



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

Chapter 1956 Newsletter

April 2009

Last Meeting

Thanks to all those who attended the last meeting, it is always good to see and talk to you, our members and friends. We were glad to welcome new member Jerry Kelsey and his wife as first time attendees.

The speaker last time was Debbie Handson, director of Helping Hands of Putnam Co. This organization works to help families with food, utility bills, rent and medical items. They began in this area in 1975 and help thousands of families each year. Funding comes from churches, organizations, individuals, local governments and through the utility companies Project Help and similar programs. While they can seldom pay the entire amount requested, they do not turn people away without helping all they can. They can always use more funding, especially now with many people out of work. More information can be obtained by calling 931-526-3838 or going by their location at 39 Fleming St. in Cookeville. We have a link to their website on our chapter website.



In March we place an emphasis on NARFE-PAC. Thanks to each one who contributed at the meeting. If anyone else would like to support this effort, you can either send a check to me or use the form in the NARFE Magazine to send it in directly. Please indicate your member ID on your check so that our chapter gets credit for your contribution. For amounts of \$20 or more, you will receive the current PAC pin.

No Meeting In April

Due to the fact that the NARFE Tennessee Federation Convention is April 20th. and 21st., there will be no regular chapter meeting in April. Your president and secretary will be away and representing you at the convention. Our next chapter meeting will be on May 19th. I will give a complete report of the Convention then and in next months Newsletter.

Help us recruit new members. Do you know of federal workers or retirees? Give us their names and how to contact them. We need them to join.

Membership News

We have no new members or member losses due to non-renewal to report this month. If your membership dues are due or if you have received a Second Notice reminder, then do take care of this immediately. Four members have recently transferred to other chapters, Chuck and Jan MacKenzie, and Bob and Gerry Hagens.

Sadly, I must report a member death, Kenneth Milligan died on March 30th. Our deepest sympathy to his wife, Mildred and to the other family members.

Alzheimer's Collections

We did not pass the Alzheimer's collection jar around at the last meeting because of NARFE-PAC but some at our meeting contributed to the Alzheimer's fund anyway, thank you. NARFE Headquarters recently announced that the total contributions from NARFE members and families have gone over the \$8 million goal that had previously been set. The new goal is set for \$9 million by the year 2011 which is the 90th. anniversary of NARFE. Together we can make this goal and more than that, reach a cure for this disease.

Legislative News

Of interest to our current employee members, legislation has been passed in the U S House to allow employees under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) to credit unused sick leave toward their retirement; and also make an improvement in the Thrift Savings Plan by automatically enrolling newly hired workers in the TSP and make them eligible for matching contributions. NARFE has long supported these two provisions which still must be acted upon in the U S Senate.

Chapter Officers

President	Ronnie Collins
Vice-President	Ellis McCowan
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Please share these newsletters with your spouse

News From Headquarters

I have received a letter from President Baptiste about a decision that the National Executive Board (NEB) has made. The letter states that National will conduct a referendum on NARFE dues. For many years there has been much effort to establish a single dues structure in order to simplify the dues process for new members. Many feel that there is too much confusion in the current dues structure and changes need to be made. This issue has been discussed and voted on at the last 2 national conventions. Each time failing to reach the required two thirds majority of the delegate vote to amend the By-laws.

Because many chapters do not send delegates or proxies to the conventions, the NEB is going to use the referendum to conduct this vote. We have been asked to make you, our members aware of this. I understand that the referendum will be mailed out in September to the chapters and each chapter will have time to send in their vote. Between now and then, news of it will be published in the NARFE Magazine. I will print below a summary of what is being proposed here in this space. If you would like to read the entire wording of the referendum and many other details, just go to the NARFE National website and you will see on the Home page a link to read more about the Referendum on NARFE Dues.

In brief, it calls for a change in the Bylaws so that new and renewing members who pay annually will be called Regular members and will pay a new dues rate of \$40 which includes chapter membership. Of that amount, \$4 will be rebated to the federation and \$9 will go to the chapter the member belongs to. For members who pay by dues withholding, the single dues rate will become \$36 with \$3.60 rebated to the federation and \$8 to the chapter. For current honorary members and National only members; they will continue as they are now.

This is very much the same dues structure that was defeated at the last convention. I sent an email message to our National President asking for additional information and making some comments on this referendum. After I and many others sent comments, National did make some improvements in the referendum. This will affect members and chapters in different ways depending on what the current chapter dues are. While this is intended to strengthen the overall recruiting and retention efforts nationwide, it will have various affects on each chapter. Currently for our chapter, we pay national dues \$29 and chapter dues of \$11 which totals \$40. So if the change is approved, we will then pay the same amount in

NARFE dues, but we would get a cut in the funds that come back to our chapter. We would receive \$9 back for each member. Those of us which pay by dues withholding, the current yearly rate will increase from \$35.60 to \$36 and the chapter would get \$8 of that.

At this point, I just wanted you to be aware of this. I am sure it will be greatly discussed in the coming months at state conventions, chapter meetings and by members through email, etc. I would welcome your comments at any time, so feel free to educate yourself and let me know what you think.

Inflation Watch

The latest information on the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) that is used to calculate our annual cost of living adjustments (COLA) shows an increase for the month of February in the amount of 0.5 percent. That was the second month in a row it has risen. But overall the index is down 4.1 percent from the beginning of this reporting year which began in October 2008 and will conclude in September 2009. The COLA that we received at the beginning of this year, 5.8 percent was the largest we have seen since 1982. Even if the index stays in negative territory we never see a reduction in our annual annuity adjustments. It seems that costs of products continually increase but the index does not always show that. We still have several more months for data to be collected before we will know what to expect next year.

Enjoy The Season

Spring is here, the temps are warmer, grass is growing, trees and flowers are blooming. Many will be planting flowers and garden plants. Now is also a good time to grow our membership. We need to constantly recruit new members, so why not take time to pass out a membership form or talk to someone about joining NARFE. Our chapter has lost many members in the past year from deaths and transferring away. We need to replace those with some new members, **Will you help?** I have forms for you.

NARFE IS ON THE WEB

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

Lots of information is available on our the NARFE websites, information about chapter meetings, newsletters, legislative news, photos, current membership lists. You can update your mailing address, phone numbers, email addresses. Download and print forms and other files. Renew your membership, and more. Check it out, if you don't have access to a computer at home, a family member, friend or the local library can help you with this.

We Appreciate Our Members!