

Specialty Underwriters Alliance, Inc.
Form DFAN14A
March 18, 2009

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

SCHEDULE 14A
(Rule 14a-101)

INFORMATION REQUIRED IN PROXY STATEMENT

SCHEDULE 14A INFORMATION

Proxy Statement Pursuant to Section 14(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

(Amendment No.)

Filed by the Registrant

Filed by a Party other than the Registrant

Check the appropriate box:

- Preliminary Proxy Statement
- Confidential, for Use of the Commission Only (as permitted by Rule 14a-6(e)(2))
- Definitive Proxy Statement
- Definitive Additional Materials
- Soliciting Material Under Rule 14a-12

Specialty Underwriters' Alliance, Inc.
(Name of Registrant as Specified in Its Charter)

Hallmark Financial Services, Inc.
American Hallmark Insurance Company of Texas
Hallmark Specialty Insurance Company
C. Gregory Peters
Mark E. Pape
Robert M. Fishman
(Name of Persons(s) Filing Proxy Statement, if Other Than the Registrant)

Payment of Filing Fee (Check the appropriate box):

- No fee required.
- Fee computed on table below per Exchange Act Rules 14a-6(i)(1) and 0-11.

(1) Title of each class of securities to which transaction applies:

(2) Aggregate number of securities to which transaction applies:

(3) Per unit price or other underlying value of transaction computed pursuant to Exchange Act Rule 0-11 (set forth the amount on which the filing fee is calculated and state how it was determined):

(4) Proposed maximum aggregate value of transaction:

(5) Total fee paid:

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.. Check box if any part of the fee is offset as provided by Exchange Act Rule 0-11(a)(2) and identify the filing for which the offsetting fee was paid previously. Identify the previous filing by registration statement number, or the form or schedule and the date of its filing.

(1) Amount previously paid:

(2) Form, Schedule or Registration Statement No.:

(3) Filing Party:

(4) Date Filed:

On March 18, 2009, Hallmark Financial Services, Inc. issued the following press release:

Hallmark Financial Services Files Preliminary Proxy Statement to Elect its Nominees to the Board of Directors of Specialty Underwriters' Alliance

FORT WORTH, Texas, March 18, 2009 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Hallmark Financial Services, Inc. (NASDAQ:HALL) announced today that it has filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission a preliminary proxy statement in connection with its nomination of independent directors to replace three members of the board of directors of Specialty Underwriters' Alliance, Inc. (NASDAQ:SUAI) at SUAI's 2009 Annual Meeting of Stockholders to be held on May 5, 2009. Hallmark's three nominees are Robert M. Fishman, Mark E. Pape and C. Gregory Peters.

As the second largest stockholder in SUAI, Hallmark strongly believes there is a need for improved governance and stockholder representation on the board of SUAI. Hallmark believes that the interests of all SUAI stockholders would benefit from its highly qualified, truly independent director nominees that possess a wealth of property and casualty insurance industry expertise. Hallmark beneficially owns approximately 9.9% of SUAI's outstanding common stock.

Background

As previously disclosed, on June 16, 2008, Hallmark delivered to SUAI's board of directors a proposal to acquire SUAI in a stock-for-stock transaction (the "Proposal"). SUAI responded through a public announcement on June 26, 2008 that its board of directors had unanimously rejected the Proposal. On July 1, 2008, Hallmark then delivered to SUAI's board of directors a letter reaffirming the Proposal (the "July 1 Letter"). In the July 1 Letter, Hallmark stated that it was committed to its Proposal and strongly believed that the Proposal offered significant and compelling benefits to SUAI's stockholders, and reiterated that its senior management stood ready to meet with the members of the SUAI board and answer any questions concerning the Proposal. Copies of each of the Proposal and the July 1 Letter are exhibits to Hallmark's Schedule 13D/A for SUAI filed on July 1, 2008 and can be obtained on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. For each of the Proposal and the July 1 Letter, the offer price in Hallmark stock in the proposed transaction represented a substantial premium to the then most recent closing price of SUAI common stock as well as its 30 day trailing average price. Nevertheless, on July 2, 2008, SUAI publicly reaffirmed its rejection of Hallmark's proposal. Then, on August 5, 2008, SUAI's board proceeded to adopt certain "defensive" amendments to the company's bylaws, including bylaws eliminating stockholders' rights to fill vacancies on the board and to call special meetings and adding advance notice provisions for board nominations by stockholders. The bylaw amendments were disclosed concurrently with the disclosure of the complete terms of new employment and change of control agreements which provide for the payment of substantial sums to SUAI executives in the event they depart the company in certain circumstances, including following a change of control of SUAI.

The Hallmark Nominees

C. Gregory Peters served as Senior Vice President, Equity Research at Raymond James and Associates from November 1999 through June 2007, where Mr. Peters was responsible for launching Raymond James' sell-side research practice for the insurance industry and served as its lead analyst for property and casualty companies.

Mark E. Pape served as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer at Affirmative Insurance Holdings, Inc. from November 2005 through December 2007 and served on Affirmative's Board of Directors from July 2004 through November 2005. Mr. Pape also held positions at Torchmark Corporation and American Income Holding, Inc.

Robert M. Fishman served as Managing Director of Southwest Insurance Partners, Inc. in 2008 and, from November 2006 through May 2007, was the Chief Executive Officer and President of United America Indemnity Ltd. Mr. Fishman also held senior positions at ARAG NA and Zurich Financial Services.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING PARTICIPANTS

HALLMARK, TOGETHER WITH THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS (AS DEFINED BELOW), HAS MADE A PRELIMINARY FILING WITH THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION ("SEC") OF A PROXY STATEMENT AND ACCOMPANYING PROXY CARD TO BE USED TO SOLICIT VOTES FOR THE ELECTION OF ITS SLATE OF DIRECTOR NOMINEES AT THE 2009 ANNUAL MEETING OF STOCKHOLDERS OF SUAI.

HALLMARK STRONGLY ADVISES ALL SUAI STOCKHOLDERS TO READ THE PROXY STATEMENT BECAUSE IT WILL CONTAIN IMPORTANT INFORMATION. SUCH PROXY STATEMENT IS AVAILABLE AT NO CHARGE ON THE SEC'S WEBSITE AT [HTTP://WWW.SEC.GOV](http://www.sec.gov). IN ADDITION, THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE SOLICITATION WILL PROVIDE COPIES OF THE PROXY STATEMENT WITHOUT CHARGE UPON REQUEST. REQUESTS FOR COPIES SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE PARTICIPANTS' PROXY SOLICITOR.

THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE PROXY SOLICITATION ARE HALLMARK FINANCIAL SERVICES, INC., AMERICAN HALLMARK INSURANCE COMPANY OF TEXAS ("AHIC"), HALLMARK SPECIALTY INSURANCE COMPANY ("HSIC"), C. GREGORY PETERS, MARK E. PAPE AND ROBERT M. FISHMAN (COLLECTIVELY, THE "PARTICIPANTS"). INFORMATION ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS ARE SET FORTH IN THE PROXY STATEMENT FILED BY HALLMARK WITH THE SEC. HALLMARK MAY BE DEEMED TO BENEFICIALLY OWN 1,429,615 SHARES OF COMMON STOCK OF SUAI, REPRESENTING APPROXIMATELY 9.9% OF THE OUTSTANDING SHARES OF COMMON STOCK, AS FOLLOWS: (I) 21,000 SHARES OF COMMON STOCK ARE OWNED DIRECTLY BY HALLMARK, (II) 1,308,615 SHARES OF COMMON STOCK ARE OWNED DIRECTLY BY AHIC AND (III) 100,000 SHARES OF COMMON STOCK ARE OWNED DIRECTLY BY HSIC. AS THEIR PARENT COMPANY, HALLMARK MAY BE DEEMED TO BENEFICIALLY OWN THE SHARES OF COMMON STOCK OWNED BY AHIC AND HSIC. CURRENTLY, MESSRS. PETERS, PAPE AND FISHMAN DO NOT DIRECTLY OWN ANY SECURITIES OF SUAI. AS MEMBERS OF A "GROUP" FOR THE PURPOSES OF RULE 13D-5(B)(1) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934, AS AMENDED, EACH OF THE PARTICIPANTS MAY BE DEEMED TO BENEFICIALLY OWN THE 1,429,615 SHARES BENEFICIALLY OWNED BY HALLMARK. EACH OF THE PARTICIPANTS DISCLAIMS BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF THE SHARES HE/IT DOES NOT DIRECTLY OWN.