



“Super Committee”

As everyone probably knows, there is a “super committee” in the U.S. Congress that is working on a proposal to bring the federal budget under better control and to ease the deficit that exists.

The super committee is composed of 6 members of each house of Congress and is divided equally between the Democratic and Republican parties. Their goal is to reach concordance on the possibility of 1.5 trillion in debt reduction over the next decade.

There is some skepticism as to whether this subset of Congress will complete their recommendations by November 23rd, the deadline for their report. If the committee does not reach agreement as to what they

wish to propose, sequestration cuts will result, for up to 1.2 trillion dollars, slashing defense spending and Medicare benefits.

The National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) has been monitoring the activity of this committee closely, although much of what the committee has done so far has been behind closed doors. Public hearings will take place in early November and NARFE will be a participant in providing information about federal employees and retirees benefits at these hearings.

NARFE has asked members across the country to let their congressmen and senators know their feelings as to reductions in

their benefits. IT IS IMPORTANT to send the message that as federal employees and retirees we will do our part, but we do not want to be singled out for especially heavy reductions in our benefits.

NARFE’s GEMS (Global Electronic Messaging System) will keep members signed up for the service advised of what is going on in Washington. If you have Internet access and are not a recipient of GEMS messages (which usually come out on Friday, but may show up at anytime), you may sign up for GEMS by going to the NARFE National homepage at www.narfe.org and sign up.

Stay ahead of events that may affect your benefits.

Changes of Address and Death Notification

It is important that you continue to receive your NARFE magazine through making any change of address known to your chapter and NARFE in general.

If you have moved, contact your Chapter President and let that person know your

new address. The chapter will inform NARFE National of the change. Returned magazines produce an unnecessary cost for NARFE, so make sure your change is known.

When a chapter member passes, it is equally impor-

tant to fill out a NARFE Form F-9 “Notification of Member Death”. Receiving this notification helps the chapter Service Officer in identifying a family that may need help in the passing of a federal employee or retiree.

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Special points of interest:

- Federal employee and retiree benefits may be at risk with Super Committee decisions.
- Contact your representatives and senators!
- Collect a \$10. Bounty for Dues Withholding
- Federation Convention at Texarkana in 2012
- The Right Way to Close a Chapter

Legislative Activity

Chapters, District Vice Presidents and the Federation Legislative Officer, George Wilken, have been active in speaking to the representatives and senators in the U.S. Congress. Meetings took place during August and September.

Chapter 0535, with Chapter President Woody Turner, hosted the state Chiefs of Staff for Senator John Boozman and Representative Rick Crawford, District 1.

District Vice President Frank Barbieri and members of the Bella Vista Chapter 1547, had a sit-down discussion with Congressman Steve Womack, District 3.

Discussions are pending with Congressmen Tim Griffin of Congressional District 2 and Mike Ross of Congressional District 4.

President Winston Wolfe and Legislative Officer George Wilken had a meeting with Senator Mark Pryor.

In addition, NARFE members attended town hall meetings in some of the districts and listened in on conversations about the federal budget and budget deficit.

Reports from those attending meetings indicated a willingness by congressional representatives to talk about federal employees and retirees and what effect current activity in Congress may have on those benefits. Since the Super Committee is working on recommendations that may include federal employee and retiree benefits, not much could be related by our congressional representatives on what would happen. In some cases, the meet-

ings were an introduction to NARFE for our congressional representatives. Those who have served in the past were very familiar with NARFE and its support of federal employees and retirees. Materials were presented at the meetings to the congressional representatives or their staff to further inform them of what NARFE is about.

Contact with our congressional representatives will continue over the coming months and whenever action is proposed by the Super Committee and approved by Congress, NARFE members may be asked to personally contact their congressional representatives to let them know what their feelings are on whatever measures come up that affect federal employee and retiree benefits.

“Protect America’s Heartbeat”

The “Protect America’s Heartbeat (PAH)” campaign is designed to provide information about federal employees and retirees to congressional representatives and the public in general. The PAH program was started because misinformation about the federal workforce continues to be spread by national and local newspapers and the media in general.

The website created for the program is

www.protectamericasheartbeat.org. The website provides photos and information about federal employees and retirees to set the record straight.

The PAH program is being updated and information will be forthcoming on the PAH updated program and how chapters and federations may use the program



in their contact with potential members. The program also assists in recruiting new members and retaining those who are members at present.

Anyone may access the PAH website and NARFE members may also keep track of the program’s progress on the NARFE website at www.narfe.org.

HELP WANTED!

NARFE chapters and federations have difficulty in surviving when few people come forward to serve as a chapter or federation officer. Some chapters have had to close partly due to the fact that no one wished to serve as a chapter officer.

In an organization like NARFE, there are usually a number of people with past experience in leadership positions. For those that wish to take on the role of a

chapter or federation officer, that do not have experience in a leadership position, training is available to assist those interested in a leadership position.

In addition, NARFE has a variety of publications that are available,

free of charge, to help those interested in chapter or federation leadership positions.

“The future of NARFE depends on the organization maintaining its chapters through leadership.”

The future of NARFE depends on the organization maintaining its chapters, through the service of individuals as chapter officers.

Contact Federation President Winston Wolfe or Executive Vice President George Wilken for more information.

Recruiting and Retention

NARFE is always in need of new members and members that renew their membership on a regular basis.

For approximately the past year, new or reinstated members or members' spouses who sign on for dues withholding, will receive a \$10. "bounty". Not only will members have their dues taken from their retirement income through dues withholding, they will receive a reduction in their monthly dues because they signed up for dues withholding.

It was recently learned that new members may also sign up for dues withholding immediately, instead of having to submit

an initial check and then wait a year for the dues withholding to take effect. Their dues will be prorated to be paid on a monthly basis through their annuity.

The "bounty" will be paid when a record of the member signing up for dues withholding shows up on the monthly chapter activity report, M-112. This may take 30 to 60 days to appear. Chapters should notify the Federation Treasurer when this happens.

If your membership is coming due, you are urged to reply to notifications by NARFE National when the time comes to renew your NARFE membership. You will know that your membership has been affected when you stop

receiving the NARFE magazine.

By renewing promptly, money will also be saved by the chapter that may also provide notification to the member whose membership is expiring.

Even if a membership lapses, the former member may be reinstated and the membership number they had will be reactivated.

Chapters are urged to appoint someone as the chapter membership chair, so that tracking takes place on those who have not renewed their membership.

NARFE online report M-112, Monthly Chapter Activity, keeps track of who has been notified of an expiring membership and chapters should contact these members as soon as possible.

Renew your membership, sign up for dues withholding and get a \$10.00 bounty.

NARFE Online Chapter (eNARFE)

For some time, when recruiting potential NARFE members, some have indicated that they do not wish to attend chapter meetings. To accommodate this, NARFE has created an online chapter known as eNARFE.

The creation of an eNARFE chapter is intended to offer another way for NARFE members to get information about their federal retirement benefits, but not attend

meetings. In the case of active federal employees, eNARFE provides a choice if they cannot attend daytime meetings of a local chapter.

Obviously, to become a member of eNARFE, a person must have Internet connectivity. When a person signs up as a new member or if a current member wishes to join the eNARFE chapter, then in either case, they will be able to do so.

eNARFE members are not local (physical) chapter members, but get all of their information online and through the NARFE magazine. eNARFE members do not have voting privileges in either federation or local chapter matters.

Even though eNARFE members are not local chapter members, chapters are urged to provide assistance to them in time of need and when called upon.

2012 Arkansas Federation Convention

The 2012 Arkansas Federation Convention will be held from May 17-18 at Texarkana College in Texarkana, Texas, right across the line from Arkansas.

Texarkana College will provide the meeting room and food for the convention banquet.

Lodging will be at a nearby Comfort Inn, located within a few miles of the college on Interstate 30 at the Richmond Road

exit. Room rate for the Comfort Inn is \$77. plus tax for single and double occupancy. Restaurants are located close to the hotel for meals outside of the convention.

The convention registration form and directions to the hotel and campus of Texarkana College are located on the Arkansas Federation website at www.narfeark.org.

Those attending the convention are urged to come in the day before, to do some sightseeing. A large shopping mall is located across the interstate from the hotel.

Further details will be made available on the Arkansas Federation website. The generic two-day convention schedule is located on the website for chapters to look at.



ARKANSAS FEDERATION OF NARFE

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***“Protecting the Benefits of Active
& Retired Federal Employees”***

We're on the Web!
www.narfeark.org

NARFE (National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association) at the national level, is the only organization that represents active and retired federal employees. From its creation in 1921, NARFE has served as an advocate for active and retired federal employees in a quest to preserve employee and retiree benefits and to be a voice in Washington, representing their interests to the Congress of the United States.

NARFE at the federation (state) and chapter (local community) level promotes volunteerism among its members and provides the organization needed to assist active and retired federal employees, including postal employees and retirees. Member chapters meet on a regular basis to discuss topics of interest devoted to the well-being of their members.

NARFE is the largest contributor to fight Alzheimer's disease and actively supports research and provides information to caregivers working with friends and family members afflicted with this disease. NARFE members have contributed over \$9 million dollars to support Alzheimer's research.

Closing of a NARFE Chapter

Unfortunately, the time will come when a few chapters feel that they are not able to continue, for whatever reason.

When a chapter begins an internal discussion about closing a chapter, the first person to contact is the Federation President. The President will meet with chapter officers and discuss some alternatives with them to avoid closing the chapter.

If the meeting produces the continued desire that the chapter wishes to close, then guidelines offered in NARFE's "Chapter & Federation Officers Manual" need to be followed.

Following the procedures set forth in the NARFE publication mentioned above serves to ensure that members will be assigned to another chapter and remaining chapter funds are distributed properly, usually prorated to the chapters who receive the members from the chapter that is closing.

Even though the chapter is closing, mem-

bers are urged to continue their NARFE membership either at another chapter or by becoming a member of NARFE's new online chapter, eNARFE.

Perhaps the most important activity that is mentioned and required in the chapter closing procedure is that every chapter member needs to be notified of the intent to close the chapter.

A chapter meeting is scheduled, at which the chapter's closing is discussed. This meeting is announced well in advance of the intended meeting day. Notification is made to all chapter members. Chapter members must be told that the meeting's sole purpose is

to discuss the closing of the chapter.

Whether by e-mail, telephone call or letter, ALL chapter members must be notified, even those residing outside of the chapter's normal boundary..

At the meeting held to discuss the closing of the chapter, a quorum, dictated by the chapter's by-laws, must be present for a vote to be conducted. If a quorum is not present, a vote may not be taken.

Once the meeting has been held, the Federation President is notified of the outcome and whether or not a vote could be taken.

For detailed information, look at pages 17 and 18 of "Chapter & Federation Officers Manual".

