

# SRSRA NEWSLETTER

For SRS Retiree Association Members

Bob & Pat Stokes, Editors

Volume 31 December 2006

## SRSRA Annual Meeting April 10, 2007!!!

(see page 4 for additional information)

## Is Your Membership Active for 2007????

(see page 8 for information and page 15 for a 2007 membership application)

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### CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

**There are a lot of irons in the fire right now and we need to remain vigilant.**

The long awaited Draft Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Management & Operating contract at SRS was issued at the end of last month. The proposal is over 300 pages long. We are concerned that there is only one brief mention of retirees in the benefits section. We also were unpleasantly surprised that DOE did not send a copy of the RFP to the Board of the SRS Retiree Association. DOE has assured us that this was an oversight and now has us on their distribution list. We have prepared comments on the draft RFP (see page 3) and have sent them to the Chairman of the DOE Source Evaluation Board. Copies of these comments were also sent to our congressional delegation, who we expect will issue their own comments on the draft. We have already spoken to one of the members of Lindsey Graham's staff about some of our concerns. We are sending the comments to Mr. Jeff Allison, Manager of DOE SR, and Ms. Ingrid Kolb, Director of the Office of Management at DOE Headquarters, because recent discussions with DOE indicate that often information is not shared by the various organizations within DOE.

Rescinded DOE Notice 351.1 was discussed in several articles in our August Newsletter. The Notice is scheduled to be reinstated in June of 2007. We think that the Notice provides a clear indication of how DOE

would like to manage pensions and benefits in the future. DOE's goal is to reduce their costs. We are concerned that this could result in lost or reduced benefits for retirees. In our meeting with Mr. Jeff Allison of DOE in August, we asked several questions about the potential effects of N351.1. He said he would ask Ms. Ingrid Kolb, Director, Office of Management, to come to Aiken to answer our questions. She reports directly to Secretary of Energy Samuel Bodman and is the point person for the Notice. Ms Kolb and two members of her staff made a one day trip on December 6 to meet with representatives of the SRS Retiree Association. Those of us who attended the meeting thought it was very informative, and we were very pleased that Ms. Kolb stated one of the major provisions in the Order is "Grandfathering all employees (including retirees) hired before March 1, 2007, for pension plans and hired before July 26, 2006, for medical plans". The words "including retirees" were added by her when we asked why retirees were not mentioned explicitly in the Notice. She stated that DOE is aware of and plans to stand by their legacy obligations. These same provisions are applicable to the new Savannah River Site M&O contract. This was very good news; but as is often the case, this is not the whole story. Our pensions and benefits will still be considered in light of future benefit-value studies and could be affected. The meeting is discussed further on page 4 and 5 of this Newsletter. We are planning to send formal comments on N351.1 to Ms. Kolb.

Recently, the SRS Retiree Association, at the request of Human Resources at WSRC, became involved in the problem of Medical Enrollment Forms that were apparently lost during shipping by FedEx. In a meeting attended by members of the Board, the Association was asked to forward additional information to our members. The members attending the meeting agreed to send a letter. I drafted a letter that was sent to all those on the Newsletter email distribution. We had planned to mail a hard copy of the letter to the rest of our members. Before we could mail the letters, we found that some of the information we were given at the meeting was incorrect. We were led to believe that WSRC had sent a letter to all retirees explaining how to respond if they suspected identity theft. In fact, WSRC had a list of those whose forms were missing and only mailed the letter to the affected employees. At that point we stepped back and reconsidered. The entire Board voted to remove the Association from the notification process. We notified WSRC of our decision and sent a list of requests to WSRC: (1) they should issue new letters to **all** retirees who receive medical benefits, with the tone of the letter based on whether or not an individual retiree's form had been lost; (2) offer to reimburse retirees for expenses involved with obtaining credit reports and placing a fraud alert on their credit reports; (3) extend the deadline for the medical enrollment for 2007; and (4) remove Social Security numbers of dependents from the Medical Enrollment forms. I personally would like to apologize to any of our members who were confused or inconvenienced by my letter. WSRC, in response to a recent email request, reported that they have prepared a letter to retirees and that letter is now being reviewed by DOE Headquarters. Their response, in essence is: the package has not been found; Fed Ex is still looking; Fed Ex does not think that the security network has been breached. Further on that topic, I was pleased to see that, when I received my confirmation of Medical Benefits for 2007, my wife's Social Security number was **not** included on the form.

We have set the date and location for our 2007 Annual Meeting. The meeting will be held on Tuesday April 10, 2007, in St. Angela Hall. Please plan to spend that day with the SRSRA and old friends. I would also like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Nick Kuehn, Chairman  
Savannah River Site Retiree Association

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## **SRSRA Recommendations on Draft Request for Proposal (RFP) for SRS Operation**

The following was submitted on behalf of the over 950 dues-paying members of the SRS Retiree Association. This information was submitted through the "Submit Questions" feature on the Industry Interactive Procurement System website and also formally to the Chair of the Source Evaluation Board (SEB) for the SRS contracts. Most of the comments were geared to highlight, and correct, the lack of recognition of the current retirees and their benefit programs in the Draft RFP. (These comments have also been forwarded to the Representatives and Senators representing South Carolina and Georgia.)

### **Recommendations**

1. SRSRA recommends that Section H-14 EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION: PAY AND BENEFITS be revised to read EMPLOYEE AND RETIREE COMPENSATION: PAY, PENSIONS AND BENEFITS and that there be an explicit discussion of pensions and benefits for present retirees.
2. SRSRA recommends that the present Site contract DE-AC09-96SR18500 be changed to state that present retirees and their benefit programs will be transferred to, and sponsored by, the new M&O contractor.
3. SRSRA recommends that the RFP Section H-14 (see title change in1) state very explicitly that pension and post retirement benefits for current retirees, given at the time of their retirement, will be grandfathered.
4. SRSRA recommends that the determination/definition of "comparability" include input from DOE Headquarters and provide a formal process for stakeholder input and not be at the sole discretion of the Contracting Officer.
5. SRSRA recommends that the RFP specify Employee Benefit Value Studies not be used to establish benefits for present retirees.

### **Summary**

SRSRA proposes that that the successful bidder for the SRS contract retains all current pension and benefit plans at SRS for retirees and active employees. This proposal meets DOE objectives, is cost effective and SRSRA believes it is in the best interests of both retirees and active employees.

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## **HEALTH CHOICE MEDICAL ENROLLMENT FORMS FOR 2007**

In early November, the SRSRA was given details on how many people are impacted by the loss of some Health Choice medical enrollment forms for 2007. There were about 1,700 forms lost. Of particular concern were those retirees with dependents covered by the WSRC medical insurance because the forms contained the names, **Social Security Numbers**, and birthdates of any dependents. There was information for about 1,500 dependents of retirees on the missing forms. The primary concern is for the **names and Social Security numbers of the dependents**. We have also been assured by WSRC that all affected retirees have been notified by direct mail from WSRC about this issue. As is stated in that WSRC letter, if any of you have additional concerns or questions, you should call either John Greenquist at (803) 725-2135 (or by e-mail at [john.greenquist@srs.gov](mailto:john.greenquist@srs.gov)) or Andy Kaminsky at (803) 952-9680 (or by e-mail at [Andrew.Kaminsky@srs.gov](mailto:Andrew.Kaminsky@srs.gov)).

Those of you contacted by WSRC should follow the suggestion in the WSRC letter and check dependent credit reports from each of the three credit bureaus. The credit reports should be free. In the event you or any of your dependents become an identity theft victim, follow the steps given in the letter; and in addition, please notify WSRC so that they can develop a complete list of victims. If you suspect any identity theft, you should have a fraud alert placed on that credit file. **There may be a charge for this service.**

In response to an SRSRA request, WSRC has prepared a letter to **ALL** retirees about this issue and that letter is now in the approval process. When the letter is released to retirees, the information will be: the package has not been found; Fed Ex is still looking; Fed Ex does not think that the security network has been breached.

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### **SRSRA Annual Meeting Schedule**

The Savannah River Site Retiree Association Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 10, 2007, at the St Angela Parrish Hall. The facility is located between York and Fairfield streets in downtown Aiken and between Richland Avenue and Park Avenue. St. Angela Hall was selected to accommodate the larger crowd we anticipate for our meeting which will come during the contract re-bid process. This location will provide adequate space for members to mingle and renew friendships. Final details are still being worked out. All members of the Association are urged to mark their calendars and plan to attend. The Site will be in the middle of the new M&O contract negotiations, and DOE will likely be preparing to reissue notice 351.1 (see below). Both of these will be addressed at the meeting. These actions could have major impacts on our pensions and benefits, and you should be interested in finding out the status of both. **In addition, the Board anticipates a selection of door prizes will be awarded by a drawing to members who are present at the conclusion of the meeting.**

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### **DOE Notice 351.1**

The meeting scheduled with DOE-HQ to highlight our concerns with DOE N 351.1 was held in early December. Ms. Ingrid Kolb, Director, Office of Management (DOE-HQ) attended with members of her DOE HQ staff: Stephanie Weakley, Director, Contractor Human Resources Management Division; and Edward Simpson, Director, Office of Procurement and Assistance Management. In addition Jeff Allison, Manager of SROO and members of his SRS staff were also in attendance: Craig Armstrong, Director, Office of Human Capital Management; Becky Craft, Senior Public Affairs Officer, Office of External Affairs; and Tim Fischer, Attorney Advisor DOE. This was certainly the right group of people to address the concerns SRSRA had with regard to the DOE N 351.1 and the current Draft RFP for M&O services! **As it turned out, it was a very informative meeting and generally allayed several of our key concerns about the next version of this DOE Notice and the SRS RFP.**

Ms. Ingrid Kolb made a presentation on Department of Energy Notice 351.1 (Contractor Employee and Medical Benefits Policy).

**Early in her presentation, Ms. Kolb emphasized that the policy “Grandfathers” all employees hired before March 1, 2007, for pension benefits and those hired before July 26, 2006, for medical plans. Those “grandfathered” do include current retirees. She assured us that the overall approach behind this Notice was to apply Notice 351.1 Policy changes only to future new workers.**

She said that the consultation process with stakeholders and members of Congress was underway and that the current SRSRA meeting was part of that process. SRSRA attendees clarified that they were representing the SRS retirees and not the active employees or the local community. Consultation with those and other stakeholders was encouraged by SRSRA. She further stated that anyone can provide input on the Notice.

While discussing the financial impact of benefit plans, Ms. Kolb mentioned that in 2006 DOE experienced a significant and unexpected pension and medical expense over anticipated increases. She also mentioned that pension and medical benefits are “hidden” costs that show up in DOE overhead rather than as a line item. Ms. Kolb’s presentation highlighted DOE’s concern about the volatility and unpredictability of those costs.

**During the discussion regarding DOE’s policy goals, Ms. Kolb again stated that retirees are included in the “incumbent contractor employees” category referenced in N 351.1 and we should read the policy in that light. Also, she stated that pre-1998 free Standard Medical for retirees is a “done deal” and is not expected to be changed.**

Ms. Kolb stated that it was **NOT** the intention of N 351.1 to end future pension adjustments as allowed under the WSRC Team Plan. Rather, the intent of the Notice was to prevent pension increases being promised by Site and Lab Managers. HQ would be the deciding force when pension adjustments were considered.

Ms. Kolb indicated that the intent with the Notice was to reduce DOE costs and to ensure fairness to incumbent contractor employees (including retirees). Fairness means following the intent of past commitments.

**Conclusions:** During this meeting, at least 3 major concerns were answered in a positive way.

- 1) Grandfathering of the current level of retiree Post Retirement Benefits, PRBs, including the multi-level medical cost arrangement (i.e. some get it free, and some pay);
- 2) No overt ban on a future ad-hoc pension adjustment; and
- 3) A benefit coverage definition that would not exclude future medical technology advancements being acceptable costs under the current medical provisions.

DOE will establish a web site to facilitate the submittal of comments by stakeholders regarding contractor employee pension/medical benefits. In the meantime, and until such time as the formal comment process is established and announced, SRSRA intends to highlight our concerns directly to Ms. Kolb and her staff.

(This Notice and the results of the discussion with DOE-HQ will also be a topic at the 2007 Annual Meeting.)

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## **Request for Proposal for Management and Operating contract at SRS**

Some of the same clarifications and assurances we heard with regard to the DOE N 351.1 were also reiterated by Mr. Jeff Allison and his staff at the same meeting with regard to the RFP for Management and Operating contract at the Site. Specifically: (1) **The new M&O contractor will be managing the pension and medical benefit plans for retirees** (i.e. the programs will not stay with WSRC unless, of course, they do win the next contract and continue as the M&O contractor); (2) **the current benefit plans will be “grandfathered” for current active employees and retirees.**

Maybe, just maybe, our concerns have been heard and addressed by those in charge. There is still a concern as to how the next M&O contractor will approach and handle the benefit-value analysis of the plans that is scheduled in the first year of the new contract.

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## **Retiree Temporary Employment Opportunities (WSRC and WGI)**

Your Retiree Association has been forwarding resumes received from the membership concerning interest in temporary employment with Washington Savannah River Company (WSRC) and Washington Group International (WGI). To date, we have no knowledge that anyone has been hired.

Nevertheless, we were contacted again in November by local WGI personnel (Ron Mulligan). He indicated WGI interest in the following types of engineers and/or designers: Civil/Structural, Process, Mechanical, Electrical, and Nuclear. All resumes available at the time were copied and hand-carried to WGI in Aiken. Arrangements are available through a third party agency to provide retirees temporary support to WGI projects without impacting pensions that SRS retirees are receiving. We are working with WGI to identify specific projects with potential job opportunities and more descriptive job openings.

If interested in WSRC and/or WGI temporary/part-time employment, please forward your resume to C.E. Sessions at the address below. Alternatively, people interested only in WGI opportunities may send information directly to **Ron Mulligan (Business Manager, Washington Energy Center, Aiken, S.C., phone 803-502-9315, fax 803-502-9350, e-mail [ron.mulligan@wgint.com](mailto:ron.mulligan@wgint.com))**.

**Charles E. Sessions, 28 Kimwood Ct., Aiken, S.C. 29803 tel.:(803)648-6027 or [cesessions@bellsouth.net](mailto:cesessions@bellsouth.net)**

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## **SRS ACTIVITIES**

### **United Way Results**

We have some very good news regarding contributions to the 2006 United Way program from WSRC retirees. As you will remember, this was the first time that all WSRC retirees were invited to support the program, not just SRSRA members. The total contributions from all WSRC retirees for 2006 was \$33,350. Of that amount, \$20,589 came from non-SRSRA members. SRSRA members contributed \$12,761. The latter compares to the 2005 contribution by SRSRA members of \$10,534. I think that all of us who contributed in this and previous years should be very pleased, and let's hope we can improve on this amount in 2007!

### **WSRC Budget Information**

In the August 2007 Newsletter, we reported that the FY-07 budget for the WSRC Environmental Restoration (EM) Program was approximately \$108 M less than the previous year's amount. Unfortunately, no additional funding has been acquired at this time in spite of gallant efforts by members of our SC and GA congressional delegations and others. The process is continuing; and, hopefully, additional funds will be acquired in the near future.

## Defense Waste Processing Facility

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) has set a facility ten-year glass melter operations record. Over the past fiscal year, the radioactive waste melter operation has set an 86% attainment record, covering 24 hours a day, 12 months a year. In the overall process, high level radioactive waste is mixed with glass frit, melted in a remotely operated furnace, and poured (and weld-sealed) into stainless steel canisters. Ultimate long term storage of these canisters is to be within a Federal repository.

## H Area radioactive waste Tank Farm Facility

At the H Area radioactive waste Tank Farm Facility, a program to consolidate five existing operations control rooms into one modernized control room has been completed. This step is phase one of a multi-year effort to consolidate operations and update monitoring equipment, resulting in reduced costs and enhanced safety. With the completion of phase one, the functions performed by two control rooms have been moved into the 3H Evaporator Facility control room. Additionally, this phase provides the infrastructure, optical fiber networks, and new safety panels needed to allow the control room functions of two new facilities (scheduled to go on-line in 2007) to be digitally monitored and controlled from the one centralized location.

## Environmental Compliance Record

The Department of Energy's Savannah River Site turned in an excellent environmental compliance record in 2005. SRS operations continued to result in minimal impact to the offsite public, according to the recently issued SRS Environmental Report for 2005. The 110-page annual report and accompanying CD have been released to the public this month. The report states that the Site's radioactive and chemical discharges to air and water were below regulatory standards for environmental protection and public health protection during 2005. It also shows that the Site's air and water quality met appropriate standards, and the radiation dose caused by SRS discharges was smaller than natural background doses or safety-based dose standards.

## SRS Citizens Advisory Board

The SRS Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) has made several recommendations to DOE addressing proposed planning and communications improvements between the CAB and DOE and other agencies. Included in recent CAB recommendations are requests for: DOE to prepare and CAB review (in March each year) the annual budget currently being proposed (beginning in FY 2009); DOE and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to conduct public meetings on the closure of SRS high level waste tanks; DOE to coordinate with the NRC and SCDHEC to make a joint presentation to the CAB, in November 2006, on their individual roles, responsibilities, and meeting processes in the Section 3116 Process and the efficiencies that may be obtained by standardizing processes to comply with Federal Facility Agreement (FFA) schedules.

## MilliWave Thermal Analyzer

Researchers at the Savannah River National Laboratory, along with team members from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, have been named winners of an R&D 100 Award for their invention, the MilliWave Thermal Analyzer. The R&D 100 awards, considered the "Oscars of research and development", are presented each year by R&D Magazine to the 100 most

technologically significant inventions of the year. The MilliWave Thermal Analyzer, developed by SRNL's Gene Daniel, Don Miller, and their colleagues, uses millimeter-wave electromagnetic radiation for non-contact, real-time measurements of temperature, amount of energy emitted, and physical changes of materials under extreme temperatures or corrosive environments.

### Cooperative Research and Development Agreement

The Savannah River National Laboratory and Digitome Corporation of Alexandria, VA, are collaborating on the development of a radiographic imaging methodology for the rapid detection of respiratory abnormalities, such as avian flu. The two have entered into a one-year Cooperative Research and Development Agreement, entitled Analysis of the H5N1 Influenza and other Respiratory Abnormalities, funded by Digitome.

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### MEMBERSHIP

**Our membership at this point in 2006 is 958! That is the highest number of active members that the SRSRA has ever had! Now it is time for the 2007 membership drive. Have you renewed yet? You should have received an email or letter recently with a 2007 membership form attached. If you did not, use the membership form included on the last page of this Newsletter. Just fill it out and send it in with your payment.** You can also help us out by asking your SRS retiree friends and neighbors if they have joined yet. If not, hook them up to our website, or have them use the membership form in this Newsletter. Remember---the larger our membership, the louder our voice with the Site Contractor, DOE, and Congress! **Join SRSRA NOW!!!**

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### NEWSLETTER MAILING

We still experience incorrect e-mail addresses and bounced communications to our membership. Our message to internet members about the SRSRA concerns with the loss of **Medical Choice forms for 2007** reinforced that problem. A number of e-mails were 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 e-mail address, or have changed your address recently, and are not receiving SRSRA communications by e-mail, please contact [membership@srsretirees.org](mailto:membership@srsretirees.org). Currently, our e-mail program has allowed us to reach 650+ members more quickly with news like the concern noted above. 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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### SRSRA WEB SITE

**WHEN IN DOUBT, LOOK TO THE SRSRA WEB SITE!!** The SRSRA web site is intended to be a useful source of current information. Let us know if it is -- or is not -- meeting your needs!

New information has been added on how to view "Medicare Summary Notices" (MSNs) and Blue Cross Blue Shield "Explanation Of Benefits" statements (EOBs) on-line. This has become particularly important since Medicare and BCBS have changed their policy about sending hard copies of MSNs and EOBs. The reduced frequency of sending these statements may make it more difficult for retirees to track their medical expenses unless they are able to view the statements on-line as described on the Medicare and Medical Benefits pages of the SRS Retirees web site (<http://www.srsretirees.org>)

We are continuing to revise, restructure, and update the web site. If you have found useful links pertaining to any aspect of our focus on Retiree Benefits that are not already on our web site, please tell us so that we can add them to the site. Just send an email to: [webmaster@srsretirees.org](mailto:webmaster@srsretirees.org).

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

The SRSRA Board of Directors has been meeting at 10:00 A.M. in the Conference Room of the Hampton Inn on Whiskey Road/Route 19 South near the Aiken Mall. **The meeting location will change in 2007 but the time will remain the same.** Association members may attend 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.**

Future meetings for 2007 are now planned for Eden Gardens off Silver Bluff Road near Woodside Executive Park. The first quarter 2007 meetings held at this new location will be on January 9, February 6 and March 6, 2007. **Meetings will still begin at 10:00 at the Eden Gardens location next year.**

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

The following summarizes financial activity for the fiscal year to date (July through October).

Opening balance	\$25,042
Income	822
Expenses	<u>1,119</u>
Closing balance	\$24,745

The income includes \$487 interest from a Certificate of Deposit purchased last December with the remainder from dues. Expenses were the result of website management, board meeting room rent, postage and Newsletter publication. Twenty thousand dollars of the closing balance is invested in Certificates of Deposit.

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### **ORA**

The ORA's offsite Web page includes the same information that is available on ShRINE. From your home computer, go to: [www.srs-ora.com](http://www.srs-ora.com). You will have access to many ORA related items.

***Editor's Comment: The following is a message from the ORA concerning the impending sale of the ORA recreation site in Aiken County.***

October 2, 2006

An article in the 9/20/06 Aiken Standard and a letter to the editor in the 9/26/06 Aiken Standard have prompted a series of e-mails regarding the sale of the ORA Recreation Site. Many questions have been asked recently and it is the intent of this message to answer many of those questions and to bring the employees up to date on the current status of the ORA Recreation Site.

The ORA first communicated that discussions were being held about the possibility of selling the ORA Recreation Site on January 10, 2005. At that time we asked for feedback about this idea. From the entire Site population of 10K+, the ORA received a total of 131 responses.

We also sent out a Sitewide communication on September 14, 2005, stating that the decision to sell the ORA Site had been made. Many factors were involved in coming to this conclusion. The ORA Board of Directors was presented a comprehensive list of all feedback that was received since the January 10 memo. Additionally, the financial status of the ORA was a major issue. This decision did not come without many meetings and long, deep discussions. With many of the ORA's funding sources being either eliminated or reduced, there was no practical alternative than to put the property up for sale. The ORA Board of Directors has acted with the best interests of the entire employee population as a whole, not just the desires of the few.

The sale of this property does not mean that the ORA is leaving. We will just be eliminating what has become our biggest financial burden. We will continue to operate the ORA Store in 766-H and will also provide the recreational leagues, discount tickets, and merchandise as we always have. All income derived from the sale of the ORA Site would go back into the ORA accounts to further enhance our programs and to create new benefits to the employees. These benefits could include deeper discounts on our tickets and merchandise as well as new activities that had once been eliminated due to budget constraints.

**Below are answers to some recurring questions that have been asked since the January 10, 2005, memo.**

**Who owns the ORA Recreation Site?**

The ORA owns the ORA Recreation Site. The ORA is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization and is totally separate from WSRC and DOE. The ORA Recreation Site was purchased with funds from the ORA accounts. No federal funds were used to purchase this property.

**How is the ORA funded?**

The ORA is funded in many ways. Our largest source of income is the operation of the soda and snack machines in the limited areas. Other sources of income include the ORA store in 766-H (merchandise and tickets), the ORA Discount programs (commissions from ADT, Chevrolet, Ford etc...) and our association with the IDEAS Program. The ORA Recreation Site brings in minimal funds and is subsidized by the other ORA sources.

**Why is the ORA Site being sold?**

As with many other companies these days, the ORA is going through changes. We have experienced a large reduction in our income over the last several months - most notably, a reduction in the number of soda and snack machines that we operate. In January 2004, the South Carolina Commission for the Blind took over the operation of several snack machines that were operated by Sodexo-Marriott until their contract expired. During this transition, we lost several soda machines that produced income for us. We are now responsible for the operation of all vending machines in the limited areas. As more buildings go down and the limited areas get smaller, we have continued to lose machines and income.

We have also lost the annual funding that WSRC had always contributed. With those two major sources of funding being reduced, we had to take a harder look at the amount of money the ORA is being subsidized. The sale of the ORA Site will help the ORA in two ways: first, it will eliminate an average annual deficit of \$75,000

at the Recreation Site; and second, it will create additional income that would be used to enhance many of our current programs as well as aid the creation of new activities and programs.

**How is it possible that the ORA Site operates at a \$75K annual loss?**

The largest items that help contribute to the expenses at the ORA Site include wages for 4 employees, property taxes, insurance, equipment maintenance, fuel, trash removal and utilities.

**Has the ORA Recreation Site always operated at a loss?**

Yes. The income brought in by the ORA Site has never come close to equaling the cost of operations. It has been the other programs the ORA has been involved in that have offset these expenses and have kept the ORA operating just in the black or at break even.

**When the property is sold how will the revenue be used?**

All income from the sale of the ORA Site will go back into the ORA accounts to further enhance our programs and to create new benefits to the employees. These benefits could include deeper discounts on our tickets and merchandise as well as new activities that had once been eliminated due to budget constraints.

**When the site is sold, would the sports leagues continue at another site (Odell Weeks or Citizens Park for example) or would those end as well?**

We do not want to eliminate any programs if possible. When the ORA Site is sold, we will look for alternate locations to rent so we can continue our leagues. If we cannot secure a place for our leagues, we would help our teams get in to the local city leagues.

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**UPDATE ON LAWSUIT OVER SUPPLEMENTAL PENSION PAYMENTS BY WSRC**

*Editor's Comment: The following has been excerpted and edited from an article originally reported in the Penn-Franklin newspaper from Murrysville, Pennsylvania, on October 16, 2006. It may be of interest to certain members of SRSRA who transferred to WSRC from Westinghouse Electric Corporation (WEC).*

A Murrysville Pennsylvania resident, and an SRSRA member, sued the Westinghouse Savannah River Company over their denial of supplemental pension benefits and won the case all the way to the United States Supreme Court.

At the time of the personnel transfers in 1989, both WEC and WSRC assured the nuclear power plant team that the move would not affect their overall pension benefits. However, it later became clear that the combined pension checks from both entities would fall short of what the employees would have received had they remained with WEC.

To resolve the concern about this difference, WSRC said it would set up a supplemental pension plan to cover the shortfalls. The details of the supplemental plan were outlined in a memo dated June 28, 1993.

After a dispute between the retiree and WSRC over the amount of the supplemental payment, the suit was filed in the Court of Common Pleas in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania.

In a 2003 ruling, the judge awarded a lump sum to the retiree to cover the retiree's lifelong supplemental pension benefit. After an appeal by WSRC, that decision was upheld and affirmed by the Pennsylvania Superior Court.

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court declined to review the case, thereby maintaining the lower court ruling.

In November 2006, the United States Supreme Court disposed of the WSRC 's appeal by an unsigned order, thus reaffirming the lower court ruling on the case.

WSRC also appealed the judge's award of a lump sum payment of the supplemental pension benefit award rather than monthly payments. The judge did so because the supplemental benefit plan was never formally put in place by WSRC.

The Superior Court ruling upheld the decision, noting that nothing in the ERISA law precluded a lump sum payment.

Since the conclusion of the case, a class action suit on behalf of all WSRC employees who have been or could be denied their Delta (supplemental pension) payment is proceeding and is in the discovery phase.

**[The SRSRA Board of Directors has not taken a position in regard to this issue but provides this information as a service to its membership.]**

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### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** – Herb Olsen, SRSRA Member

To: Savannah River Site Retirees Association Board of Directors  
From: Herb Olson

#### **Update on Project Lifesaver**

At the SRSRA Board Meeting on August 1, Captain Randy Mosely of North Augusta Public Safety described a program being implemented that will enable North Augusta and Aiken law enforcement agencies to locate people who have wandered off because of Alzheimer's, dementia or autism disabilities. People who are subject to this problem can wear bracelet transmitters enabling law enforcement officers to locate them by using tracking devices.

#### **Much has happened since the SRSRA BOD meeting.**

Project Lifesaver of North Augusta/Aiken County (PLNA/AC) is incorporated as a non profit organization. We have a Board of Directors and a bank account.

PLNA/AC has received two tracking devices and 14 transmitters. Identical equipment has been ordered for the Aiken County Sheriff's Office (ACSO).

Officers from North Augusta Public Safety Department (NAPSD), Aiken Public Safety Department (ADPS), and the Aiken County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) have been trained and certified to operate the tracking equipment.

PLNA/AC has a web site. Go to [northaugusta.net](http://northaugusta.net) and click on Project Lifesaver. All of the forms required, Client Application, Client Profile, Physicians Statement, Legal Contract, etc. have been finalized, as well as an information brochure. These are available on the web site.

PLNA/AC has received two client applications, and they have been approved by the Board of Directors. These clients, one in North Augusta and one in Aiken, have received transmitters.

### Your help is still needed.

A key part of the program is monthly monitoring of clients to change the batteries in the transmitter and to make sure it is functioning. Volunteers will be needed to accomplish the monitoring program. Training of volunteers is planned in December. If a retiree is interested in volunteering for this program he or she can **contact Herb Olson at 803 279-7599 or [hpolson1@comcast.net](mailto:hpolson1@comcast.net)**.

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## HEALTH CARE

From discussions with Medicare and Blue Cross, the following information has been obtained by SRSRA regarding changes in Medicare and Blue Cross notification to Plan participants.

### Medicare

A Medicare representative has stated that, Medicare will now only send Medicare Summary Notices to participants on a quarterly schedule, provided there were claims processed in the participant's account during that quarter. Previously Medicare had sent notices to participants about every 30 days when there had been activity in their account.

As a result of this change, participants may receive an Explanation Of Benefits from Blue Cross on a claim before receiving their quarterly Medicare Summary Notice. Retirees should carefully review their Medicare and Blue Cross statements until they become familiar with this change in the notification procedure.

Another recent change concerning Medicare claim information is as follows:

If the provider is outside your state of residence, as of January 1, 2006, your Medicare claim information will be automatically crossed over electronically to your WSRC Health Benefit Plan for secondary payment consideration. This process eliminates the need to have your medical summary notice sent to the BCBS in your state of residence. Upon completion of processing under your WSRC Plan, you will receive an Explanation of Benefits.

## **Blue Cross**

Customer Service has advised that Blue Cross will only send an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) to participants when Blue Cross has made a payment on a claim to either a medical provider or the participant. If a participant has not received an EOB for a specific medical procedure, Blue Cross will provide an EOB upon request.

As a result of these "cost saving" administrative changes, retirees may find it more difficult to track their medical expenses. If a retiree needs information about a medical claim they should not hesitate to contact Customer Service at either Medicare or Blue Cross as appropriate. These contact numbers are listed later in the newsletter in the contact information.

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## **BC/BS SERVICE CONCERNS**

We have many 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:**

**John Church, Medical Benefits Committee**

**SRS Retiree Association**

**P.O. Box 5686**

**Aiken, SC 29804**

and to:

**Kaye Bozeman, Major Service Representative**

**I-20 at Alpine Road AV-100**

**Columbia, SC 29219**

or e-mail your information to: [KAYE.BOZEMAN@bcssc.com](mailto:KAYE.BOZEMAN@bcssc.com), or fax: 1-803-264-9353. You can also call toll-free at: 1-800-288-2227 x44452, or as a last resort, call her at 803-264-4452

## **MEDICARE SERVICE ISSUES**

### **Carolinas Center for Medical Excellence (CCME)**

CCME is the Medicare Quality Improvement Organization for South Carolina. Medicare. Consumers can contact CCME for any Medicare quality of care issue. For more information, contact Andrea Fuller at [afuller@scqio.sdps.org](mailto:afuller@scqio.sdps.org), or

Andrea C. Fuller, Outreach Specialist

The Carolinas Center for Medical Excellence

246 Stoneridge Drive, Suite 200

Columbia, South Carolina 29210

800-922-3089 (Toll Free); 803-251-2215 (local); 803-255-0897 (fax)

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## **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](mailto:service-center@srs.gov) (e-mail contact for this new service)

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| ◇ <b>Life, Health, Dental</b><br>Becky Proveaux PS Svc. Ctr. #<br>Rosalee Bennett PS Svc. Ctr. #<br>Wanda McGee 803-725-0531<br>Cindy McClintock 803-725-7004 | ◇ <b>Westinghouse Corp. SIP</b> 800-581-3366<br><a href="http://westinghouse.csplans.com">http://westinghouse.csplans.com</a>  |
| ◇ <b>Pension</b><br>Pat Smith 803-725-7722<br>Viola Best 803-725-1900   | ◇ <b>Safety Eyeglass Office</b><br>Tom Cuny 803-557-4340   |
| ◇ <b>Internal Medicine Partners</b> 706-792-5075<br>(Annual Physical Examinations)  | ◇ <b>Blue Cross/Blue Shield of SC</b> 800-325-6596<br><a href="http://www.southcarolinablues.com">www.southcarolinablues.com</a><br>Option 1 for Medical<br>Option 2 for Dental<br>Option 3 for Pre-Cert/Med Authorization |
| ◇ <b>WSRC/BSRI Savings Plan</b> 800-360-2747<br><a href="http://resources.hewitt.com/wsrc">http://resources.hewitt.com/wsrc</a>                               | ◇ <b>Medicare Helpline</b> 800-633-4227  |
| ◇ <b>Westinghouse Corp. Pension</b> 800-581-4222  | ◇ <b>Medicare Web Site</b><br><a href="http://www.medicare.gov">www.medicare.gov</a>   |
|   | ◇ <b>Value Options</b> (mental health & substance abuse assistance) 800-333-6557   |

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### **Savannah River Site Retiree Association 2007-2008 Membership Application**

**Annual Dues:**

**Year 2007**

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

**Year 2008**

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

**SRS RETIREE NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_ **TELEPHONE** \_\_\_\_\_

**RETIRED FROM:** WSRC \_\_\_ BSRI \_\_\_ BWXT-SRC \_\_\_ BNFL-SRC \_\_\_ OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE OF RETIREMENT** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-MAIL ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**SRS RETIRED OR SURVIVING SPOUSE NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**RETIRED FROM:** WSRC \_\_\_ BSRI \_\_\_ BWXT-SRC \_\_\_ BNFL-SRC \_\_\_ OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE OF RETIREMENT** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-MAIL ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: **SRS Retiree Association**  
**P. O. Box 5686**  
**Aiken, S.C. 29804**  
**Attn: Ed Somers**