

# Co-Op Connection



*Meet Co-Op Agency's New Commercial Lines Customer Service Representative*

*Lynette Provard*

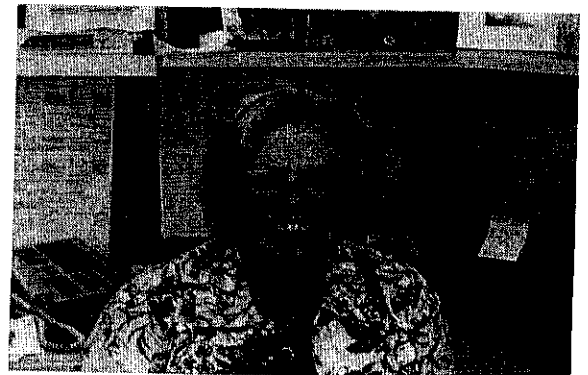
Meet *Lynette Provard* our new Customer Service Representative.

Lynette joined our staff in February of 2010. She will work closely with *Dave Koeffler & Michael Kirkpatrick* in handling the day to day servicing of customer accounts. Lynette can help you with changes to policies, insurance certificates and assist you with any questions you may have on your account.

Lynette relocated from Horsham, PA. She started her insurance career at Prudential Insurance in 1989. Her background includes underwriting, individual and small group Life and Disability products, Licensing & Registration and managing the billing department.

When Lynette is not busy working she enjoys spending time with her three Grandchildren, 2 Girls & 1 Boy. She also enjoys aerobic walking, gardening, and sewing.

Please contact Lynette for your commercial policy concerns, feel free to contact Lynette at 717-866-9747 Ext. 4901 or e-mail [lprovard@coopagency.com](mailto:lprovard@coopagency.com).



## Retirement? When? How?

You're busy with the day to day workings of your business, making sure the doors stay open and the customers keep coming through the door. You make sure the shelves are stocked, the business is insured and that your employees get paid, but *how much time do you take to take care of yourself and your financial future?*

### **Fixed Annuities**

A fixed annuity is one of the best investment options available for a conservative investor or for someone who may be uncomfortable with risking their savings in the stock market. Generally, a fixed annuity earns interest that is guaranteed by the insurance company for a specific period of time.

This investment-sometimes referred to as a ' *tax-deferred annuity* ' - defers any taxes on the earnings until you make a withdrawal or begin receiving income from it. Fixed deferred annuities help you save for retirement through the power of tax-deferred compounding. Your annuity contract earns a safe, competitive return on a continually increasing balance.

### **Types of Fixed Annuities**

**CD-Annuities**-This type of fixed annuity guarantees a level interest rate for each year up to 10 years. Somewhat like a Certificate of Deposit you can buy at a bank, this annuity guarantees a fixed interest rate for a specified period of time which you determine at the time you set up your annuity. Your interest rate does not change for the duration of the rate guarantee period you've selected. These rates are currently higher than what is available to you at your local bank. For example a current 5 year CD at a bank will generally be around 3.00%, while a current rate for a 5 year annuity will generally get you a rate of 4.05%.

**Traditional Fixed Annuities**- If you own a traditional fixed annuity, the insurance company "resets" the interest rate every year on the anniversary of your initial deposit, however, you can be assured that this rate will never be set lower than the company's minimum rate guarantee (usually between 1.5% to 3%). This annuity is different than the CD annuity described above, in that the interest rate you earn each year can fluctuate both up and down. With a CD annuity, your interest rate does not change for the duration of the rate guarantee period you've selected.

**Immediate Annuities**- An immediate or "straight life" annuity is also sometimes referred to as a fixed annuity. However, it is a very different from the "deferred" fixed annuities described in the two paragraphs above. An immediate annuity will start making secure, guaranteed payments to you right away. If you are near retirement and/or wish to turn your 401 K, IRA, or sale of a home or business into a secure, guaranteed income stream, an immediate annuity might be right for you.

**Other Annuities**-There are also additional annuity options available for you if you are seeking annuity options with a chance for a higher rate of return, they are called Index Annuities. We will be featuring the Index Annuity in an upcoming newsletter. If you would like to find out more about this option, give me a call at the contact information below.

### **Where to Buy Your Annuity**

I am always willing and ready to help you with your questions regarding annuities. We deal with several of the nation's top annuity companies. Here at the Co-Op Agency we will go above and beyond to make sure you are comfortable with, and fully understand your retirement planning. To read about our company visit [www.coopagency.com](http://www.coopagency.com) or call toll-free at 800.800.5989 ext. 4907 ask for *Steve Becker*.

## Why Do I Need Utility Services Coverage?

It already seems a distant memory when I'm looking out the window as the sun is shining and it's nearly a perfect day. However, I'm sure you all can remember this past winter when we had close to 2 feet of snow on the ground. To add insult to injury, most of us got hit with another colossal storm within the week. Thousands of people were without power for an extended period of time, including many businesses. If you were one of the unfortunate folks who lost power to their business, did you have the correct coverage's in place?

For grocery store owners, there are two coverage's which work in tandem to cover loss of power. The first, with which most of you are familiar, is *spoilage*. This is relatively self explanatory, as it covers the refrigerated and frozen goods which are ruined if you are unable to maintain the correct temperature. Quite often, this is a result of the compressors failing on premises in the refrigerated or frozen cases.

The second coverage is *utility services*. This covers the *off-premises* failure of the electric, gas water or communication companies to deliver the necessary services for you to stay in business. There is usually a time deductible of 12 or more hours.

There are two important points regarding this coverage. First, is that this addresses the cause of the power loss being *off premises* as compared to a malfunctioning compressor *on premises*. Secondly, this coverage replaces the loss of income as well as the lost product as long as the coverage is written in the correct manner.

The last note that should be mentioned regarding these coverages is to make sure that the values are correct. It's crucial to make sure that you have enough coverage for both the loss of income as well as the actual loss of product when you are evaluating a potential maximum loss. Each store is unique, which is why you really need to discuss this with your Co-Op Account Executive to make sure your store has the customized coverages in place.

All of the fine companies we represent at Co-Op Agency offer these coverage's. If you're unsure if you currently have these coverage's in place, or you just want a comprehensive review of your current policy, please feel free to contact us for a no-obligation second-opinion of your insurance program.