



## The 2022 Retiree Bonus

BY DAVID G. BRONNER

### Some Local Governments Choose Not to Provide Bonuses to Retirees

Recognizing the strain that inflation was putting on retirees, the Alabama Legislature granted bonuses to all retired public education employees and state employees, which were paid in April. The Legislature also authorized the almost 800 local government employers who have retirees (cities, counties, boards, commissions, etc.) that participate in the RSA to provide these same bonuses to their retirees. Of those, 475 local employers accepted this opportunity to help their retirees by authorizing these bonuses. These bonuses will be paid in October. Unfortunately, just over 300 local employers declined to provide this additional benefit to their retirees.

There could be solid reasons for a local employer to deny assistance to its former public servants, such as the local unit had a declining workforce with a major industrial taxpayer going out of business, a declining workforce, or simply a new major infrastructure problem, such as flooding this wet year.

But some of the reasons that have been given actually show the ignorance of a few local leaders in ignoring the public employees who worked daily to bring

the local unit to its current status. It was disappointing to see the mayor of **Huntsville**, who has done such an excellent job in making Huntsville the envy of the state in job growth, having to be overruled by the city council in order to provide retiree bonuses.

The mayor of **Orange Beach** opposed the bonus saying, “RSA is a casino betting the house’s money.” Obviously, the mayor does not understand how defined benefit pension systems work, nor does he understand that the public employees’ bonus only costs a mere one-time total of \$35,692 for Orange Beach, and these are the people who made Orange Beach a great destination. *THE MAYOR IS OPERATING IN A FOG!* The RSA owned Raycom from 1996 to 2018 and had 12% of viewers in the United States. Raycom merged with Gray Media and now broadcasts to about 34% of viewers across the country. During all this time, the RSA has used tens of millions of dollars in ad time that advertised and supported all the businesses of our beautiful beaches. The RSA has supported Orange Beach, and Orange Beach should support RSA’s retirees.

A leader in **Decatur** opposed the

bonuses for their retirees, which would have cost the city \$252,030 because he did not want to fund something for a specific group but preferred to spend public funds on things that benefit all citizens. When asked about his support for a splash pad and who benefited from that, he said that retirees could take their grandchildren there. That is unbelievable!

The RSA manages and invests the funds for local employers, and then uses these funds to pay the retirement obligations of local employers. The RSA cannot decide on its own to provide additional benefits to retirees – only after legislation can the local employers make that decision pursuant to the law.

We are happy that most retirees have received or will receive a bonus this year. We regret that some of our participants did not receive a bonus because their former employers chose to fund other interests or projects, while ignoring inflation’s effect on longtime citizens that gave years of dedicated service to their local agency or government. Remember that when these local politicians want your vote. ●

## Alabama’s Tourism Shines

EDITORIAL

Governor Kay Ivey announced that tourism has grown substantially over the last decade and is estimating a \$24 billion impact in 2022. Ten years ago, tourism accounted for an \$11 billion impact.

She stated, “Tourism is booming

across the state,” and assured the tourism industry, “You have a Governor who is committed 1,000% to supporting the industry.”

The RSA is proud to have provided all types of commercial media, television, newspapers, billboards, and even ads in

major city movie houses. Tens of thousands of jobs have been created across Alabama, from the Shoals to Mobile. We thank you, Governor Ivey, for your leadership and support. ●

# The RSA Hotels Rank High

BY MARK FAGAN

The RSA's eight hotels on or near the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail are Marriott brands managed by PCH Hotels & Resorts. There are world-class spas at six of these RSA hotels. Each RSA hotel is classified into one of Marriott's three premium brands (Autograph Collection, Renaissance, and Marriott/Resort) based on amenities and services.

Guest satisfaction surveys were compiled from October 1, 2021, to July 31, 2022, for Marriott's 561 premium hotels in North America. The results ranked each hotel within its brand on the factors of amenities, staff service, food/beverage, and maintenance. The average combined score for the RSA hotels was 78.6, which is 16 points higher than the brand average of 62.5.

The Grand Hotel Golf Resort & Spa, Autograph Collection, near Fairhope, ranked 1st out of 140 Autograph Collection properties. The Battle House Renaissance Mobile Hotel & Spa ranked 3rd, Renaissance Mobile Riverview Plaza Hotel ranked 4th, Renaissance Montgomery Hotel & Spa at the Convention Center ranked 9th, and Renaissance Birmingham Ross Bridge Golf Resort & Spa ranked 11th out of 87 Renaissance properties. The Marriott Shoals Hotel & Spa ranked 8th, Auburn Marriott Opelika Resort & Spa at Grand National ranked 15th, and Montgomery Marriott Prattville Hotel & Conference Center at Capitol Hill ranked 17th out of 334 Marriott/Resorts.

The Grand Hotel, The Battle House Hotel, Riverview Plaza, Marriott Shoals,

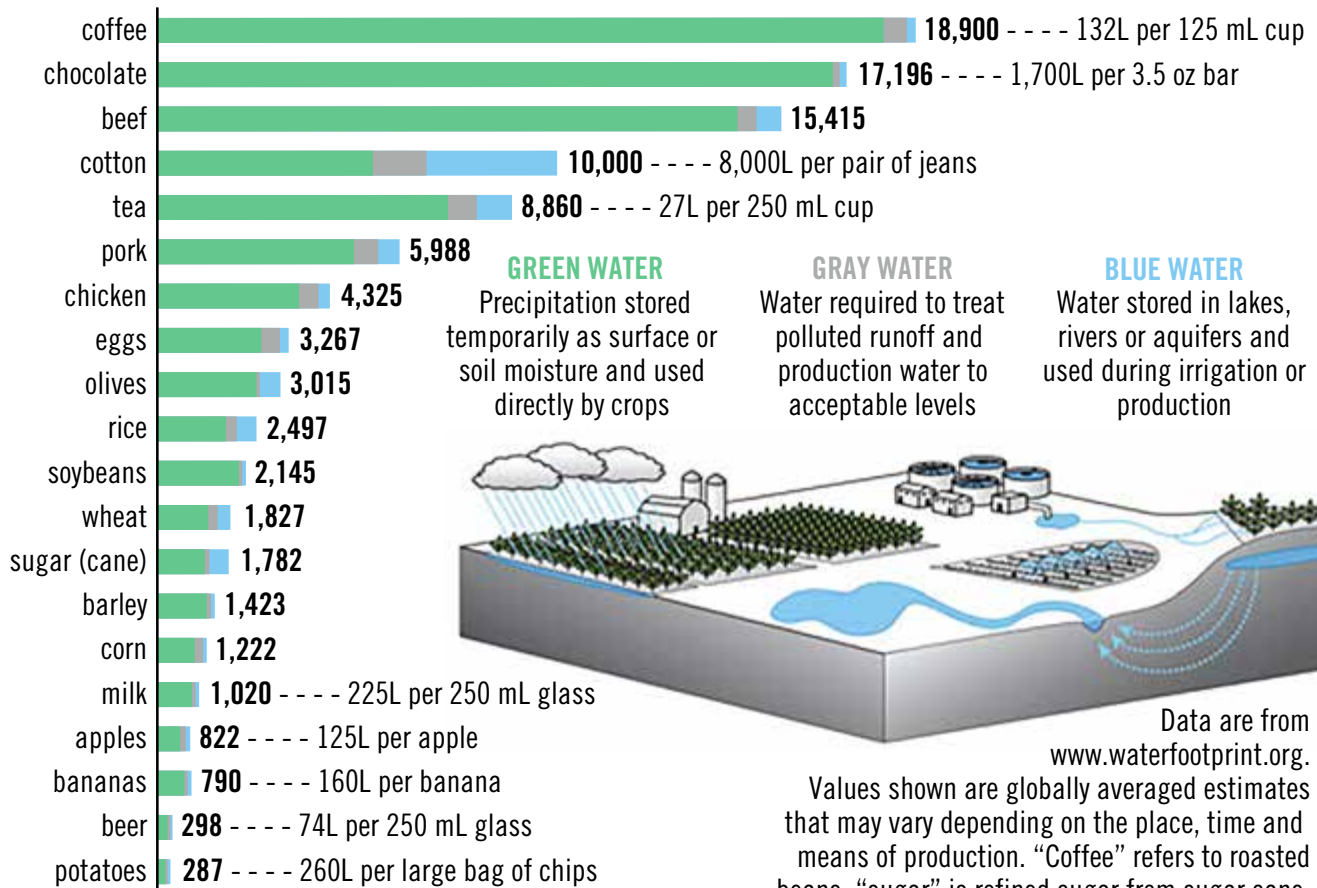
and Marriott at Grand National were in the top 5 percent, while the Montgomery Marriott Prattville Hotel & Conference Center at Capitol Hill was in the top 10 percent for their respective brand. The Renaissance Birmingham Ross Bridge Golf Resort & Spa and the Renaissance Montgomery Hotel & Spa at the Convention Center were in the top 13 percent for their brand.

The highest ratings for the RSA hotels were for spa satisfaction, pool satisfaction, cleanliness, maintenance, golf satisfaction, and staff service, with all being rated above the 90th percentile. PCH Hotels & Resorts continued to be proudly rated as the number one management company in Marriott in North America in 2022. ●

## The Importance of Water

### How Much Water Does it Take to Produce These Common Goods?

Liters of water per kilogram of product and some examples of how that translates to a single serving



# Alabama Success Story

## Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW)

Each fall, women from throughout the state and across the country converge on Columbiana, Alabama, for a three-day workshop designed for women who want to learn new outdoor skills. The Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) workshop was created to support a national effort to increase the number of women participating in hunting, shooting, fishing, and other outdoor activities. BOW is managed by the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in Alabama.

More than just a weekend of fun, BOW is part of a nationwide movement to break down the barriers many women face when trying to participate in outdoor activities. The program has enabled thousands of women to overcome those barriers and develop new life-long skills and hobbies. The initial BOW program started at the University of Wisconsin in 1991. Alabama's program was established in 1995 and has been going strong for 27 years.

BOW is designed for women 18 years of age or older. The workshop offers hands-on learning under the direction of patient, enthusiastic instructors. Participants choose from more than 40 different courses such as shooting sports (pistol, rifle, shotgun, muzzleloader, basic gun safety), fishing, small game hunting,

canoeing, nature photography, archery, ATV handling, bird watching, boat handling, and more. Each course is conducted in an atmosphere that encourages camaraderie and fun.

Alabama's BOW program is held each October at the Alabama 4-H Center near Columbiana in Shelby County. (Registration begins in August and is limited to 130 participants.)

This year, the workshop will be October 7-9. The event starts at 1 p.m. on Friday and ends after lunch on Sunday.

Attendees select four classes to take during the workshop weekend. The various courses offered allow participants to attend multiple workshops to take different lessons each time. The workshops create positive memories and build lifelong friendships.

Those interested in attending the event are encouraged to register as soon as possible. For more information about BOW,

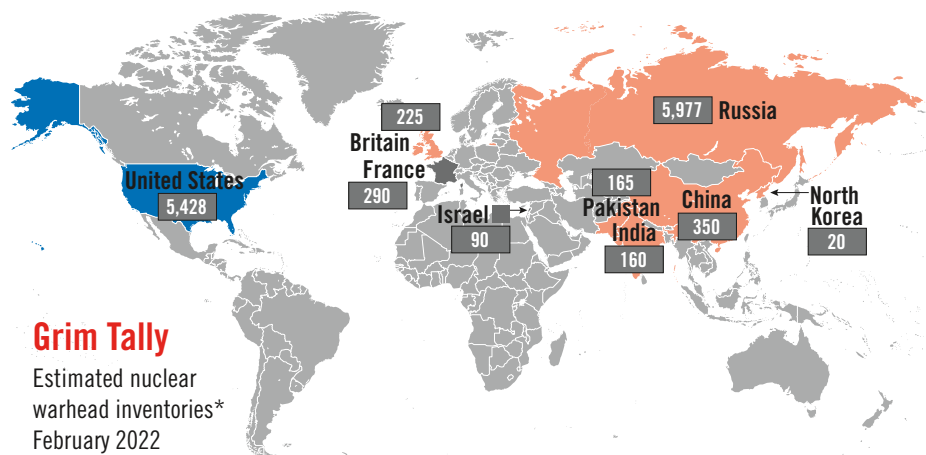


visit [www.outdooralabama.com/activities/becoming-outdoors-woman](http://www.outdooralabama.com/activities/becoming-outdoors-woman).

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources promotes wise stewardship, management, and enjoyment of Alabama's natural resources through four divisions: Marine Resources, State Lands, State Parks, and Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries. To learn more about ADCNR, visit [www.outdooralabama.com](http://www.outdooralabama.com).

*This is a series of articles about Alabama Success Stories. Please let us know if you have a similar success story you would like to share with the RSA membership. You may contact us at [communication.correspondences@rsa-al.gov](mailto:communication.correspondences@rsa-al.gov).*

## Nuclear Warheads



### Grim Tally

Estimated nuclear warhead inventories\*  
February 2022

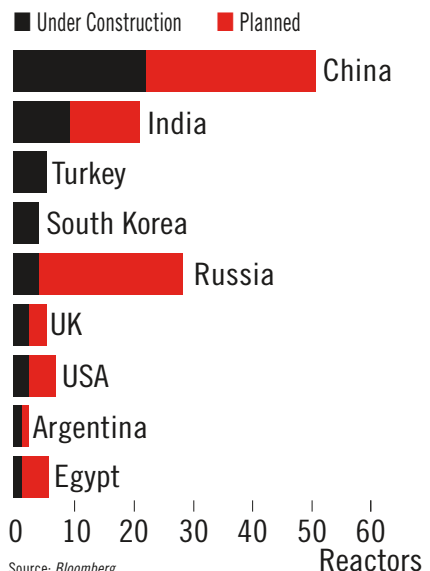
Stockpiles expected to ■ increase ■ remain stable ■ decrease

Source: Federation of American Scientists

\* Includes deployed, reserve and retired warheads

## Nuclear Power Buildout For Energy

Enormous energy demand is underpinning China's nuclear push



Source: Bloomberg

# Start Planning Your Fall and Winter Getaways at RSA's Outstanding Hotels, Spas, and RTJ Golf



Member Hotel  
Discounts Webpage

RETIREMENT SYSTEMS OF ALABAMA  
201 SOUTH UNION STREET  
P.O. BOX 302150  
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130-2150

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
MONTGOMERY, AL  
PERMIT NO. 402

## ENJOY YOUR FALL/WINTER A Special Deal FOR RSA MEMBERS

**The Battle House,  
A Renaissance Hotel \$129**  
• October 2-4, 8-12  
• November 6-10, 13-17, 20-24, 26-30  
• December 1-3, 8, 11, 15, 18-29

**The Battle House RSA Spa Package \$244**  
• October 3-4, 10-12 • November 7-8, 14-15, 21-22  
• December 19-21, 26-28

**Riverview Plaza \$119**  
• October 5-10, 26-27  
• November 6-8, 12-14, 19-24, 26-30  
• December 9-12, 18-29

**Grand Hotel (plus a 15% resort fee) \$137**  
• October 10-12, 30-31  
• November 1-2, 13-14, 20-21, 27-29  
• December 4-6, 11-15, 18-21

**Grand Hotel RSA Golf Package (plus a 15% resort fee) \$209**  
• October 10-12, 30-31  
• November 1-2, 13-14, 20-21, 27-29  
• December 4-6, 11-15, 18-21

**Grand Hotel RSA Spa Package \$285  
(plus a 15% resort fee)**  
• October 11-12 • November 1-2, 29  
• December 6, 13-15, 20-21

**Marriott Shoals \$119**  
• October 2, 16, 23, 30-31  
• November 6, 13, 20-21, 23-24, 27  
• December 21-30

**Marriott Shoals RSA Spa Package \$229**  
• October 12, 16, 23, 30-31  
• November 6, 13, 20-21, 27  
• December 21-22, 27-29

**Renaissance Ross Bridge \$129**  
• October 9, 16, 23, 30-31 • November 20-22, 27-29  
• December 7, 14, 21, 27-28

**Renaissance Ross Bridge RSA Spa Package \$260**  
• October 9, 30-31 • November 27-29  
• December 7, 14, 21, 27-28

**Auburn/Opelika Marriott Resort \$119  
(plus a 10% resort fee)**  
• October 4-6, 18-19 • November 20-22, 26-27  
• December 11-12, 16-29

**Auburn/Opelika Marriott Resort RSA Spa Package \$234 (plus a 10% resort fee)**  
• October 5-6, 19 • November 20, 26-27  
• December 11, 15-18, 21-23

**Prattville Marriott \$99**  
• October 2, 4, 9, 30-31 • November 6, 13, 20-23, 27-28  
• December 4-5, 11-13, 18-27

**Renaissance Montgomery \$129**  
• October 9, 23-24, 29-30  
• November 6-7, 20-22, 24-28  
• December 11-12, 15, 18-21, 28-29

**Renaissance Montgomery RSA Spa Package \$244**  
• October 29 • November 22, 24-26  
• December 15, 20-21, 28-29

Specific room requests may require additional charge.  
Rates available the 1st of the month and  
are not applicable to groups.

Corporate/Promotional Code: R2A  
on [www.rsa-al.gov](http://www.rsa-al.gov)  
**Book Online and Save RSA \$4.**



## TRS Board Members Sworn In At September Meeting

TRS Board of Control Chair Luke Hallmark administers the Oath of Office to Susan Lockridge, Susan Williams Brown, Ricky Whaley, Amanda Miller, and William Walsh.



- CEO**  
David G. Bronner
- Deputy Director – Administration**  
Jo Moore
- Deputy Director – Investments**  
Marc Green
- Executives**
- Communications**  
Deborah J. Kirk
- Chief Accountant & Financial Officer**  
Diane E. Scott
- Employees' and Judicial Retirement**  
William F. Kelley, Jr.
- Field Services**  
Christopher C. Gallup
- Information Technology Services**  
Michael T. Baker
- General Counsel**  
Jared H. Morris
- Legislative Counsel**  
Neah M. Scott
- Member Services**  
Penny K. Wilson
- PEEHIP**  
J. David Wales
- RSA-1**  
Rhonda H. Peters
- Teachers' Retirement**  
Christopher P. Townes

The Retirement Systems of Alabama  
201 South Union Street  
P.O. Box 302150  
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-2150  
Phone: 334.517.7000  
877.517.0020

RSA Website: [www.rsa-al.gov](http://www.rsa-al.gov)

Coming in October to Member Online Services (MOS):

### Multi Factor Authentication (MFA)

Verification Sent to you by:

- ✓ Phone
- ✓ Text
- ✓ Email

You choose the method that works best for you.

**MFA means more protection for your data!**