



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

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



*Chapter 182 President & NM Federation President  
(Sharon Reese)*



Hopefully, March will be better than the first two months of the year! With the COVID-19 restrictions, we are still in limbo for holding our monthly membership meetings.

I would like to know from you if you would participate in an electronic membership meeting, i.e., zoom? Let me know by email, [sreese346@gmail.com](mailto:sreese346@gmail.com) , or phone, 575-649-6035.

The Legislative Conference (21 June) and the 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration of NARFE is a go. The contract was finalized last week. I have not received information on the hotel and registration fees but will let you know when I hear anything. It is anticipated that there will be options, i.e., in person, electronic attendance, etc. There will NOT be any On the Hill Meetings with senators or representatives.

The 2021 NM Federation Conference date is still unknown. I have been in touch with Taos and they are hoping that the conference will be at the end of August. Again, when a decision is made, I will let you know.

I am still looking for a Senatorial Liaison (SL) to Senator Ray Ben Lujan. His office is at 201 N. Church, Suite 201B, Phone 526-5475. Senator Lujan has been an avid supporter of NARFE, and I expect that to continue. He has contacted me several times touching base to see if we, Chapter 182, have any issues or concerns that we could use his help in resolving. Mark Mickelson, the Federation Legislative Officer asked for someone, preferably in our chapter, to be Senator Lujan's designated SL.

**Beware of scammers/hackers!** NARFE websites and chapter members have been hacked in February. Remember do NOT open any email that says, "I am asking a favor" or "I need your help". Members would not send such an email. If they would need any help, I am sure they would pick up the phone and call. Also, when you answer the phone and you are not sure who is calling, if they ask is this XXX, do NOT say "yes"! Sometimes the "yes" would be recorded for ordering something that you have no idea what you have done.

I will be so glad when we can meet in person again. I miss all of your bright faces and smiles!



*Service Officer (Jim Kielty)*

**CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR JANUARY 2021  
SHOWS SIGNIFICANT INCREASE**



The Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Personnel (CPI-W), used to determine if Social Security Recipients, federal retirees, and survivor annuitants will receive a Cost-Of-Living Allowance in 2022, was 255.296 in January 2021. This figure reflected a monthly increase of 0.48 percent over the December 2020 figure, which was 254.081. The January 2021 CPI-W is 0.74 percent above the average CPI-W for the third quarter of 2020 (July-September), which was 253.412. The 253.412 third quarter CPI-W average for 2020 will be compared with the third quarter average CPI-W for 2021 to determine if a COLA will be authorized in 2022.

**STRONG ADVOCACY BY NARFE HEADQUARTERS  
LEADS TO RESCISSION OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 13957**

Although possibly overlooked by many NARFE members, the issuance on October 21, 2020 of Executive Order 13957 (Creating Schedule F in the Excepted Service) was promptly perceived by NARFE headquarters as a potential threat to the concept of a professional, merit-based, non-partisan federal civil service, which has been the government standard since the passage of the Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act, signed by President Chester A. Arthur in 1883.

Had the Executive Order been fully implemented, it would have allowed agency heads to convert thousands of civil service positions now in the competitive service to a new Schedule F category in the excepted service. Unlike the existing Schedule C employees in the excepted service who conclude their tenure at the end of the Presidential administration which appointed them, Schedule F employees would remain in place indefinitely.

On November 2, 2020 NARFE sent a letter to every member of Congress pointing out the potential problems associated with the Executive Order and urging them to work to rescind it by withholding funds to implement it. This could not be accomplished by the end of the 116th Congress. However, NARFE's high profile efforts ultimately were rewarded on January 22 when new President Joe Biden issued an Executive Order on Protecting the Federal Workforce which did rescind Executive Order 13957.



*Federal Employee and Education & Assistance*

*(Roy Willoughby)*



The deadline to apply for the 2021 FEEA Scholarship Program is Thursday, March 25, 2021. The scholarship is open to children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of NARFE members. Applicants must be high school seniors planning to attend their first year of an accredited college full time (in a two- or four-year degree program) in the fall/winter of the award year. Students can access the online application at: [fearg.org/our-programs/scholarships/](https://fearg.org/our-programs/scholarships/).





*Chapter VP for Membership & Historian  
(Dan Carroll)*



March is almost here and Spring is not far behind. Wow!  
We have **253** members in our Las Cruces chapter.

Vaccination for Covid-19 is moving along at a decent pace and our Governor has recently eased some indoor dining restrictions in Las Cruces. Restaurants can now seat 25% of their normal capacity indoors. Patio (outside) dining is also available at some local establishments. Schools are slowly moving into hybrid mode (one or two days per week at school). NMSU men's and women's basketball teams are playing their home games in El Paso, TX at Eastwood High School. Mask and social distancing is still the rule at stores and houses of worship. St. Patrick's Day is coming up on March 17<sup>th</sup>. Full moon coming up on March 28<sup>th</sup> as is Palm Sunday. Spring break is up in the air right now. Quote of the month: "Sharing what you have is more important than what you have." Albert M. Wells, Jr.

Have a good month!

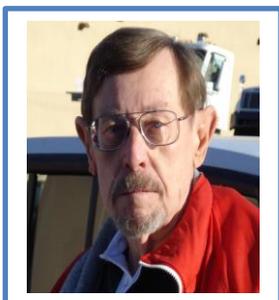
*In Memory*



We recently lost two long-time chapter members who volunteered their time throughout the years to help our chapter. We will miss them!



Dorothy Figgins passed away on January 6<sup>th</sup>, the day after her 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday. Dorothy had been a member of our NARFE Chapter since 1980. She and her husband Walter attended our meetings together until his passing in 2009. Dorothy continued attending our meetings and worked for several years as a volunteer on our Telephone Calling Committee.



Jack Dage passed away on January 31<sup>st</sup> at the age of 85. He had been a NARFE chapter member since 1991 and was known as our chapter's "Can Man". For several years he volunteered to drive his truck to our meetings and pick up aluminum cans that our members saved so that he could take them to recycling. He would then turn in the money made on the cans to our chapter to help pay for our newsletter printing costs. He would always be there bright and early waiting for members to bring their cans. And, he never wanted to drive away with an empty truck. He enjoyed helping our chapter!



*VP for Legislation*

*(Judy Rosco)*



H.R. 82, the Social Security Fairness Act, was introduced by Rep. Rodney Davis on January 4<sup>th</sup>. The bill repeals provisions that reduce Social Security benefits for individuals who receive other benefits, such as a pension from a state or local government. The bill, if passed, would eliminate the GPO (government pension offset) and the WEP (windfall elimination provision).

The bill currently has 64 co-sponsors and must have 290 co-sponsors to be brought before the House of Representatives for a vote. The bill is currently in the House Ways and Means Committee. Please contact Rep Yvette Herrell and urge her to support H.R. 82.

Other news on our Legislators:

Congresswoman Yvette Herrell (R-N.M.2<sup>nd</sup> Dist) was named Vice Ranking Member of the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources. Herrell will also serve as a member of the National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands Subcommittee.

U.S. Senator Ben Ray Luján (D-N.M.) was named Chair of the Senate Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Communications, Media, and Broadband for the 117th Congress.

U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.) was named to Appropriations Committee as Vice Chair of Joint Economic Committee, Chair of Subcommittee Overseeing VA Appropriations, and newly appointed Chairman of the Military Construction (MILCON) Committee. This also will be Senator Heinrich's fifth Congress serving on the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee.

The updated contact information on our congressional legislators follows:

**U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich**  
201 North Church St., Ste. 305  
Las Cruces, N.M. 88001  
(575) 523-6561  
<http://www.heinrich.senate.gov>

**U.S. Senator Ben Ray Lujan**  
201 North Church St., Ste 201B  
Las Cruces, NM 88001  
(575) 526-5475  
<http://www.lujan.senate.gov>

**Congresswoman Yvette Herrell**  
4440 Sonoma Ranch Blvd, Ste B, Las Cruces NM 88011  
<http://herrell.house.gov>  
DC Phone: 202-225-2365 - DC Fax: 202-225-9599  
Donna Cyr – Constituent Representative  
Phone: 575-973-4783 - Email: [donnacyr@mail.house.gov](mailto:donnacyr@mail.house.gov)



***Sunshine Report (Marcele Skelton)***



It is time for more sunshine and warm weather. Enough of this snow and cold weather--power shortages and extremely low temperatures!

March 2021 marks a year of the coronavirus pandemic. Let's hope it also marks a sunny new beginning of a continuing downward trend of Covid-19 cases in our area and in New Mexico.

Two long-time members of our chapter passed away. A sympathy card was sent to the family of Dorothy Figgins, who passed away January 6, 2021. Dorothy had been a chapter member since 1980, and had served on the calling committee.

A sympathy card was also sent to the family of Jack Dage, who passed away January 31, 2021. Jack had been a chapter member since 1991. He was known as the "can man", collecting cans and recycling them, with the money going to our chapter newsletter expenses.

Have some fun by answering this month's riddle: **WHAT IS THE BEST MONTH FOR A PARADE?**

The answer to the February riddle: **WHAT DID THE GROUNDHOG SAY WHEN HE SAW HIS SHADOW?** (Nothing! Groundhogs don't know how to speak.)

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. Marcelle: 575-521-4954 or [marcele@skelton.net](mailto:marcele@skelton.net)



Welcome New Prospective Members:

***Roseann Bensley***

***Rose Jacobs***



***Carol Main***

Our chapter membership is **253** 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 2020. We will collect your total volunteer hours when we resume contacting you for the next meeting.

***Records  
Officer***

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.



***Program Chair (Donna Harris)***

We have no chapter meetings scheduled at this time.

If you have an idea for a future program, please let me know by sending an email to: [md.harris1@comcast.net](mailto:md.harris1@comcast.net) .

## **SAMPLE LETTER REGARDING EXEMPTION OF SOCIAL SECURITY INCOME FROM TAXATION BY THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO**

Here is a sample standard letter you can use to email the Governor, your State Senator, and your State Representative in support of bills in this 2021 Legislative Session to exempt Social Security income from taxation by the State of New Mexico. House Bill 19 is about exempting Social Security despite the title and the Bill text talks about the transfer tax first before getting to the part about the Social Security exemption. However, we also encourage you to customize your email by adding an explanation of your own situation (e.g., CSRS employee/retiree affected by WEP/GPO in addition to being subject to state taxation of Social Security, or FERS employee/retiree affected by significant taxation of your Social Security benefits, etc.). Personal situations are very persuasive and effective. **Below is a sample standard letter:**

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As your constituent and a member of the New Mexico Federation of the National Association of Active and Retired Federal Employees (NARFE), I ask you to please support legislation to repeal New Mexico's tax on Social Security benefits including HB 19 and 49, and SB 78.

HB 49 and SB 78 would fully exempt Social Security from state taxation. HB 19 would partially exempt Social Security from state taxation, and provides a workable offset to cover any loss of revenue.

New Mexico is one of only 13 states that taxes Social Security benefits. In the past decade, eight of those 13 states have significantly reduced their taxes, and New Mexico now has the second heaviest tax on Social Security benefits in the nation.

Taxing Social Security income is a form of double taxation, since New Mexicans pay income tax on the money that is deducted from their paychecks for Social Security, and then we are taxed again on the benefits we receive.

This tax is particularly burdensome for the more than 55,000 New Mexico grandparents who are the primary guardians for their grandchildren. Many of these seniors struggle to meet the financial needs of their grandchildren without outliving their savings. No other public benefit, like Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, and TANF, is subject to taxation.

Every dollar of Social Security income generates \$1.71 in economic activity, so repealing the Social Security tax will generate local economic development that will create more jobs for New Mexico workers, especially in our retail, real estate, and health care industries. In addition, repealing Social Security taxes would make New Mexico a more desirable place to retire, potentially bringing new retirees to the state and retaining current retirees.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my request. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,  
[Your name]



National Active and Retired  
Federal Employees Association  
Chapter 182  
PO Box 16424  
Las Cruces, NM 88004-6424

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*You Need NARFE and NARFE Needs You!*

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<b>Chapter 182 Officers</b>	<b>Members of Congress</b>
<p>President <b>Sharon Reese</b> <a href="mailto:sreese346@gmail.com">sreese346@gmail.com</a> 575-649-6035</p> <p>1st Vice Pres. (Legislation) <b>Judy Rosco</b> <a href="mailto:rosco631@gmail.com">rosco631@gmail.com</a> 575-635-7127</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Pres. (Membership) <b>Dan Carroll</b> <a href="mailto:cardan116@comcast.net">cardan116@comcast.net</a> 575- 932-9491</p> <p>Secretary/Public Relations <b>Marlene Mayfield</b> <a href="mailto:mayfield195@msn.com">mayfield195@msn.com</a> 575- 644-6851</p> <p>Treasurer <b>Marsha Smith</b> <a href="mailto:Marsha.smith1948@gmail.com">Marsha.smith1948@gmail.com</a> 575-644-5131</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 Ben Ray Lujan (D)</b> 201 N Church St Suite 201B Las Cruces, NM 88001 575-526-5475 - <a href="http://twww.lujan.senate.gov">http://twww.lujan.senate.gov</a></p> <p><b>U.S. Representative Yvette Herrell (R) (District 2)</b> DC PH 202-225-2365 <a href="http://www.herrell.house.gov">http://www.herrell.house.gov</a> 4440 Sonoma Ranch Blvd, Suite B Las Cruces NM 88011 Donna Cyr – Constituent Representative Phone: 575-973-4783 - Email: <a href="mailto:donnacyr@mail.house.gov">donnacyr@mail.house.gov</a></p>
<p>Alzheimer's <b>Cindy Cook</b> <a href="mailto:cindy77lou@yahoo.com">cindy77lou@yahoo.com</a> 575-640-0860</p> <p>NARFE-FEEA: <b>Roy Willoughby</b> <a href="mailto:rswillowbee@comcast.net">rswillowbee@comcast.net</a> 575-524-9395</p> <p>NARFE-PAC: <b>Vacant</b></p>	<p><b>NARFE Monthly Meetings</b></p> <p><b>The Las Cruces Chapter of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association normally holds a breakfast meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month except in June, July, and August. Due to COVID-19, all meetings are “on hold”.</b></p>