



NARFE NEWSLETTER

GREATER BOWIE-CROFTON AREA CHAPTER 1747
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

Volume 40 No. 3

Web: narfe.org/chapter1747
Facebook: NARFE Chapter 1747

November 2021

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.

POSTAL ADDRESS: NARFE Chapter 1747, P.O. Box 504, Bowie, MD 20718

NOTE: Chapter meetings are cancelled when Prince George's County schools are closed due to inclement weather. Otherwise, meetings are held as scheduled.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Nov 4** Executive Board Meeting
Bowie Senior Center, 10:00am
- Nov 4** Which FEHB Health Plan is Right for You?
Federal Benefits Institute Webinar, 2:00pm
- Nov 18** Healthy Living for Brain and Body
Shaunda Bellamy, Bowie Senior Center, 10:00am
- Nov 18** Which FEHB Plans Work Best with Medicare A&B
Federal Benefits Institute Webinar, 2:00pm

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Frank Lee

Now that the Bowie Senior Center has reopened, we have resumed in-person meetings where we can interact with people in person again. Please join us to reunite with people that you have not seen for a while and to meet new friends.

Please note that the Bowie Senior Center and other AA County government buildings have a vaccination mandate. Only vaccinated people are allowed to enter the Bowie Senior Center facility. You have to show your vaccination card or provide other proof of vaccination when you enter the building. After you show your proof of vaccination, a receptionist will mark your membership card so that you won't have to show proof of vaccination again.

And the best news is that we have a terrific Holiday Luncheon planned for December 16 at the Nautilus Diner, 1709 Transportation Drive in Crofton. Your meal will include a choice of 5 entrees, a cup of soup, baked potato and mixed vegetables, coffee, tea, or soda and a choice of 2 desserts, all for \$32, tax and tip included. We were able to get this deal only because I know the manager, and we are a repeat customer. Please register for the luncheon by completing the form in the newsletter and sending your payment in to our Chapter PO Box ASAP. You may also register for the luncheon at one of our upcoming General Meetings.

Please join us for the Holiday Luncheon on December 16. We have much to celebrate including staying safe from the virus, returning to in-person meetings, being able to interact with friends and family again, and looking forward to a happy and normal new year. Please join us for the celebration of the holidays.

We have a great schedule of programs scheduled for 2021-2022. On September 16, Dawn Edgerton-Cameron gave an excellent presentation on options for your retirement account besides TSP.

On October 21, we will hold our annual Health Fair at the Kenhill Center where representatives from the Federal Employee Health Plans will provide updates to their health plans. Representatives from Care First, GEHA, Kaiser Permanente and United Health Care are scheduled to appear. I have asked APWU and CVS Health (Aetna) who will not be participating, to send literature on their health plan that we can distribute at the Health Fair.

On November 18, Shaunda Bellamy will show us how to keep our brain and body healthy as we age.

You can't afford to miss these presentations where speakers will provide us information on how to stay healthy and financially solvent in retirement. You must attend the meetings to get the benefits of the information presented.



Change in Newsletter Distribution

The Postal Service gave us sticker shock when we submitted the October newsletter for mailing. Under their new rates, the cost for mailing the same number of newsletters increased from \$51 to \$99, a 100% increase. To cope with this increase, we need to reduce the cost of mailing our newsletters. Therefore, we are going to decrease the number of hard copy newsletters that we send each month. Currently, we send about 319 hard copy newsletters and 141 electronic newsletters each month. By converting all members with E-mail addresses to electronic newsletters, we will be sending 310 electronic newsletters each month and reduce the number of hard copy newsletters that we send to 154. This change should reduce the cost of sending hard copy newsletters to close to the amount before the recent rate increase. I am notifying our members of this change by E-mail, newsletter, and at our coming General Meetings. We plan to implement this change in January 2022. Before we can make this change, we will have to develop lists of members with E-mail addresses and members without E-mail addresses. We will also confirm the E-mail address of all members with E-mail addresses.

This change is not something that we want to do. Circumstances are forcing us to take this action to ensure that we remain fiscally sound going into the future. This change will not affect members without E-mail addresses. They will continue to receive hard copy newsletters. This change will also not affect members currently receiving electronic newsletters. It will only affect those members with E-mail addresses currently receiving hard copy newsletters. They will be converted to electronic newsletter members beginning in January 2022.

Members receiving an electronic newsletter will receive an E-mail with a link to the newsletter. They can read or print the newsletter from the link. They will receive their newsletter 3 days sooner and save the chapter the cost of sending them a hard copy newsletter.

Thanks for your cooperation and understanding as we implement this change.

Holiday Luncheon

We will be holding our Holiday Luncheon on Thursday, December 16 at the Nautilus Diner, 1709 Transportation Drive in Crofton. The cost of the luncheon will be \$32/person which will include the cost of the entrée, gratuity, and tax. The meal will include the following choice of entrée: Half Roast Chicken w/Stuffing, Broiled Tilapia, Roast Meatloaf w/Mushroom Gravy, Corned Beef and Cabbage, and Broiled Pork Chops. Each meal will include a cup of soup, baked potato and mixed vegetables. All meals will be served with coffee, tea, or soda and include a choice of strawberry shortcake or chocolate mousse for desert. Attendees will give their choice of entrée to the server at the luncheon. Please make your reservation for the luncheon by sending your registration form and check to NARFE Chapter 1747, P.O. Box 504, Bowie, MD 20718. We look forward to seeing you at this celebration of the holidays.

Alzheimer's Drive

Since our Alzheimer's Drive was very successful last year, we decided to repeat it this year. Please send your donation for the Alzheimer's Fund to Chapter 1747, P.O. Box 504, Bowie, MD 20718. Please make your check out to NARFE Chapter 1747, but note in the memo section that it is for the Alzheimer's Fund. Please make a holiday donation to this worthy cause. Thanks for your donation.

Coronavirus Status in Maryland

New daily reported coronavirus cases in Maryland fell by 20.6% the past week. The 7-day average of new coronavirus cases in Maryland is currently 1,032 cases/day. 65% of people in Maryland have completed their coronavirus vaccinations while 85% of Marylanders have received at least 1 dose of the coronavirus vaccine. More people need to be vaccinated since most new cases are occurring in unvaccinated people. Adolescents 12-15 years of age are now eligible to receive the Pfizer vaccine.

2022 COLA

Retirees enrolled in CSRS will see the 5.9 percent increase to their annuity payments in 2022, while retired federal employees who are enrolled in FERS will only receive a 4.9 percent increase to their annuities.

On January 13, 2021, Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-VA) introduced H.R.304 – the Equal COLA Act. The legislation is intended to achieve parity between the cost-of-living adjustment with respect to an annuity under FERS and CSRS. This bipartisan legislation would ensure that federal retirees in FERS and CSRS both receive the same annual percentage cost of living increase each year.

Legislation Introduced to Provide Seniors with Accurate COLAs

The Fair COLA for Seniors Act of 2021, H.R. 4315, introduced by Rep. John Garamendi, D-CA, would require the use of the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E), which calculates inflation for Americans age 62 and older, to determine annual COLAs.

Currently, COLAs are determined by the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). It does not accurately account for the purchasing habits of seniors, who tend to spend more than other groups on goods and services specific to their needs. For example, medical care costs for seniors are double those for the general population. Therefore, under the current formula, federal annuitants and all seniors lose a significant amount of their purchasing power.

Using the CPI-E to determine COLAs would increase them by an average 0.27 percent per year. Because this difference would compound, it results in significant increases in COLAs over time. Federal Retirees under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), which does not provide Social Security Benefits, often rely solely on their federal annuity as their source of income. Therefore, a switch to the CPI-E would have a particularly positive impact on their retirement benefits.

Budget Reconciliation Process

Reconciliation allows bills in the Senate to pass with just a simple majority, bypassing the usual 60 vote threshold and the filibuster. With 51 votes in the Senate, Democrats can use budget reconciliation to pass legislation without Republican support.

Congress sets total spending, the surplus or deficit, revenues and the public debt in its annual budget resolution, which can include reconciliation instructions. These instructions direct congressional committees to recommend changes to the law to achieve the revisions set out by the budget resolution. Congress then incorporates the committees' policies into a reconciliation bill.

While a useful tool to pass spending and revenue bills without full cooperation between parties, budget reconciliation cannot be used to pass every type of policy. The Byrd rule requires that legislation passed through reconciliation must have a budgetary impact and change federal spending or revenue.

Congress will likely use reconciliation to pass the administration's American Families Plan; it is expected to include expanded paid family and medical leave, which would likely extend to federal employees.

Legislation passed through reconciliation cannot be projected to increase the federal deficit beyond 10 years, only within a decade. Notably, reconciliation bills cannot change or impact Social Security in any way.

House Committee Advances Bill to Expand Federal Employee Paid Leave

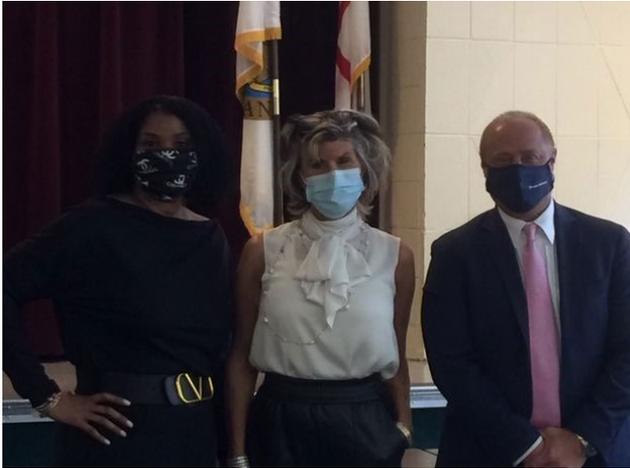
In July, the House Committee on Oversight and Reform advanced a bill that would expand paid leave options for the federal workforce. The Comprehensive Paid Leave for Federal Employees Act, H.R. 564 would broaden the list of

conditions for which federal employees are eligible for paid leave, including paid family and medical leave.

Under the current law, Feds are only eligible for paid leave in connection with the birth, adoption or foster care of a child. Other conditions only qualify for unpaid leave. H.R. 564 would expand eligibility for paid leave for all the conditions covered by the FMLA and extend parental leave coverage to U.S. Postal Service employees, who were not included in previously passed paid parental leave legislation.

Health Fair - Kenhill

Chapter 1747 Health Fair held October 21. Representatives for GEHA, Blue Cross Blue Shield and Kaiser Permanente presented information related to their insurance plans.



Tameka Anderson (GEHA), Jennifer Malave (BCBS) and Brian Hargest (Kaiser Permanente)

Distinguished Annuitant Award

Louise Cole, a long-time member of Chapter 1747 was presented the Distinguished Annuitant Award by Blue Cross at the Oct 21 Health Fair. Ms. Cole has been the Chapter's Assistant Treasurer for over 10 years and continues to volunteer to assist the Chapter and the Maryland Federation.



MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Angela Hyman

Chapter Activity Report

9/1/2021-10/20/2021

- 463 Chapter 1747 Members as of 10/20/2021
- 01 New Chapter Members – Barbara Marshall
- 02 Members Dropped for Non-Renewal
- 01 Members Passed – Arthur Anderson
- 07 New Prospective Members
- 18 Members Renewed

TREASURERS REPORT

Vanessa Washington

Balance on: Aug 31, 2021	\$9,246.62
Income:	\$284.88
Expenses:	\$235.99
Balance on: Sep 30, 2021	\$9,295.51
Useable Balance on Sep 30, 2021	\$9,113.51
Reserve for Alzheimer's Fund	\$82.00
Reserve for Advertisement	\$100.00

HAPPY VETERAN'S DAY
AND
THANKSGIVING

CHAPTER 1747 OFFICERS

Officer	Name	Contact #	Email
President	Frank Lee	410-672-5065	Fllee0716@verizon.net
Vice President	Diane Henry		henrydgy@comcast.net
Treasurer	Vanessa Washington	--	vwash411@comcast.net
Asst. Treasurer	Louise Cole	410-672-6528	Col9135@aol.com
Secretary	Vacant	--	--
Committee Chairs			
Federal Legislation	Frank Lee	410-672-5065	Fllee0716@verizon.net
State Legislation	Edward Bice	301-464-3748	de3637@verizon.net
Chapter Editor	Vanessa Washington	240-334-7212	vwash411@comcast.net
Alzheimer Chair	Edward Bice	301-464-3748	de3637@verizon.net
NARFE/PAC Chair	Edward Bice	301-464-3748	de3637@verizon.net
Network Coordinator	Bruce Thoman	--	thomanBruce@gmail.com
Social Media Coordinator	Charles Smith	301-502-3421	bigfoodnmd@yahoo.com
Membership Chair	Angela Hyman	--	bxflowers@verizon.net
Service Officer	Rhonda Hackley	301-335-0493	rmhackley7168@gmail.com

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**Receipt Upon Request Questions. Call: (410) 672-5065. **Payments Are Due by December 14, 2021

Mail this form with your check to: NARFE Chapter 1747, PO Box 504, Bowie, MD 20718

Guest Name: _____ Amount Enclosed (\$32.00 x # Attendees) _____

Email _____ # of Attendees _____

Name _____ Telephone _____

Event Registration Form:

Price: \$32.00 includes: Choice of Entrees: Half Roast Chicken w/Stuffing or Broiled Tilapia or Roast Meatloaf w/Mushroom Gravy or Corned Beef and Cabbage or Broiled Pork Chops; Entrees Include: Cup of Soup, Baked Potato & Mixed Vegetables, Coffee or Tea or Soda; and Dessert Selection: Strawberry Short Cake or Chocolate Mousse



Place: Nautilus Diner Address: 1709 Transportation Drive, Crofton, MD

Date: 12/16/2021 Time: 11:00am - 2:00pm

NARFE CHAPTER 1747 ANNUAL HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

Greater Bowie-Crofton Area

NARFE Chapter 1747

P.O. BOX 504

BOWIE, MD 20718-0504

Narfe1747.org

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