



STRAWBERRY CHAPTER 1224 NEWS

NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

NOVEMBER 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.

Upcoming Events

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

November 2, 2023, Chapter Meeting: Representatives from Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Aetna & GEHA;

December 7, 2023, Chapter Holiday Party, details in this newsletter.

From the Chapter President

Jane Lemley

As most of you know, November in the odd years is when we elect officers for the following two years. This will be a very important meeting and hopefully our attendance will reflect this. The list of candidates will be elsewhere in this newsletter. I am not running for office. There will be an opportunity for nominations from the floor at the meeting on November 2. The newly elected officers will be sworn in and take office at the January 2024 meeting. Our District 5 Vice-President Steve Abney will be doing the honors. Once the election is held the newly elected President will be contacting the current committee chairs to see if they wish to continue in their current position. Please consider getting involved.

We still are looking for a volunteer to become the Chapter Program Chair. Please contact Chapter President Jane Lemley, if you can assist with this position.

Chapter 1224 Meeting

October 5, 2023

Janie Clark, Chapter Secretary

President Jane Lemley welcomed 15 chapter members and 1 guest. Our guest was Jody Steussnig updating the members on Alzheimer's Research.

Jody began her program by asking all of us "how much does our brain weigh?" We had many different answers. My answer of 15 pounds was way off!! It seems a normal brain weighs about 3 pounds and is about 75% water. Well those two figures certainly explains a lot. Also, many diseases and brain injuries can cause the brain to shrink.

It seems that over 6 million people in the United States suffer from Alzheimer's disease. There are 580,000 here in Florida and 17,611 right here in Polk County alone. Alzheimer's is progressing at an alarming rate all over the world.

The good news is that there are now 2 new treatments for Alzheimer's that have been approved by the FDA. If you are concerned about your brain health you need to ask your doctor to recommend you for an Alzheimer's memory screening. There are bio-markers that can alert you to possible tendencies for Alzheimer's disease. There is a 24/7 Alzheimer's help line with qualified people to answer any questions you may have. Call 1-800-272-3900. If you would like to volunteer to participate in programs that help scientists learn more about this disease, go on line to: volunteer.alz.org. Several of our chapter members have participated in the past and we have some participating now.

Jody also spoke about the stress on caregivers of Alzheimer's patients. Hopefully, one day, this disease can be eradicated.

I love to listen to the interaction that our members have with our speakers and the knowledge that is shared on both sides. Our meetings don't necessarily end after the meeting is adjourned. Everyone hangs around catching up on what is going on with everyone. There are usually 5 conversations going on all at one time.

All our members bring so much to our meetings. Our group is so good about keeping up with the latest changes in Congress that can affect our future.

Our concerns and joys part of our meeting is another way of keeping up with the happenings of our members. Stanley Frazier recently had a heart procedure done and had two stents put in. Glad to report he is doing well. Marty Dickey is in rehab after her recent hospital stay and is coming along nicely. It was good to see Kent Pfremer back at our meeting after his recent surgery. Mark Silverstein has recently had to go on insulin for diabetes. Our prayers go out to all our members. George and Bobbi Gardner will be going Spain and then on a cruise.

After the meeting was adjourned we had our 50/50 drawing and Tony Cuchlinski won \$20.00 which he donated to Alzheimer's.

Our October birthday gift cards went to Betty Cuchlinski and Kent Pfremer. Happy Birthday to each of you.

Well that's all my 15 pound brain can handle for now. See you all next time!

Strawberry Chapter, Holiday Party

Connie Martin, Hospitality Chairperson

Join us for our annual Holiday Party, Thursday, December 7, 2023, Ariana Village Clubhouse, 1625 Ariana St, (off of Harden Blvd), Lakeland, FL at 11 a.m. The lunch will be catered by Fred's Market. Menu will be: Turkey, ham and fixings', ice tea and dessert. Cost per person: \$25.00. Checks or money orders need to be made out to NARFE 1224. **Checks or money orders will not be collected at the party. They need to be mailed to:**

Bill Staley
3942 Buckingham Loop Dr.
Valrico FL 33594-4821

He needs to receive the checks by **November 27th** so that I can order the food.

We will be donating toys to support "Toys for Tots". Your donation will be greatly appreciated and will make a child very happy.



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 continues to have 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.

Nominating Committee In Place

Janie Clark, Nominating Committee Chairperson

A Nominating Committee consisting of Janie Clark and Bob Lemley is in place to select nominees for officer positions at our chapter election on November, 2nd.

To date we have a candidate for all positions except Executive Vice President. Those candidates are: Tony Cuchlinski, President; George Gardner, Vice President; Bill Staley, Treasurer, and Janie Clark, Secretary. Therefore, we need a candidate for the position of Executive VP. The primary duty of the Executive VP is to fill in for the President in his or her absence or incapacity. The person filling this position might also be asked to chair a committee. We would like to get one of our newer members to step forward to fill this position. Please contact Janie or Bob, if you are interested in this position. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the time of the election. The person making the nomination must have preapproval of the nominee.

All Committee Chairs shall hold office at the pleasure of the Chapter President who appointed them to those offices, and their term of office shall expire with the expiration of the term of the appointing officer, or until their successors are appointed by the Chapter President. Therefore, the Nominating Committee does not take nominations for Committee Chairs. But if you are interested in a Committee Chair position, please let Bob or Janie know and they will pass that information on to the President Elect.

Janie can be reached at 863-738-0981 or janielakeland@aol.com and Bob can be reached at 863-701-6136 or blemley@mac.com.

Dues Withholding Incentive

Bob Lemley, Chapter Membership Chair

Currently a little over half of our chapter members are taking advantage of NARFE's Dues Withholding Program. I urge all of you to take advantage of this program. You can have your NARFE dues, as well as your spouse's dues, withheld from your annuity. The program saves you money and you will no longer receive those yearly renewal notices. National dues are currently \$48.00 per year plus \$11.00 Chapter dues for a total of \$59.00. Under the Dues Withholding program the National dues rate is \$42.00 per year plus \$11.00 chapter dues which is a total of \$53.00 a savings of \$6.00 per year. Divide that by 12 and your monthly dues rate is \$4.42 a small price to pay to protect your hard-earned benefits and receive the many benefits that NARFE offers.

You don't have to wait until your dues renewal date to sign up for dues withholding. You can sign up at any time and it will go into effect at your next renewal date.

To encourage you to take advantage of this great program anyone who signs up for Dues Withholding through the end of this year the Chapter will pay for your first year's dues saving you another \$53.00 up-front. When the chapter receives notification that you have taken advantage of this offer the Chapter will send you a check for \$53.00. Don't delay, this offer is only valid through the end of December.

NARFE also benefits from members who are on dues withholding. Membership retention is greatly enhanced, and the cost of mailing the renewal notices is eliminated, therefore saving NARFE a considerable amount of money each year, money that can be used to support NARFE's mission.

For your convenience Dues Withholding Applications are available at all chapter meetings. If you are unable to attend a meeting you can use the application found in your monthly NARFE Magazine. For tracking purposes please email me when you have submitted your application. Also, if you have any questions, please contact me. My contact information is blemley@mac.com or 863-701-6136.



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 and having your spouse as a member increases our membership. When our members of Congress 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.

Sunshine Committee Report

Becky Silverstein, Chapter Chairperson

I had recently sent a Get Well card to Kent Pfremer for a speedy recovery from his bout of COVID and pneumonia. We were all happy to see him at the October meeting. Then we learned he'd be having surgery shortly after that meeting, so another card was sent to be sure he received all our get well wishes for a speedy recovery from that!

I also sent a card to our favorite chapter photographer, Stanley Frazier, for a speedy recovery from his health concerns. He has had stents put in one of the arteries in his heart. I am not sure what else he may be dealing with, but I know we all want him to have an easy time and return to our meetings.

As always, if you know that someone needs a card for a loss or get well wishes, let me know at msilverstein@gmail.com or 301-646-9354.



Set Clocks Back one hour, Sunday, November 5, 2023, 2 a.m.

NARFE Slogan

"NARFE: The E is silent, but we are not."



Stanley Frazier 11/3 Rick White 11/16

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

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

Federal Employees Earn Retirement Benefits NARFE Protects Them

HONOR our VETERANS

Veterans Day November 11



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	863.378.8980	jmaryfrazier2355@gmail.com
Photographer/Historian	Stanley Frazier	863.378.8979	bminnovators4@gmail.com
Sunshine	Becky Silverstein	301.646.9354	rmsilverstein@gmail.com
Past President/Legislative	Mark Silverstein	301.646.9303	markjaysilverstein@gmail.com
Hospitality	Connie Martin	813.361.3032	junk@follyfive.com
Chaplain	Bobbi Gardner	813.657.8632	barbara_gardner4@yahoo.com
Programs	Vacant		

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

FACEBOOK: NARFE Chapter 1224-Strawberry

DISTRICT 5 VICE PRESIDENT – Steve Abney - 563-528-4101 - email: steve.abney@gmail.com

NARFE FLORIDA, INC. WEBSITE: fnarfe.com

NARFE FLORIDA INC. PRESIDENT - Evelyn Seabrook- email: Brooklyn_Seav48@hotmail.com

NARFE HEADQUARTERS WEBSITE: www.narfe.org

ELDER HELPLINE-Hillsborough/Polk Counties-800.336.2226

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>
District Office: 321.388.9808

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://laurelee.house.gov>
District Office: 813.393.5077

Rep-District 16: Vern Buchanan
Website: <http://buchanan.house.gov>
District Office: 813.657.1013

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 **at 10:30 a.m.**, except May and December. Meeting place: Beef 'O' Brady's Restaurant, Lake Miriam Square, 4810 S. Florida Avenue, Lakeland, FL.