



NARFE NEWSLETTER

GREATER BOWIE-CROFTON AREA CHAPTER 1747

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

Volume 32 No. 6

www.NARFE1747.org

February 2012

www.facebook.com/narfe1747

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS are held at Kenhill Center (old Bowie City Hall), 2614 Kenhill Drive, Bowie on the third Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM in Conference Room 214 (old room 204) except in July and August. There is never a charge to attend and all meetings are open to the public. Please check your current newsletter for any changes.

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:** Thursday, February 16. Speaker: Gene Sumi, Education Director, Homestead Gardens.

❖ **General Meeting:** Thursday, March 15. Speaker: Tracie Reaver, MD Relay, State Telecommunications Services for deaf/blind residents.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

DOROTHY CAMPBELL

The Time to Strengthen NARFE Is Now

Tempus fugit. Most of you know the translation: Time flies. But that's only the short version of Virgil's take on time: what he actually wrote somewhere between 70 and 19 B.C. was: "...*fugit irreparabile tempus*" or "irretrievable time is flying."

Needless to say, his words still ring true. Time does fly and we cannot retrieve the time we lose. For those of us who tend to procrastinate, we sometimes miss great opportunities, pass up chances, lose out on the ability to do things we didn't find time for while we held down full-time jobs and fulfilled family and other obligations.

Personal Obligations vs. Chapter Needs

Of course I recognize that many Chapter 1747 members are not yet retired from their federal jobs and can't attend weekday membership meetings/events. I am also well aware that many others are retired but are still working — either as volunteers or for a salary. I know others have family obligations; they are caretakers and babysitters. Still others are physically unable to be active participants in our organization. Then add those who have been highly active in NARFE in the past, and now are

ready to step aside to make way for younger, newer activists. Obviously, these are all legitimate and understandable reasons not to participate in NARFE — and we have to accept them.

However, an organization such as NARFE cannot flourish without broad participation by its members. Our chapter, since its birth in 1985, has been fortunate to have had a fairly large "core group" to lead the chapter and attend meetings and other events. Basically we still have that. But we must also keep in mind that as the members of the core group age and become unwilling or unable to continue their stewardship of the chapter, they must be replaced by younger members ready and willing to make a commitment to actively participate and keep the chapter running smoothly. In other words, to ensure its existence, the chapter must have a continuous cadre of activists to fill leadership positions and attend meetings/events/activities.

Is Our Chapter Ensuring Its Existence?

Is this actually happening in Chapter 1747? Yes and no. Yes, it appears that way if we check out the list of officers and committee/activity chairs on page 4 of our newsletter. Yes, if we look at the well-attended Health Plan Open Season meeting last November and our other better-attended meetings. And yes, if we review our long list of ongoing activities.

But the reality is also a resounding NO. FYI, when our next officer elections occur next year, at least half of the current officers may not be running again for office; and NO ONE HAS COME FORWARD, despite my and other officers' repeated calls for members to become involved/become back-up officers. In May 2013, when the election will take place, only two or three current elected officers may seek office again; those not wishing to run again will have held an office from 4 to 12 or more years. With a chapter membership that hovers between 875 to 900, this is a sad commentary on our chapter's activ-

Continued on page 2

ism. And it is no consolation that this situation can be found in NARFE chapters across the country, and in many other civic and community organizations.

It is a fact that many of our members no longer live in the area any more and a great number of others suffer from poor health, and/or no longer drive. Many of you hold down paying or volunteer jobs, and have family responsibilities. A great number of you volunteer with community, religious, service and charitable organizations, or you take classes and travel. Even if that accounts for half of our membership, that still leaves several hundred others – who could and should be stepping up to the plate, coming to meetings and taking on some responsibility for maintaining our organization. Important note: We have an often untapped volunteer group in our midst: spouses of members!

Many Opportunities, Many Options

If you read or hear my/other officers' constant pleas, you know that we stress that jobs/responsibilities in the chapter can be shared, duties can be divided and commitments may be made for specific time periods, preferably a year. Some jobs can even be done by those who cannot leave their homes; all that is needed is a telephone or a computer. We've all seen these options work effectively. We all understand the problems of time/responsibilities; we've got them too. But we also recognize that the chapter cannot function without more activism, more participation, more sharing of leadership responsibilities, more cooperative efforts.

We know that time flies and it is irretrievable. So while you can, please take some of that irretrievable time and help your chapter. Contact me or another officer or committee chair. Tell us you'd like to work with us to help strengthen our chapter and continue its good work. Don't let your irretrievable time slip through your fingers; give it to NARFE. Get involved. Participate. Attend meetings. Join a committee. Take on a task. Take time to help your chapter. Remember, time does fly, and you can't retrieve the time that's flown by.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

JOSEPH YOUNG

“President Obama Seeks to Streamline Federal Government”

On Friday, January 13, 2012, President Obama asked Congress for the authority to consolidate several related agencies under the Commerce Department; he said this would lend to streamlined services and a smaller, more efficient federal workforce.

President Obama stated before an audience of small business owners at the White House that he would initially focus on merging sprawling entities that deal with small businesses in an effort to save \$3 billion by eliminating more than 1,000 jobs over the next decade. These federal bureaucracies include five different entities involved in housing and more than a dozen that regulate food safety.

Last year, President Obama promised in his State of the Union address to create a leaner, more efficient federal bureaucracy.

Despite the prominent discussion of the issue and Obama's vow to release specific plans within six months, administration officials spent most of last year playing down the goal of a major reorganization.

The White House said they were side-tracked by the need to draft contingency planning for a possible government shutdown and the fierce debate last summer over raising the federal debt ceiling. Obama also commissioned a study, last year, to identify which entities should be targeted; he received the results in June 2011.

Once Congress grants President Obama consolidation authority, officials said, Obama would establish a new department charged with overseeing trade and investment, business and economic development, technology and innovation, and economic statistics.

The new department would combine the trade and commerce functions of the Commerce Department, Small Business Administration, U. S. Trade Representative Office, Export-Import Bank, Overseas Private Investment Corporation, and Trade and Development Agency.

The Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis and Bureau of Labor Statistics would also be included to focus on government statistical data.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which represents the largest part of Commerce's budget, would move to the Interior Department.

Although White House officials estimated that 1,000 to 2,000 jobs could be eliminated in the first wave of reorganizations, they said most of the cuts would come through natural attrition as employees retire or seek outside employment.

OUR ACTIVE CONNECTION

LEE TUVISON

Pay Freeze Continues Through 2012

In a December 2011 executive order, President Obama outlined the various federal employee pay rates for 2012, confirming the two-year pay freeze is still in effect through 2012.

Specifically the executive order stated:

“By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Continuing Appropriations and Surface Transportation Extensions Act, 2011 (Public Law 111-322), which freezes certain pay schedules for civilian Federal employees at 2010 levels through 2012 and provides for the phase-in of the full applicable locality pay rates in non-foreign areas pursuant to the Non-Foreign Area Retirement Equity Assurance Act of 2009 (5 U.S.C. 5304 note), it is hereby ordered.

In addition, Federal employees will not receive an increase in General Schedule (GS) locality pay in 2012, and there will be no new GS locality pay areas, according to a report released recently by the president's Pay Agent. Section 5304 of title 5, United States Code, requires the president's Pay Agent to submit a report each year showing the locality-based comparability payments it would recommend for General Schedule federal employees in the following fiscal year.

What About This Year and Beyond?

60 NARFE Scholarships to Be Awarded

Applications are now being accepted from high school seniors who are the children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and stepchildren of current NARFE members. Applicants must be planning to attend an accredited college in the fall.

The application and information can be found on pages 42 and 43 of the February issue of NARFE magazine, will be in the March and April issues, and is available on the NARFE website: www.narfe.org.

The scholarships are for \$1,000 each; six will be issued in each of NARFE's 10 regions. Deadline for receipt of applications is April 27, 2012. The required essay judged to be the best of all submitted will be featured in NARFE magazine.

Funding for the scholarships is derived from contributions to the NARFE Federal Employee Education & Assistance Fund (FEEA). To donate by check to the fund, use the coupon on page 42 of NARFE magazine, or contact the chapter for a contribution form. To donate by credit card, call 800-338-0755. You may also make a contribution to NARFE's Disaster Fund by form/phone. *Note: Contributions to FEEA are tax-deductible.*



CHAPTER 1747 BUDGET REPORT

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Balance on: December 1, 2011 | \$5161.07 |
| Receipts: | 714.88 |
| Disbursements: | 1816.23 |
| Balance on: December 31, 2011 | \$4059.72 |

Like these members, you too can help keep our chapter running by participating in meetings, conventions, luncheons, parades, and other events. All you need to do is volunteer.

DAYS TO REMEMBER

- February 12 Lincoln's Birthday
- February 14 Valentine's Day
- February 20 President's Day
- February 22 Washington's Birthday
- Ash Wednesday

Greater Bowie-Crofton Area NARFE News

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Vol. 32, No. 6

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

CHAPTER BOARD

Officers

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| President | Dorothy Campbell | 301-464-6372 | Dcbowie@aol.com |
| 1st Vice President | Lee Tuveson | 301-262-3164 | ltuveson@verizon.net |
| 2nd Vice President | Lillie Watson | 301-262-5926 | lwatson16@hotmail.com |
| Secretary | Chiquitta Thomas | 301-805-4108 | c_thomas106@verizon.net |
| Assistant Secretary | Jacqueline Wilson | | miss.JackieV@aol.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 | Lillie Watson | 301-262-5926 | lwatson16@hotmail.com |
| Newsletter | Jessica Forman | 843-347-9287 | jessicaforman@yahoo.com |
| Programs | Lee Tuveson | 301-262-3164 | ltuveson@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 |
| Sergeant-at-Arms | Peter Hill | 301-249-9143 | pmkthill1@msn.com |
| State Legislation | Ed Bice | 301-464-3748 | DE3637@verizon.net |
| Ways & Means | Dorothy Bice | 301-464-3748 | DE3637@verizon.net |

Activity Coordinators

| | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Alzheimer's Fund | Maria Francer | 240-245-4328 | |
| Community Events | Ed Bice (Bowie) | 301-464-3748 | DE3637@verizon.net |
| | Louise Cole (Odenton) | 410-672-6528 | col9135@aol.com |
| | Donna Minner (Crofton) | 410-721-9799 | |
| Meeting Sign-In/Greeter | Vacant | | |
| NARFE-Net Coordinator | Howard (Flash) Gordon | 301-464-2745 | flash@acm.org |
| 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 Galliard | 301-262-7261 | |
| | Tom Page | 301-262-3418 | |
| Sunshine | Marjorie Laios | 301-262-1566 | |

Thursday, February 16. Speaker: Gene Sumi,
Education Director, Homestead Gardens