



State Employees' Retirement System

2101 S. Veterans Parkway  
P. O. Box 19255  
Springfield, IL 62794-9255  
217-785-7444

# The Informer



The newsletter for annuitants of the State Employees' Retirement System of Illinois

 [srs.illinois.gov](http://srs.illinois.gov)

MAY 2019

## 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.

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 30**. 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

### Barbara J. C. Baird

Beginning in June 1979, Barbara Baird worked 38 years with the State Retirement Systems and another year with the Department of Personnel for a total of 39 years as a state employee. Barbara began as the SERS Northern Illinois Field Representative conducting seminars, workshops and counseling. In 1986, she expanded the single employee operation to a fully functioning field office and was the manager of the Chicago Division. In addition to administration duties, she continued to conduct retirement workshops, counseled members and was a speaker for many organizations. She participated in the National Pension Education Association (NPEA) and was elected to the Board of Directors, serving as President of NPEA in 2005 and 2006. She completed undergraduate and graduate work in Philosophy at Northern Illinois University. Barbara was an AFSCME member beginning in 2010.

Barbara worked in the public pension arena for nearly 40 years and is concerned about the increasing call to diminish and change public pensions. It's referred to as "pension envy" in the public pension industry. There are broader economic advantages to defined benefit plans yet very little support for them. Barbara has the SERS experience and the passion to represent retirees as a positive voice.

### Melissa L. Garman

I'm running for SERS Retiree Trustee because retirees need to have a strong representative to protect the benefits that we've earned. If elected, I will be a fierce and dedicated advocate for our interests.

After graduating from Northern Illinois University with a BA in Political Science, I worked as a child abuse investigator at the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. I earned an MSW through the Upward Mobility Program and became an investigations supervisor. I was active in addressing issues in the workplace as a union steward in AFSCME Local 448 and DCFS Chapter Chair for many years.

Upon retiring from state service in 2016, I joined AFSCME Retirees Chapter 31 where I served on the statewide Executive Board and as president of the DeKalb sub-chapter. I have also served as a member of the DeKalb County Community Services Board and the DeKalb County FEMA Board.

Fully funding the pension system is critical to the security of future benefits for all eligible participants. As a SERS Trustee, I will work to support retirees by being a strong advocate for the protection of our benefits.

**I want to register to attend the Myths & Realities of Retirement workshop:**

on \_\_\_\_\_  
Date/Location

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Zip

(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number Date of birth

\_\_\_\_\_  
Last 4 numbers of SSN **OR** Member ID

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email address

Bringing a guest?  Yes  No

***Send this completed registration form only if you're registering for a workshop (and you haven't already done so online).***

State Employees' Retirement System  
2101 South Veterans Parkway  
P.O. Box 19255  
Springfield, IL 62794-9255

**2019 Myths & Realities of Retirement Workshop**

To register, visit **srs.illinois.gov** and follow the instructions. After you register, you will receive confirmation and email reminders.

If you don't have access to a computer, you can complete and return the registration form to us or call our office to register. After you're registered, we will send a reminder letter two weeks prior to the respective workshop.

*The MRR is a free, one-day workshop examining various issues affecting retirees.*

|                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| May 7 Chicago       | Aug. 13 Schaumburg   |
| May 21 Springfield  | Aug. 21 Dixon        |
| June 18 E. Peoria   | Sept. 10 Springfield |
| June 18 Rockford    | Sept. 17 Chicago     |
| June 25 Springfield | Oct. 1 Quincy        |
| June 25 Orland Park | Oct. 15 Collinsville |
| July 9 Springfield  | Oct. 22 E. Peoria    |
| July 23 Galesburg   | Oct. 22 Utica        |
| Aug. 6 Effingham    | Nov. 12 Springfield  |
| Aug. 7 Bradley      | Dec. 3 Chicago       |
| Aug. 13 Mt. Vernon  | Dec. 10 Joliet       |

 These events are full.