



# NARFE NEWSLETTER

## GREATER BOWIE-CROFTON AREA

### CHAPTER 1747

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

Volume 28, No. 5

www.NARFE1747.org

January 2008

**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS** are held at Bowie City Hall (2614 Kenhill Drive, Bowie) on the third Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM in Conference Room 204. There is never a charge to attend and all meetings are open to the public.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS** are held the first Thursday of the month at 9:00 AM in Conference Room 125, Bowie Senior Center. All chapter members are welcome.

**NOTE:** Chapter meetings are cancelled when Prince George's County schools are closed due to inclement weather. Otherwise, meetings are held as scheduled.

#### COMING ATTRACTIONS

- ❖ *General Meeting.* Thursday, January 17, 10:00 AM: Program: Tax information; Speaker, Diane Polangin Total Tax Service
- ❖ *General Meeting.* Thursday, February 21, 10:00 AM: Program: Identity Theft—Protecting Your Private Information

#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Ed Bice*

The dawn of a new year is an occasion to look back on the old year and assess our efforts. I believe our efforts produced a very good 2007 for our chapter. As your president, I thank the officers, committee chairs, activity coordinators and all members for your cooperating efforts in 2007.

At the start of 2007 the goals of your Chapter Board were to (1) increase attendance at meetings and events, (2) make the NARFE name and mission better known in the community by taking part in community events and (3) identify and develop members to take leadership roles in our chapter.

I believe we met the challenge and are on the road to continued progress in the above three goals. Our membership is responsible for our good year and will be the key ingredient in whether 2008 will be a stellar year.

Your officers need suggestions for program topics and identifying community events. Members should come to meetings and events. There are opportunities for members to help in chapter activities by volunteering or to stand for election in the chapter.

#### CONVENTION RESOLUTIONS

*Ed Bice*

It is time to think of resolutions or proposed bylaws/standing rule amendments at the National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky in September 2008. Proposals for National resolutions should be meaningful and cover problems that need correcting. Local issues need not be aired before the entire NARFE membership. The guiding principle in any submission is whether the submission is necessary and will ultimately improve NARFE. Any submission by chapters must reach the Federation Secretary by February 20, 2008. I have copies of the submission forms.

#### FEDERAL LEGISLATION

*Paul Schuette*

The government giveth — and the government taketh away.

Federal retirees got their COLA increase for 2008, but those over 65 with Medicare Part B know for a fact that health care costs are going up faster than the cost-of-living overall.

The COLA for retirees under the Civil Service Retirement System came to 2.3 percent. The COLA was 2 percent for retirees under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)—a lesser amount because social security is integrated with FERS. The 2008 federal annuity COLAs are the lowest in four years.

Social security COLAs match the 2.3 percent paid under CSRS.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

*Continued on page 2*

The bad news for 2008 is that Part B Medicare monthly premiums jump from \$93.50 to \$96.40 for most participants—an increase of more than 3 percent.

An estimated 5 percent of Medicare beneficiaries will pay even more because they have higher incomes. In adding a prescription drug option to Medicare, Congress also tucked in a provision tying Part B premiums to income.

Individuals with annual incomes ranging from \$82,000 to \$102,000 will pay an additional \$25.80 a month, hiking their premiums to \$122.20. That surcharge is stepped up for those with higher incomes.

Retirees will have a month to adjust to those changes before new rates kick in under the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program.

Monthly premiums for the standard Blue Cross/Blue Shield plan will be going up \$10.51 to \$134.66 for Individuals. For families, the premium will be jacked up \$23.49 to \$314.47.

Blue Cross/Blue Shield has been the most popular by far among the FEHBP fee-for-service plans but the new rates may have sent some participants scurrying to plans with more modest increases.

GEHA touted no increases at all in premiums for its standard and high deductible plans and actually reduced monthly charges for its “high self” and “high family” plans.

## STATE LEGISLATION

*Ed Bice*

United Seniors of Maryland (USM) is holding its State Legislative Rally on Tuesday, January 22, 2008 (snow date January 29) at Francis Scott Key Auditorium, St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland.

USM 2008 Legislative Priorities include resolving the deficit in services for seniors by addressing qual-

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## DID YOU KNOW?

Check “Letters To The Editor”

on our web site for tax information on minimum required distribution withdrawals.

How much you take out *does* matter.

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ity long-term care, fraud and abuse, affordable health care and related critical needs. Scheduled to speak are Governor O'Malley and Gloria Lawlah, Secretary, Maryland Department of Aging. The event starts with registration from 8:15-9:00 a.m. and continues until 2:30 p.m. The \$15.00 registration fee includes continental breakfast and lunch.

If you are interested in going to this worthwhile event, please call Ed Bice (301-646-3748) for further information. In the past, our group has carpooled from Bowie City Hall to the Navy Marine Corps Stadium and then taken the shuttle to the college.

## MEMBERSHIP

*Dorothy Campbell*

### Ring in 2008, Singing the Same Old Song

Every January for years, I've been requesting all Chapter 1747 members to make resolutions to attend more meetings, become active in chapter activities and recruit new members. This message echoes all the previous ones -- but goes a little bit farther.

Attendance at our regular membership meetings normally fluctuates between 35 and 50 members -- which is disappointing, since our membership fluctuates between 1060 and 1100. Attendance should be much higher, based on the variety of our programs and the expertise of our speakers. Granted, many of our members work/volunteer, many are caretakers for family members/others, and many are not physically able to attend meetings. But what about the rest of you? Do you honestly believe that your chapter should be run by only a small cadre of dedicated officers? Do you know that many of these officers have had to double-up and even triple-up on responsibilities because the chapter doesn't get enough members to volunteer for some appointed officer/committee member positions? And although this isn't just a recent problem, it needn't be -- and you, as a participating chapter member, can correct it!

Yes, it's wonderful getting dues from so many members, but that just isn't enough to keep the chapter thriving. The chapter needs “bodies.” It needs activists who attend meetings, raise concerns, propose and vote on issues and work on the committees that do the ongoing organization work-- in other words, members who participate. And yes, while it's great to see the same, familiar faces at meetings/events on a regular basis -- we want to see some new faces.

So make those resolutions to become more active. And, more importantly, keep the resolutions. You already financially support your chapter; now physically support it! You can start by coming to meetings. We'll be looking forward to seeing you. And if you want to do more, call an officer listed on page 4.

## CONDOLENCES

The following Chapter members passed away recently. Our prayers and sympathy go to their families and friends.

**Herbert Cohen**

**Ernest G. Malchodi**

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

All 15 new members are current federal employees. They can't come to meetings, but many of you who are retired, can!

**Linda I. Baker**

**Mollie Cohen**

**William D. Davis**

**Cheryl P. Greaux**

**Joan M. Haas**

**Rolf P. Hill**

**Danita Hunter**

**Raymond Kessenich**

**Joseph A. Offutt**

**George Ratte**

**Kathleen H. Rohan**

**Nancy A. Ryan**

**Marilyn K. Wasleski**

**Donnell Whitaker**

**Joseph A. Young**

## IMPORTANT FEDERAL CONTACTS

*All are addressed as "The Honorable"*

President George W. Bush <i>president@whitehouse.gov</i>	202-456-1111	
Senator Barbara A. Mikulski <i>www.mikulski@senate.gov</i>	202-224-4654	fax: 202-224-8858
Senator Ben Cardin <i>www.cardin@senate.gov</i>	202-224-4524	fax: 202-224-1651
Representative John Sarbanes District 3 <i>www.sarbanes.@house.gov</i>	202-225-4016	fax: 202-225-9219
Representative Steny Hoyer District 5 <i>www.hoyer.@house.gov</i>	202-225-4131	fax: 202-225-4300
Representative Albert Wynn District 4 <i>www.wynn.@house.gov</i>	202-225-8699	fax: 202-225-8714



**Moments to Remember**

## CHAPTER 1747 TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance on: November 1, 2007	\$4550.56
Income:	1152.69
Expenses:	833.58
Assets:	4724.91
Obligations:	1002.00
Balance on: November 30, 2007	\$2075.04

## DAYS TO REMEMBER

January 1	New Year's Day
January 15	Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday (Observed)
January 22	USM State Legislative Rally

## Greater Bowie-Crofton Area NARFE News

NARFE News is published ten times a year (monthly from September through June) by Greater Bowie-Crofton Area Chapter 1747, National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, P. O. Box 504, Bowie, MD 20718-0504.

Vol. 28, No. 5

Dues payments, gifts, and contributions to NARFE are not deductible as Charitable Contributions for income tax purposes.

## CHAPTER BOARD

### Elected Officers

President	Ed Bice	301-464-3748	DEBice@netzero.net
1st Vice President	Dorothy Campbell	301-464-6372	Dcbowie@aol.com
2nd Vice President	Barbara Wheatley	301-352-6241	wheatley0@aol.com
Secretary	Lillie Watson	301-262-5926	lwatson16@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Bob Cullen	301-262-4783	ba3537@aol.com
Assistant Treasurer	Louise Cole	410-672-5543	col9135.aol.com

### Committee Chairs

Federal Legislation	Paul Schuette	301-262-0975	paulschuette@verizon.net
Membership	Dorothy Campbell	301-464-6372	Dcbowie@aol.com
Newsletter	Frances Steburg	301-352-0297	feks@msn.com
	Jessica Forman	301-262-3222	jeci4man@verizon.net
Programs	Barbara Wheatley	301-352-6241	wheatley0@aol.com
Public Relations	Dorothy Campbell	301-464-6372	Dcbowie@aol.com
Service Officers	Bob Cullen	301-262-4783	ba3537@aol.com
	Paul Schuette	301-262-0975	paulschuette@verizon.net
	Lee Tuveson	301-262-3164	
State Legislation	Ed Bice	301-464-3748	DEBice@netzero.net

### Activity Coordinators

Alzheimer's Fund	Maria Francer	240-245-4328	
Community Service	VACANT		
Meeting Sign-In/Greeter	Mary Catloth	301-390-2206	mcatloth@aol.com
NARFE-Net Coordinator	VACANT		
NARFE-PAC	Ed Bice	301-464-3748	DEBice@netzero.net
Photographer	Frank Lee	410-672-5065	fllee0716@verizon.net
Refreshments	Jack Calloway	301-262-3457	
	Dave Gallart	301-262-7261	
	Tom Page	301-262-3418	
Events Coordinator	VACANT		
Sunshine	Marjorie Laios	301-262-1556	