



National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association
Gaithersburg Chapter 581

Supporting most of the Montgomery Upcounty Communities since December 1956

JANUARY 2013

Our Next Membership Meeting

Tuesday, January 22nd

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

Rooms A & B, Rosborough Center
Asbury Methodist Village

Other Upcoming Events

January 17th (Thursday)

- Chapter 581 Board Meeting
Conley Hall, Trott Building
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

January 21st (Monday)

- Deadline for submitting articles
for February 2013 newsletter

January 22nd (Tuesday)

- Chapter Membership Meeting
Rooms A & B, Rosborough Center
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

January 31st (Thursday)

- Newsletter Assembly
Edwards-Fisher Building
9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

February 5th (Tuesday)

- MD Federation Board Meeting
Comfort Inn, Bowie, MD
9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

February 21st (Thursday)

- Chapter 581 Board Meeting
Conley Hall, Trott Building
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

February 25th (Monday)

- Deadline for submitting articles
for March 2013 newsletter

February 26th (Tuesday)

- Chapter Membership Meeting
Rooms A & B, Rosborough Center
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

March 19th (Tuesday)

- United Seniors of MD
Legislative Forum, Annapolis

Please put these dates on your calendar

"TIPS FOR DOING YOUR 2012 TAXES"

We are pleased that our member, *Helen Berkson, CPA*, will be our speaker at our January 22, 2013 Chapter membership meeting. In her talk, which has become her annual presentation to our Chapter 581, she will cover tips and the changes which have taken place since last year in preparing one's taxes. There will be a question-and-answer period following her talk. It's always great to have Helen make this presentation at our January Chapter membership meeting, especially since she's a member of our Chapter. Please plan to attend.

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

Larry Lange and John Padan

A very Happy New Year to all our Chapter 581 members. We hope everyone had a very enjoyable holiday season with their families and loved ones. A "happy birthday" to our Chapter 581 which was 56 years old in December.

This issue of our newsletter is always printed in mid-December, so in January we should know how the federal government's "fiscal cliff" issue ended; as always, all NARFE members need to continue their vigilance in contacting our elected members of Congress to tell them that federal employees and retirees should not be unfairly singled out in deficit-reduction plans.

A word about programs coming up early in the year: January will feature the traditional discussion on income tax preparation. At this point in time, I am sure that speaker Helen Berkson has no idea how to prepare for her talk! It should be a lively discussion with lots of questions. In February, Asbury's Fitness Director Cathy Moxley or one of her assistants will convince us why we can't just sit around this winter. We have to keep moving and exercising. The focus, which we personally have learned we can no longer take for granted, is leg strength and balance. Expect to move around a little as we learn how to remain mobile as long as possible.

As the saying goes, "the most constant thing about life is change." We had a different venue this year for our December Chapter 581

Holiday Party: O'Donnell's Sea Grill in the Kentlands area of Gaithersburg. The ambiance, the meals, and the service were excellent, and the private room was especially appreciated. The entertainment was again supplied by the actress Mary Ann Jung, who this year portrayed "Elizabeth Cady Stanton - Cyrano of the Suffragists." Added fun was when "Mrs. Stanton" pulled "volunteers" from the audience to help her character portrayals "come alive." Another change: the United Seniors of Maryland annual rally in Annapolis, MD, usually scheduled for the end of January, has been rescheduled for Tuesday, March 19th. And - a Chapter Nominating Committee has been assembled to nominate members of our Chapter to serve as officers for the 2013 - 2015 period. The members present at our May Chapter membership meeting will vote on their choices of those nominees, who will be inducted into office at our June picnic.

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT

*Jim Cowie, MDFed Federal
Legislative Committee Chairman,
Deferred Annuity Coordinator,
and more*



For the last two years, NARFE has had little success in persuading those in control of the House that we have been picked upon unfairly, and that others also should be called upon to contribute to resolving the nation's financial difficulties. Far from convincing them, measures were passed in the House, which would have made things much worse for the Federal Community, without any sharing of the burden, and we were saved by almost all of these proposals being defeated in the Senate.

It may appear that the control of the House, Senate and White House has not changed, after the election, so why should we expect any different response to our concerns? However, the polit-

ical parties are reassessing their guiding principles, based on the results of the election, which suggested that the public disapproves of politics that fails to seek out viable compromises, that move the country forward, and tends to heap more blame on one party than the other. Hence, to improve election prospects in the future, there needs to be changes in internal procedures for more effective legislation.

Hopefully this will mean that more respect will be paid, in the next Congress, to arguments put forward by NARFE on the basis of their intrinsic merit, and we can defend our interests better, because our critics will be less able to insist on a monolithic negative attitude to our concerns within their party. An early example, recently, was a declaration by nine members of the House, from Maryland, Virginia, and DC, to the President and colleagues in Congress, supporting the message that the Federal Community has contributed enough, and others should be called upon to share the cost reduction burden. The nine were made up of four Democrats from Maryland, two Democrats from Virginia, delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton from DC, and two VA Republicans - Frank Wolf and Robert Wittman. Frank Wolf has long been a solid supporter of the Federal Community, and bemoaned, on the floor of the House some months ago, the distorted understanding by his party of the many contributions the Feds make on behalf of the country. However, the significance here is that this is an indication that more politicians will listen more carefully to rational argument and act on their beliefs, with less fear that the repercussions will damage their political prospects. Hence, a better environment for NARFE to make its case.

However, it will still be true that NARFE will have a better chance of being persuasive, if we can emphasize the damage to the services provided to the country, if we are treated unfairly, rather than focusing more narrowly on how proposals will hurt us. A politician is more likely to be influenced by how voters will react to deteriorating federal services, more so than how fairly we are being treated.

Within Maryland, we intend to establish a relationship with all the staff of our Senators and Representatives, in Washington and at local offices. When the staff complements are published, we will expect the members of our Federation Legislative Committee to forge the initial links, and to cooperate with chapters to ensure that the information, flowing up and down, is as helpful as possible to NARFE getting is concerns across, and to us responding to whatever inputs they might welcome from us.

STATE LEGISLATIVE REPORT

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



Now that the Presidential and Congressional elections are over, as well as the Maryland Ballot Questions decided, the State Legislative Committee is focusing on next year's legislative agenda. We are revising the Legislative Program Document that is given to all of Maryland's legislators. We want this to be reflective of all of our members' concerns and priorities. Therefore I would be very appreciative if you would take the time to advise me of your personal concerns regarding the upcoming legislative session and your personal priorities. You can do this via e-mail to dave.roseman@comcast.net, snail mail at 6 Thorburn Road, Gaithersburg MD 20878, or phone 240-401-6628.

In addition we need to increase our visibility and viability in Annapolis. This requires members to contact their legislators and let them know what our goals are for the year and our position on legislation. This can be done via phone, mail, e-mail, or personal visits. If you can help with this also please contact me. Together we can make a difference.

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

*Jim Short,
Membership Chairman*



For the months of October and November we gained twelve new members, six members were reinstated, and one member transferred in from another chapter.

During this period of time we lost 22 members, including three members who transferred to other chapters, and two deceased members, for a net loss of three members.

Please welcome the following new members:

Linda Astor • Richard Astor • Alice Coppersmith
• Eugene Keller • Robert Yaes • James Fike •
David Lindenbaum • Leslie Weisblatt •
Lois Erasmia • Ying Ke • Joan Hoffman •
Andrea Sanders.

Please welcome back the following reinstated

members: James Chantler • Samuel Korper •
Roger Sendelbach • Dorothy Strayley •
Hattie Dickens • James Sakaris.

The following transferee should be made most welcome: Leslie Ross.

We are sad to report the following deaths:

Catherine B. Hugh • Louis M. Bykoski.

The following members were dropped for non-payment of dues as of July 1 and August 1:

Harold Blitz • William Fishbein •
Michael Greene • Maxine Kearney •
John Martin • Padma Raghavan •
Margaret Smelas • Gary Sundick • Tom Turley
• Murray Welsh • Joel Aronson • John Dowicki
• Ira Kemp • Brian Kildee • E. C. Lovoy •
David McGoff • Leslie Fredrickson.

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.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Larry Lange, Treasurer

All Funds Summary, November 15, 2012

Checking Account	\$ 9,163.58
Certificate of Deposit (Restricted Chapter Life Membership funds)	\$ 2,795.17
TOTAL CHAPTER ASSETS	\$11,958.75
WORKING CAPITAL	\$ 9,163.58

THANKS TO THE NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER'S ASSEMBLY GROUP

Thanks very much to the following 11 members who helped insert a page, fold, and apply address labels and wafer seals to our November newsletter on November the 1st (we were able to do this newsletter assembly on our regularly scheduled day, notwithstanding the fact that our printer, Franklin Press, and Franklin's paper supplier were both closed Monday and Tuesday, October the 29th and 30th because of Superstorm Sandy). We couldn't have done it without you!

Larry Lange	Dick Strombotne
John Padan	Marty Strombotne
Marty Piper	Ronnie Van Alstyne
Keith Steele	John Nolan
Jim Short	Charley Garfinkel
Charles Matkovich	

Please think about joining us the first Thursday of most months to help fold and apply address labels and wafer seals to our monthly Chapter 581 newsletter; the more persons we have helping us, the quicker this task goes – not only is this a big help to your Chapter, but you get to chat with several fellow 581 members, and – it's a lot of fun. We do our newsletter assembly in the ground floor library of the Edwards-Fisher Building on the Asbury Methodist Village campus beginning at 9:30 a.m.

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

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

Now that winter is here, please note if there is snow or other inclement weather on the day of our monthly Chapter meeting, we will follow the decision made by Montgomery County Schools: *If Montgomery County Schools will be closed or have a delayed opening due to inclement weather on the day of our monthly Chapter meeting, our meeting will be canceled.* This information is available very early on the day of our meeting on radio and TV news, and on the website for Montgomery County Schools:
<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/>

"YOU DESERVE A BREAK ..."

Dick Strombotne, Federation Treasurer
DickS.narfe@comcast.net

Happy New Year! Here is one more resolution for you. Resolve to make life easier for yourself by signing up for monthly dues withholding for your NARFE dues. You only have to do it once.

You save money -- \$6 every year off your NARFE dues.

You save time and effort – do it once and it is automatic from then on.

You gain peace of mind – you never have to worry about your NARFE membership lapsing.

All you need is a Dues Withholding Application from a recent issue of NARFE magazine, your Social Security number and the eight digit CSA or CSF number from OPM. This last number is on the benefit information that you received from OPM early in January. Just fill in the application and send it to NARFE at the address listed. The form is on page 58 in the December issue of NARFE magazine. You may also download a copy from the NARFE website:

<http://www.narfe.org/pdf/dw-2.pdf>

“TRY IT, YOU’LL LIKE IT”

*Larry Lange, Chapter Co-President
and Treasurer*

It’s the beginning of a new year, so ... try something different! There are many NARFE activities, which, if you haven’t tried any of them to date ... you should think about doing so. Your Chapter 581 has two scheduled monthly meetings eight months of the year: its Board meeting, usually the third Thursday of the month, and its Chapter membership meeting, usually the fourth Tuesday of the month. If you’ve never been to a Board meeting, please “be our guest.” The Board meets in Conley Hall (on the ground level of the Trott Building) on the Asbury Methodist Village campus at 10:00 a.m. Attending a Chapter Board meeting would give you the flavor of how your Chapter’s officers and others make decisions on speakers for membership meetings, upcoming events your Chapter will support and participate in, and many other details. If you haven’t been to a monthly Chapter membership meeting, please check one out: our Chapter officers report on the work of the Board, and we always have a presentation on varied and interesting topics by a variety of speakers. Each year in December we look forward to our annual Holiday Party, and in June our annual picnic. Chapter 581 doesn’t meet in July and August.

Moving on to NARFE’s state level activities, the MD Federation (which consists of all 34 chapters in our state) is having a Board meeting at the Comfort Inn in Bowie, MD on Tuesday, February 5th. This is an all-day meeting; you would get a chance to see how NARFE operates on the state-wide level (and, lunch is included). Usually about eight to ten Chapter 581 members attend these Board meetings, and always carpool to Bowie.

This spring, the MD Federation Convention will be held in Ocean City, MD from April 29th to May 1st – consider being a delegate from Chapter 581.

And then of course, on the national level, is the biennial National Convention; this past summer it was held in the Reno-Sparks area of Nevada; in 2014 its venue will be Orlando, Florida. Additionally, a Legislative Training Conference is scheduled for March 9th to the 12th.

As a Chapter 581 member you of course receive the monthly NARFE magazine and your Chapter’s newsletter; please consider attending one or more of the above-listed NARFE functions if you haven’t done so in the past. You’ll learn more about NARFE’s work and its goals, and you’ll meet some really great people.

For all the “trivia buffs” in our Chapter, the phrase “try it, you’ll like it” was used as an advertising slogan by none other than Alka Seltzer, in ... 1971.

50/50 Winners at the November 20, 2012 Chapter Meeting

To the Chapter 581 Treasury	\$ 21.00
First place Roy Buyer	\$ 10.00
Second place Dick Strombotne	\$ 7.00
Third place Joe Martin	\$ 4.00
Total	\$ 42.00

50/50 Winners at the December 8, 2012 Holiday Party

To the Chapter 581 Treasury	\$ 35.00
First place Dick Strombotne	\$ 17.00
Second place Carol Granger	\$ 10.00
Third place Charles Garfinkel	\$ 7.00
Total	\$ 69.00

**Gaithersburg
Chapter 581**

19333 Dunbridge Way
Montgomery Village, MD
20886

National Active and Retired Federal Employees

Chapter 581 Gaithersburg - Chartered December, 1956

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Three important Websites

www.narfe.org
www.mdnarfe.org
www.mdnarfe.org/chapter0581



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