

# NEW MEXICO FEDERATION OF CHAPTERS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES



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# VOICES



Issue 2006-1

Winter 2006

## From Your President

As this Federation year enters its final quarter, I am realizing anew just how busy a time it has been, as well as how much still needs to be done. I had the privilege of visiting nine additional chapters since the last VOICES appeared, including Las Vegas, Clovis, Silver City, Duke City, Belen, Farmington, Socorro, Las Cruces, and Albuquerque Chapter 80. Without exception, chapter members have been gracious and welcoming, and Russ and I have been most appreciative. I also had the opportunity to attend two District meetings in the NW and SE, ably chaired by Madeline Jennings and Marilyn Dobson. My plan is to visit five more chapters in the next few weeks.

There is no question that serving as a Federation officer is time consuming, but it is not just time spent on the road or in meetings. It seems that every day the hours are filled with NARFE issues: writing and responding to e-mails, answering phone calls, and trying to determine how best we can improve our organization...its membership dilemma, its legislative communications, its image. I'm sure this situation is true for every officer or committee member who is really dedicated to NARFE. However, the bottom line is... when we choose to get involved, this is our responsibility, even if our spouses are not always too happy about it!

The Federation was disappointed that two Executive Board members, Ed Tyson, Membership VP, and Jean Wade, NE District VP, felt the need to resign because of conflicting priorities. On the positive side, we were very fortunate that two members agreed to step in and fill the void. At the recent January 30th Executive Board meeting, Maxine Simmons was sworn in as Membership VP and Betty Annis was sworn in as NE District Vice President. Thank you, Maxine and Betty.

Plans are now progressing for our Federation Convention on the 13th, 14th, and 15th of April, to be held at the Courtyard Marriott in Farmington. We are very pleased that Judy Park, NARFE's Legislative Director, will be our guest from National Headquarters. Judy has even promised to conduct a legislative seminar for us.

Madeline Jennings, NE District VP and Co-Chair of the Convention, will fill everyone in on additional activities. Just plan on coming!

Loris DeKay

## NEW MEXICO HEALTH CARE

Once again during this 2006 legislative session in Santa Fe, the advocates, under the title of "Health Security for New Mexicans Campaign", have promoted the introduction of House Bill HR481 and Senate Bill SB280. In nearly every legislative session since 1993, this organization has submitted proposals to completely reform New Mexico's health care system. In 1993 it was titled the "New Mexicare Act." In each introduction, it has had a new title. NARFE has vocally been in opposition to this type of legislation due to the impact, not only on federal workers and federal retirees with FEHBP, but also on all NM residents. In each bill submission, it has been recommended as a "Single Payer" health system for all men, women, and children in New Mexico. This state would be responsible for all residents' health care.

Passage of this type of mandated health legislation would establish a very large complex bureaucratic entity. New buildings would be needed; contracts with all health care providers, hospitals, doctors, dentists, etc. would be required to standardize all service fees presently charged. It would apply to all, regardless of private or group insurance currently held. The bottom line would mean far more taxes! It could easily result in professional medical personnel leaving the state, as well as many tax-paying retirees. It could cause an influx of below poverty level transients moving into the state for health care without cost.

With the legislative session nearing its end, if these bills pass in any form, we will immediately call on all NARFE members to call the governor with the recommendation *not to sign any legislation of this type*, either for an expensive study or for enactment of a "Single Payer" health system.

It would seem that with the recent scandal of our Treasury office, New Mexicans would be reluctant to have the state responsible for our health care.

Russ DeKay

**"VOICES"**

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**NARFE, CHAPTER 80, Albuquerque, NM**

**OUR NORTHWEST DISTRICT NEWS:**

A little bit of news regarding the April Federation Convention. This convention is a first, with the distance of 136 miles between us Gallup and Farmington hosts. We are working to make the occasion super. Max Brimhall and I are co-hosting the convention.

GOSH! We have lots of things planned and hope you attend. We will have our Bingo Alzheimer fund raiser on Thursday night.

We have some good food planned for the whole convention time as well as great entertainment for the banquet. Our entertainment will be put on by two of our Chapter 1380 members representing their Indian heritage. It will feature the family of Southern Cheyenne (Oklahoma) Indian dancers as well as representation from the Turtle Mountain Chippewa Tribe. If you have some Indian attire you would like to wear, please wear it Friday night.

We also have some special guest surprises and also have a health van from BC/BS, which will be at the convention center all day Thursday. There will be some health screening available and if you have questions about health insurance for non-federal folks please bring the questions with you and ask the BC/BS reps.

**Belen Chapter 1462: Maxine Simmons, Reporter:**

WOW! Belen Chapter 1462 is busily meeting all the scheduled deadlines for the two conventions in the state (April and September). The Nominating Committee has reportedly obtained a full slate of state officers for election in March. Membership continues to be steady with 80 members. Two members qualified for Honorary Membership and have been presented with their certificates. Madeline Jennings, NWDVP will visit the chapter on March 28th.

**Albuquerque Chapter 80: Alice Stark, Reporter:**

Chapter 80, Albuquerque, has been busy since September with actions that include attendance at Region VII conference in Denver, eight local Health Fairs, welcoming transferred members from the Katrina disaster area, and working on a survey concerning recruiting and retention; results of which were presented to our Federation

President when she visited in February.

**Gallup Chapter 1380: Madeline Jennings, Reporter:**

We have been busy with plans for co-hosting the upcoming state federation convention in April. It is truly an experience. Our regular meetings are well attended and we are looking forward to seeing Loris DeKay at our March meeting. We attended all scheduled health fairs in Gallup, Grants, Zuni, and Crownpoint. The chapter even gained some new members.

**San Juan Chapter 1179: Max Brimhall, Reporter:**

Federation President Loris DeKay and husband, Russ, Madeline Jennings, DVP, and Margaret Mitchell, 1380 VP attended our last chapter meeting. The program regarding memory was interesting. Also discussed was the progress of the plans for the April Federation Convention in Farmington. Our Theme is "The Red Apple: Getting to the Core of NARFE"...

Bye, Madeline Jennings

**YOUR OPINION COUNTS**

To better serve you, we are gathering information from NARFE members so we can determine how to make NARFE more responsive to their needs. Please complete the enclosed two page survey and mail it to the address indicated on the survey. Around the first part of April, the combined survey results will be tallied and reported to each chapter. **Your opinion is important, so please help us by completing the survey and mailing it in.** If you have already completed this survey at the Region VII Conference, there is no need to do so again.

**MEMBERSHIP**

**HELP WANTED!** Members to participate the next 3 months in the Spring Statewide Membership Campaign. No experience necessary. Membership applications are available in each NARFE magazine. Enter your ID and Chapter number to receive a recruiting reward for your Chapter. Forms are available to encourage members to enroll in Dues Withholding or Life Membership. Thanks for your help to increase and maintain our overall strength.

Maxine Simmons

**"VOICES" via the Internet**

Should you wish to receive your VOICES via the NM Web Page rather than a hard copy through the mail, please send an e-mail to Jerry Makowski at [jerry-mak@dfn.com](mailto:jerry-mak@dfn.com) to that effect, and he will take your name off his mailing list. It saves the Federation money too! Thank you.

## NARFE-PAC

Nadine Boor Coordinator

March is NARFE-PAC Month. This will be the fourth successive year that NARFE has encouraged its federations, chapters and individual members to use the month to focus on NARFE-PAC as an important political supplement to NARFE's primary legislative advocacy Mission. Also, this is the first time that the National Executive Board has decided to set aside a week within NARFE-PAC month for a concentrated, nationwide week. March 20-24.

NARFE delegations are being urged to schedule visits to the district offices of their congressional legislators and individual members are encouraged to contact their own two Senators and Representative via phone calls, letters or e-mail. The purpose of concentrating NARFE contacts with members of Congress during this one week period in March is to focus attention on federal retiree's legislative advocacy and political activity in each state and congressional district. More information on this Lobby Week and the legislative issues will be forthcoming. I HOPE EACH AND EVERY CHAPTER WILL PARTICIPATE IN THIS WEEK-LONG ACTIVITY.

NARFE-PAC is at the 12 month mark in the current 2005-2006 election cycle. The fourth quarter report shows members of Region VII have contributed \$8,649 in which 46 members in New Mexico contributed \$1,025. So far in this cycle, since January 1, 2005 Sen. Bingaman has received \$2,000 and Rep Wilson \$3,000. As you can see there has been more monies paid out than have been contributed to NARFE-PAC by members in NM. Members of New Mexico we need your support and donations for NARFE-PAC.

I will have a NARFE-PAC table set up at our Federation Convention in Farmington. Hope to see you all there.

## SOUTHWEST DISTRICT VP ROUNDUP REPORT

The more I learn about the job of SW District VP — the more I realize there is a great deal of work that needs to be done by each of us. This is an ongoing and never ending need, and we must never rest on our laurels. We must work together to protect our Constitutional Rights, as guaranteed by the Declaration of Independence. We live in the greatest country on earth, but our freedom is not guaranteed nor is it free. Many of us have family serving around the world who are always in our thoughts and prayers.

A few generalities about NARFE:

Inflation edged up in June 2005

Our "COLA" is at its highest point ever; 4.4%

Estate planning — "Do it now"

We need to urge Congress to correct the inequities of GPO, WEP and Premium Conversion

Nationwide our Alzheimer's Research fund raising continues. I believe the "informed citizen" is the secret to the "art of pro-active defense for NARFE."

NARFE Days in Santa Fe are Feb. 20-24. I hope you will contact your representatives, both in Santa Fe and Washington. Grass Roots is effective — when they are contacted properly about one subject at a time. They do hear us.

I attended the Region VII meeting in Denver. At the Oct. 5 meeting in Denver we had good New Mexico representation. The search for answers continues — for protecting our chapters and solving our problems. It was well done. It was followed on Oct. 28 by the SW District Workshop held in Silver City at the Red Barn Restaurant. We were honored to have as speakers; Russ Boor, Region VII NFVP, Al Provencio, Legislation Chair, Jerry Lehnus, Public Relations Chair and Nadine Boor, NM Federation NARFE-PAC Chair. Thanks to those who served and to Chapter 481 President, Lou Pruitt for hosting us.

NM-NARFE Federation President Loris DeKay spoke at Silver City Chap. 481 November meeting. And I made my official visits to Las Cruces Chapter 182 on Nov. 12, Sierra County Chap. 1341 on Jan. 18. On Jan. 30 I attended the NM Federation Board Meeting in Socorro. I will make an official visit to Socorro Chap. 1402 on Feb. 10 and I'm scheduled to visit Luna County Chap. 1291 on Mar. 15. I will also be attending the NM Federation Convention in Farmington, NM Apr. 13-15, 2006.

Please send in your chapter's list of deceased members for the year 2005-06, by Mar. 15, to

Madeline Jennings

NM State Convention Chairperson

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Don't forget to make plans for the NARFE National Convention, Sep. 9-14, 2006 to be held at the Albuquerque Convention Center.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your SW District VP and God bless you all!

Evelyn C. Yates

## NARFE State Treasurer wins Pregnant Llama!

Lee Tomlin, the Treasurer of the NARFE NM Federation, was the lucky winner of the Socorro Chapter 1402 Alzheimer fund-raising activity. The llama was to have had her cria sometime in January and has been cared for in Luis Lopez. The fund-raising effort brought \$675 for research. Several members of the chapter donated items to the raffle, including a live beef.

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