

A (long) NOTE FROM ANGELA

No, it's not Ground Hog Day again but you might think so after reading this edition of our newsletter. I'm repeating a few things from past newsletters because I want to drive home a few topics that I think are very important to our clients. This year one of our top goals is to inform and educate our clients so that they can make better decisions about coverage. We hope to do so with newsletters, emails and our website. Stay tuned and stay informed!

One repeat topic involves rising auto rates. I look at all renewals now and have talked to many of you already about rising costs and why your rates continue to go up even when you're a good driver with no tickets, accidents or claims to consider. Believe it or not, you don't have much control over your rates – it's mostly about where you live and claims paid by carriers. SC auto carriers are currently operating at an average -1.7% loss. The national average is 3.4% profit. Why??? Our state tort liability laws favor consumers with very little limitations on the lawsuit payouts. Uninsured motorist claims are at an all-time high in our state. (*idea...* Do you need more liability coverage to protect your net worth if sued or injured?) Newer vehicles on our roadways are more expensive to repair/replace because they have advanced technology. Basically, it's about more residents, more vehicles on our roads, more accidents/claims, and more insurance payouts. Insurance companies will consider these and many other factors when setting 2018 and 2019 rates.

I'm also concerned about the number of clients that don't have flood insurance. For those of you who don't have that coverage, I have one word... HOUSTON. That city experienced a weather event that is occurring more often in the US as our weather patterns change. Many homeowners who suffered major losses were in low risk areas that had never experienced flooding before (Flood Zone X). Our Lowcountry (or neighboring communities upstream) could very easily experience one of these events if a weather system were to linger for an extended period of time. As this area grows, rain runoff in our communities will be a major concern, too. Don't look to past experiences when deciding whether to get flood insurance or not; look at the changes in our climate/communities and what *could* happen.

And finally, I encourage you all to review your policies periodically, but especially at renewal. Are you comfortable with your coverages and deductibles? So many folks were shocked to learn what their deductibles were during Hurricane Matthew and Irma. To keep your homeowner's insurance cost down, many of you have chosen high wind deductibles – some as high as 10% of your dwelling amount. With so many options available in the homeowner's insurance industry, you do not always have to have high deductibles to get a reasonable rate. Read your policies; be proactive; consider what your losses could be and call us if you have questions about your coverages. We're here to help!

Enjoy the beautiful Spring weather and renewed growth all around. Thank you all so much for your business!

Angela

\$\$\$\$\$ DO WE HAVE YOUR HOME AND AUTO INSURANCE? FLOOD? UMBRELLA? GOLF CART? BOAT? \$\$\$\$\$

If not, you could be paying more for insurance than you should!
Learn about multiple policy discounts with our agency. Some discounts are as high as 15%!

GET YOUR FREE QUOTE TODAY! CALL 843-237-1353

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

John & Mary Lee Venuti

Litchfield Beach Resident and Local Restaurant Owner

John and Mary Lee have been clients of Lowcountry Insurance for thirteen years. Both originally from the Finger Lakes region of Upstate NY, they have lived in North Litchfield Beach since 2005. They are active members at Precious Blood Catholic Church in Pawleys Island. In 2000, they opened the first Captain John's Seafood Grill in Litchfield. In 2004, Captain John's settled into their current location at the Indigo Exchange Plaza on Hwy 17. For almost 20 years, the restaurant has specialized in New England style seafood dishes. Mary Lee lived in Boston, MA for 20 years before marrying John; she was delighted that John's restaurant had a New England themed decor and menu. Haddock is a locals' favorite!

Join John and Mary Lee Monday through Saturday for a wonderful lunch or dinner and a great atmosphere!

www.captainjohnsseafoodgrill.com



POLICY RENEWALS

Be on the lookout for renewal reminders from our office. You will get an email at the month prior to your policy renewal reminding you to familiarize yourselves with the policy limits, deductibles and endorsements. We are here to assist you with any updates to your policies and questions you may have.



Contact Angela Chandler about renewals angela@lowcountryins.com or ext 1022.

**FLOODS ARE THE MOST
COMMON NATURAL DISASTER
IN THE US.
OFTEN FLOODS OCCUR IN LOW
RISK AREAS (Flood Zone X)
ARE YOU INSURED?**

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LOOK FOR OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER TO BE DELIVERED SUMMER 2018

INSURANCE INDUSTRY NEWS

WHY ARE AUTO INSURANCE RATES SO HIGH?

Most, if not all, of our clients will experience some rate increase in their auto insurance this year. Some reasons SC auto insurance rates are increasing:

- Rapid population growth in Horry and Georgetown Counties – more drivers on the roads = more claims
- Road improvements throughout the state – increase in accidents and claims
- SC leads the nation in automobile deaths per state – increase in claims
- More expensive cars on our highways – expensive to replace/repair with original/manufacture parts
- Unprecedented weather related claims in last 24 months – floods, hail, hurricane claims
- Automobile accident lawsuits are at an all-time high in SC.
- Many carriers are restricting new business causing remaining carriers' market share to increase beyond expectations and planning.

Ways you can keep your costs down:

- Take a defensive driving class (the credit is good for 3 years)
- File fewer claims
- Increase deductibles or drop comp/collision on older vehicles
- Accept used and aftermarket parts when repairing your vehicle
- Talk to your local and state representatives about our tort liability laws
- Bundle your insurance policies with the same agency for discounts



Home Based Business Insurance

Operating a business from your home can be a rewarding and profitable experience. However, each day brings the possibility for a loss that could leave you and your business unprotected. Most homeowner's policies are not designed to cover a business exposure in the home. The typical homeowner's policy provides minimal coverage for business property on and off premises and no liability coverage relating to business activities. Some examples of home based businesses:

- Accounting/Billing service/Bookkeeping
- Animal sitter/Dog walker
- Barber/Beautician
- Child care
- Consultant
- Cosmetic/Herbal sales (Avon, Mary Kay, Essential Oils)
- Events planner
- Handyman
- Seamstress
- Senior Care Service
- Tutor

Call us to make sure you're adequately insured!

Looking for cheap entertainment?

Your local high schools and middle schools have some suggestions...

- 1) Support the Arts and see a school play or choral/band concert. It rivals Broadway! And always a favorite at the holidays!
- 2) Attend an athletic event for Girls or Boys - Varsity, Jr Varsity and B teams (there's more than football to see - wrestling, softball, baseball, lacrosse, soccer, tennis, volleyball, basketball & track too!)
- 3) Come out to see rising stars at the schools' annual talent shows featuring students.

Check your local schools' websites for a calendar of events. Support our kids.

