

From the President Looking Ahead to 2011



Fern Foster

I look forward to seeing all of you at the 2011 Annual Chapter meetings.

Now is the time to make your Member of the Year nominations for 2011, which will be announced at the chapter meetings and featured in a future issue of this Newsletter. A Nomination Form is inside and also is available on the RSEA website.

Please continue to recruit new RSEA members to help support or oppose legislation. Through the collective efforts of our members, Board, and staff, we defeated the movement to severely restrict retirement benefits for future state employees.

Nationally, we will continue to work on your behalf to modify or eliminate the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Governmental Pension Offset (GPO), both which unfairly penalize the Social Security calculations for eligible retirees with pensions from public systems.

Also, if anyone hasn't registered on the web for email alerts, please do so now. Thanks to Allen Reynolds for his redesign of the RSEA website.

This is the last Newsletter being produced by Desktop Publisher Sue Ellen Lewis. We appreciate the great job she has done and thank her for her work on behalf of RSEA for the past seven years.

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The New Louisiana Voice

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2011 Annual Chapter Meeting Schedule Set

Below in date order is RSEA's 2011 annual meeting schedule. Please be sure to mark your calendar now for these very important events.

Shreveport—Tuesday, March 29, 10 a.m., La. Technical College, 2011 North Market St., Bldg. E, Shreveport; President: Marshall McKenzie, 318-797-4356.

Monroe—Wednesday, March 30, 9:30 a.m., West Monroe Convention Center, 901 Ridge Ave.; President: Dianne Guillot, 318-396-6275.

Alexandria—Thursday, March 31, 9:30 a.m., Community Center, 708 Main Street, Pineville; President: Vic Dennis 318-623-4547.

Acadiana/Lafayette—Tuesday, April 5, 10 a.m., Fezzo's III, 100 Lions Club Road, Scott; President: Cheryl Smith, 337-237-8634.

Lake Charles—Wednesday, April 6, 10 a.m., Contraband Room, Lake Charles Civic Center, 900 Lakeshore Dr.; President: Fern Foster, 337-477-5250.

Baton Rouge—Thursday, April 7, 9:30 a.m., West Baton Rouge Conference Center, 2750 N. Westport Dr., Port Allen; President: Lorry Trotter, 225-627-6264.

Coastal—Tuesday, April 12, 9:30 a.m., Quality Hotel, 210 South Hollywood Road, Houma; President: Fred Duplechin, 985-803-0672.

North Shore—Wednesday, April 13, 10 a.m., Bogue Falaya Room, Greater Covington Center, 317 North Jefferson; President: Ed Day, 985-795-8324.

New Orleans—Thursday, April 14, 10 a.m., Landmark Hotel, 2601 Severn Ave., Metairie, (*New location.*); President: Benny Harris, 504-304-4089.

Meeting notices will be sent to all members with current mailing address at LASERS. Please update your address if you have moved in the past six months.

Your Dues Enable RSEA to Work on Your Behalf!

It is time to renew your annual membership in RSEA. Your dues make it possible for the RSEA Board and staff to work on your behalf in Louisiana—as well as nationally—to address health care and retirement issues.

Other significant advantages of your membership are offered by the Association Member Benefits Advisors (AMBA), which provides a varied, useful and meaningful menu of "Members Only" benefits exclusively for RSEA.

Please complete the enclosed 2011 RSEA Dues Request Card and mail it in the enclosed courtesy envelope. (A stamp must be added.) Annual dues are only \$18 and may be paid using "E-Z PAY," with only \$1.50 deducted from your monthly retirement benefit check. You also can pay your RSEA membership dues by personal check, money order, or cashier's check.

2010 Chapter Members of the Year



**Joy Netherlin,
Alexandria Chapter**

Joy retired from Pinecrest State School as Human Resource Director. She served as President of the Alexandria Chapter for several years. Joy is active in her church and serves in numerous volunteer capacities.



**Nancy DeWitt,
Baton Rouge Chapter**

Nancy retired from the Office of Mental Health as Executive Director of Area B. She received the Charles E. Dunbar Career Service Award and the Henning Award from the American Academy of Certified Public Managers. She serves in various volunteer roles with her church.

**Agnes Gandy,
Lake Charles Chapter**

Agnes retired from the Office of Community Services where she served as a Case Manager in the Foster Care Program. She is active in her church and in several other organizations including a literacy program and Big Brothers/Big Sisters.



**Glynne Brooks,
Monroe Chapter**

Glynne retired from the Office of Family Services where she served as the Richland Parish Administrator. She is active in her church and several senior activities in her community. She has served as the Monroe Chapter Vice President for 10 years. When not involved in her volunteer work, Glynne enjoys traveling and spending time with her family.



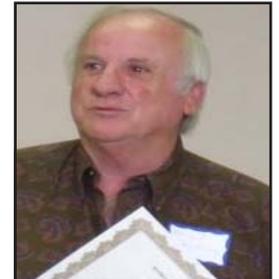
**Cheryl Turner,
New Orleans Chapter**

Cheryl retired from the Office of Family Support as a Community Specialist. She served on the LASERS Board for 16 years. She is active in church ministry working with the Youth, Volunteer and Homeless Ministries among many others. The volunteer ministry has hosted over 800 volunteers since Hurricane Katrina.



**Dalton "Beryl" Schilling,
Northshore Chapter**

Beryl retired from the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries where he served as a Captain in the agency's Enforcement Division. Beryl is active in his church as well as several other community organizations.



**Bonita Hearne,
Shreveport Chapter**

Bonita retired from the Department of Social Services where she served as Parish Administrator for Bienville Parish. She is a licensed social worker. Bonita is actively involved in her church and several other community organizations. She has served as Shreveport Chapter Vice President for several years.



Check Out the New RSEA Website

Thanks to the efforts of Allen Reynolds, former Executive Director who is now an "At Large" RSEA Board member, the RSEA website (www.rseala.org) has a new look, with updated information. For instance, under "About RSEA" is the first ever RSEA Strategic Plan, the planning document that serves as the organization's guide for future expansion of member benefits, activities and events. After visiting the site, let us know about additional information you would like to see added there. We want the site to be extremely useful, as well as user-friendly.

Louisiana State Employees Retirement System (LASERS) Update

Mandatory Social Security for Public Employees

In these difficult economic times, public policymakers are looking for a variety of new revenue sources. One proposal being debated in Washington D.C. seeks to mandate Social Security coverage for public employees in states where they are not members of the system.

In a recent statement opposing this change, Thomas Lussier, Administrator of the Coalition to Preserve Retirement Security (CPRS) pointed out that “the cost of mandatory coverage would inevitably result in separate or restructured tiers for new hires in existing state and local retirement plans.” The change, Lussier maintained, would produce reduced contributions and lower investment earnings, further compounding funding concerns.

Lussier also points out that public employees didn’t exempt themselves from Social Security, but were excluded by the Social Security Act of 1935. As a result, many pension systems designed their retirement plans to accommodate that restriction.

This issue will require continued vigilance on behalf of members of retirement systems impacted by the change. LASERS plays an active role in CPRS and will continue to update you on this topic.

Protecting the Financial Security of Public Retirement Systems

On November 2, 2010, Louisiana voters will be asked to approve 10 amendments to the State’s Constitution. One of those, Proposed Amendment No. 6, will affect public pension systems. The present constitution provides that no bill shall become law without a favorable vote of the majority of the elected members of each house of the legislature.

The proposed constitutional amendment provides that no benefit provision for members of Louisiana public retirement systems that has an actuarial cost shall be approved unless it receives the support of 2/3 of the legislature. The LASERS Board of Trustees supports this measure as a fiscally responsible way to contain system costs that ultimately contribute to the debt of a public pension system.

Your RSEA Membership Has Many Valuable Benefits

Your membership with RSEA gives you exclusive access to many valuable, money-saving benefits.

Among the numerous RSEA member benefits are:

- Dental & Vision Plans
- Long Term Care / Home Health Care Policy
- Long Term Care Annuity
- First Diagnosis Cancer Policy
- Medicare Supplement Plans
- Final Expense Whole Life Policy
- Medical Air Services Association
- Identity Theft Protection
- Government Employee Travel Opportunities

For additional information, please call our benefits provider Association Member Benefits Advisors (AMBA) at 800-258-7041, or visit www.amba.info, or www.rseala.org, and click on the “Become a Member/Benefits” button.

Retiree of the Year Nominations for 2011

Nominations are now open for the 2011 RSEA Chapter Member of the Year awards.

Selection Criteria are:

- √ Retired Louisiana state employee and member of RSEA/LASERS
- √ Service to retirees
- √ Service to community
- √ Service to volunteer and church organizations
- √ Activities/honors that improve image of public employees

Nominations should be submitted by Monday, January 31, 2011, to your Area Chapter President.

Nominations must include candidate’s name, address and telephone number, his/her position and state agency name at the time of retirement, and details on his/her qualifications, accomplishments and honors. Please limit your comments to a maximum of 250 words for each category.

A Nomination Form is inserted in this issue of the Newsletter to complete the required information on each candidate. The form is also available on the RSEA website.

Members of the Year for 2011 will be announced at the Chapter meetings and featured in a future issue of this Newsletter.

A Fond Farewell

After seven years, this is the final Newsletter which I will put out for RSEA. Thank you Connie Carlton, for the opportunity to be a part of this organization. Also, warm regards to Darlene Richard, Anne Tillman, Allen Reynolds, Frank Jobert and Paula Clark. I will continue to be an interested RSEA member, though from afar, since I now live in San Antonio, TX. Please feel free to email me at: SueEllenLewis@msn.com. *Sue Ellen*

Office of Group Benefits Update

OGB to Offer Five Medicare Advantage Plans In 2011

The Office of Group Benefits (OGB) will host Medicare Advantage Fall Enrollment meetings November 1 through November 12. A list of meetings will be mailed to all retirees who are eligible to enroll in an OGB Medicare Advantage Plan for 2011.

OGB Medicare Advantage Fall Enrollment dates are November 1 through December 31, and the plans will become effective January 1, 2011. Enrollment is open to any retired OGB plan member and covered spouse, if applicable, who both have Medicare Part A and Part B coverage.

Five Medicare Advantage plans will be offered for the 2011 plan year: an HMO plan administered by Humana, an HMO-POS plan administered by Peoples Health, an HMO-POS plan administered by Vantage, a PPO plan administered by Humana and a PPO plan administered by United Healthcare.

As the result of recently enacted federal health care legislation, Medicare Advantage private fee-for-service (PFFS) health plans will not be offered after Dec. 31, 2010.

This means retired state employees who are now enrolled in OGB's Humana Medicare Advantage PFFS plan or Secure Horizons Medicare Advantage PFFS plan must choose another health plan during this year's Medicare Advantage Fall Enrollment.

Current participants in OGB's Medicare Advantage PFFS health plans who do not choose a new plan during Medicare Advantage Annual Enrollment will automatically be placed in the standard PPO health plan (administered by OGB) beginning January 1, 2011.

If you are now enrolled in an OGB Medicare Advantage plan, you can:

- Stay in your current plan (unless you are enrolled in a PFFS health plan); or
- Transfer to a different OGB Medicare Advantage plan or an OGB standard plan – the PPO plan (administered by OGB), the HMO plan (administered by Blue Cross) or the Medical Home HMO plan (administered by Vantage).

If you did not join an OGB Medicare Advantage plan in 2009, and you and your covered spouse, if applicable, both have Medicare Parts A and B, you can:

- Join one of the five OGB Medicare Advantage plans; or
- Stay in your current OGB standard plan.

You **cannot** transfer from one OGB standard plan to another during OGB Medicare Advantage Fall Enrollment. Such changes can only be made during Annual Enrollment in April.

To enroll, you must complete an OGB Medicare Advantage enrollment form, sign it and mail it to the OGB Eligibility Section, P.O. Box 66678, Baton Rouge, LA 70896. OGB must receive all forms no later than December 31, 2010. However, if you want to have the correct monthly premium amount deducted from your retirement check in January 2011, OGB must receive your completed and signed form no later than November 30, 2010. All plan changes will take effect January 1, 2011.

Forms will be available at the Medicare Advantage Fall Enrollment meetings and on the OGB website at www.groupbenefits.org. **If you do not want to make**
(Continued next column.)

Retired State Employees Association of Louisiana The New Louisiana Voice

is the official RSEA publication. The mission of the Association is to advance the quality of life of retired state employees who have given generously of their talents to the State of Louisiana. The name and distinctive logo of the publication are registered with the Louisiana Secretary of State. Permission is hereby granted for the use of any materials within these pages, provided proper acknowledgment is made.

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Five Medicare Advantage Plans

(Continued from previous column.)

a change and you are not enrolled in a PFFS plan, you do not need to fill out a form.

If you have questions or would like to have an enrollment form mailed to you, call OGB Customer Service at 1-800-272-8451 (toll-free); 225-925-6625 (Baton Rouge calling area).

OGB encourages all eligible plan members to attend a Medicare Advantage Fall Enrollment meeting to learn more about OGB health plan options for 2011.