



National Active and Retired FEDERAL EMPLOYEES Association

NARFE ENGLEWOOD - VENICE Chapter 0717
Celebrating our 60th Year, founded 1959.

NEWSLETTER

December 2019

Published Monthly (Except July & August)

Safeguarding and improving your earned rights and benefits.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

President Steve Shoub



Upcoming Event Reminders:

December 5, 2019 Executive Committee Meeting
12:00pm at Venice Library

December 19, 2019 Regular Chapter Meeting and
Holiday Party

January 2, 2020 Executive Committee Meeting
12:00 at Venice Library

January 16, 2020 Regular Chapter Meeting

December 19 Meeting. This year we celebrate the holidays with entertainment by Bob Teesdale. He is a local entertainer, pianist and singer with many years of experience. He will provide a mix of holiday tunes and contemporary songs at our meeting. His performance fee is being paid by a chapter member donor. Donations are also sought to cover the other expenses of the meeting not covered by the \$22 meal charge. Those include the holiday gift give away and the expanded meal items. In any case, come out and enjoy a wonderful meal and entertainment with your fellow chapter members. Please RSVP! All NARFE members, spouses, prospective NARFE members and guests are welcome.

Kudos to the volunteers and officers of the chapter for their outstanding service in 2019! Kudos also to the members who recruited new members to our Chapter. Keep it up!

Reflections. We can see by the calendar that the year's end is almost here. A new year brings new opportunities for each of us, NARFE and our Chapter. Looking over 2019, I see that our Chapter on the whole did well and is strong. We have money in the treasury, including an emergency reserve fund. But to maintain the level of services you expected, we did spend more than we took in from donations and dues receipts. We will need to work on that in 2020. Our members grew closer in friendship as evidenced by our strong social ties. Twenty percent of our members attend the monthly meetings and the annual picnic. The arrival of new members was positive, but they didn't offset the loss of members due to ill health, household moves out of the area, non-payments of dues and, sadly, deaths. Our meetings are in a fine location in a dedicated room with good meals where we hear and see informative and useful presentations, and learn about Health Benefits and the NARFE Legislative Agenda. We have a cadre of dedicated volunteer officers, including a Legislative and Service Officer, callers, and volunteers to keep the Chapter functioning. People getting involved in the operation of the Chapter allow the Chapter to be successful and to offer value to the membership. Please renew your membership in NARFE and the Chapter when your time comes. You owe it to yourself and the other members to support the only organization working to secure your earned benefits. With your friendship and support we will be successful in 2020.

Venice MainStreet, Inc. As previously reported, we have joined Venice MainStreet as a non-profit partner. The VMS web site address is www.VisitVeniceFL.org.

FEHBP Healthcare Plans. Open Season ends December 9. See 2020 cost information for all the FEHBP plans in the *narfe* Magazine.

Continued on Page 2—From the President's Desk

From the President's Desk...continued from Page 1

2020 COLA. As previously reported, the Cost of Living Increase (COLA) for 2020 is 1.6%. It is not hard to understand why the NARFE Legislative Agenda includes an action item to change the way the COLA for seniors is calculated from the current CPI-W to CPI-E (Elderly) formula, and to that end NARFE supports House Bill H.R. 1553: The Fair COLA for Seniors Act of 2019. Our 2020 COLA increase does not accurately reflect the real inflation in prices and costs we live with every day.

NARFE Legislative Action Center on the NARFE HQ web site is your home for information and action on the NARFE Legislative Agenda. In the Center, you can easily send prepared email messages to your Representatives and Senators about pending legislation and policies impacting our earned retirement benefits. This is a perfect method for "Armchair Activists" to actively pursue our mission of protecting our earned right and benefits. You can do this.

NARFE magazine Civil Discourse Survey. Just before the November Chapter meeting, I received an E-mail survey from NARFE HQ. I decided to complete and submit it which is something I usually do not do. I hope those of you who also received the survey will complete and submit it to NARFE. I don't know why NARFE decided to pursue the topic of Civil Discourse, but I do believe it is a topic worth thinking about. The survey was in part confusing, because the authors assumed that survey responders would understand the definition of terms and parameters they used writing the questions, but that was not the case for me. My first questions about the survey were: What is the meaning of Civil Discourse in the survey questions? Is there uncivil discourse, and if so, what is it? I also questioned: Who are the people the survey is focusing upon concerning civil discourse? Federal employees? The general population of the USA? Of the world? The main survey question asked for my opinion about the current state of civil discourse being worse or not. I asked myself: Worse or better than when and for whom? So, in my responses, as you do in yours, I answered the survey questions with my own conclusions about the WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE and WHY the survey writers meant for us to use when answering. Even though, in my opinion, the survey has serious flaws, it did make me think about the general need to "turn the volume down," if you know what I mean. After reflecting upon the questions before answering them, it is my opinion that the issues in Civil Discourse are more complex than at first blush. I came to the conclusion that there is no one simple and best answer to complex issues in questions about Civil Discourse in current and historical contexts. What do you think?

Local Contacts for Your Senators and Representatives

Senator Rick Scott
716 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
202-224-5274
<http://rickscott.senate.gov>

Senator Marco Rubio
201 S. Orange Ave, Suite 350
Orlando, FL 32801
407-254-2573
<http://Rubio.senate.gov>

Honorable W. Gregory Steube
U.S. House of Representatives
17th Congressional District
871 Venetia Bay Blvd.
Suite 112
Venice, FL 34285
(202) 225-5792
<http://Steube.house.gov>

Honorable Vern Buchanan
U.S. House of Representatives
16th Congressional District
111 South Orange Avenue,
Suite 202W
Sarasota, FL 34236
941.951.6643
<http://buchanan.house.gov>

Alzheimer's Research Fund. It is not too late to donate to the NARFE Alzheimer's charity fund this year. More information is on page 3.

Address Corrections Cost Money. Postal rates have gone up! Please make sure you have your current and correct address in the NARFE HQ data base. You may notify us if a change or correction needs to be made, or you can go on the NARFE HQ website to review and make any necessary update to your information. SnowBirds must do this so you can keep getting our Chapter Newsletter and the national *narfe* magazine.

Please continue to support NARFE and this Chapter. You need NARFE and NARFE needs you! It is more important than ever to renew your NARFE and Chapter membership!

Happy Holidays!

**Steven Shoub, President, NARFE Chapter
717, Englewood-Venice, Florida**

CHAPTER CONTACT email: narfechapter717@gmail.com

CHAPTER OFFICERS:

President : Steve Shoub
Vice President: Don Gray
Treasurer: Jon Cantor
Secretary: Gordon Wilkie

Service Officer: Sheila Nichols, tel. 301-788-3464, email: hr4u2@comcast.net

Membership Chair: Don Gray, tel. 941-918-1516, email: dandcgray@live.com

Legislative Officer: Tim Sherer

Programs Chair, Chaplain, and Alzheimer's Fund Chair: Linda Braswell

Sunshine Committee: Jean Marie Burton

Newsletter Editor: Barry Bye

Webmaster: John Burton

Facebook Manager: Wilfredo Lopez

Venice MainStreet Liaison: Kathy Quigley

Senior Advisors: Terry Greenwood, Nancy Marik, and Roy Reichelt, Jr.

WEB ADDRESSES:

Chapter – www.narfevenice.org

Florida Federation – www.narfevl.net

National – www.narfe.org



Linda Braswell, Alzheimer's Fund Coordinator

DONATIONS BY CHAPTER 717 MEMBERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN CONTRIBUTING TO A CURE

Donations to the Alzheimer's Disease Research Fund that are made before the end of the year qualify for tax deductions for 2019 to the extent permitted by law. These voluntary donations are contributing to research to find a cure for Alzheimer's disease, the NARFE official charity.

Chapter 717 members continue their longstanding history of generously supporting NARFE's goal of \$14 Million with individual donations. Your donations are helping to discover a cure for Alzheimer's disease and to improve the lives of sufferers, their caregivers and the tremendous financial burden of the disease.

Donations to the Alzheimer's Disease Research Fund are always being accepted by your check made out to NARFE Chapter 717 at a monthly Luncheon Meeting or by mail to NARFE Chapter 717, P.O. Box 2203, Venice, FL 34284 with Alzheimer's Fund written in the memo line.

All donations, large and small, are gratefully accepted and appreciated. Donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.



Vice President and Membership Chair

Donald Gray

918-1516

dandcgray@live.com

Membership Report by Donald Gray Chapter 717 Membership Chair

Chapter membership currently stands at 149, a loss of three this month. Please be sure to pay your NARFE and Chapter dues when you are notified by NARFE HQ that it's that time again. Also, leave instructions that include NARFE as an organization your beneficiaries should notify after your death.

All members must help recruit new members to replace those who pass. The Chapter needs to maintain a 200-address mailing list for reduced newsletter postage. Members who are successful at recruiting new members from now until December 31st will be rewarded with a \$10 check from National Headquarters for each recruit. They will also be entered into a random drawing for other rewards.

The NARFE dues withholding program for retirees and survivors offers a chance to save money on National dues. You may want to offer this as an incentive for a new member or for yourself when you renew. Currently this involves submittal of a form requesting dues withholding. No down payment is needed. Withholding from your monthly payment will begin in one or two months. Withholding for National and Chapter dues currently is \$4.00 per month. A total of \$48 compared to the normal \$54 for a one year renewal. Different forms are used for current and new members. New member payment of \$40 with the usual application form includes the first year of Chapter membership. At renewal, they may take advantage of the dues withholding program.

Seasonal residents, remember to change your address on the National web site. Submit a change of address form to any officer, or give me a call at (941) 918-1516 if you want me to make the change.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

Effective date of change: _____

Name: _____

Member ID (if known):

Check here _____ if you change your local address/phone during the year. If so you will need to send in your new address/phone each new season.

Englewood-Venice Chapter Area Address

Street/Apt: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Alternate (Away) Address

From: Month _____ Day _____

To: Month _____ Day _____

Street/Apt: _____

City, State, Zip: _____



Service Officer's Corner

by Sheila Nichols, Chapter 717
Service Officer

Can you believe it is the last month of the year already? This is a good time to wrap up things, not just Christmas presents! For retirees, one of the things on your “List of Things to Do” should be checking in with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) through the use of their automated **Retirement Services Online** System. You can access this system by using your computer or a computer at a library or a friend’s house. The website is: <https://www.servicessonline.opm.gov/>.

Retirement Services Online is the system retirees use to view annuity statements, change your mailing address, change your federal or state income tax withholdings, establish allotments to organizations (such as NARFE!), print 1099-R tax forms (available at the end of January), change your banking information, request duplicate annuity booklets, and more.

In order to use **Retirement Services Online**, you will need to have your CSA number and your password. It is extremely important for retirees to access this system at least once a year; otherwise OPM will lock you out of the system due to inactivity after 15 months of non-usage. If you are ever locked out, the best way to again access the system is to call 1-888-767-6738 and ask that a temporary password to be emailed to you. If you do not have an email address, OPM will mail you the temporary password but it will take 7-10 days to receive it. OPM has added approximately 90 representatives this past year which makes it easier to call in now.

To all the NARFE members (both active employees and retirees) – may you have a wonderful holiday season and Happy New Year!



Linda L. Braswell, Programs Chair

DECEMBER HOLIDAY PARTY PROGRAM

Christmas decorations are lending a festive air, the Chapter 717 elves are shopping for your gift, and preparations for the December 19th Holiday Party Meeting are well underway.



Bob Teesdale

Adding to the good cheer and conviviality will be the musical treat of Holiday tunes and popular music provided by our entertainer, Bob Teesdale, a classically trained pianist-singer with a master's degree in music. He is a versatile musician with a family background in jazz, and he sings and plays an easy listening mix of oldies, standards, jazz, light rock, country, you-name-it from "Willie" to Frank Sinatra.

Plan to make this upbeat and festive event a part of your Holiday Celebrations!



Jean Marie Burton, Sunshine Chair

941-525-4264

johnburton140@gmail.com



Thinking Of You cards and We Miss You notes were sent to David Deibel, Betty Stern, and Sue Anders.

Donations for Sunshine cards are needed: Get Well, Sympathy and Thinking of You.

Remember to call or send me Sunshine News.

Good Health to All! Happy New Year!

Presentation at the November 2019 General Meeting



Photo by Jon Cantor

(L-R) Programs Chair Linda L. Braswell, Speaker Kirsten O'Donnell of the Area Agency on Aging for Southwest Florida, and President Steve Shoub at the November meeting.

Kirsten O'Donnell speaking at the November meeting.



Photo by Jon Cantor



Photo by Steve Shoub

(L - R) Karen Bosley, Marge Scowcroft, and Nancy Marik enjoying lunch at the November meeting.

Englewood-Venice
NARFE Chapter 717
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

ADDRESS LABEL

The meeting of the Englewood-Venice Chapter 717 will be held on **Thursday, December 19, 2019** at the Pelican Pointe Golf & Country Club. See inside for program details. Social Hour begins at 11:30 a.m. followed by a sit-down luncheon. **Reservations are required.** Contact Steven Shoub for reservations at 941 473-7395 if you have not been called. A cash bar is available. All current and retired Federal employees and spouses and guests are welcome.

**Cost, including tax and tip is \$22.00.
Make checks payable to:
NARFE Chapter 717**

**Pelican Pointe
Golf & Country Club
625 Center Road, Venice, FL**

Menu

Hot Hors D'oeuvres served at 11:45am.

Lunch at noon

Choice of Entrée:

1. Herb Roast Pork Loin with Sage, Cranberry, and Apple Chutney

OR

2. Baked Cod Piccata with Lemon Wine Butter Sauce

Entrée includes: Parsnip Whipped Mashed Potatoes; Broccoli, Cauliflower and Carrot Medley; House Salad with Choice of Dressings, and Warm Rolls and Butter

Dessert: Black Forest Cake

Coffee, Decaf, Hot or Iced Tea

Cash Bar Available

From I-75: Take exit 193. At the traffic light off exit, turn South onto Jacaranda Blvd. Continue to 3rd traffic light and turn right on to Center Road. Go approximately 1 1/2 miles and turn right into the entrance to Pelican Pointe (Horse and Chaise Blvd.)

Alt1: From Highway 41 (Tamiami Trail), turn east on Center Road. Proceed approximately 1 1/2 miles and turn left into the entrance to Pelican Pointe (Horse and Chaise Blvd)

If using GPS or a map service, use 625 Center Rd, Venice, Florida

Tell the guard at the gate that you are attending the NARFE luncheon. Park in the lot to the right.