

Election Edition



Keep your Member Services contact information up-to-date to receive the latest news, announcements or deadlines by email, text or call.

It's time to vote

An election is being held to fill one annuitant trustee seat. The Illinois Pension Code provides that four active members and two annuitants serve on the Board of Trustees of the State Employees' Retirement System.

In order to be eligible to run, candidates were required to file a Statement of Candidacy with our office and have a nominating petition signed by a minimum of 100 SERS annuitants. The candidates also provided short biographies, which are included below, listed in the order they appear on the ballot.

A ballot and return postage-paid envelope are enclosed. Read the instructions on the ballot carefully and make your selection. *Ballots must be clearly marked and returned in the envelope provided by **May 31**. Ballots received after this date will be disqualified.*

We encourage your participation, and will publish the results in a future issue of the Informer once ballots are tabulated and certified. *If you have questions about the election, contact us at 217-785-6975.*

Candidate biographies

John Tilden

Retired after nearly 40 years of service to the State of Illinois, I began my career in the Juvenile Division of the Department of Corrections as a Youth Supervisor and a Correctional Counselor and later moved to the Adolescent Treatment Center at the Elgin State Hospital. I then worked as a Psychologist II with the Department of Human Services at the Kiley Developmental Center, a position I held until retiring 30 years later.

I currently serve on the Executive Board of AFSCME Retirees Chapter 31, sitting on both the finance and legislative committees.

As an experienced and proven advocate, I know that politicians mismanaging pension funding caused the underfunding of the State Employees' Retirement System of Illinois—not retirees who faithfully paid their contributions. I am seeking this position to fight for the fiscal security of the pension fund and the continuation of pension benefits as we know them. I intend to work tirelessly for retirees to make sure that the constitutional promise of a secure retirement is kept.

Bruce Strom

Bruce Strom was Board President for the Retired State Employees Association 2012-2015. During this time, he led the RSEA Board in its successful efforts to protect the retirement benefits of state retirees.

Bruce retired from the Department of Human Services after working for state government for 34 years. At the time he retired, Bruce was managing a section of computer programmers and analysts who were responsible for the systems that supported public aid caseworkers in determining the eligibility of public assistance applicants.

For 12 years, Bruce was an elected Alderman for the City of Springfield. In addition, he has been a Commissioner on the Springfield Planning and Zoning Commission and on the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission.

Bruce has also served his community as a board member for a variety of public service groups including Springfield Rotary Club, Abraham Lincoln Memorial Garden, Mini O'Bierne Crisis Nursery, Parent Place, Citizens Club of Springfield, and several neighborhood associations.

Bruce also enjoys singing. For over forty years, he has been a member of the Barbershop Harmony Society.

Bruce has a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Eastern Illinois University and a Master's degree in Administration from the University of Illinois at Springfield.



Live longer by staying social

Often times upon retirement we wonder how we'll find enough to do in a day's time to keep busy, only to quickly realize that our calendar stays more booked than when we worked full-time, but for those that find themselves without a social circle, it is not only lonely – it can be detrimental to your health.

The Chicago Tribune reported statistics surrounding retirees' life expectancies with and without social groups in March 2016. Those that belonged to two social groups leading into retirement had only 2 percent risk of death in the first six years of retirement. Dropping just one social group after retirement raises the risk of death to 5 percent. Losing both groups makes the death risk shoot up to 12 percent.

Niklas Steffens, lead author of a multiyear study on this topic conducted at the University of Queensland School of Psychology, found it was equally as important to plan social activities for seniors as it is to plan for their finances, housing and healthcare. By skipping out on invitations for group activities, we miss out on "a sense of 'we-ness,'" according to Steffens. "Belonging and purpose give our lives meaning."

Thanks to modern resources, there are many ways to connect with others that have similar interests, like online forums, community classes and programs designed for retirees. And continuing to expand our skillset keeps our brain sharp, which is just another added bonus.

2016 Myths & Realities of Retirement workshop

This is a free, one-day workshop examining various issues effecting retirees.

Registration is completed by visiting srs.illinois.gov and following the instructions. After you register, you will receive a confirmation and email reminders.

If you don't have access to a computer, you can complete the form below and return to us, or call our office to register. We will confirm your enrollment.

May 31	Litchfield	Aug. 16	Mt. Vernon
Jun. 7	Carbondale	Sept. 6	Springfield
Jun. 14	Peoria	Oct. 4	Quincy
Jun. 21	Rockford	Oct. 17	Utica
Jul. 5	Springfield	Oct. 25	Collinsville
Jul. 19	Galesburg	Nov. 15	Springfield
Aug. 2	Kankakee	Dec. 6	Chicago
Aug. 9	Effingham	Dec. 13	Joliet

Name _____ Social Security Number xxx-xx- _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip code _____

Phone number _____ Date of birth _____

Date & city of workshop _____ Email address _____

Are you bringing a guest? Yes No

Return this form to:

State Retirement Systems
Field Services Division
 2101 S. Veterans Parkway
 P.O. Box 19255
 Springfield, IL 62794-9255



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