

# WAWCA Newsletter

April 11, 2003

Issue #4



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## *Message from the President — Phil Lehner*

At the annual meeting in February the following officers were elected:

President: Phil Lehner ([wclawyer@mindspring.com](mailto:wclawyer@mindspring.com))

President-Elect: Mark Shore ([shorem@dwd.state.wi.us](mailto:shorem@dwd.state.wi.us))

Treasurer: Ray Clausen ([Clausen\\_Severson@msn.com](mailto:Clausen_Severson@msn.com))

Secretary: Patricia Sandoz ([Trish@Wislawyers.com](mailto:Trish@Wislawyers.com))

We are pleased that Trish Sandoz and Ray Clausen are willing to continue as officers and their efforts are very much appreciated. Likewise, we need to acknowledge the work by Tom McSweeney and Janell Knutson in promoting the organization and helping to develop it. We elected First Founder Tom McSweeney to serve as chairman of the board of directors so that we may have the benefit of his continuing input. Finally, we are grateful for the continuing assistance of Past-President John Griner, who has agreed to take on several special projects for us.

As we enter the second year of the Wisconsin Association of Worker's Compensation Attorneys we now have a solid foundation in place. It is time to begin building on that foundation. The WAWCA has a lot of potential and it is now time to begin realizing that potential.

I have two priorities for my term as president. First, we need to begin doing some seminars. David Castagna ([david\\_castagna@rsausa.com](mailto:david_castagna@rsausa.com)) has agreed to serve as our CLE Chair. Our membership shares a great deal of knowledge and experience so that we have some outstanding resources available for putting on worker's compensation seminars.

We have now put together our first seminar to take place on Thursday, July 17, in Madison. We picked a Thursday date so that the ALJs would be able to participate. I am pleased to report Jim O'Malley has agreed that any attorney registering for the seminar may apply to the Department to request that no hearings will be scheduled on the seminar date. We are also in the process of setting up a golf outing to take place on the following day, Friday, July 18, 2003. More information will follow shortly!

As you know, each year Ed Falkner presents an excellent worker's compensation ethics seminar in Appleton. We are working with Ed to sponsor that program this fall.

My second priority is to get a Web site operational. The tremendous potential of the Internet already gives us a lot of opportunities for keeping up on our practice area. We need to harness some of that potential through our own Web site, directed to the specific interests and concerns of Wisconsin worker's compensation professionals. I would propose a Web site that goes far

beyond just providing information about the WAWCA. I would like to see a lot of meaningful content, such as news, case law updates, forms, practice tips, lecture outlines, and other similar resource materials.

For example, members present at the annual meeting offered to contribute spreadsheet forms they developed for doing present value computations, computing TPD benefits, and computing hearing loss benefits. I believe that there would be a lot of members who would be willing to share their work product with us through our Web site. As a hardcore computer geek, I expect to do a lot of the basic setup work myself and I propose to serve as the Webmaster during my term as president.

Past President John Griner has agreed to work on two projects. First, he is going to lead a membership drive to recruit additional members for WAWCA. Second, he is going to research the prospects for setting up a worker's compensation specialist certification program. Effective October 28, 1996, Wisconsin Supreme Court Rule 20:7.4 permits lawyers to identify themselves as specialists if they are so certified by American Bar Association-accredited programs. We want to explore the possibility of setting up a certification program through WAWCA.

We will be contacting you again the near future to solicit contributions for our new Web site. Meanwhile, I would be pleased to hear from you regarding any suggestions you have to offer regarding additional goals for our organization. Please also be sure to let me know if you want to offer to help on some specific area.

Finally, a dues statement follows below. If you have not already paid your dues for 2003, please do so as soon as possible.

Thanks,

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Mobile: (262) 939-6748  
E-mail: [wclawyer@mindspring.com](mailto:wclawyer@mindspring.com)

## **Headlines from the Association**

### ***Materials Needed for Our Web Site***

We need material for our new Web site. Please send us items that you are willing to share with our membership. We are looking for the type of materials described in the President's Message above. If you have versions of current Department forms in MS Word format, we would be pleased to have copies. (The Department Web site now uses only PDF versions of their forms, that can only be viewed and printed, but not filled in online.) We are also interested in unique forms that you find useful in your practice. Please send us any forms or materials that you are

willing to share with the membership. Please e-mail them to Phil Lehner at [wclawyer@mindspring.com](mailto:wclawyer@mindspring.com).

***WAWCA First Annual Worker's Compensation Seminar — July 17, 2003***  
***WAWCA Golf Outing — July 18, 2003***

More information will be mailed to you shortly for these events. Please mark your calendars now to attend!

**Membership:** Please share information about our association with any worker's compensation attorney that you meet. We continue to hear from attorneys that had not heard about our organization or received our newsletter. We are trying to reach worker's compensation attorneys throughout the state. Please forward this Newsletter to any attorneys that you know who may be interested in our Association.

***Minutes of Second Annual Meeting of the Wisconsin Association of Worker's Compensation Attorneys***

The second meeting of the members of the Wisconsin Association of Worker's Compensation Attorneys was held on February 28, 2003, in Madison, Wisconsin.

I. Call to Order: John Griner, President, called the meeting to order, stated the purpose of the meeting and took roll call. All officers were present, except for Ray Clausen.

II. Introductions: Members and officers attending introduced themselves.

III. Old Business:

A. President's Report: John Griner reported on various Association activities:

1. Association website: Problems have been encountered accessing the site. A new site needs to be developed that will include news from the Association, links to other websites containing resource information for worker's compensation attorneys, forms for use by our members and archives for new and past articles. It was also suggested that the information contained in the newsletter could be available on the website to eliminate the need for a separate newsletter.

2. Sharing of worker's compensation forms: The website could include forms that are commonly used in worker's compensation practice. Several members are willing to share forms and still more attorneys may be willing to share forms as well. Members would like access to forms on any of the following: spreadsheets for TPD computations, SSDI reverse offset computation, computing net present value of unaccrued benefits, hearing loss computation; and forms (Hearing Application, Answer, WKC-16-B). Most forms available at the Department's website are PDF forms that cannot be modified and are print-only forms.

3. Membership: continue efforts to reach attorneys throughout the state to increase membership and involvement of attorneys representing both applicants and respondents, together with administrative law judges.

4. IRS issues: The Association has tax exempt status. John Griner will complete the forms required by the state of Wisconsin to maintain this status. He did file an annual report in June 2002, and will continue to be designated as the registered agent indefinitely so that the agent does not need to be updated each year.

5. Nomination forms are being developed to solicit nominees for appointment to the Board of Directors and officers for future use.

6. Expenses incurred by the Association should be sent to John Griner and he will forward to the Treasurer for payment.

7. Next Association meeting: It was proposed that the Association meet this summer by hosting a CLE program and then holding a meeting afterwards. All present approved the idea, with David Castagna appointed as CLE chairman to coordinate the program speakers and location. Extensive discussion of ideas was had during the new business portion of the meeting.

B. Secretary's Report: Trish Sandoz read the minutes from the previous meeting and they were approved as read.

C. Treasurer's Report: The Association has \$2,997.77 in the bank from membership dues.

## II. New Business

A. Election of new officers and board of directors: The following slate of officers and board of directors was unanimously approved by the membership:

2003 President	Phil Lehner	
President Elect	Mark Shore	
Secretary	Trish Sandoz	
Treasurer	Ray Clausen	
Directors	Cynthia Thurston	District I
	Charles Hanson	District VI
	Mark McGillis	District VIII
Board Chairman	Tom McSweeney	

B. Introduction of New Officers: John Griner introduced the new officers and board members to the membership. President Phil Lehner then conducted the remaining portion of the meeting.

C. President Phil Lehner presented several ideas for the Association in 2003:

1. Summer seminar/meeting: It was decided that the Association will offer a seminar on July 17, 2003, with an Association meeting following the seminar. David Castagna will coordinate the seminar. It is hoped that the seminar will be approved for 6.0 CLE credits.

2. The association's original Web site is no longer operative. It was agreed that we would start from scratch with an entirely new Web site. There was discussion of the content members would like to see for an association Web site, and several members present at the meeting offered to contribute practice materials they have created. Phil Lehner indicated that he would take responsibility for setting up the new Web site.

3. Certification of Worker's Compensation Attorneys: John Griner will look into the requirements for practitioners to become certified in the area of worker's compensation. He will report back to the Association with what he learns.

4. Annual Meeting in November 2003: We thought it would be ideal to hold the annual meeting in conjunction with ALJ Falkner's annual ethics seminar held in Appleton. His seminars are well-attended and since those attending are also members or potential members for the Association, the meeting could take place following the seminar. ALJ Falkner agrees with this and plans are being made to hold it in November in Appleton. More information will be furnished later.

5. By-Laws: There will need to be a change to the by-laws to move the annual meeting from the last week in November to whatever date is selected for the seminar and meeting. This can be proposed and done at the summer meeting.

## ***EDITOR***

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***If you have received this transmission more than once, please contact Patricia Sandoz at [Trish@Wislawyers.com](mailto:Trish@Wislawyers.com), so that we may correct our mailing list.***  
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## WAWCA 2003 Membership Dues Statement

Dues for calendar year 2003 are now being collected. Please complete this form, print it out, and mail it with your check for dues to:

Ray Clausen, WAWCA Treasurer  
4510 Regent, Suite B  
Madison, WI 53705

Please make your check for \$20.00 payable to WAWCA.

*Note: Membership is limited to attorneys.*

### WAWCA MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Name:	
Firm/Company/ Organization:	
Mailing address:	
Phone:	
Fax:	
E-mail address:	
Practice area:	<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant <input type="checkbox"/> Respondent <input type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/> ALJ
Suggestions:	