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April 2021

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NARFE Wisconsin Federation of Chapters at: www.narfe.org/site/wi —Protecting the Future for Active And Retired Federal Employees!

MEETINGS:

*We are back, we hope each of you joins us for each meeting for the rest of this year and next year as well. We had 20 members at the March meeting. Our April meeting will be on **April 28th** at the American Legion Club in Eau Claire at 12:15 p.m., 634 Water Street. Mark will have a Board Meeting at 11:00 a.m. on the same day.*

If you would like to attend a Board Meeting, and give your input, you are welcome.

Advanced registration is required for meal planning and setup purposes. Please contact Peggy at 715-874-6708 or email: chipval@wwt.net, NLT 6 pm on Saturday, April 24th. Remember, you may bring an active employee, a spouse or guest with you to our meetings.

DISTINGUISHED MEMBER AWARD —

I would like to thank our Chapter for giving this honor of being considered for the Distinguished Member Award, at our meeting. It has been an interesting 20 years, with many changes along the way. May our Chapter continue in being a valid source of information & socializing, each month we can meet. —John Silvernale.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER: Mark Schmitt

With Easter behind us I am looking forward to Spring and the weather has been more like late spring the last few days. I hope it continues to be warm. It is really nice to sit outside and listen to the sounds and signs of Spring.

Last month we were finally able to meet in person at the American Legion in Eau Claire and we had 20 members present. It was great to see you all again. By now, I hope all our members have had the opportunity to receive the COVID vaccine and are feeling fine. Our meeting this month will again be at the American Legion on April 28th. Please join us and have a good meal with good conversation.

For the members that carry Blue Cross Blue Shield Medical Insurance, it is time to start planning to apply for your Medical Reimbursement. This year, I believe we can qualify for an \$800.00 per person. I know for me it took until June to qualify for the total amount and Nola was in May. Don't worry if you apply early, they will send you what you have earned and then send additional checks monthly till you the total \$800.00. More information is available on the BlueCross BlueShield website.

For members wanting to attend the Federation Convention, the date has been changed until the beginning of November. It is planned for the Tomah Best Western Hotel and Convention Center. More information will be available soon.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Kathy Pospishil

\$ 2439.89 January 2021 Start
\$ 69.72 January Receipts
\$ 262.30 January Expenses
\$ 2,247.31 January End
No receipts or expenses in February
\$ 2,247.31 March start
\$ 509.48 March Receipts
\$ 514.78 March Expenses
\$ 2,242.01 March End

Members of Chapter 0371. The Chapter is in the process of discussing the problem of declining chapter membership and its effect on the finances of the chapter. Specifically, our concern is the mailing of the newsletters.

Our Costs consist of the printing of the newsletters and then using a bulk mailing rate which requires an annual fee (\$240 in 2021). The situation that is looming is the requirement of needing 200 pieces of mail to use the bulk mailing rate. As of 4/4/21, our current chapter membership is 197; in July 2018 we had 248 members. We do mail newsletters to the presidents or other WI Chapters and to state representatives, which helps to keep the number above 200.

But that is a short-term solution. We are looking at possible options (all email, combination of mailing and email, etc) but would like your thoughts and input. Please contact one of the officers listed at the top of this newsletter or please come to a meeting where we will also discuss this.

Meanwhile. I will watch the expenses and closer to the fall, update you regarding the newsletter printing and mailing costs. Thank you from the Treasurer, Kathy Pospishil.

MEMBERSHIP: Peggy

I have no new members to report at this time. We have had a few reported deaths, but none due to Covid-19 that we are aware of. Many fewer than any of the past 10 years.

SERVICE OFFICER:

Janet Oletta Agnetta Samdahl, age 99 of Menomonie passed away on February 23, 2021. Janet was born on the home farm in the Town of Spring Brook, Dunn County and lived there until September, 2020. She was born on December 13th, 1921, graduated Menomonie High School in 1939, and went to work at the Dunn Co ASCS Office in July that same year, she worked there continuously until she retired in 1990. She is survived by a niece Linda, a great niece Kelli a great

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nephew-Christopher, 2 great, great nieces, and 2 great, great nephews, and many cousins. Funeral services were held on March 9th at Little Elk Creek Lutheran Church, in rural Menomonie. Olson Funeral Home in Menomonie provided serving to her family. Our Chapter extends our sincere sympathies to her entire family.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS IN MONTH OF APRIL

August J. Bleske, Dennis D. Donath, Ronald W. Elonen, Robert C. Hendrickson, William E. Heuer, Carole A. Hintzman, James J. Hjort, Dennis F. Meitner, Daniel Nichols, Lorraine J. Olson, Steven R. Olson, Robert W. Paddock, Dennis Penzkover, Julaine R. Peterson, Harold Robarge, Robbie D. Schellhorn, Donald L. Siler, Ann M. Williams.

NEWS BRIEFS:

WI Senate Bill 246

An Act to amend 71.05 (6) (b) 54. (intro) and 71.83 (1) (a) 6.; and to create 71.05 (ad) of the statutes; relating to: exempting from taxation the pension benefits of certain federal employees. (FE)

3/24/2021 Sen. Introduced by the Senators Kooyenga, Wirsch and L. Taylor, and co-sponsored by 26 WI Representatives.

3/24/2021 Read first time and referred to Committee on Finance Institutions and Revenue.

WI Assembly Bill 223

Same language as listed above.

3/31/2021 Read first time and referred to Committee on Ways and Means.

4/1/2021 Fiscal estimate received.

CSRS Offset

For the **active federal employees**, the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) has a hybrid system of benefits that are offset (reduced) by Social Security retirement benefits. I am retired under Offset now. If your service was always under CSRS and you never changed or had breaks in service you should be OK. I would definitely try to attend some pre-retirement seminars, if you are still working, take the time off and pay for them yourself, your agency by law is supposed to provide this service to you.

One resource is NARFE's on-line seminars, if you have a computer. Another excellent resource is ordering a handbook through FEDweek, 11551 Nuckols Rd., Suite 1, Glen Allen, VA 23059, Phone 804-288-5321. There is a fee for the

handbook you need, probably less than \$25.00. They will make sure you order the right handbook too.

A Message from NARFE President Ken Thomas

Thanks to your fierce advocacy and relentless support for your fellow federal employees and retirees, an opportunity to reform the Windfall Elimination Provision is within reach with the introduction of the Public Servants Protection and fairness act. H.R. 2337.

While we will continue to push for a full repeal of the provision, we welcome any relief for retirees who depend on an unfairly reduced fixed income. Your continued advocacy makes a difference and shows those affected that they are being heard. I encourage you to reach out to your Representatives and urge them to support this important bill.

<https://new.narfe.org/advocacy/>

To contact our elected officials:

Senator Ron Johnson, 328 Hart Senate Office, WDC 20510, phone 202-224-5323, FAX 202-228-6965, email: ron_johnson@ronjohnson.senate.gov;

Senator Tammy Baldwin, 709 Hart Senate Office Building, WDC 20510 phone 202-224-5653, email: Tammy_baldwin@Baldwin.senate.gov;

Congressman Ron Kind, 1502 Longworth HOB, WDC 20515, phone 202-225-5506 Fax 202-225-5739; email: ronkind@mail.house.gov;

Congressman Thomas Tiffany, 1714 Longworth HOB, WDC 20515, phone 202-225-3365; email: tomtiffany@mail.house.gov

Imagine this: A gas powered van, towing a diesel generator, charging an electric car!

