



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

Chapter 1956 Newsletter

July 2013

Notes From The Chapter President

Well, Summer has come and the daily temps are rising. Remember those days when we did not have air conditioned homes and cars? I know that we all get busy during the summer months, but I hope you save some time to get out to a NARFE meeting and keep your phone calls and emails going to our elected officials in Washington DC. Remember, unless they hear from you, they assume you agree with what they are doing. So it is important that you stay informed and speak out.

For those who attended our picnic last month, I hope you enjoyed it, I did hear a lot of positive comments. Thanks to Ozzie and Myrna who made phone calls to invite members to attend, and to all who brought food items, etc. Everything that I tried looked and tasted great. We had 22 of our members and friends this year. The weather cooperated and I think everyone enjoyed to time, fellowship and food. There were a few who even played a simple game called Apples to Apples.

I know some could not make it because of other things going on, and some work on Saturdays, but we try to make these social events workable for most everyone. We are always open to suggestions to make them better and more enjoyable to all.

Finally, my old computer died that I have been using for many years. So I had to replace it and restore all my programs and files. That was a huge job. So does this newsletter look any better? :-)

August Meet Your Congressman Month

As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, the Wilson County NARFE chapter is asking that we have a joint meeting in August with our District 6 U S Representative, Diane Black. There are several NARFE chapters in District 6 and it would be good for as many of us members to meet with her and just let her know our thoughts on the issues before Congress, and to hear from her about these same issues.

The details have not been worked out yet as to where and when such a meeting would take place. It may be at one of her local offices or some other location. I would like your support on this, we will discuss at the next meeting. **Think about taking part.**

Next Upcoming Meeting

We did not have a regular meeting last month, but we will for July. This month's meeting will be on the 16th. The scheduled speaker will be Maxine Frazier from the Cookeville Senior Center.

Remember that our normal meeting time is on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at Shoney's Restaurant, 880 S Jefferson Ave. in Cookeville. Our business meeting begins promptly at 6:45pm, but you should arrive by 6:00pm to eat and fellowship with our fellow members.

Legislative News

Have you looked at the July issue of the NARFE magazine? It is chocked full of legislative news and you would do well to take note. You may want to keep this issue so that you can refer back to it later. But look the articles about hearings on the Chained CPI and COLAs, Tips on Town Hall meetings, Bill to Dismantle FEHBP (that is our health insurance), NARFE Bill Tracker and especially the article on Put Pen to Paper And Defend Your Benefits. That gives us a very concise message that we can send to our members of Congress. If you are going to mail the letter, all you need is the name of the Senator or Representative and the blanket addresses as listed in the article. Written letters are good if you have no other option, but phone calls and emails seem to be more effective. The national office is requesting copies of any messages that you send.

Our national office is also collecting current and expired newspaper and similar coupons for a media push on the Chained CPI in September. According to NARFE, the average retired federal worker would lose \$48,000 after 25 years, so they hope to receive as many coupons to present to Congress. Start saving now to send in by Labor day, more later.

Chapter Officers

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Please share these newsletters with your spouse

Picnic Pictures

Thanks to Larry Charron who took some great and clear pictures at the picnic. One is placed here, but there a 5 in all. You can see them by [clicking here](#). And for anyone who wants a copy or a print of any or all, just let me know. I will try to accommodate.



New Dental And Vision Plans

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has announced that it will be adding more insurance carriers next year in the area of dental and vision plans. These should be available to federal employees and retirees. In looking over the list of companies, some are familiar and some are not. In the past there have been 7 dental plans, that will increase to 10 for next year. For vision plans we had 3 to choose from, that will increase to 4 for next year. You should note that while most of these are nationwide plans, some are only regional.

I am hoping that OPM will make some improvements to our Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) for this coming year. I have heard indications that they might be adding other categories such as Self plus 1 to the existing Self and Family options.

COLA Update

The latest data concerning the annual cost of living adjustments for 2014 was for the month of May. It showed that costs increased by 0.2 percent. There are still 4 more months to report, but as of May we are looking at a 1.09 percent COLA. All the monthly reports have only showed small changes so far this year. I do not expect that it will change much for the remainder of the year. You may recall that in January of this year we got a 1.7 percent increase.

Even if the Congress votes to change us to what is called the Chained CPI, it would not change this year's calculated adjustment.

Start saving those coupons that you don't need and send in to NARFE.

NARFE Perks

Summer is a busy travel time for many of us. Don't forget to take advantage of the many travel discounts available to NARFE members. You can find these listed in the magazine. And while at, check out the other member perks that are available to us that are listed in the back of each issue of the magazine.

Guide For Advocacy Without A Computer

There was an article in the June issue of the *Tennessee Federation News* written by Larry Henderson, our Federation President. I think it bears repeating here since many of you do not use computers but we still need you to be active in the work to protect our earned benefits and to speak out to Congress.. You do not need a computer to follow these steps.

1. Keep up with issues by reading NARFE magazine and correspondence and by calling the toll-free NARFE Legislative Hotline at 1-877-217-8234 (Approximately a 5 minute message that is updated each Friday when Congress is in session).
2. Call the Capital using NARFE's toll-free number 1-866-220-0044. Ask the Capital Operator to connect you to the office of your Representative or Senator.
3. Greet the staff person nicely who answers the phone. Give him/her your name and address so they know you are a constituent. Then say:
 - I am a retired/active federal employee and member of NARFE. I am calling to express my opinion on bill number, issue or topic _____ (fill in the blank).
 - As a constituent, I urge Representative/Senator (insert name) to vote for/against bill number or any legislation dealing with this issue or topic (insert bill # or topic).
 - Add any pertinent personal information, if any, such as rational for your opinion or the bill, issue or topic would affect you.
 - Then say, please share this information with Representative/Senator (insert name).

It is as easy as that, You can make a difference. It would be good to either keep this wording or that in the Tennessee Federation Newsletter handy and use it on a regular basis. Remember the key is too keep up and be aware of what issues and bills that Congress is working on and the way to do that is as stated in section 1 above. Thanks for all you will do for all NARFE members, but retired and working.

NARFE IS ON THE WEB

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