

Monthly Notes

Welcome to July which is usually one of the hottest months of the year for us. The month we celebrate our nations independence and roast hotdogs. Try to stay cool while enjoying this part of the summer.

Be on the lookout for the July issue of the *Tennessee Federation News* which is due to arrive this month. There should be some updates and news articles of interest to us all. If you do not get it by postal mail or email, you need to contact the Newsletter Editor or me. Every member in Tennessee should receive it and as soon as I can, I will post it on the Federation website.

I am instructing our treasurer to send a donation towards Alzheimer’s Research from our chapter in the amount of \$1,000. I believe that this is a good use of the funds that we have. Also I would encourage you to make a donation to this as well. If you are interested, you can mail a check to the Tennessee Federation chairman, Mike Gates, 341 Eaton Village Trace, Lenoir City TN 37771 or use the form that is in each magazine and make your donation that way. Either way, please reference our chapter number, 1956.

The Latest Chapter Financial Report .

May 1 balance—\$2,347.80

Dues received—\$32.66

Disbursements—\$0.00

May 31 balance—\$2,380.46

NARFE Webinars

There is a new webinar scheduled for Tuesday, July 20th. It is: **Discover the True Cost and Value of CSRS/FERS Survivor Benefits.** You can find this on the NARFE Federal Benefits Institute section of the National website along with these past ones.

- **Telemedicine and Telehealth: The Future of Your Healthcare Experience**
- **Tax Planning for Federal Retirees**
- **CSRS Offset: The Best of Both Worlds or a Nightmare?**
- **Is There a ‘Best Date’ to Retire?**
- **Navigating the Retirement Process: Smooth Sailing to Your Life After Retirement,**
- **Plan Ahead: Helping New and Mid-Career Feds Manage Your Benefits**
- **Financial Strategies for Mid-Career Federal Employees**

COLA Watch

The consumer prices continue to rise in ways that we have not seen in a very long time. As you can see in the chart below, the May increase was .91 percent making the total so far 4.03 percent.

We continue to monitor the reports on the COLA for next year and see where they go from here.

Month	Month % Change	% Toward 2022
October 2020	+0.03	+0.26
November 2020	-0.10	+0.16
December 2020	+0.10	+0.26
January 2021	+0.48	+0.74
February 2021	+0.61	+1.35
March 2021	+0.81	+2.20
April 2021	+0.89	+3.08
May 2021	+0.91	+4.03

Thanks for the Updates

I received 2 responses last month to my request for updates on member’s contact information. That is very good and helps me very much to stay in contact with all of you.

Anyone else with changes to your contact information that I am not aware of, such as mailing address, phone number, email address please let me know.

Membership Report

I continue to be frustrated with the quality of the chapter reports that NARFE provides the chapter officers. These are the new Online Activity Reports that they switched to about 2 years ago..

We welcome Helen (Marleen) Burton who moved to Cookeville and transferred her membership from the Nashville chapter to our chapter. She worked for multiple agencies, most recently the VA.

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.

Updated Membership List

There is an updated list of chapter members available on our chapter website. This list is only available to current members. For those with internet access, go to our website and click Membership List on the right column. You then will need to log in with your Username which is your Last name and Password which is your member ID. If you have any problems with that, I will help you.

We currently have 63 active members in our chapter. Please do not share member information outside our chapter. Anyone desiring a list that does not have internet access can request a copy.

Legislation Report

This month I would like to draw your attention to the Legislative Action Center which is part of the NARFE national website. When you log in as a member, you will see a link to this section near about 2/3rds the way down the home page.

In addition to the 2 bills I mentioned last month (the WEP legislation and the Postal Reform legislation), there are some other bills that are referred to on the Legislative Action Center. Such as:

The Fair COLA for Seniors Act of 2021 (H.R. 4315). This bill if passed would change the way the annual cost of living adjustments are tracked. Currently the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics uses the Consumer Price Index CPI-W to calculate the adjustments, rather than the CPI-E which better tracks the spending habits of those who are seniors.

There is a related bill, The Equal COLA Act (H.R. 304). This bill if passed would benefit those who retired under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) rather than the CSRS. Currently those under the newer FERS receive a smaller Cost of Living Adjustment than those under CSRS. This bill would seek to rectify that giving similar treatment to both groups.

There are some other bills that NARFE supports that are listed there. I will address them at a later time. Clicking on each bill gives you the opportunity to send a direct email to your members of Congress. There is a pre-worded message that you can edit as you please. There is also a way to send an email to your members of Congress on any subject you choose.

Some of you may not have access to the internet and to the NARFE website. But you can refer to the magazine. Each month there is normally some bills highlighted and there is the Bill Tracker in each magazine as well. If you don't have the ability to send emails using what NARFE provides, then the best way to contact members of Congress is the NARFE provided phone number to the Capital switchboard. Just call 866-220-0044 and ask to speak to the office of your representative or your senators by name.

Noted Magazine Articles

In the June/July issue of the NARFE magazine, there are a couple of articles to make mention of that you may want to read.

One starts on page 25 and it is about Retirement Drawdown Strategies and how to make sure your retirement funds last as long as you need them to. The article is especially important to those who retired under the FERS retirement system. No so much for those under the CSRS retirement system.

The other article is on page 46 and is on the subject, The Concerning Effects the Coronavirus Has on Brain Health. The article talks about this in detail and those who had the virus may want to take note.

These are only 2 of many interesting articles each month. The magazine continues to be a worthwhile benefit to our membership and don't forget it is a great recruiting tool to have and to pass along to prospective members.

Virtual Chapter Meetings

I have been pondering this thought ever since the COVID virus began and we stopped having chapter meetings. That is to have our chapter meetings by means of video and telephone conferencing. Many groups have been doing that for a very long time and it is growing in popularity. I understand that some other NARFE chapters are doing this.

As I understand it, I would need to establish and account with a conferencing service such as Zoom, Go To Meeting or several other services and schedule a date and time for a meeting.

The problems that I see is that most of these types of services have various restrictions and features. Some can be used free, but they limit the length of the meeting, others charge a monthly fee.

It is hard to know just how many of our chapter members would take part in this type of meeting. Our group is small and there are various degrees of capability when it comes to technology. So I am hesitant to try something like this

On The Light Side—Interesting confusions

1. *Can you cry under water?*
2. *Do fish ever get thirsty?*
3. *Why don't birds fall off trees when they sleep?*
4. *Why is it called building when it is already built?*
5. *When they say dog food is new and improved, who tastes it?*
6. *If money doesn't grow on trees, why do banks have branches?*
7. *Why does round pizza come in a square box?*
8. *Why doesn't glue stick to its bottle?*

Stay well and Enjoy the Summer

NARFE IS ON THE WEB

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