

The Baby Boomers Are Coming!!

An Alabama social work professor provided data that indicated Arkansas was one of the top ten states to see a gain in recent years of migrants age 55 and older. Dr. Mark Fagan, Department Head of Sociology and Social Work of Jacksonville State University, Alabama, has researched and written about recent migration histories of retirees, and the economic benefits baby boomer retirees bring to areas where they relocate. He provided a table from U.S. Census Bureau data of the Top 10 States Ranked by Net Migrants 55 and Older, From Years 1995 to 2000:

STATES RANKED BY NET MIGRANTS AGE 55+ (1995-2000)		
RANK	STATE	NET MIGRANTS
1	Florida	297,737
2	Arizona	104,999
3	North Carolina	50,668
4	Nevada	50,554
5	South Carolina	36,878
6	Georgia	25,332
7	Texas	25,248
8	Tennessee	24,797
9	Arkansas	13,123
10	Alabama	11,327

In an article on rural economic development, Dr. Fagan noted that the number of people of retirement-relocation age will about double over the next 10-15 years.

Dr. Fagan also noted in the article that attracting and retaining retirees will be important to future economic development for communities and states. "Retirement

Continued on Page 3

A Closer Look ...

Member Services Counseling Unit

Who do active APERS members call for answers regarding vesting, purchasing a service, eligibility for benefits, and other questions about retirement? The APERS Counseling Unit of the APERS Member Services Section provides you responses to such questions.

Counselors can provide you with information such as total credited service; when you were vested; the cost to repay a contributory refund you received previously; the cost to purchase other eligible service (such as prior active duty military, reserve/national guard service, federal service, out of state public service, time lost due to Worker's Compensation injuries, Security number, name, address and

For general information regarding the System, you may contact a counselor via telephone for a reply. But for a specific response to your own personal circumstance, you should send in a written request (include your Social Security number, name, address and

Continued on Page 3

Director's Corner

Did you know that the Arkansas Public Employees Retirement System pays out over \$200 million in retirement and survivor benefits annually? And that 98% of that \$200 million stays in Arkansas? In other words, APERS is an important and integral part of the Arkansas economy. These benefits don't stay in a shoebox, but go toward buying any number of goods and services in municipalities across the state.

What would happen if this dependable economic engine were to quit? There are law makers across the country that are waging war on defined benefit plans such as ours. They think DB plans place an undue burden on taxpayers. These lawmakers also think that 401(k) – style plans fit more readily into the "ownership society" that is frequently talked about at the federal level. In this instance, each individual would be responsible for committing a certain portion of his or her salary to a savings program which the state may or may not "match", i.e. contribute an equal percentage amount up to 6%. Did you make an unwise or unlucky investment decision? Too bad; you have to live with it. What if this means you must seek public assistance to make ends meet? Don't forget that decision-makers in Washington are trimming assistance programs like Medicaid, Medicare, and maybe even Social Security. Where would the burden of these assistance programs fall then? Onto the states and thus on

Continued on page 2

APERS PROFILE

Employee Profile for: **Jon Aucoin**



Jon Aucoin joined the Arkansas Public Employees Retirement System in 2002 and now serves the agency as Information Services Manager. He is responsible for overseeing all of the Member publications produced by APERS. This includes both the Active and Retired Newsletters, Employee Handbooks and the APERS Annual Financial Report, to name a few.

In fact, just about any publication that comes from APERS is created by Information Services. In addition to creating publications, Information Services also works closely with Member Services in developing the presentation materials used in the Retirement Seminars as well as coordinating the locations and speakers for those seminars.

Additional projects currently being handled by Information Services include coordinating the APERS Women's Seminar, a redesign of the APERS website (www.APERS.org), and development of a brand new Call Center to better service Members' needs.

Jon, a Louisiana native, has only been in Arkansas for about 5 years. He holds a BS in Psychology and an MS in Rehab Counseling, and has over 15 years experience in development and presentation of materials for the public as a corporate instructor. He also makes a mean Gumbo.

Updated your address with APERS?

You may have to do the same at other agencies

When active members submit a form or letter for an address change to the Arkansas Public Employees Retirement System, this updates the member's address ONLY with APERS. Your address is not updated with the agency you work for, or with other state or federal agencies that send you correspondence. To update your address with other state or federal agencies, you must contact those agencies directly.

In addition, APERS members with state health insurance should report address changes directly to the Employee Benefits Division (EBD), as this division - not APERS - sends out all information on state and public school employee health insurance. The phone numbers for EBD, a division of the Department of Finance and Administration, is 1-877-815-1017, or 682-9656.

A member can download an APERS Address Change Form at www.apers.org. Members can also request an address change by sending APERS a handwritten or typed letter (you must include your social security number and signature). Mail the form or letter to: APERS, 124 West Capitol Avenue, Suite 400, Little Rock, AR 72201. For more information, please call APERS Information Services at: 1-800-682-7377, (501) 682-7860 or (501) 683-6045.

Director's Corner

Continued from page 1

the local taxpayer, of course!

Another thing to consider is what would happen to the state and local economies if there weren't this steady stream of consumer spending going on. Retirement annuities are, for the most part, payable for the life of each of the 21,000 APERS retirees. This is a very predictable stream of funds. When you know what you are going to receive each month for the rest of your life, you are more likely to spend it rather than save it for emergencies. If local businesses suffer, employment suffers; it's a downward spiral no one should wish on our great state.

The APERS investment program continues to do well despite fiscal uncertainties around the world. For the eight months of Fiscal Year 2006, the fund has earned 11.45%. Our domestic equity managers brought in 11.41%, international equities returned 22.09%, and the fixed income managers earned a combined 1.21%. The APERS real estate program gained 11.89% while the timber program returned 17.89%. The total dollar value of APERS now stands at \$5.2 billion.

The APERS Board of Trustees works diligently to ensure that we are invested in a diversified array of investments, allocated to best ensure that APERS attains the rate of return necessary to support our benefit structure. We are justifiably proud of the results so far, and hope to maintain this standard of excellence into the future.

Need retirement information? Try an APERS' seminar

The Counseling Staff of the Arkansas Public Employees Retirement System (APERS) is presenting seminars for interested members during 2006 at various locations throughout the state. These seminars will provide basic retirement information on topics such as eligibility for membership, monthly service credit, vesting, purchases of service (i.e. prior service, military, etc.), reciprocity, benefits (i.e. reduced, unreduced, disability), various annuity options, the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) and Partial Annuity Withdrawal (PAW), and necessary forms and deadlines. In addition to presentations by an APERS representative, speakers for other agencies have also been invited to participate.

“Getting the Picture” Local Seminars. This half-day seminar provides basic information on eligibility for membership, monthly service credit and vesting. The topics discussed are important for someone who wants to know “Who is APERS and what can it do for me?” Representatives from the Social Security Administration (SSA) have been invited to discuss that program.

“The Entire Retirement Process” Regional Seminars. In addition to the APERS and Social Security representatives listed above, this all-day seminar also features an attorney to discuss estate planning, and a financial planner for additional concerns. For members that work for State and Public Schools employers, a representative from the Employee Benefits

Division (EBD) of the Department of Finance and Administration (DF&A) (Insurance) is invited to the Little Rock seminars to discuss information on continuing health and life insurance coverage after retirement.

A schedule of seminars for July-December 2006 will be issued during the summer.

2006 APERS Seminars - April 20 through June

Date	City/ Seminar Type	Times*	Location
April 20	Nashville (Local)	8:30 a.m.- noon	Carter Day Training Center 200 Nichols St., off Main
May 4	West Memphis (Regional)	8:30 a.m.- 4 p.m.	Southland Greyhound Park-Touch of Brass 1550 N. Ingram Blvd.
June 8	Hardy (Local)	8:30 a.m.- noon	Hardy City Hall 124 Woodland Hills Rd.
June 15	Bentonville (Regional)	8:30 a.m.- 4 p.m.	Bentonville Public Service Building

* Check-In and Registration for all seminars listed is held from 8 to 8:30 a.m.

Baby Boomers

Continued from Page 1

development can help to diversify and stabilize a local economy. Retaining and attracting retirees can increase retail sales, economic assets, the tax base, and employment, as well as, continue current government services and improve the quality of life.” It’s possible Arkansas may continue to see an increase of migrating retirees in the coming years. Some states and communities are aggressively recruiting retirees. Because relocating retirees usually bring pension and investment income along with other financial assets, they spend substantially in the local economy, thus creating jobs.

(Information courtesy of Dr. Fagan, Jacksonville State University).

DHHS DROP Process

At the request of DHHS, DROP applications from employees of the state Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) must be signed by specific DHHS personnel before APERS Member Services can accept the applications.

DHHS has authorized the following employees to sign DROP applications - Brenda Tillman, Joyce Franklin, Patty Greenleaf, and Joe Franklin. The address for the DHHS Central Payroll Office is: Payroll Processing Section, DPW, P. O. Box 1437, Slot WG01, Little Rock, AR 72203.

Counseling Unit

Continued from Page 1

etc.); when you are eligible for benefits; explanations of different annuity options, and information on the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) and the Partial Annuity Withdrawal (PAW). Counselors also can calculate benefit estimates if you’re within one year of retirement and/or participation in the DROP.

General information on these topics is in the APERS Member Handbook, and can be obtained from the website at www.apers.org. It’s helpful to schedule appointments in advance to give counselors time to research any records data that can help you make informed retirement decisions.

In This Issue...
The Baby Boomers are coming! The Director's Corner! How does the Counseling Unit help you? Updated your new address with APERS ... and other agencies? Employee Profile! Retirement seminar details! Filing deadlines! DHHS DROP procedures! And more!

APERSpective is a publication of the Arkansas Public Employees Retirement System and is distributed for the information of APERS active members.

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IMPORTANT FILING DATES TO REMEMBER		
<i>Retirement Filing Dates</i>		
Date	Earliest Filing Date	Latest Filing Date
July 2006	April 3, 2006*	June 1, 2006
August 2006	May 3, 2006	July 3, 2006*
September 2006	June 5, 2006*	August 2, 2006
October 2006	July 3, 2006*	September 1, 2006
November 2006	August 3, 2006	October 2, 2006
December 2006	September 5, 2006*	November 1, 2006
January 2007	October 3, 2005	December 4, 2006*
*If a Filing Date falls during a weekend or on a holiday, the filing deadline becomes the next working day.		
<i>DROP Filing Dates</i>		
Date	Earliest Filing Date	Latest Filing Date
July 2006	March 31, 2006	May 31, 2006
August 2006	April 28, 2006	June 30, 2006
September 2006	May 31, 2006	July 31, 2006
October 2006	June 30, 2006	August 31, 2006
November 2006	July 31, 2006	September 29, 2006
December 2006	August 31, 2006	October 31, 2006
January 2007	September 29, 2006	November 30, 2006
*The Filing Deadline for DROP applications is always the last working day of the 2nd month before enrollment, <i>not the last calendar day of the month!</i>		