



NARFE NEWSLETTER

GREATER BOWIE-CROFTON AREA CHAPTER 1747

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

Volume 35 No. 7

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March 2017

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, March 16: Ellen and Jim Dinnerman, Expanding End-of-Life Options: Compassionate Choice, Legislative Actions in Maryland and the District of Columbia.

❖ **General Meeting:** March 15. To Be Decided

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

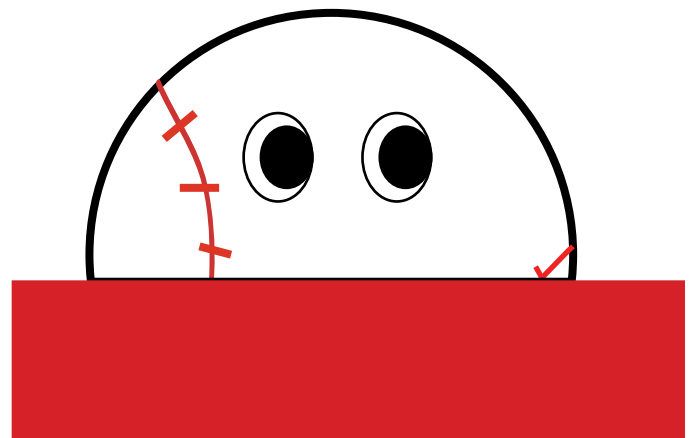
JERRY KURSBAN

We desperately need members to volunteer to serve as officers and committee chairs. We will hold our Chapter election at our May 18 Chapter meeting and hold our Installation at our June 15 meeting. At a minimum, we must have a President and a Treasurer, as National NARFE does. And without a someone to serve as Membership Chair, our Chapter cannot grow. It will almost certainly undergo attrition. PLEASE STEP FORWARD. Contact either Bob Cullen at 301-262-4783 lba3537@aol.com OR Ed Bice 301-464-3748/de3637@verizon.com.

I have already alerted the Federation that in the event volunteers do not step forward, we should prepare to merge with another chapter. We have also raised this issue at our last two Chapter meetings. If no one will step forward, we will cease to exist.

In closing, I am sending you all Dr. Spock's wish from StarTrek where he spread his third and forth fingers, and told everyone to "LIVE LONG AND PROSPER."

Hope to see you at the next Chapter meeting on March 16.



It's Coming... So Save The Day!

What are we talking about? Why, the June picnic, of course. We are going back to the Bowie Baysox, for the game, the Baysox Buffet, and the installation of our 2017-2019 officers. Can picnics get more civilized than this?

The date is June 15. The time is anytime after 6:35 PM. The place is the Baysox Stadium, U.S. Route 301 at 4101 Crain Highway. Parking is free. And like last June, the cost is still just \$26.00. which covers your game ticket, professional wait staff, taxes, service fees and the Buffet.

Bring your family, friends and even your neighbors. Plan on a fun-filled time for everyone.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

DR. HOWARD WATERWORTH

National Federation of Federal Employees: Goals Similar To Those Of NARFE

NARFE is not the only national organization representing the welfare of Federal employees and retirees. Another, known as the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE), is a national union with some 110,000 blue and white-collar government workers across the USA. It has fought for the rights of federal employees both home and abroad for the past 95 years. Their goals and objectives as well as lobbying methods with Congress are very similar to those of NARFE. So even though we assume NARFE has been the primary organization speaking on our behalf, we will never know how much of our success in terms of pay and benefits should be attributed to the influence NFFE has had over the years. Begun in 1917, NFFE is the oldest union representing federal employees. Throughout its history NFFE has played a role in many of the most sweeping federal workforce reform efforts including the passage of the national labor policy legislation such as the Equal Pay Act of 1963. NFFE's mission is to advance the social and economic welfare and education of federal workers through continued work in organizing units of federal employees, representing their interests through collective bargaining, lobbying for legislative action, fighting for better working conditions, and promoting labor-management partnerships in agency decision-making.

NFFE began as a chartered organization under the American Federation of Labor and was unique in that it included women in some major leadership positions. Early on NFFE was a strong supporter of the equal pay act which mandated equal pay for men and women.

NFFE represents unionized employees in some 36 Federal civilian and military departments and agencies such as Dept of Interior, Indian Health Service, NPS, SSA, CCC, Fish and Wildlife, FAA, NOAA, Naval Sea Systems Command, Minority Business Development Agency, U.S. Geological survey and many more. The wide variety of issues affecting this broad array of agencies has broadened the scope and power of NFFE's legislative agenda. As a result it has made gains in enhancing the life of its members, improving support systems, increasing benefits and expanding insurance coverage, establishing a national system of unemployment insurance, groups life insurance, and health benefits for federal employees and dependants. NFFE has also contributed to the formation of the Federal employee education and assistance fund, which helps families with emergency funds and scholarships.

NFFE operates by lobbying elected officials on Capitol Hill and in the White House. Members, officers, and staff meet with members of Congress, and are asked to give testimony at Congressional hearings. In 2009 NFFE successfully lobbied for a sick leave benefit for FERS employees, secured funding for the

VA, locality pay for workers outside mainland U.S. and repeal of the anti-worker National Security Personnel System.

NFFE also opposes a H.R. bill 270 that would furlough federal employees for two weeks without pay as a means to save money. Sponsors say it would save up to \$5.5 billion. However, NFFE supports bills (H.R.3485/S.1910) that would allow domestic partners to be eligible to receive insurance, family leave, survivor annuities, and other benefits for which spouses are eligible. It also supports a Parental Leave Act (H R 616) that would grant Feds 4 weeks of paid leave when caring for a newly born or adopted child. Many others are listed on the NFFE website.

NFFE keeps its members informed through its newsletter, the Federal Employee, and website, www.nffe.org with daily updates on Face book page.

Our National NARFE office has over the years and continues to work cooperatively with NFFE on issues of mutual interest.

STATE LEGISLATION

ED BICE

The various legislative committees in the Senate and House are conducting hearings as they work through over two thousand pieces of legislation introduced by members. SB 432 introduced by Senator Klausmeier was heard on February 15 in the Senate and Budget Committee. This same bill has been heard in prior years.

Members of NARFE who testified for the bill were Paul Schwartz, Bill Ferguson and Ed Bice. The bill has the support of many groups and ten cosponsors. Other bills that NARFE is supporting are: SB 696 and HB 953-Task Force on Long Term Care Education Training, which provides a task force to explore increasing Baby Boomers' knowledge of Long Term Care Insurance. HB 1444-Retire in Maryland Act of 2017, which would include income from certain retirement plans and certain unearned income sources; repealing a limitation on the maximum amount of subtraction modification allowed under the State income tax for certain retirement income of certain individuals who are over age 65.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance on: December 31	\$9,564.80
Receipts:	588.54
Disbursements:	620.06
Balance on: January 31	\$9,533.28
Reserve for Alzheimer's Fund	\$234.00

Balance is for 2017.

Prince George's Emergency Management Office Makes Emergencies Easier

Those who attended our 1747 Chapter Meeting on February 16 were treated to a highly informative and dynamic presentation by Ernie Walker and James Morrow of the Prince George's County Office of Emergency Preparation. We learned that MANY of the first-aid procedures we were taught have been modified. For example, If a person stops breathing, mouth to mouth is out. So is elevating the feet. Roll the person on the side—otherwise they may choke on their own vomit. When doing compression, PRESS HARD. Even if you crack a rib—it's OK. If a person has a pacemaker, you can still use a defibrillator. If the power goes out, your telephone may not work for voice, but you can still maintain contact by texting. When driving have an Emergency Preparedness Kit that includes a blanket, flashlight and a bottle of water. Also have an Emergency Kit for your home.



Ernie Walker



James Morrow

I strongly suggest that you sign up to receive ALERTS at <http://alert.mypgc.us> for up to date information. Find what to include in your Emergency Kit at www.ready.gov. FREE training courses are available; they have a value of up to \$800!

We extend our special thanks to Louise Cole for arranging this dynamic presentation.

DAYS TO REMEMBER

March 1	Ash Wednesday
March 12	Daylight Saving Time Begins
March 12–15	Legislative Training Conference
March 15	NARFE Day on Capitol Hill
March 16	General Meeting
March 17	St. Patrick's Day



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Paid Parental Leave for Federal Employees?

The Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act (FEP-PLA) of 2017 (H.R. 1022/S. 362) was introduced in the House by Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney, D-NY, and Barbara Comstock, R-VA, and in the Senate by Sen. Brian Schatz, D-HI. The bill would offer federal employees six weeks of paid leave for the birth, adoption or foster placement of a child. NARFE supports this bill and believes it would offer comparable benefits to compete with the private sector for top talent.

In a statement, NARFE President Richard G. Thissen said, "It has been well-documented that paid parental leave improves recruitment and retention of highly qualified, talented employees. It boosts employee morale, which has been shown to increase productivity, and reflects the value that the citizens of this country place on family and parenting."

Notably, a similar bill passed the House in 2009, but failed to see further action. Even with more recent inaction, lawmakers have continued to champion this cause. Rep. Maloney recently stated that she reached out to Ivanka Trump, President Trump's daughter, to tell her about the legislation. The president's daughter has made previous statements in support of paid parental leave.

NARFE urges its members to send a letter to their legislators asking them to cosponsor the legislation.

NARFE Keeps the Conversation Going

Is keeping in touch with Congress a chore that sends your wits flying? It needn't be. NARFE keeps links on its website that make it very easy to let your Senators and Representatives know what you are thinking. If you are at a loss for words, or just not sure how formal you must be, NARFE posts plenty of sample letters on its website.

Every member of NARFE receives a copy of the NARFE magazine each month. If you have filed your e-mail address with the website, you will also receive the electronic news digest NARFE NewsWatch in your inbox on Tuesday, when Congress is not in recess. But did you know that is not all which NARFE makes available?

NARFE is available on Facebook and Twitter. For Facebook, you can find NARFE at *NARFE National Headquarters*. On Twitter, NARFE's handle is *@narfehq*.

The NARFE Scholarship

The application process for the NARFE Scholarship Program has gone online this year. Look for details in the March issue of the magazine or on the NARFE website, at *www.narfe.org*. Once you are online, go to "About NARFE" at the top of the page and click on "Scholarship Program" on the drop down menu. The application deadline is April 28, 2017.

Senators Pledge Support for the Federal Community

This week, Sen. Mazie Hirono, D-HI, along with 14 other cosponsors, introduced S. Res. 51, a resolution that promises "to oppose efforts to reduce federal workforce pay and benefits, eliminate civil service employment protections, undermine collective bargaining, and increase the use of nonfederal contractors for inherently governmental activities." NARFE applauds the introduction of this resolution and supports efforts by legislators to protect the earned pay and benefits of America's public servants.

The resolution lists five areas that the senators will challenge if brought forward either through legislation or the executive branch. The list includes eroding fair pay for federal employees, attempting to cut federal benefits, diminishing the strength of federal employee unions, reducing federal workers' due process rights and increasing the use of contract labor. NARFE is concerned that legislation will be introduced that falls into one of these categories.

Sen. Hirono expressed support for the federal community, saying: "We have fewer federal workers than we had 50 years ago, and 85 percent of them work outside the beltway. They keep us safe, inspect our food and medicine, and preserve our national parks. They make a big difference in the lives of the people and communities they serve."

Future NARFE Happenings in our Area

- March 16 & April 20 Federal Benefits Institute Webinars
- April 30–May 2 43rd Biennial State Convention Ocean City \$69 for Oceanside room
(See pages 28-34 of the March NARFE Magazine)
- May 18 Chapter Elections
- June 15 Chapter Installation of Officers

Remember to check your March 2017 NARFE Magazine regarding the Scholarship Program (page 44).
March is NARFE-PAC month; see the article on pages 28–34

BEWARE
Cut the risk of identify thieves getting your tax return by filing early. Ignore any e-mail or telephoned threats as IRS does not use these methods.

Greater Bowie-Crofton Area NARFE News

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