



National Association of Retired & Veteran Railway Employees, Inc.

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– SINCE 1937 –

NARVRE NEWSLETTER

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Santa Fe Bicentennial Locomotive Donated to Southern California Railway Museum by BNSF. Freight diesel was repainted into scheme used to celebrate America's 200th birthday in 1976 at Kansas City and was placed on display at Union Station in June 2022. Later the SD 45-2 will be transferred to California. A special bicentennial paint scheme was created to celebrate America's 200th birthday in 1976. Built at La Grange, Ill., by the Electro-Motive Division of General Motors Corporation in 1973, the 3,600-horsepower SD45-2 type locomotive was one of five painted in a commemorative red, white, and blue scheme by Santa Fe at its San Bernardino, Calif., shops in late 1975 and early 1976.

FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT —

As I sit down with pen handwriting on a yellow legal pad, I realize how “old school” this method is. Well, “old school” has worked well into the 85th year of NARVRE and we are still the only organization expressly mandated to PROTECT, PRESERVE and PROMOTE the benefits of the Railroad Retirement Board and our annuities.

We all know that “old school” alone in this day and time will not allow us to reach those facing retirement and newly retired, so we must “embrace” our computer, cell phone, internet, Facebook and other apps yet to be discovered. This will be my method and hopefully yours to express that “we work united together to advance the principles

and ideals of NARVRE.

Please go to www.narvre.us and click on the various icons and headings at the top of the page. Pay particular attention to the two “f’s” which are our official FACEBOOK page and National NARVRE Forum. These pages are continually updated by the NST’s office staff, webmaster, and our social media contractor, Adventures Media Solutions.

The Forum is where members of your local Unit can share information with all our nearly 13,000 members.

On the second line visit “NEWS” and meet your new National President, see highlights of the 42nd Convention, memories of our outgoing President Emeritus, Tom Dwyer, the Medicare Appeals Process, and finally 3 Tips for Recruitment. These “posts” will continually change so make a habit of

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FROM THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR —

On June 2nd the annual trustee reports on Social Security and Medicare Trust Funds were released showing an improved outlook indicating the Social Security Trust Fund is solvent until 2035, an improvement of one year than was projected last year. At that time, approximately 80% of benefits will be payable. The Medicare Part A Trust Fund for hospital care now has sufficient funds to fulfill its obligations until 2028, two years later than projected in 2021. Every Member of Congress knows that they must act to strengthen the solvency of these national programs. Social Security is funded through payroll taxes (6.2%), which currently apply to income wages up to \$147,000. Notably, thanks to a change by Congress, there is no wage limit on the Medicare tax of 1.45%. Polls continue to show that most Americans think our lawmakers should make a similar change to Social Security.

In order to shore up the system, lawmakers face a wide choice of different proposals. Applying Social Security payroll taxes to those above the wage base is a popular idea with the public, and known by its own campaign slogan, “Scrap the Cap”. NARVRE has long supported a fair plan to have the Social Security tax on wages expanded as well as a plan to allow Medicare to negotiate directly with the Rx industry to lower the costs of prescription drugs in America. HR 5723, The Social Security 2100: A Sacred Trust Act, is a bill that includes both of those proposals, requiring wealthy Americans to pay payroll taxes on wages above \$400,000. This legislation would also increase our cost-of-living-adjustments (COLA) by adopting the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E) and based on the spending patterns of seniors. The Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) works closely with the Social Security Administration, and we need both

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From the National Vice President —

NARVRE has come a long way since it was established in 1937. Throughout those years, we have seen many changes, such as adjustments to our retirement plan, changes in the structure of railroads and changes to our membership.

In recent years, our NARVRE membership has declined. This can be attributed to deaths, railroad operations moving to other locations, the reduction of railroad jobs or NARVRE is completely unknown to railroad retirees. The Railroad Retirement Board reports, as of September 2020, there were approximately 202,000 railroad jobs across the U.S. This was a decline of about 20,000 railroad jobs from the previous year. These railroad workers are not retiring but being laid off.

The Railroad Retirement Board also reports there are over 400,000 railroad retirees receiving full retirement benefits. However, just a small fraction of those railroad retirees belong to NARVRE. Ask yourself, why aren't there more. The simple answer is they are not aware of NARVRE and what we protect. Many times, we hear retirees say, "Well I never knew NARVRE existed". This is a concern to NARVRE whereas you and I must disseminate information about NARVRE and what we do for retirees.

Our National President and National Secretary-Treasurer have done a tremendous job in assisting Units in starting the many Unit Facebook pages. These Facebook pages allow us to have the NARVRE name to be-

come more predominant. I would encourage every NARVRE Unit to initiate their own Facebook page. If you need assistance to create a Facebook page, contact our National Office

NARVRE relies greatly on our Area Directors and Assistant Area Directors in seeking new members and establishing new units throughout the United States. The Area Directors for NARVRE are as follows: Area 2 – Walt Barrows, Area 3 – Adrienne Natoli, Area 4 – Gary Nelson, Area 5 – Tony Padilla, Area 6 – Gary Marquart, Area 7 – Bob Boltz and Area 8 – Bob Aparico. If a member has some information on a possible new unit, please contact your NARVRE Area Director. More information on your Area Director can be found on the NARVRE website at www.narvre.us under the STAFF Tab.

NARVRE is seeking a new Area Director for Area 1 which encompasses the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. Duties of an Area Director are, to establish new units, stay in contact with units, be a good salesperson and public relations person and to use common sense when working with others. If anyone in Area 1 has the desire to become an NARVRE Area Director, please contact President George Boatright or my office, National Vice President our contact information is listed in this publication.

I hope your summer will be enjoyable. It's a time to gather with friends and family. Be safe and cherish your moments with them.

— **Ron Hylla**

NARVRE National Vice President

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visiting the website.

Your Executive Board made up of the National President, George Boatwright, National Vice President, Ron Hylla, National Secretary Treasurer, Philip Steward, and National Legislative Director, Gary Faley has already met several times by Zoom call to start sharing ideas and planning for the growth and retention of membership.

In closing, thanks to all those members of Unit 061 Oakland for their hard work in trying times to provide the Delegates with a wonderful and memorable 42nd Biennial

Convention.

Also, thanks to all our speakers and vendors, especially to newly designated counsel, Jones and Granger for supporting this convention.

Most of all sincerely and with heartfelt gratitude, I thank the delegates who have bestowed this honor on me of being your National President.

Oh, by the way, I will continue to use my pen and legal pad for my thoughts and then edit them in WORD.

— **George Boatright,**
National President

Thank you!

We would like to thank all who made donations, both large and small. Your contributions are important to advancing the organizational goals of NARVRE.

David Corless • Vicor Sundquist • Barbara Sundquist • Donation in Memory of Dean Pope Unit 30 Unit President John Bilingsly Secretary Pam Fogel Treasurer Marge Ingram LR Larry Fent • Memorial of Glen Lindbloom Vice President Marceline Unit 154 President Jackie White Secretary Treasurer Nancy Schreiner LR Dennis Van Dyke

Memorials

Ruth Johnson • Mike Stanek • Richard Wagner • Glen Lindbloom Vice President Marceline Unit 154 • Bill Moon



On June 13, 2022 NARVRE Unit #043 Conneaut, Ohio had their 12th annual NARVRE picnic overlooking beautiful Lake Erie on the Upper Pavilion At Conneaut Township Park. Pictured left to right, Chris Murphy, Attorney from Dorn and Murphy, Buffalo, New York, NARVRE Unit #043 Communications Officer David M Harlacher, First Vice President George Dickson, President Jon Brady, 2nd Vice President David Scafuro, NARVRE Area 2 Director Walter Barrows, Sec/Treas Ralph Mongenel.

From the National Secretary-Treasurer —

Many thanks to Former Vice President Tony Padilla, who due to family and personal issues, has stepped aside as National Vice President. He did an outstanding job presiding over the 42nd biennial Convention as President Tom Dwyer was unable to attend. We wish both the former National President and National Vice President nothing but the best.

A brief recap of the changes to the Bylaws and Policy Procedures Manual passed by the 2022 Convention Delegate are listed below:

- Resolution 1 allows the Governing Board by two thirds majority in case of emergency to devise methods of electing Officers without the necessity of conducting a National Convention.

- Resolution 2 Delegates concur in the designation of the Jones and Granger, Attorneys at Law to be NARVRE's official law firm. This arrangement is to be reviewed every two years by representatives of both parties.

- Resolution 3 costs to the NARVRE organization has continually increased over the years, the dues are to be amended single and couple Unit dues are now \$29.00 and \$39.00 while 801 Unit dues are now \$31.00 and \$38.00

- Resolution 4 did not make it out of the Finance Committee

- Resolution 5 Renewed the NARVRE Trademark and furthermore the future ten year renewal will no longer be required. At this point the Trademark was registered as incontestable and as indicated earlier, renewal will no longer be required.

Any new member to join NARVRE for the first time that pays their dues after July 1 will be paid up through the remaining current year and through the end of the next year. Again this is for NEW MEMBERS, one time only.

Visit our website www.narvre.us all the Membership Reporting Forms have been updated with the new dues rates, plus the Bylaws and Policy and Procedures Manual has been updated with the amendments approved by the Delegates of the 2022 Convention.

Additionally, thanks to Jerry and Cheryl Lambert in developing and designing the Presidential Plaque that was presented to Tom Dwyer at the Convention.

The tribute was conducted at the Convention in Mr. Dwyer's absence, but video was subsequently presented to him.

— **James (Phil) Steward,**
National Secretary/Treasurer

(National Legislative Director from page 1)

agencies to run efficiently with proper funding and adequate staffing.

There are many legislative proposals that committees must work through to finally get a substantive bill that can muster the needed votes to pass through both legislative chambers. Hopefully, we will have a standing bill that will be put up for a vote of Congress. H.R. 5723 has over 200 co-sponsors and would easily pass the House, even as written today. The Senate is a different story, but this is an election year and actions (or lack of) between now and November 8th can weigh heavy on candidates wanting our votes.

On the GOP side of the Senate, Sen. Rick Scott (R-FL), and chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee has released an 11-point "Rescue America Plan" that calls for the termination of every single

federal law unless renewed by legislative action every five years. That would, of course, include Medicare and Social Security, and federal laws cover federal agencies, like the RRB. Scott's plan will also impose a tax increase on more than 100 million Americans, according to the non-profit Institute of Taxation & Economic Policy. History will point to a continual record of previous threats and attempts by the GOP to increase fees and/or implement cuts to retirement benefits. At this point in time, Congress needs to strengthen the national programs that we financed during our working years. We shall be watching the actions in the House and Senate. This is an election year, and we need to support those that support us. Election Day is on November 8, 2022, and 34 of the 100 seats in the Senate will be contested this year.

— **Gary Faley,**
National Legislative Director



Photo Left: 2nd Vice President David (Scuffy) Scaffuro and Convention Delegate.

Photo Botom: On June 12, 2017 at St. Cloud, Mn. NARVRE Unit # 107 Gary Nelson Area 4 Director Speaking at Summer Lunch with a full house of members. Updating on current member recruiting at Brainerd, Mn. On June 8th onboard BNSF Employee Appreciation Train. Left to Right, Gary R Nelson, Area 4 Director, Mn., Wi., Il., Ia., Mo.; Roger Beuning, Protective Committee Chair; Duane Tadych, President, Unit # 107; Ron Hylla, Sect./Treas. Unit #107 and NARVRE National VP; Marcel Tadych, Vice Pres. Unit # 107. Good discussions regarding the protections of Railroad Retirement Issues. Photo. by Mark Skare.



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News deadline 10th of each month

Big Arrests for Medicare Fraud

It doesn't pay to defraud Medicare, or so these people found out the hard way. In fact, it can cost money, jail time and loss of medical licenses for the people who give it a try. Here are some examples from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General (HHS OIG), as reported in June 2022.

Patrick C. Finney, M.D. from Paducah, KY, was accused of and admitted to knowingly filing false or fraudulent Medicare claims using false records and statements and conspiring to defraud Medicare into making false payments. Between November 2017 and August 2020, Dr. Finney submitted more than \$3 million in false claims related to durable medical products and genetic testing services. In regard to these fake services, he didn't have anything to do with the treatment of the Medicare patients, didn't speak to the patients, and he knew that the products and services he prescribed were not medically necessary.

Marc Sporn from Delray Beach, FL, was sentenced to 14 years in prison for crimes totaling \$20+ million related to health care and wire fraud. He also was convicted of evading his taxes.

Sporn owned and operated several tele-



marketing companies. These companies marketed medically unnecessary genetic tests to sell "prescriptions" for medically unnecessary genetic tests in laboratories. The outcome for Sporn was he received kickbacks and bribes. The "prescriptions" amounted to "doctors' orders", which were used to bill Medicare for medically unnecessary goods and services.

For additional details about these cases and more, please visit the HHS OIG Enforcement Actions website at <https://oig.hhs.gov/fraud/enforcement/>.

How you can help spot fraud and abuse
You absolutely, hands down, are the best

person to spot fraud and abuse in the Medicare program. You may ask, "Did you mean, ME?" and I do!

Here's how: When you receive your Medicare Summary Notices (MSN), please review each charge carefully. Be on the lookout for charges for services or items you didn't receive, charges for the same services billed twice, or charges for procedures or services that were not ordered by your doctor.

If you want help reading your MSN or you find something on it that appears to be wrong, you can call our toll-free Customer Service Line at 800-833-4455, Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. ET. For the hearing impaired, call TTY/TDD at 877-566-3572.

We will discuss what is on the MSN with you. Sometimes the MSNs can be difficult to understand so we can review it with you. If there is a charge on there that isn't right, we can look into it for you.

Other resources for reporting suspected fraud and abuse include the Department of Health and Human Services Medicare Fraud Hotline. Their toll free number is 800-447-8477 or for TTY, call 800-377-4950.

— **Jennifer Johnson,**
Palmetto, GBA