SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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MATH EXAM PRIZEWINNERS

(This is the first of two articles.)

In 1946, this Society's two predecessor bodies announced that they would

> "jointly award one $200 and eight $100 prizes to the nine undergraduates . . . ranking highest in combined score on the (then) Language Aptitude Examination (Part 1) and the General Mathematics Examination (Part 2). . ."

In 1963 the Casualty Actuarial Society became a joint sponsor with the Society of Actuaries. After 1948, the Language Aptitude Test of those days no longer figured in the award. When spring and fall exams were started in 1962, the prize became as they remain today, one of $200 and four of $100 for each exam.

The usefulness of this award has, naturally, been debated from time to time. One such occasion was in 1957 (*TSA IX*, 96 & 99) when two of our Fellows, Carl E. Fischer and Frederick E. Rathgeber, expressed contrasting views. Prof. Fischer believed these prizes didn't encourage a greater influx of genuine actuarial students but just attracted brilliant math students with no interest in actuarial work who were "simply risking $6 to win $100 or $200". Mr Rathgeber held that even if there is just a handful of students who first become interested in this way, the plan serves to create interest among those who do not win the prizes.

This study, built from a reply by James L. Cowen to an enquiry from John W. Grantier, has been made into a pair of articles by *Actuarial Review* Editor Matthew Rodermund and this newsletter's editor, and thus reflects the combined experience of the sponsoring organizations.

The following table shows the consecutive lengths of time up to 1970 required to acquire 14 future Fellows from among the prizewinners:

	Calendar Year When Prize Awarded		
	1947-50	1951-57	1958-70
No. of Years	4	7	13
No. of Winners	36	64	133
No. of Fellows	14	14	14
Fellows/Winners	39%	22%	11%

The numbers of prizewinners of these periods who reached Associateship, but haven't (so far at least), gone on to Fellowship, are: 1947–50, none; 1951–57, 2; 1958–70, 4.

The experience in the prize-winning years beyond 1970 isn't yet mature, but shows promise of improvement over the 1958-70 period which had to survive an extraordinarly lean era—from 1959 to 1964—when we managed to attract only two future Fellows from among 61 prizewinners.

The four charter prizewinner members, from 1947 awards, are James F. A. Biggs, George Y. Cherlin, Frank H. David and Thomas M. Galt. The first prizewinner to become a Fellow of the Casualty Actuarial Society was Stuart N. Lerwick from the class of 1968.

Our next article will enlarge upon the above, and will analyze the contrasting experiences among the colleges that produced most of the winners.

E.J.M.

L. RONALD HILL

He was a 39-year-old Fellow. Tragedy on an icy Oklahoma highway on Christmas Eve 1981 cost his life and those of three of his six children. His wife and other children survived the accident.

His employer, William M. Mercer, Inc., is granting a yearly award, the *L. Ronald Hill Memorial Prize,* for the best paper on employee benefit plans in the *Transactions.* See the Yearbook, page 68.

NOTICE TO GENERAL MATH EXAM PRIZEWINNERS

The study of prizewinners in this issue was made by comparing names in the original lists with names in later Society and Casualty Society year books. If, because of a name change, you or anybody you know of would have been missed by this method, please notify the Editor at his masthead address.

E.J.M.

WOULD-BE AUTHOR SEEKS AID

I'd appreciate hearing from any actuary who has filled the role of expert (witness or adviser) in sex discrimination legislation. Object: Congress paper.

Ardian C. Gill

EIGHT SOCIETY MEMBERS DENY DISRUPTION FROM UNI-SEX PRICING

Eight of our members have filed an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in *Arizona vs. Norris,* asserting that eliminating sex-distinction in annuity pricing wouldn't revolutionize the insurance and pension industries. In this they take issue with briefs of the Academy, the ACLI and the NAIC.

Among this octet's arguments are these:

> "Employees deciding between an annuity or an alternative form of benefit do not generally make actuarial appraisals of their own life expectancy. . . . Employees make choices between lump sum payments and annuities primarily on the basis of tax considerations and the investment return they can earn on the lump sum. . . .
>
> "Insurers have in the past protected themselves against adverse experience by including substantial safety margins in annuity premium rates. These margins are required more because of uncertainty as to future investment returns than because of uncertainty as to the mortality of the annuitants; they will be more than sufficient to insulate insurers against lower average mortality rates."

These eight actuaries are:

Arthur W. Anderson	Lawrence Mitchell
Richard W. Daskais	J. Reuben Rigel
Donald S. Grubbs, Jr.	Conrad M. Siegel
Paul H. Jackson	Howard Young

E.J.M.

SOUTH FLORIDA ACTUARIAL CLUB

We welcome the South Florida Actuarial Club, recently reactivated via an Interest Questionnaire that elicited more than a 60% response. If you are interested but haven't said so, notify Robert L. Silverman, PSCC, 4601 Ponce De Leon Blvd., Miami, FL 33146.

"PRELIMINARY ACTUARIAL EXAMS"

There's a new (Oct. '82) edition of this booklet, sent to those who enquire about entering our profession. Request copies from the Society office.

L.N.C.