



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

Chapter 1956 Newsletter

January 2014

Happy New Year! 2014

Notes From The Chapter President

Just a few notes about our Christmas Luncheon last month. We had 19 in attendance which was down a few from what we have had in recent years. I think everyone enjoyed the luncheon. The location was the same place as last year but it was under new ownership and new management from last year.

If you would like to continue these social events, I would like to have more of our members attend. Normally we have 2 per year, the summer picnic and the Christmas luncheon. Please share your comments and let me know of your future interests, either at any monthly meeting or by contacting me by phone or email.

Officer Election And Other Next Meeting Notes

We did not have a formal search for officers this year or the normal election in November. I am willing to continue as the chapter president for another year. Betty Robinson has asked to step down, and Larry Harkleroad has expressed he is willing to accept the vice-president position. Thanks to Reba Collins and Myrna Estes for staying on as secretary and treasurer for another year. I appreciate the help I have had from the other officers over the past years.

In order to make these positions official, we will elect them at this month's meeting. Please come and show your support for your chapter officers. As you all know, we cannot have a chapter if we do not have people to fill the officer positions.

Our speaker for this month will be Pam Ealey with Habitat for Humanity. Come and hear from her. We are soliciting your suggestions for future speakers. We have had some very good ones over the years, many of which were as a result of your suggestions. Be thinking of some and bring those ideas to this meeting (or any meeting).

The date of this month's meeting is January 21st. Mark the 3rd Tuesday each month on your calendars. We meet at Shoney's in Cookeville at 6pm. Come as early as possible to get served in time.

Please share these newsletters with your spouse

Free 6 Month Membership Offer

This is an update on this special offer that NARFE recently held. While I do not have all the information on how well it did, I think this was a very positive thing for our association. In our chapter, we gained 2 new members, in Tennessee, there were more than 80 new members and while I do not have the number nationwide, I am sure there were several hundred. Hopefully, most, if not all will continue on with us after the free 6 month trial period.

2 Conventions This Year

This year there will be 2 NARFE conventions that you can attend. The first is the State Federation Convention which is held every year in April. This year it will be the 58th Annual Convention and will be hosted by the Nashville NARFE chapter #227 and will be held at the Drury Plaza Hotel in the Cool Springs area of Franklin TN. The dates of this convention will be April 21-22, 2014. That is a Monday and Tuesday. At the state convention, we elect the State Officers for the coming year and consider any resolutions or bylaw changes that might come up as business. Our chapter can send up to 5 delegates but all members are invited to attend. Registration is required and the chapter must approve the delegates. I hope you will make plans to attend. I will supply the forms needed for anyone interested in going.

The National NARFE Convention which is a bi-annual convention will take place this year as well. The will be the 33rd Biennial Convention and will be held in Orlando Florida. The dates of this convention will be August 24-28, 2014. At this convention, we elect the National Officers and consider resolutions and bylaw changes that come before the convention. There will be lots of information in the NARFE magazines about this and I will have more to say as well.

Chapter Officers

President
Vice-President
Secretary
Treasurer

Ronnie Collins
Betty Robinson
Reba Collins
Myrna Estes

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Dues Withholding: A Win/Win Program

Dues Withholding is a program that allows federal retirees to have their NARFE dues withheld from their federal annuity on a monthly basis AND save. It provides a convenient, discounted payment plan for our retired members, spouses of retired members and survivor annuitants. It also helps NARFE keep down administrative costs while boosting retention. Dues Withholding applications are included with the renewal notices mailed to every retired member I can also provide you with a form to switch to Dues Withholding at any time.

First of all the NARFE member wins with Dues Withholdings. There are many members who want to remain members, but forget to send in their renewal check each year. We all are very busy and sometimes the renewal notice gets set aside and not acted upon. Many of our members go into a lapsed status and later are reinstated, which is some indication that they meant to renew but for some reason failed to on time. Dues Withholding prevents this from happening, Your dues are conveniently deducted from the annuity payments and you never receive a Dues Notice The fact that the dues is spread out over 12 monthly installments is also beneficial to many members. Members on Dues Withholding save 15 percent on the National Dues amount. Who wouldn't like that?

Dues Withholding is also a Win for our association and our chapter. It saves NARFE the costs of processing renewal notices and for those who lapse, reinstatement mailings. It keeps our current membership base strong and stable. Nationally, 27 percent of qualified members participate in Dues Withholding. For our chapter, we have 35 percent of qualified members taking part.

I would like to see an increased number of you take advantage of this time and money savings program. For our chapter, the amount that comes out of your annuity check is just \$3.75 per month. And if you and your spouse are both members, the cost of both memberships can be deducted. The only members who cannot use Dues Withholding are Life Members and Active Federal Employees.

For those of you who receive this newsletter by postal mail, and eligible for this program, you will find a brochure about the Dues Withholding program which includes the form you can use to sign up. For those of you who receive this by email, you can [click on this link](#) and get a copy of the same brochure and application form. Sign up today and help yourself, our National office and our chapter. Thanks.

Plan now to attend as many monthly meetings as you can in this year of 2014. Your support is needed.

Legislative News

The recent budget deal reached between in Congress and signed by the President includes among other items, a 1.3 percent increase in retirement contributions for new hires. New federal employees hired after January 1, 2014 will contribute 4.4 percent of their salary towards retirement, with no increase in benefit. Also there was a provision to add the "self plus one" option to the Federal Employees Health Benefit Plans. OPM will establish a timeline for the new option to come available, but it could be as early as the 2014 open season. As a result of this budget agreement, there should not be any federal furloughs in 2014 and 2015.

The agreement to re-open the government in October 2013 included suspending the debt ceiling until February 7, 2014. The Treasury Department has methods in place that could extend the next debt ceiling increase beyond that date, but another fight to raise this ceiling will come by March.

The Senate bill S. 1486, the Postal Reform Act of 2013 is currently stalled in committee, but expected to be marked-up this month. NARFE is on record of strongly opposing this bill as it would negatively impact **all** FEHBP participants, as well as employees receiving workers' compensation.

One Congressman has expressed interest in introducing a larger FEHBP reform bill, but details have not been released publicly.

Go to the NARFE website for more legislative news and to respond to Legislative Action Alerts that are posted on the website. NARFE needs you to support its legislative goals.

Postal Rates To Increase

Effective January 26, 2014 it will cost 49 cents to purchase a First Class stamp. Up until that date you can purchase the Forever series stamps at 46 cents and they can continue to used forever. If you do much mailing, you may want to buy up some stamps before the rate increase. This is highest increase in the First Class rate in a few years, recent years the rate has gone up 1 cent at a time. There will also be a 1 cent increase in the Postcard rate, making it cost 34 cents to mail a postcard.

This is expected to generate \$2 billion in new revenue for the U.S. Postal Service and help improve its financial situation.

2014 is an election year, support NARFE-PAC to help elect candidates that support our NARFE!

NARFE IS ON THE WEB

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