



FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

LAS CRUCES
NEW MEXICO

CHAPTER 0182

*National Active & Retired
Federal Employees Association*

REPORTER

March 2023

Volume 23, Issue 7

National Web Site: www.narfe.org

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



Donna Harris, Chapter Program Chair

**NARFE Chapter 182 Meeting – Saturday, March 11, 8:30 a.m.
Good Samaritan Village (Creative Arts Room), 3011 Buena Vida Circle**

Program: Mesilla Valley Audubon Society (MVAS)

Our March program will showcase the Mesilla Valley Audubon Society (MVAS). MVAS is a 501(c)(3) conservation and natural history organization based in southern New Mexico and is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. It serves communities in Doña Ana, Otero, and Sierra counties and aims to promote the appreciation and conservation of birds and other wildlife. A priority is to protect wildlife and bird habitats through environmental education, issue advocacy, and natural history experiences.

MVAS is headquartered in Las Cruces, and its main activities are in Doña Ana County, with frequent field trips across southern New Mexico and El Paso County in Texas. Common birding areas include at least a dozen eBird.org hotspots within the city of Las Cruces and along the Rio Grande. Mesilla Valley Bosque State Park and Leasburg Dam State Park are exceptional areas. To the east of the Rio Grande and City of Las Cruces, the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument offers an entirely different habitat that is home to a different range of bird species.



If you have a suggestion for one of our NARFE meeting programs, please send me an email at md.harris1@comcast.net. All suggestions are welcome! We look forward to seeing everyone at our March 11th meeting.



Chapter 182 President (Judy Rosco)



The New Mexico Federation has sent out a Call Letter announcing the upcoming NM Federation Conference to be held in Santa Fe, April 28-29, 2023.

Our chapter has approximately thirteen members going. Marlene and I have already made our reservations at The Sage Hotel, 725 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, NM. Phone (855) 516-1090. Room rates are \$141.84 per night which is quite good considering it is in Santa Fe. Make sure you tell them you are with NARFE when you call for reservations. Our National President, William Shackelford, has been invited to attend but if he cannot make it, another National officer will try to attend. They are also setting up a ZOOM connection for those who want to know what is going on in NARFE but cannot attend the conference in person. More information will be coming next month.

Mark the date **April 22, 2023**. I do not know about you but my collection of “stuff” for our Yard Sale is really starting to grow. See the information on Page 6 from Sharon on when you can deliver your items to the Willoughby’s or if you need items picked up. Remember that **no clothing** will be accepted. You can take your gently used clothing to Good Will or one of the shelters in town. I know they will be happy to accept it.

On the Legislative Front...

I attended an Advocacy webinar on February 15th, hosted by John Hatton, Senior VP for Policy and Planning at our National headquarters NARFE. He updated us on legislative issues that are important to NARFE. **H.R. 159**, Chance to Compete Act, passed the House of Representatives and now moves to the Senate, **S.59**, for a vote. The bill is expected to pass and be signed by the President.

The repeal of the WEP/GPO now has 148 co-sponsors at the time of the webinar and more legislators are expected to come on board as co-sponsors. NO co-sponsors from NM have signed on to co-sponsor this bill. In case you have forgotten what this issue is about: The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) reduces the Social Security benefits of local, state and federal retirees who worked in Social Security-covered employment (e.g., private-sector jobs) and who also receive a government annuity from their non-Social Security covered government employment. The WEP affects only federal employees who retired under the CSRS. As of December 2021, the WEP affected about 2 million beneficiaries, including 1.9 million retired workers, the remaining affected persons were disabled-worker beneficiaries and eligible family members of retired-worker or disabled-worker beneficiaries. In 2023, the WEP could result in a monthly benefit that is **\$558** lower than under the normal benefit formula. This unfair reduction causes a disproportionate reduction in benefits for work-

Continued on Page 3...

President's Message Continued from Page 2....

ers with lower monthly benefit amounts than those with higher benefit amounts. On the **GPO**, legislation was enacted in 1977 to prevent government retirees from collecting both a government annuity based on their own work in non-Social Security covered employment and Social Security benefits based on their spouse's work record. This reduces their Social Security by 2/3rds of their earned benefits. As of December 2021, the GPO affects 723,970 beneficiaries. Of those affected by the GPO, 48 percent are widows or widowers, and 52 percent are spouses. In addition to CSRS annuitants, the GPO affects thousands of state and municipal retirees, as well as teachers and police officers whose work is not covered by Social Security.

(Information on the WEP/GPO was obtained from NARFE Issue Briefs.)

You can log on to our NARFE webpage under Advocacy-Take Action and notify your Congressman and Senators to co-sponsor these bills.

LEGCON23, NARFE's Legislative Conference, will be a virtual conference again this year and held June 20-22, 2023. Registration will be \$135. We will have virtual meetings with our congressmen/women on June 22nd.

I look forward to seeing you all at our next chapter meeting on March 11th.



**Roy
Willoughby**



**Federal Employee Education & Assistance (FEEA)
This is a reminder about the NARFE-FEEA'S Scholarship Program.**

Please refer to the Scholarship information available in the December 2022 NARFE Chapter Newsletter and online at: fear.org/scholarships.

The application deadline is Thursday, 16 March 2023 at 3:00 pm EDT.

Also remember to make all these FEEA programs possible, we need to make generous donations at: fear.org/givenarferelief.

For more information call Roy at 575-524-9395.



NARFE-PAC

Della Apodaca
Chapter 182 NARFE-PAC Chair

March is NARFE-PAC month and our Chapter needs your help to make it a success.

You can make a difference in the fight for our earned benefits by contributing to the PAC either [online](#), through the mail, via the form in the magazine or at our next chapter meeting.

The PAC is our association's political action committee, a unique tool that provides NARFE members more opportunities to share the real story of our community with lawmakers. These opportunities grow relationships and make our leaders better informed about issues affecting federal retirees.

Last cycle, our chapter raised \$4,833 for NARFE-PAC. Help beat that amount this cycle by contributing during NARFE-PAC month. Your support of NARFE-PAC goes a long way in the fight for our earned pay and benefits, allowing NARFE members to fight back against threats to cut our cost-of-living adjustments and healthcare.

We know that we need to fight for what we have earned. Please support NARFE-PAC today. You can even bolster your support by contributing to the PAC monthly via your federal annuity by going to www.narfe.org/pac-sustainer. Thank you for your support of NARFE-PAC.*

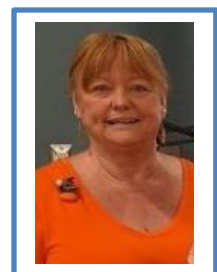
**To comply with federal law, we must use our best efforts to obtain, maintain and submit the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions to NARFE-PAC exceed \$200 each calendar year. NARFE-PAC is for the benefit of political candidates and activities on a national level. NARFE members have the right to refuse to contribute without reprisal, and NARFE will neither favor nor disadvantage anyone based on the amount of a contribution or failure to make a voluntary contribution. The suggested amounts are only suggestions and not enforceable. Only members of NARFE may contribute to the PAC. Contributions from nonmembers will be returned. NARFE-PAC contributions are not deductible for federal income tax purposes.*



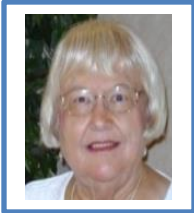
Alzheimer's Report

We want to thank all our members who support Alzheimer's by bringing gifts to be raffled and those who support by buying raffle tickets.

We collected **\$138** at our February meeting for the Alzheimer's Association.



*Cindy
Cook*



Sunshine Report (Marcele Skelton)

More hours of sunshine are in store for us in March. Winds may start in March, but the additional sunshine helps us cope.



A Get Well card was sent to Joy Davenport, who fell and broke her pelvis and has been in rehab. We wish her a speedy recovery. A sympathy card was sent to Jim Kielty, whose youngest brother Brian passed away. Jim is our Chapter Service Officer.

Have some St. Patrick's Day fun by answering this riddle: WHAT DO YOU GET WHEN YOU CROSS A 4-LEAF CLOVER WITH POISON IVY?

The answer to the Valentine riddle: WHAT KIND OF CANDY IS NEVER ON TIME? (Choco-LATE) Congratulations to Chuck James who knew the correct answer!

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



*Carol
Main*

Member Communications

Welcome

New Prospective Member:
Tessie Dunaway

We would like to see you at the March 11 meeting.
Come meet your fellow chapter members.
Our chapter membership is **207** members strong!



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 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.

*May you always have:
Love to share,
Cash to spare,
Tires with air,
And friends who care.*





NARFE YARD SALE - April 22

**The Willoughby's
3142 McDowell (Mesilla Park)**



Have you been saving your priceless stuff for the big yard sale? Remember to price your items. I will be asking for your help and will have a sign-up sheet at the March 11 meeting. This is a fun event for everyone who participates. We will need members who are bilingual and members with strong backs. We also need members with a truck to pick up large items. The schedule is Monday the 17th we will start to pick up large items. Wednesday the 19th through Friday the 21st you can start to drop off all items.

If you have any questions or want to volunteer, call me. See you at the March meeting.

Sharon Willoughby (575-524-9395)



Donna Harris, Chapter Program Chair, and Greg Smith, outgoing Director of Dona Ana Arts Council. Saturday, February 11th, was his last day in that position. We thank him for his service to the community and for being the guest speaker at our February 11th NARFE meeting.



Service Officer Report (Jim Kielty)

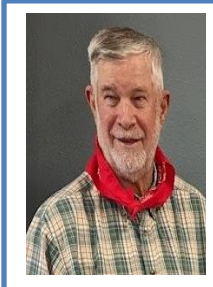


**CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FIGURE FOR JANUARY 2023
RISES AFTER TWO MONTHS OF DECLINE**

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-Adjustment (COLA) in 2024, increased by 0.9 percent in January 2023 after declines in November and December 2022. The CPI-W figure for January 2023 was 293.565, a 0.9 percent increase over the December 2022 figure, which was 291.051.

The 293.565 January 2023 figure is 0.57 percent higher than the average CPI-W figure for the third quarter of 2022 (July-September), which was 291.901.

At the end of September 2023, the 291.901 average CPI-W for the third quarter of 2022 will be compared with the third quarter average CPI-W for 2023 to determine if a COLA will be authorized in January 2024. The 2023 CPI-W third quarter average must exceed the 2022 CPI-W third quarter average in order for a COLA to go into effect. The CPI-W for the month of February 2023 will be released on March 14.



VP for Membership & Historian

Spring is almost here but we still have a few more weeks of winter. We now have **207** members in our chapter. Full moon (Mary Ellen) is on March 7th. St. Patrick’s Day is March 17th. Next chapter meeting is Saturday, March 11th at Good Samaritan Village. Quote of the month: “Peace is the skillful management of conflict.” – Kenneth Boulding. See you at the movies!

*Dan
Carroll*



**I’ll never be “over the hill”.
I’m too darned tired to climb it!**



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

You Need NARFE and NARFE Needs You!

Chapter 182 Officers

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
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| marcele@skelton.net | 575-521-4954 |

Members of Congress

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Las Cruces, NM 88001
575-523-6561 - <http://www.heinrich.senate.gov>

U.S. Senator Ben Ray Lujan (D)
201 N Church St Suite 201B
Las Cruces, NM 88001
575-526-5475 - <http://twww.lujan.senate.gov>

U.S. Representative Gabriel Vasquez (D) (District 2)
Las Cruces District Office, 115 W Griggs Ave, Las
Cruces NM 88011 - <http://www.vasquez.house.gov>
DC Address and Phone: 202-225-2365
1517 Longworth House Office Bldg Wash DC 20515

NARFE Monthly Meetings

The NARFE Las Cruces Chapter holds a breakfast meeting on the 2nd Saturday of each month except in June, July, and August. The meeting is held from 0830-1100 at the Good Samaritan Village (Creative Arts Room/First Floor), Buena Vida Circle, Las Cruces. Reservations are required and breakfast cost is \$13. All members, those who 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 **Carol Main (575-382-7686)** or email: lascrucschapter182@yahoo.com.

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