



NARFE NEWSLETTER

GREATER BOWIE-CROFTON AREA

CHAPTER 1747

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

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April 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.* April 16, Reverse Mortgages. *Presenter,* Mr. John Ferguson, Esq. President, Main Street Settlements.
- ❖ *Maryland NARFE Convention.* May 3–6, Ocean City, MD. (*Details, page 3*)
- ❖ *General Meeting.* May 21, Review, 2009 General Assembly Session

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ed Bice

Thank you to our new webmaster, Howard "Flash" Gordon, who took over in February. Flash updates our site monthly, and has some ideas for the site in the coming months. Click on NARFE1747.org and take a look.

Parades and Bowiefest

The Executive Board has voted for the chapter to participate in the Crofton Armed Forces/Homeland Security Parade on Saturday, May 2; the Bowie Memorial Day Parade on Saturday, May 23; and Bowiefest, Saturday, June 6. You may remember that our chapter was awarded the "First Place" prize as the best non-profit contingent in the 2008 Bowie parade.

I urge all members to come out and support your chapter by being part of our efforts to publicize NARFE.

Chapter Elections

Once again, please note the nomination form for officers in the newsletter for 2009-2011. The chapter needs members to step up. The need for help is also critical in the following areas: Editor(s) of the Chapter

newsletter and Chair/members of the Program Committee. For more information, contact Barbara Wheatley (programs) or me if you're interested in these critical chapter functions.

NARFE-PAC

NARFE-PAC is your political action committee. I urge members to read the March issue of the NARFE magazine which highlights NARFE-PAC. It clearly details how and why the PAC is in existence (it was established to protect your earned benefits). NARFE is "our defense fund in a potentially hostile environment."

Our retirement and health benefits are and will be under review for the foreseeable future as President Obama proceeds on his active agenda. Just the other day a U.S. senator spoke about taxing employee-provided health benefits.

How do you help our PAC protect your earned benefits? Contribute yearly to NARFE-PAC. Go to the March issue of NARFE magazine for a coupon and instructions on how to donate. Those who donate \$20 or more will receive a pin indicating they have contributed.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Joseph Young

Legislative Training Conference 2009

On March 7, 2009, the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) convened for its Eleventh Biennial Legislative Training Conference. It was held at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City, Arlington, Virginia.

The Training Conference was well attended by NARFE members from as far away as Hawaii. It was

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a great opportunity for me to meet other chapter members and discuss issues common to all chapters, such as increasing and retaining membership and maintaining and controlling chapter operating costs.

Training Conference participants attended morning and afternoon break-out sessions which covered "NARFE-PAC, Health Care Issues, the U.S. Budget, Grassroots Organizing and Contacting Congress". I found the sessions to be informative and well done. I came away from these sessions with a better understanding of the issues. It was well worth the \$150 price tag.

We were also treated to conference speakers that addressed issues ranging from the budget to health care. The following speakers addressed NARFE's Eleventh Biennial Legislative Training Conference:

- James R. Horney is the Director of Federal Fiscal Policy, at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, where he specializes in federal budget issues.

- Congressman Chris Van Hollen (Dem.—MD) was elected to Congress in 2002 in a high profile election that received national attention and has quickly earned a reputation as an active, engaged, and effective member of Congress. Rep. Van Hollen is Chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and serves on the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

- Congressman Frank R. Wolf, the most senior of the 11 members of the House of Representatives from Virginia, is serving in his 15th term in Congress. He represents the 10th District of Virginia, which stretches from McLean to Winchester. Congressman Wolf sits on the powerful House Appropriations Committee, where he is the lead Republican on the Commerce-Justice-Science Subcommittee. He also serves on the Transportation and Housing and Urban Development Subcommittee. In addition, he is the co-chairman of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, a bipartisan organization made up of more than 200 members of Congress who work together to raise awareness about international human rights issues.

- Dr. Marilyn Moon is Vice President and Director of the Health Program at the American Institutes for Research. A nationally-known economist and expert on Medicare, aging and health care financing, Dr. Moon has served as a public trustee for the Social Security and Medicare trust funds. She has written extensively on health policy, both for the elderly and the population in general, and on social insurance issues. Her most recent book, *Medicare; A Policy Primer*, was published in 2006.

- Norman J. Ornstein is a resident scholar at American Enterprise Institute. He also serves as an election analyst for CBS News and writes a weekly column called "Congress Inside Out" for *Roll Call* newspaper. He has written for the *New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Foreign Affairs*, and other major publications. He regularly appears on television programs such as ABC News Nightline, PBS's Charlie Rose, and The News Hour with Jim Leher, where he was recently recognized as the most frequent guest over the program's thirty years. He was the first "pollster" for the Comedy Central Network working with Al Franken in 1992, and was the first guest to appear twice on "The Colbert Report."

On Tuesday, March 10, 2009, the Legislative Training Conference concluded with a successful day of lobbying. The lobbying team of Bill Ferguson, Chuck Thomas, Ed Bice, Nancy Leonard, Tom Leonard, and Joe Young met with assistants for Senator Ben Cardin, Senator Barbara Mikulski, and Representative Steny Hoyer to request that they support and cosponsor committee action on "Premium Conversion" H.R. 1203 introduced by Rep. Chris Van Hollen and S. 491 sponsored by Senator James Webb, legislation to allow all federal annuitants and military retirees to use pre-tax earnings to pay their share of health insurance premiums.

We also requested that they act to eliminate both "Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) H.R. 235, introduced by Rep. Howard Berman and S. 484 sponsored by Sen. Dianne Feinstein.

Presently, the GPO law prevents federal, state, and local government retirees (who were first eligible to retire in December 1982 and later) from collecting both a government annuity and one based on their spouse's work record. This law provides that two-thirds of the government annuity offsets whatever Social Security benefits would be payable to the retired government worker as a spouse (wife, husband, widow, etc.). A federal retiree with a monthly annuity of \$900 and no Social Security coverage of her own would receive a greatly reduced widow's benefit from the program on the death of her husband as a result of GPO.

Under the WEP, the Social Security Amendments of 1983 include a provision that greatly reduces the social security benefit of a retired or disabled worker who also receives a federal, state or local government annuity based on his/her *own* earnings. It applies to anyone who becomes 62 (or disabled) after 1985 *and* becomes eligible for his/her government annuity after 1985. Congress provided for a five-year phase-in on

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	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@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	

April 16: Reverse Mortgages and other housing questions.

May 21: Review of the 2009 General Assembly Session.

Don't be shy: Nominate yourself for a chapter position!