



SRSRA NEWSLETTER

For SRS Retiree Association Members

Gene Dixon, Editor

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Contents

SRSRA Contact Information:	1	Aging into Medicare Monthly Training	3
Membership Status	1	In Memoriam: May – June 2026	3
Resource Center Update.	1	2026 SRSRA Annual Meeting Minutes.....	4
Help Us Help Legislators.....	2		

SRSRA Contact Information:

SRS Retiree Association, Inc. P. O. Box 5686, Aiken, SC 29804 Phone Message Line: 803-226-0070
e-mail: SRSRA@srsretirees.org or use the “Contact Us” button on the website.



Web Page: <http://srsretirees.org>



Like us on Facebook: SRS Retirees

Membership Status

Our current 2026 membership total is 1,983. Please continue to support the SRSRA and our Resource Center by making a membership payment and/or donation to the SRS Retiree Association.

The easiest way to pay dues is online. Go to our website, <http://srsretirees.org>, there is a Membership button near the top of the page. It lets you complete an electronic form and go to our PayPal account to make a payment via a credit card. There is a paper copy form there you can complete and mail to us, if that is your preferred method.

We need volunteers to serve on the Board and/or perform services at the Resource Center to continue operations. Please encourage all retirees to join the Association, especially those that use the Resource Center services.

Why not share this information with a retiree friend who is currently not an SRSRA member. Our strength is in numbers.

Resource Center Update.

210 Newberry Street NW, Aiken SC 29801 Phone: 803-226-0070 srsra@srsretirees.org

SRNS Retirees

Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina has approved a Guaranteed Issue Medicare Supplement Plan G for South Carolina residents. That means no medical considerations for eligibility or premium amounts. Enrollment ends Friday, August 14th. To determine your eligibility, call the SRNS partner Gallagher Alternative Health Solutions at 855-662-0681, Monday thru Friday 9 am to 6 pm EST, or visit AHS-Partner-US.AJG/SRNS. You can call Gallagher and check the specific insurance premium amount for your location. Their licensed agents are familiar with the SRNS HRA Plan requirements, and they will provide the information you need to make a decision.

Many SRNS retirees have not registered yet to file SRNS HRA (Health Reimbursement Account) claims. You may be receiving a paper check for an old Automatic Premium Reimbursement amount in the mail from HealthInvest (HI), but that does not mean you can file NEW claims, nor update your APR amount to reflect current premiums, nor check your balance, nor sign up for Direct Deposit to your bank. It doesn't mean your account information data has been updated (phone, email, address, authorizations, etc.). The SRSRA Resource Center has been registering SRNS/BSRA retirees for their new HI accounts and helping retirees to file claims for reimbursements. If you would like assistance call (803 226-0070 or email (SRSRA@srsretirees.org) us to make an appointment to come to the Resource Center, or we can help you with a three-way conference call with HI. The SRSRA Retiree Resource Center has filed \$530,863 in HI claims for our retirees from January to June 30th 2026.

SRMC Retirees

The SRMC Post-65 Retiree Open Enrollment Meetings are set for 2027 Plan Year. SRMC's partners, ViaBenefits and Humana, will be onsite at the SRMC office at 1070 Silver Bluff Road in Aiken on Tuesday, September 15th and Wednesday, September 16th at 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM each day. No RSVP required. These meetings are open to any SRMC retirees who will be Aging Into Medicare in the near future.

Please make sure your personal email address and phone number is up to date in the SRMC Benefits Portal. SRMC Benefits uses this information to send important benefits information to you including their mailings each Fall for Open Enrollment choices. Go to www.mySRMCbenefits.com and login to update your personal information. If you need assistance with your username or password please email SRMC-Benefits@srs.gov.

Gas Card Winner

The first gas card winner for this issue is Jeff Newman. This SRSRA member has won a \$50 gas card courtesy of the SRSEA and SRSRA. Please text or call Bob Hottel (803 221 4248) or email (roberthottel27@yahoo.com) within 30 days to claim your gas card! Please verify your home address when you contact Bob.



Help Us Help Legislators: A Focus on Retirees

The SRSRA Board continues to work for a pension increase through lobbying contractors, DOE, and legislators. What the Board has learned is that to represent you, legislators need to hear from you. The SRSRA Board encourages all members to contact their legislators. And, why not request friends and family members to contact the legislators on your behalf? Congressional delegation staffers respond to the number of contacts. Let's join together in making our pension a priority from the number of contacts. It is so easy to contact your representatives with an on-line message.

Try this:

1. Draft your message.
 - a. Let them know that you know they are busy. Thank them for their considering your request.
 - b. State your purpose briefly and clearly. You might point out the need for Congress to provide a pension adjustment to combat rising inflation over the last 20 years.
 - c. Personalize your message with stories of how inflation has been detrimental to you and how a pension increase will benefit you, your family, and your community. Some points you can reference—but make them personal—include:

- SRS retirees have not received a pension adjustment in over 25 years, a 96% loss in spending power.
 - Ask that if the government truly values your services during the cold war a pension adjustment would reflect that value.
 - A pension adjustment for SRS retirees would provide equity with retirees from across the weapons complex who have been received adjustments over the last 25 years.
 - The SRS Member Meetings (below) have some points that you might include in your draft.
- d. Be polite. Be respectful. Maintain a courteous tone.
 - e. Ask for a response that shows their commitment to a pension adjustment.
 - f. Avoid stale jargons such as "...as a citizen and taxpayer". Do make the point that you are asking "...for their support in including a cost-of-living adjustment in the biennium budget.
 - g. Focus on key points. Try to use common terms and language.
 - h. Close your draft by encouraging specific action(s) in the form of a request. Offer to speak with the legislator by repeating your phone number.
2. When you have finished your draft, find your legislator at <https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member>. Enter your zip or street address and you will see a map and a list of legislators.
 3. Click on your representative and answer the questions. Your draft request for action should be copied or transcribed into the box labeled "Please write your message"
- It helps all retirees when you personally reaching out to your representative(s)!

Aging into Medicare Monthly Training

Do you know someone who is retiring? Share this link with them for more information, schedule sessions and registration information are available at: <https://srsretirees.org/resource-center-aim-scheduler-r0/>. This opportunity is available to all SRS employees, retirees, spouses and retiree caregivers. Vendors and processes will change over time so a refresher might be helpful.

In Memoriam: May – June 2026

SRSRA Board members obtain these names from local newspapers. If you would like your deceased loved one included, please send us their name via our website, email at SRSRA@srsretirees.org or leave a message at (803)508-7065.



Philip Lee "Phil " Ames	Augusta	Laurie Beth Taus Burkhalter Kornacki	MacKay ID
Betty Marion Givens Arnold	Graniteville	Narinder Pal Malik	Martinez
Dewey E Barnes.	N. Augusta	Gregory Alonzo McKie	Decatur GA
Donald Ellsworth Barnes	Aiken	Robert Hampton McMillan	Ulmer
Danny Ray Black	Barnwell	Billy K Mitchell	Graniteville
John Thomas "Jack" Bombard	Trenton	Kent Pascal Pearson	Aiken
Willie Clem "Will" Collins	Barnwell	Margaret B Pope	N. Augusta
Leroy Elmore	Blackville	Everett Wallace Rabun Sr	Aiken
James Rudoph "Jimmy" Flanigan	Williston	David William Edwin Smith	Evans
Lee Bertha Gause-McNair	Durham NC	Robert William Stone	Aiken
Cynthia Diane Brown Johnson	Williston	Jack Lee Taylor	N. Augusta
Robert Wells "Bobby" Jones	Elko	Theron Theodore "Ted" Thompson	N. Augusta
John Charles Jordan	Aiken	Khoi Van Vo	N. Augusta

Gas Card Winner

The second gas card winner for this issue is Cheryl Kania. This SRSRA member has won a \$50 gas card courtesy of the SRSEA and SRSRA. Please text or call Bob Hottel (803 221-4248) or email (roberthottel27@yahoo.com) within 30 days to claim your gas card! Please verify your home address when you contact Bob.



2026 SRSRA Annual Meeting Minutes

April 21, 2026, Millbrook Baptist Church, Aiken, SC

Call to Order and Opening Remarks – Gene Dixon, SRSRA

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm. The following contributors and supporters were recognized: SRSRA members, SRS Employee Association, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, Savannah River Mission Completion, Battelle Savannah River Alliance LLC, SRP Federal Credit Union, and the Lessie Senior & Youth Center. Also recognized for their efforts are our veterans, our Board of Directors, and Congressional staffers Erin Harrison (Rep. Wilson, SC D-2), William Smith (Sen. Graham, SC), Maria Cook (Sen. Warnock, GA), and Brinsley Thigpen (Rep. Allen, GA-12). Special thanks to Dave Fauth, Deb Shedrow, Luther Gibson, and Millbrook's Technical Team.

The SRSRA mission is to advocate for retiree pension and medical benefits, provide support of SRS retirees, ensure retiree needs are visible, and support SRS missions. Our membership has grown to ~2000 members. We advocate with contractors and DOE on behalf of our over 16,000 pensioners. Our focus continues to be retiree pensions and benefits. The SRS Pension Plan Primary Benefit formula has the lowest pension multiplier in the DOE complex. That means we have the smallest pensions per dollar earned and years of service. Our last pension adjustment was in 2002 - and only for those who retired before 5/1999. The average total inflation rate from 5/1999 to 1/2026 is 96%, i.e., our pensions have lost about half their buying power in these 24 years. The SRSRA has made four attempts for another pension adjustment since 2022; the last formal attempt was initiated in 2022 (for the FY2025 budget). We have not given up.

The SRS and our association are experiencing a period of change and transition. The SRS landlord change has also changed who and how we communicate with Site decision-makers. The new landlord, NNSA, a semi-autonomous part of DOE, is now responsible for the pension plan and its budget. With these changes the Board has been spending a great deal of time building trust-based relationships with decision-makers. We have also experienced changes with how retiree benefits are administered across the primary contractors. Board members have been working to re-establish routine meetings with contractors and their HR/Benefits personnel. At our Resource Center we assist with Medicare plan selections, insurance claims, stipend reimbursements, and Aging-Into Medicare training. We also assist contractors with designing communications to clearly explain health care benefits changes. To fulfill the SRSRA missions we must continue to grow, in membership and in volunteers for the Board and the Resource Center.

Maintaining and/or improving our retiree benefits requires a strong, collective voice and visibility with SRS leadership and Congressional representatives. Over the last year articles in our newsletter have asked you to join us in reaching out to Congressional offices to engage them in understanding our stagnant pension.

The Board asks all members to have a collective voice by joining us in reminding Congress of our role in U.S. history.

- Join us in telling them that our legacy in the history of the U.S. spans the Cold War, the Space Program, and production of special isotopes for health, research, and more.
- Join us in letting them know that the average total inflation rate from 5/1999 to 1/2026 is 96%.
- Join us in making them aware rising healthcare costs hit our pockets immediately.

We look to our elected officials to protect that legacy by protecting the welfare of retirees as civilian veterans of the Cold War. We were busy at the SRS. We're asking them to be busy for us and suggesting you should be asking too. Contact your representatives. Gene stated that he contacted his representatives. He received an email response from Senator Graham's office, no response from Senator Scott, and a response from the staffer for Representative Sheri Biggs, SC, District 3, my representative. This led to a Zoom meeting with him on our lack of a pension adjustment in 24 years.

If you get a chance to meet with Congressional staff, you are welcome to invite a Board member to help you prepare for the discussion and, only if you like, sit in on the discussion. Why the push to contact Congressional representatives? Because they are sensitive to the numbers of people with the same issues, and we have issues to discuss. The Board will continue to work with any representatives having retirees in their districts.

We are...~

- ...2000 members representing 16,000 retirees in our pension plan.
- ...a financial force with a \$247M impact on the local economies, mostly in the CSRA.
- ...a voice that must reach out to our representatives telling them we are not to be disrespected.

Why?

- Because we are proud American citizens who have made career choices to honor the American legacy of freedom by working in the Weapons Complex.
- We are...a breathing, living part of the population who deserve respect and that respect should be manifest in a meaningful pension adjustment.

It is time to use our voice, collectively, individually, to influence change.

SRSRA Treasurer Update – Tom Kmetz, SRSRA

Last fiscal year, 7/1/2024 - 6/30/2025, the SRSRA had \$84,996 in income and \$92,315 in expenses. To avoid another overrun, we established a balanced budget for the current fiscal year. To develop this year's budget, we took several cost cutting measures including reducing the budget for the Annual Meeting, e.g., a less costly venue, eliminating the mailing newsletter, and reducing the Resource Center budget.

SRSRA Resource Center (RC) Update – Don Stevenson, SRSRA

The SRSRA RC provides free employee benefit assistance to SRS retirees by working with retirees and their families, SRS prime and benefits contractors, and Medicare providers. Services include assistance in choosing and enrolling in Medicare insurance plans and in filing reimbursement claims. The RC also offers monthly Aging-Into Medicare training sessions for upcoming retirees and in-person appointments with our certified Medicare counselors. The RC offices are located at 210 Newberry Street NW, Aiken, SC. The telephone message line is 803-226-0070 or contact us through our website www.srsretirees.org or srsra@srsretirees.org.

SRSRA Resource Center client summaries for CY2025 include a total of 717 clients assisted, \$352,879 in Health Retirement Account claims processed, and Aging-Into Medicare training provided for 284 attendees. For the period 1/1/2026-4/20/2026, 155 clients have been assisted, \$255,960 in Health Retirement Account claims have been processed, and Aging-Into Medicare training was provided for 49 attendees.

The current SRS retiree annual stipend allocation amounts are as follows:

Tier 1 (65-69) \$2508, Tier 2 (70-74) \$2604, Tier 3 (75-79) \$3,000, Tier 4 (80+) \$3444.

The allocations are available on the SRSRA website.

General Business – Gene Dixon, SRSRA

- The proposed Board of Directors slate was approved.
- A list of the SRSRA Board Standing Committees was provided.
- Ten members were randomly selected to receive \$100 gas cards.

Adjournment – Gene Dixon, SRSRA

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm.

Gas Card Winner

The third gas card winner for this issue is Kathy Lewis. This SRSRA member has won a \$50 gas card courtesy of the SRSEA and SRSRA. Please text or call Bob Hottel (803 221 4248) or email (roberthottel27@yahoo.com) within 30 days to claim your gas card! Please verify your home address when you contact Bob.

