



**NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES
CHAPTER 2104, DUNWOODY, GEORGIA
JULY 2011**

NEWSLETTER

CHAPTER 2104 meets the second Wednesday of each month, except July, at 11:00 am for a business meeting, program, and luncheon. The location is the Dunwoody Pines at Georgetown, 4355 Georgetown Square, Dunwoody, GA 30346. This is a retirement facility. We meet in a room on the other side of the dining room. Ask the Information Desk, just inside the door, to point out the NARFE meeting room. This Newsletter is published in January, April, July, and October.

BOARD OF OFFICERS 2008

President:	Tom McKinney	770-396-3598	mckinneyt@bellsouth.net
1 st Vice Pres:	Carol Moore	770-350-6636	cmoore0702@att.net
2 nd Vice Pres	John Mills	770-843-5159	johnm11@bellsouth.net
Secretary:	Sandy McKinney	770-396-3598	skm1126@bellsouth.net
Treasurer:	Herb Daws	770-394-2655	hdaws@bellsouth.net
Legislative Officer:	John Mills	770-843-5159	johnm11@bellsouth.net
Service Officer:	Boyd Rose	404-266-8197	boydrose@bellsouth.net
Sunshine:	Nancy Wolff	770-394-2607	
Publicity/Program Chair:	Sandy McKinney	770-396-3598	skm1126@bellsouth.net
FEEA:	Sandy McKinney	770-396-3598	skm1126@bellsouth.net
NARFE PAC:	Joe Staiano	770-621-3628	presganarfe@aol.com
Alzheimer's:	Katherine Miller	404-255-3486	kathypm@comcast.net

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE-PRESIDENT TOM MCKINNEY



Greetings! I hope everyone is enjoying the summertime. The 55th Georgia Federation of Chapters Convention was held at the Macon Marriott City Center hotel 19-20 May 2011. Attendees from Chapter 2104 were Tom and Sandy McKinney, Carol Moore, Herb Daws, Boyd Rose, John Mills, Larry Fountain, Mary Halsey, Don and Denni Coker. There were 195 delegates and 59 alternates/guests registered. Federation President Joe Staiano called the convention to order on Thursday, May 19, 2011. There are 45 chapters in GA and 8,062 members as of 3/31/11. Membership is down, and we need to focus on retention. Joe appointed separate Federation Recruitment and Retention committees. The Federation began a pilot six month incentive program on March 1 to give \$5 to the first 100 members who sign up for dues withholding. The AFE (Active Federal Employee) Chapter 2360 at the Atlanta Federal

Center is the only AFE chapter in Region III. AFE's are our future. Nationwide, the new enarfe (online only) Chapter 2363 at NARFE HQ now has over 500 members.

Keynote speaker Elaine Hughes, NARFE National Secretary, gave us a bleak picture of what's happening legislatively. Every inequitable and unfair proposal to cut federal retirement, pay and health benefits continue to be on the table. Bottom line – ALL OF US – working, retired, or a surviving spouse- face threats to our retirement, salaries, and health benefits.

We heard from Don Stewart, Region III Vice President and Bill Douglas, President of GFMRC (Georgia Federal/Military Retiree Coalition). Federation Officers gave their annual reports, followed by the memorial service for deceased members.

On Friday an amendment to the Bylaws to reduce per capita dues from .75 to .50 per member was passed. (This is the amount each Chapter pays to the Federation for each member every year.) This will become effective October 1, 2011.

The 2012 convention will be held at Merry Acres, in Albany, GA on May 1-3, 2012. District 4 (that's us) will host the 2013 convention in the Atlanta area at a time and place to be determined.

Congressional reports were presented by Kenneth Cuts- District Director for Rep. Sanford Bishop, Tate O'Rourke- Field Representative for Senator Johnny Isakson, Stone Workman-Field Representative for Rep. Austin Scott, and The Honorable Larry O'Neal- Majority Leader Georgia House of Representatives. All agreed – the budget deficit is out of control. 88% of the federal budget is Medicare, Social Security and defense. To cut the deficit, everything is on the table.

The only good news was that there is no change to the current law that says in 2012, at age 62, \$65,000 of all retirement income will be exempt from state income tax. GFMRC, NARFE and others have worked tirelessly on this issue. We must continue to be vigilant and watch that this benefit and others will not be changed or eliminated.

Chapter Officers, Legislative, Alzheimer's, FEEA, Membership, PAC, Editor and Public Relations training sessions were held on Friday morning. All the sessions provided attendees with excellent information.

Clarence Robinson was elected District 4 Vice President at the District Caucus. Federation Officers elected were: President – Virgil Halte, Vice President- Roger Finley, Secretary – Lynn Harper, Treasurer- Janice Burgess, and Legislative Director – Larry Harper. All were sworn in at the banquet on Friday evening and began their terms on May 21, 2011.

DEBT CEILING DEAL MAY MEAN LOWER COLAS FOR RETIREES

President Obama's apparent willingness to accept changes to Social Security could mean bad news for federal and military retirees, a federal employees' organization said Thursday.

According to multiple news reports Thursday morning (July 7th), Obama has decided to accept cuts to Social Security to help reduce the deficit, and get congressional Republicans to agree to raise the debt ceiling and avoid a government default on its debt. The Washington Post reported this could include changing inflationary rates used to determine Social Security payouts.

Dan Adcock, legislative director for the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, said this would likely mean using the so-called chained Consumer Price Index to set Social Security payouts. And if that happens, federal and military pensions are almost certain to also switch to the chained CPI to set cost-of-living adjustments, he said.

"If they're willing to take the political heat to adjust the inflation measure downward for Social Security, they're not going to think twice about doing it for a much smaller constituency," Adcock said. "That's the reality of that proposal."

Some experts argue that the government's current cost-of-living measures — the Consumer Price Index for Urban Consumers, or CPI-U, and the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers, or CPI-W — overstate inflation rates by about 1.1 percentage points per year, because they do not account for changes in buying habits.

Critics, such as former White House chief of staff Erskine Bowles and former Sen. Alan Simpson, say the government should instead use the chained CPI, which does account for the fact that most consumers change their buying habits as prices increase. For example, if apples become more expensive, most consumers will buy fewer apples or switch to a cheaper fruit.

Simpson and Bowles last December proposed using the chained CPI to set Social Security COLAs, saying it was a more accurate measure of inflation. Experts estimate that such a change could save anywhere from \$255 billion and \$300 billion over its first decade.

The Simpson-Bowles report also said the chained CPI should be used for all federal programs that rely on CPI-U or CPI-W, which would cover COLAs for federal and military retirees.

CAR INFO - IMPORTANT

Wednesday, I approached my truck from the passenger side to place my computer bag (aka my man purse) in the Front passenger seat. As I reached to open the door, I noticed there was a hole right under my door handle.

My first thought was, "someone has shot my truck!" I began to think about it and inspect it a little closer and the "light" slowly began to come on. I phoned my friend who owns a body shop and asked if he had any vehicles with damage to the doors that looked like a bullet hole. 'Yes, I see it all the time. Thieves have a punch and place it right under the door handle, knock a hole through, reach in and unlock it, just as if they have a key. No alarms, broken glass or anything.'

I then placed a call to my insurance agent and explained it to him! I was puzzled that they left my GPS and all other belongings. Here is where it gets scary!"Oh no,' he said, 'they want the break-in to be so subtle that you don't even realize it. They look at your GPS to see where "home" is.(That is why you should never program your home address in the GPS. Put in the nearest Grocery Store). Now they know what you drive, go to your home, and if your vehicle isn't there, they assume you aren't and break into your home." He says they will even leave a purse or wallet and only take one or two credit

cards. By the time you realize there has been a theft, they may have already had a couple days or more to use them. I didn't realize my situation for two full days! They even give you the courtesy of re-locking your doors for you.

Periodically walk around your car; daily if you are in a shopping center or other parking area. Report thefts immediately...your check book w/missing check numbers, your credit card agencies, police and insurance companies, etc.
(Below is picture of what the hole looks like!)



SERVICE OFFICER

A Service Officer is available in each Chapter to assist you with problems you encounter concerning your employment-related financial or health benefits, retirement problems or to assist federal widows or widowers when a spouse is deceased. It is a service NARFE provides all members. Your Chapter Service Officer is Boyd Rose, 404-266-8197.

NARFE HOTLINE: Thank you for using the Hotline. This weekly legislative message is available to telephone callers (703/838-7780 and toll free at 1-877-217-8234), posted on NARFE's Internet site, www.narfe.org, made available to NARFE-Net Coordinators; and sent to over 65,000 GEMS e-mail addresses. Each delivery channel is a service of NARFE, the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association.

LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS

Phone:

U.S. Capitol Switchboard: 866-220-0044

White House Comment Line: 888-225-8418

Web:

NARFE Site: www.narfe.org

NARFE Legislative Action Center: www.capwiz.com/narfe

U.S. House of Representatives: www.house.gov

U.S. Senate: www.senate.gov

White House: www.whitehouse.gov

Library of Congress Legislative Database: www.thomas.gov

CONGRESSIONAL CONTACTS

US Senators

Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-GA)

416 Russell Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510
Phone (202) 224-3521
Fax: (202) 224-0103
<http://chambliss.senate.gov/>

North Georgia Office
100 Galleria Parkway
Suite 1340
Atlanta, GA 30339
Phone: (770) 763-9090
Fax: (770) 226-8633

Sen. Johnny Isakson (R-GA)

120 Russell Senate Office Bldg
Washington, DC 20510

Phone: (202) 224-3643
Fax: (202) 202-228-0724
www.Isakson.senate.gov/

Georgia Office
One Overton Park
Suite 970
3625 Cumberland Blvd.
Atlanta, GA 30339
Phone: (770) 661-0999
Fax: (770) 661-0768

Are You on GEMS????

All new members are automatically being entered into NARFE's GEMS alerts system (Global Electronic Messaging System) at NARFE Headquarters. If you are currently NOT receiving weekly GEMS legislative updates and items of interest to all Federal employees and annuitants you can sign up by going to www.narfe.org. You'll need your NARFE membership ID number which is found on the mailing label of the monthly NARFE magazine. Follow steps #1 and #2 on the left side of the page under WHAT CAN YOU DO ONLINE click on "JOIN GEMS" and fill in your information.

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to the following new members: Diane Allensworth, Nell Brownstein, Patricia Dubose, Bruce Fowler, Patricia Hicks, Catherine Newberry, and Roger Vissman. Welcome Aboard! If there are any Active Federal Employees in Chapter 2104 working downtown that would like to transfer to Chapter 2360 at the Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center to attend the meetings at 12:00, the second Thursday of every month, contact Tom McKinney, 770-396-3598, mckinneyt@bellsouth.net.

NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 10, 2011

PROGRAM: BLUE CROSS/BLUE SHIELD

PRINTING BY:

SOHO OFFICE



2090 Dunwoody Club Dr
Suite 106
Atlanta, GA. 30350
USA

Phone: 770-352-3434
Fax: 770-352-3448
Email: shilling@sohooffice.com

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