



NARFE CHAPTER 0738 NEWSLETTER

MAY 2021

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Mary Jane Reetz

After all the Covid excitement, the masks, the rules, the drive through meals, no visiting loved ones, etc. Isn't it great that's behind us? Returning to our normal life sure feels good, doesn't it? We all hope to see each other again! With all the restaurant closings, it was a little difficult to find a place to meet. Some have shortened their hours and some are not re-opening. We can meet at the Sawmill Inn however. Since we have quite a little to discuss and plan, I do not think we should wait any longer to meet. It will be nice to catch up on each other's lives since we haven't seen everyone for many months!

Please take a few minutes out of your day to read the legislative updates on the next page and write to your congress people asking them to support these bills. Your representative's and senator's addresses are usually in the newspapers. If you have a computer, you can do it online. Quick and Easy! Or ask someone who has a computer to help you with it! Let them know **you** are a voter and concerned about these problems!

Mary Jane

NARFE CHAPTER 0739 MEETING

JUNE 8, 2021 2nd Tuesday of the month

Sawmill Inn Junct 210 and old 371

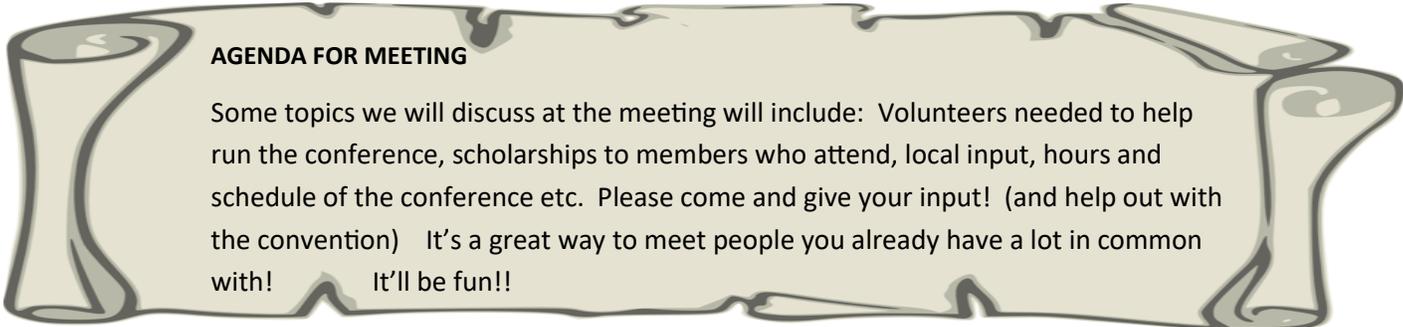
Gathering 11:30, Sign in and visit

or Washington St and 6th St

Lunch followed by Meeting

NARFE'S 100 YEAR CELEBRATION!!!

Did you know that NARFE was started in 1921? We're celebrating 100 years of NARFE at the Minnesota Federation Conference Which will be held October 19 –20 right here at Breezy Point Resort!! So we are the unofficial hosts– how about that? Carolyn Billings from Fergus Falls and myself, Mary Reetz, have been doing the local planning. We're hoping for a good turnout since it is the 100th Year of having a great advocacy group like NARFE available to us! There was a registration form in the March Federation newsletter. Please have it turned in by September 1 . Hope to see you there! It will never be closer to Brainerd So here is our chance to show off!!



AGENDA FOR MEETING

Some topics we will discuss at the meeting will include: Volunteers needed to help run the conference, scholarships to members who attend, local input, hours and schedule of the conference etc. Please come and give your input! (and help out with the convention) It's a great way to meet people you already have a lot in common with! It'll be fun!!

HR 392 Equal Pay Federal pay rates must be competitive to recruit and retain a well-qualified and high-performing workforce. To maintain competitive pay rates, NARFE supports an average increase of at least 2.7 percent for calendar year 2022 through the appropriations process. This would provide parity with the expected 2022 military pay raise and is based on increases in private-sector wages. They are set at 2.2 percent currently

Oppose Any Cuts to Earned Federal Retirement and Health Benefits In exchange for years of hard work, federal employees and retirees were promised retirement annuities and retiree health care. Past proposals have sought to reduce or eliminate cost-of-living adjustments, reduce the initial retirement benefit, reduce the rate of return on federal civilian and military retiree savings in the Thrift Savings Plan G Fund . NARFE strongly opposes these and urges that they be non-starters for budget negotiations

Support Reform or Repeal of the WEP and GPO The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) unfairly reduces earned Social Security benefits based on government employment. The Government Pension Offset (GPO) unfairly reduces or eliminates the Social Security benefits government retirees could collect based on their spouse's work record by two-thirds of their own government pension. NARFE supports the **Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 392, S561** which provides full repeal of the WEP and the GPO. We also support efforts to reform the WEP and GPO, as we recognize that even partial relief would be a substantial improvement.

Take the example of a spouse who receives a civil service annuity of \$900 per month based on his/her own earnings, and applies for a Social 1 See "Social Security: The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP)," Congressional Research Service, p. 8, available at: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/RS/98-35> Security widow(er)'s benefit of \$500. Two-thirds of his/her annuity, or \$600, totally offsets the Social Security widow(er)'s benefit. Therefore, he/she receives no widow(er)'s benefit from Social Security !

FERS & COLA Equal COLA Act, H.R. 304, which would ensure Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) retirees receive the same COLA as Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) retirees and Social Security beneficiaries. Price Index for Urban Wage Earners (CPI-W). The CPI-W fails to account for seniors' spending habits, notably that of medical care. Any changes to COLAs for one group should apply to all others. NARFE also supports the Equal COLA Act

POSTAL REFORM BILL HR 695 S 145

We also support eliminating USPS' requirement to prefund future retiree's health benefits through passage of the USPS Fairness Act, H.R. 695 and S. 145. The unnecessary and unusual burden the mandate imposes on the Postal Service's balance sheet has paved the way for legislative proposals threatening benefits, cost-cutting strategies, and limited capital investments. This bill would repeal the USPS prefunding future retirement benefits.

We also support eliminating USPS' requirement to prefund future retiree's health benefits through passage of the **USPS Fairness Act, H.R. 2382** . Postal retirees should retain the choice as to whether to add Medicare to their existing retiree health benefit coverage. Eliminating that choice, as proposed in previous postal bills, breaks a basic promise to avoid altering retiree benefits for those in retirement and heaps significant additional costs on aging retirees. H.R. 2382

For more detailed information, go to the NARFE advocacy site at: advocacy@narfe.org

Then click on Top Issues for factsheets and NARFE issues. There is also a site to contact your congressmen which is really handy!