



Website: [www.narfe.org/chapter422](http://www.narfe.org/chapter422)

Chapter 422 office hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays NOON to 3 PM

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### Message from the President

We were not able to have our January meeting because the Senior Center was closed for renovations. Our speaker was to be Ms. Diane Polangin (a tax specialist) who had addressed our group in the past. Several members requested Diane meet with us, in particular to discuss the new tax law. Unfortunately, Diane cannot be at our February meeting due to a prior commitment.

However, in an email from her, she stated: ***“There are a tremendous number of changes, most of them having to do with the schedule A. Most of the people in NARFE will not need a schedule A. They will not have to itemize. The most important thing for them to do would be to look at their itemized deductions from the prior-year, as the standard deduction has doubled. This is why there will not be a need for schedule A for 75% of the people. It is very taxpayer-friendly. However, you will still have to fill out a schedule B & D for your Investments.”*** I recommend that you check with your tax advisor for your individual tax situation.

As you are aware, we are in the middle of a government shutdown. *The Washington Post* will publish a Letter to the Editor on the Government Shutdown, written by our Maryland Federation President Dr. Gary Roundtree Sr., on Saturday, January 12, 2019. As strong feelings run on both sides of the political spectrum and the Federal worker is caught in the middle, I pray for Civility and an end to the shutdown.

Happy New Year.

*Samuel J Raines, Sr.*  
President

## **NARFE Chapter Speaker @ February Meeting - Sara Walser, Program Officer**

The February Chapter 422 meeting will be on Wednesday, Feb. 6, 2019 at 1 p.m. at the Laurel-Beltsville Senior Activity Center, 7120 Contee Road, Laurel. Don Graham, manager of the restoration projects at the Montpelier Mansion, will talk to us about the many restoration projects underway at the site. It is fascinating to see parts of the original house and how the property has been maintained and updated over the years. Mr. Graham will also discuss restoration of the old furniture and clothing, which is used in staging the rooms.

## **MARYLAND INCOME TAXES - Dick Strombotne, MDFED Treasurer, Dec. 23, 2018**

If you usually claim the standard deduction on your Maryland income taxes, you can skip this article. It is intended to inform and advise people who usually claim itemized deductions on Maryland income taxes.

What is the problem? The big increase in the standard deduction on Federal tax makes it attractive for people to claim it for 2018. It saves money on federal taxes. If you do that, then you cannot claim itemized deductions on your MD taxes. You can estimate how much your MD state and local taxes will increase easily. Look up the amount of itemized deductions on the MD tax return for 2017. Subtract the amount of MD standard deduction: \$4,500 for joint filers and \$2,250 for single filers. Multiply the result by 8 percent. That is the amount of the increase in your MD state and local taxes for 2018, roughly. If you don't like the result, read on.

Let your state legislators know that they need to roll back the increase in MD State and local income taxes on people who claim the Federal standard deduction. The Maryland General Assembly started its 90-day session on Jan. 9, 2019.

Call the toll-free number for the General Assembly, 1-800-492-7122, and tell the operator who you want to speak to. When you call a legislator's office, a staff member will usually answer. Say who you are and that you are concerned about not being able to claim itemized deductions on your Maryland taxes.

Key legislators are members of the House Ways and Means Committee (HW&M) and the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee (SB&T). The Chair of SB&T is Senator Nancy King, District 39. The Chair of HW&M is Delegate Anne Kaiser, District 14. Delegate Julie Palakovitch Carr, District 17, is a new member of HW&M. These senators and delegates have fellow members from their districts who can be called and asked to support legislation to fix the problem.

After legislation is introduced to address the problem, there will be hearings by the relevant committees. Usually, there is only about two weeks' notice of hearings. It is vitally important that NARFE members be present at those hearings to let the committee

members know that the matter is important. You can park at the Navy Marine Stadium lot for \$5 and ride a shuttle to the General Assembly area of Annapolis for \$1. Hearings usually are scheduled to start at 1:00 p.m. and there is no telling when the bill of interest will be heard. The website for Maryland General Assembly is at [http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frm1st.aspx?tab\\_home](http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/webmga/frm1st.aspx?tab_home). It is a marvelous source of information about committees, legislators, reports, etc

### **MEMBERSHIP REPORT – Dave Walser, Membership Officer**

Membership Report as of 31 January 2019 is as follows:  
We have one new member: Sandra Ann Stoner; two members were reinstated including: Sharon A. Coursey and Elaine Shell; and seven members were sent second notices to renew membership.

### **TREASURER REPORT – Stew Saphier, Treasurer**

Our treasury has \$2,216.14. The Chapter's Alzheimer's fund totaling \$190 was sent to the NARFE/MD Alzheimer's POC for forwarding to NARFE Alzheimer's Research.

### **SUNSHINE REPORT – Theresa Murray**

The Chapter sent a Get well Card to member Rodney Stough of Laurel.

### **NEWSLETTER – Bill Stoner, Editor**

All Chapter Members: If you would like to submit an article or information of interest to our members, please forward to me at my email address shown in our Contact information at the end of this newsletter. Submissions from the Board for the March 2019 newsletter are requested by 12 February 2019.

### **Open Positions in our Chapter**

We need our Chapter Members to step up and please consider filling one of the two open positions in our Chapter. Positions include the Service Officer and the Point of Contact (POC) for Active Federal Employees.

## **HELP WANTED!**

As many of our members know, our NARFE Chapter maintains an office in the Laurel-Beltsville Senior Activity Center located next to the Laurel Regional Hospital. The address is 7120 Contee Road. Office hours are Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from Noon to 3 p.m. We need **YOU** to help us by volunteering one or two days a month on this desk. This would help relieve the people who are currently covering a given day all month. Member Darryl Mahoney currently mans the desk on Tuesdays. 1<sup>st</sup> VP David Walser mans the desk every Wednesday except for chapter meeting day. Our newsletter editor, Bill Stoner, mans the desk every Thursday. Duties are very light and we find it a good time to catch up on other things. If you can help, please let our President Sam Raines or Bill Stoner know via email or phone. Our email and phone numbers are shown at the end of the newsletter under contacts. **Thank you for your consideration.**

## **SCAM - ALERT!**

I recently had a phone voice mail message from an individual who gave her name and a local phone number and said she was calling from BGE. She said that I hadn't paid my bill and to call her. I was suspicious, since I had paid my BGE bill for December and January as well. So, I went online and checked the phone number. It came up as a scam. A friend said she had received a similar call. Be aware, in case you get a phone call like this. Pat Farmer

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