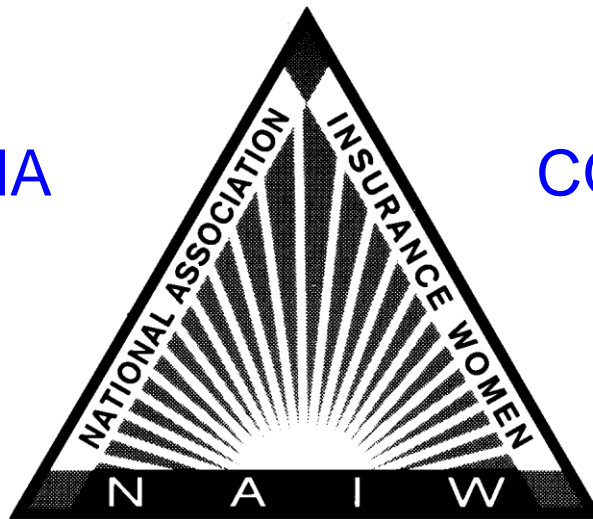


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COVERED.....

Volume 16 Issue 10

June 7, 2007



**INSURANCE PROFESSIONALS OF
SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY**

LEADERSHIP 2006-2007

**President – Jeannie Upright
Vice President – Gail Bradley
Secretary – Debbie Musgrave
Treasurer – Pam Stetler**

**Education – Brenda Weaver
The Horizon**

**Membership & Public Relations – Gail Bradley
Safety – Barbara Kressler
Legislative – Patsy Lachat
Sunshine – Patsy Lachat**

Newsletter Editor – Ginger Garner

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.....Jeannie Upright

I'm leaving today for my first NAIW National Convention in San Juan, Puerto Rico ! YEAH!!

I wish all of you could go with me. As a first timer, I'm very excited to represent IPSV at this convention. I will give a complete report on my return and in the newsletter in September.

May all of you have a wonderful Summer. I hope to see all of you returning for the 2007-2008 session. IPSV will hold it's first board meeting July 15th to begin planning next year's agenda. If you have any suggestions for the program, please let me know.

SECRETARY'S MINUTES.....Debbie Musgrave

The Insurance Professionals of Susquehanna Valley met on Wednesday May 16, 2007 at Portabella's in Lightstreet.

President Upright called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM and welcomed all of our guests for the evening, Coucil Director, Donna Mescall, her Assistant and Council Director Elect, Polly Jones, Carla Buma, Kim Cotter, Susan Studenski, Betty Ann Blockus, Charlotte Stetler, Lois Bangs & Maureen McHenry. Members present were Jeannie Upright, Gail Bradley, Pam Stetler, Barbara Kressler, Patsy Lachat, Brenda Weaver, Betty Rafalko, Lori Reese & Donna Coombs.

The Secretary's minutes were approved as printed in the newsletter.

The Treasurer's report was distributed and reviewed and accepted and filed for audit.

President Upright read the Collect and dinner was enjoyed by all.

After dinner Council Director Donna Mescall installed the new officers as follows:

President - Jeannie Upright
Vice President - Gail Bradley
Secretary - Dee Musgrave
Treasurer - Pamela Stetler
Board of Directors - Patsy Lachat
Brenda Weaver
Barbara Kressler

After the installation, Council Director Mescall addressed the members.

Donna Coombs presented the Insurance Professional of the Year award to Brenda Gordner. A plaque was presented to Brenda along with a hanging basket.

Photos will follow in the newspaper and a copy will also be sent to Nationals and posted on our website.

Brenda then presented all Past Insurance Professionals that were present with a bud vase with a flower.

The 50X50 drawing was won by Charlotte Stetler who gave the winnings back to the association.

The following reports were given:

Membership & PR - Gail Bradley reported that the photo of the Regional awards should be in the Press Enterprise and Danville News shortly. She is also sending in a photo of Patsy & Jeannie from the Day On The Hill that they recently attended. It was also suggested that copies of all photos that we have put in the paper also be sent to National. Gail also reported that the bloodmobile had to be cancelled due to technical difficulties with the site.

Gail reported that Austin is doing a great job with the website and makes any changes sent to him immediately. If you have any photos or other information that you would like to have posted please contact Gail. The new Member forms are also available on the website so if you know of anyone that is interested in becoming a member go to the website and print off a form. Remember the address is www.ipsv.net

Brenda also passed a photo she took of the window display at Gordner-Coombs Insurance Agency for NAIW week. Great job Brenda!

Carla Buma has decided to join our association and completed her new member form. Also joining us will be Charlotte Stetler. Hopefully Kim & Susan will also decide to join!

Education - Brenda reported that she has been unable to contact the lady from Flood that presented our flood seminar before but will keep trying to contact someone about a future class. We will discuss this further at the next board meeting.

Safety - no report

Legislative - Patsy reported on the Day on The Hill held recently in Harrisburg that she and Jeannie attended. She said that it was a wonderful and busy day and they had the opportunity to visit with many legislators. She very much recommends the trip to anyone. Vince Phillips would also like a plaque with the

NAIW logo to display on his wall along with NAIW brochures. We need to discuss making new tri-folds for our association.

Also be sure to notify Patsy if you voted in the primary election.

Patsy also distributed information for a letter writing campaign about funding for the trail test of NSABP P-4 study on breast cancer. For more information contact Patsy.

It was decided that the June meeting would once again be a picnic at Gail's with everyone bringing a covered dish. Contact Jeannie about the menu.

We also discussed that perhaps we could co-sponsor a blood mobile next year with someone who already has an approved site. Lori also said that she would check with the minister from the Millville Christian Church to see if that church would be available in the fall and if so Brenda would set up an inspection with the Red Cross to see if it could be approved as a future site.

Lucky Brenda was the winner of the President's phrase prize which was a nice summer fun package.

After For The Good of the Cause the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM

Respectfully Submitted
Gail Bradley, Acting Sec'y

EDUCATION.....Brenda Weaver

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PROGRAM AND MENU.....Gail Bradley

Our June 20th meeting will be held at the home of Gail Bradley. A picnic dinner will be shared at 6pm.

Please RSVP by June 15th by emailing Gail Bradley at brado@ptd.net.

Call Gail for menu details

SAFETY.....Barbara Kressler

None to report

MEMBERSHIP AND PUBLIC RELATIONS...Gail Bradley

It was GREAT to see so many guests at the May meeting. Carla Buma has turned in her new member form for the upcoming year. Welcome Carla at our next meeting and make her feel like one of our new family members!!

Also joining us next year as a new member will be Charlottee Stetler - everyone knows Charlottee - Pam's Mom - so also welcome her with open arms!

Hopefully Kim Cotter & Susan Studenski will decide to join us also.

I have New Member application forms and they are also available on our website as well as on National's website if you know of someone who needs a form!

I would also like to get some of our own NAIW brochures made so that we have them to send to any new prospective members and to also give to Vince Phillips to post outside of his office in Harrisburg. That will be a project for us in the upcoming year.

I would like to thank everyone for their hard work this past year in inviting guests and prospective new members to our meetings and for welcoming those guests that did attend a meeting and making them feel comfortable and wanting to come back again.

I hope everyone has a great summer and I will see you again in the fall after our June picnic.

LEGISLATIVE.....Patsy Lachat

NAIW DAY ON HILL

Jeannie and I attended NAIW Day on Hill Tuesday, May 8. We arrived at Vince Phillips office at 7:45 and waited for the others to arrive. Vince showed us around his office and his terrific room with all sorts of memorabilia, from photos with past presidents and other political people to awards, etc.

From 9:00 on the day was a whirlwind of meetings as we were Citizen Lobbyists for the day, ending with a delicious lunch across the street from the Capitol building.

We met with Rep. Kate Harper from Montgomery county, Rita Zielonis, who is the assistant to Sen. Roger Madigan from Bradford county (our senator), Sen. Mike Stack from Philadelphia, the minority chairman of the Senate Banking & Insurance Committee, Rep. Steven Capelli, Lycoming county (our representative), Fran Cleaver, Esq., assistant to Sen. Robert Tomlinson from Bucks county, Chris Latta who is Chief of Staff for Sen. Gib Armstrong from Lancaster county, chairman, Senate Appropriations Committee, and finally Stephanie Anderson, legislative aide to Rep. Gene DiGirolamo and then Rep. DiGirolamo from Bucks county.

Each person we met with was attentive, answered our questions and spoke about what was most important to them on that particular day. All had their own thoughts about the Governor's Health Plan as well as tax reform.

Please consider going next year. It is well worth the trip!

Patsy

Also, attached is the latest Leg Reg Review:

LEG REG REVIEW 2007, Eighteenth Issue

RENDELL BUDGET PASSES HOUSE

Last week, the PA House passed Governor Rendell's Budget proposal (House Bill 1286) and sent it to the Senate. The 102-97 vote was along party lines with Democrats voting for and Republicans against with the exception of Republican Speaker of the House Dennis O'Brien (Phila.) siding with Democrats. What made the vote unusual was a decision by both parties to vote on one Republican amendment rather than the usual procedure with multiple amendments from legislators of both parties. Traditionally, a flood of amendments comes from members wishing to show advocacy for a particular program or simply to show

commitment to constituents. The problem has been that the House-passed bill bears little resemblance to a 'real' Budget since any new money must be justified by a cut in an existing program.

A gap of about \$2 billion separated the Republican versus the Democrat Budgets. It now goes to the Senate where majority Republicans are expected to pass their own version of the Budget without many of the things the Governor wants. When the Senate acts, the Budget will return to the House to receive a non-concurrence vote. With two different versions, the Budget will go to a conference committee made up of leadership and Appropriations committee chairs from all four caucuses.

Text of HB 1286 is found at www.legis.state.pa.us. Some highlights include:

- A \$2 million cut in Crop Insurance premium subsidies (Agriculture Department)
- Office of Health Care Reform \$3.950 million state money to implement Rx for PA and \$2 million federal money
- Health Department money to implement Rx for PA includes \$719,000 for health literacy; \$510,000 hospital community standards \$810,000; hospital admission criteria; \$1 million for health equity strategies (*NOTE: The health equity money implements Governor Rendell's Executive Order 2007-4 creating an Office of Health Equity within the Department of Health to examine any disparities in health treatment that stem from gender and race, income, location and other variables.*); \$5.4 million primary care access
- Insurance Department :
 - Rx for PA small business regulation \$268,000 ostensibly to review business insurance programs to see if they meet the new state standards to enable them to receive the credit back from their payroll 'Fair Share Assessment' mandated by Cover All Pennsylvanians.
 - CHIP administration \$2.381 million (plus \$5.2 million federal money)
 - CHIP program \$63.531 million (plus \$210.4 million in federal money)
 - adultBasic administration \$3.458 million
- Dept. Public Welfare long-term care \$799.1 million state money plus \$2.286 billion in federal money. Add to that \$79.227 million from the Tobacco Settlement

HEALTH PLAN RHETORIC HEATS UP

Despite the General Assembly shift from passing all of Governor Rendell's Rx for PA in one bill (HB 700) to passing components, the Governor has apparently stepped up the PR offensive for the entire program by blasting opponents as "morally indefensible" at a labor rally at the State Capitol. He was also reported by the Carlisle Sentinel newspaper as telling the Harrisburg Area Chamber that it was either his proposal or a single payer plan.

SENATE PASSES BLUES MERGER BILL

The PA Senate passed House Bill 112 (Eachus-D-Luzerne) enabling the Insurance Department to review the proposed Independence Blue Cross and Highmark Blue Shield merger. The action was taken after an unsuccessful Senate Democratic attempt to delay the vote by one session day. At issue is whether the legislature should also have a role in scrutinizing the merger in addition to the Insurance Department. Governor Rendell has indicated that legislative oversight over and above the Insurance Department's review would prompt a veto. An earlier version of the bill would have given the General Assembly a regulatory veto power by establishing the Insurance Restructuring Board. The current bill puts the legislature in an advisory capacity where concerns must be answered by the Department. The Senate vote was 30 to 18. The bill goes back to the House, setting the stage for a conference committee to work out the different versions.

HOUSE INSURANCE COMMITTEE MOVES HEALTH BILLS

On May 22, the House Insurance Committee moved three health insurance bills. They are:

- HB 972 colorectal mandated screening benefit for those over 50
- HB 1000 re credentialing of managed care plans outpatient behavioral health services (notifying a plan within 90 days) and honoring mental health referrals
- HB 207 adding a section to the Insurance Company Law for professional and trade association rate protection... "shall base the premiums for association members on actual claims and expense experience for such group providing that the association's membership is comprised of at least 50 individuals." Association formation solely for the purpose of purchasing insurance would be prohibited.

Another bill, HB 1150 (O'Brien-R-Phila.) did not move through committee. It is a bill regarding insurance company payments for autism treatment.

MEETINGS TO NOTE

- On May 29, the House Professional Licensure Committee will hold a hearing on the scope of practice for nurse practitioners (HB 1253 and HB 1254). The following day, the hearing topic will be on expanding powers of dental hygienists (HB 1257). On May 31, the committee will discuss nurse midwives (HB 1255). Expanding the authority of these professions is seen by Governor Rendell and others as a way to reduce medical costs by reducing the need for physicians to be involved in providing certain care.
- On May 31, the House Health & Human Services Committee meets in Scranton to discuss Governor Rendell's proposed smoking ban.
- On June 6, Senate Public Health & Welfare Committee will hold a hearing on hospital acquired infections, a key cost issue in Governor Rendell's health reform plan.
- June 6 and June 20 the House Republican Policy Committee will discuss tort reform with former Governor Thornburgh.

- House Democratic Policy Committee meets at U of Pittsburgh June 7 on the \$500 million health initiative sought by the Administration (Jonas Salk Fund).

MISCELLANEOUS.....

BIRTHDAYS...

- June 29 – Pam Stetler
- July 21 – Jeannie Upright
- July 27 – Lori Reese
- August 4 - Donna Coombs



Give it your all