



# SPOKANE CHAPTER 32 NEWSLETTER

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Advocates for Current and Former Federal Employees

November 2011

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *Arlene Patton*

As we enter into the month of Thanksgiving season, as your President, I have so much to be thankful for. 2011 has been a very busy year for Chapter 32. We hosted the 2011 WSFC Convention, thanks to all that supported and attended the convention. The Convention was rated very successful. Chapter 32 Bylaws were amended and have been forwarded to NARFE National for review and approval. A special thanks to Kathy Brooks, Roger Bosky and Lois Pace for their work on the Bylaws Committee. Also, special thanks to you who continue to respond to alerts and have your voice heard by contacting your Senators and Congresswoman. Our voices are being heard, but the work is not done.

It has just been announced that we will be receiving an increase in 2012 for our social security and annuity benefits. That is a pleasant surprise after not receiving an increase for the last two years.

**Wishing you and your family a very happy & safe Thanksgiving.** I know that I and my family have much to be thankful for.

## MEMBERSHIP *Ken Kaul*

I don't understand it. I don't know why, but it keeps happening. And, I don't know what to do about it. **Last month Chapter 32 had 37 members dropped for non-renewal!** While this is consistent with national trends, it defies logic that in these times of challenges to federal employees and retirees benefits that membership would drop rather than increase.

We are being targeted by Congress. A political fire is raging and the heat is quickly melting away our health benefits, job security, and retirement benefits

For too long the federal community sat back and enjoyed the benefits we thought were guaranteed. If NARFE is to continue to be an effective advocate for federal employees we must keep up our membership numbers. NARFE is not just an organization for retirees, but an advocate for the entire federal family, including active workers, their spouses and survivors. NARFE's successes affect active workers a lot longer than retirees. So, stay a member, for your sake!

## NARFE NEEDS YOU AND YOU NEED NARFE!

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS *Frances Baker*

The election of officers and directors for 2012 will take place at our November meeting, so please attend this important meeting if you can. We will be asking for nominations from the floor so there is still time to make this a competitive election by nominating yourself or a willing Chapter member.

Chapter President Arlene Patton would like to hear from you if you are interested in serving on a committee. One person does not constitute a committee, so please volunteer if you are able.

## NARFE PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINAR

**Save the date!** A NARFE PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINAR (FERS) will be held on March 13 & 14 in Spokane. More information regarding time and place will be available the first part of November.

## NOVEMBER CHAPTER MEETING

Monday, November 14, 2011  
Old Country Buffet  
5504 N Division Street  
Lunch at 11:30 Meeting at 12:30

Program: Washinton State Veteran's Cemetery  
Richard Ceslar, Director

## PROGRAM *Pat Hegerberg*

The speaker for our November Chapter meeting will be Richard Ceslar, Director of Washington State Veteran's Cemetery. He will present a program on veterans benefits and eligibility for burial in the Washington State Veteran's Cemetery.

Last month, Spokane Mayor Mary Verner and Chief Financial Officer, Gavin Cooley spoke about the 2012 city budget: An 8 million dollar deficit with ZERO revenue increases. The city is facing drastic cuts in order to balance the budget, she stated. 70% of the city's budget goes to salaries for city employees. She went on to say non-union city employees had their salaries frozen for the third year in a row. The Mayor and City Council know citizens cannot absorb new taxes so she is focused on retaining and increasing new jobs in Spokane.

Recent positive developments (financially) for Spokane include the following: 1) Medical School in the U-district, 2) 12M single stream recycling center, 3) Caterpillar parts distribution center, 4) Scafco purchase of Playfair 5) Agreement with the Restaurant Association.

The City Council has been prudent with taxpayer money as Spokane still has money in a savings account and a Triple A bond rating—all accomplished while closing the deficit, she explained.

## ALZHEIMER'S *Jean Flechel*

The Board of Directors is making an effort to expand the committees that serve your chapter. Would you like to assist with this one? Several leaflets on different aspects of Alzheimer's are available at chapter meetings and we collect contributions four times a year.

November is a regular month for "passing the hat", but you can give to the NARFE Alzheimer's Fund at any time. Last month, half of the raffle winnings was donated to this project, and a generous memorial contribution was received. Thank you all for your continuing support.

## REST STOP FUNDRAISER *Bob Elmore*

Thanks to everyone who helped out with the Sprague Rest Stop fundraiser. We made \$750.00 after expenses. Next year we'll again be on the westbound side, August 20-23.

*Happy  
Thanksgiving*

**NARFE on the Web:**

National: [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org)

WSFC: [www.narfewa.net](http://www.narfewa.net)

Spokane: [www.narfespokanewa.org](http://www.narfespokanewa.org)

**LEGISLATION** *Bill Beatty*

The November NARFE Magazine reports that closed-door meetings of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction have spawned considerable speculation as to what we can expect when the Committee's Thanksgiving deadline for offering \$1.5 trillion in budget cuts over the next ten years rolls around. Predictions range from total lack of agreement, in which a series of across the board spending cuts automatically become law, to compromise legislation that will include reductions to federal civilian retirement, pay and health benefits. As always, speculation grows best in the soil of uncertainty.

Several things are known for sure, however. We know that NARFE and federal employee unions have made persistent efforts to protect the interests of federal annuitants and active employees. Part of that joint effort calls for robust support from each of us. November 2 is "Call to Congress Day." I hope you make your call. If you haven't, call 1-866-220-0044 or 202-224-3121; ask for Senator Patty Murray's office; and tell them you are a member of Spokane NARFE Chapter 32, and that you are calling to request that the Committee not cut the benefits that you earned through years of public service. If you are an active employee, indicate that you are calling to ask that federal workers not be singled out to bear the burden of fixing a budget problem that you did not create.

If you fail to support this effort, you run the risk of suffering from the implementation of those other things we know for sure. I refer specifically to entreaties by persuasive politicians that Senator Murray and her fellow committee members eliminate federal pensions; extend the current pay freeze and within grade pay increases for several more years; require that you pay more of your frozen wages into your pension plan (assuming it is not eliminated altogether); and suffer losses in your retirement income, which will, of course, be less due to the wage freeze, by modifying the cost-of-living index.

Finally, if you do not have internet access, stay current by calling NARFE's toll free legislative hotline at 1-877-217-8243.

**SERVICE OFFICER** *Lennie Husa*

This year there will not be an automatic mailing of the 2012 Service Benefit Plan brochures to current members of the Federal Employee Health Benefit Plan (FEHBP). You will receive information about 2012 benefits and 2012 benefit changes along with a standard option and basic option benefit comparison chart as in years past.

From your computer you may view and download a copy of the brochures, save an electronic copy of them and/or print the pages you want to save based on your needs. Information on obtaining printed copies of any of the brochures will be included with the mailing you receive with the 2012 benefits and 2012 benefit changes.



**SUNSHINE** *Estelle Bailey and Tina Kaul*

A warm welcome to new NARFE members Susan Harvey and Curtis Ota. Our sincere condolences to the family of Honorary Member, Edwin C. Thompson.

Congratulations to Chapter President, Arlene Patton, volunteer with the Washington State Housing Finance Commission, who received the 2011 Friend of Housing Award during the annual Housing Washington Conference. Thank you to Lester Ames for donating the fruit basket door prize given at the October chapter meeting and to Mayor Mary Verner, our October guest speaker.

**DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR**

- Nov 14 Chapter Meeting
- Nov 14-Dec 12 FEHBP Open Season
- Nov 28 Board Meeting
- Dec 12 Chapter Meeting
- Dec 19 Board Meeting

**CHAPTER 32 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES**

Officers and Directors:

President	Arlene Patton	747-1589
Vice President	Bob Elmore	838-4061
Secretary	Roger Bosky	443-0686
Treasurer	Chris Boettger	468-9438
Fin. Secretary	Lani Boldt	325-3031
Directors	Jean Flechel	838-8081
	Ken Kaul	448-3542
	Janet Toone	466-3147
	Pat Hegerberg	448-5343
	Tina Kaul	448-3542
	Lois Pace	325-9245
	Gary Johnson	928-2322
	Gene Owen	922-7800
	Milton Maas	448-8722

Service Center.....625-1359

Committees:

Alzheimer's	Jean Flechel	838-8081
Awards	Gary Johnson	928-2322
Legislation	Bill Beatty	747-2249
Membership	Ken Kaul	448-3542
NARFE-PAC	June Christie	443-6819
Newsletter	Lois Pace	325-9245
	Harry Lippincott	443-0570
Nominating	Frances Baker	226-5391
	June Christie	443-6819
	Art Hathaway	235-8509
	Ardyce Pangerl	
Program	Pat Hegerberg	448-5343
Public Relations	Kathy Brooks	624-9465
Raffle	Frances Baker	226-5391
Service	Lennie Husa	924-1298
Sunshine	Tina Kaul	448-3542

**ELECTED OFFICIALS**

President Barack H. Obama  
 202-456-1414  
[www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

Senator Patty Murray  
 10 N Post, Suite 600  
 Spokane, WA 99201  
 509-624-9515  
[www.murray.senate.gov](http://www.murray.senate.gov)

Senator Maria Cantwell  
 920 W. Riverside Ave., Suite 697  
 Spokane, WA 99201  
 509-353-2507  
[www.cantwell.senate.gov](http://www.cantwell.senate.gov)

Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
 10 N. Post, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
 Spokane, WA 99201  
 509-353-2374  
[www.mcmorris.house.gov](http://www.mcmorris.house.gov)