



National Association of Retired & Veteran Railway Employees, Inc.

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Cost – Membership in a Unit or Membership-at-Large



NARVRE NEWSLETTER

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FROM THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT —

From time to time a member may object to a position NARVRE may take in regards to politics or our stand on issues. The National Association of Retired & Veteran Railway Employees, Inc., is a 501(c) 4 under the IRS Code which entitles NARVRE to endorse federal candidates if they so choose although we never have. We do however support legislative issues such as Amtrak, Railroad Retirement, Transit funding or other issues whereby an elective member of Congress name may be used in their official capacity as Chair of a Committee in support of such issues be he/she Democrat/Republican or Independent. Bills passed in the House or Senate usually carry the name of the committee of jurisdiction.

Local Units shall not endorse candidates running for local and state office nor use official NARVRE correspondence as a candidate for a Unit or National office. Regular stationery purchased by the individual is sufficient.

Because of Covid 19 these figures may be somewhat outdated due to Railroad Retirement Board employees working from home during the pandemic. The average spouse annuity awarded in 2017 was \$1,485 per Month and Annual \$17,820. A SSA recipient in 2017 received \$930 per Month and Annual \$11,160.

An average Widow on the Rolls under Railroad Retirement would receive \$1,650 monthly or \$19,800 Annually whereas a SSA recipient would receive \$1,270 per month and annually \$15,240. In the case of a railroad employee and spouse these figures are based on career rail employee with 30 years of service.

There are cases where the spouse/widow(er) had employment in their own right such as a public employee, government employee or another private pension plan where the non-railroad employee is better off collecting their own pension in addition to social security if they contributed as such.

— Tom Dwyer, National President



Big Boy No. 4014, the famed Union Pacific steam locomotive built delivered in 1941 for carrying troops, equipment, and other strategic important cargo critical in supporting America's effort in World War II

The Guinness Book of World Records calls it the largest full-steam locomotive ever made at 133 ft. long, 560 tons or 1.12 million pounds, 7,000 horsepower and is 17ft tall! This is the first time Big Boy has gone on tour since its post-restoration debut in 2019 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the transcontinental railroad's completion. The 2021 10 - state tour includes whistle-stops in more than 90 communities and one-day public display events in five major cities: Fort Worth and Houston, New Orleans, St. Louis, and Denver. Big Boy No. 4014 was delivered to Union Pacific in December of 1941 and was retired in 1961 after traveling a little over a million miles.

FROM THE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR —

As members of NARVRE, we should be ready to act on legislative proposals that may require our involvement at any given opportunity. But patience is necessary when we're working with others on certain issues. We've been following numerous bills that are important to us as beneficiaries of railroad retirement programs and Railroad Medicare, and legislation that would lower the costs of prescription drugs (HR 3). NARVRE is always keeping watch on actions concerning Amtrak, along with other groups that support passenger rail in America. It's certainly beneficial for us to work with other advocates when lobbying for adequate funding for Amtrak. Organizations such as the Rail Passengers Association (rpa.org) has a large presence on Capitol Hill

and is a valuable asset to NARVRE's legislative efforts. The RPA represents members concerned with the improved expansion of Amtrak and passenger train service in America, as well as high speed rail initiatives across the country. NARVRE and the RPA both support goals that can impact active rail workers and former workers now drawing railroad retirement benefits. NARVRE must also remain vigilant and aware of proposals that may prove harmful to us as seniors. As consumers and constituents, we should make sure our elected officials understand that we are active and thereby aligned with millions of American seniors participating under the umbrella of like-minded organizations. It therefore makes sense to engage

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From the National Vice President —

As we begin to prepare for NARVRE's National Convention in Oakland at the Waterfront Hotel on May 15-17, 2022, it is uncertain that we may be hampered once again by the continued saga of the second and most deadly Delta Variant mutation of the Corona Virus. With that in mind September is the final quarter of the year for all Area Directors to begin to prepare for attending. The promotion of the Delegates and Alternates is the most important task as we approach this November to elect officers of all units and specifically to select Delegates and Alternates to the NARVRE Convention. Many will be faced with the difficulty to wanting to attend because of Covid19 and the Delta Variant. The Convention committee and officers will be preparing soon to determine the outcome of the Convention. The officers of the convention are Niece Patterson Chairperson; Brian Lewis, Co-Chairperson; and Robert Paulson Treasurer. The sponsor of the NARVRE Convention is host Unit #61 in Oakland California who will be updating all of us with information about the Convention. Units should keep in mind that only one delegate has a vote at the convention from one Unit, but in the absence of the Delegate, the Alternate Delegate will have the right to vote in the convention and on electing your new Officers and Area Directors. Both Delegates and Alternates must be registered to participate.

President Tom Dwyer will be sending out the official call of the Convention. The current Area Directors 1, 3, 5, and 7 are up, and new Area Directors will be selected. All new Area Directors should take time to evaluate yourselves and be prepared to make a commitment to continue to work

diligently to the primary goal of promoting, protecting, preserving your Railroad Retirement Annuity not only for current NARVRE members already receiving a Railroad Retirement pension, but also to protecting the future Pension Annuity of future retirees. As stated before, your main function as Area Director is to monitor Units and be in contact with the officers to promote and cultivate the membership in their respective units to increase membership; but, the most important function is to establish new Units in areas where there are no Units. Many have said, "I never heard of NARVRE before" this is true especially where there are clusters of retirees not yet explored. When you find where these groups exist, we cannot afford not to go get them but also, noting that we cannot go on a goose chase because the expense does not justify it. NARVRE would exhaust our finances if we did not exercise caution. Area Directors are encouraged to promote meetings in an attempt to alert Railroad Retirees of their rights under the Railroad Retirement Act. But it easier said than done, the mission to attaining new members to recover losses of members is a losing and exhausting job, so we must employ the most reasonable means to reach new members. On another front we continue to monitor the Congress and the

Administration to make sure our Railroad retirement benefits are not weakened. Here, I am referring to Social Security which is our Tier I of Railroad Retirement as we want to put to death the notion that Railroad Retirement can be consolidated under Social Security Administration. As we reflect on the 79th anniversary of Social Security, let's remember Franklin D. Roosevelt's famous words upon signing the Social Security Act into law on August 14, 1935 as well as on July 30th, Medicare celebrated its 56 Birthday. Seniors from all over the nation celebrated and praise the work of President LBJ for signing Medicare into law in 1965. Happy Birthday to both praised Social Programs. The 86th anniversary of the enactment of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1935 is being observed during this August 29, 2021. Part of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal legislation, the Act was signed into law on August 29, 1935. The Railroad Retirement Act became Public Law on June 24, 1937. Three Months later, NARVRE was organized on 9-6-1937 by a small group of retirees that wanted to make sure their RRB benefit survived because shortly after the enactment of the RRB pension, the congress wanted to repeal the law.

— **Anthony (Tony) Padilla**
NARVRE National Vice President

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with other senior based non-profits such as the Alliance for Retired Americans. The ARA has over 4 million members and we have worked together on many bills that will protect Medicare, Social Security and Railroad Retirement benefits. Together, we will continue to fight to change the cost-of-living allowance (COLA) and use a new

sensible formula that determines the COLA benefit based on the spending patterns of the elderly, instead of the current policy based on younger workers (CPI-W). Our efforts will eventually repeal CPI-W over to a sensible CPI-E (elderly). We are currently working together, preparing to pass H.R. 3 and change the current policies of the pharmaceutical industry which absolutely impacts the budgets of seniors all across

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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.

Mertle E Bryant donation in Memory of Life Member Thomas Bryant • Margit and Roald Tormondsen

Memorials

Carol Schleicher • Jerome F Schadewald
• Shirley Mc Gee



Union Pacific Double track bridge is located 3 miles west of Boone IA, known as "Kate Shelley High Bridge". This picture is featured on the cover of NARVRE Group page administered by Richard Duffy and Steven Bovenmeyer Unit 59 Boone IA

From the National Secretary-Treasurer —

Labor Day will be NARVRE's 84th Birthday! We are very proud of legacy of protecting, preserving and promoting your Railroad Retirement. An excerpt from chapter 11 of Mary David's book, History of NARVRE, reads, "On Labor Day September 6, 1937, Railroad Employees from nine states met in Louisville, Kentucky, and laid the foundation for an association of retired railway employees. Employees with thirty years of service were eligible to retire from the railroad. The founder and first president was J. L. Stark. This historic two-day meeting, held in conjunction with the annual Labor Day celebration of railway unions, was in the Hotel Seelbach. It was the consensus of those in attendance that a "pension association" be formed in response to the newly passed Railroad Retirement Act of 1937 since there were still concerns about who was covered under the act and how benefits would be derived. The states represented were: Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, New York, Illinois, Georgia, and Wisconsin." "At this historic meeting in Louisville the six rail unions represented were:

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers
The Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Engineers
The Order of Railway Conductors
The Order of Railway Trainmen
The Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen
The Brotherhood of Railway Carmen"

After filing Articles of Incorporation in 1938, the Association was to be non-political and was not to be operated for profit.

Our annual membership renewal campaign begins in October. As usual, 801 members (members not associated with a local unit) will receive an invoice with a membership card and a self-addressed envelope to send their dues in the form of a check or money order to the National Office. We will also be mailing the three required reporting forms to all unit Secretary -- Treasurers. These include Membership Reporting Forms, Officer Election Reports, and Annual Audit Forms. Each of these forms are also available for download on our website www.narvre.us. The deadline for these forms to be submitted is February 28, 2022. Membership cards and unit rosters will be available to Unit officers upon request.

Our Social Media initiative has already exceeded our initial expectations. By the end of October 2021, NARVRE will have well over 50 Group pages spreading the NARVRE message across the nation. There are currently over 1700 people participating in this network. Many thanks to Pat Hiatt, Gary Nelson, George Boatwright, Jack Bengston, and Ron Newman for their vision, hard work and leadership in making this program the success it has become.



Victor and Barbara Sundquist



David and Cecilia Corless

More exciting news will be provided about the Social Media program and the three Training Classes in our next issue.

We are in unprecedented times and the constantly changing COVID-19 situation in our country and around the world leaves us uncertain of what is to come. We hope that you and your loved ones are taking the proper precautions for your family's health and safety.

TRIBUTE TO MONTHLY DONORS DAVID & CECILIA CORLESS AND VICTOR & BARBARA SUNDQUIST As we celebrate NARVRE'S 84th birthday, two member families give monthly throughout the year pictured David and Cecilia Corless and Victor and Barbara Sundquist. We certainly appreciate their monthly gifts and as well as all of our members who donate to our great organization. Thank you all!

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

(National Legislative Director from page 2)

America. These partnering arrangements can get complicated at times, due to the multitude of legislative proposals processing through the committees of jurisdiction in Congress. As stated, patience is needed on the timing of certain bills, due to the amount of work spent on COVID-19 relief/stimulus bills, and now on the Biden Administration's national infrastructure plans.

On July 28, the White House and a group of bipartisan Senators finally reached agreement on key infrastructure provisions and moved a procedural vote that garnered the support of 17 Republicans in the Senate and passed by a surprising tally of 67-32. Even Senate GOP leader Mitch McConnell voted for passage, and this is the same Senate Majority Leader who earlier stated that "100 percent of our focus is on stopping this new administration". Recently, on August 10th, the Senate passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, a huge \$1.2 trillion restructuring package after months of negotiations between the Democrats, Republicans and the White House. This "hard infrastructure" legislation (highways, air, rail, water) touches about every priority needed in all states...and the \$66 billion we all requested for Amtrak has survived to this point, and remains in this bill. The bill passed with a bipartisan vote of 69-30 with 19 republicans joining with all Senate democrats. It now awaits a vote in the House of Representatives when that body returns from recess later in August. The President's FY2022 Budget Plans must also be addressed and the Senate democrats will have to pass this \$3.5 trillion spending package without any Republican Senators via a process known as budget reconciliation. This procedure enables the 100-member Senate to pass measures with a simple majority vote instead of the 60 votes most bills require. This means Democrats can pass this reconciliation bill with 50 votes, and the tie-breaking vote from the current Vice-President, Kamala Harris. After all of that, there's possible turmoil in the House among the progressive and moderate caucuses, but we don't have the room to describe those possibilities in this setting. We'll have to wait and see, before we call out anyone that sinks this ship. But let's hope that the crucial infrastructure bills can get passed and be placed on the President's desk... it's way overdue.

— **Gary Faley,**
National Legislative Director

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED
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News deadline 10th of each month

CONVENTION CORNER UNIT 61 OAKLAND CA

Like Rip Van Winkle, your Unit #61 Convention Committee has awakened from its long COVID slumber and is ready for a mulligan! That's right! We are relaunching our campaign to get every NARVRE Unit delegate to Oakland's Waterfront Hotel on May 15-18, 2022 for the 42nd Convention of the NARVRE organization. With the Convention eight months away, we will be following health guidelines concerning vaccination and masking, but we will also be conferring regularly with NARVRE's national leadership as to how we can gather together safely in 2022 and enjoy. Registration forms will be sent to Units by mail and we will again offer a raffle for early-bird registrants, (forms will also be available on the national website: www.NARVRE.US) As you prepare to elect delegates and alternates to the 2022 Convention this Fall, please be sure that they are (or will) be vaccinated by May of next year. More information will be available on NARVRE Unit #61's Facebook page: NARVRE 61 and www.narvre.us - NARVRE National Website. See you in Oakland, California!

Medicare May Cover Additional Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine and the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Doses for Immunocompromised Patients

On August 12, 2021, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) changed its emergency use authorizations to allow for an additional dose of both the Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine and the Moderna COVID-19 vaccines in certain immunocompromised patients. Per the FDA's August 12, 2021, press release, this includes solid organ transplant recipients or those who are diagnosed with conditions that are considered to have an equivalent level of immunocompromise. For the latest COVID-19 information from the FDA, visit their website at www.fda.gov.

Administration of this third dose of vaccine became payable for dates of service on or after August 12, 2021. This vaccine is free to you and your provider. Medicare pays your provider to administer the dose of the vaccine to you.

If you have concerns about taking a third dose of the BioNTech or Moderna vaccines, talk to your doctor. They know

and understand your health and can speak to you about what makes the most sense for you and your condition.

Some reminders from Palmetto GBA/Railroad Medicare about the COVID-19 vaccines:

1. The COVID-19 vaccines are free. You do not pay for the vaccine or for someone to give you the vaccine.

2. There are Medicare-approved lab tests related to the diagnosis of COVID-19. They are also free/you pay nothing for the services.

3. Do not accept money to receive the vaccine or for you to give your information as a method of receiving the vaccine.

4. Medicare will never call you about receiving the vaccines. If you have an appointment with CVS or another institution, you may hear from them, but no one from Medicare will call you on the phone. Do not release any information to anyone on the phone from "Medicare."

If someone contacts you and offers you money to receive the vaccine or tries to charge you to receive it, please call our toll-free Beneficiary 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. This line is for the hearing impaired with the appropriate dial-up service and is available during the same hours Customer Service Representatives are available. Share as much information as possible with us so that we can assist law enforcement, should that be necessary.

We encourage you to visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/myrrmedicare>. We also invite you to use our online portal, MyRRMed, where you can track claim status, obtain historical Medicare Summary Notices, and more. Visit www.PalmettoGBA.com/MyRRMED today.

— Jennifer Johnson
Palmetto, GBA