



NARFE

National Active & Retired
Federal Employees Association

Protecting the Future for Retired and Current Federal Employees

New Mexico Federation

Voices

Special Edition (Sep 2012)



*News
Actions
Reports
Facts
Efforts*

National Web Site www.narfe.org
NM Federation www.narfe-nm.net



New Mexico Federation President

Janice Baker

This special edition of *Voices* brings you reports and personal perspectives from New Mexico NARFE Officers/Members who attended the NARFE 32nd National Convention, August 26-30, 2012 in Reno-Sparks, Nevada. Please share this newsletter and the NARFE message with your co-workers, family, friends and community partners who care about the quality and continuity of services that our Federal Workforce provides.

ADVOCACY – MAIN PURPOSE OF NARFE

By Janice Baker, Chapter 186, Santa Fe

Two days before the 2012 National Convention began, the 54 Federation Presidents met to discuss mutual concerns and share ideas. We also met with the National Executive Board and had the opportunity to ask questions on any aspect of NARFE, to offer suggestions, and to make requests. We covered many topics, but I want to focus on one, which I have labeled “*the cycle of advocacy.*”

We reaffirmed that NARFE’s main purpose is advocacy on behalf of all Federal employees and retirees, to protect their earned benefits. To be most effective, each level of the NARFE organization must do its part and the action of each level must be known to the others.

I believe that National is doing its part. In addition to its own “*Protect America’s Heartbeat*” campaign, National is leading the Federal-Postal Coalition (30 groups) in a campaign called “*America Counts on Us.*” Both of these campaigns stress the importance of Federal workers to every community-- and the need for fairly-shared sacrifice to solve the nation’s economic problems. Because the Coalition focuses on the issues, not political party affiliation, Coalition members have excellent access to individual Representatives and Senators and hold hundreds of face-to-face meetings with key decision makers.

When a crucial decision is about to be made and the outcome is uncertain, National may send out a GEMS “alert.” It is then incumbent on the other levels of NARFE to do their part.

Member and chapter response to alerts is highly important. Congressional offices keep track of how many calls, emails, letters, and personal visits their constituents make on an issue, and how many are “for” or “against” it. **Numbers matter!** Less important is how polished a written or oral communication is. Of course, it is even better if members and chapters develop and maintain ongoing contact and long-term relationships with the local offices of their congressional delegates and staff.

To close “*the cycle of advocacy,*” members and chapters need to inform National about their contacts with policy makers---in response to a GEMS alert, or a personal contact at a local town meeting, the appearance of a policy maker at a chapter function, etc. Why? Because when a National officer goes to Capitol Hill for a face-to-

face meeting with a Senator or Representative, he or she can include that local contact during the course of their conversation, such as “Jane Doe told me about your conversation at the meeting in Santa Fe. She was impressed with your position. May I ask...”. This helps to reinforce that we are united in purpose and personalizes our message, providing a good opening for our NARFE advocate.

MEMBERSHIP IS “CLOUT”

By Mary Ellen McKay, Chapter 182, Las Cruces

The 32nd NARFE National Convention dealt with many important issues, many of which centered around membership. The declining membership is a huge problem for NARFE. As our membership declines so does our clout in Congress. The people who track trends in Washington DC, know that our membership shrunk from almost 500,000 members 30 years ago to just under 300,000 today. That is a loss of clout to use to protect our earned benefits. Also, the majority of new members are recruited by mailings from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

There were 7 resolutions concerning membership submitted to the National Convention. A lot of lively debate on the floor of the Convention resulted in 2 of the resolutions being adopted and 5 being rejected. None of them involved dues increases, thank goodness. I will share the adopted resolutions here in shortened form--just the main ideas—and I think both of these have good intent and content.

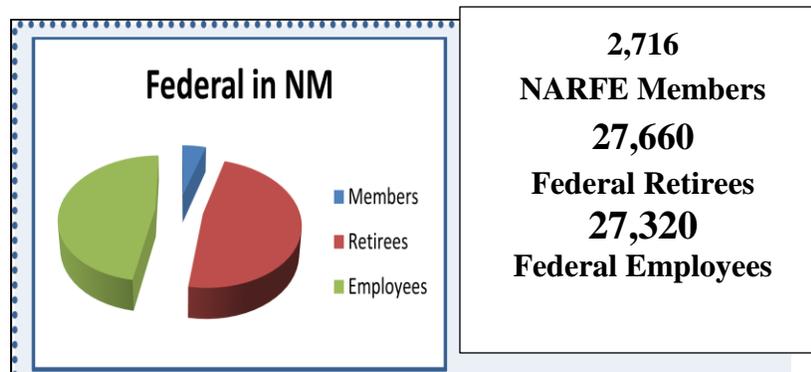
- The National Executive Board (NEB) is urged to have the NARFE magazine include articles on chapter best practices and awards that result in recruiting and retention of members.
- The NEB is urged to set out suggestions for chapters to use for integrating new members into chapters.

The National Secretary, Elaine Hughes, presented several reasons why membership has been declining. One is the simple fact that we are an aging demographic. Death accounts for approximately 15,000 losses a year. Another reason is the changing interest of the “boomer” generation.

At a Lunch and Learn session, Rick Whalen, President of Marketing General, Inc. shared some dynamic ideas on membership. The New Mexico Federation, with the Membership Vice President, will be using and sharing some of these techniques. Here are some ideas:

- Get and use a NARFE business card with the NARFE website on it.
- Use more than one way to contact prospective members; telephone, personal contact, social media.
- Ask people you know in other organizations if they belong to NARFE.
- Start recruiting now. With many issues on the national level such as pay freeze for Federal employees and health care, this is the time to ask because people are concerned about their futures.

The Federation will be putting a lot of effort into growing the membership. ***For the next 2 years our goal is to involve every member as a recruiter and slow or stop the decline in New Mexico.***



RECRUITMENT POTENTIAL IS HUGE!

PROPOSED BYLAWS/RULES ADOPTED

By Russell Boor, Chapter 182, Las Cruces

After a three hour debate on just Article 1, Sections 1 and 2, page 1 of 18 pages, the delegates grew frustrated with the process and voted to the end debate and send the proposed bylaws/rules to ballot. The delegates electronically voted to approve the proposed bylaws/rules – 78 percent for – 22 percent against.

The newly adopted bylaws/rules were essentially approved by ballot as printed in the March issue of the NARFE magazine. Highlighted below are some of the differences between the 2010 bylaws/rules and the newly adopted bylaws/rules which were not debated and that might be of most interest to chapters and members:

National is now required to hold an annual membership meeting. Previously, NARFE held a national convention every two years. What the newly required off convention year annual membership meeting will be is yet to be fully defined by National Headquarters.

The right of members to join the chapter of their choice was moved from a bylaw to a rule. This means that right of membership will only take a majority instead of a two-thirds vote at a future national convention to change or eliminate.

The national executive board (NEB) now has the right to establish and extend incentive benefit recruitment and retention programs. Under the old bylaws/rules, the NEB could establish incentive programs and after two years the NEB was required to submit any further extension of that incentive to a national convention for approval. Note, this could affect the amount of chapter dues received from new members for at least the first two years of their membership.

The age requirement of 85 for distinguished members was eliminated. Any member who has been paying National dues for 20 years can now be designated a distinguished member by a chapter.

Annual membership meetings at all levels may now be conducted in person, via electronic means, or in conjunction with annual training sessions.

The revised and adopted national bylaws/rules are now in effect. The e-chapter concept was approved when the delegates voted *not* to adopt a resolution that proposed to disenfranchise e-chapters and transfer e-chapter members to traditional chapters.

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

*By Jerry Makowski, Chapter 731, Roswell
Chair, National Convention Resolutions Committee*

This year there were only 11 resolutions presented to the Resolutions Committee.

Resolution 12-24 was a By-Law resolution and so was turned over to the By-Laws Committee who subsequently voted to reject it. That vote was upheld at the National convention. The Resolutions Committee, after much discussion voted to amend two resolutions and to adopt as amended. After full debate these two resolutions were rejected by the convention delegates. The other eight resolutions, after much committee debate, were rejected by the Resolutions Committee. However, the maker of these resolutions, a Detroit Michigan chapter member, disagreed with the outcome and had each of the ten resolutions subsequently withheld for consideration by the delegates.

Each resolution received the maximum allowed time for debate on the convention floor; and each was rejected by the convention delegates. There was a great amount of time wasted on debating resolutions that should never have been submitted.

I would suggest that the Rules Committee consider developing a new rule that would state that when the Resolutions Committee votes *unanimously* to reject a resolution, that resolution would be dead and, therefore, not be allowed to be debated. When the Resolutions Committee vote on a resolution is *not unanimous* the resolution would be eligible for withdrawal, and would be allowed to be debated by the convention delegates.

This assignment was a great learning experience for me and I really enjoyed the challenges of Chairing this committee!

PUBLICITY REPORT

By Marie Farnsworth, Chapter 80, Albuquerque

The 32nd NARFE National Convention was both informative and interesting. We found that a Universal problem is both recruitment and retention of members throughout our organization.

I was impressed by the emphasis being placed on additional public relations through widespread advertising in an attempt to inform both retirees **and current employees** of the purpose of NARFE AND OUR GOAL TO PRESERVE THE RIGHTS AND BENEFITS OF ALL!

It may be beneficial for each Chapter to initiate a strong Public Relations Program using personal and public media to remind Federal workers and retirees of what we and NARFE are all about.

Let's do this -- each member recruit a member -- and we'll have it made!

SERGEANT at ARMS COMMITTEE REPORT

By Marcele Skelton, Chapter 182, Las Cruces

I very much enjoyed the opportunity to serve on the Sergeant at Arms Committee at the NARFE National Convention in Reno. The responsibilities of the committee are to serve as ushers and security under direction of the President. This includes checking badges at the doors during general sessions, directing delegates and guests to designated seating areas, assisting at the microphones as delegates discuss pros and cons during general sessions, assisting the Ballot & Teller committee during the voting process, and assisting anyone needing first aid.

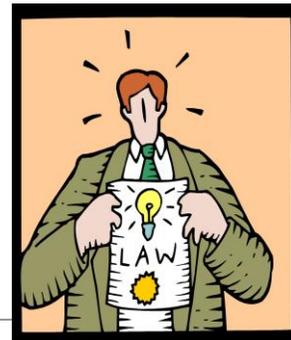
There were 22 of us on the committee from several different regions. Don Wiese, our Chair was a pleasure to work with. Don's philosophy was that the committee should make every possible effort to assist delegates with their concerns and to help them have an enjoyable experience...**and we tried!**



Snail mail or Email... keep in touch!

In order to provide you with timely information and to keep Federation mailing costs under control, we ask---actually, we beg---every member to give us an email address for Federation communications. You may give the information to your chapter president or send it directly to the Federation President at

JaniceNARFE@msn.com



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
110 Hart Senate Office Bldg, Washington, DC, 20510	
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336 Cannon HOB, Washington, DC 20515	Fax: 225-4975
U.S. Representative Steve Pearce NM-2nd	202-225-2365
2432 Rayburn HOB, Washington, DC 20515	Fax: 225-9599
U.S. Representative Ben R. Luján NM-3rd	202-225-6190
330 Cannon HOB, Washington, DC 20515	Fax: 225-1528

UPCOMING EVENTS

Federation Workshops

In late October (probably Oct. 22, 23, and 24) the Federation will hold identical training workshops around the state to update all members on current NARFE activities, how to access and use the upgraded Headquarters website, resources available on line, the 2013-2014 national legislative agenda adopted at the National Convention, and other important topics. More details to come. In the meantime, reserve those dates!

Health Fairs

Seventy-six (76) Federal health fairs are scheduled in New Mexico from late October through early December 2012. Chapter Presidents have received the complete list of health fairs. Please plan to represent NARFE at fairs in your area. These fairs are recruitment opportunities that we cannot afford to miss!

Statewide Ad Campaign

In October the Federation plans to begin a statewide ad campaign. It would be helpful if NARFE members sent to JaniceNARFE@msn.com contact information for their local newspapers, public libraries, Federal offices, community centers, senior centers, and other places where the Federation might be able to place an ad or post an announcement. We plan to emphasize the value of the Federal workforce to New Mexico and NARFE's advocacy on behalf of all Federal employees and retirees.

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Complete NM Officer Directory
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MEMBERS WELCOME

Federation Executive Board meetings are open to all NARFE members who want to observe the actions of the Board. The President may ask observers to comment on business items under discussion or to state their own concerns. Next Board meeting

September 20 10 am-2 pm

Bodega Burgers in Socorro

606 North California Street

(main street off I-25)

The agenda will include many topics mentioned in this issue of Voices.

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