



# NARFE

## Coastal Sussex Chapter 1690



Volume 11 Issue 3

PO Box 390, Ocean View, DE 19970

March 2020



### Inland Bays Subject of March Luncheon

We have a real treat in store for us at our Thursday, March 12, Luncheon when our guest speaker will be **Dr. Susan Ball, Board Chair of the Delaware Center for the Inland Bays**. She will update us on the work being done to “preserve, protect and restore” this great natural resource in our own backyard.



The Center was established as a nonprofit organization in 1994. It oversees the implementation of the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for Delaware’s Inland Bays, and promotes the wise use and enhancement of the Inland Bays watershed by conducting public outreach and education, developing and implementing restoration projects, encouraging scientific inquiry, sponsoring needed research, and establishing a long-term process for the protection and preservation of the watershed.

Dr. Ball is a retired physician, and retired to this area after 30 years of practice in the Philadelphia area. She says she is a “long time nature lover” and became involved with the center several years ago “because its mission and the connection to nature fit with my love of the outdoors and birdwatching.”

Preservation of the inland bays benefits all local residents. Make your luncheon reservations now for what will be a most interesting presentation.

#### Upcoming Dates

##### March 4

Executive Board  
1 – 2:30 pm  
Meeting Room B  
South Coastal Library  
Bethany Beach

##### March 8

Daylight Savings Begins

##### March 12

Monthly Chapter  
Luncheon Meeting  
12 Noon  
1776 Restaurant  
Midway Shopping Center  
Rehoboth Beach

##### March 17

St. Patrick’s Day

##### March 20

1<sup>st</sup> Day of Spring

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#### Save the Date!

The Executive Board has been working to line up an interesting variety of speakers for our monthly luncheons. Here are the planned speakers for the remainder of the spring. (Remember – we do not convene in July and August).

*THURSDAY, APRIL 9* – **Janet Sydnor, President of Smooth Transitions, Lewes.** The benefits of “decluttering.”

*THURSDAY, MAY 14* – **Ian Friedland, Friends of Cape Henlopen State Park.** An overview of the many programs and activities of the park.

*THURSDAY, JUNE 11* – **Annie Berger, Army Arlington Ladies.** The work of a group of volunteers who attend all burials at Arlington National Cemetery.

## Osher Institute Offers Senior Learning Opportunities

**Osher Lifelong Learning Institute Manager Anna Moshier** told members at our February luncheon that the organization's large catalogue of classes "offers something for everyone's interests."

Moshier said the program is open to men and women age 50 and above who "have an interest in learning." She said, "It provides opportunities for intellectual development, cultural stimulation, personal growth, and social interaction." The Institute is a program of the Division of Professional and Continuing Studies at the University of Delaware. Courses are held in Institute facilities in Dover, Lewes, and Ocean View.

Moshier said that for a single registration fee, either for a semester or for the full year, Osher members can then sign up for as many courses as they like. She said they have an extensive roster of volunteer instructors "who bring considerable expertise to the classes they are running."

She encouraged chapter 1690 members to consider volunteering to offer new course ideas and serve as instructors, serve on a committee, or volunteer in the office. She said, "Active participation in our program can help members develop new friendships and be part of an exciting learning program."

Moshier said another exciting dimension of the Osher program was the Institute's sponsorships of trips "to enhance the educational experience." Some of the trips are one-day trips associated with particular courses. For instance, she said, they had a very successful opera trip to New York City in connection with a course on opera.

At the conclusion of her remarks, Moshier said, "Keep your brains active and your fingers nimble."



## Service Officer Report

**Mike Buso**

One of the benefits of being a member of NARFE is the ability to get information about the various benefits offered to federal retirees.

At the national level, NARFE Service Centers are staffed with volunteers from local chapters who can answer questions concerning federal retirement, the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance, Social Security, and Medicare. These centers can assist retirees in contacting the Office of Personnel Management with changes in records or applications for benefits.

NARFE Headquarters' Federal Benefits Service Department provides information to the Service Centers and is always ready to assist the volunteers if they have questions or problems.

At the local level, Chapter 1629 has a Service Officer – **Mike Buso** – who is available to help you with these kinds of questions, and who can help put you in touch with NARFE representatives or government offices when you have questions you need answered. Mike is also available to help families sort out issues involving benefits when a member passes away. He can be reached by phone at 703-861-9180, or by email at [buso.mike@gmail.com](mailto:buso.mike@gmail.com), or you can talk with him at one of our monthly luncheon meetings.



## President's Column

**Carl Bouchard**

Innovation: Did you ever wonder why people take certain paths to begin a career and end up in an entirely different field not based on their training? I guess happenstance can take you in many directions. But one usually has some interest or thought on what field to go in while in school.

I studied engineering because I wanted to build things. Well, I quickly learned that hands-on was short-lived, and I ended up in management. I was privileged to have an Englishman who really challenged us and stirred us up with conventional wisdom. For instance, in one of our design courses, we had to design and build machines that exceeded human endurance. That meant riding a stationary bike to determine oxygen needs, carbon dioxide output, and the total energy expended during this “work-out”. Our professor’s charge to us was not to design and build the machine but to obtain all those human output parameters, and then design and build the tools we needed to get that information. We felt we were taking a course in human anatomy.

Actually, today there is a group proposing that medical doctors first become engineers before going to medical school. The rationale is that humans are mechanical machines and that prospective doctors should study the many bionic parts we have installed in our bodies.

Look at all the amazing instruments used in hospitals to monitor your vital systems. It was engineers who designed that equipment to serve specific needs. They also made significant advances, such as in the field of robotics, with Da Vinci machines doing robotic non-invasive surgeries, and in the design of radiology probes to target certain spots for treatment. Initially, engineers performed these operations until the doctor could be trained to operate the machines. Scary isn’t it?

One institution, Texas A&M, wants to transform medicine by training a generation of innovation-minded physicians. The belief is that while physicians devote a lot of time to studying biology and chemistry, and memorizing issues and potential remedies, engineers learn to innovate to solve problems. The goal is to blend both mentalities to combine the best of each discipline.

For one, I am personally most appreciative that a radial ablation procedure - and the equipment needed to accomplish this - are now in use! Stay tuned for a hopeful future.

Advocacy: Now that the impeachment procedures are over, candidates will return home to campaign and hopefully not dig up any more schemes to attack our benefits. There is a group of 146 House members proposing that merit pay be increased and that pensions be slashed, all in the guise of “increased government efficiency.” That is one we will have to watch out for. In addition, the administration’s budget proposal, summarized on page 7, has some draconian proposals, although these comprehensive budget documents rarely turn into actual legislation. We still need to push for repeal of WEP and to try to have FERS retirees receive the same cost of living adjustments as civil service retirees.

Fortunately national NARFE will be working hard during the year to protect our benefits.



**2020 Officers**

<b>President</b>	
Carl Bouchard	424-4425
<b>1st Vice-President</b>	
Larry Trombello	430-7689
<b>Secretary</b>	
Martha Justice	664-1231
<b>Treasurer</b>	
Jo Ann Teiken	616-2017
<b>Federation Treasurer</b>	
Jim Blakeslee	227-5306

**Members-at-Large**

<b>2019-2020</b>	
Pat Brady-Rice	215-805-7782
Kathleen Lagore	
<b>2020-2021</b>	
Linda Berwick	436-4261
Maria Ryan	537-1117

**Nominating Committee**

<b>2019-2020</b>	
Vinnie Rice	215-805-7783

**Committee Chairs**

<b>Alzheimer's</b>	
Lisa Botluk	443-852-0043
<b>Chaplain</b>	
Theresa Pitman	539-5280
<b>Membership</b>	
Ron & Carol Weber	829-8906
<b>NARFE-PAC</b>	
Greg Neuner	539-1013
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David Fiske	604-0504
<b>Service Officer</b>	
Mike Buso	703-861-9180
<b>Social Committee</b>	
Jo Ann Teiken	240-481-4623
<b>Sunshine</b>	
Cece Niemi	
	<a href="mailto:sumien@mchsi.com">sumien@mchsi.com</a>
<b>50/50 Raffle</b>	
Vinny Rice	215-805-7783

**NARFE-PAC Report****Greg Neuner****NARFE-PAC Mid-Term Results**

At the halfway point in the 2019-2020 PAC cycle, national NARFE has raised over \$1,043,000 towards the goal of \$1,750,000. Nearly 21,000 NARFE members have contributed nationwide. Also, NARFE has disbursed \$616,000 to congressional campaigns and committees, including \$3,000 to Senator Chris Coons and \$1,500 to Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester.

Locally, our Chapter 1690 has raised \$2,305 with 43 members contributing and three sustainers making monthly contributions. We are well on our way to reaching our goal of \$4,000 for the two year cycle.

Overall, the Delaware federation has raised \$5,335 with 93 contributors and 9 sustainers. In addition, 42 "National Only" members who reside in Delaware have contributed \$1,845. This is a new statistic that NARFE has not reported in the past.

Thank you to all who have contributed to NARFE-PAC. The PAC is a critical component of NARFE's advocacy program and is especially important in an election year. Also this year, the Administration's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2021 is troubling for federal retirees (see article on page 7), and NARFE's legislative representatives will need all the support we can give them.

We will be collecting donations again in March, the traditional NARFE -PAC month. But members can also donate at any time at any monthly meeting or by using the form in the NARFE magazine (and make sure you identify yourself as a member of Chapter 1690 so we get the credit for your donation).

**Alzheimer's Report****Lisa Botluk**

Chapter 1690 has concluded the 2019 fundraising for Alzheimer's. In 2019, NARFE Chapter 1690 members contributed \$840 in cash and checks, \$407 from the 50/50 proceeds, and \$1000 from the proceeds of the June 2019 Federation conference (as previously agreed by the Executive Board) in addition to \$250 that had already been collected and sent, for a 2019 total of \$2,497.

At their February 2020 meeting, the Executive Board agreed to provide \$1,000 to the local Alzheimer's Association office in Georgetown, and send \$1,247 to the national NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund, where 100% of all contributed funds are spent on research on the cause, prevention, and treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

In collaboration with the Alzheimer's Association, NARFE members nationally have donated approx. \$14 million for the NARFE research fund.

Chapter 1690 has now begun collecting for the 2020 fundraising campaign. We are grateful for the support we had last year from many members, and hope we can surpass this in 2020.



## Social Report

Jo Ann Teiken

Thirty-one Chapter 1690 members and one guest attended our February luncheon. Anna Moshier was our speaker. She is the Manager of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Delaware serving Kent and Sussex Counties.

She outlined the courses and classes available to adults 50+. An extensive catalog of available classes, travel, and interests common to many of our group was given out. Her presentation was very interesting and enjoyable.

Our next luncheon will be held on Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup> at 1776 Restaurant. Hope to see you there. Please remember to get your reservations to me by 5:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 10th.

### **NARFE RENEWAL REMINDER – WRITE IN CHAPTER 1690**

Whenever you renew your NARFE membership during the year, please remember to indicate clearly that you are a member of, and want to renew your membership in, Coastal Sussex Chapter 1690.

*Help us keep our local membership strong!*



### **LUNCHEON RESERVATION FORM**

Make your Reservation and Luncheon Selection with: **Jo Ann Teiken**

**Email:** joteiken@msn.com or **Call:** (240) 481-4623 or

**Mail to:** P.O. Box 390, Ocean View DE, 19970 **Attn.** Jo Ann Teiken

Please note I will respond to each email and telephone reservation. If you don't receive a response from me, please contact me again.

Please make reservations for \_\_\_\_\_ Member(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Guest(s) for  
**Thursday, March 12, 2020 at Noon at 1776 Restaurant in Midway Mall, Rt. 1** (near the theaters)  
**Price: \$17.00 per person (which includes gratuities)**

*Reservations must be made by 5:00 pm on the Tuesday before the luncheon.*

*Walk-ins are welcome and can order lunch from the regular 1776 Restaurant menu.*

#### **Luncheon Selections:**

\_\_\_\_\_ (1) Chicken on top of tomato-vodka sauce over penne

\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Pulled pork BBQ sandwich w/chips and pickle

\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Shrimp on field of greens Caesar Salad

Dessert: Chocolate Cake

My check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ made payable to "NARFE Chapter 1690" is enclosed.

Names (Please Print): Member(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Guest(s) \_\_\_\_\_

## Consumer Alert: Beware of Tax Scams

*In tax season, it is always helpful to pay attention to Internal Revenue Service notices to beware of tax scams. Some of their warnings are summarized below:*

First: The IRS DOES NOT initiate contact with taxpayers by email, text messages, or social media channels to request personal or financial information. If they need to contact you, they will send a written notice in the mail. **Never give any personal information over the phone or in an email.**

Second: Most email scams try to get you to open attachments. Don't. These usually send you to an erroneous site, or even worse, attach malware to your computer.

Recent IRS notices include the following:

- Scammers attempt to frighten people into returning “robocall” voicemails, for instance by claiming to be able to suspend or cancel the victim’s SSN.
- Beware of fake calls concerning funds for victims of major disasters. Scammers try to take advantage of people’s generosity.
- Beware of fake calls supposedly from the Taxpayer Advocate Service.
- Beware of fake emails supposedly from the IRS that attach documents (usually containing malware) that the victim is asked to open.
- Beware of fake calls saying you owe money to the IRS, or conversely that you have a refund due, and asking to “verify” your personal information.
- Beware of a new email scam campaign with subject lines of “Automatic Income Tax Reminder” or “Electronic Tax Return Reminder” with a request to “access” your files for a refund.

[For further information go to the IRS website: https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/tax-scams-consumer-alerts](https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/tax-scams-consumer-alerts)



**March 2020**

**LUNCHEON RESERVATION FORM**

## FY 2021 Budget Proposals Affect Federal Employees and Retirees

NARFE and other federal employee organizations will have their work cut out for them – AND US! - in 2020 to deal with a number of proposals laid out in the Administration's recently-released fiscal year 2021 budget proposal.

The authoritative Federal Times summed up the budget request as follows:

*“President Donald Trump is once again calling on Congress through his fiscal year 2021 budget proposal to reduce federal spending, predominantly through cutting the budgets of many federal civilian agencies, reorganizing existing agencies, and modifying federal employee benefits. The White House plans to reduce the deficit through reductions to federal employee healthcare and retirement benefits, and plans to support a one percent increase to federal pay in 2021 in exchange for changes to the federal retirement system.”*

NARFE President Ken Thomas said that NARFE would work in Congress to “explain the negative effects of the president's FY21 budget request on civil servants' retirement savings and health care, as well as on federal workforce recruitment and retention.”

Proposals in the budget proposal affecting federal benefits include:

- Increase employee contributions to the Federal Employees Retirement System such that the employee and employer would each pay half the normal cost
- Eliminate the FERS Cost-of-Living Adjustment, and reduce the Civil Service Retirement System
- Change the retirement calculation from the High-3 years to High-5 years, which bases retirement payments on the highest-paid years of federal service
- Eliminate the Special Retirement Supplement, which provides a bridge for feds WHO have to retire before they are Social Security eligible
- Reduce the Thrift Savings Plan G Fund interest rate, which is designed to provide a higher-than-inflation rate of return on federal retirement investments

Other FY 2021 budget proposals affecting federal employees include:

- Alter federal employee leave policies to reduce the number of overall leave days available to feds, while merging different types of leave into one pool
- Develop a Federal Robotic Process Automation Reskilling Academy to train and mentor federal employees whose jobs are being affected by automation
- Grow the federal cybersecurity workforce through reskilling — investing in training personnel with an aptitude for cybersecurity
- Push for already-proposed and new reorganization plans in 2021, many of which proved contentious in FY2020 negotiations
- Cut the budgets of a majority of civilian federal agencies, except the Departments of Homeland Security, Treasury, Veterans Affairs, and NASA;
- Place budget requests for OPM under the GSA, to make the government's personnel office a subcomponent of GSA, rather than its own agency
- Transfer background investigations from the Office of Personnel Management to the Department of Defense



*Coastal Sussex Chapter 1690*

PO Box 390

Ocean View, DE 19970

[www.narfede.org](http://www.narfede.org)

## March 2020 Newsletter

### **Reminder: Region II Training Academy Opportunity in June**

Are you – particularly new chapter members - interested in learning more about the activities and programs of NARFE and in having the opportunity to interact with NARFE members from other states?

Then please consider signing up to attend the Region II Training Academy to be held from noon, Monday June 1, through noon, Tuesday June 2, at the Wyndham Garden Hotel in York, PA. (Region II is made up of Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the District of Columbia.)

NARFE National Executive Director Barbara Sido will be among the speakers on Monday afternoon. On Tuesday morning, there will be a series of roundtable discussions and breakout sessions on topics such as: fundraising; recruitment and retention of members; managing a chapter; service officer duties; PAC initiatives; Alzheimer's outreach; and handling finances.

The Registration fee is \$99, which includes three meals – buffet lunch Monday, dinner Monday night, and a buffet breakfast Tuesday morning. The hotel rate is \$90 plus tax. Federation money has been budgeted to help reimburse costs for chapter members attending, and the chapter will also subsidize costs for chapter members.

This is always a useful and informative program. Chapter 1690 members who would be interested in attending should contact Carl Bouchard for more information.