



# NARFE

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

Official Quarterly Newsletter of the  
Houston Association of Chapters

January 2009

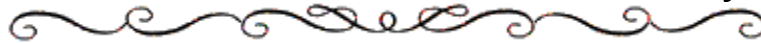
<http://www.narfehouston.org>



President: Dave Bloomer VP: vacant

Secretary: Hazel Hicks Treasurer: Wilbur Doehring

## TFC President to attend HAC Quarterly Meeting



TFC President Jerome Smith has asked that Houston Chapters consider hosting the 2011 TFC Convention here in Houston. President Smith has agreed to attend the January meeting of the Houston Association of Chapters to provide information on bidding for the 2011 TFC Convention and to answer questions. All Houston area Chapter Presidents (District 7 & 8) and interested members as well as representatives to HAC are invited to attend the meeting which will be on Wednesday January 28th at 10:30 AM at the Tracy Gee Community Center, 3599 Westcenter Drive, Houston, Texas. Agenda items for the meeting will include:

Bidding Process for 2011 TFC Convention – Jerome Smith TFC President

Should Houston Chapters bid to host the 2011 Texas Federation of Chapters Convention in Houston.

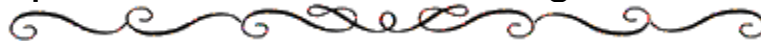
Houston Association of Chapters is also considering a Name Change

Suggested names submitted to date are:

NARFE Greater Houston Council of Chapters

NARFE Houston Council of Chapters

## BC & BS Non-preferred Provider Change Causes Controversy



NARFE recently called on OPM and BC & BS to change the preferred provider provisions of the 2009 BC & BS Standard Option plan. Congress even held a hearing about the issue.

Blue Cross/Blue Shield's (BC/BS) and OPM's negotiations for 2009 had resulted in provisions which required federal employees and annuitants enrolled in the insurance carrier's "Standard Option" to pay 100% for out-of-network surgical services up to a separate per episode \$7,500 catastrophic limit. After NARFE and others questioned the change which came at the same time as a 13.3% increase in premiums OPM and BC & BS have agreed to modify the changes. Federal employees and retirees (Continued on page 2)

### NARFE Websites:

<http://www.narfe.org> <http://www.txnarfe.org> <http://www.narfehouston.org>

(continued from page 1)

will now have till the end of January to change plans if they wish to do so. The BC/BS Standard Option out-of-network non-emergency surgical procedure benefits were to have changed as shown in the left column and will change as shown in the right column for 2009:

**Original Benefit for 2009**

You pay 100% of the billed amount up to a maximum of \$7,500 for non-emergency/ non-accidental surgery performed by non-network Physicians.

The \$7,500 co-payment was not included under the plan's catastrophic out-of-pocket protection

Medicare B enrollees: copayment waived as provided in brochure.

**Revised Benefit for 2009**

you pay 30% of the plan allowance subject to the yearly deductible plus the difference between the plan allowance and amount billed.

The coinsurance is included in the annual \$7,000 limit; the difference between the allowance and billed amount is not. (Same as 2008)

Medicare B enrollees: coinsurance is waived as provided in brochure.

The revised benefit is similar to the benefit Blue Cross offered in 2008, but the coinsurance payment increases from 25% to 30% for 2009.

To ensure FEHBP participants have enough time to review and compare benefits OPM is allowing belated open season enrollment changes through the end of January. Please note: while enrollees can make a late open season change in health insurance coverage, the effective date of open season changes is January 1, 2009 for retirees and the first pay period beginning on or after January 1 for active employees which is January 4 in most cases. Claims for medical services performed after these dates should be submitted to the new insurance carrier. For retirees, premiums in their annuities reflecting their new health insurance coverage may not show in their February 1 payments. If their open season change was not processed by OPM before mid-January in time for February 1 payment data sent to the Treasury, the February 1 annuity payment will show the 2009 premium for their current plan, not the plan they changed to. The new premium along with any adjustment between the old and new premium will first show in the March 1 annuity payment.

## District 7 Convention



Chapter 828 as host for the District 7 Convention on March 19, 2009 has announced that the convention will be held at Spring Creek Barbeque, 25831 Northwest Freeway, Cypress Texas 77429, which is in the Shopping Center on Highway 290 @ Spring Cypress Road. The convention will convene at 09:30 A M and conclude by mid afternoon. When available the Agenda and a map for the Convention will be posted on the Houston Association of Chapters website on the District 7 Representative webpage. <http://www.narfehouston.org/D7Rep.html>

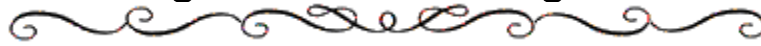
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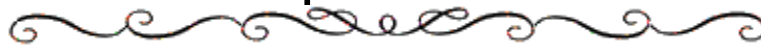
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## NARFE Legislative Training Conference



The NARFE National Legislative Conference will be held March 7-10 2009 at the Hyatt Regency, Crystal City, Arlington Virginia. The Conference offers NARFE members training sessions on NARFE's legislative agenda and the political process including grass roots organizing and also offers an opportunity to meet their congressman to discuss NARFE's legislative goals if they have sought appointments with the appropriate official prior to arrival. A link to registration and detailed information on the conference is available on the national website. The second article listed on the home page at <http://www.narfe.org> is "Registration Now Open for March NARFE Legislative Training Conference." Click on the Read More link following the description and you will be taken to a page will complete information about the Training Conference.

## Chapter News



Each Chapter President has been asked to have their Publicity Chair or Newsletter Editor contribute information on their Chapter two weeks before the beginning of each quarter. Each Chapter has also been advised to update their meeting and event information quarterly for the website. Was information submitted for your chapter?

### **Greater North Houston Chapter 828**

Chapter 828 as host for the District 7 Convention on March 19, 2009 has announced that the convention will be held at Spring Creek Barbeque, 25831 Northwest Freeway, Cypress Texas 77429, which is in the Shopping Center on Highway 290 @ Spring Cypress Road. The convention will convene at 09:30 A M and conclude by mid afternoon.

At the January 20<sup>th</sup> Chapter 828 meeting members will nominate delegates to the TFC Convention to be held in San Antonio April 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>. Plans for the District 7 Convention will also be discussed.

At the February 17<sup>th</sup> Chapter 828 meeting members will elect the Nomination Committee for 2010 Officers and Elect Delegates to TFC Convention to be held in San Antonio April 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>.

At the March 17<sup>th</sup> Chapter 828 meeting members will complete plans for District 7 Convention which the chapter will host.

### **Northeast Houston Chapter 1349**

#### **Montgomery County Chapter 1350**

Chapter 1350 elected new officers for 2009. Allen Machart was elected President, Marie Bishop 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Betty Cruse 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Danny Ball, Treasurer and Barbara Horswill, Secretary.

#### **Southwest Houston Chapter 1375**

The Chapter 1375 meeting on January 21<sup>st</sup> will feature a presentation by Richard Laster on "Fractional Currency."

#### **Rosenberg Chapter 2030**

The January 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of Chapter 2030 will feature entertainment by the dance duo "Texas Lovin' Cloggers," and an update on the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo events for 2009.

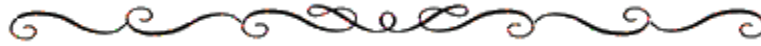
The February 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of Chapter 2030 will feature a presentation by Steve Thomas, an AARP Income Tax Advisor.

There is no speaker scheduled yet for the March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of Chapter 2030. Members should plan to attend the District 7 Convention which will be hosted by Chapter 828 on March 19<sup>th</sup>. Additional details should be available at the February or March meeting.

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## 2009 Texas Federation Convention



The 55<sup>th</sup> Texas Federation Convention is being planned and hosted by the San Antonio area chapters. Although the convention will be held April 24-27, 2009 --information on registration and hotel reservations has already been made available. A package has been sent to Chapter Presidents, and information has been posted on the Texas Federation Website at <http://www.txnarfe.org/TFCconv.html> Note: A link is available on the website to make a reservation with the hotel. Convention Registration and Hotel Reservation forms are also available on the website.

The 55th TFC Convention will be held in the Hilton San Antonio Airport Hotel. Located on Loop 410, two miles from the airport. The hotel is North of Loop 410 across from North Star Mall. Hotel parking is \$4 a night in a covered parking garage. For people not staying at the hotel, the parking day rate is \$2.50. Convention Hotel Rates are: Single Rate: \$85.00, Double Rate: \$85.00, Triple Rate: \$100.00 & Quad Rate: \$115.00, plus tax. This rate is available for 3 days before and after the convention when booking for the convention.

The tentative agenda is:

Friday 24th: Committee meetings and Executive Board meeting -- general membership attendees should report for registration.

Saturday 25th: full day of meetings -- Mexican Buffet in evening

Sunday 26th: full day of meetings -- Banquet in evening. The banquet theme is "American Heritage Night".

Members are encouraged to come in ethnic attire.

Monday 27th: half-day session

**NARFE Houston Association of Chapters  
C/O Dave Bloomer, President  
1934 Mustang Springs Drive  
Missouri City, Texas 77459**

**To:**

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