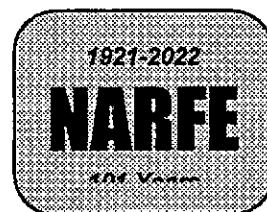




NARFE NEWSLETTER



Chapter 1770
Volume 41

(National Active and Retired Federal Employees)
September 2022

Bel Air, MD
Number 1

President's Message by Jim Wood

As we emerge from the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, our NARFE activities are starting to return to some degree of normality. In October 2021, our Chapter was able to meet in-person for the first time in over a year. Our Chapter also met in-person in January and in April. In May, Pam Doner and I attended the biennial Maryland NARFE Federation "Mini-Conference" in Bowie. However, on the Friday after our meeting in Bowie, I received a reminder that the **pandemic was not yet over**. Pam and I were notified by the Maryland Federation Secretary that one of the attendees had tested positive for COVID. I administered a self-test to myself, and the results were negative. However, that incident reinforced to me the need for "**continued vigilance**" to **protect** ourselves against COVID.

Similarly, "**continued vigilance**" is necessary to **protect** current benefits for Federal employees and retirees. All of us were **greatly relieved** when President Biden repealed the previous Administration's Executive Order creating a new 'Schedule F' category of Federal employees. That Executive Order had been **opposed** by NARFE because of its **potential to threaten the integrity of our merit-based nonpartisan Federal Civil Service workforce**. While the repeal of that Executive Order was a "win" for NARFE and for the Federal workforce, "**continued vigilance**" is still necessary. In March, the ranking member of the House Oversight and Reform Subcommittee on Government Operations introduced H.R. 7095, '*Accountable Federal Employees Act*'. That legislation, if ever signed into law, would codify the provisions of the rescinded Executive Order and establish a new 'Schedule F' category.
(Continued on page 2)

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Service Committee Chair **Vacant**

Public Relations Committee Chair **Vacant**

Alzheimer's Committee Chair..... **Pam Doner**
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(President's Message continued from page 1)

During this past year, we have also seen new legislation become law which expands Federal benefits. The FY 2022 '*National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)*', which received strong **bipartisan** support in both the House and Senate, was signed into law by President Biden on 27 December 2021. The FY 2022 NDAA included provisions for paid bereavement leave for Federal workers. Federal employees are now authorized up to 2 weeks of paid time off following the death of a child.

On 6 April 2022, the President signed the '*Postal Service Reform Act of 2022*' into law. Previous versions on the '*Postal Reform Bill*' had included provisions for existing Postal retirees to either enroll in Medicare Part B or lose their retiree health insurance coverage. That would have set the **dangerous precedent** of changing retiree health benefits for those individuals who had already retired. Fortunately, thanks in part to all of NARFE's advocacy efforts, that provision was not in the final version signed into law. Under the final version of the '*Postal Service Reform Act of 2022*', no one who is a postal annuitant prior to 1 January 2025 will be required to enroll in Medicare Part B as a condition of being in the Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) Program. However, as the postal employees and retirees are transitioned from their existing Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) plans to the new PSHB plans, the associated reduction in numbers of individuals covered under the FEHB plans, there may be an increase in FEHB premiums. Again, "**continued vigilance**" will be needed.

I know that all of us have been impacted by the increasing inflation that our economy is currently experiencing. As all of us know too well, periods of increasing inflation can pose "special challenges" for Federal employees and retirees. Congress may be tempted to "**curb inflationary spending**" by **reducing our earned Federal benefits**. Again, "**continued vigilance**" will be needed, and NARFE is our greatest supporter. Therefore, I would ask each of you to continue to **spread the word** about the critical importance of NARFE's advocacy efforts for Federal employees and retirees. Meanwhile, continue to stay vigilant; continue to stay safe; and I hope to see all of you at our October meeting.

2022 Alzheimer's Walk by Pam Doner

The Harford and Cecil County "Walk to End Alzheimer's" is scheduled for Sat., 1 Oct. 2022. The event will be held at Ripken Stadium again this year. Please contact Pam Doner for details and/or to make contributions.

Membership Report by Pam Doner

We are pleased to welcome the following new members to our Chapter:

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| June Allera | Aaron Kazi |
| Ann Cahill* | Evette Jones-Hatton |
| Patricia Cromer** | Nathaniel Mapp |
| Arthur Kaff | |

* Transfer from Susquehanna Chapter

**Transfer from Glen Bernie Chapter

Treasurer's Report by Pam Doner

| | |
|------------------------|------------|
| Previous Balance | \$2,690.00 |
| Current Balance | \$2,412.00 |

October Meeting

DATE: Mon., 24 Oct. 2022 (12:00 noon)
SPEAKER: Anne Healy
TOPIC: FEHB Program Updates
PLACE: Bel Air United Methodist Church+
21 Linwood Ave., Bel Air, MD

December Meeting

DATE: Mon., 12 Dec. 2022 (11:30 am)
SPEAKER: NA
TOPIC: Holiday Luncheon
PLACE: Bel Air United Methodist Church+
21 Linwood Ave., Bel Air, MD

January Meeting

DATE: Mon., 23 Jan. 2023 (12:00 noon)
SPEAKER: 1 Lt. Michael Higgins, CAP
TOPIC: Civil Air Patrol in Harford Co.
PLACE: Bel Air United Methodist Church+
21 Linwood Ave., Bel Air, MD

April Meeting

DATE: Mon., 24 Apr. 2023 (12:00 noon)
SPEAKER: Rajiv Goel
TOPIC: Elder Law and Estate Planning
PLACE: Bel Air United Methodist Church+
21 Linwood Ave., Bel Air, MD

October Meeting

DATE: Mon., 23 Oct. 2023 (12:00 noon)
SPEAKER: Anne Healy
TOPIC: FEHB Program Updates
PLACE: Bel Air United Methodist Church+
21 Linwood Ave., Bel Air, MD

December Meeting

DATE: Mon., 11 Dec. 2023 (11:30 am)
SPEAKER: NA
TOPIC: Holiday Luncheon
PLACE: Bel Air United Methodist Church+
21 Linwood Ave., Bel Air, MD

+NOTE: Chapter meetings may be impacted by inclement weather and/or future COVID-19 "spikes" in Harford County. Members will be notified via separate mailing if this occurs.

New NARFE HQ Resource

Affairs in Order: Benefits Guidance for Survivors of Federal Annuitants

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Update

The TSP has expanded its investment options to include mutual funds. The TSP now has a Mutual Fund Window (MFW) which may be used by all TSP account holders. Additional information on the MFW may be obtained by accessing 'My Account' at www.tsp.gov or by calling the Thriftline Service Center at (877) 968-3778.

Data Breach Settlement

A settlement has been reached in the class action lawsuit about the OPM data breach which occurred because of cyber attacks during 2015. Millions of records of current and former Federal employees and contractors were potentially exposed during that data breach. If you experienced out-of-pocket losses (e.g., purchase of a credit monitoring/identity theft protection product) from that data breach, you could be eligible for a payment from this settlement. Epic Class Action & Claims Solutions, Inc. is the Court-appointed claims administrator. Completed claims form must be submitted online or by mail postmarked no later than 23 December 2022. Information about filing claims online and downloading paper claim forms is available at <https://www.opmdatabreach.com>. The paper Claim forms may also be obtained by calling the claims administrator at (855) 917-3567.

Contacting OPM Retirement Services

Internet: www.opm.gov/retirementservices
www.servicesonline.opm.gov

E-mail: retire@opm.gov

Mail: Retirement Operations Center
P.O. Box 45
Boyers, PA 16017-0045

Phone: (888) 767-6738
(800) 887-8339 (hearing impaired)
(Federal Relay Service - Dial 711)

Customer service hours: 7:40 am - 5:00 pm EST
Mon. - Fri. (except for Federal holidays)

NARFE

710 Kings Path - Unit 1-B

Bel Air, MD 21014

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Next Meeting -- 24 October 2022

Annual Christmas Luncheon

RSVP No Later Than 5 December 2022

DATE: Monday, 12 December 2022 (11:30 am)

PLACE: Bel Air United Methodist Church, 21 Linwood Avenue, Bel Air, MD (Room 202)

COST: \$10.00 (Lunch Buffet)

MENU: Appetizer Table; Main Course Selections; Assorted Vegetables; Rolls & Butter;
Assorted Desserts; Beverages (Coffee, Iced Tea, Water)

PLEASE RETURN FORM TO: Pam Doner, 710 Kings Path - Unit 1-B, Bel Air, MD 21014

CHECKS PAYABLE TO: NARFE Chapter 1770

NAMES OF PERSONS ATTENDING: _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: _____