

# THE ANNUITANT

A PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY CARBONDALE  
ANNUITANTS ASSOCIATION

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## SIU President Randy Dunn to speak to Chapter at Fall General Meeting



Dr. Randy J. Dunn  
SIU President

SIU President, Randy J. Dunn, will be the guest speaker at the Chapter's Fall General Meeting on Friday, September 26. The meeting will be held at the Dunn-Richmond Center and will begin at 10 a.m. A luncheon will follow in the Atrium. President Dunn's remarks will be titled, *Direction of the SIU System*.

Dr. Randy J. Dunn was selected to become the eighth president of the Southern Illinois University System on February 17, 2014, and he began his official duties on May 1.

Prior to coming to Southern Illinois, Dunn served as president at two other state institutions—Murray State University in Kentucky (2006-2013) and Youngstown State University in Ohio (2013-2014). Before that, Dunn was the state superintendent of education, appointed to that role by the Illinois State Board of Education. He is not a stranger to the SIU System, having held the rank of professor in the Department of Educational Administration and Higher Education at SIU Carbondale. Dunn started at the Carbondale campus as an associate professor in 1995 and was named department chair in 2000, before leaving to assume the state superintendency. During his term as chair, he also taught in the joint doctoral program in educational leadership at SIU Edwardsville. Dunn began his academic career as an assistant professor in the Department of Leadership at The University of Memphis for two years before taking his faculty post at Southern Illinois University.

Dunn received his doctorate in educational administration from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1991. He graduated from Illinois State University with a master's in administration and foundations in 1983, and the B.S. in education in 1980.

Dunn is married to Dr. Ronda Baker Dunn, originally from Benton, IL, and they reside in rural Carbondale. They enjoy travel, riding in their Jeep, the arts—and of course, Saluki and Cougar athletics. Randy and Ronda are the parents of four adult children.

All SURS annuitants, which includes current employees, are invited to attend the meeting and to hear President Dunn speak.

## No one left, none but all of us

Doug Bedient

After Doris Kearns Goodwin spoke to SIU Carbondale this spring and mentioned *The Bully Pulpit* as the book that followed *Team of Rivals*, I put it on my reading list. Reading Goodwin's newer book I was taken by some of the similarities of American life when Theodore Roosevelt was progressing from lawyer, to NYC Police Commissioner and Mayor, to rancher-conservationist, to NY Governor to President.

"In the mid-1890s, the genteel world of patrician reformers and civil service enthusiasts that Taft and Roosevelt initially typified had begun a seismic shift. Widespread discontent with the industrial order, building for over a decade, threatened now to flare into open revolution. The growth of colossal corporations in the aftermath of the Civil War had produced immense, consolidated wealth for business owners, but the lives of the working people, western farmers and eastern factory workers alike, had become increasingly difficult. 'We plow new fields, we open new mines, we found new cities, Roosevelt's mayoral rival, Henry George, observed; 'we girdle the land with iron roads and lace the air with telegraph wires, we add knowledge to knowledge and utilize invention after invention.' Yet despite such vaunted progress, he declared, it becomes no easier for the masses of our people to make a living. On the contrary, it is becoming harder." (p. 157)

Most of us are familiar with some of Theodore Roosevelt's exploits—leading the Rough Riders in Cuba; fighting corruption in New York City as police commissioner; setting aside land for parks and monuments; promoting conservation; and busting trusts that dominated much of American business. Kearns describes how TR worked with progressive journalists of his time to build support for the changes Roosevelt saw as necessary for America.

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Visit the Annuitants Association on the Web!  
[annuitants.siu.edu](http://annuitants.siu.edu)

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## *A message from the president*

*Greetings!*



Doug Bedient  
President  
SIU Carbondale  
Annuity Association

I am humbled to serve as the President of the SIU Carbondale Annuity Association. Bruce Appleby has been a great leader in his second cycle as our chapter president while concurrently assuming SUAA's state presidency this year. He has just begun his full presidential term. How about that for SUAA commitment?

I have been impressed that some of our chapter leaders continue to serve SUAA. Bob Radtke is a member of the SUAA Foundation Board. Carolyn Donow is a leader in SUAAAction. I enjoyed serving when each of them led our chapter. John Pohlmann was an excellent model to try to emulate. Our officers and board members are dedicated. Treasurer Don Stucky has served with distinction for as long as I have been a part of the Board. Marcia Anderson helps keep us on track as Secretary. Thyra Russell is our Vice President and she brings tremendous experience as she served as our Membership chair. Trish Welch, Bill Wright and Jay Brooks continue their board service while Pat Eckert, Mike Murray, and Lynn Smith join the Board. I would be remiss if I did not express thanks to Mike Hanes and Nancy Hartman for their service. And Nancy does a stellar job of preparing our newsletter. I welcome the opportunity to lead this board and draw upon their counsel and experience as we deal with the challenges and opportunities that our retirement system provides.

Your Board of Directors decided at its August meeting to work to bring more current employees as well as retirees to our chapter's membership. We ask that you join in this effort by talking up SUAA to your retired friends as well as current SIU Carbondale employees. SUAA is 'The Advocate' for SURS annuitants — retirees as well as current staff. This newsletter documents the impact SUAA has had in defending our pension and benefits. Help us grow so that our voice resonates even more loudly!



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### **SUAA Legal Fund needs our support**

When the Illinois Supreme Court ruled that our health insurance is part of our pension benefits and can't be reduced, we were all greatly relieved. But, that's just the beginning. Our success in defeating the Constitutional Amendment two years ago, our success in getting the health insurance declared part of our pension benefits and our success in getting the injunction against PA 98-0599 are great indications that we are winning. But the battle isn't over. Legal fees still need to be paid and the State is talking about new and other ways to get at our pensions.

So, we need for everyone to contribute to the SUAA Legal Fund. Thus far, the Legal Fund has received \$289,000 in donations. Our chapter has been the fourth highest contributor to the Legal Fund, however only 110 individuals in our chapter of over 700 members have contributed. We need everyone to contribute and we need for those who have contributed to give again. If you are retired, consider giving the equivalent of one or two months of the pension increment you received in January. If you're still working, please consider \$25 to \$50 per \$1000 of your monthly earnings.

You'll receive a letter, soon, detailing all this. Please help SUAA protect your pension!

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### **SUAA Alert - Health Insurance Premiums**

In July, The Department of Central Management Services (CMS) enacted an emergency rule that doubled deductions for health insurance. The rule went into effect immediately and you have already seen those deductions on your recent pension checks.

In the meantime, the SUAA executive director and attorney took action with the Governor's Office, CMS and the Joint Committee on Administrative Rules based on the *Kanerva* case. As a result, CMS has withdrawn its proposed rule and expects to publish a new rule on August 22nd. According to a News Alert Follow-Up e-mail from SUAA on August 14, 2014, the withdrawing of the rule by CMS does not mean that the health insurance withholding for July and August will be changed or that the 1% and 2% deduction that has been occurring since July 2013 will be changed. What should happen is that your pension checks should return to have either the 1% or 2% deduction for health insurance premiums.

SUAA is continuing legal action on our behalf to get the 1% and 2% health insurance premiums eliminated based on the Supreme Court's recent decision that health insurance is part of our pension package. However, the fight is expensive and it is our benefit to protect.

## So what do the pension decisions mean?

~ Bruce C. Appleby, President SUAA

After years of writing about how bad things are and how we have to fight on, it's good to be able to report that we have won a couple of battles and things are going our way.

As Christopher Z. Mooney, Director of the Institute of Government and Public Affairs at University of Illinois - Springfield put it in an editorial in the *Southern Illinoisan* on July 9, 2014: "But didn't the two pension reform bills effectively 'diminish or impair' pension benefits?"

That was the central question the Supreme Court of Illinois addressed in their July 3 opinion on *Kanerva vs Weems* when they decided that Article XIII, section 5 of the Illinois Constitution applied to our health benefits. They stated that health insurance is a benefit in our contract with the state and that our health benefits cannot be reduced or impaired.

Don't think that this means the state will immediately refund the 1% and 2% of our pensions that have been withheld since July of 2013. In a statement released July 7, State Universities Retirement System (SURS) officials said they will continue collecting the money pending a final resolution of the case. SURS will continue to collect the health insurance, which is being kept in an escrow account.

From my perspective, this is a wise move. It would be over-optimistic on our part to conclude that we should get our money back immediately. There is a possibility that as this case makes its way through the courts again, we may not get our money back. If SURS were to give our money back or stop taking it out and then the decision from the courts is that our health benefits are not a part of the pension benefits covered by Article XIII, section 5, the accounting nightmare that would ensue would be monumental.

The other court decision, that Public Act 98-599 could not go into effect on July 1, 2014, meant that we can probably expect to receive our usual 3% cost of living adjustment on January 1, 2015. More importantly, it also meant that people who had made a decision to retire before July 1, 2014, could stay on the job and not be forced into retirement because they would be losing part of their pension under the new law. Thousands of university and community college employees around the state were saved by this decision.

A big question that we can hope will be clarified is that of the "sovereign power" or "police power" that the State has. The State has argued that some items challenged by the various lawsuits are not "pension benefits," items such as our health insurance and the COLA. The State argues that it can violate the Pension Protection Clause for the greater good of the citizens of Illinois: sovereign power. The decision in *Kanerva vs. Weems* shows the Supreme Court believes that health coverage is a pension benefit. It in no way addresses the sovereign power argument. That will be a major point as the State's presentations of these cases progress.

A status hearing is scheduled for July 22. The Supreme Court set a schedule where the State will complete its disclosure of the expert witness opinions by July 29. The State will then provide actual written expert reports by August 29 and then our lawyers will have time to depose those experts and provide experts of our own.

This has been and will continue to be a long and drawn out process. The *Kanerva* decision is a major turning point in our arguments but it is not the end. There is much more to be done and we have to expect a long fight.

And what a perfect opportunity for SUAA to get to those who are benefiting from our work and convince them that joining SUAA is the strongest thing they can do to protect their pension benefits.

When the decision that Public Act 98-599 could not go into effect on July 1, 2014 was announced, I was standing at my locker in the Recreation Center on campus at SIU Carbondale when the pool tender came up to me and said "Thank you," and I replied, "You're welcome—but for what?" He explained to me that he had done all the paper work for retirement before July 1, because the new laws would have meant a \$700 a month reduction of his pension should he stay on the job past July 1. Since the announcement had been made that the law wouldn't go into effect and our injunction was successful, the University allowed him to withdraw his request for retirement and he was able to save that \$700 a month.

There are many stories like this at community colleges and universities all over the state. These are the people we must recruit for membership in SUAA. They know most directly how our efforts have benefitted them. We need to collect and use these stories as we convince others who are currently employed to join us as we fight to save their pension benefits.

And at the local level, we need to know and let others know that SUAA is helping them. Our local chapter at SIU Carbondale gives four scholarships every year to undergraduate students. I was at a campus meeting of the Recreation Center Advisory Board and another board member came up and said "Thank you." Again, "You're welcome—but for what?" He explained that he was one of the recipients of a scholarship from us. That this young man is the president of his fraternity and had just been elected President of Undergraduate Student Government makes the scholarship just that much more reflective of our efforts. His mother stated that they were very happy that their son had chosen SIU Carbondale and they were very happy about his scholarship. And our local chapter gave both itself and the University a good piece of public relations.

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*Continued on page 7*

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## Emeritus Faculty Organization to present *It Takes Two* at 2014 fall lecture

The annual Emeritus Faculty Lecture this Fall will feature two emeriti from the School of Music, Jeanine Wagner and Margaret Simmons. The title of their program is *It Takes Two*. They will talk about and perform examples of the musical interplay between singer and pianist and the roles of each in a performance situation.



**Jeanine Wagner  
& Margaret Simmons**

The program will be held in a new location this year, room 110 in Altgeld Hall, which has excellent musical facilities and acoustics. The date is Tuesday, October 28, and the program will begin at 7 p.m. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

Jeanine Wagner served on the voice faculty at Southern Illinois University Carbondale from 1984 to 2013, and as Director of the School of Music from 2007 to 2013. Her voice students have received recognition in the United States and abroad as soloists on operatic, musical theater, and concert stages. She has been noted as a performer with a voice of “great beauty, expressive power and artistic quality.” Ms. Wagner was the winner of the St. Louis Artist Presentation Society Award and the winner of the Mu Phi Epsilon International Competition. Additionally, she was named an International Finalist in the Luciano Pavarotti Competition and has been a Regional Winner in the Metropolitan Opera Auditions. She has also been presented as a soloist with the Rigas Muzikalais Teatris Orchestra and the Philharmonic Orchestra in Riga, Latvia. Her operatic roles include The Queen of the Night in *Die Zauberflöte*, Constanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, the title role in *Rodelinda*, and Cunegonde in *Candide*. Recent local performances include the role of Mother Abbess in the McLeod Summer Playhouse production of *The Sound of Music* and soloist with the Southern Illinois Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Wagner holds a DMA in voice from the University of Illinois and an MM in Opera/Music Theater from SIU Carbondale. In 2013, she completed the Master of Science degree in Speech/Language Pathology.

Margaret Simmons served as Vocal Coach and Coordinator of the Voice Area in the School of Music at SIU Carbondale until her retirement in 2007. Associated with the Marjorie Lawrence Opera Theater and McLeod Summer Playhouse for more than 30 years, she has credits as musical director, coach, and performer. She has toured

nationally and internationally as a member of the Aulos Trio and the Klarion Trio, has twice been invited to perform and teach at the National Academy of Music in Riga, Latvia, and has won acclaim as a recitalist with numerous professional singers. Additionally, she has served as the official accompanist of the Mu Phi Epsilon International Competition and the National Arts and Letters Society Musical Theater Competition. Her current project involves the collection, study and performance of art songs by African American composers. In 2004, *A New Anthology of Art Songs by African American Composers*, edited by Ms. Simmons and Ms. Wagner, was published by SIUC Press.

Remember to mark the event on your calendar: Tuesday, October 28, Altgeld 110, 7 p.m., Jeanine Wagner and Margaret Simmons, Emeritus Faculty Lecture.

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## Professor Tim Fink & students to present program at Emeritus Faculty Organization’s Fall meeting

The Emeritus Faculty Organization will hold its regular Fall meeting on Friday, September 26, at 8:30 a.m. at the Dunn-Richmond Center. Our program will be presented by Professor Tim Fink and students from the SIU opera and musical theater programs. The title of their presentation is “Selections from the musical *Curtains*, by Kander and Ebb.”

Professor Fink has been director of the opera and musical theater programs at SIUC since 1994. He has also served for 10 years as Artistic/Co-General Director of the McLeod Summer Playhouse. Tim’s teaching duties include Lyric Theater Ensemble, Musical Theater History, Opera Workshop, Music Theater Workshop and private voice instruction, especially to musical theater students.

Working mostly as a director of opera and musical theater, professional credits include directing and music directing at Bigfork Summer Playhouse in Montana, St. Michael’s Playhouse in Vermont, Muddy River Opera Company in Quincy, Illinois, University of Nevada at Las Vegas, and Western Washington University. In addition to directing, Tim has also been Artistic Director for the Clinton Area Showboat Theater.

When time and energy permit, Tim continues to perform, most recently with his wife Lori for McLeod Summer Playhouse as Michael in *I Do, I Do*, and with several of his colleagues in *Side By Side* by Sondheim for the Mu Phi Epsilon International Congress.



**Tim Fink**

# Chapter happenings

## FALL GENERAL MEETING

A catered buffet luncheon will be served in the Dunn-Richmond Center's Atrium immediately following the Fall General Membership meeting. Cost is \$15 per person.

A luncheon registration form is included in this newsletter for those living in the southern Illinois region. Others may register by sending your name, email-address and check made to SIU Annuitants Association for \$15/ person to SIU Carbondale Annuitants Association, Human Resources, Mailcode 6520, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Miles Hall, 1255 Douglas Drive, Carbondale, IL 62901

## BLOOD DRIVE

Our chapter volunteers assist with campus Red Cross Blood Drives twice a year. One pint of donated blood can save up to three lives. Watch our Listserv and Facebook page for updates on blood drives.

## GOLF

-KEITH MCQUARRIE

The annual Spring Golf Outing was held at the Pine Lakes golf course on Monday, May 19, 2014. A small group – only 2 teams of 4 participants played in the event. The event, played in 'scramble' format, also included longest putt and closest to pin contests. Finishing in second place was the team of Paul Webb, Ron Mahoney, Anne Johnson and Keith McQuarrie. The "Next to Last" team (first place) team was made up of Kay Brechtelsbauer, Charlotte West, Ruth Barnhart and Judy Rawls. Long putt went to Kay Brechtelsbauer and 'closest to the pin' went to Charlotte West. After the round of golf, participants enjoyed a relaxing lunch in the clubhouse.

The Fall 2014 Golf Scramble will likely be scheduled on a Monday in mid September, with a rain date one week later. As usual \$5 will cover the prizes for the usual team score, plus Longest Putt, and Closest to the Pin contests. Please watch for updates on the EAA website (<http://eaa.siu.edu/>), or send an email to [keithmcq@siu.edu](mailto:keithmcq@siu.edu) to get on my mailing list so I can let you know when the time, date and location have been set. Lastly, please spread the word and encourage others to field a team – we always have a great time!

*The Annuitant* newsletter is published three times a year by the Southern Illinois University Carbondale Annuitants Association and the Department of Human Resources, Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Editor-in-Chief, Nancy Hartman

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Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
Miles Hall, 1255 Douglas Drive  
Carbondale, IL 62901

## SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS ANNOUNCED FOR 2014

Kudos to the Scholarship Committee, chaired by Imogene Beckemeyer, for once again completing the tasks of reviewing, ranking and selecting the recipients of the Chapter's four \$1000 scholarship awards for the 2014-15 academic year.

The committee members consisted of Denny Hays, Brenda Gilbert, David Koch, along with Chair Beckemeyer. Applications were reviewed and ranked based on the individual academic achievement and leadership qualities. Upperclassmen applicants are also required to possess a 3.4 GPA.

Recipients of this year's awards are: Jensen Falker, interior design major, who plans to be a professional designer; Stephanie Perry, radiologic sciences major, with plans to be certified in radiography and a specialist in radio therapy; Cameron Shulak, aviation flight/management major, who has goals of being a flight instructor and teach ground school courses; and, Rachel Tate, anthropology major, who plans to complete a Ph.D. and become a university professor (research in cultural anthropology and teach).

Our SIU Carbondale chapter is one of the few in the state of Illinois to be able to provide the number of scholarships, and in the dollar amount of each award, that we award annually to deserving students.

## SOCIAL

Over 20 members of our chapter gathered for an excellent dinner before the June 20 opening performance of Oklahoma at McLeod Theater. The catered dinner by Heartland Catering featured salmon and steak as well as baked potato, salad and cheese cake.

We hope to schedule other social activities and welcome your ideas for future functions.



## **It is important that we can contact you**

The Board of Directors encourages members who use the Internet to become a member of our on-line family, by signing up for our Listserv and joining our Facebook group page so that we can keep you informed of important messages from SUAA and your chapter. To sign up for the Listserv, contact Nancy Hartman at [nancyhartman@juno.com](mailto:nancyhartman@juno.com). The Facebook page can be found at SIU Carbondale Annuitants Association.

The Association is also in need of your current e-mail address. To assist us in gathering this information, please send an e-mail message to Nancy with SUBJECT: SIU Carbondale Annuitant E-Mail.

We also remind you that if you are on our listserv and change your e-mail address, you must notify us of the change to continue to receive messages from the listserv.

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## *No one left, none but all of us* (Continued from page 1)

A leading publication during Roosevelt's ascendancy in American politics was *McClure's* magazine. Samuel S. McClure gathered together a team of reporters who focused on the problems of American society and called for changes that would reduce the power and influence of the few and broaden public participation in decision-making. McClure understood that the 'vitality of democracy' depends on "popular knowledge of complex questions." In the preface of *Bully Pulpit* Goodwin writes that she hopes her book "will guide readers through their own process of discovery towards a better understanding of what it takes to summon the public to demand the actions necessary to bring our country closer to its ancient ideals." Goodwin quotes McClure's exhortation as he cast about for a remedy for America's woes at the turn of the twentieth century, "There is no one left, none but all of us."

We annuitants have been living through some very tumultuous times in recent years. Illinois' unfunded pension liabilities have been well documented. Debate about how significant the deficits are has ended. Various proposals for solutions surfaced from legislative and executive leaders and candidates, University presidents, business and industry associations as well as annuitant and labor groups.

Guarantees for State payments of health insurance for long-term state employees were set aside by legislation (SB 1313). Many of us remember the chaos of certifying eligibility through IRS proof. We went through some excruciating presentations and seminars in the fall of 2013 to learn about changes in health insurance and determining whether we would pay 1 or 2% of annual pension as the premium. Some annuitants were switched away from long-term insurer Cigna to Medicare Advantage. The choice of an insurer became very simple for the Medicare eligible annuitant because only one provider was available for much of southern Illinois. Suffice it to say that we annuitants learned more than what we wanted from these exercises. A friend of mine remarked, "I remember when health insurance was free, simple and good. Now it is expensive, complex, and I don't know how good it is." Welcome to life as an annuitant in 2013-14.

SUAA and other groups went to court to protest the changes in health care benefits (*Kanerva vs. Weems*). While the health insurance changes were being adjudicated Senate Bill 1 came along with its myriad changes to the various retirement systems—except for the judges. Once again various annuitant organizations went to court to test the constitutionality of these changes.

After months of wondering when the IL Supreme Court would make a decision concerning the health insurance charges to retirees, word came that a decision would be announced July 3, 2014. In a 6-1 vote the Court announced that it would return materials from the lawsuit to the lower court in early August. While the decision is a victory for retirees it is not the end of the dispute. Sangamon County Judge Steven Nordulli will have to decide how to implement the Supreme Court decision. (Refer to Bruce Appleby's piece in this newsletter for more about the decision, some of its ramifications, and next legal steps.)

The July 3 decision was not connected to a separate lawsuit seeking to overturn the 2013 Public Act 98-599 that altered pension benefits for State workers, teachers and university personnel. So we need to remain vigilant as legal procedures grind on.

SUAA Executive Director Linda Brookhart urged caution in her July 7 Mini Briefing. "The State will have to file a response (which will probably include a claim that it can still violate the pension protection clause even if it applies under the 'sovereign power' exception—a doctrine that says the State can violate laws to preserve the welfare of its citizens.) The message therefore is that while this is a big win, the health care battle has just begun. Perhaps the tide has turned in our favor, but we still have a fight on our hands."

I attended the SUAA Board of Directors meeting in June. Aaron Maduff, the lead attorney for SUAA's suit against the pension reform bill, effusively praised the support of the SUAA office in his preparation of the lawsuit. We have excellent legal representation backed by Brookhart and her staff. But we must continue our support of SUAA. Membership numbers count. Our local chapter has been growing its membership, but each of us has friends and former colleagues who probably are not members. Let's reach out and bring them into our chapter. We have supported the legal fund that was established to hire Maduff and to support his work. Many of our members support SUAAction that lobbies for candidates who support the pensions and benefits of SURS annuitants. We need to continue and expand our efforts in these areas.

The recent court decision concerning health insurance could be a watershed event. But remember the caution of Bradley J. Frigon, President of the National Academy of Elder Law: "Anytime you're in court, it's never a slam dunk. The court is a precarious place."

I am again reminded of the relevance of McClure's admonition, "There is no one left, none but all of us." Let us move ahead on multiple fronts!

Frigon, Bradley J., *USA Today*, July 8, 2014, p. 8C.

Goodwin, Doris Kearns. (2013). *The Bully Pulpit*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

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## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

SEPTEMBER 26 - 8:30 A.M. - EMERITUS FACULTY ORGANIZATION MEETING - PROFESSOR TIM FINK, SPEAKER - DUNN-RICHMOND CENTER

SEPTEMBER 26 - 10 A.M. - FALL GENERAL MEETING - SIU PRESIDENT RANDY DUNN, SPEAKER - DUNN-RICHMOND CENTER

OCTOBER 18 - LIBRARY GALA FEATURING R. BUCKMINSTER FULLER ONE-MAN PLAY - MORRIS LIBRARY - 7 P.M.

OCTOBER 25 - 2014 SIU CARBONDALE HOMECOMING - THEME: WILD WITH PRIDE

OCTOBER 28 - 2014 EMERITUS FACULTY LECTURE - ALTGELD #110 - 7 P.M. - PRESENTERS JEANINE WAGNER AND MARGARET SIMMONS

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## Help increase our membership in SUAA!

Membership in SUAA is growing. At the end of June 2014, the SIUC chapter of SUAA had 744 members. That is an increase of 25 members over the past year. However, we need more support and the Board hopes to increase that number in the coming months.

You can help us do that! Encourage your friends and colleagues to join SUAA. Tell them how SUAA is leading the efforts to protect our pension benefits. Membership strengthens and furthers the successful advocacy and lobbying efforts of SUAA.

In 2012, Governor Quinn signed SB 1313 into law, which required SURS annuitants to start paying a portion of their health insurance premiums. In 2013, the Governor signed SB 1 into law, which attacked the automatic annuity increases, retirement age, and annuity formulas, among other things.

SUAA was at the forefront of the lawsuit opposing SB 1313. On July 3, 2014, the Supreme Court of Illinois reversed the trial court decision and made the determination that health coverage is a pension benefit. SB 1 is still being challenged.

It is important we support SUAA's efforts. Annual membership is only \$37.00 a year. Please visit the SUAA website: [www.suaa.org](http://www.suaa.org) for information on how to join. Click on "Join Now."

The website also contains useful information on the activities of SUAA. "Mini Briefing" allows one to keep up with SUAA's activities concerning lawsuits, etc. There is a video of attorney Aaron Maduff discussing pre-trial preparation on the SUAA pension lawsuit. He describes the impact of the recent Supreme Court ruling that says healthcare benefits are a protected pension benefit. It is anticipated that this will favorably influence the pending lawsuit against SB 1.

Encourage non members to check out this website and give their support by joining our organization. NUMBERS DO COUNT!

Please contact me, Thyra Russell, personally if you need help joining SUAA. You may reach me at 457-7554 or [trussell@siu.edu](mailto:trussell@siu.edu)

**SUAA MEMBERS – Please help make the VOICE in Springfield stronger.  
Every new member raises the VOLUME!  
RECRUIT A NEW MEMBER. REACH OUT TO CURRENT EMPLOYEES.**

### CONTACTS FOR LOCAL STATE LEGISLATORS

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Tele: (618) 997-9697 Marion

## Three one minute health tips

1. Kick your shoes off at the door as you enter the house. According to experts, it prevents tracking in allergen loaded soil and pollen.
2. Drink that watermelon juice, it contains high levels of amino acid called L-citrulline that can relieve muscle soreness.
3. A cucumber slice, pressed to the roof of your mouth for 90-seconds, can eliminate bad breath by increasing saliva.

Source: **AARP The Magazine**. June/July 2014. p. 14

Please learn the names and phone numbers of your legislators and keep the information close to your phone or recorded in your cell phone.

Remember it is your personal contact that does make a difference to your future!

## So what do these pension decisions mean? *(Continued from page 3)*

Again, I can't emphasize enough that our efforts as an organization are benefiting those currently employed even more than they are benefiting those of us already retired. With our success on the Constitutional Amendment nearly two years ago, our success with the injunction on instituting Public Act 98-599 and now our success with the health insurance question, we are proving the force of our organization and its direct effects on those still working.

These are some examples of what we can do when we work together and when we let others know what we are doing. We need to let people know how our efforts are benefiting them. We need to get more of those directly involved to not only join SUAA, but to contribute to our Legal Fund. The support is out there. We need to go out and recruit it.

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**MEMBERSHIP MATTERS**

**If you are associated with SIU Carbondale...**

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 \$37.

**Ways to join:**

- Go to [www.suaa.org](http://www.suaa.org) and click on “Join Now.”
- Go to the Annuitants Association website: [annuitants.siu.edu](http://annuitants.siu.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  
 SIU Carbondale-AA Vice President & Membership Chair  
 457-7554 or [trussell@siu.edu](mailto:trussell@siu.edu)

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