



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

Article from:

# International News

April 2009 – Issue No.47



Cecil D. Bykerk, FSA, FCA, MAAA, is president of CDBykerk Consulting, LLC. in Omaha, Neb. He can be reached at [oakoffice1@cox.net](mailto:oakoffice1@cox.net).

## Message from the SOA President

By Cecil D. Bykerk

It is a great privilege for me to greet the 1800 members of the Society of Actuaries' International Section. As you may know, I have been involved in a number of international initiatives throughout my professional career. Most notably, I have served as a volunteer on several International Actuarial Association (IAA) committees and working groups, including two terms as chairperson of the IAA Education Committee. Ensuring that North American actuaries are kept informed of international developments in the profession and ensuring that our overseas members maintain a strong connection to our association are two objectives that are important to me. With 10 percent of all SOA members residing overseas and a growing number of international students, the International Section plays a critical role in the sustaining of those two ideals and I encourage you to continue to actively support this section.

I was quickly ushered into the international reality of the SOA presidency when I embarked on two-week trip abroad just three days after receiving the gavel. That trip included stops in Shanghai, Singapore, Cyprus and London. In Shanghai, I enjoyed the hospitality of some local actuaries at a dinner arranged by the staff of the Joint Actuaries Office. Our dinner discussion proved that the current financial

crisis has no geographical boundaries and that actuaries around the world are being called upon to help address many of these concerns.

I was also privileged to meet about 60 actuarial candidates through our Associateship Profes-

sionalism Courses held in Shanghai and Singapore. For some reason, all of these students were amused by the fact that many were not yet born at the time I earned my FSA! These smart and engaged students did however demonstrate to me that our profession has a bright future. The addition of e-Learning to our basic and continuing education offerings is one way that the SOA is addressing the needs of our overseas constituents.



From Asia, I traveled directly to Cyprus to attend the meetings of the International Actuarial Association (IAA). At the IAA meetings, association delegates discussed the pros and cons of an international education program, aimed at actuarially developing countries as well as a global ERM credential. That trip was concluded in London with two-days of meetings with our colleagues of the Institute/Faculty of Actuaries (UKAP). Part of that trip included a walking tour of the city of Oxford and its namesake university.



Standing from the left are Raymond Tam, Albert Chan, Tommy Ng, Brian Chiu, Jerry Brown, Cecil Bykerk, Steve Hui, and Michael Ross. Seated from left to right are Doreen Tan, Martha Sikaras and Pat Kum.



“Ensuring that North American actuaries are kept informed of international developments in the profession and ensuring that our overseas members maintain a strong connection to our association are two objectives that are important to me.”

The month of December brought with it snow to my hometown of Omaha, which led to me gratefully accept the invitation of the Caribbean Actuarial Association’s annual meeting, held this year in Trinidad. Previous SOA presidents had told me that they considered this event to be their favorite. Now that I’ve had the chance to experience the hospitality of the Caribbean actuarial community, I understand why. This association recently celebrated its entry into the IAA as a full member. I spoke to its members about our newest credential, the Chartered Enterprise Risk Analyst (CERA).

One of the benefits of the SOA presidency is the opportunity to travel; meet new people; see and experience new cultures, foods and traditions. In Singapore, for example, I was able to enjoy the night safari at the Singapore Zoo as well as an evening meal at the Newton Circus food centre. The greatest benefit of course is the chance to meet the current and future members of the SOA as well as other professionals in the financial services industry. I look forward to meeting many of you in the coming year as I travel around the United States, Canada and the world. □

