



Nashville Chapter 227, Newsletter (August 2007)

National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association

Officers: Bruce Thomas, President 781-6083; Nancy Wells, 1st Vice President-Membership 377-9011; Helen Tyson 2nd Vice President-Service 269-0614; Chris Wasson, Sunshine Chairperson 227-3064; Edna Smith, Secretary –Treasurer 298-4757; John Wells - Newsletter Chairperson 331-0705.

Chapter Web Site: <http://www.narfetn-nashville.org/>

NARFE's mission has remained the same since 1921, to protect and improve the retirement benefits of federal retirees, employees and their families.

July Meeting: Meeting was called to order by President – Bruce Thomas at 1PM. New members and guests were welcomed. The invocation was given by Marie Anglin, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance lead by Bruce Thomas. There were 31 members in attendance.

The Jackpot drawing of \$22 was won by Lucy Gresham (\$11 to Lucy and \$11 to the chapter treasury). The \$3 was won by Bruce Thomas and the \$2 by Nancy Wells both donated to the Alzheimer fund. The Manager of Piccadilly gave us a complimentary lunch voucher; this was won by Pauline Thomas.

July Program: Don Bivens introduced our speaker for the meeting, Karl Dean former Metro Director of Law, candidate for Mayor of Nashville in the upcoming election. He gave an informative review of his background and qualifications to become Mayor. He stressed that his No. 1 priority would be education, followed by public safety and economic growth. A question and answer session followed his address.

August Program: *James E. (Jim) Trusty*, will be our speaker. Our next meeting date is August 13, 2007, Plan to be there at the Piccadilly Cafeteria at 874 Murfreesboro Pike, Nashville TN (615) 367-4640

TN Federation Convention: The 2008 NARFE Tennessee State Federation Convention will be hosted by the Nashville Chapter and well be held at Montgomery Bell State Park on April 28-29, 2008. Mark you calendars and join in the fun of helping the Nashville Chapter host this convention and making it a huge success. If you want to volunteer contact either Bruce Thomas, President 781-6083 or Nancy Wells, Vice President 377-9011.

Treasurer Report: Current balance in Checking is \$1,367, Credit Union account is \$903, for a Total of \$2,270.

Status of Current Legislation: *as of July 2007*

1. Repeal of Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP)/Government Pension Offset (GPO)

H.R.82 now has 323 (74.3% of the House) up 19 from last month. Tennessee non cosponsors are Jimmy Duncan, Jim Cooper and John Tanner. We have 435 representatives in Congress, so with 323 cosponsors we have 74.3% as cosponsors

H.R.82 is in the Ways & Means Committee, Charles Rangel is the Chairman, and John Tanner is a member of this committee.

S.206 now has 33 cosponsors, up two from last month (none of the Senators from Tennessee are cosponsors). We have 100 Senators in Congress, so we have 33% cosponsoring.

We now have another version of WEP Modification, **H.R. 726**, which now has seven cosponsors, up two from last month (none of the Senators from Tennessee are cosponsors).

In addition **S,1254** to Modify GPO has seven cosponsors, the same as last month

2. Premium Conversion

H.R.1110 now has 211 cosponsors, up 20 from last month, Tennessee non cosponsors are David Davis, Jimmy Duncan, John Tanner & Steve Cohen. Lincoln Davis is now a cosponsor.

S.773 now has 42 cosponsors, up seven from last month (none of the Senators from Tennessee are cosponsors)

Edna Smith
National Active and Retired Federal Employees
Secretary-Treasurer
4426 Granny White Pike
Nashville, TN 37204

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IMPORTANT DATED MATERIAL
DELIVER BY August 8, 2007

Fed Retirement Safe in Budget Resolution

In May, the House and Senate adopted the final agreement on a fiscal year (FY) 2008 Budget Resolution—Congress' annual spending and tax road map. The resolution did not include proposals to reduce federal civil service retirement or health benefits.

The resolution (S. Con. Res. 23) passed the Senate by a 52-to-40 vote on May 17. Senate Democrats unanimously supported the measure, and Maine's two senators, Olympia J. Snowe and Susan M. Collins, were the only Republicans who voted with the majority. A day earlier, the House voted 214-to-209 to pass the budget blueprint. No House GOP members voted for it, and 13 Democrats voted against it.

In the new budget, entitlement spending will be subject to a revived pay-as-you go rule. An entitlement is a legal obligation of the federal government to make specific payments to a person, group of people, business, unit of government or similar entity that meets the eligibility criteria set in law. Federal retirees are entitled to an annuity and health benefits because they worked a sufficient number of years for the government and made contributions to the retirement system.

Under the pay-as-you-go rule, new entitlement spending or tax cuts would have to be offset by cutting other programs or raising revenue. To waive the budget rule, a simple majority (218 votes) will be necessary in the House, while a super majority (60 votes) will be required in the Senate.

Membership: In June we have 1 Current Fed Employee new member, 1 new one year Special, 4 reinstatements, 4 sent 2nd notice and 6 dropped for non renewal.

COLA - On July 18th, the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov/cpi) reported that the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for June 2007 is **203.9**, up **0.1 percent** from the May index of 203.6. The CPI-W for June is **2.4 percent higher** than the 2006 third quarter average base index of 199.1. For purposes of calculating the next COLA (cost-of-living adjustment) the index has **increased 2.4 percent**. The CPI for July, the first month of the third quarter measuring period, will be released Wednesday, August 15, 2007.

Former federal employees now receiving monthly benefits under provisions of the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) receive a COLA based on the change in the CPI-W during each calendar year. Thus far, the index is **3.4 percent higher** than the December 2006 base of 197.2.

August Set as NARFE Lobby Month **Work From Home**

August is a good month for **citizen lobbyists** to meet and talk with the legislators on their home turf. That's where our best lobbying can be done before the fall session of Congress gets underway.

It's not too early, but not too late to drop by or phone the one of the district offices of your Representative(s) and two Senators to set up a meeting with them, or their senior staff person. Just a few minutes of face to face time, identifying yourselves as NARFE members, and citing the "fairness" issues of our legislative priorities can make an impact. And if you don't think it can, take a minute to read this month's **Civics 101** article on page 18 of the July NARFE Magazine.