



News
Actions
Reports
Facts
Efforts

NARFE

National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association

Protecting the Future for Retired and Current Federal Employees

New Mexico Federation

Voices

Fall 2011 Issue

National Web Site: www.narfe.org

NM Federation: www.narfe-nm.net



President's Message *Leon E. Garcia, PHD*

NM Federation President Garcia shares an article written by Joe Davidson of the Washington Post, October 19, 2011...*See page 6*

ARE YOUR
\$\$\$ earned benefits \$\$\$
LOW HANGING FRUIT?



HELPLESS?

VOICELESS?

**SPEAKING for
FEDERAL EMPLOYEES & RETIREES**

JOIN or RENEW NOW!!

www.narfe.org

Membership in New Mexico Continues Decrease

Executive VP Membership, Dennis Clark
October 12, 2011

To: All NARFE Members,

Membership in New Mexico continues to decrease at an alarming rate. For the months of July, August and September the losses were 34 and 29 and 34 respectively. This is approximately 1% of our total membership each month. New Mexico's total membership stands at 2,841. These losses are about 1% of our total membership each month and the bleeding continues unabated.

New members are only replacing dropped members by around 50%. Deaths continue to range from 5 to 10 each month. The only bright spot is that reinstatements have picked up somewhat but again they are in a 5 to 10 per month range which is only replacing deaths.

While this picture remains dark, two things need to be remembered. The first is that we have not had a full year since the dues went up, possibly losses will level off after the deadwood drops out, those complaining that the dues are too high. Second, chapters need to keep pushing dues withholding as this may be the one saving thing for NARFE. Members going on dues withholding will not have to worry about yearly dues of \$40 or so, nor will they miss the \$3 per month coming directly out of their annuities.

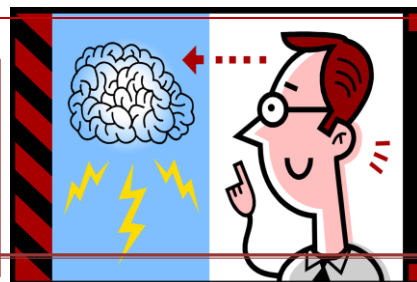
(continued on page2)

Membership Report (continued from page 1)

I wish the entire NARFE organization would have went to one dues rate, along with the life membership instead of all the many rates that can be quite confusing. Membership is and will continue to be the most important thing we can work on. It does no good to go to Capital Hill and ask for breaks when our membership continues to decline at such a rapid rate.

LESS MEMBERS = LESS CLOUT!

**Calling all Brains...
UNM Needs YOU!**



At the 2010 New Mexico Federation convention in Taos, Department of Neurology Professor Dr. John Adair presented an informative update on the Alzheimer's research being conducted at the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center.

Dr. Adair's talk helped to put into focus the progress being realized, in part, by New Mexico NARFE members' 2010 contributions of more than \$9000.00! As a non-profit organization dedicated to the well-being of Federal workers who ensure the quality of our government, NARFE members serve their local communities through thousands of volunteer hours and hundreds of dollars in contributions to Alzheimer's research. Consistent with this mission Taos Chapter 1402 subsequently provided to Dr. Adair a contact list of members who expressed an interest in participating in research being conducted at UNM.

In May 2011 Janine Morgan of Socorro Chapter 1402 was contacted and asked to participate in a study being conducted at the Mind Research Network on the UNM campus (Dr. Adair had given Janine's contact information to the study's principal investigators). This research is studying the effect of healthy aging on the brain and the effects of hypertension, higher than normal blood pressure levels, and Type-2 diabetes, higher than normal levels of sugar in the blood, on memory performance and brain structure/function.

Janine stated "I had neither of these conditions at the time so I was placed in the healthy group and underwent three days of tests. Two days in June included one day for a Magnetoencephalography (MEG) test which took about 3 1/2 - 4 hours and one day for a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) test which took approximately 1 1/2 - 2 hours. The final day in July consisted of a fasting blood draw, a neurological test, and paper/pencil tests of attention, memory, and speed of mental processing and general intelligence. These took approximately 3 - 4 hours to complete. My researcher was Lori Sanfratello. Lori asked me to put the word out that ***they need approximately 120 more study participants over the next 2 years.*** They mostly need people in the 60+ age group who live in the Albuquerque area."

If you are interested in participating in the UNM Mind Research Network study please contact Lori Sanfratello at lsanfratello@unm.org or 505-272-5557.

If you are contacted to participate in any study related to NARFE's signature cause to find a cure and treatments for Alzheimer's Disease, please notify the NM Federation Alzheimer Chair, Marie Farnsworth at mhf623@aol.com or 505-881-2858.

YOUR contributions do make a difference and are much NEEDED!

Northwest District Report

Madeline Jennings, NW District VP

Gallup Chapter 1380 is meeting and working on their health fair schedule. While we don't have a large attendance, we do meet. SanJuan/Farmington Chapter 1179 hasn't had a meeting this fall as the President is coping with some health issues that require he and his wife to travel for treatment/and follow-up. Gale Krause reports that he is feeling better. Belen Chapter 1462 is doing well. I am happy for their continued chapter meetings. Albuquerque Chapter 80 continues to meet and provide their members with some great programs and updates. I attended the Region 7 Conference hosted in Albuquerque and had a great experience. 127 people from the five states attended. It was nice seeing old friends and making new friends. I was pleased with how well all of the ABQ chapters participated in making the meeting a success. We were brought up-to-date with concerns from National HQ. We do need to keep in touch with everything that comes to us from State and National leaders and get that information to our members. NWDP quote for the day:

"No matter how many people come to the meetings we should appreciate those who attend!"

I know I really appreciate the great representation from the NW District at the Region VII Conference; so glad to see members from Belen -- Del Gregory and his wife had a really nice time there!

Southeast District Report

Mary Baca, SE District VP

I am very pleased to report that all five Chapters in the Southeast District are working hard and remain active (Carlsbad 796, Roswell 731, Alamogordo 698, Tucumcari 1387 & Pecos River 1455)! The Pecos River Chapter is now meeting in Santa Rosa at Joseph's Bar & Grill on Saturday mornings at 9:30 AM for breakfast. They meet every fourth month. They held their August meeting on the 27th and will next meet on November 19th. They gained one new member and report that they also have two prospective incoming members. We are very sad to report the death of Andres Hernandez. He died September 26 in Edgewood, New Mexico at the nursing home where he had been staying. Andres was ninety-eight years old and remained very active with Rio Pecos Chapter 1455, and several other organizations. A Memorial Service was held for him at Puerto De Luna on October 14th. Andres will be greatly missed by all of us who knew him! We attended the Region VII Conference in Albuquerque October 2-4 during the Balloon Festival and it turned out great! We had some very good speakers and the classes which were provided during the conference were also very informative and useful.

Southwest District Report

Sharon Reese, SW District VP

The Holidays are fast approaching but there is still work to be done to protect our retirements! The "Good News" is the COLA increase. The "Bad News" is we are not yet out of the woods. So please keep on top of the news from National Headquarters and respond to requests to contact your Congressional representatives! The Region VII Conference in Albuquerque provided very good training sessions. Thank you Albuquerque Chapter for hosting a great conference! Two of our 5 SW District Chapters were represented; I provided information to the Chapters that were unable to attend to share with their Officers and Members. I contacted our Chapters regarding my visits, with two confirmed; Socorro Chapter 1402 on January 13, 2012 & Las Cruces Chapter 182 January 14. The SW District Workshop will be held in January 2012. We are awaiting a confirmation date & location which will be posted on the Federation website so anyone who wishes to attend may do so. The topic is *Caregiver's Guide to Legal Documents and Resources*. Assistance is being provided to the Chapters for "Open Season" visits and all were provided the schedule along with suggested items to include in their packets for prospective members, including the PowerPoint presentation from the National Headquarters website, "NARFE Protecting the Future for Active and Retired Federal Employees", ***Have a safe and happy Holiday Season!***

President Janice Baker and NARFE Chapter 186
cordially invite you to join us in

Santa Fe
April 19-21, 2012

Come explore our theme:

**It's
Not
Just
About Us**



and celebrate
New Mexico's
admission
to the Union
100 years ago!

Treasurer's Report

Rick DeMello

(1 May 2011 – 30 September 2011)

Beginning Balance		\$12,009.54
Income		\$3438.00
Interest	\$139.77	
10% Monies	\$3298.23	
Per Capita Assessment	\$0.00	
Matching Funds	\$3438.00	
Expenses		(\$1964.35)
Travel: Mileage	\$953.60	
Travel: Lodging	\$573.01	
Travel: Registration Fees	\$220.00	
Travel: Other	\$200.30	
Office: Printing	\$0.01	
Office: Postal	\$97.41	
Office: Other	\$120.33	
Miscellaneous	(\$200.00)	
Awards	\$0.00	
Current Balance		\$13,483.19

*"If you do what you've always
done You'll get what you've
always got" ... Author unknown*

*We can all learn new and easier
ways to get what we want or
need...even a Federal worker or
retiree!*



THEN...



NOW...

TAOS CHAPTER 1401 SECRETARY RETIRES... AGAIN!!

The installation of new Taos Chapter 1401 Officers on June 2, 2011 marked the retirement of **Lucie Martinez** from her 25-year service to NARFE as Chapter Secretary.

During the recognition ceremony, NE District VP and Taos Chapter member Ray Garcia presented Lucie with a beautiful vase of yellow roses and an Applebee's Restaurant gift certificate. "This is a small token of our appreciation for your long and honorable service to this chapter, and to NARFE", Ray said. Lucie expressed her appreciation for this acknowledgement by her fellow NARFE members, stating ***"It's been a real pleasure - these 25 years just flew by!"***

Lucie became a NARFE member in January 1983 after retiring from the Carson National Forest Service in Taos as a personnel specialist. She attended Taos schools and married her high school sweetheart J.B. Martinez in Taos at our Lady of Guadalupe Church. J.B. is a retired teacher and a NARFE member who has also served as Chapter 1401 President, twice!

Lucie and J.B. have two children and four grandchildren. Their son Michael, a retired educator lives in Taos and has one son, Joseph, who is attending UNM Taos. Their daughter Joanna, also a retired educator, lives in Taos and has three children. Joanna's daughter Rebecca is studying at Temple Medical School in Philadelphia and is presently completing her "clinicals" in her third year in medical school in Pittsburgh, PA. Joanna's son Tomas (T.J.) Valerio, is a student at UNM Albuquerque, and is presently attending the University of Palermo in Buenos Aires, Argentina under the UNM Student Exchange Program. Tomas is also working toward a medical degree. Joanna's son Daniel will graduate from Taos High School this year and plans to attend the University of New Mexico.

Lucie's personal and professional integrity and life-long dedication in the service of her country, her community, and her fellow NARFE members reflect great honor upon her and the entire Federal workforce – she is a shining example of the value of Federal service to our Nation.

We know that Lucie and J.B. will enjoy this new retirement phase and hope that they will have many more years of a life filled with relatively healthy days with family, good food and fulfilling activities!

THANK YOU, LUCIE!!

Retirees get a raise; widely supported whistleblower bill moves...

By [Joe Davidson](#), Published: October 19

During this pay freeze for U.S. government workers, at least one group of federal employees will see their incomes rise.

As my colleague Eric Yoder [reported online](#), federal retirees will receive in January the first inflation [adjustment to their annuity benefits](#) since 2009, an increase of 3.6 percent for most.

The cost-of-living adjustment, or [COLA](#), will also be paid in Social Security and military retirement benefits, which — like civil service annuities — have been frozen for two years.

“It’s a breath of fresh air that our retired federal employees will receive inflation protection through a COLA increase next year,” said Joseph A. Beaudoin, president of the [National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association](#). “For the past two years, every federal retiree’s monthly annuity has remained frozen. Meanwhile, their health insurance premiums and Medicare costs have risen and their other retirement savings have declined due to the market downturn.”

The freeze was due to a period of deflation that followed the calculation of the January 2009 payout.

Those who retired under the Civil Service Retirement System will receive the full adjustment, while those who retired under the Federal Employees Retirement System and who are eligible for COLAs will receive 1 percentage point less. The FERS system generally doesn’t pay inflation adjustments until age 62, except to disability retirees, survivor beneficiaries and those subject to mandatory early retirement, such as law-enforcement officers.

Although about four-fifths of active employees are covered by the FERS system, roughly the same portion of retirees draws benefits under CSRS. That’s because the CSRS generally covers those hired through 1983, and FERS generally covers those first hired in 1984 and later. The less-generous COLA arrangement under FERS was part of the law creating that system, which also includes Social Security coverage and employer contributions to the federal retirement savings program.

According to a Congressional Research Service report issued this year, there were about 1.9 million civil service beneficiaries in fiscal 2009, with an average monthly benefit of \$2,899 under CSRS and \$1,051 under FERS. In addition, there were about 600,000 survivor beneficiaries, with average monthly benefits of \$1,360 and \$440, respectively.

The COLA has no direct effect on pay raises for active federal employees because the two types of adjustments are determined in different ways. Federal pay was frozen for two years, beginning in January, although that did not stop another form of raise, called a within-grade increase, that is based mainly on longevity.

Proposals are circulating in Congress to extend the salary schedule freeze through 2013 or 2015 and also to deny within-grade increases.

Read more from Joe Davidson at

http://www.washingtonpost.com/joe-davidson/2011/03/02/ABXUQ7M_page.html



***New Mexico Federation & Chapters
for your support of the October 2011
Region VII 11th Biennial Conference!***

One hundred and thirty members from the Region's five states registered for the 11th Biennial Regional Conference held in Albuquerque, New Mexico October 2-4, 2011. The keynote speaker was Paul Carew, National Vice President. Members also received a welcome from Joe Beaudoin, National President, and a legislative update from NARFE's National Legislative Director, Dan Adcock. Both were "skyped" in from National Headquarters. This was the first Regional Conference where "skyping" was utilized and it proved to be a good way to hear from our National Officers when they cannot attend in person. There were five breakout sessions offered on Chapter Leadership/Responsibilities, and Evaluation of Running a Chapter; Legislation and NARFE-PAC; Membership Recruitment and Retention; Importance of Mentoring; and Vision of NARFE's Future. All sessions were well attended. The comments I heard back from attendees indicated that they were pleased with the conference and felt they had received a lot of good information that they could take back to their chapters. The attendants especially liked the idea of "skyping" with headquarters. Sometime during the month of November I will complete the "summation" of the Regional Conference and will send it to all Region VII Federations and Chapters.

My thanks to the New Mexico host Regional Committee for all their hard work!

Plans are already underway for the 12th Biennial Regional Conference which will be held in the great state of Arizona!

I thank all those who took the time to be with us this year and I hope you will encourage your Officers and Members to join us at the 2013 Regional Conference!

*Sincerely,
Betty Lucero-Turner
NARFE Region VII VP*

PAPERLESS NARFE...CAN WE DO IT?

Marlene Seaton, Federation Secretary

In the last newsletter I talked about how “We Are Going Paperless”! For those of us not computer literate this may seem like an insurmountable challenge. But NARFE is being forced into this new way of doing business because it’s more cost effective and efficient. Membership is down, costs must be trimmed, and changes must be made if we are to survive as an organization. We cannot afford to ignore the benefits that can be realized through the use of the internet.

I recognize that for many of us owning and maintaining a home computer to access the internet may NOT be the best way to meet this challenge! This technology can be expensive and many people cannot afford it, or just don't have enough need to justify the cost. In addition, there are many among our ranks that never used computers in their jobs, and they really don't even know how to turn one on. How can our members get what they need without a costly burden?

Would you believe it -- you may be able to access computerized information for FREE!

LIBRARIES. Many New Mexico libraries have internet-ready computers available, some for a minimal fee or FREE. One great benefit to going this route is the computer is maintained by the library. Libraries are a great resource because there are usually people there to help you if you are just starting out. Some even offer classes for a very low cost or – FREE!

COMMUNITY AND SENIOR CENTERS. Some community and senior centers have computer labs, some of which also offer training and assistance -- FREE!

SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES. Public schools or community colleges or extensions near you may offer public use of their computers. A publicly funded institution often allows use – FREE!

CHURCHES. My hometown church (city of 5,000) has just installed a media room, which was donated for registered church members’ use. Your church might have one you can use -- FREE!

TELEPHONE. If none of the above works for you, consider upgrading your cell phone to a smart phone. These come with a data package that allows you to access the internet...its limited and typing on a phone isn’t easy but it may be a cost effective alternative.

COMMERCIAL ENTITIES. FedEx stores are another resource to consider, especially when traveling away from home. They accept a major credit card and charge by the minute so know what you want to do when you get on. This works well for quick email, or printing a boarding pass.

When none-of-the-above works...PURCHASE CONSIDERATIONS...

LAPTOP. Consider buying a used or reconditioned laptop. Why a laptop? Because you can then go to any wireless-equipped area (wifi) such as Starbuck’s or your local library, and use their internet service for FREE! Where do you get a used laptop? Local computer repair stores will sell you a recondition laptop (even HP will sell you one). Local stores are a great resource since they also provide some customer support when you have a problem. Let the people in your NARFE chapter know that you are interested in a used laptop so that when one of those “geeks” is ready to upgrade you might be able to negotiate a good price for their old one!

DESKTOP. You can get a new basic desktop for about \$500 or less. However, you will be responsible for installing, upgrading and securing the system hardware & software. Remember to discuss virus protection with the place where you purchase the computer -- its much cheaper to install protection software on your computer than to fix it after it gets infected! All systems come with basic internet access software which will allow you to do NARFE online tasks, internet research, email, etc. Some systems come with a standard suite of software applications such as a word processor for letter writing, etc. If you start using your computer a lot, you might also find that you need additional specialized software applications such as a spreadsheet. The best

time of year to purchase a new computer is in August or September when many of the big box stores offer great back-to-school specials. Staples will often match the price of other advertised specials. (I recently purchased from Staples the Norton Antivirus software for all three of my computers at a special package price of \$39.00!)

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

DO NOT DO ANY FINANCIAL OR CREDIT CARD TRANSACTIONS ON A PUBLIC COMPUTER. Your bank & credit card account numbers and passwords may inadvertently be stored on that computer even after you LOGOUT or it is POWERED OFF.

DO NOT buy a computer if your only purpose is to conduct NARFE related tasks.

Before investing in your own computer, give serious consideration to where you will get technical assistance. This includes user training, hardware and software troubleshooting, hardware upgrade and service & repair, and security software maintenance. Ask other NARFE members and computer-literate friends and relatives for advice and referrals.

I hope NARFE New Mexico will organize a computer swap meet at our Federation conventions. Members who have upgraded their laptops, phones, printers, or digital cameras could bring the equipment to the swap meet to help others join the computer community at little or at very low cost. Aren't there others like me who would like to have our spare stuff find a good home?

Where will you learn? Many communities, even Senior Citizen centers, are providing cheap or free computer training. You could also ask NARFE members if you have a specific problem or ask your chapter to conduct some classes. This is a great way to learn with others of your generation and skill-level. Our Rio Rancho group started an information exchange to teach each other what we know about computers, internet activities, and other tools at every meeting. What about starting a chapter Facebook group? What is it, and how do you do it? More to come on this.

Once you begin doing online tasks and activities, you may find that some will require you to have an email address to which they can communicate. There are currently several FREE email service providers such as AOL, Yahoo and Gmail. Once you have an email address (account) be aware that you may receive in your mailbox a message with an attachment that you cannot open (read) because the computer you are using doesn't have the necessary software.

F-7 ONLINE. I plan to have people available at the convention in *Santa Fe* to help you learn to prepare online your Chapter Officer Roster (F-7). My idea is to set up a laptop with the exhibit tables, and just have people drop by to create or update their F-7. If we get enough people interested we might conduct a training workshop and those who have their own laptop could work along with the instructor. If you are already submitting your F-7 online, please consider volunteering to help me with this initiative.

I know I haven't answered all your questions but please feel free to ask me anything -- I'll do my best to get you an answer. I can be reached at 505-831-3335 or bugszie@aol.com.

The only way to learn is to ask! Can we do this? NARFE members are one of the most intelligent groups I have ever been a member of... **OF COURSE WE CAN DO IT!!**

NARFE
New Mexico Federation of Chapters

Northwest District

Albuquerque Chapter 80
Belen Chapter 1462
McKinley County (Gallup) Chapter 1380
San Juan Valley (Farmington) Chapter 1179

Northeast District

Duke City (Albuquerque) Chapter 1411
Española Valley Chapter 1423
Las Vegas Chapter 886
Rio Rancho Chapter 1381
Santa Fe Chapter 186
Taos Chapter 1401

Southwest District

Grant County (Silver City) Chapter 481
Las Cruces Chapter 182
Luna County (Deming) Chapter 1299
Sierra County (Truth or Consequences) Chapter 1341
Socorro Chapter 1402
Statewide Charter – Chaparral Chapter 2341

Southeast District

Alamogordo Chapter 698
Carlsbad Chapter 796
Curry County (Clovis) Chapter 1357
Pecos River (Ft. Sumner) Chapter 1455
Roswell Chapter 731
Tucumcari Chapter 1387



**Snail mail or Email....
Let's keep in touch!**

Many members dropped for non-payment of dues are members that don't have an email address on record with NARFE. Without email these members aren't getting news through GEMS.

I would like each chapter to try and get as many email addresses from our members as they can. Knowledge is a powerful tool -- if we can keep our members informed, we should be able to hold onto more of them!

When members feel we are doing nothing to protect them and they get no information to the contrary, they often just drop their membership.

Let us also have a goal of at least 50% of our members reporting their emails this coming year and maybe for 2012-13 have at least 75% reported.

This is not difficult to do. Simply go to the NARFE National home page and use the "contact us" icon to relay information about our members.

If you wish me to forward your members' email addresses to National email the information to me, Dennis Clark, at lmccclark@q.com.

New Mexico Federation of Chapters

Voices Newsletter

Published Quarterly
(Spring, Summer, Fall, & Winter)

Publisher: Madeline Jennings 505-863-5712 mjjennings@cnetco.com

Editor: Karen Nichols 575-377-1469 iq104@aol.com

Webpage: www.narfe-nm.net

Webmaster: Jeffery Smith postmaster@narfe-nm.net

Please send correspondence (except for actual newsletter articles) to:

New Mexico Federation of Chapters

702 Pinetree Rd. SE

Rio Rancho, NM 87124-2131



NARFE
*National Active and Retired Federal
Employees Association*

NM Federation of Chapters

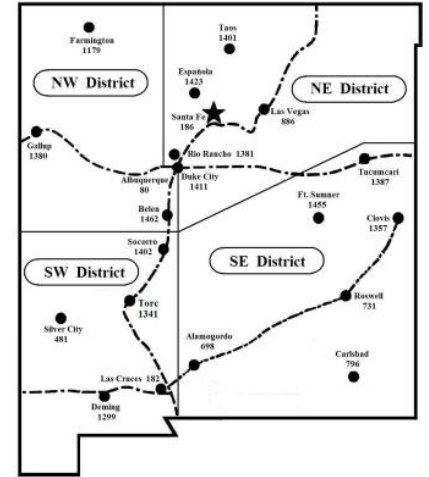
Leon E. Garcia, President
702 Pinetree Rd. SE
Rio Rancho, NM 87124-2131

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage Paid
Rio Rancho, NM
Permit No. xxx

Return Service Requested



*You Need NARFE
and
NARFE Needs You!*



NM Federation of Chapters – Officers

Leon E. Garcia, President

(505) 891-1108 arubolino@aol.com

Dennis Clark, Exec Vice Pres/Membership Chair

(575) 437-0776 lmccclark@q.com

Dee C Gragg, Vice President/Legislation

(575) 437-5419 deegragg@yahoo.com

Marlene Seaton, Secretary

(505) 831-3335 bugszie@aol.com

Rick DeMello, Treasurer

(505) 821-4777 rickdemello@gmail.com

Madeline Jennings, NW District Vice President

(505) 863-5712 mjennings@cnetco.com

Ray C. Garcia, NE District Vice President

(575) 776-9612

Sharon Reese, SW District Vice President

(575) 532-9422 nmreeses@msn.com

Mary Baca, SE District Vice President

(575) 403-5531 mrbaca@plateautel.net

Members of Congress

U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman (202) 224-5521

703 Hart Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC, 20510

U.S. Senator Tom Udall (202) 224-6621

B40D Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC, 20510

U.S. Representative Martin Heinrich NM-1st (202) 225-6316

1505 Longworth HOB, Washington, DC 20515 Fax: 225-4975

U.S. Representative Harry Teague NM-2nd (202) 225-2365

1007 Longworth HOB, Washington, DC 20515 Fax: 225-9599

U.S. Representative Ben R. Luján NM-3rd (202) 225-6190

502 Cannon HOB, Washington, DC 20515 Fax: 225-1528

NM Federation of Chapters Biennial Conference

April 19-21, 2012

Santa Fe, New Mexico

Vacant, NARFE-PAC Chair

Marie Farnsworth, Alzheimer's Chair

(505) 505-881-2858 mhf623@aol.com

Jeffrey Smith, www.narfe-nm.net Webmaster

(575) 525-8271 postmaster@narfe-nm.net

Madeline Jennings, Voices Publisher

(505) 863-5712 mjennings@cnetco.com

Karen Nichols, Voices Editor

(575) 377-1469 iq104@aol.com