

NARFE



July 2015

NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES CHAPTER NO. 214 HENDERSONVILLE, NC 28792

President
Helen Sherman
1-703-963-9058

VP/Legislative
Paul J. Boudreaux
828-697-2034

VP/Membership
Jerry Miller
828-890-0647

Treasurer
Jake Reess
828-989-8830

Secretary
Gary Stammer
443-632-4694

Newsletter Editor
Carolyn Miller
828-890-0647

Programs
Kenneth Plummer
828-693-9233

Service Officer
George Butler
828-890-5610

Legislative Affairs Paul Boudreaux, VP Ch 214

This month a high priority action of the North Carolina NARFE Federation was to activate a grass roots effort to call our State Senators in the North Carolina Legislature to tell them that we want them to restore the House Budget Bill for the North Carolina medical expense tax deduction for NC state income taxes. Additional grass roots efforts are desired to lobby the US Congress on behalf of NARFE issues. Pending national legislation includes reforms to the federal workers compensation program for federal employees (FECA) and on ways that the civil service could be reformed. FECA was established to provide federal employees compensation for medical expenses and wages lost due to job-related injuries or illnesses. The hearing

focused on reforms proposed by the Department of Labor, including noncontroversial modernizations and program integrity measures, which have received broad bipartisan support, and controversial benefit reductions for injured federal workers. Reform proposals discussed at the hearing may be included in budget reconciliation legislation reported out of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. Recognizing the need for civil service reform, the Subcommittee solicited ideas on a variety of topics, including rewarding high performers, making it easier to remove poor performers and providing better managerial training. Prior to these committee hearings, NARFE sent letters outlining our position on each of these issues to each congressional

subcommittee considering this legislation. The house and Senate are expected to be in session during the month of June. They will recess June 29 – July 6.

A critical part of the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) is the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). In a few years the Thrift Savings Plan could feel more like a private plan. With a more participant-focused strategy the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board will make a shift to providing greater access and flexibility and a more informative customer service experience. The goal is to provide more services without increasing costs for participants. This may come about because many retirees opt-out of the TSP to transfer their funds into an IRA in order to have more control of withdrawals.

In Memoriam

Karen Masson died in May and we extend our sympathy to her family.

Deb Karlin lost her husband, Jim, recently and we extend our sympathy to her and the family. Deb is one of our NARFE callers each month.

Next Meeting July 17, 2015

10:00 AM

Flat Rock Village Center
Flat Rock, North Carolina

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Helen Sherman, President

While I was unable to attend the June 19th meeting, I understand that John Murphy, Director, Bullington Gardens, delivered an excellent presentation on Bullington Gardens and the programs offered there.

The speaker at our next chapter meeting on July 17th will be Denise Young, who will be speaking on the status of Alzheimer's research. This topic should be very informative and of personal relevance in terms of the implications of this disease for ourselves and for our friends and relatives.

Funding of Alzheimer's research is the most worthy cause that NARFE so generously supports. Chapter 214 is committed to doing its part in terms of our annual contribution to the Alzheimer's Fund. This year's goal is to once again donate at least \$1,000 to the fund. Information on where to send your donation is contained elsewhere in the Newsletter. All donations are most appreciated regardless of amount.

As most of you may know, the Annual Area 1 Picnic is being held at 12:00 noon on Saturday, August 15th, at Lake Julian Park. The menu sounds great and the cost is reasonable. Entertainment and guest speakers are planned. Specifics on the upcoming picnic are provided elsewhere in the Newsletter. I hope that many of you have already marked your calendars and are planning to attend this year's picnic. It is a great opportunity to meet and socialize with some of our fellow Area 1 NARFE members. Please be there and help to ensure a good Chapter No. 214 turnout.

We are collecting for the 2015 Alzheimer's Fund. Our goal is to do even better than our 2014 contribution. Please send your Alzheimer donations to:

**Jake Reess, 29 South Greenwood Forest
Drive, Etowah, NC 28729**

Members Dropped for non Renewal
Dorothy Martin

Change of Address:

Thomas DeKay 828-749-2433

John Simmons 828-692-2956

Stephen Smith 828-625-9814

Callers please note these possible changes.

July 17, 2015,

PROGRAM TOPIC

"Alzheimer's"

Denise Young

Alzheimer's Association

If you have suggestions for a future program, please contact **Kenneth Plummer.**

FYI: Anyone with change of address or telephone, please call (1-800-456-8410) to let NARFE Hqs. know. Also, please inform Carolyn Miller at (828-890-0647) and/or jercarmiller@gmail.com

Highlights from the NC NARFE Federation Annual Convention

by
Jerry Miller

From a report by President Richard Thissen, NARFE did well on Budget Round 1, but there is still more to come. The Grass Roots push on recruitment is important. When recruiting, focusing on Federal Benefits is effective. The NARFE magazine is highly regarded in Washington and can be used as a recruitment tool. Last year the Strategic Planning Committee was formed with one delegate from each area for a total of four. This committee will be permanent, and their mandate is to change NARFE to be more attractive to younger FERS retirees.

Please use the letter writing campaigns often and a handwritten letter emphasizing the legislation's impact on your situation is the most effective form of communication to legislators. Silence = Acceptance

Jason Freeman, Political and Legislative Specialist, shared: when Sequestration started there was a 16 day government shutdown without pay which cost the 750 workers \$1billion. There are 7 years of sequestration remaining.

FUTURE THREATS: Chained CPI, pay freezes, high 5 calculations for retirement.

NARFE Priorities: Attacks on Federal Pay and Benefits, FEHBP, Preventing chained CPI.

The Proposed Postal Reform includes: Elimination of FERS for new recruits, Mandatory move to Medicare B including spouses.

Ron Buffaloe's remarks focused on revitalization as a concern to leaders. The 7 Tier Consulting firm has been hired with the following goals: Transform the growth of NARFE to be consistent and accommodating to all types of members, to make our brand attractive and consistent, to stabilize the structure of chapters and regions while growing memberships.

NARFE-PAC is a separate fund made up of only voluntary contributions from our members specifically for political purposes. There is a Board made up of two elected national officers, and the Legislative Director, who have the final say on which candidates for the House and Senate will receive NARFE-PAC Funds. These factors are considered for distribution of funds: Voting record on NARFE issues, questionnaires for non-incumbants, the influence a legislator can exert for NARFE goals, competitiveness of the candidate's race, and the candidate must request NARFE-PAC. In the 2013-2014 cycle, 76% of NARFE backed candidates won their races.

The ALZHEIMER'S FUND to date has raised \$11,300,000. When this disease first became prominent, and the National Alzheimer's Association started raising funds, NARFE made an agreement that contributed funds would go to a special Alzheimer's/NARFE Account. Representatives from NARFE meet to review requests for grants.

Area I Caucus: Seven Chapters: Theron Ramsey of Asheville is now the AREA I Vice President.