

National Active & Retired Federal Employees Assoc.
 NARFE
 Chapter 1734
 7235 Procopio Circle
 Columbia, Md. 21046

Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage
 PAID

Permit No. 19
 Columbia, MD 21045

Time Value Mail
Next Meeting
Mar 16th 2011



National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association
Serving over 1000 Federal annuitants and their families in Howard County

Howard County Chapter 1734 News & Notes

Mar 2011

NEXT MEETING: Wed, 16 Mar Business Meeting 10:00 East Columbia Library

OFFICERS

President – Burdelle Dowdell	301-596-2916	Service Officer – William Kelly	410-465-4065
Past President – Jim McConnell	301-854-3742	Service Officer – Stephen Huza	410-381-5319
VP-Memb. – Michael Santiago	410-381-1639	PR Chair – Sue Neri	410-381-7140
VP-Fed. Leg. – Frank Chase	410-992-9304	Luncheon Chair – Susie Bell Jones	410-715-1936
VP-State Leg. – Carole Graves	410-312-9140	Alzheimer’s Chair – Sue Neri	410-381-7140
Secretary – Barbara Donley	443-546-4682	Welcome – Joel Turner	410-964-2607
Treasurer – Jim McConnell	301-854-3742	Telephone Tree – Joy Cohen	410-740-0481
Sunshine – Natalie C. Yopconka	410-740-8837	Newsletter Editor – Stephen Huza	410-381-5319
Auditor – Ed Kuespert	410-465-1384	Newsletter Mailing – Sue Neri	410-381-7140
Program Chair – Burdelle Dowdell	301-596-2916	Newsletter Mailing – VACANT	

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Sen. Barbara Mikulski	410-962-4510	e-mail: on web at www.mikulski.senate.gov
Sen. Ben Cardin	410-962-4436	e-mail: on web at www.cardin.senate.gov
Rep. John Sarbanes	410-295-1679	e-mail: www.sarbanes.house.gov
Rep. Elijah Cummings	410-685-9199	e-mail: rep.cummings@mail.house.gov
NARFE HOTLINE	703-838-7780	White House e-mail: president@whitehouse.gov

**NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED
FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**

News & Notes

**Chapter 1734
March 2011**

**Howard County
Maryland**

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Location</u>
5-8 March	all day	Legislative Training Conference	Alexandria, Va.
9 March	all day	USM Rally	
16 Mar	10:00	Business Meeting	East Columbia Library
20 Apr	11:30	Luncheon	TBD
2/3 May	all day	Federation mini-convention	Bowie

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – Burdelle Dowdell

We have a newsletter editor, Steven Huza. Thanks for volunteering!

Persons who take the bus to meetings and luncheons can obtain a ride for fifty cents, one way. For information, call 1-800-270-9553.

The dead line to register for our convention in Bowie, Md. is March 31,2011.

Frank Chase, Chuck Thomas, and I attended the Legislation Board Meeting on February 14, 2011.

March is NARFE-PAC Month. Your donation is not tax-deductible. Members who do not have a computer can use the NARFE Hotline. The number is 1-703-838 7780.

I think there is a great deal of experience and knowledge within our chapter membership. If you are interested in serving your chapter, please call me at 301-596-2916 or E-Mail bdowdell2@verizon.net.

NARFE chapter 1734 will be commemorating its 31st anniversary on March 21, 2011.

Welcome New Members We welcome all of the retirees, spouses, and especially current federal government employees who have recently joined or re-joined NARFE. Please attend our meetings and luncheons so that we can meet you and so that you can find out more about NARFE on the local level. It is the local Chapter level that drives the NARFE national agenda.

Business meetings start at 10:00 AM followed by a speaker. There is usually a social half hour starting at 9:30 AM. Business meetings are held in September, November, January, March, and May. The meeting place is the Senior Center at the East Columbia Library. Luncheons typically start at 11:30 AM and are held in October, December, February, April, and June. There are no meetings or luncheons in July and August.

Chapter meetings or luncheons are held on the third Wednesday, September through June, and are canceled whenever Howard County Schools are delayed or canceled due to weather. Dues and contributions to NARFE are not deductible as charitable contributions for income tax purposes.

Our chapter web site is
www.narfe.org/chapter1734

Volunteer tasks done by chapter members are vital to the smooth operation of our chapter. Please consider volunteering for one of our positions or to back-up the incumbent.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Another person is needed to work on the newsletter addresses. Each month we receive 1000 labels from NARFE HQ. They are sorted by zip codes, added, the postage is compiled. They are later taken to the Library where 10 volunteers do the next step - folding and stapling the newsletters and then applying the address labels. Call Sue Neri, 410-381-7140, if you want to help her with the initial sorting.

Most of the 95 new Members of the House and 16 new Senators have had little exposure to the federal civil service. Chapter and federation outreach resulting in individual or group meetings should cover income security and health security issues. NARFE's toll free number for the Capitol switchboard, 1-866-220-0044, can be used to reach any Representative or Senator. Review the NARFE's talking points of the Fiscal Commission's proposals to cut federal retirement, pay and health benefits and provide a copy to your congressional delegation or their staff. NARFE members can find the Talking Points by logging on to the NARFE web site, selecting Legislation and looking on the left under LEGISLATIVE Publications. The specific address for NARFE members is:

<http://www.narfe.org/departments/legislation/articles.cfm?ID=2068>

Speaker for the March Meeting
Brooke Hisle
From: Maryland Health Care for All Coalition

The Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative established the Maryland Health Care for All! Coalition in 1999

She will speak on health care for all

A proposal for health care for all residents

STATE LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Carol Graves

Governor O'Malley, in his State of the State address, reported that Maryland's situation is improving but not good enough. With diminished resources, he says he will strive to protect three priority areas: public education, public health, and public safety. He is looking to reduce the size and cost of government and has proposed a significant change that will increase employee contribution to the state pension system. He proposed initiatives to support business in the creation of jobs and to encourage wind energy. But the legislative session is once again restricted by severe budget concerns.

The NARFE State Legislative Committee (SLC), chaired by Ed Bice, has a hard job this year in gaining support for NARFE's priority issues, which are not revenue neutral. As of this writing, SLC had secured sponsors for a bill authorizing an annual tax credit for the payment of long term care premiums. We had not yet secured sponsors for bills to equalize the dollar value for the senior exemption for all seniors 65 or blind or to reduce the property tax burden on senior homeowners. Legislators are reluctant to sponsor any legislation that will add to the budget crunch. Nevertheless SLC members visited legislators and attended a series of fundraisers to keep our concerns before potential supporters.

We can support our SLC by showing up at relevant bill hearings in Annapolis. SLC is providing incentives including parking reimbursement at the Marine Stadium and \$35 per chapter having three or members attending a hearing. Good attendance at the United Seniors of Maryland Legislative Rally on March 9 is also important.

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Frank Chase

Each day there seems to be new legislation introduced in Washington that could adversely affect federal employees and federal retirees' benefit rights. I urge all Chapter 1734 members to bring their concerns about such bills to your Representative and to Senators Mikulski and Cardin TODAY, preferably by letter or Email. Spell out how enactment of such bills will adversely affect your own standard of living and/or retirement plans. It would be well to emphasize how the recent increases in FEHBP health insurance premiums and the suspension of COLAs have already had an impact.

NARFE is first, last, and always a lobbying organization, and the only one that is going to give primary attention to the needs of our members and other federal employees/retirees and the impact on them of actions taken at whatever level of government. NARFE can't be "neutral" with so much at stake. The most effective lobbying, however, is usually conducted on an individual basis by constituents with their elected officials.

NARFE can make a strong case on many issues, but in the final analysis it is the voters that must protect themselves. This means that, if you're not willing to make waves personally, you might very easily drown and have no one to blame but yourself. Enough said, I hope.