

THE BEAM

MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTER

The LASERS Vision: Confidence in our service, assuring financial security for your future.



2021 ELECTION YEAR FOR LASERS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Four seats on the LASERS Board are up for a vote in the 2021 Board of Trustees election. LASERS members have the opportunity to cast their ballots for candidates every two years for the 13-member Board.

Nominations open March 1 and close July 13. Voting occurs in September and October. The Board certifies election results and an announcement of newly elected Trustees occurs in November.

In 2021, three seats are open for active members and one for retired members. If you are interested in being a candidate in the Board election, you may obtain a nominating petition from your agency's human resources office, the LASERS website, www.lasersonline.org, or by calling LASERS.

Trustees serve four-year terms unless they are filling an

unexpired portion of a term. No Trustee may serve more than three consecutive terms.

LASERS active members elect six of the 13 Trustees and LASERS retirees elect three. Four positions are ex-officio, held by the State Treasurer, Commissioner of Administration, Chair of the Louisiana Senate Committee on Retirement, and member of the Louisiana House Committee on Retirement appointed by the Speaker of the House, or their designees.

A third party vendor experienced in handling balloting for public pension plans conducts the LASERS Board of Trustees Election. LASERS members receive election ballot packets by mail, and have the option to vote by mail, telephone, or the Internet. We look forward to your participation in this important and exciting process.

Election continued on page 2

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Beverly Hodges
2021 Board Chair
225.342.8844

Barbara McManus
2021 Board Vice Chair
337.433.8910

Thomas Bickham
225.342.6630

Virginia Burton
225.753.5527

Charles Castille
225.937.7363

Comm. Jay Dardenne
225.342.7101

Rep. Lance Harris
318.767.6095

Judge William Kleinpeter
225.346.4702

Janice Lansing
225.342.4698

Lori Pierce
225.344.4758

Sen. Edward Price
225.644.6738

Hon. John Schroder
225.342.0055

Shannon Templet
225.342.2455

The qualifications for candidates seeking a seat on the board are:

ACTIVE CANDIDATE

2021 LASERS Board Of Trustees Election:

- An active member candidate must have at least 10 years of credited service with LASERS (excluding any military service credit) by the closing date for nominations, **July 13, 2021**.
- Each active candidate must submit a nominating petition bearing the names and signatures of at least 25 active LASERS members. Each signature must include the last four digits of the signatory's Social Security number.
- Each petition must include the candidate's photo, qualifications, and platform.

RETIRED CANDIDATE

2021 LASERS Board Of Trustees Election:

- A retired member candidate for a position as a Trustee must be retired by the closing date for nominations, **July 13, 2021**. The term "retired member" shall not include any person still employed by the State, including retired status under the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP). A LASERS retiree who is re-employed by the State pursuant to La. R.S. 11:416 (1) and (3) is still considered a "retired member."
- Each retired candidate must submit a nominating petition bearing the names and signatures of at least 25 retired members of LASERS. Each signature

must include the last four digits of the signatory's Social Security number.

- Each petition must include the candidate's photo, qualifications, and platform.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEE:

- A Trustee should have knowledge of, background in, or the ability to understand and utilize investment principles and terminology for a retirement system whose current assets exceed \$11 billion.
- A Trustee should become familiar with all applicable retirement laws in order to adequately rule on appeals submitted by members of the retirement system.
- Trustees are expected to attend all regularly scheduled meetings of the Board; assigned committee meetings; and workshops.
- Trustees must act in the sole and exclusive interest of LASERS members and retirees. Breach of fiduciary duty can result in personal liability.
- Trustees must file annual personal financial disclosure reports with the Board of Ethics detailing, among other requirements, income received from the state, political subdivisions, and gaming interests.
- Persons who have been found in violation of the Code of Governmental Ethics for misuse of public funds are not eligible to serve as a Trustee.
- Persons who have been convicted of a felony offense are not eligible to serve as a Trustee for a period of five years after the conviction or after the end of imprisonment, whichever is later. ■



2021 Schedule of Election Events

March 1, 2021	Nominations Open.
July 13, 2021	All nominating petitions, platforms, and photos due to LASERS by 4:30 p.m. (Central Time).
July 19, 2021	Drawing to determine candidate positions on ballot.
September 24, 2021	Final day that information on candidates/ballots mailed to members.
October 22, 2021	Votes must be received by 4:30 p.m. (Central Time).
October 27, 2021	Votes tallied and verified by this date.
November 18 or 19, 2021	Board certifies and authorizes publication of ballot count.
January 2022	Newly elected Trustees receive orientation and are sworn in.

FROM THE DESK *of*



Cindy Rougeou, LASERS Executive Director

“ In my 15-year tenure as executive director, I have never been prouder... ”

LASERS CELEBRATES 75 YEARS OF SERVICE

As the ninth executive director of LASERS, it is my privilege to announce that 2021 marks the 75th Anniversary of our retirement system. It

all began in 1946 when Governor Jimmie Davis and his administration sponsored legislation to create a retirement system that would provide retirement allowances and other benefits for state officers, employees, and their beneficiaries. LASERS was established by Act 126 that year and was appropriated \$725,000 to create and administer the plan. The first members joined the System in 1947.

The Board of Trustees and staff are excited to celebrate this monumental anniversary. In the past 75 years, LASERS has implemented numerous reforms, further enhancing the future sustainability of our plan and security of our members. LASERS and our members provide a strong economic impact in every community throughout Louisiana. Throughout 2021, we will share our history with you and recognize those who played a vital role in building LASERS into the modern, essential agency it is today.

How will we celebrate?

- A new **75th Anniversary logo** has been unveiled to commemorate the year;



- A special **History of LASERS** section on our website has been created to share the background of the System, legislation and pension reform, LASERS growth in assets, the history of our Board of Trustees, and much more;
- Feature stories on those who have made significant contributions to the sustainability of the System in our **Who's Who of LASERS**; and
- Produce a commemorative video featuring major highlights and accomplishments.

As we examine our past to compile LASERS comprehensive history, it truly is amazing to see our advancements in the last 75 years. Take a look at these comparisons:

	<u>1947-49</u>	<u>December 2020</u>
LASERS Assets	\$1.1 Million	\$12.3 Billion
Active Members	15,015	39,487
Retired Members	216	41,271
Average Annual Benefit	\$734	\$27,712

Please feel free to share any historical tidbits relating to LASERS with us through email at pidrequest@lasersonline.org.

In my 15-year tenure as executive director, I have never been prouder of the financial strength of the System, the economic impact we have on the State of Louisiana, the talent and dedication of our Board of Trustees and staff, and the importance of the members that define LASERS. ■



The 1973 LASERS Board of Trustees: **Front Row (L-R), Leila M. Smith, Dempsey D. White (Board Chair), Mary Y. Cannon. **Back Row** (L-R) C.O. Roberts, Emil J. Maciasz, Robert L. Allen, James W. Jolly.*

**Please let us know if we have incorrectly identified any of the Trustees.*

COVID-19 Update: LASERS OPEN BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

As of this printing, the LASERS office is currently open to the public **by appointment only**. Appointments will be with a LASERS representative through video or phone. Walk-in appointments are not permitted at this time. **Please check the LASERS website before visiting to confirm current building restrictions.**

Please call 1.800.256.3000 (toll-free) or 225.922.0600 (Baton Rouge) to schedule your appointment.

Members may drop off documents at the Security Desk in the building lobby Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Documents may also be mailed or faxed.

LASERS has building safety protocol in place:

- **Face masks are required inside the building at all times;**
- Practice **6 ft. social distancing** from all individuals;
- Two people are limited to an elevator at one time;
- Wash your hands, use our hand sanitizing stations, and avoid touching your face;
- If you are feeling ill, have been exposed to COVID-19, or experiencing symptoms, please **reschedule** your visit.

We appreciate your cooperation while visiting LASERS. Our goal is to protect the well-being of our staff and members while continuing to deliver exceptional service. ■



NEW FEATURES IN *my* LASERS

Two new features are now available in myLASERS.

Document Viewing: In addition to 1099s and Annual Statements, members can view Retirement Acknowledgment Letters, Preliminary Benefit Letters, Refund Letters, EFT Change Letters, Social Security First Eligible Letters, Income Verification Letters, and many more in their myLASERS account.

Document Upload: In addition to mailing, faxing, or dropping off documents, members can upload required documents such as Social Security cards, birth certificates, marriage licenses, death certificates, and more through myLASERS.

Over time, the documents available for viewing and uploading will expand depending on the needs and feedback from users.

Learn how to create a myLASERS account and watch tutorials on certain features on our website at lasersonline.org/myLASERS-info. ■



MILLENNIALS! SUBSCRIBE TO MINT EMAILS

The LASERS Millennials Investing Now for Tomorrow (MINT) initiative educates early-career members on the basics of the System and guides you toward a more secure financial future. The MINT section of our website contains helpful infographics and videos on topics such as the Deferred Compensation Plan, the benefits of unused leave, ways to find your retirement plan, and more.

Even if you are not a millennial, the topics and information provided on our website and in monthly emails are relevant for all members throughout the retirement planning journey.

Sign up for the MINT emails at:

www.lasersonline.org/actives/millennials-investing/. ■





from the Office of Group Benefits:

COVERAGE OF THE COVID-19 VACCINE AND MEDICARE SUPPLEMENTAL PLANS

COVID-19 VACCINE

As the COVID-19 vaccine becomes available to more people, the Office of Group Benefits wants you to have all the available information on where to get the vaccine and how it will be covered.

For **active employees, their covered dependents and non-Medicare retirees**, the vaccine will be covered no different than the flu shot. If you go to a pharmacy to receive the vaccine, there will be no out-of-pocket cost to you. If you go to your primary care physician to receive the vaccine (when it is available to physicians' offices), you may be required to pay your normal visit copay/coinsurance if you receive the vaccine in addition to other services.

For **retirees with Medicare**, the COVID vaccine will be covered under regular Medicare at no cost to you.

The Louisiana Department of Health is coordinating the COVID-19 vaccine distribution effort in Louisiana. As more vaccines become available from the CDC, more individuals and groups will be offered a vaccination. You can learn more about the State's rollout plan for the COVID-19 vaccine at ldh.la.gov/covidvaccine.

OGB encourages members to get the vaccine when it is made available to them. Until then, continue to follow the guidelines set forth by the CDC and the Louisiana Department of Health:

- Wear a mask to protect yourself and others. The mask should be worn over your nose and mouth.
- Stay at least 6 feet from others who do not live with you.
- Avoid crowds. The more people you are in contact with, the more likely you are to be exposed to COVID-19.
- If you are sick, stay home. Isolate yourself from other members of your family to prevent spread to them and the people they may have contact with.
- Get tested! If you have symptoms, call your health care provider about getting tested.



MEDICARE SUPPLEMENTAL PLANS

OGB would like to remind members with Medicare that they should NOT enroll in a Medicare supplement plan without first consulting with OGB. If you are enrolled in the Pelican HRA1000, Magnolia Local, Magnolia Local Plus or Magnolia Open Access plans, you already have a Medicare supplement. These plans pay secondary to Medicare or "supplement" regular Medicare coverage. Enrollment in one of these plans also includes your Medicare Part D coverage through Vibrant Rx.

OGB understands it can be tempting to look into the Medicare plans you see advertised on television, but you need to do your homework before enrolling. Most

plans that seem too good to be true, usually are. It is important to ask yourself, "is the plan sponsored by OGB?" Why is this important? **If you enroll in a plan that is NOT sponsored by OGB, you will lose your OGB coverage.** The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will only allow you to be enrolled in one Medicare supplement plan at a time. If you enroll in another plan, CMS will disenroll you from your OGB plan. Remember, your OGB coverage acts as a supplement to Medicare and is your Medicare Part D coverage.

How do you know if a plan is sponsored by OGB? OGB requires participating Medicare Advantage

plans to incorporate the OGB logo into anything they send members or any ads they have on the Internet or television. Another way to determine if a plan is sponsored by OGB is to call or email OGB customer service. The OGB customer service team is available Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. to answer any questions about Medicare supplement plans. **You can call OGB customer service at 1.800.272.8451 or email OGB.customerservice@la.gov.**

If you do your research and decide that you want to move forward with the non-OGB sponsored plan, you need to understand that you will lose your OGB coverage and you will not be able to get it back. ■



Get the Numbers

Visit the LASERS Website for Investment Performance

Click on the *Investments* tab, then *Performance*. Investment performance summaries are updated monthly.

View our investments actual asset allocation and target allocation by clicking on the *Investments* tab, then *Asset Allocation*.

A Solid Foundation for the Future: Report Released

LASERS *A Solid Foundation for the Future* is now available on our website. This four-page document gives a snapshot of the System in an easy-to-understand format.

The numbers show that by lowering the discount rate, adopting new strategic asset allocations annually, reducing the assumed inflation rate, improving efficiency, and reducing operational costs, the **sustainability of the LASERS fund will continue to strengthen for decades to come.**

Did You Know?

LASERS had 12 retirees as of July 1, 1947 who drew the first monthly benefits payout in August of that year, totaling \$1,011.

GET TO KNOW

LASERSSTAFF



MEET ROBERT W. BEALE:

LASERS Executive Management Team Member

Robert W. "Bobby" Beale was employed at Merrill Lynch before joining LASERS in 1997 as an investment officer. Within three years, Bobby was promoted to his present position of Chief Investment Officer. He has over 30 years of investment experience in pensions and investments management, and holds Charterholder designations as a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) and Chartered Alternative Investment Analyst (CAIA). Bobby has a Bachelors

of Business Administration/Finance degree from the University of Louisiana, Lafayette and a Master's Degree in Finance from LSU.

As our Chief Investment Officer, Bobby leads the Investments Division at LASERS. The Investments Division, with oversight from the Board of Trustees, is responsible for the management of the plan assets. When asked what he enjoys most about his job at LASERS, Bobby said, "Definitely the people I work with, not only the professionalism of how they perform, but also how much all of us care about what we do here. There are tens of thousands of people depending on us to do a good job providing for their retirement, and it's a huge responsibility."

"Bobby Beale's contribution to LASERS as our Chief Investment Officer is immeasurable," said Cindy Rougeou. "During times of extreme market volatility, Bobby remains a reassuring and stable presence; he inspires confidence. He and his team internally manage one-third of LASERS portfolio, saving enough in manager fees to fund the salaries of every employee at LASERS. During his tenure as CIO, the value of LASERS assets has more than doubled to \$12.3 billion by calendar year end 2020. Bobby is well respected by our Board of Trustees, LASERS staff, as well as his colleagues nationwide."

In addition to his role in Investments, Bobby is also a member of the Executive Management Team at LASERS along with Executive Director Cindy Rougeou, Chief of Staff Trey Boudreaux, and Executive Counsel Tina Grant. He is always available to the Executive staff and Board of Trustees to answer questions and provide information when needed.

It seems that Bobby has chosen the perfect career path. He remarked, "I have always been interested in Finance and Investments since before college. Investments and everything connected to them are always changing, always evolving, so there is always something new to learn. I like that. It would be very boring if that wasn't the case."

In his spare time, Bobby enjoys being outdoors, exercising, water-related activities, and a nice glass of wine.

Cheers to Bobby Beale for his accomplishments at LASERS! ■

“ There are tens of thousands of people depending on us to do a good job... and it's a huge responsibility. ”

20 YEARS
[AT LASERS]

Celebrating

10 YEARS
[AT LASERS]



CELESTE FUNDERBURK
[INVESTMENTS]



MONA JOSEPH
[FISCAL]



ANDREA ROGERS
[HUMAN RESOURCES]



WENDY DEMOUY
[MEMBER SERVICES]



MIKE KERN
[MEMBER SERVICES]



ERNEST POINDEXTER
[FISCAL]



BRODIE BRUMFIELD
[MEMBER SERVICES]

LASERS BOARD ELECTS CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

The LASERS Board of Trustees unanimously elected Beverly Hodges and Barbara McManus as the 2021 Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, at its January meeting.

Hodges, retired Undersecretary for the Department of Natural Resources, will lead the LASERS Board as new Chair. She has served as an active member Trustee since 2010. Hodges previously chaired the Audit, Management, and Investment Committees of the Board and served two prior terms as Board Chair.

A retiree from the Department of Social Services, McManus is the new Vice Chair and has a long history with the Board. She first served as an active member Trustee from 1976 – 2000. McManus was then elected as a retired member Trustee in 2004 and served



Beverly Hodges
2021 Board Chair



Barbara McManus
2021 Board Vice Chair

continuously until 2016. She was re-elected in 2018 for her 13th term. McManus most recently chaired the Audit Committee, but in her long tenure as a Trustee, she has led all Board committees numerous times, in addition to serving as Vice Chair and Board Chair a total of eight years.

"I am delighted that Beverly Hodges and Barbara McManus will lead our Board of Trustees in 2021. Both of them have a world of professional knowledge and vast experience as Trustees of our System. They are committed to keeping LASERS safe and sound, and sustaining growth in assets to provide benefits to current and future retirees," said LASERS Executive Director Cindy Rougeou. "I have a great deal of admiration for both of them. ■



Comments from our Members

“ While nearing retirement is an exciting time, it also has its accompanying stresses and worries. Your (Derek Harris) great service has eliminated a few of those worries! ”

Joel D.
Oakdale, LA

“ Danielle Henning did a great job of answering my questions and providing me with all of the information that I needed to prepare for my retirement. ”

Brenda B.
Zachary, LA

“ Bridget Taylor was very knowledgeable and helpful to my needs. She knew her job and if it was something she didn't know, she got the answer for me. ”

Vanette T.
Woodville, MS

“ LASERS is a class act. You sincerely do your best to prepare us for retirement! ”

Sid L.
Erath, LA

THE BOARD MEMO



Beverly Hodges, 2021 Board Chair

“ *LASERS will continue to monitor this legislation and provide updates as appropriate.* ”

FEDERAL BILL, HR 82, SEEKS REPEAL OF WEP/GPO

Congressman Rodney Davis (R-IL) introduced **HR 82**, known as the Social Security Fairness Act of 2021, on January 4 in the House of Representatives. This federal bill, if passed, would repeal provisions that reduce Social Security benefits for individuals who receive other benefits, such as a pension from a state or local government. **HR 82** would eliminate the Windfall Elimination Provision or WEP and the Government Pension Offset or GPO. Currently, 45 U.S. representatives across the country have joined to co-sponsor the bipartisan bill.

A similar bill from Rep. Davis, **HR 141**, or the Social Security Fairness Act of 2019, stalled in Congress last year and did not move through the legislative process despite 264 co-sponsors.

The new proposed legislation is

similar to **HR 141** in addressing the WEP and GPO, but additional sponsors are being sought. So far, only two members of Congress from Louisiana have co-sponsored **HR 82**, Rep. Garret Graves and Rep. Clay Higgins. The bill has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee.

The repeal or elimination of the federal offsets, the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset, have been identified by the LASERS Board of Trustees as issues of significance.

LASERS will continue to monitor this legislation and provide updates as appropriate. You may also visit RSEA's website for additional information on **HR 82**. If you have any questions, please contact RSEA Director of Legislative and Governmental Affairs, Frank Jobert, at 504.289.9424. ■

RSEA TO HOST “VIRTUAL” STATEWIDE TOUR

RSEA's much-anticipated annual statewide chapter tour is expected to begin in early April, but the usual participants will experience a new format this year. **For the first time, a virtual tour is on the agenda.** While parts of the statewide tour have been canceled in the past because of weather conditions and the Governor's Stay-at-Home order last year, the COVID-19 pandemic brought about the decision to cancel the in-person tour in 2021.

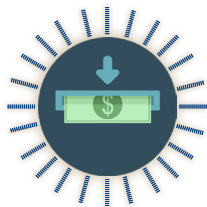
An announcement will be forthcoming from RSEA with specific information on how to participate. In the meantime, LASERS is developing a video presentation with the latest information and a special section on our website with supporting materials for active and retired members. Stay tuned! ■

ATTENTION LASERS MEMBERS

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: IMPORTANT BENEFIT PAYMENT

Please note that the **May 1, 2021** benefit payment date falls on a **Saturday**, which could affect receipt of your funds.

Direct deposits are guaranteed to be in your bank or credit union on the **first day** of the month. Be aware that if the first falls on a weekend (Saturday or Sunday) or holiday, funds may not be available until the following business day. In these cases, please contact your financial institution directly for information on when your funds will be made available to you. That decision is made by your financial institution, not LASERS. If you have not received your monthly benefit payment by the first business day of the month, please contact LASERS in Baton Rouge at **225.922.0600** or toll-free at **800.256.3000**. ■



DROP RATE OF RETURN

The rate of interest to be paid on eligible (non-Self Directed Plan) DROP accounts for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2020 is 3.44 percent. This interest rate is based on a five-year actuarially smoothed return.

The Public Retirement Systems' Actuarial Committee (PRSAC) approved the interest rate at its December 14, 2020 meeting. The interest was posted to accounts in January.

Participants in the Self-Directed Plan do not receive this interest, but participate in earnings or losses based upon the choices they have made in their investment allocations through Empower Retirement.

For more information regarding DROP, please see the Deferred Retirement Option Plan chapter of the *Member's Guide to Retirement*. ■

ATTEND A LASERS SEMINAR VIRTUALLY!

Whether you are a new LASERS member or approaching retirement, our educational seminars provide essential information and tools to help you plan for your retirement.

We currently offer two seminars virtually to meet the needs of our members.

EARLY CAREER SEMINAR: This two-hour virtual seminar is for LASERS members hired on or after January 1, 2011, but who are *not* within five years of retirement eligibility. This seminar introduces members to LASERS and educates them on membership in a defined benefit retirement plan. We encourage registration for *all new hires* who meet the above requirements, especially members who have no previous LASERS service.

PREP SEMINAR: This four-hour virtual seminar is for LASERS members who are approaching retirement. This seminar includes information on Social Security and the Office of Group Benefits. It also includes a presentation from Empower Retirement. We encourage registration for any member inquiring about retirement and/or approaching retirement.

Multiple virtual seminar dates are available through June 2021. Register for one by going to www.lasersonline.org, and click on 'Register for a Seminar' on the home page. ■



Protect Your Health

The flu and Covid-19 vaccines are fully covered by Medicare at no cost to you.

Contact your doctor to schedule an appointment to receive your vaccinations.

For more information, contact the LDI Senior Health Insurance Information Program at 1.800.259.5300 or visit www.lidi.la.gov/SHIIP. Follow us on Facebook @LASHIIP. ■

View Your 2020 Annual Statement in *my* LASERS

Active members will receive annual LASERS member account statements in the mail in March. However, we encourage you to log in to your myLASERS account to view your statement. Once you are logged in to myLASERS, click on **Documents**, then **Annual Statements**. A Member Connection email will be sent when statements are available to view in your account. ■

Throughout 2021, we will recognize people who have made significant contributions to LASERS to ensure the long-term sustainability of the System. In making our initial selections, two men immediately came to the forefront of the list; both instrumental in the formation and early implementation of the retirement system.

[GOVERNOR JAMES "JIMMIE" HOUSTON DAVIS]



Governor Jimmie Davis is credited with creating the State Employees' Retirement System in 1946. He and his administration sponsored legislation, according to the original bill, that would provide "a retirement fund for aged and incapacitated officers and employees of the State of Louisiana and their beneficiaries." Established

with Act 126, Gov. Davis was known to say that the creation of the retirement system in his first term (1944-1948) was one of his finest achievements.

Elected at 43 years old in 1944, Davis was considered an anti-Huey Long reform governor, but was better known as a "fancy-dressing hillbilly tenor" who had already sold more than a million records before entering politics. His biggest country/western hits included, "You Are My Sunshine," "Nobody's Darlin' but Mine," and "It Makes No Difference Now." Davis was known as the Singing Governor and famously campaigned with his band, giving short speeches, and pleasing the crowd with his music. He said, "It's better in a political campaign to give folks very little talking and a whole lot of songs."

Interesting facts about Jimmie Davis:

- During his first term as governor, he traveled to Hollywood and Nashville to make B western movies and sing, earning him the nickname, "the absentee governor." He also scored five Top Five singles during this period of time.

- He saw to it that drivers of automobiles were finally licensed in his first administration, and he got the first Driver's License issued in the state.
- In 1947, he starred in a movie, "Louisiana," about his life growing up as a sharecropper's son, and ending with his election as governor of the state.
- On inauguration day of his second term, in 1960, he wore a white cowboy hat and rode his horse, Sunshine, up the steps of the Louisiana Capitol to sing the praises of his legislative agenda.
- His performing career spans eight decades; he was elected to the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1971, the Nashville Songwriters Hall of Fame, and the Gospel Music Hall of Fame.
- His smash hit, "You Are My Sunshine," is one of the state songs of Louisiana. It has been recorded by hundreds of artists over the past 80 years, sold millions of records, translated into over 30 languages, and is considered "one of the most commercially programmed numbers in American popular music."



Governor Davis riding Sunshine at the State Capitol.

When Gov. Davis passed away at 101 years old in 2000, his fame and achievements were recognized in *The New York Times*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Times Picayune*, and other newspapers throughout the country. It seems his political career was overshadowed by the wonderful body of music he left behind.

When asked late in life how he wanted to be remembered, he replied, as "someone who scattered a little sunshine along his path."

[HOMER RUFUS ROBINSON]



Homer R. Robinson holds the distinction of being the first executive director of the Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System. He was chosen to administer the System in February 1947, having previously served as the Chief of the Audits and Inspection Division of the Department of Revenue. Robinson was selected from

among 30 applicants for the position, after each was given a written exam and oral interview.

C.J. Winters, a member of the Board of Trustees said, "As the first administrator of the new system, he faces a difficult task, that of putting into operation a retirement plan which will affect the security of thousands. Employees will be glad to know that their interests are in the most capable hands." Archival newspaper clippings indicate that Robinson gave a series of talks educating new members of the System about eligibility, benefit calculations, service credit, and many of the same topics that we discuss in our modern PREP workshops.

Interesting facts about Homer Robinson:

- He was born in Illinois, but moved to the Lake Charles, Louisiana area with his family at a young age.
- He was a football star at Tulane University, playing center, and earning All-Southeastern Conference honors, 1933-1934, and varsity lettering, 1932-1934.

- He was on the Southeastern Conference winning team in 1934, which also won the inaugural Sugar Bowl on New Year's Day 1935, defeating Temple University. "Home," as he was known on the team, suffered a fractured skull after a head-on collision in the game.
- He was also an honors student at Tulane, and belonged to Sigma Phi Epsilon social fraternity, Tulane's Young Men's Christian Association as a cabinet member, and was elected to Omicron Delta Kappa, a national honorary leadership fraternity.
- Graduated from Tulane with a Bachelor of Education in Physical Education in 1935.
- Shortly after graduation, he married Christine Fontenot, the daughter of the Collector of Revenue for the State of Louisiana.
- He served for three years in the U.S. Navy during World War II as a warrant officer, 1943-1946.

Robinson left the state retirement system in September 1949, and even though he had a relatively short history as administrator, he set the stage for the future of LASERS. Many of the policies established for the System have survived and have been improved upon over the years.

Homer Robinson passed away in 1982 in Houston, Texas, but he will long be remembered as a dedicated public servant, veteran, and stellar collegiate football player. ■

TULANE, 41—CHATTANOOGA, 0

With two touchdowns in as many minutes standing as an example of their superiority and strength, Tulane's Wavemen marched to an easy victory over an out-classed but scrappy eleven from Chattanooga by a 41-0 score to open a championship season.

Monk Simons, on a jaunt around left end, Mintz on a 44-yard dash a few seconds later, Lodrigues on a line plunge, Thomas twice on end sweeps, and Henderson on a pass from Nichols, were the touchdown getters of the day.

With Captain Joe Lofin, disabled by a broken foot, and other regulars on the bench, Bill Moss, Noel Lofin, Marion Mink, Doug Johnson, and other soph exhibited excellent defensive and offensive work.

TULANE, 13—AUBURN, 0

Tulane climbed the first rung of the ladder toward the conference title by easing out a 13-0 win over the Auburn Plainsmen after slowly wearing down a stubborn, inspired defense which threatened to hold the Greenies scoreless despite their twelve first-downs.

"Little Monk" Simons was the first-banged that finally burned the Auburn jinx to a well-done cinder. He scored the first touchdown on a 15-yard reverse around left-end, dragging two Plainsmen the last five yards of the way. His pass to Hardy, who made a phenomenal catch, was greatly responsible for the second touchdown.

Kyle, Ary, Moss, and Robinson kept the line play well above par while the backs amassed a total of 279 yards—an average of almost 5 yards per play.

Thus the Auburn Tiger met his doom.

work to add thrills and chills every game.

BERNARD D. MINTZ
Alternate Captain-Elect—Half-back

The spark that kept the Greenie eleven at top speed whatever it threatened to weaken, "Bernie" was consistently a standout performer.

HOMER R. ROBINSON
Center

Undisputed All-Southeastern center, Homer played football four ball all year to raise to three Tulane's consecutive list of great pivot men.

CLAUDE SIMONS, JR.
Halfback

High-point scorer of the conference, maintained on nearly every All-American, a snort in every game, "Little Monk" was without a superior.

Homer Robinson and teammates – 1934



Sugar Bowl Program – 1935



Newspaper Clipping – 1974

BEAM-ME-UP *Your Questions Answered*



Q: I turned 59 ½ last year. Why did I receive two 1099s for 2020?

A: During the year you turn age 59 ½, the IRS distribution code changes. In Box 7 of your 1099, benefits paid prior to age 59 ½ are coded "2" because the distribution is part of an annuitized benefit that is not subject to an early distribution penalty. Benefits paid after you turn age 59 ½ are coded a "7."

Q: I have selected my retirement date. When can I turn my application in?

A: LASERS will accept your retirement application up to six months in advance of your retirement date. You can begin submitting vital documents at any time, including photocopies of birth certificates and Social Security cards for you and your named beneficiary(ies), a photocopy of your marriage license (if applicable), and certified copy of any judgment of divorce and/or community property settlements.

The Louisiana State Employees' Retirement System (LASERS) distributed this document digitally. No publication costs were incurred.

In an effort to go green, we encourage you to subscribe to receive *The Beam* newsletter via email.

As a subscriber, you will receive *The Beam* directly in your email inbox and no longer receive a paper copy.

Subscribing to the Paperless Beam will reduce paper usage and cut printing cost. [Subscribe to the Paperless Beam now.](#)