



VOICES

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



How's the summer going? Won't be long and Fall will be here with a little cooler weather. Lot's of happenings these last few months, including the Region VII Conference held in Aurora, Colorado

...(more info on that later in Newsletter) and I attended the joint National Executive Board (NEB)/Federation President's meeting at the Hyatt Hotel in Jacksonville, FL. That venue will also be the site for the 2018 National Conference. A bit humid, but that's to be expected.

An interesting discussion occurred during the NEB/Presidents meeting that may provide some food for thought. There was some lamenting about Chapter

Federation Board

President

Lorna Howerton (505-828-3083)

Exec. Vice President

Nancy Brunson (505-379-3353)

Vice President

Sharon Reese (575-532-9422)

Secretary

Marian Thornton (505-797-8064)

Treasurer

Patricia Bachtel (575-758-8382)

District VP's

Northeast

Mark Mickelsen (720-205-0251)

Northwest

Billie Jean Zinter (505-554-4345)

Southeast

Dennis Clark (575-437-0776)

Southwest

Sharon Willoughby (575-524-9395)

Members vs National Members – what and how much support is provided to which group, Federations are struggling with communicating with all members, shift of costs of doing business, etc. The Federation President from Oregon made a pitch to us all that rather than thinking of “us” vs “them” (Chapter members vs National members), we consider this premise – We are all National members and what's also true some of us are National Plus members; similar to airlines that have customers who pay for Plus services. Remove the “us” vs “them” in our discourse. Define and highlight the value added by being a member of a Chapter and embrace the community environment it provides. Develop programs and services that meet identified members needs. Later in this newsletter is a summary article about the meeting and you can find a full report on the narfe-nm.net website.

This fall we will be working full bore on organizing and getting ready for the 2018 NM Federation Convention (April 19-21, 2018). Tucumcari Chapter is hosting the event and will accept any help to pull it off – they are a small Chapter but have a big heart. Stay tuned for Convention Call and registration information etc. Also, several convention committee volunteers will be needed, so expect my giving you a call, too. ---Lorna Howerton , President

Membership Report – Nancy Brunson Exec. VP

Hope you have enjoyed your summer rest and relaxation and are ready to gear up for our Fall activities! It will be the busiest time of year for all the VPs for Membership and All Members as we prepare for the annual Open Season Federal Employee Benefits Health Fairs. With our newest category of National Members, I am positive we can recruit many new, current Federal employees.

I recently read an article about the history of service clubs, Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, etc. in the United States. It noted they made communities stronger, more interesting, and more engaged. These service clubs were once the backbone of community life but have been in significant decline over the past 2-3 decades. The clubs have not changed; however, America has changed. It is time for us to Reinvent for a New America! Club attendance has declined by 58%, and Americans have 43% fewer family dinners together. These types of statistics represent a loss to community – and the new question is, ‘Where do we go from here?’

Digital life has changed traditional communication and replaced it with an ancient human social unit, the Tribe. These are groups founded on shared ideas and values. People still like to bond with other people, and we need to create opportunities for people to connect, open-up, and be comfortable. When we become their friends, they become our family and, one by one, we can rebuild our clubs.

Not only are new members needed, but we must focus on retention of all current members. We might need to be flexible and change our chapter meeting format. If your group meets for only a coffee, perhaps you can try having lunch together and invite potential members from nearby Federal buildings. Chapters may apply for NARFE Matching Funds for up to 50% of total expenses for a qualifying recruiting event. Please note, preapproval is required for these funds. Do you offer interesting, informative, and educational

programs throughout the year? Programs or guest speakers can be a dramatic addition to your meetings. Many younger folks connect on-line and when they do attend meetings, they prefer them to be social, conversational, and less formal. We need to learn how to adapt to this new environment. We can try to tap into some new ideas that have an impact now to keep our chapters alive and growing.

For the Membership Committees, please take an inventory of your recruiting forms and brochures. When you order from NARFE, please be sure to use the latest F-18 form. The current one is dated 07/17. The F-135 Membership Brochure w/Application is dated 10/16. When you recruit with the ‘narfe’ magazine membership application, please note there is a blank for a Chapter Membership Request. We like to encourage chapter membership, but we will also enroll National Members for the good of our organization. The F-126 and F-127, Worst Mistakes Fed. Employees and Fed. Retirees Can Make have been updated as of 04/17.

In addition to the NARFE printed brochures, the website has a few White Papers you can print locally to supplement your handouts. At the NARFE website, go to Membership Materials, Resource Library, and White Papers. One colorful white paper is titled, “Speeding the Retirement Journey.” That seemed to be very popular at last year’s Health Fairs. Please call me if I can be of assistance to help you prepare for our busy Fall Activities!

Legislation Report – Sharon Reese Vice President for Legislation

I truly hope that all of you have had a very good summer. I sure did! The summer also involved NARFE business and pleasure.

At the May 18th New Mexico Federation Board Meeting, Rodney Adelman, Region VII Vice President presented the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association Awards Certificate to the Las Cruces Chapter 182 in recognition of the Chapter's dedicated service to its membership for **65 Years!**

I attended the Region VII 13th Biennial Conference as well as the Colorado Federation Convention, held in Aurora, Colorado June 29th – July 1. You were well represented by Marian Thornton, Billie Jean Zinter, Mark Michelsen, Roy and Sharon Willoughby, Irv and Marcele Skelton, Lee Tomlin, and John Reese. Mark Michelson, NE District Vice President did an outstanding job of preparing a report on the Conference. I asked attendees to add comments and we would use the report as a combined report. The report has been placed on the NM Federation Website for your reading pleasure. Lorna Howerton did not attend and I was asked by Rodney Adelman to give her report and act on her behalf during the Conference. The conference was very productive with interaction between the speakers and the members.

Are you ready to meet with your Legislators during August for your Grassroots effort? All Senatorial Leaders (SLs), Congressional District Leaders (CDLs) and Chapter Representatives are encouraged to contact your local Legislators office and obtain their schedule for August. If there is a town hall meeting, or other function in your area, please attend. If your Legislator will not be in your area you can always meet with the Staff at the local office. On page 9 of the August NARFE Magazine is a listing of issues to discuss. Remember to personalize the issues you discuss! I would appreciate an email by **5 September** stating who attended, who you met with, and any other pertinent information you think is beneficial. I need to send a report to the National Office early in September.

NARFE-PAC Report Linda Clark, Coordinator

NARFE-PAC is the political Action Committee for NARFE and raises funds to support the campaigns of legislators who are supportive to the federal community. NARFE-PAC is a non-partisan fund and is financed through NARFE members' direct voluntary contributions to this separate fund.

NARFE's goal is to raise \$1.5 million and disburse \$1 million in political contributions. During the first two quarters of the 2017-2018 cycle, 6,405 NARFE members contributed \$328,849 to NARFE-PAC. The average contribution was \$51.34. New Mexico NARFE members sent in 87 contributions of \$3,806 with 15 Sustainers. So far this cycle NARFE-PAC has given Senator Martin Heinrich \$1,500 and Representative Ben Ray Lujan \$5,000.

New Mexico NARFE Members ===== Any additional contributions will be greatly appreciated during this cycle where our hard earned benefits are being threatened.

NARFE**52nd Colorado State Convention and Region VII 13th Biennial Conference**

Introduction: The Colorado Federation sponsored the 2017 Region VII Conference held on June 30 and July 1, 2017 in Aurora, Colorado. Attendees came from the five Federations in Region VII: Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico, and Arizona. The largest delegation of several dozen folks was from Colorado, while New Mexico was represented by **Sharon Reese, Marian Thornton, Billie Jean Zinter, Mark Mickelsen, Sharon Willoughby, Lee Tomlin, Roy Willoughby, Marcele Skelton, Irv Skelton, and John Reese** (see picture right) from the following chapters: Albuquerque; Las Cruces; and Rio Rancho. Our Federation President Lorna Howerton was unfortunately unable to attend at the last minute, due to a sudden illness (she has since recovered); she was missed! The Utah Federation had only one representative attending: their Federation President.

(NOTE: An account of all presentations highlighted below can be found on the <http://narfe-nm.net> home page or contact any Board member or District VP to obtain hard copy of full report.)

The Colorado Federation Convention convened at noon on June 29th and lasted only 4 hours. During that time, the 58 members in attendance passed new By-laws (pending Headquarters approval) and elected by acclamation a new slate of officers. As a result of the new Bylaws they no longer have District Vice Presidents. There was no candidate for Executive Vice President for Membership.

The RVII Conference began Friday morning, June 30, after an informal reception Thursday evening. There were 102 registered members in attendance. About a half of the attendees were first time Region Conference attendees. The speakers from the morning's session were as follows:

- Philip Gardner, OPM Retirement Services
- Jennifer Hilts, First Command Financial Services
- John Bryant, Social Security Administration



John Dowie – NARFE National Secretary/Treasurer, gave the Keynote address. He was followed by Headquarters staff presentations that afternoon:

- Jessica Klement, Legislative Advocacy and NARFE-PAC
- Bridget Boel, Marketing
- Barbara Sido, National Chief Executive Officer

Saturday, July 1st began with Region VII report by Rodney Adelman, RVII VP. The Arizona, Colorado and Utah Federations have already had their new By-Laws pre-approved by Headquarters prior to voting on them. The New Mexico and Wyoming Federations are still working on theirs, and they should be ready soon. He appreciates that the Chapter Bank/Credit Union Account verifications have been completed. The SL/CDL system has been implemented in New Mexico, Colorado, and Arizona, and seems to be working quite well. Our Region VII has led the nation in participation in Region VII Webinars. The webinars have been revamped to be more policy-oriented instead of process-oriented. He reiterated his view that chapters need to have a NARFE-PAC Chair, a Federal Legislative Chair, and a State Legislative Chair. In terms of recruiting, the Las Cruces Chapter won the Region Grand Prize for recruiting, while a Colorado member was the single biggest recruiter. Region VII has lost fewer members proportionately than NARFE as a whole.

RVII Conferencecontinued

We also have the lowest number of member deaths of any region. We have the highest percentage of National-only members at 32.3%.

Following Rodney’s report each Federation President gave their individual reports as well as reports from the following RVII coordinators and committees:

- Alzheimer’s Chair’s Report – Deborah Corner
- Configuration Advisory Board (CAB) Report – Deborah Corner
- FEEA Chair’s Report – Sharon Reese
- Strategic Planning Committee Report – Ted VanHinton
- NARFE-PAC Report by Region VII VP Rodney Adelman

The final item of Conference business was a debate held between National Secretary/Treasurer John Dowie and Immediate Past President Joe Beaudoin regarding the proposal (put forward by the Strategic Planning Committee) to amend the National By-Laws to permit the current National President Richard Thissen to run for a third term (he’s currently limited to two terms) by special ballot.

John Dowie was at the Conference but Joe Beaudoin was not, so the debate was held via Video Link with Mr. Beaudoin visible on a giant screen at the front of the room. This topic had created quite a stir throughout the Association. Subsequent to the RVII Conference, the National Executive Board did not approve the referendum and a special ballot would take place.



NEB/Federation Presidents Meeting

--Lorna Howerton, NM Fed Pres.

The NARFE NEB/Federation Presidents Meeting was held in Jacksonville, Fl at the Hyatt Regency July 10 – 14, 2017. This venue will be the site for the 2018 National NARFE Conference, August 26-29. Attendees in 2018 will be introduced to a new experience, in that the event will not be a Convention as in the past, but rather an event where members can learn, be motivated and create or renew acquaintances. The theme is “Celebration of the Federal Community”. Please mark your calendars for a special time.

Obviously, this was my first Presidents meeting and I was especially pleased to meet with our own Region VII Federation Presidents, as well as meeting the Headquarters staff and other Federation Presidents from around the country. Overall, the mood was fairly positive, even with the challenges NARFE is facing. Barbara Sido, National Executive Director, is a welcome addition to the already top-notch staff at Headquarters. Below are highlights from all the presentations.

Executive Director, Barbara Sido – Keynote Address

Barbara is listening and learning – starting with a blank slate with the criteria of “what’s best for NARFE”. Her initial observations of NARFE are:

- >Strengths
 - Committed members, leaders and staff
 - Off the Charts retention rate
 - Recognized expertise
- >Challenges
 - Complex Business model draws resources away from mission-aligned programs
 - Need for clear, consistent value proposition
 - Member needs get lost in the dialogue

The current situation:

>for Advocacy is “It’s a Wonderful NARFE”. If you think about the movie “It’s a Wonderful Life”, the lead character ponders what it would be like if he was not there in the world. So too, with NARFE, the successes to-date would be missed if NARFE was not around.

President's meeting ...continued

>for Membership & Marketing is “What do I get for my money?”

>for Knowledge resources is Knowledge = Value

What is the VISION? NARFE is the go-to resource for and about the federal community. For Members and media (local and national) --- NARFE is the first phone call!

Membership loss curve is improving but more work is needed to not only slow and flatten the curve but also move it up. Change is hard but necessary. Expectations need to be ambitious but realistic (stretch goals). We're all in this together --- Contact Barbara at execdir@narfe.org

Meeting attendees were provided a mountain of information through presentations by Jessica Klement, Legislative Director; Bridget Boel, Marketing & Membership Director; update on the work of the Strategic Planning Committee; as well as the National President & National Sec/Treasurers reports. My takeaways are as follows:

Legislation – Issues driving Legislative efforts

- Postal Reform
- FY 18 Budget
- Backburner issues, but being monitored – TSP, Medicare Hold Harmless, WEP reform, and FLTCP reform

Grassroots – Importance of Action

- - Members are own best advocates
- - Critical to NARFE Success
- - Constituent Voice resonates with Congress
- - Congress can change your benefits AT ANY TIME!

NARFE PAC is the 3rd leg of the Legislative stool – along with Lobbying and Grassroots.

Why?

- - Access to info
- - Keep NARFE relevant
- - Builds & strengthens relationships
- - Supports those that support us (say's thank you)

Membership

- - Description of what Headquarters send to Prospects (emails/letters)
- - Recruitment & Retention Journal will have info about the 2017 Fall Recruitment Campaign (main prize = Apple Watch) and explanation of the Gift Membership process.

Federal Benefits Institute -- Provides accurate, timely, accessible benefit information & guidance. The plan is to grow this area.

- Why the Institute is important:
- -- Active Employees seek it
- -- HR/OPM can't provide
- -- More difficult for local sustainability
- -- NARFE's unique Value
- How this benefits NARFE:
- -- Recruitment tool
- -- Retention tool
- -- Non-dues revenue tool
- -- Branding tool

Strategic Planning Committee – update

The Strategic Planning Committee's proposed amendment via referendum to allow a National President to run for a third term, upon request and approval by NEB was discussed by the attendees. The discussion identified process and communication issues, which no doubt, will continue to be discussed in the coming year. (Subsequently, at Thursday a.m. NEB Breakfast – the proposed request for referendum did not get 2/3 affirmative vote, so there will not be a ballot in the NARFE magazine on this issue.)

The SP Committee spent a lot of time looking at the issue of Federation viability and organization and focused on:

- Defining minimum roles & responsibilities of a federation to best support the mission
- Defining perceived strengths at the federation level & strengths of headquarters
- Providing national guidance ensure federation budgets/expenditures are aligned to support the mission statement. (The full federation overview document is available on the NARFE website (Strategic Planning – Meeting Synopsis May 23, 2017))

---A 15 page summary of the NEB/Fed Presidents meeting is on the <http://narfe-nm.net> home page ---

The NARFE Federal Benefits Institute is a Member-Only resource designed to help NARFE members take charge of their federal benefits and guarantee a secure future.

NEW WEBINAR!

**From Employee to Annuitant:
Master the Process**
Presented by Tammy Flanagan

Thursday, August 24 at 2 p.m. ET

Promo Code: SUMMER17

From Federal Employee to Annuitant -- Master the Process!

August 24 at 2 p.m. ET
Presented by Tammy Flanagan



You may be ready to retire...but are you ready for the paperwork? Get insider tips from nationally recognized federal retirement and benefits expert Tammy Flanagan that will guarantee a flawless transition. Attend this one-hour webinar plus Q&A session and get what you need to ensure your paperwork and finances are in order when you separate.

Federal retirement expert Tammy Flanagan Offers tried-and-true

recommendations to ensure a pain-free transition from working fed to retired fed. This hour-long webinar with bonus Q&A session is an exclusive presentation from the **NARFE Federal Benefits Institute**.

Upcoming Webinars (All webinars start at 2 p.m. ET)

Sept. 21 -- Retirement Forms Step-By-Step for Guaranteed Success

NM Federation Standing Appointments

Federation Service Officer:
Jim Kielty, Las Cruces
(575) 523-6044

FEEA:
Sharon Reese, Las Cruces
(575) 432-9422
(575) 649-6035 (cell)

NARFE-PAC:
Linda Clark, Alamogordo
(575) 214-2172

Alzheimers:
Marie Farnsworth, Albuquerque
(505) 881-2858

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Next Federation Meeting:

August 17, 2017

11:00 a.m.

Bodega Burger – Socorro, NM