



NARFE NEWSLETTER

GREATER BOWIE-CROFTON AREA CHAPTER 1747

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

Volume 33 No.9

www.NARFE1747.org

May 2013

www.facebook.com/narfe1747

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS are held at the Bowie Senior Center, 14900 Health Center Drive, Bowie, 20716 in Rooms #2–4. Meeting dates are the third Thursday of the month at 10:00 AM 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, May 16, Bowie Senior Center. State Legislators provide first-hand accounts on the legislative session: also big issues: a chapter dues increase and officer elections.

❖ **General Meeting:** Thursday, June 20. Chapter 1747 Officer Installation and Luncheon.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

DOROTHY CAMPBELL

It Can Happen Here Too . . .

Last month when I received “The Voice,” the newsletter of Hyattsville’s Chapter 264, I was dismayed when I read its front-page story, “PLEASE READ—VERY IMPORTANT NEWS ABOUT CHAPTER 264 !!!”

It’s a sad story, but it must be told because it can happen to any chapter—even ours! I’ve reprinted the gist of the article—which I believe speaks for itself.

“Chapter 264 was chartered 10 June 1953 and from a high of over 1000 members in the 1980s, now has about 260 members. Of these, only 12 are active either in monthly meetings or as chapter officers. The chapter has 4 officer vacancies and faces another 4 vacancies this summer when two volunteers step down from their positions. Nearly all of our current chapter officers have served faithfully many, many years, in a thousand ways. Without new volunteers, the chapter cannot continue to function.”

An All Too-Familiar Situation

The article continues with information to its 260 members that they could merge with a neighboring chapter, and these

members will soon vote on whether they should. Yes, that’s an option, but it’s unfortunate that Chapter 264’s members allowed this situation to develop. Note: *If they don’t get officers and they don’t vote to merge, the chapter will be dissolved and its members will be assigned to other chapters. Whatever happens, I wish the officers and members of Chapter 264 well.*

I’ve provided this story not to embarrass a chapter that has been kept alive for years by a dedicated few. Instead I’ve issued it as a warning that it can happen to any chapter, even ours. In our chapter, only a small number, on average 3–5 percent, attend membership meetings, and far fewer hold office and perform the necessary duties of keeping our chapter viable. Today, increasingly fewer members participate in special events than in the past; even attendance at luncheons—normally a good draw—has dropped. Granted, meeting attendance varies (depending on programs?), but it’s very inconsistent despite the high caliber of our speakers. In 2013, our meeting attendance ran nearly 5 percent in January and February, then dropped off in March to less than 3 percent. This is not good. It’s not fair to our speakers, and those who don’t attend meetings aren’t being responsible organization members.

Continued on Page 2

CALLING ALL MEMBERS !

If you haven’t signed up yet for our June 20 luncheon—taking place again at the Blue Dolphin Seafood Bar & Grill—please do it now!

See the box on page 3 with all the information you need to sign up and enjoy great food, great company and a chance to win our Bowie Theatre raffle and door prizes. Or sign up at our May membership meeting.

If you haven’t signed up yet for any/all of our other events – such as the Bowie Memorial Day Parade and Bowiefest—you can get details on these and other events on NARFE1747.org and call or e-mail the appropriate contact person.

Officers Desperately Needed

As for officers—while long-serving leadership can be good for an organization, regularly changing leadership is almost always better. It brings the infusion of new ideas and new life to a group—along with a healthy dose of workload-sharing. These points—or organizational goals—should be considered and acted upon by every able-bodied NARFE member. Anything less is unfair. Organizations at any level cannot survive when a small cadre of leaders has to carry the entire load of the group's duties and efforts.

I recognize that our membership consists of many retired members who can no longer actively participate: many live not just out of town but out of state. Others are physically unable to take part. And yes, we have an aging membership, but we also have many newer members who are younger and healthier and who need to recognize that merely paying dues does not keep a chapter functioning.

In the nearly four years since I've been president and the other six when I was an active officer/executive board member, we've lost over one hundred members who moved, died, became incapacitated, or dropped out. That's all to be expected. And we can't expect those still employed to take off from work to attend meetings (and note that when we held Saturday morning HP Open Season meetings every November, very few, if any, "actives" showed up at them).

To me, the answer lies in three groups; one is our new retiree members, another is those who have rested contentedly over the years while some of us actively participated, and the third in non-members we need to recruit (more on the last group next month). Yes, when I first retired, I didn't want to do anything; I just wanted to enjoy the freedom that came from not having job responsibilities. But newer, younger retirees and those who have been merely duespayers need to recognize that they are the NARFE activists who must take the places of those who have been active for years—just as we activists did for those who came before us. Organizations—not just NARFE but all groups—function only when members recognize that as leaders leave they need to be replaced. Dissolution of our chapter, or a merger should not be an option; our option should be and must be "replacement."

Participate. Volunteer. Serve.

I believe in NARFE and Chapter 1747 and its membership. I believe we have many members on our rolls who can lead this chapter not only for the next two years, but as long as it exists. Being a chapter leader may not necessarily be an easy job, but it can be a most rewarding job—as it has been for me and many others. So come on, give yourself and your chapter a chance. Come forward. Breathe new life into our Chapter. Volunteer to be an officer (or a committee chair/member). You don't need any special experience and you'll even get OTJ training.

And hurry. Nominations/elections take place at our May 16 meeting. Use the Nomination Form on the next page.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

JOSEPH YOUNG

Proposed Change in Benefits Formula

In his 2014 budget to Congress, President Obama proposed changing the formula used to calculate annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) to federally-administered programs. The proposal would use the chained CPI method of determining inflation in place of the current CPI-W. Using the chained CPI instead of the CPI-W would reduce COLAs by an estimated 0.3 percent per year and, compounded over time, would add up to a big loss in benefits.

The median Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) annuitant, with a monthly benefit of \$2,620, would lose up to \$1,525 during the first five years of lowered inflation protection. The median CSRS survivor annuitant (\$1,230 per month) would lose up to \$716 over the same five years. Over 30 years, an annuitant could lose over \$100,000 in benefits.

President Obama's budget plan will cut or save, depending on which side of the fence you are on, \$35 billion through reform of federal retirement programs.

The federal workforce is already contributing more toward its retirement. Employees hired this year and in the future will pay 3.1 percent of their salaries toward their pensions. The exception to the rule is those with five years of previous federal service. They will contribute at the current rate of 0.8 percent.

The National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) criticized the budget plan for using the chained CPI, a less generous index to increase benefits in retirement programs, including Social Security and federal retirement.

"We are disappointed to learn the president's first proposed budget since his re-election will embrace a policy designed to balance the budget by cutting the earned benefits of America's seniors, veterans, and those with disabilities," NARFE President Joseph A. Beaudoin said in a statement. "If President Obama endorses the chained CPI inflation formula to calculate the cost-of-living adjustments for Americans, as has been reported, he will be turning his back on the populations most in need of assistance."

Obama's budget request proposes a range of other initiatives, such as \$100 billion in new cash for roads and railways, \$1 billion for 15 new institutes to promote innovation in manufacturing and \$8 billion to help community colleges prepare students for existing jobs.

Other proposals by President Obama include a \$3 million cap on the value of individual retirement accounts and an increase in the estate tax after 2018.

President Beaudoin urges you to use NARFE's Legislative Action Center to tell both Congress and the President to reject reducing your earned benefit.

Boldly Go where you haven't gone before!
All Chapter 1747 officer positions are open. Nominate yourself. We *must* have officers to keep our chapter going!

NARFE Chapter 1747 Nomination Form

Please use this form to submit your name or to nominate another member of Chapter 1747 for the following officer positions. Those elected will serve a 2-year term, from July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015.

Your Name _____
President _____ Secretary _____
1st Vice President _____ Treasurer _____
2nd Vice President _____ Assistant Treasurer _____

Deliver this form to Ed Bice or Bob Cullen at the May 16 membership meeting.
Nominations will be accepted from the floor at that meeting. All nominees must be members in good standing of Chapter 1747.

Installation Luncheon

PLACE: Blue Dolphin Seafood Bar & Grill, 1166 Route 3 South, Gambrills, MD

DATE: Thursday, June 20, 2013

TIME: Social/Cash Bar: 11:30 AM; Lunch: Noon

MENU: Choice of one entrée (to be made upon arrival at restaurant)

Broiled Crab Cake

Jr. Cut New York Strip Steak

Chicken Marsala

Vegetarian Meal (available on request)

Includes: Salad, Baked Potato, String Beans, Bread

Plus: Iced Tea, Coffee, Hot Tea, Dessert

COST: \$24.00 (includes tax and tip)

Pay when you sign-up at our May membership meeting, OR by mail **AFTER** making reservations with:

Bob Cullen, 301-262-4783, ba3537@aol.com OR Louise Cole, 410-672-6528, col9135@aol.com

Mail checks to: NARFE Chapter 1747, PO Box 504, Bowie, MD 20718

Please make all checks payable to: NARFE Chapter 1747; all payments must be made by June. 14.

Cancellation policy: **No refunds** will be made if reservations are not cancelled by June. 17.



STATE LEGISLATION

Ed Bice

We have invited three members of the General Assembly to talk at our May 16 chapter meeting about the recently concluded 2013 Maryland Legislative Session. They are: Sen. Edward Reilly (R-District 33), Sen. Douglas Peters (D-District 23), and Del. Geraldine Valentino-Smith (D-District 23A). Please come, listen, and feel free to ask questions.

Results of 2013 Session

The results of our efforts during the session were disappointing as legislation supported by the SLC was not voted out of committee for consideration by the other House. Very disappointing was that SB 23 and HB 578, Income Tax Credit for Long Term Care Insurance Premiums, never even received a committee vote. HB 578 had 85 cosponsors and the support of various organizations. These bills would have reduced the State's MEDICAID burden in the future by creating an environment which would encourage the purchase and retention of LTC insurance.

CHAPTER 1747 BUDGET REPORT

Balance on: March 1, 2013	\$2581.13
Receipts:	406.511
Disbursements:	323.00
Balance on: March 31, 2013	\$2664.64

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

Officers

President	Dorothy Campbell	301-464-6372	Dcbowie@aol.com
1st Vice President	Lillie Watson	301-383-1597	lwatson16@hotmail.com
2nd Vice President	Vacant		
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	301-383-1597	lwatson16@hotmail.com
Newsletter	Jessica Forman	843-347-9287	jessicafforman@gmail.com
Programs	Executive Board		
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
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	Vacant		
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	F. Miner and D. Evans		
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	

Attend Thursday, May 16's, Important Meeting

Elect Chapter Officers

Vote on a chapter dues increase

Hear and question State Legislators on the 2013 MD Legislative Session