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The Actuary

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AN ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Readers will find little that is unusual about this issue except for the articles starting in the two outside columns of page one, both of which in some sense commemorate the founding of *The Actuary* 20 years ago.

Readers will *not* be surprised that *The Actuary* has once again called upon Jack Moorhead. Jack has an interest in North American actuarial history that he has been pursuing ever since he gave up the Editorship. It is only fitting that Jack combine his two most recent professional interests by telling us how *The Actuary* was born, and the principles which have governed its first 20 years.

For those not so well informed as to what transpired 20 years ago, and hence not quite aware of the role that Jack played in *The Actuary's* founding, it may be well to quote from the editorial of the October 1984 issue:

Younger actuaries, or those with a short memory, may not realize how much a part of *The Actuary* Mr. Moorhead has been. Although he served as Editor only since 1979... Jack was in some ways the father of this publication. Back in the middle sixties, when the only actuarial newsletter was an informal one put out by Ralph Edwards, Moorhead was the Chairman of a Society task force investigating the desirability of an official newsletter. *The Actuary*, first published in 1967 under the Editorship of Andrew C. Webster, was the result.

It was probably inevitable that when Andy decided to step down, Moorhead was chosen to carry on... The Moorhead to Webster and back to Moorhead double play makes it look to some of us that *The Actuary* has had 17 years of continuous leadership.

Readers may be more surprised to see the names of the two authors of the "Down Memory Lane" article. Marjane Cloke and John Brion were the original production staff, at first performing as MONY employees associated with Andy Webster, later as part-time workers for the Society. John performs this important production function even today, while Marjane was similarly active until 1985. John and Marjane are the *unsung heroes of The Actuary*. Their names have never appeared, on the masthead or elsewhere, until today; it is high time they receive recognition.

The middle column on page 1 announces the appointment of a new Editor, together with some associated changes that readers can now expect. Three more issues will remain the responsibility of C.L.T. and John Brion, but with the coming of fall the main responsibility will fall to the two Lindas — Linda Emory, the new Editor, and Linda Delgado, Director of Communications in the Itasca office.

We are confident that *The Actuary* remains in good hands, and that it will continue to meet the needs of Society members. To be on the safe side, and to be sure that readers' views receive attention, we recommend prompt response to the accompanying questionnaire.

C.L.T.

WORKDAY PROBLEMS

By Bob Likins

Just a year ago the first of what has become an every-other-month "column" appeared in this space. Since the original idea was mine, the Editor has given me responsibility for **WORKDAY PROBLEMS**; but the idea was that readers would propose their own.

Although there has been some reader response to the problems here presented, we have not had any great success in getting readers to present new ones. If this column is to be helpful, we must have *your* **WORKDAY PROBLEMS**. We encourage you to send them to me, at my Yearbook address.

For this month's **PROBLEM**, let us applaud the trend toward greater use of visual aids at Society meetings — but at the same time notice that the slides presented are often the result of transforming tables or graphs from written reports, without recognizing the need for simplification and brevity. Slides all too often contain too much material.

I have found these guidelines helpful in improving the quality of visual communication.

1. Legibility and Content

a. Amount of copy — use a typewriter, and work within a rectangle 3½" by 2½".

b. Text — limit to 8 double spaced lines plus a heading; use no more than 36 elite or 30 pica spaces per line.

c. Charts — limit to 2 pie charts or 10 bars to a slide. If considerable detail, 1 pie or 5 bars.

d. Print size — no less than 14 point — even better, no less than 18 point.

e. Colors — for easier reading in a semi-lit room, use yellow or white lettering on a dark background; other colors are not as satisfactory except for charts or graphs.

2. Continuity

Arrange the presentation so that the visual support runs throughout — or in one uninterrupted module. Raising and lowering of lights is a distraction.

3. Use of Technical Terms

Terms that will not be immediately understood should be explained — *if* better yet, avoided.

The keys to a slide assisted presentation are legibility and understandability.

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