

SRSRA NEWSLETTER

For SRS Retiree Association Members

David Zigelman, Editor

Volume 42 August 2009

“SRSRA Annual Meeting --- April 13, 2010”

(save the date!)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|----|
| Chairman’s Letter | 1 | SRSRA Web Site | 6 |
| Message from Senator Lindsey Graham | 2 | Board Meeting Dates | 7 |
| Message from SRNS | 3 | Treasurer’s Report | 7 |
| Message from SRR | 4 | SRSRA Medical Interface Committee | 7 |
| SRSRA 2010 Annual Meeting | 5 | SRS Activities | 9 |
| Let Your Voice be Heard | 5 | BC/BS Service Concerns | 10 |
| Membership | 6 | Benefits Contacts | 10 |
| Newsletter Mailing | 6 | SRSRA Membership Form for 2009-2010 | 11 |

CHAIRMAN’S LETTER

As most of you are aware, I chaired your Board of Directors from 2000 to 2006. Returning as your chairman was an easy move thanks to the great job Nick Kuehn has done the past 3 years. I welcome the opportunity, to once again, work with your highly dedicated Board of Directors to preserve the benefits you retired with. The recent change in SRS M&O Contractor has SRS Retirees facing our biggest challenge yet. DOE has advised us that our benefits will continue under the new contractor; however, on January 1, 2009, retirees were assessed a 24% increase in your medical insurance contribution. This is the largest assessment increase ever and we consider it a reduction in benefits value. We are currently in discussion with DOE and SRNS regarding how the assessment was determined. SRNS has been non-committal in discussing their plans for retiree benefits primarily because retirees are not addressed in the contract. We are included in the overall retirement cost envelope. The SRNS long range plan includes further benefits evaluations on January 1, 2010 and 2011. Assuming future evaluations will further reduce our benefits value we plan to focus our agenda on maintaining the benefits we retired with.

We have had two key meetings since the SRSRA annual meeting. A meeting with Senator Lindsey Graham gave us an opportunity to air our concerns relative to maintaining medical benefits and obtaining a pension cost of living adjustment. Senator Graham quickly grasped the situation recognizing and sympathizing with our issue with SRNS performing a benefits evaluation comparing our benefits with companies that do not provide retiree medical benefits. We discussed our action for a pension adjustment with the Senator and he responded favorably in support of an increase. Senator Graham committed to discuss our concerns with DOE HQ and SRNS top management.

Thanks to the continued excellent support and arrangements by Mr. Jeff Allison, Manager SRS DOE, we had a very successful video conference with Ms Ingrid Kolb, Director of Office of Management at DOE-HQ, Mr. Allison and key DOE staff personnel. We discussed at length our concern that the new SRS contractor was not aware of the contents and commitments in the many retiree early retirement incentive (ERI) packages starting in 1993. Those of us involved based our decisions to retire on the contents of those ERIs, and we consider them

binding contracts. DOE approved those ERI packages. The DOE Legal representative suggested that there must be memorializing documents out there describing the ERIs. MY MESSAGE TO YOU IS SEARCH YOUR FILES, SEND ME ANY DOCUMENTS YOU MAY HAVE DOCUMENTING YOUR ERI. Funny, I distinctly recall a WSRC letter documenting a 12/31/97 deadline for the 1997 ERI committing to free medical insurance. I recall giving much thought to that offer, but turned it down. We also brought to the table an issue in the manner in which the Contractor determined your record setting medical insurance contribution increase on January 1, 2009. SRSRA is in continued discussion with DOE-SR on this issue. Although Ms. Kolb was not optimistic on the possibility of a pension adjustment, we plan to continue to seek our pension adjustment through our Congressional Delegation.

Your Board of Directors has an excellent agenda to protect the benefits you earned and accrued while working at SRS. I cannot emphasize enough the need to increase our dues paying membership. We are currently close to 1000 members. I am convinced that each of you each knows of a retiree that is not currently a dues paying member. Recruit that individual, get him or her to complete an application and send it to us.

Best Regards,

Dave Cowfer
SRSRA Chairman

MESSAGE FROM SENATOR LINDSEY GRAHAM

I appreciate the opportunity to be the first member of our Congressional delegation to be invited to write in the Savannah River Site Retirees Association Newsletter. I always take great comfort in knowing that some of the same patriots who helped our country win the Cold War continue their involvement with SRS through the SRSRA.

As we work to secure future missions for SRS, we must honor the promises made to our previous generation of SRS workers. I continually remind DOE of their responsibilities to those who have served our nation at SRS. We must ensure fair, consistent treatment of your pension and medical benefits. This continues to be a high priority and I look forward to continuing my work in this area.

I realize that issues important to your association go beyond the fence line at SRS. Please know that as the Senate considers issues such as health care reform and climate change, I am paying particular attention to the impact that legislation may have on you. I believe the implementation of significant, meaningful reforms to both our health care system and the way we protect the environment must not simply inject intrusive government bureaucracy, but must provide targeted changes that will advance our goals.

Finally, my office is always open to any South Carolinian that happens to be traveling in the Washington area. We are happy to assist in setting up tours of some of our government buildings or giving you updates on areas of interest.

Best regards,

Lindsey Graham
United States Senate

(Editor's Note – From time to time, the Newsletter will include messages from our Congressional delegation. Sen. Graham's message is first in the series.)

MESSAGE FROM SAVANNAH RIVER NUCLEAR SOLUTIONS (SRNS)

Savannah River National Laboratory's (SRNL's) Future: Upward

The last few months have been both exciting and educational for the new management team at SRNS and for me as the new SRNL director. We all believe strongly in the potential of the Lab and its value to both DOE and to the nation as a whole. I look forward to leading the Lab through the next stage of its evolution.

Our designation as a National Laboratory about five years ago has meant that we can broaden our R&D horizons well beyond the immediate needs of SRS. This is our present funding: Our budget last year was for about \$172 million, \$67 million of which was for Environmental Management work at SRS, and \$22 million for National Nuclear Security Administration work at the Site. Offsite sources accounted for 46 percent of our funding. Importantly, non-DOE federal agencies were \$25 million of our funding, and commercial sources added a million.

Our goal for the near future is to grow our funding to about \$300 million annually, which is what we would need to sustain a stand-alone capability, something our customer encourages. We would do this partly through expansion of current programs, especially in our role as EM's corporate laboratory. Beyond EM, we have successfully proven our worth to Homeland Security, to Defense, and to Justice (notably the FBI), among other agencies. The more these other agencies come to know us, the more they see how we can effectively support their missions.

We are proposing work, often in partnership with other organizations, in areas the present environment is fostering. These include alternative energy sources, biomass, wind or solar applications. As you know, we are heavily committed to hydrogen R&D, with the largest research staff in the nation devoted to this field. Last year, DOE picked SRNL to head up the Hydrogen Storage Center of Excellence, in recognition of our long-standing expertise in that field, arising from all of our work on the development of tritium technology. The

Lab's applied science focus will help answer questions in carbon sequestration, battery development, and the so-called smart grid for power systems.

Even though DOE has "canceled" the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership, R&D work in the nuclear fuel cycle will continue, and SRNL will remain part of that. Indeed, renewed interest in nuclear energy provides a path forward for many of our plans. We have the capability to support a multi-faceted energy park, and we hope that concept can be realized at SRS.

I would be remiss in my assessment if I did not point out some of the dark clouds on the horizon. As all of you are aware, the infrastructure in the Laboratory is in dire need of upgrading to allow us to compete effectively in the 21st century R&D environment, and it has been difficult to secure funding for that in the past. We have been pushing our plans for the upgrades and feel we will be able to obtain funding to initiate work on these in the near future.

In summary, the future of the Laboratory looks bright. Our dedicated, highly qualified staff looks forward to the possibilities of contributing to solutions to the major problems facing the Nation and the world.

Dr. Samit Bhattacharyya, Director
Savannah River National Laboratory

MESSAGE FROM SRR

As many of you know by now, Savannah River Remediation LLC (SRR) began its work as the new Liquid Waste contractor at SRS on July 1. SRR took over the contract from the Washington Savannah River Company after 20 years of service.

SRR is a new company formed by the URS Corporation, in partnership with the CH2M Hill, Bechtel National and B&W Technical Services. All these companies provide leading edge performance in the nuclear industry.

We will engage three significant subcontractors, AREVA, EnergySolutions and Washington Safety Management Solutions, in executing and accelerating our work. You can go to our website, www.srremediation.info, for more information about the new company and our partners.

I am extremely proud to return to SRS (I spent 16 years here) to work with the dedicated and talented team of professionals who operate the Liquid Waste Complex. I am familiar with the magnitude and complexity of the challenges ahead for Liquid Waste and admire the progress that has occurred since I worked here years ago.

I am committed to creating an inclusive project team, engaging with the workforce to focus on worker safety, to deliver safe operations, and to provide continued exceptional performance for all of our customers: the U.S. Department of Energy, our regulators, and our external stakeholders. However, in my view, the retirees of SRS are some of our most important stakeholders. No one understands the SRS rich and proud history of safe

operation in support of our national defense missions and the more recent mission evolutions better than you. Understandably, nobody can be a better ambassador for our team and our efforts than you.

In the coming weeks, you will read more details regarding SRR team, its partners, and its leaders, along with details of our approach to accomplish our work safely and efficiently.

I am encouraged by the well wishes from many of you, and I look forward to having a continuing dialog with SRS Retirees. SRS has been successful because of the proud legacy and forward momentum you have provided for many of us, sometimes on a personal level. With thanks to your work, we will be able to continue to deliver a safe work expectation, continued progress, and innovation on closure work, resulting in reduced risks for our neighbors thorough out the state

Jim French
President and Project Manager
Savannah River Remediation

SRS RETIREE ASSOCIATION 2010 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The 2010 Annual Meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, April 13, 2010. The meeting location will be St Angela Hall in Aiken. This is the same location used for the last several Annual Meetings. Please mark your calendar for this date and plan on joining your SRSRA Board of Directors and your other retiree friends for the annual update.

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD

Several pieces of legislation, currently being debated in the U.S. Congress, could significantly affect seniors if passed into law as currently written. Of highest importance is probably Health Care Reform. It is important that you voice your opinions on these bills directly to your U. S. Senators and Congressmen ASAP. Useful links for developing emails to your elected officials can be found at <http://www.usa.gov/Contact/Elected.shtml>. If you are unsure of who your Congressman is, there is a search engine on that web site that will help you. Remember, your elected representatives work for you!

MEMBERSHIP

Your membership in the SRS Retiree Association is critical to our success in protecting your benefits. Please renew now for 2009 and/or 2010, or join for the first time, using the form attached below. The cost is only \$15.00 annually for a retiree (and no additional charge for a retired spouse), and \$5.00 for a surviving spouse. Encourage your retired SRS friends to join as well. Our membership currently includes approximately 1000 retirees and survivors, which provides strength when discussing your issues with elected officials and the Savannah River Site. For 2010 we want to strengthen the effectiveness of the SRSRA even more through your commitment as a member. Please join now to help us look out for your interests!

To join SRSRA, please send your membership payment, along with an application form to **SRS Retiree Association, PO Box 5686, Aiken, SC 29804**. You can use the application provided at the end of this newsletter or access the form from our website at www.srsretirees.org and click on "Membership". You can also contact Kent Sullivan, Membership Chairman, at 803-279-9570 for assistance or questions.

NEWSLETTER MAILING

Questions and comments related to the Newsletter may be addressed to David Zigelman, Newsletter Editor, at zigelman@gforcecable.com.

A number of emails have been returned for incorrect addresses; recipient mailbox over quota; recipient not accepting mail from SRSRA; and several others indicating that our database needs some "tuning up". If you have an active email address, or have changed your address recently and are not receiving SRSRA communications by email, please contact membership@srsretirees.org. Our email program allows us to reach the vast majority of members more quickly with news. Other pluses are quicker distribution of the Newsletter and less cost of copying and mailing hard copies. Thanks to all of you who are receiving your Newsletter by e-mail.

SRSRA WEB SITE

The SRSRA web site includes a wealth of information of value and use to our retiree members. Most importantly, it includes the most recent contact information for benefits administrators at SRS and Blue Cross/Blue Shield. A new search engine feature makes finding documents much easier. Any suggestions on changes/additions to the web site should be sent via e-mail to: webmaster@srsretirees.org. **An SRSRA Membership Form is also available on the web site.**

BOARD MEETING DATES, TIME AND LOCATION

The SRSRA Board of Directors meets at 10:00 A.M. in the Conference Room at Eden Gardens off Silver Bluff Road near Woodside Executive Park. Association members may attend Board meetings and participate, but may not vote on Board issues. If you ever plan to attend a meeting, be sure to contact a BOD member to confirm that the meeting date and time has not changed. **BOD meeting dates are listed on the website but are generally on the first Tuesday each month unless impacted by a holiday or special event.**

TREASURER'S REPORT - Stan Smith, Treasurer

Our last Newsletter reported financial activity through April 2009. This report covers May and June 2009 and closes out FY 2008-09.

| | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Opening Balance | \$44,921 |
| Income | \$ 1,844 |
| Expenses | \$ 681 |
| Closing Balance | \$46,084 |

The above income includes \$399 interest from a matured CD with the remainder resulting from membership dues. Expenses included printing costs associated with publishing of the last Newsletter and other miscellaneous printing costs, website management, and residual expenses from the annual meeting.

The closing balance shown above includes \$30,500 in CDs.

SRSRA MEDICAL INTERFACE COMMITTEE

QIOs Tapped by CMS to Maximize EHRs in Physician Offices

By ANNA MARQUEZ COOK
CCME Creative Services Coordinator

Quality Improvement Organizations (QIO's), like the Carolinas Center for Medical Excellence (CCME), are playing a crucial role in helping physician practices improve their preventive health services through the use of electronic health records.

Electronic health records (EHRs) are here to stay. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the stimulus package signed into law on February 17 by President Barack Obama, set aside \$19 billion for the development and adoption of health information technology. A majority of this—about \$17 billion—will be allocated as incentive payments through Medicare and Medicaid to encourage providers, hospitals, and other organizations to adopt EHR technology by 2011. As specified in the legislation, hospitals and eligible

professionals will receive incentive payments for the first five years, from 2011 to 2015, for demonstrating “meaningful use of certified EHR technology.” If meaningful use of EHR technology is not demonstrated by 2015, incentive payments will not be received, and reimbursement payments under Medicare will be reduced, as specified in the legislation.

“Providers who are actively using EHRs will get the biggest bang out of the new stimulus package—they will be the most rewarded,” said Gary Balser, EHR consultant at The Carolinas Center for Medical Excellence (CCME), the Quality Improvement Organization (QIO) for North and South Carolina. The nation’s QIOs work to improve the quality of health care for people with Medicare. “Technology is not going away. We are moving towards every practice needing an EHR product in order to receive full reimbursement.”

Jennifer Anderson, MHSA, CCME EHR consultant, said in the long run, reducing wasteful spending and improving health care quality are the true benefits of the health care reform measure. “It’s a win-win situation,” she said. “EHRs increase the efficiency of providers through a secure, electronic, centralized data management system which, in turn, provides the best care for patients.”

CMS Expands MyPHRSC to Include TRICARE for Life Health Data

By Seth Edlavitch
MyPHRSC Program Manager & Project Director

South Carolina pilot program continues to empower people with Medicare.

A special pilot project launched in South Carolina last year by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has broadened its scope to include TRICARE for Life health data. My Personal Health Record, South Carolina (MyPHRSC), is the pilot project that has been encouraging people with Original or Traditional Medicare to use an Internet-based resource to track their health care services and better communicate with their providers. TRICARE for Life is TRICARE’s “wraparound” coverage that is available to all Medicare-eligible TRICARE beneficiaries who have Medicare Parts A and B. TRICARE is a health plan serving active duty service members. MyPHRSC expanded its program in January, 2009 to make available TRICARE for Life medication data. Registered MyPHRSC users are able to authorize the data to be populated directly into their MyPHRSC record. Before the expansion, TRICARE for Life data was only available to beneficiaries through the Department of Defense (DOD) Medical Information Technology systems.



“This exciting pilot expansion will be a major step forward for Medicare and the DOD,” said CMS Acting Administrator Kerry Weems. “We believe that collaborations of this sort will provide more complete information and better tools to empower consumers to manage their health.”

SRS ACTIVITIES (INCLUDES DOE, SRNS AND SRR)

WASTE PROCESSING OPERATIONS NETS 1 MILLION GALLONS

As of July 2009, Savannah River Remediation (SRR), formerly Washington Savannah River Company (WSRC), employees have processed over one million gallons of hazardous waste in the last six months, mostly from the Site's underground waste storage tanks, at the Savannah River Site's (SRS) Saltstone facility.

The facility recently achieved this milestone and continues to safely stabilize and dispose of low-activity salt and incidental process waste at record numbers.

SRS is the only site within the DOE complex that processes and permanently disposes salt waste removed from waste tanks. The one million gallons of waste has been removed from the Site's tank farm system and has been placed into permanent disposal form. Although the Saltstone facility has been operating for some time disposing of other low level waste streams, disposition of the salt waste stream began in January 2009.

THE AMERICAN REINVESTMENT AND RECOVERY ACT (ARRA) HARD AT WORK AT SRS

More than 13,500 South Carolina and Georgia residents have participated in five job fairs hosted by DOE's Savannah River Site. The most recent, held on July 20 in Augusta, drew an estimated 3,000 people.

"The purpose of the Recovery Act Project at SRS is twofold," said Jeffrey M. Allison, Manager of the DOE's Savannah River Operations Office. "First, it creates jobs. The tremendous turnout of people attending the job fairs shows that the Recovery Act provides hope in potential employment opportunities to many people in our local communities. Secondly, the Recovery Act Project will accelerate environmental cleanup at SRS, which, in turns, saves taxpayer dollars and reduces risk for workers, the public, and the environment."

About 3,000 jobs will be retained or created by 2011 through the ARRA funding for SRS. While the jobs are not permanent, the more than \$1.6 billion allocation authorized for SRS earlier this year will help many who are now unemployed and support small businesses in the Central Savannah River Area.

"We are at the forefront of getting people back to work, and we are proud of that," explained Chuck Munns, President and CEO of Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC. "We are processing between 75 and 100 new hires a week; more than 10,000 resumes have been collected and we are safely addressing some of the Site's most important environmental challenges."

Through July 17, small business contracts of more than \$49 million had been awarded to small businesses in the region.

BC/BS SERVICE CONCERNS

We receive letters from retirees trying to get proper Blue Cross/Blue Shield reimbursement for their medical bills. Most of the problems occur when the retiree/patient lives out-of-state (i.e., no longer in SC). If you have records of BC/BS service problems to share with SRSRA members, please **send a letter outlining your case to both:**

Dale Friar, Medical Benefits Committee
SRS Retiree Association
P.O. Box 5686
Aiken, SC 29804

Kaye Bozeman, Major Service Representative
I-20 at Alpine Road AV-100
Columbia, SC 29219

or e-mail your information to: KAYE.BOZEMAN@bcbsc.com, or Fax: 1-803-264-9353. You can also call Gari Howard, your BC/BS service representative, toll-free at (800) 868-2500, ext. 45805. As a last resort, you can call Kaye Bozeman at 800-288-2227, extension 44452 or 803-264-4452.

BENEFITS CONTACTS

People Support Service Center (a one-stop service for most HR and payroll activities and questions).

- ◆ **803-725-7772 (local area SC and GA)**
- ◆ **800-368-7333 (long distance)**
- ◆ service-center@srs.gov (e-mail contact for this new service)

◇ **Life, Health, Dental**

Becky Proveaux 803-725-3759
Rosalee Bennett 803-725-3757
Wanda McGee 803-725-0531
Cindy McClintock 803-725-7004

◇ **Pension**

Pat Smith 803-725-7722
Katherine Hutto 803-725-4775

◇ **Internal Medicine Partners** 706-792-5075 (Annual Physical Examinations)

◇ **SRNS Savings Plan** 800-360-2747 <http://resources.hewitt.com/srns>

◇ **Westinghouse Corp. Pension** 800-581-222

◇ **Westinghouse Corp. SIP** 800-581-3366 <http://westinghouse.csplans.com>

◇ **Safety Eyeglass Office**

Tom Cuny **803-208-8515**

◇ **Blue Cross/Blue Shield of SC** 800-325-596 www.southcarolinablues.com

Option 1 for Medical

Option 2 for Dental

Option 3 for Pre-Cert/Med Authorization

◇ **Medicare Helpline** 800-633-4227

◇ **Medicare Web Site** www.medicare.gov

◇ **Value Options** (mental health & substance abuse assistance) 800-333-6557

Savannah River Site Retiree Association 2009-2010 Membership Application

_____ I want to RENEW my membership in the SRSRA
(...and I am willing to serve on the Board of Directors) _____ Yes _____ No

_____ I want to JOIN the SRSRA
(...and I am willing to serve on the Board of Directors) _____ Yes _____ No

_____ My spouse is also retired from SRS and wants to JOIN the SRSRA
(...and my retired SRS spouse is willing to serve on the Board of Directors) _____ Yes _____ No

_____ I am the surviving spouse of an SRS retiree and wish to join/renew my membership in the SRSRA
(...and I am willing to serve on the Board of Directors) _____ Yes _____ No

Annual Dues:

Year 2009

_____ \$15 for Retiree
_____ \$0 for Retiree's Spouse (also retired from SRS)
_____ \$5 for Retiree's Surviving Spouse

Year 2010

_____ \$15 for Retiree
_____ \$0 for Retiree's Spouse (also retired from SRS)
_____ \$5 for Retiree's Surviving Spouse

SRS RETIREE NAME _____

SRS Retired or Surviving SPOUSE'S NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ TELEPHONE _____

SRS RETIREE RETIRED FROM:SRNS _____ WSRC/SRR _____ BSRI _____ BWXT-SRC _____ BNFL-SRC _____ OTHER _____

SPOUSE RETIRED FROM SRS:SRNS _____ WSRC/SRR _____ BSRI _____ BWXT-SRC _____ BNFL-SRC _____ OTHER _____

SRS RETIREE DATE OF RETIREMENT _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

SRS RETIRED OR SURVIVOR SPOUSE DATE OF RETIREMENT _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Return to: **SRS Retiree Association**
P. O. Box 5686
Aiken, SC 29804
Attn: Kent Sullivan, MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN