



# The Tennessee Federal Retiree

National Active and Retired Federal Employees

December 2006

## Special points of interest:

- New Region X Vice-President elected
- Convention a success in Albuquerque
- Legislative goals focused on at presidents' meeting
- Great start for federation website
- Leo Potts NARFE-PAC Commemorative Award

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## Beaudoin elected as new Region X Vice-President

Since returning from the 29<sup>th</sup> National NARFE Convention, which was held in Albuquerque, N.M., on September 10-14, I have spent time trying to absorb and rationalize what happened at the convention. By now all of you know that Margaret Baptiste, who was the National Vice-President in 2002 and lost to Charles Fallis (the National Treasurer) at the 2002 Greensboro convention (in a very close vote), defeated Dr. Dan Galvan (National VP) and Charles Carter (past National President) to become the new National President. Ms. Baptiste, as well as the new National Executive Board (NEB), took office on November 1. President Baptiste will announce her agenda and appointments at the next NEB meeting, which will be held on November 13. Bill Austin (our own past-Region X NFVP) was elected as the National Vice-President, Nat Brown was elected National Secretary and Dick Ostregren was re-elected as our National Treasurer. In Region X, the race between Col. Clay Shannon (KY Past Federation President) and myself was very close. I received 54 percent of the votes with Clay receiving 46 percent.

One of the biggest disappointments at the convention was the defeat of By-laws Committee Resolution #01 (BC-01). This resolution would have established "association dues" and would have, hopefully, done away with all the various dues that we have in our organization. The resolution needed a 2/3 vote and received a 62.17 percent approval

(about 4 percent shy of the 2/3 vote). During the next two years, I will be asking for your thoughts and ideas on this subject, as well as other subjects that are of your interest to NARFE.

There are problems in NARFE - namely our declining membership. During the next two years, I will work with all of you (especially with and through your Federation President - John Hicks and your other Federation and/or Chapter Officers) to: (1) convince our present dedicated members to stay with us (our retention efforts appear to be in need of help), (2) continue the efforts to recruit more members, (3) work with all of you to enhance our legislative programs, and (4) continue supporting the other NARFE projects and agendas that we presently have in place. We need to look forward if we are to succeed. Our members have a wealth of knowledge and expertise and NARFE needs to "tap into this resource." Together we can make NARFE a household name, and we can move NARFE into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Please feel free to contact me with your suggestions, ideas, concerns, complaints, etc. I am here to serve you, and the only way that I can be effective in this job is if I hear from you. Let's all remember our motto: NARFE - Your Future - Our Focus.

- Joe Beaudoin  
Region X NF Vice-President  
E-mail: [jbeaudoin1@verizon.net](mailto:jbeaudoin1@verizon.net)

## Convention a success in Albuquerque

My wife Sharon and I have just returned from the National Convention in Albuquerque, N.M. and had a great time. I am happy to inform you that besides my wife and me, we had 11 other federation members present. Nearly 2,000 delegates, members, spouses, friends and guests representing 1,500 NARFE chapters nationwide attended the convention. I'm sorry to say that we did not carry the proxy votes for two of our chapters.

On Saturday, September 9, all the federation presidents had a meeting. We were divided into three groups for the day. We had three topics to discuss: membership retention, national dues and mandatory chapter Membership. (The only place the words *Mandatory Mem-*

*bership appear is in the index of the Bylaws, not in the bylaws*) It seems all of us were trying to figure where that phrase came from. On the convention floor, it was voted on and passed that "automatic" chapter membership" is substituted for the word "mandatory." A lot was learned by all in these meetings and we all voted to have these meetings once a year to pass on information to each other. You would be surprised how many federation presidents have asked me for our Officer Training Lesson Plans. Something that I learned in the presidents'



John Hicks, Margaret Baptiste, and Bill Austin at the national convention in Albuquerque.

meeting was that Region X has the best track record in the Association for retaining and getting new members.

Since Joe Beaudoin, Region X NFVP, has covered the main points of the convention, I can see no point in me going over them again.

The three vice-presidents of the federation had a very hard time trying to get chapter proxies for the National Convention. The forms were mailed out in mid-May to all chapters. I had to call National and get ten new sets of new proxy forms sent to chapters who either lost or misplaced them. Chapter presidents, it is your responsibility to check what is in your mail from headquarters

and act upon it, not just set it aside.

Remember that it is getting close to the submission of F-7 forms and delegate/proxy forms for the state convention.

The next meeting of the Federation Executive Board will be held in Lebanon, Tenn., on February 15-16, 2007. More information to follow.

- John T. Hicks  
Federation President

## Attend chapter meeting as new year's resolution

The temperature is starting to drop and the winter season is upon us, which means another year is almost gone. After retirement they seem to come and go much faster. As we look toward the new year, we think of some of our legislative issues that are still on the back burner in Congress. We are a strong organization, and as that, we must continue to insure that our elected officials are well aware of and support those bills that have an effect on our future.

Our state membership numbers are growing.

Thanks go out to our membership chairs for a job well done.

Soon it will be time to make New Year's resolutions. Many will be made and hopefully most will be met. For the members that have never been to a chapter meeting, please consider this one. Attend the next chapter meeting in your area or one in the near future. The fellowship alone may bring you back.

Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas,

- Larry Cunningham  
State 3rd Vice-President

## Congratulations to newly elected officers

Congratulations to our newly elected federal NARFE officers; may they lead us in our way to achieve the goals to preserve the benefits of all federal employees. The November elections are over; hopefully, your favorite candidates did well. The new members of both houses of Congress will not take office until January 2007. We need to encourage the present members to pass legislation, Premium Conversion (HR 994) during their session before the year end.

This is the time of year for chapters to elect officers for the coming year and get people to fill all of the positions at the chapter level to spread the work around and make it easier for all chapter members. We could use a legislative officer in the 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District if some one is interested.

- John P. Shannon  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President

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## Multi-state presidents' meeting focuses on legislative goals

Recently, President John Hicks and I had the opportunity to attend a presidents' meeting in Bristol, Va. It was hosted by Bill Austin, our National Field Vice President. The federation presidents and vice-presidents for the states of Tennessee, Kentucky, North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia attended. Dr. Dan Galvan, National Resident Officer, and Dan Adcock, National Legislative Assistant, who is an employee of NARFE, were present.

The primary focus of the meeting was our NARFE legislative goals. Adcock led the discussion. His job at NARFE is to monitor legislation in Congress and do everything possible to keep bad legislation (detrimental to federal employees) from being passed and to do everything possible to have our current legislation brought out for a vote. He is extremely knowledgeable.

The repeal of Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision would cost some \$63 billion over ten years. The question arose as to whether it might be wise to split this legislation and try to get one piece passed at a time. Everyone agreed that GPO is most unfair. Our congressmen and senators all seem to agree. A non-federal employee pays into social security for 30 years; the person dies; he is survived by a federal employee spouse and that spouse cannot draw one dime of survivor benefits. Everyone agreed this result is unfair, and we shared the

specific cases of members in our own chapters. Adcock voiced the opinion that if Congress would amend GPO to allow a 1/3 reduction as opposed to a 2/3 reduction, this would help passage. Adcock commented that the agency heads of Social Security are not in our corner. They keep telling Congress everything is fine, and we do not need repeal of WEP or GPO.

A number of us expressed the concern of our chapter members – we feel like the “gerbil in the cage” – run, run and go nowhere. Adcock did not agree. He pointed out that we have been successful in keeping bad legislation from being passed. This is largely attributable to our efforts at the chapter level. This is quite an accomplishment, particularly at a time when our country faces a deficit of \$8 trillion.

The discussion ended with a summary position that we must continue to fight. Dr. Galvan said that NARFE Headquarters would take a hard look at separating the legislation to see if we could have more success. The meeting gave us an opportunity to express our concerns and those of our members. In addition, it underscored the need that we must do something different. We have been trying to get WEP and GPO repealed for the last 20 years and nothing has happened. It is time to go back to the well and find some fresh water.

- Carey Frazier  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President

## Great start for federation website

The federation website, [www.narfetn.org](http://www.narfetn.org), is off to a good start. The website was initiated in May of this year and is averaging 400 unique visits per month. Its pages are filled with lots of information that both members and non-members will find useful. If you have not seen it or if it has been awhile since you have, then go back and view it often as the pages are constantly being updated with new information. A suggestion would be to add it to your bookmarks or favorites list. You can find information on our officers, chapters, membership, legislation, the federation convention, pre-retirement seminars, and in the library section many useful documents. One particular new feature is the posting of these federation newsletters and chapter newsletters. If your chapter produces a newsletter, submit it for posting. Another new feature is the ability to take care of changes to your phone number, mailing address or e-mail address by updating those by use of the website. Our website is a tremendous tool for our members. Put it to use and make it work for you.

Several chapters have developed their own website which we encourage. If your chapter has one, let us know so that we can add a link to it from the federation website. Also submit it to the national organization for a link from there. If your chapter needs any assistance in setting up an Internet website, or if you have any questions along this line, then contact us and we will be glad to help. My contact information is (615) 735-2486 or [rwcollins@bellsouth.net](mailto:rwcollins@bellsouth.net).

- Ronnie Collins  
Federation Webmaster

## NARFE info available online

Many of you have had some problems receiving the weekly hotline communication from headquarters. Others have changed addresses (slo-mail and e-mail) or telephone numbers and not notified headquarters. For those with Internet capability, you can update or check your headquarters communication information by the following procedure:

- Go to NARFE website: [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org)
- Log in
- Screen will change, on the right side under Membership Tools
- CLICK Upgrade your Record
- Enter Member ID and birthdate and SUBMIT
- Change your data as necessary
- CLICK Update

We have 202 members in our Tennessee federation e-mail net. The net distributes information unique to the Tennessee federation. If you would like to join, please contact me at [chasmack@multipro.com](mailto:chasmack@multipro.com)

We are getting ready in our chapter to test delivery of the monthly newsletter by e-mail to those with the capability to receive it. For chapters with less than 200 mailings, this could save \$5 per year per member. It would require the chapter to have a net coordinator to facilitate distribution.

-Chuck MacKenzie  
Net Coordinator

## Note to chapter treasurers regarding per capita dues

Article II of the Constitution and Bylaws specifies the amount and the timing of payment of the annual per capita dues by the chapters for each member. This procedure establishes the official membership and delegates strength for the annual convention.

-Marie Anglin  
Federation Treasurer



*Have a joyous holiday season!*



## Announcing Leo Potts NARFE-PAC Commemorative Award

Beginning with the convention in 2007, the federation will present our first annual Leo Potts NARFE-PAC award in recognition of the chapter that has achieved the greatest per capita participation for the previous year. The dollar average will be on a per capita basis so that small chapters will have the same opportunity to successfully compete with larger chapters. Now is the time to start emphasizing the importance of NARFE-PAC at your monthly meetings. The value of the financial contributions made to

NARFE-PAC cannot be over-emphasized. Through NARFE-PAC, our voice is heard in Washington.

Let's build up our NARFE-PAC funds so that our voices are loud and clear. Remember that with a contribution of \$15 or more, you will receive a NARFE-PAC pin, which you should wear proudly to NARFE events. Contact me or your district officer for pin assistance. Thank you for all your past participation.

- Herschel Taylor  
Federation NARFE-PAC Coordinator

## Taylor presents legislative report

In recognition of Leo Potts' tireless efforts and sincere devotion to the NARFE-PAC efforts in Tennessee, a Leo Potts NARFE-PAC annual commemorative award is being established. It is with great pride that the Tennessee Federation announces this new award. For more information, see the NARFE-PAC coordinator's article in this newsletter.

As you know, we are now in the lame duck session of Congress following the elections. While we had some surprises, we now know who we must work with and through during the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress. I remember Nancy Pelosi speaking at a legislative training session a couple of years ago, and at that time, she was a big supporter of

our earned benefits and of NARFE. It's too early to guess who will support us on what, of course, but let's start making contacts and friends of our newly elected officials. That's the democratic way. America is great, and we are fortunate to have the ability to vote the party or candidate of our choice.

As of November 1, I have stepped down as the National Legislative Chair for Tennessee. I just have too many irons in the fire, and something had to go. I have enjoyed this work, and thank you for the confidence you placed in me in electing me to this position. See you at the federation convention.

-Diane Taylor  
National Legislative Chair, Tennessee

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## What is NARFE?

- NARFE is an association of nearly 350,000 federal workers and retirees united to preserve the economic security and well-being of federal employees in retirement.
- NARFE sponsors and supports legislation to protect the earned retirement benefits and the general welfare of members.
- NARFE operates nationwide service centers staffed by volunteers who provide assistance to federal employees, annuitants, and survivors.

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