



NARFE

National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association

Protecting the Future for Retired and Current Federal Employees



New Mexico Federation **Voices**

May 2015 Issue

President's Message

Janice Baker

Fellow NARFE members, we have an exciting year ahead! Your Federation Executive Board is leading the way to place us in the best position possible to fulfill NARFE's mission now, to influence Strategic Planning at Headquarters, and to adapt to decisions made at the 2016 National Convention.

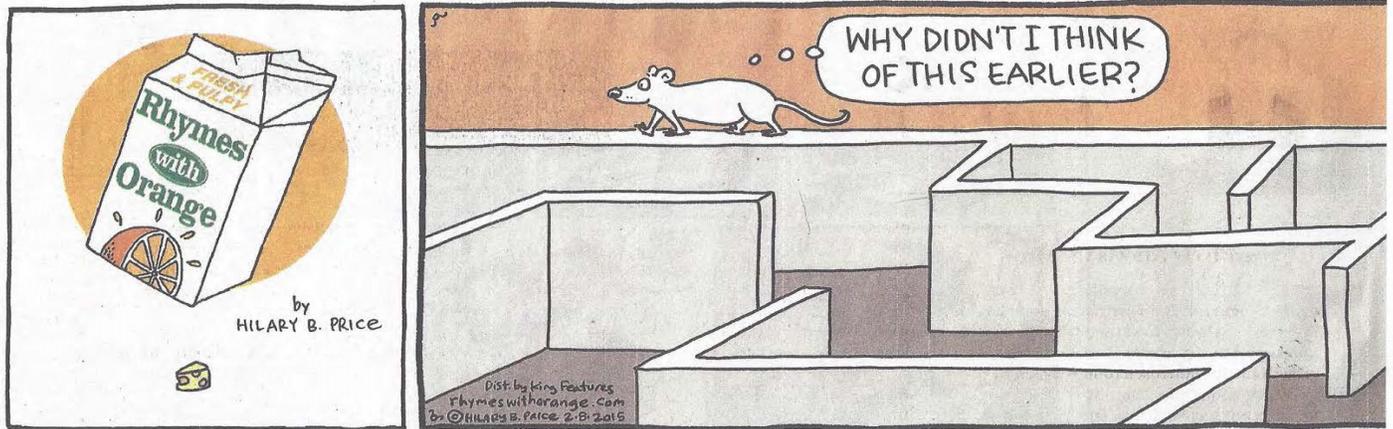
Articles in this issue of *Voices* provide details on recent Board initiatives. First, your Board has instituted a new approach to political advocacy, based on recommendations of the Future of NARFE Committee and on the current Strategic Planning discussions at Headquarters. Second, your Board is planning a Statewide Gathering in September for discussion of the new approach to advocacy, our input to Headquarters Strategic Planning, new recruitment plans and tactics to use at Federal health fairs, and other topics.

On page 2 you will find a cartoon that has become my inspiration. A wise mouse has abandoned his frustrating maze of obstacles that always keep him from reaching his goal. One day he looked in a different direction, saw another possibility, and decided to try it. The mouse is now running atop the wall of the maze, with none of the usual obstacles between him and his goal. He says to himself, "why didn't I think of this earlier?"

Our challenge is to be like that wise mouse. We want to reach our mission/goal of effective political advocacy backed by an impressively large membership. We keep trying to get there by doing what we have done for years. And for years we have been blocked by longstanding obstacles, namely, aging membership, ineffective recruitment of current workers, declining participation in legislative advocacy, declining interest in being a chapter officer, focus on the local chapter and social aspects of membership---all of which lead to a feeling of being in a downward spiral that means the certain demise of NARFE.

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We can be better problem solvers! We must keep our vital mission/goal, but let's stop slamming into longstanding obstacles. Let's find different ways to get to the goal, ways that reduce current obstacles, or ways that go around them. Please discuss the "wise mouse" approach at your Chapter meetings. And please come to the Statewide Gathering to discuss with your fellow NARFE members our many opportunities and challenges in 2015 and 2016!



Sharon Reese

NM Federation Vice President for Legislation

I was fortunate to attend the NARFE 2015 Legislative Training Conference that was held March 14th through March 17th at the Renaissance Arlington Capital View Hotel. New Mexico had 3 attendees, a first! I was joined by first time attendees Billie Jean Zinter, Northwest District Vice President, Chapter 80 Legislative Chair, and Nancy Phillips, Chapter 1411 Legislative Chair.

This was a superb conference in terms of attendance, participation of attendees and the agenda with very good topics. The Legislative Advocacy breakout sessions were, "All Politics is Local", "Grassroots Advocacy after March 17th", "Organizing by Congressional District" and Legislative Advocacy and Membership Recruitment.

The Organizing by Congressional District breakout session coincided with one of the proposals of the National Executive Board (NEB). The NEB has tasked the Strategic Planning Committee to review and possibly propose implementation of Congressional District Liaisons across all Federations at the National Convention in 2016. Currently there are 10 Federations that have implemented this process. Several have had this process in place over 3 years. Arizona and New Mexico initiated this process in April 2015.

The whole purpose of the Senatorial Legislative Liaisons (SLLs) and Congressional District Liaisons (CDLs) is to promote relationships with all of New Mexico legislators and increase participation in legislative advocacy by all Chapters by encouraging members to participate in town hall meetings, one-on-one meetings, telephone calls, letter writing, and immediate responses to NARFE Legislative Alerts.

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I prepared a document with the qualifications and duties of the proposed positions for our Federation Executive Board (FEB) meeting in April. It was discussed, revised and approved by the FEB on April 24, 2015 for a period of one year (April 2015 to April 2016). This will allow time to establish a permanent procedure to include a Bylaw change for submission to the membership at our Federation Convention to be held in April 2016.

Janice has selected and appointed individuals to fill these positions and the selections were approved by the FEB on May 4th. The appointees are:

SLL for Senator Tom Udall: Mary Ellen McKay

SLL for Senator Martin Heinrich: Billie Jean Zinter

CDL for Representative Michelle Lujan Grisham, Congressional District #1: Marlene Seaton

CDL for Representative Steve Pearce, Congressional District #2: Elizabeth (Betty) Hicks

CDL for Representative Ben Ray Lujan, Congressional District #3: William (Bill) Britton

I thank all of the SLLs and CDLs for offering to work with me in the next year. Together we will succeed!

On the National Website under Legislation is the Protect America's Heartbeat (PAH). A subject under the PAH is "Field Plan Toolkit". In this toolkit, you will learn how to plan a successful field campaign. This guide utilizes strategies in the other toolkits to help you take the necessary steps and create a timeline to set and reach your advocacy goals. I drafted a Field Plan, which was revised and approved by the FEB on May 4th. The Field Plan outlines our plan to accomplish legislative advocacy within New Mexico for the next year.

These documents have been placed on the Federation Website. Please take a look at them so that you are aware of how we are moving toward increasing members' participation in legislative advocacy.

I will be preparing a workshop to be given at our September 25th and 26th gathering in Elephant Butte that will provide additional information, guidance, and reporting criteria.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me. Remember this is a learning experience for all of us and I thank YOU for being part of this endeavor.



Monthly Legislative Update for NARFE Chapters – May 2015

FY16 Budget

- At the end of March, both the House and Senate passed their respective budgets. Both budgets make severe cuts to federal employees and retirees.
- During the week of April 13, the House and Senate appointed their conferees to the budget conference committee to hammer out the differences between the two budgets. The conference committee held its first public meeting on Monday, April 20.
- The conferees will negotiate the differences between the House-passed budget and the Senate-passed budget in hopes of reaching agreement on a conference report on the budget resolution. This conference agreement will be announced and voted on with very little public notice. Rep. Tom Price (R-GA), the chair of the House Budget Committee, said that it is his hope that the budget agreement passes the House and Senate by the end of April. Media reports indicate a deal may be officially released early the week of April 27, though at the time this email was sent, the content of the deal had not been made public.
- NARFE sent a [letter](#) to the members of the conference committee expressing our opposition to any budget agreement that unfairly targets federal workers and retirees. The Federal-Postal Coalition, which NARFE chairs, also sent a [letter](#).
- Budget resolutions do not get signed by the President and, therefore, do not have the authority of law. The budget sets spending levels for the appropriations committees, which are responsible for funding the federal government.
- Even though the budget isn't signed into law, the proposals contained therein do not go away. The measures can be introduced as stand-alone bills, to "pay for" other legislation, or in the appropriations process.
- Additionally, and of utmost concern to NARFE, leadership has expressed a desire to include reconciliation instructions in the conference agreement. Reconciliation instructions are signed by the president and impact mandatory spending – civil service retirement contributions and/or retirees' Federal Employees Health Benefits Program premiums. Reconciliation instructions are likely to include a June or July deadline.
- **NARFE members are encouraged to contact their members of Congress using NARFE's toll free line, 1-866-220-0044.** NARFE members should encourage their Representative and two Senators to oppose any budget agreement that unfairly and disproportionately attacks federal employees and retirees. More information is available on NARFE's [website](#).



Lucy A. Garcia

Exec VP Membership

Hello Fellow NARFE members. I think it is a perfect time to talk about the Health Fairs in November and December. This gives us plenty of time to prepare. Last year we had 75 locations where Health Fairs were held. NARFE members were able to attend most of them, but I'm sorry to say we did not have NARFE presence in some of them. A Big Thank You to the members that were willing to cover health fairs away from their home town.

We have to take advantage of open season. NARFE HQ has lots of information on the website for recruiting. They are also available and willing to help when we contact them. They respond promptly to phone calls and emails. In the health fairs I worked, I concentrated on what affects the current employee.

Don't wait to order supplies. The Membership chair can order supplies right away. (order extras if you feel you need them. Leftovers can be left at the agencies, they are usually willing to leave the packets in break rooms.) Packets: Put all the handouts in big envelopes (easier to hand out) Have the contents of the Kit on the table for employees to look at. If they express interest hand them kit

The Kit should contain: (this could change if HQ comes out with new handouts) NARFE magazine
F-135 membership application F-123 Pop Quiz

F126 10 worst mistakes Fed employees can make M2 contact card

Don't forget to put your member number on application

You can have incentives. Each chapter has developed their own. (ie; gift cards, memberships, token giveaways like candy etc)

HEALTH FAIRS are really important for us. We have to take advantage of open season. That is the only time we have face to face contact with current employees. As soon as the health fair schedule is out, membership chairs should gather volunteers to attend. If you have trouble attending all the health fairs in you chapter area let me know so we can help you .

Thank you for all the work you do for your chapter.

NEW MEXICO STATISTICS

As of March 2015 As	New Mexico NARFE Membership	2,059
of September 2014 As	New Mexico Federal Retirees	27,638
of September 2014	New Mexico Current Employees	28,150



LORNA HOWERTON

NM Federation Statewide Gathering

The NM Federation voted in 2014 to have Statewide Conventions every 2 years, therefore in 2015 the Federation Board has agreed to sponsor a Statewide Gathering to be held in September. The tentative dates and times are Sept 25-26, Friday and Saturday from Noon to Noon. This will allow for travel Friday morning and Saturday afternoon. The location is the Elephant Butte Inn and RV Resort at Elephant Butte Reservoir near Truth or Consequences, NM.

The topics to be covered are as follows:

1. Our Mission: Effective Political Advocacy
2. Headquarters Strategic Planning Process
3. Membership plans and tactics
4. Communication issues within and between Chapters

The Federation Board invites you to put those dates on your calendar. There are many activities in the Elephant Butte/Truth or Consequences area, so hopefully along with getting together with old friends and colleagues, you may find yourself wanting to take the opportunity to spend more time exploring the area. Many more details, including lodging options and other costs will be coming very soon.

Tom Anderson **SE District Vice President**

I am very glad to see that the Future of NARFE committee is taking really constructive action. I am referring to the Legislative Liaison project. I feel this will go a long way toward our mission of supporting legislation beneficial to us. I congratulate the members that have taken the positions of Senate and Congressional Liaison, and strongly urge every member to support them. There are five of these positions; two for senators: Mary Ellen McKay and Billie Jean Zinter, and three for congressmen: Marlene Seaton, Elizabeth Hicks, and William Britton. I am sure you will be hearing a lot more on this.

The Alamogordo Chapter is apparently fighting a losing battle to stay open. Their President Pete Semanik, has notified President Baker that they have not been able to get new officers, and have asked for directions to close. This is very, very disheartening as this is one of the larger chapters in New Mexico. Every member should know that the chapter they belong to is not the officers chapter, but theirs, and that they need to become an officer. I know that many of our members have been there before, but it really does not take that much time and chapters are very important. On that note, I encourage very chapter to consider making a bid for the 2016 State Convention.

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Our President, along with Vice Presidents Lucy Garcia and Sharon Reese and Myself held a special meeting in Clovis for "members without a hometown chapter". Twelve people were present including four past federation presidents: Joe Urban of Clovis (1999-2001); Loris DeKay (2001-2002 and 2005-2006), Gerald Makowski ((2002-2004). It was really great to see these fine people. There are thirty members in this eastern New Mexico area that do not have a home town chapter. President Baker contacted them all by letter. Three showed up that belong to the Chaparral Chapter. Mable Flores of the Pecos River Chapter was also present.

We have only two chapters in New Mexico that are less than 40 years old, They are Duke City Chapter 1411, and the just closed Belen Chapter 1462. Tucumcari Chapter 1387. Celebrated it's 40th with an open hose on April 6. They displayed a City Proclamation, and a letter of Congressional recognition from Congressman Ben Ray Lujan, their Chapter banner, and NARFE magazines and literature. Sixteen people attended, were welcomed by President Tom Anderson, and Congressional Field Representative for Lujan, Ron Willmont. They enjoyed a slide program, received a prize for knowing the most NARFE members (highest number was 18), a cake and cookies, and had coffee and soft drinks.

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