

The TRUTH

Vol. 120
No. 4
2022



A Publication of the

RBO

*Our
Second Century*

Cover photos / Nicholas Petronko



39th RBO
Successful
Convention
HELD



The TRUTH

Editorial Office
910 Linden Street
Mayfield, PA 18433
E-mail: ypam1010@echoes.net

Subscription Rates: In the United States
\$8.00 a year, in Canada and foreign
countries: \$15.00
ISSN 0041-3690

Non-Profit postage paid at Tampa, FL

Subscription and Circulation Office:
301 Oxford Valley Road Suite 1602B
Yardley, PA 19067-7721

The opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the policy or beliefs of this publication or the RBO.

John Uram, Editor

Published by
RBO

Basil G. Russin, Esq., President
Nicholas Petronko, Vice President
Stephen Wanko, Sec./Treasurer

CORPORATE SECRETARY
Heather M. Bradley

SUPREME COUNCIL
John Wanko
Alexander B. Russin
David Carlock
Donald Lambo
Edie Evans

AUDITORS
Daniel M. Carlock
Harrison Russin
Stephen Wasilewski

General Council
Alexander B. Russin

RBO
A Fraternal Benefit Society
301 Oxford Valley Road Suite 1602B
Yardley, PA 19067-7721

Belief in God, **still strong**, is slipping

Most adults in the United States do believe in God, but their numbers are on a downward trend, according to Gallup. Although 81% in a recent Gallup poll say they believe in God, that's down six percent from 2017, and the lowest since Gallup first asked in 1944. From 1944–2011, more than 90% of Americans expressed belief in God.

The number began dipping in 2011, when 87% professed belief, and stayed there until the most recent survey in May 2022.

Perhaps not surprisingly, belief in God seems to correspond with one's political beliefs. The survey found that 62% of liberals believe in God, along with 72% of Democrats (and 68% of young adults), compared to 94% of political conservatives and 92% of Republicans.

About 42% of those who believe say that God hears prayers and can intervene on a human's behalf, although 28% believe God is unable to respond and 11% think God does neither.

Many live in multigenerational households

Multiple generations sharing a single household is more and more common in the U.S. these days, and that doesn't seem likely to decline anytime. The Pew Research Center reports that the number of people living in households with family members has quadrupled from 1971–2021, accounting for 18% of the U.S. population and 59.7 million people in March 2021.

Young adults make up the biggest portion of this population. Compared to previous generations, they tend to stay in school longer, delaying marriages and putting off creating their own households. Thirty-one percent of adults 25–29 live with their parents or relatives—37% of men and 26% of women.

Aside from financial factors, a third of adults live in multigenerational setups because of care giving needs, with 25% caring for an older relative and 12% involved in child care. Other reasons include a change in relationship status (15%) and companionship (12%). Thirteen percent cite COVID-19 as their reason for living with several generations.

The **workplace** is still in flux

The conflict between remote, hybrid, and in-person work is still going strong, according to Microsoft's 2022 Work Trend Index study. The study found that 51% of current hybrid workers, who shift between the office and home, are considering switching to working exclusively on a remote basis, but 57% percent of remote employees say they'd consider shifting to a hybrid arrangement.

Either way, 50% of leaders said they're planning for a full return to in-office work by the end of 2022.

MAILING LIST CHANGES

If your address is incorrect or if you know a member who is not receiving The Truth or if you want to remove someone from the mailing list please fill out this form and mail to:

R.B.O., 301 Oxford Valley Road Suite 1602B, Yardley, PA 19067-7721

Phone: 1-215-563-2537 Web page: www.rbo.org

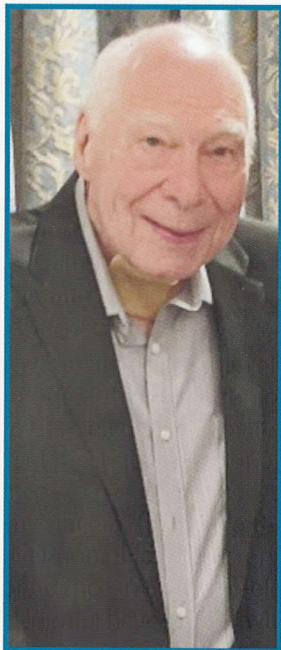
Address Change New Member Remove from list
Include old address

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ - _____ Lodge # _____



39th RBO Supreme Convention

Retiring President's Report

August, 2022

Reverend Clergy, Supreme Officers,
Sister and Brother Delegates,
Honored Guests, Family and Friends,
Glory to Jesus Christ, Glory Forever

I want to extend a very warm and fraternal welcome to each of you as we gather for our 39th convention of the RBO. A special welcome to the delegates who are attending the convention for the first time. I sincerely hope you enjoy your convention experience.

I would like to express my sincere "thanks" to the delegates of the 38th Supreme Convention held in Feasterville-Treose, PA for expressing your confidence in me by re-electing me to the office of supreme President. I have always with my fellow supreme officers made a sincere effort to make good decisions and to do what is best for our members. I am confident

after reviewing our Supreme Officers reports you will all agree with me.

Special thanks to the Supreme Council, our meeting always had a positive exchange of ideas to help nurture RBO to grow with new products and fraternal benefits.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the outstanding efforts of Heather Bradley, our office manager. All reports and paperwork were always completed in a timely matter and also thank you to Irena for her very efficient support.

During my tenure a large decision was made to sell our building on Spring Garden Street, and purchase a smaller office building in Yardley, PA. To date it has proved to be an asset and money saver.

During my tenure a large decision was made to sell our building on Spring Garden Street, and purchase a smaller office building in Yardley, PA. To date it has proved to be an asset and money saver.

Over the next two days, you will hear about several positive changes that have occurred over the past few years that have impacted our financial results. Since our last convention the state of Pennsylvania Department of Banking and Insurance conducted an examination audit of our society's records for the 5-year period of 2015-2020. The insurance examination reviewed all records and reports and presented their results. I am very happy to report that our books, investments and various insurance related requirements have been performed to the satisfaction of the state of PA insurance examiners.

Our surplus increased by 28,000 in 2021 and now stands at 3.37 million. Our assets continued to grow and reached an all-time high of 16.7 million. Life policies and annuities in 2017 were 3,679, in 2021 3,475, a loss of 204 policies. This is an area where all of us have to work to increase our membership.

Let, us not, forget about our proud past of 121 years and be prepared to make the proper decisions for our growth and progress, so that the RBO will continue to prosper and serve all of its members as we continue to proceed into the future.

It is important that I thank God for keeping me healthy and assisting in directing the everyday decision-making.

Finally, I thank my wife, Helen for her support in keeping me on track and being by my side.

John Wanko
RBO President

here & there

Do the **hard** jobs first.
The **easy** jobs will take care of themselves.
—Dale Carnegie

Creativity is just connecting things.

When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a **little guilty** because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while.

—Steve Jobs

The person who constantly angers you or frustrates you, controls you.

—Colleen Kettenhofen

The scariest moment is always just before you start.

—Stephen King

Apply yourself at whatever you do, whether you're a janitor or taking your first summer job, because that work ethic will be reflected in everything you do in life.

—Tyler Perry

RBO Secretary/Treasurer Report 39th Supreme Convention

Mr. President, fellow members of the Supreme Council, Clergy, delegates, and guests, welcome to the 39th Supreme Convention of the RBO or the USA. I look forward to a productive convention.

Since the last convention in 2018 a lot has occurred in the world and the economy. I am happy to report the RBO has effectively dealt with these difficult unprecedented times and has emerged stronger than ever. At the 2018 convention the RBO reported assets of 14.6 million dollars. For the fiscal year ending December 31, 2021, the reported assets for the RBO were an all-time high of 15.7 million dollars. Even though COVID-19 related issues continued to hamper our operations in 2021 the RBO was able to maintain its solid financial health throughout the year. Unfortunately, the core of our business, writing new life insurance policies was down this year to 23 new policies from the prior year of 31 policies. These new policy totals are well below executive board goals and expectations. We must do a better job of attracting new members.

Throughout 2021, I reviewed the RBO investment portfolio closely with Thomas Paluszynski of Morgan Stanley. 2021 investment environment and pandemic related issues which affected swings in credit ratings of our bond holdings. Several of our bond holdings were downgraded due to market conditions. As a result, the RBO was forced to be constantly active in the market buying and selling bond issues. At our yearend review our actuary firm CPS Actuary reviewed the RBO bond portfolio and determined our positions are improving. CPS reported that at year end approximately 14% of bonds were below investment grade. This is a vast improvement from 2017 when the RBO held about 31% non-investment grade bonds. This improvement is the result of the close monitoring and selling of lower grade bonds. Our partnership with First State Trust Company has been very good for the RBO over the last 18 months. Since we partnered with First State Trust Company our custodial expenses have decreased. Our current investment portfolio contains particularly good investment grade bonds returning roughly 5% on our investments,

which is excellent in this climate.

Along with working closely with Morgan Stanley, I also attended all the Executive Board meetings this year and distributed meeting minutes to the Supreme Council for review and discussion. I reviewed the internal audit results prepared by the RBO's independent certified public accounting firm Pappler Thompson and Associates. I attended via telecom the American Fraternal Alliance conference in July. In October I attended the Pennsylvania Fraternal Alliance Annual Meeting and the New Jersey-New York Fraternal Alliance Annual Meeting. In addition to normal RBO business, I was actively involved in the annual 5-year Pennsylvania Insurance Department inspection. This inspection was delayed a year due to Covid and was initiated in 2021. The inspection spanned

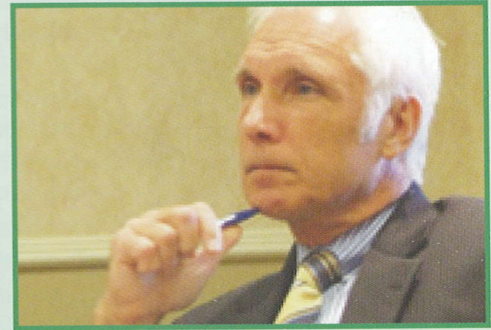
... new policy totals are well below executive board goals and expectations. We must do a better job of attracting new members.

a little over a year and was a very hands-on process with the insurance regulators. The inspection was just concluded in May of this year and final reports are in process and due from the insurance regulators. The RBO was not cited for any major findings. All our financials, meeting minutes, office procedures, and safeguards were all in order and meeting acceptable business practices by the regulators.

In March of this year, I reviewed the Annual Statement of the RBO submitted to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with Allan Ferrone, of CPS Actuaries. Here are some 2021 highlights:

Surplus: Increased this year by \$28,000 due to operational gains and gains from the sale of common stocks and bonds.

Assets: 2021 resulted in a new record high of 16.7 million dollars. This was due to positive cash flow from operations, premiums and investment income exceeded operating expenses and benefits paid out.



Our percentage of assets are bonds 87%, common stocks 4%, mortgages 3%, preferred stocks 3%, cash 2% and real estate 1% (office)

Solvency Ratio: Decreased by 2% to 125% (RBO has \$125 of assets for every \$100 of liabilities). This is still a very high level which is positive for regulators.

Risk Based Capital (RBC) Ratio: The PA Insurance Department has indicated that they will start looking into a society much more closely when the ratio drops below 300%, whereas most other states use 250% or 200% as the guideline. The RBO's ratio increased slightly in 2021 to 985% due to the increase of surplus and asset valuation reserves.

Results of operations: This increased for the 10th year in a row. The gain in operations was \$72,000 for this year. This gain was due to continued reduction of expenses. The expenses for the year decreased to \$425,000 from \$433,000 in 2021. Investment income increased slightly in 2021, mainly due to income received from the bond portfolio. The portfolio is organized using a ladder maturity model, (2021 thru 2050) with a rate of return of just under 5%.

Membership: The RBO experienced declining membership for another year. Current policies are down to 3,112 from 3,169. The insurance in force remained about the same as last year due to new policies purchased which have a higher face value than terminating policies. Our total insurance in force is 17.9 million, with the average face amount increasing to \$5,800. The average age of our membership remained the same at 48.7. The average age of the life insurance member is around 50 and the average age of annuity holders is 62. About 91% of members have paid up

Continued on page 5.

RBO Secretary/Treasurer's Report Continued from page 4

policies and 23% of the membership are 70 or older. There are 363 annuities in force. About 34% of policies are on lives of members that are 70 or older.

Focus items for 2022:

- 1.) Find ways to increase membership and increase insurance sales
- 2.) Continue cost savings programs
- 3.) Continue to monitor bond portfolio and acquire high quality bonds
- 4.) Continue to investigate common stocks with high dividend returns
- 5.) Continue to investigate other investment products with good returns and minimal risk profile.
- 6.) Adhere to the RBO Investment policy
- 7.) Closely monitor cash flow positions to prepare for any potential annuity withdrawals or death benefits.
- 8.) Implement any findings from the report from the Pennsylvania Insurance Department Audit.

A special thank you to Heather Bradley and her office staff. All their hard work and dedication in managing the day-to-day operations of the Corporate Office has made 2021 another great year for the RBO.

I look forward to serving the RBO in the future.

Respectfully Submitted
 Stephen J. Wanko
 Secretary/Treasurer

RBO Vice-President's Convention Report



The four years since our last convention have been, indeed, unique. The death of Michael Snyder, early in his term as Secretary-treasurer, caused a restructuring of the Executive Committee. Steven Wanko was appointed to take Michael's place. He learned the job quickly and soon became a critical member of the Executive Committee.

Then, the Covid pandemic came and prevented us from having in-person meetings, closed our in-person office and drastically changed our way of running our organization. From March, 2020 until May, 2021, we met virtually by phone, email and zoom. Although these methods allowed us to conduct our necessary business, it prevented us from personal contact with each other, members, and potential members.

Despite the pandemic, the Pennsylvania Insurance Department began our audit. An initial zoom meeting was held with the state auditors. The audit turned out to be an enormous amount of work on the part of our office staff. The Executive Board had bi-weekly phone meetings with the state auditors where there was always an exchange of issues being presented. All in all, we received a very positive report --- but, at a huge expense to our organization. The final cost was \$107,000.00 and thankfully, we will not be audited again for four more years.

Although our membership is not what we would like it to be, our financial condition continues to strengthen. Expenses are contained to a minimum.

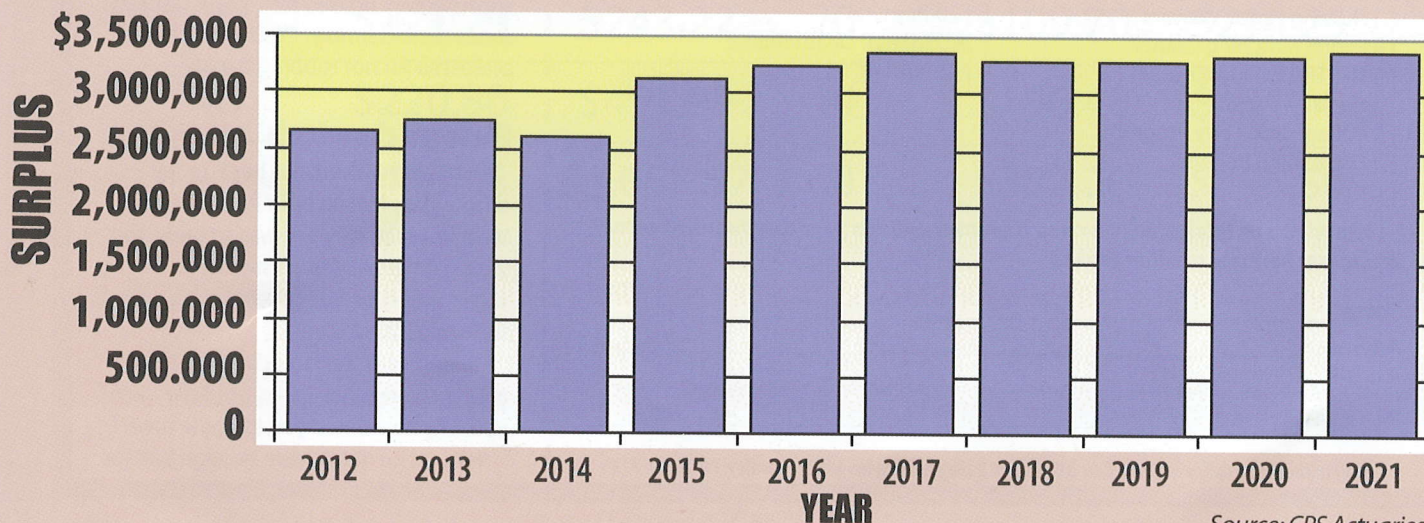
I would like to thank President John Wanko, acting Secretary/Treasurer Stephen Wanko, Heather Bradley and the office staff for the help and assistance in keeping the RBO running efficiently during the past four years, especially made more difficult with the death of Margie Ovack. Special thanks to Heather Bradley for her diligence and perseverance in running our office.

Respectfully submitted,
 Basil G. Russin
 Vice-President

RBO on the internet - heather@rbo.org, Web page: www.rbo.org, RBO forms are available on-line at: www.rbo.org

Surplus:

Despite the challenges of operating during a pandemic the last two years, surplus has increased recently and now stands at \$3.37 million. The following graph shows the trend in surplus over the last 10 years. As we are all aware, a lot has happened since then but the Society has been weathering the storm better than most small fraternal.



Source: CPS Actuaries

SUPER FOOD

Berries



High in fiber, berries are naturally sweet, and their rich colors mean they are high in antioxidants and disease-fighting nutrients.

How to include them: When berries are not in season, it is just as healthy to buy them frozen. Add to yogurt, cereals, and smoothies, or eat plain for a snack.

A generous donation was made to the Ss. Cyril & Methodius Scholarship Fund by: John & Kathleen Chromchak Jr, Lodge 265; Brian & Jennifer Doran, Lodge 24; William & Joan Dupkanick, Lodge 222; Christopher & Rachel Dupkanick, Lodge 168; Rebecca & Gabriel Williams, Lodge 168; Anne P Cvercko, Lodge 198 & St Nicholas Lodge #198; Mr & Mrs Martin J. Vronick (Lodge 204); Gloria Spitko (Lodge 57); Nicholas Ladomirak (Lodge 41); John & Helen Wanko (Lodge 100) and Deborah Donlick (Lodge 216); nonmember Laura M Armbrust, friend of Lodge 167; John & Nancy Malinchok, Lodge 72 PA; Mary E Mihaly, Lodge 204 OH; Nancy Gresko, Lodge 93 PA

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

*I wish to donate to the Ss. Cyril and Methodius Scholarship Fund to help young members of the R.B.O. receive a college education. Please acknowledge my con-tribution by publishing same in **The Truth**.*

Name _____ Amt. \$ _____

Address _____ Lodge # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

All checks should be made payable to the Russian Brotherhood Organization, Ss. Cyril and Methodius Scholarship Fund and mailed to the Home Office of the R.B.O., 301 Oxford Valley Road Suite 1602B, Yardley, PA 19067-7721

Check here for RBO information on:

Our FREE Fraternal Benefits:

- Scholarship Program
- Newborn Insurance
- Child Cancer Benefit
- Nursing Home Waivers
- Lodge Matching Grants
- The TRUTH Subscription
- Heritage Project
- College Book Buy Program
- Other FREE Benefits

Our Fine Fraternal Products:

- Single Premium Life
- 3-Pay Life
- Whole Life
- 20-Pay Life
- Accidental Death Riders
- Annuities

Would you be interested in having a speaker address your congregation on our immigrant heritage or other topics?

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Parish Affiliation _____

Mail to the Home Office of the R.B.O., 301 Oxford Valley Road Suite 1602B, Yardley, PA 19067-7721

The lighter side



No bull

An official from the government pulled into a ranch in Texas. "I need to inspect your ranch here for illegally grown drugs," he told the owner.

The rancher shrugged. "Fine with me. Just don't go into that field over there."

The government man reached into his pocket and showed the rancher his badge. "See this? This badge means I am allowed to go wherever I wish, on any land, no questions asked. Have I made myself clear?"

The rancher nodded politely. "Whatever you want, officer."

An hour later, as he was doing his chores in the barn, the rancher heard loud screams coming from the field. He ran out and saw the government man racing toward the fence with a big, angry bull in hot pursuit. The bull was gaining on the officer with every step.

"Help!" the man yelled. "Help! What do I do?"

The rancher dashed to the fence and yelled at the top of his lungs: "Your badge! Show him your badge!"

One stroke

Bobby Jones was one of the best golfers of the early 20th century. He was known for his honesty and sportsmanship.

Once, when he hit his ball on the 11th hole at the 1925 U.S. Open in Boston, Jones told officials that he had moved the ball slightly by accidentally clipping the grass, violating rule 18 (moving the ball). They didn't see it, but Jones stayed firm and they finally had to accept his word.

When he lost the game by one stroke, sportswriters praised him for his honesty. Jones replied simply, "You might as well praise me for not robbing banks."

Bait and switch

A little girl walked into her Sunday school class half an hour late. When the teacher asked why she was so tardy, the young girl replied, "I wanted to go fishing with my Daddy, but he said I had to come to Sunday school!"

Pleased with the father's spiritual dedication, the teacher asked, "And did he tell you why he wanted you to come here?"

"He said he didn't have enough bait for the two of us."

122 YEARS
RBO
INSURANCE
Good for your Grandparents
Great for your Grandchildren



20-Pay Life: Affordable for Everyone!

For the 20 Year Payment Life plan, premiums are payable for a period of 20 years only. The plan becomes fully paid-up at the end of 20 years and the face amount of insurance continues in force for the life of the member. Cash values will accumulate for this plan.

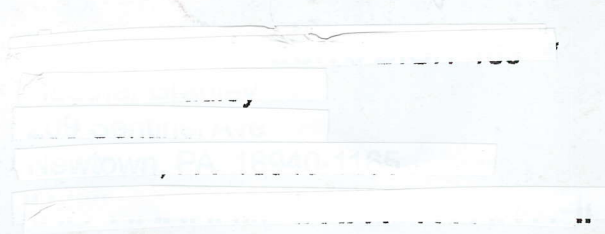
MALE			FEMALE		
Age at Issue	\$10,000	\$25,000	Age at Issue	\$10,000	\$25,000
0	\$81.17	\$142.92	0	\$77.70	\$134.25
10	\$98.35	\$185.88	10	\$87.70	\$159.25
20	\$121.29	\$243.22	20	\$109.70	\$214.25
40	\$220.80	\$491.99	40	\$196.40	\$431.00
60	\$445.46	\$1,053.67	60	\$382.20	\$895.50

1-215-563-2537

The TRUTH

301 Oxford Valley Road Suite 1602B
Yardley, PA 19067-7721

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit # 3698
Tampa, FL



Vertical text on the right edge of the page, likely a postage meter or barcode strip.

We are looking for . . .

LODGE SECRETARIES

Call Heather at 1-215-563-2537

Recipe

KOLBASA in Wine Sauce

It's hard not to nibble while the main meal is baking in the oven, so many hostesses put out a tray of fresh vegetables or chips with dip. Instead, try a platter of kolbasa with wine sauce. This will disappear very fast.

- 1 pound kolbasa
- 1/2 cup red wine
- 1/4 cup prepared mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 Tablespoons scallions

Cook kolbasa in water to cover according to directions on package. Cool.

Remove skin, if desired, cut into identical bite-sized pieces. Combine wine, mustard, salt, and scallions or onion chopped fine, in a saucepan.

Add the kolbasa. Bring to boil. Simmer for 2 to 3 minutes. Arrange on platter. Provide toothpicks. Serve with thin slices of toasted bread squares or crackers.

Source: Hanya's Kitchen, The Orthodox Herald Recipe Collection

SS. Cyril & Methodius Scholarship Award

This award is given to students pursuing an undergraduate degree. A recipient of this award receives **\$400 each year** automatically renewable for three years.

To Qualify: You must have a life insurance policy of \$10,000 or more and be a member for at least two years.

September 30, 2022

Is the deadline if you graduated high school this year and you have been accepted at a college or other school for the Fall semester.

In order to be considered for a SS. Cyril and Methodius Scholarship, you should go to rbo.org and

- (1) click RBO Scholarship,
- (2) click Application for Ss. Cyril & Methodius Scholarship Program . . . fill out the scholarship application and
- (3) return it to the RBO. (address below)