



March

THE BONDSMAN

2006

Ya'll Come to Texoma

OBA Southeast members are invited to the OBA Southeast Regional Members Meeting at Lake Texoma Lodge, at 3:00 p.m. on March 16, 2006

March 16

3:00 p.m. OBA Board of Directors Meeting
All OBA Southeast members invited

5:00 p.m. World Famous Dicky Kidd Fish Fry at his Lake House near Texoma Lodge (maps to be provided at meeting).
Host: Dicky Kidd, Southeast Regional Director

Rooms blocked at Lake Texoma. Ask for special 'Bondsman's Rate.'
King bed - \$65/night
Queen bed - \$55/night
You MUST call to make reservations. Rate good for up to 2 adults.
800-528-0593



From Insurance Commissioner Kim Holland:

Greetings! I cannot believe it has already been a year since I was appointed Insurance Commissioner. What a year it has been as we have worked hard to redefine the Oklahoma Insurance Department over the past twelve months.

My first goal was to restore the public's confidence in the Oklahoma Insurance Department and its employees and programs. We have done just that - and we will continue to raise the bar!

We have implemented tough new ethics standards - well beyond the requirements of state law.

We have reorganized the Department to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. In so doing, we have been able to bring in some new highly qualified staff to compliment

Government Relations

-- by Dudley Goolsby

Your Oklahoma Bondsman Association has introduced HB 2513 authored by Terrill in the House and Crain in the Senate. This bill would require 30 hours college credits before a person can become a bail agent, raises the net worth required for a professional to \$250,000, and raises the initial deposit to \$50,000.

It changes the language in Sec. 1327 D. to: if found guilty by a court or a jury or a voluntary plea of guilty or nolo contendere is entered, regardless of whether the finding of guilt is immediate or deferred, in any such event the undertaking and the bondsman and insurer shall be exonerated from further liability.

It also adds language making it a felony to give false information to a bondsman in making application for bail. This bill has been assigned to the Insurance Committee and is set for the first hearing on Feb.21.

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From the Commissioner...

the dedicated and experienced staff already at the Department.

The bail bond industry is large and thriving in Oklahoma. Bail bondsmen licensed in this state play a large part in the public safety of our communities. I commend you for your efforts to police yourselves and for your ongoing cooperation with the Insurance Department.

It is a tremendous honor to serve as your Insurance Commissioner. I take this responsibility very seriously, and I take great pride in the

position and the many wonderful people employed at the department. I am happy to share with you a few of the wonderful things taking place at the Oklahoma Insurance Department, and I assure you there are many exciting things to come.

OBA BOARD MEETINGS & SCHOOLS

- March 2 & 3 - Pre-License School
- March 16 - OBA Regional Board Meeting - Lake Texoma Lodge
- April 20 - OBA Board Meeting
- May 18 - OBA Board Meeting
- June 1 & 2 - Pre-License School
- June 5 - Annual Board Meeting and General Membership Meeting/NE regional Membership
- June 6 - CE #1, Meridian Conference Center
- June 13 - CE #2, Cherokee Casino & Resort, Catoosa
- July 20 - OBA Board Meeting
- August 17 - OBA Board Meeting
- September 7 & 8 - Pre-License School
- September 21 - OBA Board Meeting
- October 19 - OBA Regional Board Meeting - Chickasha Area
- November 16 - OBA Regional Board Meeting - Tulsa Area
- December 7 & 8 - Pre-License School.
- December 21 - OBA Board Meeting



Planning Your Funeral

from *The Bailbond Chronicles*

One of the most vocal complaints in our industry is the cutting of premiums. It is becoming more and more prevalent, and in many areas is expected by those seeking bail for themselves and their friends. They expect a discount. The only effective way to stop this practice is for local associations to rally against it and look for legal ways to stop the practice.

With all the liability out there in lawsuits, skips, forfeitures, and an increase in advertising, it is a difficult job from day to day to keep your head above water. So every time you cut your price, if you are serious about your business for the long term, you are just pounding another nail in your coffin.

A Really Bad Joke

A bounty hunter rode into town one morning and went into the Sheriff's office. "Anyone with a price on his head round these parts?" asked the Bounty Hunter.

"Well," said the Sheriff, "there's a \$500 reward, dead or alive, for the Brown Paper Kid."

"The Brown Paper Kid?!" exclaimed the Bounty Hunter. "Who in tarnation is the Brown Paper Kid?"

"He's a varmint who wears a hat made from brown paper," replied the Sheriff. "His coat is made from brown paper. His shirts are made from brown paper. He wears pants made from brown paper and his boots are made from brown paper."

"Well," says the Bounty Hunter, "and what's he wanted for?"

The Sheriff replied, "He's wanted for rustling."

PBUS Forms Alliance with Bailbooks

PBUS President Linda Braswell announced that PBUS has signed a contract with Bailbooks.com to offer the members their online business management service.

Bailbooks is an online way to manage your bail bond agency. For the average agency, this new kind of software will be easier, cheaper, more mobile, more reliable and often more powerful than a standard desktop-based agency management system.

- **Web based and centrally hosted** 24/7 access from home, work, or the road (and no hardware or software to install).

- **Document repository** All agency paperwork available anywhere, anytime from any Internet connected computer.

- **Archive agent reports** Smoother turnovers – employees leave a record of information.

- **Easy to setup** IT staff not required. You'll be up and running within seconds (seriously) .

- **Archived client records** Have instant access to a customer's bond history and any notes that are important about them.

PBUS members can use Bailbooks for 60 days free, and will receive a 25% discount off any Bailbooks plans. Visit bailbooks.com, or call 1-877-467-9433 for more information.

Government Relations, continued

On a more personal note; Ada Reynolds-Taylor passed away in January. She was the widow of Bill Reynolds and a very gracious lady. Many people failed to notice the petite, quiet lady helping at the OBA functions until 1998. Ada was the daughter of a Lutheran Minister from Minnesota who made the journey to Oklahoma via Washington D.C.

She was an aide to a congressman from Minnesota, then became a secretary to Oklahoma's Senior Senator Robert S. Kerr until his death. She retired as Executive secretary at Kerr-McGee Petroleum in 1984. She became Lt. Governor Robert S. Kerr Jr.'s secretary until he left office. She was at Bill's side while he was OBA's Director.

New Program has Bondsman Worrying about the Future of their Jobs

The Stuart News/Port St. Lucie News (Stuart, FL)

Eligible defendants would strap on a tracking bracelet instead of having to pay to get out of jail. St. Lucie County bail bondsmen want to lock out a new program they say could turn into a get-out-of-jail-free card for suspects. The bondsmen recently spoke out against a program that uses a satellite tracking system to keep tabs on suspects, which they fear will steal away business. The program, which started in December, is designed to monitor defendants while they wait for trial, by strapping a GPS tracking device to their ankle and making them carry a one-way cell phone.

St. Lucie County Bail Bondsman Association President Mitchell Hilburn said he feels his business, along with the businesses of the other 77 registered bondsmen in the county, will be affected by the

program. "We feel it will replace or seriously hurt the private business of bail bondsmen," he said. "I'm scared I'm going to lose a customer base at the taxpayer expense."

County Criminal Justice Coordinator Mark Godwin said the purpose of the program is not to replace the county's bond industry but to offer an alternative to suspects who can't afford bail.

"This is not designed to put them out of business. St. Lucie is not going into the bail bonds business," he said. "We're trying to find people who qualify, as opposed to setting them in jail and wasting taxpayers' money."

Within hours after they are arrested, low-grade offenders will be evaluated for eligibility by staff from Sentencing Alternatives, the company that will run the program for the county. Hilburn and other bondsmen have argued the cost of bonding out of jail shouldn't be an issue because many bail bondsmen let their clients pay in installments. He also suggested that if the criminal justice system wants to use this program, only suspected declared indigent by a judge should be eligible.



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Bobservations

from Bob Rollins



The Omnipresent Enemy

By Leslie W. Sebring, MCBA
from the January *PBUS NOW*

The headlines read like this: "Bounty Hunter Allegedly Opens Fire," "Bounty Hunter Blunder: Woman Claims Four Men Mace Dog, Make Off with Valuables," "Bounty Hunter

Raid Leaves Family with Questions."

Such incidents beg the question: are there more such incidents occurring recently or are we simply becoming more aware of them? I'm not sure. It is alarming. There are potentially devastating side effects for our profession because of these events. There may be a feeding frenzy of attacks by prosecutors filing criminal charges, and civil lawyers filing wrongful death and abuse charges. As well, state legislatures will react. And, the US Congress may go on the offensive again.

Whichever it is, PBUS President Linda Braswell, MCBA, has commissioned a task force to examine our position on such matters, to suggest to the Board of Directors of PBUS what their policy should be.

We can easily blame these "two week wonder" bounty hunter schools

and the people that put them on. We can take a look at the psychology of the wannabe bounty hunters whose interest is charged up each time one of these bounty hunter movies or television shows appears.

To be fair, there are a number of "incidents" caused by the bail agents themselves, so it's improper to blame it all on the bounty hunters. The bottom line, often these crimes are committed by poorly trained untrained, unlicensed individuals.

Certainly training, education, and legislation can be a part of the solution. Overall, the clear and present danger to the future of our profession are those who hire such misfits without thoroughly investigating their backgrounds.