



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
Chapter 182 President

FEDcon24 was a success!

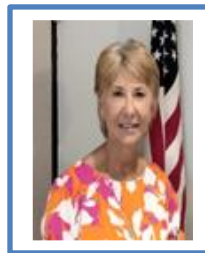
More than twice as many attendees as there were in Phoenix and some new breakout sessions were added. The keynote speaker for the opening session was Alex Sheen founder of the “because I said I would” movement. He learned from his father to be a man of his word, keep your promises because there may not be a tomorrow. He used the term “cognitive reframing” meaning “I don’t have to do ____, I get to do ____”. His message was very powerful and if you want to find out more about him, Google him.

I chose breakout sessions in Advocacy Update: What’s the Latest and What’s Ahead, Evolving Advocacy: NARFE’s Grassroots Toolbox for Today and Tomorrow, Volunteers are Your Greatest Resource: Best Practices in Volunteer Recruitment and Retention, and Lifelong Learning: Travel is the Great Educator.

Our keynote speaker for our closing session was Tom Temin, Reflections on the Evolving Civil Service. Tom is the host of The Federal Drive with Tim Temin on Federal News Radio. He often has John Hatton, NARFE, VP for Advocacy, as a guest on his program. All I can say about his presentation is that I am glad I am retired from Federal Service. BUT as a NARFE member we are still advocating for current and retired federal employees who need us now more than ever.

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Legislative Breakfast
Meeting
Saturday, 14 September
8:30 a.m. - Good Samaritan



Janice Bridges
VP for
Legislation

We have invited our Senate and House members to speak at our meeting. Gabe Vasquez and Ben Lujan have responded that they are sending representatives to come and speak with us at our September 14th meeting. Don’t miss this important meeting!

Breakfast Buffet: \$17.00
Reservations: NLT Sep 4th
Call: Carol Main (575-382-7686)

Also, I attended FEDcon24 and the advocacy meetings were very good and informative. I learned a lot more on benchmarks that are reported and how to read the reports. There has not been any movement on the legislation concerning retirement benefits this past month.

Chapter 182 President's Message Continued...

Our last night in St. Louis, NARFE offered free tickets to see the St. Louis Cardinals play the Milwaukee Brewers. It was a pretty boring game (with a score of 3-2 in favor of the Brewers) right up until the bottom of the 9th... Cardinals at bat, 2 outs, bases loaded, and you guessed it... the batter struck out! So that made the game a lot more exciting. St. Louis still lost but a good show in the end. Thanks to NARFE for the free tickets!

Please plan to attend our September meeting program on Legislative Issues. Janice Bridges, 1st VP for Legislation, will be introducing special guests. I look forward to seeing you there.



*Some of our NARFE Chapter 182 members who attended FEDcon24 in St. Louis also had fun when they attended the St. Louis Cardinals and the Milwaukee Brewers game.
(First row L-R): Janice Bridges, Dan Carroll, Cindy Cook, Judy Rosco, & Steve Rosco)*

(Photo by Dave Fox)



Aug 2024 - NARFE Chapter 182 members at the FEDcon24 in St. Louis seated with three members from AZ and the SW Federation President: (Front L: Dave Fox, Della Apodaca, Janice Bridges, Cindy Cook, Marlene Seaton (AZ), Roger Corner (AZ), Deborah Corner (AZ), Mark Mickelsen (SW Federation President), Carol Main, and Bob Main) (Photo by Judy Rosco)



FEDcon24 - Member Communications (Carol Main)

Bob and I just returned from FEDcon24 in St. Louis. There were nine other chapter members there as well as ten other members from our almost official Southwest Federation.

I attended four breakout sessions. AMS Strategies for Officer Success was conducted by a panel of five Configuration Advisory Board (CAB) members. They were very knowledgeable and I learned about the upgrade to the membership database. Chapter Officer 101 was conducted by a panel of four chapter officers and five staff members. Their different perspectives on being chapter officers and conducting meetings were quite eye-opening. Jenn Rafael, Director of Communications and Marketing, conducted the third breakout, Best Practices for Chapter and Federation Communication. She used QR codes to do surveys during her presentation. There was much discussion about NES, the old e-mail system. It is not being kept up and should not be used. There is no replacement for it from NARFE HQ at this time. John Hatton, Staff Vice President, Policy and Programs, gave the advocacy/legislative update. His updates on current legislation were very important and I am glad I attended.

There were three keynote speakers. Opening speaker, Alex Sheen, founder of “because I said I would” was engaging and dynamic. (I bought a T-shirt and book.) NARFE-PAC breakfast speaker, Dennis Wasserman, Senior Editor & Elections Manager for *The Cook Political Report with Amy Walters*, who spoke on the current political race for President, was the most compelling speaker I heard in the three days. Closing speaker Tom Temin, whose talk was “Reflections on the Evolving Civil Service” was certainly interesting.

The other important thing at the conference was hearing from the candidates for NARFE national officers. There was also discussion from the by-laws committees explaining their rationale for their recommendations. If NARFE national has your email, you should have received your email ballot last Wednesday, August 21. The paper ballots are included in the September NARFE Magazine which I received this week. There is additional information about the by-laws on-line at <https://www.narfe.org/2024-narfe-national-election/>. There is much discussion about the by-laws on FEDHub also. The candidate statements were in the June/July NARFE Magazine with extensive discussion on FEDHub. If you are voting electronically, please remember to vote by 11:59 pm Eastern time 30 September. If you choose to use the paper ballot in the magazine, make sure you mail it by 19 September to allow at least ten days which should be sufficient for delivery. Don't forget to vote!

Chapter 182 Records Report (Carol Main)

We do not have any new members to announce this month, but we still have a strong chapter membership of 185 members! Hope to see you at our September 14 meeting.

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, or any notices we send out.



NARFE-PAC

Della Apodaca

**Make a voluntary contribution today.*



FEDcon24 Update

Our drive to St. Louis was long but interesting as we (Dave and I) encountered at least 50 freight trains driving through Texas and Oklahoma. The NARFE-PAC breakfast was extremely popular and attracted many members. It was free of charge to sustaining members who contributed at least \$10 per month, or a donor who has contributed \$250 or more over the course of the 2023-2024 election cycle. Other members making a \$150 contribution at the conference also attended.

Our speaker was Dennis Wasserman, Senior Editor & Elections Manager for *The Cook Political Report with Amy Walters*, who provided interesting facts and results from his analysis about the upcoming 2024 Presidential election.

*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 non-members will be returned. NARFE-PAC contributions are not deductible for federal income tax purposes.



Alzheimer's

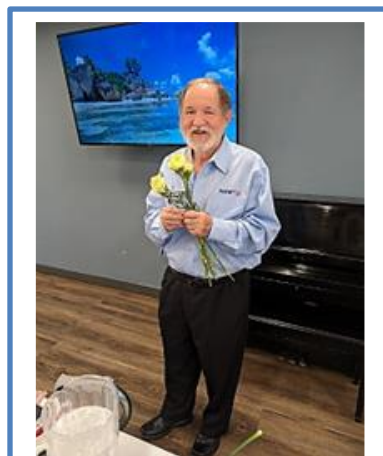
Cindy Cook



2024 Walk to End Alzheimer's

The ALZ walk in Las Cruces is on November 9th at Pat & Lou Sisbarro Park. We will send out a reminder and more information in our October chapter newsletter.

ALZ Las Cruces: The Alzheimer's Association no longer has an office here in Las Cruces but if you need information or have questions, you can call the Alzheimer's 24/7 Helpline: 800-272-3900.



John Reese surprised everyone by presenting a beautiful flower to every lady who was at the May meeting. Thanks, John!



**Membership Report
Dan Carroll, VP for Membership
& Chapter Historian**

Hello everybody! Just got back from FEDcon2024 in St. Louis, MO. Thanks for sending me along with other Chapter 182 members who attended. We stayed right on Mississippi river next to the famous ARCH. I chickened out and didn't take ride to top but others in our contingent did and said it was great!

I didn't get adopted by another chapter this time like at FEDcon2022 but our chapter did unofficially adopt You-Gene from Pittsburg, TX and Merry from Seattle, WA area. I met a nice senior couple from Hawaii and others from Puerto Rico, San Diego, CA and Falls Church, VA. Classes were interesting and food good. Our accommodations were in tourist/hotel area and it was very safe and clean. You could walk to everything and area was flat. Surface traffic was low. We went to Busch Stadium (4 blocks from hotel) and saw Cardinals lose 3-2 to Milwaukee Brewers. Cards had bases loaded in bottom of 9th but final batter struck out to end game. Pinch hitter, Rob Carpenter, hit a two-run homer for the Cards in the bottom of the 8th. Wow! Some of us went to mass on Sunday at the beautiful Basilica of St. Louis which was two blocks from the hotel.

We now have 185 members in our chapter. Labor Day coming up on September 2nd. Full moon is September 17th. Quote of the month: "If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door."—Milton Berle. See you everyone!



Service Officer Report (Jim Kielty)

**CPI-W FOR JULY 2024 ONLY INCREASES
BY 0.1 PERCENT COMPARED WITH JUNE CPI-W**



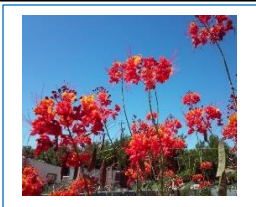
The Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Personnel (CPI-W), used to determine if Social Security recipients, federal retirees, and survivor annuitants will receive a Cost-Of-Living-Adjustment (COLA) in January 2025, showed a minimal increase of 0.1 percent for the month of July 2024.

The July 2024 CPI-W was 308.501, while the June CPI-W was 308.054. The 308.501 figure for July was 2.41 percent higher than the average CPI-W for the third quarter of 2023, which was 301.236. In order for a COLA to be authorized in January 2025, the average CPI-W for the months of July-September 2024 must exceed the average CPI-W for the months of July-September 2023.

The ongoing inflation slowdown makes it increasingly likely that the Federal Reserve will authorize an interest rate cut in September. The CPI-W for August 2024 is scheduled to be released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics on September 11, 2024 and the September 2024 CPI-W will be released in mid-October when this number becomes available.



Sunshine Report (Marcele Skelton)



September is a "back to" month in many ways.

It is back to a little less sunshine each day. Back to school for students. Back to work after summer vacations. Back to meetings for groups taking the summer off. Back to our Saturday morning NARFE breakfast and programs.

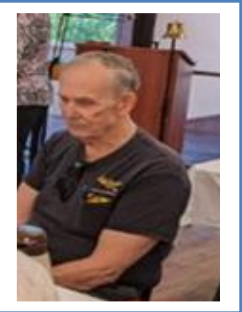
A Get-Well card was sent to Jeanne Libby, who has been diagnosed with lung cancer. Keep Jeanne in your thoughts and prayers. A sympathy card was sent to the family of Earl Shepherd who passed away on August 10th. He was a member of Chapter 182 since 1985 and retired as Comptroller at White Sands Missile Range in 1992.

A Sympathy card was sent to the family of John Smith, who passed away August 2nd. John has been a member of Chapter 182 since 2006. He served as Vice President for Legislation and then Vice President for Membership. He will be missed.

Have some fun by trying to solve this riddle: **WHAT CAN YOU SWALLOW, BUT CAN ALSO SWALLOW YOU?**

The answer to last month's riddle: **WHAT DO BEES USE TO STYLE THEIR HAIR?** (Honeycombs & beeswax)

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



***In Memory of
John H. Smith***

**Retired Commander,
USN, and retired DOD
Civil Service employee
at White Sands Missile
Range**

John passed away August 2, 2024. He was an active member of our NARFE Chapter 182 since 2006 and served in the past as the Chapter VP for Legislation and Chapter VP for Membership. He regularly attended our monthly meetings and will be missed by our chapter.



Membership Report

Donna Harris

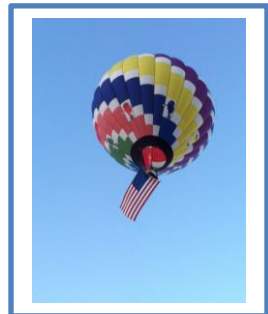
Great programs coming this year.

December program will be the choral group *Young At Heart*.

January will feature our own Janice Bridges who will conduct a presentation of the NARFE website and how you can use it.

February will be Pam Rodgers from Amber Hospice - You Matter Too: Self Care and Burnout for Caregivers.

More to come on future programs.



EYE CANDY IN THE SKY Chapter 182 Member (Marilyn Koukol)

As the days hopefully begin to cool, keep your eyes focused in the skies and maybe you will see some brilliant hot air balloons. There are local balloons here in Las Cruces and also several Balloon Rallies this Fall. The Elephant Butte Balloon Rally takes place September 6-8. White Sands is scheduled for September 20-21 and the big Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta is slated for October 4-13. (Usually, the Mesilla Valley Rally is in mid-January.) These early morning rallies depend on gentle breezes and clear skies for a beautiful launch. Pilots are always looking for crew to help set up, chase, and pack up those amazing balloons. Let me know if you are interested in helping. They say a picture is worth a thousand words, so I will stop this narrative right now and let you view the “eye candy!”

Hugs! Marilyn Koukol
(koukolmar@comcast.net)



Martha Raup, who is the NARFE CAB (Configuration Advisory Board) chair traveled through Las Cruces last month and met up with members of our chapter for dinner at La Posta on July 24th. A good time was had by all! (L) Sharon Willoughby, Roy Willoughby, Marlene Mayfield, Sharon Reese, John Reese, Della Apodaca, Dave Fox, Steve Rosco, Judy Rosco, Bob Main, Carol Main, Diane Joseph (San Francisco Chapter Treasurer and friend of guest of honor Martha Raup), Martha Raup (NARFE CAB Chair & 1st VP of San Francisco chapter), Craig Singleton, Judy James, Chuck James (not shown).

Martha Raup: "Thanks ever so much for the fabulous get-together in Las Cruces - we had a wonderful time, and it was great meeting so many members of your chapter! It was interesting learning about White Sands and we now have many memories of Mesilla to cherish."



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

You Need NARFE and NARFE Needs You!

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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>
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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 \$17. 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: lascrucschapter182@yahoo.com.

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