

Chairperson's Corner

By Mary Broesch

As my time as chair of the Reinsurance Section Council comes to an end, I'm doing a bit of reflecting. In my reflections, I find it useful to think about what happened, and note what I learned from the experience.

So, here's a reflection I'd like to share. At last year's Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, the Reinsurance Section Council decided to switch things up and sponsor a luncheon session at a restaurant, instead of the typical hot breakfast session at the hotel. We wanted to provide an intimate and fun networking event for our members and the restaurant offered burgers and fancy, adult-themed milkshakes! The logistical challenges started when the event sold out, leaving several people, including officers of the Reinsurance Section Council, without a ticket. What made matters worse, is that it was not possible for people who wanted to attend and did not have a ticket, to use the ticket of someone who did not show up. And then, to top it off, the restaurant was so noisy that we could not make any announcements or share any information.

Even though I enjoyed myself and the milkshake, the logistical challenges keep me from categorizing the event as a success. Originally, we wanted to create a fun, networking event for our members that was different from prior events. The lesson

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I recognized is to not let failure or fear of failure thwart your efforts, if you have a strong desire and belief in what you're doing. Instead of abandoning the luncheon idea after the first time and offering a hot breakfast again for the next time, we learned what could be done differently and applied those lessons to plan for a better luncheon the next time. I hope the second luncheon turns out better than the first, even though there won't be any milkshakes.



My reflection would not be complete without thinking about what has been accomplished over the past year. It's my pleasure to highlight our fabulous Council members and what role they played.

- Ronald Poon-Affat has been a fantastic editor-in-chief of *Reinsurance News*, our section's newsletter published three times each year. Ronald has worked tirelessly over the past

three years to produce a high quality publication, including diverse articles, also available on podcast.

- George Hrischenko played a key role for the section as the research coordinator, where he led the facilitation of developing new research. Most of the money that the reinsurance section raises through webcasts and seminars is spent on topical research projects. In 2018, look for new research in the areas of accelerated underwriting and extreme events.
- Mike Kaster, as the vice-chair, provided great advice, support and leadership to the Council and section members over the past year. Mike contributed significantly to developing the Life and Annuity Reinsurance seminar that began a few years ago and is considered a success today.
- Jeremy Lane split his time over the past year between coordinating webcasts and populating the SOA volunteer database. The three webcasts offer section members opportunities for continuing education, while the database captures open volunteer opportunities for members to easily review and apply for online.
- Tim Paris took the lead and deftly coordinated the third annual Life and Annuity Reinsurance seminar, which had a record 84 attendees. This valuable educational program included top notch industry experts as presenters and opportunities to network with colleagues.
- Emily Roman was responsible for marketing to reinsurance section members, with a goal of increasing communications on relevant items of interest. She was instrumental in launching our section's new website, which will now be updated more frequently as things change.

- Katrina Spillane did an outstanding job as coordinator of all the reinsurance section sponsored sessions and activities at four key SOA conferences, including the Annual Meeting in Boston, where the second annual reinsurance section networking luncheon was held.
- David Vnenchak, last but not least, served the Council as secretary and treasurer over the past year. Keeping us organized as a Council is no small task and Dave's ability to do this and stay focused on our goals is greatly appreciated.

Beyond the Council members are significant others who also support reinsurance section members. The SOA staff, especially Jessica Boyke, Jim Miles, Sam Phillips and Ronora Stryker, for whom I'm particularly grateful, provides excellent support to the section and Council. Plus, I'm also grateful for our active Friends of the Council including Larry Stern, Marc Cagen and Olivia Yang. For years, Larry has been dedicated to directing, managing and expanding the LEARN educational program for regulators, which is sponsored by the reinsurance section.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your chair of the Reinsurance Section Council. I look forward to continuing my connection and service to the reinsurance section as a Friend of the Council and enjoying another milkshake the next time I'm in Vegas! ■



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