

Newsletter

March 2020

(Published monthly September – June)

Vol. 37, No. 7

UPCOMING MEETINGS/ACTIVITIES (Open to all)

Chapter:

- **Members Meetings:** Mar 24, Apr 21 or 28, May 19*
- **Newsletter Input Deadlines:** Mar 18, Apr 18, May 21
- **Board Meetings/Newsletter Prep:** Apr 1, May 6, Jun 3

Outside Events:

- Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board, Tues. March 17, at 7 pm, Wheaton Library/Rec Center, 11701 Georgia Ave, Wheaton.
- Active Aging Expo- May 4, Activity Ctr. Bohrer Park
- NARFE MD Federation, Mini-Conference May 4 – 5, 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM each day, Bowie, registration required, 301-589-7465.

NOTE: Unless otherwise noted*, our Members Meetings are held on the **4th Tuesdays at 12:45 PM** at the Holiday Park Senior Center, 3950 Ferrara Dr., Silver Spring, MD 20906, 240-777-4999; ample free parking; covered parking in rear. **In the event Montgomery County Schools close or are delayed due to weather—General Member Meetings are cancelled.**

Our Facebook Page: NARFE Chapter 1892, Aspen Hill.

Chapter Fundraiser - Silent Auction

Donations of new and gently used items are needed for our silent auction at the **April 21 or 28** (to be announced later) **pizza luncheon at the Stained Glass Pub** in Glenmont. (Yes, your favorite event of the year!) Items can be brought to the March 24 membership meeting; we can pick up donations at a mutually convenient location, or just bring them to the luncheon. Please contact Cathy Hobbs at 301-924-4633 or cathy_hobbs@yahoo.com.

Thank you!

Cathy Hobbs, Secretary

President's Message

This newsletter is so full of information, that there's no space for me to say anything other than I hope you have a great month and to see you on March 24 at the general meeting! - Sarah

Your Influence Matters

You fund the NARFE political action committee (NARFE-PAC). *Your donations are dispersed in congressional races throughout the Country. This is how we influence Congress.*

Every contribution, no matter the size, makes a difference and shows politicians that NARFE members mean business. Please look at page 25 in your March 2020 issue of the NARFE magazine and fill out the contribution page to make your gift to the NARFE-PAC. This is your chance to let Congress know you exist, you don't want your pensions reduced, and you vote!

Be Part of the Action!

Be part of the excitement! Be an election worker at the April 28, 2020 Primary election. Volunteers are needed and it's fun! Please, follow the below instructions to apply.

1. Go to our website (www.777vote.org), click on Election Workers, and then the **EJ Connection** link to login.
2. Click on the **Application** link.
3. Key in your personal information, availability, and desired position.
4. Submit your application. You will receive a confirmation email and further instructions.

Call the Montgomery County Board of Elections Judge Recruitment Team on 240-777-8533 for assistance.

National Legislative Report

We enjoy wonderful annual traditions like New Year celebrations helping to prepare us for a positive reset for the upcoming year--a fresh start. We celebrate Thanksgiving, reminding us of the many blessings we enjoy. There is another tradition, however, that does not create warm and fuzzy feelings--the annual battle and debate about the Federal cost of living adjustment (COLA) and other Federal employee and retiree benefits.

Especially important is the COLA, intended to ensure that the buying power of Social Security recipients and Federal retirees remains on par with inflation. Elimination or reduction of the COLA equates to retirees who become poorer with each passing year. The President's Budget for 2021 asks for the elimination of COLA's for FERS retirees and a reduction of 0.5% for CSRS retirees.

A few other issues in the President's budget include:

- Increasing FERS employees' contributions to their annuities by one percent each year for the next six years without any corresponding benefit increase.
- Reducing the rate of return on the Thrift Savings Plan's Government Securities Investment (G) Fund. This would cost federal employees and retirees, as well as military personnel and veterans, \$10.5 billion over the next 10 years.
- Calculating new retiree pensions based on the average of the highest five years of salary instead of the highest three.
- Reducing working and retirement-age benefits for federal workers disabled as a result of their service.

The above annual attacks on Federal retirees and employees usually fail due to NARFE and union lobbying and the small cadre of senators and representatives friendly to Federal workers. Still, while these cuts remain on the table, the many congressional seats up for grab may add a different dynamic to the conversation. Write to your senators and congressmen. Tell them you oppose these cuts!

(For instructions and names and addresses of your senators and representatives, see <https://www.narfe.org/legislation/index.cfm?fa=voteVoice>)

Sapphire Marc-Harris, National Legislation Chair

Chapter 1892 Leadership

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- Historian/Past President**Rudy Volin
301-598-2209
- Photography Team Lead**.....Anita Rhawn
- Greeter**.....Andreina Iosue

State Legislation

Paul Schwartz, our Vice President and the MD Federation State Legislation Chair, has been busy testifying in Annapolis about two bills that are meant to help eliminate the unfair Maryland State tax issue created by the increase in standard tax exemption in the Federal Income Tax. He asks that you support the fight by writing to your State delegates and senators and asking them to support SB486 and SB278. Time is of the essence. It will be too late if you wait!

The 2020 Census Is Now

Between March 12 and April 1, the Census Bureau will send you a questionnaire to complete and return by paper or online or you can respond via phone. *Your response is important as it is the basis for Federal funds to be transferred to the states for roads, hospitals, schools, and other public sector investments.* Be sure to fill out the form and be counted!

NEXT CHAPTER MEETING: Tues., March 24.
See below article for details!

Worried?

You momentarily lost the name of your grandson or your route in familiar territory. Are you experiencing normal aging or are you starting the decline into dementia? Do you have a loved one with dementia and are having difficulty managing their behavior? Are you finding it uncomfortable to speak with your friend who has dementia?

Come join us for a presentation,

Conversations on Aging: Dementia, Dementia vs. Normal Aging, and Managing Challenging Behaviors and Effective Communication with Dementia Patients,

at our March 24 general meeting at the Holiday Park Senior Center. Christine Bitzer, C-ASWCM, Assistant Director of the Care Management Program, Seabury Resources for Aging will help us better understand dementia and how to be a good caretaker and friend of those with dementia.

After Christine's presentation, we will socialize and continue to enjoy the refreshments. At the same time, for those that wish to learn more about estate planning, we will show the NARFE webinar, "Estate Planning for Feds—Protect Your Assets".

As usual, we will have our **desserts and appetizers pot luck** starting at 12:45 PM so if you can, please bring something to share. Coffee, tea, and water will be provided.

Refreshments start at 12:45 PM and the meeting begins at 1 PM on Tuesday, March 24, 2020 at the Holiday Park Senior Center, 3950 Ferrara Dr., Silver Spring 20906.

Note: If you can't attend, you can call 301-232-0143 and key in the code/pin: 887080# to hear the meeting over your phone.

Free Tax Services

The VITA and AARP tax programs provide free tax preparation services--VITA for low to moderate income Montgomery County Residents with household incomes of \$56,000 or less. The AARP tax program has no age or income restrictions. You may schedule an appointment or walk-in at various locations in the County.

By appointment:

Takoma Park and Silver Spring Library – call 240-777-2577.

Gaithersburg, Rockville, Germantown, and Wheaton – call 240-777-1123.

Walk-in:

Aspen Hill Library, 4407 Aspen Hill Rd.
2 – 6:00 PM.

Rockville Library, 21 Maryland Ave.
2-6:00 PM.

Wheaton Library, 11701 Georgia Ave.
1:30 – 3:30 PM.



Eight Birthday Babies were Celebrated at the Feb. Mtg. Terrific mtg. with 3 speakers, 30 attendees, & great info.

Your Chance to Structure the Future--Vote!

2020 Presidential Election: The **Primary Election** in Maryland takes place April 28, 2020, from 7 AM until 8 PM. Early Voting for the Primary Election takes place Thursday, April 16 - Thursday, April 23, 2020, from 10 AM until 8 PM.

The General Election takes place November 3, 2020, 7 AM until 8 PM. Early Voting for the General Election will be Thursday, October 22, 2020 through Thursday, October 29, 2020 from 8 AM until 8 PM.

NARFE
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March 2020 Edition

Special Note from the editor: Big thanks to all the contributors this month!
Also, one birthday baby not shown in picture on Page 3, and mtg. attendees were both onsite and via teleconference.

Brain Teaser from Chapter Member, Dollie Nicholson

You have to choose to enter one of three rooms. Inside the first room is a team of ninjas hired to kill you. Inside the second is a tiger that hasn't eaten for three months. Inside the third is a raging inferno. Which room do you enter? See answer at bottom left of page.

St. Patrick's Day Parade

It's Irish American Heritage Month and you can celebrate by attending the March 14, 20th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade starting at Rio Lakefront in Gaithersburg at 10:00 AM. Rio Lakefront is located at 9811 Washingtonian Blvd.

Answer to the above Brain Teaser:
Room No. 2. A tiger that hasn't eaten
in three months is dead.

American Diabetes Alert Day – March 24

Diabetes affects about 30.3 million Americans or about 9.4 percent of the U.S. population. Diabetes leads to problems such as heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, eye problems, dental disease, nerve damage, and foot problems. The sooner you know you're at risk, the sooner you can take steps to prevent or manage diabetes. For Diabetes Alert Day, take the Diabetes Risk Test (link on www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/diabetes).