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# Letter From the Editor: Please Participate!

By Bruce D. Schobel

In October 2018, after serving for a year as chair of the Social Insurance and Public Finance (SIPF) Section Council, I moved over to the equally demanding job of newsletter editor. Section newsletters are critically important documents within the SOA and the actuarial profession as a whole. They serve as an archive of the section's most important activities, documenting work that the section intends to preserve for posterity. Five years of back issues of this newsletter are accessible on the SOA's website here:

<https://www.soa.org/sections/social-ins-pub-finsocial-ins-pub-fin-newsletter/>

Older issues are available through the SOA office.

Many subjects of intense interest to section members may not be of broad enough interest to warrant publication in *The Actuary*, SOA's most widely circulated publication. Section members hopefully know to look for articles of greatest relevance to them in their own newsletter. This applies to all sections, not just SIPF.

Newsletters, however, don't write themselves. All of the content in this and all previous newsletters was written by individuals—myself among them—who believed that they had information worth sharing with their peers. A certain amount of hubris may be required to look at something that you have done and believe that other people would like to read about it. And the rewards are

not great: Few people will contact a newsletter author and thank him or her for the useful information. But that doesn't mean that it isn't useful. If you have ever found useful information in this newsletter, then consider whether you have something to give back in return.

Some sections have inherent obstacles to publishing their members' work. A lot of the work that actuaries do is proprietary. Employers, plan sponsors and other clients may not desire or agree to the publication of actuarial work that they paid to produce, even if names are changed to protect the innocent—or the guilty, as the case may be. Fortunately, work in the fields of social insurance and public finance tends to be much more unfettered than is the work of most private-sector actuaries. For example, the work of U.S. Government actuaries cannot even be copyrighted, by law, and little to none of it is classified or even confidential (except as it may relate to individual beneficiaries who do have privacy rights).

As editor, I ask every reader of this newsletter to look back on your work during the past few years and try to find something that might be useful—or merely interesting—to other actuaries with interests similar to yours. If you find something and have time to describe it in a few pages, please prepare a draft article and send it to me. You are unlikely to become a famous author, but you will be contributing to the vast body of knowledge that underlies actuarial science. We do have some practical limits on article length, so if your contribution is too long, please attempt to summarize it. Interested readers will be told how to contact authors for additional background material.

Thank you in advance for your contributions to this newsletter, the SOA and the actuarial profession! ■



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