

● JANUARY 2023

SAVANNAH RIVER NUCLEAR SOLUTIONS



# SRNS Today

## Milestone met

K Area makes first downblended plutonium shipment out of state



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to connect with  
our social media

## This month

Active shooter response training • Nuclear Operator Apprentices • Secretary of Energy awards



# Welcome

to the January 2023 edition of

# SRNS Today

**Stuart MacVean**  
SRNS President and CEO

There are a lot of adjectives that can be used to describe SRNS and its employees: safety-conscience; resilient; unique; community-oriented; innovative and committed – the list could go on for the rest of this page. This month, I am putting an underline beneath dedicated and award-winning.

**On the cover**

A truck holding shipping containers containing the first downblended plutonium to leave South Carolina from K Area is staged in a hut for final verifications prior to leaving SRS.

SRNS proved its dedication to meeting its commitments this month, with the first shipment of downblended surplus plutonium from K Area to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico. This is a huge win for the company and the Site, that comes after years of hard work and gets us ever closer to our plutonium removal goal.

Four teams that included SRNS employees were recognized with Secretary of Energy Achievement Awards based on accomplishments in 2022. These awards are given in recognition for service and contributions to the Department's mission and the benefit of the nation. Congratulations to the SRNS members of the Accelerated Basin De-inventory Team; the Lower Three Runs Final Remedial Decision Team; the Phytoremediation Project Team; and the Japan Highly Enriched Uranium Removal Team.

In addition, we kicked off the American Heart Association Heart Walk campaign and continued to reach students from kindergarten through college in order to encourage interest in STEM-based programs and careers.

We hope you enjoy this month's edition of SRNS Today.



Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC, is a Fluor-led company whose members are Fluor Federal Services, Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell. Since August 2008, SRNS has been the management and operating contractor for the Savannah River Site, a Department of Energy-owned site near Aiken, South Carolina. The SRNS corporate and community offices are located in the renovated 1912 "Old Post Office" building in Aiken. The primary initiatives of SRNS are national security, clean energy and environmental stewardship. SRNS Today is published monthly by SRNS Corporate Communications to inform our employees and other stakeholders of the company's operational- and community-related activities. If you have questions or comments, please contact us at 803.952.6131 or visit our website.

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**COMMON ACRONYMS**

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) • Savannah River Site (SRS)  
Department of Energy (DOE) • National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA)

Some of the photos in this issue were taken under previous COVID-19 guidelines, including guidelines with no mask requirements for vaccinated employees.



## Preparing for crisis

### SRSFD conducts active shooter response training course

The Savannah River Site Fire Department (SRSFD) recently teamed up with Centerra to conduct a four-week active shooter response training course, putting emergency responders in immersive crisis scenarios to prepare for potential threats.

Prior to the drill, all participants were thoroughly briefed on what could be expected and continuously made aware that this was a drill. Active areas for the drill were indicated by purple sheets of paper on doors, while other doors had signs alerting participants not to enter. As each room was searched, firefighters marked the purple sheets to inform others that they had been there.

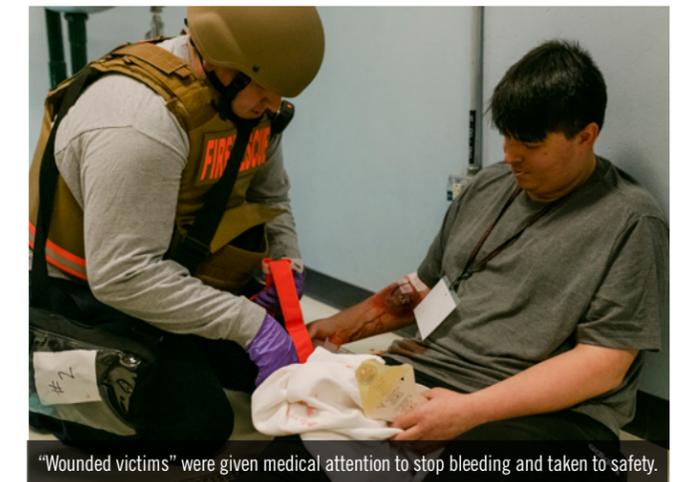
Audio recordings of gun shots and screams echoed throughout the building as volunteer "victims" were dispersed in various rooms covered in fake blood and special effects wounds to simulate the setting of an emergency event. Firefighters and Centerra personnel scanned rooms for victims while staying alert to their surroundings.

Once victims were located, personnel rushed to their aid asking questions to those who were in a condition to answer, applying medical devices to stop bleeding and transporting the wounded to a safe zone for further care.

SRNS Emergency Management employee Cristy Freda volunteered multiple days to play the role of an injured victim in the drill. She stated, "This was a great opportunity to help the fire department prepare to help others. Seeing employees with fake blood and wounds really put you in the situation and made you realize the severity of an active shooter event."

"Unfortunately, hostile and violent situations are becoming more frequent, so we must prepare in the event one were to take place on SRS," said Travis Scott, SRSFD Technical Services Chief. "It's important to conduct these exercises to test our procedures, equipment and response strategies to large scale incidents. The complexity of the active shooter and multiple casualty incidents require interagency collaboration, so it is vital to conduct joint training with agency partners such as Centerra."

Scott continued, "Being able to train within the Waste Solidification Building (WSB) has provided us with a realistic environment and presented infrastructure challenges that are unique to SRS. We are grateful for the WSB staff for allowing us to use their facility as well as all of those who volunteered to be role players. As an organization, these training exercises have given us the opportunity to refine our skills and evolve our tactics to meet the unique challenges presented by active shooter situations."



"Wounded victims" were given medical attention to stop bleeding and taken to safety.



SRSFD personnel search the building for "wounded victims" and practice crisis handling skills during a recent four-week long active shooter response training course.

## SRNS establishes location to destroy outdated media

Through collaborative efforts between SRNS employees of Supply Chain Management (SCM), Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Information Services and Cyber Security, a centralized location for physical destruction of classified and unclassified media has now been established in building 731-2N.

Historically, concerns have arisen regarding long term storage of electronic media at SRS. Over the past several years, a significant backlog of obsolete media has accumulated, including: hard drives, thumb drives, CD/DVD/floppy disks, circuit boards, VHS tapes and more without a defined disposition path.

Securely destroying outdated media sources is a necessary practice to ensure the protection of confidential information and avoid potential damages that could be caused by data breaches.

This media destruction location is now available to personnel across the Site and is staffed by SRNS Property Management, who will



Tyler Gleaton, SRNS Property Specialist, loads discs into the LM-1 Degausser, which destroys all data stored on electronic media by removing its magnetism.

assume responsibility for media collection, storage and disposition.

"The successful completion of this long-needed project was a direct result of applying what I call the Keys (C's) to Success: communication, collaboration, cooperation and commitment in an always changing environment," said Ron Bielewicz, SCM Program Support Manager, who led the cross-functional project team. "Because of the project team's efforts, we are now able to meet customer expectations while being good stewards of government resources."

## Fourth cohort of Nuclear Operator Apprentices graduate from SRNS/ATC

The fourth cohort of SRNS Nuclear Operator Apprentices celebrated their graduation at Aiken Technical College (ATC) on Thursday, Dec. 8, after they completed the Nuclear Fundamentals Certificate Program.

Fifteen apprentices participated in the eight-month Nuclear Operator Apprenticeship Program, which provides ATC students a unique learning opportunity by allowing them to simultaneously receive on-the-job training while completing their required classroom work. Students spent two days a week receiving instruction from ATC and two days a week training at SRS.

"Our apprenticeship partnerships are a great way to support workforce development efforts. It allows participants to earn a college credential while also gaining relevant, on-the-job experience," said School of Technical and Continuing Education Dean Steven F. Simmons, Ed.D. "The success of this program has opened the door to exploring ways we can expand to offer similar opportunities for other critical positions at the Savannah River Site."

Apprentices learned the basic qualifications of a production operator, including conduct of operations principles, radiation worker training and qualification and how to perform shift rounds. All were hired full-time and have been put to work in areas around the Site.

Operator Apprentice Christopher Smith said it was a little hard to go back to school at first. "It's been about 15 years since I was last in school. They really made it easy, though, by whittling down the information that applies to the job and not adding extra stuff."

Smith continued by saying he was looking forward to work at SRS. "There is opportunity at the Site to grow and do what you want while making money doing it."

The Nuclear Fundamentals Program, created in 2016 in collaboration with SRNS, prepares students for entry-level positions in the nuclear industry. The recent addition of the apprenticeship program pathway further helps to build the workforce pipeline.

"So far, this Apprenticeship Program has been a huge success for the apprentices, SRNS and ATC," said Stuart MacVean. "The program helps us with developing our operator pipeline while also providing meaningful employment for members of our community as well."



The fourth cohort of Operator Apprentice graduates

## MOUs provide funding, internships and professional training

SRNS has memorandum of understanding (MOU) agreements supporting multiple colleges throughout the region and now — two more — Paine College, a Historically Black College and University (HBCU), in Augusta, Georgia, and The Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina.

"SRNS strives to build strong relationships with HBCUs in our immediate geographic area. So far, we have MOUs with all eight HBCUs in South Carolina," said Anitra McManus, SRNS Workforce Services. "Paine College, in Augusta, Georgia, will be number nine. A monetary donation and exposure to internship opportunities, in addition to professional development opportunities, will be provided to both Paine College and The Citadel, a South Carolina military college. The opportunities offered to each school include training related to resume writing and job interviews, plus advice on personal branding designed to help them advance their careers. And, in time, we hope they will join our workforce at the SRS."

According to McManus, the academic programs featured at both colleges will be targeted for specific internship opportunities at SRNS. Project Controls internships will be the focus at Paine College, due to their strong accounting curriculum, while The Citadel will be engaged for interns related to Engineering and Supply Chain Management.

"We have all this talent in our backyard," said McManus. "We want to get them here to experience the Site as interns, which may lead to a career with us."

Since the inception of the SRNS partnership with local HBCUs, SRNS has hired 46 South Carolina HBCU graduates and hosted 14 interns.



SRNS Executive Vice President Sean Alford, (right), presents Paine College President Cheryl Evans Jones, Ph.D, (left), with a donation, after both signed a memorandum of understanding for SRS internship opportunities for Paine College students.

"The Citadel produces principled leaders for service to our Nation and its Communities," said General Glenn Walters, U.S. Marine Corps (Retired), President, The Citadel. "In the globalized economy, STEM, supply chain and cybersecurity graduates with real-world experience are critical. We look forward to our partnership with SRNS in training the next generation of professionals in these key fields, while perhaps enhancing the SRNS workforce. It's a win-win proposition for each organization."

Cheryl Evans Jones, Ph.D, President, Paine College said the academic faculty and staff at Paine College are looking forward to deepening our relationship with SRNS through this valued MOU.

"The MOU will provide additional academic and professional resources for our students as we continually strive for academic excellence, ethical and spiritual values, social responsibility and personal development to prepare spiritually-centered men and women for positions of leadership and service," said Jones.

## SRNS employee recognized as part of Security Team of the Year

United States Secretary of Energy, Jennifer Granholm, recently recognized the 2021 Outstanding Security Award winners, including the Security Team of the Year. The team award was presented to the Material Control and Accountability (MC&A) Technical Qualification Program (TQP) Pilot, where SRNS employee Voneisa McBride serves as a member of the team with others from across the DOE/NNSA complex. The Outstanding Security Awards recognize both federal and contractor employees who excel in the performance of their duties while providing security services, or support, to the Department's protective mission.



Voneisa McBride

Under the leadership of Amy Whitworth, NNSA MC&A Program Manager, and in conjunction with the NNSA National Training Center, the TQP Pilot was initiated to strengthen the technical base for MC&A due to attrition

and turnover. McBride's role in the program is as an instructor for Local Area Nuclear Material Accounting Software (LANMAS) for those entering the MC&A Program throughout the DOE/NNSA Complex.

LANMAS is the standard application used to collect, store, retrieve and report information required to satisfy the nuclear material accounting requirements established by DOE. As the Design Authority for most versions of LANMAS, SRS maintains the software to ensure functionality and supports all versions of the product. SRNS utilizes LANMAS, along with 18 other NNSA/DOE sites across the nation.

"I'm both excited and thankful to be a part of the team that is developing the MC&A talent of the future," stated McBride.

In a letter congratulating the 2021 winners, Granholm stated, "The Department of Energy's security mission is critical to ensure the protection of our national resources. I am truly thankful to the members of our security team and extend my sincere admiration to all those who dedicate their careers to the protection of these resources."

# Down(blended) and out

## First shipment of downblended surplus plutonium from the SRS K Area leaves South Carolina



Shipping containers holding the first downblended plutonium to leave South Carolina from K Area.



Shipping containers are surveyed to ensure no radiation is present before leaving SRS.



Lisa Mead, Anna Jackson and Bryant Tanner of SRNS Packaging and Transportation Services look over the shipment's paperwork.

Background photo: The first shipment of downblended plutonium from K Area leaves.

**S**RS recently made the first shipment of downblended surplus plutonium from K Area, a momentous milestone culminating from multiple years of effort to remove plutonium from the state of South Carolina.

“Words really cannot describe the amazing day we’ve had today or the sense of accomplishment - with the years of planning, dedication to the mission, and effort to make it a reality,” said NNSA Office of Material Disposition Director Virginia Kay.

Plutonium is diluted, or downblended, in the Site’s K Area Complex glovebox in a process that mixes plutonium oxide with a multicomponent adulterant to enable DOE to produce a proliferation-

resistant form that can never again be readily used in nuclear weapons. The downblended material meets requirements for shipping and disposal of the surplus plutonium as contact-handled transuranic waste at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in New Mexico. The downblended material is packaged in Criticality Control Overpack drums and staged on a designated storage pad until it is characterized and ready to be shipped to WIPP.

In the past, all transuranic waste shipped to WIPP was characterized, stored and shipped from the SRS Solid Waste Management Facility (SWMF), located several miles away from K Area.

“This shipment is the result of years of planning, preparation, construction, and coordination,” said Lee Sims, K Area Facility Manager for SRNS. “Shipping directly from K Area, instead of through SWMF, saves time and resources and allows for more efficient removal of plutonium from the state.”

“We are celebrating today, but we know we have a lot more work ahead of us,” said Stuart MacVean. Work is ongoing in K Area to increase the rate of downblending and shipping, including the construction of three new glovebox lines (used to perform the downblending process), and new entry control facilities and housing for an influx of new employees that will be needed to meet the mission.



**WATCH THE VIDEO:**  
Go to the SRS YouTube channel and search “K Area shipment”

# Secretary of Energy Achievement Awards

**Over 100 SRS employees** were recently recognized as members of teams receiving Secretary of Energy Achievement Awards, including many DOE and contractor employees, based on accomplishments in 2022.

These awards recognize DOE employees and contractors for their service and contributions to the Department's mission and the benefit of the nation. They represent some of the highest internal, non-monetary recognitions that DOE employees and contractors can receive.

"We are proud to announce that SRS employees are recognized as contributors to several of the Achievement Award-winning teams," SRS Manager Mike Budney said. "These exceptional employees deserve both our congratulations and our thanks."

## SRNS employees were recognized as contributing members to the following teams:



Accelerated Basin De-inventory Team



Japan Highly Enriched Uranium Removal Team



Savannah River Site Phytoremediation Project Team



Savannah River Site Lower Three Runs Final Remedial Decision Team



Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Standup Team



Clean Energy Corps Core Competency Interview Team



Office of Environmental Management Minority Serving Institution Partnership Project Execution Team

“These exceptional employees deserve both our congratulations and our thanks.”

**Mike Budney,  
SRS Manager**

## Other teams recognized from SRS included:

## SRS achieves national recognition and awards for 'green' electronics

SRS Information Technology (IT) personnel were recently named a three-product category award winner related to the use of the computers, displays, mobile phones and servers engineered to protect the environment.

This national recognition by the Green Electronics Council (GEC) emphasized the environmental benefits and energy-related savings obtained by SRS during 2021, due to their use of 5,343 EPEAT (Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool) Information Technology (IT) products purchased by SRNS.

Use of EPEAT-qualified equipment during this time period resulted in:

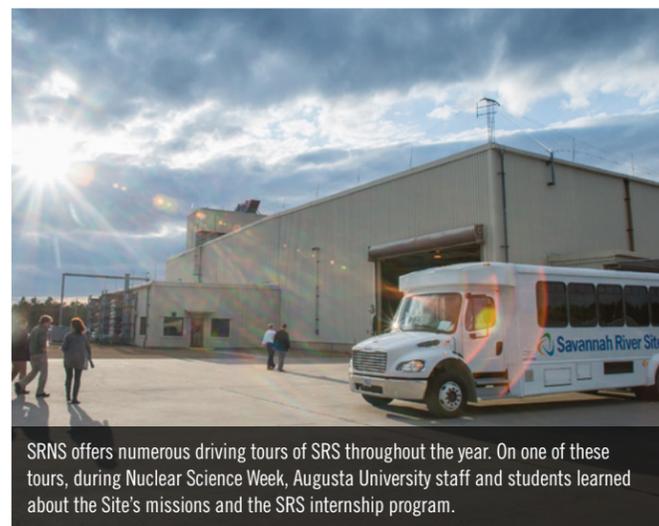
- a savings of 4,044,000 kilowatt hours of electricity;
- the elimination of 82,000 kilograms of solid waste;
- a reduction of 856,000 kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents;
- a savings of 9,348,000 liters of water; and
- a monetary savings of \$164,762.

In a letter from William White, the GEC Senior Advisor for Environmental Management, he stated, "Congratulations to EM Savannah River Site and your contractor partner, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions. This is a significant contribution to the Administration's and the Department of Energy's initiatives to promote green information technology.

"We recognize the team's outstanding achievements in support of this important initiative. Participation in the 2022 EPEAT Purchaser Awards program is particularly noteworthy in that it is a voluntary program and demonstrates a commitment to excellence, reflecting well on the Department, EM, SRS and SRNS."

The EPEAT awards recognize excellence in the procurement of sustainable IT products and are open to all U.S. organizations. In total, EPEAT has helped in the reduction of 220 million metric tons of greenhouse gas since its launch in 2006.

"I am proud that my team and the entire Site use sustainable electronics that meet voluntary environmental performance criteria. We conserve energy, use environmentally sensitive materials and packaging and have a greener lifecycle," said Mason Richardson, SRNS Manager, IT Facilities and PC Administration. "The use of EPEAT products helps to fulfill our mission to protect the environment for future generations."



SRNS offers numerous driving tours of SRS throughout the year. On one of these tours, during Nuclear Science Week, Augusta University staff and students learned about the Site's missions and the SRS internship program.

## AU students learn about SRS careers

For years, SRNS has supported Nuclear Science Week events and activities, including the recent visit from Augusta University (AU) students who toured SRS.

As students explored the 310-square-mile nuclear reservation and national environmental research park, they learned about its missions and the SRS internship program.

In a recent letter to the SRNS management team, Joseph Newton, PhD, AU Assistant Professor of Physics and Director of Nuclear Science, said, "All 17 chemistry and physics majors expressed an interest in nuclear science and an interest in a career at SRS. Needless to say, this strong group of engaged and dedicated students were incredibly excited to visit the Site and to learn about SRS careers and internship opportunities.

"I believe we will see more high-quality students applying for SRNS internships than ever before, and it is interactive experiences like this that are the reason. This tour truly impacted the future career trajectory for some of these students. It is clear that investing in your future workforce is a priority."

Kim Mitchell, SRNS Education Outreach Lead, emphasized the win-win aspect of hosting the students for the tour. "For these students, success within their prospective careers at SRS fuels our success as a company," she added.

According to Newton, all aspects of the extensive tour exceeded his expectations. He particularly appreciated the speakers.

SRNS' Rich Zaharek spoke to the students about engineering career-paths at SRS, while Roy Windham discussed health physics and radiation protection occupations. Sylvia Zimmerman explained the types of and advantages related to SRNS internship opportunities - including how and when to apply. "These were three of the best and most relevant interactions that I have seen with a group of students in the 10 years I have been Director of Nuclear Science," Newton said.

## WORCshop introduces nuclear careers to A.R. Johnson students

SRNS recently partnered with Augusta University, A.R. Johnson, and Savannah River Site Community Reuse Organization (SRSCRO) to host a Workforce Opportunities in Regional Careers (WORC) WORCshop.

WORCshop is a leading educational outreach opportunity to introduce students to nuclear science careers by solving a real-world problem. The event took place on Dec. 9, 2022, at A. R. Johnson Health Science and Engineering Magnet School in Augusta, Georgia.

Emily Driggers, Principal at A.R. Johnson Health Science and Engineering Magnet School stated "Our students are excited for the opportunity to have connections with real world problems. We have an engineering magnet program that allows students to apply the skills learned in class to their projects and finding solutions to real world issues."

Six teachers from A.R. Johnson requested SRS engineering mentor assistance in their classroom to help make academic standards applicable to their students. These instructors taught middle and/or high school chemistry, physics, engineering, or other science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Each teacher chose a standard or concept for the WORCshop and the mentors provided a real-world problem that could be associated with that concept. Teams then created a project to showcase what they learned and presented solutions that are environmentally friendly and cost effective.

One of the projects showcased was focused on the lithium battery recycling process. The students researched and evaluated two processes that focused on different methods of breaking down and properly recycling the batteries.

Rick Connolly, Director of Commissioning and Readiness, Plutonium Modernization Program, SRNS, was a participant in the WORCshop. He said, "The whole premise of the program is to get students energized about STEM-related careers. Our future workforce are these students, whether they are in high school, trade school or college."

The WORC grant, funded by the DOE-Environmental Management and NNSA, began in 2016. SRSCRO developed the WORC proposal and provides administration and program management of the grant involving academic partner institutions, including Augusta University.



At A.R. Johnson Health Science and Engineering Magnet School, attendees examine a project focused on water filtration and flooding prevention systems.



**Henry Bryant**

**AT SRNS:** Computer Security Engineer

**IN THE COMMUNITY:** 2023 SRS Heart Walk Campaign Communications Chair

## THE PEOPLE OF SRNS

Computer Security Engineer Henry Bryant is not new to leadership. Through his role in Cyber Defense, his volunteer work on the SRS Heart Walk campaign committee, and his participation in Aspiring Mid-Career Professionals (AMP), Bryant is committed to engaging in the community and creating a platform for the future workforce.

"My perspective on leadership takes me back to my high school JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps) days," he said. "We defined leadership as the ability to influence an individual or group to accomplish a task or mission. I try to take that mindset into all that I do."

Bryant is serving as this year's SRS Heart Walk Campaign Communications Chair. In addition, AMP recently selected him to receive a Going the Extra Mile, or GEM, award for his outstanding effort at their outreach events.

"It's important to me to give back and to help others," he said. "One of my favorite Maya Angelou quotes — that I relate to leadership — is 'I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.'"

## Get hearts pumping for AHA campaign

The 2023 SRS American Heart Association Heart Walk Campaign has officially kicked off and runs through March 25. This year's theme, "With a Healthy Heart, the Beat Goes On," exemplifies the dedication SRS has in supporting the Association in their effort to raise awareness for cardiovascular disease in the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA).

SRS held a joint kickoff event where Heart Walk participants from SRNS, Savannah River Mission Completion, Centerra and Savannah River National Laboratory gathered in preparation for the upcoming campaign. They were given a quick tutorial on how to register, recruit and rally participants followed by words of encouragement from CSRA American Heart Association Development Director Marah Curry.

"Every walker who joins, every dollar donated, means more lives saved, more research funded, more people trained in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and more lifesaving moments for hearts big and small," said Curry. "By participating and donating to the CSRA Heart Walk, participants are supporting the lifesaving mission of the American Heart Association and safeguarding that fewer people die from stroke and heart disease."

Thanks to the success of the Site's joint campaign over \$197,000 was raised in 2022 to save and improve lives in the CSRA.

"Thank you, for your continued passion and support of the American Heart Association," said Stuart MacVean. "While we are making great



CSRA American Heart Association Development Director Marah Curry shared words of encouragement during the SRS American Heart Association Heart Walk Kickoff event.

strides, there is still much work to be done. Heart disease remains the No. 1 killer in the CSRA and will claim more lives in our area than all forms of cancer combined. I hope you will join me as we take the steps to make the CSRA a heart-healthy community. "

This year's CSRA Heart Walk event will take place Saturday, March 25, at SRP Park in North Augusta. To learn more, visit [csraheartwalk.org](https://csraheartwalk.org)

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# SRNS



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We make the world **safer.**