



**Risk and
Insurance
Management
Society, Inc.**

L.A. RIMS NEWS

Los Angeles Chapter

The Newsletter for Risk and Insurance Management Professionals September 2003

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Once again, it's time for our Board of Directors to meet and plan for 2004. Part of the planning process includes discussing potential luncheon topics, scholarships, and special events such as Education Day, the holiday party and the golf tournament. Discussion also includes budgeting for events and administration. But the major part of the planning is how we can improve our Chapter's services to our membership.

This year we have been very lucky to have an enthusiastic Board with fresh ideas that we have implemented. Perhaps you have some ideas and suggestions as to how we can improve. Perhaps you are a Member and would like to join our Board. Participating as a Director on the Board is one way you can effectively make a difference in your Chapter.

It's also a way to expand your network of risk management professionals. Personally, I can say that my experience on the Board of Directors has had a positive effect on my professional career. It has given me the opportunity to meet and learn from others who are more than willing to share their experiences and advice.

So take my advice...consider joining our Board of Directors. It's an experience you don't want to miss.

Kathy Merkovsky
President, RIMS L.A. Chapter

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

Bruce Summers
AEX, Inc.

CHAPTER CLIPS

FRIENDS OF RIMS NIGHT

Our Friends of RIMS night will be held at Fox Studios Commissary on September 24, 2003

STELLA AWARDS



TRUE OR FALSE - YOU BE THE JUDGE

It's time once again to review the winners of the annual "Stella Awards." The Stella's are named after 81-year-old Stella Liebeck who spilled coffee on herself and successfully sued McDonald's. That case inspired the Stella awards for the most frivolous successful lawsuits in the United States.

Unfortunately, the most recent lawsuit implicating McDonald's, the teens who allege that eating at McDonald's has made them fat, was filed after the 2002 award voting was closed. This suit will top the 2003 list without question.

Here are this year's winners:

5th Place (tie):

Kathleen Robertson of Austin, Texas, was awarded \$780,000 by a jury of her peers after breaking her ankle tripping over a toddler who was running inside a furniture store. The owners of the store were understandably surprised at the verdict, considering the misbehaving little toddler was Ms. Robertson's son.

5th Place (tie):

19-year-old Carl Truman of Los Angeles won \$74,000 and medical expenses when his neighbor ran over his hand with a Honda Accord. Mr. Truman apparently didn't notice there was someone at the wheel of the car when he was trying to steal his neighbor's hubcaps.

5th Place (tie):

Terrence Dickson of Bristol, Pennsylvania, was leaving a house he had just finished robbing by way of the garage. He was not able to get the garage

CHAPTER CLIPS CONTINUED

door to go up since the automatic door opener was malfunctioning. He couldn't re-enter the house because the door connecting the house and garage locked when he pulled it shut. The family was on vacation, and Mr. Dickson found himself locked in the garage for eight days.

He subsisted on a case of Pepsi he found, and a large bag of dry dog food. He sued the homeowner's insurance claiming the situation caused him undue mental anguish. The jury agreed to the tune of \$500,000.

4th Place:

Jerry Williams of Little Rock, Arkansas, was awarded \$14,500 and medical expenses after being bitten on the buttocks by his next door neighbor's beagle. The beagle was on a chain in its owner's fenced yard. The award was less than sought because the jury felt the dog might have been just a little provoked at the time by Mr. Williams who had climbed over the fence into the yard and was shooting it repeatedly with a pellet gun.

3rd Place:

A Philadelphia restaurant was ordered to pay Amber Carson of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, \$113,500 after she slipped on a soft drink and broke her coccyx (tailbone). The beverage was on the floor because Ms. Carson had thrown it at her boyfriend 30 seconds earlier during an argument.

2nd Place:

Kara Walton of Claymont, Delaware, successfully sued the owner of a night club in a neighboring city when she fell from the bathroom window to the floor and knocked out her two front teeth. This occurred while Ms. Walton was trying to sneak through the window in the ladies room to avoid paying the \$3.50 cover charge. She was awarded \$12,000 and dental expenses.

1st Place:

This year's run away winner was Mr. Merv Grazinski of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Mr. Grazinski purchased a brand new 32-foot Winnebago motor home. On his first trip home, (from an OU football game), having driven onto the freeway, he set the cruise control at 70 mph and calmly left the drivers seat to go into the back and make himself a cup of coffee. Not surprisingly, the R. V. left the freeway, crashed and overturned. Mr. Grazinski sued Winnebago for not advising him in the owner's manual that he couldn't actually do this. The jury awarded him \$1,750,000 plus a new motor home. The company actually changed their manuals on the basis of this suit, just in case there were any other complete morons buying recreation vehicles.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

OCCUPATIONAL INJURY AND ILLNESS RECORDING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

OSHA is deleting two provisions of the Occupational Injury and Illness Recording and Reporting Requirements rule published January 19, 2001. These provisions required employers to check the MSD column on the OSHA 300 Log if an employee experienced a work-related MSD, and stated that MSDs are not considered privacy concern cases. The effective date of these provisions has been delayed since publication of the Recordkeeping rule in January 2001; consequently, the requirements deleted by this final rule have never been in effect. The amendments in this rule will become effective on January 1, 2004.

Class Action Reform Update -

The Class Action Fairness Act (S.274) proposes modest procedural changes in order to streamline the legal system, enabling it to operate more efficiently and equitably-without limiting anyone's ability to file a lawsuit or capping damages. The Senate bill currently has the support of 57 Senators. California Senator, Dianne Feinstein (D) still supports the bill and it is important to continue to contact her office and thank her for her support. The bill needs 60 votes to limit debate on the measure and overcome any potential filibuster. RIMS National and The Los Angeles Chapter support this bill. It appears that the bill will likely be scheduled for a vote shortly after Congress returns from their summer recess.

Senator Feinstein's Offices

Los Angeles 310.914.7300, 310.914.7318 Fax
Washington, D.C. 202.224.3841, 202.228.3954 Fax

CA Workers Compensation Bills to Watch - Pending

SB 228 (Alarcon) Establishes a fee schedule, effective 1/1/04 for provider fees, inpatient facility fees and outpatient facility fees at 120% of Medicare and for pharmaceuticals and pharmacy services at 100% of Medi-cal.

SB 354 (Speier) Sets a limit of 15 one-hour visits to chiropractor, absent approval by a Medical Doctor for more visits; doubles the maximum fine for fraudulent claimst to \$100,000 or double the value of the fraud, whichever is greater.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

HELP WANTED

Who: Deputy Members of RIMS L.A. Chapter
Position: Director

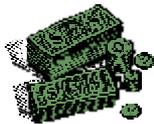
Qualifications: Current Member of RIMS L.A. Chapter. Not afraid to contribute ideas. Desires to improve services provided by Chapter. Has leadership and organizational skills. Able to work as a team player or individually. Enjoys attending or planning special events. Willing to attend monthly board meetings. Able to say "Aye" or "Nay" upon request. Attendance at luncheon meetings is desirable.

Job Duties: Make recommendations, suggestions, and seek solutions to improve or streamline Chapter services. Participation in decision-making. May be asked to lead or participate in the research or planning of an event or service.

Hours: Flexible.

Compensation: Personal satisfaction that you have made a difference.

Bonus: New friends and peers.
If interested, please contact any member of the Board or call the RIMS office at 818.842.6096



JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Northrop Grumman - **Manager, Casualty Insurance** - Manage the renewal process and administration of various casualty insurance programs including the Executive Coverages, Aircraft Products, Primary and Excess General/Auto and non-Aircraft Products Liability. Identify and evaluate the exposure to risk associated with these coverages and recommend risk mitigation measures to the Director of Risk Management MBA, ARM, CPCU

preferred. Minimum 10 years of experience, 15 years preferred. Special requirements/skills, Microsoft Office Suite, Lotus Notes. Some relocation assistance may be available. Security Clearance Required.

Northrop Grumman - **Risk Management Specialist** - Prepare all financial plans including Forward Pricing Rate Proposal, Business and Long Range Plans and Indirect Cost Proposals. Allocate all expenses to Sectors. Reconcile all insurance-related general ledger account balances. Fulfill actuary's data requests. Responsible for completing various state reports (monopolistic and self-insurance). Collect annual renewal exposure information and quarterly workers comp payroll data. Accounting Degree preferred, 8 years of experience preferred. Microsoft Office Suite, Lotus Notes required.

NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL

Starting in October, we will begin emailing the newsletter to our readers. If you would prefer to receive the hard copy newsletter by regular mail, please contact the RIMS office at 818.842.6096 as soon as possible.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All monthly meetings are held at the New Otani Hotel, unless otherwise noted

September 14-17, 2003
RIMS Western Regional Conference
Oregon

September 17, 2003
Monthly Luncheon

September 24, 2003
Friends of RIMS Night

October 15, 2003
Education Day



L.A. RIMS NEWS



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