



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

Chapter 1956 Newsletter

August 2010

Notes From Last Meeting

We had good attendance for our July meeting, thanks for your support. We enjoyed a presentation by Nancy Rich and Jan Tollett who were from the Master Gardeners Program in Putnam County.

The Master Gardeners Program is not only a nationwide program but also is international. This year it celebrates 100 years of history. Their main purpose is horticulture education, statewide they train 1200 people per year. In Putnam County it was started 10 years ago. In Tennessee, it is operated under the University of Tennessee Extension Service. In your county, you can contact them through the local County Agent.

Were we shown the work of the group by a picture show of the many beautiful gardens that they have established in the community. You may have seen some of these, at location such as at the hospital, Burgess Falls Park, the farmers market and other places. In Putnam County the group consists of 76 certified members.

This group is planning a cookbook of recipes that they have developed, you can preorder now by contacting any member or get it at the Putnam County Fair. For any help or questions about the program, find them at the UT Extension Office, 900 S Walnut Ave. this is close to the fairgrounds.

In other news from our July meeting, I talked about the upcoming NARFE National Convention and the proposed resolutions that have been submitted. At this meeting, I summarized the resolutions that pertain to changes in Dues. Because NARFE has had a major decrease in membership over the last several years, the current dues are not bringing in enough revenue to sustain the operating costs, even though NARFE has done several cost saving changes recently. No one likes to see membership fees increase, but I think we have no choice but approve one at the next convention. There are many various proposals and even these will be changed by the time they reach the floor for debate, but I expect to see a increase of about \$10 per year.

I hope that you will understand the need and will still agree that membership in NARFE is bargain. Remember there is **no other** organization that does for us what NARFE does. Thanks for your support.

Please share these newsletters with your spouse

Coming Up At Our Next Meeting

Mark your calendar for August 17th. that will be the date of our next meeting at Shoney's Restaurant on S Jefferson Ave. in Cookeville. Our planned speaker will be Paula Smith-Wray, who represents Genworth Financial Co. and will be talking to us about Long Term Care Insurance. This is something that everyone should consider. I am sure you have some questions on this subject, so I invite you to come and hear from this speaker.

Also, I will continue to summarize more of the resolutions to be considered at the upcoming National Convention. I will talk about some of those running for National Office as well. Help me out by reading online and in the magazine about the issues and candidates for office and give your thoughts to me at the next meeting or before the convention.

Remember if anyone in the Cookeville area needs a ride to the meeting, contact Roy Byrd by calling 252-2973.

NARFE NewsWatch

Those of you who are signed up to receive the GEMS messages from NARFE headquarters should have seen the latest news service recently started by our National office. They have teamed up with an outside news service to gather news from a whole host of media outlets which pulls in current articles of interest to federal employees and federal retirees.

I think this is one of the better improvements that NARFE has done and I believe you will find these articles useful. They are not very long and will not take a lot of your time to read. If you are not getting this new service and would like to, just send me a note and I can add your email address to the system.

Chapter Officers

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Common Myths and Truths -By Bill Price

Note: There are several of these type of articles and they will run for several months as space permits.

MYTH: I am not renewing my membership in NARFE and dropping out because: NARFE did not do this or that; did too much or too little on health care reform and other legislation; etc.; etc.

TRUTH: NARFE does not claim to be perfect; it works on behalf of all its members but with limited, finite resources. NARFE is dwarfed by other interests groups' influence. NARFE argues its case before the voting members of the Congress and the President but they have the final say. NARFE is the only special interest advocate you have on Capitol Hill, with the Administration, and in your state capital. Because federal pay and benefits can be changed at the whim of Congress, we all need a strong voice to represent us. Not renewing your membership and dropping out only serves to reduce the number of people NARFE represents and thus weakens the only political voice you have with the Congress and the Administration. And, you cannot assume any longer that remaining NARFE members can protect your pay and benefits for you. NARFE membership and financial resources are declining to such levels that its future success in stopping cuts in federal pay and benefits will be significantly more difficult at best. NARFE needs everyone's membership and dues to ensure it can maintain its strong political voice.

MYTH: NARFE isn't doing enough on the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO). [In essence, WEP greatly reduces your Social Security benefits if you also receive a federal pension. GPO does not allow receipt of spousal Social Security benefits if you, as survivor, also receive a federal pension.]

TRUTH: As noted in the March 2010 NARFE magazine, page 16, WEP and GPO are one of the Association's top legislative priorities. WEP and GPO were introduced by the Reagan Administration in the 1980s in an early attempt to shore up Social Security. Legislative bills S.484 [sponsored by Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)] and H.R.235 [sponsored by Representative Howard L. Berman (D-28thCA)] would eliminate WEP and GPO. Legislative bills H.R.1221 [sponsored by Representative Kevin Brady (R-8thTX)] and S.490 [sponsored by Senator Kay Bailey Hutchinson (R-TX)] would reform WEP. Since early 2009, the bills have been stalled in the House Committee on Ways and Means and the Senate Committee on Finance. Key lawmakers do not want to act on the bills unless they are considered as part of a comprehensive overhaul of Social Security. And, there is concern about the cost resulting from repealing the offsets, estimated at \$90 billion over 10

years. Despite this, NARFE continues to press lawmakers to pass repeal legislation. And, NARFE members should also use the Legislative Action Center to send prepared messages to their senators and representatives to let them know the issue is still important.

Legislative News

August is 'Meet Your Candidates Month' and has been so designated by NARFE for several years. Congress takes a break and members return to their home state and districts during the month of August. This is a great time to meet with them as they hold meetings or in their offices.

This being an election year, many changes will take place in those who represent us in Washington. The August primary elections are now over but we look forward to the November general election. So now is a good time to visit with incumbent Rep. Lincoln Davis of the 4th. District and the others running in the two districts that our members live in, that is District 4 and 6.

If you have opportunity to speak with any of those running, be sure to ask about their stand on the issues relating to federal employees and retirees. I would like to hear from you what you find out.

Membership

The most recent Membership Report for our chapter shows only one member was sent a Second Dues Notice, which is an improvement. Thanks

One of the best things that you as a member can do to help yourself, our chapter and NARFE as a whole is take advantage of the Dues Withholding option in order to pay your membership dues. Many of you already do that, but many more could be. It saves you money and time and besides, you want be getting reminders from us to renew you dues each year. Why not sign up now while you are thinking about it. Don't worry, if your membership renewal is not due now, you can still sign up and the change will not take place until it is time.

Many of you will see included with this newsletter the **Form** that you need to use for this. Just fill it in both parts of the form with your information and mail it in the address shown. You will need your CSA or CSF number from your OPM records, your Social Security number and your NARFE membership number. Our chapter number is 1956.

Thanks to all who have renewed your membership

NARFE IS ON THE WEB

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

