



## OKLAHOMA COUNTY BONDSMEN ORGANIZE




New officers for the Oklahoma County Bondsman Association: 1st row, left to right, Katie Hazelwood and Monica Gaddis; 2nd row, left to right, J.B. Askins, Mena Samara, and Kenny Boyer.

Oklahoma County bondsmen have joined together to form a county wide association, the Oklahoma County Bondsman

Association, OCBA. The organization selected its first set of officers for 2011-12. Elected officers are Mena Samara, President; Kenny Boyer, Vice President; Monica Gaddis, Secretary; Katie Hazelwood, Treasurer; and J.B. Askins, At Large. Major impetus behind the formation of the new association is concern about Oklahoma County's pretrial release program. Some controversy exists over the correctness of the figures being used by the OCBA. They do not agree with the figures from the Oklahoma County Court Clerk's office and the Oklahoma Court Services program. Members of OCBA did attend the recent Conditional Bond Program Board Meeting. President Dudley Goolsby represented the state association at the same meeting.

With the creation of the OCBA, Oklahoma now has three associations representing the bond industry: the OBA, the OCBA, and the Tulsa bondsmen association, ABAT.



**AN OPEN NOTE TO  
OKLAHOMA BONDSMEN  
FROM OBA PRESIDENT  
DUDLEY GOOLSBY**

We are in the ninth month of the new administration of Commissioner John Doak. It has been a time of getting to know each other and the process hasn't always been smooth but resolutions have been reached in a pleasant manner. The working relationship has been a pleasant one. I would like to ask bail agents to keep in mind when regimes change it's always a bumpy road. When you throw downsizing due to budget shortfalls into the mix it can get contentious at times. Please keep this in mind when you have to make telephone contact with Department employees, things go smoother when manners are observed. Fewer employees usually means more work at the same pay level for those that remain.

### 2012 DUES SCHEDULE

**Dues paid before November 1, 2011**

Pay **\$350.00**

Remember – Dues must be hand-delivered or post-marked on or before October 31st!

**Dues paid November 1 or later,  
but by December 31, 2011**

Pay **\$450.00**

Remember – Dues must be hand-delivered or postmarked on or before December 31st!

**Dues paid January 1, 2012 or later,  
NO DISCOUNT ALLOWED**

Pay **\$550.00**

*PLEASE NOTE: Dues not paid by March 31st shall result in suspension from membership and have no accidental death & dismemberment insurance coverage and no voting rights until dues paid in full!*

# WHY DO YOU NEED SOCIAL MEDIA?

*(This article is taken from Collateral Magazine published in October of this year and written by Katie Puza. The timeliness of this article, given the massive growth in the use of social media for business promotion by almost all service industries, including the bail bond business, suggested it should be reprinted for the benefit of OBA members. )*

In the past 5 years, the internet has gone from a place to discover information to a place to share information. This shift has resulted in what is commonly called Internet 2.0.

What does Internet 2.0 involve? Everything from being able to comment on articles, write product reviews on sites like Amazon.com, and being able to network with others via sites like MySpace and FaceBook are included in Internet 2.0. Often times these sites are referred to as "Social Media" because anyone has the ability to publish and share information through these sites. As the internet is quickly moving out of the home and office onto our phones, more and more people are turning to the world wide web as a networking source. Instead of asking their co-worker for a suggestion of where to eat later that night, people are turning to their online friends for suggestions and reviews. A good (or bad) review can spread farther faster than it has ever been able to.

What does this mean to you? If people are going online to share information, you want to be a part of that conversation, or at least listening to it. What can you gain from listening? You can hear what people are saying about (you and) your industry. You can hear if people have a problem you'd be able to help them solve. And, most importantly, you can hear what people are saying about your company. If they're happy, you can take the time to thank them for their support and potentially use them for a testimonial. If they're unhappy, you can respond to their complaint immediately - excellent customer service and attention might be enough to change their attitude.

The easiest way to listen is to be a member of the communities where these conversations are taking place and utilizing a few simple, free tools to keep track of the conversation online. The first thing is to identify where people are talking on the internet. The simplest answer? Everywhere. The beauty of the internet is that anyone can publish pretty much whatever they want. While this may seem impossible to listen to, Google has a free tool that makes it easy to hear what people are saying about you on the internet - Google Alerts. With Google Alerts, all you have to do is type in what phrases you want Google to keep an eye out for, and they will send you an email when they find that word being used on the internet. Maybe someone used your services to bail a loved one out of jail and blogged a positive review. If you're not using Google Alerts, you may never know.

Another way to stay in tune with what people are saying about you is to monitor social networking sites. Though Yelp is primarily known for people ranking restaurants, salons, stores and the

like, they also have bail agencies listed on their site available for review. Go to Yelp.com to see if your business is listed, the information is correct and to register as an owner. Be sure to check your Yelp page at least once a week to monitor what people are saying about you.

Another important website to monitor is Twitter. With everyone from Oprah to Shaq on Twitter, it is growing at a phenomenal rate. Twitter is a "microblogging" site which allows people to only write 140 character messages at a time. Many people (including lawyers) use Twitter from their smartphones for up to the minute thoughts. Using a free service like TweetBeep, which is basically Google Alerts for Twitter, allows you to see if anyone on Twitter needs a bail agent in your area or is talking about your company without having to constantly check Twitter.

What happens if you don't listen to what people are saying? If you don't listen to what people are saying, you have no way to respond to negative feedback, and you allow other people to control your reputation. No matter how much time and money you have spent cultivating your company image, one bad experience by a person respected on online communities can severely damage your brand. Using the free, simple tools highlighted in this article, you can effectively listen and protect your brand with very little effort.

*(You cannot afford to ignore Social Media in your business. Just one or two people mentioning you or your organization's name in a negative manner can ruin a good reputation that took you years to build. Look for Part 2 of this article in the next edition of The Bail Report on line where they will discuss various ways to participate in Internet 2.0 communities.)*



# 2012 CONTINUING EDUCATION DATES MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

- Monday, June 4** Annual Membership Meeting  
OBA Building/ OKC
- Tuesday, June 5** CE#1 – Magnuson Hotel and Meridian Convention Center (formerly known as Clarion Meridian)  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- Tuesday, June 26** CE#2 – Hard Rock Hotel & Casino  
Catoosa, Oklahoma

## NEW BONDSMAN LICENSES

Tanya Anthony.....	Carter County
Penny Bair .....	Wagoner County
Adam Carter.....	Craig County
Billy Carter.....	Craig County
Sherry Cole.....	Payne County
Robert Deso.....	Comanche County
Douglas Fletcher.....	Muskogee County
Pam Gallahar .....	Payne County
Carl McClure.....	Tulsa County
Danny McSwain.....	Pottawatomie County
Dillon Price.....	Custer County
Monica Reece.....	Muskogee County
Ishanta Shoals.....	Muskogee County
Tucson Smith.....	Texas County
Ruth Summers.....	Payne County
Matthew Westfall.....	Payne County
Tanya Whittaker.....	Tulsa County
Lesia Woodard.....	Oklahoma County

## NEW LICENSE RENEWAL AND REPORTING RULES

Changes are happening in bail bond regulation at the Oklahoma Insurance Department, and bondsmen should be sure to understand the new rules and processes.

Effective after the September 2011 renewals, a bondsman license will expire biennially, rather than annually, and will expire on the last day of the licenseholder's birth month. The bondsman's new renewal date was printed on all licenses issued upon September 2011 renewal.

Also effective Sept. 1, all applications for licensing and renewal of licensing must be completed electronically. The first round of electronic license renewals is complete. Initial applications should be submitted online at [www.bailbonds.oid.ok.gov](http://www.bailbonds.oid.ok.gov).

To maintain licensing, bail bondsmen must take eight hours of continuing education each year to meet the state requirement for 16 hours of continuing education prior to every biennial renewal of the bondsman's license. Reporting continuing education will likewise be done electronically. The Oklahoma Insurance Department no longer receives the BCE3 or BCE4 forms. Requests for copies of these forms should be directed to the Oklahoman Bondsman Association.

In another requirement effective Sept. 1, bondsmen must submit a financial statement each year on their birth month. Oklahoma bail bond Code provides that the financial statement must be

dated within the 90 days prior to the date of the application for renewal. Professional bail bonding agents with an April birth month might want to have their financial statement prepared prior to "tax day" on April 15.

Concerning bail reports, Phase 2 of the bail bond electronic reporting project at OID is now complete. October 2011 reports, due by Nov. 15, must be submitted electronically. OID is providing the necessary software to all bondsmen. Download the BBP-Lite program from the Oklahoma Insurance Department Web site at [www.bailbonds.oid.ok.gov](http://www.bailbonds.oid.ok.gov). reviewal fees must be paid by electronic check.

Those currently using TRACKUM's Bail Bond program must begin uploading monthly reports at [www.bailreports.ok.gov](http://www.bailreports.ok.gov). Again, fees for reviewal must be paid by electronic check.

In other administrative changes, Anna Denman, senior licensing administrator of bail licensing for OID, has moved from the Licensing Division and is now in the Bail Bond Division as the bail manager. Carol Ryan, supervisor of the Bail Bond Division, remains the supervisor over bail reporting. The Bail Bond Division welcomes new employees Renonda Cherry and Cindy Barnum.

*For Bail Licensing, call the OID at (405) 521-6612. For Bail Reporting, phone (405) 521-6610.*





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## OBA CALENDAR

Please mark your calendars NOW for the following upcoming events:

<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>November 8</b>	<b>10:30 a.m. OCBA Meeting at OBA</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>November 22</b>	<b>1:00 a.m. ABAT Meeting</b>
<b>Thursday-Friday</b>	<b>December 1 &amp; 2</b>	<b>PLE #4 at OBA</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>December 13</b>	<b>10:30 a.m. OCBA Meeting at OBA</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>December 21</b>	<b>Annual ABAT Christmas Dinner &amp; OBA monthly Board meeting at the Tulsa County Courthouse</b>

Watch OBA website [www.okbondsman.com](http://www.okbondsman.com) for updates to be announced!

### *In Memoriam*

**Ruth Henderson (07/11)**  
**Carol Carlson (08/11)**  
**Betty Smart (10/11)**  
**Ivan Kelly (10/11)**  
**David Kroth (10/11)**

### **FOUR NEW COMPANIES APPROVED TO WRITE BAIL**

The following surety companies have recently been approved to write bail in the State of Oklahoma.

Crum & Forster Indemnity Company,  
Great Divide Insurance Company, Indiana  
Lumbermens Mutual Insurance Company  
and Key Risk Insurance Company.

For contact information for all approved surety companies writing bail in Oklahoma, please review on the OBA website, [www.okbondsman.com](http://www.okbondsman.com) OR the Insurance Department Website, [www.oid.ok.gov](http://www.oid.ok.gov).

**[www.okbondsman.com](http://www.okbondsman.com)**