



NARFE NEWSLETTER

GREATER BOWIE-CROFTON AREA CHAPTER 1747

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

Volume 34 No. 5

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May 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, May 19. Annual Maryland Legislative Update; **Kenhill Center** (Old Bowie City Hall).

❖ **General Meeting:** Thursday, June 16. Picnic, Bowie Baysox Stadium, 6:30 PM, (Stadium opens at 5:30), catered buffet dinner and game. See page 3 for details.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

JERRY KURSBAN

A warm welcome from members of NARFE Chapter 1747 to the former members of Chapter 1122 who have chosen to join our chapter. We are now the second largest chapter in Maryland with a combined membership of 1200. We look forward to meeting you at our picnic at the Baysox game and at chapter meetings.

As you already know, the Maryland State Mini-Convention will be held on May 2 and 3 at the Bowie Comfort Inn. Eight of us have agreed to attend—Frances, Flash, Lillie, Chiquitta, Louise, Jackie, Richard Denhof, and myself. I have forwarded this information to Marty Strombotne.

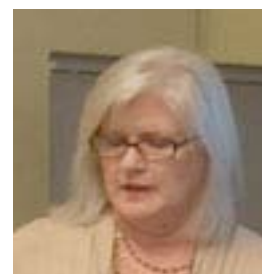
We need members for the Memorial Day Parades in Crofton, May 14 and Bowie, May 28. We need two walkers to carry the NARFE banner at each parade, and others to ride in cars. We have 3 drivers for Crofton and the 2 car maximum for Bowie. We also need people to hand out materials from our booth at BOWIEFEST on June 4. Please call 301-261-3329 if you can participate in any event. Hats and tee shirts will be provided.

The Region II Training Symposium was conducted at the Wyndham Garden Hotel in York, Pennsylvania on April 4 and 5. Flash Gordon and I attended from our chapter. On the first day all of us attended panels addressing (1) Marketing, (2) Legislation, and (3) Strategic Planning. NARFE National President Richard Thisen, Secretary/Treasurer Jon Dowie, and Region II Vice President

Evelyn Kirby held a session on "Securing the Future." NARFE membership is approximately half the number it was in 1984. Much of the decline has been attributed to a 1986 decision that requires members to join a chapter. Research shows that the baby boomer generation, currently NARFE's primary target, was born between 1946 and 1964, and the oldest members are now about age 70. This generation is less inclined to join and participate in chapter activities or to serve as officers. While regular chapter membership has stagnated, the number of federal retirees joining E-NARFE has increased significantly. These and other issues will be addressed at the 34th National Convention in Reno, Nevada.

I attended a session for chapter presidents which addressed chapter development. I came away with several ideas which I will share with you in the near future. My overall impression is how lucky I am compared to presidents in other chapters to have the current officers, committee chairs and activity coordinators we have. But we still have several vacancies. Also, in the session I attended on IT/OAM/Web and Social Media, I discovered how

April Showers Brought...



No, not May flowers, but excellent speakers. *Left*, Debra McBrook, Aging and Disabilities Service Division, PG County, Md., and *Right*, Trish Foley, Director, Community Services Independent Now, Inc.

fortunate we are to have Flash Gordon as our Chapter 1747 webmaster. Some chapters don't even have a webpage.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

JERRY KURSBAN

The WEP and Other Reforms

Reform of WEP, the Windfall Elimination Provision, was discussed at a House Ways and Means hearing on March 22 addressing H.R. 711, the Equal Treatment of Public Services Act of 2015. The bill would provide a rebate to those currently affected by the WEP and create a new formula for future beneficiaries. Both Republican and Democratic subcommittee members expressed support for the bill. These hearings also included discussions regarding reform of the Government Pension Offset (GPO) in the future. NARFE provided testimony, which was entered into the record, which called for total repeal of both WEP and GPO. However, NARFE supports passage of H.R. 711, which would provide some relief now to current beneficiaries for up to 50 percent of the current penalty. For additional information, see pages 4 and 5 of your May 2016 *NARFE* magazine, and visit NARFE's dedicated Web page at www.narfe.org, then click on "WEP Reform" under heading "Latest from NARFE."

NARFE has endorsed a new law which would speed up the federal hiring process by allowing agencies with similar hiring needs to share information. These agencies could not previously share information about prospective employees, resulting in duplication of work from agency to agency. This bill was signed into law on March 18.

NARFE has also sent a letter to the House Budget Committee urging it to keep cuts to the federal community out of the 2017 budget, which has proposed an increase in retirement contributions for all federal employees, and a 10 percent decrease in the federal workforce, along with other undesirable items. (See page 7 of your May 2016 *NARFE* magazine for details). And check the NARFE Bill Tracker on pages 10-12. It shows NARFE's position on several other bills which would affect federal employees and retirees.

NARFE issues. Assuredly all the candidates knew what NARFE is and the issues that concern us. A second Forum was held on April 9 at the Woodlawn Senior Center in Gwynn Oak, Maryland. National NARFE President Richard Thissen attended as did Region II Vice President Evelyn Kirby. Our Maryland Federation President Dan McGrath presided. Leading candidates for the U.S. Senate, Donna Edwards and Chris Van Hollen, responded to questions from our National Legislative Director, Jessica Klement. Both candidates have a record of supporting issues important to NARFE. The four Republican candidates responded to a separate round of questions, as did the other Democratic candidates.

The 2016 Maryland State legislative season has been completed and more than 100 bills have already been signed into law. The budget includes no new taxes, a major criminal justice system reform, scholarships for students from low-income households, measures to combat heroin use, measures to expand hearing aid programs, and a measure to reduce deaths from drunken drivers which would require ignition-locking devices for six months for anyone who fails a 0.08 breath test. There is a possibility of a one-day session that would address two major bills that failed to pass, both of which are of special interest to NARFE members. One would expand tax breaks to Marylanders, including seniors, which was one of NARFE's two major legislative initiatives. The other issue would ensure that state employees receive paid sick leave. Our second major NARFE initiative, to provide a tax incentive for the purchase of long-term care insurance, did not pass.

Remember our May 19th Annual Maryland Legislative Update will be held at the Kenhill Center, (Old Bowie City Hall,) 2614 Kenhill Drive, Bowie, Md.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance on: February 29, 2016	\$4294.00
Receipts:	930.00
Disbursements:	548.00
Balance on: March 31, 2016	\$4676.00
Reserve for Alzheimer's Fund	\$569.50

STATE LEGISLATION

2016 Legislative Update

The Maryland NARFE Federation, under the leadership of President Dan McGrath and First Vice President Gary Roundtree sponsored two legislative Forums which definitely put NARFE on the map at both the Maryland state and Federal levels. The Forum (not a debate) for Congressional District 4, which featured the six candidates who are running for Donna Edwards' U.S. House seat, was held at the Bowie Comfort Inn on March 19. Each candidate responded to a prepared list of questions which addressed

DAYS TO REMEMBER

- May 2-3 Maryland Federation Meeting, Bowie Comfort Inn
- May 8 Mother's Day
- May 14 Crofton Memorial Day Parade
- May 19 Chapter 1747 Meeting: State Legislative Review
- May 21 Armed Forces Day
- May 28 Bowie Memorial Day Parade
- May 30 Memorial Day
- June 4 BOWIEFEST
- June 16 Chapter 1747 Picnic at Baysox Stadium

at the Baysox Ballpark
Meet Me in St. Louis, Louie

Bring your family for an evening of entertainment and celebration.

No, St. Louis, just didn't make it. Our June Picnic will be held on June 16, 2016 at the Baysox Stadium, Bowie, MD. The Stadium, located on U.S. Route 301 at 4101 Crain Highway, opens at 5:30, one hour before the game starts. Your \$26.00 admission fee covers your game ticket, professional wait staff, taxes, service fees and the Ballpark Buffet. Parking is free. Still have questions? Call **410-672-6528** for answers. We will accept payments until 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. |

Alcoholic Beverages are not included in the price.



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

Your Name and Telephone	Number of Guests	Amount Enclosed
Names of Your Guests		

CHAPTER BOARD

Officers

President	Jerry Kursban	301-261-3329	jkursban@gmail.com4
1st Vice President	Frances Steburn	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	410-672-6528	col9135@aol.com

Committee Chairs

Federal Legislation	Jerry Kursban	301-261-3329	jkursban@gmail.com
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Social Media Coordinator	Howard (Flash) Gordon	301-464-2745	flash@acm.org
Sunshine	Marjorie Laios	301-262-1566	

Next Meeting: May 19
Annual State Legislative Update
Kenhill Center (Old Bowie City Hall)

HELP NEEDED

Can you read this? If so, Flash—Howard Gordon—could use some help. Flash needs a backup for the chapter 1747 website. You do need to know how to get to the website, but you don't need to do anything exotic. Please contact Flash if you know you can, or if you are willing to learn a few basic online skills to help maintain our website.

Greater Bowie-Crofton Area NARFE News

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

Last Night I Dreamed the Strangest Dream...

It was Joan Baez who sang about the strangest dream. She shared it with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and tens of thousands of other ordinary people. Our bit of the dream is tangible—and one lucky member or friend of Chapter 1747 will take it home! The full object is one of the cobblestones from the approach to the Lincoln Memorial which has been inscribed with Dr. King's famous quote and then embedded in lucite. The package includes a booklet on the historic speech and a certificate of authenticity. It will be awarded at our June Picnic. Get your chance at this solid memory of his speech by buying raffle tickets. You can buy them at the next general meeting or send this form in before June 6th.



Drawing will be held at the picnic at the Baysox, June 16. You don't have to be present to win.



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