

Monthly Notes

The month of June has arrived which means there will be longer days and still warmer temps. Summer will arrive on the 21st of this month. If anyone has any trips planned, be sure to take care and have safe travels.

I have not heard much this past month from the Tennessee Federation. Some of the officers are talking about making chapter visits to encourage them to keep going. NARFE depends on chapters and its members to remain strong.

Remember now that chapter membership is optional. When you get the renewal notice, you need to indicate that you want to renew both the national and chapter portions of your membership. Thanks for your cooperation in this.

The next federation newsletter will be sent out in July, so keep an eye open for that.

The Latest Chapter Financial Report .

April beginning balance—\$1619.96
Dues received —\$30.00

Disbursements—none
April ending balance—\$1649.96

Latest NARFE Webinar

- **Mid-Career Reality Check: Golden Handcuffs or a Move to the Private Sector?**
- **The Finale Countdown to Retirement: Smoothing the Transaction**

Presented on the NARFE website.

FLTCIP Premiums Going Up

OPM renewed the contract with the John Hancock Company who manages the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program. And it seems that every time this happens, it includes a rate increase in premiums.

Per the extended contract, most enrollees should expect to face a premium increase effective January 1, 2024. In September 2023, each enrollee will be offered personalized options that will include accepting the premium rate increase to maintain current coverage or to reduce coverage to reduce the impact of any increase. OPM indicated that premium increases would be phased in over three years for some options.

It was not reported how much the rate increase would be. In 2016 some enrollees saw a 126% increase and in 2009 it was as high as 25%.

COLA Watch for 2024

Another month of reporting the Consumer Price Index CPI-W. Now for 4 months in a roll, the reports indicate a increase in consumer prices. There are 5 more months of reports that determine any adjustments in annuity for next year.

As of the latest report, the index stands at an increase of 2.00 percent towards next year's adjustment.

Month	Month % Change	% Toward 2024
October 2022	+0.40	+0.38
November 2022	-0.17	+0.20
December 2022	-0.49	-0.29
January 2023	+0.90	+0.57
February 2023	+0.50	+1.10
March 2023	+0.33	+1.40
April 2023	+0.58	+2.00

Change in Newsletter Format

Last month I made a change in the format of the newsletter sent out by email. I trust that no one had any trouble reading it. If so, be sure to let me know.

Worth Reading—NARFE Urges OPM to Reevaluate Verification of Life Process for Annuitants.

In the June/July issue of the NARFE magazine is this article on page 12. You may be interested in reading this. Apparently there have some issues with the process.

Monthly Reports

For the month of May, we had 3 members renewed by annual renewal and 2 members renewed by dues withholding. I am always pleased by our loyal members renewing year by year. If anyone would like information on dues withholding, let me know.

Chapter Officers

President & Newsletter Editor	Ronnie Collins
Vice President	Vacant
Secretary	Reba Collins
Treasurer	Myrna Estes

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When you get your renewal notice, be sure to renew both your National and Chapter Dues.

Ways to Contact OPM

Sometimes you want to contact OPM about a question or issue, but that is not always easy. You can try calling their phone number, 888-767-6738 but there is long wait times. The call center is open Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays) from 7:40 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. The best time to call is before 10:30 or after 1:30.

Other ways is to use a computer and go to here: www.opm.gov/support/retirement. From there you can create an online account with Retirement Services Online. There are many things this will allow you to do, such as:

- Get your monthly annuity payment statement
- Get your annual summary of payment
- Verify life insurance enrollment (FEGLI)
- Get your 1099-R tax form
- Change your federal and state income tax withholdings
- View or print your retirement card
- Check your interim retirement pay status
- Start or change direct deposit
- Start or change a checking or savings account allotment
- Start or change allotment to an organization
- Request a copy of your annuity booklet
- Update your profile and contact information
- Change your mailing address

You can also email them at retire@opm.gov.

Legislative Report

Social Security On April 26, the House Subcommittee on Social Security held a hearing on Social Security's history and finances. Prior to the hearing, NARFE National President William "Bill" Shackelford submitted a statement for the record, detailing the arbitrary origins of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and calling on the committee to advance legislation to repeal or reform the penalties.

Shackelford cited the vast support for the Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82, in the previous Congress and chided the Ways and Means committee for failing to advance legislation in the 117th Congress. His statement concluded by calling on the Ways and Means committee to advance legislation in the 118th Congress and highlighted that the Social Security Fairness Act of 2023 is the second most cosponsored bill in all of Congress.

Witnesses for the hearing included Barry Huston, an analyst with the Congressional Research Service, Stephen Goss, the Chief Actuary of the Social Security Administration, and Dr. Phillip Swagel, Director of the Congressional Budget Office. Lawmakers and witnesses discussed the long-term finances of Social Security, the underlying economic and social condi-

tions affecting the program, and the expected exhaustion date of the Social Security Trust Fund. While the focus of the hearing wasn't specific to legislation intended to shore up Social Security, legislators on both sides discussed policy proposals to increase the longevity of the program. However, significant disagreement over the future of Social Security and what to do was evident between lawmakers.

During the hearing, Rep. Mike Carey, R-OH, asked the witnesses about the WEP and GPO, wanting to learn more about when the penalties were instituted, how they work, why they were set in place and the congressional intent behind them. Rep. Carey, a freshmen lawmaker, mentioned that he hears often from his constituents about the WEP and GPO, a testament to NARFE's grassroots advocacy and all those working to repeal the penalties. NARFE encourages its members to continue to contact their lawmakers asking them to cosponsor The Social Security Fairness Act of 2023, H.R. 82/S. 597. Support for legislation to repeal the WEP and GPO is growing at a fast pace, with 250 Representatives and 40 Senators cosponsoring H.R. 82/S.597.

Government Debt Ceiling Talks There has been a lot of recent news about Congress and the President reaching a deal to raise the government spending limit. As I write this a deal has been reached and signed. The details allowing for the increase was the hangup, some wanted more in the way of reduced government spending and some wanted no cuts at all. That is why it took so long to come to an agreement.

There are some who claim if the deadline came without an agreement, then citizens would not receive Social Security payments, Federal annuity payments, and Medicare payments. That is for the most just a scare tactic. The government never runs out of money. Money comes in every day from many sources. There is always money available to make these payments and more. This will come up again every so often, so don't believe these reports and rest assured that no one will not receive the needed payments.

Here are ways to contact your Representative: Go online at narfe.org to **Advocacy** and then **Take Action**. That will get you to the Legislative Action Center where you can see the list of bills, read about them and send an email. OR call them using this phone number 800-456-8410 and select option 5.

On the Light Side

A man tells his doctor, "Doc, help me. I'm addicted to Twitter!" The doctor replies, "Sorry, I don't follow you,,,"

HaHa

NARFE IS ON THE WEB

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