President Glenn Poshard will be the featured speaker for the April 20 Spring General Meeting of the SIUC Annuitants Association. Dr. Poshard will focus his talk on the legislative and budget issues impacting the SIU system and our pensions.

Glenn Poshard is a native of White County, Illinois and is a three-degree graduate of Southern Illinois University Carbondale, the first such graduate to serve on its Board of Trustees. He holds a bachelor’s degree in secondary education (1970), a master’s degree in health education (1974), and a Ph.D. in higher education administration (1984), and worked as both a student worker and as a civil servant while pursuing these degrees at SIUC.

In August 1984, Dr. Poshard was appointed to the Illinois State Senate and served until 1989 when he was elected to the United States Congress to represent the 22nd Congressional District. He set a limit of ten years on his service in Congress and in 1998 won the Democratic nomination for Governor of the State of Illinois but lost in the general election. During his years in the Illinois Legislature and in the U.S. Congress, he advocated for campaign finance reform, clean coal research, the Shawnee National Forest, tourism, economic development, transportation, and higher education.

In 1999, Dr. Poshard was appointed Vice Chancellor for Administration for the Carbondale campus of Southern Illinois University, a post he held until July 2003. Governor Rod Blagojevich appointed him to the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University in January 2004. Later that year, he was elected Chair of the Board of Trustees, a position he held until declaring his candidacy for President of the University system in 2006.

All SIUC retirees and active annuitants are welcome to attend this meeting and to hear President Poshard speak at The Dunn Richmond Center. The meeting will begin at 10 a.m. with a brief business meeting that will include the election of The Annuitants Association officers for the coming year and the appointment of new board of director members. Dr. Poshard’s talk is scheduled for 10:30 a.m. A catered lunch will follow the meeting in the Dunn Richmond Center’s atrium. To make reservations for the meeting and luncheon, please complete the reservation form included with this newsletter. You may also find reservation information on our website at: www.eaa.siuc.edu

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The SIUC Annuitants Association is sponsoring an informational meeting, open to all SIUC faculty and staff, with keynote speaker, Linda Brookhart, executive director of the State Universities Annuitants Association (SUAA). The meeting will take place the evening of May 7, 2012, in Ballroom A at the Student Center.

Ms. Brookhart will discuss how decisions made in Springfield have a direct effect on employee pensions. In her talk, Brookhart will address what is happening—and what has been happening—in the state legislature that has a direct effect on SURS retirement annuities. Pensions of public employees in the five state retirement systems are going to change. By May 7, there will possibly already be major changes in the State Universities Retirement System (SURS). Linda is on top of what is happening in Springfield and will bring to us her experience with the Higher Education Legislative Coalition, the Illinois Retirement Security Initiative, the SURS Roundtable and other groups dedicated to protecting SURS pensions and benefits. Linda functions as a lobbyist for SUAA and her talk will be specifically aimed at current employees: civil service, administrative/professional, and faculty.

All current retirees are invited to attend this informative evening event and are encouraged to bring a colleague interested in becoming a member of our organization.
Greetings!

What’s going on in Springfield?

A quick answer to this question would be “nothing.” Perhaps better might be “who knows?”

As I write (February 29, 2012) and having just spent a day in Springfield, I am totally confused by what is or isn’t happening in Illinois politics. The March 20 primary will not provide answers to the many questions we all have about what might be happening to our pensions and our benefits, but will let us see possible directions.

Since all members of the legislature are up for election in November and since the districts have been redrawn based on the 2010 census, there is an understandable lack of direct, honest and open statements by any legislators right now on where they stand on just about all issues. Once the incumbents or the challengers make it through (or not) the March 20 primary, then taking a stand and declaring being in favor of or in opposition to an issue will be more possible. Right now, there is a palpable fear or discomfort in committing to a stance.

Of course, that doesn’t stop our legislators from having opinions or even convictions. It just means that we’re left hanging. So, what issues are being discussed and what issues are of the greatest interest to us, the annuitants of the State Universities Retirement System?

Possibly being voted on as I write, there’s House Bill 5531, which repeals the 50% tuition waivers for children of state university employees, effective immediately. The Higher Education Committee probably would not have passed this bill out of committee, so it went to the House Executive Committee. It’s hard to predict if the House Executive Committee will vote

Continued on next page
it out and take it to the floor of the House. Our local representative, Mike Bost, who sits on the House Executive Committee, has indicated his opposition to the bill.

Then there's Senate Joint Resolution 5, which is to study the concept of health benefits exchanges in order to provide retiree health benefits for Medicare eligible former state employees.

The Institute for Illinois' Fiscal Sustainability at the Civic Federation did an extensive study titled "State of Illinois FY2013 Budget Road map: State of Illinois Budget Overview, Projections and Recommendations for the Governor and the General Assembly." Released in late January, this study is the one that Governor Quinn referred to several times in his budget address. Among other recommendations, this study recommends that current Illinois retirees and employees hired before January 1, 2011 receive the same annual pension benefit increases as new employees: 3% a year or one-half of the increase in the Consumer Price index, whichever is less. It also supports reducing non-vested benefits for current employees, increasing employee contributions or both.

The Civic Federation supports broadening the base of the individual income tax in Illinois to include federally taxable portions of retirement and Social Security income.

Released in early February from the Institute of Government and Public Affairs of the University of Illinois was a fascinating study titled “Fiscal Sustainability and Retirement Security: A Reform Proposal for the Illinois State Universities Retirement System.” I personally think this study is going to have a lot of weight in Springfield and it is well worth looking at in detail. (Go to http://igpa.uillinois.edu/system/files/SURS-Paper.pdf to see the entire study, which is only 6 pages long.)

The study points out, emphatically, that “There are strong ethical and fairness arguments supporting the idea that the retirement benefits of current retirees, as well as the already-accrued benefits of current participants, should be honored in full.” The non-impairment clause of the Illinois Constitution means that even though there may be disagreement with this concept, it is inevitable that the courts will strike down any change. Again, there are those who disagree.

Given this, the study goes on to look at and focus on reforms that change the system in ways they believe are constitutionally permissible. Acknowledging the inadequacy of the existing Tier II system, the study argues for the creation of a hybrid Defined Benefit/Defined Contribution system for new employees. This hybrid would be mandatory for new employees, but voluntary for current employees.

Suggesting that the SURS “effective rate of interest” should be pegged to market rates, the study presents a method by which the SURS funding burden could be redistributed. It is argued that the entire funding burden should not be shifted to employers. In addition, it is argued that the contributions from employers (universities and community colleges) should be phased in over a period of several years in order that there not be a substantial one-time budget shock. That the state needs to commit to maintaining at least the current level of state appropriations is a given.

Finally, the study recommends that the current vesting system, whereby Tier II defined benefit enrollees must participate in SURS for 10 years before vesting, be changed in that this system makes SURS extremely unattractive to potential new employees, where tenure decisions for faculty are made after 6 years.

Right now in Springfield, there is a House committee on pensions, a Senate committee on pensions, the Governor's appointed committee on pensions and an ad-hoc bipartisan, bi-cameral committee on pensions. SUAA seems to be in the leadership position to effect these committees and their recommendations. If you aren't already on the SUAA listserv, go to suaa@suaa.org and get on the mailing list. The Mini-Briefings that our executive director, Linda Brookhart, puts out as bills go through the legislature are invaluable and the best way of keeping up with what's going on in Springfield.

By Bruce C. Appleby, member of the executive committee of SUAA and vice-president of the SIUC Annuitants Association

Chancellor Cheng reports on campus changes

In an article in the Spring issue of the Southern Alumni, Chancellor Cheng reports that construction of a new Student Services Building will begin next month, where the old parking garage was located. The demolition of the Triads is anticipated to begin this summer.

Contacts for local state legislators

Senator:

David Luechtefeld (R)  
Senator 58th District  
103B Capitol Building  
Springfield, IL 62706  
Tel: (217) 782-8137 Springfield  
Tel: (618) 243-9014 Okawville

Gary Forby (D)  
Senator 59th District  
417 Capitol Building  
Springfield, IL 62706  
Tel: (217) 782-0387 Springfield  
Tel: (618) 439-2504 Benton

Representative:

Mike Bost (R) 115th District  
202-N Stratton Ofc Building  
Springfield, IL 62706  
Tel: (217) 782-0387 Springfield  
Tel: (618) 457-5787 Carbondale

John Bradley (D) 117th District  
265-S Stratton Ofc Building  
Springfield, IL 62706  
Tel: (217) 782-1051 Springfield  
Tel: (618) 997-9697 Marion
**Chapter happenings**

**HOLIDAY OUTING** - Nancy Hartman

The Annuitants Association first dinner/theatre event held on December 7, 2011, was well attended and enjoyed by all.

The evening kicked off with a catered buffet dinner served in the Dean’s Conference Room in the Communications Building. A candy cane theme accented the tables and each guest received a packet of chocolates at their place setting. Guests were welcomed by Mike Hanes, co-chair of the event, and the producer of the evening’s theater production also dropped by to welcome the group.

Following dinner, the group moved to their seats in adjoining McLeod Theater to enjoy the fabulous performance of Irving Berlin’s *White Christmas*.

**BOOKSTORE GREETERS** - Doug Bedient

Thank you, Bookstore Greeters

Our members and friends turned out in excellent fashion. Great camaraderie made for a smooth week. Some persons who had unexpected personal or family illnesses or schedule conflicts found other volunteers to trade with or called on the standby volunteers who responded in excellent fashion. Thanks to all who participated.

Volunteers included Ann Dillard, Bob Radtke, Nancy Fligor, Joyce Webb, Bill Doerr, Bill McMinn, Linda Dutcher, Joe Cash, Kay Brechtelsbauer, Judy Rawls, Beverly Walker, Monica Wilson, Bill Wright, JoAnn Hannigan, Susan Rehwaldt, Beth and Bob Arthur, Barbara Humphrey, Nancy Pfaff, Joan and Rick Erickson, Roland Person, Dick Bradley, Mike Hanes, Chuck Frank, Georgia Kelley, Carolyn and Herb Donow, Al Quamen, Dick Daesch, Roberta Reeves, Mary Mantovani, Phil Davis, Julie Beck, Emil Spees, George Mavigliano, John CORKER, Russ Trimble, Joe Swindell, and Keith McQuarrie. Apologies to anyone who worked or stood by to help if I didn’t include their name. Let me know and I’ll make sure you are in our data base.

If you are interested in working next fall, let Doug Bedient know (687-2792, bedient@galaxycable.net) and you will receive information in the summer. Again, thanks.

**BLOOD DRIVE** - Mary Mantovani

The SIU Annuitants Association’s Blood Drive held on January 25 - 26, 2012, was successful even though falling four pints short of reaching goal. The two day total was 53 pints.

Many thanks go to the following for volunteering to work during the Drive: Imogene Beckemeyer, Bill Doerr, Mary Mantovani, Jackie Mueller and Nancy Phaff. The next Drive is to be held in late August 2012.

Remember that blood is always in great demand, so let’s go members, faculty, staff and students and donate that blood. One pint can save up to three lives.

**GOLF** - Keith McQuarrie

The annual Fall Golf Outing was cancelled due to late publication of the newsletter. This was a result of delays caused by the approval of the ‘new’ university logo.

The Spring 2012 Golf Scramble will be at Stone Creek Country Club, Makanda, Illinois on Monday, May 7, 2012, with a rain date of Monday May 14. The cost is $35.00 per person and includes lunch. An additional $5 will cover the prizes for the usual team score, plus Longest Putt, and Closest to the Hole. A flyer is included in this publication. Please make plans to join us for a fun and relaxing day of golf. Please spread the word and encourage others to field a team – we always have a great time! Also, please watch the SIU Annuitants Association’s web page (listed as Emeritus Association) for any late minute details.

**EMERITUS FACULTY ORGANIZATION** - Bill Wright

The Emeritus Faculty Organization will hold its regular Spring meeting on Friday, April 20, at 8:30 a.m. at the Dunn-Richmond Center.

Our speaker will be Mr. David Yepsen, Director of the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at SIUC. Mr. Yepsen’s talk is entitled “2012 Political Overview.”

Mr. Yepsen is an engaging speaker, and he appeared on national television programs in January to provide analysis of the Iowa caucuses.

Please come, listen, and possibly ask a question or make a comment.

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**Calendar of Events**

**APRIL 20, 2012** - **Emeritus Faculty Organization Meeting - Dunn-Richmond Center, SIUC - 8:30 A.M.**

**APRIL 20, 2012** - **Spring General Membership Meeting - Dunn-Richmond Center, SIUC - 10 A.M.**

**MAY 7, 2012** - **Golf Outing - Stone Creek Country Club, Makanda, IL (Raindate: May 14)**

**MAY 7, 2012** - **Program for Current and Retired Annuitants-Linda Brookhart, Speaker. 7 P.M., Student Ctr, Ballrm A**

The Annuitant - 4
University policy on hiring retirees

A new policy at SIUC will restrict the hiring of retirees at the very time that more employees are expected to retire. This policy, applicable to SIUC and the Medical School, will place restrictions on the way in which retirees are re-hired.

Basically, a retired employee can only be rehired if (1) the position is advertised and filled through a competitive search or (b) if a search waiver is sought, the retired employee can only be hired if the following are satisfied:
- a justification for the hire, including a succession plan for a permanent replacement to be hired through a competitive search, must accompany the request for a search waiver;
- the employment must be no more than 50% FTE;
- the employment contract must be no longer than one year; and
- salary rates must be based upon what would be paid for a new employee for the same position.

Those eligible to be hired outside a competitive search include:
- Retired faculty members who teach courses, advise students, and perform related duties on a part-time or occasional basis;
- Retired faculty or staff members who conduct research on appointments funded by external grants and contracts;
- Retirees who are appointed as hourly (Extra Help) employees on a temporary basis. Subject to administrative approval, Extra Help craft employees who are referred from their respective union hall maybe hired under this policy.

All such hires require the prior approval by the Chancellor on the recommendation of the relevant Vice Chancellor or Provost. Renewal of temporary appointments of University retirees is discouraged. Hiring of retired senior administrators is subject to additional scrutiny.

The policy states that “[c]employees, who choose to officially retire from the University, forfeit any claim or expectation of post-retirement employment at the University.” SIUC requires effective succession planning. Use of University retiree re-employment is not a substitute for developing well-qualified faculty and staff. Further, “[t]he cost savings attributable to benefits which a retiree receives from SURS shall not be a basis to avoid a competitive search process when filling positions.”

It appears that retirees hired through a competitive search process are not subject to this policy.

The policy seems to have been developed and was implemented during the summer of 2011. While the deans are familiar with the policy, it appears many faculty and retirees are not. Anyone who is retired or plans to retire and who expects to be re-hired should consult with department chairs or deans well in advance to allow time for a competitive search. If no search is to occur, they should be prepared for these restrictions.

Read the entire policy at: http://policies.siuc.edu/policies/emplret.html

Submitted by Suzanne Schmitz who retired July 31, 2011. sschmitz@siu.edu. 618 529 2807

Advanced indicators project that a large number of SIUC employees will retire on June 2012. While there are a number of factors that may be playing into this unusually large number of retirements, it also gives cause to be concerned about what impact this will have on our pension system. As more long-term employees drop off the payroll and activate their pension annuities, fewer contributions flow into the SURS coffers to fund our investments and monthly annuities.

This is yet another reason why it is important to grow our chapter’s membership to keep our voice strong in Springfield to protect our pension system and benefits.

United we stand; Divided we fall.
The Stage Company community theater, officially the Jackson County Stage Company, is celebrating its 30th year of providing continuous seasons of plays for Carbondale and the surrounding communities. This milestone was celebrated by the all volunteer organization during its recently completed third play of the season, “Inherit the Wind.” This play was chosen as a reprise of the first play the Company produced in 1982. In addition to the now standard six performances of the play, the celebration also included a reception of complimentary wine and hors d’oeuvres prior to each performance, an extensive exhibit of the Company’s history in pictures and three dimensional exhibits in the gallery and lobby of the Varsity Center for the Arts and a ribbon-cutting ceremony on opening night to launch the Company in to its fourth decade.

From its beginning, The Stage Company has had many SIU retirees as active members. Beginning with Archibald McLeod, in 1982, to the present, with active members such as David Christensen, Loren Cocking, Mike Hanes, Christian Moe, Bob Radtke, David Rush and Roy Weshinskey, SIUC retirees have been an important part of the community theater. In addition, there are several other active members who are currently employed at the University. Of course, the approximately 100 members of the Company come from all walks of life and bring many skills to the theater group. In addition to acting and directing, there are roles for scene designers and builders, costumers, lighting and audio technicians and even those adept at locating props and furniture for a production. The Company invites those with an interest in getting involved to view their website at www.stagecompany.org for additional information.

In its 30 years to date, The Stage Company has produced 178 plays and given over 1100 performances. At first, the Company had no home and rehearsed and performed in many locations including lodge halls, churches, high schools and restaurants. At the end of its first season in June, 1983, the Bank of Carbondale agreed to lease to the Company, for $1.00 per year, the use the building on the corner of Washington and Main, which they had vacated a few years earlier. This building had theatrical roots as it contained a popular opera house on the second and third floors back in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. During the summer, the Stage Company and other volunteers renovated the old building into a 96-seat theater and opened with the first show in October of that year. Success was immediate as the company found they had to give nine performances of each play to satisfy demand. That became the Company’s home for 22 years, but in 2005 the Bank of Carbondale made the decision to raze the building because of safety concerns. So the Stage Company went back to its beginnings, performing wherever it could find a venue as it aggressively looked for a new home.

In late 2007, Mayor Brad Cole successfully negotiated with the Kerasotes Theater Corporation to give the Varsity film theater, which they had vacated in 2003, to the community. In early 2008 the title was conveyed to the Stage Company and plans for renovation began. At that time, Carbondale Community Arts joined in the effort for restoration. A new organization was formed, The Varsity Center for the Arts, whose purpose it is to raise funds and execute renovations. The VCA Board of Directors consists of four from The Stage Company, four from CCA and seven from the community at large.

During the spring, summer and fall of 2008, Stage Company volunteers and others rolled up their sleeves and restored the theater to what you see today. This includes the East theater (which seats 150), a stage, scene shop, dressing rooms, a gallery/meeting room, box office, lobby and restrooms. What has been accomplished to this point represents stages one and two of a four stage process for complete renovation. The title has been transferred to the Varsity Center for the Arts and fund raising is currently underway toward the goal of full restoration. Currently the building is being actively used by The Stage Company, Carbondale Community Arts and many other groups.

Story by Craig Hinde, President and one of the founding members.
CARBONDALE, Ill. -- Mark Kelly, who served as commander of the space shuttle Endeavour on its final mission last year, will be the keynote speaker for Southern Illinois University Carbondale's three commencement ceremonies on May 12.

"I am delighted that Captain Kelly has agreed to serve as our keynote speaker," Chancellor Rita Cheng said. "I am confident the message he will deliver, 'Endeavour to Succeed,' will resonate with our graduating students and their families." A sought-after keynote speaker, Kelly is an American hero who inspires others to be their best while remaining true to their core values. He exemplifies leadership, the importance of teamwork, and courage under pressure.

A retired U.S. Navy captain, Kelly is a best-selling author, prostate cancer survivor and experienced naval aviator who flew combat missions during the Gulf War. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Legion of Merit, two Defense Superior Service Medals and two Distinguished Flying Crosses.

He is married to former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, who continues her recovery from a January 2011 assassination attempt. The Arizona Democrat, first elected in 2006, retired from Congress in January 2012 to focus on her recovery. The couple shares their story of hope and resilience in their best-selling memoir, "Gabby." Kelly was selected as the commencement speaker as part of the campus initiative to link graduation to the theme that "big things are within reach" for all SIU Carbondale students.

“Our curriculum and research strengths, particularly in such areas as cancer research, aviation, and rehabilitation, combined with Mark Kelly's message, further emphasize the critical role of our faculty and staff in addressing important national concerns,” Cheng said.

“SIU Carbondale is well known for preparing students for the many challenges life will present,” she added. “Captain Kelly’s life story of courage, perseverance and preparation will inspire our students as they enter the next chapter in their lives.”

Kelly earned a bachelor's degree in marine engineering and nautical science from the United States Merchant Marine Academy, and a master's degree in aeronautical engineering from the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School.

He was selected as an astronaut in 1996. He flew his first of four missions in 2001 aboard Endeavour. He also commanded space shuttle Discovery, and is one of only two individuals to visit the International Space Station on four different occasions. Kelly has logged 6,000 flight hours in more than 50 different aircraft, 375 aircraft carrier landings, 39 combat missions and more than 50 days in space.

Admission to the May 12 commencement ceremonies is free, and tickets are not required. Ceremonies will take place at 9 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.
Membership Matters

If you are associated with SIUC...

You should join the State Universities Annuitants Association. SUAA serves all participants and beneficiaries of the State Universities Retirement System (SURS). SUAA is the only advocacy organization focusing solely on preserving pension and healthcare benefits for current employees and retirees of public universities and community colleges. It is important that everyone—retired and current employees, spouses, and survivors—become a member of SUAA. The annual fee is $31.

Ways to join:
- Go to www.suaa.org and click on “Join Now.”
- Go to the Annuitants Association website: http://eaa.siuc.edu/ and click on “Membership Information.” Payment options include automatic dues deduction, annual payment by check, or automatic payroll deduction (current employees only). Automatic dues deduction is encouraged because it eliminates the need to be contacted annually by SUAA.
- Call the SUAA Office toll-free: 888-547-8473.

To those who are already members of SUAA we thank you. To those who have not yet joined, please consider joining today. We need to protect our pension and benefits.

Thyra Russell
SIUC-AA Membership Chair
457-7554 or trussell@siu.edu