



National Active and Retired FEDERAL EMPLOYEES Association

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

NEWSLETTER

February 2020

Published Monthly (Except July & August)

Safeguarding and improving your earned rights and benefits.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

President Steve Shoub



Upcoming Event Reminders:

February 6, 2020 Executive Committee Meeting
12:00pm at Venice Library

February 20, 2020 Regular Chapter Anniversary
Meeting at Pelican Pointe Clubhouse

March 5, 2020 Executive Committee Meeting
12:00pm at Venice Library

March 26, 2020 Regular Chapter Meeting (**Note
date change to fourth Thursday in March!**)

The “Roaring 20’s”, that is, the decade starting in 2020, have begun. There is a no holds barred battle for control of the government going on in Washington. We will need some good luck if NARFE and we are not to be caught up in some way in the turmoil; and I hope it is not to the detriment of our earned benefits. When the first Roaring 20’s ended 90 years ago, NARFE was being born to further and protect the earned benefits of retired Federal employees. NARFE was named NARCE (National Association of Retired Civil Employees) then. Sixty-one years ago on February 12, 1959, our Chapter was established. This month we celebrate the Chapter’s 61st Anniversary at our meeting on February 20th. Several years ago, Programs Chair Linda Braswell began an event to honor our members who reached the age of 90. She called it “Honor the 90’s.” We celebrate our 90 and 90-plus year old members at our meeting on February 20 when we celebrate the Chapter’s Anniversary. Our oldest

members are generally our longest members of the Chapter. They have been loyal to the Chapter and NARFE. They see value in belonging to both NARFE and the Chapter. Please come out and support the Chapter and our Honorees.

Mark Your Calendars. On February 20, in addition to Honoring our 90’s, we will hear an entertaining presentation from Eric Watters of the Venice Theater. At our meeting on March 26 (note the date change from March 19) we will hear a presentation by John McCarthy, Executive Director of Historic Spanish Point, who will report upon developments concerning shoreline archaeological sites.

January 16 Meeting. We learned all about the Sarasota County Fire Department (SCFD) organization, fire prevention, and emergency services for county citizens from Michael Rodrigue, Community Resource Specialist, SCFD. See photos on page 7. Also, copies of the Sarasota County Fire Prevention “FILE FOR LIFE” were distributed to attendees to complete and post upon their refrigerator in case of emergency.

2020 COLA. The Cost of Living Increase (COLA) for 2020 was received in our January 2, 2020 disbursement. 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. **In the NARFE Legislative Action Center, you can easily send prepared email messages to your Representative about this pending legislation.**

Kudos to **Secretary Gordon and Carole Wilkie** for their dedication and assistance to the Chapter.

Continued on Page 2—From the President’s Desk

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

OPM Electronic Annual Notice and 1099R. As previously reported, you can obtain your annual mailer and 1099R electronically from OPM using your Services Online account. Simply log into www.servicesonline.opm.gov and enter your claim number, password and update your communication preferences in your Profile. Your annual mailer and 1099R will be available for viewing at your convenience on your Services Online Account. If you have forgotten your password, it's easy to request another one, just follow the on-screen directions if you have an email address associated with your account, or contact retire@opm.gov to have a password sent to you. (Reference: OPM message dated Dec. 20, 2019)

Thrift Savings Plan 1099-R Forms. The TSP notified participants it has mailed IRS Form 1099-R, *Distributions From Pensions, Annuities, Retirement or Profit-Sharing Plans, IRAs, Insurance Contracts, etc.*, to participants who received a withdrawal up to December 27, 2019, and/or a taxable distribution of a loan up to December 31, 2019. Withdrawals processed on December 30 and 31 are taxable income for 2020. If you have not received Form 1099-R by mid-February, you can print a copy from TSP's "My Account." Corrected Forms 1099-R will be issued late February/early March. If you are expecting a corrected Form 1099-R, TSP suggests you may wish to wait to file your taxes until you receive the form.

New IRS 2019 Tax Forms for Seniors. In January, the IRS began using a new tax form IRS Form-1040-SR exclusively for senior citizens age 65 and older for filing 2019 taxes. This form is an easier to use alternative filing option for seniors. Reference: IRS New Essentials; Issue No. IR-2020-24 dated Jan. 30, 2020.

DoD Veterans Benefits. In addition to the Veterans Administration Canteen Service (VCS), as of January 1 the Department of Defense is expanding access to base retail facilities for veterans who are enrolled in VA Health Care and have a VA Identification Card.

Venice MainStreet, Inc. As previously reported, we have joined Venice MainStreet (VMS) as a non-profit partner. The VMS web site address is www.VisitVeniceFL.org. **Kathy Quigley** is our Chapter Liaison with VMS.

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>

HELP WANTED. Due to the retirement of our Service Officer Sheila Nichols and our Legislative Officer Tim Sherer at the end of 2019, we are looking for volunteers for the positions of Chapter Service Officer and Chapter Legislative Officer. Anyone with an interest in learning more about these opportunities to serve our Chapter should contact me.

Address Corrections Cost \$0.61. 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. Every incorrect address label costs the chapter \$0.61, and that is in addition to the initial cost to mail the Newsletter.

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!

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: VACANT

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

Legislative Officer: VACANT

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

Some Facts About Brain Health

The human brain weighs about three pounds, accounting for about 2% of the body weight; but it requires at least 20 to 30 percent of calories consumed. Brain cells require glucose, a form of sugar, to fuel cellular activities. However, the brain is unable to store energy and needs a constant supply of glucose and oxygen regularly delivered to neurons (brain cells). Humans continue to make new brain cells throughout life in response to mental activity and learning new skills. Physical exercise helps too. Hydration is critical to maintaining brain health.

The brain has the memory capacity to hold more information than all the reference books in your local library. Many people are capable of maintaining their memory and attention into their eighties and nineties.

Alzheimer's Disease is a progressive disease of the brain in which brain cell connections and cells themselves degenerate and die, destroying memory and other important mental functions. No cure exists as yet, but medications and management strategies may improve symptoms.

NARFE has partnered with the Alzheimer's Society since 1985 to fund research for a cure for Alzheimer's Disease. Chapter 717 members continue to give individual donations toward the \$14Million goal, including \$113.00 donated at the January Luncheon Meeting.

Donations are always accepted at any time with your check made out to NARFE Chapter 717 at a Luncheon Meeting or mailed to 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 are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Thank you to all Chapter members for your generosity.



Vice President and Membership Chair

Donald Gray

918-1516

dandcgray@live.com

Membership Report by Donald Gray Chapter 717 Membership Chair

Total Chapter membership is 143. This is a loss of 1 from last month. Some of the recent losses may be due to errors in the National data system. I will soon send letters to those who may have been dropped from Chapter due to an error. If there are errors, I can request National to correct them.

Your help is needed to introduce prospective members to the Chapter. Thanks to those who have recently brought guests to our luncheon meetings. We have a list of about 24 prospects. Check with me to see if you know anyone on the list. Perhaps you can help recruit them to membership.

What's Your Name? That's a question I often need to ask at our monthly meetings. While I have information on all 140 plus Chapter Members, it doesn't include photos. My only opportunity to relate names to faces is at the monthly meetings. A nametag would be a great help. A NARFE unique name badge is available from NARFE headquarters. Cost and ordering information will be available at the February meeting. Information is available at the NARFE General Store on the National web site.

Flyers with Chapter meeting and contact information are now available for you to post at your neighborhood club house or notice board. Call me if you want a copy.

Please remember to make your address, phone number, and e-mail changes to your NARFE National record. If you are unable to do this, please submit the change in writing using the Newsletter form. You can give it to a Chapter officer, or mail to the Chapter mail box.

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

(Editors note: The Service Officer Position is currently vacant. The article below is a reprint of the Service Officer's Corner from the February 2019 Newsletter. The article has been edited for length and COLA amounts updated for 2020.)

As NARFE members, we receive the NARFE monthly magazine which is an excellent resource in so many ways. One of these ways we can use it is by reviewing all of the great benefit questions and answers provided in each magazine. Also, you might not know this, but NARFE published an entire booklet that includes a compilation of many of these great questions and answers all in one spot. It can be found at: https://www.narfe.org/pdf/NARFE_Q&A_Book.pdf (**Questions and Answers from the Pages of the NARFE Magazine**). What makes it even nicer is that it is sorted by specific topics with a table of contents in the front of the booklet. Take some time to review this at your leisure and you just might find some answers to your very own questions!

A question I receive many times concerns the COLA (cost-of-living adjustment). As most of you know, the COLA for 2020 was the same CSRS annuitants, FERS annuitants, and Social Security beneficiaries, 1.6 percent.

It is that time of year to be working on our taxes. If you are like me, you want your 1099R from OPM as soon as possible. You don't have to rely on the post office to get it to you. You will get it quicker on-line by using OPM's Services Online at <https://www.serviceline.opm.gov/>.

The 1099R form for the current tax year and for four previous years can be printed or downloaded to your computer or tablet or smartphone. If you are unable to print or save the document, you can request a mailed copy from the On Demand Documents module. If any of your tax information has changed or been amended during the current tax year or the previous four tax years, contact the OPM Retirement Information Office for further instructions. The phone number is 1-888-767-6738. If you wish to speak with an OPM Customer Service Specialist, you should call during OPM's regular business hours from 7:40 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. It is easier to reach them Tuesday through Friday and at 7:40 a.m.

Keep in mind that we are very fortunate to have technology available. It is just as simple as using Google to ask questions. Even as a former retirement and benefits specialist working for the federal government, I would ask Google all kinds of questions related to my work. I still do. There is just too much information to be able to know all of it, so I encourage you to do the same. I still use it when someone asks me a question. I certainly can't remember it all myself either! Use your fingertips (on the computer!) to do the walking! You will be amazed at what you WILL know!

by Sheila Nichols, Service Officer (2019)



Linda L. Braswell, Programs Chair

Honoring Our Chapter Heroes

We of Chapter 717 are looking forward to honoring our 90 plus year old members and Past Presidents at our 61st Chapter Anniversary on February 20, 2020. If you were born in 1930 or before, let me know as soon as possible, because the February 20th Luncheon Meeting is about you!

We are happy to recognize and honor Virginia Brisson, Ilse Cavaliere, David Deibel, Kitty Koscielny, Tom Martorana, Marcy Sarkozy and Esther Schmitt as our 90 plus year old Honorees who have inspiring and entertaining stories of dedication to their jobs and their country.

Local celebrity and Director of Development Eric Watters of Venice Theatre, who sang in a church choir with one of our Honorees, Marcy Sarkozy, will entertain and pay tribute to our Honorees as he shares his thoughts on 17 years of playing Scrooge in "A Christmas Carol" at the theatre, highlights from his Dad's World War II diary, and the latest plans and programs for Venice Theatre.

The rest of us in our 50's, 60's and 70's, who are sure that age 90 will never happen to us, can learn from our elders how their optimism, good humor and resilience have ensured that they have successfully navigated the inevitable ups and downs, disappointments and successes of life. They have earned every bit of the respect that we can give them as well as the valuable lessons we, their juniors, can learn from their example.



Jean Marie Burton, Sunshine Chair

941-525-4264

johnburton140@gmail.com



Cards of cheer were sent to Jim Fitzpatrick and Esther Schmitt.

We would appreciate donations of "GET WELL" cards.

Remember to call or send me Sunshine News.

Good Health to All!

**Presentation by Mike Rodrigue, Sarasota County
Fire Department (SCFD), at the January 2020
General Meeting**



(L-R) Programs Chair
Linda Braswell, speaker
Mike Rodrigue, SCFD, and
President Shoub at January
meeting.

Chapter members and
guests at lunch. Tom and
Dee Martorana in the
foreground.



President Shoub presents a
Certificate of Appreciation to
Mike Rodrigue, SCFD.

Photos by Jon Cantor

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

ADDRESS LABEL

The meeting of the Englewood-Venice Chapter 717 will be held on **Thursday, February 20, 2020** 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

Rolls and Butter

Choice of Entrée:

1. Chef's Beef Rouladen

OR

2. Baked Salmon with Champagne Sauce

Entrée includes: House Salad with Choice of Dressings OR Chef's Soup du jour, Twice Baked Potatoes, and a Squash - Zucchini Blend

Dessert: Anniversary Cake with Ice Cream

Coffee, Decaf, Hot or Iced Tea

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.