

OPINION EXCHANGE

Happy New Year

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This is our last issue carrying the title *InsuranceTimes*.

InsuranceTimes is NOT going out of business. We're not going anywhere. We're staying right here to publish under our new name, *Insurance Journal/East*. And we are going to be better than ever.

The people of Wells Publishing, who produce *Insurance Journal*, have already shown they can publish the best insurance publications in the country by their success on the West Coast and in the Southwest.

Now, it's time the East Coast had the best insurance publication possible, too. So *InsuranceTimes* is joining with *Insurance Journal* to deliver just that—the best insurance publication yet.

In addition to our new name, we'll have a bigger circulation and a brand new look. We'll be a higher-quality magazine with four-color graphics and professional design. We'll have some new reporters, editors, designers and sales executives and lots of new advertisers and readers to join with our loyal supporters of *InsuranceTimes*.

Being New Englanders, we know that tradition has its place, that not all change is good. So we're not changing our commitment to local and regional reporting. We will actually have more time and resources to cover issues, people and events that Northeast agents and other insurance professionals care about.

One difference will be that in the same publication where we will give you your regional and local coverage, we will also give you national features and news. You will actually be getting two publications in one.

This is extremely good news for our advertisers who as "friends" of *InsuranceTimes* will still pay according to our own *InsuranceTimes* rates. Yet our advertisers will be rewarded with a classier publication and wider circulation.

As grateful as we are to you -- our readers and advertisers -- for your support these past 20 years, we are equally determined to merit your ongoing support under our new name and format.

This has all happened so swiftly, there has been little time to reminisce about the 20 years we have been publishing *InsuranceTimes*. But when we look back, we think not of headlines or stories, but of certain people.

First and foremost, the Meyers. John Meyer, co-owner of *InsuranceTimes* for 10 years, was chiefly responsible for our early success. He has remained a true and most generous friend, mentor and advisor as he has gone on to create opportunities for teenagers, teachers, parents and many others. And his wife, Stephanie Meyer, also a friend, whose patience, understanding and keen eye for detail made us all better writers and editors, now inspires young writers, poets and artists.

We are proud that *InsuranceTimes* has helped groom a generation of reporters, advertising executives and other professionals who in many instances have gone on to careers at other publications. Penny Williams, Spence Lee, Dottie Nauer, Leila Shumar, Sally O'Connell, Diane Astle, Barbara MacNeil, Pat Faletra, Meryl Dubay, Jeff Torborg, David Isgur, Myron Raisner, Chris Mahoney, Mark Hollmer, Tris Lozaw, Alec Soule and Pat Healy are just some of the employees to whom we also owe special thanks.

While this is a big event in our lives, we know it is not such a big deal in your lives or in the scheme of things. Mergers are happening all the time around us. But not everyone gets to write about theirs.

Thank you for being there for *InsuranceTimes*. If you liked us as *InsuranceTimes*, we think you'll love us as *Insurance Journal-East*.

Happy New Year!