

"It Was Twenty Years Ago Today"



...well, almost.

It was certainly two decades ago, on June 1, 1982, when MAG Mutual Insurance Company opened its doors in Atlanta as an admitted carrier for medical professional liability insurance. The event had taken several years of work and planning by the physicians of Georgia. With help from the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG), an all-physician Board and small professional staff raised the necessary capital, set up administrative offices, prepared all the forms, and won regulatory approval to begin selling insurance to doctors.

After all of this work, there were smiles all around Insurance Commissioner Johnnie Caldwell's office in Atlanta as he signed MAG Mutual's certificate of authority to begin issuing policies. The first one sold, not surprisingly, went to Albany Internal Medicine, the group of MAG Mutual's founder and chairman, Charles D. Hollis, Jr., M.D.

We look back with admiration and thanks to the company founders and to all who have helped make our Company what we are today! ☺

August Physician Meetings Scheduled for Savannah and Macon



Monday, August 5

The Mulberry Inn
Savannah

Tuesday, August 6

Holiday Inn Macon Conference Center
Macon

MAG Mutual Insurance Company is pleased to present "Managing Your Risk When Caring for Patients with Breast Problems" with our honored guest speaker, Marjie G. Harbrecht, M.D., a nationally known presenter and author.

The seminar is presented free of charge, courtesy of MAG Mutual, in order to promote education for the Georgia medical community. Attendees will receive two hours of Category 1 CME credit for attending. Advance registration is required, as seating is limited. A complimentary dinner buffet will be provided from 6:00-7:00 p.m.; the program follows from 7:00-9:00 p.m. To register or for more information, please call Cheryl Winsett at 800-282-4882, ext. 5681. ☺

Health-Care Heroes Awards: A Five-Year Success Story

For the fifth consecutive year, MAG Mutual Insurance Company, in conjunction with *The Atlanta Business Chronicle*, sponsored the Health-Care Heroes Awards. The awards were presented May 16 at the Swissôtel in Atlanta. MAG Mutual is proud to be part of recognizing the true "heroes" who are committed to the pursuit of excellence in the healthcare field. The winners are:

Jeffrey P. Koplan, M.D., M.P.H.

Emory University
Lifetime Achievement Winner

Cynthia Rudert, M.D.

Atlanta Women's Medical Alliance
Physician Winner

Gaylord P. Lopez, Pharm.D

Grady Health System
Allied Health Professional Winner

The Ovarian Cancer Institute

Founder Benedict Benigno, M.D.
Health-Care Innovation Winner

Mercy Care Services

St. Joseph's Health System
Community Outreach Winner

Tanner Health System

Employer Winner

Congratulations to the 2002 Health-Care Heroes award winners, finalists and nominees. You've certainly proven yourselves worthy of the word "hero."

MAG Mutual-Insured Physicians are Winner and Finalist at Health-Care Heroes Awards

Dr. Cynthia S. Rudert, a board-certified gastroenterologist from Atlanta, is founder of the Atlanta Medical Alliance and has been a MAG Mutual policyholder since 1992. Rudert is an authority on celiac disease, a condition that prevents patients from eating foods containing gluten. She was the winner in the physician category.

Dan B. Stephens, M.D., a Marietta obstetrician/gynecologist, was named a finalist in the physician category. Stephens has delivered more than 5,000 infants during his 33 years in practice. In spite of his hectic work schedule, Dr. Dan (as he is affectionately known) is also committed to helping the community. He has been a MAG Mutual policyholder since 1982.

HIPAA Without the Hype Update

The Medical Association of Georgia's (MAG) HIPAA workshop is a step-by-step program designed specifically for Georgia physicians and their offices. Tracy Field, an attorney with Arnall Golden Gregory LLP, and George Inman, a consulting manager with MAG Mutual HealthCare Consultants, Inc., will provide the information and tools to get and keep you in compliance. Space is limited, so sign up today and you or a designated staff member will:

- Be eligible to attend two different HIPAA workshops in a city near you
- Have access to two conference calls following the workshops where you can have your questions answered and be updated on the latest HIPAA information
- Receive a complete HIPAA manual with templates for all forms to implement your compliance plan

Cost - MAG members: \$495/1 physician, 1 staff member (additional staff: \$150 per person). Non-MAG members: \$595/1 physician, 1 staff member (additional staff: \$150 per person). In addition, physicians who attend the workshops will receive six hours of Category 1 CME credit.

To register call the Medical Association of Georgia today at 404-881-5158.

MAG Mutual CEO Receives Distinguished Service Award

Roy W. Vandiver, M.D. recently received the prestigious Distinguished Service Award presented annually by the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG). The award is presented to a doctor for service that reflects credit and honor upon the association.

The veteran neurosurgeon practiced in DeKalb County for more than 30 years. During that time, he served as president of the DeKalb County Medical Society and was chief of staff at DeKalb Medical Center.

Vandiver is a past MAG president and currently serves on the boards of the DeKalb Regional Health Care System and DeKalb Hospital Authority. He has been Chairman of the Board of MAG Mutual Insurance Company since April 1999. ☺

Tort Reform

To quote Dr. Richard F. Corlin, president of the American Medical Association, "tort reform is an idea whose time has come—again," or Lawrence Smarr, president of the Physician Insurers Association of America, quoting Yogi Berra, "it's déjà vu all over again." These industry leaders are referring to the medical malpractice liability crisis facing many physicians today and what occurred in the 1970's, i.e., skyrocketing medical professional liability premiums and insurers either leaving the market or going insolvent. Huge jury awards and settlements in recent years have forced many insurers across the country to either leave this market or take significant rate increases. In 2001, St. Paul announced that it was exiting the medical malpractice liability market. First Professionals Insurance Company (FPIC) recently announced that it will stop accepting applications for new insureds that are not joining existing large groups. In addition, six prominent insurers of medical professional liability in the United States have become insolvent. Physicians in certain specialties in several states are either limiting or leaving their practices because they cannot afford to pay the higher premiums. If this trend is allowed to continue, access to healthcare in certain areas e.g., rural communities will be severely impacted.

In 1987, the Georgia General Assembly passed modest tort reform measures. One of the most significant items in this act allowed for the disclosure to the jury of collateral sources (e.g., accident and health insurance, disability insurance, Medicare, etc.) available to pay for an injured patient's expenses. In 1991, this measure was found to be unconstitutional. The loss of such tort reform significantly affects the cost of the awards and settlements. It is again time to seriously consider enacting new tort reform in Georgia. MAG Mutual has always strongly supported tort reform and is working with the Medical Association of Georgia, the Georgia Hospital Association and others in the business and medical communities to aggressively pursue meaningful tort reform in upcoming sessions of the Georgia legislature. We will continue to update you about these efforts throughout the year. ☺

