

## Another successful convention: 2008 PIA Oregon/Idaho Convention & Trade Show

The annual PIA Oregon/Idaho Convention and Trade Show concluded early last week at the Sunriver Resort, Sunriver, Oregon. It was the usual annual success as a couple of hundred agents, exhibitors and sponsors immersed themselves in all things PIA.



PIA Oregon/Idaho installed a new board of directors including new president Gary Steffen of Safe and Sound Insurance in Gladstone, Oregon. In his installation speech Steffen compared the PIA presidency to fatherhood.

“I had to determine the tools I needed to succeed. So I did an inventory of what my dad did for me and what he passed on to me,” Steffen said.

- He was involved from day one.
- He was a hands-on guy
- He put the family above all else
- He spent time with me
- He protected me
- He had uncommon common sense

“The interesting thing about the PIA—and what makes it much different than some other insurance associations—is the sense of family.

We are a close-knit group. Yet we aren’t so close that somebody new to the association cannot easily become one of the family.”

Steffen mentioned the need we all have of finding new business and improving the agency bottom-line.

“The PIA—as your agent association—must continue to find ways to drive business into your agency. We all know that an independent insurance agent has more flexibility and options for the consumer than a captive,” he said.

One way is to take advantage of PIA National’s excellent branding program. It’s free and has won national awards. The program now also features radio ads that you can tag with your agency’s contact information. You can find it at [www.piawest.com](http://www.piawest.com) under the Membership Perks link.

“The point is that this association is doing things to drive business to your door. But we can do more. This is where your thoughts and ideas are invaluable. As independent agents we need to find more and better ways to share these ideas with all of us. My goal is to develop a place on the (PIA Western Alliance Main Street) website where we can place our marketing successes. And it will be a place where you can ask questions about particular marketing problems and others can write to you or post answers on that section.”

PIA Oregon/Idaho also said thank you to now Immediate Past President Pete Lackner. He thanked everyone for a great year.

“I couldn’t have done it without everyone here: the vendors, company support, PIA staff, the current board members. Everything just melted together perfectly. I want to thank you all for coming, for supporting the PIA and for supporting each other.”



PIA Oregon/Idaho board of directors

Here is the new PIA Oregon/Idaho board of directors:

Pete Lackner—Past President, Rose City Associates, Portland  
Gary Steffen—President, Safe and Sound Insurance, Gladstone  
Chris Huwaldt—President-Elect, Western States, McMinnville  
Glenda Lile—Vice President, Prineville Insurance, Prineville  
Peter Ball—Treasurer, Corvallis Insurance Services, Corvallis

Chris Peterson—Secretary, Fullerton & Company, Portland  
Terry Adams—National Director, Terry Adams & Associates, Ashland

#### Directors

Wendy Abel-Hatzel, Harry Abel Insurance, Coos Bay  
Ron Baker, Rhodes-Warden, Lebanon  
Tim Bangert, Cascade Insurance Services, Bend  
Dennis McGanty, Oregon Mutual, McMinnville  
Tyrone Snelling, Liberty Northwest, Portland  
Brian Crawford, Smith and Crakes Insurance, Eugene  
Scott Weaver, Insurance Marketplace, Medford

And Oregon’s two new board members:

Rich Sorem, Stewart and Tunno Insurance, Portland  
Doug Hartley, Hartley Insurance, Silverton



PIA Oregon/Idaho President Gary Steffen presents Randy Carlton with the Agent of the Year award

PIA Oregon/Idaho also named former president and the owner of Cascade Insurance Services of Bend, Oregon as PIA Agent of the Year. An obviously shocked Carlton said, "This is a real and unexpected surprise. I'd like to thank all of my staff. I wouldn't be where I am and the agency wouldn't be where it is without the staff. I have been with the PIA well over 15 years. There is no way I would have the success I have without my membership in the PIA.

Thank you very much."

- Kelsey Wood of Gordon Wood Insurance and Financial Services of Roseburg is the Committee Person of the Year.
- Brian Carney of Cochrane & Company of Spokane, Washington is the Company Person of the Year.
- And the PIA Oregon/Idaho tabbed Craig Dalton of Oregon Mutual as the association's Blinders Award winner. The Blinders Award is given annually to an underwriter to goes above and beyond the rules to help agents write more business.