



NARFE NEWSLETTER

GREATER BOWIE-CROFTON AREA

CHAPTER 1747

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

Volume 29, No. 4

www.NARFE1747.org

December 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 10:00 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

- ❖ *Holiday Luncheon.* December 18, The Nautilus Diner Restaurant, Social 11:30 AM, Lunch: 12:00 noon
- ❖ *USM Legislative Rally.* January 27, 8:15 AM to 2:30 PM.
- ❖ *General Meeting.* January 15, Tax Time Tips

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ed Bice

During the past two years, our chapter numbers increased due to free one-year memberships given to new NARFE Premier Federal Credit Union members. The vast majority of these new members did not renew their NARFE membership for various reasons. As a result, our chapter membership is down.

In today's political and economic environment a strong NARFE is vital for all members. Yes, we all need to recruit more members and keep NARFE a strong organization. Everybody, please do your part by recruiting a new member or two.

Recruitment is very important. Retention of members is vital to the success of any NARFE chapter. Your executive board has started to contact all of our chapter members who have been dropped for non-renewal of membership. This effort will continue for the rest of my term.

There are many benefits to our chapter retaining members. If you want to help our "Calling Committee," please call or see me or any one of our officers. Thank you.

An extra thank you to Al Golato and Bill Cramer who represented the chapter at Bowie's Veterans

Day ceremony. The event is very special to all who attend. The presence of the Cub Scouts, Brownies, Girl and Boy Scouts and veteran and civic groups is especially memorable.

Snow Policy: It's the time of the year for snow. Please note that chapter meetings are canceled when Prince George's County schools/offices are closed for inclement weather. Otherwise, meetings are held as scheduled.

I extend to all members and their families best wishes for a happy and holy holiday season. I hope to see many of you at our holiday luncheon on December 18.

United Seniors of Maryland (USM) Rally

This annual legislative rally will be held January 27, 2009 from 8:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at St. John's College, Annapolis. The cost is \$15. USM works to preserve and enhance the mental, physical and financial well-being of the state's seniors. Please see Ed Bice for details.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Joe Young

The Right to Vote

Voting is a method by which groups of people make decisions. In many countries such as ours, people vote to elect their political leaders and to decide public issues.

The right to vote is considered by most Americans as one of their most important rights because it allows

Continued on page 2

us to choose who will govern us. Citizens of democratic countries may elect their public officials either directly or indirectly. In direct elections, the citizens themselves vote for the officials. In indirect elections, the voters elect representatives, who then choose the officials. The President of the United States is elected indirectly through the Electoral College, made up of elected representatives from all the states and the District of Columbia.

Voting in the United States was not always a right, but rather a privilege given to a select few. During our colonial period, the right to vote was limited to adult males who owned property. It was thought that property owners had the strongest interest in good government and so were best qualified to make decisions. Most women could not vote, though some colonies gave the vote to widows who owned property.

After the United States became an independent nation, the Constitution gave the states the right to decide who could vote. Over time, each state abolished property requirements and, by 1830, all white adult males could vote. Only New Jersey gave women the right to vote, however, in 1807 New Jersey reversed that decision.

In the 1800's and 1900's, democratic nations have extended the right to vote (suffrage) to many people who previously did not have that right. The Constitution of the United States has been amended several times for this purpose. The 15th Amendment was adopted in 1870, five years after the Civil War ended. It prohibited the states from denying a citizen the right to vote because of race. Women were not allowed to vote in most states until the ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920. The 23rd Amendment, ratified in 1961, gave citizens living in Washington, D. C. the right to vote in national elections. The 24th Amendment, adopted in 1964 banned the states from requiring citizens to pay a poll tax to vote in national elections. In 1966, the Supreme Court outlawed the use of taxes in state and local elections. In 1971, the 26th Amendment lowered the voting age to 18 for all states and national elections.

All democracies limit the right to vote in special cases. In the United States and Canada, for example, people who are mentally ill or retarded or who are serving a prison sentence for committing certain crimes may not vote.

After the adoption of the 15th Amendment, several states used various means to deprive blacks of their

voting rights by adding grandfather clauses to their constitutions. These clauses set voting requirements that no blacks could meet. In 1915, the Supreme Court of the United States declared such clauses unconstitutional. Many states also required blacks and poor whites to pay a poll tax or pass a literacy test to prevent them from voting.

To protect the voting rights of blacks and members of other minority groups, the United States Congress passed the Voting Rights Act of 1963. Under its terms, people who attempt to deprive others of their voting rights are subject to severe penalties.

While working as a technician for the Maryland State Board of Elections at the University of Maryland College Park polling site, I was reminded of the history behind our right to vote and the great democracy in which we have the privilege to live. I was also reminded of the Freedom Riders, Civil Rights Marches, Supreme Court decisions outlawing unfair and unjust voting rights laws, and those individuals who gave their lives, blood, sweat and tears for our right to cast a vote.

As I witnessed thousands of young adults of all races, religion and ethnic backgrounds, waiting for hours to exercise their right to vote for the candidate of their choice. I could not help but feel proud and reassured that democracy was alive and well in America.

STATE LEGISLATION

Ed Bice

The State Legislative Committee (SLC) is actively seeking sponsorship for our priorities for 2009. They are: equalize tax exemptions for Maryland seniors, provide an annual tax credit for long-term care insurance premiums, reduce the property tax burden on senior homeowners by capping property assessments to 5% statewide, and increasing the homeowners tax credit of assessed value to \$450.00.

Want your NARFE News in **Color?**

check out

www.NARFE1747.org

Ready for
TAX TIME?

Start early--right after our January
Tax Time Tips!

MEMBERSHIP

Dorothy Campbell

'Tis the Season for Giving and Getting

It's the holiday season again and the time for gift-giving, and what's better than giving the gift of a NARFE membership? Especially when NARFE gives you a gift in return!

Yes, you read that right. For each new member to whom you give a gift membership and pay their \$33.00 first year dues – NARFE will automatically send you a check for \$8.00.

Besides being a great way to make your gift-giving easier, it's a great way to build NARFE. Contact me now (see page 4) for gift membership applications or find them on the web at NARFE.org. Look in the left-hand column on the home page for Gift Applications.

And there's more: Just signing up a new member also gets you an \$8.00 check from NARFE as long as you enter your membership number on the new member's regular membership application. So even when you get someone to join and pay their own dues, it still pays off for you!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Ralph M. Bartimo	Dorothy M. Medford
Nancy M. Chadwick	Cecilia Pfau
Karren R. Daniels	John W. Robinson
Eleanor Gerber	Gary M. Snellings
Virginia C. Granville	Joan F. Tarkington
Robert M. Henry	Ferrol W. Thomas
Jacquelyn A. Kolenkiewicz	

CONDOLENCES

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

Dorothy W. Ertel **Ralph Francis Kessler**

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

Nautilus Diner Restaurant

Corner of Routes 3 and 424, Crofton, MD

Social: 11:30 AM, cash bar

Lunch: 12:00 noon

Choice of: Corned Beef and Cabbage ❖ Meat Loaf with Potato and Vegetable ❖ Broiled Tilapia with Potato and Vegetable ❖ Half Chicken with Potato and Vegetable

Plus: Cup of Soup ❖ Coffee or Soda ❖ Strawberry Shortcake, Coconut Cake or Chocolate Cake

Cost: \$19.00 (Make checks payable to NARFE Chapter 1747)

Reservations: Barbara Wheatley, 301-352-6241

You must call by December 15.

CHAPTER 1747 TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance on: October 1, 2008	\$4109.12
Receipts:	361.68
Disbursements:	306.90
Balance on: October 31, 2008	\$4163.90

DAYS TO REMEMBER

- Dec 7 – National Pearl Harbor Remembered Day
- Dec 21 – Hanukkah (begins at sundown)
- Dec 21 – First Day of Winter
- Dec 28 – Last day of Hanukkah
- Dec 25 – Christmas

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.

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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	DE3637@verizon.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	410-672-6528	col9135@aol.com

Committee Chairs

Federal Legislation	Joe Young	301-218-5187	JosephYoung48@yahoo.com
Membership	Dorothy Campbell	301-464-6372	Dcbowie@aol.com
Newsletter	Frances Steburg	301-352-0297	feks@msn.com
	Jessica Forman	843-347-9287	jessicaforman@yahoo.com
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	ltuveson@verizon.net
State Legislation	Ed Bice	301-464-3748	DE3637@verizon.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	DE3637@verizon.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	301-262-1566	

December 18: Holiday Luncheon.
11:30 AM (Social) 12:00 AM (Lunch) The Nautilus Diner

January 15: Tax Tips.