



## NATIONAL ACTIVE & RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ASSOC. CHAPTER #108 - CHATTANOOGA, TN

October 3, 2008

*Elmer Gillespie, President - 894-1606*

*Donald V. Geoffrion, Editor - 886-0439*

NEXT MEETING - Friday, October 10, 2008, at Wally's Restaurant, Ringgold Road at 1-75, East Ridge. This will be a luncheon meeting starting at 12:00 noon. All members, prospective members and visitors are invited. Order from the menu or enjoy the buffet. (Eat at 11:30).

PROGRAM - We will be honored to have **Linda Holbrook**, of Blue Cross/Blue Shield once more as our guest speaker. Linda will bring us up to date on the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHBP) coverage for 2009, with particular reference to Blue Cross/Blue shield (BC/BS) provisions.

PREMIUM INCREASES - FEHBP premium increases will average **7.0** percent. However, the share paid by employees and retirees in the program's most popular plan (BC/BS standard option), will jump by **13.3** percent. Representative new monthly rates are: APWU, high self, **\$107.18**, high family, **\$242.34**; BC/BS, std. self **\$152.06**, std. family, **\$356.59**; GEHA, high self, **\$198.23**, high family, **\$401.57**, std. self, **\$74.26**, std. family, **\$168.77**; Mail Handlers, std. self, **\$129.70**, std. family, **\$278.76**.

COLA - The Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Employees (CPI-W) for August declined by **0.5** percent. This brought the cumulative figure for the next cost of living Adjustment (COLA) to **6.0** percent. (The comparable figure for last year at this time was **2.2** percent.) the September CPI-W, which will be used to compute the year-end COLA, will be released October 16, 2008.

MEMBERSHIP - The chapter activity report from NARFE Hqs. For August showed six members being sent 2<sup>nd</sup> renewal notices. Hopefully, they have paid their dues by now. One member was dropped for non-payment.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER - Mr. David King, 7530 Woodland Bay Drive, Harrison, TN 37341-9449.

NATIONAL NARFE CONVENTION - The convention was at Louisville, KY, Sep. 7-12, 2008. 1,284 members attended, representing 1,245 chapters out of a total of 1,464. Officers for the coming two years are, **Mrs. Margaret Baptiste**, President (she had no opposition and was re-elected by acclamation), **Mr Nathaniel Brown**, Secretary, and **Mr. Richard Ostergren**, Treasurer were also re-elected. They both had opposition, as well as **Mr. Joseph Beaudoin**, former Region X Field Vice President, who was elected as National Vice President. **Mr. Paul Carew**, of North Carolina, was elected Region X Field Vice President.

A motion to equalize dues nationally was defeated. The proposal was to create a single dues structure of \$40, with 10 percent going to Federations and \$9 to chapters.

It was decided to eliminate Honorary Memberships and establish instead a category of "Distinguished Member" for members who reach age 85 with 20 or more years of NARFE membership. They would continue to pay National dues. Current Honorary members would be grandfathered with no change.

A goal was set to raise \$9 million for Alzheimer's research by the time NARFE reaches its 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2011. To date, NARFE members have contributed \$7,590,279, well on the way to the current target of \$8 million in 2008.

LEGISLATIVE NOTES - On September 27<sup>th</sup>, both the House and Senate passed **H.R. 2638** and sent the bill to the President for approval and signature. This legislation provides for continuing appropriations through March 6, 2009. Among the myriad of items addressed in this measure is a provision granting a **3.9** percent pay raise for federal civilian employees, the same as the increase approved for military personnel. At this writing, Congress is wrangling over the \$700 billion financial rescue plan. When this is resolved, they are likely to adjourn for the year, subject to a possible "lame duck session".

*Please note:*

*NARFE information is readily available at our Headquarters website, < www.narfe.org >  
And that of the Tennessee Federation of Chapters, <www.narfetn.org>*