



Newsletter

Vol. 18, Number 9

www.MyGSRA.com

September 2024

GSRA Annual Meeting Ballot – Officers and Board Member Candidates for 2025

Officers and three At-Large Board Members are elected at each Annual Meeting to serve for the next term. This will serve to notify members of the candidates who have volunteered to serve in Officer and Board positions for the 2025 Board year. Having received no further nominations, we ask that you please affirm your vote for the slate of nominees whose terms will begin in January 2025. Also, please vote to accept the 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes and the 2023 Annual Financial Reports. The Annual Meeting Minutes and Financial Reports can be viewed on the GSRA website.

We encourage you to vote online. Please follow this link to the ballot on the GSRA website: [2024 GSRA Annual Meeting Online Ballot](#) **Online voting will close at midnight on Saturday, October 5**

To vote by mail, print this page, mark an “X” in the Vote Yes or Vote No column, and return it to GSRA, PO Box 6308, Elberton, GA 30635. Ballots must be received no later than Friday, October 4th. Write “Election Ballot” on the outside of the envelope. If you have questions, contact GSRA at help@mygsra.com.

POSITION	NOMINEE	VOTE – YES	VOTE - NO
President	Judy Bryson		
President-Elect	Robert Riddle		
Treasurer	Harold Grindle		
Secretary	Dan Coffee		
At-Large Board	Donna Donahoo		
At-Large Board	Sheilah Fagin		
At-Large-Board	Allan Hill		
Approve 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes			
Approve 2023 Financial Report			
Approve 2023 Legal Fund Report			

At Large Board Member Candidate Profiles



Sheilah Fagin is a lifelong resident of Macon, Georgia. After completing her undergraduate degree at Mercer University in Macon, Sheilah received her Master of Public Administration from Georgia College and State University in Milledgeville.

Sheilah was a career employee of the Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services, retiring as Region VI Director. She also held the position of adjunct instructor at Mercer University, Macon, teaching in the Social Services field for twenty years.

Sheilah is a member of the Historic Macon Foundation and on the Board of Directors of Crisis Line and Safe House of Central Georgia. She is also an active member of Christ Episcopal Church.

Sheilah is married and is the proud mother of two children, who live in Atlanta and Nashville, Tennessee, no grandchildren yet! Since retirement, she has enjoyed traveling and reading- especially with her book club- and being involved with community projects and activities.

As a GSRA member, Sheilah would like to take a more active role by serving on the GSRA Board, advocating for and supporting state retirees and employees. She has always considered GSRA a strong advocate of our interests and would look forward to contributing to those efforts.



Hello, fellow GSRA members! My name is Donna Donahoo, and I will be pleased to serve our organization as an at-large board member. I began my career in state government in 1985 with the Georgia Department of Human Services, where I worked my entire career with the Department of Family and Children Services. I had various positions in the department during my time. I was also a member for many years of the Georgia County Welfare Association, now known by another name, GPHSA/Georgia Professional Human Services Association. We aimed to advocate for our clients and the staff that served them. Being a part of this professional organization was one of my favorite things about my job.

I live in Acworth, was born here, went to school here, and have never lived anywhere else. I guess I'll stay here. I graduated from Kennesaw State University. I live close to Lake Allatoona, where I spend most of my time fishing, boating, and riding my wave runner. I love gardening, especially flowers and plants. I'm a Mom of 2 and DeDe to 5 wonderful grandchildren and a grand puppy. I love being retired, and it's the best job I've ever had!



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2024 Annual Meeting Macon, Georgia October 7th & 8th “Teamwork Makes the Dream Work”

By Allan Hill and Kip Mann

GSRA will hold its 2024 Annual Meeting on October 7-8, 2024, at the Robert F. Hatcher Sr. Conference Center on the Middle Georgia State University campus in Macon. We will begin on Monday, October 7, at 12:15 PM in the Banquet Hall. Lunch will be on your own on Monday. You're welcome to bring your lunch to the meeting on Monday; lunch on Tuesday is included with your registration.

We have an exciting meeting agenda. On 12:30 Monday, President Robert Riddle will moderate a panel discussion featuring **Rep. Matt Hatchett, Chair**, House Appropriations Committee; **Rep. John Carson, Chair**, House Retirement Committee; **Rep. Lehman Franklin, Vice Chair**, House Retirement Committee, **Sen. Rick Williams, Chair**, Senate Retirement Committee and **Sen. Billy Hickman, Chair** of the Senate Higher Education Committee which takes the first step in the ERS appropriation process.

Following that, four workshops will be offered based on a membership survey to determine which topics are of most interest. There will be a special workshop, which will not be shown in the program, especially for Local Chapter Officers. Then, at 5:00, join us for our traditional opening reception, featuring a cash bar, appetizers, and music from the Mercer University Jazz Quintet.

Tuesday features a continuation of the workshops and presentations from Jim Potvin, Executive Director of ERS, Russell Carlson, Commissioner of DCH, and Louis Amis, Director of SHBP. Following their presentations, GSRA will conduct its Annual Business Meeting, featuring the election of officers and directors for 2025. Finally, always a favorite, your chance to win one of the great door prizes donated by local GSRA chapters.

Things to Know

Middle Georgia State University is off I-475 at Exit 3, Eisenhower Pkwy/US 80. Directions: From I-475 Exit 3, head west on Eisenhower Pkwy/US 80. MGSU will be on the right. Take the second entrance into campus and turn left on University Pkwy. If you are coming from the west side of Macon (from Columbus, for example) on US 80, the campus will be on your left, and you'll take the first entrance into the campus. Turn left on University Pkwy.

Follow the signs for the Robert F. Hatcher Sr. Conference Center. The Conference Center is inside the Charles H. Jones Building. No sign outside the building indicates that the Conference Center is inside. To the right of the building is a handicap ramp. Once you enter the Charles H. Jones Building, you will see the Robert F. Hatcher Conference Center. Your ever-faithful Annual Meeting Committee had a hard time finding the Conference Center the first time we tried; we were glad we kept looking once we found it.



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You will need a parking pass. You can download the parking pass here: [2024 GSRA Annual Meeting Parking Pass](#) or pick one up at registration.

We look forward to a great meeting and seeing our friends and members. We hope you will be there!



Figure 1: The Robert F. Hatcher Sr. Conference Center is inside the Charles H. Jones Building. The handicap ramp is to the right of the building.



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From the Home Office

By Robert Riddle

Hello GSRA Members,

I hope all of you are enjoying this WARM fall weather. There are some important features in this newsletter that I want to share with you:

- 1.) All retirees must make a proactive decision regarding their state health benefit plan. The biggest takeaway is to Pay Attention! You must review the material SHBP sends you or attend one of the SHBP sessions. Your current healthcare provider **will not** roll over into 2025. If you don't choose your provider, SHBP will choose for you.
- 2.) The Ballot for a new slate of GSRA will soon be posted on our website or emailed to you. For those voting by mail, the ballot you will need to mail to GSRA is included on the first page of this month's newsletter. We have some profiles in the newsletter of new candidates for Board positions.
- 3.) Please, please take the time to drop the Governor and your local legislators a respectful handwritten note regarding our need for a COLA. An action alert has gone out suggesting how to put a note together.

Finally, if you haven't already registered, please try to come to our Annual Meeting in Macon on October 7th and 8th. Our agenda includes conversations with Legislators, the ESRGA Executive Director, and the SHBP Director, as well as great informational workshops from GSRA sponsors and others. So, join your friends and former colleagues and be informed!

Robert

Local GSRA Chapter News

Valdosta Chapter

The Valdosta GSRA Chapter met on September 10, 2024. Our group included 21 members, with several new members attending. Our speaker was Erika Bennett, Marketing Director, South Georgia Medical Center. She updated us on SGMC's expansion plans, including purchasing many local medical practices. We also discussed the new options for our State Health Benefit Plans. We ended the meeting by encouraging members to attend our Annual GSRA Conference in Macon in October.



Figure 2: Erika Bennett updated members on the South Georgia Medical Center's expansion plans.

CSRA-GSRA Chapter

The monthly meeting of the CSRA-GSRA chapter was held on September 17, 2024, at Miyako/Rocking Crab Restaurant in Grovetown, GA, with 18 members attending, who enjoyed fellowship and a delicious lunch. The Chapter will have a table at the October 22 insurance meeting at the Doubletree Hotel, 2651 Perimeter Parkway, Augusta. Come by and say hello and learn about your Augusta Chapter, advocating for your retirement benefits. The next monthly meeting will be held on October 15, 2024, at the Richmond County Health Department, 950 Laney Walker Blvd., Augusta. The speaker will be a representative from AMBA (Association Member Benefits Advisors), who offer discounts on health benefits to Georgia State retirees. (See their ad in the GSRA newsletters.) This might be your opportunity to purchase dental, vision, long-term care, etc. insurance that will benefit you. Hope to see you there!



Figure 3: Eighteen Chapter members enjoyed lunch and fellowship during the September meeting.

Record Breaking Attendance at East Metro Chapter Meeting

The East Metro Chapter Meeting on September 23rd had the highest attendance ever, with 50 attendees. (See photo.)



Figure 4: Fifty people attended the September Chapter meeting. This was the highest number of attendees for the Chapter.

Due to upcoming changes in our health insurance and the October Annual Meeting, we asked B.J. Bennett and Kip Mann to update members. After lunch provided by the Chapter, President David Taylor introduced Kip Mann, who gave an overview of the SHBP changes and what members must do to select providers this year, including a review of costs, needs, and services. He also encouraged members to attend the Annual Meeting on October 7th and 8th, where vendors and SHBP representatives will be present.

B. J. Bennett then presented detailed explanations of the changes and gave members a two-page handout summarizing the new plans and premiums. She explained the selection process, with Anthem and United Healthcare being the finalists. One of the most salient points is that members must choose a provider this year, a significant change from prior years. If a selection is not made, the member's plan will revert to the lowest-cost plan, which is Anthem. She also reviewed the services provided in each plan and premium levels.



Figure 5: Members appreciate the information provided by B.J. Bennet and Kip Mann.

After the Q and A session, door prizes were awarded, and the meeting adjourned.

Coosa Valley Chapter

District 13 State Representative Katie Dempsey from Rome was the special guest at the August meeting. Apologies to the Coosa Valley Chapter for not including the following picture in last month's newsletter.



Figure 6: Dinah Brock with District 13 State Representative at the Chapter's August meeting in Rome.

Coosa Valley's next meeting is scheduled for October 17, 2024, at 10:00 AM. It will be held at the Floyd County Department of Family and Children Services. Attendees at the Annual Meeting will bring a full report of what we learn!



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Welcome New Members!

Name	County	Name	County
Minda Bassett	Meriwether	Sharon De Mille	Bibb
Benjamin Dunn	Pike	Karen Fowler	Upson
Deborah Hart	Carroll	Solomon Hill	Crisp
John Johnson	Appling	Patricia Johnson	Tattnall
Walt Landrum	Decatur	Sherry Lang	Dekalb
Donna Lowe	Clarke	Michael Lurey	Morgan
Kelly Praino	Bibb	Jerry Randolph	Rockdale
Rebecca Reynolds	Washington	Joseph Sharpe	Fayette
Lisa Spivey	Clayton	Christine Thomas	Wilkinson
Siri Werner	Chatham		



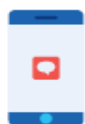
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Anthem. 

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is an LPPO plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield depends on contract renewal. Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield is the trade name of Blue Cross Blue Shield Healthcare Plan of Georgia, Inc. Independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. Anthem is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc.

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