



NARFE NEWSLETTER

GREATER BOWIE-CROFTON AREA CHAPTER 1747

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

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www.NARFE1747.org

January 2015

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS are held at the Bowie Senior Center, 14900 Health Center Drive, Bowie, 20716 in Room 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 or our website 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:** January 15 10:00AM, Bowie Senior Center. Diane Polganin, Update for your 2014 Tax Forms

❖ **General Meeting:** February 19 10:00AM, Bowie Senior Center. Tracy Hanavin, Oasis Senior Advisors: Adapting to Major Life-Changing Events

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

JERRY KURSBAN

"The days go slow but the years go fast" is a well-known French proverb. As we look forward to the opportunities and challenges of 2015, a quick look back may be of value. The year 2014 was truly a LANDMARK year of change for NARFE. The National Convention made decisions to streamline the organization and control costs. These decisions included ramp-up efforts aimed at increasing membership and managing the resources of our members more effectively; including placing a greater emphasis on strategic planning and marketing.

The November national election was a "wave" election, as Republicans gained control of the U.S. Senate and increased their number of House seats and State governors. In our own state of Maryland, we elected a Republican governor for only the third time in the last 50 years.

I invite you to check out NARFE'S Legislative Program for the newly elected 114th Congress on pages 39-42 of your January NARFE magazine. You may notice that this issue includes an extensive list of initiatives. Again, I remind you that YOU NEED NARFE and NARFE NEEDS YOU. No other organization focuses EXCLUSIVELY on protecting the pay, retirement and health benefits of federal and postal employees.

Finally, at the risk of sounding like a broken record, we desperately need more volunteers to step forward to serve as officers

and as Committee Chairs for our Chapter 1747. At our Executive Board meeting on December 4, we agreed that unless more members volunteer in the next few months, we will need to contact the Maryland Federation to discuss the possibility of merging with other chapters. We hope this will not be necessary, but we are no different than the several other NARFE chapters which have merged in recent years because their members did not participate in running their chapters. So, I urge you to contact any of the officers on our chapter and VOLUNTEER TO SERVE.

We extend our special appreciation to Bob and Ann Cullen for arranging our Holiday Luncheon which we celebrated at the Blue Dolphin restaurant.

STATE LEGISLATION

Ed BICE

USM LEGISLATIVE FORUM

United Seniors of Maryland announces that their Forum will be held on January 28, 2015. The program will be held in the President's Conference Room, Main Floor, Miller Senate Office Building, 11 Baden Street, Annapolis, MD 21401. Registration is from 8:00AM through 9:00AM; programs run from 9:00AM until 12:30PM. The program includes speakers and is followed by group caucuses to advocate for seniors. You will be contacted on your caucus location after you register and pay. The event is a rain, snow, or shine event and will be held whatever the weather. USM will make the call as they did for the blizzard last year to cancel. Notice of cancellation will be on the USM website by 5:30AM, January 28. It is your responsibility to track the notices for the event.

Continued on page 2

Obama declares a 1% Federal Pay Raise Effective January 1, 2015!

State Legislation Continued from Page 1

The USM website is www.unitedseniors.net. It will have a PayPal account to register. If you prefer to mail a check, please send mail payment in full to USM, P.O. Box 1094, Sparks, Maryland 21152. The \$15.00 fee is the same as in past years. This year, USM will include a full-year membership to any attendee. You can opt out of the USM membership but you must contact USM, not Chapter 1747, to do so. Otherwise, all attendees will receive the membership. If you were a fully paid 2014 Forum attendee, YOU MUST STILL REGISTER. USM is honoring all paid 2014 fees for the 2015 forum. If you fail to register and just show up at the door, you may have to be turned away. This special venue requires a full head count of attendees, security counts, and potential refreshment counts. No refunds will be given. See you in Annapolis.

CHAPTER 1747 BUDGET REPORT

Balance on: November 1, 2014	\$2041.66
Receipts:	1057.73
Disbursements:	345.00
Balance on: November 30, 2014	\$2754.39



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Congressional Changes

NARFE federal legislation reports are committed to informing you about what has occurred in Congressional sessions, how individual Senators and Representatives voted on specific issues, and summarizing what these votes mean to federal employees in terms of pay, benefits, retirement, and health care costs. NARFE is non-partisan in that it supports issues rather than political party platforms; although support of pro-federal employee policies may seem to favor one party over the other.

There is no such thing as an election without consequences. The recent mid-term election was a "wave election" which created wide-spread changes in Congressional structure. A majority change always includes a top-to-bottom change throughout the House and Senate, switching every office from Committee Chairs to majority/minority organizational offices. Only the president pro tem of the Senate—the sitting Vice President—does not change. These changes, more than one party's majority number of votes, affect when and how bills and nominees are considered by the chamber.

For the six years of Obama's presidency, Congress has been effectively paralyzed. Members have not worked in a bipartisan fashion to consider or encourage passing legislation. Rather,

We're Still Available!

The days of giving—Hanukah and Christmas—will have ended by the time you receive this issue, but the raffle remains! Our year-long contest still has six months before the lucky winner is announced. Our raffle tickets are still available at prices which won't overload your credit cards or require major budgeting to purchase one or more chances. They are still only 1 ticket for \$2, 3 tickets for \$5, or 7 tickets for \$10. You can't return them, but they're guaranteed to be the right size and color.



That's President Jerry Kursban holding up a corner of Margy Hill's handmade quilt. The raffle ends in June.

Tickets can be purchased at our monthly meetings or by using the Raffle Ticket Order on page 3. Please make your check payable to NARFE Chapter 1747 and indicate "Quilt Raffle Tickets" on the memo line. The form should be mailed to NARFE Chapter 1747, P.O. Box 504, Bowie, MD 20718. Remember to fill in your name, phone number, e-mail (if you use e-mail) and the number of tickets you are purchasing on the form. You will receive your tickets at the next meeting, or by mail if you miss the meeting. You do not have to be at the June luncheon to present the winning stub; but you will miss a good time (and a good meal) if you aren't there.

both parties have stuck to party-line votes, stalling legislation, funding, and blocking consideration of many nominees.

Democrats fear that Republicans will use their new majority to attack key progressive priorities while promoting a right-wing agenda that includes the Keystone XL pipeline, repealing Obama Care, blocking fair immigration legislation, and banning abortions after 20 weeks, further weakening the Dodd-Frank Act and the social safety net. Republicans counter that these Democratic programs will result in excessive intrusion by the federal government in individual citizens' lives to run programs if people are entitled to far-reaching government support regardless of the cost. Examples of such programs include Obamacare, banking regulation, energy-program regulation, and abortion bans.

The best way to end the existing deadlock and prevent wild polarized pendulum swings is to be informed and to let your individual Senators and Representatives know how you want them to deal with these issues. NARFE will provide the information you need; but it is up to you to determine policies by telling your officials where you stand on such issues. These elected positions rely on citizen votes and keep a sharp eye on what their constituents tell them.

Quilt Raffle Ticket Order Blank

Name _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Number of tickets ordered: _____ (1 for \$2, 3 for \$5, or 7 for \$10)

Mail this form with your check to NARFE Chapter 1747, P. O. Box 504, Bowie MD 20718



You'll never know if you don't try it.

Try reading your newsletter on *your* computer.

Get up-to-the-minute delivery and save the chapter money at the same time. E-mail Flash at flash@acm.org. Put NARFE Newsletter in the subject line and include your zip code in the message. Please don't call or just mention it at a meeting—we need a paper trail.



SCENES FROM A LUNCHEON



DAYS TO REMEMBER

January 1 New Year's Day
January 19 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Greater Bowie-Crofton Area NARFE News

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Tax Troubles?

January 15, 10:00 AM

**Diane Polangin of Total Tax Service has answers ready
for your questions.**