

Monthly Notes

Spring has arrived, but with it we are dealing with the virus that is being spread worldwide. Parts of the US and Tennessee has a varying number of people who have tested positive. I hope that our region is spared for the most part and none of us become infected with it.

I attended a webinar on the new NARFE records system, called Associated Management System (AMS). The webinar was to learn about the officer portal and available member reports. This new system has been in development for about a year now and seems to be very little progress. I can see most of the financial reports but not all, and they keep promising member activity reports, but so far, none of those are available.

The NARFE headquarters just outside of Washington DC is closed due to the virus at least through April 24th.

Here is the details of the latest Chapter Financial Report which includes the month of February.

February 1 balance—\$2,167.84

Dues received—\$18.00

Disbursements—none

February 29 balance—2,185.84

Our chapter financial records were recently audited for the year, 2019 by Roy Byrd. He found everything to be in order.

NARFE Webinars

The new webinars have been postponed until further notice. However those previously shown are available for viewing as a recording. The last one was on March 12th and was **Set Your Retirement Goals and Plan the Process.**

There are many others available by recording, some would be of interest to those still employed and some to those who are retired. You can find the full list of them on the NARFE website. I am sure the webinars will resume after the coronavirus threat has gone away.

Next Chapter Meeting

We are planning to have our next chapter meeting in the month of May providing that the coronavirus threat has abated by then. I will let you know for sure as soon as I learn more.

2021 COLA Watch

The report for the month of February showed an increase in the Consumer Price Index We will continue to monitor these reports through out the year to see if we get annuity increase next year.

Month	Month % Change	% Toward 2021
October 2019	+0.26	+0.28
November 2019	-0.10	+0.18
December 2019	-0.08	+0.10
January 2020	+0.36	+0.46
February 2020	+0.23	+0.69

Update on the Coronavirus

Just about everything is closed down except for businesses that are deemed to be essential. Federal and state guidelines call for no public gatherings and to limit travel and to stay home.

Congress has passed and the President has signed a stimulus bill which is intended to help the economy, businesses and individuals recover from the negative effects of the virus. Part of that bill provides for a payment to be made to people in the amount of \$1200 per adult and \$500 for children. There are income limits and phase outs and is based on the 2019 tax returns (or 2018 returns).

Many seniors who are not required to file may not have filed a 2018 or 2019 return. I am told that those who fall into this category will receive the stimulus automatically. The IRS has set up a page on its website that addresses the Coronavirus Tax Relief.

You have until July 15th this year to file your tax return and the stimulus payments will be sent out though the end of year 2020. Most will go by direct deposit to your bank. Refer to the irs.gov for info.

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

Legislative News

There are many items listed on the NARFE Legislative Action Center, pertaining to federal workers and retirees. I listed some of them last month, here are a few more.

- The Federal Adjustment of Income Rates (FAIR) Act of 2020. This bill would be a step toward closing the gap between public and private-sector wages. It would also help with recruitment and retaining the best federal workers. NARFE encourages support for this bill, H.R. 5690 and S. 3231.
- The Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 2478) would allow full-time federal employees to “buy Back” their time as temporary or intermittent workers to account for such time in their retirement calculations. As it is now, temporary or intermittent workers are not eligible to participate in the Federal Employees Retirement System. If the bill becomes law, such employees can deposit into FERS for the years they was not full time. NARFE supports this bill.
- The Social Security Fairness Act of 2019, H.R. 141 and S. 521 is similar to other bills. It would repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). As you know these two items have been around for a very long time and both needs to be repealed. NARFE supports this bill.
- A bill that has been around for a long time would require postal workers to enroll in Medicare Part B in order to continue receiving their current federal health insurance coverage. This is an undue burden on them, NARFE opposes this bill.

The Legislative Action Center on the NARFE website allows us to compose a message that can be easily sent to Members of Congress on these and other bills that are listed there. If you do not know who your Members of Congress are, that can be found there as well.

Phone calls and emails are the most effective way to contact the member of Congress. That telephone number for the Capital Switchboard is 866-220-0044. Let them hear from you.

Condolences

Just after I had printed the last newsletter, we learned that Syd Byrd, wife of Roy Byrd had passed. Roy has been a long time member and we extend our deepest condolences to him and the family at this time.

I am sure that we are not aware of many cases of our members who have sickness and deaths, please keep us informed as you are able.

Update on Chapter Dues Payments

I have looked through the chapter financial reports that I can find listed on the national website and have identified **21 members** who were charged too much during the past year for the chapter portion of the membership dues. I can't find reports for every month, but most of them now are available. Some of you are billed on an annual basis and pay by check or credit card and some are on dues withholding and a portion of the dues are deducted each month from the annuity payment.

For most members the amount of the overcharge is \$4. But some who are billed annually renewed for 2 or 3 years and paid \$8 or \$12 too much (\$4 per year).

I may not know all the members who were overcharged, so if you think you were, I would like to know. If you are not sure, I would be glad to check my records for you.

I am sorry that the national office has done this and I have tried many times to get them to respond to me and to correct this, but I have found them to be less than helpful. The only way that I can think of to correct this is to have our treasurer mail out refund checks to those who overpaid. Some may decide that a refund is not desired, you can certainly opt out if you want. I am asking everyone to use my email address or phone number (call or text) to let me know, or to ask questions. My contact information is listed in each newsletter.

Hope everyone is safe and well from the coronavirus that is going around.

Some Thoughts to Ponder

Positive thinking will let you do everything better than negative thinking will. —Zig Ziglar

As I grow older, I pay less attention to what men say. I just watch what they do. —Andrew Carnegie

A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives. —Jackie Robinson

Cherish all your happy moments; they make a fine cushion for old age. —Booth Tarkington

If there is anything that a man can do well. I say let him do it. Give him a chance. —Abraham Lincoln

It is more important to know what sort of person has a disease than to know what sort of disease a person has. —Hippocrates

Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn. —Benjamin Franklin

NARFE IS ON THE WEB

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Tennessee Federation:	www.narfetn.org
NARFE Headquarters:	www.narfe.org