



Ohio Federation Newsletter 2023

NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

DECEMBER 2023

OHIO FEDERATION UPDATE

**PRESIDENT
TIM GARTNER**

**VP MEMBERSHIP
VACANT**

**VP LEGISLATION
ALBERT GRIGGS JR**

**SECRETARY
VACANT**

**TREASURER
LYNNETTE RARICK**

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FRAN LEISZ**

**REGION IV VP
ROBERT HELFRICH**

**REGION IV
ALZHEIMER'S COORDINATOR
DIANA IULIANO-CHAN**

President Message

Another year has come and gone. We will soon start 2024. So, let us look at where the Association and Federation is and where we need to go in the future.

First off, "Thank You," to our chapter and federation officers as well as any member that dedicated time and energy to the survival of your chapter as well as our association. Without volunteers serving the chapters and federation we would cease to exist. That said, here is what I foresee for 2024. Again, thanks to all our members that continue to support NARFE. As many of you may know, NARFE membership numbers are declining. In the mid-1990s we had almost 500,000 members! We currently have around 135,000. This is less than 2% of the eligible federal employees and retirees that could be members. NARFE is a membership driven association. NARFE's operating revenue comes from our national dues. If we continue to lose members, we will not be able to sustain our existence.

In 2024 we, the membership, need to get back to recruiting for our association. Back in the 80s & 90s we had many members that did not hesitate to tell other fellow workers what NARFE is and what it is all about. When was the last time you talked to someone you worked with, or a fellow retiree and mentioned NARFE? Our name, "NARFE" after 100 years is STILL not widely known among our fellow employees and retirees. They do not know that NARFE is the only organization that has one agenda, and that agenda is to "Protect our Earned Benefits". We do not have the recruiters of yesteryear, so, each one of us needs to talk to a federal employee or retiree that we know and tell them what NARFE is. If each one of us just talked to one person and is able to recruit them to join NARFE, our association would double in size by the end of 2024. This is not a hard task, just talk to a friend about NARFE. Let them know why you joined. I believe that if you just do this, they will join NARFE. Tell them about the monthly magazine with information dealing with federal employees as well as retirees. Tell them about the NARFE website, webinars on subjects such as healthcare, legislative bills, estate planning, wellness issues, Social Security, and so much more and it is FREE to NARFE members.

CONTINUED.....

HQs also has a “Benefits Expert Department” that can answer any question concerning employee or retirement issues. I like to refer to them as our own personal OPM experts. So, as a NARFE chapter/national-only member, a chapter/federation officer, there is a need for all of us to work to “maintain” and “recruit” new members. We need to do this if we want our association to continue for another 100 years. All of us must be involved with bringing in new members. Asking you to recruit one member next year is a simple request. Please, be a dedicated NARFE member and help us bring our membership back to the 500,000 as it was in the mid-1990s.

Tim Gartner, Ohio Federation President

Membership Report of the Ohio Federation

Here is the ‘good news’! At NARFE HQ they released the membership numbers at 135,000+. The number of members not renewing their membership has slowed down and reinstatements/recruiting has started on an upswing trend. This is a positive trend that we hope continues for the future. In Ohio we still sit at twenty-seven (27) chapters. We are working with a few chapters to get them back to full speed.

Here are our current Chapter numbers:

As of Nov 1, 2023, we have 4,020 members in Ohio. Of those only 1,916 are chapter members.

Do you see the trend? Since the beginning of 2017 we have seen just over 1,400 chapter members become national-only members. Reasons transferred; no longer drive, too far to meeting, uninteresting speakers, and ill health just to name a few.

Main reason chapters are closing; chapter members are getting older and younger members are not stepping up to be chapter officers. This has been the issue for many years now.

Last issue for chapters – We have one chapter with 2 members. Another with 8 members but no local officers. (A federation officer is serving as the chapter president). We have three chapters that are having some issues with officers and are talking possible closure.

Now, just because a chapter closes does not mean we lose those members. Some transfer to another chapter within their area, those that do not become a national-only member. National-only members are still members of NARFE and the Ohio federation. They are just no longer associated with a local chapter. As you see they now are larger in numbers than our chapters. The federation is still here to support the chapters as well as the national-only members.

<u>Chapter members - 1,916</u>			
Chap under 25 Mbrs -	8	Chap under 50 Mbrs -	4
Chap under 100 Mbrs -	8	Chap under 200 Mbrs -	5
Over 200 Mbrs -	1		

National-only members - 2,104

Submitted by Tim Gartner

FYI - NARFE has been doing some advertising on-line, in newsletters at various agencies, and on Facebook, twitter, radio ads, etc. We, at the federation, may look at doing some advertising at agencies in the Cincinnati, Columbus, Dayton, Cleveland, and Toledo areas. These are areas with large numbers of Federal employees/retirees. If we do we are hoping to work with the Marketing Dept. at NARFE HQ. We are always looking for new ideas. If you or one of your officers has an idea/suggestion contact your District Vice President (DVP) or one of the federation officers.

CURRENT FEDERAL EMPLOYEES—WE NEED YOUR HELP

We must increase our membership numbers to sustain our mission to protect our earned benefits. You joined NARFE because you knew there was value in being a member. We need to get the word out to others at your agencies so that they too will join us in our mission.

In years past the agencies held Health Fairs and Pre-Retirement Seminars and invited NARFE to come and speak to the employees about the benefits of being a NARFE member. After 9/11 it became exceedingly difficult if not impossible to get into the agencies.

Does your agency have a FACEBOOK Page, or do they publish a weekly or monthly newsletter? Is there a way we could advertise NARFE to the employees? If so, send us a point of contact so we can reach out to them. **Email the information to sgartner@windstream.net**

Here are some things you can tell your fellow employees about NARFE:

NARFE's team of professional lobbyists continue to work tirelessly on behalf of the federal community. Supported by grassroots activists, NARFE is a leading voice in Washington and across the country. Just one example is The Equal COLA Act, H.R. 866. It is one of NARFE's legislative priorities and its passage would provide the full COLA for FERS annuities, which would be in line with the full COLAs that CSRS retirees and Social Security beneficiaries currently receive. Current law doesn't allow for a FERS COLA until age 62 and reduces COLAs for FERS annuities when the COLA is higher than 2 percent, eating away at the value of the annuity over time. Over the course of a retirement, and based on historical inflation figures, an average FERS annuity would lose nearly \$88,000 over a 30-year retirement.

Someday you will retire, and you will want to be as informed about all your options as possible. Decisions you make about your retirement options will affect your standard of living for the rest of your life.

NARFE Federal Benefits Institute - NARFE Federal Benefits Institute is a members-only resource designed to help NARFE members take charge of their federal benefits and guarantee a secure future. As a member you receive access to webinars, benefits briefs, and other FREE resources.

FEDERAL RETIREES AND SURVIVOR ANNUITANTS—WE NEED YOUR HELP

We need your help also. Do you still have contact with the agencies you retired from? Do you subscribe to a retirement publication or view info about your agencies on social media? If so, send us a point of contact so we can reach out to them. **Email the information to sgartner@windstream.net**

If we all work together as current federal employees, retirees, and survivor annuitants we can increase our membership numbers and continue to receive the vital information we need.

Membership: Who Can Join?

Membership in NARFE, the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, is open to civilians who are or will be eligible to receive an annuity or survivor annuity from the federal retirement programs of any agency of the United States government.

That includes:

- Current federal employees
- Retirees
- Spouses and surviving spouses of those eligible to join NARFE
- Former federal employees
- A former spouse who is entitled to a federal survivor annuity

REASONS TO BECOME A NARFE MEMBER

NARFE members have:

Powerful **representation and advocacy** before Congress, the Office of Personnel Management and the White House

Award-winning **NARFE Magazine**, the prime source of information and guidance on critical legislation and benefit issues and updates

Access to a team of **federal benefits specialists** for personal answers to complex questions

NARFE FEDERAL BENEFITS INSTITUTE

We know federal benefits are complicated and that there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution for every fed. The NARFE Federal Benefits Institute is a members-only resource designed to help NARFE members take charge of their federal benefits. NARFE's federal benefits experts provide assistance to help NARFE members resolve issues surrounding annuities, insurance, Medicare, Social Security and more. NARFE members have a responsive and reliable team of experts at their service, available by email, phone, or fax.

The Institute serves as a gateway to live and recorded learning events and valuable resources.

For ongoing access to on-demand sessions, institute experts, benefits briefs and other free resources, join NARFE today.

**IN MEMORY
OF
DIANA JEAN DILLER**



Diana served as the Ohio Federation of Chapters Secretary for many years. If you attended a Federation State Conference she was the one you first saw to get your conference package and she always had a smile on her face.

Diana passed away peacefully in her sleep on November 6, 2023, at her residence.

Diana was born on Oct 6, 1947, in Lima, Ohio to Armin and Mildred (Frueh) Diller Jr.

Diana graduated from LCC in 1965. She was the local and state secretary and treasurer of NARFE. Diana was a member of AFL, and she organized the Labor Day Parade for many years. She retired from the Post Office, working at the Lima, Elida and Cridersville post offices. Diana was both an OSU and a Lima Locos fan. She also enjoyed playing cards, bingo, cruises, and wine trips.

She is survived by her siblings, Armin (Sue) Diller III, Alice Diller, Cathy Julian, and Joyce (John) Dunham; 8 nieces and nephews; 17 ½ great nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents.

Diana will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

**And HE will raise you up
on eagles' wings,
Bear you on
the breath of dawn,
Make you to shine
like the sun,
And hold you in the palm
of His hand.**

Advocacy Update

As we gear up for the New Year, NARFE is proud to highlight a major milestone in our advocacy efforts for the Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82/S 597. Throughout 2023, through the dedication of both our grassroots and grassstops advocates, we achieved a remarkable feat – amassing 300 cosponsors for the repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) in the House of Representatives. This achievement goes beyond the mere number; it signifies that we've surpassed the critical threshold of 290 cosponsors needed to trigger the House Consensus Calendar rule that would force House committee or floor action. Your dedication to this cause has been instrumental in building the bipartisan support required for meaningful legislative change.

Exciting New Year Ahead: Gear Up for Grassroots Advocacy!

As we approach the end of 2023, NARFE's Grassroots division is preparing diligently for the forthcoming year. In 2023, NARFE members attained substantial legislative achievements through their steadfast commitment to advocacy. The undeniable influence of your voices stands as a testament to our collective progress.

In the spirit of progress and innovation, we're proud to announce a fresh wave of grassroots activities set to launch in 2024. These initiatives are designed to empower our members with new avenues to make their voices heard and drive positive change.

To close out the year, we're initiating a series of engaging activities throughout December. These activities will provide an opportunity to reflect on our achievements in 2023 and create momentum for our 2024 grassroots initiatives.

Anticipate the rollout of new educational resources in 2024, poised to sharpen your advocacy skills and deepen your comprehension of all key issues. As part of our forthcoming initiatives, we are dedicated to furnishing you with the knowledge and tools required to drive substantial change. Members can look forward to the launch of these resources this month.

To conclude 2023 grassroots efforts strongly and with a continued forceful push for our legislative priorities, we strongly urge all NARFE members to send a letter to their Member of Congress, urging support for the Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82/S. 597 that would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO).

As we look ahead to 2024, NARFE is committed to strengthening our grassroots efforts, with your advocacy always at the forefront of our mission. Keep an eye out for more updates and details on these exciting initiatives!

narfe.org/advocacy

Let's make our voices heard, loud and clear to pave the way for a fairer future for all federal retirees!

OHIO CHAPTER NEWS

MICHAEL WEBB—DISTRICT VP—DAYTON AREA

RECORD CROWD AT MIAMI VALLEY (DAYTON) CHAPTER 1927 MEETING

The Dayton Miami Valley Chapter 1927 hosted a record crowd for its December 1st, 2023, meeting of an estimated 65 members and guests. The Guest speaker was Blue Cross/Blue Shield Representative Wava Iker. As an added bonus, Chapter Vice President Michael Madges recruited two new members at the event. Such a crowd was not unexpected. Chapter 1927 averages 30 attendees at its meetings. This proves that chapters can be revived and prosper in our current environment. All that's needed is a will to succeed and a willingness to adopt new practices.

Miami Valley Chapter 1927 has a progressive board that over time has developed a formula for success. The chapter has an active website which is updated frequently. Chapter meetings and events are announced in the Dayton Daily News Local focus section. Well written newsletters are mailed to members 6 times a year. Emails are sent out via the Ohio Federation FEDHub community and through the NES (NARFE Email System) informing members of upcoming meetings and events. The chapter holds monthly meetings alternating between board and full chapter meetings. Chapter meetings are led and moderated by dynamic and enthusiastic officers. And last, but not least, the chapter strives to invite interesting and dynamic guest speakers. In short, the chapter conducts interesting and entertaining meetings.

NARFE's mission of advocacy and our federal benefits focus is always a significant part of our meetings and planning. We never lose sight of our core mission and values. We exist to protect our hard earned pay and benefits and to help our members get the most out of their federal benefits. The meeting agendas, which are published on the chapter website in advance, always include legislative and membership reports. Chapter officers review pending legislation and proposals that would impact our benefits and cover member benefits including upcoming webinars and other NARFE perks. In other words, members are continually reminded about what NARFE does for them. Chapters and NARFE will thrive as long as we are faithful to our mission and values.

Finally, find people in your chapters who are good public speakers to preside over meetings. That person isn't always the chapter president. The presiding officer will set the stage for a successful meeting and will lead to a vibrant and thriving chapter.

Michael Webb, Dayton District Vice President and Chapter 1927 President



_ December 2023 Newsletter
Federation Treasurer/Toledo District VP

The Ohio Federation is moving forward after the November 6 passing of our State Secretary, Diana Diller. Diana wore many hats within the organization and was active in her community, Lima Ohio, and with her Union – APWU. The loss to her Chapter, the State AFL-CIO, the Ohio Federation and to the Federation Board is minimal compared to the huge loss her loved ones.

State of the Toledo District Chapters

John Polk/Lima Chapter 317

Diana's Lima Chapter held their December meeting, Tuesday, Dec. 12. The Chapter President, Alice Bennett, asked for the chapter to meet and 'gather themselves' since it would be the first meeting since Diana's passing. Meeting attendees are reaching out to members to get them interested in attending meetings. The Lima Chapter meets the third Wednesday of even-numbered months. The December meeting is held on the second Tuesday of the month.

Williams Co., /Bryan Chapter 1136

Diana was the Secretary-Treasurer of Bryan Chapter, where I remain the sole officer as Chapter President. Diana and I were to do an Audit of the Bryan Chapter accounts in November. The annual newsletter was mailed to members with the announcement of Diana's passing. Chapter 1136 will begin the closing progress in early 2024.

Fulton-Henry Co. Chapter 1856

Fulton-Henry Co. Chapter 1856 did hold its November meeting. The sole officer is updating financial and roster information. Chapter 1856 meets the first Wednesday in odd-numbered months.

Firelands Chapter 382

Sandusky-Firelands Chapter is very active and interactive. This Chapter has responsible, reliable officers. There is a full meeting agenda followed at each meeting. Their meeting month varies; but meetings are held on the fourth Monday at 1:00 pm at the Golden Corral in Sandusky.

Toledo Chapter 226

Toledo Chapter follows a meeting agenda, has active officers, makes regular donations to NARFE Alzheimer's Research and to a local charity. At the December meeting, there was a Guest Speaker, Joe Habib from St. Paul's Community Center, an optional gift exchange, a Christmas game, holiday cookies and treats. The men loaded our St. Paul's donations Joe's vehicle. The Toledo Chapter meets at 11:30 a.m. on the first Monday of every month. September meetings moved to the second Monday, as will be the January 2024 meeting.

Treasurer Information

With the start of the new year, many chapters will be doing their 'yearend' audits.

To the Chapters and Chapter Treasurers – please use **the F131** to report your Chapter Audits. This form is available at narfe.org and is also on page 30 of the F-10.'

According to the Federation Bylaws template, the Federation President will appoint an Audit Committee to review the books. Diana Diller had set January 21, 2023, for the 2022 Audit of the Federation accounts. Diana and Alice Bennett conducted the audit. At the time of the Audit, National – NARFE Headquarters, had not yet issued **the F-132**. When that form was available, the Federation did file it with NARFE National/HQ.

SANDY GARTNER-DISTRICT VP-COLUMBUS AREA

Chapter 235 Columbus NARFE Chapter 235 had not been meeting due to the pandemic. The board met in June and decided to revitalize the chapter and have been meeting each month since. They have increased the number of members attending at each meeting. They meet the 1st Thursday of the month at the MCL Cafeteria, 5240 E. Main St. in Whitehall. At the November meeting they had Chase Dixon, from Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) give a presentation on the FEHBP Open Season and the new Medicare Part D. At their December meeting they had their Christmas Party and had a new member attend. As of 12-4-2023 they have 133 chapter members, and 292 national only members for a total of 425 members.

Chapter 310 Licking County Newark meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at Heritage Hall Senior Center located at 1058 E Main St., Newark, OH. The chapter held their annual picnic in August and had a very good turnout. In November Chase Dixon from BlueCross/BlueShield spoke about the changes to our FEHBP and the new Medicare Part D option. The chapter is running a membership drive where a member pays \$20.00 for a guest membership and the chapter picks up the rest. So far they have signed up 7 new members. The drive will continue until the end of the month. The chapter met in December for their Christmas Party and had 20 Members in attendance. As of 12-4-2023 there are 285 chapter members and 101 national only members for a total of 386 members.

Chapter 612 Johnny Appleseed_Mansfield currently has 19-chapter members and 42-national only members for a total of 61. They meet at the Golden Corral Restaurant, 575 Lexington-Springmill Rd., Ontario, OH on the second Monday of the month at 1:00 for lunch followed by the meeting. The December meeting was attended by the Ohio Federation President Tim Gartner and myself. Joe Cinadr their chapter president ask for nominations for officers. The current officers agreed to run again and will be voted on at the January meeting due to the secretary not being able to attend this meeting. Joe also gave a legislative update on the GPO/WEP.

JOE LEISZ-DISTRICT VP-CLEVELAND AREA—Total members in the district = 994

AKRON CANTON DISTRICT—DVP Vacant

CINCINNATI DISTRICT—DVP Vacant

Thanks to all the BlueCross/BlueShield representatives for inviting us to participate in several Health Fairs during FEHBP Open Season. This gives us the opportunity to speak to many federal employees and retirees from many different agencies and let them know about the benefits of becoming a NARFE member. Also thanks to the representatives that gave presentations at several of our chapters.



Great News for our NARFE members! The NARFE-Alzheimer's Research Program raised **\$1,220,734.37 in Fiscal Year 2023!** (This is for the period July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.) This is the highest amount raised during the history of the NARFE-Alzheimer's Research Program in one year!

NARFE-Alzheimer's was able to grant research funding for five programs during the NARFE Alzheimer's National Committee Virtual Training on November 8-9, 2023. The research projects sponsored are:

- (1) \$400,000. ALZ-NET (Alzheimer's Network for Treatment and Diagnostics). This project will help clinicians and scientists collect and use real-world data in order to improve brain health outcomes.
- (2) \$400,000. U.S. POINTER – One of the world's largest clinical trials designed to evaluate whether lifestyle interventions can protect cognitive function in older adults.
- (3) \$200,000 – 3 years, fully sponsored. Danielle Gulick, Ph. D. - Study of alcohol use and ApoE Genotype in Alzheimer's Disease risk.
- (4) \$159,452 – 2 years, fully sponsored. Darlingtona Esiaka, Ph. D. - Study on sleep and Alzheimer's Disease risk among older African-Americans.
- (5) \$61,283 of \$250,000 (partial sponsorship). Enmanuel Perez, M.D., Ph. D. - Study the effect of Glial ApoE on traumatic brain injury and Alzheimer's.

As of December, NARFE members have donated **\$104,757** to the **WALK to End Alzheimer's!** We have surpassed our goal of \$100,000! **Great Job NARFE members!** Chapters can start registering NOW for the **2024 WALK to End Alzheimer's**. Just go to: <https://www.alz.org/narfewalk> and register your chapter. Be sure to appoint a captain for your team and start raising funds for the 2024 WALK which will be held in your local area. Remember, the funds raised for the WALK support your local Alzheimer's for education, administrative expenses and support. We are in this **TOGETHER** with Alzheimer's Association!

Alzheimer's Association has set up a **Planned Gift Giving** for members who wish to make donations from their IRA (Individual Retirement Account), a charitable gift annuity, a charitable remainder trust, gifts through a Will or Trust. More information can be obtained from Alzheimer's at plannedgiving@alz.org or by calling 866-233-5148. The amounts donated by NARFE members in a planned gift also counts towards the NARFE's National Goal, which is now **\$17,000,000** by the end of 2025.

REMEMBER! The FIRST Survivor of Alzheimer's is out there! Let's continue to Fight to find a cure!

If you have any questions regarding the NARFE-Alzheimer's Research Program, please contact Fran Leisz, Ohio Federation Alzheimer's Coordinator at leiszjc@att.net, or Diana Iuliano-Chan, Region IV NARFE Alzheimer's Regional Coordinator at diananarfe341@gmail.com.