

President's Message

Joseph Arsenault

Welcome to February. So far we have had a very interesting start to the year. It appears we are currently in the 4th coldest winter since records have been kept, and we just experienced the 5th highest snowfall in that same period. And I thought getting out of New England would put this type of weather behind me. Oh well, I was wrong.

There are a couple of "brighter" notes to pass along. First would be the idea sent down from the SC Federation, that they would reimburse \$50.00 of the registration fee to any chapter member who attends the annual convention in Summerville this March. The dates are March 17-19. This offer is in addition to the previously announced "Grant Program" whereby 3-chapter 1015 members would be reimbursed \$135.00 if they met the qualifying factors.

On January 31, our Executive Board met and voted to add to the Federation's offer a reimbursement of \$85.00 so that any attendee, above the 3 "Grant" positions would also get a total of \$135.00. Billie on Feb 1st, sent an info package on this to all of our members. Hopefully, we will get some takers.

Also, in keeping with the Convention theme, during our February and

President's Message-Continued

March Chapter meetings, we will be selling Alzheimer's 50/50 raffle tickets. This is a major fund-raising event at the convention. Tickets for this raffle are \$1.00 each, or 6 Tickets for \$5.00, or 15 Tickets for \$10.00. You do not have to be present at the convention for the drawing. What you will need to do is fill out your name and Chapter# on the back of the ticket, or it is also recommended you place an address sticker on the ticket to identify yourself. A total of 3 prizes will be awarded. Alzheimer's will receive 50% of the total raised. One person will then get 50% of the other half and 2 people will split the other half. For example:

Total Pot= \$1,000.00

Alzheimer's share: \$500.00

Winner #1 =\$250.00

Winners #2 & #3 = \$125.00

You will also see in the newsletter that guest speakers are set through April. We will need your input for May's meeting. We are looking at a possible September idea that may be finalized by the February Meeting.

Becky Hyman will run the Feb meeting as I will be away. But I hope to see everyone in March.

Chapter Speakers scheduled for Year 2025

February 13, 2025-Damon's

Thursday-11:30 am

Tom Strebeck-Horry County Museum

March 13, 2025-Damon's

Thursday-11:30 am

Carol Osborne and Kelli Barker-SALT-Senior Adventure in Learning

April 10, 2025-Damon's

Thursday-11:30 am

Betsy Morgan-Brown-Alzheimer's Association

May 8, 2025-Damon's

Thursday-11:30 am ?

Pending

September 11, 2025-Damon's

Thursday-11:30 am

Blue Star Mothers

October 9, 2025-Damon's

Thursday-11:30 am

AETNA and GEHA FEHB-Representatives

November 13, 2025-Damon's

Thursday-11:30 am

Blue Cross FEHB-Representative-Ann Usher

December 11, 2025

**Thursday-11:30 am-Holiday Party at the Sons and Daughter's Italy Lodge
#2662**

Legislative Officer
Morris Zupan
LEGISLATIVE REPORT: FEBRUARY 3, 2025

The Social Security Fairness Bill was signed into law by President Biden on January 5, 2025; however, as detailed by USA Today on January 31, there will be problems implementing the law.

Three million workers/retirees eligible for increased Social Security will have to wait a year or more to receive this benefit. These benefits are for Federal retirees who retired under the CSRS (Civil Service Retirement System) and worked additionally under Social Security. Many State and local government workers/retirees are impacted by this law.

The Social Security Administration must adjust retroactive benefits for 2024. The SSA expects that it could take more than a year to adjust the benefits and pay all retroactive benefits. The law did not provide funds to implement. The SSA has ongoing staffing shortages coupled with a hiring freeze since November 2024.

1. H.R. 492/S.134: During the week of January 13, Representative Connolly and Senator Kaine of Virginia reintroduced this Act to block the implementation of Schedule F, which would reclassify potentially tens of thousands of Federal positions into a new service category WITHOUT COMPETITIVE PROTECTIONS.

2. NARFE President Shackelford's response to the executive order that reinstated Schedule F: "Congress can stop this executive action in its tracks by passing the Saving the Civil Service Act. H.R. 492/S.134 and I urge them to do so."

3. President Shackelford's statement on the hiring freeze: The size of the Federal workforce has decreased slightly over the last five decades, while the US population and labor force has increased substantially. Yet, the hiring freeze relies on an incorrect and unsubstantiated notion that the Federal workforce is inflated. The hiring freeze will only further disrupt critical operations hampered by

inefficient hiring processes recognized via the executive order on reforming the hiring process (Implementation of the Social Security Fairness Law will be negatively impacted by the hiring freeze).

4. H.R. 491: The equal COLA Act which calls for equal COLAs for Retirees under FERS as retirees under the CSRS; the Act was reintroduced by Senator Kaine (D-VA) on January 16, 2025.

Sunshine/Membership

Lynn Vos

Happy Birthdays-February

**Bruce Lake, Dene Nichols,
Richard Palmer, and Claudia
Shook**

Notable February Dates

2 - Groundhog Day

9 - Super Bowl

**12 - Abraham Lincoln born
1809**

14 - Valentines' Day

17 - President's Day

**22 - George Washington
born 1732**

Newsletter Editor

Billie Nichols

**Chapter Membership as of
February 4, 2025=107**

**Total National members in
Chapter area=151**

**Total Chapter plus National
Members=258**

**Our next Chapter Meeting is
Thursday 11:30 am February
13th at Damon's Grill located
at 2985 S. Ocean Blvd, Myrtle
Beach, SC**

**Our feature speaker for the
month of February is:**

**Tom Strebeck-Horry County
Museum**

Cathy Linta-Leader Secretary

VACANT POSITIONS

We have several vacant positions including the Service Officer, Alzheimer's Chair, Audit Committee, NARFE-PAC Chair, and 50/50 Committee. A summary of the responsibilities of each follows. Contact an officer if you are interested and/or need additional information.

Service Officer – Provides members information, answers questions, and offers guidance in navigating issues relating to federal pay and benefits such as the procedures governing delivery of annuity checks, life insurance and health benefits, survivor benefits, change-of-beneficiary procedures, death benefits, state and federal income taxes, and Social Security requirements. (Service Officer Guide, FH-10, is available at Headquarters.)

Alzheimer's Chair – On a monthly basis, receive contributions from Chapter members and forward any monies to the Federation Coordinator; write an article for the Chapter newsletter. Oversee the Alzheimer's bank account. During meetings, provide monthly financial reports and give a brief report on any new Alzheimer's news releases. Schedule an Alzheimer's speaker/program for the November chapter meeting. Participate in and plan fundraising events including the annual Walk to End Alzheimer's.

Audit – Perform fiscal-year audits of the Chapter Treasurer's and Alzheimer's Chair records and funds. Furnish report to the President and Executive Committee and inform members of findings. If an audit discloses any discrepancy, the Executive Committee determines the cause and corrections. Forward said report to the Federation and Regional Vice President. At least two members are needed.

NARFE-PAC - Promote our Association's political action committee by educating members on its importance, soliciting member contributions, and assisting Federation NARFE-PAC Coordinators in providing state recommendations for contributing NARFE-PAC funds to candidates in our district.

50/50 – Before the start of the Chapter meeting, sell 50/50 tickets to members. Tally the total monies received, have members pick two tickets and distribute 50% of the collection to the Chapter and the remaining 50% to two members. Document monies received and gave the Treasurer the Chapter's portion. At least two members are needed.



Know your number.

- **Have your blood pressure checked? It is easy, quick, and painless.**
- **Your blood pressure should be checked by your healthcare provider at least once each year.**
- **If you have high blood pressure, it should be checked more often. You can have your blood pressure checked at your doctor's office, your neighborhood clinic, health fairs at your church, or some shopping malls.**

Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against your blood vessels. Your blood pressure is at its greatest when your heart contracts and is pumping blood. This is systolic blood pressure. When your heart rests between beats, your blood pressure falls. This is called diastolic blood pressure. Blood pressure is always given as these two numbers: the systolic and diastolic pressures. The numbers are usually written one above or before the other, with systolic first, for example, 120/80.

Is high blood pressure a big deal?

YES! When your blood pressure is high, your heart has to work harder than it should to pump blood to all parts of the body. High blood pressure is called the "silent killer" because most people feel healthy and do not even know that they have it. If it is not treated, high blood pressure can cause:

- **stroke**
- **heart attack**
- **kidney problems**
- **eye problems**
- **death**
- **Prevent high blood pressure and aim for a healthy weight.**
- **Choose foods lower in fat and calories.**
- **Eat smaller portions.**
- **Try not to gain extra weight. Lose weight if you are overweight. Try losing weight slowly, about 1/2 to 1 pound each week until you reach a healthy weight.**
- **Be physically active every day.**