



**NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED
FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
PUTNAM COUNTY—COOKEVILLE TENNESSEE
NARFE Works For You**

Chapter 1956 Newsletter

October 2009

Last Meeting

At our last meeting in September, the turnout was again extremely low. This is very disturbing as we use to have exceptional attendance, well above the average NARFE chapter. Because we had some very important business to discuss that would take extra time, we did not schedule a speaker for the last meeting. We try very hard to keep our meetings short so as not to keep you too late. If was felt that a speaker and a longer than usual business session would be too much. I realize that our membership is aging and many of you simply cannot get out and about like you use to be able to do. But I appeal to those of you who are still active and able, do make an extra effort to support our meetings.

I appointed a committee to nominate chapter officers for next year. This is a very important responsibility and I appreciate the following for their willingness to serve on the Nominating Committee: Larry Charron, Tom Banker and Tom Pointer. As in any organization, officers are critical in carrying on the chapter. The 4 positions that we need to fill are: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Urgent! I just spoke to Larry Charron who updated me on the nominating progress. He is having a very difficult time finding anyone for officers, especially the position of President. Many of you have the talents and abilities to do that job and you are very much needed. It is not hard, but it does take some time. Our chapter is not allowed to continue if we do not have at least a President so I urge your to consider or reconsider helping your chapter. I believe it is time for someone else to step up and lead this chapter. If you have an concern at all, please contact one of the committee members and if they contact you, please consider serving. **This is of upmost importance, will you help?** Training is available.

Also as advertised, we did have a very good discussion on the NARFE Dues Referendum. I gave out information that I had on the subject and many good questions were raised. Those in attendance felt it best to delay the vote until the next meeting in order to get input from more members. So go back and read again the September Newsletter for details on the how it will affect our organization. If you have questions, feel free to contact me.

Please share these newsletters with your spouse

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be October 20th. at Shoney's on Jefferson Ave. in Cookeville. You will need to arrive by 6:00 pm. if you desire to eat. The business session will begin promptly at 6:45 pm.

The scheduled speaker will be John Kendrick who is the Fire Chief for the Cookeville Fire Department.

If anyone needs transportation to any of the meetings, fellow member Roy Byrd has graciously offered to pick up anyone in the Cookeville area. You can contact him at 526-1895.

Membership Report

We were please that previous member Sue Richardson attended the last meeting and renewed her membership. Many of you know her and her late husband, Earl. Thanks Sue for re-instating your membership. We are pleased also that Billy Smith renewed for another year. Thanks Billy.

Please help us keep our membership strong by renewing as soon as you get the renewal notice. Keep in mind that renewal notices are sent out by NARFE Headquarters 2 months prior to your membership expiration date, but I hear from many member that they do not receive this notice. Then a second notice is sent out the month your membership is due to expire. If you think you have not received your notice, contact me so I can check when your dues are due.

Legislative Report

NARFE has been working for the past 3 months in support of a bill that has just been passed in the US House of Representatives. This bill H.R. 3631 would insure equity for all Medicare beneficiaries from an increase in the

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Part B premiums for year 2010. Because it is projected that there will be no cost of living adjustment (COLA) this coming year, those eligible for Social Security benefits are exempt from the increase in Medicare premiums, but federal, state and local government retirees not eligible for Social Security would have to pay the increase if not for this bill. In order for the bill to become law, it still must be passed also by the Senate and signed by the President. NARFE headquarters will continue working on this bill all the way through. I do not know the Senate Bill number but you can contact our Senators and mention the purpose of the bill. Those not eligible for Social Security benefits, will have to pay the new premium of \$119 per month for the Medicare Part B unless this new bill is passed.

Two other issues which NARFE supports have made progress in Congress. The House and Senate conference committee have approved provisions that would allow current FERS workers to credit unused sick leave toward retirement and allow federal agencies to re-employ federal retirees on a part time basis without the offset of their annuity. So these 2 issues are a step closer to becoming law.

NARFE Mailings

Most of you probably just received the annual calendar that NARFE sends out each year about this time. Sometimes members complain about receiving items such as the calendars and the greeting cards that are also sent out annually. Keep in mind that NARFE uses these as a way to produce much needed income for the organization. Many members do send back a contribution for these items, in fact so many do that NARFE raises millions of dollars on these projects. What that does is help to prevent NARFE from having to increase member dues to meet its financial obligations. You are free to use these items, give them away or even to trash them, but you are not obligated in any way to send in a contribution. It is your choice.

If you prefer not to receive these and other mailing that come from time to time, just contact NARFE headquarters and let them know, they will gladly remove your name and address from that mailing list. Just call NARFE Headquarters at their main telephone number, 703-838-7760.

On a side note, if you and your spouse are both members and you are receiving 2 magazines, keep both of them coming. Just use the extra one to pass out to a friend or leave it in some office waiting room for others to read. The reason for this is, this increases the advertising dollars that NARFE gets from the ads in the magazine. The larger the circulation, the more they get for the ads.

Thanks to everyone who has renewed recently

Hold On To Your Purse or Wallet

Get ready to pay higher premiums for your Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) insurance for next year. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has just announced the new rates for 2010 with an overall average of 8.8 percent increase. But in looking a little closer at some of the most popular plans that you and I have, here is what I found.

For retired members who have the Blue Cross Blue Shield Basic Family Plan, the monthly rates will increase from \$216.48 to \$235.98, that is \$19.50 per month or 9% increase. For the same category who have the Mail Handlers Standard Family Plan the new rates jump from \$278.76 to \$396.29 per month. That is an unbelievable \$117.53 or 42.8% increase per month

For current non-postal employees who have the Blue Cross Blue Shield Basic Family Plan, the rates will increase from \$99.91 to \$108.91 bi-weekly. That is a 9% increase. And for current postal employees, who have the Blue Cross Blue Shield Basic Plan, you will see an increase from \$53.95 to \$63.17 bi-weekly. That is an increase of 17%.

Other plans have various other rate changes. The full list of all plans is available on the OPM website. If you have a different plan and you want me to look up your plan premiums, let me know. Open Season information will be provided to retirees by OPM, and from your agency for those still working in the federal government. Open Season this year runs from November 9th. to December 14th.

All this comes in light that there will not likely be a cost of living increase this coming year for retirees.

Support Needed

Earlier I mentioned that we are in need of officers for next year. But we have a need for several other people to help with the chapter. Some critical functions that we currently do not have anyone to serve are: Membership Chairman, Legislative Chairman, Public Relations Chairman, someone to help with the Newsletter mailing; just to name a few. If more people would do a little it would not be hard on anyone. Remember you chapter president can't do it all.

If our chapter is important to you, will you offer to help with one of these or another chapter position?

Sunshine Report

I am not aware of any of our members that are sick, etc. If you know of anyone, let me know.

NARFE IS ON THE WEB

Chapter 1956:	www.narfecookevilletn.org
Tennessee Federation:	www.narfetn.org
NARFE Headquarters:	www.narfe.org