



# National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association Gaithersburg Chapter 581

*In our fifty-sixth year of supporting most of the Montgomery Upcounty Communities*

## MARCH 2012

### Our Next Membership

**Meeting:** Tuesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>,

9:00 a.m., Rooms A-B,

**Rosborough Center,**

Asbury Methodist Village

**PLEASE NOTE THE DATE AND TIME  
CHANGE**

### Other Upcoming Events

March 22<sup>nd</sup> (Thursday)

**Chapter 581 Board Meeting**

**Conley Hall, Trott Building**

**10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon**

March 28<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)

**Deadline for April**

**newsletter articles**

April 5<sup>th</sup> (Thursday)

**Newsletter Assembly**

**Edwards-Fisher Building**

**9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.**

April 19<sup>th</sup> (Thursday)

**Chapter 581 Board Meeting**

**Conley Hall, Trott Building**

**10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon**

April 24<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday)

**Chapter Meeting: Annual**

**MD State Legislators Forum**

(Preceded by a luncheon)

April 25<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday)

**Deadline for May**

**newsletter articles**

April 30<sup>th</sup> - May 1<sup>st</sup> (Mon./Tues.)

**MD Federation Mini Convention**

**Comfort Inn, Bowie, MD**

*Please put these dates on your calendar*

### **DR. JIM COWIE, NARFE's MD Federation Federal Legislative Committee Chairman, Our March 27th Chapter Membership Meeting Speaker**

Jim Cowie, a Chapter 581 member, will speak on the extremely timely topic "Advocacy in the Current Political Environment", presented at a recent Bowie, MD training session. Please meet Jim and learn the NARFE state level business at our next chapter membership meeting **Tues., March 27<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.** at Rosborough Rooms A & B at Asbury Methodist Village.

### ***PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE***

***John Padan and Larry Lange***

We're all familiar with the phrase "The most constant thing in life is change" – for Chapter 581 for February and March 2012, nothing could be more true. As in last month's newsletter, due to a scheduling "glitch" at Asbury, ***we had to move our monthly chapter meetings up one hour to 9:00 a.m.*** Thanks to ***Rocky Jones***, our Asbury Liaison, ***our annual April MD State Legislators' Forum, on Tuesday, April 24<sup>th</sup> both the luncheon before the forum to begin at 12:30 p.m., and the forum at 1:15 p.m.,*** will be held in different rooms in the ***Parkview Building*** on the Asbury Methodist Village campus. Please see the registration coupon for the luncheon in this (P. 4) and April's newsletters.

***Ms. Evelyn Kirby, NARFE MD Federation 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President and Legislative Director,*** spoke at our February Chapter membership meeting. ***Marty Strombotne, Recording Secretary, Sunshine Lady,*** reports that Evelyn spoke of the MDFed structure—34 chapters & many committees; volunteer vacancies to be filled; involve more Active Employee Members in NARFE Legislation. There are 2 Board meetings annually, a Mini-convention every other year, & a main convention every 2 years. Other legislation organizations are NTEU, AFGE, Military groups, & AARP. NARFE is one of the 28-member Federal-Postal Coalition & other organizations representing government employees. Strategic planning & digital communications will increase member involvement.

In the coming months will be the ***MD Federation Mini-Convention,*** at Bowie's Comfort Inn ***April 30<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>,*** our ***annual Chapter picnic on June 12<sup>th</sup>*** in Bohrer Park in Gaithersburg, and of course the ***National Convention in Reno-Sparks, NV August 26<sup>th</sup> through the 30<sup>th</sup>*** (see P. 4)... a lot of NARFE activities to look forward to and in which to participate! Reserve early!

As many of you are aware, I, ***Co-President Padan*** was on sick leave for a while, missing the January 24<sup>th</sup> chapter and the February 23<sup>rd</sup> board meetings. My ***thanks for the cards, calls, and visits.*** I appreciated them. I am not out of the woods yet but felt well enough to attend the February 28<sup>th</sup> chapter meeting. I thoroughly enjoyed the sense of camaraderie and it made me realize that we join NARFE because we want to help protect our earned retirement benefits. We attend NARFE meetings, to a large degree, because of the people we meet.

**FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

*Jim Cowie, MDFed Federal  
Legislative Committee Chair  
Deferred Annuity Coordinator*



In December there was a squabble in Congress as to how to pay for a year's extension of the payroll tax reduction, unemployment continuation and the so called "doc fix," which prevented Medicare payments from being reduced. Temporary arrangements were made for two months. Then in February, it was agreed that the payroll tax reduction would be continued for the rest of the year at a cost of \$100 billion without arranging to cover this cost. The other two items, with a price tag of \$50 billion, would be paid for by various contributions including increases in the pension contributions of new hires to the Federal Government and those with less than five years of service. The original proposal from the House was that current active employees would make such additional contributions, but this was strongly opposed by Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen in the joint Senate/House Committee charged with resolving differences in the House and Senate versions of the legislation. There was a very strong desire to reach an acceptable compromise. It was finally agreed that a permanent change would be made to the terms of federal employment to resolve an unconnected transient issue lasting ten months.

Those in Congress who have a better understanding of the contributions of the federal service and who were very aware that the federal sector has already been called upon to sacrifice, (a two year pay freeze) were outraged that this compromise resulted in one segment being penalized to pay for reductions for other members of the work force. But in the present political environment, unreasonable demands can succeed if needed to come to reach agreement on what is considered to be an important issue, albeit a temporary one.

The evidence strongly indicates this trend of attacking the federal community will continue for as long as the controlling power in the House is in charge. NARFE needs to take whatever steps it can to weaken this influence in the crucial next election. Hence it is important to build up NARFE PAC contributions from members (March is designated as NARFE PAC month – see the latest NARFE magazine) so that NARFE can invest in districts across the country with close races and where the candidates' attitudes towards the federal community are markedly different. Even if a candidate

**Cowie** (continued on Page 3.)

**STATE LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

*Dave Roseman, MD PAC Chair and  
MD Fed Budget Officer*



**Maryland's State Primary** is scheduled for April 3rd. In addition to the Republican Presidential Primary there are 10 Republicans running to challenge U.S. Senator Ben Cardin who is himself being challenged by eight other Democrats in the Democratic primary. In Congressional District Eight Chris Van Hollen is being challenged by one other Democrat and four Republicans seeking the nomination. In the 6th district there are five candidates running to challenge either Republican incumbent Roscoe Bartlett or one of the seven candidates running in the primary against the incumbent. As you can see the next few weeks will present a lot of opportunities for you to either get involved in Maryland politics, no matter what your political persuasion, or to watch from the side lines. Those of you who watch from the side lines need to remember if you don't like the results, you didn't earn the right to complain. Also, if you can't vote on the 3rd of April go to the Maryland State Board of Elections web site [www.elections.state.md.us/voting/](http://www.elections.state.md.us/voting/) for information about early or absentee voting.

**The Maryland State General Assembly** has been meeting and is now considering bills that NARFE is interested in, as well as numerous bills that we don't take a position on, but that will impact all of us. Members of the State Legislative Committee and others have testified on bills dealing with annual tax credits for long term care insurance premiums as well as other pension related bills. Bills of general interest to all of us include various bills that will raise state income taxes, raise fees and charges on a host of services and permits/licenses, changes in the way teacher pensions are funded (Montgomery County would be very hard hit if this is passed), and other bills that would raise costs for everyone such as expanding the sales tax to gas and requiring large subsidies for attempts to develop wind power. All of you should carefully review all of these bills and let your delegates and state senator know how you feel about these proposals.

**United Seniors of Maryland held their annual forum** on January 24th. It was a huge success with close to 400 seniors attending. Speaking at the forum were Nancy Kopp, the Maryland State Treasurer; Senator Mike Miller, President of the Senate; Senator E. J. Pipkin, Senate Minority Leader; Delegate Michael Busch, Speaker of the House; and Delegate Tony O'Donnell, Minority House

**Roseman** (Continued on page 3)

**MEMBERSHIP NOTES**

*Jim Short,*  
*Membership Chairman*



For the month of January we gained only four new members and five members were reinstated.

During this period of time we lost 16 members, including two who transferred to other chapters, and one voluntary cancellation, for a net loss of seven members.

**Please welcome the following new members:** Rohn Brown • George Freeland • Tony On • Dorann Bunkin.

**Please welcome back the following reinstated members:** Albert Belsky • Keith Egli • David Levine • Linda Martinez • Richard Trencher.

**We are sad to report the following deaths:** Patrick W. Carlin • Donna Randolph.

**The following members were dropped for non-payment of dues as of October 1:** Kathryn Brown-Etter • Syd Carter • Walter Coward • Kathryn Daniels • Eric Eskew • Arthur Mehner • Dorothy Miller • Gail Morrell • Carolyn O'Connor • Richard Sheer • Charles Whittington.

If you know any of these people, please give them a call and try to convince them that they should renew their memberships, and encourage dues withholding.

I recently had a request from a member who lives in Damascus who would like to attend our meetings, but needs a ride. If any of you live in that corner of the county and would be willing to bring her to meetings when you come, please call me (301-330-5084) to see if we can work out a mutually satisfactory agreement.

**Cowie** (continued from Page 2.)

is more sympathetic, this in practice may not help if the party is controlled by less reasonable colleagues. For example, NARFE is interested in the new MD District 6. It is also important that NARFE members take an active interest in both the primary and the election so that the candidates are asked about their attitudes toward the federal community and how their party is likely to act if they have control. The federal community has never been threatened as much as it is today. Much of the cause is misunderstanding and misinformation. We need to fight back and an election year provides ample opportunity to do so. Unfortunately an outcome of the

Continued in the Right Column

**Cowie** (continued from left column)

recent compromise is that it drives a wedge between retirees, vested federal employees and new recruits. Already, there is a very divisive issue between Social Security recipients who do not have to pay more for Medical Part B, in any year where there is no COLA. This adds to the burden of colleagues who do not get Social Security. NARFE has always argued for the need to attract a fair share of talent because we believe in the importance of a quality federal service. It is imperative that we fight as vigorously on behalf of future federal employees as we do for our current members. If not, then we can justifiably be accused of being preoccupied by our own self interest and engaging in empty rhetoric about the importance of the federal service just to further our own selfish ends.

**Roseman** (continued from Page 2)

Leader. Having both sides of the aisle represented led to interesting, lively debates on all issues. All of the forum participants had the opportunity to meet with their delegates and exchange views on issues and legislation of interest to seniors. For more USM info go to [www.unitedseniors.net](http://www.unitedseniors.net).

**THANKS TO THE FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER'S ASSEMBLY GROUP**

**Thanks very much** to the following 12 members who helped fold, address label, and wafer seal our Feb. newsletter Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>. We couldn't have done it without you!

- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| George Donovan   | Keith Steele      |
| Roger Dahlman    | Dick Strombotne   |
| Larry Lange      | Marty Strombotne  |
| Marty Piper      | Eleanor Williams  |
| Jim Short        | Meredith Williams |
| Genevieve Steele | Judy F. Bernstein |

And **many thanks** to our great diligent **proof-readers!**

**Our 50/50 Winners at the February 28<sup>th</sup> Chapter Meeting:**

<b>To the Chapter 581 Treasury</b>	\$ 15.00
First place Jim Cowie	\$ 6.00
Second place Larry Barker	\$ 5.00
Third place Dave Roseman	\$ 3.00*
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$ 29.00</b>

\*Dave donated his winnings to the Chapter Treasury.

## NARFE Chapter 581 Luncheon

April 24, 2012 12:30 p.m.

Parkview Building, Asbury Methodist Village

A delicious New York Style Deli buffet lunch!

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

No. Of Diners \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$14.00 each = \$ \_\_\_\_\_.00

Please make your check (to be **received** no later than Wednesday, April 18<sup>th</sup>) **payable to NARFE Chapter 581** and mail to:

Mr. Larry Lange  
11210 White Barn Court  
Gaithersburg, MD 20879-3146

**Please mail your check no later than April 16<sup>th</sup> !**

## CALL MARTY STROMBOTNE!

Do you know of a member who is seriously ill, has passed away, or is celebrating a special occasion? Please call **Marty Strombotne**, Sunshine Chairman, at 240-632-9881.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

*Larry Lange, Treasurer*

### All Funds Summary, February 23, 2012

Checking Account	\$ 11,409.27
Certificate of Deposit (Restricted Chapter Life Membership funds )	\$ 2,794.96
<b>TOTAL CHAPTER ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 14,204.23</b>
<b>WORKING CAPITAL</b>	<b>\$ 11,409.27</b>

## NARFE MDFED MINI-CONVENTION

*Dick Strombotne, MDFED Treasurer*

At the NARFE MDFED Mini-Convention April 30th-May 1st, attending members will learn how NARFE chapters work together on *important matters to our members*; receive a plated lunch; the chapter covers the \$20 daily registration fee for attending members; program to include a talk by *one of the original Tuskegee airmen*; *RSVP to Larry*; more details in April's newsletter.

## MORE ON DUES WITHHOLDING

*Dick Strombotne, Treasurer, MD Federation*

[DickS.narfe@comcast.net](mailto:DickS.narfe@comcast.net); 240-632-9881

For the past several months in this newsletter I have been pointing out the advantages of paying your NARFE dues by regular small monthly payments from your annuity. It is done automatically by the Office of Personnel Management. It occurs to me that you may give the idea more consideration if you know that other NARFE members are doing it. In the Maryland Federation of Chapters, 177 members decided to use dues withholding last year. At the end of January, 2012, there were 2,335 members on dues withholding. Here in Gaithersburg Chapter 581, in the last 12 months ending in January, 11 of our members went on dues withholding, bringing the number to 107 at the end of January. These new dues withholding members are enjoying the savings in time and money and the convenience that comes with the switch.

The monthly dues withholding payment for members of this chapter is \$3.50, a total of \$42 annually. This reflects the \$8 chapter dues plus the 15% savings on national dues. To apply for dues withholding just use the form on page 40 in the January 2012 issue of NARFE magazine, fill it out, and send it in. Also, the form can be downloaded from the [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org) website. You can also contact me or Membership Chair Jim Short for an application form or to answer your questions.

## NARFE 2012 NATIONAL CONVENTION IN SPARKS NEVADA, AUG. 26TH-30TH

*Dick Strombotne, MDFED Treasurer*

**NARFE members have until March 31 to offer suggestions to the Bylaws Revision Committee** on the draft bylaws published in the March issue of NARFE Magazine, Pages 38-46. The delegates to the 2012 NatCon in Sparks NV will be voting on new bylaws.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR ...

*Is there something on your mind you'd like to share?*

Do you have something to share with your fellow NARFE members? Do you have a comment about an article published in this newsletter? Is there some issue you would like to address that would be of interest to NARFE members? Please send your submissions or inquiries to [tom@kitchens.de](mailto:tom@kitchens.de) or [llange3751@aol.com](mailto:llange3751@aol.com). Inclusion will be on a space available basis.

## STILL WONDERING IF YOU ARE IN DISTRICT 2, 6, OR 8?

*John Padan, Chapter 581 Co-President*

My wife and I live in Montgomery Village, a part of which was moved into Congressional District Four, following the 2000 census. After the 2010 census boundaries were adjusted again and we knew we would either remain in District Four or be placed into District Six. As of yesterday, I was still wondering and growing anxious about it because the voting issues are not the same. I decided to investigate on my own and stop waiting to receive something in the mail. I dug out my trusty Montgomery County Voter Registration Card and dialed 1-240-777-8500. An official asked me a few questions to verify my identity and then explained that we are in District Six now and that "I should have been sent something on that." Our polling place remains the same and it (supposedly) is OK to use my old card with District 4 on it. I hope this information helps some of you who may still be in a quandary.

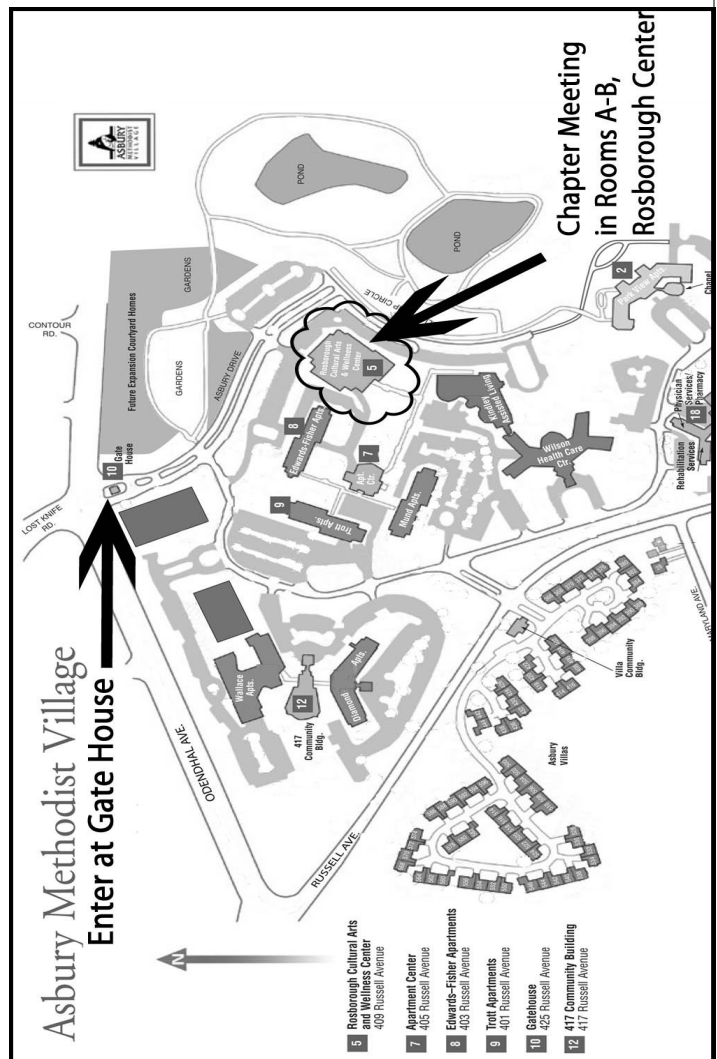
At the MD Federation Board Meeting in Bowie on February the 7<sup>th</sup>, Evelyn Kirby had drawn up the following instructions on how to determine one's Congressional District via the Internet following Maryland's redistricting. Those directions are:

1. Go to [www.mdp.state.md.us/Redistricting](http://www.mdp.state.md.us/Redistricting)
2. Click on "Interactive Maps," a small MD map in a blue background on the lower right 1/3 of your screen ("Interactive Map" is also found about 1/4 of the way down in the left column). This requires Adobe Flash 1.1 software, which is free to download; if you are asked to download this software, click "yes"; when it asks you to "accept," click the "accept" box – this takes approximately one or two minutes to accomplish.
3. Click "Launch the 2011 Congressional District Interactive Map"
4. Click "Proceed"
5. At "Redistricting Themes" click "Maryland 2011 Congressional Districts"
6. At "Find District by Address" enter your street address and zip code
7. Click "Locate"
8. You'll see a binoculars or horseshoe appearing on the map at the address specified
9. RIGHT click on or near the binoculars/horseshoe so that the specific Congressional District for that address will appear in a drop box. [Hint: You may need to do a left click and then a right click one or more times in the

## FOR OUR MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Enter Asbury Methodist Village in Gaithersburg at the intersection of Odendhal and Lost Knife Roads by the Gate House. Continue straight through on Asbury Drive. The building on your right as the road curves is the Rosborough Cultural Arts and Wellness Center (Bldg. 5 on the map below). The meetings are held in Rooms A-B. You can also ask for directions at the Asbury Gate House.

**NOTE: All meetings are now in the Rosborough Center.**



area of the binoculars/horseshoe for this box to appear.] ALSO: Outlines of the eight Congressional Districts are available for viewing and printing at the site shown above. The Governor's recommendations went into effect & will apply in the 2014 elections. To find an address within the proposed state-level legislative districts, follow the steps above, except at # 3 click on "Launch the 2011 Legislative Redistricting Interactive Map." Call 1-240-777-8500 with questions on any information available on the site.

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Montgomery Village, MD  
20886

**NARFE Chapter 581 Newsletter**  
**National Active and Retired Federal Employees**  
Chapter 581 Gaithersburg - Chartered December, 1956

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**Three important Websites**

[www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org)  
[www.mdnarfe.org](http://www.mdnarfe.org)  
[www.mdnarfe.org/chapter0581](http://www.mdnarfe.org/chapter0581)



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