



# Chapter News

**Next Chapter Meeting**  
**Noon, Tuesday, January 27<sup>th</sup>**  
**New China Restaurant**  
**Roanoke Rapids**

**Guest Speaker**  
**Ms. Patsy Zeigler**  
**NC BC BS**

**Upcoming Events**

*January Chapter Meeting*  
 Noon, Tuesday January 27<sup>th</sup>  
 New China Restaurant.

*Officers Meeting*  
 TBD

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## Mike' Comments

Tim Stone, Cindy and I attended a leadership conference on January 8 and some of the topics were very enlightening. Paul Sams, our Federation VP, had what I consider the more important comment on President Obama and his speech to the nation on NPR that morning. In it Mr. Obama outlined his proposed "bailout" which is going to cost the taxpayers anywhere from \$700 Billion to \$1 Trillion (I can't even write those numbers out). Anyway, the gist of the address is that he and his staff will be looking at many areas to save or get the money to fund this massive bailout.

The second item on his agenda is "entitlements". Now entitlements encompasses many programs namely Social Security and right close behind that on the agenda is Government Pay and along with that is Government retiree's annuities and benefits. NARFE National is alert to this and is getting ready for the struggle ahead. There is a lot of money to be had by cutting our earned benefits. For instance, stopping COLA's would save billions, cutting the amount the Government contributes to Health benefits again in the billions.

You can see that we have our work cut out for us. I encourage each of you, that as soon as the new Congress is seated, to e mail, call or write your congressmen and encourage them to leave our benefits alone. This has in fact been elevated to the primary legislative agenda at the last National Convention and is one of the best recruiting items we have. In other words, when people ask what has NARFE done for them we can state that NARFE has been instrumental in maintaining our current benefits and, in fact, was the organization that in the late 80's got our COLA's reinstated. NARFE is the only organization whose sole purpose is protecting the Federal retiree's benefits.

Mike McCoid  
 President

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## January's Meeting

The Chapter's January meeting will again be at the New China Restaurant. President Mike talked to the owner and expressed to him our concerns about the traffic back to the rest rooms. The owner has agreed to set some panels up along the side—in effect creating a corridor back to the rest rooms. So we will give it another try.

Our guest speaker at the meeting will be Ms. Patsy Zeigler, our FEHBP account manager for North Carolina Blue Cross Blue Shield. She will discuss changes to the FEHP for 2009. This is particularly relevant since Open season for making health plan changes doesn't close until the end of the month.

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## The Time To Act Is NOW

If we, as members of NARFE, are truly interested in the repeal of GPO/WEP and the passage of Premium conversion, **THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW**—not next week or next month but **NOW!** That means getting your pen and paper out, picking up the telephone, or cranking up your computer and contacting Senators Burr and Hagan and Congressman Butterfield **NOW** and urge them to include the repeal of GPO/WEP and the passage of Premium conversion in the pending economic stimulus package.

With a new Congress—now the 111<sup>th</sup>—all legislation introduced in the previous Congress that was not enacted into law must be reintroduced. Thus, the whole process of introduction of legislation, gaining cosponsors, holding hearings, and passage must be started over. Which it has—Representatives Howard Berman (D-CA) and Howard “Buck” McKeon (R-CA) have already introduced legislation to repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) (HR 235). Similar action has not yet been taken on Premium Conversion.

But the last several Congresses have demonstrated that simply introducing legislation, no matter how many cosponsors, has little assurance that legislation will make it into law. In the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, over a two-year span, all we saw was one hearing on one of the four bills. Not much to show, is it?

But the pending economic stimulus package opens a window of opportunity. As Mike noted in his above comments and as you are well aware from all the discussion in the news media, a chief priority of President Obama and the new 111<sup>th</sup> Congress is to pass and sign into law an economic stimulus package.

That package provides an excellent vehicle for legislation repealing GPO/WEP and enacting Premium conversion. It would rapidly place a significant amount of disposal income directly in the hands of consumers—many of whom are in the lower income strata and were a concern of President Obama’s campaign. Additionally, the budget cost would be absorbed by the bill itself.

To that end, NARFE President Margaret L. Baptiste has urged that all NARFE members contact their Congressional representatives urging that Premium Conversion be added to the stimulus package. In your newsletter editor’s opinion, it is entirely appropriate to include GPO/WEP.

So start contacting! Point out that as noted in a recent NARFE press release, recent data indicates approximately 465,000 Social Security beneficiaries affected by the GPO, of whom about 77 percent are women, approximately 43 percent are widowed, and 75 percent have lost their entire Social Security spousal benefit. The data also showed roughly 972,000 Social Security beneficiaries affected by the WEP.

Congressional contact information is listed below. Or go to [www.capwiz.com/narfe](http://www.capwiz.com/narfe) on the NARFE National web site and send a message via that route.

Remember, doing nothing is itself an action. If you don’t contact Congressman Butterfield and Senators Burr and Hagan, that means you are happy paying your health insurance premiums with gross income dollars and that you think docking or denying a person’s Social Security benefits simply because that person happens to be drawing Federal retirement is a good thing.

Also remember that this opportunity probably will not repeat itself. In the next couple of months, the Congress may actually realize the tremendous cost of the stimulus package and will have little appetite for spending budget dollars on as limited a group as the Federal retiree. Today, GPO/WEP repeal and enactment of Premium Conversion can be presented as stimulus items and a place to spend money to meet the Administration’s goals. But, as Mike pointed out, in a couple of months, they will again be viewed as entitlements—something to be cut to achieve budget discipline.

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## Congressional Contacts

Updated Congressional contacts are below. Note that Senator Burr now has an office in Rocky Mount.

*Capitol Toll-free number:* 1-866-220-0044

Dial the number and ask the operator to be connected to the Congressional office you wish to reach.

### *Congressional Delegation Contacts*

	<u>Washington, DC office</u>	<u>Local office</u>	<u>Web site</u>
<i>House of Representatives</i>			
G.K. Butterfield	413 Cannon House Office Building Washington, DC 20515 Phone: (202) 225-3101 Fax: (202) 225-3354	311 West 2 <sup>nd</sup> St Weldon, NC 27890 Phone: (252) 538-4123 Fax: 252-823-0236	<a href="http://www.house.gov/butterfield">http://www.house.gov/butterfield</a>
<i>US Senate</i>			
Richard Burr	217 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, DC 20510 Phone: (202) 224-3154 Fax: (202) 228-2981	100 Coast Line Street, Room 210 Rocky Mount, NC 27804 Phone: (252) 977-9522 Fax: (252) 977-7902	<a href="http://burr.senate.gov">http://burr.senate.gov</a>
Kay R. Hagan	B40a Dirksen Senate Office Building Washington Dc 20510 Phone:( 202) 24-6342	3310 New Bern Avenue Suite 122 Raleigh, NC 27601 Ph: (919) .856-4630	<a href="http://hagan.senate.gov">http://hagan.senate.gov</a>

Note: Each web site has a form for e-mailing the respective Senator/Congressman. That form can generally be accessed by clicking "Contacts" on the Home Page.

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## Minutes of the December 2008 Chapter Meeting

President Mike McCoid called the business meeting and Christmas Party to order at 2:15 PM, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008 at the Lloyd Andrews Building in Roanoke Rapids. He led the Chapter members and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Approval of Minutes**

There were no corrections to the minutes of the November meeting as distributed in the December newsletter.

### **Treasurer's Report**

None

### **Old Business**

None

### **New Business**

- Area IV Vice President, Bennie Saunders, installed the following as Chapter officers for 2009:
  - President—Mike McCoid
  - Vice President—Virginia Shell
  - Secretary—Tim Stone
  - The Treasurer, Barry Van Scoyoc, and Service Officer, Hal Gardner, were not present.He urged Chapter members to attend the Area IV training session on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009 in Raleigh.
- President Mike said that
  - The Chapter would cover the costs of the lunch at the Area IV session.

- He would again discuss the arrangements at the New China with the owner.
- Thanked Marge Prescott and her volunteers for arranging the Christmas Party and Virginia Shell for donating the turkey.

Olive Hutton won the 50/50—\$34.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

Tim Stone  
Secretary

## Chapter Directory

If you got this newsletter through the regular mail even though you have a valid e-mail address, there are a couple of possible explanations— your e-mail address as listed in the membership directory lists is incorrect or your spam blocker is keeping the e-mail with the newsletter from being delivered into your mail box. To fix the problem:

1. Forward your correct e-mail address to me (Tim Stone) at [tfdnstoneagain1@embarqmail.com](mailto:tfdnstoneagain1@embarqmail.com)
2. Set your spam blocker so e-mails from that address get through to your mail box.

## Chapter 2297 Officers

The following individuals are serving as the chapter officers for 2009.

Office	Incumbent	Telephone	E-mail
President	Micheal McCoid	(252) 537-2096	<a href="mailto:mmccoid@embarqmail.com">mmccoid@embarqmail.com</a>
Vice President	Virginia Shell	(252) 537-1713	<a href="mailto:virginiashell@gmail.com">virginiashell@gmail.com</a>
Secretary/Newsletter	Tim Stone	(252) 586-4864	<a href="mailto:tfdnstoneagain1@embarqmail.com">tfdnstoneagain1@embarqmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Barry Van Scoyoc	(252) 410-0433	<a href="mailto:big.bear@earthlink.net">big.bear@earthlink.net</a>
Membership Chair	Barbara Dow	(252) 537-8627	<a href="mailto:dowhome@peoplepc.com">dowhome@peoplepc.com</a>
Service Officer	Harold Gardner	(252) 586-7896	<a href="mailto:beth_gardner@embarqmail.com">beth_gardner@embarqmail.com</a>