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Word from the President

It has been nine months since we last met. Our Executive Committee still feels strongly it is best we do not meet until COVID-19 is under control. Once we hear it is safe for crowds over 10 people to meet, we will notify members of our next meeting.

The presidential election is finally over! I am sure most of you like me are excited we do not have to view and listen to negative campaign rhetoric any longer or at least until the next election. Now, whether the candidate of your choice won or lost, we all need to put our differences aside and stand behind the President-elect and give him the opportunity to prove himself. America is at its greatest when everyone works together instead of against each other!

As most of you have watched on TV or read on your local paper, COVID-19 continues to cause havoc across the U.S. The numbers are alarmingly high yet so many people refuse to accept how deadly the virus can be especially for the elderly and people with underlying health conditions. I have lost relatives and neighbors to this virus and the saddest part was they died alone without having a loved one by their side. This is not a hoax and I encourage everyone to listen to the experts and follow criteria outlined by CDC to protect yourself and others from coming down with this virus.

On a brighter note, it has been announced use of the COVID-19 vaccines on the U.S. public could start as early as December 11. Once approval is received from FDA, healthcare personnel and long-term care facility residents, other essential workers, and older adults and adults with high risk medical conditions will begin receiving the vaccine. Children are not in any of these groups because they were not included in vaccine trials. Younger and middle-aged adults who work from home and do not have serious medical conditions will probably not be able to get the vaccine in the first few months it is available. These priority groups are tentative and only for the initial rollout while vaccine availability is



Gerry Rendon

limited. Once enough vaccines are available to give to everyone who wants it, priority groups will not be used anymore.

Chapter Membership



Chapter membership as of November 28, 2020 is 118. During the month of November, we regretfully loss Helen Rodriguez and Guadalupe (Lupe) Flores.

Helen Rodriguez passed away on November 15th. She joined our chapter in 2011. She was 95 years old and was living at the KinCare Assisted Living Home the past few years. Helen retired from Kelly AFB after 32 years of service.

Guadalupe (Lupe) Flores passed away November 18th. Lupe and his wife Stella set up the refreshment area for our monthly chapter meetings for many years. He was born September 18, 1934 in Hondo, TX. His family moved to San Antonio during his youth. He met Stella at a Chili Bowl football game in 1953 and married her July 4, 1954. Lupe handled two government careers, military and civil service, for many of his working years. He spent three years on active duty in the Marines, two years active duty in the Air Force, and seventeen years in the Air Force Reserves concurrent with thirty- three years of Civil Service. In Civil Service, Lupe started by completing a four-year apprentice course as an Aircraft Electrician and worked for seven years as a Journeyman in that trade. In 1966, he transferred to Material Management as a Cataloger. In 1976, cataloging was transferred to Battle Creek Michigan and he went with it. Two years later, he returned to Kelly AFB as an Equipment Specialist in support of the Materiel Item Managers. Three years later, he was promoted as Equipment Specialist in the System Management Division. Three years later, Lupe transferred back to the Maintenance Engineering Division as an Aerospace Engineering Technician in support of the Aircraft Periodic Maintenance Program, primarily on the C-5 Aircraft. He retired in 1989 with a total of 33 years in Federal Service.

Helen and Lupe are in our prayers and will be missed.

This quarter, we also loss a NARFE member who was very close and dear to our Chapter. Dr. John Creswell, our past Texas Federation President, passed away on the 9th of October of an aggressive form of brain cancer. John and his wife Dorothy were a steady fixture at our June and December luncheons. He was a wonderful and respected man who would go above and beyond to publicize and increase NARFE membership. He will be greatly missed. Our condolences on your loss Dorothy.

NARFE Legislative Action Center

In the November issue of NARFE Magazine, President Kenneth J. Thomas' message to all NARFE members is that "NARFE" will remain a staunch advocate of protecting our earned benefits, but we need each of you to stand with us. Whether it's in the form of a

phone call, a letter or an e-mail to your members of Congress and the White House; a personal visit with your representatives; or a contribution to assist us in this effort, your dedication and time are greatly appreciated. Legislation pending is GPO/WEP, H.R. 3934/S.3401, The Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act, Rep Kevin Brady, R-TX and Sen. Ted Cruz, R-TX. This bill would reform the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), to provide WEP-affected individuals who are eligible for benefits before 2022 a \$100 monthly rebate and \$50 for an affected spouse. Changes the WEP calculation moving forward. This bill was referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means (H.R. 3934/S. 3401; Referred to the Senate Committee on Finance (S. 3401). Also Bill H.R. 1553, Fair COLA for Seniors Act of 2019, introduced by Rep. John Garamendi, D-CA and co-sponsors of 37 D and 2 R which would require Social Security and federal retirement programs to use the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E) to calculate cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) to retirement benefits. Referred to the House Committees' on Ways and Means, Veterans' Affairs, Oversight and Reform, and Armed Services.

Last, but not least, H.R. 5690/S. 3231, Federal Adjustment of Income Rates (FAIR) Act/Rep. Gerry Connolly, D-VA/Sen. Brian Schatz, D-HI would provide federal employees with a 3.5% pay raise in 2021. This bill was referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Reform (H.R. 5690)/S. 3231. Referred to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs (S. 3231).

There is a very interesting article on page 24 of the November issue of NARFE, "From Military Service to Civil Service". Three wounded warriors discuss their transitions to civilian federal jobs. It is a very informative article and tells how our veterans adjust to civilian jobs. NARFE stands proud in helping our veterans.

NARFE PERKS: At the very end of your NARFE magazine, there are two pages of perks for NARFE members. Did you know you can receive up to 80% on over 93,000 products at Office Depot and you can shop online or in any office depot or OfficeMax store. Free next-day delivery on online orders. Looking for Christmas gifts? How about Omaha Steaks? NARFE members can enjoy free shipping on exclusive combos' and an extra 10% off your entire order with Omaha Steaks. Just think, free shipping, that alone is a saver. I recently shipped a box of baby clothes to my granddaughter which would have cost me \$48.50; but the nice postal clerk suggested a smaller box, produced one and packed my baby clothes in the smaller box saving me over \$35. Remember, it is also the size of the box not just the weight that they bill you on. Another perk, Sam's Club membership, 40% off on a 1-year membership, plus a gift upon purchase. Nice and the list goes on. Just check out NARFE Perks at www.NARFE.org/memberperks and you will be happy to be a member of NARFE. (Shirley Swift, Legislative Chair)

Items of Interest

“**Estate Planning: Strategies for Feds**” will be NARFE’s December webinar. It will be Thursday, December 10th from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. CT (1-hour for webinar plus 1-hour Q&A). Everyone needs an effective estate plan to maximize their savings and provide for their loved ones. Mark Keen, CFP, will discuss what constitutes an effective estate plan, as well as tools and strategies to help federal employees and retirees ensure that their money goes to their beneficiaries of choice without unnecessary expense, headache, and taxes. These webinars are free to NARFE members. Non-members registering for webinar will receive a one-year membership provided they meet NARFE membership eligibility requirements. Link to register is <https://www.narfe.org/index.cfm?fa=viewOldArticle&id=4828>.



The **Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)** open solicitation started September 21st and will continue through January 15, 2020. If you would like to participate in this year’s campaign but do not know who to contribute to or how to find a particular charity, <https://cfcgiving.opm.gov/offerings> is the link to the online charity list. After finding an agency or charity you would like to donate to, you will then need to go to the CFC Donor Pledging System (<https://cfcgiving.opm.gov/welcome>) to process your donation.



2020 Open Season runs through December 14, 2020. Any active and retired federal employee may make changes to their health, dental or vision insurance during this period.

You cannot enroll, change your enrollment or cancel your coverage in these programs outside the Open Season unless you experience a Qualifying Life Event (QLE). Examples of a QLE are getting married, having a baby, or losing health coverage. To compare the costs, benefits, and features of different plans, go to <https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/>.

Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA): Social Security recipients and Federal annuitants will receive a 1.3% COLA for 2021 as announced by the Social Security Administration.



For 2021, the General Schedule base pay scale will receive a 2.6% across-the-board pay raise. No information available on the locality pay increase as of publication of this newsletter.

In support of the Department’s effort to continue to build a bigger more lethal and ready force, the FY 2021 President’s Budget proposes a 3 percent increase in military basic pay.

Upcoming Events

Chapter Meeting	December 16
Chapter Meeting	January 20
Executive Committee Meeting	February 10
Chapter Meeting	February 17

Birthdays

Shirley Click	December
Steve Guzman	December
Santa Maria Jones	December
Richard Weber	December
Rosie Yznaga	December
Kathryn Click	January
Beryl Parker	January
Ricardo Salmon	January
Amelia Sanchez	January
Ida Arrambide	February
Connie Bedock	February
Jovita Durand	February
Elevia Gant	February
Renee Eschmann Harris	February
Shirley Swift	February

Anniversaries

Linda & Steve Guzman	December
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Keep Up with Us



DECEMBER 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		26
27	28	29	30	31		

JANUARY 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	MLK Day	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

FEBRUARY 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14		16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

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: December 16th January 20st February 17th

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.**

