

# Newsletter

September 2020

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## UPCOMING MEETINGS/ACTIVITIES (Open to all)

### Chapter:

- **Members Meetings: Sep 22, Oct 27, Nov 17\*, Dec 8\*.**
- **Newsletter Input Deadlines:** Sep 16, Oct 16, Nov 13.
- **Board Meetings:** Oct 7, Nov 4, Dec 2.

### Outside Events:

- NARFE MD Federation, Board Meeting, online Zoom platform, Oct 5, 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM, registration required, 301-589-7465.
- Election Day in the United States - Nov 3.
- NARFE Region II Training Academy - March 14-15, 2021, York, PA. Registration Required.

**NOTE:** Unless otherwise noted\*, our Members Meetings are held on the **4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays at 1:00 PM.** Please note that until January, we will meet via a videoconference using an online Zoom-LIKE platform. If you cannot connect via the videoconference, you can hear the meeting on your phone using the teleconference number our chapter has used in the past. Link and telephone number information is on Page 3 in "Do You Feel Lost?".

**Our Facebook Page:** NARFE Chapter 1892, Aspen Hill.

system we use is easy, but if you just want to listen, our super easy telephone-only teleconference system still works and is familiar to you. There are details on how to access the virtual meeting in the "Do You Feel Lost" article on page 3.

Below is an update on items of interest:

- Telemedicine with computers, tablets, and phones is now supported by almost all insurance companies, so you can stay home and still see a doctor. Don't be afraid to call your doctor.
- Insurance companies are providing free webinars regarding stress and other issues caused by folks staying home for so long during the Coronavirus. Check out insurance companies' websites. You don't even have to be a member to access the webinars.
- Senior centers and hospitals are providing virtual classes, including exercise classes--some for seniors (I'm taking 3 from Suburban Hospital and they're great!)
- I am looking for a replacement for me as president. I have been president for two years and was heavily involved in the running of the chapter the year prior to that. My life has changed in the last 7 months and I must step down as your president. Until we find a replacement, I will continue to act as president as long as I can. Please email me ([NARFEsrichards@aol.com](mailto:NARFEsrichards@aol.com)) if you want to help as president or as a Board member.

Thank you all for helping me have a great time and making a happy difference in so many of our Federal employees' and retirees' lives.

Stay safe and best wishes always,

*Sarah*

NARFEsrichards@aol.com

**Volunteer to be an election worker** for Nov 3 at:  
[www.777vote.org](http://www.777vote.org) or call 240-777-8533.

## President's Message

Fall is coming and with it progress on a vaccine for Covid-19. I, like many of you, am looking forward to a time when I can shop, go to meetings, concerts, plays, and baseball games without fear of catching a disease for which I'm at high risk of dying.

At least one Chapter member had the Coronavirus and survived but another died from it. There are probably more of our folks affected. The loss of lives everywhere is heartbreaking, and through our pain, we are moving forward, determined to regain our lives to the fullest that we can safely do. To that end, we will be having virtual general meetings, at least through December. The videoconferencing

## State Legislation

(Article truncated from Paul Schwartz' original article in the Maryland Federation Fall Newsletter.)

Tax unfairness, an important issue that affects Maryland taxpayers, has not disappeared. What has disappeared is any interest on the part of the Maryland State legislature to do anything about it. Remember that, when your state representatives come to solicit your vote. Remember to hold them accountable for not fighting for tax fairness.

Tax fairness, however, is not the only issue that affects YOU. Pharmaceutical pricing is also an issue that affects us all, and addressing the high price of pharmaceuticals is an issue that calls out for our support.

The Maryland Prescription Drug Affordability Board has bi-partisan support and is continuing its work to identify exactly how the high cost of drugs is hurting average Marylanders just like you.

Additionally, it is the NARFE MD Federation's intention to join forces with the Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative and AARP to support legislation that makes an impact on reducing the high price of pharmaceuticals. **You can help** achieve that end by sharing your stories on how the high price of pharmaceuticals directly impacted you. Please share your stories on the [healthcareforall.com/hearmystories](http://healthcareforall.com/hearmystories) website.

You can also receive more information on this initiative at the Maryland Prescription Drug Affordability Board website at [PDAB.Maryland.gov](http://PDAB.Maryland.gov).

Paul Schwartz, Maryland Federation State Legislative Committee Chair and Chapter Vice President

## YOU'RE NOT TOO LATE

The **new** deadline for people responding to the 2020 Census questionnaire is September 30. The Census Bureau should have already sent you a questionnaire to complete and return by paper or online. You can also 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!**

## Welcome to the Fun Chapter!

We are super pleased to announce new and/or returning Chapter members: **Marlene Appleton, Barbara Ellis, Ehud Gamliel, Vitaly Nagy, and Sandra Weston.** Glad you're on board! Do say hi at our next meeting!

## Chapter 1892 Leadership

**President/MD Fed. Res Comm Chair** .....Sarah Richards  
301-589-7465.....NARFEsrichards@aol.com  
**V-Pres/State Leg/MD Fed. SLC Chair**.....Paul Schwartz  
301-260-1903  
**Secretary**.....Cathy Hobbs  
301-924-4633  
**Treasurer**.....Bob Kammer  
301-847-9820  
**Assoc. Treasurer** .....Marilyn Biviano  
770-721-6940  
**Membership**.....Merle Biggin  
301-814-6047  
**Sunshine**.....Minnedore Green  
301-565-2005  
**Interim Newsletter Editor**.....Sarah Richards  
301-589-7465  
**National Legislation**.....Sapphire Marc-Harris  
202-577-6677  
**Alzheimer's/Past President** .....Linda Cohen  
301-460-5177  
**Greeter/Past President**.....Saj Durrani  
301-774-4607  
**Historian/Past President** .....Rudy Volin  
301-598-2209  
**Photography Team Lead**.....Anita Rhawn

## LAST PAPER NEWSLETTER

This is the last paper newsletter the Chapter will send you until the Coronavirus is contained. This month, we've hired a printing company that will print, tab, label, and take the newsletter to the bulk mail post office for us. However, the cost is prohibitive for more than just this once.

To keep getting newsletters, you must have an email address in the NARFE system. **PLEASE send your updated email address to [NARFEsrichards@aol.com](mailto:NARFEsrichards@aol.com)** so we can send you electronic newsletters. For electronic live meetings, we hope to use the following link for about a year: <https://live.unlimitedconferencing.com/live/SarahRichards/myconference>. Tune in the fourth Tuesday of each month (excepting November 17 and December 8 the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> weeks instead) at 1:00 PM, to access the live, fun electronic meetings.

## Do you Feel Lost?

### Confused re the November voting process?

### Need tips for work-a-rounds for safe living during the Pandemic?

No problem--we've got you covered. At our next general meeting, there'll be two sessions: the first, with Dr. Alberto Zelaya, Vice President of the Montgomery County Board of Elections, who will present on every facet of voting from soup to nuts. Registration, voting via mail, electronically, or at the polling place, deadlines, etc.—Dr. Zelaya will share the latest information, and it'll be accurate!

Second, we'll be discussing work-a-rounds to new issues that we're experiencing due to the Covid-19 virus--issues like safely getting groceries and other supplies, visiting doctors and hospitals, traveling without restaurants being fully opened, and no rest rooms along the travel route. This will be an open discussion. Share your tips at the meeting or just email them to [NARFEsrichards@aol.com](mailto:NARFEsrichards@aol.com) or call Sarah at 301-589-7465 and she'll compile tips to share at the meeting.

We'll also vote for new officers at the next meeting. All candidates are unopposed. They are:

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Sarah Richards  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Paul Schwartz  
Co-Secretaries – Myron Chace and  
Sapphire Marc-Harris  
Treasurer – James Bachmaier

The meeting will be a virtual one, held Sept. 22, at 1:00 PM. You can easily access the videoconference via computer, tablet, or smart phone. Click on the link: <https://live.unlimitedconferencing.com/live/SarahRichards/myconference>. Then type your name, select a sound type if you don't like the default one, and click on the box that says allow microphone and camera. You'll be able to see and hear us, as well as speak should you want. Note: this system **does not work on the Internet Explorer** browser. You will need to use Google Chrome, Safari or any other browser. If you prefer,

you can just listen to the audio with any type of phone by calling 301-232-0143 and when asked, key in the pin number 887080 followed by the # sign. You will be connected to the meeting. If you want to test either the videoconference or the teleconference system prior to the meeting, email [NARFEsrichards@aol.com](mailto:NARFEsrichards@aol.com) and ask for a test.

### Sympathy

It is with deepest regret that we announce the following members who passed away since our last newsletter: Nathan Edelberg, Alan Talbert, Jeanne Parker, Ray Smyrk, Jerome McDonald, Lee Kolman, and Lillian Goldberg. Loyal members of the Chapter, they will be missed. Also, MD Federation Past President and beloved NARFE champion, Dr. Dick Strombotne, passed away.

### Flu Shots

Flu Shots are now available at your doctor's office, clinics, drug stores like CVS, and grocery stores like Safeway. Check what protective measures they have before you go, so you can choose the safest venue, but do go and stay healthy!

### General Election Important Dates

**The General Election** takes place November 3, 2020. Don't forget that you must be registered to vote or you will be turned away.

- October 13 - Deadline for registering to vote.
- October 20 – Election Board must receive your request for a mail-in ballot by this date.
- October 26 through November 2, 2020, Early Voting takes place.
- November 3 – General Election at voting centers and polling places. Note these may be different than those you were previously assigned. You will receive notification of yours in October.

**Voting is your power to make the world the way you want to see it!**

**USE YOUR POWER—VOTE!**

NARFE  
Aspen Hill Chapter 1892  
713 Richmond Ave  
Silver Spring MD 20910

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## September 2020 Edition

**NEXT GENERAL MEETING: September 22, at 1:00 PM.** Click on the videoconference link:  
<https://live.unlimitedconferencing.com/live/SarahRichards/myconference> or for audio only: call 301-232-0143, pin-887080.

### National NARFE Bylaws Change Vote

The National NARFE Bylaws Proposals vote has ended. The Maryland Federation recommendations were followed on 13 of the 22 proposals. However, the MD Federation lost by a small number of votes on our attempt to insert standards for voting ballot development. We also lost our bid to stop an increase in National dues to \$48 and the financial cut to chapters in funds they receive for new members. A proposal to allow the National Executive Board to merge regions without the consent of the merging regions also passed, though we fought against it. Two big wins for us were stopping the cut in funds to Federations and eliminating from the bylaws the detailed job duties of the Executive Director.

### MD Federation Bylaws Change Vote

All proposals were approved. We will have clearer bylaws at the MD Federation level now. Thank you for your votes!

#### Helpful Resources

- Medicare: Visit [medicare.gov](http://medicare.gov), Call 1-800-MEDICARE, TTY:1-877-486-2048
- OPM: Visit [www.opm.gov/retire](http://www.opm.gov/retire)
- Blue Cross and Blue Shield Federal Employee Program:  
[www.fepblue.org/medicare](http://www.fepblue.org/medicare)
- Social Security: Visit [ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov), Call 1-800-772-1213, TTY: 1-800-325-0778