



Vacancies and Potential Vacancies

Carolyn Webb has served the chapter for several years as Service Officer. She would like to step down and will train a successor. If you think you might be interested, please talk to Carolyn, Marci or Blake about what this might entail. We still need a successor for Cathy as Legislative Officer.

Notes from the Newsletter Editor

Billie Nichols

There will not be a General and Executive Meeting during the month of December 2019. The next scheduled meetings will be a General Meeting on January 16, 2020 at 11:30 AM at Damon's and the Executive Meeting, location to be determined, will be January 23, 2020.

Sunshine Officer

Lynn Vos

Happy Birthday for

December

**Marjorie Anctil, Joe Arsenault,
Mary Brady, John Maccormack,
Ann Murphy, Robert Murphy,
Carolyn Webb**

Get well card sent to Joyce Jones wishing her a speedy recovery for her long-awaited knee-surgery.

Messages from the President

Looking to 2020

Chapter Members Share Views

With the State Federation President

Chapter 1015's holiday party was held Dec. 5 at the Sons and Daughters of Italy Lodge 2662.

Elected officers for Calendar Year 2020 were installed by S.C. Federation President Blaine Lotz, of Hilton Head, who attended the party with his wife, Lynne.

The elected officers for calendar year 2020 are:

Blake Crawford, President

Marci Vogel, Vice President

Billie Nichols, Secretary

Joe Arsenault, Treasurer

Thank-you cards were presented for outgoing Secretary Joyce Jones and outgoing Legislative Officer Cathy Linta-Leader for their dedicated work in 2018. Linta-Leader will continue her roles as chapter webmaster and chair of the audit committee, but said she needs a break from legislative assignments.

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Alzheimer's Research Officer

Alice Villavicencio

**Tip for the Month of December 2019:
Listen to Music**

\$400,000 Awarded for New NARFE-Alzheimer's Research Grants

According to NARFE magazine (December 2019), the NARFE-Alzheimer's National Committee has awarded grants totaling almost \$400,000 to three research teams, for the coming year, for science-based investigations into the possible cause of Alzheimer's Disease. It is important to know the cause, so that a cure can be discovered. Although the funding is not equally divided among the three teams, each team will conduct one study for duration of more than three years.

The funding will be used by researchers at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; the University of Rochester, N.Y., and Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton. The Michigan team will examine whether proteins that help protect DNA are "read" properly in a person with Alzheimer's disease. The Rochester team will investigate the impact on brain health when old immune cells in the brain are replaced with younger cells in the brain.

Continued: Alzheimer's Research Officer

The Florida Atlantic team will study whether a decrease in cholesterol levels in nerve cells may disrupt nerve cell communications in the brain of a person with Alzheimer's disease.

For further information, please read the article entitled "Grants Awarded for Alzheimer's Research," written by Olivia Williams, NARFE-Alzheimer's Chair, and appearing on pages 60-61 in the December 2019 issue of NARFE magazine.

It is rewarding to know that a substantial portion of our contributions to Alzheimer's is used to fund research to end this dreadful disease, and that NARFE shows its members how their donations to NARFE-Alzheimer's are used. This is transparency.

Thank you, Chapter 1015 members for your continuing contributions to the cause.



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Nearly 40 chapter members joined in a “listening session” for President Lotz, who has been traveling the state seeking opinions about issues active and retired federal employees confront.

Protecting our benefits, which were earned over many years but are under attack, was an issue raised repeatedly.

Members discussed the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset. The Brady (Republican) and Neal (Democratic) bills, both of which NARFE supported, would reduce the impact of WEP, and are fruitful areas for nonpartisan collaboration. (Please see the legislative report.)

Lotz responded to questions on new NARFE efforts to eliminate South Carolina taxation of Federal pensions. NARFE argues that Federal retirements bring new people into the states who are well educated, generally do not put added demand on the public school system and are potentially valuable contributors to the state economy.

Given the negative trends in NARFE membership, Lotz stressed the need for public support and encouraged members to write articles, talk to friends and be active in spreading the message of the good work federal employees have done on the job and do in retirement.

Lotz also urged chapter members to engage in more service projects to show others how effective and caring federal employees and retirees are.

The group also discussed outreach to national-only members who live in South Carolina but who might be interested in joining a chapter.

For its part, the state federation is launching a quarterly tabloid-format newsletter, which will stimulate more robust information exchange and collaboration among chapters.

Lotz has also issued an initial round of press releases that will tell the NARFE story to more than 50 media outlets which serve our state. Most are in SC, but some are in neighboring cities that have a SC market, such as Augusta, Savannah, and Charlotte.

Next year’s state federation annual conference will be held in North Charleston, and is likely to be held in late April or early May. Lotz was asked to make scholarships available again for chapter members’ travel and hotel expenses, so that more regular members can get to know and work with colleagues from elsewhere in South Carolina.

Stay tuned for more developments in 2020.

Legislative Officer

Cathy Linta-Leader

Although the FY 2020 federal budget was approved earlier this year, appropriations bills divvying up the money has yet to be passed with securing border funding as the main impasse. Another continuing resolution to fund the government passed and extends fiscal year 2020 funding through December 20. Although this avoids a government shutdown for now, the standstill leaves federal community priorities such as a 3.1 percent average pay raise.

The President announced the Office of Personnel Management will continue as is and will not have some of its functions performed by the White House and the General Services Administration.

NARFE needs you to help persuade legislators that a bipartisan bill that builds upon two NARFE-supported Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) reform bills is the best solution to address an unjust policy. Over 1.8 million Social Security beneficiaries are short-changed by the WEP, and Congress must come to a consensus on a compromise bill to turn this legislation into law. In September, the House Committee on Ways and Means Chairman Richard Neal, D-MA, introduced the Public Servants Protection and Fairness Act, H.R. 4540. (Congressman Tom Rice is a member of this committee.) In July, the Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act, H.R. 3934, was introduced by the committee's ranking member Kevin Brady, R-TX. There are a few differences between the bills, but NARFE supports both of them, as each provides a rebate to those affected by the WEP.

Continued: Legislative Officer

Call our legislators, send them the pre-drafted letter on the www.narfe.org website, and/or write a letter to the editor detailing how WEP affects you and/or us.

Representative Carolyn Maloney was elected chair of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform. She replaces Elijah Cummings.

Continue to visit the Legislative Action Center on the NARFE website, www.narfe.org, for pre-drafted letters to our U. S. senators and congressman regarding all legislation affecting us. Additionally, call these representatives at their DC offices at 866-220-0044.

Budget forecasters predict the South Carolina general budget starting July 1, 2020 will have \$2 billion more to spend than last fiscal year. Some lawmakers favor paying for security upgrades at prisons and maintenance at universities. Other lawmakers and Gov. Henry McMaster predict the money will go towards teacher's raises or using the surplus to enact tax cutting reform. Contact your local legislators about how the money should be spent.

Have a joyous holiday season!