



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

Chapter 1956 Newsletter

February 2011

Notes From The Last Meeting

The January meeting took place on a cold, wet winter evening. Hopefully the weather will improve soon. We had a great time as many reminisced about days long ago. Our attendance continues to be low and that should be a concern to all of us.

At this meeting we discussed the real possibility that there will be cuts in the federal government that directly affect both current and retired federal workers. But more on this in a separate article in this Newsletter.

We had a very productive discussion on chapter needs, attendance and participation. Over the last 2 years, we have had a large influx of new members and we would especially encourage them to get involved with the chapter and attend our meetings. Those present at this meeting agreed to take a portion from our list of current members and contact them with a survey of their thoughts on such things as meeting date, time, location in order to stir up interest. We would mainly concentrate on those who live nearby Cookeville, so you may have received a phone call in regards to this since the last meeting. If you did not get a call, maybe they could not reach you. Whether you live nearby Cookeville or far away such as myself, we extend a welcome to everyone to take part in our meetings and the chapter.

Important Dates Coming Up

February 14 Valentine's Day
February 15 Next Chapter Meeting
February 21 President's Day
March 13 Daylight Savings Time Begins

Membership News

We would like to welcome our newest members which were reported since last month. They are Deborah Herriger of Monterey and Herbert Yott of Sparta. Thanks to these who join the growing NARFE community.

NARFE headquarters has reported for the last 3 months an **increase** in members. This is very good news. Previous to this, we have experienced declining numbers. Our current total Nationwide is 305,426. In order to keep this going in a positive direction, we need you to do two things. Renew your own membership and invite others to join. ☺

Please share these newsletters with your spouse

Upcoming Meeting

We will go over the results of the caller survey and continue to discuss chapter needs. We would welcome your thoughts if you care to come and share those with us. There is no speaker planned for this meeting, but we hope to have speakers once again if we can get some increase in attendance. Please bring suggestions for speakers with you when you come.

Federal Cuts

Not only did we just see many proposals for cuts from the Commission On Fiscal Responsibility And Reform, but the President has already issued a directive to freeze federal pay for 2 years and that could be extended by Congress. Congress is also looking at other ways to reduce spending and we know all too well, one of the first places they look is at groups like us.

This is likely the most serious threat to our pay and benefits that we as federal employees and retirees have seen in a very long time. This is why you need to stay abreast of what is being drafted and proposed, and let your members of Congress know how you feel. NARFE has provided us a way to stay in be alert to possible changes; that is through the use of the GEMS email alert system. If you are not currently getting these important messages, let me help you get signed up. You can call NARFE member services at 800-456-8410 and tell them you want to be sure they have your email address. NARFE also provides us a easy way to respond by email to our members of Congress, just go to their website, [Member Section](#), log in, and scroll down and click on the [Legislative Action Center](#). Or call your member of Congress, the Capital Switchboard is 866-220-0044.

Chapter Officers

President	Ronnie Collins
Vice-President	Betty Robinson
Secretary	Reba Collins
Treasurer	Myra Estes

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Federal Tax Withholding Change For 2011

Retired members probably noticed in your February annuity payment an increase in the amount withheld for federal taxes. If you receive the important messages by email from headquarters, you saw this, but for those who are not on the email list, I am reprinting a response from David Snell who is Head of the Retirement Benefits Department at NARFE.

"While all of the attention recently was on Congress extending the Bush era tax cuts – which happened – a lesser known federal tax credit for employees and retirees that was part of the 2009 Stimulus law was allowed to expire.

The "Making Work Pay" credit expired December 31, 2010, which could mean higher federal tax withholding amounts in monthly annuities/pensions for public and private sector retirees, including federal annuitants. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) issued a notice in December saying withholding tables for 2011 would no longer be adjusted for the Making Work Pay tax credit and there is no longer an optional additional withholding adjustment for pensions.

The Making Work Pay credit was created with the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Public Law 111-5, signed into law February 17, 2009 (also known as the Stimulus law). The credit equaled 6.2% of a taxpayer's earned income up to a total credit of \$400 for individuals and \$800 for joint filers. Last year the IRS asked employers to use the new withholding tables to adjust workers' take-home pay to account for the new credit as soon as possible emphasizing that employees did not have to fill out a new W-4 withholding form, and that the adjustments would automatically be made based on the 2010 withholding tables. Those withholding tables also affected federal retirement payments. With the expiration of the temporary credit, IRS tax withholding tables have changed for 2011, and many retirees may see an increase in the amount of federal tax being withheld from their monthly annuity payments as a result.

It is important to keep in mind that, like all employers, OPM uses tax withholding tables that are provided by the IRS, and questions about changes to those tables must be referred to the IRS, not OPM.

As a reminder, federal annuitants receiving payments from OPM can change their tax withholding amounts for both federal and state taxes by contacting OPM. Retirees can call OPM at 1-888-767-6738, or make changes using Service Online at www.opm.gov/retire. We would also suggest retirees use the OPM on-line tax withholding calculator at the same site before making a change to their monthly tax withholding to make sure they do not under withhold which could result in paying out of pocket additional federal tax that may be due at the end of the

year.

NARFE members who are unhappy about the expiration of the Make Work Pay tax credit should direct their complaints to their own representative and senators. NARFE is consulting with our coalition partners in the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations regarding congressional action on this issue.

While retirees' and survivors' anger about the expiring tax provisions is justified, NARFE members need to stay focused on the more critical and immediate threat of the unprecedented spending cuts Congress is considering, particularly proposals to reduce the earned retirement, pay and health benefits of federal employees and annuitants."

A Member We Will Miss

We are sorry to report the passing of long time member J B Robbins, he died on Jan. 25th. Our deepest sympathy goes out to his wife Thelma and the other family members.

State Federation Convention

It is time now to sign up to attend this year's NARFE Tennessee Federation Convention. This is where we elect state officers, bring resolutions, bring changes to the Bylaws and conduct other business that will help and improve our federation. All NARFE members are welcome to attend and our chapter as a member of the Tennessee Federation and is entitled to 6 voting delegates. The Convention this year will be in Nashville at Radisson Hotel near the Opryland Resort. Dates are Monday April 18th and Tuesday April 19th. The Donelson Area Chapter is hosting it this year and they always have done a great job. There will be other interesting things to see and do nearby the Convention site.

Myself and Reba plan on attending, but I would encourage anyone interested in going as well. To go, contact me for details, there is a Delegate Form and a Registration Form that we need to process. You can also find more information online at this address.

http://narfetn.org/convention_news.html

Print Copy

For those receiving this Newsletter in the mail, the quality of the print is not as good as usual, the printer that I use is wearing out it seems and not doing a very good job. Sorry about that.

Thanks to everyone who has renewed recently!

NARFE IS ON THE WEB

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