

# NEW MEXICO FEDERATION OF CHAPTERS

NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION



News  
Actions  
Reports  
Facts  
Efforts

# VOICES



Issue 2007-2

Fall 2007

## FACES OF NARFE

The NM Federation is made up of many individual who have served and are serving their country in interesting and diverse ways. Some have worked in federal agencies as protectors of our borders, land, agricultural and animal resources; others as health providers; some in the aerospace field, others in scientific research; some have managed federal programs, others have constructed major projects. No matter what they are or have been doing they represent a valuable national resource of civil servants who are banded together to protect the earned entitlements, rights and benefits of all federal retirees, employees and survivors.

In each NARFE Chapter are dedicated members. Some are serving as leaders, others are diligent members carrying out their duties to support legislation beneficial to current and potential federal annuitants and to oppose legislation contrary to their interests. They promote the general welfare of current and potential federal annuitants by advising them with respect to their rights under retirement laws and regulations.

At the federation level are other dedicated leaders supporting the chapters and the members as they carry out all of the above responsibilities. Each one is serving as a volunteer giving of their best to the organization.

The faces of NARFE are your co-workers, neighbors and friends in your community. Thanks and support them as they work for you and your family.

*Hal Waters, NM Federation President*

## LEGISLATION

NARFE Legislative Day at the State Capitol will be held on Monday February 4, 2008. We will be setting up a display in the area of the Rotunda and handing out our literature and telling people who we are and what we stand for. We need people to work at the display and more importantly to visit with their State Representatives and Senators. Our issues are Health Care, Taxes, Ageing Concerns and other things that impact our communities and families that are of personal concern to us.

Please consider attending. We need the strength of numbers and visibility. Look for us in the East Hall of History.

New Mexico NARFE Chapters were very active during NARFE Lobby Month, 2007. In an effort to encourage co-sponsors for NARFE's priority legislation I sent each Chapter Legislative VP or President a form letter asking them what activities they had sponsored during the month. I included in the letter the position papers on WEP/GPO and Premium Conversion. I

received 11 replies to the questions. In terms of surveys and activities conducted I thought this was wonderful return on my letter.

Chapters visited their Congressional Representatives and Senators offices. They also wrote letters to them. They all indicated they addressed our concerns. The down side to the activities was that none of the Chapters got to actually see and visit with the office holders. All visits were with staff, who said they would forward the position papers to the Congressman/Senator. The one exception to the visits with staff was Bob Baker of Chapter 80 in Albuquerque. He did get to speak to Senator Domenici at a dinner for the Senator and President Bush.

We have a very interesting election year shaping up in New Mexico with the retirement of Senator Domenici. We will have some new people in at least one office and maybe a lot more. Now is the time to be thinking about who is running for office and be prepared to get active. We need to be at gatherings the candidates or other groups sponsor and ask the tough question about our priorities.

I will be contacting each Chapter for your input after candidates ask for PAC funds from National NARFE Headquarters. I need your input and your feelings on the suitability of the candidate and whether or not your members feel this candidate should receive PAC funds.

*Mary Ellen McKay, VP for Legislation/NARFE PAC Chairman*

## A SUMMARY OF THE FEB MEETING ON OCTOBER 19, 2007

The FEB met at K-Bob's Steak House in Socorro, NM. A quorum was present. Region VII Vice President Russ Boor was also present, as were representatives from Alamogordo Chapter 698.

Region VII VP Boor advised that the proceedings of the Region VII Conference have been distributed to all Chapter Presidents. He discussed the impact of the new IRS rule requiring all Chapters to at least file an E Post card on line for the 2007 tax year. Chapters who do not have an EIN number must obtain one by applying to the IRS using either an IRS Form SS-4 or applying on-line at the irs.gov website. A final item of interest is the establishment of a committee at the National Office level which includes the National President, Past Presidents, and selected federation Presidents, who are charged with the responsibility to prepare recommendations for moving NARFE into the 21<sup>st</sup> Cen-

*(Continued on page 2)*

**“VOICES”**

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National Active and Retired Federal Employees Assoc.  
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(Continued from page 1)

tury.

Executive VP Maxine Simmons reported that over 60 Health Fairs have been scheduled state-wide. These Health Fairs will be staffed by members from the local chapters. NARFE was also represented by VP Simmons and Secretary Mattox at the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Health Benefits Officers Seminar.

Vice President Mary Ellen McKay has completed arrangements for NARFE to participate in “Legislative Day” held February 4<sup>th</sup> in Santa Fe in conjunction with this year’s meeting of the State Legislature.

President Waters, Russ Boor and Gloria Delgado met with the Federal Executive Board in Albuquerque on August 29<sup>th</sup>. This meeting opened new avenues for cooperation and will serve to strengthen relationships and enable us to interact more productively in the future.

All members are encouraged to regularly check New Mexico NARFE’s website at [www.narfe-nm.net](http://www.narfe-nm.net).

K-Bob’s Restaurant in Socorro, our host for this meeting, is undergoing a complete renovation and should be a delight for our 2008 meetings.

The next Federation Executive Board meeting will be February 5, 2008 in Santa Fe, NM.

*Harry Mattox, NM Federation Secretary*

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Need a Holiday Gift Idea?** Why not give a NARFE membership to your spouse, an Active Federal Employee, or retiree friend? Good idea! Call 861-1100 to obtain a Gift Certificate by return mail!

During the 2007 Open Season Health Fairs, members in 16 chapters volunteered to attend, promoting the NARFE Membership to Active Federal Employees. NARFE helps Active Federal Employees plan and prepare to enjoy their future retirement.

Involvement offers members a great way to share knowledge in understanding—COLA’s (Cost of Living Adjustment)—affordable health care, life insurance, and changes in laws affecting retirement benefits.

NARFE members, to update your membership records: 1) Call 1-800-456-8410, or 2) go to [narfe.org](http://narfe.org)—click “Update Membership Record” also, check the New Mexico Federation webpage at [www.narfe-nm.net](http://www.narfe-nm.net).

Mark your calendar for 2008 State Convention, April 17-18-19, 2008, Alamogordo, NM.

*Maxine Simmons, Executive VP, Membership*

**FROM THE SOUTHWEST DISTRICT**

In the past months the Chapters in the SW District have been active in collecting for Alzheimer’s and they have been alert and proactive to opportunities in recruiting new members. President Hal Waters visited all but one of our five Chapters. These visits are very important to keep face-to-face contacts and to let the members know who to call for important issues facing most chapters. My visits started with our SW District workshop in Truth or Consequences and will continue through this fall.

At this year’s Region VII conference the “What has NARFE done for you lately?” brochure (F-122) was brought to everyone’s attention. As we all know, this is a common question asked by those members that are thinking of dropping their membership. That’s because most members are unaware that NARFE is actively looking out for us on a day-to-day basis in Washington. Therefore, it was pointed out that we should share this information with them because it clearly shows that NARFE continues to be successful in heading off attempts by Congress to reduce our retirement benefits.

Sarah McAdoo, Membership Chairperson of Chapter 182 has been sending letters to; prospective members, new members with a questionnaire, 2<sup>nd</sup> notice members and dropped members with a questionnaire. She is meeting with some success. Her current program is to offer a small cash reward to anyone who goes on “Dues Withholding”. Members are not so quick to drop if they don’t get a dues notice. She will also be contacting members with spouses that are not members to get them to join.

I am sharing these tools and encouraging all the chapters in the SW District to incorporate these ideas and to come up with their own ideas that can be shared with the other chapters.

*Sharon Willoughby, Southwest District Vice President*

**SE DISTRICT VP MAKING THE ROUNDS**

If you shake a tree hard enough something will fall. Occasionally it will be something good. Such is the case for the Curry County Chapter 1357. At least I am now very optimistic about them being able to salvage the chapter. Although the prospective candidate for president has an unbreakable commitment during the upcoming meeting, he will hopefully have a member to nominate him. I feel that getting the other needed officers will also be possible. In addition, final plans are being made to have a NARFE table at the upcoming Cannon AFB health fair as a means of recruiting members. Alice Brady, the SE Membership Chair and I will attend to that.

Alice is also President of the Pecos Valley Chapter 1455. I attended their meeting in Fort Sumner in September. Two of their members had to travel nearly 100 miles, and another traveled nearly 50 miles, to attend. Now, I would say that that is dedication. They have a very good Alzheimer’s information and fund raising program going, but more about that as it progresses. One of their members also attended the Area Agency on Aging meeting in Albuquerque, and, in addition to reporting that some 1500

senior citizens attended, and that NARFE had a fine booth, he received the "Outstanding Volunteer Award". That was our own Andres Hernandez. I am certain that many of you know him. Be sure to congratulate him.

The Tucumcari Chapter under the leadership of Ted Peabody, continues to have good meeting attendance (in spite of my being the guest speaker). As per protocol, I carried greetings from Federation President Hal Waters, reported on membership changes and need to continually work for recruitment, the upcoming open season for FEHB, and happenings around the district, state and nation.

Ted and his fellow members proudly displayed their new NARFE banner that was obtained with the cost share program. It is indeed a nice looking banner. The first effort to pump some new life into the Curry County Chapter was very disappointing. You have to remember that about half of the members were transferred in from the disbanded Portales Chapter only a few years ago. Anyway, the six members that did attend were not ready to give up, and voted to give it one more try in November. So a meeting has been called for the 13<sup>th</sup>, and notices have been sent to the 33 members. As noted above, in all likelihood the Chapter will continue. This is indeed good news, as the Chapter area has potential for a significant number of members.

**Five Chapters represented at District Workshop**

On November 3<sup>rd</sup> I held the SE District workshop in Tucumcari. It was a very good meeting, if I say so myself, primarily because most, if not all of the attendees participated. The leadership and knowledge about NARFE by our members really pleases me.

The guest speakers were past federation Presidents Loris and Russ Dekay, NM Federation VP Mary Ellen McKay, and Region VII Field Vice President Russ Boor. I extended greetings from Federation President Hal Waters, reported on several items of concern, and talked about "Are you an appreciative NARFE member?" This was in reference to the low cost of membership, and the high quality of work done by chapter, Federation, Regional and National members and employees.

The Dekays' provided interesting information on the how's, why's and who's of our officers. They stressed the need for officers to be familiar with the purpose, constitution and by-laws, of NARFE at the assigned level, and to be familiar with and able to carry out their responsibilities. One very important trait of a good leader is to start on time and adjourn on time. They provided handouts and information on the NARFE web site to obtain information and materials.

Mary Ellen covered two topics; "legislation and NARFE PAC." She noted that there are thousands of lobbyists in Washington, and that they are constantly chasing congressmen. In order for NARFE to be effective we need the clout of numbers and members that will take the time to contact the lawmakers. PAC provides us with a means informing candidates of our purpose, a much needed political tool, but it does not buy us votes. She explained the processes of transferring these moneys.

Russell Boor, as always showed his interest in NARFE. He reported on the Region VII Conference and the fact that New

Mexico had the same number of members represented this year as they did for the last conference. There is an effort underway to determine how NARFE can be restructured to meet the needs of a new generation that are totally computer literate, not into joining and volunteering, and can acquire the same information provided by NARFE in other places. This study is being done by a committee of past national presidents.

*Thomas Anderson, SE District VP*



To numerous to name individually are the participants in the SE District Workshop held on November 3rd in Tucumcari.

Photo from: Tom Anderson

**COMMUNICATION IS IMPORTANT TO US ALL...**

whether we do it thru phone calls, email, snail mail, or post messages on the web sites. NARFE members have various means receiving communication. Visibility is another form of communication...3 of NWD chapters did get their NARFE banners and again, this is a great form of communication. We can post the paper banners about NARFE in various govt. agencies.

Communication in meetings and making our group visible to others. We have to communicate and share ideas with each other. We need to share ideas whether thru monthly newsletters or on our NM web page. I am pleased that we have 2 of four of our chapters that have newsletters in order to communicate. Representing NARFE during the health fairs is also important. NWD has participated in all health fairs in their areas. During this time of needing to recruit members, we must use every form of communication possible. I am also pleased to announce that NWD will have their district meeting at Palo Duro Senior Center in Albuquerque on Saturday, February 2, 2008, noon until 2:30. We will have Mary Ellen McKay discussing legislation. Russ Boor will also be able to give us updates.

*Madeline Jennings, NW District VP*

**NEW MEXICO CONFERENCE ON AGING**

This year the NM Conference on Aging was held in Albuquerque at the Sandia Resort and Casino Conference Center, August 28-30.

Since the NM Federation of Chapters partners with the NM Aging and Long Term Services Department, a ¼ page ad was placed in their conference program book with the help of matching funds from national headquarters.

There were over 1,500 persons registered for the Conference. This Conference provides a great opportunity to reunite with old friends and learn about new programs and approaches to aging. With its work shops and booths, it provides seniors and professionals a chance to exchange ideas and work together to increase senior inde-

*(Continued on page 4)*

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 pendence.

Mark your calendar for next year. In 2008 the Conference will be held August 26 -29. Three and one half days of fun, workshops, a sports and fitness fair and numerous round table sessions. The location of the 2008 Conference will be announced at a later date.

Last but not least, one of the award recipients at this year's conference was Andres (Andy) Hernandez from Pecos River Chapter 1455. Andy received the Voluntario Extraordinario Award. Congratulations Andy.

*Nadine Boor, Chair*

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