



A PUBLICATION
OF THE
TENNESSEE
FEDERATION OF
CHAPTERS

TENNESSEE FEDERATION NEWS

News of Interest to Active and Retired Federal Employees

January 2011

We must all do our part to protect our earned benefits

If I had known that I was going to live this long, I would have taken better care of myself. I'm sure that most have heard or maybe have even said that a time or two. One way to help with that thought is to stick with the New Year resolutions that you made only a few days ago, which for most is improving one's lifestyle. I hope everyone has enjoyed good health with family and friends throughout the holidays.

As I stated in the January 2010 newsletter, many of NARFE's goals were attained, but several were left on the table, and that is still the case today. Active and retired federal employees are under constant attack, and our membership continues to decline. I don't know what it's going to take to convince all active employees and retirees that our income livelihood is in danger. Our future lifestyle is largely controlled by congress. Our only input is through legislation, which must be acted on locally as well as nationally, along with increased membership. We have a new slate of National Officers as well as a new Region X Vice President. They are tasked with protecting our earned benefits, but they cannot do it alone. We must all do our part. I would ask all to continue your membership and request others to do the same, and contact your legislators on a continuing basis through phone calls and/or e-mails. RECRUIT, RECRUIT, RECRUIT.

It's now time to start planning to attend the State Convention on April 17-19 at the Radisson Hotel at Opryland. Enclosed in this issue is a delegate form that needs to be completed by every delegate or alternate attending by the end of Janu-

ary. It must be signed by the chapter secretary, with the top portion going to the federation secretary, and the bottom portion staying with the delegate or alternate to be brought to the credentials desk at the convention. I would suggest that you complete the form, top and bottom, and take it to the chapter secretary for their signature. The secretary can mail the top portion to the federation and return the bottom portion of the form to you to be brought to the convention. Send no money with this delegate form. Everyone, including delegates and alternates, must complete a separate registration form, including fees that should be mailed to the convention chairperson.

As always, enjoy life to the fullest. Get out and exercise to the fullest extent possible. Take care of yourself.

- Larry Cunningham
Federation President

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Email Address Changes

In order for NARFE to be able to send you Action Alerts and urgent notifications using the Global Electronic Messaging System (GEMS), they need your email address. To be sure that your email address is listed correctly in your member profile, send it along with your name to GEMS@narfetn.org.

It will only be used for official NARFE-related messages.

Region X Vice President Martin outlines goals during his term

This is my first report to you as Region X Vice President. Although elected at the Grand Rapids convention in September, my appointment was not effective until November 1, 2010. As my first printed word in this position, I want to thank you for your support. My wife Gail and I had a great time attending the conventions of the five federations in Region X, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Virginia. I plan to work very hard during the next two years proving to you that your support was justified.

My good friend Bill Austin, from North Carolina, was also a candidate for this office. He has been a leader in NARFE for many years. I appreciate all of the things he has accomplished in the various positions he has held, including Region X Vice President and Vice President of our wonderful organization – NARFE – the only organization whose purpose is to protect the earned benefits of the Active and Retired Federal Employees and their surviving spouses. Bill Austin has a commendable record. I am honored to have been elected to serve with Bill as my opponent. My thanks to Bill Austin for the professional campaign he conducted.

During my term, I plan to work with the five Region X Federation Presidents to improve our performance in membership retention and recruitment, national legislation activities and our public relations activities. I hope to establish region-wide groups working on these three major areas, starting with the National Legislation Federation Chairs – setting up an internet group where these folks can bounce ideas off each other to enhance and improve their performance. Following that, I hope to do the same with Federation Membership Chairs and then Public Relations Chairs. As we progress through the coming year, I'll report to you on successes and any failures – and I hope there are very, very few failures.

One major effort I am planning for August 2011 is the President's Conference, held in Kentucky. My aim is to increase attendance at this conference by finding ways to subsidize it, thereby reducing expenses to the individual chapters and federations – more on this in the next newsletter.

Our concern now has to be what happens during the next congress. The President has al-

ready decided to deny any increase in pay for active employees for the next two years - the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform has recommended a three-year freeze. The commission has also made recommendations on the FEBHP, Medicare, changing from the last three to the last five years for calculating an annuity and even changing the formula for COLAs. These are the major changes recommended for consideration for the federal employee family. If you would like an internet copy of the report or an extract, send me an email to narfe2065@hughes.net, and I'll send you a pdf copy by return email. Please pay attention to messages from NARFE – NewsWatch, Legislative Updates and GEMS messages calling for us to contact our representatives on specific issues. You will receive these important, timely messages if you are on GEMS.

If you do not presently receive GEMS, you can sign up by going to www.narfe.org and clicking on Membership then Update Your Record. You will need to enter your membership number (it's on the address label of your NARFE magazine) and your birth date. Then, enter your email address. Your email address will not be shared with anyone outside NARFE regardless of what you may have heard. By sharing your email address with NARFE, you will be certain to receive critical notices regarding your earned benefits and actions the Legislative Department and our NARFE officers are asking you to take. It is important that we be vigilant regarding actions congress may be planning that will affect our earned benefits.

Please feel free to contact me with any comments or questions – I represent you. I can be reached by email at narfe2065@hughes.net or by phone at 540-872-3345.

- William F. (Bill) Martin
Region X Vice President



Obama needs reminder that federal employees are not the problem

By the time you read this, Thanksgiving, Christmas and other holidays will have come and gone. 2011- Who would believe. Now, I will have to learn to write this new year on my checks, correspondence, and I am sure I will inadvertently write 1996 on some. That was a good year.

In my last article, I asked for your help in obtaining emails so they could be shared with NARFE Headquarters, and you will receive GEMS messages, legislative alerts directly, and you will be kept informed. While it has not yet happened, there is talk of "electronic membership." This will only work if we have your emails.

Your response has been tremendous. I am most appreciative. Some of you do not have computers, but you were kind enough to write and say thanks. Some are already on the NARFE email address list and others want to be. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your positive response.

Our NARFE State Convention is coming up in April. The Hermitage-Donelson Chapter is the host, and they are working very hard to have everything ready. Yours truly is in charge of making

reservations for the "General Jackson Boat Ride" and Grand Ole Opry tickets.

Do not drop your membership in NARFE. We need members more than ever. At the moment, President Obama has proposed a two-year freeze on the salaries of federal employees. We must remind the President and our elected congressmen and senators that federal employees are not the cause of our terrible deficit. Federal employees have gone to work every day doing the very best job they know. **They are not the problem.** Please let everyone you know in our federal employee family, they must join NARFE. Membership is power. We have some rough days ahead.

Thanks to all of you for your participation and staying involved. That is what it is all about.

- Carey Frazier
Past Federation President

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Chapter presidents encouraged to nominate service officers for award

NARFE's Service Officer Award Program, now in its fourth year, is about recognizing all of NARFE's chapter service officers and rewarding those individuals who have demonstrated exceptional dedication and assistance to fellow members, chapters and the larger organization.

Any current active chapter service officer, **except prior winners**, can be nominated. Federation service officers are not eligible unless they also serve as a chapter service officer. Only the chapter president, or an individual temporarily serving as chapter president in cases where the position of president is vacant, can nominate his or her chapter's service officer for the award.

Your written nomination can be as short or as long as you wish, but it should give enough information about the nominee for the selection committee to make a fair assessment of the individual.

Provide a short background on the individual being nominated, such as how long the individual has been a NARFE member and how long they have been a service officer.

Make sure you include specific information on the individual's achievements while serving as a service officer. For instance if you keep track of the number of individuals the nominee has helped, make sure you provide it. Also write specifically **about a significant instance(s)** where the nominee did something to help a member that resulted in a good outcome. **Nominations that do not include such examples will not be considered.**

You can mail written nominations to NARFE at 606 N. Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314, fax to (703)838-7782, or email dsnell@NARFE.org. The deadline to submit nominations is January 15, 2011.

For additional guidelines and information on nominating your chapter's service officer, contact your chapter president or me at (571) 483-1269.

- David B. Snell, Director
Retirement Benefits Service Department

DELEGATE FORM (Top Portion-mail to Federation Secretary)**2011 NARFE STATE CONVENTION- APRIL 17, 18, 19, 2011***Please print or type:*

Chapter No: _____ Chapter Name: _____ Location: _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Delegate _____ Alternate _____ Proxy for Chapter _____

I wish to serve on the following committee: Membership _____ Legislation _____ Public Relations _____

Service Officer Committee _____ Rules _____ Nomination _____ Alzheimer _____ Resolutions _____

Constitution & Bylaws _____ Credentials _____ Financial Ways & Means and Audit _____ PAC _____

Time & Place _____ Ballot & Teller _____

Signature of Chapter Secretary _____

-----*Cut delegate form in two separate pieces*-----**DELEGATE FORM (Bottom Portion-bring to the Convention)****2011 NARFE STATE CONVENTION- APRIL 17, 18, 19, 2011***Please print or type:*

Chapter No: _____ Chapter Name: _____ Location: _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Delegate _____ Alternate _____ Proxy for Chapter _____

Signature of Chapter Secretary _____

Instructions:

If you plan to attend the Convention as a delegate or alternate fill out both the top and bottom portion; Chapter Secretary must sign. Leave blank the "Proxy for Chapter" Please return top half to the Federation Secretary, Lynda LeMay, 1608 Hunt Lane, Pleasant View, TN 37146. The Delegate will carry the bottom portion to the Convention and present to Credentials Committee.

If no one from your Chapter will attend, please find someone from another chapter who will serve as your proxy. The name, address of the person serving as proxy should appear above and the "Proxy for Chapter" should have an "X". The Chapter Secretary should still sign. The top half should be mailed as outlined above and the bottom half sent to and carried by the proxy holder to the Convention. If there is any questions, please call Larry Cunningham at (865) 933-0229.

This form is also available on the TN Federation website: narfetn.org, click on Library.

Secure your future as a federal retiree

By the time you read this, you will have gone through yet another holiday season. I hope it brought good tidings to you and your family. In a few homes there was less cheer as loved ones were taken from them during the year. Our hearts still go out to the Henderson family.

A quick look back to 2010, before we move on to 2011. We had an election; a quite interesting one at that. It should have come as no surprise to anyone with the massive shift in party support.

Americans are pretty fed up with the foolish irresponsible spending that goes on in Washington and even in the state houses across the land. Our own organization has some serious decisions to confront in the financial arena.

We have several new faces on Capitol Hill. These "new kids on the block" need to be informed and quickly as to the many issues they will confront. That is where you come in. Each and every NARFE member should take a moment to contact (email, phone call, letter to district office – not D.C.) their respective member of congress and both senators on NARFE's position regarding legislative issues. If you need information on how to address these, consult your NARFE magazine or www.NARFE.org.

With members of congress, they will have campaign debts to retire. That is where NARFE-PAC comes in. We desperately need your supporting PAC contributions as early as possible in the year so we can make an immediate impact on

these new congressmen.

We have nearly 4,300 members, yet only 808 have contributed in 2010 for a total of \$20,684 through September 30. That amounts to an average of \$25.60 per contributor, which is less than \$5 per member. We can do better! I urge each and everyone of you to write a check today to secure your future as a federal retiree. Please send your PAC contribution now.

A final note: make plans now to attend the Tennessee Federation Convention to be held April 17-19, 2011 at the Radisson Hotel at Opryland in Nashville. You will have a wonderful time. Details are elsewhere in this newsletter.

- Larry Minniear
TN PAC Chairman



PAC Chairman Larry Minniear and Sen. Bob Corker



From the family of

Penny Henderson

Our hearts have been touched and our spirits lifted by the countless expressions of kindness and concern in relation to loss of my wife and our mother, Penny Henderson.

We wish to thank you especially for providing the lovely floral arrangement in her memory. It was a fitting tribute to her to be remembered with an item of such beauty, and she would have been honored by your consideration.

We will recall your remembrance with sincere gratitude, thanksgiving and love.

Larry Henderson
Sammy & Anna Henderson Ogburn
Audra Henderson

Address Changes

Names and addresses for newsletter distribution come directly from

NARFE'S National Office.

To correct your address, please contact the National Office at (800) 456-8410.

We need to stand together

By the time you read this newsletter in January 2011, the NCFRR (National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform) will have released their recommendations to congress and the president. The advance releases by the committee chairmen and others provided the desired effect by generating discussion and various reactions from the groups affected. NARFE headquarters, and we as members, protested the proposed cuts to our retirement benefits and to active employee wages. The committee recommendations should reflect or at least consider these reactions.

Now the big challenge begins. The message is the same as before: The threat is real, and we need to stand together to protect our earned rights as federal employees and retirees. Our legislative section in Washington will provide us with the road map, but we need to take the action ourselves. Remember, we are all members of the legislative committee of NARFE because protecting our benefits is the basis for our existence and the reason our organization came into being.

What can you do? The answer is easy, but it will take some effort from all of us. Begin by learning all you can about what is happening, become involved in your local chapter (this is easy when you discover you are working with others who want the same thing you do), and follow up with your legislator when issues arise concerning our earned rights.

Finally, NARFE accomplishes a lot more and has a lot more influence if more people participate and we have more members. So, plan to attend our convention in Nashville on April 17-19, and like I said in a past newsletter, you will have a good time with some really sharp people who want the same things you want. And remember, whenever you can, promote NARFE to active employees. Our organization represents both, but some employees still do not know this. **Come to the convention and recruit, recruit, recruit!!!**

- James Glenn
Federation Legislative Chairman

Henderson thanks supporters

As I began writing this article on November 22, 2010, my thoughts immediately turned to my dear wife Penny who would have celebrated her 60th birthday today. Although the editor of the Federation Newsletter kindly noted our loss in the November edition, many of you may not know that Penny was taken from us suddenly and unexpectedly as a result of injuries sustained in an automobile accident on September 24, 2010, near Forsyth, Mont. I mention it at this time and in this place to let all of our NARFE friends know that the many expressions of love and caring for Penny and the outpouring of support for me and my family through cards, telephone calls, visits, flowers, gifts and e-mails have lifted our spirits and brightened our days during this extremely difficult time. All acts of kindness and compassion from the entire "NARFE family" have been very much appreciated.

If the Christmas season has slipped by without a visit, telephone call or card to someone in need, it is not too late. The time is always right to remember our friends and fellow NARFE members – especially our less abled senior folks. Just a few minutes of your time could really brighten someone's day.

According to the Federation Policy Manual, the January edition of the newsletter should contain "convention data" and I am sure you will see that in abundance. I would just like to mention one item concerning the convention that often gets very little attention. According to the Federation Constitution and Bylaws, Article VI, Section 2, "All chapters will submit a list (not credentials) of the names of their delegates who will attend the State Convention to the Federation President not later than January 15. The submitting of this list will facilitate the committee assignments at the State Convention. The list of names of delegates may be changed by the chapter where it is deemed necessary." As you can see, this is a nonbinding list and does not create a financial obligation, so the sooner the information can be submitted to our Federation President the better. The delegate form may also be use to provide the necessary information. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage everyone to begin making plans now to attend our annual Federation Convention being held April 17-19, 2010, at the Radisson Hotel at Opryland

(Continued on next page)

Henderson (continued)

in Nashville. Your participation is essential to make this the best attended convention in federation history.

This is an ideal time to express the gratitude of the federation to all of our current members for maintaining their membership in NARFE and to all of our chapter officers for their dedicated service the past year. It is also a good time to express our appreciation to the chapter officers elected to serve for the current year. So, whether you are a newly elected officer serving for the first time or filling one of those "lifetime appointments" with which many of us are all too familiar, thank you for your commitment to serve NARFE in the position(s) for which you were elected. A note to newly elected chapter presidents, NARFE Form F-7, Chapter Officers Roster, should be submitted annually to the National Office by January 1.

It was a pleasure to work with the members of the Federation Executive Board last year as well as the officers and members of the chapters in West Tennessee. Your support, suggestions, participation, generosity, and cooperation are very much appreciated. I hope that everyone had a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

- James L. (Larry) Henderson
Federation 2nd Vice-President
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Whitney describes recovery from knee replacement surgery

I did not have an article for our last newsletter; however, I had a fairly good excuse for not getting it submitted. I had double knee replacement surgery on 24 September, and right now I'm doing GREAT only being two months out. I spent six days in the hospital and was admitted to the Clarksville Nursing & Rehab Center on 30 September. After spending two weeks there, I started in-home therapy that lasted for three weeks. Now I am in outpatient therapy, and all the medical folks say I am doing amazing. I think my outpatient therapy will probably only last until around the 16th of December when I meet with my surgeon, and he will more than likely release me, and I will go back to the YMCA and continue my exercises there. The amazing thing about this whole ordeal is that I NEVER had any pain whatsoever! Yes, both legs were VERY large and stiff, and I couldn't walk without help, but the amazing thing is that they didn't hurt. The folks at Clarksville Nursing & Rehab really put me through the exercises, and this is the key to a quick recovery. After the two weeks there, I was walking on my own, occasionally using a cane, but in no time I discarded it as it wasn't doing that much good, and I really didn't need it. I got home from the Rehab Center on a Thursday, in-home therapy showed up on Friday, and on Saturday I had on loose fitting

jeans and my BOOTS! The best thing was when I could get my boots on and walk around the area and not restricted to a room. I started driving after being home just a couple of weeks, and right now I'm doing pretty much whatever I want to do (within reason). My knees are still swollen some and a little stiff, but they seem to get better with each day. All in all, I'm VERY pleased with the operation and would do it again in a heartbeat. Right now I can bend over and "squat" easier than I could before, so it definitely is an improvement and success for me.

We had an increase in our membership for the first time in four months. For the month of October, we had an overall gain of 7 members, giving us a new grand total of 4,293 members for our great state of Tennessee. NARFE National also had an overall gain of 266 members, yielding a grand total of 299,724 members. This is the first time the national totals have been below 300,000; maybe this positive trend will continue and our overall membership will start to increase.

- JC Whitney
TN Federation Membership Chair
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We're on the web!
www.narfetn.org

2011 NARFE State Convention

Radisson Hotel
at Opryland

April 17-19, 2011

Hosted by the
Hermitage/Donelson
Chapter

Protecting the Future for Retired and Current Federal Employees

Ten Tips for a Safe Winter Season



1. Get vaccinated annually against the flu.
2. Ask your doctor about the vaccine which protects against pneumonia.
3. Check the lighting in your house. Use night lights, and don't have loose extension cords lying around – tape them to the floor.
4. Check your rugs. Make sure they are not wrinkled or torn in a way that can trip you up as you walk. Use padding or special tape underneath them to prevent from sliding.
5. In the bathroom, have mats inside and outside the tub to keep you from slipping on a wet surface. If you need them, install grab bars inside the tub, and always check the temperature of the water before getting into the tub.
6. Continue your exercise regimen – indoors if possible. However, avoid strenuous exercise like shoveling snow.
7. Maintain your diet and a good level of hydration.
8. Make sure your smoke alarms and carbon-monoxide alarms are working.
9. Wear appropriate footwear. Comfortable shoes with anti-slip soles will help you navigate icy streets.
10. Have a programmable phone with emergency numbers entered. Another good idea for older persons living alone is a personal emergency response system – a device worn around the neck or on a bracelet, which can summon help if needed. Wear this device all the time, and use it.

TENNESSEE FEDERATION OF CHAPTERS, NARFE

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