



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Blake Crawford

Something New for Spring

As you can see from our banner this month, Spring is in the air. While we're still not yet able to venture out and about as a group, we hope to bring you some fresh new options as you explore what's available for entertainment, education, and service in the Zoom world. We have an exciting list of guest speakers confirmed and planned.

In March, our guest will be Kelli Barker, co-founder of the new lifelong learning venture, **What's Next? Senior Adventures in Living and Travel**, which opened for business in the fall of 2020. Kelli was assistant director of academic and community outreach at Coastal Carolina University until July 2020. Her new venture with co-founder Carol Osborne offers Zoom-based education and fun. They also are planning in-person trips and course offerings when that becomes safe.

For April, joining us is SC NARFE Federation President Blaine Lotz, who will talk to us about NARFE today and in the future. Should we worry about the future of NARFE? I expect part sober analysis, part pep talk, and lots of questions. He will also formally install our officers.

For May, we will continue with the NARFE guests, hearing from Marsha Padilla-Goad, Grassroots Program Manager from headquarters. In February, NARFE published its initial Grassroots

Continued: President's Message

Letter via email, which is intended to improve communication with us on priorities and opportunities for advocacy. Marsha says she needs your advice, so come and join in.

While you're at it, leave us with a few ideas for additional speakers this year. As usual, we're holding spots in the fall for health insurers in the FEHB Program, but everything else is wide open.

Not yet ready for Zoom? We have chapter members who Zoom on PCs, laptops, and I Phones. We can arrange a one-one-one or small group session to help. It's easy - we've already made the mistakes, so you don't have to.

And finally, a shout-out to Sue Day from Pawleys Island. She is 94 years old. She doesn't drive to meetings, but she reads the chapter newsletter! Thank you, Sue.

We hope to see everyone else on March 18.

Dates: March 18, April 15, May 20

VICE PRESIDENT

Marci Vogel

Hope all are continuing to stay safe and healthy during the pandemic. Also, has everyone received the COVID-19 virus vaccine? If not call this number [1-866-365-8110](tel:1-866-365-8110) to make an appointment. Please everyone stay safe, keep your social distance and wash your hands. Help to stop the virus spread.

I hope to see you all very soon.



**Newsletter Editor
Billie Nichols**

**Chapter 1015 membership as of
March 5, 2021=149**

**Prospective New Members based
on M-112 Report as of March 5,
2021**

Fran Baldassare

Mary Connell

Charles Engle

May the road rise up to meet you,

**May the wind be always at your
back,**

**May the sunshine warm upon your
face, and**

The rains fall soft upon your fields.

**CALL FOR MEMBERS WHO WANT TO
PARTICIPATE IN CHAPTER MEETINGS BY
ZOOM**

Already some of the SC NARFE chapters have started conducting their meetings by Zoom. We have to explore this new technology and encourage our members to take advantage of this manageable way to start having our chapter meetings virtually.

Our chapter has conducted several previous meetings by Zoom. We have contacted several chapter members and we have received positive responses and they would like to be included. There are several ways you can be included in these meetings.

If you have a PC-personal computer you can buy an inexpensive camera and mount it to your computer monitor, or if you don't have a PC, you can use an I Phone, a tablet or a laptop. These devices all have a built-in camera.

We have some very talented and qualified zoom users who can make it work for you and will assist you in signing-on to the Zoom virtual meetings.

Therefore, starting Thursday, March 18, 2021, at 11:00 AM we will be conducting our first chapter meeting using Zoom. We have tentatively planned for subsequent meetings to be conducted April 15 and May 20.

If you are interested please contact me, Billie Nichols, at 843-839-0598 or [email-billie.nichols1@sccoast.net](mailto:billie.nichols1@sccoast.net)



Sunshine/Membership

Lynn Vos

Happy Birthdays

March

**Emily Aspel, Evelyn Ewing,
William Patriarca, Raymond
Poutre, Wayne Stogner**

**Sunshine Grins- of- the- Month
are:**

If a plane crashed at the Canada/US border, where would the survivors be buried? Buried?! You don't bury survivors!

. What do you call a lawyer who has gone bad? A senator, of course!

. What did the lawyer name her daughter? SUE!

. What did the ocean say to the beach? Nothing, it just waved.

. What happens when the smog lifts in Los Angeles? UCLA!

. I don't trust stairs...they are always up to something.

Continued: Sunshine/Membership

Sunshine Books-of-the-Month -

Keep Sharp. Build a Better Brain at Any Age (Dr. Sanjay Gupta). Easy for him to say, but no harm in being optimistic. The 100-year old McDonald's employee is a great example of optimism, as is the 90, yes, 90-year old WA woman who WALKED 6, repeat, 6 MILES in the SNOW to get a vaccine! (That's recent news, BTW, not something in his book.) New research showing secrets to longevity and strategies to help keep your brain resilient and free from disease.

COVID-19 - The Reset...Changes are a-comin. Big time. Thought-provoking, whether we adapt or not, we can see glimpses of future possibilities of our world order. Too much, too soon?

Audit Committee Chair

Nominating Committee

Cathy Linta-Leader

Members received either an email or letter requesting nominations for the Chapter's elected positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer to be received no later than February 14, 2021. Since no other nominations were received other than those made during the January 21, 2021 Zoom meeting, the successful candidates are Blake Crawford as President, Marci Vogel as Vice President, Billie Nichols as Secretary, and Joe Arsenault as Treasurer.

Legislative Officer

Sherry Gainer

Un-Happy Anniversary—it has now been a year since the first COVID-19 death in the United States, and for most of us, our self-imposed quarantine. I hope that all of you have received at least the first vaccination and are scheduled for your second. Stay well!

On February 27th the House passed HR 1319, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, which calls for almost \$2T of coronavirus relief to the nation. Support was along party lines with Rep. Tom Rice voting Nay along with all other Republicans. Key provisions of the bill are:

- Funding to supplement declines in tax revenues for state and local governments
- \$1400 payments to those making \$75K or less
- \$400 per week supplemental unemployment payments
- \$130B to assist in reopening schools and remote learning
- \$46B for COVID testing and tracing
- \$7.5B for vaccine distribution
- \$7.6B for expanding the public health workforce
- Proposal to increase federal minimum wage to \$15 (which will be eliminated in the Senate)

The bill now goes to the Senate.

Activity in other areas of focus:

- **Federal Pay and Benefits**

HR 382 FAIR Act, to provide a 3.2% pay raise to federal employees, referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Reform

- Support Reform/Repeal of WEP/GPO
- **HR 82: Social Security Fairness Act of 2021 (Jan 4, 2021)**—seeks to amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the GPO and WEP; referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

Continued: Legislative Officer

- **Support Accurate COLA for Retirees**
- **HR 304: Equal COLA Act**—would guarantee that FERS and CSRS retirees would receive the same COLA increases, using the CPI-W (for Wages, not CPI-E for Elderly) Referred to House Committee on Ways and Means
- **USPS--Protect Postal Retiree Health Benefits**
- **The USPS Fairness Act, (S.145 and H.R.695)** to eliminate the pre-funding mandate for retiree health insurance premiums; supporters are optimistic for passage during this Congress.
- **President Biden has nominated 3 people to fill vacancies on the USPS Board of Governors, which would mean a full complement for the first time in a decade, although it appears unlikely the Board will replace the current PMG DeJoy. The most notable nominee is Ron Stroman, a previous deputy PMG. Biden also replaced the Republican head of the Postal Regulatory Commission with a Democrat.**

Be sure to keep in touch with our senators and representatives by using the NARFE Action Center.

<https://new.narfe.org/advocacy/legislative-action-center/>

Alzheimer's Research Officer Alice Villavicencio

TIP FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2021

Take a Course in a Subject of Interest to You.

A March 2, 2021, report published by the Alzheimer's Association provides valuable data, in the form of text and statistical tables, on Alzheimer's disease. It is entitled *2021 Alzheimer's disease Facts and Figures (Special Report Race, Ethnicity and Alzheimer's in America)*. Because of the abundance of valuable data that it gives on Alzheimer's and dementia, I will discuss only a small amount of information on a few specific areas.

The publication briefly clarifies that Alzheimer's disease begins before dementia, and not that Alzheimer's is a phase of dementia as "was often ... describe[d] in the past." Now, scientists "know that dementia is only one part of [Alzheimer's] disease and that it [follows] mild cognitive impairment." See *Report*, Page 8.

As we have discussed before, there are several known risk factors that contribute to persons developing Alzheimer's. Some of these factors are age, genetics, and family history. The greatest factor is age. According to the published data, persons 85 years of age and older are 35 percent more likely to develop Alzheimer's. See *Report*, Pages 13, and 32-33.

The Report also states that some research has shown that certain genes have been found to increase the risk of developing the disease. One of these genes is the APOE-e4 gene which has been identified as the gene

Continued: Alzheimer's Research Officer

with the greatest impact for the risk of developing late-age Alzheimer's disease. This specific gene gives a "blueprint" for a protein that carries cholesterol to the bloodstream. There are three forms of the APOE gene: APOE-e2, APOE-e3, and APOE-e4. These forms are known as alleles, and every human person "inherits" one of three forms from each of the parents. Therefore, "resulting in six possible APOE pairs: e2/e2, e3/e3, and e4/e4. Researchers have found differences in the frequency of these pairs in different racial and ethnic groups." Some of the APOE pairs may increase the risk of developing Alzheimer's; other APOE pairs may decrease the risk of developing the disease. See Report, Page 13, Table 3, and Page 29.

The risk of developing Alzheimer's disease is stronger if one parent, both parents, a sibling, and other first-degree relatives had or has the disease. This does not mean that a person with a family history of the disease will develop it. A person who has or had no first-degree relative with Alzheimer's may develop the disease if the person has certain risk factors. However, risk factors may be modified to prevent developing the disease. For example, following a heart-healthy diet, exercising, participating in activities that keep the mind active, such as reading, and learning new information or games may reduce the risk of developing Alzheimer's. Some research suggests that persons with higher education, and those who performed or perform meaningful/challenging work, may have a lower risk of developing the disease.

<https://www.alz.org/media/documents/alzheimers-facts-and-figures.pdf>.