

# UAHRA Newsletter

Spring 2009

## UAHRA May Meeting

Our annual meeting of 2009 will be Wednesday, May 20, at 11:30 a.m. The meeting will be held in the Multipurpose Room of Frank Franz Residence Hall. This is the building directly in front of Morton Hall. Parking is in the lot on the south side of the building. Enter through the front door and proceed straight ahead. A salad/dessert lunch will be provided by the Board of Directors.

The guest speaker will be Ms. Sandra Parton, Director of Benefits and Employment Services in the Human Resources Department. To assist with food planning, please let Faye Hartman ([hartmanf@uah.edu](mailto:hartmanf@uah.edu) or 824-6982) know if you will be coming.

If any non-Board members wish to bring salad or dessert to the meeting, it will be welcomed. You could coordinate with Vella Dailey at [daileyv@uah.edu](mailto:daileyv@uah.edu) to see what has been committed.

## Election of New Board Members

Please return your ballots electing members to fill the three Board positions which will be

vacated at the May meeting. Board members serve a three year term.

## Newsletter Editor Needed

UAHRA will need a newsletter editor to assume the responsibility following this issue. Although the current newsletter editor has been a member of the Board, any member could fill this function. We usually have three newsletters a year distributed prior to each of our general meetings in January, May and October. If you are interested, please let the current Board know.

## AERA Annual Meeting

Board President Carol Roach and Vice-President Val Seaquist attended the Alabama Education Retirees' Association (AERA) annual meeting in Montgomery March 31<sup>st</sup>.

As an organization of retired State education employees, UAHRA is allowed several voting delegates (number based on UAHRA membership count). Several items of concern were presented at the meeting by AEA Executive Secretary, Dr. Paul Hubbard, and the luncheon speaker, Dr. David

Bronner, CEO of the Retirement Systems of Alabama.

As we are all aware, the downturn in the economy has resulted in less tax revenue and this directly affects the State education system. Dr. Hubbard stated that the Education Trust Fund Budget had been “patched” by the federal government’s stimulus package but, even with that, we are facing job losses among teachers and administrative support personnel.

Dr. Hubbard also expressed concern about PEEHIP costs which are growing. One concern is that the Legislature will act without the concurrence of the PEEHIP Board to effect changes in the PEEHIP funding sources. He felt strongly that the PEEHIP Board is the proper entity to initiate of action and was concerned that allowing the Legislature to take action in this instance would seriously weaken the autonomy of the PEEHIP Board.

Dr. Bronner explained some of the economic realities affecting our pension fund. The 2008 losses in the Teachers’ Retirement System fund will be spread over the next 3-4 years. Although we have an excellent “defined benefit” retirement system, he warned that we must stay “politically active to protect your retirement pensions and health care.”

AERA Board members were extremely pleased to announce that AERA membership has now exceeded 25,000. AERA is the primary political voice for education

retirees in Alabama and new members are always welcome. The AERA membership year begins in September. You can find more information about joining AERA as well as other information of interest at the AERA website at: <http://www.aerainc.org>.

## UAHRA Scholarship Fund

If you wish to contribute to the UAHRA scholarship, your check should be made to “UAHuntsville” with “UAHRA Scholarship” on the “for” line. This will insure that the funds are credited to our scholarship and that you receive an acknowledgement for tax purposes. Checks can be given to the UAHRA Treasurer at meetings or sent to the Advancement office at: UAHuntsville Office of Advancement, Suite 300 Shelbie King Hall, Huntsville, AL 35899.

## 2009 Dues!

Don’t forget to renew your UAHRA membership! Checks should be made to “UAH Retirees’ Association” or “UAHRA” and sent to Faye Hartman, c/o Office of the President, Room 370 Shelbie King Hall, UAH, Huntsville, AL 35899. You can also give dues to Joan Williamson, Treasurer, at the May meeting. The dues are determined by your membership category and categories can change from year to year as circumstance or preference dictate:

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| <b>UAH Retiree</b>                                  | \$10.00 |
| <b>UAH Retiree &amp; Spouse</b> (both UAH retirees) | \$15.00 |
| <b>UAH Retiree &amp; Non-UAH Retired Spouse</b>     | \$17.50 |

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|---|---------|
| <b>UAH Retiree &amp; non-retired Spouse</b>                                     | \$20.00 |
| <b>Surviving spouse of UAH retiree</b>  | \$10.00 |
| <b>Other individual applicants</b> (as approved by the Board)                   | \$20.00 |
| <b>Associate Member</b> (UAH employee within 5 years of retirement eligibility) | \$10.00 |

## **Tax Changes Will Possibly Affect Retirees' Benefit Checks**

You may see a different total on the check you receive the end of April. This will be the result of the "American Recovery & Reinvestment Act of 2009". Certain individuals will receive tax credits. To accomplish this, the IRS has changed the withholding tables which will result in less federal tax withheld. Although this Act does not affect TRS retirees, the IRS requires that everyone, including the Retirement Systems of Alabama, use the new withholding tables.

Based on these new withholding tables, your April 30<sup>th</sup> check may reduce the amount of income tax withheld, thus increasing the amount of your check. This reduction does not decrease your tax liability and you may be liable for additional tax payments next April 15<sup>th</sup>.

You may want to talk to a qualified tax advisor or the IRS to determine if it would be in your best interest to file a new withholding form with RSA. To do so you would need to complete RSA form W-4P.

*(This is an excerpt of an article on the AERA website and is not intended to be construed as tax advice.)*

## **UAHRA Webpage**

Information about UAHRA (constitution, by-laws, current board members and officers), past information (newsletters) and announcements of future meetings can be found at the UAHRA Webpage. Go to the UAH homepage: <http://www.uah.edu> and then click on "Visitor" and "UAH Retirees Association".

## **2009 Service Award & Retiree Coffee**

The 2009 UAH Employee Service Awards Luncheon will be held Friday, May 1, in the University Center Exhibit Hall from noon until 1:30 p.m. You must purchase a ticket (\$12.00) by April 27<sup>th</sup> in room 214 of the University Center. You can find a list of this year's awardees at <http://www.uah.edu>, type "service award" in the search box and open the file.

**You are invited to a Retiree Coffee prior to the luncheon at 11:00 a.m. in room 125 of the University Center.** There is no charge for the coffee but you must have a ticket to attend the luncheon.

## **Minutes**

Minutes of the last general meeting in October will be provided at the meeting in May.