



Michael P. Palazzotto Chapter 1264
 PO Box 552, Ridge, NY 11961-0552
 Chartered December 18, 1972

General Meetings 1st Wednesday (except January, February, July & August)
 10:30 AM at the Longwood Public Library Auditorium
 800 Middle Country Road, Middle Island, New York 11953

President / Editor Emeritus: Vincent Nasta

June 2026

President
 Editor
 Joanne Smith

1st Vice President
 PAC Chair
 John Eget

2nd Vice President
 Membership & Retention Chair
 Dorothy Owens

Treasurer
 Theresa Perrino

Secretary
 Alzheimer's Chair
 Bob Irish

Advocacy Leader
 Carl Schroder

Webmaster
 Helen Orlando

Hospitality: Vacancies (2)

INCLEMENT WEATHER - call the Longwood Library at (631) 924-6400 to determine if the building is open or not. Our meeting is canceled if the building is closed.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS, Email, or Renewals. Please call NARFE Membership Services at (800) 456-8410, press 2 (Monday to Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM), or email memberrecords@narfe.org so you can continue to receive your NARFE Magazine and Chapter Newsletters.

Did you know that your NARFE membership ID is on the second line of the mailing label on your monthly NARFE Magazine? It's all you need to access all your benefits on <https://www.narfe.org> <https://fedhub.narfe.org/home>

Our next meeting is scheduled for
 Wednesday, June 3, 2026, at 10:30 a.m.
 in the Longwood Public Library Auditorium

Our presentation this month will be NARFE's webinar on "Putting Your Affairs in Order," covering benefits available upon your death and how to preserve them, by NARFE's Federal Benefits Expert, Michele Bollier. Ms. Bollier is a retired federal benefits specialist who worked for the Department of the Interior for over 30 years, primarily in retirement and benefits, assisting employees with their needs while they were employed and then setting them up for retirement.

Join NARFE federal benefits expert Michele Bollier as she outlines clear and concise instructions on documenting your wishes in advance. Essential for responsible planning is recording your end-of-life wishes. Without proper organization, families can encounter avoidable legal issues, financial setbacks, and emotional hardship. Taking proactive steps ensures that benefits are protected and that loved ones receive clear guidance and support.

INFLATION

The CPI tracks two measures of inflation: headline and core. Headline inflation tracks specific subsets of consumer spending, such as food, housing, and transportation, to reflect the actual cost of living. The "basket of goods" is meant to represent the actual spending habits of a typical consumer in the US, and Core inflation tracks spending across all other categories.

3.8% headline inflation rate, all items
 (April 2025 to April 2026) and the

2.8% core inflation rate, excluding food and energy
 (April 2025 to April 2026)

The CPI-W inflation rate was 3.8%, as of April 2026 released May 12th. Even though 3.8% might sound low, it compiles on

top of the massive price hikes from previous years. This is why your grocery bills, rent, and insurance still feel incredibly heavy compared to a few years ago. Inflation refers to the rise in prices of goods and services over time, which reduces the purchasing power of the dollar. While several government datasets track price changes, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) represents about 90% of the US population. The CPI measures inflation by tracking price changes in a “basket of goods and services” over time, providing a clear picture of how inflation affects everyday living expenses.

The CPI tracks two measures of inflation: headline and core. Headline inflation tracks specific subsets of consumer spending, such as food, housing, and transportation, to reflect the actual cost of living. The “basket of goods” is meant to represent the actual spending habits of a typical consumer in the US. Core inflation tracks all other spending categories.

Food and energy prices, in particular, can be highly volatile due to factors such as weather and supply chain issues, so excluding these categories from core inflation gives a clearer picture of long-term price trends. Price changes within the basket of goods can vary widely. To account for this, the CPI uses a weighted system to reflect how much the average consumer spends on a particular category relative to other categories, so housing-related costs carry more weight than recreation costs.

The weighted system means that even if the prices of some items spike, the headline inflation rate reflects the overall change in costs across the entire basket of goods. While the current headline inflation rate is 3.8%, the cost of fuel oil and other fuels has increased by 31.9% compared to the previous year. On the other hand, egg prices have dropped by 39.2%. When considering only items included in the core inflation rate, jewelry and watches had the largest price increase, at 14.6%. Health insurance dropped the most (-6.1%).

The latest numbers show that while some categories have calmed down, "sticky" sectors,

such as things that don't change price easily, are keeping inflation elevated. The main culprits right now include:

- **Energy and Gas:** Energy costs spiked by 17.9% over the past year, heavily driven by rising gasoline prices.
- **Housing and Rent:** The cost of shelter jumped 3.3% over the year, making up a massive chunk of everyday household pressure.
- **Food:** Groceries and dining out have risen 3.2% compared to last year.

The Federal Reserve (the U.S. central bank) has a healthy inflation target of 2%. Because the current 3.8% rate is stubbornly above that goal, the Fed raises interest rates to make borrowing more expensive. This strategy deliberately cools down consumer spending to force businesses to lower their prices.

A very common point of confusion is thinking that when inflation "cools down," prices drop. They are not. A 3.8% rate means prices are still climbing, just at a slower speed than the 9.1% peak seen in 2022.

The next Bureau of Labor Statistics release of Consumer Price Index data for May will be on June 10th.

NARFE Webinars Coming Soon:



- Understanding Alzheimer's
Thursday, May 28th,
2026, 2:00 p.m. ET
- AMS and Microsites

Training with NARFE's Configuration Advisory Board (CAB),

Thursday, June 4th, 2 p.m. ET

- Should I Stay or Should I Go?
Thursday, June 11th, 2 p.m. ET
- Preparing for Retirement,
Thursday, June 18th, 2 p.m. ET
- The Retirement Process,
Thursday, June 25th, 2 p.m. ET
- Three Health Plan Options for Federal Annuitants,
Thursday, July 1st, 2 p.m. ET

NARFE.org/chapter1264

Great place to find a wealth of information!

We always post our chapter newsletters, and our chapter meeting minutes are accessible only to chapter members.

A New Medicare Program Will Soon Cover GLP-1 Weight Loss Drugs

This summer, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is launching the Medicare GLP-1 Bridge program, which extends coverage of GLP-1 weight-loss medications to eligible Medicare Part D beneficiaries, regardless of whether they have an underlying medical condition. Previously, Medicare only covered GLP-1s for conditions like diabetes or cardiovascular disease, not for weight loss. For federal annuitants enrolled in Part D, this program could expand your options.

What Is It and Who Qualifies? -The program launches July 1 and operates outside of standard Part D benefits. Medicare beneficiaries enrolled in a standalone Part D plan (PDP) or a Medicare Advantage plan with Part D (MA-PD), including Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) employer group waiver plans (EGWPs), are eligible. To qualify, your doctor must submit a prior authorization confirming the drug is prescribed for weight loss alongside lifestyle modifications, and that the beneficiary is at least 18 with a BMI of 35 or higher (lower thresholds apply for those with qualifying medical conditions).

Costs and Drug Access - The program charges a flat \$50 copay per covered drug, which may be more than what you currently pay through your FEHB Part D plan. Compare prices using your carrier's prescription drug tool before using this new program.

The main advantage of the program will be broader access to GLP-1s: the program covers all formulations of Wegovy and Foundayo, as well as the KwikPen version of Zepbound. Many FEHB plans cover only some of these (for example, BCBS Basic & Standard only covers Wegovy but not Zepbound or Foundayo). One important caveat: the \$50 copay does not count toward the catastrophic limit, either from Part D or the medical catastrophic out-of-pocket limit from the FEHB plan, which could increase your total out-of-pocket costs.

Should Annuitants Subject to IRMAA Reconsider Part D? - If you've opted out of Part D due to Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (IRMAA) surcharges, the math may still favor enrolling. For example, Wegovy (0.25mg) costs \$640/month without Part D under BCBS Standard, compared to \$35/month with Part D coverage. Even at the highest IRMAA surcharge (\$91/month), having Part D saves roughly \$514/month. Note that Part D only requires Part A enrollment; opting out of Part B doesn't disqualify you. And, you don't have to wait until Open Season to enroll in a PDP. FEHB carriers that offer PDPs allow enrollment year-round.

How to Use the Program - Talk to your doctor, not your FEHB plan. Your provider submits the prior authorization to the program's central processor. You then pick up your medication at the pharmacy and pay the \$50 copay. Additional operational details from CMS are expected before the July 1 launch. Note that this demonstration program is currently set to expire on December 31, 2027.

Message from Chapter President



This month's chapter newsletter is being emailed to all members. Moving forward, we will send out newsletters by mail in alternating months. To ensure you stay informed, I must have your email address on file so you can receive all newsletters. We are planning to discontinue mailing newsletters effective March 2027 and will shift to e-mail only due to increasing expenses for the non-profit postal permit, newsletter printing, and rising USPS mailing costs.

June will be our last program before the summer break. I hope you have enjoyed the programs presented throughout the year. Have a healthy, safe summer.....see you in September!

Join us on Wednesday, June 3rd, for our NARFE Chapter meeting, as explained on the cover page. Don't miss this opportunity to connect and grow with fellow members! Please note that a social hour will follow the meeting.

Joanne Smith
Joanne Smith