



NARFE BUZZ

Western Montgomery County Chapter 258 - Chartered November 10, 1953
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association
(Formerly the Bethesda - Chevy Chase and Gaithersburg Chapters)

November/December 2015

Our Next Chapter Meeting – And Into The Future

Our Friday, November 13th chapter meeting will be at the Mykonos Grill, 121 Congressional Avenue, Rockville, MD; members who wish to come for lunch may arrive at 11:30 a.m., with the meal being served at 12:00 noon. The cost is \$25.00 per person, payable either in cash, or checks made out to “Mykonos Grill” (please, no credit cards). Those who do not wish to come for lunch may arrive at 1:00 p.m. The speaker will be Ms. Jennifer Malavé, Account Manager, Carefirst Blue Cross Blue Shield, who will give her annual health care “Open Season” presentation.



Monday, November 9th, Chapter Executive Board meeting, Ledo's Restaurant, 10300 Westlake Drive, Bethesda, MD, 10:00 a.m.

Thursday, November 12th – Cong. Chris Van Hollen's Annual Open Season Health Forum, 7:00 p.m to 9:00 p.m., Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, MD 20850.

Monday, November 23rd – Cong. Chris Van Hollen's Annual Open Season Health Forum, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., Holiday Park Senior Center, 3950 Ferrara Drive, Wheaton, MD 20906.

Wednesday, December 9th, will be our Holiday Party, at the Golden Bull Restaurant, Gaithersburg, MD (details given in this newsletter).

Monday, January 4th, Chapter Executive Board meeting, Ledo's Restaurant, 10300 Westlake Drive, Bethesda, MD, 10:00 a.m. PLEASE NOTE: If Montgomery County Public Schools either have a delayed opening or are closed due to inclement weather on the day of our Chapter Board meeting OR our Chapter membership meeting, that meeting will be *cancelled*.

Friday, January 8th, Chapter meeting, at the Mykonos Grill, Rockville, MD.

Tuesday, February 2nd, NARFE MD Federation Board Meeting, Bowie, MD, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Wednesday, February 3rd, USM (United Seniors of Maryland) Forum, Annapolis, MD. The price of \$15.00 includes membership in USM, plus coffee and donuts and a box lunch. Please contact Dave Roseman for further details (his phone number and E-mail address are on the back page of this newsletter).

Monday, April 4th and Tuesday, April 5th, NARFE Region II Training, Windham Hotel, York, PA.

Monday, May 2nd and Tuesday, May 3rd, NARFE MD Federation Mini-Convention, Bowie, MD.

President's Corner

Charles Garfinkel

Federal retirees, employees, and Social Security recipients **WILL NOT** receive a cost-of-living increase (COLA) in 2016. The following request was reported in the NARFE *News Watch*: NARFE is asking that members contact their Senators and Representatives asking them to support Senate Bill S. 2148, *Protecting Medicare Beneficiaries Act of 2015*, and House Bill H.R. 3696, *Medicare Premium Fairness Act of 2015*. The two bills would keep Part B premiums at their current rate (\$104.90 per month for most) for all Medicare beneficiaries in 2016. For federal retirees covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and who do not receive Social Security benefits, your Medicare Part B premium payment is slated to increase by 52 percent in 2016 (going from \$104.90 to \$159.30 per month). These two bills, filed by Senator Ron Wyden (D. OR), and Representative Dina Titus (D. NV), need co-sponsors to protect millions of seniors, including CSRS retirees, from the disproportionate increase in the Medicare Part B premium.

For those who missed the October chapter meeting, our guest speaker was Jim Resnick, Manager of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Senior Outreach Office, who discussed a variety of safety issues. Some of those issues included an evacuation plan, a determined-upon meeting place when a fire occurs once all family members are safely outside, and smoke detector locations. Mr. Resnick advised us that beginning in January 2018, one will no longer be able to use smoke detectors with a 9-volt battery as the primary power source; these will only be allowed as a backup power source. Mr. Resnick advised we should consider purchasing smoke detectors that have the 10-year batteries. Jim talked about being observant of your surroundings when entering public places, *i.e.* restaurants, offices, and stores and to note the exit locations (doors and windows) in case of fire. Mr. Resnick provided copies of the “Personal Planning for Emergencies” document and spoke about the benefits of keeping it up-to-date. The document includes space to list medical conditions, medications, health insurance, doctors' names and telephone numbers, and emergency contacts. This document should be maintained in the File of Life packet (which has a magnetic strip) and kept in a very visible place in your home (such as on your refrigerator's door).

Continues Pg. 2

November is the month that federal employees and retirees consider their choices in health insurance. Our November meeting will be on health insurance changes. It is scheduled for November 13th, at the Mykonos Grill, and our guest speaker will be Jennifer Malave. Jennifer has worked for CareFirst Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) for 26 years. She started with BCBS as a customer service representative where she learned the benefits “like the back of my hand.” Over the years Jennifer has held various positions at CareFirst, ultimately accepting a position as Marketing Representative for Care First BCBS, a position she has had for 16 years. Her team recently took over the management of the local Plan HMO, Blue Choice, which is offered to federal employees. Jennifer’s department is now called *FEHBP Account Management and OPM Relations*. She will discuss which changes are OPM-driven and which are Plan-driven, and if any of the changes are the result of the Affordable Care Act. Any benefit changes that affect enrollees of Medicare Parts A and B will also be discussed.

The Office of Personnel Management officially announced the dates of the 2015 Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) Open Season, which will run from Monday, November 9th through Monday, December 14th. New for this open season is the **Self-Plus-One (SPO) Enrollment type**. You may call 1-800-332-9798 to speak to a customer service representative who will be able to answer general questions about SPO. Congressman Chris Van Hollen will be hosting his 12th annual FEHBP Forums (see the “Upcoming Events,” front page of this newsletter, for dates and locations).

I want to remind everyone about the Membership Recruitment Drive reported in the October newsletter, which runs from September 1st through December 31st. In addition to the information contained in Dick Strombotne’s *Membership Report* in this newsletter, recruiters will be entered into a drawing for the Grand Prize of an Apple iPad Air 2 (one entry for each member you have recruited). Headquarters will also be sweetening the pot by selecting a winner in September, October, and November for a \$25 Amazon Gift card. You are reminded that credit for recruitment can only be given if the recruiter’s NARFE ID number is provided on the application when the new member joins.

Our Chapter 258 Board has agreed to join the Aspen Hill and Rockville NARFE Chapters for a joint Holiday Party. This luncheon will be on Wednesday, December 9th, at the Golden Bull Restaurant, 7 Dalamar Street, Gaithersburg, MD, starting at 11:30 a.m. Please consider attending this party; it will be a lot of fun – the reservation form to complete and send in, with your check, to Bob Arndt, Treasurer of the Aspen Hill NARFE Chapter 1892, may be found in this newsletter. The cost of the meal will vary slightly based on the entree selected. There will be entertainment (an actor portraying a special woman at the time of the Civil War) and 50/50 drawings.

Membership Report

Dick Strombotne, Membership Chair
DickS.narfe@comcast.net

New Recruitment Awards Campaign

If you recruit a new member to join NARFE and HQ receives the application form before the end of the year, you will receive a \$10 award check from HQ and another \$10 award check from Maryland NARFE. You can use the application form in a recent issue of *narfe* magazine. Be sure to write your membership ID number on the form so you will receive your award. Your ID number is listed on the label of your *narfe* magazine. (Repeated from October newsletter.)

Chapter 258 Membership For Period 12 September to 9 October 2015

New Members.

Debra Bergstrom, Edmund Habib, Joan Kutcher, and Jack Schenendorf.

Welcome Back These Reinstated Members.

Dorothy M. Bailey, Eugene Grunby, John G. Honig, Howard Kaplan, Marlis Kessler, Harri J. Kramer, Patricia Rinaldi, and Doris I. Stamm.

Deceased Members.

Mary G. Belliveau, John V. Gilfrich, Jack Katz, and Richard Quarles.

If you know any of the dropped members listed below, do them a service and invite them to rejoin NARFE.

Members Dropped in September.

Syed Ali, Hilda B. Auricchio, Merrilee Banic, Margaret L. Bodine, Joseph Fenton, Brenda Hausman, Gary Palmer, Elton A. Peller, Virginia S. Phillips, Rick Progar, Linda L. Schneider, Arlyne Sher, and Edith C. Wolff.

Chapter Statistics:

Western Montgomery Chapter 258 has 1540 voting members, as of the end of September, including 131 Life members, 34 Honorary members, and 184 members on dues-withholding. Current federal employee members total 235.

Charge Alzheimer Donations to Your Credit Card

Gordon Brown, Second Vice President

In the September issue of the *Buzz*, I pointed out that you can charge your NARFE-PAC donations to your credit card. This is a great way to be sure that you always support NARFE-PAC without having to remember to take your check book to every Chapter meeting. At the national convention in Reno three years ago, I asked the NARFE/Alzheimer's Chair if I could do the same thing for my Alzheimer's donations. She suggested that I contact the Alzheimer's Association, which I did. I now have regular Alzheimer's donations made through monthly charges to my credit card. Once in awhile, information about having Alzheimer's donations charged to your credit card is in the *narfe* magazine. I think this is a great idea and hope other Chapter 258 members will do the same thing. NARFE-PAC and Alzheimer's research are two things all NARFE members should support. By the way, I do the same thing with other charitable donations. My regular donations to the Wounded Warriors Project are charged to my credit card. I hope some of you will do as I did: Use your credit card to ensure that you regularly support NARFE-PAC and the charities of your choice, most particularly the NARFE/Alzheimer's program.

Treasurer's Report

Larry Lange, Treasurer

At the end of November the previous Chapter 258 Sun Trust checking account will be closed and its funds will be added to the Wells Fargo checking account, where our Chapter members' dues are deposited electronically.

Chapter 258, Funds Summary, October 6, 2015:

Checking Account, Sun Trust \$ 8,670.23

Chapter 581, Funds Summary, October 6, 2015

(All Chapter 581 funds are at Wells Fargo)

Checking Account \$ 6,009.23

Certificate of Deposit (Restricted Chapter Life Membership funds) \$ 2,476.95

TOTAL CHAPTER 581 ASSETS \$ 8,486.18

WORKING CAPITAL, Chapter 581 \$ 6,009.23

Total combined funds of both Chapters: \$ 17,156.41

WE WILL JOIN TWO OTHER NARFE CHAPTERS FOR OUR HOLIDAY PARTY

Larry Lange, Treasurer, Chapter 258

We will join NARFE Chapters 1892 (Aspen Hill) and 1127 (Rockville) for our Holiday Party on Wednesday, December 9th. The party will be at the Golden Bull Restaurant, 7 Dalamar Street, Gaithersburg, MD 20877. Below is the registration form – we hope you'll be able to attend!

Reservation Form for the Joint Aspen Hill, Rockville, and Northern Montgomery County NARFE Chapters Holiday Party Wednesday, December 9, 2015 Luncheon

at the Golden Bull Restaurant, 7 Dalamar Street, Gaithersburg, MD, 20877, phone 301-948-3666.

You may arrive at 11:30 AM: Mix/mingle; the meal will be served at noon;

the actor portraying a Civil War figure will begin at 1:00 p.m. Two 50/50's, door prizes ... fun!

MENU:	NAME	NAME	NAME	SUBTOTAL
A. Crab Cakes	\$27.50			\$
B. English Cut Prime Rib	\$25.00			\$
C. Broiled Filet of Salmon	\$25.00			\$
D. Chicken Breast Chardonnay	\$21.00			\$
E. Vegetarian Pasta Marinara	\$21.00			\$

Each meal includes Salad, Two Sides, Coffee/Tea/Soda, and Chocolate Mousse Dessert – Costs include tax/tip.

Subtotals for **A + B + C + D + E + F** Equal Total Due \$ _____

Your telephone/cell number _____ • email _____

Check Receipt Deadline is December 4, 2015. Please send your check, payable to the NARFE Chapter 1892 and this reservation form to:
Mr. Robert Arndt, 17524 Shenandoah Ct., Ashton, MD 20861 contact: 301 774-4403 rcatwo@verizon.net

Western Montgomery County Chapter 258
 National Active and Retired Federal Employees
 20837 Scottsbury Drive
 Germantown, MD 20876-4187

NON-PROFIT
 US POSTAGE
 PAID
 SILVER SPRING, MD
 PERMIT #5715

Return Service Requested

**Ms. Jennifer Malave, our BlueCross Blue Shield representative,
 will give her annual Open Season FEHB presentation at our
 November 13th meeting**

Chapter Officers		Committee Chairs		Awards	
President Charles Garfinkel garfinkc@verizon.net	301-972-0183	Public Relations Suzanne Ackerman suzword@gmail.com	301-588-6206	Gordon Brown papabrown26@verizon.net	240-328-6926
1 st Vice President Allan Kam akam@htsassociates.com	301-469-0352	Newsletter Larry Lange llange3751@aol.com	301-972-6775	United Seniors of Maryland Dave Roseman dave.roseman@comcast.net	240-401-6628
2 nd Vice President Gordon Brown papabrown26@verizon.net	240-328-6926	Suzanne Ackerman suzword@gmail.com	301-588-6206	Membership Dick Strombotne DickS.narfe@comcast.net	240-632-9881
Secretary Marty Strombotne martystrom@comcast.net	240-632-9881	Judy Welles judywelles@verizon.net	301-229-8110	Alzheimer's George Perez George.E.Perez@gmail.com	
Treasurer Larry Lange llange3751@aol.com	301-972-6775	Federal Legislation David Richman dmr0313@aol.com	301-770-3608	Congressional Delegation Senator Barbara A. Mikulski 202-2245-4654	
Service Officer Helen Berkson	301-881-1168	State Legislation Dave Roseman dave.roseman@comcast.net	240-401-6628	Senator Benjamin L. Cardin 202-224-4524	
		Programs Charles Garfinkel garfinkc@verizon.net	301-972-0183	Representative Chris Van Hollen, Jr. 202-225-5341	
		Allan Kam akam@htsassociates.com	301-469-0352	Representative John Delaney 202-225-2721	