

**South Jersey Shore Chapter 1664  
January 2020 Newsletter**

**Chapter 1664 Officers**

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Vice President – Lawrence Stroud  
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Secretary – Vacant

Treasurer – Karl Clouting  
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Legislative Officer – Tom DeFiore  
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Service Officer –; Michael Ryan  
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Chaplain – Lawrence Stroud  
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Webmaster - Wayne Marsey  
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Membership Chair – Carol Dawson,  
(609) 652-8149

Publicity Chair - Vacant

**NARFE National Contacts**

**Change of Address:**

(800) 456-8410

**Recruitment & Retention:**

(800) 627-3394

**Legislative Hotline (24 hours):**

(703) 838-7780

**Legislators' Phone Numbers**

**Senator Cory Booker**

(973) 639-8700 or (202) 224-3224

**Senator Robert Menendez**

(856) 757-5353 or (202) 224-4744

**Congressman Donald Norcross (Dist. 1)**

(856) 546-5100 or (202) 225-6501

**Congressman Jeff Van Drew (Dist. 2)**

(609) 625-5008 or (202) 225-6572

**Congressman Andy Kim (Dist. 3)**

(732) 504-0490 or (202) 225-4765

**Congressman Chris Smith (Dist. 4)**

(609) 585-7878 or (202) 225-3765

**JANUARY 15, 2020 LUNCHEON MEETING**

**Improve Your Balance & Prevent Falls**

SHORE DINER, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

The next meeting of the NARFE South Jersey Shore Chapter will be on Wednesday, January 15 from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. at the Shore Diner, located at 6710 Tilton Road, Egg Harbor Township. Lunch is \$18 (gratuity and tax are included), but is optional, and consists of salad, entrée, dessert, coffee or soft drinks. Federal employees, annuitants, spouses and other guests are welcome.



**President's Corner**

*Gary Levy, President, Chapter 1664*

2020 greetings, Chapter 1664 members! As your new president, I thought it would be appropriate to use this first Newsletter issue of the year to introduce myself. I

was born and raised in Philadelphia, PA., went to Northeast H.S. and graduated from The Philadelphia College of Art (now The University of The Arts) with a BFA Degree in Art Teacher Education. Following graduation, I was drafted into the U.S. Army and served on active duty at Ft. Jackson, SC, Ft. Leonard Wood MO. and Ft. Belvoir, VA. While at Ft. Belvoir, because of my BFA Degree, I was fortunate enough to be assigned as a soldier/instructor with the Army Special Services Arts and Crafts Program, a distinct segment of leisure-time activities available for soldiers and their families. After separating from active duty at the end of my two-year obligation, instead of going into public school teaching, I chose to become a civilian Arts and Crafts Director and took employment with the Army Special Services Program in Europe. While there, I supervised multiple Arts and Crafts Center operations located at Army Installations throughout large geographical areas of Germany. While overseas, I also served as president of The European Recreation Society and president of The Rhein/Main Frankfurt Toastmasters Club, an organization dedicated to better listening, thinking and speaking.

I spent eight years in Europe then transferred to work for the U.S. Army Forces Southern Command in the Panama Canal Zone where I served for two years as the commanding general's Staff Youth Activities Director, overseeing the command's Army Dependent Youth Activities Program. While there I also served as the Canal

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## LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Tom DeFiore, Legislative Officer, Chapter 1664  
NJ Federation National Legislative Chair

**New Year:** On behalf of Chapter 1664 and the NJ NARFE Federation Legislative Team, we wish everyone a happy and safe New Year. Since the December newsletter, there is little new to report and I for one am thankful to get two weeks relief from politics. Unfortunately, on 6 Jan, it will resume in earnest.

**NARFE District II RVP: Current NARFE Region II VP, Kathy Adams, has indicated that she will not be returning as VP. Currently,** the lone nominee for this position is the President of the Maryland Federation, **Dr. Gary Roundtree.** Unless something changes, it is presumed that Gary will become NARFE's new Region II VP.

**COLA: Grossly Unfair for Seniors.** My family's income is solely from my CSRS Annuity and my wife's Social Security. This year's 1.6% COLA increases our joint income by approximately \$130/mo. The increased premiums from FEHB, Medicare Part B (for 2), deductibles, co-pays and Dental Insurance totals approximately \$55 and consumes over 40% of our COLA increase. What do these numbers say about the long term adequacy of using the CPI-W measure to calculate COLA's for seniors?.

**Postal Reform:** H.R.2382 "the USPS Fairness Act," appears certain to pass the House early this year. Identical Senate Legislation, S.2965, has been proposed to repeal the crippling financial requirement for the USPS to prepay for future retirement benefits through continuing contributions to the Retiree Health Benefits Fund, thus righting the USPS financial ship. Presently, there are 3 co-sponsors: Senators Daines (R-MT), Schatz (D-HI) and Cardin (D-DE). The NJ Federation is encouraging NARFE National to make acquiring Senate support for S.2965 is highest priority.

**Congressman Van Drew:** Media outlets have reported an unending stream of news of Congressman Van Drew's vote against Impeachment and subsequent switch to the Republican Party. Of particular human interest is the coverage, regarding the sudden resignation of numerous Van Drew D.C. Staffers. The reasons were: They were "*deeply saddened and disappointed*" at Van Drew's decision. "*Accordingly, we can no longer in good conscience continue our service in the congressman's employ,*" they wrote that *Van Drew's decision "does not align with the values we brought" in joining his staff. (exact quotes italicized).* The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee had jobs waiting for those leaving over Van Drew's anticipated party switch. One can only wonder just how sincere/heartfelt these staffers' convictions would have been had their resignation resulted in being unemployed rather than instantly re-employed by the Democratic Party.



**NARFE HOLIDAY PARTY ATTENDEES DECEMBER 2019**



## Service Officer Report

Michael Ryan, Service Officer Chapter 1664  
NJ Federation Membership Chair

**Recently Deceased:** Our thoughts and prayers are with those who have passed on recently. These include **John Williamson**, our long-time Service Officer who was the backbone of our chapter for so many years and others:

Charles D. Rabey	84	Oct 29	Northfield	USPS
John Williamson	97	Dec 9	EHT	FAA
Alberta Jeanette Watson Davis	82	Dec 12	Atlantic City	FAA
Joseph McCusken	91	Dec 19	Atco	DOD
Barbara Astillero	94	Dec 20	EHT	FAA
Sahlana Elan Blackwell Jacobs	22	Dec 17	Sicklerville	FAA
Max Greenberg	-	Dec 26	Vorhees	FAA
Elanor Wasman Burk	-	Dec 26	Somers Point	FAA

**National Magazine** – Recently a Chapter Member reported non-receipt of the NARFE Magazine. I left a message with Membership Services. Later they left voice mail explaining that: a) membership had lapsed back in February and that b) dues withholding had started in October, that they would send three back issues, and place her back on distribution. The bad news is they messed up; the good news is they fixed it.

**Nj Federation Newsletter** – Elizabeth DeVincenzo, Federation Secretary, Tom and I successfully distributed the Federation Fall Newsletter using the NARFE Email System. We achieved distribution to the ~2,650 Chapter Members and National Members within New Jersey. Unfortunately, there are ~2,000 members without an email address.

**Officer Roster** – The F-7 Chapter Officer Roster was recently filed with National.

**Audit** – Our Treasurer’s books were recently audited by Anne and Gary. The F-131 Audit Form was filed with Federation Treasurer.

**Treasurer** – Karl, Chapter Treasurer, and I visited Jersey Shore Credit Union and had me installed as a second signature on the Chapter accounts. Because of my Mississippi travels, a hopefully someone will step forward and take over Treasurer’s duties. A quick review of online transactions shows two things: 1. Chapter revenue increased about ~\$100 in 2019 over 2018 ; 2. Chapter spending deficit increased to ~\$400 in 2019 over \$240 in 2018. Hopefully that deficit increase was temporary, caused by a temporary postage issue.

**National Executive Board** – The November NEB meeting minutes revealed some severe cost cutting efforts. A few highlights were a) New Member dues increased from \$40 up to \$48 ) Federation portion of National funds cut from 10% down to 5% and c) Locals portion of New Member dues cut from 33% down to 16%.

**Whistleblower** – From Mother Jones Dec 20, 2019: “According to a [new poll](#) conducted by the Government Business Council, the research arm of *Government Executive*, one-in-three federal workers say they are now less likely to “report an act of perceived wrongdoing to the appropriate authorities” because of the attacks on the whistleblower by Trump and his allies. Specifically, 19 percent said they are now “much less” likely to report wrongdoing, and 15 percent responded that are “somewhat less” likely to do so. The good news is that half of respondents said that Trump’s attacks would have no impact are their willingness to expose malfeasance, and 16 percent said they were now more likely to blow the whistle.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**JAN 15 LUNCHEON MEETING** 1:00 – 3:00; SHORE DINER, 6710 TILTON ROAD, EGG HARBOR TWP. SPEAKER: SUSAN COHEN, BETTER BALANCE AND HOW TO PREVENT FALLS.

**FEB 19 LUNCHEON MEETING** 1:00 – 3:00; SHORE DINER, 6710 TILTON ROAD, EGG HARBOR TWP.

**MAR 18 LUNCHEON MEETING** 1:00 – 3:00; SHORE DINER, 6710 TILTON ROAD, EGG HARBOR TWP.

*(President's Corner Continued)*

Zone Soap Box Derby Director. Following my Panama tour, my civilian career took me to Ft. Dix, NJ where I was ultimately promoted to the position of Special Services Officer with responsibility as a division chief for supervising all of the installation's Morale, Welfare and Recreation Programs (sports, service clubs, entertainment, arts and crafts, youth activities, outdoor recreation, hunting and fishing, libraries, golf course, bowling lanes, movies and more). After 18 years at Fort Dix, I retired from Civil Service in 1988. While at Fort Dix, I was

briefly assigned as Chief Management Negotiator for the Non-appropriated Fund Employees Union contract and reached agreement in a record four hours. I am also proud to say that I am the recipient of the Department of Army's Meritorious Civilian Service Award and Medal.

In 1991 I took a job to work for the County of Burlington, NJ and became a Senior Administrative Analyst in the Office of Human Services, Department of Health. I served as chief of the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Unit in this "second career" for 12 years until my NJ State retirement in 2002. I moved to Atlantic County, NJ in 2005 and currently reside in Margate City.

As many of you may know, I am an avid photographer. I started working with a single lens reflex (film) camera in Germany and went on to purchase my first digital SLR camera in 2008. I'm now on my third and best DSLR, but had to trade in the first two cameras to be able to buy it. Thanks to Anne Harlan whom I first met at a 2017 Chapter 1664 meeting, I became a member (and am now also treasurer) of the Stay Focused Photo Club which meets at Stockton University. As a reward for my ensuing photography pursuits, in 2018 eight pieces of my work which were on temporary display at the Margate City Library were actually purchased by the Library for their permanent collection. This past March 2019, my photo entry "Marker Magic" won BEST OF SHOW in the Ocean City, NJ Arts Center's Annual Photography Contest. That led to them to inviting me to be a judge for their August 2019 Annual Ocean City Boardwalk Art Show, and I'm honored to say that the OCAC has also granted me the whole month of February 2020 for a one-man photo exhibition in their gallery. You are all invited to the "Meet the Artist Reception," February 7th at 7:00 pm.

In closing, let me say that I am proud to be a long-standing member of NARFE (I believe since 1988) and now to be your President. I follow a GIANT of a past-president, Rodney Guishard, who has done so much for the organization. Also, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the people I've gotten to know better at the monthly newsletter/envelope-stuffing meetings, i.e. Anne Harlan, Tom DeFiore, Mike Ryan, and Karl Clouting. They work diligently in their chapter officer jobs, as do Lawrence Stroud and Carole Dawson. They have already been so very helpful to me and a great source of Chapter 1664 historical knowledge. I look forward to good things happening in the future. It is therefore with great pride that I say thank you for electing me to be your president and for your confidence. My best wishes to you all for a most happy and healthy New Year.

*Gary Levy, President, Chapter 1664*



## Thank You to Rodney Guishard

Anne Harlan, Newsletter Editor

I want to take this opportunity to thank Rodney Guishard for his incredible work, dedication and spirit, serving as President of our chapter for the last eight years! I have known Rodney for almost 25 years and knew that his ideas, dedication to NARFE and willingness to help, no matter the task, would make him an excellent President. Even after his medical issues, he continued writing his column every month and stayed involved with everything related to the chapter. His wife, Helen, has been fantastic throughout, helping in so many ways. Thank you both!!! Rodney leaves behind very big shoes to fill, but I am confident that our new President, Gary Levy, who has so many excellent skills himself, will build on that foundation and take the chapter to even greater heights.