

November 2008



Message from the SC Federation President

Last month I gave you a brief recap of the National Convention. This month's NARFE Magazine had great Convention coverage, along with many pictures. It was a distinct privilege to represent you in Louisville at what has been described as one of the best and most efficient National Convention in many years.

Chapter meetings are in full swing, and I plan to visit Sumter and Myrtle Beach this month. November is also election month in our Chapters, with slates of Officers being formulated and presented to the membership of each Chapter. In support of this crucial activity, I would like to point out how important it is for our members to step up to serve in positions of leadership in our Chapters. Accepting responsibility for the progress of one's Chapter by being a Chapter Officer is essential to the

maintaining and growing the NARFE influence. We have all heard the stories about attending a Chapter meeting, and leaving as the new President. In fact, establishing Chapter leadership is a direct result of recognizing talent, mentoring candidates and supporting those who agree to serve. If approached, please consider your potential contributions in light of those who have gone before you in promoting NARFE now and the future.

In the legislative arena, the "Meet the Candidates Month" actually extended to election day. Bill Nichol, our Federation Legislative Chair and Past Federation President, rendered a final report recently which reflected a very successful outreach to incumbents and candidates. This effort was directly attributable to the Chapters meeting with our Legislators and staffers at the grassroots level. Thanks to all who helped in setting the example for what should continue annually as we make sure that NARFE appears on the legislative radar screen.

As I write this, we should know the election results early this coming week. Our NARFE members have an excellent reputation for getting out the vote--a point we always make with our Legislative delegation. And now, we will learn what new challenges lay ahead as our Nation's Leaders seek bill payers to fund programs to support revitalizing the economy and cut funding that may potentially include those programs that directly affect us. At the State level, we also need to be alert for impacts of the proposed \$488 Million in budget cuts, that we already know about. In short, these are challenging times in which we live to quote an old expression. Your membership in NARFE gives you the voice in sufficient strength to protect your hard-won benefits.

Thanks for your continued support and all that you do for NARFE.

Best regards.

John Geiger,
President, South Carolina Federation of NARFE Chapters

CONTENTS:

Note from The President . . .	1
Note of Thanks	2
Sad News	2
2009 COLA Announced . . .	2
Note on NARFE Website . . .	3
NARFE PAC Report Reg III	3
NARFE PAC Chapters	3
Health Benefits Open Season	4
FEEA Needs Help	4
FEEA Form	5
Columbia Chapter Leg. . . .	5
National Election SC results	5
Upcoming Events	6
Federation Officers contacts	6
Newsletter Contact & Info . .	6

NOTE from John:

- Big 3: **Relevancy, Membership** (new Recruits and retention of our membership) and **Legislative...**
 - Be on the alert for impacts from the proposed \$488 Million Budget Cuts at the State level...
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NOTE OF THANKS:

(From Esther Crandall - Past Federation President)

Thanks so much to my many friends and chapters who have sent cards, called, and included me in their prayers. I appreciate this more than you know.

After my third chemo treatment, the malignant nodes had shrunk by half. I had a fourth chemo, then started a maintenance treatment program every three weeks. This one only takes one hour instead of the five for chemo, so it's a breeze. I'll have another CT Scan later to be sure the nodes aren't growing again.

I'm feeling fine. I have a few annoyances as a result of the chemo, but I'm hoping they will go away with the less toxic treatment. I still get tired easily, but that could be attributed to age. I have been very blessed during this ordeal, and I thank each and every one of you for being with me in thought and prayer.

God bless you,
Esther Crandall

SAD NEWS FROM CHAPTER 1082 - Summerville

(From Barbara Bryan, President Chapter 1082)

On September 5, 2008, Chapter #1082 (Summerville) lost one of its most active and respected members, Narvie ("Speedy") L. Bilbray, Sr. Narvie joined NARFE in 1988, served as Chapter President from 1991 through 1992 and as Legislative Officer for many terms. In 1997 he became the only Chapter President from #1082 elected to serve as Federation President. Narvie Lee Bilbray, Sr, was a Retired Navy Chief Petty Officer, He was born in April 1922 in Baghdad, Florida, and was a graduate of Charleston Southern University. He retired from the Polaris Missile Facility, Atlantic and the United States Navy. He was a member and past Worshipful Master of Franklin Lodge #96 of Charleston, SC. He was a life member and past Commander of American Legion Post #21 of Summerville, SC. He was a life member and past State President of The National Association of Retired Federal Employees. He was also a member of Voyager 1488. Narvie Bilbray will be missed!

COLA FOR 2009 ANNOUNCED

(National NARFE Headquarters)

The next cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for millions of retired and disabled Americans will be 5.8 percent, the largest since March, 1982. Social Security beneficiaries, as well as most civil service annuitants, foreign service and military retirees will be among those receiving the adjustment in their January 2009 benefit payments. Thus long retired annuitant covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) will receive a 5.8 percent COLA. However, Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) annuitants age 62 and over, as well as FERS survivors and disability retirees, will receive a full Social Security COLA, but the adjustment in their FERS annuity will be 4.8 percent. This is due to the fact that the FERS COLA formula differs from that used for CSRS retirees whose federal service did not earn them Social Security coverage. While the 5.8 percent CSRS COLA is designed to maintain retirees' purchasing power, it will serve as a tempting target to some lawmakers next year as they try to cut federal spending.

On October 16th, the Labor Department's BLS (www.bls.gov/cpi or 202/691-6994) announced the September 2008 Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) is 214.935. This index reflects a decrease of 0.1 percent from the August index of 215.247. Since

1984, the annual federal retirement cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is based on the percentage difference between the third quarter average index readings in two consecutive years. The next CSRS COLA of 5.8 percent reflects the percentage difference between last year's third quarter average base index of 203.6 and this year's 2008 third quarter average index of 215.5, computed by averaging July's 216.304, August's 215.247, and September's 214.935 index readings.

The most recently retired federal employees will receive lesser inflation adjustments, as their first COLA is pro-rated to cover only the months of the year during which they were actually retired. The COLA -- an annuity adjustment, not a pay raise -- will be effective December 1, 2008 and reflected in January 2009 retirement payments. Last year's CSRS COLA was 2.3 percent. The Bureau of Labor Statistics will release October consumer price indices on Wednesday, November 19th.

Annual COLAs paid to federal workers forced out of the labor market by work-related injuries or illnesses, who receive monthly benefits under provisions of the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA), reflect the percentage change in the CPI-W during each calendar year. As of September, the index of 214.935 is 4.5 percent higher than the December 2007 index of 205.7. The December 2008 inflation data needed to determine next year's FECA adjustment will be reported on Friday, January 16, 2009.

NOTE ON NARFE NATIONAL WEBSITE

(From NARFE National Headquarters)

We have received some feedback on the new NARFE National Web site. <http://www.narfe.org/home/>

Based on some of the comments, we would like to alert you to the location of certain links, as follows:

- Links to Membership Renewal, Join GEMS, Update Your Record, etc., are located on the Members Home Page in the left panel under What You Can Do Online.
- Links to Forms are located on the NARFE Leadership Home Page.

Here are a few of the links that are on the National NARFE Website:

- Membership renewal: https://www.narfe.org/departments/isi/renew_membership.asp
- Join GEMS: https://www.narfe.org/departments/isi/join_gems.asp

NARFE PAC 2007-2008 Seventh Quarter Report

(By NARFE PAC Chair - Neil

ST. Number	Amount	Average
AL 6506	\$14,299.00	\$22.00
FL 2573	\$58,493.45	\$22.73
GA 1063	\$23,759.00	\$22.35
MS 296	\$7,042.00	\$23.79
PR 133	\$2,583.00	\$19.42
SC 465	\$10,643.00	\$22.89
TOT. 5,180	\$116,819.45	\$22.55

NARFE - PAC Contributions by SC Chapter Period: 01/01/2007 to 9/30/2008

Location	Chapter#	Contributors	Amount
NORTH CHARLESTON SC	0072	56	\$1,105.00
COLUMBIA SC	0087	63	\$1,342.00
GREENVILLE SC	0121	28	\$535.00
SPARTANBURG SC	0560	37	\$1,045.00
NEWBERRY SC	0772	3	\$50.00
ANDERSON SC	0825	6	\$220.00
GREENWOOD SC	0920	10	\$205.00
AIKEN SC	0934	27	\$655.00
FLORENCE SC	0960	20	\$435.00

CHARLESTON SC	1013	39	\$975.00
MYRTLE BEACH SC	1015	34	\$890.00
BEAUFORT SC	1021	14	\$310.00
CLEMSON SC	1079	14	\$295.00
SUMMERVILLE SC	1082	29	\$661.00
ORANGEBURG SC	1170	7	\$175.00
ROCK HILL SC	1180	21	\$460.00
WALTERBORO SC	1185	8	\$170.00
SUMTER SC	1786	11	\$225.00
PAWLEYS ISLAND SC	1958	9	\$175.00
HILTON HEAD SC	2258	23	\$595.00
CAMDEN SC	2319	6	\$120.00
State of: SC		465	\$10,643.00

2009 Federal Benefits (FEHBP) Open Season (New Premium Rates, Plan Brochures and Comparisons)

(By www.MyFederalRetirement.com.)

The 2009 Federal Benefits (FEHBP) Open Season (for the 2009 plan year) begins on Monday, November 10, 2008, and runs through Monday, December 8, 2008.

Choose a Plan & Enroll - View FEHBP Plan Brochures

View a list of all plans available in your state, as well as links to the plan brochures, changes for each plan from the previous year, information on plan patient safety programs, and links to the plan provider directories. Go here:

<http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/planinfo/index.asp>

Search and Compare FEHBP Plans Online

To find plans by location, plan name or by plan code, go here:

<http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/search/plansearch.aspx>

2009 FEHBP Premium Rates: In addition to the biweekly and monthly premiums, you can also find the total premiums, the amount the government pays, and the change in your portion of the premium compared to last year. Note: Non-U.S. Postal Rates apply to enrollees who are not employed by the U.S. Postal Service. U.S. Postal Rates apply to enrollees who are employed by the U.S. Postal Service.

<http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/rates/index.asp>

FEEA NEEDS HELP:

(Margaret Baptiste, National President)

FEEA has received a great many requests from NARFE members due to Hurricanes Gustav and Ike and more still have to be processed. They are also expecting requests due to the current fires in Southern California. I would ask NARFE members if they can, to respond to this appeal.

A coupon can be found below for mailing your donations to our members in need of help. Send your contributions to FEEA, 3333 S. Wadsworth Blvd, Suite 300, Lakewood, CO 80227.

Thanks,
Margaret

NARFE-FEEA

PROGRAM FUND CONTRIBUTION FORM

YES! I would like to help with my contribution.

Please check appropriate box(es); to make credit-card contributions, call 1-800-323-4140. Scholarships are available to children and grandchildren of federal civilian retirees and current federal employees who are NARFE members.

☐ NARFE-FEEA Disaster Fund Amount \$ _____
☐ NARFE-FEEA Scholarship Fund Amount \$ _____
Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

**YOUR CHARITABLE
CONTRIBUTION IS TAX
DEDUCTIBLE TO THE FULLEST
EXTENT ALLOWED BY LAW.**

**Make check payable to:
NARFE-FEEA Disaster Fund or
NARFE-FEEA Scholarship Fund
Please mail coupon
and check to:**

FEEA

8441 W. Bowles Ave., Suite 200
Littleton, CO 80123-3245

COLUMBIA CONTINUES TO MET WITH LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVES

(By Paul Donahue, Columbia Chapter 87)

As part of NARFE'S "Meet Your Candidates Month" program, several members of NARFE Chapter #87 met with Congressman Joe Wilson, Second District of South Carolina, on October 24th in Columbia, South SC.

In attendance, per attached photos, were: Paul Donahue, SCNARFE Federation Web Coordinator; Carl Caughman, Public Relations Chair; W.K. "Chub" Jordan, Sgt. @ Arms; Linda Toney; William Toney, Legislative Chair and group spokesperson; Cong. Joe Wilson; Betty Wessinger, SCNARFE Federation Alzheimer's Chair; Hugh Wessinger, Executive Committee; Tom Daniels, Treasurer; Ernest J. Williams, Jr., SCNARFE Federation District 2 Field Officer. In addition to a most cordial reception by staff members; matters that were mutually discussed with Congressman Wilson concerned Entitlement Reform (COLA), Health Care (Premium Conversion) and Social Security (WEP, GPO).

(Editors note: Joe Wilson, {R}, District 2

Congressional Representative won his seat for another 2-year term.)

NATIONAL ELECTION NOVEMBER 4, 2008 - SC Results

All six Congressmen and the one Senator that were up for reelection in South Carolina were reelected by the voters of this state. Here are the people that will represent us in the Legislative Branch for at



L to R. Paul Donahue, Federation Web Coordinator; Carl Caughman, Pub.Rel. Chair; W.K. "Chub" Jordan; Linda Toney; William Toney, Leg. Chair; Cong. Joe Wilson; Betty Wessinger, Federation Alzheimer's Chair; Hugh Wessinger, Exec. Comm; Tom Daniels, Treas.; Ernest J. Williams, Jr., DFO-2

least the next two years:

U.S. Senate:

Reelected - Lindsay Graham (Rep) *

U.S. House or Representative:

District 1 - Henry Brown (Rep)

District 2 - Joe Wilson (Rep)

District 3 - Gresham Barrett (Rep)

District 4 - Bob Inglis (Rep)

District 5 - John Spratt (Dem) *

District 6 - Jim Clyburn (Dem) *

* Recipients of NARFE PAC Funds in this election cycle.

In addition, Jim DeMint, (Rep) will continue as our other Senator from South Carolina.

NARFE PAC Funds in 2007-2008 were distributed as follows:

1. Congressman Spratt, \$2,000 for the 2008 Primary (March 2007), and \$2,000 for the 2008 General election. (September 2008).
2. Congressman Clyburn, \$1,000 for the 2008 Primary. (June 2007) and \$1,000 for the 2008 General Election. (September 2008).
3. Senator Graham, \$2,000 for the 2008 General Election. (June 2008).

UPCOMING NARFE EVENTS- Mark Your Calendar

SC Federation Executive Meeting - 10:30 am. - Columbia, SC - Monday January 12, 2009

SC Federation State Convention - Beaufort, SC (Holiday Inn) - April 22-24, 2009

NATIONAL NARFE Convention - Grand Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids, MI in 2010

NATIONAL NARFE Convention - Nugget Hotel, Sparks, NV in 2012

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