



SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

Article from:

The Actuary

October 1996 – Volume 30, No. 8

The Actuary

The Newsletter of the
Society of Actuaries
Vol. 30, No. 8 • October 1996



Robert H. Dobson
Editor responsible
for this issue

Editor

William C. Cutlip, FSA
76443.1471@compuserve.com

Associate Editors

Robert H. Dobson, FSA
bob.dobson@milliman.com
Suc A. Collins, FSA
102714.2361@compuserve.com

Robert J. McKay, FSA
Robert D. Shapiro, FSA
73231.102@compuserve.com

Marc Twinnay, FSA

Assistant Editors

Selig Ehrlich, FSA
Craig S. Kalman, ASA
74262.2543@compuserve.com

J. Bruce MacDonald, FSA
jbm1mac@ac.dal.ca
Ken A. McCullum, FSA
102757.2132@compuserve.com

Puzzle Editors

Louise Thiessen, FSA
L.THIESSEN@access.awinc.com
Dan Reichert

Society Staff Contacts

847/706-3500

Cecilia Green, APR

Director of Public Relations
76041.2773@compuserve.com

Linda M. Delgadillo, CAE

Director of Communications and Administration
102234.2543@compuserve.com

Correspondence should be addressed to

The Actuary

Society of Actuaries
475 North Martingale Road, Suite 800
Schaumburg, IL 60173-2226

The Actuary is published monthly
(except July and August).

Sam Gutterman, FSA, President

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Nonmember subscriptions: Students, \$6; Others,
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Printed on recycled paper in the U.S.A.

EDITORIAL

A time for predictions and a strategy for life

by Robert H. Dobson

Ah, fall. Time for football, the World Series, and elections. And time for another restructuring of the actuarial examinations. It's even time to peer into the future of health care again. In this editorial, your fearless associate editor will offer up predictions in each of these areas.

I can handle the first three topics by quoting my friend Tom Attaway, a member of the Society: "Somebody won; somebody lost." Or, for events that have not yet occurred: "Somebody will win; somebody will lose." The winners will generally be happy; the losers will generally be gracious; and life will go on. There will be no articles in this issue on these topics (except for a small item on the "Lighter Side," asking for your U.S. presidential vote), but reading material is plentiful elsewhere.

Actuarial exams are, of course, never as hard as they used to be. I can predict that untold hours of hard work will be devoted to the redesign of the education and examination system this time around, as they have been in each of the prior changes. This effort will include both volunteer and SOA staff time. Some students will think the changes are great, and some will complain. Some will continue to pass exams; others will not; and life will go on. An article concerning the new system appears in this issue.

The only certainty in health care is constant change. The drastic reforms proposed earlier have died away for the current time. The relatively easy reforms we could all agree on (the Kennedy-Kassenbaum bill) have passed and been signed into law. (See the article on page 8.) New ways of managing care, such as disease

management, are being discussed and tried. (See the article on page 7 by Brent Greenwood and David Epstein.) And, physicians are continuing to criticize the old ways of managing care, though not really understanding them (See "AMA" box on page 2). Some will prosper in the new health care environment; others will not; and life will go on.

To all, I offer this strategy for life:
*"Never die with anything good
left in the wine cellar."*

Followed by its obvious corollary:
*"Always keep something good
in the wine cellar."*

And how is the Nouveau Beaujolais?

Kalman joins editorial board

The Actuary welcomes Craig S. Kalman, health actuary for the Missouri Department of Insurance since 1994, to the editorial board. He will serve as assistant editor, working with Bob Dobson, associate editor. His first article appears in this issue on page 4.

Kalman, a graduate of Drake University, achieved his ASA designation in 1986. He is a member of the Health, Computer Science, and Education and Research Sections. He telecommutes from his home in the St. Louis area, going into the office in Jefferson City about one day a week. This arrangement works well for him, since his wife, Sheryl L. Kalman, is an actuary at the GENELCO subsidiary of General American Life Insurance in St. Louis, and they have a 6-year-old child in school.