

# ***SRSRA NEWSLETTER***

*For SRS Retiree Association Members*

*Ed Somers, Editor*

*Volume 49 July 2011*

## **Another Successful Annual Meeting**

### **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

Notes from SRSRA 2011 Annual Meeting	1	Treasurer's Report	9
Update on SRSRA Efforts to Stop Proposed		SRSRA Medical Interface Committee	10
Changes to Retiree Medical Benefits	7	SRS Activities	10
Membership	8	BC/BS Service Concerns	15
Newsletter Mailing	9	Benefits Contacts	15
Board Meeting Dates	9	SRSRA Membership Form	16

### **NOTES FROM SRSRA 2011 ANNUAL MEETING**

St. Angela Hall, Aiken, SC  
April 27, 2011

A full capacity crowd filled the St. Angela Hall in Aiken for the Savannah River Site Retiree Association's (SRSRA) annual meeting. It was estimated that approximately 600 people were in attendance.

David Zigelman, Chairman of the SRSRA, called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM by welcoming the largest annual meeting crowd to the SRSRA annual meeting and expressed his appreciation to all who came out for the meeting. David began by reviewing the agenda for the meeting, pointing out that following the adjournment there would be a Medicare workshop for those who would like to learn more about the changes coming to Medicare

#### **Guest Speakers**

David introduced Dr. David Moody, Department of Energy (DOE) Manager of Savannah River Operations (SROO), as the first guest speaker. Dr. Moody was appointed to his current position in September 2010 replacing Jeff Allison as Manager, SROO. Dr. Moody has 35 years of experience with DOE and came to SC from his previous assignment in Carlsbad, NM.

Dr. Moody expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to speak to the SRSRA because the DOE is currently in the process of rolling out the Vision for the site, and he would like to obtain input from the retirees on the draft of the new site Vision. Dr. Moody pointed out that when he decided to take the job at the Savannah River Site (SRS), he did so because the site was designated to be a long-term asset for the country, not a closure site. He noted three areas in which site accomplishments have demonstrated a proven track record of the SRS people and their capabilities and have instilled confidence in the public for sustainability.

The first area is that of resolving the nuclear waste legacy. From 1996 to date: 3125 canisters of vitrified high level waste (HLW) have been produced; 700,000 gallons of salt waste have been disposed of through the Saltstone Facility; over 30,000 drums of transuranic (TRU) waste have been dispositioned; HLW tanks have been emptied, cleaned, grouted and stabilized; and, 377 of 515 soil and groundwater waste units have been remediated.

The second area is that of maintaining the gateway for nationwide nuclear materials consolidation and ultimate disposition. This effort includes: maintaining critical infrastructure such as H Canyon and K Area; placing nuclear materials in a safe form for reuse or disposition; recycling uranium for commercial power; and, the shutdown of unused facilities to reduce cost and maintain security.

The third area is the continuation of missions for national security and energy independence, which includes: conversion of plutonium to power reactor fuel; homeland security; the Center of Excellence for Hydrogen Technology; tritium production for the nuclear weapons arsenal; and, biofuels production. Dr. Moody pointed out that Congressman Joe Wilson, who would speak later in the meeting, would be reviewing biofuels production later that day by touring the biomass steam plant at the Site.

Dr. Moody then detailed accomplishments at SRS.

The next speaker, Kelley Sanders, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) Benefits Manager, briefly addressed future benefits changes under consideration. The proposed changes to the pension benefits will not impact current retirees, only active employees.

However, beginning in the year 2013, for retirees 65 years of age and older (Medicare eligible), the company plans to establish a health care reimbursement account for each retiree for the purchase of a Medicare supplement or Medicare Advantage based on individual needs. The company would make a to-be-determined (TBD) annual contribution to the account. Additionally, a Medicare advocate would be available to assist with the selection of plans, and there would be no pre-existing condition exclusions.

For retirees under age 65 (Not Medicare-eligible), the health care plan would be split apart from the active employees, and premiums would be based upon actual claims for the retirees.

Ms. Sanders also outlined some miscellaneous benefit changes: (1) 2012 open enrollment in health plans will be the same with nominal premium increases, (2) payments will be direct to Liberty Mutual, (3) for the Savings and Investment Plan, Copper Rock will be replaced by Jenison, and (4) life insurance remains a fully-funded plan renewable on January 1, 2012.

Ms. Sanders, Mr. David Hepner, DOE SROO, and Mr. Jim Hanna, SRNS, then answered questions from the audience, which are summarized as follows.

*Question: For a couple currently on Medicare and currently enrolled for standard coverage from Blue Cross/Blue Shield (BC/BS), what will be the financial impact on us after the changes are implemented? Will we pay more out of pocket, the same, or less?*

Ms. Sanders' Answer: SRNS is at the earliest stage of defining its goals and strategy and, as such, have made no decisions. We need the bids first. Our goal is to be pretty much cost neutral at the beginning. I cannot give you a dollar amount, but we don't expect huge impact.

*Question: It seems that benefits will be cut due to a mere five percentage points on the survey. Can you explain this survey?*

Mr. Hepner's Answer: Ben-Val studies began in the 1970s. The 105 score is not a line in the sand. We want to move toward 105 from 110 but not cross over that line to be defined as a Cadillac plan and cost additional dollars for the retirees.

*Question: Are we compared to federal government plans?*

Mr. Hepner's Answer: No, you are compared to other corporate entities, which may include other contractor companies at other DOE sites.

*Question: It appears that the change will drop major medical coverage. Is that true?*

Ms. Sanders' Answer: We are not dropping major medical coverage. Your personal situation will determine what plans, in addition to Medicare, is the best fit. An advocate will be made available to help you select the best additional plan.

*Question: It seems that retirees have to pay for all of the changes required for improving the Ben-Val scores. Aren't there other benefits that could be cut instead of making retirees pay for everything?*

Mr. Hanna's Answer: Active employees pay 25% of cost; retirees pay only 15% of the cost. Other changes for active employees include reduced disability pay practices.

*Question: If the Ben-Val score goes below 105, will benefits come back?*

Mr. Hepner's Answer: A re-evaluation every two years will determine corrective action.

*Question: Our presidents and congressman for the last 20 years have told us Cold War warriors that we are owed a debt of gratitude for winning the cold war. But we are being compared to outsiders. What happened to that debt of gratitude?*

Answer not offered.

Chairman David Zigelman ended the question and answer (Q&A) session to allow the next speaker, Congressman Joe Wilson, to address the membership with his remarks.

Congressman Wilson offered his assistance to all for achieving the future vision of the site outlined by Dr. Moody. He thanked the membership for winning the Cold War and pointed out that the efforts of SRS employees and retirees have resulted in today's modern economies worldwide. Wilson noted that SRS employees and retirees set the pace for nuclear safety and they raised our families and retired in the shadow of the site as testimony to their confidence in safety.

Congressman Wilson spoke of his four sons, who are serving in the military, and drew a comparison to how the retirees are just like his sons in serving and protecting the country. Wilson thanked Sid Curry and David Zigelman for keeping him educated on the issue of pension increases and use of unspent funds.

Wilson closed with a description of how he will work together with Congressmen Paul Broun, Jeff Duncan, James Clyburn and John Barrow on site issues.

David Zigelman then recognized audience special guests Garry Flowers, SRNS President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and Dave Olson, Savannah River Remediation (SRR) President and Project Manager.

A three-minute video, recorded by Senator Lindsey Graham, was then played for the membership. In that video, Graham made the following points:

- He enjoys working with the SRS retirees.
- SRS retirees should be proud of having worked at the site and winning the Cold War.
- He believes that the best times for the site are yet to come.
- Budget woes will require sacrifice from those who can afford it.
- He will continue to look for new missions.

- He considers H Canyon a national treasure.

Dave Zigelman then recognized those staff members of the Congressional delegation that were attending for their respective Congressional members. They included: Jennifer Hayes from Senator Saxby Chambliss' office, Billy Boylston from Congressman Jeff Duncan's office, Ian Headley from Senator Jim DeMint's office, and Nancy Bobbitt from Senator Johnny Isakson's office.

A short recess of the meeting was taken.

Following the recess, a continuation of the Q&A session with Mr. Hepner, Ms. Sanders and Mr. Hanna, resumed. The following summarizes the Q&As:

*Question: When calculating the retirees' medical care cost proportion, do you add in the Medicare premium and the over-\$2000 out-of-pocket costs? Will there be a cost of living adjustment to the stipend?*

Ms. Sanders' Answer: The 15% that I spoke of is for pre-65 retirees only. Regarding the cost of living adjustment to the stipend, we just don't know yet.

*Question: Hanford retirees are getting a flat stipend, but I understand Los Alamos is continuing with their regular insurance. Why is there a difference, and why can't we be treated like Los Alamos retirees.*

Mr. Hepner's Answer: There are different contracts and contractors, and it depends on what the government negotiates with the winning bidder.

*Question: For those people who are over 65 on Medicare Part B and are beyond their initial enrollment period, will they have guaranteed issue rights for Medigap and not underwritten when the proposed changes are made.*

Ms. Sanders' Answer: Yes, the roll out date of 2013 is timed to coincide with the enrollment period so transition can be smooth, even with pre-existing conditions. You can ask such questions via e-mail to [service-center@srs.gov](mailto:service-center@srs.gov) or by phone at 803-725-7772.

*Question: We would like to see more details, at least a summary level, of these comparisons made in the Ben-Val studies. For example, Los Alamos uses 2.4 as their pension multiplier compared to our 1.2, which means they get twice the pension that we do for the same years of service. That means they can afford more for health care. How are those factors taken into account?*

Mr. Hepner's Answer: They are leveled during the evaluation. We are going to make the executive summary of the Ben-Val available on the website. Look at it and if you have any questions, send them to your executive committee. We meet with them quarterly. Or you can send the questions to me at [david.hepner@srs.gov](mailto:david.hepner@srs.gov), and I will answer. I'm even willing to meet with any of you, or a subgroup, to answer any of your questions.

*Question: My wife still works for another company and I'm retired on Medicare. When she retires, she will not be eligible for Medicare, how will she be insured?*

Ms. Sanders' Answer: She can be enrolled on the SRS plan.

*Question: Is our current plan a Cadillac plan?*

Ms. Sanders' Answer: Not today, but the Prime option will be a Cadillac plan.

*Question: Will you ensure that retirees that live elsewhere are taken care of with this stipend?*

Ms. Sanders' Answer: Yes. By using a stipend, retirees will be able to buy health insurance that fit their geographical needs.

*Question: Will the stipend be adjusted subject to ups and downs resulting from pharmacy costs, medical costs, the economy, and budget problems?*

Ms. Sanders' Answer: We don't yet know.

The chairman concluded the Q&A session.

### **Business Segment:**

David Zigelman presented the "State of the SRSRA". He listed the four main activities of the SRSRA and addressed each of them individually: (1) protection of member retiree benefits, (2) servicing member needs, (3) effective communications with membership, and (4) support of current and future missions at SRS.

For the "protection of member retiree benefits" activity, David began by addressing the two main areas of focus. The first was ensuring the health of the pension fund. At the start of last year, DOE's failure to make a planned \$300 million deposit into the fund resulted in the fund balance dropping to 67% of liabilities. This deficiency (less than 80%) caused the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation to declare the fund "at risk" and resulted in higher insurance premiums to be levied on the fund. SRSRA Board of Directors (BOD) reacted by expressing its concern to Congress, DOE-SROO, DOE-Headquarters (HQ), and the contractors. Consequently, commitments have been made to return the fund to the greater than 80% level by fiscal year (FY) 2014. Note that even though this deficiency exists, there has been no impact to pension checks. However, until the deficiency is corrected, potential ad hoc pension payment increases will remain highly improbable. SRSRA BOD will remain vigilant regarding the pension fund balance. In the interim, SRSRA BOD will pursue alternative approaches with Congress and DOE for pension adjustments that will help offset the 22% loss of buying power that has accrued since the last pension adjustment in 2002.

The second area addressed under protection of benefits focused on the impact of protection changes to the health care plans. Changes have already been made at Hanford, Sandia, and Lawrence Livermore, and as previously discussed are under serious consideration for SRS retirees. Changes are also forthcoming as the result of the Healthcare Reform Act passed under the Obama administration. SRSRA BOD has been in contact with the Congressional delegation reminding them of the Cold War warrior legacy commitments to retirees. This area of health care benefits protection is expected to significantly occupy the SRSRA BOD's scope of work during the next year.

For the "servicing member needs" activity, David recognized Ellen Miller, chairwoman of the Medical Interface Committee, and her many contributions during the past year to assisting members with the complex and ever-changing health programs. David highlighted the upcoming Medicare 101 workshop following the business meeting, for which Ellen Miller was the principal producer for this meeting.

For the "effective communications" activity, David noted that the SRSRA BOD continues to issue a quarterly newsletter and has special communiqués as conditions warrant. One such example was the announcement of health care changes being considered by SRNS. David noted that the retiree members heard about it first from SRSRA BOD, which is a good reason to remain a member. David also noted that the Annual Meeting agenda was changed in an effort to better meet the communication needs of the membership.

Activities for "support of current and future missions" included attending and speaking at public meetings, such as the Blue Ribbon Panel, sending letters of support to Congress in support of H-Canyon Operations, and continued dialogue with DOE and the contractors.

David concluded his presentation by summarizing the key issues that SRSRA can expect to encounter during the next year including changing policies in DOE and site contractors, budget shortfalls and changing budget priorities. David noted that the SRSRA Board of Directors will remain vigilant and represent the memberships' best interests to Congress, DOE and the site contractors.

### **Election of Directors**

The next order of business was the election of new members for the SRSRA Board of Directors. The nominating committee presented the following slate of candidates:

Art Blanchard (Incumbent), Fred Cadek (Incumbent), Fred Cavanaugh (Incumbent), Larry Coleman (Incumbent), Ken Cooper (Incumbent), Don Green (Incumbent), Gail Jernigan (Incumbent), Nick Kuehn (Incumbent), Judy Maddox (Incumbent), Ellen Miller (Incumbent), Kent Sullivan (Incumbent), Jack Roberts (Incumbent), Joe Yanek (Incumbent), Rick Geddes, Bob Steitler, Matt Zimmerman (1-year term).

The slate was elected by unanimous voice acclamation.

### **Amendment of Bylaws**

In the next order of business, unanimous voice acclamation resulted in the following bylaw changes:

- Remove offices, Second and Third Vice-Chairperson
- Emphasize the eligibility of all members to serve as committee members and specify how committees are formed
- Permit removal of persons from membership, BOD, or office with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote of Board of Directors.
- Correct typographical errors and provide minor clarification of meaning.

### **Financial Report**

The Treasurer's report was made available to everyone in attendance by hard copy. The report presented was as follows:

#### **SRSRA FINANCIAL REPORT MARCH 1, 2010 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2011**

Submitted by Stanley Smith, Treasurer

OPENING BALANCE (3/1/2010)	\$49,419
DUES INCOME	\$17,078
INTEREST INCOME	\$284
EXPENSES	<u>\$22,294</u>
CLOSING BALANCE (3/31/2011)	\$44,847

The opening balance above is \$8 less than the closing balance reported at the last annual meeting due to a late entry of a bank charge. Expenses by type are listed below:

Consultant expense	\$10,000
Travel	\$3339
Annual meeting	\$2399
Printing	\$2311

Supplies	\$1426
Website	\$943
Postage	\$866
Insurance	\$750
Miscellaneous	\$260

The consultant expense covers fees and a retainer for assistance with Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) laws. Travel expenses primarily resulted from a trip to Washington, DC to meet with the legislative delegation. The newsletter printing and mailing consume the majority of printing, postage and supply costs. The insurance expense covers Directors and Officers insurance for the organization.

### **Prizes**

The business meeting concluded with the awarding of door prizes. David thanked Ben Bernau, Executive Director of the SRS Employees Association (SRSEA), for their donation of four special door prizes (\$100 gift card each) above and beyond the normal group of prizes. Winners were as follows:

- Four \$50 prizes: one each to Allen W. Wilson, John Burton, Mikell Powell, and Leonard E. Wilson.
- Five \$100 prizes: one each to Lee H. Kearsse, Arthur Wiseman, Pat Walker, and Walter L. Glover and Elmer Wilhite.
- One \$300 prize to Doris Holt.
- Four \$100 gift cards from SRSEA: one each to Sandra Lawrence, Leon Hayes, Bruce Cameron, and Sarah Jones.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:00 pm and after a short break, the Medicare workshop was conducted. Contact the Medical Interface Chairperson for details of this workshop.

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## **UPDATE ON SRSRA EFFORTS TO STOP PROPOSED CHANGES TO RETIREE MEDICAL BENEFITS**

Since the April Annual Meeting, the SRSRA Board of Directors has been focused on preventing the implementation of the changes to retiree medical benefits being considered by SRNS. Prior to the meeting, we had written to Energy Secretary Steven Chu voicing our opposition to the changes. Since the annual meeting, we have briefed the following elected officials or their staffs: Senators Lindsey Graham and Jim DeMint of SC, Senator Saxby Chambliss of Ga., Congressmen Joe Wilson, Jeff Duncan and James Clyburn of SC and Congressman Paul Broun of Ga. We are making arrangements to brief Senator Johnny Isakson and Congressman John Barrow of Ga. These elected officials have voiced support for the SRSRA position that the changes would violate promises made at the time of our members' retirement and that retiree medical benefits should be "grandfathered" at the level earned and accrued at the time of retirement. Senator Graham's office has agreed to take the lead for this congressional effort and the other elected officials have been asked by us to indicate their support to Senator Graham.

We have continued a professional dialogue with the DOE Savannah River Operations Office (Dr. David Moody) and with Mr. Garry Flowers of SRNS. We have met with both since the annual meeting and will meet with them again in the next 2 months. At the June 17 meeting with SRNS, we provided them a letter detailing the reasons for our opposition to the proposed changes and requesting that current retirees have their medical benefits “grandfathered”. A copy of this letter can be found at the SRSRA website, <http://srsretirees.org>. This letter was also sent to DOE. Both DOE and SRNS clearly understand our position and the consternation they have created among the retirees.

Thank you all who participated in the letter writing campaign to your Senators, Congressmen and to SRNS. Although you may be frustrated that you either did not receive an acknowledgement or response to your letters or received an obvious “form” letter, please rest assured that your letters have received the attention of the addressees. At our meeting with SRNS on June 17, we learned that Mr. Flowers has received over 150 letters. The elected officials all have acknowledged receiving a significant number of letters from our membership. Although they may not have read each letter, the overall message is not lost on them.

Our efforts to stop the implementation of these drastic changes will have to continue for the next 6-12 months. The SRSRA Board of Directors will continue to meet with the SC/GA congressional delegations, DOE and SRNS in order to influence their decision making. You can help by continuing to write your Senators and Congressmen, especially if you do not live in the CSRA. Use my June 17, 2011 letter to SRNS (see the SRSRA website) as a template to explain your position on these changes. If you wish, send them a copy of my letter. Elected officials identified above have already received the letter. Our perseverance, the Board’s and yours, will be critical to our success.

Within the past two weeks, DOE has announced a plan to “fold” the Office of Environmental Management (the DOE-HQ office responsible for the largest part of the SRS budget) into the National Nuclear Security Administration. It is not clear what effect, if any, this reorganization will have on our situation. We are exploring what this change could mean to us.

In the meantime, keep up the fight.

David Zigelman, Chairman  
SRS Retiree Association

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## **MEMBERSHIP** - Larry Coleman, Membership Chairman

Your membership in the SRS Retiree Association is critical to our success in protecting your benefits. Please renew now for 2011 and 2012, or join for the first time, using the form attached to this newsletter. 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 at the end of 2010 was 967. Our current membership for 2011 is 1161 retirees and surviving spouses. A large membership number provides strength when discussing your issues with elected officials and the Savannah River Site. Although our membership is strong, there are still many retirees who have not joined. For 2011 we want to strengthen the effectiveness of the SRSRA even more through the continued commitment of current members, as well as adding new members. 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 on our website at [www.srsretirees.org](http://www.srsretirees.org) and click on "Membership". You can also contact Larry Coleman, Membership Chairman, at 803-278-3977 for assistance or questions.

With your support we can really have an impact in protecting our future pension and benefits!

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## **NEWSLETTER MAILING** - Ed Somers, Membership Communications

**Questions and comments related to the Newsletter may be addressed to Ed Somers, Newsletter Editor, at [edsomers@gforcecable.com](mailto:edsomers@gforcecable.com).**

A number of emails continue to be 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". These "error messages" result in the newsletter being sent by hard copy at additional cost to the SRSRA. If you have an active email address, or have changed your address recently and are not receiving SRSRA communications by email, please contact [newsletter@srsretirees.org](mailto:newsletter@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.

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## **BOARD MEETING DATES, TIME AND LOCATION**

**The SRSRA Board of Directors meets at 2:00 p.m. in the Conference Room at Cumberland Village off Hitchcock Parkway and Route 421.** Any Retiree Association member 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.**

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## **TREASURER'S REPORT** - Stan Smith, Treasurer

This report covers the April 2011 through June 2011 period.

Opening Balance	\$44,487*
Income	\$3,983
Expenditures	\$5,061
Closing Balance	\$43,408

\*Due to a typing error the annual meeting report showed this to be \$44,847

The income includes \$223 in CD interest with the remainder derived from dues. The major expense items included some annual meeting expenses and a special mailing to the membership. The closing balance includes \$27,117 in CDs.

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**SRSRA MEDICAL INTERFACE COMMITTEE** - Ellen Miller

We received the following Public Service announcement from the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program (EEOICP):

**ATTENTION**

Compensation and medical benefits are available for covered illnesses related to exposure to radiation, beryllium, silica and toxic substances through the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program (EEOICP). Over **\$446 million** has been paid to eligible **Savannah River Site** workers or their survivors through this program.

Anyone with questions and/or potential claims is asked to contact the program through the Savannah River Resource Center, 1708 Bunting Drive, North Augusta, SC or call 803-279-2728 or 866-666-4606.

**You may be entitled to compensation and medical benefits**

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**SRS ACTIVITIES (INCLUDES DOE, SRNS AND SRR)**

**SRNS Recognized by Governor Haley for Preservation Project**

Governor Nikki Haley recently presented SRNS with an award for their commitment to historic preservation for the preservation of the old post office in downtown Aiken, currently occupied by SRNS.

The Palmetto Trust for Historic Preservation, a statewide nonprofit organization that advocates for historic preservation throughout South Carolina, honored SRNS - who have leased the building since 2008 - with the Corporate Stewardship Award, as well as Aiken photographer Todd Lista and former owner Sen. Greg Ryberg.

"We're very pleased to be recognized, of all the companies in the state, for our stewardship and historic preservation, and we think it is an exciting opportunity for us, and it is exciting for the community," said Clif Webb, SRNS vice president of public affairs.

The old Aiken post office, located at the corner of Laurens Street and Park Avenue, was built in 1912 and served as Aiken's post office until 1971. The building was owned at different times by Ryberg and Lista, both of whom were recognized for their work to preserve the building in downtown Aiken. SRNS was credited with overseeing and completing the majority of the work when they began leasing the building, according to the organization.

The Palmetto Trust partners with the office of the Governor and the South Carolina Department of Archives and Historic Preservation to present the awards each year.

**Bernard Beckett**

On May 7, 1951, a 15-year-old Bernard Beckett went to B Area to get his badge and reported to the Savannah River Site, where he would spend the next 60 years working mainly as a teamster. Unlike today, proof of age through a birth certificate or drivers' license was not required of new employees. Like many others at the time, Beckett did not have a birth certificate and, even though he loved driving and spent most of his career as a truck driver, he did not have a drivers' license either. Beckett got lucky that day, however, when the man at the

employment office did learn his age, but “bumped him up” a couple of years on the paperwork so that he could get the job.

As the years progressed, he noticed many other changes on Site. What had been mostly farmland filled with trees; buildings went up and were taken down. Even recently when he drove through B Area and watched the removal of the Heavy Water Components Test Reactor dome, he remembered how he had been there to pour the concrete for the building. But more than just the scenery has changed at SRS, he said; safety has become a much more important factor on Site. For instance, in his early years of driving, SRS trucks did not come equipped with safety belts. Practices and procedures were also not done with safety as the main focus, as they are now. Even so, in all of his 60 years of service, Beckett has never had an injury.

Manager of Construction Services Cary Milliner made note of Beckett’s exemplary safety record recently, when he spoke at a celebration held in honor of Beckett’s 60 years of service. He gave an estimated calculation of safe hours based on normal working hours over 60 years – saying that Beckett has a running total of approximately 115,000 man hours without injury. He said, “That’s quite an accomplishment; it’s incredible.”

When asked about why he has stayed so long, he replied that it was mainly because of the people, but added that he didn’t like to travel and that fishing got old. What he does like to do during his spare time, however, is spend time with his family, which he can still do while working. Almost all of his children have worked at the Site for a time, and among them all, the Becketts have given 129 years of service to SRS. He never considered leaving his work here for another job and has even helped to bring his children and others that he knew to positions that needed to be filled.

But even he, the longest working employee on Site, said that his favorite place at SRS was 6 Road - the road that takes him home each day.

### **SRS Employees Donate Food to Golden Harvest Food Bank**

SRS recently donated nearly \$22,000 and over 1,000 pounds of food during its annual food drive for the Golden Harvest Food Bank.

Several SRS organizations participated in this food drive—SRNS, SRR, the U.S.D.A. Forest Service-Savannah River, Wackenhut Services Savannah River Team and the U.S. Department of Energy. The SRS food drive is one of Golden Harvest Food Bank’s largest, local fund-raisers.

According to SRNS President and CEO Garry Flowers, the Site’s past food drives have collectively yielded over 262,475 pounds of food for Golden Harvest. SRR President and Project Manager Dave Olson added that many of the Site’s employees also volunteer time to support this vital United Way agency.

Mike Firmin, Executive Director for the Golden Harvest Food Bank was pleased to receive the checks and food. “The recession has been very hard on area families, especially the working poor who, just a few years ago, did not typically need our services,” said Firmin. “SRS’s contributions greatly help us meet the constantly growing need for assistance we’ve been experiencing. We appreciate the generosity of our friends at SRS.”

### **SRNL Wins Prestigious R&D 100 Award**

Aiken, SC (June 22) -- A research team led by the U.S. Department of Energy’s Savannah River National Laboratory (SRNL) has been selected to win a prestigious 2011 R&D 100 award in an annual competition conducted by R&D Magazine. The award recognizes the SRNL-invented Porous Walled Hollow Glass Microspheres as one of the 100 most technologically significant products of the past year.

Porous Walled Hollow Glass Microspheres have potential for use in targeted drug delivery, hydrogen storage and other applications. SRNL's partners in the winning technology include Toyota, the Georgia Health Sciences University (GHSU), and Mo-Sci Corporation, a Rolla, Missouri, specialty glass provider that has been licensed by SRNL to manufacture and market the microspheres.

The SRNL research and development team included Dr. George Wicks, Dr. Leung Heung, Dr. Ray Schumacher, Dr. Steven Serkiz, and Dr. David Peeler. Other honorees included Dr. Rana Mohtadi of Toyota; Dr. Bill Dynan of GHSU; and, Ted Day of Mo-Sci Corporation.

Hollow glass microspheres have been used for years in lightweight filler material, insulation, abrasives and other applications. SRNL's Porous Walled Hollow Glass Microspheres are unique because of a network of interconnected pores in the microsphere walls, which allow the tiny microspheres to be filled with, hold and release gases and other materials. Because the glass microspheres provide a protective environment, or cocoon, for their contents, they can be used to hold reactive or flammable absorbents or stored materials, including solids, liquids or gases. This has the potential to provide a safe method of handling, storing or transporting a variety of materials.

Each microsphere is about 50 microns in diameter, about half the width of a human hair. SRNL originally developed the microspheres as a solid-state storage method for hydrogen as part of the Lab's support of DOE's nuclear defense mission.

SRNL is partnering with Toyota to explore applications for storage and handling of hydrogen gas in hydrogen-based vehicles. The joint program with the Georgia Health Sciences University has investigated drug-delivery systems and Magnetic Resonance Imaging contrast agents. Overall, the research has already led to five separate patent filings. Other uses are expected to be identified as additional research projects are completed.

### **Two Savannah River Site Projects Gain National Recognition**

SRS has received Environmental Sustainability (EStar) awards from DOE for two projects growing out of technology research, development and application at SRNL.

EStar awards recognize excellence in pollution prevention and sustainable environmental stewardship. They are awarded for projects and programs that reduce environmental impacts, enhance Site operations, and reduce costs.

One award, for Renewable Technology Development, Deployment and Education in South Carolina, is a collaboration between SRNL and the Economic Development Partnership of South Carolina. Through collaboration, SRNL has shared expertise and knowledge of renewable energy technologies with EDP, which in turn has leveraged existing relationships with industry to identify and evaluate specific opportunities. The results have ranged from emissions reductions (through deployment and staging of hydrogen and wind energy technology) to community education programs.

The second award recognized a project to remediate tritium-contaminated debris in an innovative, cost-effective way. SRNL identified and tested technology to remove tritium from contaminated concrete and soil by using a high heat source called a "thermal detritiation unit." Each unit is a concrete block structure housing an array of commercially available heating elements, effectively removing the tritium over a period of time. The treated soil and concrete debris can be disposed at an on-site excavation site rather than sent offsite for disposal, reducing transportation, packaging and disposal costs. Over \$1.6 million in transportation cost savings and an avoidance of 400,000 truck miles were realized from the deployment. The awards are among 15 granted by DOE out of 186 national entries.

## **Allendale School District, SRR Partnership Produce Savings**

In this time of economic uncertainty, Allendale County taxpayers can expect a savings in electricity costs in the future, thanks to a partnership between the Allendale County School District and Savannah River Remediation (SRR).

A six-month study of the district's energy consumption by a team of district officials that incorporated SRR's Six Sigma process will result in at least a five percent electricity reduction, which translates to \$18,500 annual savings for the district at the current electric rate. The team evaluated the district's electricity usage and developed potential solutions for reducing overall electricity cost, something that is essential for a public school district, according to Charles Harney, District Executive Director of Operations.

"South Carolina law requires that public school districts submit an energy conservation plan with a goal to reduce energy consumption by at least one percent annually for five consecutive years beginning July 1, 2008, with an overall energy consumption by 20 percent by 2020," Harney said. "The SRR Six Sigma process has provided us with recommendations that, if we incorporate, will get us to our goal."

Proposed solutions for the district have a one-time, implementation cost of \$7,000, Foreman said. In an effort to offset the district's cost, SRR recently donated \$3,000 toward the project's support.

By employing the Six Sigma methodology, several improvements were proposed by the team at the May 23, 2011, Allendale County School Board meeting.

Dave Olson, SRR President and Project Manager, said his company wanted to reach out to the school district in a meaningful way as part of the company's continuing effort to be a positive partner in all communities.

## **SRR Recognized by DOE for Safety Excellence**

Savannah River Remediation (SRR) recently received the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) Star award, the highest recognition in the department's VPP safety program.

The Savannah River Site (SRS) has long been a recipient of the DOE's Star recognition; however, when the managing and operations and liquid waste projects were split in 2008 into two contracts, SRR had to recertify under the VPP Star program.

## **SRR Achieves Milestone in Tank Waste Removal**

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Savannah River Remediation (SRR) LCC, achieved a major milestone by completing Bulk Waste Removal Efforts on Tank 11. This is the third tank to complete Bulk Waste Removal Efforts since SRR took over the contract in July 2009.

Tank 11 is one of 12 Type I tanks that are the oldest tanks at SRS. These tanks were not constructed with full secondary containment and are, therefore, the focus of SRR's bulk waste removal efforts and tank operational closure program.

SRR's efforts to date have resulted in the removal of 92 percent of the sludge waste from this 750,000 gallon capacity radioactive waste tank five months ahead of schedule. The sludge is the most difficult fraction of the waste to remove because it does not dissolve in water, is very thick, like axle grease, and it contains the bulk of the most long-lived radionuclides.

The significant reduction in waste is not the end of the cleaning process for Tank 11, but it does meet the Bulk Waste Removal Effort Federal Facility Act schedule date of September 30, 2011.

The next step for Tank 11 is to have four new mixer pumps installed to start the heel (residual waste at the bottom of the tank) removal process that will include vigorous mixing, water blasting and chemical dissolution of the waste.

This milestone is another step in the SRR operational mission of closing 22 of the Site's oldest tanks by 2018. For the first time in SRS history, there are 15 tanks in the closure process.

### **SRR/URS Launches 'Vials of LIFE' Project**

Savannah River Remediation (SRR) and its parent company, URS, introduced a new personal safety program at the fourth annual Fox Family Fun Fest in May.

Called the "Vials of LIFE," which stands for Life-saving Information For Emergencies, the program provides resources that allow individuals to make available medical information to responders immediately in the event of an emergency.

Getting necessary personal information in the hands of medical responders can be key to saving someone's life, Dave Olson, SRR President and Project Manager, explains.

Participants in the program fill out a form that contains the patients' name, pertinent medical history and emergency contact information. The completed form is rolled up and put into an oversized pill capsule and stored in the door of the home's refrigerator. A magnet is placed on the refrigerator door and a sticker is located at the front door of the residence to notify emergency responders of the Vial of LIFE.

The patient form, capsule and other resources available at a SRR/URS sponsored booth during various events in the CSRA.

SRR is the liquid waste contractor at the Savannah River Site. SRR is comprised of a team of companies led by URS Corp. with partners Bechtel National, CH2M Hill and Babcock & Wilcox, and critical subcontractors AREVA, Energy Solutions and URS Safety Management Solutions.

Additional forms and labels are available at [www.SRRremediation.com](http://www.SRRremediation.com)

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## **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:**

**Ellen Miller, 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.

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## **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 (long distance)**
- ◆ **service-center@srs.gov (e-mail contact for this new service)**

- ◇ **Internal Medicine Partners** 706-792-5075  
(Annual Physical Examinations)
- ◇ **SRNS/SRR Savings Plan** 866-288-3257  
[www.ibenefitcenter.com](http://www.ibenefitcenter.com)
- ◇ **Westinghouse Corp. Pension** 800-581-4222
- ◇ **Westinghouse Corp. SIP** 800-581-3366  
<http://rps.troweprice.com>

- ◇ **Blue Cross/Blue Shield of SC**  
800-325-6596  
[www.southcarolinablues.com](http://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](http://www.medicare.gov)
- ◇ **Pre-Certification for Mental Health / Substance Abuse** 800-868-1032

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## Savannah River Site Retiree Association 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:

#### Current Year

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

#### Next Year

\_\_\_\_\_ \$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: Larry Coleman, Membership Chairman**