



NARFE NEWSLETTER

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

Volume 40 No. 5

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

January 2022

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

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Jan 6 | Executive Board Meeting
Zoom Meeting, 10:00am |
| Jan 20 | Tax Changes, Diane Polangin
Bowie Senior Center, 10:00am |
| Jan 20 | Retirement Considerations for Special Category
Employees, Federal Benefits Institute Webinar, 2:00pm |
| Feb 3 | Executive Board Meeting - Zoom Meeting, 10:00am |
| Feb 16 | Post Retirement Tax Planning for Federal Employees,
Federal Benefits Institute Webinar, 2:00pm |
| Feb 17 | Relationship between FEHB and Medicare,
Medicare Part B Option, Jennifer Malave, Bowie
Senior Center, 10:00am |

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Frank Lee

With a projected 7 percent annualized growth rate for the fourth quarter, the United States is ahead of Europe and China. That relative strength against the rest of the world, reflected in a strong dollar that lowers the cost of imports for U.S. consumers, matters greatly.

The economy grew 2.3 percent in the third quarter (higher than the expected 2.1 percent). Moreover, for all the talk of inflation and the pandemic, consumer confidence is through the roof.

ABC News reports: "The Conference Board, a business research group, said Wednesday that its consumer confidence index — which takes into account consumers' assessment of current conditions and their outlook for the future — rose to 115.8 in December, the highest reading since July."

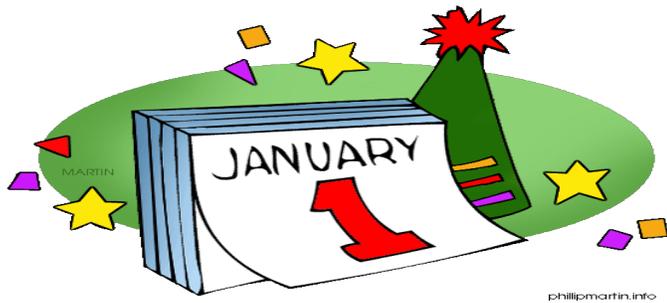
That economic exuberance is driven in part by a drop in gas prices. The White House can now boast that gas prices are down nearly 10 cents from last month. As it noted in a recent statement, "The average price at the pump is now \$3.32. This price is in line with the real price of gasoline over the previous ten years from 2011-2020." Next year, gas is expected to drop below \$3 per gallon.

Furthermore, supply chain woes are showing signs of abating. As President Biden said at a meeting on Wednesday with his supply chain task force, "Packages are moving, gifts are being delivered and shelves are not empty." He was also able to point to concrete steps his administration has taken to address the issue, such as obtaining the ports' agreement to operate 24/7.

If nothing else, by highlighting the problem and making "supply chains" a household word, the administration helped consumers, suppliers and transit companies avoid holiday calamities. The New York Times reports, "Many consumers helped themselves by shopping early and in person." Retailers and consumers planned ahead, and delivery companies hired appropriately. "By some measures, in fact, they have done a better job this holiday season than even before the pandemic," the Times reports.

As we head into the new year, I would like to share some good economic news reported by Jennifer Rubin of the Washington Post.

Heading into the new year, the economy looks in better shape than Biden's legislative agenda. The Wall Street Journal reports: "A booming U.S. economy is rippling around the world, leaving global supply chains struggling to keep up and pushing up prices. The force of the American expansion is also inducing overseas companies to invest in the U.S., betting that the growth is still accelerating and will outpace other major economies."



Newsletter Changes

In January 2022, all chapter members with E-mail addresses will be moved to the electronic newsletter distribution list. Members without E-mail addresses will continue to receive hard copy newsletters. This change will increase the number of members receiving electronic newsletters from about 150 to 305. It will decrease the number of hard copy newsletters that we send from about 319 to 159. The change will reduce our mailing costs and also our printing costs as the number of printed newsletters will be reduced from 500 to 300 a month. 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. Thanks for your cooperation and understanding as we implement this change.

Holiday Luncheon

Thanks to all who attended our Holiday Luncheon. It was an opportunity to reconnect with friends and celebrate our survival from coronavirus. It also was an opportunity to reunite with Dorothy Campbell, one of our former chapter Presidents. We had a total of 30 attendees. I thought that everyone had a good time with a delicious meal and a great dessert. I want to thank Louise and Vanessa for their efficient management of the raffle and right-left game. Thanks to everyone who contributed a gift to the raffle. We had a total of 30 gifts. Thanks also to Gary Roundtree for giving awards to a number of members for their good work in support of NARFE and Chapter 1747. Pictures on last page and more can be seen on our webpage at www.NARFE.org/Chapter1747.

Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)

Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and eligible Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) retirees and survivors will be receiving a COLA effective December 1, 2021. The increase will be reflected in your January 3, 2022 payment. CSRS annuitants will receive a 5.9% COLA and eligible FERS annuitants will receive a 4.9% COLA.

Alzheimer Fund

Thank you for another successful Alzheimer Drive. We were able to collect a total of \$400.00. Again, thanks to all who made a donation during the Drive. If you missed the donation drive, you may still submit your donation to NARFE Chapter 1747, P.O. Box 504, Bowie, MD 20718.

Debt Ceiling Legislation

Congress has voted to raise the nation's debt limit by \$2.5 trillion, officially preventing a default if the U.S. were unable to pay its bills. The House passed the legislation in a vote of 221-209 after the Senate

approved the measure in a 50-49 party-line vote. The bill has been sent to President Biden for his signature. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said that the increase is large enough to last into 2023, which would allow Congress to avoid any more fights over the debt ceiling until after the 2022 midterm elections.

Coronavirus Status

The coronavirus pandemic is not over. In the U.S., more than 802,000 people have died from coronavirus and more than 50,730,000 cases have been reported. Last week, new cases and deaths rose by 7% and coronavirus related hospitalizations rose by 3%. The country is experiencing a surge of coronavirus cases driven by colder weather, holiday gatherings and holiday travel. The appearance of a new variant called omicron is adding to the surge. Current data indicates that omicron may have milder affects than other variants but appears to the spread much more rapidly than other variants. The delta variant is still dominant variant in the U.S. causing more than 120,000 cases and nearly 1,300 deaths per day.

Preliminary data indicates that people with two vaccinations may be able to avoid the most severe symptoms of omicron while people with two vaccinations and a booster shot may be fully protected from omicron.

To avoid getting the virus, the CDC recommends getting vaccinated if you are currently unvaccinated and getting a booster shot if you are fully vaccinated. You should also try to avoid large crowds and wear a face mask and practice social distancing where possible.

Even though more than 60% of the U.S. population has been fully vaccinated, we still have more than 60 million unvaccinated people who are most at risk of getting the virus. To bring the virus under control, more people need to get vaccinated.

Good news on new treatments for coronavirus. Pfizer announced that its antiviral pill under development cut hospitalizations and deaths by 90% when taken within three or five days of the onset of symptoms and that the drug was effective against omicron. Antiviral pills from Pfizer and Merck are being tested and may be authorized by the end of the year. Oral antivirals will be easier to administer because they can be taken at home.

A new rapid test for coronavirus that can be taken at home has been announced by President Biden. He has asked health insurers to cover the cost of the test. This test will make it easier for people to get tested for coronavirus because it can be administered at home and you won't need to get an appointment at a health care facility to be tested.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR Angela Hyman	
Chapter Activity Report 11/1/2021-12/20/2021	
458	Chapter 1747 Members as of 12/20/2021
02	New Chapter Members – Khalid Bensitel; Alfreda Jones
03	Members Dropped for Non-Renewal
02	Transferred out of Chapter
01	Members Passed – Thomas Lee
01	New Prospective Members
10	Members Renewed



HOPE TO SEE YOU AT THE NEXT MEETING OR LUNCHEON

More pictures on website at www.NARFE.org/Chapter1747

CHAPTER 1747 OFFICERS

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Contact #</u>	<u>Email</u>
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Secretary	Vacant	--	--
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Membership Chair	Angela Hyman	--	bxflowers@verizon.net
Service Officer	Rhonda Hackley	301-335-0493	rmhackley7168@gmail.com



**TREASURERS REPORT
Vanessa Washington**

Balance on: Oct 31, 2021	\$9,311.64
Income:	\$998.56
Expenses:	\$293.49
Balance on: Oct 31, 2021	\$10,016.71
Useable Balance on Oct 31, 2021	\$9,709.71
Reserve for Alzheimer's Fund	\$307.00
Reserve for Advertisement	\$100.00

GET YOUR COVID-19 BOOSTER

STAY SAFE

**Greater Bowie-Crofton Area
NARFE Chapter 1747
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Narfe1747.org**

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VALUE
MAIL**

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