On February 28 our industry lost a real hero. Richard C “Dick” Goff passed unexpectedly from complications of surgery leading to cardiac arrest following a slip on ice at his home on his 69th birthday. It was a devastating shock to all who had the pleasure of knowing him.

Dick was a very special person, not only to our industry but to all who had the opportunity to do business with him or know him as a friend. He was a true “doer” and a much focused businessman. I can recall when I first met Dick some 20-plus years ago at a SIIA event where he made several suggestions on how SIIA could expand its services and representation of the industry. After listening I said, “well, Dick you have some good ideas and you should consider getting actively involved and bring them to the SIIA leadership.” Dick just nodded his head and, the next thing I knew, he took the task to heart by serving on several committees through the following years, testifying before Congress and many state legislatures on behalf of the industry and ultimately serving as president and chairman.

SIIA’s leadership was stunned at his sudden passing yet quick to articulate the impact of his loss. “Dick was a hugely influential figure in our industry and our association,” said Mike Ferguson, SIIA’s chief executive officer. “He was a constant
and vigorous supporter of the self-insurance marketplace and a friend to all who knew him. Our thoughts today are with his family, colleagues and many friends.”

Erica Massey, executive vice president of SIIA and president of the Self-Insurers’ Publishing Corp., said,

“Dick was not only an inspiration and a tireless supporter of the self-insurance/alternative risk community, he was also a dear friend to all and a great mentor. His vibrant personality and unwavering support of the industry will truly be missed but never forgotten.”

A large group of Dick’s family, friends and industry figures gathered at a north Baltimore hospitality venue for a memorial service and, according to his wishes, “a party.” A focal point was an antique wooden Budweiser case containing a commemorative copper plaque and six Budweiser bottles that – following the directive of Dick’s will – were filled with his ashes. That was Dick, who could be playful even in serious times.

Dick was a true visionary, always thinking “outside the box” with a strong positive attitude. I don’t think the word “can’t” ever was part of his vocabulary. To Dick everything was possible and he proved that time and again both in his business world and personal life as well. In business, he never feared his competitors and was eager to share information and extend a helping hand if asked. Like all of us, he had his gripes but I never heard him say a bad word about anyone.

His company, MIMS International, which later became The Taft Companies, is as unique as Dick himself. A strong independent broker, administrator and captive insurance management firm, Dick and his team crafted some of the most unique programs for his clients. There were times his closest colleagues felt compelled to reel him back into the “box,” but more often than not his innovative thinking prevailed.

His partners, Allen Taft and Mary Claire Goff (Dick’s best friend, loving spouse and business partner) made an awesome team that I’m sure will continue to follow and implement Dick’s vision for years to come.
During his SIIA tenure Dick helped to expand its presence in workers’ compensation, international operations, formation of special coalitions to advance alternative risk finance. In addition he served as a founding member of related organizations including the South Carolina Captive Insurance Association, the Captive Insurance Council of the District of Columbia and the Montana Captive Insurance Association (where he was currently serving on its board of directors). He was also instrumental in the expansion of SIIA government relations work with a focus on alternative risk financing as well as employee benefits, serving as author of The Self-Insurers’ monthly column “The ART Gallery,” director/officer of the Self-Insurance Educational Foundation and more. To say Dick was “involved” is an understatement!

Dick leaves a strong legacy and a devoted family who I am confident will carry on his vision, enthusiasm and support. Case in point is his son Jon, who along with his wife Karen are dedicating their lives to helping young men who have experienced a rough time in life through their special “ride to work” program. With the help of Dick and Mary Claire and other supporters, Jon and Karen formed Gallant Chance Ranch, a non-profit organization based in Montana that helps at-risk teens become productive citizens. It was fitting that the announcement of his passing noted that in lieu of flowers memorial donations could be made to Gallant Chance Ranch. I encourage readers to visit www.gallantchanceranch.org and consider supporting them, not only as a tribute to Dick but for the excellent work they are doing to help others in need. Donations may be made online or mailed to Gallant Chance Ranch, 1097 West Dry Creek Rd., Belgrade, MT 59714.

**R.I.P., My Friend and Colleague, Dick Goff**

Jim Kinder was among the founders of SIIA and served as its Executive Director/CEO from its inception in 1981 until his retirement in 2008. In addition to creating SIIA he formed several other industry organizations including South Carolina Captive Insurance Association, District of Columbia Captive Insurance Association, Montana Captive Insurance Association and Self-Insurance Educational Foundation. Jim remains active in the industry and currently serves on the board of directors of Montana Captive Insurance Association and is Chairman of Self-Insurers’ Publishing Corp. He is also active in philanthropy activities serving as president/CEO of Kinder Family Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization supporting continuing education through scholarships, children’s issues and seniors. Jim can be contacted at 864-409-8347 or jkinderr120@icloud.com.