



# NARFE NEWSLETTER

GREATER BOWIE-CROFTON AREA CHAPTER 1747

**National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association**

Volume 34 No. 2

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February 2016

**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:** Thursday, February 18. Diane Polangin of Total Tax Service The 2015 Tax Changes.

❖ **General Meeting:** Thursday, March 17. Linda Dennis of Partners in Care.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*JERRY KURSBAN*

As we begin the journey of a new year, and NARFE turns 95, we have an opportunity to take stock of our current situation. A reminder that the MISSION of NARFE is:

"To support legislation beneficial to current and potential federal annuitants and to oppose legislation contrary to their interests."

It is worthwhile to remember that NARFE is the only formal organization EXCLUSIVELY dedicated to protecting the interests of current and potential FEDERAL ANNUITANTS. Not AARP, which supports a myriad of interests. Not the National Committee to preserve Social Security and Medicare. These organizations fit into one of NARFE's other missions:

"To cooperate with other organizations and associations in furtherance of NARFE'S general objectives."

For Chapter 1747 members, the cost of having professionals protect your interest is one dime per day.

NARFE National President Richard Thissen reminds us (see page 4 of your February NARFE Magazine) that it will be necessary to embrace the challenge of change in order for the organization to remain relevant. The NARFE National Executive Board (NEB) has proposed a plan of action to reinvigorate the organization. The Strategic Plan has been posted on the

NARFE website for our review. Delegates will vote on this Strategic Plan at the 34th NARFE National Convention in Reno, Nevada, Aug 28–Sept 1, 2016. (See page 46 of your February 2016 NARFE Magazine and the NARFE National Convention Website at [www.narfe.org/convention2016](http://www.narfe.org/convention2016) for details on the convention and how to make arrangements to attend. Also see the short article on page 2 of this newsletter.)

## FEDERAL LEGISLATION

*JERRY KURSBAN*

In 2015, NARFE actions helped to avert a number of bullets aimed to reduce the benefits of current and retired federal annuitants. NARFE lobbied forcefully to prevent a reduction in the return on the TSP G Fund. That savings would have been used to help fund the Federal Highway Trust Fund. Another win for NARFE's efforts was the requirement for the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to offer identify theft protection for 10 years and identify theft insurance of up to \$5 million in liability to personnel affected by OPM data breaches. Still another victory involved securing relief from a 52 percent increase in Medicare Part B premiums for annuitants who were not receiving Social Security benefits.

For 2016, Congress has already reached an agreement on overall federal government spending levels through October 2016. Consult the NARFE Bill Tracker on pages 12–14 of your NARFE Magazine which shows the specific Congressional Legislation that NARFE is following and NARFE's position on each of these bills. You may note that Rep. Sarbanes has sponsored H.R. 20 which would reform campaign finance laws, and Sen Cardin has sponsored S. 1746, which would extend protection for identify theft. Also note that 2016 may present the best opportunity in several years for reforming the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), which reduces an individual's Social Security benefit based on his or her federal, state, or local government

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employment and earnings. See page 8 of your February NARFE Magazine for details.

To learn more, consult the NARFE Legislative Hotline, which provides a weekly update of legislative news, at 877-217-8234 or at [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org). Consult the NARFE Legislative Action Center at [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org) for assistance in sending a letter to Congress. Remember that letters and messages are always counted when a representative decides how to vote on specific issues.

## STATE LEGISLATION

*Ed Bice*

The 2016 General Assembly convened on January 13 in Annapolis. The Democratic leadership team was reelected by their party. Governor Hogan will present his budget for next year during the week of January 20. He has announced already that he will propose tax cuts for senior citizens, low income families, and some manufacturing businesses, fulfilling a campaign pledge. He said the cuts which would amount to an estimate \$480 million over the next five years would help "Marylanders who desperately need it most." The Governor said he wants to increase the personal exemption for senior citizens over age 65 from \$1000 to \$5000, phasing in the change over four years and saving 640,000 seniors about \$183 million over the next five years. His proposals also included accelerating an existing plan to increase the Earned Income Tax Credit, which helps families earning less than \$53,000 a year. The State Legislative Committee (SLC) has long championed the senior tax exemption in the General Assembly. In the 2011 session our bill, same subject, had a majority of Senate and House members as cosponsors. However, the leadership of both bodies did not allow our bill to come out of committee for a vote by the full General Assembly.

At this time, the SLC needs your voices to be heard in Annapolis by communicating to your representatives that you support the Governor's action on the senior tax exemption. To view a sample letter which you can use for guidance and mailing information go to [mdnarfe.org](http://mdnarfe.org) and click on legislative state page. The mdsic page will appear. Click on sample letters. Make sure you state what the money will be used for such as medical expenses if the General Assembly votes yes. You can also view the sample letter and then go to [mlis.state.md.us](http://mlis.state.md.us). Click on legislators, find your legislator and email your support to him/her on the form provided. This site is also useful as the office phone numbers of members are listed if you want to communicate by telephone. The SLC views the Governor's action as a positive. To make it a reality our members will need to express their support to overcome any hurdles that stand in the way of our legislative success.

Remember Co-ops? Partners in Care is one. They match people who can help with people who need help. Each volunteer job awards you points, which you use when you need some help yourself.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance on: December 1, 2015	\$4556.76
Receipts:	856.17
Disbursements:	1208.44
Balance on: December 31, 2015	\$4204.49
Reserve for Alzheimer's Fund	\$542.00

## DAYS TO REMEMBER

February 10	Ash Wednesday
February 12	Lincoln's Birthday
February 14	Valentine's Day
February 15	President's Day
February 22	Washington's Birthday

## Going National?

Preparations for the 34th Biennial NARFE National Convention are underway! The National Convention, hosted by the California and Nevada Federations, will be held in Reno, Nevada, August 28 to September 1.

The National Convention is where NARFE delegates from across the country gather to make important decisions, including setting the legislative agenda and electing new national officers and board members. Registration is not yet open, but a dedicated website is up and running with convention fees, travel, and agenda information. Beginning March 1, and continuing through Aug. 1, NARFE members can register online through the convention website. Check the website regularly for more details.

Many Chapter and Regional events to prepare for the national convention are listed below. Some carry a small cost while others are free. Listed below are dates, function and sponsor, and cost, if any.

February 2	Federation Executive Board, Comfort Inn, Bowie	8:30-3:30	\$20
February 3	United Seniors of Maryland (USM) Legislative Forum, Miller Conference Center, Senate Office Building <a href="http://www.unitedseniorsmd.com">www.unitedseniorsmd.com</a>	8:00-2:30	\$15
April 4 & 5	Region II Training Symposium Wyndham Garden Hotel, York PA		
May 2 & 3	Mini-Convention, Comfort Inn, Bowie		
July 26	National Convention Preparation Meeting, Bowie		
Aug 28- Sept 1	National Convention Reno NV <a href="http://www.narfe.org/convention2016">www.narfe.org/convention2016</a>		

## June Picnic

Chapter 1747 Board Members and Membership have voted to hold our Annual Picnic on June 16, 2016 at the Baysox Stadium, Bowie, MD. Admission to the game, professional wait staff, taxes, service fees and the Ballpark Buffet are included for only \$26.00 per person. The stadium opens 1 hour before the 6:30 PM game. Parking is free. Stadium is located on U.S. Route 301 at 4101 Crain Highway.

We will be accepting payments from January through June 6, 2016. Payments by check or money order can be sent to NARFE Chapter 1747, PO Box 504, Bowie, MD 20718-0504. Payments can also be made in cash, check or money order at our monthly membership meetings. A receipt is available on request.

### The Ballpark Buffet:

Fresh Tossed Salad	Baked Beans
Grilled All Beef Hotdogs	Pulled Chicken BBQ
Crunchy Chips	Popcorn,
Assorted Cookie Tray	Strawberries
Iced Tea	Lemonade.

Please include the form below to let us know how many people will be attending.

Name	Number of Guests	Amount Enclosed
Names of guests:		

## CHAPTER BOARD

### Officers

President	Jerry Kursban	301-261-3329	jkursban@gmail.com4
1st Vice President	Frances Steburg	301-352-0297	feks@msn.com
2nd Vice President	Lillie Watson	301-383-1597	lwatson16@hotmail.com
Secretary	Jacqueline Wilson		missJackieV@aol.com
Treasurer	Howard (Flash) Gordon	301-464-2745	flash@acm.org
Assistant Treasurer	Louise Cole	410-695-0643	col9135@aol.com

### Committee Chairs

Federal Legislation	Jerry Kursban	301-261-3329	jkursban@gmail.com
Membership	Lillie Watson	301-383-1597	lwatson16@hotmail.com
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Programs	Vacant		
Service Officer	Bob Cullen	301-262-4783	ba3537@aol.com
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Alzheimers Fund	Dorothy Bice	301-464-3748	debice@netzero.net
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NARFE-PAC	Ed Bice	301-464-3748	debice@netzero.net
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Sunshine	Marjorie Laios	301-262-1566	

## Next Meeting: February 18

### Diane Polangin of Total Tax Service The 2015 Tax Changes.

#### Opportunity Knocks: The Annual NARFE Scholarship

If you are a NARFE member who is the parent, grandparent, or great-grandparent of a high school senior who is planning to attend an accredited college full-time in a degree program in the fall/winter of 2016 you have an opportunity to apply for a NARFE Scholarship. You must submit a complete application packet by the April 29, 2016 deadline. An application and the requirements are elaborated on page 47 of your February 2016 NARFE magazine.

Please note that the requirements for submission are very specific and an essay is required. We have had winners of NARFE Scholarship from our geographic area in the past, and would like the honor of other winners in the future. For more information, you can obtain the Guide to NARFE's Annual Scholarship Awards Program (F-105) by sending an email to [scholarship@narfe.org](mailto:scholarship@narfe.org); downloading it from the NARFE website, [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org); or calling Headquarters and requesting scholarship information.

All NARFE officers and committee chairs can be reached by mail at:

NARFE Chapter 1747  
PO Box 504  
Bowie, MD 20718-0504

#### HELP NEEDED

Flash—Howard Gordon—is looking for someone to act as backup for the Chapter 1747 website. You don't have to be a guru, but you should have basic website skills.

If you are interested, please contact Flash.

#### 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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## Do You Remember the Dream?

Take a chance on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's dream and get raffle tickets! The winner gets a piece of some of the original cobblestones used around the Lincoln Memorial, embedded in lucite and a booklet on the dream history. Tickets available through June.



### Dream 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