

What's New?

With this issue we're introducing a new look for **Member Briefing.**

We'd appreciate your comments and suggestions.



Member Briefing

A Newsletter for Members of the Uniformed Services Benefit Association

Got a Question?

New Call Center Has the Answer

- Can I keep my life insurance coverage after I separate from the service?
- What is the difference between term insurance and whole life insurance?
- When is whole life a better choice than term insurance?
- Is children's coverage available?

These are just a few of the questions the USBA® Call Center can answer for you. The center opened in February this year, and concentrates on the sales function previously handled by Member Support in addition to Customer Service. This improvement makes it easier for you to talk to product specialists who are highly informed about the products and services available. They can answer your questions as well as offer advice on all of your options so you can decide which products best fit your needs.

Some of the services the Call Center product specialists provide include:

- Responding to members' phone calls and e-mail requests for information.
- Following up on calls from prospects who have seen our television ads on the History Channel and other cable channels.
- Following up with people to whom

they've mailed information and forms, and seeing if there are any questions they can answer.

- Completing applications over the phone and then sending the forms for the customers' signature. (If customers prefer, they can fill out the

(cont'd on page 2)



From left, Sandra Ruess, Mary Chestnut, Linda Smith and Sandy Smith.

President's Perspective

Celebrations Fill Calendar

It seems fitting that we celebrate a lot of human achievements in the spring. Our family calendar fills up with things like awards ceremonies, weddings and graduations (preschool, college and everything in between). We may even welcome a new baby within our circle of family and friends – or, in our case,

(cont'd on page 2)

New Call Center Has the Answer

continued from the front



applications on their own and send them to USBA.)

- Working with customers during the underwriting process, to answer questions and keep them informed of progress being made.

The Call Center's phone lines are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. After business hours and on weekends, our answering service takes the information and asks for the best time to call back. A Call Center representative then returns

the call on the next business day.

"One benefit we offer is that one product specialist becomes your representative, so you don't have to start over each time with a different person," notes **Sandy Smith**, Call Center Director.

Sandy and three product specialists have each earned state life and health insurance licenses. They are also pursuing continuing education and completing requirements for designations such as Associate Customer Service (ACS) and Fellow of Life Management Institute (FLMI). These designations are awarded upon successful completion of coursework through the Life Office Management Association (LOMA).

Here's information to introduce you to members of the Call Center:

Sandy Smith, FLMI, ACS, is in her fifth year with USBA. She has spent most of her career in the life insurance industry and has been a licensed insurance agent for almost nine years.

Mary Chestnut, Product Specialist, has over 16 years of life and health insurance experience and joined USBA nearly a year ago. She recently obtained her Life and Health Insurance License, and has passed her first LOMA exam.

Sandra Ruess, ACS, Product Specialist, is in her fourth year with USBA. Previously, Sandra had worked for over 12 years in the insurance

industry. She has recently obtained her Missouri Life and Health Insurance License, and has passed nine LOMA exams, including eight of 10 leading to the FLMI designation.

Linda Smith, Product Specialist, joined USBA in 1998. She was intro-

duced to the association by her mother-in-law, Julie Smith, who was USBA's first employee and worked for the company for over 30 years until retiring. Linda recently obtained her Life and Health Insurance License and is working on her fourth LOMA class.

 To reach the center, call 1.800.368.7021

President's Perspective

continued from the front

two new babies! One of our USBA employees and her husband are expecting a set of twins this month. New opportunities are opening up all around us!

If you or members of your family are among those graduating, getting married, or being promoted this spring, congratulations! It's exciting to think of what the future holds. (And while you're enjoying the thrill of moving out into a new venture, I hope you'll also take some time to make sure the ones you love are protected with enough USBA group life insurance.) Take a few minutes now to review your insurance needs and the policies you currently carry with a view of making sure you have a dynamic plan which will cover all your needs. Then, call one of our qualified representatives or visit our Web site for information on any changes you would like to make.

As spring 2000 heralds new beginnings, why not take advantage of an opportunity to add some excitement to your life by trying something new? Every month we like to treat a group of USBA employees to lunch to celebrate their birthdays. We always try to find an interesting place where we can try something new. It's great to get "out of the rut" once in awhile. I highly recommend it.

Recently here in Kansas City, at USBA's corporate office, we've made some internal changes. A few of our long-time employees have taken on the challenge of moving from one department to a different one. The reasons were varied: new opportunities, new challenges and, as one 24-year veteran put it, just a "change of scenery." Spring can be a time of rejuvenation for more than just the front lawn. We know our service to our members will change in the spring too—it will be even better!

So, this spring has brought us many new opportunities. And speaking of something new, I hope you like the new "look" of our newsletter. Drop us a line and let us know what you think – or send us your ideas and suggestions.

Sincerely,

Larry G. Vogt
Rear Admiral, USN (Ret.)
President/CEO



Can You Afford to... Retire Someday?

Annuities can provide income for your golden years

Are you starting to think about retirement? If so, you're probably also wondering if you'll have enough money to support the kind of retirement you've always dreamed about.

After all, it doesn't take a crystal ball to see that the cost of living keeps

going up.

That's a challenge for all of us, but would be even more of a challenge if you tried to retire on a fixed income.

So it's not too soon to start planning. If you set up an annuity

If you set up an annuity now, you will have a nest egg at retirement that will be guaranteed to provide regular income.

now, you will have a nest egg at retirement that will be guaranteed to provide regular income.

Here are two examples to compare:

Example 1: Passbook savings — You could put away money in a traditional passbook savings account, but interest earned is subject to income tax each year. So, if you're in the 28% income tax bracket and put savings into a taxable account paying 7% annual interest (higher than most current rates), you'll actually get to keep only about 5.04% interest after taxes.

Example 2: Deferred annuity — During the years you are saving money, you gain tax benefits. If you put your money into a fixed annuity paying 7% annual interest, you'll get to keep the entire 7% until you start withdrawing your money and paying taxes on your withdrawals. After retirement, the additional money in your account continues to earn interest over the years, so your income can really add up over time.

A dollar comparison shows the differences even more dramatically:

■ You're in the 28% tax bracket and

put \$10,000 into a passbook savings account earning 7% interest per year.

Your money would grow to about \$26,735 in 20 years (after taxes), and to \$43,700 in 30 years (after taxes).

■ If you put the same money into a 7% fixed annuity, it could grow tax deferred to \$38,700 in 20 years and \$76,100 in 30 years.

The net result? Over 30 years, as a savvy annuity buyer, you would end up with \$32,400 more in your pocket.

Still another option to consider is a variable annuity, which offers more diversified investment options. Depending on your investment objectives and risk tolerance levels, these investment options may permit you to increase your potential for greater returns.

"I have a friend who points out that if you're in Minnesota in August and it's a hundred degrees, you still know you're eventually going to need a winter coat," explains **Dudley Crow**, Senior Vice

President, Market Development. "In other words, protect yourself by diversifying your insurance and investment portfolios. Determine your best options taking into consideration such factors as family needs, your tolerance of risk and the number of years you have to invest."

Whatever option you choose, money you earn will certainly come in handy for making your retirement years more golden.

USBA Services, Inc. offers a variety of fixed annuities through Lincoln Benefit Life and SunAmerica. Interest rates and terms vary depending on the current market and the plan you choose. For more information, call us at 1.800.821.7912.

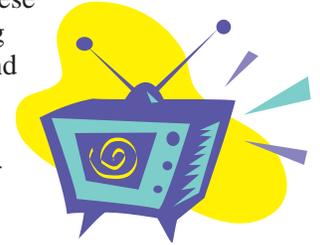
Variable annuities are offered through BMA Financial Services, Inc., member of NASD and SIPC. USBA Services, Inc. and BMA Financial Services, Inc. are not affiliated.



Dudley Crow

Have you seen us on TV?

If you haven't, then you're not watching enough cable TV. Actually we've been advertising our TWO for ONE® Family Life plan for nearly four years on cable TV networks like...The History Channel, Headline News, Fox News, Pax TV and CNN. And most recently we've had great success running spots on TVLand. They run nationally on these networks during the mornings and afternoons, with some prime-time coverage in the evenings.



If you've seen a life insurance ad with lots of umbrellas, that's us. It's so successful that we now spend 65% of our advertising budget on TV.



In BRIEF

"Your \$2,500 check, which was sent immediately, helped tremendously and exceeded expectations!!"

*Charles Couch, USN (Ret.)
Honolulu, Hawaii*

When Mr. Couch's wife Margaret died in 1998, he appreciated the quick service he received from USBA. "I didn't know they provided this advance payment. It's a good idea," he said. "It helped me in getting funeral arrangements made." Mr. Couch served in the U.S. Navy from the late 1940s until his retirement in 1967 as a Chief Petty Officer. He served on five ships in the Pacific, including the Korean War and the Vietnam War.



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In BRIEF

“It was quite a surprise to find that you had sent a partial payment along with the claim form. Words cannot express the appreciation I feel for your thoughtfulness... Thank you so much.”

Ruth Odiorne, El Paso, Texas

Mrs. Odiorne’s late husband, Vern Odiorne, was retired from the U.S. Army and had served in Korea, leaving the service as a Sergeant First Class. When he died eight years ago, she says her income immediately stopped. “When I said words can’t express my appreciation, I meant exactly that. I will be forever grateful for receiving the prepayment,” she said. She has continued to be a USBA member.

Check Us Out at
www.usba.com

Now you can see the current issue of *Member Briefing* online at www.usba.com.

The newsletter is posted in PDF (Portable Document Format). You can read the file by using free Adobe Acrobat Reader software available through the Web site. Just click on the icon that says “Get Acrobat Reader.”

The site also provides the latest information on USBA products and a “members only” section. Plus, you can give us feedback through the e-mail form provided. We’d love to receive your comments and suggestions!



Member Briefing

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“Attn.: Newsletter” at address above or call 1.800.821.7912

Web site: www.usba.com

MAKING YOUR MOVE?

Be sure to give us your new address

Every year about one in every five Americans moves. For USBA members serving in the military, the percentage is probably even higher.

If you’re one of the people on the move, be sure to let us know so we can ensure you receive our mailings.

Change-of-address cards are available from USBA. When you return the form, it would also be helpful if you could tell us the following information.

- When the address change will become effective.
 - Whether any family members will have a different address.
 - An alternate address (such as a family member) to use for forwarding in case we don’t receive information on any future address changes.
- We appreciate your help in keeping our records up-to-date. This will enable us to get mail sent on time to each family member at the right location.