



NARFE NEWSLETTER

GREATER BOWIE-CROFTON AREA CHAPTER 1747

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

Volume 36 No. 3

narfe1747.org

December 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

December 7: Executive Board Meeting Bowie Senior Center 10:00am-noon

December 21: Holiday Luncheon Party Nautilus Diner, Crofton, 11:30 am-2:00 pm

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Dec. 12-20: Hanukkah

December 25: Christmas

Dec. 26-Jan 1: Kwanzaa

January 1: **HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!**

January 4: Executive Board Meeting Bowie Senior Center 10:00am-noon

January 18: Chapter Meeting Diane Polangin, Total Tax Service

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Jerry Kursban

Holiday Luncheon and Installation

Our Chapter 1747 Annual Holiday Luncheon will be held on Thursday, December 21 from 11:30a-2:00p at the Nautilus Diner located at 1709 Transportation Drive, Crofton, MD. Please make a special effort to attend because **FRANK LEE** will be installed as our new Chapter 1747 President and **QUINTON ROUNDTREE** will be installed as our new Treasurer by Maryland Federation President, Gary Roundtree. In addition to a variety of tasty food, there will be gifts and games for your entertainment. The cost is \$27. See the last page of this newsletter for instructions on how to make reservations.

FEHB Open Season

The Open Season for Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program Season ends on December 11. Please read the "Open Season Report" article on Pages 42-58 of your December NARFE magazine. To help determine which plan is best for you, be sure to review your current plan's 2018 brochure, as well as the brochures for other plans that you are considering. The 2018 plan brochures for all FEHB plans can be viewed online and downloaded at www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance. The average total premium increase in the FEHB for 2018 is 4%, which is more than your 2% COLA. NARFE President Thissen has stated that "Our method for calculating the increasing cost of goods and services is out of sync with the reality faced by Federal annuitants, Social Security recipients, and military retirees." NARFE supports the CPI-E Act of 2017,

H.R. 1251, which would use the Cost of Living Index for Elderly, CPI-E, to calculate cost of living adjustments for retirement benefits.

Your December NARFE Magazine "Open Season Report" also contains Plan Changes (pp.44-50), including a summary of 2018 premiums for many of the most popular plans (p.45); a summary of 2018 FSAFEDS, the flexible spending program for Federal employees (p.50); a prescription drug guide, including prescription drug benefits for selected plans (pp.52-53) and dental and vision plans including costs (pp.55-58). Please consult your NARFE Magazines for December, November, and October for information to assist you in your FEHB decision, one of your many benefits as a NARFE member.

NARFE Scholars

NARFE awarded \$60,000 in scholarships to 60 students who received a certificate and a \$1,000 check for the 2017-2018 school year. See pp. 67-68 of the December NARFE Magazine for a list of winners.

NARFE Alzheimer's Research Grants

NARFE has awarded \$466,450 to four winners of the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund. NARFE has awarded 75 research grants since the program began in 1985. See Page 62 for resumes of the winners.

NARFE-PAC

The political arm of NARFE works to defend our earned pay and benefits by building strong relationships with members of Congress. For 2018, NARFE has set a goal of distributing \$1 million in political contributions. See Page 9 of the December NARFE Magazine for a summary of NARFE goals for 2018. You may contribute to NARFE-PAC by filling out the information on Page 9 or by sending a check payable to NARFE-PAC, Attn: Budget & Finance, 606 North Washington St, Alexandria, VA. 22314.

Membership Drive

NARFE's special membership drive will end on December 31, 2017. Recruiters will receive \$30 for each member recruited who joins. The Grand Prize is an Apple watch. See Page 72 of the December NARFE Magazine for a New Member Application, and remember to include your membership number which can be found on the cover of your NARFE Magazine.

We look forward to seeing you at our Annual Holiday Luncheon.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Jerry Kursban

Important NARFE Win!

NARFE played an important role in avoiding \$32 billion in cuts from Federal retirement and health benefit programs. The initial House 2018 budget resolution, House Concurrent, Resolution 71 (H.Con., Res 71) required \$203 billion in spending cuts, including \$32 billion from Federal retirement and health benefit programs. The Senate budget resolution passed without these cuts in Federal retirement and health benefits. The House subsequently announced support for the Senate passed version without the cuts. NARFE President Richard G. Thissen stated that "This was a **BIG WIN FOR NARFE** – no doubt about it. But it was a bigger win for the value of public service in this country." Enjoy the Holiday Season knowing that your retirement and health benefits are safe for now.

TSP Modernization Act

On November 1, President Trump signed into law the TSP Modernization Act, HR 3032, which provides more flexible withdrawal options for TSP participants. The TSP provides individual retirement accounts for Federal employees and retirees, as well as members of the military. It is the Federal workforce equivalent of private-sector 401(k) and Roth 401(k) plans. See Page 7 of your December NARFE Magazine for details regarding the many improvements provided to recipients. "NARFE thanks all its members who took action to secure final passage of this bill". Our Maryland Representative, Elijah E. Cummings, introduced the bill.

The examples described above demonstrate that NARFE made a difference in protecting and enhancing our pay and benefits. This is the importance of participating in NARFE. Politicians interpret silence on an issue as your consent and approval. You must let your voice be heard. You can make use of NARFE's Legislative Action Center, which provides a one-stop site to send a letter to Congress, and much more at www.narfe.org

You can also tap into NARFE's Legislative Hotline which provides a weekly update of legislative news, also available at www.narfe.org or by toll free telephone at 800-456-8410. You might want to thank Representative Anthony Brown who represents Maryland Congressional District 4 which includes Crofton and Odenton. He spoke at the recent NARFE Legislative Training Conference in March 2017 and is currently sponsoring H.R. 3269, the Federal Employee Pension Fairness Act of 2017. Chapter 1747 is the designated point of contact for Representative Anthony Brown. As NIKE would advise you, "Just Do IT".

TREASURER'S REPORT

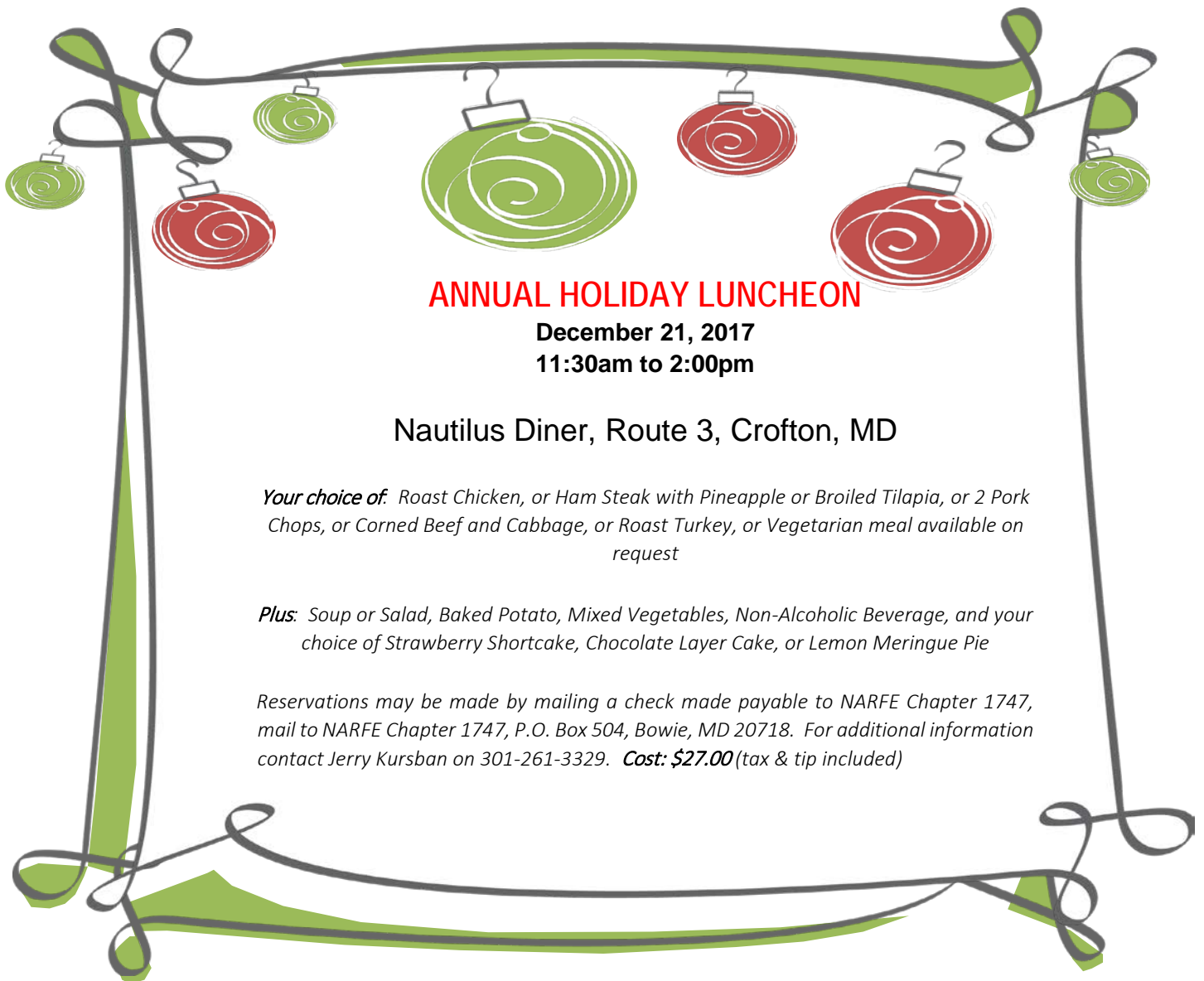
Balance on: September 30, 2017	\$11,116.27
Receipts:	487.98
Disbursements:	369.40
Balance on: October 31, 2017	\$11,234.85
Reserve for Alzheimer's Fund	295.00

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.



ANNUAL HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

**December 21, 2017
11:30am to 2:00pm**

Nautilus Diner, Route 3, Crofton, MD

***Your choice of:** Roast Chicken, or Ham Steak with Pineapple or Broiled Tilapia, or 2 Pork Chops, or Corned Beef and Cabbage, or Roast Turkey, or Vegetarian meal available on request*

***Plus:** Soup or Salad, Baked Potato, Mixed Vegetables, Non-Alcoholic Beverage, and your choice of Strawberry Shortcake, Chocolate Layer Cake, or Lemon Meringue Pie*

*Reservations may be made by mailing a check made payable to NARFE Chapter 1747, mail to NARFE Chapter 1747, P.O. Box 504, Bowie, MD 20718. For additional information contact Jerry Kursban on 301-261-3329. **Cost: \$27.00** (tax & tip included)*