

## Message from the Chair

by Vernon K. Veal, CPCU, CLU



**Vernon K. Veal, CPCU, CLU**, is chair of the CPCU Society's Senior Resource Interest Group Committee. He retired following 40 years of service with State Farm. Veal's career involved underwriting, product development and project management; he drafted and implemented original versions of many commercial and personal lines policies in use today. Veal is a past president of the CPCU Society's Central Illinois Chapter, and continues to serve as a member of various committees. He has served the CPCU Society for more than 20 years, including stints as director and regional vice president.

**H**oliday greetings to everyone! This seems appropriate as we are preparing this message in early December.

On behalf of the Senior Resource Interest Group (SRIG), let us note that many say our recession is waning and economic optimism seems to be returning. We hear, however, that investment values will return slowly, with the current jobless picture staying with us for some time. It is our wish that you are doing well with hope for your future. As seniors in our society, we seek to bring encouragement, general optimism and great expectations.

Resilient people live a positive and active life. One's lifestyle, attitude and social interactions key the actions to live and age well. We are never too young or too old to stay sharp and enjoy people. Be a resilient person.

This newsletter, subtitled *Adding Value*, offers ideas to help you in your retirement or to encourage your retirement planning. Adding value comes as we name thoughts for those aware or for others to say "ah ha!"

Reports indicate we increase volunteering in bad economic times. We also lower our giving slightly during the same time period. One study shows that retirees enjoy more time with their families, more time following their interests and hobbies, and more time traveling.

Social media is one of the most dynamic changes occurring in our culture. One way of defining this term is media formed mainly by public groups in a social way. In addition to the social aspect between people, social marketing by businesses also is proving successful and growing every day.

It is estimated that 80 percent of companies are using LinkedIn to recruit new employees. My list of some social networks and blogs provided in earlier newsletter issues is still growing rapidly — adding people and increasing usage. Social media brings a fundamental change in our communication.

Cell phones have become computers with many new mobile uses. The

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## Message from the Chair

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term “app” equates to software applications designed to help users perform various tasks. Access to many apps is now available on mobile devices. The expansion in these areas is only beginning. While social media challenges us to stay current with family, friends and businesses, we can (must?) learn to get involved with these new opportunities.

### Senior Resource Position Paper

After discussion at our interest group meeting in Denver, we created a “position paper” outlining our view of seniors in the CPCU Society. It is published in this newsletter and available on the SRIG Web site, <http://seniorresource.cpcusociety.org/>. Let me offer some comments that add to the information.

We endorse an important role for CPCU Society seniors that differs from their career disciplines. We appreciate continued interest in each primary career group. We seek an easy way to identify and support CPCU senior members who look to us for information on the “senior lifestyle.”

Thank you for continuing your CPCU Society membership. Please feel free to contact me by e-mail at [vvea@verzion.net](mailto:vvea@verzion.net). If you have joined the social media world, let me know about it. If you have thoughts about our position paper, please send them to me. Thank you to those who already have sent e-mails.

Until we share again, this message comes from my chair ... in your humble service. ■

# Senior Resource Interest Group Position Paper

by Senior Interest Group Committee Members

**T**he Senior Resource Interest Group encourages its members to remain active and involved with the CPCU Society by sharing their extensive experience, resources and knowledge with fellow CPCU professionals. It also provides a valuable networking link to its members for sharing or obtaining information related to their post-career phase in life. The benefits and enjoyment of keeping in touch with friends, both professionally and socially, are meaningful and rewarding to these members, regardless of career disciplines.

The “senior group,” comprised of ages 55 and older, has members with homogeneous interests unrelated to their diverse career paths. Information focusing on retirement issues is, at some point, common to all. The Senior Resource Interest Group provides the resources for obtaining this information through its newsletters, resource library and seminars. Examples of the topics offered are: financial planning, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, relocation options, estate planning, travel opportunities and volunteerism.

Another meaningful service offered to seniors is the opportunity to socialize and reminisce at senior dinners and at local chapter gatherings. The Senior Resource Interest Group supports and encourages these types of programs for senior members.

While the membership in the Senior Resource Interest Group has declined since the initiation of the “primary interest group” selection program, it is nonetheless a viable and valuable resource for all Society members considering retirement or already

retired. Without such a service to identify with, these members would be separated from the one network that specifically addresses their issues.

Over the years, senior members have contributed much of their time, talents and money to the CPCU Society and the CPCU-Loman Education Foundation. The Senior Resource Interest Group programs are one way of giving back to seniors and making them feel they are still an appreciated and important part of the CPCU organization.

As pointed out earlier, the Senior Resource Interest Group has an objective of including seniors in both Society- and chapter-level activities for as long as they are able to, or desire to, participate. The Senior Resource Interest Group also assumes the responsibility of providing seniors with the tools needed for maintaining the quality of their lives and the opportunity for staying connected with the CPCU Society and fellow professionals. ■

# CPCU Society Honors Senior Resource Interest Group Member

by Judith A. Brannon, CPCU, ARe, AIAF, API, ARP



**Judith A. Brannon, CPCU, ARe, AIAF, API, ARP, retired in 2004 as a vice president from GuideOne Insurance after 36 years of service. Brannon has been president of the CPCU Society's Iowa Chapter, served as a CPCU Society governor and is a member of the Senior Resource Interest Group Committee. In 2006, she was inducted into the Iowa Insurance Hall of Fame. Brannon currently serves as president of a nonprofit agency, a volunteer for the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) and a part-time worker for Iowa's Senior Health Insurance Information Program.**

**S**enior Resource Interest Group (SRIG) member **Theodore D. Lussem, CPCU, CPIM**, was presented a "Celebrating CPCU Experience" plaque at the Annual Meeting and Seminars in Denver this past September by then-CPCU Society President and Chairman **Marvin Kelly, CPCU, MBA**.

The plaque reads: "Exemplifies CPCU Excellence through dedication to insurance education

and professionalism and through continuous support and contributions to members of the CPCU Society and Iowa Chapter of the CPCU Society."

Kelly said, "During my presidential year, I've had a chance to meet so many terrific members with inspiring 'CPCU life stories.' Among the brightest of these shining lights is the man we're about to honor, Ted Lussem. A lifetime member of the CPCU Society, he's a Rock of Gibraltar of the Iowa Chapter, where he's a past president, historian and all-around general knowledge keeper. Straight out of high school in 1955, he passed INS 21, and then went on to complete the INS series, earn a designation in risk management and achieve his CPCU in 1973. Over the decades he has taught, mentored and inspired countless insurance professionals in Des Moines. So devoted is he to our industry, even the Insurance Women of Des Moines made him an honorary member!"

Lussem, calling himself "an old Iowa semi-retired insurance agent," said, "Wow! ... it has taken me a week to come off cloud nine."

Lussem, by the way, has every property-casualty designation the American Institute for CPCU and the Insurance Institute of America (the Institutes) grant, and he is responsible for a lot of Iowa Chapter members having designations as well because he organizes and leads study groups every time a new designation is offered.

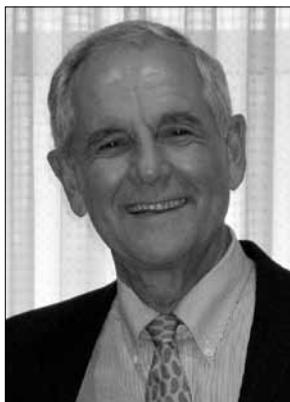
As a fellow member of the Iowa Chapter, I can tell you that Lussem's recognition is well-deserved. He is a mentor extraordinaire within the chapter. More than one CPCU, upon agreeing to go through the officer chairs for our chapter, has agreed "on the condition" that Ted Lussem is still active in the chapter during his or her years of service. Congratulations, Ted! ■



*Marvin Kelly, CPCU, MBA, (pictured on right), presents a plaque of excellence to Ted Lussem, CPCU, CPIM, at the CPCU Society's 2009 Annual Meeting and Seminars in Denver, Colo.*

# Seniors Make Important Contributions to Maryland Chapter

by Ralph J. Monaco, CPCU, AAI, and Charles E. Whitmore, CPCU, AIM



**Ralph J. Monaco, CPCU, AAI,** currently is the executive director of the Insurance Society of Baltimore, which follows a career working with property-casualty insurers and as principal of a brokerage.



**Charles E. Whitmore, CPCU, AIM,** currently is Maryland regional director for the nonprofit ministry Christian Business Men's Connection (CBMC), following a 30-year career with Crawford & Company.

## **Editor's note: A Candidate**

*Mentoring Guide* prepared by the CPCU Society is available on the Society's Web site under "Chapters" and "Candidate Recruitment and Development." This guide includes steps for implementing a candidate mentoring program; suggested duties of a mentor; candidate mentoring contact calendar; suggestions based on chapter size; sample letter to recruit mentors; and sample letter of introduction from mentor to student. The guide is also available from Pat Coleman, CPCU, membership development director, at [pcoleman@cpcusociety.org](mailto:pcoleman@cpcusociety.org).

**C**PCU chapters that welcome the continuing contributions of their senior members will often thrive because of it. The Maryland Chapter is a good example.

A couple of years ago, some of our retired chapter members were talking about the lack of activities for the chapter's older members. They and others like them wanted to stay involved and knew they had a lot to offer. We discussed the successful pairing of young and old in various ways in society and how this dynamic can benefit both groups. We decided to begin a Maryland Chapter mentoring program for CPCU students and enlist the help of our senior members.

The chapter, along with our 2008–2009 President **Lori A. Houser, CPCU**, found additional ways to reach out to our retired members, encouraging them to stay active. This included establishing a Retired Members Committee, which has

since been renamed Senior Resource Committee.

**Patricia J. Wagner, CPCU, AAI,** 2009–2010 chapter president declares, "The name is very descriptive of what and who they are and what they mean to our chapter — a very valuable resource! Our senior and retired members have so much to offer. They benefit by knowing that they are very much needed, and our younger members benefit enormously from their experience and knowledge, as does the chapter. The mentoring program, made up of seniors and 'seasoned' members, has been very successful. They have also established a speakers bureau."

Wagner also related, "Our senior and retired members are sharing their love of learning, respect for our profession and a commitment to ethics with a new generation. Their enthusiasm is infectious! As chapter president, I can honestly say we are a better chapter because of the activities of our Senior Resource Committee."

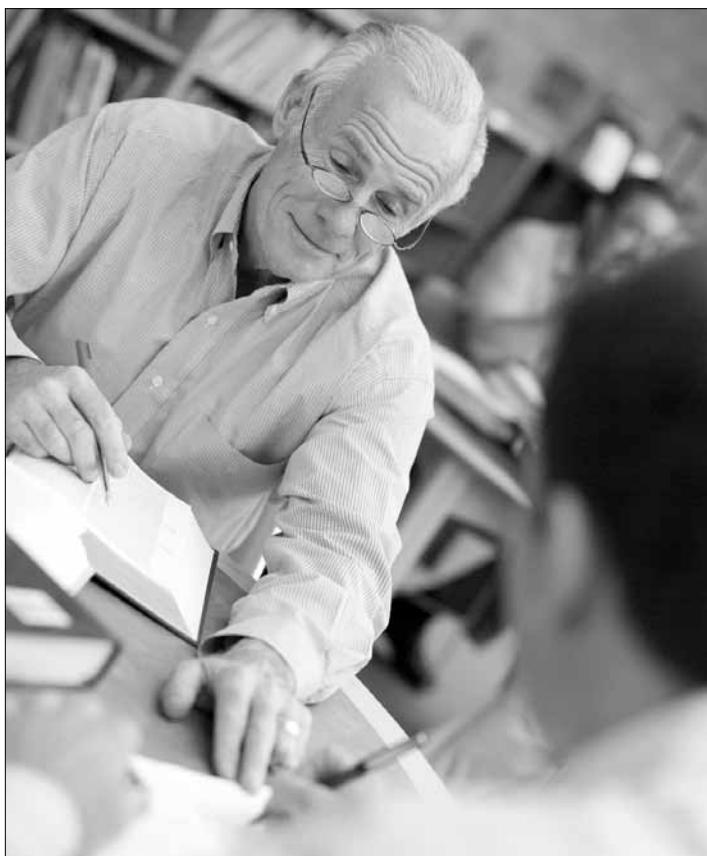
How does the mentoring program work? Our vision is to offer assistance, encouragement and guidance to CPCU candidates in our geographical area. Because the classes are offered through the Insurance Society of Baltimore (ISOB), we have a solid framework on which to build our mentoring program.

The program officially started in May 2008. We decided to target candidates who have completed a CPCU part within the last three years. We obtained this list from **Dotty Platt**, study group coordinator at the American Institute for CPCU/Insurance Institute of America (the

Institutes). Prior to the fall 2008 ISOB class registration, we sent an e-mail letter to each candidate, explaining the mentoring program and inviting them to participate. We also sent an e-mail letter to all of the members of our chapter and solicited their involvement as mentors.

The results were encouraging. We received positive responses from 10 candidates who needed help, and 20 chapter members, including six senior members, who volunteered to serve as mentors.

We then assigned each candidate to a mentor by matching the mentee's needs with a mentor who was comfortable with the particular subject matter with which the candidate needed help.



We also formulated a "Guide for Mentors," which provides student study tips. Last but not least, we maintain an ongoing record of mentees and their assigned mentors, so we can track their progress.

It's always gratifying to be able to relate examples of individual success. One candidate in particular contacted us because she was struggling with CPCU 553. This was her last part. One of our mentors met with her and reviewed the areas with which she had difficulty. A few weeks later, she excitedly contacted us to say she had passed the exam and was now a CPCU!

Our goal is to communicate the mentoring program to CPCU candidates in July of each year, prior to the ISOB fall registration. Having this service available has also helped increase our class registrations. This program is still relatively new, and we expect adjustments to be made as the program progresses.

We encourage other chapters to adopt similar programs and reach out to their senior members. We are available to anyone interested in working

with seniors or setting up a chapter mentoring program. Please contact us if we can help. Ralph Monaco can be reached at [isob@verizon.net](mailto:isob@verizon.net). Chuck Whitmore can be reached at [cwhitmore@cbmc.com](mailto:cwhitmore@cbmc.com).

After many years in our fine industry, we can say there are great opportunities for those of us who have enjoyed successful careers to embrace the spirit of our Code of Ethics and lend a hand to our newer colleagues who are trying to better themselves. ■

# Volunteering — You Can Make a Difference!

by Richard A. Vanderbosch, CPCU, CLU, AIS



**Richard A. Vanderbosch, CPCU, CLU, AIS**, retired in 1999 after a 36-year career with State Farm. Named a CPCU Society Standard Setter in October 1998, he continues to be active in Society activities. Vanderbosch is a member of the CPCU Society's Colorado Chapter and the Senior Resource Interest Group.

**M**aking a difference in our communities and the lives of others can come in many different ways. A simple dictionary definition of giving is “the transfer of one’s own possessions to another.” This can be in the form of money, physical possessions or the giving of one’s time and talents. The last of these is the topic of this article, and for all practical purposes is called **volunteering**.

To give or not to give — that is the question. In this economy, many of us have tightened our belts and pulled back on some of our charitable contributions. But, we can still give without creating a financial burden by donating some of our time and talents. These donations, while not directly monetary, have a similar impact by offsetting the need for financial resources.

No matter what our roles in life, we develop our knowledge and expertise through many years of schooling, training and job experience — tweaking here and there as we mature through our work and our lives. Rewards and recognition come in many forms. One form, which often is overlooked, is that of personal satisfaction. This is the “feel good” that comes from giving back of our knowledge, our physical labor or our time to support a favorite cause or to help organizations that provide services to those in need. These groups depend on volunteers to help sustain their programs.

Now that we realize we really are needed, how do we get started? How do we determine what we have to offer and whom do we call to make ourselves available? All of our talents are individualistic. We may have an expertise in a specific field, such as insurance, accounting, law, plumbing, carpentry or electrical. Or it may be that we have good clerical or computer skills. Whatever our talent might be, there is always a place and a need for it in the world of volunteering.

The first step is to identify just what we can do and how much time we have available to do it — an hour a day, three hours a week, two days a month ... whatever fits our respective lifestyles. This should be identified up front, based on our own schedule

and commitments. Next, identify those organizations that you would like to help, and select the one that you care most about or feel has the greatest needs. Call this organization and offer your skills. If your availability and talents are compatible with their needs, you will have an opportunity to volunteer. If not, try another organization until you find one that is a match on both sides.

Volunteering opportunities can be found in the phone book under organizations, churches, social services, schools or hospitals. Other resources are advertisements in the newspapers or on television programs requesting volunteers. Here are just a few of the many possibilities: Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Salvation Army, Meals on Wheels, Habitat for Humanity and Family Outreach Centers.

Volunteerism is always a personal choice, and, as such, is initiated by you. Your time, your talents and your commitment are entirely your call. Why not give it a try — become a volunteer! You’ll be glad you did!

**You** can make a difference! ■



# Are You Ready for Medicare Part D 2010?

by Judith A. Brannon, CPCU, ARe, AIAF, API, ARP

**Editor's note:** This information comes from a November 2009 press release from Iowa's Senior Health Insurance Information Program. The information has been revised to make it applicable countrywide. It is edited and reprinted with permission.

**T**he new year is just around the corner, and for people on Medicare, the last two months leading up to 2010 are particularly important. The Medicare Part D drug plans for next year were announced in October, and Medicare enrollees need to take a good look at what is offered to make sure they are enrolled in a plan that provides the best coverage at the lowest cost.

The period Nov. 15 through Dec. 31, 2009, includes key dates. During this time, you can enroll in a Medicare prescription drug (Part D) plan if you missed the enrollment deadline earlier. If you already have a Part D plan, you can choose to enroll in a different plan for 2010.

***Plans can change from year to year, so you shouldn't assume that the plan you were happy with this year will necessarily be the best plan for you in 2010.***

Your first step should be taking a close look at any changes for 2010 — the premium, the amount you will pay each time you fill a prescription, and the drugs covered by each plan (called the "formulary"). Plans can change from year to year, so you shouldn't assume that the plan you were happy



with this year will necessarily be the best plan for you in 2010.

There are several changes to Part D plans for next year. The maximum deductible allowed will be \$310, up from \$295 in 2009. The coverage gap, or "donut hole," will be reached when total drug costs (paid by you and the Part D plan) reaches \$2,830. Once your out-of-pocket drug costs reach \$4,550, you'll reach Medicare's catastrophic coverage, where you pay only 5 percent of the cost of your prescriptions.

The best tool to help you with comparing plans is the Medicare Web site, [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov). This site allows you to enter your prescriptions and pharmacy and get a comparison of the plans based on total annual cost. If you don't have access to a computer, you might ask a family member to help, visit your local library or call your state's State Health Insurance Program (SHIP). A SHIP is available in every state (sometimes under different names) and offers free, confidential

and objective assistance comparing plans. You can find the number for your state's SHIP organization listed on the back cover of your *Medicare & You 2010* booklet or call 1-800-MEDICARE.

Once again, in 2010, Medicare is offering extra help with drug costs through Part D. If your income is below \$16,245 as an individual (\$21,855 couple) and your resources are below \$12,510 (\$25,010 couple), you might get help with your Part D premium and drug costs. (Note: these amounts vary in Alaska and Hawaii.) Call your state SHIP or the Social Security Administration, (800) 772-1213, if you think you might qualify. ■



# Senior Resource Interest Group

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*Adding Value*

CPCU Society  
720 Providence Road  
Malvern, PA 19355  
[www.cpcusociety.org](http://www.cpcusociety.org)

**Address Service Requested**

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**Senior Resource Interest Group**  
<http://seniorresource.cpcusociety.org>

**Chair**  
Vernon K. Veal, CPCU, CLU  
E-mail: [vvea@verizon.net](mailto:vvea@verizon.net)

**Editor**  
Judith A. Brannon, CPCU, ARe, AIAF, API, ARP  
E-mail: [jabrwj@msn.com](mailto:jabrwj@msn.com)

**Assistant Editor**  
Irwin Lengel, CPCU, ARM, AAM  
E-mail: [iglengel@aol.com](mailto:iglengel@aol.com)

**CPCU Society**  
720 Providence Road  
Malvern, PA 19355  
(800) 932-CPCU  
[www.cpcusociety.org](http://www.cpcusociety.org)

**Director of Program Content and Interest Groups**  
John Kelly, CPCU

**Managing Editor**  
Mary Friedberg

**Associate Editor**  
Carole Roinestad

**Design/Production Manager**  
Joan A. Satchell

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## Volunteer Leaders, Rising Stars to Gather in Phoenix

The CPCU Society's current and emerging leaders will focus on strategic issues affecting the Society and your chapter at the 2010 Leadership Summit. The conference will be held on April 29–May 1, 2010, at the Pointe Hilton Squaw Peak Resort in Phoenix, Ariz.

All volunteer leaders are urged to attend this distinguished gathering to chart the Society's future course and participate in a free-flowing exchange of ideas on vital topics.

The Summit will include:

- Board of Directors meeting.
- Committee, task force and interest group meetings.
- CPCU Society Center for Leadership courses. Open to all members.
- Chapter and interest group leader workshops.
- Leadership luncheons with special guest speakers.

Visit [www.cpcusociety.org](http://www.cpcusociety.org) for a sneak preview.