



FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

LAS CRUCES
NEW MEXICO

CHAPTER 0182

National Active & Retired
Federal Employees Association

REPORTER

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



*Chapter 182 President
(Judy Rosco)*

Happy Fall to everyone! I am sure everyone will be looking forward to cooler weather and no more 100-degree days.

Mark Mickelsen, NM Federation President, will be visiting our chapter meeting on October 14th to give us more information on the merger between NM and AZ Federations. This will be Mark's first chapter visit since becoming our Federation President and we look forward to seeing him. We have included a letter from Mark and the Memorandum of Understanding regarding this merger on the last pages of this newsletter for your information.

Here we are again, facing a government shutdown if Congress doesn't pass the budget by September 30th which is not likely. Our expectation is that a Continuing Resolution Authority (CRA) will be granted, and Congress will have another thirty days to come to a budget resolution. Congress has only completed appropriations four times in the last 40 years. The last time all the bills were completed was 20 years ago in 1996.

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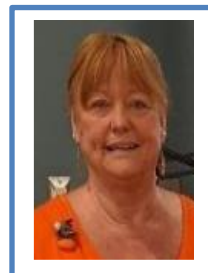


**Join Us at our October Meeting
Saturday, October 14th, 8:30 a.m.
Good Samaritan Creative Arts Room**

Program: Alzheimer's

Penny McClarin, Alzheimer's Resource Development Officer with the Las Cruces Alzheimer's Association, will be our guest speaker. She has a vast knowledge of Alzheimer's and caregiving. Bring any questions you may have regarding available day cares, the process to become a caregiver, or caregiver support groups.

**Breakfast Buffet - \$15.00
Reservations – Call Carol Main
(575-382-7686)
NLT October 4th**



*Cindy Cook
Chapter Alzheimer's
Committee Chair*

*President's Message
Continued from Page 1*

Please be alert and on the lookout for the many SCAMS that are going on now. I have seen several including Medicare, Amazon, and Social Security. Don't ever give out your personal information to anyone over the phone or internet unless you know **for sure** who you are dealing with. Medicare and Social Security will never call and ask you for information over the phone.

I am looking forward to seeing you at our breakfast meeting on October 14th.



Janice Bridges, new Chapter 182 VP for Legislation being sworn in by Chapter 182 President, Judy Rosco, at September 2023 meeting.



Chapter 182 President Judy Rosco thanking Janice Bridges for taking on the duties of Chapter VP for Legislation at the September 2023 Chapter Board Meeting.

VP/Legislation (Janice Bridges)

Cynthia Hull and Cody McCarty from Representative Vasquez' office attended our NARFE September 9th meeting at Good Samaritan. Cynthia read a letter from Representative Vasquez. He supports legislation that protects our retirement benefits. He also co-sponsored H.R. 866 this week.





Sunshine Report (Marcele Skelton)



*Summer's past; now 'tis fall
Just the nicest time of all!*

October is a month that balances sunshine and darkness. We look forward to all the changing fall colors, harvesting the garden, roasting chile and celebrating Halloween.

A Sympathy Card was sent to the family of Erik Richardson who passed away August 19th. Erik had been a chapter member since 2001. A Sympathy Card was also sent to Dan Carroll on the death of his sister.

A Thinking of You card was sent to Mary Ellen McKay who has been in intensive care at the hospital. A Thinking of You card was also sent to Janice Bridges who experienced a personal loss.

Have some fun answering this Halloween riddle: WHEN IS IT BAD LUCK TO SEE A BLACK CAT?

The answer to the September riddle: IT IS SEPTEMBER AND LEAVES ARE STARTING TO FALL. THERE IS AN OAK TREE, A PINE TREE AND A BUSH. THE WIND IS BLOWING WEST. WHICH WAY DO THE LEAVES ON THE PINE TREE FALL? (Pine trees do not have leaves. They have needles.)

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.



*Records
Officer

Carol Main*

Welcome New Member: *George Rushing*
We would like to see you at the October 14 meeting.
Come meet your fellow chapter members.

Our chapter membership is **194** 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 of any changes 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.

National Web Site: www.narfe.org

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



Service Officer (Jim Kielty)

AUGUST 2023 CPI-W SHOWS THAT INFLATION HAS ONCE AGAIN INCREASED



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, showed an inflation increase in August 2023 compared with the July 2023 CPI-W figure. The CPI-W figure for August 2023 was 301.551, compared with the July 2023 figure of 299.899. This was an increase of 0.55 percent over the July 2023 CPI-W figure. The August 2023 CPI-W of 301.551 was 3.3 percent higher than the average CPI-W for the third quarter of 2022, (July-September 2022), which was 291.901.

At the end of October 2023, the 291-901 average CPI-W for the third quarter of 2022 will be compared with the average CPI-W for the third quarter of 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 September 2023 CPI-W will be released on October 12.



FEHBP OPEN SEASON FOR THE 2024 BENEFITS YEAR ON THE HORIZON

The Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) for the 2024 benefits year will begin on Monday, November 13 and conclude on Monday, December 11. 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 request a paper copy of your plan's 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 2024 premiums for each individual plan. This information should be released in early October. The October 2023 edition of the *NARFE* magazine will contain a preview of the Open Season. More detailed information will be presented in the November and December 2023 editions of the *NARFE* magazine and the November and December 2023 editions of the Chapter 182 Reporter.



**Donna
Harris**

Chapter Programs

I'm still working on programs. Seems like I've been on vacation the months of August and September. Anyway, I should have all programs done by November. As always, I am open to suggestions.

Just send them to md.harris1@comcast.net or let me know at our meeting. See you all in October.

- October (Alzheimer's Speaker)
- November (Federal Employees' Health Insurance Open Season)
- December (Christmas Holiday Program)



**Dan
Carroll**

VP for Membership and Chapter Historian

Monsoon still hanging in there. Got some rain last night (9/20/2023) along with thunder and lightning! We now have **194** members in our Chapter 182. Columbus Day is October 9, 2023. Next general meeting is Saturday, October 14, 2023. Full moon (Mary Ellen) is October 28th.

Quote of the month: "Plans are worthless, but planning is everything." – Dwight David Eisenhower.



Patricia King

September Alzheimer's Raffle

Patricia King was the lucky winner of the beautiful afghan made and donated to the Alzheimer's Raffle by member **Terry Bloom**. It was good to see Patricia at our September 9th meeting and she was very happy to be one of the raffle winners!

Our Alzheimer's raffles are always successful. We make money for the Alzheimer's fund and our members win lots of prizes! Everyone enjoys them! Thanks to all our members who participate!

NARFE 2025 Goal: \$16 Million
24/7 Helpline: 1-800-272-3900





**Letter from NARFE NM Federation President
Mark Mickelsen Regarding the
Merger of AZ and NM Federations**

September 2023

Hello everyone,

We had a very informative and useful Federation Presidents Meeting and combined meeting with the National Executive Board (NEB) during the last week of August 2023 in Alexandria, Virginia. Many topics were discussed, including advocacy and ways to improve communication, but the overall theme seemed to be the urgent need to recruit and retain more NARFE members due to the continued decline in membership as much of the active membership ages. We will certainly increase our efforts in this area, in both New Mexico and in the combined AZ-NM Federation that will be formed in the future. We welcome any suggestions you have in this regard. We recognize that we also need to invite our National Members in the Federation to become more involved in NARFE's work, in a way that is meaningful to them and not burdensome. National Members form an essential part of NARFE! It also became clear that we need to create a plan, something like a Federation Strategic Plan, to guide our efforts in the future. We may reach out to you as members to help in this regard. The timing will depend on the pace of the coming AZ-NM Federation Merger. We will discuss these and other matters at our next Federation Board Meeting on Oct 13, 2023.

The NEB approved having the Arizona and New Mexico Federations proceed with the proposed Federations Merger. Many steps remain before the actual merger can be officially submitted to the NEB for final approval. However, with their interim approval of the process, Arizona Federation President Deborah Corner and I signed the Memo of Understanding (MOU) governing how the two Federations will cooperate during the transition period to the actual merger. I have attached the MOU to this message so that everyone can see what was agreed to. We will keep you posted on the progress of the merger and on other matters. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Best regards,

/s/

Mark Mickelsen, President, New Mexico Federation

Phone or Text: (720) 205-0251 - Email: mmickelsen@aol.com

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)
NARFE ARIZONA (AZ) AND NEW MEXICO (NM) FEDERATIONS**

Background: On June 14, 2023, during the National Executive Board Meeting President William (Bill) Shackelford assigned Region VII Vice President Sharon Reese to the Federation Merger Committee to proceed with the proposal to merge the AZ Federation with the NM Federation.

On June 16, 2023, an email was sent to both Federations' Executive Board requesting concurrence of the plan of action (process to merge the federations). Concurrence was received from all elected board members to proceed.

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Memorandum of Understanding

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A letter was sent to all members of each Federation asking for comments/concurrence. These were sent electronically and USPS for members with no email addresses. Responses received affirmative to proceed.

Purpose: Place an agreement, a MOU, until NARFE National Executive Board and NARFE Headquarters approves the merger between the Arizona and New Mexico Federations. This MOU will define the working relationships between AZ and NM.

BYLAWS: Official bylaws will be written and submitted for approval once the merger approval has been granted. Note: This will include an agreed upon name change for the Federation.

Advocacy: Current positions and roles will remain in effect. A plan for advocacy has been developed and approved by NARFE Headquarters, John Hatton, Staff Vice President, Policy and Programs, with input from both AZ and NM current Federation Presidents.

Financial: AZ and NM will continue to maintain individual treasurers and treasuries, with 10% funds continuing as currently being managed by headquarters. Both Federations will continue to request supplemental funds from Headquarters as appropriate.

Officers: Current Federation Boards will continue in place. Officers of one Federation will be invited to meetings of the other Federation's Board to continue to build relationships. These meetings may be held in person or electronically. If a vacancy occurs in an appointed or elected position in either Federation (including President) and there are no in-state candidates for that position, the counterpart or another member in the other Federation may perform the position's duties with his/her expenses paid by the Federation receiving the services.

Conference: In 2024 a combined Biennial Conference (for training) will be held. In 2025 a combined Annual Conference (with elections) will be held. Both conferences may be held virtually or hybrid (in person and virtually). Members attending virtually will pay the same registration fee as in-person attendees. NM will take the lead on this with the help from AZ. Costs will be apportioned to each Federation based on the number of attendees from each Federation. The location will be set to be equally convenient for travel by members of both Federations.

Membership Recruiting: The resources of both Federations will be employed together to recruit new members.

Services to Members: Both Federations will continue to make their members, including National members, aware of services and events available to them. Federation Newsletters will continue to be distributed as they currently are.

APPROVED:

/s/ 08/28/2023

Deborah Corner
AZ Federation President

/s/ 08/28/2023

Mark Mickelsen
NM Federation President



**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

President	Judy Rosco rosco631@gmail.com 575-635-7127
1st Vice Pres. (Legislation)	Janice Bridges jan838790@msn.com 575-635-9768
2 nd Vice Pres. (Membership)	Dan Carroll cardan116@comcast.net 575-932-9491
Secretary	Marlene Mayfield marlene.mayfield@gmail.com 575-644-6851
Treasurer	Sharon Willoughby swillowbee@comcast.net 575-524-9395
Alzheimer's	Cindy Cook cindy77lou@yahoo.com 575-640-0860
NARFE-FEEA:	Roy Willoughby rswillowbee@comcast.net 575-524-9395
NARFE-PAC	Della Apodaca dmarieda@aol.com 704-351-2051
Program Chair:	Donna Harris md.harris1@comcast.net 575-382-9070
Records Officer:	Carol Main csmain7@gmail.com 575-382-7686
Service Officer:	Jim Kielty jkielty70@yahoo.com 575-640-9585
Sunshine:	Marcele Skelton marcele@skelton.net 575-521-4954

Members of Congress

U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich (D)
201 N Church St Suite 305
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://www.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 **\$15**. 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: lasruceschapter182@yahoo.com.

Public Relations: (Dave Fox) foxydave1@aol.com
Newsletter Editor: (Sarah McAdoo) mcadoosr@aol.com