

**National Active & Retired Federal Employees  
Chapter #331  
York, Pennsylvania  
Newsletter May/June 2020**

**FROM THE PRESIDENT**

It is May 1<sup>st</sup> and the COVID-19 virus still has us ‘hunkering down’. Social distancing, a new phrase brought on by the coronavirus, is a term commonly spoken every day now. Will this be added to Webster’s Dictionary for 2021? Social distancing; avoiding crowds; elbow bumps; wearing masks; gloves; six-foot separation; and one-way isles at the food store; these conditions are the new normal now! But wait, I can’t even get into the food store! New shoppers are controlled until enough customers exit to maintain minimal crowding inside! So, I stand outside and wait. There will be one more consequence of the coronavirus which will affect our culture long after the virus epidemic has passed. You remember the Crew-Cut hair style, then the Flat Top, a Mohawk, the Beat-nick look, and for the girls, Curly Bobs, Poodle Bubble, the Punk-Rock era (pink hair), Pony-Tail; well coming soon will be the latest rage sported by all of the trend setters, Dr. Levine Locks. This dear lady has taught us how to wash our hands, sing Happy Birthday, explained Flattening-the-Curve and the recession, reported to us the daily statistics of new cases, testing, and results. Those of us in Pennsylvania are lucky to have her.

As the coronavirus caused the cancellation of the April membership meeting, the May meeting will also be cancelled. There is still an average of 1,200+ new cases reported each day this week throughout Pennsylvania. The new cases of COVID-19 may have leveled off, but the new daily cases have not begun to decline. The risk for exposure is still high, especially for those of us who regularly attend the Membership Meetings and are in a high-risk category, so we should not be out during times like these. In addition to this, the Meadow Hill Restaurant is presently closed, respecting COVID-19 protocols and there is no guarantee that they will be open by our meeting date of May 12.

Still not much moving along in Congress, in fact, the pandemic has caused many Congress members to leave the Capital. Back in February or early March the Trump budget was sent to Congress. This budget was summarized in an article in the April issue of the NARFE magazine. The President’s budget is similar to what he has submitted in the past. It calls for over \$179 billion in cuts to the earned benefits of federal employees and retirees, undermines past and future service to this nation and takes aim at the retirement security of the federal community. It eliminates the Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs) to Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) annuities and reduces COLAs by 0.5% for Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) annuities; asks for an increase to FERS employee contributions to retirement without any corresponding increases in benefits; elimination of the fully funded FERS annuity supplement; reduction of the TSP Plan G Fund rate of return; calculation of federal annuities

using the average of the highest five years of salary; and a reduction of paid leave by combining sick and annual leave. The president's proposal included these cuts under the General Services Administration's (GSA) budget, indicating that the administration is still leaning toward eliminating the Office of Personal Management (OPM). He also offered a suggested 1.0% pay raise (2.5% below a mark Congress has set) while simultaneously taking credit for a strong economy, low unemployment, and high private-sector wages, shows a total lack of appreciation for the work of civil servants. The proposals outlined by the President's budget require Congressional approval. Let's hope Congress stops this proposal from moving along.

Jim Dine, President

## **CHAPTER MEETING/PROGRAM NEWS**

Tuesday, May 12, 2020

**Cancelled due to the coronavirus.**

Tuesday, June 9, 2020

NARFE Chapter 331 meeting will be at the *Meadow Hill Family Restaurant* located at **2935 E Prospect Rd., York, PA 17402** the meeting is at **12:00 noon**. Order from the menu. Please leave a tip for your waitress. Joan Groh with Hospice & Community Care whose topic will be Making Your Wishes Known: A Living Will May Not Be Enough.

### **Senate and Congressional Contacts**

*U.S. Senator Bob Casey: (717) 231-7540 (Harrisburg) or (202) 244-6324 (Washington, D.C.)*

*U.S. Senator Pat Toomey: (717) 782-3951 (Harrisburg) or (202) 224-4254 (Washington, D.C.)*

*Congressman Scott Perry: (717) 603-4980 (Harrisburg) or (202) 224-6324 (Washington, D.C.)*

*Congressman Lloyd Smucker: (717) 393-0667 (Lancaster) or 202-225-2411 (Washington, D.C.)*

### **Chapter Officers**

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