CAR News:
CAR Office Relocation ...

CAR will be moving from its present location at 225 Franklin Street, Boston to its new location at 101 Arch Street, Boston during a three-day period starting Friday, September 9, 2016.

CAR’s new address:

Commonwealth Automobile Reinsurers
101 Arch Street - Suite 400
Boston, MA 02110

CAR will close at 3:00 p.m. on Friday, September 9th and will reopen for business on Monday, September 12th. During the closure, CAR’s telephone system, web site and email service will not be operational. The MAIP Policy Application will not be available from 3:00 p.m. on Friday, September 9th until 7:00 a.m. on Monday September 12th.

Please plan for this system shutdown accordingly. CAR telephone numbers, fax numbers and email addresses will remain the same following the office relocation.

POWER SHUTDOWN
On Friday, September 16th starting at 5:00 p.m. a planned building power shutdown will result in an interruption of service to CAR’s telephone system, web site and email service. The MAIP Policy Application will not be available from 5:00 p.m. on Friday, September 16th until 7:00 a.m. on Monday September 19th.

MAIA News:
Pacesetter Agent of the Year Nominations Wanted ...

Here’s your opportunity to reward a fellow agent for his or her hard work and dedication to the independent agency system. The Henry F. Barry, Jr. Memorial Pacesetter Award is given annually to a person who is “setting the pace” and taking the lead for all agents to follow.

We’ve posted the Pacesetter nomination form on our website. Click here to access the form.

If you have questions regarding the Pacesetter Agent of the Year Award, please feel free to contact Donna McKenna by phone at 800.972.9312 or by email at dmckenna@massagent.com.

In this Issue ...

- CAR News: CAR Office Relocation 1
- MAIA News: Pacesetter Agent of the Year Nominations Wanted 1
- Guest Article: How to Guarantee a Bright Future for Your Agency 3
- YAC News: Young Agent of the Year Nominations Sought 4
- Member Milestones: VT Mutual Honors Employees for 25+ Years of Service 4 - 5
- Arbella Insurance Foundation Presenting Sponsor for Jimmy Fund Radio Telethon 4 - 5
- Thanks Company Partners 5

SUBMIT YOUR NEWS
GOT A STORY?
There is no charge to submit milestones, staff promotions, mergers, relocations, etc... to MAIA. Spread your news today!
SUBMIT NEWS
AGENTS COUNCIL FOR TECHNOLOGY UPDATE:

Risk Advisories: Agents Council for Technology Tackles Changing Nature of Risk ...

The Agents Council for Technology (ACT) ‘Changing Nature of Risk’ work group discusses drones, Peer-to-Peer and other critical trends in the first of six ‘Risk Advisories’ designed to evaluate the independent insurance agency system’s “Changing Nature of Risk: Moving from trends to critical action.”

The ‘Risk Advisories’ are intended to drive strategic discussions among industry leaders to help the distribution channel evolve. The advisories are short, focused overviews which define each trend, the implications to the independent insurance agency distribution, economic impacts, recommended actions and resources for more information.

While the Changing Nature of Risk work group will continue to tackle all major risk trends, the following are the first six issues, each addressed in their own ‘Risk Advisory’:

1. Telematics, in the insurance industry, refers to data about behavior that affects insurance premiums and acceptable level of risk. Telematics can be applied to tracking and diagnostics such as driver behavior, fuel management or maintenance scheduling, but it also includes GPS and navigations systems. Auto policies with premiums based on the telematics data is also referred to as usage-base insurance.

2. Peer-to-Peer (P2P) insurance is new terminology for an old idea. Entities with commonality have been banding together to defray their financial risks for many years. Some of these approaches are known as risk retention groups, safety groups and risk pools. The major differentiator in these new efforts is the innovative use of new technologies that is improving customer service, product distribution and reducing costs.

3. Machine Learning has the ability to impact the distribution channel by providing a new way to communicate with prospects and clients. By supplementing staff with timely, on-demand guidance, agencies, carriers, and vendors can improve service levels and better meet customer needs.

4. Smart Homes & Buildings technology has the potential to have significant impact on underwriting, claims, and loss mitigation for property insurance in the near future. These technologies will enable the insurance industry to monitor, in real-time, the health and status of the insurance exposure (homes and buildings being one of the largest combined assets covered by insurance), as well as use analytics to identify loss potential prior to a loss.

5. Drones continue to grow in popularity and as their useful applications increase, the exposures and insurance needs of consumers and businesses will also increase. In addition to becoming better educated on the impact drones will have on the independent agency system, it’s important to be proactive in developing products that will address personal and commercial consumer needs.

6. The Sharing Economy is an ever-changing space with little to no regulation. Insurance carriers are struggling to create best practices and products in a timely manner, agents are unsure of what questions to ask and are opening themselves up for E&O exposures and consumers are vulnerable because they are unaware of exclusions on their policies.

“ACT is pleased with the Changing Nature of Risk work group efforts to identify and discuss critical issues such as machine learning, drones, smart homes and how they impact the industry,” says Ron Berg, ACT executive director. “Although these technological developments and trends often present challenges, they’re also blooming with opportunities for agencies to build their business and provide better service.”

The complete ‘Risk Advisories’ on each topic are available on the ACT website.
We have all heard and read dire predictions about the future of the independent agent. Most of those predictions were based on assumptions about the fearsome technological and financial power of huge, highly competitive companies who use their might to target consumers directly. But the IA is still here, still relevant, and still a force to be reckoned with. This is particularly true in Massachusetts, where the J.D. Power 2015 Insurance Shopping Study revealed that customers who used a local agent for a new auto insurance policy were more likely than people in other regions to choose an independent agent (61% vs 44%).

In a recent internal research study, Safeco Insurance found that the distribution of auto insurance, by channel, was virtually unchanged from 2010 to 2015. That’s a huge accomplishment when you consider what we were up against during each of those five years. As widely reported, the big-brand, direct-to-consumer carriers spent a combined total of about $6 billion on consumer advertising. This massive spend is designed to commoditize the product and compete on the strength of web sites and mobile apps.

And yet they gained virtually no ground from the independent agent — not even enough to register outside the margin of error. So how can independent agents remain competitive and thrive in a market where the landscape is fluid and threats seem to grow and multiply? By doing what we do best, and learning a few new tricks.

**LOCAL IS A STRENGTH**

In our study, the number of consumers who selected “company is local” as an important factor when shopping for auto insurance grew a whopping 72% from 2010 to 2015. So we know that “local” is a selling point of growing importance. Showing your face regularly at community events will remind people that you’re a living, breathing member of the local business community.

With 20 locations in Massachusetts, the team at HUB International recognizes the importance of establishing a strong local presence. Charley Brophy, president and CEO of HUB International New England, recently told me, “People often ask ‘why don’t you centralize everything and work with one nonprofit organization for the sake of efficiency?’ I explain that it’s a delicate balance. We listen to the leaders within our local branches and based upon their guidance we support organizations they believe bring value to the community. Of course, we also support clients’ philanthropic interests. Customizing your support to meet the needs of each community helps your agency establish meaningful and lasting relationships.”

**“LEAN IN” ON DIGITAL**

The new rules and tools of engagement no longer apply exclusively to millennials. The rest of us have caught up — social media, email drip campaigns, mobile apps and 24x7 access to digital tools are markers of the “new normal” Eastern Insurance, based in Natick, recognizes the power of social media. John Koegel, the agency’s executive vice president of personal lines, told me “Today, agencies must have a strong presence on social media in order to reach customers of all generations. It’s a quick and cost effective way get your brand and messages out there – which in turn supports customer retention and winning new business.”

**INDEPENDENT BUT NOT ALONE**

Even though IAs are “independent” by definition — and there are many strengths that come with independence — the truth is, we’re all part of a community with shared interests and shared risks.

Sharing ideas that work and stories that inspire is to everyone’s advantage. There are so many opportunities to teach and learn from each other — from Mass Agent to online communities like the Independent Agent Community by Safeco on Facebook. If everyone contributed just a fraction of the ideas they consume, the entire community would grow stronger.

By playing to the unique strengths of an IA, developing our digital muscles and creating a shared sense of “brand” we can guarantee a bright future for the independent agent … no matter what challenges lie ahead.
YAC News:
2016 Young Agent of the Year Nominations Sought ...

Now is the time to your nomination for the 2016 James O. Herrick, Jr. Memorial Young Agent of the Year Award. Each year MAIA’s Young Agents Committee presents the award for Young Agent of the Year to an exceptional agent during MAIA’s State Annual Meeting during The Big Event.

Award Criteria: Young Agent of the Year candidates should be a current MAIA Young Agent (under the age of 40 or in the business less than 5 years), who has demonstrated a commitment to the industry and their insurance education, by going above and beyond in their agency and community.

Nominations may come from any individual – colleagues, peers, clients, etc. The award will be presented on Friday, October 28, 2016 at 11:30 am. The nomination deadline is Wednesday, September 14th. Get those nominations in TODAY!

Member Milestones:
Arbella Insurance Foundation Named Presenting Sponsor of 2016 WEEI/NESN Jimmy Fund Radio-Telethon ...

Foundation Continues Longstanding Support of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

The Arbella Insurance Foundation is proud to be the presenting sponsor of the 15th annual WEEI/NESN Jimmy Fund Radio-Telethon, a two-day event at Fenway Park in support of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, a world leader in adult and pediatric cancer care and research. Along with its presenting sponsorship, Arbella's Foundation will make a generous gift of $100,000 to the Jimmy Fund.

Since its founding in 1948, the Jimmy Fund has supported the fight against cancer in children and adults at Boston's Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Dana-Farber supports more than 300,000 patient visits a year, is involved in some 700 clinical trials, and is internationally renowned for its blending of research and clinical excellence. Last year's Radio-Telethon raised more than $3.5 million, and since 2002, the event has generated more than $40 million to help raise the chances of survival for cancer patients worldwide.

Arbella's $100,000 contribution this year is based on several initiatives. Through its “Let’s Strike Out Cancer” campaign, the Foundation contributes $50 for every strike-out by a Red Sox pitcher. Additionally, during the month of August, the Foundation hosts a ‘like’ campaign on Arbella's Facebook page, donating $5 to the Jimmy Fund for every “like” its Jimmy Fund Facebook posts receive, up to $5,000. Finally, Arbella's Foundation also offers a matching gift program, matching donations from Arbella employees and any of its 500 independent agents spread throughout southern New England. This year's contribution brings the total donation from the Foundation and Arbella Insurance Group agents and employees to $641,000 since 2007.

“As a local company, we recognize how fortunate we are to have a world-class cancer institute here in Boston. Cancer has touched countless members of our Arbella family and we are honored to have a patient partner this year, Jodi Killeffer, who shared her incredible story of receiving treatment at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute with us,” said John Donohue, chairman, president and CEO of the Arbella Insurance Group and chairman of the Arbella Insurance Foundation. “Giving back is a big part of our culture at Arbella, and we are proud to partner with our employees and independent agents in support of Dana-Farber because we’re dedicated to helping fund research that will help patients like Jodi, right here in our community.”

The 36-hour broadcast begins at 6 a.m. on Monday, August 29 and will feature inspirational stories from Dana-Farber patients, doctors, researchers and nurses. The Radio-Telethon also showcases interviews and commentaries by local sports heroes on the WEEI Sports Radio Network, heard in Boston on 93.7 FM, and on NESN throughout New England and nationally via NESN National.

To help drive out cancer during the WEEI/NESN Jimmy Fund Radio-Telethon presented by the Arbella Insurance Foundation, call 877-738-1234. For more information or to contribute online, visit jimmyfundradiotelethon.org.
Member Milestones ... continued from page 4
Vermont Mutual Honors Employees for 25+ Years of Service ...

Vermont Mutual Insurance Group® recently held its 34th annual meeting of the “25 Year Club.” Every year Vermont Mutual hosts a reception and dinner to honor those employees, both active and retired, who have given at least 25 years of service to the company.

A total of seventy nine guests were on hand to celebrate and recognize members of this venerable club. Vermont Mutual’s General Counsel, Richard Bland, who celebrates 25 years at Vermont Mutual, is the newest member of the club. Also acknowledged for 30 years of service were Renée Bilodeau, Sharon Chadwick, Christine Lewis and Laurie Stone. Celebrating 35 years at the company were Debi Graves, Shirley Metcalf and Julie Smith and celebrating 40 years at Vermont Mutual was Mary Davis, who started at the company back in 1976. Though the evening was one of celebration, all in attendance joined in a somber and reflective moment of silence for one of its esteemed members, former VP of Claims, Donald W. Bean, who sadly passed away on June 16, 2016.

During the evening, Daniel C. Bridge, Vermont Mutual’s President and CEO, stated: “It is indeed a remarkable achievement to be admitted into this exclusive club and Vermont Mutual is pleased to acknowledge these outstanding employees. We are grateful for their dedication and decades of service and look forward to working alongside these distinguished insurance professionals for many years to come.”

The “25 Year Club” is proud to have 66 members in its ranks, 44 of whom are active and current Vermont Mutual employees.

Mark Your Calendar ... Better Yet, Register TODAY!