



*National Active & Retired  
Federal Employees Association*

**Las Cruces Chapter 182**  
**REPORTER**

**Volume 21, Issue 3 – October 2020**

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

Local Web Site: <http://www.narfe-nm.net/ch0182/ch0182.html>



*Chapter 182 President (Sharon Reese)*



Autumn is in the air. Cooler weather is on the horizon. And, we are still in a state of flux, thanks to the Covid-19.

I am sorry to inform all our members that Angie Carroll passed away on September 16<sup>th</sup> with a short battle of cancer. Service was held on September 25<sup>th</sup> at Holy Cross Church with burial at Masonic Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be given to Animal Service Center of Mesilla Valley, 5531 Bataan Memorial, Las Cruces, NM 88012. For on-line condolences go to [www.bacasfuneralchapelslascruces.com](http://www.bacasfuneralchapelslascruces.com).

For all our members who know Tom Anderson, Past President of Tucumcari Chapter, he is currently in Tucumcari Hospital after a 3 week stay in the Amarillo Hospital. He is expected to go home around the 24<sup>th</sup> of September. You may send “thinking of you” or “get well” cards to his residence, 401 S. 5<sup>th</sup> St., Tucumcari, NM 88401-3417.

As of September 20<sup>th</sup> we have 260 members in our chapter. We seem to be steady in membership.

It still looks like it will be at least another month before we are able to hold chapter meetings. If this changes for our October meeting, everyone will be notified via email and/or phone.

I am sure that you are asking, isn't there any good news"? Yes, we are having our “garage sale” on October 17<sup>th</sup> (8 a.m. – 2 p.m.)! Donations will be accepted 14, 15, and 16 October at the Willoughby residence, 3142 McDowell, Las Cruces (in Mesilla Park). If you have any large items that you would like picked up please call me at 575-649-6035. If you would like to volunteer to price items or work the morning of the 17<sup>th</sup> please let me know, by phone at 575-649-6035, or email, [nmreeses@msn.com](mailto:nmreeses@msn.com). We will be wearing masks on the 17<sup>th</sup> to keep our members safe! Remember this is our only fundraiser for the year!

We have included a survey in this newsletter that I hope you will take the time to complete and return. This is needed by your board to determine how we will continue with our member meetings.

A bit of trivia: Lady Gaga recently filmed part of a new music video at White Sands National Monument. It will be interesting to see how much is actually in the video. Many musicians and movies have had parts of Las Cruces, Mesilla, the Organ Mountains and the surrounding area included in their work.

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS



*Donna Harris*  
Program Chair

Programs are being worked in the hope that we will be able to meet in the upcoming months.

I am currently working to have the *Desert Harmony Singers* back with us for our Christmas meeting. I have scheduled *Ms. Michelle Ungvarsky*, Estate Attorney, for our January meeting.

As businesses open and people return to work, I hope it will get easier to contact potential speakers. Any suggestions you have for program topics are welcome. Please send them to [md.harris1@comcast.net](mailto:md.harris1@comcast.net).



**OCTOBER 17**

**8 a.m. – 2 p.m.**

**THE WILLOUGHBY RESIDENCE  
3142 MCDOWELL  
LAS CRUCES  
(In Mesilla Park)**

**(Donations accepted on 14, 15, & 16 October)**

## SUNSHINE REPORT



*Marcele Skelton*

Be happy! Spread sunshine! As the song goes: "Spread sunshine all over the place, and put on a happy face". We all need to remember to keep up a spirit of happiness and a sunny disposition. It will help us, as well as others, cope with the stressful issues of Covid-19, violence, stormy weather, and political divisiveness.

A sympathy card was sent to Teruko Kondo, whose husband, Richard, passed away April 8th. Both Richard and Teruko came to our chapter recently after being long time members in Alamogordo. A sympathy card was also sent to Dan Carroll and daughter, Alexa, after the passing of Dan's wife, Angie, on September 16th. Angie was a member of our chapter, and Dan is our 2nd Vice President (Membership). Our thoughts and prayers are with these families.

Have some fun by answering this month's riddle: WHAT ARE THE PEOPLE IN CHINA CALLED WHO ARE TESTING PEOPLE FOR THE CORONAVIRUS?

The answer to the September riddle: WHY DID THE TEACHER PUNISH THE STUDENT FOR SOMETHING HE DID NOT DO? (He did not do his homework.)

Please let me know if you hear of a member who is ill, has passed away, or could use a little sunshine in their life. Marcele: 575-521-4954 or [marcele@skelton.net](mailto:marcele@skelton.net)





**SERVICE OFFICER REPORT**  
*(Jim Kielty)*



**FEHBP OPEN SEASON FOR 2021 ON THE HORIZON AMID MANY QUESTIONS**

The Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) Open Season for the 2021 benefits year will begin on Monday, November 9 and conclude on Monday, December 14. As part of the Open Season, a series of health fairs traditionally has been conducted by federal agencies in the Las Cruces area. At these health fairs, Federal employees, Federal retirees, and survivor annuitants would have an opportunity to meet with representatives of many of the Federal health plans to obtain information about plan benefits, premiums, and changes for the upcoming benefits year. However, the current Covid-19 pandemic has raised serious questions about the scheduling of such health fairs this Open Season.

Thus far, NARFE has been advised that Blue Cross/Blue Shield will have a computer webinar on Saturday, November 7 for NARFE members. More detailed information will be sent out prior to the webinar to allow interested NARFE members to register. It is our understanding that all of the health plan providers will be offering virtual presentations online this Open Season, but details are unavailable at present.

NARFE members are reminded that the various health plan providers no longer automatically mail paper copies of plan brochures to those currently enrolled in these plans. To obtain a paper copy of your plan's 2021 brochure, you must follow any instructions your health insurance provider gives you. If you have any questions, call the customer service number on your health insurance ID card. In addition, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) website will contain on-line versions of each plan's brochure when they are released as well as other valuable information related to the Open Season.

OPM has not yet announced the overall average increase for all FEHBP premiums or the 2021 premiums for each individual plan. This information should be available in early October. The October 2020 edition of the *NARFE* magazine will contain a preview of the Open Season. More detailed Open Season information also will be presented in the November and December 2020 editions of the *NARFE* magazine and the November and December 2020 editions of the Chapter 182 **Reporter**.



**Federal Employee Education & Assistance (FEEA)**  
*(Roy Willoughby)*

**How Public Service Loan Forgiveness Works [#FedLifeHacks]**

Have you been wondering if you are eligible for public service loan forgiveness? Not sure how the program works? For our latest blog \*, we interviewed Seth Frotman, Executive Director of the Student Borrower Protection Center, to get all the answers.

\* <https://feea.org/2020/09/09/how-public-service-loan-forgiveness-works/>

**Donations to FEEA**

Please consider supporting the NARFE-FEEA program during this time of seclusion.

Remember donations can be made directly online at: [feea.org/givenarferelief](https://feea.org/givenarferelief)

For more information call Roy at 524-9395.



*1<sup>st</sup> VP for Legislation (Judy Rosco)*



I sent letters to all our Legislators in August and let them know that our Annual Legislative Breakfast had been canceled due to COVID-19.

I received a letter from Senator Udall's office and he thanked us for our work on behalf of active and retired federal and postal workers and stated that NARFE's voice in Washington and across the nation remains strong and effective. Senator Udall supports the Social Security Fairness Act and is, in fact, a co-sponsor of S. 521. He also supports the people who depend on COLA increases and wants them to be fair enough to offset increased costs.

I met with Congresswoman Xochitl Torres Small, through Zoom, on September 13<sup>th</sup>. Mark Mickelson, NM Federation Legislative VP, also attended the meeting. As in the past, the Congresswoman was very supportive of the House bills below that NARFE supports. She assured us that she would look into co-sponsoring these bills. She also asked if one was more important than the other on the WEP bills. We told her H.R. 141, to repeal the WEP and GPO would be the best but we will take anything we can get as far as her support.

Please contact your Legislators and ask for them to co-sponsor the following bills:

H.R.141/S.521- the Social Security Fairness Act would fully repeal both the WEP and GPO.

HR3934/S 3401 - Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act 2019 would provide relief to current and future retirees. The bill does not fully repeal the WEP but it would be a significant improvement over the status quo for the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)

H.R.4540 - The Public Servants Protection and Fairness Act would provide relief from WEP for current and future retirees.

H.R.1553 - Fair COLA for Seniors Act would require the CPI-E to determine a more accurate COLA for seniors and veterans.

H.R.1254 - The Equal COLA Act would correct the disparity for COLA between CSRS and FERS retirees, making them equal.

STAY SAFE.

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Your Legislators can be reached at:

U.S. Senator Tom Udall, (575) 526-5475 or <http://www.tomudall.senate.gov>

U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich, (575) 523-6561 or <http://www.heinrich.senate.gov>

U.S. Congresswoman Xochitl Torres Small, (575) 520-5319 or <http://xochitl.torressmall@mail.house.gov>



*Records Officer*

*Carol Main*



*Welcome New Member:  
Kevin Wainer*

*Welcome New Prospective Member:  
Elmer Veeder*

Our chapter membership is 259 members strong!

Since we won't be having meetings until the COVID-19 pandemic is resolved, please keep track of your volunteer hours starting in March. We will collect your total volunteer hours when we resume contacting you for the next meeting.

Reminder: Have you changed your home address, telephone number, or email address? If you have dropped your landline and are using your cell phone only, let me know. Please notify me at [csmain7@gmail.com](mailto:csmain7@gmail.com) or phone (575) 382-7686. We don't want you to miss any copies of the *NARFE* magazine, our chapter newsletter, or any notices we send out.

**Chapter Secretary Marlene Mayfield spent time with her friends during the summer in the cool pines of Ruidoso.**



**ACTIVE & RETIRED  
FEDERAL EMPLOYEES**

**JOIN NARFE TODAY!**

**MEMBERS PLEASE RECRUIT!**

There is a NARFE Membership Application form in every *NARFE* Magazine. Let's all try to recruit one new member. Ask a co-worker or a friend who is retired and not yet a member to join our chapter!

If you have questions, contact Chapter Membership Chair, Dan Carroll at:

[cardan116@comcast.net](mailto:cardan116@comcast.net)



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Chapter 182  
PO Box 16424  
Las Cruces, NM 88004-6424

PLEASE COMPLETE THE SURVEY ON PAGES 7 AND 8  
AND RETURN BY MAIL OR EMAIL TO SHARON  
REESE. SEE PAGE 1 (PRESIDENT'S ARTICLE)

*You Need NARFE and NARFE Needs You!*

<b>Chapter 182 Officers</b>	<b>Members of Congress</b>
<p>President <u><a href="mailto:nmreeses@msn.com">nmreeses@msn.com</a></u> 1st Vice Pres. (Legislation) <u><a href="mailto:rosco631@gmail.com">rosco631@gmail.com</a></u> 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Pres. (Membership) <u><a href="mailto:cardan116@comcast.net">cardan116@comcast.net</a></u> Secretary/Public Relations <u><a href="mailto:mayfield195@msn.com">mayfield195@msn.com</a></u> Treasurer <u><a href="mailto:Marsha.smith1948@gmail.com">Marsha.smith1948@gmail.com</a></u></p>	<p><b>U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich (D)</b> 201 N Church St Suite 305 Las Cruces, NM 88001 575-523-6561 - <a href="http://www.heinrich.senate.gov">http://www.heinrich.senate.gov</a></p> <p><b>U.S. Senator Tom Udall (D)</b> 201 N Church St Suite 201B Las Cruces, NM 88001 575-526-5475 - <a href="http://www.tomudall.senate.gov">http://www.tomudall.senate.gov</a></p> <p><b>U.S. Representative Xochitl Torres Small (D) (District 2)</b> 240 S Water St, Las Cruces NM 88001 575-520-5319 <a href="http://www.xochitl.torressmall@mail.house.gov">http://www.xochitl.torressmall@mail.house.gov</a></p>
<p>Alzheimer's <u><a href="mailto:cindy77lou@yahoo.com">cindy77lou@yahoo.com</a></u> NARFE-FEEA: <u><a href="mailto:rswillowbee@comcast.net">rswillowbee@comcast.net</a></u> NARFE-PAC: <u><a href="mailto:memckay1@comcast.net">memckay1@comcast.net</a></u> Program Chair: <u><a href="mailto:md.harris1@comcast.net">md.harris1@comcast.net</a></u> Records Officer: <u><a href="mailto:csmain7@gmail.com">csmain7@gmail.com</a></u> Service Officer: <u><a href="mailto:jkielty70@yahoo.com">jkielty70@yahoo.com</a></u></p>	<p><b>NARFE Monthly Meetings</b> The Las Cruces Chapter of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association holds a breakfast meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month except in June, July, &amp; August. The meeting is held at the <b>Hilton Garden Inn, 2550 Don Roser Dr, Las Cruces</b>. Doors open at 8:30am (breakfast at 8:45am), and the cost is \$13. All members, those that might be interested in joining, and guests are most welcome. Membership is open to all federal civilian employees, retirees, their spouses, and surviving spouses. For reservations, contact <b>Carol Main (382-7686) or Carol Decker (522-3033)</b> or email: <a href="mailto:lascrucschapter182@yahoo.com">lascrucschapter182@yahoo.com</a>. <b>Newsletter Editor (Sarah McAdoo): <a href="mailto:mcadoosr@aol.com">mcadoosr@aol.com</a></b></p>

**CHAPTER OPERATIONS MEMBER SURVEY  
SEPTEMBER 2020**

As our Chapter continues to seek ways to diligently execute our member dues, it is important to hear from you. Due to Covid-19 and the rising costs to continue meeting at the Hilton Garden Inn the Board of Directors needs your input.

Our current contract requires a 30 member minimum at a cost of \$25.03 per person. Now we did raise the member cost to \$15.00 however we do utilize \$10.03 per person from our Ways and Means money. Also, we currently have a buffet which is prohibited by our Governor. However, if the Hilton Garden Inn would be allowed to serve a breakfast, and the number of attendees were raised by the Governor then this is what we will be required for October, November, and December. So many unknowns at this time.

If you could please take a few minutes to answer this survey and return it to Attn: Sharon Reese, NARFE Chapter 182, P.O. Box 16424, Las Cruces, NM 88004-6424 by mail or electronically to [nmreeses@msn.com](mailto:nmreeses@msn.com) **by October 15th**. Questions about this survey should be directed to Sharon Reese, 575-649-6035 or [nmreeses@msn.com](mailto:nmreeses@msn.com) . Results will be published in our November Newsletter.

Your city/town \_\_\_\_\_

Member of chapter for \_\_\_\_\_ year(s)

Is your spouse a chapter member?  
 Yes  No  N/A

Do you consider yourself an active member of this chapter?  
 Yes  No  Not sure

Personally, how committed do you feel to this chapter? (Check one)

Why do you attend chapter meetings? (check all that apply)

- Very Strongly
- Strongly
- Moderately
- Slightly
- Not at all

- Socialize
- Hear interesting speakers
- Just to get out
- Chapter officer/chair
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Will you attend a meeting:

- As soon as restrictions are lifted
- Before a vaccine is available
- After a vaccine is available

List any programs that you would like For 2020-2021:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

-OVER-

**Survey continued....**

Serious consideration must be given to changing our meetings from a contract to possible ordering from a menu. Please rank the following options with (1) being your top choice. Then rank the day of the week.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Lunch                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Dinner                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monday <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday     | <input type="checkbox"/> Monday <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday  | <input type="checkbox"/> Monday <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday <input type="checkbox"/> Friday    | <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday <input type="checkbox"/> Friday | <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday <input type="checkbox"/> Friday |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday                                 |
| <br><input type="checkbox"/> Meeting only—no meal                    |   |   |
| <br><input type="checkbox"/> Monday <input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wednesday                                   |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thursday <input type="checkbox"/> Friday    |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saturday                                    |   |   |

If you would like someone to talk to you about opportunities where you can participate in chapter programs, activities or leadership, please provide your name, phone number, and/or email.

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What is the chapter doing right?

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What could the chapter do differently?

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