



NARFE NEWSLETTER

GREATER BOWIE-CROFTON AREA

CHAPTER 1747

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

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www.NARFE1747.org

February 2009

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

- ❖ *General Meeting.* February 19, Dr. Sam Boles, Ophthalmologist, Anne Arundel Eye Center
- ❖ *General Meeting.* March 19, Gardening. *Presenter:* Mr. Gene Sumi

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ed Bice

Holiday Luncheon

Thanks to all for your help in the Chapter's successful Holiday Luncheon on December 18. Everybody had a good time, as the food was good and plentiful and the door prizes were won by happy members. The total attendance was 58.

Chapter Elections

The Chapter elections will take place at the May general membership meeting. Since I will not be running for an elected office, I will be Nominating Committee chair. Tom Page is on the committee, but we still need a third committee member. If you wish to volunteer, please contact me.

Chapter 1747 elects officers every two years to serve from July 1 through June 30. The Nominating Committee presents a slate at the April meeting. The membership can present nominations from the floor at that time as well as at the May election.

I urge the present officers to seek the same or another office for 2009-2011. The goal is to have every elected position and key committee chair positions filled at all times. We need more *new* volunteers. If you have questions about the duties of any position in our organization, please see me, call me, or mail me. We need your help to keep our chapter an outstanding enterprise.

Maryland Federation Convention

Maryland NARFE will be holding its biennial convention in Ocean City, MD at the Clarion Fontainebleau Hotel on May 3-6, 2009. This is a great chance for you to join in deciding who the new leadership of Maryland NARFE will be, to take part in setting new directions for Maryland NARFE, to meet other NARFE members from all over the state, and to have a good time.

NARFE's policies are decided by its members through their convention delegates. If you have an idea for improving NARFE, and in particular the Maryland Federation, submit a resolution with your idea before February 15. Consult with President Ed Bice on the appropriate way to do it.

Hotel rates for the convention are a bargain compared with regular season rates. Fees for registration at the convention and the banquet are reasonable as well, and there may be financial assistance for the registration and banquet.

Anyone interested in attending should contact Ed Bice, who can provide more details about the convention.



Pictures from our Holiday Luncheon

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Joseph Young

Little Time for Ceremony

There was little time for ceremony as new members of the House and Senate were sworn in on Tuesday, January 6, 2009. The worsening economy has turned what should have been a day of celebration into a somber day of reflection and debate over how to address the problems of a nation that has slipped into a very deep recession.

This is the time for leadership and nonpartisan politics from both sides of the aisle. The nation expects and deserves no less. Members of the House and Senate see the current recession as an opportunity to move beyond the partisan politics of the last 12 years and, hopefully, pass legislation that will help resurrect the nation and its people out of this recession mess.

While the mood in the Senate was one of bipartisan consensus, there were some signs of discontent among Republicans in the House who accused Democrats of rewriting the rules to strip away what little power they have left. However, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) was not fazed by this criticism, as she vowed quick action on an economic stimulus plan, universal health care and climate change legislation, among other issues such as the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

On Monday, January 5, 2009, President-elect Barack Obama met with a bipartisan group of congressional leaders. Obama told them that tax cuts would represent about 40 percent of the total cost for the stimulus plan, with the likely focus coming on a \$1,000 per household tax cut and business tax credits, which would allow firms to write off purchases more quickly, and an increase in small business expensing limits.

The plan would also include \$350 billion for infrastructure programs such as highway construction, an upgrade of health care technology, the extension of unemployment benefits, and increased funds for food stamps. States would also receive at least \$100 billion to help cover short falls in Medicaid funding and other budget items.

The Democrats would like to act quickly to pass this economic stimulus plan; however, there are some Republicans, like Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.) who said "Somebody needs to slow this train down." He warned his fellow Republicans not to accept "small temporary tax cuts," which Obama advisers have pegged at \$300 billion in exchange for massive federal spending.

Leaders of the Democratic Congress would like to pass the legislation through both chambers by early February; however, Sen. Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii), the new chairman of the Appropriations Committee, said that his aides had only recently received the legislation. "Now we have to put it into the little details of legislation," he said, declining to specify a final spending target.

Let's just hope that the two major parties can rise above partisan politics and formulate a stimulus plan that is good for the

nation in a timely fashion. This would truly be a welcome change from the polarizing atmosphere of the past decade.

NARFE Welcomes Social Security Fairness Bill

Margaret L. Baptiste, president of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees' Association (NARFE), applauded Representatives Howard Berman (D-CA) and Howard "Buck" McKeon (R-CA) for swiftly introducing legislation in the new 111th Congress to repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), Social Security laws that unjustly deny federal retirees and other public sector retirees their earned Social Security benefits. NARFE's President reiterated her association's long-standing opposition to these provisions of the Social Security Act and pledged to work closely with Congress to ensure action this session.

Baptiste thanked Representatives Berman and McKeon for introducing H.R. 235, which was immediately cosponsored by a sizable bloc of their House colleagues. She specifically noted the federal community's continued appreciation for the legislators' "tireless and steadfast efforts to deliver equity to our nation's public servants".

Since 1983, the GPO has prevented retirees from collecting both their federal annuity and any Social Security benefit based on their spouse's work. Two-thirds of the amount of the earned civil service retirement annuity is used to offset Social Security spousal or survivor benefits that might otherwise have been payable. The WEP reduces the earned Social Security benefit of a federal worker who also receives a government annuity based on his/her own work. Hundreds of thousands of retired federal civil servants, as well as other public sector retirees, have lost Social Security income as a result of these offsets, and many annuitants are affected by both.

Recent data indicates approximately 465,000 Social Security beneficiaries affected by the GPO, of whom about 77 percent are women, approximately 43 percent are widowed, and 75 percent have lost their entire Social Security spousal benefit. The data also showed roughly 972,000 Social Security beneficiaries affected by the WEP.

President Baptiste highlighted NARFE's ongoing work with other organizations to persuade Congress to address the adverse economic impact of the GPO and WEP. For over 25 years, NARFE has led a legislative campaign to rid the Social Security Act of the GPO-WEP provisions. NARFE chairs the Coalition to Assure Retirement Equity (CARE), comprised of over 40 national organizations representing public sector retirees, including teachers, police officers and city workers that seek to change the law. "The GPO and WEP arbitrarily eradicate the earned Social Security benefits of far too many public sector retirees. There is absolutely no legitimate reason for one segment of seniors being denied their Social Security benefits for which full Social Security taxes were paid" affirmed Baptiste.

STATE LEGISLATION

Ed Bice

The State Legislative Committee (SLC) continues support for our priority legislation. Delegate Gilchrist (Dist. 17) is sponsoring our senior exemption equalization bill — which will have the increases start in 2010 with three annual increments of \$500, \$850 and \$850 for a total exemption of \$3200.

Delegate Manno (Dist. 19) will introduce legislation for an annual tax credit for long-term care insurance premiums. He also has pre-filed tax bills on health-related issues. Our efforts supporting the establishment of a “senior caucus,” spearheaded by Delegate Manno and Senator Pugh (Dist. 40), have met resistance from Speaker Busch, who does not like caucuses in principle. Please remember that in 2010 the senior population in Maryland will reach one million — or one-sixth of the state’s population.

Programs

Barbara Wheatley

Dr. Sam Boles, ophthalmologist, Anne Arundel Eye Center, a cataract and glaucoma specialist, will give a slide presentation at our next meeting. Dr. Boles comes highly recommended and enjoys taking questions from the audience.

MEMBERSHIP

Dorothy Campbell

Two Join Membership Committee

A special thanks to the two chapter members who have volunteered to join our Membership Committee, **Dorothy “Dottie” Van Doren** and **Jacqueline “Jackie” Wilson**. They will be sending “welcome to our chapter” letters to all new chapter members and calling members who have not responded to national NARFE’s reminders that their dues are due — two very important committee functions.

If there are any more members who’d like to help out (there’s plenty of membership work to do in addition to the two above-listed activities.)

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Patricia A. Booker	Joanne K. O’Malley	Paul Smith
Fred Heugel	Barbara J. Rey	Kevin E. Toevs
Linda A. Lovell	Jesse T. Scruggs	Michael J. Turner

ISO UFOs

(In search of Unabashed, Fearless Officers)

The time has come to start our campaign for bipartisan officers for our Chapter 1747. We promise not to bombard you with TV ads for this important election. Our new officers will not have to face a budget deficit nor look at bailing anyone out. We will have a very tame election process.

We need to elect members to the following positions:

- President
- 1st Vice President
- 2nd Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Assistant Treasurer

Those elected will serve a two-year term, from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2011. If you are interested, please contact Ed Bice (nomination committee chairperson). An installation luncheon will take place at the June 2009 general meeting.

Also, we are seeking volunteers for the following committees: Programs, Newsletter Publication and Web Page, Federal Legislation, State Legislation, Public Relations, and Membership. These are not elected positions. Please remember if we do not get any volunteers for these committees, our chapter may have to curtail some activities.

CHAPTER 1747 TREASURER’S REPORT

Balance on: December 1, 2008	\$3827.88
Receipts:	1011.95
Disbursements:	1567.78
Balance on: December 31, 2008	\$3272.05

DAYS TO REMEMBER

- Feb. 12 – Lincoln’s Birthday
- Feb. 14 – Valentine’s Day
- Feb. 16 – Presidents’ Day (Observed)
- Feb. 12 – Washington’s Birthday
- Feb. 25 – Ash Wednesday

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@verizon.net
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	Joseph 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@verizon.net
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	

February 19: Ophthalmologist Sam Boles.

March 19: Gene Sumi on Gardening

**Chapter 1747 Wants YOU! Could you be an officer
or committee chair?: Contact Ed Bice.**