



SRSRA NEWSLETTER

For SRS Retiree Association Members Bruce Cadotte, Editor Volume 19, No. 4, December 2016
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SRNS Changes Stipend Amount, Structure

You should have received a letter from Savannah River Nuclear Solutions in October informing you of an increase in the Health Reimbursement Account (the medical expense stipend) for post-65 retirees and spouses, and changing the amounts to a tiered system. Starting in 2017, the stipend will be \$2,508 for ages 65-69, \$2,604 for 70-74, \$2,808 for 75-79, and \$3,000 for ages 80 and up.

If you have questions about the stipend, please contact the Resource Center (see the phone numbers on this page), RightOpt at 1-877-591-8904, or the SRNS Health and Welfare Plan Administrator at (803) 725-7772.

Your association has been working with SRNS and DOE-Savannah River closely on issues related to the medical stipend, on possible pension adjustments, and on the retiree benefit picture as a whole. These discussions have been collaborative and productive. SRSRA argued strongly with the Site for a stipend adjustment and it is gratifying to see that the Association's views were effective. The tiered approach is sensible and consistent with the approach SRSRA took in discussing pension adjustments.

With respect to the pension adjustment discussions, the study of pensions in the DOE complex has not yet been reported to Congressman Joe Wilson, who requested it, and with the forthcoming change in administrations it is not clear when the study will be complete. Mr. Wilson's phone number in Aiken is (803) 642-6416.

Best Wishes for a happy, healthy and prosperous 2017! And save the Annual Meeting Date!

The board of Directors of the SRSRA hopes that each member had a happy holiday season and that the new year will bring you all the best.

The 2017 Annual Meeting will be on April 18 at the Etherredge Center, University of South Carolina – Aiken.

Resource Center Contacts, Lower Savannah Council of Governments (LSCOG) Building

Phone: (803) 508-7065 (866) 845-1550 (toll free) Option 7

Please leave a message. Due to available staffing, phone messages will be returned in a few days.

Internet: srsra@lscog.org

Hours: Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please call to arrange an appointment.

Location: LSCOG Building, 2748 Wagener Rd., Aiken (next to Aiken Electric Co-op, across from Aiken Pest Control)

Resource Center Manager: Ms. Laureen Feinman, lfeinman@lscog.org

SRS Museum Advances, Plans More Public Openings



The new SRS Museum, in the refurbished Dibble Memorial Library building on Laurens St., Aiken.

Public openings of the SRS Museum are planned for next February following a short hiatus.

Planning to establish a museum dedicated to explaining the history and notable accomplishments of the Savannah River Site began in 2003 when the Board of Directors of Citizens for Nuclear Technology Awareness (CNTA) established a committee to consider historic preservation at the Site. The role of this committee evolved from

preserving artifacts to building a museum to interpret them.

In 2005 the SRS Heritage Foundation was formed to pursue this broader vision. Plans were developed in 2007 for adaptive use of a building at the Site but lack of federal money doomed this concept. After years of searching for an affordable offsite location, Aiken County proposed using the former Dibble Memorial Library building for the SRS Museum. Keys to the building were given to the Foundation in 2014.

The first phase, adapting the former library to its new role as a museum, is nearing completion. The work has included installing a sprinkler system, building a handicapped restroom and refurbishing the exterior of the iconic Dibble building. When the initial phase of building work is complete, the first floor will comply with current standards for public access.

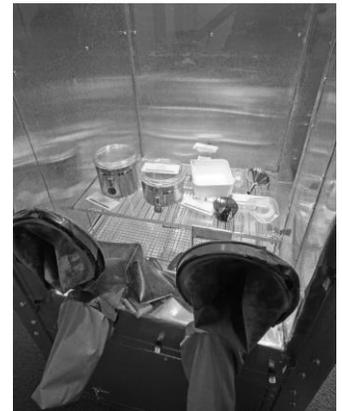


Walt Joseph, Executive Director, SRS Heritage Foundation



Visitor and exhibit area to the left of entrance

Public openings are planned to resume in February after the six-month interruption for construction and cleanup. Exhibits showcasing the history of SRS and many of the technical accomplishments at the Site are installed, and they will be improved and updated as time and resources permit. Docents are being recruited and trained to guide visitors through the facility.



Interactive simulated glovebox display

Meanwhile, plans are underway for subsequent construction that will permit public access to the second floor and installation of more interactive exhibits. An elevator is planned for access to the second floor along with a replacement staircase that meets current code.

(Retiree visitors to the SRS Museum will recognize the style of the 1950s rear addition to the original 1926 front of the building; it has the same low ceilings and exposed piping that many SRS buildings had...or have.)

The SRS Museum is located at 224 Laurens Street SW in downtown Aiken. Watch for announcements of public openings in 2017. The SRS Heritage Foundation accepts donations; contact (803) 226-0116 or (803) 648-5634.

Resource Center Continues Help to Retirees

Client Summary Report for eleven months of 2016 and for November

	<u>Year through Nov.</u>	<u>Nov.</u>
Number of Clients	1,051	257
Office Visits	766	249
Home Visits	10	7
Age-In Training	144	20
Client Assist Hours	1,409	279
Claims Processed	\$430,146	\$24,951
Rx Plan savings	\$325,510	\$285,488

For the 2016 Open Enrollment period, the Resource Center achieved the following results:

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Reviews	280	343
Amount saved	\$312,684	\$437,573
% plans changed	70	69
Average savings	\$1,587	\$1,849

Congratulations to Harry R. James, winner of a \$50 gas card courtesy of the SRSEA and SRSRA. Call Neal Smith at 706-481-0970 or 706-833-1289 within 30 days to claim your gas card! Please verify your home address when you contact him.

2016 SRSRA United Way Results

As of the end of October, SRSRA members who live in the Central Savannah River Area and nearby towns had contributed \$18,859 to this year's United Way campaign. It's never too late to make your gift!

Congratulations to Rebecca H. Fitzpatrick, winner of a \$50 gas card courtesy of the SRSEA and SRSRA. Call Neal Smith at 706-481-0970 or 706-833-1289 within 30 days to claim your gas card! Please verify your home address when you contact him.

Resource Center: Volunteer Opportunities

The SRSRA Resource Center is always in need of volunteers, even now that the Medicare open enrollment period is over. Your fellow retirees in particular need continuing help with WageWorks claims. There are also appointments to be made, problems to solve, issues with aging-in to Medicare, issues with getting started with RightOpt, keeping paperwork straight, and unpredictable emergent problems. Call now and offer your time and talents. (803) 508-7065. Training will be provided.

Some Lessons Learned to Help Adjust to Medicare

In conducting aging-in classes with retirees and talking over their issues at the Resource Center, a number of common problems have been identified. We've included some key ones in this article as a refresher, and we will publish more in subsequent issues of this newsletter.

- You MUST initially enroll in a Medicare Advantage or Supplement (Medigap) plan through RightOpt to become stipend eligible. In future years you can make changes to these plans without going through RightOpt, but you may wish to do so. If you choose Medigap, generally we recommend keeping your selected plan for life. Changing Medigap plans may require underwriting with potential coverage and cost risks.
- The Pay-My-Provider option works well for some people, but you need to remember:
 - It does not roll over year-to-year
 - WageWorks does not notify you when your stipend funds run out
 - WageWorks payments are sometimes delayed or not credited properly
 - It is up to YOU to monitor the payments
 - If you are sick or hospitalized, you may inadvertently lose your coverage and not be easily or quickly reinstated without limited or more expensive options
- Some folks fail to enroll in a Part D drug plan—"I don't take any drugs"—but if you do not buy a drug plan when it is first available this results in a large penalty that increases for every month you delay buying a drug plan.
- Drug plans need to be evaluated every year. Even if your drug needs don't change, the plans do. The same plan may cover different drugs, have a different premium, or have a different deductible, among possible changes. While RightOpt can help evaluate these choices, Medicare.gov is a better resource. You can do this evaluation online or have the Resource Center assist.
- Electronic submission causes fewer rejections and a copy of what you submitted is saved online. Many avoid electronic submission because of the need to work computers hardware and navigate the WageWorks Web site. It is, however, the system that works best to ensure reimbursement and in many ways takes the least effort.

(This newsletter will deal with various topics related to aging-in to Medicare and similar issues from time to time. Meanwhile, the Resource Center offers an orientation to aging-in, and the SRSRA Web site also discusses the subject at length at <http://www.srsretirees.org/medcare.html>. Note that the address says "medcare," not "medicare." There is also a direct navigation link to the subject from the home page.)

Resource Center Video

Want a quick orientation to the Resource Center? See the video on the SRSRA Web site at <http://www.srsretirees.org/rscntr.html>

Newsletter Information

Questions and comments related to this newsletter may be addressed to Bruce Cadotte, newsletter editor, at newsletter@srsretirees.org, or Newsletter, SRS Retiree Association, P.O. Box. 5686, Aiken, SC 29804.

If you have a new e-mail address, or have changed your address recently and are not receiving SRSRA communications by e-mail, please contact newsletter@srsretirees.org. Our e-mail program allows us to reach members more quickly with news. Other benefits 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.

Benefits Contacts

- ◆ **Benefits 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 (toll free)
 - ◆ service-center@srs.gov (e-mail contact for this service)
- ◆ **SRS Retiree Resource Center:**
 - ◆ (803) 508-7065
 - (866) 845-1550 Option 7 (toll free)
 - **Internet:** SRSRA@LSCOG.ORG
- ◆ **Westinghouse Corp. Pension** 800-581-4222
- ◆ **RightOpt (formerly MyMedicareAdvocate)** 877-591-8904; www.rightoptretiree.com/srs
- ◆ **WageWorks** 877-924-3967; www.wageworks.com
- ◆ **Medicare Helpline** 800-633-4227
- ◆ **Medicare Web Site:** www.medicare.gov
- ◆ **Blue Cross/Blue Shield of SC** 800-325-6596;
Option 1 for Medical
Option 2 for Dental
Option 3 for Pre-Cert/Med Authorization
www.southcarolinablues.com

Congratulations to William E. Norris., winner of a \$50 gas card courtesy of the SRSEA and SRSRA. Call Neal Smith at 706-481-0970 or 706-833-1289 within 30 days to claim your gas card! Please verify your home address when you contact him.

Interested in serving on the SRSRA Board of Directors?
Please e-mail Tom Varallo, Nomination Chairman, at tomvarallo@gmail.com

Like us on Facebook to keep up with news and information! Search for SRSRA from your Facebook page.

Savannah River Site Retiree Association

Membership Form

Annual Dues

Annual dues for the Association are \$25/year for a retiree (there is no charge for retirees who are spouses of members).

For surviving spouses of retirees, annual dues are \$5.

_____ As a retiree, I want to **JOIN/RENEW** my membership in the SRSRA (\$25). Retirement date from SRS: _____

_____ I am the **SPOUSE** of a member and also an SRS retiree and I want to **JOIN** the SRSRA (no charge). Retirement date from SRS: _____

_____ I am the **SURVIVING SPOUSE** of an SRS retiree and want to **JOIN/RENEW** my membership in the SRSRA (\$5).

_____ I am willing to **SERVE** on the SRSRA Board of Directors.

_____ I am interested in **VOLUNTEERING** at the SRSRA Retiree Resource Center.

_____ In addition to my dues, I want to make **AN ADDITIONAL GIFT** to the SRSRA Resource Center ___ or the SRS Heritage Foundation ___ (latter is tax deductible):

_____ \$25 ___ \$10 ___ \$15 _____ Other amount \$_____

The Resource Center is staffed by volunteers, but your dues do not cover its costs.

Member's Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email address: _____

Providing your e-mail address allows SRSRA to send important communications to you electronically.

Mail this form (and your check) to:

SRS Retiree Association

P. O. Box 5686

Aiken, SC 29804

Attention: Membership Chair