



January 2004

OAHU HealthLines

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Legislative Committee Becomes Proactive

by Kirby Nielsen



Ohio and legislation. Legislation and Ohio. Either way you say it, Ohio has had a long history of involvement and success.

With one of the best organized

and informed memberships in the National Association of Health Underwriters it is natural to be considered one of the best in the country.

Although we feel we are struggling to get the Ohio Health Insurance Risk Pool, our SB 136, moved forward, many other states have borrowed our techniques and used our materials and ideas in their campaigns. In return, we can learn something from their efforts to help us out on a piece of legislation some day.

Learning is one of the most critical things involved in legislation. It is not so much who one knows or who won what race by what percentage that is of ultimate value. The ultimate value for a health underwriter is knowledge. It is the one thing we can use to put ourselves in the middle of

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2003 at a Glance



John May, President

My first six months as President of OAHU have gone by quickly. Those months have been very rewarding and quite eventful. Significant strides have been made on both the state and national levels.

Early in 2003 former president Randy Ayers spearheaded an OAHU "first" - an affiliation with a professional public relations firm. With the assistance of Clary & Associates, OAHU intends to educate both the media and consumer about our role as the consumer advocate. Uninsured Ohioans may have access to a new health delivery system thanks to the efforts of OAHU members and Senate Bill 136. Kirby Nielsen, Denny Recker and Carol Steele along with the OAHU Legislative

Council have played a vital role in the introduction of this legislation. Senate Bill 136 would provide access to health coverage for many uninsurable citizens in Ohio.

Nationally, one of the single most important occurrences in recent years has transpired with the passage of the Medicare Prescription Drug Bill. As a portion of that bill, Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) will be available on January 1, 2004. This will give agents/brokers an attractive cost savings alternative for their clients. HSAs will allow their clients to play a more active role in the decisions made regarding their health care and at the same time help them control their health care costs.

On a lighter note, while attending the NAHU conference in San Diego I was approached by the President of the Michigan Association of Health Underwriters. They have challenged us to a contest involving the overall net growth of membership of each respective association. The losers will don the colors of the winner's state university at the upcoming 2004 NAHU convention in Baltimore. As a proud Buckeye I cringe at the thought of wearing maize and blue. I hope you will help our association grow and achieve yet another "Buckeye" victory by recruiting at least one new member.

In the upcoming year we hope to see the seeds we planted in 2003 continue to grow. I look forward to working with you. I wish you a very happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!

John May

BWC Safety Congress and Expo Held March 23-25, 2004 in Cincinnati

The 74th Ohio Safety Congress and Expo will be held March 23 to 25 at the Cincinnati Convention Center. Admission to the event is free.

The event, hosted by the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) and the BWC's Division of Safety and Hygiene, will offer more than 100 educational sessions on topics such as cost-cutting safety strategies, injury management, lift guidelines, construction safety and emergency planning. The exhibit hall will feature 225 suppliers of personal protective equipment and clothing, ergonomic tools, and services such as safety consulting, exposure monitoring, and drug testing.

The BWC and CCI encourage employers to take advantage of the opportunity to attend the Expo.

More than 6,000 people from businesses throughout Ohio are expected to attend the event. Continuing education units, industrial hygiene certification maintenance points and credits for the BWC's 10-Step Business Plan are available.

The Expo's keynote speakers are Nando Parrado, the Uruguayan rugby team member who survived 72 days trapped on a glacier in the Andes in 1972, Desi Williamson and Jim Bearden.

The 5th annual Ohio Forklift Rodeo Championship will take place at the Expo, as well. The forklift rodeo features teams from around the state maneuvering through a series of challenging, realistic tasks and situations. Drivers are rewarded for their driving skill, safety awareness and equipment knowledge.

Register at the door or in advance on the web at www.ohiobwc.com or by calling 800.OHIOBWC, press 22, then 2. On-site registration is also available. Attending the free event can help companies lower their injury rate and workers' compensation costs. For any questions about the Safety Congress and Expo, contact the BWC at 800.OHIOBWC.

OAHU Leadership Plans Future

The Ohio Association of Health Underwriters' Board of Trustees met in October at Mohican State Lodge Pete Clifford, founder and senior managing facilitator with Advance Leadership Services. Under his direction and input for our members, a three-year strategic plan was formed and approved at the January 2004 board meeting.

Thanks to all who participated and took time from their busy schedules to help in this process: John May, Randy Ayers, Mike Moore, Kathy Hughes, Frank Novy, Jessica Lagusch, Carol Conway, Steve Brubaker, Jeff McClung, Belinda Brooks, Darlene Kaczmarek, Randy Klein, Mike Stahancyck, Diane Oliver, and Randy Klein. Thank YOU!

(legislative news continued from page one)

all health insurance debates. Yes we need personal contacts to get into the door, but once inside, we must be credible sources of knowledge.

Darlene Kaczmarek said something at a recent Legislative Committee meeting that really struck me. She said "Ohio does its Due Diligence." Her comment came in relation to a review of what Tax Credits are, how they work, and whether or not they will serve their intended purpose. I stopped for a second and thought that her statement was very insightful. We do debate issues, we consider all sides, we maintain a consistent message, and we weigh each decision as to whether or not what we are helping the market place, our clients. I doubt too many organizations can state these things for a fact.

We have for the first time taken a real pro active stand on an issue we considered to be our top priority. We have written and introduced a bill, and we have garnered considerable respect in the process. We have met with the decision makers, legislators, aides, and interested others in promoting our ideas. And we will continue the good fight on this and other issues in the years to come.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing me to serve you as Legislative Chairperson for OAHU for the last year and a half. Carol Steele will be stepping into the Legislative Chair for 2004 and in 2005 David Kross will begin our first two year term as Legislative Chair which will coincide with the entire legislative session for the first time. Please give them your very best effort and support. Our clients are depending on your efforts.

2004 Ohio Calendar

Board Meeting and
Legislative Council Meetings:
February 19, 2004
March 18, 2004
April 15, 2004

All above meetings are held at 2600
Corporate Exchange Blvd. in Columbus

May 4 - Day at the Statehouse

■
NAHU Cap Conference
March 28-30, 2004
Capitol Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.

■
NAHU National Symposium
June 27-30, 2004
Baltimore, Maryland

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Financial Update

by Frank Novy

During June 03 we hired a new accountant, Ms. Beth Curtis. Ms. Curtis lives in the Columbus area, and she prepares the financial statements, the monthly expense checks and makes the monthly checking deposits for the board. Beth also assists the Legislative PAC committee.

Last year (2003) OAHU came in under budget in expenses again! There is a true commitment from the OAHU executive committee to control expenses as much as possible and to pass as much money back to our local chapters.

In 2003 OAHU started a program that paid the Early Bird registration for Capital Conference, the Annual Convention along with monthly meeting reimbursements for auto and meal expenses for the local chapters representatives attending the OAHU monthly meeting. We made a commitment to the local chapters to continue this program through the 2004 year.

During the month of November (2003) I presented the largest budget ever to the Executive Board for approval. For the 2004 calendar year we are expecting total revenues and expenses of \$281,500. The largest part of our revenue will again come from the CCI – Workers Compensation Program. I personally would like to thank you for your support of the CCI Workers Compensation Program.

The final (2004) Budget is available for your review, if you would like a copy please email me at Fnovy@QASdirect.com and I will forward to you.



Award Winners!

Left: Debbie Venrose, 2003 Northeast President Frank Novy, and 2004 Northeast President Darlene Kaczmarek accept the NAHU Award for Continuing Education. Only one local award is given in the United State. Congratulations!

Right: 2003 Ohio President Randy Ayers congratulates 2004 Northwest President Belinda Brooks for winning the NAHU Pacesetter Award at the national symposium in San Diego in June.