

Arlington NARFE Chapter 1201 Newsletter

October 2019 - January 2020 Vol. XIX No. 3

<http://www.narfe.org/site/chapter1201/>

Chapter 1201 Monthly Meetings

When: Third Monday every month except second Monday in January and February

Time: 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. (Business Meeting) 11:15 a.m. - Noon (Program Speaker)

Place: Eunice Activity Center, 1000 Eunice Street, Arlington, Texas 76010

At the August 19, 2019, Chapter 1201 Meeting, Andy Nguyen gave answers to questions that had been previously submitted to Congressman Ron Wright's office by Chapter 1201. Those questions and answers were published in the June 2019 - September 2019 issue of this newsletter.

Members also asked additional questions at the meeting and answers to those questions appear below.

1. A month ago, Star Telegram said Congressman said that women who have abortions should go to prison.

o Andy clarified statement that Congressman Wright was talking about the doctors who break the law.

2. Social Security officials: Studies suggest throughout the years that the social security fund was solid. Now government is saying that the fund is no longer stable, and that government has been borrowing from the funds without replacing it. Why is this happening and when will the government pay back what they have borrowed?

o In an effort to preserve the fiscal health of Social Security and Medicare trust funds, H.R. 1215 would establish a Social Security Surplus Protection Account in the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and a Medicare Surplus Protection Account in the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund. Creation of these accounts would restrict the federal government's ability to spend surplus funds on other obligations. Congressman Wright is very concerned about the long-term solvency of Social Security and Medicare. H.R. 1215 has been referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means, of which Congressman Wright is not a member.

3. Federal employees should worry about social security running out in 2034. Why won't government remove the social security caps and raise the limit to \$340,000.00? This could help extend the life of social security.

o Current estimates predict that the trust fund for Social Security will be able to meet only 80 percent of its obligations by 2035. Americans have paid into this program for most of their lives and deserve the benefits they earned and were promised. Congressman Wright does not want Social Security to falter and wants reforms so that it will be there for Americans for years to come. You may be pleased to hear that Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for nearly 69 million Americans will increase 1.6 percent in 2020. In order to pay for such an increase, new payroll taxes would have to be levied that could have unanticipated implications on Main Street businesses, as local job creators find it harder to expand.

4. What is Congressman Wright's views on lowering costs or making community college free for everyone?

o Congressman Wright is looking for solutions to help reduce the cost for two-year institutions... NOT make it free.

5. Medicare: Forcing USPS to join Medicare or lose their plan B insurance benefits. Is this because of insurance companies?

o Congressman Wright is not for any such bill.

6. Question by Duane Raffety– What does Congressman Wright think about Healthcare costs in America? Costs of prescriptions, procedures, doctors, etc. are becoming too much. The American people are becoming afraid for their ability to pay for healthcare. Thoughts on the affordable care act? Congressman Wright should pass a law that would ban Drug companies from advertising their drugs on TV, which you need a Doctor's note to even receive.

o Congressman Wright is looking to find solutions and is unhappy with the progress on reducing healthcare costs, including insurance premium. Congressman Wright feels strongly that transparency throughout the healthcare system will reduce cost

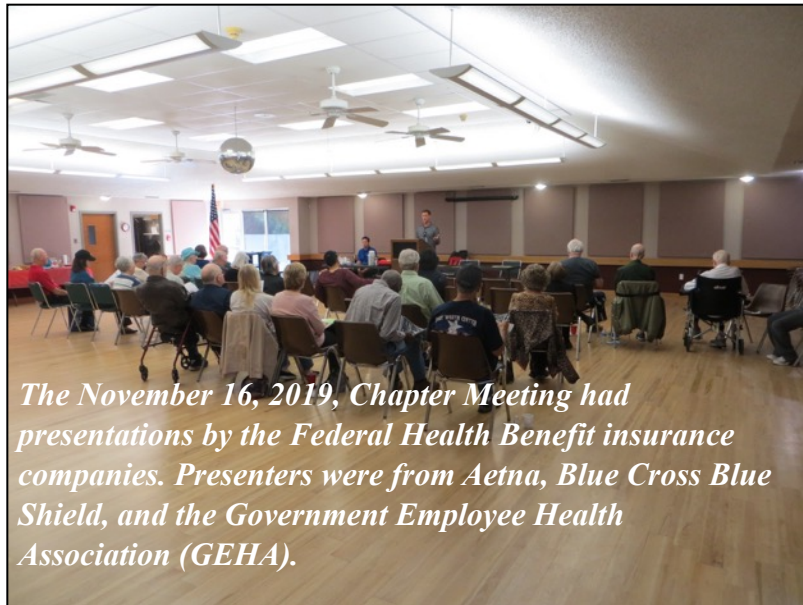
7. Pharmaceutical Companies should not advertise their drugs on TV, which they use 50% of their budgets for. If they are not allowed to advertise, then they would have enough money for research and development which then would have savings passed to the customer.

o Congressman Wright understands the frustration of the high cost of drugs and medicines. He had personally experienced this frustration. Congressman believes that we can solve this problem more effectively by improving price transparency and competition.

8. Why do customers in America pay more for prescriptions than other countries? Why can a drug company be able to change the recipe for their drug is made on paper (yet not actually change how the drug is made) to receive an extension on their patent? This should not be allowed.

o The cost of prescription drugs has skyrocketed in recent years, becoming a major concern for many Americans. While some believe government intervention in drug pricing is the answer, the Congressman disagrees. A report from the Council of Economic Advisers found that government price controls on prescription drugs could lead to as many as 100 fewer lifesaving drugs, or one-third of the total number of drugs, from entering the United States market. Instead, he believes the best way to bring down drug prices is by promoting competition and enhancing transparency and accountability in drug pricing.

Congressman Wright is a cosponsor of H.R. 2455, the Ensuring Timely Access to Generics Act introduced by Representative John Joyce (R-PA) on May 20, 2019. The bill would bring generic medicine to the market more quickly, bringing drug costs down. Congressman Wright is also a cosponsor of H.R. 19, the Lower Costs, More Cures Act. This critical legislation will lower out of pocket spending for American consumers while protecting research and development into new medicines, promoting competition, and enhancing transparency.



The November 16, 2019, Chapter Meeting had presentations by the Federal Health Benefit insurance companies. Presenters were from Aetna, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and the Government Employee Health Association (GEHA).



The Annual Chapter 1201 Meeting was held on December 16, 2019. After the installation of officers for 2020, members enjoyed some delicious holiday food.

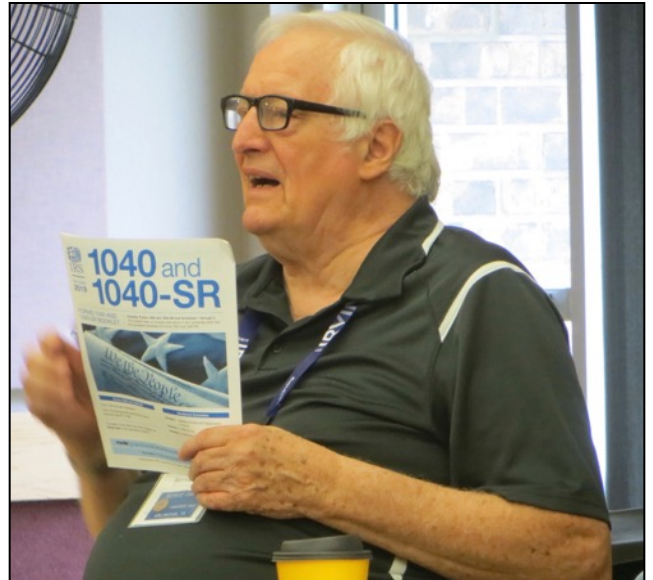


Chapter 1201 Officers for 2020

Left to right: Dennis Gaster, President; Linda Heartley, Vice President, Programs; Geraldine Arnold, Secretary; Julius Lyons, Treasurer; and Ben Weiger, Vice President, Membership.



Back by popular demand, Darrell McCallum sang a music medley for members at the January 13, 2020, meeting.



At the February 10, 2020, meeting, Chapter members Bernie Owen, Mike Kortum, and Ben Weiger presented helpful income tax information for the 2019 Tax Year.





**Programs
by Linda Heartley
Second Vice-President for Programs**

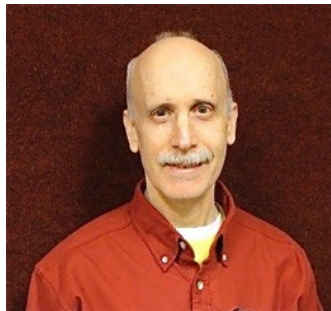
Programs for March, April, May, June, and July were cancelled.

Programs for the rest of the year depend upon the re-opening date of the Eunice Activity Center.

- March 16, 2020..... **Aging Well in Arlington and Update on New Senior Center** by Ms. Alva Roy, Ambassadors for Aging Well
- April 20, 2020..... **The Benefits of Massage Therapy for Seniors** by Ms. Keva Mack, Keva Mack Massage and Wellness
- May 18, 2020,..... **Vietnam and Asia Today** by Mr. Larry Bowling, member, Chapter 1201 and retired Air Force veteran
- June 15, 2020..... **Annual Picnic Luncheon**
- July 20, 2020..... **Who Said Mobility Can't be Fun** by Mr. Paul Saueressig, Mobility City North Texas
- August 17, 2020..... **Legislative Update or Meet the Candidate TBD**
- September 21, 2020..... **Stephen Daniel, Democratic Candidate for U.S. Congress, District 6, Texas**
- October 19, 2020..... **The Benefits of Massage Therapy for Seniors** by Ms. Keva Mack, Keva Mack Massage and Wellness
- November 16, 2020..... **2021 Federal Health Benefits**, Ms. Kristine Scott GEHA, Mr. Bruce Harrison, BCBS of Texas, Mr. Schann Holladay, Aetna
- December 21, 2020..... **Annual Meeting and Christmas Luncheon**



NARFE-PAC protects NARFE members' pay and benefits by raising and spending money to elect members of Congress who support the federal community.



MEMBERSHIP REPORT **by Ben Weiger** **1st. Vice President for Membership**

Membership Activities from October 2019 – January 2020

As of January 31, 2020, our chapter membership stands at 153 members. During 2019, we recruited 4 new members. We met our 2019 goal!

We requested distinguished member certificates for our members who will reach 20 years of NARFE membership support in 2020. If that is you this year, be on the lookout for a certificate and pin in the mail or in person at one of our chapter meetings. Thanks for your 20 years of membership support. It is greatly appreciated!

I accepted the position as the TX Federation membership coordinator. In that position, I will be coordinating with other Texas chapters regarding potential assistance (i.e., recruitment materials, matching fund requests, post meeting reimbursement forms) with recruitment efforts at state/regional/national federal organization events. I will also write membership-related articles for the TFR. The next TFR will contain my introductory bio.

I continued to follow up with the prospective members we met at the Arlington Aging Well Expo in February 2019 and at the SW Rural Carriers Conference in Irving TX back in January 2018. Several of the prospective members from the Aging Well Expo have already joined our chapter.

The Aging Well Expo is at the Arlington Convention Center. It is scheduled for February 19, 2020 between 9am-2pm. We are registered for the event, and plan to have a booth at the Expo. We plan to distribute 2 gift cards – one for someone who pays and joins NARFE at the Expo, and one who fills out an M2 card at the booth.

I coordinated with a retirement seminar company. They are planning some retirement seminars for the DFW sometime this winter or spring. Dependent on location, our chapter and possibly other DFW chapter members will participate at these events.

Opportunities for Recruitment/Retention

- Consider attending an annual Christmas party/luncheon at your current/former agency's office in December.
- Consider attending a retirement luncheon/dinner for one your agency's colleagues
- Consider giving a NARFE presentation to your current/former agency
- Consider giving a presentation about NARFE to your former agency's retirement group.
- Consider giving your doctor's office a copy of the NARFE magazine
- Carry extra membership applications with you (in purse, car, etc.)

MEMBERSHIP REPORT, cont.

If you would like to give a NARFE presentation to your current/former agency, or If you would like to help us recruit new members, please contact me at weigerben@gmail.com or 817-807-3658. Please contact me so I can send you membership applications to assist with your recruitment drive efforts. We also have membership applications available during our monthly meetings.

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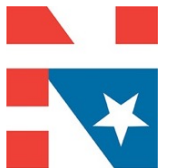
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