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## The Maryland Messenger

The Maryland Messenger is a bi-monthly publication published for the exclusive use of regular and associate members of the Independent Insurance Agents of Maryland. Publication of any article, letter to the editor or advertisement in the Maryland Messenger should not be deemed an endorsement by IIAM of the opinions expressed or product advertised. Questions and comments should be directed to the editor, Shelley Arnold.

Editor: Shelley Arnold, CPCU, AU, ARM, AAI  
Graphic Designer: Maritza Dintino  
Advertising Info: www.iiamd.org  

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Editorial Office, IIAM, 2408 Peppermill Drive,  
Suite A, Glen Burnie, MD 21061  
phone 410.766.0600 • fax 410.766.0993  
email shelley@iiamd.org • www.iiamd.org
IS UBI YOUR NEW BFF?

I’ve never been particularly concerned about a “hard market” or a “soft market.” Likewise, the evolution of banks selling insurance, internet sales, Wal*Mart sales, car dealer insurance sales, etc. has not had a significant impact on my agency over the years.

Is it different with Google getting into the insurance business? I’m not sure, but I think there are issues here and with other developments that should cause us as retail agents to think differently.

When it comes to Google selling private passenger insurance, I would be much more worried as a carrier than as a retail agent. Certainly, Google has thought about its potential as an insurance company rather than acting solely as an agency. Google recognizes that the mega-data on their servers may be superior underwriting information to what actuaries currently supply. What does your Google (e.g. your smart phone) know about your driving habits? It knows where you go, what time you traveled, how often you drive, how far you drive, how many calls/texts you initiated or answered while driving and much more. Tie that information with static data already available (MVR’s, credit, tax data) and the potential exists not only for a completely automated (read no humans needed) personal auto policy, but one that may be more actuarially sound than what the industry has been producing for the last sixty years.

Closely tied to this reasoning is the continuing development and growth of “UBI” (Usage Based Insurance) or telematics. Many of us think of it simply as the “dongle” that Progressive and GMAC co-produced about a decade ago in an effort to develop mileage-linked discounts reflective of the way people drive. Other carriers, GEICO and Allstate to name a few, have taken similar marketing approaches as Progressive. For many retail agents UBI is not a significant part of their personal lines book. Should it be? Innovations in UBI include companies like Metromile who recently added our neighbor Virginia to their list of states where they offer per-mile insurance. Additionally, Metromile gives clients software tools for commute optimization, parking location, customizable trip logs, mileage tracking for expense reporting, driving trends and street cleaning notifications. Very different than what you and I offer our personal lines prospects.

The prevailing arguments against the above two scenarios developing further are typically two. Against Google getting into the insurance business as a carrier; the existing insurance regulatory environment. For UBI and the ever growing list of UBI variations (Pay-As-You-Drive, Pay-How-You-Drive, Pay-As-You-Go, and Distance-Based Insurance) the primary argument is around privacy and the dissemination of the information collected by the UBI devices. Both are substantive arguments and space doesn’t allow me to go into much detail, so let me throw out two thoughts. First, the growth of Uber in the face of the highly regulated taxi industry where the value of a taxi medallion has dropped precipitously in recent years and with regard to privacy, the continued willingness of society to share personal information in staggering amounts and in numerous venues.

I’m certain much if not all of the above is well known to most members of this association. This isn’t an effort to educate, rather I’m asking you a question I ask myself all the time, “Am I spending enough time working on my business instead of just in it?” What do we, as retail agents need to do differently in light of societal and technological advancements? How quickly do we have to make those changes in order to be relevant?

What are your thoughts? What do you see as opportunities for independent agents to advance or as potential pitfalls facing the industry?

To your continued success.

L.E. Goldsborough & Son, Inc.
405 E. Joppa Road, Suite 301
Towson, MD 21286
Telephone: 410-377-2111
Fax: 410-377-0003
Email: don@goldsborough.com
This summer Montgomery County adopted legislation mandating sick and safe leave for employees. Bill 60-14, Human Rights and Civil Liberties-Earned Sick and Safe Leave, will require, when it becomes effective on October 1, 2016, that an employer operating and doing business in Montgomery County to provide earned sick and safe leave to each employee for work performed in the county.

The overview below should help members prepare for the 10-1-2016 effective date. It is also expected that the Office of Human Rights will conduct an outreach to the business community to assist in preparation.

Who is subject to the sick and safe leave law?

Employers: Public and private employers that employ 1 or more persons in the county.

Employees: Any person working in the county. Part time employees working more than 8 hours per week are included. It excludes any person who (1) works 8 hours a week or less; and are independent contractors.

Minimum leave for employers with 5 or more employees:

Rate of accrual: Employees will accrue sick and safe leave at the rate of at least 1 hour for every 30 worked in the county.

Maximum leave accrued in a calendar year: 56 hours unless full amount awarded at the beginning of the calendar year. Employers can award the full amount at the beginning of calendar year or as the leave accrues.

Maximum leave that can be used in a calendar year: 80 hours

Probationary period: Allows employee to accrue but not use leave during their initial 90 day probationary period.

Paid Time off: The law does not prohibit an employer from adopting or retaining a general leave policy that meets the minimum requirements.

Employer administrative requirements:

• General notice/posting: Notify employees that they are entitled to accrue sick and safe leave. The County will prepare a model notice in both English and Spanish and other languages if necessary.
• Notice must include:
  • How leave is accrued
  • Permitted uses of leave;

• Statement that employers cannot retaliate against employees for using leave and exercising rights under the law; and
• Information about filing a complaint with the Office of Human Resources Director

Notification Methods:

• Display notice in conspicuous and accessible areas;
• Include in employee handbook or other written guidance and distribute to all employees; or
• Distributed model or other notice to new employees when hired.

Notification of available leave:

Employers must provide a written statement to employees of available earned sick and safe leave each time the employee is paid. Employers can satisfy this requirement by creating an online system which employees can utilize to access their leave balance. The employer will be required to keep records for three years and are subject to inspection by the Office of Human Resources.

The sick and safe leave may be used for many reasons including the employee’s physical or mental illness

(Con’t on page 6)
Commercial Property and Casualty Insurance

Berkley Mid-Atlantic Group (BMAG®) is a regional insurance company offering commercial property casualty coverages to small business and middle market accounts. We work exclusively through independent agents, forming strong relationships to better serve both agent and policyholder.

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(Con’t from page 5)

or to care for a family member due to their sickness or mental illness. In order to take the leave, the employee must notify the employer and provide:

- Request the leave as soon as possible
- Notify employer of anticipated duration of the leave; and
- Comply with employer’s reasonable leave procedures

Employers cannot require that leave be taken in increments larger than 4 hours but the employer can require employees using 3 or more consecutive days of leave to supply reasonable documentation to verify appropriate use of leave. The employer cannot require the employee to:

- Find a replacement while employee is on leave
- Disclose specific details of the employee or family member’s illness or condition; or
- Provide certification that would violate the Federal Social Security Act or Federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.

Employers are not required to compensate employees for unused leave when the employee’s employment ends. There are specific requirements however, regarding reinstatement within a certain time period.

There are also specific ways for employees to file complaints, as well as specific penalties, appeals, retaliation, etc.

IIA Maryland suggests that you become familiar with the new law, which may be found on our website at www.iiamd.org in our ‘Maryland Insurance Law’ section. You may want to share this information with your insureds domiciled in Montgomery County.

Avoiding Surety E&O Claims
by Jack Anderson

With the vast number of surety bonds available agents need to be cautious when working with customers to meet their needs. Claims data from Swiss Re and Big “I” Professional Liability Program shows that bond related E&O claims have roughly three times the claims severity as other claims. Like with any coverage or customer exposure agencies need to feel comfortable and have the expertise to understand the process of writing a bond and the coverage they afford. If they don’t the chances of an E&O claim increase dramatically. Working with a broker that can assist you through the process of placing bonds can make the difference between a satisfied customer and a future E&O claim.

This article looks at the common missteps that could lead to E&O claims that agents can make when handing surety bonds.

Also provided are some ways to protect the agency, including some sound risk management procedures to follow.

Common Surety Handling Missteps

Failure to Advise Proper Rate
- Often times agents feel compelled to communicate a rate to a client. In many cases, that rate ends up being below what can actually be obtained.

Failure to Properly Execute Bid Bonds
- If a bond is not prepared in strict accordance with the owner’s requirements, the client runs the risk of presenting a bid that may be determined “nonresponsive” even if that client is the low bidder.

Failure to Deliver Bid Bonds in a Timely Manner or to a Proper Address
- Bid bonds sent via regular mail run the risk of being delivered late. Regular mail might be less costly up front, but could end up being very expensive in the long run when a client misses a bid date due to late delivery. This could also result from someone in your office using an incorrect address.

Failure to Give Proper Advice Regarding Bid Security
- A bid bond assures that a performance bond will be put in place by the authorizing surety, while using a cashier’s check as bid security does not. Advising a client to use a cashier’s check might be perceived as expedient, but the amount of the check is ultimately at risk of being forfeited.

Failure to Receive Approval from the Surety
- By improperly issuing a bond, an agent exposes him/herself to potential E&O claims from both the carrier and the client. The surety will seek recourse from the agent if the unauthorized bond goes into claim. If the client’s bond program is disrupted as a result of an agent’s actions, the client might have recourse for lost financial opportunity.

Failure to Adhere to Conditions & Exclusions of Line of Authority
- In instances where a surety has extended a line of authority to an agent and the agent has issued a bond that falls outside the line of authority, the agent will be held accountable for any loss a surety experiences as a result of the agency mishandling his/her authority.

Failure to Provide Timely Information to the Surety
- An agent is responsible for communicating all information to the surety that is relevant to the surety’s decision to authorize a bond. The surety may have recourse against the agent for information that is omitted if that information would have been material to a surety company’s ability to avoid a claim situation.

These are only a few examples of situations that create E&O exposure for agents. By implementing internal risk management policies and standardized procedures, and addressing proper steps and expectations for associates who handle bonds for your clients, you can significantly mitigate your E&O risk.

Producer and CSR Tips for Avoiding Surety Claims

The relationship between a customer and an agent that helps them secure bonds for their projects is vital to their success. By being aware of the possible pitfalls that can create E&O claims, you will be able to provide bond services to your clients without interruption, and mitigate serious E&O exposures for your agency. Remember working with surety bond is a specialized process in which dabbling can land you in the middle of an E&O claim. It is strongly recommended that you work with an experienced and professional broker that can assist you though the process.

(Con’t on page 8)
E&O Tip #1:
Obtain Specific Rate Approval from a Surety - If a client pressures you for a rate, provide a range that includes a low and high estimate (e.g. 1% - 5%). Communicate that you cannot give an exact rate without knowing credit history and other underwriting information.

**Benefit**: By receiving a specific rate from a surety, a contractor will be able to include a more exact amount in his/her bid estimate, and the agent avoids providing inaccurate information.

E&O Tip #2:
Establish a Checklist for Bid Bond Preparation - The checklist should include the following:
- Verify bond form
- Verify bid bond amount/percentage
- Attach a separate notary signature page for contractor’s signature
- Attach Power of Attorney showing name of person who signed bond
- Independent review of bid bond to ensure accuracy
- All requirements included

**Benefit**: Establishing a checklist will help eliminate the possibility of a contractor’s bid being rejected as a result of bid bond mistakes. This will also eliminate your agency’s exposure to a claim involving a contractor’s lost profit and its ability to cover fixed overhead.

E&O Tip #3:
Assure Proper and Timely Delivery of Bid Bonds - Confirm delivery address ahead of time and use a reliable overnight delivery service.

**Benefit**: Taking steps to assure proper and timely delivery alleviates the possibility that your client will miss a bid deadline. Delivery date and time will be specified and status can be tracked if reliable overnight delivery is utilized.

E&O Tip #4:
Never Advise a Contractor to Use a Cashier’s Check as Bid Security in Lieu of a Bid Bond - Notify clients that they must request a bond as soon as they are aware one will be required. If a bid bond cannot be secured in a timely fashion, a cashier’s check should only be used when the surety provides written approval stating that they will support the bid bond. Never assume that the surety will support a bid bond for which a cashier’s check was provided.

**Benefit**: By verifying that a surety will support a bond, the contractor will avoid the possibility that he/she will be out the amount specified in the cashier’s check, triggering him/her to file an E&O claim against the agent.

E&O Tip #5:
Establish a Written Procedure Requiring Verification of Surety Approval - Set up guidelines regarding what constitutes authorization from the surety and how it should be documented. Agency staff who issue bonds must be notified of this policy and adhere to all requirements prior to delivering bonds to your clients.

**Benefit**: By having agency staff receive prior approval, the surety’s trust in your agency will be maintained, and your client’s future surety relationships will not be jeopardized.

E&O Tip #6:
Train Associates on Specific Criteria Granted by Bond Lines of Authority - Don’t focus solely on single bond size and aggregate limits authorized under the line. Know and understand the other conditions and exclusions before issuing a bond under the line.

**Benefit**: When a line of authority is given by a surety company, it gives the agent authority to issue bonds that fall within the scope of the line. Verifying that the project meets each and every item on the bond line of authority is critical to maintaining the confidence of the surety and protecting your agency against an E&O claim if the project ends up in claim.

E&O Tips #7:
Deliver All Relevant Information to the Surety in a Timely Manner - Create and adhere to a procedure that calls for providing all known information to the surety that may impact their decision for both bond approval and for the handling of a claim.

**Benefit**: This requirement is included in the agency agreement that is signed with the surety, and honoring it is critical to maintaining the relationship with the companies with whom you do business.

About the Author: Jack Anderson is a CPA and Vice President, Chief Financial Officer, and Secretary of Goldleaf Financial. In addition, he is President and Chief Manager of Goldleaf Escrow. As a former audit CPA, he has extensive knowledge in accounting, financial analysis and business valuation. Goldleaf is a high-skill, high-services national surety bond broker with licenses in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and the US Virgin Islands. Based in Minnesota, Goldleaf currently provides prompt, professional support to more than 1,500 insurance agencies around the country that need occasional or regular help placing bonds for their clients. Goldleaf provides Big “I” members with access to its products through Big “I” Markets with no access fees, no volume, and competitive commissions. Visit www.bigimarkets.com for more information.
Dear Pat:
A friend of mine and I have a bet—do you think there will ever be “drone insurance” in the future? I bet no. Do I win?

Droning on in Dundalk

Dear Droning on in Dundalk:
Droning is here to stay. In fact, the Federal Aviation Administration estimates that by 2020—just five years from now—there will be 30,000 unmanned aircrafts that will be used for all types of business purposes. It is anticipated that worldwide spending for these aircraft systems will top $89 million in the next decade. The Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International is reported to be estimating that 100,000 new jobs will be created in the “drone industry” in the next ten years. For a person that grew up watching “The Jetsons” (you youngsters should Google it), it is hard to imagine that what we thought was science fiction is finally here.

With that many aircrafts and that much money at issue, there certainly has to be insurance! ISO, recognizing that there is a wide range of potential risks, has issued new coverage and exclusions options for commercial drones.

You win only because “drone insurance” has arrived. It is not a thing of the future.

Pat

Dear Pat:
My friend refused to pay up; he thought I only won on a technicality.

So my friend and I have a second bet—double or nothing. He says that a business does not need a separate policy for drones if it has a commercial general liability policy. I am betting that it does. What say you?

Droning on and on

Dear Droning On:
I am going to hedge my bets and give you a lawyer like answer of “Maybe”. This issue is still not decided by the Courts and is most likely going to be fact specific. As there have been over 420 drone crashes recently, I suspect we will be getting an answer to this question relatively soon. Anecdotally, there is talk around the insurance community that claims are being denied or being handled under a reservation of rights.

Many of the standard commercial general liability policies have aviation exclusions. So you will have to look at the specific policy at issue to see who wins the bet.

Pat

Dear Pat:
Neither one of us were willing to concede that we lost the bet on that last one—so we decided that the third time was the charm. How will drones impact the personal lines area?

Dundalk Droner

Dear Pat:
We are calling this betting on drones. But before you close up, can you see any special types of risk where drones may play a part?

Done with Droning

Dear Pat:
I certainly do! Drones will change the way that construction companies and insurers do business. Contractors will use drones to monitor construction activities. Insurers will use drones to inspect risks.

I do not know that lawyers will need them in the future, but one never knows.

Pat

Dear Pat:
Oh I can think of so many ways that drones will become part of our future on the personal lines area! Think about it.

Can a homeowner claim that a drone is trespassing? Can a person claim invasion of privacy if their picture is taken by use of a drone? When does the use of a drone constitute harassment? I am not certain of the answer to these questions (shocker I know), but I have a good suspicion that such liability claims posing such scenarios may be covered under a standard homeowner’s policy or an umbrella policy.

Should I go on?

Pat

Dear Pat:
We are calling this betting on drones. But before you close up, can you see any special types of risk where drones may play a part?

Done with Droning

Dear Pat:
I certainly do! Drones will change the way that construction companies and insurers do business. Contractors will use drones to monitor construction activities. Insurers will use drones to inspect risks.

I do not know that lawyers will need them in the future, but one never knows.

Pat

Dear Pat:
Oh I can think of so many ways that drones will become part of our future on the personal lines area! Think about it.
Have you reviewed your 401(k) Plan lately? Concerned about higher income taxes? DOL rules? Attractive Investment Options?

Take advantage of the Big "I" MEP 401(k) Plan and lower your overall retirement plan costs while receiving consulting, helpful educational tools and low-cost investment options.

Some great features include:

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2. Mesirow Financial - is the ERISA 3(38) Fiduciary determining the investment offerings
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4. For larger participating employers, elimination of expensive individual ERISA audits
5. Competitive administrative costs

Big “I” Retirement Services has partnered with national firms to provide a unique member only plan. With higher income taxes around the corner and the new DOL disclosure requirements, 401(k) plan sponsors have more to think about than ever before. Want the ability to offer a 401(k) without all the administrative hassle while limiting your fiduciary exposure? Let us show you how.

For more information, call Christine Munoz at (800) 848-4401 or email christine.munoz@iiaba.net for a free plan consultation.

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Prospect Effectively

An independent agent can spend countless hours investigating leads and thousands of dollars in advertising in the pursuit of new business. Knowing the best methods, investigating new marketing trends, and creating a referral pipeline can make prospecting more customer-centric and more efficient for overall agency growth.

Use Traditional Marketing Methods

In spite of the social media revolution of the 21st century, some traditional methods of marketing outreach are still crucial.

Maximize your value to potential clients. Customers value the attributes primarily held by independent agencies:
- Agent familiar with account
- Agent analyzes needs and finds best coverage
- Expert to meet with face-to-face

Focus advertising on strengths of independent agent:
- Finds best policy for price
- Available locally
- Builds personal relationship
- Finds tailored coverage

Communicate with current customers. It’s as important as publicizing to potential customers:
- Use emailed company newsletters and ask people to forward it at the bottom (See “Content Marketing” on page 13). Reinforcing the choice made by current clientele through ongoing publicity reduces defections as well.
- Articles should highlight new and most popular services and specialty coverages as well as accomplishments. (More than one-third of small commercial customers say they don’t rely on their agent for advice on coverage. Perhaps a more consistent communication strategy to clients will demonstrate what your agency can offer.)

Trade associations are important sources of information on insurance. They influence the decision-making process, particularly for businesses that may not be mainstream (e.g., day care, nail salons).

Identify which current customers can be targeted for new services. Stimulate cross-buying (auto, home and umbrella). Small commercial buyers indicate an interest in packages designed for their business: key person life, investment services, personal property/casualty, credit products and personal life. Some potential clients are willing to switch providers to get these services.

Use integrated marketing. Work with car dealerships and realtors for joint advertising and cross referrals of services and products.

Get involved in community causes and participate in special events:
- Staff a booth at your next fire station open house.
- Donate child safety seats to your local police department for the needy.
- Adopt a local school during fire safety week.
- Sponsor a local youth group or sports team.

Use affinity merchandise to gain name recognition:
- Offer safety “seals of approval” to school kids during safety awareness campaigns.
- Print a small, quick-reference guide for emergency road services.
- Provide other low-cost tools that educate and motivate.

Ask for customer feedback:
- Invite your customers in to an employee meeting to give feedback on their recent experience with your agency. Customer service will improve, and word will get around.

Capitalize on Internet Marketing

Experts in the Big “I” Agents Council for Technology (ACT) say it’s urgent and critical that agencies participate

(Con’t on page 12)
online. Those that don’t are invisible to the majority of potential customers, who are searching for insurance information online.

Agency Websites
No marketing plan is complete without a robust Web site.

Must be professionally designed.
Add content regularly to optimize search engine results.
Must meet customers’ expectations:

- Offer quote capability. According to the comScore Online Auto Insurance Shopping Report, in 2012 69% of shoppers went online to obtain price quotes on auto insurance. Only 25% called toll-free numbers or visited a local agent.
- Offer a self-service portal for customers to access their policies, download ID cards, etc., day or night. You can outsource this service to vendors like Artisan and others.

Social Media
ACT experts say it is both urgent and critical that agencies participate in social media.

Develop a social media strategy. Make it an integral part of your marketing plan. Resources to help you plan and execute a social media strategy are posted on the ACT website.

Give employees who are already good at social media responsibility for it. For reports to help you guide employees’ social media behavior, see ‘Creating a Social Web Policy Guide’ on the ACT website.

Monitor social media to learn what’s being said about your agency.
Monitor social media, because some of your customers expect to contact you that way.

To attract new customers through social media, see “Content Marketing” page 13.

Ask for customer feedback. If you’re developing a mobile app, ask customers, “What functions would you like to see on it?”
For further guidance on social media marketing, visit the ACT website.

Referrals
Referrals are a very effective way of gaining new customers. But many people have trouble asking for one.

Obstacles
The first priority is to get over your fear. Bear in mind that most people like to help other people (if there is no negative cost to them).

Remind yourself that the worst that can happen is that the client says, “No.” That’s not so bad, is it?

Referral Methods
The most effective way to gain referrals is to make it standard operating procedure to ask for one from every satisfied client. A face-to-face request is the most effective, then phone, then email.

In addition:

Add a sentence in a bright color to the email signatures of your staff: “If you like our service, tell a friend! We love referrals!”

Use your current customer database to identify potential customers. Ask for a face-to-face meeting in which to discuss the referral; if the prospect doesn’t agree to an in-person meeting, use the phone or email.

Use LinkedIn tutorial: https://www.linkedin.com/company/referrals-for-success

Use the FaceBook tutorial: https://www.facebook.com/GettingReferrals

Use Twitter #clientreferral

Listening and Offering What the Prospective Customer Needs
Have you ever sat down with someone who really listened to you? It’s rare—you remember that person. He or she stands out in your mind, and you want to go back to him or her.

Be that kind of person. Be a good listener and create that kind of rapport with every customer. When you listen to find out what that customer needs, you can match him readily with the best product.

Tips for good listening:

Don’t get so wrapped up in what you can offer that you forget to find out what the prospective customer needs.

Bear in mind the old adage: “When my mouth is moving, I’m not learning anything.”

If the prospect asks you about your business or background, answer, but be brief. Then take the focus off yourself and turn it back on the prospect.

Learn what they need: That way you’ll have a much easier time presenting them with solutions that meet their needs. When the product matches the client’s need, the sale is easy.

Actively listen to the customer. Show that you’re actively listening by making eye contact, nodding, saying, “Yes, I see,” or jotting a note.

Don’t interrupt a customer when he or she is speaking: Ask clarifying questions when the customer is finished.
Community Building and Engagement

Definition of Community Building
It’s a range of practices that alleviates problems and helps create a sense of community among individuals who live within a region or who share a common interest. It is sometimes referred to as community development or community service.

Insurance agencies have long been aware that involvement in their community’s causes and events is good business practice.

Approaching community involvement with a bigger goal, however—the health of your community—will, in the long run, benefit your agency even more.

Communities are enhanced when causes are approached with a sense of possibility, generosity and celebration of gifts.

Places to get involved include, but are not limited to:

Public libraries. They establish a sense of place in a community. They are anchor institutions that, in times of disaster and economic struggle, are the heart of their communities.

Houses of worship.

Hospitals.

Schools (tutoring, mentoring, coaching).

Chambers of Commerce, Rotary, Lions, other service organizations.

Engagement
As you meet people in these organizations, get to know them and try to connect them with others in the community who share their interests. Be of service.

Content Marketing
As you participate in the online revolution, finding content for blog posts and Tweets can be a challenge.

The good news is you have lots of content right within your agency:

- Post your involvement in community causes and events on your blog, Facebook, Twitter and Google+ but not in a self-promotional way (more in a celebratory way, celebrating the community).
- Brand journalism: Assign someone in your agency to write down your company’s success stories: Discounts found for clients, smart deals structured, problems solved. These can be posted on your Web site; then write posts in social media that link to the stories on your site. Use the success stories in your email newsletter.
- Target your newsletter: It’s a measurable, cost-effective way to grow client accounts. Send success stories on certain topics to clients who are likely to be interested in those topics. Use an email system like Constant Contact (http://www.constantcontact.com)
- Write down the questions your customers ask. Post a snippet on social media and a link to the full answer on your blog. This makes you part of the education economy, where people want information, not a hard sell.

Content from Outside Your Agency

- Curate Web content that would interest your clients (always giving attribution). Set up a Google Alert on a topic clients have expressed interest in. Google will troll the Web for articles on that topic and notify you automatically.
- Always think of what your customers need to know in order to manage their lives and businesses better. Don’t just think about what you want to say.

- Segment your customers. Some are interested in home and auto, others are interested in business interruption insurance.

Further Reading:


If You Work In Insurance (Ryan Hanley): http://www.ryanhanley.com/if-you-work-in-insurance-this-should-be-the-only-article-you-read-on-the-future-of-social-media/


Property/Casualty Insurance
Licensing for Veterans

Are you ready to begin a NEW career? We can help!

The Independent Insurance Agents of Maryland (IIAM), to show their support for the men and women that serve our country both here and abroad, will be offering FREE property/casualty insurance licensing classes to all U.S. veterans.

The insurance licensing course is a one week, 8 hour per day, program that prepares students to sit for the Maryland State insurance licensing examination.

What is included: ($520 Value)
- One week, 40 hour, licensing course
- Property/Casualty textbook, exam simulator and handouts
- Reimbursement of state exam fee (must pass the exam)
- Reimbursement of application fee for your initial producer license

Funding for the program is being provided by the Independent Insurance Agents of Maryland’s Scholarship/Education Fund.

Why Insurance?

The insurance industry...one of the best kept secrets in employment. It has changed since the days of your grandfather’s door to door salesman. It is a business that contributes to the national economy and provides many opportunities for professional development and advancement. It stimulates the economy, encourages growth to many businesses, backs investments and has a real positive impact on society. That positive impact is felt in small communities, rural areas and the big cities.

It isn’t all about sales. That is just one part of the business. Obtaining your license can open the door for both sales and service, as well as a few other insurance fields that do not require the producer license. Insurance is something that everyone needs. Having insurance gives the consumer the proverbial ‘good nights sleep’. It protects what is important to us.

Whether you are choosing or changing your career, insurance is a great field to explore.

Some of the careers in the Insurance industry include insurance producer, customer service agent, actuary, field representative, loss control specialist, claims adjuster, risk manager and underwriter.

Program Provided By:

IIA of Maryland, Inc. ~ 2408 Peppermill Dr., Ste A; Glen Burnie, MD. 21061 ~ 410-766-0600
Course Information & Registration

**Course Tuition:** FREE to all U.S. Veterans

**Course Schedule:** IIAM will be offering two licensing courses in 2015 for Veterans Only. The dates of the courses are May 11th-15th and September 28th-October 2nd. These are the only licensing courses offered by IIAM that are free to Veterans.

**Course Location:** 2408 Peppermill Dr., Ste A; Glen Burnie, MD. 21061

**Course Material:** Each student receives the property/casualty textbook that includes the exam simulator. **You will be required to pick up your books from IIAM. At that time we will request to see your photo identification and your 'Honorable Discharge' certificate.** Based on which registration date select you will have a required date to pick up your material.

**Course Registration:** Register ONLINE at [www.iiamd.org/licensingforveterans](http://www.iiamd.org/licensingforveterans) or fill out the registration form below and fax to 410-766-0993 or email to rebekah@iiamd.org. **Please note that if you register for this course and do not show up you will be responsible for payment of the licensing book. The Cost of the book is $65.**

**State Licensing Exam:** Upon completion of the 40 hour course you will then be eligible to schedule and sit for your Maryland licensing exam. The state exam is administered by PSI. You are responsible for scheduling and payment of the state exam. The exam can be scheduled by visiting [https://candidate.psiexams.com](https://candidate.psiexams.com). You can only schedule the exam once you have completed the 40 hour course. The cost of the exam is $70. IIAM will reimburse you the exam fee once you have passed the exam. You will need to send the print out of your test scores you receive from PSI to rebekah@iiamd.org.

**License Application:** Once you have passed your state exam you are ready to apply and pay for your initial insurance license. You can apply for your license by visiting the National Insurance Producer Registry at [www.nipr.com](http://www.nipr.com). The cost of the initial license is $54 plus a $6.18 transaction fee charged by NIPR. These fees will all be reimbursed by IIAM. Once you have completed the license application and submitted payment simply send the receipt to rebekah@iiamd.org.

**Continuing Education Requirements:** Congratulations on becoming a licensed insurance producer! Now that you hold a Maryland property/casualty producer license you are required to complete 24 CE hours every two year license renewal term. Of those 24 hours, 3 hours must be done in the category of Ethics. If you sell Flood insurance, you are also required to complete an approved 2 hour Flood course every 2 year renewal term.

**Contact Information:** If you have any questions regarding the program please feel free to contact the IIAM Education Director, Rebekah Langford, at rebekah@iiamd.org or 410-766-0600.

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**Registration Form:**

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*I would like to attend the following course:*

- [ ] September 28 - October 2, 2015

**Registration Deadline:** September 12th  
**Book Pickup:** September 14th
Dickerson to Lead Property & Casualty Unit

Insurance Commissioner Al Redmer, Jr., announced the appointment of Mr. Lynn Dickerson as the Maryland Insurance Administration’s new Associate Commissioner, Property and Casualty. Mr. Dickerson brings years of executive-level experience in the property and casualty field, including a decade spent as vice president of operations for State Farm Insurance Companies.

As Associate Commissioner, Dickerson oversees the review of rates and forms filed by insurance carriers, as well as the investigation of complaints from consumers. He supervises a staff of more than 40.

“We are fortunate to have found someone with such a depth of knowledge and experience to lead this crucial unit of our agency,” Commissioner Redmer said. “Lynn’s work, both in underwriting and claims, will serve him well here.”

At State Farm, Dickerson worked his way up through the company. His positions included serving as assistant vice president of property and casualty underwriting and as claims manager. Most recently, he operated Dickerson & Associates LLC, which assists small business owners to develop long-term growth strategies.

“I am honored and humbled by the opportunity to join the Maryland Insurance Administration,” Dickerson said. “I look forward to helping advance the MIA’s goal of efficiently and effectively servicing both the consumers of insurance products and the insurance industry.”

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RLI Reports Second Quarter 2015 Results

Company Release 07/20/2015

PEORIA, Ill.-- RLI Corp. (NYSE: RLI) -- RLI Corp. reported second quarter 2015 operating earnings of $34.1 million ($0.77 per share), compared to $28.9 million ($0.66 per share) for the second quarter of 2014. For the six months ended June 30, 2015, operating earnings were $56.0 million ($1.27 per share) compared to $53.7 million ($1.23 per share) for the same period in 2014.

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(1) See discussion below of non-GAAP financial measures.

Highlights for the quarter included:

- Combined ratio of 79.8, resulting in underwriting income of $34.8 million.
- 6% decrease in gross premiums written, which reflects the impact of a previously announced exit from crop reinsurance.
- $30.1 million net increase in underwriting income resulting from favorable development in prior years’ loss reserves.
- $6.3 million net decrease in underwriting income resulting from 2015 storms.

- Book value per share of $20.07, an increase of 2% from year end 2014.

“We’re proud to report excellent second quarter results,” said RLI Corp. Chairman & CEO Jonathan E. Michael. “We achieved a 79.8 combined ratio for the quarter, despite a continually challenging environment. While premium volume was affected by the non-renewal of our crop reinsurance business, the strength of our product portfolio is reflected in our results. Excluding the impact of crop, overall gross premiums written were up 7%. Both the casualty and surety segments produced a strong combination of growth and underwriting profit. Our property segment remained challenged, with premium down 9%, excluding crop, due to catastrophe exposed

(Con’t on page 17)
Berkshire Hathaway GUARD Names Lyle Hitt Executive Vice President of Property and Liability Insurance

WILKES-BARRE, PA – Berkshire Hathaway GUARD recently named Lyle Hitt Executive Vice President of Property and Liability Insurance. In his new role, Hitt will oversee activities related to lines of coverage used to complement the company’s traditional workers’ compensation specialty. Specifically, he will lead the expansion of the organization’s property and liability lines into new states; refine existing products to address the needs of an even wider audience of commercial accounts; and develop new products.

Hitt brings over a quarter century of experience in the insurance industry to his new role. As an executive at Arch Insurance Group, he most recently oversaw the insurer’s Professional Liability Division, Corporate Training, and Travel Insurance Division. Hitt also held executive positions at Zurich North America.

Berkshire Hathaway GUARD began diversifying into other lines of insurance in 2008 with the introduction of a new multi-line BizGUARD Plus product that features businessowner’s, commercial umbrella, and commercial auto policies.

As President and CEO Sy Foguel explains, “Within about two years, our BizGUARD Plus product will, like our workers’ compensation policies, be available in all states. Our long-term goal is to be a One-Stop Insurance Shop for commercial accounts; Lyle Hitt’s leadership and years of experience building and managing business units will help us achieve our objectives.”

Hitt notes that he is joining the organization at an exciting time. “The chance to help a company evolve into a national, multi-line player is a special one that does not come your way every day, and becoming part of the Berkshire Hathaway family is a bonus. The Berkshire Hathaway brand will benefit us greatly as we introduce our products in many new states. Due to my background, we also plan to introduce professional liability products which will be a nice complement to BizGUARD Plus. In October of 2012, GUARD Insurance Group was acquired by National Indemnity Company, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway – an international holding company with diverse interests that include insurance and reinsurance. In 2013, GUARD unveiled a new identity as Berkshire Hathaway GUARD Insurance Companies. Each of the organization’s carriers (AmGUARD, EastGUARD, NorGUARD, and WestGUARD) are rated A+ (“Superior”) by A.M. Best – a leading source of independent rating information on the insurance industry. Agents interested in learning more can contact the company on-line at www.guard.com/apply.
Check Out RLI’s Training Videos

Educate yourself on some of the basics of the RLI system.

It’s time to dig in and learn more about the RLI system so you can write personal umbrella coverage with ease. These tools should help you to create a login, quote new business, check existing policies, obtain forms, and submit business online via eSignature and direct bill payment. In turn, this should free up more time for you as well so that more time can be spent marketing and growing your book of business! Check out:


Visit Big “I” Personal Umbrella online at www.iiaba.net/RLI or contact Carla McGee, your state administrator at [carla@iiamd.org](mailto:carla@iiamd.org).

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Big “I” Joins “Alliance to Fight the 40”

Coalition will seek repeal of the Affordable Care Excise Tax

WASHINGTON, D.C.— The Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America (IIABA or the Big “I”) joined with a diverse group of public and private sector employers, unions, and other health insurance stakeholders to announce the launch of “The Alliance to Fight the 40: Stop the 40% Tax on Health Benefits” (“Fight the 40”). The Alliance is dedicated to repealing the 40% tax on employee health benefits (the so-called “Cadillac tax”) imposed by the Affordable Care Act to ensure that employer-sponsored health coverage remains a meaningful and affordable option for working Americans.

“As the country’s oldest and largest national association of independent insurance agents representing a network of more than a quarter million agents, brokers and their employees, the Big ‘I’ is greatly concerned about the impact of the Affordable Care Act’s 40% excise tax,” says Robert Rusbuldt, Big ‘I’ president & CEO. “This pernicious tax will not only hit many of our small business members and their clients starting in 2018, but over time will impact more and more individuals because the tax threshold is tied to a very slow measure of inflation. This snowball effect will do irreparable damage to the employee benefits marketplace. The Big ‘I’ fully supports repealing this damaging tax and looks forward to working with the Alliance to Fight the 40 to ensure this tax never sees the light of day.”

Starting in 2018, the ACA will impose a 40% tax on health benefits that exceed an established annual cost. That year, health plans exceeding $10,200 a year in value for individuals or $27,500 a year for families will be subject to this 40% tax. In the future, this tax will impact a greater number of individuals while health care costs continue to rise.

According to a March survey by Mercer, a benefits consulting firm, about one-third of employers will face the tax in 2018 if they do nothing to change their plans. By 2022, almost 60% will face the levy. The Alliance to Fight the 40 predicts that this will lead to a reduction in employer-sponsored coverage and an increase in employee cost sharing – the exact opposite of the ACA’s stated goals. This will be harmful to middle-income Americans across the country. For these reasons, the Big “I” looks forward to working with the Alliance to Fight the 40 to repeal this damaging tax.
What NCCI Class Code is your Agency?

Effective 7/1/2012, NCCI added a new national classification code for ‘Insurance Companies-Including Clerical & Salespersons’. This new classification was approved in Maryland and should be used by agents, both exclusive and independent agents. The class code is 8723.

The description for 8723 is applicable to employees of insurance companies. Insurance companies include carriers or providers, both exclusive and independent agents, brokers, and ratemaking organizations. These businesses provide coverage for individuals, businesses, or property in exchange for premium. These businesses may also bind coverage, sell policies or place coverage, develop rates, process claims, and collect data.

Employees common to insurance companies include actuaries, underwriters, customer service representatives, sales agents, premium auditors, inside claims adjusters, analysts, and other professional support such as lawyers, computer programmers, computer troubleshooters, accountants, managers, etc. This list is representative and is not intended to be all inclusive.

Not included in this class are insurance company inspectors, outside claims adjusters, examiners, appraisers, and detectives or investigators (Code 8720). Code 8723 is not for contracted services, such as real estate appraisals or investigations, or Title insurance companies.

Our Umbrella Programs Give You More Options

Preferred Property Program gives you broader, more flexible coverage with a range of limits

Fast service and more security are what you get with Preferred Property Program. Our umbrella liability policies are written by XL Insurance with Chubb Insurance Group for excess layer – two of the industry’s most highly rated carriers.

- Options of $5 to $50 million in umbrella coverage.
- Hi-Rise apartments up to 35 stories eligible.
- Developer-sponsored board eligible.
- Excess of D & O General Liability, Auto Liability, and more.

Contact us for a quote:
www.umbrellaprogram.com
888.548.2465
info@umbrellaprogram.com

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Preferred Property Program®
Service is our specialty; protecting you is our mission ®
960 Holmdel Road, Holmdel, NJ 07733
What is the opportunity?
by Scott Zilber

ACA is here, interest rates are still very low, commissions have been cut and competition seems fiercer than ever. One of the largest opportunities lies in helping to assess, plan and facilitate the life, disability and long-term care insurance needs of your commercial clients.

Feel unsure about this approach? That makes sense; assessing the life insurance needs of your clients is not the daily focus of most Property & Casualty advisors and discussing advanced underwriting, estate planning, key-man coverage or even buy-sell planning may feel like foreign territory. Do not let this stop you.

There are resources to help support you with life insurance, disability insurance and long-term care. Select a General Agency partner willing to help market these new services to your clients, identify the right clients for each strategy, train your producers, and offer point of sale assistance.

How do I approach my client?

One of the best times to approach your client is at your bi-annual or quarterly BOP (Business Owners Planning) meeting. Once you have talked about renewals and made any changes to the client’s current plans of insurance the life conversation can begin. Working with your MGA partner, you will be able to prepare in advance for these meetings and have a strategy lined up for each of your clients.

Example:
With the help of their BGA a Property and Casualty Agency had incorporated a buy/sell review and business valuation service into the annual planning conducted with their larger commercial clients.

During a regular meeting with one of their business owner clients the agent discovered that the two equal partners did have a buy-sell in place but had never funded the agreement. The two business partners owned the entity equally (50/50) and were obligated under this agreement to buy out their partners equity at the time of death or disability to a tune of $1,000,000.

The BGA completed a complimentary business valuation of the company and apply for the appropriate amount of life and disability insurance to protect the partners and their families.

Results
1. To fund the buy-sell coverage, the partners committed to an annual premium of approximately $12,000.
2. For the personal coverage, the families selected a permanent universal life policy with a Long Term Care rider. This policy provides a tax free death benefit or a pool of money that can be used tax-free for qualified long-term care expenses. These policies resulted in an additional $15,000 of premium.

How do I get started?

Feel free to contact us at Belman Klein Associates Ltd. We are prepared to work with you and the producers at your agency to prepare a business plan that will help you detail and successfully implement this opportunity.
Congratulations to Bryan Langford, son of IIAM’s Education Director, Rebekah Langford and his Baltimore Celtic Soccer Club. His team earned the first place national ranking in July when they won the prestigious U.S. Youth Soccer National Championship. Just recently he was informed that he was selected to participate in the U.S. Youth Soccer Interregional competition November 26th-30th in Casa Grande, Arizona. This is an opportunity for Bryan to not only be coached by top professional coaches and play alongside other top athletes but it’s also an opportunity for him to play in front of National Team coaches. Bryan will begin High School this year at Archbishop Spalding, where he is the proud recipient of the Presidential Scholarship. After several tryouts, Bryan was informed he will play on Spalding’s Varsity team. We wish this young man all the best in his dream to one day play for the USA National team.

kudos to Bryan Langford

Congratulations to Bryan Langford, son of IIAM’s Education Director, Rebekah Langford and his Baltimore Celtic Soccer Club. His team earned the first place national ranking in July when they won the prestigious U.S. Youth Soccer National Championship. Just recently he was informed that he was selected to participate in the U.S. Youth Soccer Interregional competition November 26th-30th in Casa Grande, Arizona. This is an opportunity for Bryan to not only be coached by top professional coaches and play alongside other top athletes but it’s also an opportunity for him to play in front of National Team coaches. Bryan will begin High School this year at Archbishop Spalding, where he is the proud recipient of the Presidential Scholarship. After several tryouts, Bryan was informed he will play on Spalding’s Varsity team. We wish this young man all the best in his dream to one day play for the USA National team.
ISO Files New PAP “Car Sharing” Endorsements

by Bill Wilson

ISO has made two countrywide filings in response to the increasing use of Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft by PAP and PUP insureds driving for these organizations:

PAP Forms Filing PP-2015-OTNFR

“Introduction of a Reinforced Public or Livery Conveyance Exclusion and Related Optional Coverage Endorsements”

- PP 23 40 10 15 – Public Or Livery Conveyance Exclusion Endorsement
- PP 23 41 10 15 – Transportation Network Driver Coverage (No Passenger)
- PP 23 45 10 15 – Limited Transportation Network Driver Coverage (No Passenger)

PUP Forms Filing DL-2015-OTNFR

“Introduction of a Reinforced Public or Livery Conveyance Exclusion”

- DL 99 12 10 15 – Personal Umbrella Liability Policy Public Or Livery Conveyance Exclusion Endorsement

Each forms filing also has a companion rules filing and the proposed countrywide effective date for these changes is October 1, 2015, though the actual implementation date could vary in specific states.

The Personal Umbrella Policy (PUP) endorsement follows the reinforced Personal Auto Policy (PAP) “public or livery conveyance” exclusion introduced with the PP 23 40 PAP endorsement. There are apparently no options at this time to extend even limited coverage under ISO’s PUP to TNC drivers. This article focuses on the three PAP endorsements.

PP 23 40 10 15 – Public or Livery Conveyance Exclusion Endorsement

This endorsement revises the existing ISO PAP exclusion for the use of a vehicle as a public or livery conveyance to clarify, according to the filing explanation, that it applies to any period of time that an insured is logged into a “transportation network platform” as a driver and that such exclusion applies whether or not a passenger is occupying the vehicle.

A “transportation network platform” is defined in the endorsement to mean:

“Transportation network platform” means an online-enabled application or digital network used to connect passengers with drivers using vehicles for the purpose of providing prearranged transportation services for compensation.”

The new Part A – Liability Coverage “public or livery conveyance” exclusion reads as follows (new language is highlighted):

5. We do not provide Liability Coverage for any “insured”:

For that “insured’s” liability arising out of the ownership or operation of a vehicle while it is being used as a public or livery conveyance.

This includes but is not limited to any period of time that “insured” is logged into a “transportation network platform” as a driver, whether or not a passenger is “occupying” the vehicle.

This exclusion (A.5.) does not apply to a share-the-expense car pool.

The implication of the language “but is not limited to” is not yet known.

ISO is also making the same revision to the “public or livery conveyance” exclusion that appears in similar form under Part B – Medical Payments Coverage and Part D – Coverage For Damage To Your Auto in the PAP. Since UM and UIM coverages are statutory and provided by state-specific endorsements in most states, ISO is filing a similar change, to the extent permitted by law, to each state’s UM/UIM endorsements.

PP 23 41 10 15 – Transportation Network Driver Coverage (No Passenger)

This optional premium-bearing endorsement would replace the PP 23 40 and, according to the filing explanation, extends PAP coverage to an insured TNC driver for the period of time from when the driver logs into a “transportation network platform” up until a passenger has entered the vehicle.

The endorsement modifies the “public or livery conveyance” exclusions in Parts A, B, C, and D of the PAP. It includes a schedule of the following information:

- Identity of the “transportation network platform(s)” for which the insured drives;
- A description of the vehicle being driven for the TNC(s); and

(Con’t on page 23)
• A list of the coverages being provided, triggered by a premium entry for each desired coverage.

PP 23 45 10 15 – Limited Transportation Network Driver Coverage (No Passenger)

This optional premium-bearing endorsement would replace the PP 23 40 and, according to the filing explanation, extends PAP coverage to an insured TNC driver for the period of time from when the driver logs into a “transportation network platform” up until the driver accepts a request through the “transportation network platform” to transport a passenger. It obviously differs from the PP 23 41 in that it does not cover the time period between accepting a TNC request and the entry into the vehicle of a passenger.

The endorsement modified the “public or livery conveyance” exclusion in Parts A, B, C, and D of the PAP and includes the same schedule as shown above for the PP 23 41.

Neither optional endorsement extends PAP coverage while a passenger is in the vehicle…a driver with only an ISO PAP must rely on whatever coverage is provided by a TNC. That may or may not include medical payments or UM/UIM for the driver or passenger(s) or physical damage coverage.

Any advice about these endorsements should be provided to insureds with great care. Even under the PP 23 41, the full TNC driver exposure is not fully covered and the insured may not elect to extend limited coverage to all PAP coverage parts. If TNC drivers are independent contractors, they are basically operating a business and might be advised by legal counsel to do so as a corporation or LLC and purchase a BAP rather than rely on a PAP.

In addition, there may be situations where a claim or suit is filed against a TNC driver that is more appropriately addressed by a CGL, BOP or other commercial policy rather than a BAP. For example, a claim for slander, invasion of privacy, wrongful eviction, etc. might be unrelated to the use of an auto and unlikely constitute BI or PD. Since the driver is engaged in a business activity, a homeowners policy would likely not respond.

**Note:** It is IIAM’s understanding that ISO filed the endorsements with the Maryland Insurance Administration the week of August 17th. They have not been approved by the MIA at this time. As with any form or endorsement, please confirm with your carriers if they have filed and have approval to use the forms and if they are in fact using the forms.
First Delivery Made to VSCOA
by Brenden Langford

Thanks to Rebekah Langford, IIAM's Education Director, and her family, a truckload of goods was delivered to the VSCOA program in Quantico, Maryland.

We wish to thank the individuals and agencies that supported this endeavor: V.W. Brown Insurance, III Group, Ira Kelly (Veteran in licensing class), Riehl & Knodle Agency, Insurance Services Group, IIA Maryland, The Avon Dixon Agency, L.E. Goldsborough & Son, Day, Deadrick & Marshall and Joseph McCartin Insurance. Thanks to you we were able to deliver personal items such as toothpaste, dental floss, toothbrushes, shaving cream, mouthwash, razors, body wash, shampoo, conditioner, lotions, soap, deodorant, hand sanitizers, combs, chapstick, cologne, Qtips, handiwipes, detergent, paper products (paper towels, toilet paper, napkins, Kleenex) and clothing including over 41 pairs of boxers and underwear, 34 undershirts and 52 pairs of socks. This delivery also included tennis shoes, a few bags of gently used clothing and supplies for the dogs (leashes, toys, tennis balls, Milk Bones).

As you are aware this facility acts as a shelter for homeless combat veterans suffering from PTSD. It is these combat veterans that are succumbing at an alarming rate to suicide. Ms. Langford and her family were able to meet these men and spend some time with them. The men are trained to train the dogs, also homeless, in their PAWS Therapeutic Canine Training program, which has proven to be extremely successful. The VSCOA PAWS program allows for rehabilitation, empowerment and gainful employment of the vets on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. During the Langford's visit, one veteran was leaving the facility to move into his own place on the shore.

Now some people would say to themselves “Well why would you put those two things together?” as we did at first but after delivering the donations we got a more in-depth explanation and along with that got to meet the great people that run this organization.

VSCOA is located about 20 minutes from Salisbury in Quantico. On the property there are two buildings, one for housing and the other for the dogs and the office. The main house can hold up to 12 veterans and it currently houses 9. When we got there we met Mr. Jerry Black, the founder of VSCOA. We were given a tour of the compound where the dogs are kept. We were then provided with the purpose and meaning of VSCOA. VSCOA is the only shelter of its kind on the eastern shore. They take any veteran in and make them comfortable but they also help these men recover and move on with their lives, and this is where the dogs come into play. The service dog training is fairly new to VSCOA and it is a very unique program. In fact, this program was started by Mr. Black and is not under the VA. When a veteran comes to the facility they are given the option to train a dog. This training is twofold, it serves to help the veteran become more open and social. The dogs have a way of providing ‘unconditional friendship’ to the vet. If you think about it, the program is more complex. It is not just the veterans training the dogs, it is the dogs transitioning the men. They use the dogs as psychiatric therapy to ease the men back into the worlds changing social environment. The way Mr. Black explained it was they use the dogs to ‘retrain’ the vets and force social interaction. By sending the veteran and dog team into town or places where social interaction is necessary, the veterans begin to open up and interact with others. Mr. Black said “If you send a guy to Walmart with a dog people will come up, pet the dog, and ultimately ask a few questions. The veteran, talking about the dog, begins to trust in others and to socialize again. This eventually leads to the veteran being able to go to town and apply for housing and employment”.

We delivered the goods, but Mr. Black delivered the bad news. It appears that

(Con’t on page 25)
the VA will discontinue their support of the center. Even though the VA admitted that the program was exceeding their contractual obligations and performing very well, the contract would not be renewed. The PAWS program is not part of the agreement, but the VA felt that this was performing very well and now wants to extend the program and put it out to bid. Mr. Black stated, “working with the VA is so frustrating. It is almost like talking to a wall”. We were also told of the many veterans who are fighting their own battle to get their VA health benefits. We were introduced to a retired Army Ranger who was shot twice and has YET to have his surgery scheduled to remove the bullets. Instead the VA sends him highly addictive pain pills, compounding the problem. If you feel so inclined (and this is not an association request) write to Congressman Andy Harris, George Owings (Maryland Veterans Affairs), Senator Jim Mathias and Senator Adelaide Eckardt. Their contact information is at the conclusion of this article.

IIA Maryland will continue our support, so keep the supplies coming. Mr. Black has specifically requested the following:

- Gas cards are high priority as our cash flow has dried up
- Paper products such as paper towels and TP
- Laundry Soap
- Canned Goods
- Personal Goods
- Towels and linens
- Bedding for single beds, we have bunk beds but the sheets and blankets are getting pretty thin and sparse.

As always we appreciate your help. If you would like items picked up, just give us a call. They may also be delivered while attending a class or meeting here.

Contact Information-Legislative/Government

Andy Harris (R-1st)
506 Cannon House Office Building,
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-5311; fax: (202) 225-0254
Website: http://harris.house.gov

James N. Mathias, Jr.
Democrat, District 38, Somerset, Wicomico & Worcester Counties
Miller Senate Office Building, Room 401
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401
(410) 841-3645; 1-800-492-7122, ext. 3645 (toll free)
E-mail: james.mathias@senate.state.md.us
Fax: (410) 841-3006
Local Office: 11941 Industrial Park Rd., Unit 8
Bishopville, MD 21813
(410) 352-3096; Fax: (410) 352-3087

Senator Adelaide C. Eckardt
322 James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Annapolis, MD 21401
Phone: 410-841-3590 | 301-858-3590 | Toll-free in MD: 1-800-492-7122 ext. 3590
Fax: 410-841-3299
Interim Address: 601 Locust Street, Suite 202
Cambridge, MD 21613
Phone: 410-221-6561

George W. Owings, III
Maryland Office of Veterans Affairs
16 Francis Street, 4th Floor
Annapolis, MD 21401
Phone: (410) 260-3838
http://veterans.maryland.gov/secretary/

(Con’t from page 24)
September 10, 2015
Insurance Ethics
Stanley Lipshultz, CPCU
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

September 10, 2015
Insurance Ethics
Stanley Lipshultz, CPCU
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

September 16, 2015
Commercial Auto Insurance
Don Dudey, CPCU
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM

September 23, 2015
The Basics of Flood Insurance
Annette Winston
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

September 23, 2015
The Basics of Flood Insurance
Annette Winston
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

September 24, 2015
ISO Commercial Automobile Changes
Don Dudey, CPCU
9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

September 28 - October 2, 2015 (5 days)
Property/Casualty Pre-Licensing Course (VETERANS ONLY)
Joe Conroy, ACSR
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

October 5, 2015
Personal Insurance
Joe Conroy, ACSR
9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

October 7, 2015
Understanding the Wholesale Market
Shelley Arnold, CPCU
8:30 AM – 10:30 AM

October 14, 2015
Contractual Risk Transfer in Construction
Don Dudey, CPCU
9:00 AM – 4:30 PM

October 19-23, 2015 (5 days)
Insurance Property/Casualty Pre-Licensing Course
Joe Conroy, ACSR
8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

October 27, 2015
E&O Risk Management
Meeting the Challenges of Change
Stanley Lipshultz, CPCU
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

IIAM congratulates Sharon Gardner, CSA, AAI. Sharon completed her final part of the AAI (Accredited Advisor in Insurance) program this past month. Sharon is employed at Insurance Services Group. She plans to move forward with her studies and begin the CPCU (Chartered Property & Casualty Underwriter) program. Our best wishes for continued success.
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DON’T BE ON THE HOOK FOR:

✓ Failing to procure coverage requested by the client
✓ Not adequately identifying client exposures
✓ Failing to provide timely notice of a claim to the carrier
✓ Misrepresenting or not explaining policy provisions
✓ Providing inaccurate information to carriers
✓ Failing to properly add additional insureds or loss payees

Big “I” Risk Management Website

www.independentagent.com/EOHappens

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