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Legislative Alerts from

<http://www.nahu.org/>

Don't Forget to Mark Your Calendars

RGAHU will be sponsoring their annual Educational Symposium. We are scheduled to offer 6 hours of continuing education, and lots fun and prizes. This all day symposium is scheduled for **May 9th, 2003.**

Keep your eyes open for e-mails and upcoming newsletters for details. This year's chairperson is Cyndi Garcia. If you are interested in sponsoring a break or vendor table, Please call Cyndi at 923-8176.

***SILENT AUCTION AT SYMPOSIUM
GREAT MOTHER'S DAY GIFT ITEMS
Proceeds to benefit Rachel's Courtyard
For more information
Contact Joan Punt @ 883-0007***

Continuing Education

Date: May 9th

Time: 7:30am to 10:30am

All Day Symposium

**Legislative Report
by: Anne Sperling**

Capitol Conference is here and gone. The conference was exciting, informative and well worth the trip. "Kudos" to Eva Jean Fomalont for being the National President and heading up this impressive event. She and the staff of NAHU had the great vision to address timely topics and to educate us on the National Legislative Issues. Some of the timely topics included HIPAA Privacy, Prescription Drugs, Media Relations, Long Term Care, and New Trends in Health Plans.

The NM State Association will be hosting a 2-hour Continuing Education addressing the topics of Capitol Conference as well as NM Legislation on April 23rd in Santa Fe and I will be teaching the class. The proceeds from the class will go into the State Legislative Defense Budget for year 2003-2004. The State Legislative Defense Budget benefits all members from every chapter around the state. So, please mark your luncheon calendar for Santa Fe on the 23rd and register early. The registration form is attached to this newsletter.

Unfortunately, money talks when it comes to politics. NM is one of the few states that has no Political Action Committee fund (aka PAC) for supporting the candidates of our liking. Other states have instituted PACs whereby the agents donate \$10.00 per month into the PAC by way of automatic bank draft. There is a National PAC called HUPAC and every member can contribute to this PAC right now and I encourage you to do so for National issues. Also, please voice your opinion [to NAHU] on to whom the proceeds should go. NM still needs to set its PAC up and it can start with donations from members at the class on the 23rd! I'll have more information about that set-up at the class.

Why is a PAC necessary? Well, few other industries are as heavily regulated as health insurance.

Therefore, your success, and that of your clients, is directly dependent upon the actions of Congress and the NM Legislature. It is absolutely critical that we help those members who are willing to consider our point of view in support of private sector health insurance.

Lastly, I am the proud recipient of the NM State Legislative Achievement Award. It's quite a thrill to see your name flash up on a giant screen and have 600 people clapping for you as you accept an award. My thanks go to the nomination committee for nominating me and submitting a winning nomination package. It's an experience I will treasure my whole life.

**Rio Grande Association of Health
Underwriters President's Message
By P. J. Sugg, RHU**

We just got back from Washington, D.C. I personally left on Thursday, March 20th, the day the war started, flew American Airlines directly into Washington National, and actually had no problems. We arrived on time and continued with some wonderful meetings and listened to some great speakers. Most of all, we had the pleasure of listening to Tommy G. Thompson, Secretary of Health and Human Services. We will be giving you a brief overview of our Capital Conference at our May symposium, followed by a more complete report at our June meeting.

I hope to see all of you at our April breakfast meeting. Our issues are very important and we need your support.

We were especially proud to be at this Capitol Conference, as Eva Fomalont is the National President.

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT
By Julia Moore**

The Education Committee consists of Angela Romero, Heddy Long, and Julia Moore. The Education Committee meets the last Friday of every month from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at 2929 Carlisle (behind Langell's Art Supply).

Please mark your calendars now for Continuing Education that will be offered in the upcoming months:

February 14, 2003 Day on the Hill in Santa Fe, 7:30 a.m. at the Hotel Santa Fe.

More detailed information will be published in RGAHU's monthly newsletter.

March 13 & 14, 2003 NMSAHU will sponsor a Joint Spring Continuing Education Seminar with The Independent Insurance Agents of NM (IIANM) at the Albuquerque Hilton. Twenty-four different classes plus Ethics (15 hours of CE) taught by 20 instructors are being offered during the two days for P & C, L & H and Financial Service agents/brokers. Thursday, March 13, Sue Bisbee, COBRA Compliance, will present 4 hours CE on HIPAA Updates 2003 on March 13 from 8:00 –12:00 a.m. Thursday afternoon, Anne Sperling, Daniels Insurance, will present 3 hours CE on the New Mexico Legislative Environment for Group Insurance. On Friday, March 14, Alberta Priest, AMP Consultants, will present a 3 hour CE on the Cafeteria Plan (Section 125) from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Health Underwriter members may register under the IIANM member cost. Information booklets were distributed at the January Symposium and can be obtained from Julia Moore.

March 14, 2003 RGAHU Breakfast meeting, 7:30 a.m., Sheraton Hotel. Speaker: Robert Simmons, VP of Provider & Medical Affairs for Health Care Horizons. "Healthcare Cost Increases – Everyone is a Villain"- 2 hours CE.

April 11, 2003 RGAHU Breakfast meeting, Sheraton Hotel. 2 hr. CE – Summary of Capitol Conference Legislative Issues that affect our industry.

May 9, 2003 RGAHU All Day Symposium - Details will follow at a later date

June 13, 2003 Open Election of Officers

July 11, 2003 Open Installation of Officers

August 15, 2003 Open

As you can see, Continuing Education is extremely important for our association members! No one should be lacking the necessary 15 hours of CE required by the State when the end of September rolls around. Please feel free to contact Julia Moore at 890-1539 or Angela Romero at 821-9330 to share ideas, suggestions or input on future Continuing Education speakers or topics. Even better...become a committee member and take an active role in the education process to make a difference!

Treasury Report By Peggy Chavez

Checking Acct. Balance as of today: \$5041.68;
Savings Acct. Balance is \$11,123.50

Written annual budget and financial statements are available by contacting RGAHU Treasury Chairperson, listed on page 12 of this newsletter

Media/Communications Report By Alberta Priest, NMSAHU Media Relations Chair

The following information was presented to our committee members at our last Media Relations meeting by Joan Punt. At first glance you might wonder why I wanted to put it in the newsletter. As representatives of NAHU, you are often the first contact someone will have with the Organization.

You may also be the first to become aware of a situation or occasion where we could participate in a community affair and ultimately bring our message to other agents and the general public. Please contact us if you become aware of an upcoming event in which we could participate or share our knowledge and experience and further NAHU.

NAHU COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE TOP TEN TIPS FOR INCREASING PRESS ATTENDANCE OR AWARENESS

1. Create an email list of media contacts with interest in RGAHU issues.
2. Call local reports and build a relationship and some trust.
3. Provide press kits at the beginning of the meeting on our chapter
4. Do not provide press kits in advance – they will use that material and not show up.
5. Be concise and current – don't comment on "old news" that's been reported already
6. Have a media event – invite contacts
 - A. Have a relevant topic that ties into current news.
 - B. Plan date carefully; don't want to compete with another "big news" event
 - C. Schedule early in the day
 - D. Work on locations that fit the reporter's area of coverage

- E. Schedule speakers that will attract reporters attention
 - F. Make event short and concise
 - G. Provide FOOD
7. Shop your event to reporters in advance; see if they would likely attend. (It might be a “been done” event and no longer news-worthy.)
 8. Cultivate stories in the trade press vs. local daily newspaper. Then show local paper your “published” piece.
 9. Attempt a partnership for an event with local health carrier or community with a current topical issue; prescriptions for Seniors (AARP), local Health Fair, Governor-elect’s transition team.
 10. Invite press to any event that helps the needy and underprivileged; our silent auction for Rachel’s Courtyard, etc.

Our next meeting will be on February 11. Please call 243-2601 if you would like to attend or want more information.

**Northern NM Association of Health Underwriters President’s Report
by Anne Sperling**

No Report

**Membership Report, Rio Grande Association by Cyndi Garcia
State Association by Terry LeVois,**

The State’s current membership is 154 members. The Northern Association has 11 members; Rio Grande has 142 members and we have 1 at large State Association member.

In the months of December and January we added five new members. Congratulations to Judy Anderson with the Benefits Group; Rosemary Koffman with Manual Lujan Insurance; Kim Polyard with Strategic Employee Benefits; Joe Caraway with Dental Source and Howard M. Shaver with the Shaver Group. Welcome to our new member. All new members to RGAHU will receive their first breakfast meeting free. Again, remember you receive NAHU Bucks for sponsoring a new member.

On January 16, several members from the Association held a Membership Blitz at P.J. Sugg’s office. Calls were made to brokers and agents in the State to invite them to join the New Mexico

Association of Health Underwriters. Many contacts were made and next month’s report will give final numbers on new members as a result of this blitz. Thank You to Anne Sperling, Julia Moore, P.J. Sugg, Alberta Priest and Genia Chambellan for all of the calls they made. Terry handled faxing and mailing applications as requested and will be tracking the results.

Reminder to everyone about the new payment options available for NAHU membership. This was a very good selling point when the Membership Blitz took place. You now have the option to have the membership fee drafted on a monthly basis from a bank account, or have it billed to a credit card account each month. There is no additional fee or increased membership fee for this. It is a service being offered by NAHU so you don’t have to come up with the entire annual fee at once.

Check out the NAHU website, www.nahu.org. If you need assistance using the NAHU website or just have general questions regarding membership, please feel free to contact Terry LeVois at (505) 923-8177 or e-mail tlevois@phs.org or Cyndi Garcia at (505) 923-8176 or e-mail cmgarcia@phs.org.

**NM State Association of Health Underwriters President’s Message
By Anne Sperling**

The January symposium was a great success. The attendance was at an all time high with over 100 participants. The food was great – fresh veggies and dip for the afternoon snack – how novel! The speakers were well prepared and delivered their material in an organized and entertaining manner. The HIPAA privacy material was vast and complex, but extremely vital in importance to what we do everyday. Any member who did not attend this class on HIPAA privacy really missed out because we got an earful from the carriers we write with everyday...Blue Cross, Cimarron, Delta Dental, Lovelace, and Presbyterian. If you did miss the class, there is a great article in the January HIU magazine about HIPAA compliance – check it out.

I thank all those who attended the symposium for making it a great success. I thank all the contributors including our speakers: Thom Turbett from the Independent Agents Association, Gerry Katz from Florida, Gail Davalos and her consortium of speakers on HIPAA. I also thank the volunteers who arranged for the room and food and CE’s – Alberta Priest and Julia Moore. Terry LeVois and Peggy Chavez did their wonderful job of tending the door and preparing the CE certificates. Genia Chambellan, Bernadette Mares, and many from the

Rio Grande Board helped with passing out the sign-in boards and collecting questions from the audience. Teamwork is what it's all about!

On the national level, Kevin Corcoran, NAHU Executive VP, informed me that NAHU will be doing another member needs assessment survey. Several thousand randomly selected members will be asked questions addressing all aspects of NAHU's operations. The Board of Trustees will use these results in its strategic planning. Please be on the lookout for the survey and be prompt in completing it and returning it to NAHU.

Capitol Conference is coming up quickly in March. Three members from the state board will be attending including yours truly, Alberta Priest and Julia Moore. In April, I will be teaching a class on what we learned in DC for your benefit. The class will be repeated in Santa Fe this year.

Remember, February is **DAY ON THE HILL** month. There will be no CE given on **February 14th** because the state of NM Insurance Department does not

recognize legislative endeavors as continuing education material. Please plan on attending and part RSVP to Marcie Abeyta at mabeyta@talbotcorp.com. Please look at your invitation, which was sent to you via email last week for details. See you in Santa Fe!

The President's call was overwhelmed with discussion regarding membership. **Our region is DEAD LAST** in recruiting new members. New Mexico is behind in its membership goals as are the rest of the states with the exception of Colorado. I encourage our members to talk to your colleagues who are not members and encourage them to join. With each new member you enroll, you receive \$5.00 as NAHU bucks that can purchase any of the NAHU endorsed products. Please contact Terry LeVois or Cyndi Garica for more details. Our membership blitz that occurred this month went very well and at last count I believe we enrolled 10 new members with a potential of 10 more. Thank you to all those who joined and all those who aided in the process of asking members to join

May Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
				RGAHU Board Meeting 8:30am		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
		Regional Legislative Conf. Call 9:00am	National Membership Conf. Call 1pm	NMSAHU Board Meeting 8:30am	All Day Symposium	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	President's Conf. Call					
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
					RGAHU Newsletter input due	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

NM State Board of Directors 2002 - 2003

Title	Name	Phone	E-Mail
President	Anne Sperling	982-4302	Asperling@dii-biz.com
Past President	Julia Moore	890-1539	Jtm7105@aol.com
President-Elect	Vacant		
Secretary	Bernadette Mares		
Treasurer	Laura Steen	923-8304	Lsteen@phs.org
Membership	Terry LeVois	923-8177	Tlevois@comcast.net
Communications	Alberta Priest	243-2601	Ampcinc@aol.com
Awards	Genia Chambellan	883-4777	Geniac@deltadentalnm.com
Legislative	Judy Anderson	888-7909	Jeander@aol.com
National President	Eva Fomalont	855-7111	Evaf@deltadentalnm.com
RGAHU President	PJ Sugg	883-6850	Pjsugg@qwest.net
NNMAHU President	Anne Sperling	982-4302	Asperling@dii-biz.com
Regional Vice President	Scott Leavitt	208-377-1428	

RGAHU BOARD MEMBERS FOR 2002 - 2003

Title	Name	Phone Number	E-Mail
President	PJ Sugg	883-6850	Pjsugg@qwest.net
Past President	Melissa Sherrard	798-4545	Msherrard@hchorizons.com
President-Elect	Cynthia Tapia	855-7127	Cynthiat@deltadentalnm.com
Secretary	Kim Sauter	923-8169	Ksauter@phs.org
Treasurer	Peggy Chavez	923-5624	Pechavez@phs.org
Membership	Cyndi Garcia	923-8176	Cmgarcia@phs.org
Communications	Robert Long	883-0007	Bobby.long@ucci.com
Awards	Sondra Pattison	816-2099	Sondra_sorroche@bcbsnm.com
Legislative	Lindsay Cardona	766-9676	Lindsay@dii-biz.com
Education	Angela Romero	821-9330	Angelaromeroins@aol.com
Operations	Catherine Pozega	262-3016	Catherine.pozega@cigna.com
National President	Eva Fomalont	855-7111	Evaf@deltadentalnm.com