



NARFE NEWS

NATIONAL ACTIVE & RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES VANCOUVER CHAPTER 131 www.narfe.org/chapter131

A Free Publication by Chapter 131

Preserving Active & Former Federal Employee's Earned Benefits

May 2010

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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I believe our District III Workshop went off O.K. on Wed, April 14th. There were 26 attendees there and half of them were members from our own Chapter #131. "Thank-you" Chapter #131 for standing behind me with all of your support. I would like to thank all of those who attended and helped with:

- registration
- taking orders and money for meals
- helping set-up
- putting out refreshments
- participating in the program
- and all of the other things you did.

"I couldn't have done it without YOU".

At the workshop I was voted-in to continue to be your District III Vice President for another year.

The membership voted at our April chapter meeting to have our annual Picnic at the Bedford Retirement Center on Tuesday, July 20, 2010. The Bedford has offered to host our picnic at their facility with no cost to us. I will need to know who is planning on attending this picnic by our June meeting so I can let the Bedford know how many they will need to prepare for.

Bonnie

USPS TEN-YEAR PLAN

Faced with the prospect of a \$238 billion deficit by 2020, the US Postal Service, on March 30th, asked regulators to approve a 5-day delivery service.

The Service has a 10-Year plan to help resolve its financial problems:

1. An emergency rate increase in 2011
2. An end to Saturday delivery
3. Eliminate or restructure the \$5 billion per year pre-payments for retiree health care costs.
4. Allow more retail stores with non-postal employees to offer postal services
5. Create a more flexible workforce with temporary workers
6. Increase flexibility by introducing and pricing postal products

PROGRAM – Nancy Jackson

On Tuesday, May 4, 2010, Dave Seesholtz, Vancouver Chapter #131 Newsletter Editor, will give a presentation about the 1980 eruptions of Mount St. Helens. As part of his program he will ask the question, **"Where were you when the mountain blew"?**

When Mount St. Helens reawakened in 1980, Dave was working on the Mount St. Helens Ranger District and managed the recreation use in the area. He wrote the contingency plan for the district and led the evacuation of the area on March 27, 1980.

Come for lunch at noon or arrive at 12:45 PM for the program and find out how Dave and others in our chapter were affected by this historic event.

Nancy

Vancouver Chapter Meeting

Tuesday, May 4, 2010

"Where Were You When Mount St Helens Blew"

Dave Seesholtz

Vancouver American Legion
4607 St. James Road

Lunch at 12:00 Meeting at 12:45 PM

DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

April 26	10 AM	Board Meeting	VMRC
May 4	Noon	Chapter Meeting	VAL
May 17-19		WA State Convention	Everett
May 24	10 AM	Board Meeting	VMRC
July 20		Annual Picnic	Bedford

SERVICE – Charlie Caughlan

Okay, now that I've gotten most of you to obtain and fill out NARFEs' form F-100; **"Be Prepared for Life's Events, What a Survivor Should Know"**, they have come up with a new and improved form. This is not a bad thing because your old one is still usable but the new one is even better and has more detailed information to fill in. In addition, they have developed a new F-100 so that it can be downloaded on your computer, filled out on your computer and updated on your computer. I don't know about you, but I just hate to re-fill out forms when information changes. The new form has 17 pages of information for you to fill out. I can't think of a thing they have forgotten.

The new form can be obtained one of three ways. Two of the ways require you to Log on the national NARFE website at www.narfe.org using your membership number. If you don't remember your membership number, you can find it on your magazine label. Once you have logged-in, there is a section called "News from NARFE"; click on the F-100 section. Now, you have the choice to either download the new form as a printed form or type your information into the form you see on the computer screen. (I'm excited about being able to enter my information into the computer and saving it so I can update it when the information changes. That's the one I downloaded.) The third way is by contacting NARFE headquarters by phone at 703-838-7760 or by emailing: retbenefits@narfe.org and ask for the F-100 Form.

Charlie

LEGISLATIVE CHAIR – Mike Teefy

At our district workshop I made a presentation on the impact of our Federal Employee Health Plan premiums and Medicare. The monthly medical premiums that Government retirees who are on Medicare Part A and Part B pay should be significantly reduced because Medicare becomes your primary insurer and FEHP is your secondary. When you are on Medicare Part A and Part B your current insurance company is saving over 80% of their costs because Medicare is your primary coverage. I suggested that this issue be discussed at both the State and National conventions since it appears that Federal retirees who are also covered by Medicare Part A and Part B are paying more than double in premiums when compared to non government retirees who have insurance through their employer or their union. **It is estimated that this savings would be almost \$300 to \$400 a month to each retiree** and the total savings to the retirees and the government would be approximately \$1.2 billion a year.

Additionally, we discussed that NARFE should demand that OPM allow FEHP to receive the Medicare Part D subsidy that private insurances receive from the Federal government. That \$1 billion a year subsidy would also reduce our premiums by \$80 to \$100 a year for each retiree.

Senator Patty Murray has cosponsored Diane Feinstein's Senate bill 484 to eliminate Windfall Elimination Provision [WEP] and Government Pension Offset [GPO]. She has also cosponsored Jim Webb's bill on Premium Conversion. With this year's election in November we need to remember and support Senate and House members who support our issues and protect our pay and benefits.

With the flurry of Tea Party protests across the country they failed to mention that federal taxes were cut by \$232 billion this year for middle class Americans and that most families of 4 earning less than \$40,000 a year paid no taxes. Also, the poor four CEOs at the major health insurance companies, [Aetna, Travelers, Cigna and Prudential] only earned \$82 million dollars this year. The health care system takes better care of CEOs than it's patients, hopefully the new health care law will change this.

Mike

STIMULUS FOR WASHINGTON STATE

Washington DOT Director Scott Witt announced that a \$590 million in federal stimulus grant has been "snagged" to enhance rail transportation from Seattle to Portland.

He envisions up to 13 daily round-trip high speed runs per day.

REGION IX VP – Lanny Ross

We were very fortunate to have Lanny Ross, Region IX VP at our District Workshop on Wednesday, April 14th. Since it's very possible that you don't know what a Regional VP is, I'll provide a little information on the NARFE Organization. NARFE is divided into 10 Regions. Washington State is in Region IX along with Alaska, Idaho, Montana and Oregon. The delegates from each region elect a vice president from their region at the national conventions, which occur every two years. The 10 regional VPs plus 4 resident officers (national president, vice president, secretary and treasurer) make up the NARFE Executive Board.

The following is some of the information that Lanny shared with us:

On **March 8, 2010 NARFE had 306,297 members.**

There are presently **1422 chapters** nationally.

Alaska 5

Idaho 10

Montana 16

Oregon 25

Washington 22

Washington State has about half of the members in Region IX.

In March there were 23,815 Active Federal Employees in NARFE. Region IX has 1726 AFE members. Washington State has 1068 AFE members.

The bad news is that NARFE is losing members at a fast pace, as illustrated by the following numbers.

2005 Net loss in membership – 17,988

2006 Net loss in membership – 6,707

2007 Net loss in membership – 9,414

2008 Net loss in membership – 17,388

2009 Net loss in membership – 7,415

We all need to work hard at recruiting and retaining members. There is strength in numbers when you're dealing with Congress. Perhaps the hard times and threats to our benefits will bring in new members.

As of March 18, 2010 NARFE total donations to Alzheimer's was at \$8,570,773.

The NARFE Calendar program as of April 2010 has resulted in a net revenue of \$513,868.52.

The 2010 NARFE Scholarship Applications must be postmarked by April 30, 2010.

Reported by your editor