

LAUTUM *news*



Inside . . .

- 2024 Convention Highlights
- 2024 Award Winners
- Congressional Contacts Program

Chair's Message

Ben Leezer
Elmira Mutual

CONTENTS

Chair's Message2

Executive Director's Message.....3

Congressional Contacts Program4

Mutual News.....6

Mutual Milestones8

Memorials9

2024 Convention Highlights11

2024 Claims Seminar29

Farewell from the Outgoing Chair30

2024 IAMIC June Golf Outing30



Hello all,

When you looked out the window on the world over the past year, I am not sure anyone quite saw all the challenges we would face. The last quarter of

2023 was a mad scramble for everyone to find a reinsurance solution. When we learned that unlimited Agg was not readily available in the marketplace, we were able to pass BILL SB765 into law in a last-minute veto session. While not perfect and a 5-year sunset clause, it did buy us all some time to sort through the toughest insurance market to date. I'm not sure if everyone knows how much time and effort Chris put into this. There were times I wondered if Chris was able to work on his own work at all. Chris has put so much into IAMIC that I don't think we can thank him enough for his service! When I was asked about becoming Chair, I was unaware I would follow Chris, or I may have reconsidered. All jokes aside, Chris, thank you for your leadership and dedication over the years.

My theme for 2024 – 2025 is IAMIC


Marketplace. This theme came naturally to me for many reasons. First, I like to think of IAMIC as a Marketplace. You may go to the store to buy milk and eggs but end up leaving with a whole lot more. IAMIC has so many resources available to everyone. Next is the network. We have so many talented and intelligent people with experience you won't find anywhere else. And lastly, I think we

need to go into sales mode. We need to prove to the world that Farm Mutuals are needed and are here for the long run.

Resources. I know we all have full plates already, but I would like to encourage everyone to set aside time to investigate the resources of IAMIC. Everyone can shift twenty minutes a week or even a month to look through the resources available. And you never know, you might just find a tool that will change the way you do business.

Network. The IAMIC network is one of the best aspects of the association. Everyone is willing to share so much so that we can all be successful. To any of the new people, I ask that you join a committee or volunteer in any capacity with IAMIC. The people you will meet by working with them will become long-lasting relationships and you will probably learn more than you can imagine.

SALES. With the last year or two, I think everyone should be shifting into sales mode. We need to sell how great Farm Mutuals are to the Department of Insurance. We all need to sell what our companies do and how we make it profitable to our reinsurance carriers. And lastly, we need to sell to our Agents why they should place GOOD business with the Farm Mutuals.

Of all the years I have been in sales, I have never had a "no", only a "not yet." Don't be afraid to sell yourselves, it might just make the change you are looking for. 

Ben

LAUTUMnews

Fall 2024
Volume 54 • Number 1

The LAUTUM NEWS is published periodically, in the interest of Farm Mutual Insurance by the **Illinois Association of Mutual Insurance Companies**
P.O. Box 116
Ohlman, IL 62076
217/563-8300, 800-69-IAMIC
Fax 888/403-0935
E-Mail leadership@iamic.org
www.iamic.org

POSTMASTER – Send address changes to:
Lautum News, PO Box 116, Ohlman, IL 62076

From the Executive Director's Desk

The year 2024 brought a mix of anticipation and trepidation as we adjusted to the "new normal." Many companies found it challenging to plan for the future due to the uncertainty we faced.

I want to express my pride in IAMIC's volunteers, including our Board of Directors, committee members, and IAMIC staff, who worked together to continue providing value to our members through events and communications.

What does harnessing the Power of the Association mean for you? It's the concept that the people you associate with can significantly influence your success. By supporting the industry, as a whole, you can dedicate yourself to your peers and the continuation of our heritage.

This past summer, my personal life was turned upside down. I lost my sister; my daughter Kelsey suffered a brain aneurysm (miraculously surviving with no lasting deficits); and then we lost my brother-in-law, who was our best friend. I had to refocus my priorities, and I'm grateful for the support from my IAMIC family, who prayed for us and sent cards and gifts. Their love helped heal my broken heart.

As our chair, Chris Feldt, led the association onto a new path, keeping a keen eye on the future and reinforcing the

association's purpose to our membership. Chris assembled a great team to plan and execute educational courses that informed members, provided networking opportunities, and improved the website and Tradewing platforms.

Chair Feldt selected **Dogs for Our Brave** as his charity, and our members rallied behind him to support this worthy organization. It's a powerful statement of what people can achieve when they unite. See Page 16 for our total donation. I am so proud to be a part of such a kind and giving group.

Thank you for supporting this fantastic organization! Together, we can accomplish remarkable things. As we transition leadership to Ben Leezer and his team, we encourage you to use your membership benefits fully. Ben's theme, IAMIC MARKETPLACE, will help us recognize the wealth of knowledge and resources at our fingertips.

As we close out 2024 and step into 2025, I wish you the ability to see all the hope and possibilities our future holds. Sending my best wishes to each of you. 🍁

Jackie



Jackie Rakers, IOM



What does harnessing the Power of the Association mean for you? It's the concept that the people you associate with can significantly influence your success. By supporting the industry, as a whole, you can dedicate yourself to your peers and the continuation of our heritage.



2024 CCP

*CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT:
In Front of Capitol Building — Lyle Bruning,
Carl Beebe, Cory Bruning, Linda Olson,
Alan Neuhaus, Rhonda Neuhaus,
Jason Svanda, Christine Clark, Andy Gerlach,
Katie Smull and Chris Feldt*

Awe — Washington D.C. in July. Luckily we had beautiful weather and were able to meet with many of our legislators.

IAMIC members meeting with Rep. Bill Foster

2024 CCP Group with Rep. Mary Miller

2024 CCP Group with Rep. Mike Bost

Rep. Eric Sorenson met with IAMIC members

Rep. Darin LaHood met with IAMIC members





**We Support
IAMIC
Because
IAMIC Supports the
Farm Mutual
Insurance Industry**



**Central Illinois Mutual
Insurance Company**

Villa Grove, IL

*Serving
Farmers and Homeowners
Since 1892*

www.CIMICO.net

Mutual News

2025 IAMIC Board

“A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.”

—John C. Maxwell

“Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.”

—Governor Ariff Ali



Front row, left to right: Abel Castor, Jackie Rakers, Linda Olson, Katie Smull, Matt Harford
Back row, left to right: Beth Wingenter, Chris Feldt, Ben Leezer, Jeremy Weakes, Steve Carroll

Retiring Board Members

Thank you to Kathy Bray, Annie Kurth, Jeff Likes, and Clint Huffstutler, for their years of service to the Association and their peers within the farm mutual industry.



Kathy Bray, Wilberton Mutual, retires from the IAMIC board after serving as Past Chair



Annie Kurth, Frontier-Mt. Carroll Mutual, retires from the IAMIC board after serving 3 years



Jeff Likes, Westervelt Mutual, retires from the IAMIC board after serving 3 years



Clint Huffstutler, Hamlet Mutual, has served IAMIC well during his 2 years as Secretary/Treasurer

Welcome New Board Members



Welcome New Secretary/Treasurer

Linda Olson, Town & Country Mutual Manager, brings years of experience to the Board having worked in customer service for a local insurance agency, then becoming an underwriter and then manager.



Welcome Jeremy Weaks, Chair-Elect

Jeremy Weaks, Prophetstown Mutual Manager. He entered the insurance world in 2010 and worked as an adjuster then became manager of Prophetstown Farm Mutual in 2016. Welcome to the Board Jeremy.



Welcome New Board Member

Abel Castor, Hamlet Mutual entered the Farm Mutual insurance industry in 2016 when he joined Hamlet Mutual. Abel brings a fresh perspective to the industry.

Thank you,
BRONZE
Sponsors

Farmers Pioneer Mutual Insurance Company

Frontier – Mt. Carroll Mutual Insurance Company

Guy Carpenter

Mutual Milestones

“Flaming enthusiasm, backed up by horse sense and persistence, is the quality that most frequently makes for success.”

—Dale Carnegie



Randolph Mutual — 155 Years

Left to right, Ray Winter, Don Rheinecker, Bruce Guebert, Aaron Wilson, John Helmers, Andy Gerlach, Jackie Rakers, Alan Neuhaus, Kent Burns, Duncan Britton, Rob Henke, and William Richelman

“Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome.”

—Booker T. Washington



Payson Mutual — 150 Years

Left to right, Jeff Schneider, Larry Rapp, Jim Lynch, David Dawson, Sam Deal, Randy Strubhar, and Michael Walden

If your Mutual is celebrating a five year milestone in 2025, we would love to attend one of your board meetings to present your company with an Anniversary Plaque! Please contact the IAMIC office with your next board meeting date.



Memorials

Remembering our Friends who have passed

Don Koenig — Past Chair

Robert Stoxen — Peru Waltham Mutual

Ken Bridgeford — Svea Mutual

Larry Pfile — Stephenson Mutual

Roger Needham — Forreston Mutual

Bill Wilczynski — Serve Pro of Kankakee County

Bear Ferguson — ESI



Keep in touch at www.iamic.org

IAMIC's state-of-the-art association management software is designed to improve communication with our members. Among several helpful features, members can register for events easier and the Manager of each Mutual can now register multiple members for events with ONE login!

Keep track of upcoming events and Association news, too. Check it out!

 **Guy Carpenter**

A business of Marsh McLennan

GLOBAL VOLATILITY

A new era of risk is intensified by geopolitical instability, social unrest and misinformation.

Disruption creates new opportunities to be ready. Guy Carpenter can show you how.

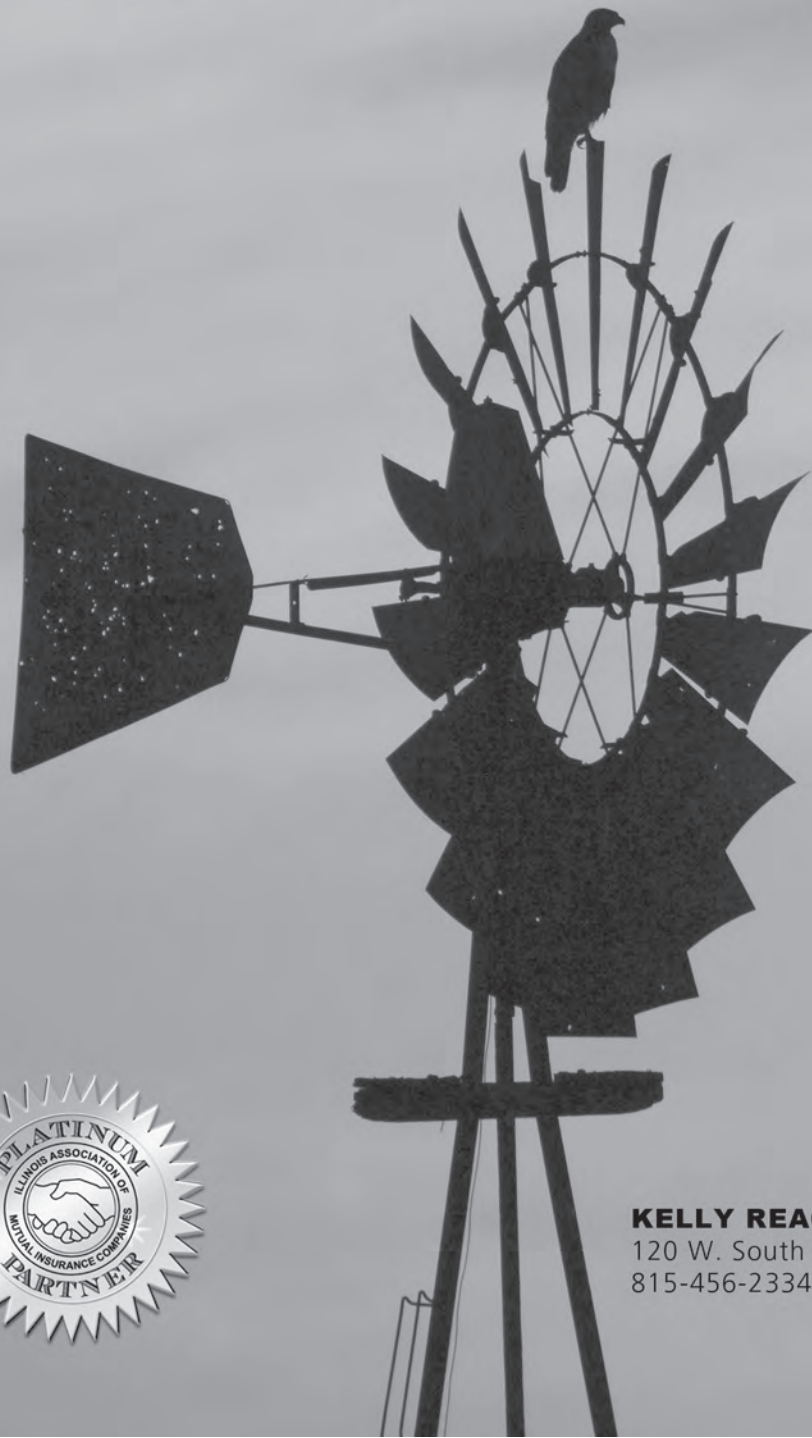
A NEW ERA OF RISK. A NEW ERA OF INNOVATION.





BRADFORD VICTOR-ADAMS

MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY Since 1869



KELLY REAGAN, MANAGER
120 W. South St., Franklin Grove, IL 61031
815-456-2334 | bradfordmutual.net

2024 IAMIC Convention Highlights

August 19 - 21, 2024 • Marriott Hotel & Conference Center, Normal, Illinois

Opening Session with Stephen Iwersen

Stephen Iwersen helped everyone by revealing the powerful strategy that champions in all walks of business have in common with one another — even those in the World Championship Porcupine Races.



Stephen Iwersen



Farm Mutual Act Panel

Left to right: Rick Grenzebach, Brown, Hay & Stephens; Erin Collins, NAMIC; Brett Gerger, Big I Illinois; Jen Hammer, JW Hammer, LLC; Whitey Patton, Patton & Company; Evan Manning, Big I Illinois; Jackie Rakers, IAMIC Executive Director



Annual Business Meeting

Neil Alldredge swears in new '25 board members: Ben Leezer, 2025 Chair; Chris Feldt, Past Chair; Jeremy Weeks, 2025 Chair-Elect; Linda Olson, 2025 Secretary/Treasurer; Abel Castoer, 2025 Board Member.

— continued on next page



(Convention Highlights – continued from page 11)



'24 Chair Chris Feldt passing the gavel to the '25 Chair Ben Leezer



Chris Feldt thanks Annie Kurth and Jeff Likes for their service on the IAMIC Board of Directors

*“Leadership is action,
not position.”*

—Donald McGanno

*Right: Annual Business Meeting
in the Theatre setting*

*Below left: NAMIC President Neil Alldredge
and Jackie Rakers*

*Below right: Education Session presented by
Tony Schuering, Brown Hay & Stephens*



2024 LAUTUM Award goes to Tony Koehler

The LAUTUM Award recognizes strength, dedication, leadership, commitment, integrity, and honor. It is awarded by one's peers to ONE individual who reflects these qualities, making it a highly esteemed accolade. Tony Koehler is one such person. Tony has served as Chair of IAMIC. In years past he has also chaired the Government Relations Committee, and Convention Committee, making frequent trips to Washington DC to represent Illinois Mutuals. His regular attendance at IAMIC education events is a testament to his dedication and his willingness to join task forces and dedicate countless hours to the betterment of our association and industry is an inspiration. 📌



Tony Koehler, Chris Feldt



Left: Jackie Rakers and Wilberton Manager, Kathy Bray present the St. Peter Fire District with the Fire Department of the Year award.

Fire Department of the Year Award recognizes St. Peter Fire Protection District

Firefighters are a rare breed. This volunteer team of firefighters and first responders is no different. They serve many surrounding communities and work diligently to serve many local celebrations. At approximately 1 a.m. on January 14, 2024, a fire broke out at a local business in St. Peter, Illinois. Despite an outside temperature of minus three and a wind chill of minus 26, these volunteers fought throughout the night and successfully contained the fire within four interconnected buildings. Fire Chief Kevin Jenne coordinated the St. Peter Department and seven other departments to battle the largest fire they have ever faced. 📌

Police officers and firefighters who run headlong into harm's way and lose their lives don't die because they are in the wrong place at the wrong time. They die because there is a highly dangerous situation and they go charging forward into it anyway.

—Brian Mast

— continued on next page

2024 Company Achievement Award goes to Belle Prairie Mutual

2023 proved to be one of the most challenging years for the insurance industry. More companies merged or closed their doors than ever before, and we didn't have time to find new avenues quickly. Manager, TJ Welte recently joined the mutual team and handled the crisis with professionalism and dignity. He utilized the network connections within the Association to gather as many options as possible.

We recognize Belle Prairie's significant changes in transitioning toward its future. However, we also want to acknowledge its selfless efforts in assisting many others by sharing their knowledge and ideas and connecting its peers to opportunities. We appreciate its sacrifices to continue business and allow time for decisions in its mutuals. 🏆



Belle Prairie's TJ Welte accepts Company Achievement award from Chris Feldt.

Volunteer of the Year Award Recipient, Jeremy Weaks, Prophetstown Mutual

Jeremy has chaired the IAMC Education Committee for the past few years and has been instrumental in putting together seminars that benefit the association, as a whole, not just his own company. He has played a critical role in the planning process of IAMIC and has contributed significantly by sharing his knowledge, particularly in the area of insurance claims. Jeremy has also developed a valuable resource tool to aid mutual companies in learning about their history and planning for the future. His dedication, resilience, and proactive approach have made him an invaluable asset to the association.

The Volunteer of the Year Award was established to honor individuals who generously volunteer their time to help the association succeed. It is conferred upon individuals who exemplify volunteer commitment and leadership. 🏆



Jackie Rakers presents Jeremy Weaks the 2024 Volunteer of the Year Award.

PLATINUM
Sponsors



**Central Illinois Mutual
Insurance Company**

**BRADFORD
VICTOR-ADAMS**

MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY

Since 1869

Thank you!

IAMIC Members raise \$5,000 for Dogs for Our Brave



Service Dogs Enrich and Improve the Lives of Their Veterans Every Day

The mission of Dogs for Our Brave is to provide professionally trained service dogs at no cost to veterans who have suffered debilitating injuries or illnesses while in service to our country. They aim to use rescue dogs at every opportunity, thus saving two lives at once. To fully realize their mission without adding financial burden, they also provide a continuum of free support that covers all food, veterinary care, and pharmaceuticals for the dog's life.

IAMIC members raised \$5,000 for Dogs for Our Brave by purchasing T-shirts and participating in the Raffle Baskets! 🐾



Chris Feldt and Tony Koehler...
proud supporters of Dogs for Our Brave



The Difference Makers: 32 members gathered Wednesday morning to show their support of our brave veterans and their trained service dogs. Thank you to Heartland Mutual and Randolph Mutual for sponsoring the T-Shirts.



After the Auxiliary made dog toys, there were supplies left over so Kaitlynn Feldt took it upon herself to make more toys on the ride home from the Convention.



Thanks to the Auxiliary for making dog tug toys for help in training the dogs... Rhonda Neuhaus, Brenda Johnston, Connie Elliott, Alicia Glendenning and Kaitlynn Feldt. The Ladies made about 25 tug toys Monday afternoon.



AMIC presents a \$5,000 check, plus the dog toys that were made by the Auxiliary group at the Convention, to Dogs for Our Brave.


STAR
Sponsor




**Venture
Subrogation**

Thank you!


Shared Purpose.
MUTUAL VALUES.



Frontier-Mt Carroll
Mutual Insurance



305 Decatur Street
Lincoln, IL 62656
217-732-8222
www.fmcmutual.com



grinnellmutual.com



BUILD YOUR BUSINESS WITH OUR RESOURCES

Claims adjusting, underwriting assistance, strategic planning, marketing, investigation services, training programs, and financial services are some of the added services Grinnell Re offers. We're here to support your success.

Trust in Tomorrow.® Talk to us today.

STRONG | SECURE | STABLE



Trust in Tomorrow.®

"Trust in Tomorrow." and "Grinnell Re" are registered trademarks of Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company. © Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company, 2024.

Trade Show



Many Members brought gift baskets for the raffle and some were very creative... from vacation baskets to party baskets, to meat and even specialty pies... You never know what will excite a person to bid.



Jenna Bruck was the Big Prize Ticket winner, and she received a paid registration and hotel stay for the 2025 IAMIC Convention.



Members had the opportunity to meet and see vendors, check out the raffle items for our fundraiser, take a selfie in front of the 80's theme backdrop and make new friends ... a Win-Win experience!



Chair, Chris Feldt (aka: MacGyver) always gets a new head of hair for the Convention every year.

80s Trivia Night: a fun night of fashion and trivia

From music to lyrics and TV shows to movies ... Trivia was great fun! Teams of 10 at a table played for fun and prizes. Where there was a tie on a game then the real fun began with games of Rock–Paper–Scissors to win. 🎲



Jackie introduces the Trivia Host: Andy Gerlach; Grader: Dylan Sill; Runners: Margaret Leonard and Beth Wingerter.



Chris 'MacGyver' brought his family to 80's night ... Kaitlynn, Amy, Kyle and Chris



Left: Trivia graders Dylan Sill and Collin Dooley

Below: For the tie! Host, Andy Gerlach goes over the Rock–Paper–Scissors game rules.



Jackie rocks the 80s night cutouts!



Girls just wanna have fun!



Left: Kelly Reagan and Shaela Porter, Bradford Victor Adams Mutual

(Convention Highlights – continued from page 20)



Tina Turner and Michael Jackson made a guest appearance!



– more Trivia Night Fun on page 23

Proud
IAMIC
Sponsor



Protecting farms, homes, &
families for over 140 years.



(Convention Highlights – continued from page 21)



Above: Amanda Drey reveals an additional hidden talent: stacking cups.



Right: Michael Jackson a.k.a. Nagesh Anupindi, and Annie Kurth



Kelly Reagan, Beth Wingerter and Chris Feldt

FARMERS PIONEER MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY

Providing Quality Farm & Home Insurance Since 1874



124 West Seminary Ave | Onarga, IL 60955 | (815) 268-7300 | www.farmerspioneer.com

(Convention Highlights – continued from page 23)

Casino Night...Viva IAMIC!



Mac 'N Cheese Station



Taco Station



Baked Potato Station



Tuesday Night Dinner was a winner...who knew the Mac 'N Cheese bar would be such a hit! Everyone chooses from one or all the food stations—Taco Station, Potato Station, or Mac 'N Cheese Station. Then the doors opened to Viva IAMIC with casino tables and fun money to win or lose—but mainly to have fun. 🎲



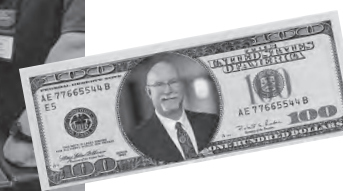
Matt Harford, Andy Gerlach, Parker Holland, Nick Lanutti, Nagesh are taking a chance and rollin' the dice.



Time to brush up at the Black Jack Table.



Rich Neff, Jenna Bruck, Alicia and Luke Glendenning, Jeff Likes, Gus Cole, Dylan Sill at Blackjack Tables.



(Convention Highlights – continued from page 24)



John Cratty, Deena Johnson, Collin Dooley



The Black Jack tables were kept busy.



Tiffany Foege, Pam and Kevin Wiseman all took chances on the Money Wheel.



Richard Neff, Troy Neil, Brian McIntyre, Mike Sebben, Jeff Likes and Gus Cole.



Dennis Bray, Jeremy Bivens, Nola Devries, Emily Varerla, Ben Lampman, Clint Huffstutler and Ben Leezer at the Black Jack tables.

 **VENTURE**
Subrogation™

**Recovering Claim Payments
From At-Fault Parties**

- No Upfront Cost Claim Reviews
- Direct Referrals
- Individualized Client Reporting & Data Analysis
- Expert Negotiations
- Arbitration Filing & Responding

* Arbitration Responding / Defending (Fees may Vary)

- Collision Claims
- PIP Claims
- Med-Pay Claims
- Uninsured Motorist Collections - License Suspensions
- Property Claims - Fire - Water - Equipment Failure

www.venturesubro.com
888-587-4878
info@venturesubro.com

***** For all Your Subrogation Needs *****

(Convention Highlights – continued from page 25)

IAMIC Golf Outing



A large group enjoyed beautiful sunny weather for a day at Prairie Vista Golf Course.



IAMIC Awards THREE Joe Reid Scholarships for 2024!

Congratulations Winners!

Jason Svanda—*Madison Mutual*
Alan Neuhaus—*Randolph Mutual*
Christine Clark—*Heartland Mutual*



... even the geese enjoyed watching the play.

Sporting Clay Shoot



Christine Clark (Heartland Mutual) taking aim.



Sarah Wilderman (Heartland Mutual) was awarded Women's Event Champion.



Collin Dooley (Western Illinois Mutual) was awarded the Men's Event Champion.



Congratulations Shane Pritchett (United Mutual), who was awarded the Grand Champion trophy.



Dylan Sill (Heartland Mutual) was the lucky winner of the wooden flag raffle. The flag was made by Danny Johnston (Bishop Mutual), a talented wood craftsman.





TIMES LIKE THESE CALL
FOR **WORRY FREE**
PARTNERSHIP

Partnering with the right people can make all the difference in giving policyholders the peace of mind they are looking for.

Contact us to discuss your next commercial prospect.



IMTINS.COM

Claims Seminar, February 2024

The Seminar was well attended with interesting presentations and panels.



Casey Carbaugh, FMC; James Wilke, JL Payan; Jeff Blevins, Hausch & Company; and Tim Whiteman, RAC, field questions from concerned members.




Cory Swanson of Swanson Roofing.



Zach Wienhoff shares his knowledge.



Ryan Beaty, Encova



WESTERVELT
MUTUAL



208 N. Main St. | Westervelt, IL 62565
217.738.2621 | westervelt.com

Farewell from the Outgoing Chair

Keep on keeping an eye on the industry



I wanted to take an opportunity to say thank you for all you support & trust you have placed in me over the past year while I have been serving as your IAMIC Board


Chair. Today, our Insurance Environment outside our “own” windows may look a little different than it did last year at this time. However, I would encourage all of you to be ready for anything and be ready to pivot in a moment’s notice.

Over the past year, my main goal as your Board Chair was to meet in person with the Department of Insurance, so I could tell “Our” story within our State Association. Unfortunately, due to changes within the Department mid-year I was unable to accomplish my main goal. However, over the next year, I will not give up the fight in telling our story, so the Department has a better understanding of us while we learn to

understand what they want from us as Farm Mutuals. This is a win/win for everyone.

During the upcoming year please continue in supporting our Association so we can continue to provide specialized services. This includes high-level education classes for events such as our Claims Seminar, Regional Meetings, Underwriting Seminar, Farm Inspection School, and our Annual Convention.

In closing, please give Ben and the entire IAMIC Board your full support over the next year while they work diligently in moving our Association forward.

Remember to be looking out your Mutual Window each day to see the forecast within our Insurance Environment and especially within our “own” Mutuals. 

Sincerely,

Chris

Christopher M. Feldt, PFMM, FMDC
Chief Executive Officer
Heartland Mutual Insurance Company

June Golf Outing Supports Joe Reid Scholarship

We generated over \$3,000 in 2024 for the scholarship fund!



GOLD *Sponsors*



Thank you!

IAMIC Anti-Trust Statement

The purpose of IAMIC is to promote the best interests of the mutual insurance community, and particularly the best interests of policyholders of mutual insurance companies. To this end, IAMIC programs and activities are planned and implemented with the objective that policy holders will benefit from the best products and services.

It is not the intention of IAMIC to provide a forum for standardizing products or rates, dividing markets, fixing profit levels, or categorizing customers to whom insurance products may be sold.

If you have any concerns about the prohibited activities in connection with any IAMIC activities, please contact the president or any IAMIC Board member immediately.



IAMIC

Illinois Association of Mutual
Insurance Companies

P.O. Box 116
Ohlman, IL 62076



SOFTWARE SERVICES

Complete Suite of Online Software



Mutual Tools

Policy Maintenance
AP / GL
Claims
Imaging

Agency Tools

Quoting
Policy Search
Agency Download
... and more!