



B-CC BUZZ

Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chapter 258 - Chartered November 10, 1953
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

February - March 2012

President's Corner

To all Chapter 258 members, I hope you had great holidays and that you will have a happy and great 2012.

At the September meeting the Board of Directors discussed ways to improve Chapter 258. One of the suggestions brought forward was to decrease the number of chapter meetings. Beginning this February, the Board has decided to meet bimonthly for 2012. Thus, we will have regular chapter meetings on February 10, April 13, and June 8. We will not meet in March and May. We will assess whether participation in our chapter improves, or not, for these three chapter meetings. Before the September 2012 chapter meeting, the board will decide whether to continue bimonthly meetings or return to monthly meetings in the 2012/2013-chapter year. Members' input will be solicited in making this decision.

At the December meeting the Board of Directors talked about changing the types of programs we should present. Program Chair, Dave Richman, elaborates on this suggestion, article to follow.

All of this is part of our attempts to revitalize Chapter 258, to get greater member participation in chapter meetings and in all chapter programs. In addition, I am asking members to volunteer to serve on one of the chapter committees. We have a great need for a new Chapter Service Officer. Nora Taylor has served in this capacity for quite a few years and she wants to retire now. The post of Service Officer is one of the most important in NARFE. It does not take very much time and Nora is willing to work with the new Service Officer. Also, the Maryland NARFE Federation provides good training by the Federation Service Officer and there is ample printed information and guidance for Service Officers provided by NARFE Headquarters.

Our Membership Chair, Jeanine Flaherty, expects to move soon and will no longer continue in this role. This is another very important chapter post. We urgently need a volunteer to work with Jeanine while she is still active, and then take over the Membership Committee. Again, very little time per month is required for this position.

I think the true test of how much NARFE means to any member is whether or not he or she is interested, and willing to help, in keeping the Chapter 258 alive and vibrant. There are other ways you can help our chapter, but these two positions are the most urgently needed.

Upcoming Events:

- On February 7, the Federation Board meeting will be held at the Comfort Inn, Bowie, Md. At that meeting, the Board of Directors will consider where to hold the Federation's 2013 and 2015 conventions. Sites under consideration are hotels in Ocean City, Solomons, and Hagerstown.
- On April 30 to May 1, the Maryland Federation Mini-Convention will be held at the Comfort Inn, Bowie, MD.
- On Aug. 26-30, the NARFE National Convention for 2012 will be held in Reno, NV.

All of these meetings are open to NARFE members and I hope some of you will decide to attend one or more of these events. Chapter 258 sets aside money every month to help pay the expenses of chapter members attending the National Convention in Reno.

Gordon Brown, President

Listening to Our Members' Suggestions

At the December 12th Board meeting, chapter members in attendance discussed ways in which to turn Chapter 258 around, that is, reviving a "grass roots" approach in support of NARFE's mission. The February program will be the first in a series to identify to our membership what NARFE – National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association – is all about.

As retired and active federal employees, we have contributed or do contribute for federal annuities, Medicare and (in many cases) Social Security programs. Many of us who are retired have worked or are working in the private sector and are eligible for Social Security. The February program, about Social Security, is ultimately aimed at ensuring we understand the issues faced by NARFE and by us in being able to receive the benefits we have been promised, and paid for, during the years we were employed. We believe our retirement systems are more complex than the Social Security system and we believe understanding the latter system will help us to be better able to understand the more complex retirement ones. We look forward to a follow up program to February's Social Security presentation with one about federal retirement.

Too many of us take our current systems (CSRS and FERS) for granted and don't realize how susceptible to legislative modifications they are or the issues that exist.

We would be happy to receive feedback from chapter members for future topics aimed at a better grasp of NARFE's efforts to protect our earned annuities and medical as well as other benefits. This is your chapter, suggestions for speakers and topics are most welcomed.

David Richman, Programs Chair

February 10: Financing of the Social Security System, It's Complicated

The program for February is aimed at ensuring we understand the issues faced by NARFE and by us in being able to receive the annuities and benefits we have been promised and paid for during our working years. A very important aspect of this is to know how the Federal Government meets its obligations to us through its operations. Our speaker will be Webster Phillips, Senior Legislative Representative of the "National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare" NCPSSM. Mr. Phillips will address financing of the Social Security system, the trust fund concept, issues that need to be considered to maintain the system and meet its legislated purpose, and how these same concerns affect our more complex federal retirement systems. Mr. Phillips retired from an active career with the Social Security Administration before joining the NCPSSM. Since retiring, he has become an active member of NARFE.

[Because it is February: In anticipation of possible closings and cancellations due to weather, our meeting will be postponed. The alternate meeting date will be Friday, Feb 17th, the same time, same place.]

Legislative Report

Every thing is dormant in regard to legislative activities that effect retirees; however, provisions in some of the appropriation bills will effect active duty civil service. The payroll deduction law will expire 1 March and that will start another series of discussions as will the need to increase the national debt ceiling later on in the year. Retirees are fortunate that the 2012 COLA was not considered for any adjustment.

In Maryland: a major legislation that NARFE is advocating for in the General Assembly in Annapolis involves a tax credit for long-term care insurance premiums. Presently, there is a one-time tax credit of \$500 for long term care insurance premiums, but the suggested legislation would allow a \$200 tax credit annually. Bills have been introduced in both the House and the Senate. If you have any personal contact with the District 16 Delegation, please urge them to co-sponsor or at least support this legislation, The District 16 Delegation is: Senator Brian E. Frosh-Delegates C. William Frick, Arianna Kelly and Susan C. Lee.

Laurin Knutson, Legislative Chair

Chapter Membership

Welcome to new members who joined recently. We hope to see many of you at this year's meetings: Ada S Adler, Alexandria Arnesen , Michael A Berdak, Linda B Dubroof, Carol B Epstein, Donald A Gignac, Michael Goldstein, David H Hammers, Charmaine Iversen, Alexandra K Kielty, John Middleton, Mary L Miers, Geraldine Ostrove, Gerald J Robinson, Daniel D Segal, Audrey D Sheppard and Nancy B Wehr.

Important to Note

It has come to NARFE's attention that some members have received solicitations from "Alzheimer's Disease Research, PO Box 950, Clarksburg, MD 20871". NARFE's contact is with the Alzheimer's Association in Chicago, IL. Please note that the Alzheimer's Association does not send solicitations to NARFE members and never has. If you have any questions, please contact Alzheimer's Committee Chair, George Perez, (see page 4).

SAVE THE DATES!

Feb 6 Monday 10 a.m. Executive Board Meeting, Ledo's Restaurant, 10300 Westlake Dr., Bethesda (Near Montgomery Mall)

Feb 10 Friday 12 p.m. Chapter Meeting/Speaker: W. Phillips
[In anticipation of possible closing of Montgomery County Schools due to weather

Feb 17 Friday *will be the alternate meeting date. Same time, same place.]*

Chapter meetings are held on Fridays at Alfio's La Trattoria. Social time at 11:30 a.m., lunch at noon (fixed menu \$14.00; pay at restaurant) followed by speaker. Alfio's La Trattoria, 4515 Willard Ave. (Willoughby Building) between Wisconsin Ave. and River Rd., in Friendship Heights. Free valet parking. Restaurant is walking distance to the Friendship Heights Metro and bus services.

All are welcome to attend Chapter 258 Executive Board meetings on Mondays at 10 a.m.

March: Chapter Board and Monthly Meeting canceled.
Next meeting April.

Consumers Corner

Tax changes: OPM has a new Tax Hotline to change federal tax withholdings. The number is 1-800-307-8298.

To adjust your email messages from National Headquarters (GEMS), such as legislative Hotlines, press releases, retirement benefit news, and your state federation newsletters and information, please go to www.narfe.org, and update your record by selecting the types of messages you would like to receive. The choices are: All GEMS Messages; Headquarters'/Legislation/Member Benefits Only; State/Local News Only.

Recruiting: When you try to get other federal employees or annuitants to join NARFE, point out that though NARFE cannot claim total responsibility for the 2012 COLA, it wouldn't have happened without lobbying by NARFE members and NARFE's Legislative Department.

Who Are You? Prove it.

A current photo ID is required in more and more situations and it costs more to replace. Best to be prepared.

- Thinking of giving up driving? That can be a sensible decision, but don't let your license lapse as long as you can pass the eye test.
- The teller at the bank who knows you by sight won't recognize you, when it comes to legal and financial documents, without that current ID.
- If your driver's license is out of date and you want to get the Maryland non-driver's photo ID, it is the same as starting over, all but the driving knowledge. A recent case I know of failed because of a torn birth certificate document
- Not expecting to travel abroad any more? Renew your passport anyhow.

Submitted by Nora Taylor

For Your Information: Next BUZZ will be sent in MARCH announcing APRIL 13 Speaker, and JUNE 8 Luncheon/guest speaker. There will be NO MAY Meeting.

NARFE Convention

National Convention: The 32nd NARFE National Convention will be held August 26-30, 2012, at the Nugget Casino Hotel, Reno-Sparks, Nevada. NARFE Headquarters needs volunteers to serve on these convention committees: Legislation, Membership, and Resolutions Committees, which consider resolutions related to their subject areas; Ballot and Teller, which conducts and reports results of all convention balloting; Credentials, which handles changes in voting status and reports delegate numbers to the convention; Rules, which considers changes to Convention Standing Rules; Secretary, which sits on the podium to identify delegates seeking recognition to speak.; Sergeant at Arms, serving as ushers and security during sessions.

Anyone interested in attending the convention and serving on any of these committees should contact Chapter President Brown at 240-328-6926 or online at HYPERLINKmailto:papabrown26@comcast.net. Convention committee members must be at the convention site up to three days before the convention convenes. NARFE Headquarters will reimburse expenses during those days.

Acknowledging One of Our Members

We would like to congratulate Judy Welles, one of our Chapter 258 members (and BUZZ editor), who was recently named chairwoman of Montgomery County's Commission on Aging. For more information, go to Web site www.montgomerycountymd.gov/senior For telephone assistance and information, call the Senior Resource Line at 240-777-3000.

Our Sympathy



We mourn the loss and the passing of the following Chapter members, reported in November 2011 through January 2012, and extend deepest sympathies to their families and friends: Curtis F Adams, Geoffrey G Cox, Raymond H Femenias, Herbert W Horrell, and Artis Plato.

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**February 10: Webster Phillips from NCPSSM
March 2012: Chapter board and monthly meeting cancelled**

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