SOCIETY OF ACTUARIES

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Winners of first puzzle contest announced

Skill earned them a place, but luck made them winners of the first puzzle contest sponsored by *The Actuary* and its puzzle editors, Louise Thiessen and Dan Reichert.

From April through November last year, readers of *The Actuary* were invited to complete the puzzle usually carried on *The Actuary's* back page and submit it for evaluation. Names of those solving all five puzzles correctly were entered into a random drawing. The prize was a one-year subscription to *Games* magazine for up to three word wizards.

The winning puzzle-solving units — one individual and two teams — drawn from the 32 solvers of all the puzzles were:

- William A. Allison, SOA member, a retired actuary and life insurance executive, Dunwoody, Georgia
- Marshall Lykins, vice president and actuary, and Joseph M. O'Connor, actuary, both SOA members and employees of New England Life, Boston
- Marcia Vandesteeg, SOA member, senior staff actuary, Lutheran Brotherhood, Minneapolis, and her father, Adolph White, a retired music professor, Northfield, Minn.

Each person will receive a subscription to *Games*.

Update: 1997 prize, rules

A bigger and better contest began on the back of *The Actuary's* January 1997 issue.

Because of the surprisingly large number of winning entries last year, both the selection process and the prize have been changed. In 1997, one winner a month will be chosen at random from all 100% puzzle solvers. The prize for each winner will be an exclusive mug honoring him or her as an F.S.A.P. — Famous Solver of Actu-Puzzles.

Thiessen and Reichert remind players that puzzles must be postmarked by the 15th of the second month after each puzzle appears (e.g., April's must be mailed by June 15). Puzzles sent by e-mail are due on the 15th. Both "snail mail" and e-mail addresses are listed at the bottom of each puzzle.

Readers who design puzzles are invited to submit them for consideration. If your puzzle is used, you'll receive a byline and 100% credit for that puzzle.

Actuary's book accepted by Chinese universities

A book by Society member A. Haeworth Robertson has been translated into Chinese for use as a university textbook in China. *Social Security: What Every Taxpayer Should Know* is being incorporated into that nation's university system under the title *Social Security in America.*

The book's journey to the Far East began in 1993, when Robertson was teaching an actuarial science seminar at Nankai University. "As part of the seminar, I was a guest lecturer for one day at Renmin University of China in Beijing, and officials there were considering introducing actuarial science into the statistics curriculum," Robertson said. "They expressed interest in translating my book and having it published and distributed by the People's University of China Press for use as a textbook in the university system."

Robertson's book, published in 1992, was on the 1993 examination study syllabus for the SOA, the Casualty Actuarial Society, and the American Society of Pension Actuaries.

The SOA library has a copy of both the English and Chinese versions (phone: 847 / 706-3575; fax: 847 / 706-3599; e-mail: ebull@soa.org).

Actuarial education leader honored by math association

Carl C. Cowen, Jr., head of Purdue University's actuarial program, received the Mathematical Association of America's highest award for distinguished college or university teaching of mathematics at the 30,000-member organization's January meeting.

Cowen received the Deborah and Franklin Tepper Haimo Award, which honors extraordinarily successful and widely recognized educators whose teaching effectiveness has had influence beyond their own institutions.

Cowen has been director of Purdue's actuarial science program since 1992. His articles have appeared in *American Mathematical Monthly,* among other publications, and he has supervised six doctoral dissertations. He also has supervised undergraduate research projects, most supported by the Research Experience for Undergraduates program of the National Science Foundation. Eight of the 15 undergraduates he supervised have published articles on their projects.

"My goal is always for students to leave with a better understanding of the role mathematics can play in their work," Cowen responded, "and to enjoy the application of mathematical tools ... in their problems."