



FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

MADISON  
WISCONSIN

CHAPTER 120

# NEWS

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## PRESIDENTS LETTER

Linda Kustka

Belated Happy New Year! I hope 2021 is off to a great start for you! At this time last year, I was liking the number

2020 as being a sign of good vision and related good happenings. In March, our lives changed as the seriousness of the virus became apparent. I feel all of us should have pride in the adaptations we made to get through 2020. With happiness, I got rid of old year calendars and celebrated the positive things that happened last year like learning new ways to connect and reconnect with people, different exercise routines, time to work on hobbies and read.

I'm proud of the decisions our Chapter 120 made to end the year including remembering Waunakee Manor residents with chapter-purchased gifts, and their staff with gift cards to Rex's Innkeeper. Besides the loss of business from our in-person meetings, Rex's has lost significant other business as most restaurants have. Thanks to Kathy Losby for working out all of the details behind delivery of these gifts!

2021 will be a better year! We'll overcome "virus lifestyle" through vaccinations and continuation of safe practices. We'll continue to interact virtually until it's safe to meet in person.

I'm excited about the February Zoom meeting. Please invite current/retired colleagues to join us

whether they are members or not. This will be a great opportunity to hear what's happening nationally. The Zoom technology gives us the chance to bring in nonlocal speakers. We'd like to get your suggestions for other speakers who may or may not reside near here for future meetings.

See you soon!

## FEBRUARY MEETING WITH JESSICA

KLEMENT NARFE STAFF VP, POLICY AND PROGRAMS  
Bill Bremer

Chapter 120 paused gathering at Rex's Innkeeper for in-person lunch meetings and programs due to Covid-19 last spring and moved to Zoom computer communication for Chapter Board meetings. Since physically getting together for our lunch meetings is still out of the picture, the Chapter Board wanted to try Zoom to bring speakers to Chapter members. With Zoom we can reach out to speakers who otherwise may have trouble with travel and time needed to get to Waunakee for our meetings.

For our Zoom "luncheon" on Friday, February 26 at noon, we are pleased to have Jessica Klement speak and answer our questions. She will talk about the NARFE national policy and programs agenda for the new 117th Congress and the new President Biden Administration. For the past 1 1/2 years Jessica has served as NARFE Staff Vice President for Policy and Programs, a senior staff position in our national headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia.

Jessica is no stranger to our Federation or to Wisconsin. Her most recent NARFE visit was to speak at the Wisconsin Federation of Chapters Convention. She is a true Badger who grew up in Milwaukee and earned her under-graduate degree from Marquette University. Her NARFE work began in 2012, and included work in communications, advocacy and legislative lobbying.

These are challenging times in Washington and NARFE has plenty of policy issues on our plate to communicate and promote to the new Congress and Administration. Find out from Jessica the biggest challenges affecting NARFE and federal employees today including how members should advocate for our retirement benefits and help to keep federal civil service non-political in light of the most recent change with Schedule F classification. There will be lots to cover, but hopefully we will also have time for Jessica to answer our questions.

*A truth in advertising statement: While Jessica has agreed to participate as our meeting speaker, there is the possibility she may have to defer to others on her staff if an unforeseen high priority scheduling conflict arises, such as a call to be at the Capitol representing NARFE. Since Jessica will have such an important message for us, we reached out to other Wisconsin NARFE chapters and Wisconsin Federation leaders to participate in our meeting. **Please try to make time to participate.***

## SUNSHINE REPORT

Veronica Guski

A few deaths to report:

**Janice Dunn** passed away on 11/24/20. Possibly her husband, Phillip, was a federal employee.

**John Hillis Sr.** died at age 82 on 11/25/20. He had a long career at Forest Products Lab.

**James Ziehr** passed away on 10/31/20. Jim worked at the Madison Post Office.

**Jean Larson's** death was reported, but we don't as yet have the date or other details.

**Leon Loy** passed away on 1/6/21 at the age of 86. He farmed while serving as the county executive director for FSA. He was passionate about many

things and was an active member of the Wisconsin State Tractor Pullers Association.

**Daniel Caulfied**, age 85, died on 1/15/21. Dan was a senior research chemist the Forest Products Lab. He worked with graduate students in the Engineering Department at the UW for over 30 years and had over 75 scientific publications and holds several patents. He loved going to the opera.

**Blanche Beryl Slotten** passed away on 11/17/21. Blanche worked for the Veteran's Hospital in Madison as the secretary to the Engineering Department for over 30 years, retiring at 80 years old. She then volunteered at the VA in the Auxiliary Department for another 10 years. I knew Blanche since I worked at the VA also. She came to NARFE's luncheons until recently, when I noticed she wasn't coming lately. I had no idea that Blanche was so close to 100 years old! You would never know it to look at her. She passed away after a brief illness, so sounds like she enjoyed a healthy, fulfilling life.

None of these appear to be Covid-19 deaths, so that is a good thing. And vaccines are coming!! I hope everyone can get one as soon as possible.

## MADISON CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

Myrna & Dobbin McNatt

The Madison Chapter Activity Report for 11/19/2020 - 1/19/2021 lists 2 new chapter members: **Rose Schulte** of Darlington, WI and **Butch Speth** of Stoughton, WI. One member who was previously dropped has been reinstated. One other member recently dropped for nonrenewal has been contacted. Five new prospective members have been contacted. Four member deaths were recorded.

## SAVE THE DATES: NOVEMBER 8-10

Our 2021 Wisconsin Federation Conference has been moved from the traditional May dates to the fall. We will celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of NARFE and we would surely like to see many of you there. It will be November 8 – 10, 2021 in Tomah WI. More details will be coming as the date gets closer but please *do* put this celebration on your calendar and save the date.

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Tom Miller, Chapter 120 Legislative Liaison

The 117<sup>th</sup> Congress is back to business after the January 3 swearing in and the January 6 incident at the Capitol. The new administration is getting settled after the inauguration on January 20. The President has communicated his priorities to the nation and Congress. To achieve those goals, many will require review and action by both houses of the legislative branch. NARFE Headquarters legislative staff is monitoring the introduction of bills and promoting legislation of importance to the federal community.

One of the first bills to be introduced is H. R. 82 that would repeal both the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). These provisions cut earned Social Security benefits to certain federal retirees and their spouses who are eligible for benefits. Of note, President Biden is in support of this legislation so if it passes both houses during the next biennium, it's likely to be enacted. Please contact Members of Congress to support this legislation.

The passage of the GPO/WEP bill is only one of several NARFE Legislative priorities. NARFE is advocating a change in the way cost-of-living-adjustments (COLAs) for federal retirement programs are determined from the CPI-W (workers) to CPI-E (elderly). Another priority is to repeal the increase in pension contributions for new federal employees with no corresponding increase in benefits.

Other priorities include postal reform, support of pay increases for current federal workers, maintain affordable health benefits including Medicare, and continuation of the federal long-term care insurance program.

President Biden did repeal the Executive Order (EO) signed by President Trump late in his term that created a "Schedule F" class of employees. This EO allowed federal agency heads to reclassify certain civil service policy-making positions to quasi-political appointees or Schedule F. If enacted those employees would lose their civil

service protections and could be fired at will. NARFE supported the repeal.

To learn more and stay up to date on the NARFE legislative agenda, check out the latest issue of the NARFE Magazine or go to [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org) and click on the advocacy tab. There you will find a full description of the NARFE advocacy positions for the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress as well as a link to the Legislative Action Center. From there, you can send letters to Members of Congress on issues of concern.

The legislative agenda appears to be packed for the next few months. As members we'll learn more about pending legislation and actions you can take to advocate for NARFE positions. If you have any questions about NARFE legislative matters, please contact me either by email or phone.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tom Miller, NARFE Chapter 120 Legislative Liaison

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Do you need to change your address, telephone or e-mail listing? There are several ways you can do this.

We recommend you do one of these in addition to completing the USPS change of address to save the cost of "Address Service Requested".

Go to [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org), log in and click on "Update My Record" or Call (toll free) 1-800-456-8410 or E-mail [memberrecords@narfe.org](mailto:memberrecords@narfe.org)

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## **Topic: NARFE Chapter 120 February 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

Join us via Zoom to hear from Jessica Klement or staff from NARFE National Headquarters about the new administration and outlook for NARFE. If you missed the chance to ask questions during her January 28<sup>th</sup> NARFE Webinar, this is a new opportunity for comments, questions and the latest news.

## **Time: Feb 26, 2021 11:30 AM Central Time (US and Canada)**

Chapter 120 invites your participation on February 26 at 11:30 am for a few minutes of social gathering before the special program scheduled to start at noon.

## **Your link to join Zoom meeting:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82898426464>

Meeting ID: 828 9842 6464

Find your local number:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kcXDYydUtE>

