



# STRAWBERRY CHAPTER 1224 NEWS

NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

**MAY**



**2023**

## NARFE Mission Statement

To support legislation and regulations beneficial to federal civilian employees and annuitants and potential annuitants under any federal civilian retirement system and to oppose those detrimental to their interests – To promote the general welfare of federal civilian employees and annuitants and potential annuitants, to advise and assist them with respect to their rights under retirement, health and other employee and retiree benefits laws and regulations, and to represent their interest before appropriate authorities – To cooperate with other organizations and associations in furtherance of these general objectives.

## From the Chapter President

*Jane Lemley*

### Upcoming Events

Chapter Meetings, 10:30 a.m., Beef 'O' Brady's Restaurant, Lake Miriam Square, 4810 S. Florida Avenue, Lakeland, FL.

May 4, 2023, Chapter Picnic at Medard Park, Plant City.  
Flyer in this newsletter;

June 1, 2023, Chapter Meeting;

July 6, 2023, Chapter Meeting;

August 3, 2023, Chapter Meeting.

Although we do have a good turnout for our monthly chapter meetings, I realize that not all of our chapter members are interested in attending regular meetings. Meeting attendance is a personal choice, but we do serve every member of our chapter whether you attend our meetings or not. NARFE has been in existence since 1921 and is the only organization dedicated to protecting the earned benefits of federal employees, retirees, and their survivors. Our legislative efforts are a vital step in protecting those earned benefits. These are critical times for federal employees and annuitants.

Our Service Officer, Tony Cuchlinski, is available to every member of our chapter to assist him or her with problems they might have with OPM concerning their benefits and many other issues such as assisting a surviving spouse through the stressful process of dealing with retirement and insurance issues.

Whether you attend meetings or not You Need NARFE and NARFE Needs you.

## Chapter 1224 Meeting

April 6, 2023

*Janie Clark, Chapter Secretary*

President Jane Lemley welcomed 18 chapter members to the meeting. Our guest speaker for the meeting was Christine Royer, representing Estates at Carpenter's Way in Lakeland.

Christine went over all the advantages of Senior Retirement Living at the Carpenter's Estates. Located in North Lakeland, Carpenter's has been in business for 37 years. Right now they are updating and adding new facilities to the property.

In their continued redevelopment they offer concerts, a dog park, outdoor cooking facilities, nursing and life care and so much more. If you are interested in a tour of The Estates at Carpenter's you can call Christine at 863-853-5505-ext.142 or visit website:

[www.EstatesAtCarpenters.com](http://www.EstatesAtCarpenters.com)

Chapter members Kent Pfremer and Rick White let everyone know that on April 15<sup>th</sup> they will be attending the Car Show taking place at Carpenter's Estates. Everyone is invited to come.

At our meeting last month we had representatives from Presbyterian Homes and I forgot to mention that the Homes are considered having one of the best "skilled nursing" and "rehab centers" in the state.

Special thanks to President Jane Lemley for getting such good and topical speakers for our meetings. Jane let us know that she would like someone to step into this position to provide guest speakers for our meetings.

I hope everyone is making plans to attend the chapter's annual picnic at Medard Park on Turkey Creek Road, Plant City. It is always such great fun, relaxing and we all look forward to seeing the resident "gator" that swims by after smelling all the great food everyone brings.

So grab your lawn chair, favorite covered dish (we have some great cooks) and your beverage of choice (non-alcoholic) and meet us at Medard Park on May 6<sup>th</sup>.

After the meeting was adjourned we had our 50/50 drawing. Pat Staley won \$31.00 which she graciously contributed to the Alzheimer's fund.

It seems that no one present was having an April birthday but it was decided, instead of having a drawing for the \$15.00 birthday gift card, that whoever was having a birthday that month would get a gift card. I did mention that my father's birthday was April 6<sup>th</sup> and he would have been 102, but apparently he didn't qualify.

Every month as I write my article I try to give you the essence of what our meeting is all about, but I never seem to be able to capture the full nature of the humor, friendship and love that we all share for each other. NARFE is our common goal that brings us together, and that is very important, but it is so much more!!!!

See you at the picnic.

## Legislative

*Mark Silverstein, Chapter Chairperson*

Now that our legislators have finished their April visits to their home districts, here are some updates on NARFE concerns.

NARFE's President Shackelford has sent a letter to members of the House and Senate Appropriation subcommittees, asking for adequate funding and sufficient oversight of OPM's retirement services division's customer service to federal annuitants. Additionally, members of Congress have responded to both NARFE and other constituent requests by sending a letter to OPM regarding slow processing times for new retirees. This has been a concern that has been around since I retired myself, over 15 years ago. Over the years there had been some improvement, and it is good Congress is addressing it again.

President Shackelford also asked for a 5.2 percent pay increase for federal workers. In my opinion, keeping federal pay behind that which similar professionals earn in the private sector is no way to assure that US government workers are the best and the brightest. Hopefully, our legislators will consider this view.

Meanwhile, various factions within the House Republican caucus have been making list of policy priorities. One of these factions, the House's Republican Study Committee, has created is a "Debt Limit Playbook." This "Playbook" includes cuts to earned federal retirement and health benefits. This is something we should watch and be aware of.

Finally, I want to urge everyone who is interested in grass roots politics and advocating for our earned benefits to register and attend LEGCON, June 20-22. The registration fee is \$150. The conference is virtual, so you don't have to leave your home computer. You will be instructed on the issues, and talking points, and on how to speak with a legislator. On the last day, you get to join other NARFE members and bring our concerns to your legislator or a staff member. This is true democracy in action and enables us to bring our concerns right to the offices of our representatives. I can't recommend this experience enough.

## **Yes, there is A "Free Lunch"**

*Bob Lemley, Chapter Membership Chairperson*

To all new members and members of our chapter who have never attended a chapter meeting this is your opportunity to get a free lunch. All you have to do is show up for a monthly chapter meeting and lunch is on us.

Our monthly meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month. Meetings last about an hour and a half. We have a guest speaker or program that is informative and/or entertaining. We also conduct a short business session. The meeting begins at 10:30 AM. At Beef 'O' Brady's Restaurant, Lake Miriam Square, 4810 S. Florida Avenue, Lakeland, FL. I'm looking forward to meeting you.

In addition any member who attends a meeting during the month of their birthday will also be treated to lunch.

## **NARFE-PAC**

*Jane Lemley, Chapter Chairperson*

NARFE-PAC, our organization's Political Action Committee is a separate, segregated fund used for electoral purposes. In complete compliance with the Federal Elections Campaign Act, NARFE-PAC collects the voluntary contributions of NARFE members in order to support congressional candidates with proven records of serving the vital interests of nearly five million active and retired federal employees. I will be having the forms available at Chapter meetings, or you may make your contribution directly using the form in the monthly NARFE magazine. Our Chapter has the most sustainers (10) of any regular Chapter and more than most states. Sustainers can now have contributions withheld from your annuity check. Thanks to all.

## **Membership Record Update Reminder**

If you have changed your address, telephone number or email address, please go to the NARFE National website and correct the information. If you do not have access to a computer or do not feel comfortable going to the website, please contact Bob Lemley at 863-701-6136 or by email at [blemley@mac.com](mailto:blemley@mac.com) and he will correct the information for you.

## **Program Suggestions**

*Jane Lemley*

We try to have interesting and informative programs for our meetings; however, we would like to know what our members would like us to have. I know a lot of you are involved in other organizations and I'm sure you've heard some great programs and have said to yourselves this would be great for our NARFE chapter meeting. Now is your chance to share your suggestions by sending them to [janelemley@mac.com](mailto:janelemley@mac.com). Please include contact information including their name, title if any, type of information/program, phone number and email.

# YOU NEED NARFE – NARFE NEEDS YOU

## NARFE STRAWBERRY CHAPTER 1224 ANNUAL PICNIC

Come out for fun and fellowship with your NARFE friends.

Thursday, May 4, 2023 – 12:00 Noon  
Edward Medard Park  
Turkey Creek Road, Plant City, FL

\$2.00 Fee Per Car to Enter Park

Provided Jane & Bob Lemley - Pulled Pork  
Provided by Mike Pfremmer - Chicken

PLEASE BRING SIDE DISHES OR DESSERTS  
BYOB (no alcohol beverages) and  
a lawn chair, if you have one

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Please RSVP by April 30, 2023 to:  
Jane Lemley, 863.701.6137  
Email: janelemley@mac.com

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### Directions: From Lakeland and Mulberry

Take SR60 West to Turkey Creek Road, turn left at the light. Follow Turkey Creek Road to the park. Turn left and follow NARFE picnic signs to Burnt Stump Drive. Turn right. Pavilion #2 is on the right side of the road.

### From Valrico/Brandon/Plant City area

Take SR60 East to Turkey Creek Road. Turn right at the light. Follow Turkey Creek Road to the park. Turn left and follow NARFE picnic signs to Burnt Stump Drive. Turn right. Pavilion #2 is on the right side of the road.

### Also From Plant City

You can take Turkey Creek Road all the way to the park. You will cross SR60. Follow Turkey Creek Road to the park. Turn left and follow the NARFE signs to Burnt Stump Drive. Turn right. Pavilion #2 is on the right side of the road.



We still are looking for volunteers to become the Program Chair and Hospitality Chair. Please contact Chapter President Jane Lemley at [janelemley@mac.com](mailto:janelemley@mac.com) or 863-701-6137, if you can assist with either of these two positions.

## Why Should My Spouse Belong to NARFE?

*Bob Lemley, Chapter Membership Chairperson*

This is a question that I hear often. Many members do not see any advantage of their spouse belonging to NARFE. Your spouse has a vested interest in the benefits that you receive and it is even greater if you have provided a survivor benefit. Since we lobby congress to protect our benefits, it is very important that we have a large membership. When they see how many members we have and know that those are potential votes, they take notice. Therefore, we encourage your spouse to join NARFE. Remember that if any of your benefits are removed because of congressional action they will also suffer that loss. We also provide many services to all our members. Our Service Officer is available to every member of the chapter to assist him or her with problems they might have with OPM concerning their benefits and many other issues such as assisting a surviving spouse through the stressful process of dealing with retirement and insurance issues.

**PLEASE VISIT THE CHAPTER FACEBOOK PAGE AND WEBSITE**





Joanna Frazier	5/11
Betty Alfonso	5/23
Connie Martin	5/24
Bill Staley	5/29
Charles Burdette	5/31



*Happy anniversary!*

Bobbi & George Gardner 5/4

Happy Birthday and Happy Anniversary to members whose names are not listed for May

**Members who would like their birthday/anniversaries listed in the Newsletter, please give your information to Joanna Frazier**

### *NARFE Slogan*

*“NARFE: The E is silent, but we are not.”*



### 5 TRAINING TIPS for Recruiting NARFE Members

- 1 Get to know your audience
- 2 Ask questions to identify their needs
- 3 Provide a NARFE solution to help solve their specific concern
- 4 Offer NARFE's Membership Brochure (F-135)
- 5 Collect contact information from the interested prospect

**NARFE** FEDERAL EMPLOYEES RETIREES  
Questions about recruiting? Email [membership@narfe.org](mailto:membership@narfe.org).

Happy Mother's Day!

May 14



**Federal Employees Earn Retirement Benefits NARFE Protects Them**



**PROTECT America's Heartbeat**

**Federal Employees and Retirees:**

Fight back against attacks on your benefits and reputation.

**CHAPTER EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

President	Jane Lemley	863.701.6137	janelemley@mac.com
Executive Vice President	Tony Cuchlinski	561.317.2084	dadfad60@gmail.com
Vice President	George Gardner	813.657.8632	barbara_gardner4@yahoo.com
Secretary	Janie Clark	863.425.3920	janielakeland@aol.com
Treasurer	Bill Staley	813.689.7449	bcstaley1@msn.com

**CHAPTER APPOINTEES**

Membership	Bob Lemley	863.701.6136	blemley@mac.com
Service Officer	Tony Cuchlinski	561.317.2084	dadfad60@gmail.com
NARFE-PAC	Jane Lemley	863.701.6137	janelemley@mac.com
Alzheimer's	Pat Staley	813.689.7449	phs61@msn.com
Public Relations	Michael Pfremer	*****	mpfremer@hotmail.com
Communications	George Gardner	813.657.8632	barbara_gardner4@yahoo.com
FEEA	Marty Dickey	863.944.5466	martydickey@icloud.com
Newsletter/Website	Joanna Frazier	863.205.0362	jmaryfrazier2355@gmail.com
Photographer/Historian	Stanley Frazier	863.512.5382	bminnovators4@gmail.com
Sunshine	Becky Silverstein	301.646.9354	rmsilverstein@gmail.com
Chaplain	Bobbi Gardner	813.657.8632	barbara_gardner4@yahoo.com
Past President/Legislative	Mark Silverstein	301.646.9303	markjaysilverstein@gmail.com
Programs	Vacant		
Hospitality	Vacant		

**CHAPTER WEBSITE: <http://www.straw1224.com>**

DISTRICT 5 VICE PRESIDENT – Steve Abney - 563-528-4101 - email: [steve.abney@gmail.com](mailto:steve.abney@gmail.com)

NARFE FLORIDA, INC. WEBSITE: [fnarfe.com](http://fnarfe.com)

NARFE FLORIDA INC. PRESIDENT - Evelyn Seabrook- email: [Brooklyn\\_Seav48@hotmail.com](mailto:Brooklyn_Seav48@hotmail.com)

NARFE HEADQUARTERS WEBSITE: [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org)

ELDER HELPLINE-Hillsborough/Polk Counties-800.336.2226 - **FACEBOOK:** NARFE Chapter 1224-Strawberry

**Florida Congressional Leaders**

Senator Rick Scott  
Website: <http://rickscott.senate.gov>  
Main Office: 202.224.5274

Senator Marco Rubio  
Website: <http://rubio.senate.gov>  
Tampa Office: 813.977.6450

Rep-District 10: Maxwell Frost  
Website: <http://frost.house.gov>  
Main Office: 202.225.2176

Rep-District 12: Gus Bilirakis  
Website: <http://bilirakis.house.gov>  
District Office: 813.752.9849

Rep-District 14: Kathy Castor  
Website: <http://castor.house.gov>  
District Office: 813.871.2817

Rep-District 15: Laurel Lee  
Website: <http://lee.house.gov>  
Main Office: 202.225.5626

Rep-District 17: Greg Steube  
Website: <http://steube.house.gov>  
District Office: 813.677.8646

Rep-District 18: Scott Franklin  
Website: <http://franklin.house.gov>  
District Office: 124 S. Florida Ave  
Suite 304, Lakeland, FL 33801  
863.644.8215

**DISCLAIMER REQUIRED BY IRS**

Dues payments and gifts or contributions to NARFE are not deductible as charitable contributions for Federal Income Tax purposes.

**OUR PURPOSE**

NARFE is committed to preserving federal retirement benefits for all civilian employees and retirees. NARFE is the sole organization standing for the protection of federal employee retirement benefits by uniting civilian employees, retirees, survivors and spouses around the world.

**OUR MEETINGS**

Meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month. **Meetings will be at 10:30 a.m.**, except May and December, at 10: 30 a.m. Meeting place will be Beef 'O' Brady's Restaurant, Lake Miriam Square, 4810 S. Florida Avenue, Lakeland, FL.