

March 2006

An Internet User's Guide to Useful Industry Information

by VCAHU Leslative Chair Connie Zarkowski

For all of you “leg” junkies out there, I'd like to tell you about some terrific online resources. Now why would you want to spend your valuable time reading about the latest political chatter? Well, for one thing, you keep on top of the trends in the marketplace. For another, you become a resource to your clients. Both of these add to your sales income and improve your level of professionalism. So here are some resources for your Internet library:

- **nahu.org** – Our national association website. Here you will find the latest federal legislation and information on everything from association health plans, to broker compensation, to the Avian Flu. Some links are only available to members. Others are designed for the general public, such as how to find an agent. Check this site out to see how your organization is working for you.
- **cahu.org** – Our state association website. Check out CAPRAP by John Lovell, our lobbyist in Sacramento. He gives his unique take on legislation in our state assembly and senate. He has links to the candidates as well.
- **politics1.com/ca.htm** – This website tells you about political candidates: who is running and for which office. It has links to the candidates, too.

In addition, there are numerous “fun” links to various blogs, political cartoons and other informative sites: **www.garamendi.org/files/Priced-Out-Health-Care-in-California.pdf** is the report authored by Insurance Commissioner Garamendi that criticized HSAs and was disproved by the Galen Institute and statistical studies. **benefitnews.com** is a site that offers a subscription to receive daily updates relating to employee benefits. It is designed for HR and insurance professionals. They also provide web seminars for CE credit and informative articles to keep you abreast of the latest benefit trends.

insurancenewsnet.com headlines the latest industry happenings. **ambest.com/sales/bestday** is on the A.M. Best website **ambest.com**. It is a free subscription for daily insurance news alerts sent by email. For a chilling insight, go to **www.healthcareforall.org/kuehl.html** and read the interview with State Senator Sheila Kuehl. Our own **venturacountystar.com** has local information about health insurance issues, including a story on the most recent effort to socialize insurance for uninsured children here in Ventura County.

Finally, as Debbie Blander, Chris Denton, Aline Roberts and I head off to Washington, D.C., for Capital Conference this month, come share a little of the experience by visiting the following sites.

whitehouse.gov and **archives.gov** to view the national treasures; **si.edu** to look at the Smithsonian Institution, which is a series of national museums that mostly line the Washington Mall ; **<http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln/sites/memorial.htm>**, a great site for the Lincoln Memorial with a link to the National Park Service that handles all of the monuments in Washington; **arlingtoncemetery.org**, with numerous photos to give you an idea of the emotional impact that comes from visiting this sacred place – be sure to read about Arlington House for a historical surprise; **aoc.gov**, the architect website for the latest Capital renovations which I've seen take shape over the past few years – check out the aerial views that we won't be able to see; **www.thecapitol.net/MapsAndDirections/capitolhillmap.htm**, an overall guide to the nation's capital with links; **mountvernon.org** (turn on your sound) where we will attend a HUPAC event, and my favorite: **supremecourthistory.org**, an informative link to the Supreme Court where I have been fortunate to attend several oral arguments in front of former Chief Justice Rehnquist. Enjoy your virtual tour! When we come back, there *will* be a quiz (just kidding).

President's Message

March madness is upon us in more ways than one. Not only are the top NCAA teams going head-to-head, but it's a very busy time in our industry as well. We have the Blue Cross Focal Renewal around the corner, Aetna changing 17 of their plans effective April 1, Health Net introducing 4 new plans effective May 1 and a host of other carrier updates. It's hard to stay on top of it all!



Because it is such a busy time of year, VCAHU will not hold its Annual Sales Symposium in April. This year, it will be held on Friday, June 2. We are very excited about the program for the symposium. We have booked James Lloyd to speak to us during the symposium lunch. James is a motivational speaker who will be giving a talk about dealing with your clients during good times as well as adverse times. He is so uplifting and a pleasure to be around. You will not want to miss this program. More details on the Annual Sales Symposium to follow.

Our February meeting was super! Tom Bruderle from NAHU gave an excellent and informative speech. During the meeting, we signed up some new members and made a nice contribution to HUPAC.

Our March meeting will offer one hour of CE credit on electronic medical records. I look forward to seeing you all there on Tuesday, March 21.

Have a great month, and try to stay sane during all the madness!

Debbie Blander
VCAHU President
2005-2006



VCAHU Hosts NAHU VP

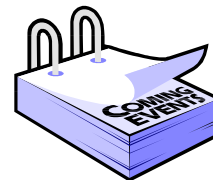
by Karen Wood, RHU, Education Chair

Thank you to the 50+ in attendance at our February meeting in spite of the day change. Our attendance at this meeting was proof that our enhanced communications are working and that our membership is dedicated to staying informed about issues at both the local and national levels.

For those who missed the meeting, Tom Bruderle from NAHU (pronounced NAYHOO by Tom) was our February speaker. Tom's program gave us an overview of what is happening in the way of legislative activity in Washington, D.C. If nothing else, I hope this gave everyone a good idea of why it is so important for us to support HUPAC as well as our own CAHU PAC. It is so important for NAHU to be represented, as well as respected, in Washington (see related photo, page 4).

As our chapter year draws to a close, stay tuned for more information about our April and May programs.

Coming Events



- **March 21** - Monthly Membership lunch meeting (11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.), Courtyard by Marriott - Oxnard, **Topic: "Electronic Medical Records" (1 hour CE)**
- **April 4** - Board meeting, 9 - 11 a.m.
- **April 18 or 20** - Monthly Membership lunch meeting (11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.), Courtyard by Marriott - Oxnard, program TBD
- **May 1** - Golf Tournament, 11:30 a.m. registration, 1 p.m. shotgun start, Sterling Hills Golf Club
- **May 2** - Board meeting, 9 - 11 a.m.
- **May 16** - Monthly Membership lunch meeting (11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.), **Topic: "Travel Insurance" (1 hour CE)**

Membership Report

by Jason Herbison, Membership Chair

Our February meeting was billed as “bring a non-member to lunch day.” A lot of effort and planning went into the delivery of the event; the board members contacted every member and enlisted their support and attendance. Our Chapter President Debbie Blander secured our speaker, Tom Brudele, NAHU’s VP of congressional affairs, who gave us a very informative presentation from his perspective as a Washington, D.C. insider. Several members brought their non-member colleagues. Together our efforts paid off, as we had six new members and two associates sign up.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Company</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>
Evan Gilroy	Standard Insurance	Member	ED Darling
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Stephanie Berger	Warner Pacific	Member	Debbie Blander
Judy Cajiuat-Mueller	Blue Cross	Associate	Chris McConathy
Betty Briggs	Briggs Benefits	Associate	

VCAHU Continues with Contributions to State and Federal Political Action Committees

by Christopher Denton, PAC Chair



February was all about HUPAC, and the VCAHU board voted to have a raffle to raise funds for our national political action committee. We sold 30 tickets and raised \$600.

Thank you to all the chapter members who stepped up and bought a ticket. Congratulations to

our winner, Aline Roberts, who won a portable DVD player. I know she will put it to good use.

Each month I preach the same old story about how every member needs to support the CAHU PAC. All we ask for is a \$1 a day. This is about how much you spend each day, on average, at the local coffee house. Give back to an industry or career that has rewarded you many times

over. Better yet, check out our Gem Stone Contribution levels, and think how prestigious it would be to be part of the club.

Ruby: \$21 per month
Emerald: \$42 per month
Sapphire: \$60 per month
Diamond: \$85-\$465 per month

For more information, or to have a contribution form sent to you, call me at (818) 228-6537 or email me at christopher.denton@blueshieldca.com.

February PAC Contributions

Debit card: \$182
Credit card: \$536
One time donation of \$1,000

NAHU VP of Congressional Affairs Addresses VCAHU



NAHU VP Tom Bruderle delivered first-hand federal legislative information to attendees at the February VCAHU luncheon. In a letter to our chapter, Tom thanked VCAHU for the opportunity to address our membership and for making a charitable contribution in his name to the Ventura County Hospital Pediatric Unit. Tom is pictured here with VCAHU Education Chair Karen Wood.

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