt a certain weight of responsibility to do a good job and take my responsibilities on the council seriously.

Over the following months, I learned a lot about the activities of the SOA sections and the great work they do. I learned that the planning for the SOA meetings starts really early (we start working on the annual meeting in January each year). I discovered that the sections sponsor really important research that is

extremely valuable to practicing actuaries. I also found out about the many "friends of the council" that help out even though they are not elected to the council. These many volunteers help with everything from organizing section newsletters and recruiting for meetings, to overseeing the research sponsored by the SOA.

The Product Development Section has an especially great group of volunteers and they allow our section to do these many amazing things and more. Anyone is welcome to volunteer and we have lots of opportunities to get involved, many of which are a very small commitment of your time. If you're interested in finding out more about getting involved, I would encourage you to contact me or one of the other council members listed on the inside front cover of this newsletter.

As I look back on that spring day in Toronto, I'm glad that I decided to say "yes" to the opportunity to get involved with the Product Development Section Council. I've met some great people and learned a lot about the Society of Actuaries. Starting in October of 2015, I began my term as the chair of the Product Development Section Council. I'm excited about the work we have planned for the upcoming year as we continue to provide great content to our members.

Best of all, I'm now the one that gets to ask "Have you ever thought about getting involved with the Product Development Section?"



Jeremy Bill, FSA, MAAA, is vice president at Midland National Life Insurance Co in Sioux Falls, SD. He can be reached at jbill@sfgmembers.com.