

Director's Corner

The fiscal year just concluded has been a very busy one for APERS. The new contributory program is now one year old.

The transition has been a challenging one for participating employers and APERS staff alike as we all got accustomed to the new procedures. During this time we have taken in \$4.7 million in employee contributions which is a good step toward ensuring the financial integrity of the pension plan while relieving the upward pressure on employer contributions.

APERS expects the number of retirees to nearly double over the next ten years, while the number of active members paying contributions will remain constant. Fiscal stability of the plan is crucial.

At the same time, APERS staff has also been busy getting the fledgling Arkansas District Judge Retirement System off the ground. It is now successfully operating and presents yet another opportunity to establish reciprocal service with the other Arkansas retirement systems. If you were to be elected to a position as District Judge, using reciprocity, your service in that capacity could help you to vest for a benefit in APERS.

The APERS investment program has had another stellar year, posting a 12.24% return and placing us in the top 8% of all public retirement plans. Our international equity and

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Rules for Disability Eligibility with APERS

Arkansas ranks third among all states with the number of residents ages 21 to 64 who have a disability (19.9%). Only West Virginia (21.5%) and Kentucky (20.1%) rank above Arkansas. The statistics come from the 2004 American Community Survey, found on the U.S. Census Bureau website.

The APERS definition of a disability is very specific and strict. Page 27 of the 2004 APERS Member Handbook states: "To qualify for disability retirement...you must be **totally and permanently disabled** from performing any useful and efficient service as an officer or employee."

To apply for disability retirement, a member must have at least 5 years of actual APERS service credited in the system, and must have served

18 of the 24 months immediately preceding the disability. If you are eligible for an unreduced benefit and are approved for disability benefits by Social Security, you will be paid the unreduced benefit.

A member must be found eligible for Federal Social Security Disability Benefits due to determination of **total and permanent** disability. If a member is not approved by

the Social Security Administration (SSA) the member may, after appealing through the Administrative Law Judge

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"To qualify for disability retirement you must be totally and permanently disabled"

2006 APERS Seminars

September through December

Date	City/ Seminar Type	Times*	Location
Sept. 14	Warren (Regional)	8 a.m.-4 p.m.	Bradley County Municipal Courtroom
Sept. 21	Helena-West Helena (Local)	8 a.m.-noon	Phillips County Community College-Fine Arts Center
Oct. 5	Blytheville (Local)	8 a.m.-noon	Northeastern College-Governor's Ballroom
Oct. 12	Little Rock (Regional)	8 a.m.-4 p.m.	State Police Headquarters/ Classroom C
Oct. 19	Waldron (Local)	8 a.m.-noon	Scott County Courtroom
Nov. 16	Paragould (Local)	8 a.m.-noon	Paragould Community Ctr-Room A
Dec. 7	Newport *(Local)	8 a.m.-noon	Arkansas State University Student Community Center-M&P Room

* Seminar check-in and registration for all seminars takes place from 8 to 8:30 a.m.

APERS PROFILE

Employee Profile for: **Marcy Lindsey**



In October 2004, Marcy Lindsey joined the Arkansas Public Employees Retirement System (APERS) as the Information Systems Manager, the newest department in the agency. In this role, Marcy is responsible for managing the agency's information systems.

That translates into establishing and monitoring information technology plans for APERS, and directing the activities of the section's nine staff members to ensure all agency data processing needs are met. Marcy was well qualified for the position. From May 1983 until she joined APERS, Marcy worked 21 years at the state's Department of Information Services (previously the Department of Computer Services).

Marcy noted she grew up in various states, mostly in the Midwest, but has lived in Arkansas for 27 years. She completed a Bachelor of Sciences degree in Computer Sciences at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

She likes to wear wild socks on casual Fridays, and claims the only place she'd rather be than APERS is Key West, Florida!

Disability requirements

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level of SSA, also appeal to the APERS Board of Trustees. While Social Security has a five-month waiting period, a member should file for disability with APERS immediately. If Social Security approves the member, the APERS disability benefit will be paid retroactive to the first of the month following the later of the member's termination date or disability onset date.

If Social Security approves an APERS member for disability, but the member doesn't have service in APERS for 18 of the 24 months immediately preceding the disability, the member may appeal to the APERS Board of Trustees. However, the onset date of disability must be within 24 months of their termination of employment and they must have appealed through the Administrative Law Judge of Social Security.

A member who feels they qualify for disability retirement should contact APERS Member Services for more details.



Have You Moved?

Whenever you move, please inform APERS in writing. You can use the agency Change of Address form available at www.apers.org. Or you can just send a handwritten letter with your signature stating your new address. Remember to post your Social Security number on any correspondence you mail APERS. Persons who wish to request an Address Change form by phone may call (501) 682-7860.



REMEMBER THESE IMPORTANT FILING DATES

DROP Filing Dates

Date	Earliest Filing Date	Latest Filing Date
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, *not the last calendar day of the month!*

Retirement Filing Dates

Date	Earliest Filing Date	Latest Filing Date
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.

Website offers drivers fuel-economy tips

It's a fact most persons drive, whether working or retired, and it's obvious gas costs aren't going down anytime soon. So what can you do? Many websites offer tips on fuel economy to help drivers. One good information source is www.fueleconomy.gov, a website hosted by the U.S. Department of Energy. Here are some tips to help you get more miles to the gallon:

1. Drive more efficiently. Tailgating, rapid acceleration and braking between stoplights (traits of aggressive driving) wastes gas, perhaps as much as 33 percent at highway speeds and about 5 percent in downtown driving.
2. Drive at, or under, the speed limit. The website states that each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph costs you approximately 0.20 cents per gallon. Gas mileage decreases rapidly at speeds over 60. Not only is driving

slower safer, the website estimates the potential economy benefits range from 7 to 23 percent, depending on your vehicle's efficiency. That may translate into savings from 20 to 67 cents per gallon*.

3. Remove unnecessary weight from your car. Every 100 pounds can reduce your M.P.G. by 2% and removing such weight could save the driver about 3 to 6 cents per gallon. Extra weight affects smaller vehicles more than larger ones.



4. If you're idling for awhile, shut off the engine.
 5. Use your cruise control. Using cruise control helps motorists maintain a constant speed and conserves fuel.
- *The fuel savings estimates noted by the website assumed a fuel price of \$2.91 per gallon.*

Director's Corner

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domestic real estate allocations were of particular help, returning 26% and 24% respectively. Far from patting themselves on the back, however, the APERS Board of Trustees continues to work hard investigating potential areas for new investment and carefully monitoring those that it already has. "Trimming away the dead wood", in other words, terminating money managers for non-performance, is never a pleasant duty, but our strong results tell the tale.

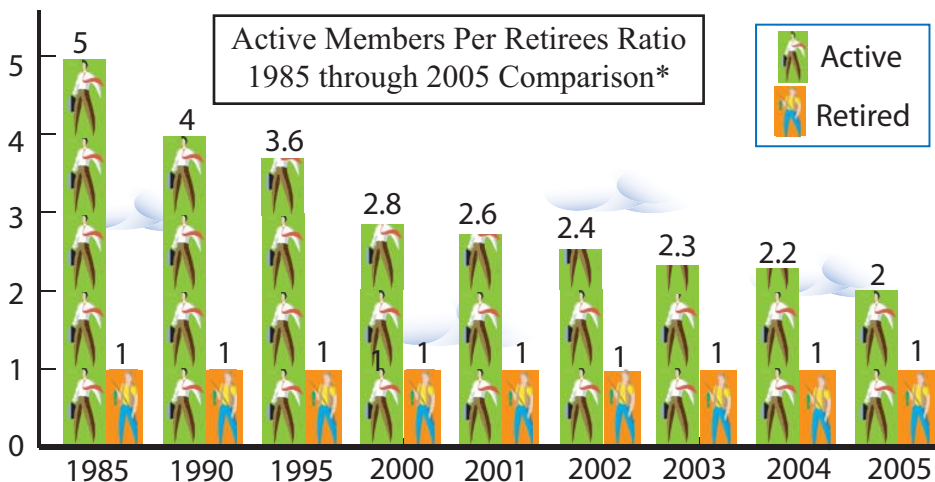
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We would like to remind members and retirees that, as campaign season for elected offices shifts into high gear, you should ask your candidates about their positions on defined benefits for public employees. Around the country there are politicians actively seeking to do away with pension funds like APERS in their own states. These people somehow believe that it is cheaper for the taxpaying public to switch state, county and local employees over to 401(k)-style plans.

Not true! In fact, more than 80% of each pension dollar paid comes from the investment program. Imagine what the health of the Arkansas economy would be if a consistent \$220,000,000 in pension benefits paid were not available to be spent on Arkansas goods and services.

So ask your candidates their thoughts on the topic – and think twice about voting for someone who does not wholeheartedly support your retirement system.

The Baby Boomers Are Here



* Source for statistical data - Gabriel, Roeder, Smith & Co. APERS Actuarial Valuation & Experience Gain (Loss) Analysis, FY 2005.

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Lots of baby boomers are APERS members!

In January 2006, the first of America's Baby Boom generation turned 60 and are confronting choices about retirement in coming years.

The APERS workforce will also deal with a number of Baby Boomer retirements over the next several years. Of approximately 45,000 active members, 23,198 (51 percent) fall into the Baby Boomer age group. The oldest ones turn 60 this year.

The youngest are in their early 40s. The Baby Boom generation is described as persons born between January 1, 1946, and Dec. 31, 1964. (Data from APERS Information Services.)

Correction

In the Spring 2006 APERSpective newsletter, state Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) worker Joyce Watson was incorrectly identified as Joyce Franklin. APERS regrets the error.

Canceling appointments

Members who can't make scheduled meetings with a retirement counselor are asked to call Member Services to cancel the appointment. It's requested the member call no later than the day before, if the member knows by then. Even a call on the same day before the meeting is appreciated. Advance notice of cancellations allows Member Services to rearrange work schedules to help other members. To contact Member Services, call (501) 682-7830, or call toll-free (outside Pulaski County) to 1-800-682-7377.

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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