



FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

**LAS CRUCES  
NEW MEXICO**

CHAPTER 0182

*National Active & Retired  
Federal Employees Association*

**REPORTER**

**April 2025**

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

**Southwest Federation Inaugural Conference May 16-17, 2025 (Las Cruces Village-Independent Living)**



**Chapter 182 President (Judy Rosco)**

Changes are in store for current and retired federal employees. If you have been watching the TV or reading daily newspapers or online papers, you know that President Trump has been busy cutting federal programs and jobs. I was a federal employee for 30 years and yes, there is fraud, waste, and abuse in the federal government.

Several Presidents over the years have stated that the government needs an overhaul. Jimmy Carter and George W. Bush tried to reshape civil service. President Bill Clinton fired over 377,000 government employees and President Obama made cuts that were projected to total \$85.4 billion in reduced budget when they capped discretionary spending across the federal government. President Trump has not wasted any time initiating new ways to downsize the government. As you may or may not know, NARFE has joined the Government Accounting Project (GAP) and filed a lawsuit against the President. NARFE joined with the Government Accountability Project (GAP) to file suit in U.S. District Court against Executive Order 14171 which would create a Schedule Policy/Career (P/C), formerly called Schedule F. The defendants are President Trump, the Office of Personnel Management and its Acting Director, Charles Ezell. The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 is intended to provide Federal managers with the flexibility to improve Government operations and productivity while, at the same time, protect employees from unfair or unwarranted practices. On February 10, NARFE, along with a group of labor unions representing over two million workers, filed a suit in federal court in Maryland to stop Elon Musk's attempt, under Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), to get confidential information from three separate federal agencies.

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**Please Join Us!**

**NARFE Chapter 182 General Meeting  
Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025 (8:30 a.m.)  
Las Cruces Village – Independent Living  
3011 Buena Vida (Creative Arts Room)  
\$18.00 – Cost for Breakfast  
Please call Carol Main at 575-382-7686  
not later than March 26<sup>th</sup> if you plan to  
attend.**

**April 2025 Program Speaker**

**Scarlet Ayers  
from the Mesilla Valley Iris Society**

**See Page 2 for more  
information on this program.**

**Chapter 182 President (Judy Rosco)**

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NARFE did get a big win with the passage of repeal of the Windfall Elimination Program (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) bills that were signed into law by President Biden just before he left office. Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) retirees will be getting a lump sum payment from the beginning of January 2024 in March and monthly checks will reflect the new social security benefit in April. NARFE has fought for forty years to repeal the WEP and GPO and we can now take a sigh of relief.

Mark Mickelsen announced that our merger into the Southwest Federation (Arizona and New Mexico) took effect March 5, 2025. The new NARFE National Secretary-Treasurer signed the Southwest Federation Bylaws, and we are a new NARFE Federation. I look forward to seeing you at our Inaugural Southwest Federation Conference which will be hosted by Chapter 182, 16-17 May 2025, at the Las Cruces Village-Independent Living (formerly Good Samaritan). Planning meetings are being held every two weeks, and we are making substantial progress. We need help from our members in getting ads for our Program Book. If you visit your dentist, realtor, lawyer, or hairdresser/barber, please ask if they would consider putting an ad in our Program Book. Sharon Reese or Dave Fox can give you more information about the ads. We have already begun to receive donations for the Door Prizes that will be given to attendees at the Conference. Please contact Cindy Cook about the donations.



**Chapter Programs (Donna Harris)**

Our April 12<sup>th</sup> speaker will be Scarlet Ayers from the Mesilla Valley Iris Society. She will provide a presentation on the Society and what they do. Their mission is to stimulate and foster interest in horticultural pursuits, conservation and protection of irises, and to educate the public and encourage young growers.

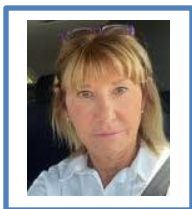
Come join us and learn about how these beautiful flowers can enrich your life.

There will not be a general meeting on May 10th since we have the SW Federation Conference scheduled to be held here in Las Cruces on May 16 and 17.

I always appreciate ideas for our programs. If you have suggestions, please send them to me at [md.harris1@comcast.net](mailto:md.harris1@comcast.net).



Recruit a new NARFE Member. There is a NARFE Membership Application in every NARFE Magazine or you can join online at [www.NARFE.org](http://www.NARFE.org). Ask a co-worker or friend to join NARFE and our Chapter 182.



### Legislation (Janice Bridges)



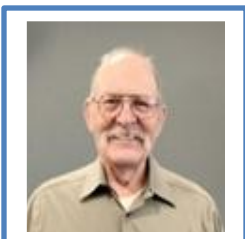
There are a few issues going on that people need to go and read about and take action on.

Please remember to go to [NARFE.ORG](http://NARFE.ORG) and look under advocacy to see these items and let your lawmakers know how you feel about these items. Following is an outline of the proposals of cuts that will affect the workforce and also the retirees. More information on each is on the web-site.

H.R. Con 14 was introduced on Feb 25. Please let your lawmakers know to vote **AGAINST** this one.

1. Reducing the government contribution towards Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) plans by switching to a flat-rate voucher model
2. Eliminating Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs) for current and future Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) retirees
3. Reducing COLAs for Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) retirees by 0.5 percent. • Breaks promises to retirees.
4. Reducing the rate of return on the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) G Fund
5. Increasing federal employee payroll contributions toward retirement by 4.4 percent without any added benefit
6. Converting new federal employees to at-will unless they accept a higher FERS contribution (of 4.4 percent)
7. Charge a Fee for Federal Employee MSPB Appeals
8. Basing federal annuities on the highest five years of salary instead of the highest three years of salary
9. Eliminating the FERS Annuity Supplement

Take action now to tell members of Congress to support the Saving the Civil Service Act, H.R.492/S.134, to protect this country's merit-based civil service. And also, to support H.R. 491 which provides for equal COLAS to FERS.



### Harry Palmer

Long-time member Harry Palmer has volunteered to become the Chair of the Chapter Nominating Committee. He has held several chapter positions in the past. We thank him for volunteering for this position.



**Service Officer (Jim Kielty)**

### **REPORTING THE DEATH OF A FEDERAL RETIREE OR SURVIVOR ANNUITANT**

As we all realize, the death of a family member can happen when we least expect it, and at some point NARFE members may be called upon to report the death of a federal retiree or a survivor annuitant. During a time of grief, it is important to know in advance what steps need to be followed in reporting the death to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and in knowing what benefits may be due for survivors. As your Chapter 182 Service Officer, I am available to assist you and answer any questions you may have.

When an annuitant passes away, the person calling OPM should dial 888-767-6738. The caller will need to identify themselves and provide the name of the deceased annuitant, along with the person's Civil Service Annuity (CSA) claim number, if known, and their dates of birth and death. The financial institution to which their monthly annuity payments are being sent should also be notified. The person reporting the annuitant's death will need to obtain several copies of the death certificate when these become available.

The caller will need to provide OPM with their name, their relationship to the deceased, and their caller information (mailing address, telephone number, and email address). If you are calling on behalf of the surviving spouse, also provide their name, mailing address, telephone number, and email address. When the death has been reported to OPM, they will create a survivor file and assign a Civil Service Family (CSF) case number to it. OPM will review the deceased person's records and send the survivor either a Form 2800 (Application for Death Benefits) for CSRS Survivors or SF 3104 (Application for Death Benefits) for FERS survivors. If the deceased was covered by the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program, a Form FE-6 will be sent to the individuals entitled to that benefit. If the deceased annuitant had Self Plus One Health coverage, OPM will change that to Self Only Coverage for the surviving spouse, thus reducing the monthly premium. It is important to promptly complete the forms provided by OPM to insure timely payment of any death benefits.



**Carol  
Main**

**Records  
Officer**

**Welcome New Members: Della Chavez, Ellen Cooper, and Donald Moore**

**New Prospective Member: Carla Alford**

**We would like to see you at the April 12 meeting.**

**Come meet your fellow chapter members.**

**Our chapter membership is 184 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](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.**





**Coming up fast! SW Federation Conference 25 (May 16-17, 2025)  
(Dave Fox, Chapter 182 Public Relations Officer)**

**Just another quick appeal from me to my fellow chapter members for your help to find business owners that would like to be featured with their business card or flyer exposure in our Conference Program for only a minimal fee.**

**Think of your favorite restaurant, your local real estate agent, that reliable plumber or electrician that you would recommend to another member. It may be an organization or a really good dentist or optical office or a hairdresser that you like using.**

**I am talking about somebody that you know, a good local family who wants to get their name and business in front of our visiting Conference attendees and be seen multiple times in the Program that will be given out in our Conference material.**

**So, please put your thinking caps on folks and try and write down someone and then text or call me at 704-301-3484 with the name of someone who might like to benefit from visibility in our Conference Program Magazine.**

**Thank you for your attention everyone. We hope to hear from you and to see you at our next breakfast meeting.**



**Alzheimer's (Cindy Cook)**



**Our chapter will have an ALZ raffle and door prizes at the Southwest Federation Conference we are hosting here in Las Cruces on May 16-17, 2025.**

**We are requesting donations of items from those who are able to donate. We would like the items to have a Southwest theme. We are looking for donations such as local wines, anything "chile", anything "pecan", SW pottery/art, etc. I'm sure there are more southwestern items you may come up with. We need these items by the end of April. Please contact me if you have any questions ([cindy77LOU@yahoo.com](mailto:cindy77LOU@yahoo.com) or 575-640-0860).**

**At our general meeting Alzheimer's raffle, we collected \$87.00 in February and \$109.00 in March for a total of \$196.00 sent to National Alzheimer's.**

**Thank You All for supporting Alzheimer's Research and Community/Family Support to those afflicted with this disease!**



### Sunshine Report (Marcele Skelton)

After a month of cold winds and sandstorms, we are ready to welcome April.



Spring weather should bring more sunshine for warmth, and showers to settle the dust. Spring also means flowers, shrubs, and trees are blooming.

A sympathy card was sent to Mario Luna, whose wife passed away February 26th. A Get-Well card was sent to Harry Palmer who is recovering from cataract surgery. A Thinking of You card was sent to Donna Harris, whose mother has been hospitalized.

Have some fun by solving this Easter riddle: WHERE DOES THE EASTER BUNNY GO TO EAT ON EASTER?

The answer to the St. Patrick's Day riddle: WHAT KIND OF SANDWICH SHOULD BE SERVED ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY? (Paddy Melts)

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)



### Membership Report

Daylight Saving Time is now in effect and it's 7am and still dark outside. Evenings are longer now, too. Full moon (Mary Ellen) is April 12<sup>th</sup>. Palm Sunday is April 13<sup>th</sup>, and Easter is April 20<sup>th</sup>.

We now have 184 members in our Chapter.

Dan  
Carroll

VP for  
Membership  
and  
Chapter  
Historian

Quote of the month: "By the time a man realizes that maybe his father was right, he usually has a son who thinks he's wrong." –Charles Wadsworth. See you at the movies (Yvette).

*Happy Easter*

Reminder: Let's all try to recruit at least one new NARFE member this year!





Della Apodaca

Thank you for your contributions during NARFE-PAC\* month.

Eleven members contributed a total of \$285 during our March 8 chapter meeting. There is still time for other members to make a voluntary contribution. While March is the month we give focus to NARFE-PAC, members can make a contribution at any time. Click [here to make an online contribution](#).

If you are a federal retiree, become a sustainer. Contribute monthly through your federal annuity. Click [this link to get started as a NARFE-PAC-sustainer](#). Others can use a credit card by mailing in a completed NARFE-PAC brochure to become a sustainer. Monthly contributors of \$10 or more receive a sustainer lapel pin.

*\*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.*



(March 2025) (L-R)  
Marilyn Koukol  
Jackie Pickering  
Tom Pickering  
Bob Nichols  
Martha Nichols  
New Member Ellen Cooper

Chapter President Judy Rosco and Brandie White, Program Director, Mesilla Valley CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate), at March 2025 general meeting.





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

**(Next General Meeting-April 12, No General Meeting in May because of SW Fed Conference May 16-17)**

***You Need NARFE and NARFE Needs You!***

#### **Chapter 182 Officers**

President	<b>Judy Rosco</b>
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Treasurer	<b>Craig Singleton</b>
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Service Officer:	<b>Jim Kielty</b>
jkielty70@yahoo.com	575-640-9585
Sunshine:	<b>Marcele Skelton</b>
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

The NARFE Las Cruces Chapter holds a breakfast meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month except in June, July, and August. The meeting is held from 0830-1100 at the **Las Cruces Village** (Independent Living Center) (Creative Arts Room/First Floor), Buena Vida Circle, Las Cruces. Reservations are required and breakfast cost is **\$18**. 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: [lascruceschapter182@yahoo.com](mailto:lascruceschapter182@yahoo.com).

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