



SHARPENER

Annapolis Chapter 251

Vol. 41, Issue 3

November 2017

President's Message

At the October meeting, **Abigail Nelson**, representing AAMC Community Outreach, spoke on *The Conversation Project*, a national program dedicated to helping people of all ages talk about their wishes for end-of-life care. A survey conducted in 2013 indicated that 90% of people say it is important to talk with loved ones about end-of-life care, but only 27% have actually done so. You can download a copy of *Your Conversation Starter Kit* by going to www.theconversationproject.org.

Looking ahead, **Anne Healey**, from Blue Cross/Blue Shield Care First, will speak at the November meeting and take questions from attendees on health care issues. **Voices in Melody**, the chorus of the Anne Arundel Retired School Personnel Association, will perform at the December 20 meeting. Members of the Bay Area Chapter 1363 will once again be our guests. I invite you to bring along a friend to join in our holiday celebration.

Bob Doyle, **Jim Duls**, and I attended the Maryland Federation Training Day on October 27. **Tammy Bresnahan**, AARP Associate Director of Advocacy, stated that all politics is local and stressed that AARP is issue oriented, not partisan. **Dan Adcock**, from the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare (NCPSSM), suggested that NCPSSM and NARFE can work together in promoting use of the CPI-E (elderly) rather than the current CPI-W in formulating the COLA for retirees. After lunch, Jim Duls and I attended the Membership Workshop moderated by **Ed Reed**, Maryland Federation Membership Director. Ed reminded us that NARFE's Autumn Membership Drive runs through December 31, 2017. Recruiters will receive \$10 from NARFE National and \$10 from the Maryland NARFE Federation. There are also monthly prizes of \$25 Amazon gift cards. On behalf of Chapter 251, I want to congratulate **Eloise T. Tarter** and **Shirley L. Spice** whose names appeared in the September 2017 NARFE *Recruiting & Retention Journal* for recruiting new members between January and June 2017.

President, continued on Page 2.

CHAPTER NEWS

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The membership report from National, dated October 7, reports no new members for Chapter #251.

RAFFLE WINNERS

The **Fun(d) & Games** winner at the **October** luncheon was **William McQuade, Jr.** Thank you for supporting the chapter!

Barbara Muller won the **50/50** raffle. **Congratulations to all!**



REMINDERS

- If you live in the Annapolis area and lack of transportation is preventing you from attending Chapter 251 luncheon meetings, please let us help. Contact Chapter President Carla Duls at kid3dle@aol.com or (301) 261-7515 to arrange for someone to drive you to the meeting.
- Remember to renew your membership in Chapter 251 when you renew your National NARFE membership! Since March, 76 members have transferred out of Chapter 251. Unfortunately, many of these individuals may just have neglected to indicate that they also wished to renew their chapter membership.

NEXT MEETING

The **November luncheon meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 29**, at the Elks Lodge, Annapolis, Maryland. We gather at 11:30 a.m. with lunch served at noon. A brief business meeting begins at 12:30 p.m. followed by the program at 1:00 p.m. Checks, in the amount of \$20.00, should be made payable to **NARFE Chapter #251**. Make your reservation with Doris Bussey at 410 757-2477. If you can't join us for lunch, stop by later for the meeting and/or the program. **Anne Healey**, from **Blue Cross/Blue Shield Care First**, will be our speaker.

Don't forget to check out our chapter Facebook page! You can find us at:
NARFE Maryland Chapter 251



Inclement Weather Policy

As in the past, in the event of inclement weather (think snow, etc.), Chapter 251 follows the Anne Arundel County Public Schools. If they're closed, closing early, or opening late, we do not meet that day(s). Fall back positions and/or alternate dates will be available from the Chapter President.



NATIONAL NEWS

NARFE recently issued several press releases addressing issues important to NARFE members.

(Oct. 13) A COLA of 2.0 percent in 2018 has been announced. NARFE President Richard G. Thissen noted that this COLA “provides only partial relief and serves as a reminder that our method for calculating the increasing cost of goods and services is out of sync with the reality faced by federal annuitants.” He indicated that this COLA “is outpaced by the average 6.1 increase in health care premiums for federal retirees in 2018.” He went on to say, “Medicare premiums increased disproportionately for most federal annuitants during the last two years, and long-term care premiums sharply increased by 83 percent, on average.” Thissen suggested that Congress require the use of the CPI-E (Consumer Price Index for the elderly) as the measurement for setting COLAs.

(Oct. 27) The House passed a fiscal year 2018 joint budget resolution, concurring with the Senate and ending the budget reconciliation tax reform threat to the federal community. NARFE will closely monitor the anticipated tax bill for potential effects on the federal community.

The current continuing resolution (CR) expires on December 8, creating another potential avenue for cuts to the earned pay and benefits of the federal community. NARFE members should stay informed and be ready to take action in the coming weeks.

(Nov. 7) NARFE President Richard G. Thissen issued the following statement in response to the Senate’s passage of the TSP Modernization Act of 2017. “This bill will provide the proud men and women who serve this nation in the civil service and in the military greater control over their own retirement savings and the ability to plan responsibly for their future. The changes, common in the private sector, are much needed and long overdue.”

You Are Invited To The Virtual Benefit Fair!

Register to attend the **2017 Virtual Benefits Fair** to chat with carriers, review 2018 plan details, and get the information you need to help make the right decisions, in one convenient online location. Visit LTCFEDS.com/elearning.

Log in anytime during the Federal Benefits Open Season, from November 13 to December 11, 2017. Save 2018 plan brochures in your online briefcase, visit individual carrier booths, watch instructional videos, and register for educational webinars.

Representatives from all participating carriers will be available to take your questions during the remaining live carrier chat day: **Tuesday, December 5, 2017 from 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

BYLAWS REVISION

In order to be in compliance with National and Federation Bylaws, the Executive Committee approved the following changes to the Chapter 251 Bylaws at the September 21 meeting, and they were presented to those in attendance at the September 27 General Membership meeting. A final vote by the membership will take place at the November 29, 2017 General Membership Meeting.

Article I. NAME

(Current language) The chapter shall be affiliated with the Maryland Federation of Chapters...

(Proposed language) The chapter shall be affiliated with the Maryland State Federation...

Article III. MEMBERS

Section 2.

(Current language) The chapter may provide for non-voting members as allowed in Article I, Section 2B of the National Bylaws. The chapter shall also provide for associate members as allowed in Article IV, Section 5F.

(Proposed language) The chapter may provide for non-voting members as allowed in the National Bylaws Article IV, Section 5F defining associate and social members.

Article VI. COMMITTEES

Section 4

(Current language) An audit committee may be appointed by the president to perform an audit of the financial records of the chapter at any time.

(Proposed language) The audit committee shall be appointed by the president to annually perform an audit of the financial records of the chapter.

Article VIII. CONVENTION DELEGATES

Section 1

(Current language) Delegates to the Association’s National Convention or the Maryland Federation Convention shall be elected by the chapter’s voting members, in accordance with the National or Federation Bylaws and guidelines, as soon as possible after the official count of membership and delegate strength is issued by National Headquarters or the State Federation.

(Proposed Language) Section removed

Article IX PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY becomes Article VIII.

Article X AMENDMENTS becomes Article IX.

President, continued from Page 1

Just a reminder that the vote to approve the Chapter 251 revised bylaws will take place at the November meeting. The proposed changes are reprinted above.

By now, you should have received the November issue of *narfe* magazine. Due to the delayed availability of information for the issue, the magazine went to press later than usual. As always, it is available on the NARFE website.



Did you know that November is National Alzheimer’s Awareness Month and that the USPS has authorized an Alzheimer’s semipostal fundraising stamp? The stamp, which will be available for two years, will sell for 60 cents and is designated as a first-class postage stamp. It will be available November 30, 2017.

I wish a very happy Thanksgiving to all Chapter 251 members!

Carla Duls
President

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Because you should always lead with the most important news, I will pass on to you this news which you heard already if you were at our last Chapter meeting – we have confirmation from the Administration that there will be senior income tax relief legislation introduced in the 2018 session. Here are the details.

Our State Legislation Committee (SLC) Chairman Paul Schwartz attended a fundraiser on October 24 for MD Delegate Sid Saab (R- District 33), at which the featured speaker was Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford. Paul discussed our tax relief agenda with the Lt. Governor and learned from him that the Governor intends to introduce a bill to increase the senior tax exemption. When Lt. Governor made his remarks to the crowd, he specifically made reference to Paul and the issue of tax relief. Mr. Rutherford promised Paul that he would send us the information as soon as the bill is prepared. Also at this fundraiser was Delegate Seth Howard, (R- District 30B), the delegate representing many Chapter 251 members, who told Paul he would go through the proposed bill with members of the SLC line by line when we have it to make whatever changes we feel are needed. We look forward to working with Delegate Howard on this issue.

On Wednesday, November 1, I and fellow SLC colleagues Ed Bice and Bill Ferguson went to the Annapolis Senate and House Office Buildings to deliver in person a copy of our 2018 pamphlet on the MD NARFE Federation State Legislative Program, which you received if you attended our October Chapter meeting, or you can read at our website - <http://mdnarfe.org/the-maryland-federation/committees/legislative-state/>. It was the first time I had done this (which was certainly not the case for Ed and Bill) and I enjoyed meeting the staff persons and discussing the tax relief issue with them. In a few cases, we were told that our pamphlet was the first legislation advocacy paper received by the Senator's or Delegates's office for the 2018 session.

As you read elsewhere in this issue of the *Sharpener* in the President's Message by Carla Duls, the Federation held a Training Day at the Bowie Comfort Inn on Friday October 27. In the morning overview sessions, Paul Schwartz brought everyone up to date, including discussion of his meeting with Lt. Governor Rutherford which I detailed above. In the afternoon, along with many other informative sessions, there was a Legislative Workshop on Federal and state matters. For the State Legislation workshop segment, Paul Schwartz reintroduced everyone to the SLC website which can be found on the MD Federation main page or directly at <http://mdnarfe.org/the-maryland-federation/committees/legislative-state/>. We will update and maintain our website as the 2018 Maryland session grows closer to provide you with valuable information and suggested model letters to use to write to the Governor and your State Senator and Delegates.

Bob Doyle
Legislative Chair

CANDID CAMERA



Chapter 251 members **Carla Duls, Bob Doyle, and Jim Duls** participated in the Maryland Federation Training Day on October 27.



Tammy Bresnahan, Associate Director of Advocacy, AARP Maryland, spoke during the morning session.



The luncheon speaker was **Dan Adcock**, Director of Government Relations and Policy, National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare (NCPSSM).



Evelyn Kirby, NARFE Region II Vice-President, provided information about the Region II Training Academy which will be held June 11-12, 2018, in York, PA.

2018 Maryland Federation State Legislative Program

Brochures detailing the 2018 Legislative Program are available at Chapter 251 luncheon meetings and can also be accessed by going to marylandnarfe.org and click on "Legislative - State Page" under Legislative News. You will also find a sample letter to send to Maryland legislators concerning the reduction of Maryland income tax on pensions and other retirement income.



NARFE
Annapolis Chapter 251
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NARFE, one of America's oldest and largest associations, was founded in 1921 with the mission of protecting the earned rights and benefits of America's active and retired federal workers. The largest federal employee/retiree organization, NARFE represents the interests of nearly 5 million current federal employees, retirees, spouses, and survivors. NARFE IS NOT A LABOR UNION but is registered as a 501(c) 5 Tax-Exempt organization under current IRS guidelines.

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DATES TO WATCH IN 2017

November 20 NARFE Webinar: Health Plans-Discover Your Best Options

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2017 Meeting Dates

January 25
 February 22
 March 29
 April 26
 May 31
 June 28 Picnic



July/August-
 no meeting
 September 27
 October 25
 November 29
 December 20

The Board meets at noon at the Elks Lodge on the Wednesday of the week before each meeting. Every member is welcome to attend.