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1. Welcome New Members! As DoDEA begins a new school year, FEA-Retired welcomes all our new FEA members, who were previously “pre-retired” members; and now are FEA-Retired members. We appreciate your years of service to the military community worldwide. We are here for you through the combined strength of FEA and NEA, working with our legislation action committees, Member Benefits, and numerous publications. Active members who retired this summer (if they are “pre-retired” members) should contact FEA-Washington to change their membership status.

2. Federal Budget Negotiations Affect You. While the House of Representatives has not yet submitted a Federal Budget Proposal, the Republican Study Committee (which is made up of approximately 175 Republicans) has submitted its proposal. If adopted, it would have a financial impact on current and future Federal retirees. According to the *National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association* (September, 2023), it could reduce the cost of living adjustments for Federal retirees under both FERS and CSRS. It would replace paying a percentage of retirees’ health premium, with a flat fee dollar contribution from the Federal government. It could also affect the rate of return in the TSP Plan G Fund.

For current Federal employees, this proposal would calculate one’s retirement on the employee’s highest 5-years of pay (instead of 3), thus reducing one’s pension. It would end FEHB retirement benefit for all new federal hires, and would gradually increase the age of full retirement from 67 to 69 for Social Security. Contact your Representative in Congress to see where s/he stands on these issues. For additional information, visit:

<https://www.narfe.org/blog/2023/06/20/congressional-budget-proposal-cuts-earned-federal-retirement-benefits-for-cost-savings/>

3. Traveling to Europe in 2024? Don’t forget your ETIAS, along with your passport. Starting next year, US citizens will need an electronic travel authorization to visit much of Europe. Travelers to any Schengen-zone country (this includes Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy and Spain) will have to register with the European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS). The process will involve a quick online application and a 7 Euro credit card payment. The authorization will be valid for unlimited entries within a 3-year period (or until the date of the applicant’s passport expires, whichever is sooner).

4. Support for Our Colleagues in Hawaii. You are already aware of the tragic events unfolding in the historic town of Lahaina, where a devastating fire has wreaked havoc. The heart-wrenching scenes of businesses, schools, homes, and the cherished historic harbor reduced to ashes have deeply affected us all. In this time of adversity, the leadership, staff, and members of the Hawaii State Teachers Association stand united, rallying to provide unwavering support to our members and their families who have been directly impacted by this catastrophe. We urge you to visit the HSTA website (<https://www.hsta.org/news/recent-stories/donate-to-teachers-affected-by-maui-wildfires/>) to find ways to contribute to the relief efforts aimed at

helping our members who have lost their homes and classrooms and are in desperate need of essential resources and support.

5. Stay Strong Through Healthy Eating. According to the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition (April 2023), getting an additional 10 mg of the compound quercetin from food each day, reduces the odds of frailty by 35 percent. Quercetin neutralizes DNA-damaging molecules in the body. It can be found in apples, asparagus, blueberries, broccoli, cherries and onions.

6. Congratulation to Michael Priser, newly appointed NEA Board Member. Last month, the NEA-Retired Council selected Michael Priser to an open seat on the NEA Board of Directors for retired representation. He is replacing Anita Gibson, who was elected as the President of NEA-Retired last June. Michael will join FEA's NEA Director, Chad Jimison, on the NEA Board, along with 5 other NEA-R retired representatives. Michael stated, "As a member of NEA/NEA-R for over 4 decades, I believe in building a strong and responsive organization committed to meeting the needs of all our members."
