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Chairperson's Corner

By Mike Kaster

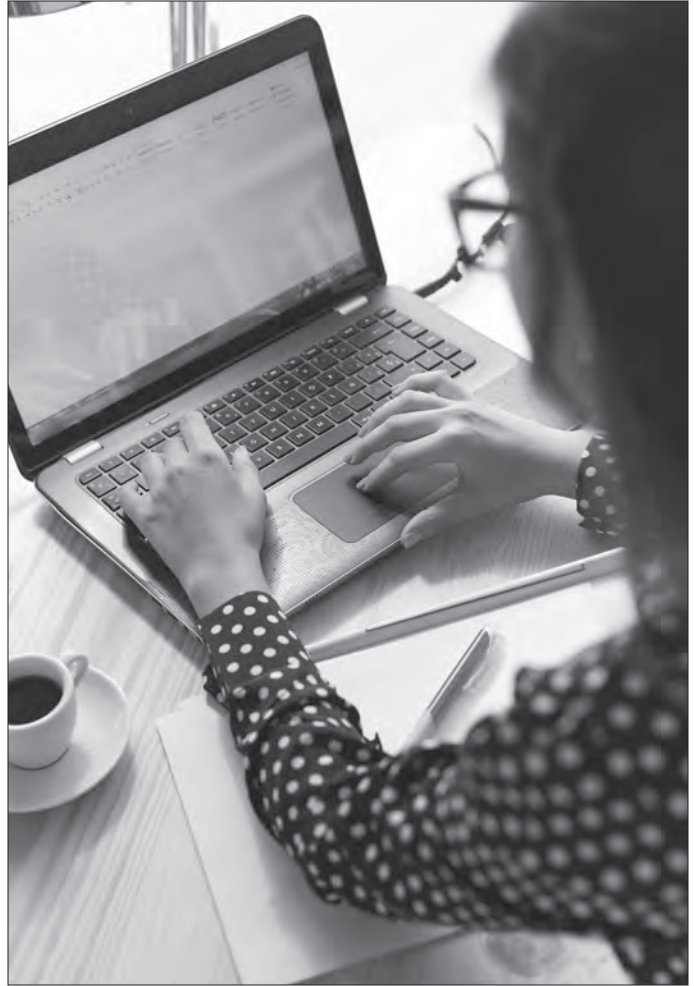
The days are growing shorter now. And so is my time with the Reinsurance Section Council.

It has been a great run for me personally, having been involved with the Reinsurance Section Council for seven years, serving two terms as a council member with a volunteer year in between. I have seen us accomplish a lot over this time. But, as I end my final year, and my year as chair of the council, the thing I know I will miss the most is working with all the other outstanding volunteers involved with this council.

What does it take to volunteer? For some, it requires a supportive employer who understands the added value you obtain by being involved in an industry council. Not only do you get to network with other professionals with a common interest (in our case, reinsurance), you also learn about what is going on with other companies and within the industry. For our group, we have spent this past year focused on a number of hot topics, and we have worked hard to make sure that we are addressing these topics. But for me personally, I also have learned a lot about these topics, and that is something that would not have happened had I not been involved. So, even if your employer won't support you as a volunteer, I know you will find it very worthy of your personal time.

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Our council is now in the habit of meeting in person twice a year. One time is at the SOA Annual Meeting & Exhibit, as most of us tend to be at that meeting anyways. But, the other time is shortly after the section year kicks off, usually in January. This past year, we met as we have for several years now, in January in New York City. It seems that there is an awful lot of reinsurance activity in NYC, so it makes sense to meet there. And while this is a great opportunity for the entire council to focus a day on what we look to accomplish, probably the best



part of the day is when we all get together at the end of the day for dinner and get to socialize and get to know each other a bit better.

As it turns out, actuaries are pretty likable folks! Through this process, I have probably met no less than 30 new friends and contacts, and countless others who I have run into as a part of our efforts. This year's council has been great to work with, so if you are taking the time to read this, I thank you! Because it is giving me the opportunity to thank these great volunteers, and recognize their efforts for your benefit.

Joining me in ending our three-year terms as council members this year are Tim Paris and Katrina Spillane. It has been fabulous working with them both for the past three years. Over the last couple of years, Katrina has been responsible for all of our continuing education sessions at the major meetings (SOA Annual Meeting & Exhibit, Life & Annuity Symposium and Val Act). This is no small task, as anyone knows who has worked on the large SOA meetings. And while it hasn't happened yet

at the time I am writing this, I'm very much looking forward to a successful luncheon at the SOA Annual Meeting & Exhibit, which is Katrina's swan-song. Tim has also helped in the area of continuing education, by coordinating our annual Reinsurance Seminar. This annual event has now been occurring for six years, the past two due to the efforts of Tim and several other volunteers. Tim's swan-song was this year's event held in Washington, D.C. just four weeks ago. It was outstanding, as I personally can attest to. Thank you Katrina and Tim for all your efforts.

There are six other section council members, all returning next year to continue their efforts. Taking over for me as section chair will be Dave Vnenchak. Dave has been very helpful this past year as vice-chair of the council. Our group has grown well beyond the nine council members, so having Dave's help over the past year has really been vital to our success. Following in Dave's footsteps will be Kyle Bauer, who moves from secretary/treasurer into the vice-chair role. Working with Dave and Kyle has been a pleasure, and I will miss our leadership calls. I know that Dave and Kyle will be providing great leadership to the group going forward.

Each of the four other returning council members have worked to help us accomplish many of our goals over the last year. I'd like to express my thanks to Jeremy Lane and Emily Roman for completing their second year on the council, and to Laura Muse and Jean-Marc Fix for completing their first year. They each contributed many things to the council's success this year, not only for their specific roles, but also in general with their creative thoughts and ideas. Thank you for your efforts, and I know I leave the council in very good hands.

This group, and a long list of additional volunteers, helped us all accomplish a lot. The following is a list (hopefully inclusive, but I can't promise I didn't miss something) of the various items we have completed over the past year.

Continuing Education

- Twenty to 30 different reinsurance-specific sessions at the large meetings.
- One full-day reinsurance focused seminar, with networking.

Research

- Finalized two research projects: "Impact of Genetic Testing on Life Insurance" and "Mortality of the 1900 Birth Cohort."
- Began research on three topics: "Accelerated Underwriting Survey," "Recapture Provision Survey," and "Extreme Events."

- NOTE: The Reinsurance Section research team is a separate group, led by Jean-Marc Fix, and they are always looking for additional volunteers. Contact Jean-Marc for details.

Webcasts—Completed three this past year.

- "Global Ageing and (Re)insurance,"
- "Reinsurance Tax Reform Considerations," and
- "In-force Management."

Podcasts

- Completed three specific podcasts for reinsurance, thanks to Jing Lang the Reinsurance Section's podcast director/producer—check the iTunes store.

Newsletter

- Three very substantial newsletters have been completed each year.
- The past year with new newsletter editors, Ronald Poon-Afat and Dirk Nieder.

LEARN

- This is our educational initiative for state insurance regulators.
- Completed education for three major states (Fla., N.Y. and Calif.)
- Recruited four new volunteer presenters to help keep this program going.

Web media

- The reinsurance LinkedIn group is now a public group and open to all.
- We also have improved our website (on *SOA.org*) to make it easier to find our content.

I'm sure there is more, but I think you get the idea. As a group, we accomplish so much in the area of education, research and networking for our Reinsurance Section members. It has been a privilege and an honor to serve as the chair of this auspicious group. ■



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