

NARFE

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association
Olympic Peninsula Chapter 1006 • July 2007



NARFE District IV Website

www.narfewadist4.org

Chapter Officers

President: Ray Weinmann

Vice President: Ron Gill

Secretary: Marilyn Falls

Treasurer: Mary Balian

Board Member: Ralph Angulo

Board Member: William Holman

Board Member: Lois Shaw

Past President: Orvie Jensen

District IV Vice President: Bill Powers

Chapter Chairpersons

Alzheimer's: Elizabeth Owen

Historian: Charlotte Petersen

Legislative: Bill Holman

Membership: co-chairpersons:

Orvie Jensen

Lois Shaw

Newsletter: Sara Boore

Programs: co-chairpersons:

Ron Gill

Ray Weinmann

Public Relations: Gary Kydland

Service Officer: Ralph Angulo

Sunshine: Marie Wall

Telephone: Mary Tate

Legislators

Senator Maria Cantwell

website: <http://www.cantwell.senate.gov>

Senator Cantwell's Director for the Olympic Peninsula

Robert Thoms - (253) 572-2281

The Commerce Building

950 Pacific Avenue, Suite 615, Tacoma, Washington

Senator Patty Murray

website: <http://www.murray.senate.gov>

Senator Murray's Director for the Olympic Peninsula

Mary McBride - (253) 572-3636

The Commerce Building

950 Pacific Avenue, Suite 650, Tacoma, Washington

Representative Norm Dicks

website: <http://www.house.gov/dicks>

345 6th Street, Suite 500, Bremerton, WA 98337 and 332 East Fifth Street, Port Angeles, WA 98362 (Staffed by Mary Schuneman) Tuesday 9:30 A.M.-Noon, Thursday 2:00-5:00 P.M., and by appointment 452-3370)

July Chapter Program

July 24, 2007, 11:30 A.M.

The Secret Garden Buffet

First St. and Golf Course Road

Port Angeles, WA

The July Program will have Michael Smith, Executive Director of the Sequim Senior Center, as our speaker. He will give a presentation on the center and its plans for the future.

The Pledge of Allegiance will be at 12:00 noon and will be followed by the presentation and a short business meeting. You do not have to eat at the buffet to attend the meeting.

President's Corner

Well, lightning does strike twice in the same place (and perhaps even more). In the past two chapter meetings we have had winners in our raffle. So the odds aren't too bad to win half the pot. But you do have to be present to win.

We received a very nice letter from one of our members thanking us for supplying help in a time of need. One important aspect of NARFE membership continues to be the service we can offer when needed.

I hope that each of you are enjoying our "summer" on the peninsula. Our August meeting program will be the Port Angeles Postmaster giving a talk on postal regulations and "scams, etc." It should be an interesting program. Plan to attend and bring a prospective member.

—RAY WEINMANN
CHAPTER PRESIDENT

Membership

We send our sympathy to Chapter Member Jack Gilbert, whose wife passed away recently.

Another reminder about dues: For retired Federal Employees dues withholding is the least expensive way to go. With chapter dues and national dues the total withheld is \$2.63 per month, or \$31.56 per year. That is a little more than \$4 per year less annual renew. If you would like the form for dues withholding just give myself or Lois Shaw a call and we will get the form right out to you. Remember, once done you don't have to worry about renewing your membership again.

Last month Lois gave a real good explanation of "Premium Conversion". Since then I have received via email from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) a Benefits Administration Letter (BAL) talking about certain CSRS and FERS annuitants that may be eligible for Premium Conversion. Section 845 of the Pension Protection Act of 2006 (PPA) added a provision to the Internal Revenue Code, effective January 1, 2007. New Internal Revenue Code section 402(1) allows a limited premium conversion tax advantage for certain annuitants who are retired public safety officers. They can now exclude from their gross income distributions from eligible retirement plans that are directly used to pay qualified health insurance premiums and/or long term care insurance premiums. The annual maximum exclusion is \$3,000.

OPM has determined that the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) are eligible retirement plans under section 845 of the PPA. Retired public safety officers are deemed to have made a premium conversion election for this purpose. As a result, retired public safety officers whose CSRS or FERS annuity payments include a direct premium payment to a health insurance carrier or long term care insurance carrier may self-identify eligibility for, and self-report, the tax exclusion to the Internal Revenue Service. IRS Publication 721 Tax Guide to U.S. Civil Service Retirement Benefits at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p721.pdf> contains additional information on this tax advantage.

Therefore, it appears that you members that are retired public safety officers are eligible for premium conversion on your insurance premiums. Maybe some day the rest of us will also get the benefit. In the mean time, I encourage all of you to urge your Representative to co-sponsor H.R. 111, and to implore your Senators to co-sponsor S.773. Contact your Member of Congress by e-mail through the "Legislative Action Center" on the NARFE web site www.narfe.org, or to call them at (202) 224-3121, the Capitol Hill switchboard.

—ORVIE JENSEN, MEMBERSHIP CO-CHAIR

June Speaker Highlights

The speaker for our June meeting at the Secret Garden was Mindi Blanchard, President of Bridge Builders Ltd.

Mindi's business "Bridge Builders" does not hire ironworkers! She builds bridges with services to continue adult independence. If you need a little extra help with everyday things, like letter writing, or checkbook balancing, grocery shopping, or getting to appointments, they can help. They will even take your pet to appointments! Need help with big things, like arranging for a caregiver, or setting up your place for your homecoming from the hospital, caring for your spouse while you need to be away, being the contact person for your distant family, or taking care of your legal documents on your behalf? They can do that, too! Those are just SOME of the services offered by BRIDGE BUILDERS from Sequim.

Do not be shy about asking for that extra bit of help. "Bridge Builders" are problem solvers! For information or a consultation, give them a call at (360) 683-8334. Now that is a helpful group of people!

—MARILYN FALLS, CHAPTER SECRETARY

Current Employee Corner:

Are you contributing the maximum to your Thrift Savings Plan?? It forms one third of your retirement coverage. The Government matches (up to the allowable limit) so it really is a "no brainer".

—RAY WEINMANN
CHAPTER PRESIDENT