FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS
LAS CRUCES NEW MEXICO CHAPTER 0182

National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association

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

National Web Site: www.narfe.org Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/NARFE.LasCrucesChapter.182



Judy Rosco
President, Chapter 182

I would like to give Janice Bridges, 1VP for Legislation of our chapter, a big thank you for the program she presented to our members at our Legislative Breakfast. The candidates running for House of Representatives in NM, District 2, are incumbent Gabe Vasquez (D) and opponent Gregg Cunningham (R). These candidates were invited to our meeting, but previous commitments prevented them from attending. Janice gave a thorough presentation on both candidates backgrounds and platforms.

In the September 2026 issue of the NARFE magazine, a copy of the NARFE Election Ballot was included. Please vote for the candidates of your choice, and the bylaws and standing rule amendment proposals. Voting ends September 30, 2026. Mail your ballots to NARFE Ballott Processing, c/o Election Services Co., PO Box 9020, Ronkonkoma, NY 11779-9020. The candidates you elect are the future of NARFE. Vote!

Do not hold on to your STUFF. The Chapter Executive Board has decided not to have any more fundraiser "YARD SALES." Your Board is aging

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NARFE Chapter 182 General Meeting
Saturday, October 10, 8:30 a.m.
Las Cruces Village-Independent Living
(Creative Arts Room)
Breakfast Buffet - $21.00
Reservations: Call Carol Main
(575-382-7686) NLT Sep 22, 2026
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Please join us at our October 10 general meeting. Our Southwest Federation President, Mark Mickelsen, will be our guest speaker. We look forward to his visit.



This is Mark's annual visit to our chapter and he will bring us up to date on a lot of NARFE subjects.



NARFE (FEDcon26) Aug 2026
Sharon Reese (Region VII VP) presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Jeffrey Smith for his accomplishments as Webmaster for the Southwest Federation and Chapter 182.

Chapter 182 President's Message
(Continued from Page 1)

and it is just too much work to prepare and hold the yard sale. However, you can have your own yard sale which is what I plan to do.

If you see any ads on Facebook about NARFE, Street Level Studio, NARFE's Contractor, will begin a digital marketing campaign within a mile radius of WSMR, U.S. Border Patrol on Main Street, and the U.S. District Court, on Church Street. The campaign will run from September 15 - December 15, 2026. The campaign will be reaching out to current federal employees, asking them to join us, and letting them know that NARFE is the only organization that works solely for federal employees earned benefits.

The following is a list of programs that are scheduled through December 2026:
October 10th – Mark Mickelsen, Southwest Federation President
November 14th – Chapter Health Fair
December 12th – Christmas White Elephant gift exchange
Please mark your calendars and plan to join us.

The Chapter Executive Board has these current vacancies:
Member-at-Large (Two Vacancies) - This position allows the individual to learn about the inner workings of the Chapter Executive Board and how we do business; positions on the Board they may want to fill; and duties as assigned (i.e., call table numbers at our monthly meetings, greeting members when they arrive; helping with the Alzheimer's drawing, etc.)

Program Chair – Provides interesting programs for the chapter at monthly meetings.

Way & Means Chair - Finds creative fundraising ideas to help chapter members attend NARFE National and Southwest Federation Conferences.

Please consider serving your NARFE Chapter 182 and accept one of these Board vacancies. I will keep submitting chapter vacancies in my article until they are filled. Please contact me at 575-635-7127 or rosco631@gmail.com for more information.



Records Officer (Carol Main)
We do not have any new members to announce this month, but we still have a strong chapter membership of 170 members!

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, ballots or any notices we send out.



We thank Janice Bridges, our chapter VP/Legislation for handling the entire program at our Chapter Legislative Meeting on Sep 12th. She brought us up to date on important legislative issues and answered many questions from our members.



VP for Legislation (Janice Bridges)

With the help of the Southwest Federation, I had the opportunity to attend the NARFE FEDcon26 in Indianapolis, Indiana. This year's theme was Learn, Advocate and Lead.

I was able to attend sessions that covered the main topics that NARFE is supporting and where each is in the Legislature. Also, where we stand with Republicans and Democrats. Most Democrats support us where the Republicans are a little stand offish and want to cut our benefits. One main point that was brought up is that if the active federal employees do not get a raise this year which the President is pushing for, they are pushing not to give the retirees their COLAs. These two things are unrelated.

The NARFE PAC session was very informative, and I got A LOT out of that. There is money on the National level to help ALL members of NARFE to attend political rallies. I plan to tap into that and push everyone to also use this opportunity. Being able to talk and discuss issues with other Federations was a huge source of information and advice.

There is more legislation coming up dealing with Dementia and Alzheimer's that NARFE is looking at supporting. I encourage members to support this and let your representatives know that they also need to.

At the September 12th meeting I held the Legislative program where I went into great detail about the candidates running for the U.S. Representative New Mexico 2nd District. Gabe Vasquez is the Democratic incumbent. He is a product of Las Cruces and graduated from New Mexico State University here in Las Cruces with a degree in Journalism. In the past, he has co-sponsored the Bills covering the Fair Cola Act and the Saving the Civil Service Act. To date he has NOT co-sponsored these bills and NARFE did donate to his campaign.

Greg Cunningham is the Republican running against Vasquez. He is from Albuquerque, a retired Marine with his background being in police work. He graduated from Clark Atlanta University with a degree in marketing and obtained an MBA from Fordham University. I did a call-in question-and-answer session with his campaign, and he was not very familiar with NARFE or the legislation that we support. But he seemed willing and eager to learn.

PLEASE STUDY EACH CANIDATE ON YOUR OWN AND REMEMBER TO VOTE!

Please continue to contact your Legislators and let them know what legislation that NARFE supports and please vote accordingly. Remember you can go online to the NARFE website and go to the Advocacy site and there are "scripts" there you can use to email or call to let them know which ones to support. Please let them know that the government shutdown affects all of us.

These are the MAIN LEGISLATION ACTS that NARFE is supporting and actively pushing for right now. H.R.492/S.134- "Saving the Civil Service Act". NARFE supports this bill. It will prohibit the establishment of Policy/Career of the excepted service to ensure merit-based hiring and firing of civil servants. H.R. 491/S.624- "Fair COLA Act". NARFE supports this bill. It will give full cost-of-living adjustments to FERS Annuities based on changes in consumer prices.

PLEASE subscribe to Newsline, stay active on FEDHub, read the NARFE magazine and continue to let your Legislators know where we stand on these bills.

See you in October. Sign up for the Alzheimer's Walk!



NARFE-PAC

Della Apodaca

FEDcon26 Update - A Few of My Notes

NARFE's RJ Thacker, Manager, Political & Legislative Affairs, spoke about NARFE-PAC. He talked extensively about electing fed-friendly candidates, strengthening relationships, and the need to grow awareness of NARFE as an organization. He reminded us that contributions to NARFE-PAC through the annuity withholding option has no processing fees, a cost savings. Please consider this option.

During the NARFE-PAC breakfast, we heard from Paul Helmke, Professor of Practice at Indiana University's O'Neil School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He spoke about actions that contribute to successful advocacy as follows:

1. Persuasion - Explain why you are taking action. The key is to change the hearts and minds of people. Paul suggested the use of specific terms to persuade. Examples of terms used by others included "deep state, unelected bureaucrats, and gun control."
2. Protest - This can mean different things to different people. Regardless, it needs to be planned and strategized. He spoke extensively about Martin Luther King's movement.
3. Persistence - This will take time. An example was the women's movement which took place over a 72-year period.

And last, he said we should celebrate our victories. This reminded me of all of NARFE's efforts, over many years, to repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO).



Paul Helmke (Professor of Practice at Indiana University's O'Neil School of Public and Environmental Affairs), Della Apodaca (CH 182 NARFE-PAC Chair), William Shackelford (NARFE National President), and Sharon Reese (CH 182/Region VII VP) at the FEDcon26 PAC breakfast.



Membership Report (Dave Fox)

I enjoyed attending FEDcon26. We met other NARFE employees and members from around the country including Abby Pasquella, Policy and Programs Associate, NARFE HQ.

During the Region VII session, Sharon Reese presented a certificate of appreciation to our very own Jeffrey Smith. "As the Federation Webmaster, Jeffrey efficiently keeps our Website current and has pioneered our first Chapter website for the Las Cruces Chapter."

Mark Mickelsen spoke about his vision for the SW Federation, which is strengthening chapters and increasing member involvement. We heard from three candidates running for National offices.

Show your support by casting your vote by September 30. Look for an email from "Election Services for NARFE" for instructions and your personal link to vote. Overall, I thought it was worthwhile to attend FEDcon26. Please consider attending in the future.



Dave Fox and Della Apodaca with Abby Pasquella, Policy and Programs Associate, NARFE Headquarters.

FEDcon26, Indianapolis



Alzheimer's (Cindy Cook)



Walk To End Alzheimer's
Pat and Lou Sisbarro Park, 3205 Arrowhead Dr. (NMSU Campus)
Saturday, Oct 24, 2026, (Check In - 9 a.m.)

To sign up to donate or just become a walk participant under our NARFE Team, these are the instructions: Google ALZ Walk Las Cruces NM 2026 (make sure you are on the correct date).
Click on: Look for a Team - Put in our Team exactly like this: NARFE Las Cruces NM Chapter 0182
Team Captain is Cynthia Cook. (Make sure you're on the right one).
You can sign up to donate or just sign up to be a member on the team.
If you are unable to do it online, you can give me cash or a check and I'll sign in for you.

We collected $116.00 to be sent to ALZ Research at our Sep 12th general meeting. Thank you to those who donate prizes for the raffle and those who buy tickets for the ALZ raffle as Every Dollar Counts! Thank You for supporting the mission for a CURE for Alzheimer's! If you have any questions, call me at 575-640-0860.



Sunshine Report (Marcele Skelton)

In October our sunshine begins to wane, and the cool temperatures tell us that fall has arrived. Autumn brings colorful leaves, harvesting of crops and gardens, and pumpkin spice.



Did you know that pumpkin spice contains absolutely no pumpkin? I didn't until I read about it in the Farmer's Almanac. Pumpkin spice consists of cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cloves and allspice. Oh well, I'm still going to enjoy drinking Pumpkin Spice lattes, and eating Pumpkin Spice cheesecake.

A Thinking of You card was sent to Espy Balizan who has family and friends with health issues.

Have some fun by trying to solve this October riddle: WHAT DID THE HALLOWEEN GHOST SAY WHEN IT WAS SAD?

The answer to the September riddle: ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER, WHAT DID THE TEACHER SAY WERE HER THREE FAVORITE WORDS? (June, July, August)

Please let me know if you hear of a member who is ill, has passed away, or just needs a little sunshine in their life. Marcele: 575-521-4954 or marcele@skelton.net



Dan Carroll

Service Officer

Monsoon season petering out! Rainfall about average. Columbus Day is October 12th. Full moon (Mary Ellen) is on October 26th. Halloween is October 31st. CPI rose 0.1% in July. Inflation about 3.2% for last 12 months. FEDcon26 was a success. Some 400 members attended meeting in Indianapolis, IN including yours truly. Beautiful city! Downtown area, where event was held, was clean and safe. Homeless were relocated to other parts of the city. Electric scooters can be rented for a few dollars and are good alternative to walking. Hyatt Regency, site for convention, centrally located and football stadium and baseball ballpark are within walking distance. Roman Catholic church two blocks away and I attended mass on Sunday with other NARFE members. The Indianapolis Indians beat the Columbus Clippers in baseball action attended by a large contingent of NARFE members. Fun! Quote of the month: "When you talk you repeat what you already know; when you listen you often learn something." – Jared Sparks. Have a good month!

Recruit a new NARFE member. There is a NARFE Membership Application in every NARFE Magazine, or you can join online at www.NARFE.org.

Ask a co-worker or a retired friend to join NARFE and our Chapter 182.



Chapter Member Communications (Carol Main)

Bob and I had a wonderful trip to FEDcon26 in Indianapolis. We drove, 4 days going, 3 days in Indianapolis, and 4 days back. In addition to Bob and I, there were eight other chapter members there as well as six other members from our Southwest Federation.

I attended three breakout sessions as well as the Region VII caucus. Both candidates for National President, incumbent William (Bill) Shackelford, and Deborah (Debbie) Fisk spoke to us in our caucus. Chapter Officer 101 parts 1-2 were conducted by Tim Gartner, Ohio Federation President, Lynn Harper, Region III Vice-President, and Calvin Stevens, Georgia Federation Parliamentarian and past DeKalb Chapter President. I had hoped to learn about the new database NARFE will be using after the current contract expires but that was not discussed. Jenn Rafael, Senior Director of Technology and Communications, and Matt Sanderson, Senior Content manager, conducted the third breakout, Best Practices for Chapter/ Federation Communication. They discussed using FEDHub, NARFE microsites(websites), social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn) and email both to communicate with current members and attract new ones. I was a speaker in the fourth session, Navigate, Automate, Accelerate. My section detailed the advantages of using video-teleconferencing (Zoom).

I heard three of the four keynote speakers. Opening speaker was Brett Culp, a documentary filmmaker who helps leaders and organizations see their stories more clearly and inspires purpose, courage, and connection during times of change. Dr. Joanne Pike, President of the Alzheimer's Association, gave us the latest Alzheimer's news at lunch on Monday. Closing speaker was Lieutenant General Russel L. Honoré (Ret.), a nationally respected military leader and crisis manager who led the Joint Task Force Hurricane Katrina relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina. My lasting memory of his presentation is this. Raise your children and grandchildren to be responsible adults. I didn't make it to the PAC breakfast because I was exhausted. Kudos to Sharon & John Reese and Janice Bridges who were there.

The other important thing at the conference was hearing from the candidates for NARFE national officers who addressed the entire conference. There was also discussion from the By-laws Committee explaining their rationale for their recommendations. There is information about the candidates and by-laws on-line at https://www.narfe.org/2026-narfe-national-election/ . Most of the candidate statements were in the June/July NARFE Magazine. If NARFE national has your email, you should have received your email ballot Wednesday, August 26 from "Election Services Co. for NARFE" <narfehelp@mg.electionservicescorp.com>. If you would like to use a paper ballot, follow the instructions in Judy Rosco's article. If you are voting electronically, please remember to vote by 11:59 pm Eastern time 30 Sep.

Don't forget to vote!



National Active and Retired
Federal Employees Association
Chapter 182
PO Box 16424
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You Need NARFE and NARFE Needs You!

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U.S. Representative Gabriel Vasquez (D) (District 2)
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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 **Las Cruces Village** (Independent Living Center) (Creative Arts Room/First Floor), Buena Vida Circle, Las Cruces. Reservations are required and breakfast cost is **$21**. 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.**

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