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Word from Chapter President

Active Federal employees and retirees continue to be targeted by congress as a means of balancing the budget. Increasing the percentage of the share we pay for health insurance, increasing percentage active Federal civilian employees contribute to their pension plans, freezing pay raises and going from a high-3 to a high-5 when calculating retiree salaries are just a few areas being considered. This doesn't even include changes and cuts to social security and Medicare that are now rumored to also be on the table. We cannot sit back and watch our benefits being cut. NARFE needs members to reach out to their elected officials and let them know they are keeping a close eye on how they are voting on issues affecting their pockets. NARFE and its PAC continue to pressure congress to work on our best interests; however, they can't do it alone. They need us to do our share and call our elected officials to bring home the point. One call isn't always enough. Calls are like votes, the more they receive, the better the chances of a win! I urge everyone to become more involved or we will surely see our benefits cut at the stroke of a pen.



Gerry Rendon

December Meeting

Meeting was held at the Golden Corral at 1025 SE Military Drive. Gerry Rendon called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. Invocation was led by Elevia Gant followed by pledge of allegiance by David Cuellar. Forty-six members were in attendance. After the pledge, there was a moment of silence to honor members lost during 2019. Gerry Rendon introduced guest speakers Dr. John Creswell, Texas Federation President; Dorothy Creswell, New Braunfels TX Chapter 0672 President, NARFE Configuration Advisory

Board Chair, and Region VI Representative (TX); and Carol Wetz, Texas Federation District 12 Representative.

After introduction of guests, member birthdays and anniversaries were announced. Birthdays in December were Shirley Click, Marva Gary, Steve Guzman, Santa Maria Jones, Richard Weber and Rosie Yznaga while Lynda and Steve Guzman celebrated their anniversary.

First speaker was Dr. John Creswell who highlighted issues and events that occurred across Texas. Second speaker was Mrs. Dorothy Creswell. She provided an update on AMS and requested members having problems while using the application to report them to her so she could forward to the contractor to have them fixed. Third speaker was Mrs. Carol Wetz who gave the newly elected 2020 officers the oath of office. Newly elected officers receiving oath were Gerry Rendon – President, Al Dreumont – 1st Vice President, Shirley Swift – 2nd Vice President, Christine Cuellar – Secretary, and Santa Maria Jones – Treasurer.



L-R: Jovita Durand, Al Fremont, Gerry Rendon & Shirley Swift recognized for recruiting new members

Mr. Rendon recognized 90+ year old members Earl Harris, Exia Duke, Elevia Gant, Berry Parker and David Cuellar with a gift. He also recognized Margarita Hernandez (Treasurer) and Mary and Ricardo Salmon (Social Committee) with gift cards for their excellent support to the Chapter during 2019. \$25 gift cards were also presented to Al Dreumont, Jovita Durand, Shirley Swift and Gerry Rendon for their recruitment efforts during the July – December 2019 time period. Appointed and Volunteer Officers were also recognized for their new assignments.

Mr. Rendon chose to forgo December's monthly reports until January 2020.

Items of Interest discussed were CFC and COLA's. Members advised contributions to CFC was open through January 12, 2020. Federal annuitants and Social Security recipients were receiving a 1.6% cost of living adjustment for 2020 while active civil servants could expect a 2.6% increase.

Old Business discussed included Chapter to continue payment of NARFE annual dues for the 1st year only of new, active & retired Federal employees joining Chapter through December 31, 2019; NARFE Membership Drive ongoing through December 31; work continues on Chapter calendar for 2020; and Christmas baskets for four ill members have been made by Connie Bedock.

Meeting closed with a prayer by Elevia Gant.

Gerry Rendon, President, NARFE San Antonio Chapter 1594

January Meeting

Meeting was held at Brookhill Baptist Church. Gerry Rendon called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. Invocation was led by Shirley Rushfeldt followed by pledge of allegiance by David Cuellar. Special guest to the meeting was Attorney Todd Marquardt, Marquardt Law Firm, P.C., Business and Estate Law. After introduction of special guest, member birthdays were announced. Birthdays in January were Juan Ballin, Kathryn Click, Beryl Parker, Ricardo Salmon, Amelia Sanchez, and Joyce Zerr.



L-R: Al Dreumont presenting Attorney Todd Marquardt with small gift in appreciation for his presentation to Chapter Members

Speaker Attorney Todd Marquardt gave a very informative briefing on wills, trusts, and protecting assets. He urged everyone to leave a will in order to avoid leaving problems for the loved ones you leave behind.

Officer and Committee Reports:

- a. Membership: Connie Bedock reported membership at 125.
- b. Treasurer's: Margarita Hernandez reported \$2,709.79 in the bank with \$477.44 in checking and \$2,232.35 in savings.
- c. Secretary's: Christine Cuellar reports to be presented at February meeting.
- d. Legislative: Shirley Swift had nothing to report.
- e. Service Officer: Sandy Vogel had nothing to report.
- f. NARFE PAC: David Cuellar had nothing to report.

Items of Interest discussed were a final 3.1% cost of living adjustment (COLA) for active Federal employees for 2020 (2.6% across the board and .5% to locality) and a 1.6% for Federal annuitants and Social Security recipients. Executive committee meeting was also scheduled for February 12th.

Old Business discussed was the Chapter stopped paying for new memberships effective December 31st, 2019 and that Gerry Rendon was working on posting events calendar on the webpage.

New Business discussed was for need of helpers to assist Social Committee in setting up before and cleanup after each monthly meeting. A requirement for two volunteers to perform an audit of the Chapter's books with Treasurer Margarita Hernandez in order to properly transfer function to new Treasurer Santa Jones. Submittal of IRS 990 N electronically and the presentation of Ms. Amelia Sanchez's bio.

Meeting closed with a prayer by Shirley Rushfeldt.

Gerry Rendon, President, NARFE San Antonio Chapter 1594

February Meeting

Meeting called to order at 12:30 pm by President Gerry Rendon. Invocation led by Elevia Gant. Pledge of Allegiance led by Gerry Rendon.

Twenty-eight members were present. Guest speaker Bruce Ashton from the Rail Passengers Association presented a slide show about traveling on Amtrak trains. This included destinations, travel deals, discounts for seniors and military and his experience traveling on these trains. Reservations can be made on-line at Amtrak.com or calling 800-872-7245.



Bruce Ashton with Rail Passengers Association briefing members on traveling via rail

Members having birthdays in February were Ida Arrambide, Connie Bedock, Jovita Durand, Elevia Gant, Renee Harris, and Shirley Swift.

Officer and Committee Reports:

a. Membership: Connie Bedock reported that membership is 121. Also, Joyce Zerr is in the hospital. She had back surgery. Her address was given to members if they want to send her a card. Connie sent one from the chapter.

b. Treasurer's Report: Two Chapter members audited the final report from Margarita Hernandez. Reports are closed and new treasurer Santa Maria Jones can take over her assignment.

c. Secretary Christine Cuellar was absent her reports will be submitted at next meeting.

d. Legislative Report: Shirley Swift gave each member a paper copy.

e. Service Officer: Sandy Vogel reminded that all members should now have their income tax information for filing 2019 taxes.

f. NARFE PAC Chair David Cuellar was absent but Gerry Rendon reminded how important the PAC contributions are and how they are distributed in congress. Also, members should contact their congressmen and voice their opinions on important subjects.

Discussions of upcoming 2021 budget from the White House, pay increases and reports from Congress was informally held.

Members agreed to have the June Luncheon meeting at Golden Corral at SE Military Drive and to continue bringing door prizes to the monthly meetings. Jovita Durand asked members to sign the refreshment list for the March meeting. Gerry Rendon is working on upcoming speakers.

Meeting closed with a prayer by Elevia Gant.

Connie Bedock, Acting Secretary

Chapter Membership



The current chapter membership total as of February 2020 is 121. Of this total 44 members have taken advantage of the Dues Withholding Program. If you are interested in saving money and receiving a rebate, this program is for you.

The Texas Federation Executive Board has voted to extend the dues withholding rebate program through June 30, 2021. Members who enroll in this program will receive a one-time rebate of \$20.00. The withholding option allows \$3.42 to be taken out of your monthly allotment. This is also a 15% discount because the annual dues are then only \$41.00 versus the annual payment of \$47.00. Forms are available at chapter meetings or you can call Connie Bedock at 210-673-2290 and she will mail you a form. Forms must be completed and signed and mailed to the Federation Treasurer as listed on the form.

Items of Interest



House Republicans Unveil Plan to Boost Merit Pay and Slash Pensions: A group consisting of three-quarters of House Republicans on Thursday released a new blueprint to overhaul the civil service, calling for easier firing, more merit-based bonuses and cuts to automatic pay raises.

The Republican Study Committee and its 146 members praised the federal workforce overall, but said in its Government Efficiency, Accountability and Reform Task Force [report](#) that civil servants' overall compensation is too high. The report repeated a long-running complaint that good applicants are too hard to hire, and bad workers are too hard to fire, suggesting that some feds are intentionally undermining the Trump administration. At an event at the Capitol to unveil the reform plan, which featured several members of the committee as well as a man in a “swamp monster” costume, lawmakers said it would serve as a “playbook” for legislative changes once Republicans retake control of Congress. (GovExec, Monday, February 10, 2020)



Protect Yourself from Social Security Scams: Scammers are pretending to be government employees. Scammers will try to scare and trick you into giving them your personal information and money. They may threaten you or your family and may demand immediate payment to avoid arrest or other legal action.

DON'T BE FOOLED! IF YOU RECEIVE A SUSPICIOUS CALL:

1. Hang up!
2. DO NOT give them money or personal information!
3. Report the scam at OIG.SSA.GOV!

Social Security may call you in some situations but will never

- Threaten you
- Suspend your Social Security Number
- Demand immediate payment from you
- Require payment by cash, gift card, pre-paid debit card, or wire transfer
- Ask for gift card numbers over the phone or to wire or mail cash

What to look for



The call or email says there is a problem with your Social Security Number or account.



Someone asking you to pay a fine or debt with retail gift cards, wire transfers, pre-paid debit cards, internet currency, or by mailing cash.



Scammers pretend they're from Social Security or another government agency. Caller ID or documents sent by email may look official, but they are not.



Callers threaten you with arrest or other legal action.

Protect yourself, friends, and family!

- If you receive a questionable call, hang up and report it at oig.ssa.gov
- Don't be embarrassed to report if you shared personal information or suffered a financial loss
- Learn more at oig.ssa.gov/scam
- Share this information with others

COLA

Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for 2021: President Trump administration is proposing a 1% pay raise for federal civilian employees as part of the White House fiscal year 2021 budget request. The White House said the 1% raise would be complemented by an increased issuance of performance-based bonuses and other financial awards.

Upcoming Events

Chapter Meeting	March 18
Chapter Meeting	April 15
Chapter Meeting	May 20

March 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Birthdays

Christine Cuellar	March
David A. Cuellar	March
Al Dreumont	March
Margarita Hernandez	March
Billie McLaughlin	March
Dora Santillano	March
William Brennan	April
Henry Huizar	April
Exia Duke	May
Stella Flores	May
Sandy Vogel	May

April 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Keep Up with Us



Chapter Officers

Name	Title	Phone
Gerry Rendon	President	(210) 213-4169
Al Dreumont	1 st Vice President	(210) 637-0032
Shirley Swift	2 nd Vice President	(210) 300-9046
Christine Cuellar	Secretary	(210) 647-1424
Santa Maria Jones	Treasurer	(210) 744-9531

Meeting Information

Upcoming Meetings: March 18th April 15th May 20th

Place: Brookhill Baptist Church, 631 Utopia Ln., San Antonio, Texas 78223
(Current Location)

Date: Every third Wednesday of the month (unless rescheduled)

Time: 12:30 p.m. regular meetings & 11:00 a.m. lunch meetings in June and
December
(restaurant selected month prior to meeting)

If you need a ride to the meeting or are interested in giving a member a ride, please let one of the officers know.

