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POLL



Which of the following best describes the effect that the financial crisis has had on your personal work situation?

None, I'm as busy as ever

Changed my level of responsibility in same job

Substantively changed my job (e.g. my focus shifted to investments)

I'm considering a career change

I lost my job

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

By Josh Bank

Perhaps a better title for this, my first Editor's column for the Pension Section News (PSN) would be "Meanderings from the Editor," but here goes...

Art Assantes

The first time I became aware of Art Assantes was during my first year as an elected member of the Pension Section Council, back in 2004. At that point, the *Pension Section News** was a hardcopy publication that was mailed to each of our section's approximately 4,000 members. Art was a true, old school newsletter editor, responsible for overseeing everything from pumping both section members and non member pension aficionados for articles, to managing the article selection process, reviewing and negotiating revisions with the authors, final proofing of the layout, and numerous other tasks that preceded and followed the printing and distribution of each issue. Art was also editor of *The Pension Forum*, which required similar effort to produce, and he was involved in the significant process of converting the *PSN* into its present electronic format. While many people have had a hand in producing these two principal communications vehicles of the Pension Section, I hope you will all join me in giving Art a big hand (virtually or otherwise) for his successful labors on behalf of the SOA and his fellow Pension Section members during the past five years!

Not one, but two formidable acts to follow

In addition to the able work of Art Assantes, Kelley McKeating, from whom I inherited the role of chair of the council's Communications Team earlier this year, provided significant direction and leadership to the team and the previously mentioned publications during her tenure. Following publication (in early 2010) of the next issue of *The Pension Forum*, which Kelley is co-editing, she will be retiring (temporarily, we hope) from her decade-long volunteer activities for our section. This also included a period leading

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the Research Team and participation in numerous projects. Please join me in publicly recognizing and thanking her for her valuable contributions.

Although succeeding Kelley will be a difficult task, I have taken on both of these roles (*PSN* Editor and Communications Team Chair). With the able support (both moral and otherwise) and patience of the SOA staff and the members of the Pension Section Council and its teams and committees, I will strive to continue the efforts of the Communications Team and to work on new communications initiatives.

Other new and familiar faces and roles in and around the Pension Section Council

At last month's face-to-face council meeting in New York, the following changes were made in the various volunteer leadership positions:

- Marcus Robertson was elected Chairperson of the Pension Section Council, taking the baton from Cindy Levering, who presided over a very productive and exciting year at the helm.
- Bill Sohn was elected Vice Chairperson and is expected to succeed Marcus as Chair a year from now.
- Meanwhile, new council members Scott Hittner and Penny Bailey were elected to the roles of Treasurer and Secretary, respectively.
- I was reappointed as Chairperson of the Communications Team and Kevin Binder and Ellen Kleinstuber agreed to take the Chairs of the Research and Continuing Education Teams, respectively.
- All of these teams have been strengthened by several new members. You can view the full Communications, Research and Continuing Education Team rosters by clicking the following links:
 - [Pension Section Communications Team](#)
 - [Pension Section Research Team](#)
 - [Pension Section Continuing Education Team](#)
- Finally, Tonya Manning, Council Chairperson for the 2004–2005 term, is the Board Partner assigned to the Pension Section Council, succeeding Donald Segal, who was elected President of the SOA for the 2010–2011 year.

In addition, I want to recognize Sheldon Gamzon, Mike Archer and Ian Genno (in addition to Cindy mentioned above) who have completed their terms on the council, and thank them for their service to the Pension

Section.

The Pension Section Council continues to be supported in terrific fashion by Andy Peterson (Staff Fellow, Retirement Systems), Sue Martz (Project Support Specialist) and Kathryn Baker (Senior Communications Associate), and by many other SOA professionals who make our "volunteer" roles highly rewarding.

Survey Sez...!

When Marcus Robertson started writing his article covering last spring's survey of Pension Section members and other retirement practitioners, he picked up immediately on the need to *inform* the membership on survey results in a way that doesn't give away the show on how the SOA and the Pension Section Council will act upon the valuable information and opinions that you all provided. The fact is that we haven't yet decided just yet which of the baker's dozen or so of major possible action steps that we've thus far distilled from the survey are doable or net-value-added. However, I feel that I can invoke editorial freedom (and Communications Team Chair's prerogative) and give you all a sneak peek at just a few of the steps that the Communications Team has put forth for consideration by the council for the coming year. No promises, of course (the council won't be making any formal decisions on action steps until its next face-to-face meeting early next year), but here they are, in no implied order of priority or chronology:

- Publish a monthly "mini newsletter" to plug the gap between our PSN newsletters, which are published three times per year (a few other sections have already gone this route).
- Develop a "Discussion Forum" concept through the Web, or create and formally promote a pension oriented discussion subgroup under the SOA's LinkedIn Group. See [LinkedIn](#) for a quick look at how SOA members in general are using this existing "business networking" vehicle. (You may need to log in or register with LinkedIn in order to follow the above link to its intended destination.)
- Adopt a cohesive, thematic structure for individual issues of the *PSN* (e.g., focusing the core articles on different aspects of a specific topic of major interest), while at the same time adding one or two more recurring columns, such as the recently added "Perspectives from Anna" column. Themes that we have (briefly) discussed for these additional recurring columns include risk, investments, and international.
- Publish rigorous synopses of recent (or upcoming) Annual Meeting

sessions, webcasts, symposia, etc. (*However, a Monthly Update vehicle might be better suited for this, since some material could be as much as four months old before it made it into an issue of the PSN.*)

Well, I promised myself that I'd hold this column to 1,000 words, and appear already to have broken that promise a few paragraphs ago. Enjoy this current issue of the PSN, and we will be back with our next issue shortly after Punxsutawney Phil does his forecast in early February!

Josh Bank, ASA, EA is Chairperson of the Pension Section Council's Communications Team and Editor of the *Pension Section News*. Josh can be reached at jobank@gmail.com.

*That was the former name of our newsletter, before last year's "Name the Newsletter" contest gave us the "new" name ... *Pension Section News*!

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