

2nd Quarter Newsletter 2026



Chapter Officers

President William Fude

1st Vice President Diane Fielder

2nd Vice President Mary Cook

Secretary Frances Johnston

Treasurer Joe DeSira

Nomination Chair Vacant

Audit Chair Kathy Zerkle

Committee Coordinators

Membership Bruce Miles

Sunshine Kathy Zerkle

NARFE-PAC Joe DeSira

Newsletter Frances Johnston

Legislative Chair Frances Johnston

To contact our chapter officers, use the direct message linked to the officer title above.

Lansing Chapter 0289 meetings are held first Thursday of month at 1pm at the Tri-County Office on Aging, 5303 South Cedar St. in Lansing. Enter through Door number 1 on north side.

Upcoming Programs

We have some interesting programs coming up in the next months. Be sure to put on your calendar so you will remember what is coming. **The newsletter only comes out quarterly.**

April 2nd speaker could save you money and keep you from getting scammed. Tania Matz of LPL Financial in Okemos, Michigan will be teaching us about cryptocurrency and bitcoin. What is it? Should I put my savings into it? Who regulates it? Is it regulated? This is a very current topic and the more we learn about it, the better we can make decisions concerning it. As Federal employees, I know we all worked hard for our money, let's learn about wisely investing it.

Our **May 7th speaker** will be Heather Lehman, Community Programs Specialist for the Michigan History Center. She will be speaking about the 12 museums and historic sites all over our state, the over 1800 historical markers within our state, across other states, and Europe, and the heritage trail program. Michigan history is all around us- come and

learn about the museum collections, things to do, places to explore, and volunteer opportunities. If you have some time this summer and no particular plans, come and listen - you might just find your next road trip.

We will not have a speaker **in June** as we will be hearing reports about the Federation Conference by some attendees. In **July** our meeting will be a picnic at Kathy Zerkle's home in East Lansing. We resume regular meetings in August.

Mary Cook books speakers that she thinks will be of interest to many people. If you have an idea of who to book, or you have an interest in a particular subject - talk to Mary about it and see if we can all learn something new together. (Link to send a direct message to Mary upper left on this page.)

Membership Update

Did you know? You don't have to wait until Open Season to recruit new members. You can continue earning recruiter rewards all year long! For every active federal employee you recruit as a new NARFE member, you receive an \$8 recruiter reward. Simply ask them to enter your ID number on their membership application where it asks for a recruiter. You can also share the gift of NARFE membership with a spouse or family member for an upcoming anniversary, Mother's Day, or Father's Day. It's a meaningful gift that keeps on giving.

Chapter President Message:

Calendar-wise spring has arrived and, except for the UP, we have endured another Michigan winter! Right now, March madness is a nice distraction from other disturbing developments. The war with Iran is costing \$1 billion/day and DOD says it needs \$200 billion more so it will either be over in about six months or they will again need more money. Get used to paying more at the pump. Agricultural producers are struggling. Food for your supper table and everything else will cost more. Far worse than economic pain we will see more “dignified transfers” of bodies at Dover. We’ve lost 7 already and that’s too many.

The SAVE Act (Safeguard American Voting Eligibility) in Congress might better be described as the Suppressing Access to Voting Everywhere. It appears to be a solution in search of a problem. An audit of Michigan’s 2024 General Election identified 16 apparent non-citizens as having voted (0.00028% of total voters) who were referred to the MI AG’s office for potential charges. Other states had similar results. If the SAVE Act is enacted with its many restrictions, it will end voting by mail and that should bother you.

The Schedule Policy/Career (formerly Schedule F) looks like OPM will make it happen. This would affect 50,000 federal employees. It removes civil service protections, making them subject to firing without recourse. Welcome back to the “political spoils system” which was done away with in the 1800’s! What’s next in this “take America back” frenzy? Back to pre-1920 when women couldn’t vote? Pre-1865 when slavery was legal? Pre-1776 when we were ruled by a king? It hasn’t always been pretty or even timely and more needs to be done but we have made progress in protecting the rights of people over the last 250 years. Let’s stay on that track! It won’t be easy but will be worth it. Happy spring!

FEDERATION NEWS

The annual Michigan Federation NARFE conference /meeting will be held from May 19-21, 2026, at Zehnder’s Splash Village, Hotel and Waterpark, 1365 S Main St., Frankenmuth, MI 48734. Lansing Chapter voted at the March meeting to support three members attending the conference. They will provide reports during the June Chapter meeting. NARFE President William Shackelford will be attending in person. Watch for further information on the special page on the [Michigan Federation Website](#).

OTHER NEWS OF INTEREST

IRS phase-out paper checks

Federal News Network article by Jory Heckman on March 10, 2026 titled: [IRS phase-out of paper checks leaves some taxpayers waiting months for refunds](#). “Hundreds of thousands of taxpayers are facing extended wait times to receive their tax refunds from the IRS amid a governmentwide push to phase out paper checks.

Democrats on the House Ways and Means Committee said more than 830,000 taxpayers have received notices from the IRS stating their refunds are delayed, because they did not provide banking information necessary to receive those refunds via direct deposit.”

IRS has also announced that they **will not be accepting paper checks after 2027 for tax payments**. Customers should plan ahead and consider creating an online account with the IRS.

The US Government’s Secret Tax

The US government’s secret tax that will lower your Social Security checks in 2026 (and beyond). [Prepare for it now](#) is the title of an article by Moneywise by Vishesh Raisinghani Feb 15, 2026

“Most retirees expect their Social Security benefits to rise each year. After all, that’s what the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) is designed for (1). On paper, this annual increase is meant to help benefits keep pace with inflation.

However, in practice, many retirees see part of that adjustment offset by federal income taxes triggered when their total income crosses certain thresholds. Because these thresholds are not indexed to inflation, a growing number of Social Security recipients are affected each year. This phenomenon is sometimes called “tax bracket creep.” If you’re collecting benefits in 2026 or beyond, here’s what you need to know about this oft-overlooked tax rule and how it can reduce your net Social Security income.” The link for more information is in the first paragraph of this item.

Expanded NARFE Bill Tracker Now Available Online

NARFE now has a new [Bill Tracker](#) on the website. Check out what federal workforce legislation is pending in Congress, where NARFE stands on it, how many cosponsors there are, and even connect to relevant action letters to let your views be known. NARFE has provided this information in the NARFE Magazine but now it is available daily. The NARFE Advocacy staff will update the page on a weekly basis to ensure that it contains accurate and relevant information for our members.

NARFE Bill Tracker

This tracker highlights legislation NARFE is following as of December 8, 2025. Expand a topic, then expand a bill to view details. Check back often for updates.

NARFE's Position

- Support
- Oppose
- No Position

Any questions? Email NARFE's advocacy staff.

Click to open to see the list of associated bills

Here are a couple of Bills currently in the works that our members need to keep track of as they work through the approval process in Washington, D.C.

H.R. 491/S.624 – Fair Cola Act. NARFE supports this bill. It will give full cost of Living adjustments to FERS Annuities based on changes in consumer prices. Under the current system, FERS retirees face a cap on their annual COLA, which leaves their retirement annuities vulnerable to the impacts of inflation. This policy disproportionately affects retirees, especially during times of high inflation when fixed monthly incomes are eroded by increasing costs for essential goods and services. [Send letter from Action Center on this bill.](#)

H.R. 7480/S. 3823 - Federal Adjustment of Income Rates (FAIR): NARFE supports this bill introduced by Rep. James Walkinshaw, D-VA and Sen. Brian Schatz, D-HI. The bill proposes a 4.1 percent pay increase for federal employees in 2027 with a 3.1% across-the-board increase, and a 1% average increase to locality pay rates. This increase falls in line with recent private-sector wage growth and the expected increase to military pay. Additionally, the increase would allow the federal government to better compete with the private sector to attract and retain a highly qualified, top-performing federal workforce and improve the morale of current employees. [Send letter from Action Center on this bill.](#)

ALZHEIMER’S NEWS

Did you know that Alzheimer’s Association has set up a [NARFE page](#) for our members. The page starts - “Welcomes, members of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE). If your life has been touched by Alzheimer’s disease or another dementia, know the Alzheimer’s Association is here and ready to help you. Whether you, a spouse, partner, relative or friend is a caregiver or living with Alzheimer’s, we provide education and support to the millions who face dementia every day.” **If you donate, be sure to indicate what state and chapter you are from. You can also [donate online through NARFE using this form.](#)**

WAYS OF PAYING FOR YOUR NARFE MEMBERSHIP

MONEY SAVING METHODS:

DUES WITHHOLDING - Members who receive an annuity can sign up for a monthly annuity deduction, also known as Dues Withholding, which takes a small portion of NARFE dues out of your annuity each month. The total annual amount charged is \$42, a \$6 annual savings. To sign up for Dues Withholding, simply fill out the form on the back of your renewal notice or in the magazine, or you can find the form online to print and mail back: <https://www.narfe.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/dw-2.pdf>

Note: Do not mail payment with your dues withholding form, simply complete the form and mail.

TWO OR THREE YEAR RENEWALS - Not yet retired or not ready to commit to dues withholding? Save money by signing up for a Two- or Three-Year renewal! Two-Year Renewal is \$92 (savings of \$2/annually) and Three-Year Renewal is \$126 (savings of \$6/annually). To sign up, select one of these options on your renewal notice, email memberrecords@narfe.org to request a change to your renewal invoice or call us at 800-456-8410 x1.

OTHER WAYS TO PAY:

AUTOPAY - While not a special discount for signing up for AutoPay, this does save you time and hassle of having to renew each year. Simply set it and forget it by providing your credit card number up front to be charged upon your membership expiration date. Simply login to <https://members.narfe.org> and click on My Account/My Settings/My AutoPay Account. Click on Save New Payment Type, complete the form and hit 'I agree to Pre-Authorize this card' and you're all set!

PAY YOUR DUES ONLINE - Save a stamp and pay your dues online! Login to <https://members.narfe.org> and click on My Account/My Invoices. If you do not see an open invoice, you do not owe any dues. This is a great way to check to see if we have received your renewal payment as well. Pro tip: Check in the early days of the following month for which you mailed your payment, dues payments are usually processed by that time for the previous month.

DO NOT FORGET TO ADD YOUR CHAPTER DUES

Thank you for being a member, I hope this helps make renewing a little easier for you and put some extra cash back in your pocket!

Reminder: Have you changed your home address, telephone number, or email address? If you have dropped your landline and are using your cell phone only, let me know. Please send Fran Johnston a message using link to send the Secretary a direct message upper left on this page. We don't want you to miss any copies of the NARFE magazine, chapter newsletter, or any notices we send out.

NARFE WEBSITES Important Web Addresses

Chapter Web Page address is:

<https://www.narfe.org/chapter0289/>

Federation Webpage address is:

<https://www.narfe.org/mi/>

National: <https://www.narfe.org/>

[NARFE National Headquarters | Facebook](#)

Federation NARFE Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/NARFEMI>

FEDHub: [Home - FEDHub \(narfe.org\)](https://www.narfe.org/)