



NEWSLETTER

May, 2011

NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Chapter No. 214 – Hendersonville, NC 28792

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OUR JUNE 17, 2011 MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE VILLAGE CENTER OF FLAT ROCK

[Meeting / Program 10:00 a.m. -Coffee]

May 20, 2011 Program

Speaker from The Toastmasters Club

June 17, 2011 Program

Speaker from The Bullington Center

July 15, 2011 Program

Bethanne Knudson from The Oriole Mill will speak about textiles, fabrics and designs

August, 2011 Program

A picnic, hosted by the Asheville Chapter, will be held at Lake Julian – details to follow

have not yet contributed, send check to: Ray Carter, 126 Larchmont Dr., Hendersonville, NC 28791. We have not reached our goal and need your help.

If you have not attended a meeting lately and can swing our 9:45 am time on the 3rd Friday of each month -- please join us!

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

By Paul Boudreaux, VP

The Senate will be voting soon on the House passed Budget Resolution (House Concurrent Resolution 34) which includes \$375 billion in savings over ten years from current and retired federal employees. Visit the newly updated www.ProtectAmericasHeartbeat.org to send a message to your Senators telling them to vote “no.” The stakes are high – act now! There is a Protect America’s Heartbeat “toolkit” that is now available on the NARFE Protect America’s Heartbeat website under “Resources”. The toolkit will give you the facts about federal worker and retiree compensation and benefits and resources to raise your voice in your community. Here is the internet web link: <http://www.narfe.org/heartbeat/resources.cfm>.

Current discussions in congress that are not in the present House passed bill, but are now being considered, are the following actions: (1) extending the “No-COLA” for retirees for the next five years, regardless of the CPI Index on inflation; (2) an-across-the-board 3% reduction in annuities for retirees in

Social Security and federal retiree pensions. As I have said many times in the past, please write your Senators and Congressman to express your opinion on these critical issues. It is YOUR retirement annuity they are talking about! Here is a copy of a NARFE based draft letter that you can use as an example:

Dear Senator,
As a member of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), I am writing to urge you to oppose H. Con. Res. 34, the Fiscal Year 2012 Concurrent Resolution on the Budget proposed by House Budget Chairman Paul Ryan and passed by the House of Representatives. The assumptions in the resolution proposing to freeze federal employee pay for five years, cut the work force by 10 percent and require employees to significantly increase their contributions to the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund are unfair and unreasonable, even in the current budget atmosphere.

Chairman Ryan is correct when he says, “the federal government’s responsibilities are dependent on a strong federal work force.” Yet the Budget Resolution’s plan to tax the wages of our federal workers and reduce their pay will damage the government’s ability to fulfill its responsibility to its citizens.

Requiring workers to contribute a much higher share of
(Continued page 2)

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Joyce Armstrong

The NC Federation meeting held in May at Carolina Beach was considered a real success. They had the biggest attendance in a number of years. Hopefully, this demonstrates an increase of interest among retired and active employees to support the main voice (NARFE) in defending our benefits. To contact your representative, remember that a handwritten or typed individual letter or phone call is most effective.

Next year the Federation meeting will be held at Harrah's in Cherokee on May 9, 10 and 11. Since we are a part of the host Area, we would love to have some of our people serve on a committee. Think about this and be prepared to volunteer!

The campaign for the Alzheimer's Fund has now collected \$800. If you

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Continued

their salary toward their defined-benefit annuity would have the effect of a significant pay cut. The additional contribution would not result in any change in a person's retirement annuity. While employees currently make contributions from their salary to the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund, most large private-sector employers historically have not required their workers to make any contributions toward their defined-benefit pensions.

Freezing or cutting pay sends the wrong signal to the federal employees whose jobs are to protect us and drive America's progress. Instead, we need to preserve policies that attract and retain the best American workers. These are the federal meat inspectors who ensure the safety of the food our families eat and the federal nuclear regulators who prevent the next nuclear disaster from happening on U.S. soil.

America's federal employees perform important jobs that demand skill and dedication. Indeed, the Office of Personnel Management reported in October that the salary advantage private-sector workers have over federal employees grew to 24 percent in 2010, two percentage points higher than in 2009.

In addition, cutting the federal work force by 10 percent is more about politics than good human resource management. In fact, 60 percent of all federal workers will be eligible to retire in the next five years. We can ill afford to lose our most talented and experienced employees at a time when we are facing unprecedented crises. In 1989, there was one federal employee for every 110 residents in the United States. Twenty years later, there is one federal employee for every 147 residents. The size of the work force has remained remarkably consistent and yet the demands upon government have increased dramatically.

More than anyone, our federal employees understand the constraints of the U.S. budget, and they are

already doing their part to lower government costs. But Chairman Ryan's plan to cut pay and retirement by \$375 billion over 10 years goes too far and is not an acceptable solution. Even in these tough economic times, America cannot afford a second-tier government and we must not forfeit our protections.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote against H. Con. Res. 34, the Fiscal Year 2012 Concurrent Resolution on the Budget passed by the House of Representatives.

JOIN NARFE
Contact Frank Coperich
(692-4566)
Vice President Membership

The 2011 Federation convention was held May 4-6 at the Marriott in Carolina Beach, NC. The attendance was 210.

The current officers were re-nominated and re-elected without opposition. Those being: President – Paul Sams, Vice President - Vilma Geisert, Secretary - Gracie Couch, Treasurer - Sam Crain

\$1,300 was raised from the Alzheimer's raffle. \$1,205 was raised for PAC (without a raffle)

I was assigned to the resolutions Committee. We had one resolution – that being to acknowledge Avery Ghent for his many years of service to NARFE. That resolution was passed by unanimous vote.

Instead of "break-out" sessions, four guest speakers were presented. The opinion was that the break-out sessions are the same every year and attended by the same people – who, in effect, were probably capable of running a break-out session themselves.

The speakers were:
MS Sharon Appel of OMB
Mr. Andrew Olsen, elder law attorney
Mr. Brett Speas, District manager of Wilmington Social Security office
Mr. Dan Adcock, National Legislative Office

The general message was quite uniform for all of the speakers – that being to keep your personal records up to date. This is where the NARFE F-

100 Be Prepared For Life's Events is helpful. Most importantly, OPM needs the most current information that affects disability benefits, life insurance, survivor benefits, income tax withholding, wills, trusts and financial information. It is important to realize that benefits can only be paid out on the basis of information that is on record with OPM. OPM contacts are 1-888-767-6738, retire@opm.gov and www.opm.gov/retire.

The prospective for cuts to Federal employees / retirees is most serious for current employees. Retirees may see changes (reduction) to the amount (percentage) that the Government will pay for health benefits.

While we are always encouraged to contact out local Senators and Representative, there are so many bills and versions being introduced by a variety of congressmen that we can most make our point by addressing the main issue(s) and not specific "Bills" as they are constantly emerging. That is why we need the NARFE representatives in Washington, DC.

The 2012 convention will be held May 9-11 at Harrah's hotel and casino in Cherokee, NC. Hosted by Chapter 1420. The issue of whether to change the Federation convention schedule to a two-year interval will be evaluated at that time

CALLERS: Pls note below info and add to or change your calling list numbers. THANKS.

FYI: Anyone with change of address or telephone, please call 1-800-456-8410 and let NARFE Hqs know. Also please inform Lenelle Perry (696-9490).

New Members
Wilma M. Hodges, PO Box 532, Dana, NC 28724-0532 (828-685-1922)

New Member Incentive Program
Clarence D. Swerengen, 109 Brandy Mill Loop, Etowah, NC 28729-9786 (828-891-2123)

Members Dropped for Non-Renewal
Kenneth M. Jenson; Charles A. Liberto; Teresa Whitmire

Marlene B. Jimenez, Editor (697-2112) marbj@juno.com