

NARFE MARYLAND FEDERATION Fall 2026 Newsletter

EDWARD HOLLAND Maryland Federation President

I am still awed and honored that you allowed me to come in and steer NARFE MD on a correct route. But I'm sure you know that this is a corporation with corporate—albeit—elected officers. In the last few months, I've found myself having to replace chairs who suddenly resigned with not much warning giving to me. Two people who gave me ample warning are Penny Young and Lillie Watson. I want to thank Lillie for her many years as the NARFE MD Registration Chair. Regarding vacancies, on a positive note, thank you Dr. Tiffany Daniel for stepping into the position of NARFE MD Service Officer. I'm still in need of: Program Director, Public Relations Officer, and Registration Chair.

Some of you have asked about the reimbursement policy to attend NARFE FEDcon26 in Indiana. Only elected NARFE MD Federation Officers are eligible to be reimbursed for FEDcon.



James Wade, Renaldo Walston, Dr. James Dula, and Ed Holland

The next NARFE MD Federation Board Meeting will be held on **Tuesday, October 6, at 9:00am**, at the Bowie Comfort Inn. Our keynote speaker will be Deputy Secretary Steven Connelly of the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

On May 30, Veterans Affairs Deputy Director James Wade, and I, with Charles County Commission Chair Renaldo Walston, presented keynote speaker Dr. James A. Dula with a NARFE MD challenge coin at a Memorial Day event held at the Maryland Veterans Museum. Dr. Dula is the Manager, Office of Veterans Affairs, Prince George's County. Dr. Dula briefed NARFE Chapter 1747 at a monthly meeting (see photo).

On June 5, I had the pleasure of virtually swearing in the incoming officers of NARFE Chapter 306 Hagerstown. They are Chapter President Patricia Nix, Vice President Ed Reed, Treasurer Pandela Reed, and Secretary Wilma Reynolds.

I wish you all a wonderful Labor Day / Halloween / Thanksgiving Day. And of course, on Veterans Day I will see my fellow veterans around Maryland.

TERESA BAKER

Maryland Federation 1st Vice President, Legislation

Congressional Candidates at NARFE MD Meeting

Last May, as part of the NARFE Maryland Federation Mini Conference, I had the privilege of moderating the panel of 17 Congressional Candidates running to succeed former Democratic Leader Rep. Steny Hoyer in District 5 including the winner of the June primary, Congressman-elect Adrian Bofo (D-Bowie).



In addition to the Congressional Candidate Meet and Greet, the Federation heard from Maryland State Comptroller Brooke Lierman, NARFE National Secretary/Treasurer Cindy Blythe, and retired federal employee, Linda Kohn, the President of the League of Women Voters of Maryland.



NARFE Howard County Legislative Forum

NARFE Chapter 1734 Howard County hosted our Second Annual Legislative Forum at the East Columbia 50+ Center on April 15. Although the Maryland General Assembly had adjourned in the wee hours the day before our meeting, five of our legislators representing Howard County came to speak and take our many questions!

We are grateful to Delegates Pam Lanman Guzzone (D-13), Terri L. Hill (D-12), Gabriel Moreno (D-13), Jen Terrasa (D-13), and Natalie Ziegler (D-9A) for taking time out of their busy schedule to attend. They described a wide variety of bills they had introduced and shed light on the legislative process which leads to enacting new state laws.

VIRGINIA BENDER

Maryland Federation Alzheimer's Chair



Alzheimer's Chair Barbara Ware was recognized for Distinguished Service last May by Hagerstown Chapter 306.

Sharing Your Alzheimer's Diagnosis

Sharing your diagnosis with others is a key step toward integrating Alzheimer's disease into your life. You may hesitate to share your diagnosis, but keep this mantra in mind: Alzheimer's disease is not your fault.

Why tell others about your diagnosis – As the disease progresses, you will need the support of those close to you. Concealing your diagnosis could limit your ability to cope with the challenges ahead. While some relationships might be tested by your diagnosis, others may be strengthened. Talking openly with those you trust is a powerful way to educate them and to engage their support.

Deciding who to tell – Some people choose to share their diagnosis with just their closest family and friends, while others choose to inform a wider circle. Assess your personal comfort level in making this decision. You may feel more supported sharing your diagnosis with close friends and family first before telling others. More information is available online at <https://www.alz.org/>.

PAUL SCHWARTZ
NARFE Region 02 Vice President

Renewal, the essence of life

In 2010 NARFE had 313,000 members. By 2015, NARFE was down to 224,000 members. Today we have 119,051 members. We must reverse membership losses, or NARFE could cease to be influential. No single step will address this challenge. It will take myriad solutions working together. We contracted Street Level Studios to work on all segments of the federal workforce. We also have all the outreach that the federation and its chapters participate in. But there needs to be more.

As most of you know by now, I led the fight to strengthen federations and chapters by returning to the past practice of placing new members directly into chapters. This is how it was done prior to the change made in 2015. This change placed new members directly into National Only status with the option of opting into a chapter at the time of becoming a new member. The change was adopted as an attempt to address the continual decline in membership. Now, eleven years later, I think we can all guess how that worked out.

An important way to address membership decline is to focus on non-renewals. Certainly, as an aging organization, loss of members due to death is a challenge beyond our control. However, deaths of members are only one segment of non-renewals. Without specific data, I cannot state unequivocally that automatic chapter membership at the time of becoming a new member will see a marked increase in NARFE membership renewals, it is certainly safe to say, as current data does indicate, renewals have a higher rate among chapter members than National Only members.

Strengthening federations and chapters is critical for NARFE to successfully conduct its mission since it is our federation and chapters who welcome legislators to their meetings since it is there, in NARFE chapters and our federation, that legislators find their constituents.

While the motion to make this change has so far been futile, the fight is far from over. We are currently requesting more Headquarters data to solidify our case, and we are hopeful that we will be able to get this done before we lose too many more members.



On behalf of NARFE Chapter 1734 – Howard County, NARFE's Region 2 Vice President **Paul Schwartz** and Chapter President **Teresa Baker**, presented certificates of appreciation to **Maryland Delegates Terri Hill, Natalie Ziegler, Gabe Moreno, and Pam Guzzone**.

STEVE GROOM

Maryland Federation Second Vice President, Membership

NARFE MD Federation's membership declined by 562 members since our last newsletter, from 9,876 (4,443 Chapter and 5,433 National Only) to 9,314 (4,203 Chapter and 5,111 National only), a 6.0% drop. Chapter members decreased by 5.6% and National Only by 6.3%. Bad news, given our earned benefits remain in jeopardy, and more members at both the state and national level are needed to be heard and heeded.

There are currently over two million civilian federal employees and 2.7 million federal retirees (a pool of 4.7 million potential members and this doesn't even include eligible spouses), yet NARFE only has about 120,000 members or 2.5% of that pool - how can we increase our numbers (and our voice)? Our main obstacle, from what I can tell, is a general lack of knowledge about NARFE and the value it provides for current federal employees and federal retirees.

So, how can we remedy the situation? By reaching out to our audience and communicating NARFE's value and benefits in person, although that is sometimes easier said than done. We can easily connect on an individual basis, simply ask someone sitting next to you at a crab feast, at church, or any other social occasion if they, their spouse, or family members are federal employees or annuitants. Your chapter can set up a booth at a county fair or local event using materials supplied by NARFE online at <https://www.narfe.org/officer-resources/membership-officer-resources/narfe-membership-recruitment-resources/>.

The Maryland and DC Federations recently partnered with NARFE's Nora McDonald, at the Association of Government Accounts Conference in DC. Maryland Federation 1st Vice President, Teresa Baker, and Chesapeake Bay Area Chapter 251 Treasurer, Penny Young, joined Nora McDonald in the NARFE booth for three days of meeting and greeting attendees, about half of whom were government employees. While some attendees were NARFE members and others at least knew what NARFE is, many were hearing of NARFE for the first time. Six individuals joined on site and many others indicated an interest in joining after hearing about NARFE's many benefits. Member Penny Young was amazed that so many active federal employees did not know about NARFE. She provided a first-hand account of how NARFE membership benefited her and her husband to many of the attendees who visited the NARFE booth. (See photos.)



Member Retention and Recruitment Events

The Chesapeake Bay Area Chapter 251 plans to hold two meetings this fall on the eastern shore to (1) connect with current members and (2) reach out to federal employees and retirees. I will report back to you this fall about successes and lessons learned in this outreach. To summarize, carry a membership brochure with you wherever you go, you'll never know when it might be needed! Ignorance of NARFE is our biggest challenge.

Remembering Edward Ward Bice

NARFE mourns the loss of Ed Bice (90) who died peacefully in July. Ed's service to the Greater Bowie-Crofton Area Chapter 1747 included: President (October 2004-June 2009); Alzheimer's Coordinator; NARFE/PAC Chair, and founding Chair of the NARFE MD State Legislation Committee to speak for NARFE members to the Maryland General Assembly.

Ed and other Federation members formed the SLC in the mid 1990's to provide a voice for Maryland NARFE members before the Maryland General Assembly to work on legislation to improve the lives of all Maryland seniors in the areas of tax relief, long term care, and consumer protection. Ed and his SLC colleagues also established the MD NARFE PAC (Political Action Committee) to be a "Mom and Pop" PAC to lobby for MD seniors' interests before the MD General Assembly just like the much larger industry and business PACs which seek to influence MD legislators.

Ed served as Chair of the SLC for many years. It was my privilege and honor to work with Ed when I joined the SLC in 2012, and I was fortunate to learn a lot from him in areas of legislative advocacy and senior issues, both in substantive policy and in working with SLC colleagues and the members and staff of the General Assembly. We also became great friends as well as fellow season ticket holders for Navy Basketball, another of his passions. As Paul Schwartz said in his FEDhub post, "Ed Bice was truly one of the nicest human beings we have ever had the good fortune to work with." I will miss him dearly as a mentor and pal.

– Bob Doyle

BOB DOYLE

MD Federation State Legislative Committee Chair

The Maryland General Assembly will convene for a special session to act on Congressional redistricting which may consider overriding five vetoes by Governor Wes Moore. Senate President Bill Ferguson (D-Baltimore City) and House Speaker Joseline Peña-Melnyk (D-Prince George's and Anne Arundel) have restricted the legislative agenda of the special session to redistricting.

MD NARFE PAC

MD NARFE PAC or Political Action Committee works with the Federation's State Legislative Committee (SLC) for legislation beneficial to seniors by raising and spending money to elect members of the Maryland General Assembly who support our legislative program. Contributions to MD NARFE PAC also help our SLC build strong relationships with our lawmakers, a key component to winning legislative fights.

MD legislators will hold fundraisers throughout this election season, and after the elections through the beginning of the 2027 General Assembly session. As always, if you are aware of an upcoming fundraiser for your State Senator or Delegate and you or anyone from your Chapter would like to attend, PLEASE contact me using any of the contact methods for me listed below. If you need the instructions for requesting funding to attend a fundraiser, please contact me and I will send you a Word version of the instructions for your Chapter newsletter or to otherwise send to your Chapter members.

Finally, as always, please communicate to your Chapter membership that they can make an investment in advancing our legislative program in Maryland by supporting MD NARFE PAC today! (Note –MD NARFE PAC contributions are not tax-deductible for Federal or state tax purposes. Further, contributions to MD NARFE PAC must be made only by individual members, and not by Chapters using Chapter funds.)

Members should make checks payable to: MD NARFE PAC, and mail to:

Robert Doyle, Treasurer
MD NARFE PAC
4226 Carvel Lane
Edgewater, MD 21037

MARYLAND CHAPTER NEWS



Chapter 1770 Bel Air Meeting

On April 27, President Edward Holland enjoyed meeting the numerous members who turned out for Chapter 1770's meeting. He briefed the members on his goals for NARFE MD. The meeting was held at the Bel Air United Methodist Church in Harford County.

Pictured here (left to right) Jean Salvatore, Member Chapter Legislative Committee; Pam Doner, Chapter Secretary/Treasurer & Membership Chair; MD President Ed Holland; Jim Wood, Chapter President & Newsletter Editor; and Jan Kolakowski, Chapter Vice President & Legislative Chair

Chapter 1747 Greater Bowie-Crofton Area Health Fair – October 15

Melody Kebe, Chapter 1747 President, invites all NARFE members to their Annual Health Fair which will feature a guest speaker on the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle. The **Healthy Me Education Day** will take place on Thursday, October 15, 2026 from 10:00am-noon at the Kenhill Center, 2614 Kenhill Drive in Bowie. Attendees can engage with healthcare partners about their health insurance coverage and the upcoming “2026 Federal Benefits Open Season.”



Chapter 409 Frederick Meeting

Delegate Kenneth Kerr, Ed.D. (D-3B) spoke at Chapter 409's April luncheon about the just finished General Assembly session. We were informed about passed bills and bills that didn't pass.

In May, they raised money for Supporting Older Adults Through Resources, Inc. SOAR works to enable seniors to safely age in place. Frederick County Executive Jessica Fitzwater spoke on county issues at the May memorial program and instillation of officers.

Pictured here (left to right) Delegate Kenneth Kerr and Scott Darby, Chapter 409 President



Chapter 251 Chesapeake Bay Area Meeting

Chapter 251 Chesapeake Bay Area hosted Delegate Seth Howard, (R-30B, Anne Arundel County) at their April meeting wrap-up on the 2026 legislative session of the Maryland General Assembly. Without question, the single best way to stay connected to your Maryland State legislators is to invite them to your Chapter Meetings.

Pictured here (left to right) Chapter 251 President Delegate Carla Duls, Delegate Seth Howard (R-30B), and Federation SLC Chair Bob Doyle.



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CALENDAR *(subject to change)*

Aug 24-26, 2026	NARFE FEDcon26 Hyatt Regency, Indianapolis, IN
Sep 18	Board Registration Deadline for Board Meeting – October *
Oct 5	Executive Committee Meeting (3-6pm) Comfort Inn Hotel, Bowie MD
Oct 6	Board Meeting Comfort Inn Hotel, Bowie MD *
Oct TBD	Region 2 Training Academy TBD
Nov 20	Deadline to submit WINTER Federation Newsletter items to Editor
Mar 10, 2027	MD Federation Election of Officers & Bylaws Change Voting Begins
Mar 10	Deadline to submit SPRING Federation Newsletter items to Editor
Mar 26	Registration deadline for MD Federation May 2027 Biennial Conference
Mar 31	MD Federation Election of Officers & Bylaws Change Voting Ends
Apr 23	Announce Results of 2027-29 Officers Election & Bylaws Changes
May 3-5	Annual Meeting & Biennial Conference Aloft Hotel, Ocean City, MD

* The Board consists of officers, chapter presidents and an at-large national-only member.