

USS Coral Sea (CV-43)
John Steel, Artist

War Dogs

At the height of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the U.S. military had a force of roughly 2,500 military working dogs.

-2eyeswatching.com



The Prez Says ...



Larry Minniear

By the time you read this we will be digging into 2016. What will this new year bring? It will bring whatever you want it to, provided you push hard enough to make it happen.

On the NARFE scene, members are inquiring along the same lines. The answer is the same. There have been a number of rather radical changes proposed via the Strategic Plan. Which ones will actually come to fruition? That will be up to the members. All members need to take a serious look at the proposals (they are on the NARFE website) and determine which are best for the longevity of our organization and which ones you as an individual could support.

We will be discussing many of these at length at the upcoming Federation Convention to be held April 25-26 at the MainStay Suites in Pigeon Forge. I strongly urge as many of you to attend as possible so you can be informed of which direction your organization is heading.

Do you want to see the Federation go away? Do you want chapter membership optional? How do you want your national board elected? Do you prefer a non-federal employee manage our national office? How much should we pay this position? Should the regions be reduced? What should the

role of a Congressional District Liaison/Leader be?

All of these questions and more will be discussed at the Federation Convention. We need to have a clear and unified response for your delegates to take to the national convention in Reno, Nev., in August.

On a political front, the political parties should be well on their way to a nominee by the time of our convention. This appears to be ramping up for a wild and crazy nomination season. How do you feel about the candidates? What do you know about the candidates? Remember, you will never have the ideal candidate (according to your individual beliefs). What you have to decide is which one comes closest to your core beliefs. Do not get misled by all of the media hype. The media would very much like to lead you into voting a certain way. You have a privilege few people across the globe have. You have the privilege to select your leadership. Please get out and vote! Vote in the primary (early voting starts February 10; election day is March 1) and again in November.

Speaking of leadership change, the turn of a new year brings in a sometimes new, sometimes old slate of officers at the chapter level. I have from time to time tried to encourage chapters to seek new people to fill these leadership roles. Many chapters have a very good succession plan; many other have nothing in place to bring in fresh

Continued on page 2

Tennessee Federation Officers

President

Larry Minniear
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First Vice-President

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The Prez Says ... (continued)

ideas to the chapter leadership team. Your officers are in place for 2016. I would highly suggest you use this next year to mentor some people to accept the challenges of chapter leadership. If you continue to elect the same people, the chapter gets stale and the membership loses interest. Everyone who attends meetings with any regularity should have an active role.

We are hoping to try some new things with our newsletter. However, we need your input and participation. We need every chapter to contribute with news and photos (digital) of local meetings and events. We are also planning on adding advertising to help offset the cost of the newsletter. If you can assist with contacting a local business for a contribution (Max and the Board will set the rates) and business card or artwork, please forward these to Max, and we will get this started.

Finally, an organization is only as strong as its membership. It makes no

difference what our national, federation, or chapter structure looks like if our membership numbers continue to decline. When someone leaves their position in the workplace, what happens? In most cases they are replaced; either through promotion or new hire. When an organization hires, they need to recruit for a hiring pool. The same thing applies to NARFE. We need to recruit to replace our members who can no longer be with us. It may be difficult, but it is not impossible. It does require one thing. You must ASK a potential member to join. They will not learn about our organization through osmosis, nor will they sign up automatically.

Best Wishes for a Successful 2016!

-Larry Minniear
Tennessee Federation President
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Reminder to submit delegate forms



Marilyn Evans

Please include me when you submit your F-7, especially if you haven't done that in the past. It really helps to know where to send information as I receive it to those who need to know.

Finally, another reminder to submit your Delegate Forms for the State Federation Convention as soon as possible. As

First, I hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas and wish you all an exceptionally Happy New Year. Next, "thank you" to all who have submitted their F-7 reports already. I realize that many Chapters will hold your elections at their January meetings.

mentioned before, the sooner you let us know you are coming and what committees and training you would like made available to you, the better and easier planning will be. This will be beneficial to everyone.

I'm looking forward to seeing you all at the 2016 Convention this April. Your presence is needed for a strong NARFE organization. A concerted effort is being made to revamp the Convention's agenda to make things more cohesive and move along in a more logical order. I think you'll like the new look.

-Marilyn Evans
Tennessee Federation Secretary
808 Sandburg Place
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Several NARFE victories reported in 2015



Rhonda Mooney

I hope everyone had a good 2015 and that you will have a great 2016! NARFE worked hard for us in 2015 and will continue to do so this year. There are several NARFE victories from 2015 that come to mind. NARFE successfully fought against the 52 percent Medicare Part B premium increase. There is an increase in premiums for most federal retirees who do not receive Social Security benefits (those not held harmless), but it is substantially less than the 52 percent originally proposed.

NARFE was instrumental in getting the self plus one option for our health insurance. I switched from family to self plus one and to be honest the savings were not as much as I had hoped for but I am saving \$15 per month. Just three months of those savings more than pays for my NARFE dues for an entire year.

Following the announcements of two OPM data breaches, NARFE has stayed in constant communication with OPM officials to ensure NARFE members have the information they need to protect their financial well being. NARFE has also worked to increase identity theft protection provided to individuals impacted by the data breaches at OPM.

Please make plans to attend our Federation Convention in Pigeon Forge in April. There is a lot going on with NARFE now, and your input on what you would like to see NARFE look like in the future is very important. And you will also get to visit with friends from across the state and have an opportunity to make even more friends.

Hope to see you in Pigeon Forge!

*-Rhonda Mooney
Federation 1st Vice President
rmooney@narfetn.org
731 267 2336*

*An SH-60F "Seahawk" helicopter from the USS John F Kennedy (CV-67).
Photo credit: Photographer's Mate 1st Class Jim Hampshire.*



Tennessee Federation Officers (Continued)

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Membership Chairman

Vacant

Immediate Past President

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NARFE Appointed Positions

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Network Coordinator

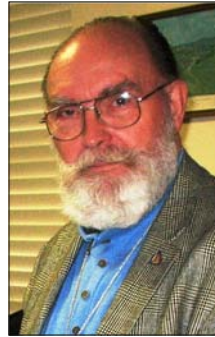
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Look, there's a squirrel!

Reaching retirement age has a number of benefits, one of which is that there isn't anything left to be learned the hard way. Almost anything that comes up, we've been there, done that, got the t-shirt. One of the things I've had time to practice is my ability to focus on one thing at a time. Being a creative type, trained as a photojournalist, my mind is usually tracking three or four things at a time. My equally creative wife, the artist, calls that the "squirrel reflex".

That's where the fellow is talking along and suddenly stops to blurt out, "Look, there's a squirrel!" And everything else is forgotten.

Now one way to improve both one's concentration and effectiveness, the experts tell us, is by using lists to sort out and prioritize what lies before us. If you've never operated that way, you should try it. You sit down and list all the things you need to do, need to buy, need to accomplish, all the people you need to speak with and why. The you pick out the top five and number them one to five in accordance with which are most important.



Ed Evans

Then you have before you all that is important to you, for that day, and the sequence in which they should be accomplished. That's how things get done and not forgotten or lost in the shuffle of the day.

This year 2016 is a sparkly, brand new year, not at all like last year. We're not even completely aware of the opportunities and challenges waiting for us there, yet. But we each have a few things we would

like to accomplish before this year is out, meetings and conventions we would like to attend, a few triumphs we would like to be in on. That's where your list comes in. Set priorities.

Now, if we could just get our legislators to make a few lists in our favor, that might work to our benefit. Seems like in the middle of doing the people's business, somebody's always yelling out, "Look, there's a squirrel!"

-Ed Evans

*2nd Federation Vice-President
808 Sandburg Place
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Phone: 615-872-8978
Cell: 615-429-0342*



USS Seawolf (SSN-575)

Millennials to be the next generation of retirees

It is the consensus of opinion among the widespread NARFE leadership that during this coming year of elections and change that the activity level of our Chapter membership, our teams, is going to become more important than ever, and recruiting doubly so. With that in mind, I've collected some reading for you which addresses teams, how to keep them, how to motivate them, and how to let them know how important each member is to the team.

It is a general assumption that most teams underperform, but that it is possible to beat the odds. And that's what we need to do, beat the odds.

We are all parts of different teams with one goal, to take good care of one another by ensuring our hard-earned retirement funds are not poached and do not wither away simply because predatory politicians do not have to live within our restricted budgets. But to reach that goal, we are going to need the commitment and participation of much more of our membership than we have seen so far.

Please read through these and determine if there are some nuggets of human resources gold you can use to benefit your group.

First, here are some questions that your group might discuss:

What are your processes for welcoming new members to your club or association?

How are your retention and renewal rates? What is working or not working in your opinion?

What is the feedback you receive from new members?

How or do you collect feedback from new members?

Second, here are some tips on how we can recruit and hold onto those of the next generation of retirees, the Millennials.

Engaging New Millennials; Best Practices *By Jason Shim*

Jason is the Associate Director of Digital Strategy and Alumni Relations at Pathways to Education. He also teaches Digital Marketing at George Brown College in Ontario,

Canada.

Jason has over 10 years in the non-profit and academic sectors helping organizations stay ahead of the technology curve. Through his work with Pathways to Education, an organization that helps low-income high school graduates transition into post-secondary education, Jason gained valuable insight into the underlying principles which motivate and engage today's youth.

Key Challenges from Participants

It's difficult to retain Millennials past an event or short term opportunity. Communication styles are evolving dramatically, making it hard to reach this generation. Understanding what motivates Millennials to volunteer what messages reach them best.

Solutions and Ideas To Be Discussed

Create connections. Creating bonds between Millennials and other members/volunteers of your organization can help to increase their loyalty. An easy example is to invite Millennials to your Facebook Group where they can keep connecting with other members after an event is over.

Discover their desires. Find out what your Millennial volunteers enjoy doing and find an appropriate position that plays to their talents. Not only will they value their experience more, but they'll come back to your organization to keep developing their skills.

Stay on top of technology. While the motivations behind joining an organization have stayed the same over generations, Millennials communicate in different ways. In order to communicate with them where they're at, you'll need to stay on top of technological and social trends. Try creating short video messages, a Facebook group, an Instagram account or send updates through text messages.

NARFE Appointed Positions (Continued)

Service Officer

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State Legislative Officer

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jglenn@narfetn.org

Public Relations Officer

Vacant

Special Project Officer

Vacant

The Back Nine Holes by John Powers

You know, time has a way of moving quickly and catching you unaware of the passing years. It seems just yesterday that I was young, just married and embarking on my new life with my mate. Yet in a way, it seems like eons ago, and I wonder where all the years went. I know that I lived them all. I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams.

But, here it is, the back nine of my life and it catches me by surprise. How did I get here so fast? Where did the years go and where did my youth go?

I remember well seeing older people through the years and thinking that those older people were years away from me, and that I was only on the first hole and the back nine was so far off that I could not fathom it or imagine fully what it would be like.

But, here it is, my friends are retired and getting gray. They move slower, and I see an older person now. Some are in better and some worse shape than me, but I see the great change. Not like the ones that I remember who were young and vibrant, but like me, their age is beginning to show, and we are now those older folks that we used to see and never thought we'd become.

Each day now, I find that just getting a shower is a real target for the day! And taking a nap is not a treat anymore, it's mandatory! Cause if I don't on my own free will, I just fall asleep where I sit!

And so, now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do things that I wish I had done but never did!! But, at least I know, that though I'm on the back nine, and I'm not sure how long it will last. This I know, that when it's over on this earth, it's over. A new adventure will begin! Yes, I have regrets. There are things I wish I hadn't done, things I should have done, but indeed, there are many things I'm happy to have done. It's all in a lifetime.

So, if you're not on the back nine yet...let me remind you, that it will be here faster than you think. So, whatever you would like to accomplish in your life, please do it quickly! Don't put things off too long!! Life goes by quickly. So, do what you can today, as you can never be sure whether you're on the back nine or not!

You have no promise that you will see all the seasons of your life, so live for today and say all the

things that you want your loved ones to remember, and hope that they appreciate and love you for all the things that you have done for them in all the years past!!

"Life" is a gift to you. The way you live your life is your gift to those who come after. Make it a fantastic one. Live it well! Enjoy today! Do something fun! Be happy! Have a great day! Remember, "It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver. Live happy in 2016!

Lastly, consider this:

- Your kids are becoming you, but your grandchildren are perfect!
- Going out is good. Coming home is better!
- You forget names, but it's okay because some people forgot they even knew you!
- You realize you're never going to be really good at anything like golf.
- The things you used to care to do, you aren't as interested in anymore, but you really do care that you aren't as interested.
- You sleep better on a lounge chair with the TV on than in bed. It's called "pre-sleep."
- You miss the days when everything worked with just an on and off switch.
- You tend to use more 4-letter words: "what?"..."when?"
- You notice everything they sell in stores is "sleeveless."
- What used to be freckles are now liver spots.
- Everybody whispers.
- You have three sizes of clothes in your closet, two of which you will never wear.
- Old is good in some things: old songs, old movies, and best of all, old friends!

Stay well, old friend! Send this on to other old friends, and let them laugh in agreement! It's not what you gather, but what you scatter that tells what kind of life you have lived.

Today is the oldest you'll ever be, so enjoy this day while it lasts. And may the Lord take a liking to you.

Chapter 1576 Donelson



Left: NARFE Federation 2nd VP Ed Evans presents Carla Perry with her Past Chapter President's pin, at the Donelson Chapter's 2015 Christmas party, following a successful year as President of Chapter 1576. Hers was a terrific performance maintaining, leading and projecting the Chapter forward.



Chapter 108

Right: Don Mitchell (Treasurer); Virginia Moats (1st Vice Pres.); Santa (aka Jim Cooke, President); Vicki Hunkin (Secretary); Ronnie Born (Legislative Chair); Larry Minniear (Federation President installing officers)

Chapter 227 Nashville



Above L-R: Glenn Turner, PAC; Mary Lee Fielder, Sunshine Chair; Pat Hagerty, Treasurer; Betty Waters, Secretary; Carol Allen, Vice-President; Norris Alderson, President; Joyce Moore, Chaplain; Leo Baghdoian, Vice-President, Don Dotson, Legislative/Membership Chair.



Chapter 152 Athens

Above L-R: Larry Minniear, Federation President; Debbie Cardin, Vice-President; Karen Matheny, Secretary; Bill Garrett, President; Mary Reece, Treasurer.

NARFE members send message to Congress



Jim Glenn

NARFE had a remarkable year in 2015. Early in the year the House came out with a proposal to cut various federal benefits by \$280 billion, which included employees' contribution increases, TSP "G" fund cuts, FEHB cuts, among other things. The Senate proposal included some of the same items, but only to the tune of \$170 billion. It didn't look good for us.

Many more members of NARFE responded by sending the message to Congress that we had already contributed our fair share. How much this helped, we will never know for sure, but by the end of the year, none of those proposals were implemented. The highway bill was passed, a budget agreement without the sequestration reductions applied, and the really unfair Medicare provisions were changed in time to avoid sharp increases for a few feds. Thanks to all NARFE members who contacted their representative to voice our concerns.

Congress passed and President Obama signed the \$1.1 trillion omnibus bill that funds the government through October 1, 2016. The omnibus bill allocates money for federal agencies for fiscal year 2016 but also delays the "Cadillac tax" until 2020. In addition, the bill includes ten years of identity theft protection for all individuals affected by the OPM two data breaches and liability protection from \$1 million to \$5 million. One other item of interest to NARFE members was the inclusion to allow residents of states without an income tax to deduct sales tax from their federal taxes.

What does all this mean to NARFE members? The good news is that we made it through 2015 and through to Octo-

ber 1, 2016, with no major cuts to our federal benefits. In my opinion, it appears Congress is on the right track working together to accomplish some of the higher goals. The new speaker of the House, Paul Ryan, is following through with his promise of compromise and working together to do what Congress is supposed to do.

Does this necessarily mean this is good for NARFE and we are home free? I think NARFE has benefited in the past in the fact that Congress was not passing anything significant simply because if they did pass something it would have been a reduction for us in the long run. A quote from Lamar Alexander, who along with Chuck Fleischmann and Bob Corker voted for the \$1.15 trillion omnibus bill, mentioned now we need to look at the "other" two-thirds of the budget (mandatory entitlement spending) which is "sky-rocketing out of control." Again, in my opinion, I feel we will still be targets next year when they start looking for ways to reduce the federal budget.

The Tennessee State Convention will be April 25-26 in Pigeon Forge at the MainStay Suites. If you are ever going to a convention, this is the one. It is a great location and a perfect place to visit. Send in your registration form today! It is the best way to learn what is going on with our benefits and get to know others who want the same thing you do in protecting those benefits. And it is the first step to take in doing your part by learning all you can, using NARFE headquarters as a resource when getting the word out to our legislators about our concerns, and protecting what we have all worked hard to achieve.

*-Jim Glenn,
Legislative Chair
931-473-5074
jaglenn@blomand.net*

Chapter 2016



L-R: John Rampy, Larry Bowers, Dale Bradley, Kathryn Howse, Bob Crook, Bob Walker Jr., and Tennessee Federation President Larry Minniear.

War dogs are pretty darn special



In addition to all the fine qualities that dogs have as team members, dogs can do even more. They have visual and olfactory sensory abilities that are literally superhuman, can go where a soldier cannot, and can often subdue or intimidate a foe more quickly with non-lethal force. Because of these traits, they have been successfully trained for many military duties and roles by modern armies for a century.

- uswardogs.org



Convention program advertising space for sale

Advertising space in our convention program has been a huge success in the past, and we are offering that space again for the 2016 Convention in Pigeon Forge. The advertising funds help to defray the cost of the convention. The size of the program and the advertising costs will be the same as last year. The size of the program will be 5" X 8" and the cost will be \$100 for a full page, \$50 for a half page and \$25 for Business Card size (1/4 page). Advertising may be purchased by sending your camera-ready advertisement or Business Card to Clarence Nash, 1120 Elsborn Rd., Maryville, TN 37801-9330 with a check made payable

to NARFE Chapter 204. Clarence (Joey) can be reached at (865) 982-1268 or mowmanjoe@gmail.com. All advertising requests must be received by April 1, 2016.

Advertising is not limited to NARFE members, so if you are aware of any company that may be interested, please furnish them with the information. Your support in this endeavor is very much appreciated.

-Larry Cunningham
lcunningham@narfetn.org
(865) 933-0229

DELEGATE FORM

2016 NARFE State Convention - April 25-26, 2016

Top Portion – mail to:

Merilyn Evans, Federation Secretary, 808 Sandburg Place, Nashville, TN 37214-4051

Please print or type:

Chapter No: _____ Chapter Name: _____ Location: _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

(Check One) Delegate _____ Alternate _____ Proxy _____ for Chapter # _____

I wish to serve on the following committees:

Membership _____	Legislation _____	Credentials _____	Service Officer _____
Public Relations _____	Rules _____	Nomination _____	Resolutions _____
Constitution & Bylaws _____	Financial Ways & Means and Audit _____	NARFE-PAC _____	
Alzheimer _____	Time & Place _____		

Would you like to attend officer training at the Convention? _____

Signature of Chapter President or Secretary _____

-----Cut delegate form in two separate pieces-----

DELEGATE FORM

2016 NARFE State Convention - April 25-26, 2016

Bottom Portion – Delegate to bring to the Convention and deliver to Credential Committee.

Please print or type:

Chapter No: _____ Chapter Name: _____ Location: _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

(Check One) Delegate _____ Alternate _____ Proxy _____ for Chapter # _____

Signature of Chapter President or Secretary _____

Committees and Training I signed up for: _____

INSTRUCTIONS:

If you plan to attend the Convention as a delegate or alternate, fill out both the top and bottom portions; Chapter President or Secretary must sign. Leave blank the “Proxy for Chapter”. Please return top half to the Federation Secretary, **Merilyn Evans, 808 Sandburg Place, Nashville TN 37214-4051**. 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 and address of the person serving as proxy should appear above and the “Proxy for Chapter” should have your Chapter number. The Chapter President or Secretary should still sign. The top half should be mailed as outlined above to the Federation Secretary and the bottom half sent to your proxy for them to carry to the Convention and present to the Credentials Committee. If there are any questions, please call Larry Minniear at 423-875-5612 or Merilyn Evans at 615-872-8978.

2016 Convention Registration Form

60th Federation Convention

Pigeon Forge TN

April 25-26, 2016

Hosted by Knoxville Chapter 204

Each delegate, alternate or Member should use a separate registration form and print or type information for self, Spouse and Guests. If additional space is needed for guests, please use the back of the form.

Chapter No. _____ Chapter Name _____ Location _____

Name _____ NARFE ID No. _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address _____

Spouse/Guest Name _____

CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY: Delegate Federation Officer National Officer Chapter Officer
Past Federation President Member

CONVENTION OPTIONS	SELF	SPOUSE/GUEST	FEE (Each)	TOTAL
Full Registration (Convention/Banquet)	_____	_____	\$55	_____
Convention Registration Only	_____	_____	\$25	_____
Banquet Only	_____	_____	\$30	_____
Late Fee (After April 01, 2016)	_____	_____	\$ 5	_____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

Submit registration forms as early as possible, but no later than April 1st to avoid the late charge.

Make Checks Payable to NARFE Chapter 204 and mail to: Clarence Nash, 1120 Elsborn Ridge Rd.,
Maryville, TN 37801-9330, Phone: (865) 982-1268 or email: mowmanjoe@gmail.com

Convention Location: Main Stay Suites, 410 Pine Mountain Rd., Pigeon Forge, TN. Phone: (865) 428-8350 or toll-free (888) 428-8350. Call the Main Stay Suites direct for reservations and mention NARFE to receive the convention rate of \$79 plus tax. THE CUTOFF DATE FOR RESERVATIONS AT THIS RATE IS MARCH 24, 2016. Directions: I-40, exit 407, south on SR66 to US441 to Pigeon Forge, turn right at traffic light #6 - Pine Mountain Rd. Hotel is ½ mile on right.

For More Information contact: Bill Bolt (865) 344-7094 or Larry Cunningham (865) 933-0229.

2016 Convention News

The 2016 Federation Convention in Pigeon Forge will have some significant changes that all members and guests need to be aware of. The Federation Executive Board, after listening to suggestions from delegates from previous conventions decided to change the starting time for the convention. The change will provide more time for convention business without being pressed for time. The opening ceremonies will start at 9 a.m. on Monday instead of Tuesday, and the convention will still end about the same time on Tuesday around noon. Those living outside the Pigeon Forge/Knoxville driving area will probably need to arrive on Sunday. We have 60 rooms blocked for Sunday as well as Monday at the MainStay Suites, and we may or may not be able to get more at the \$79 rate if those rooms are booked early. I would suggest that you book as early as possible.

There is a possibility that the 2016 Fed-

eration Convention could be the last one held in the State. One of the recommendations made by the Future of NARFE Committee (FON) was to abolish the federations and that could happen at the 2016 National Convention in Reno. Without federations, there would be no need to continue with the conventions.

We would love to have one of the largest attendances ever for a convention. April is a great time to be in the mountains of East Tennessee, especially in Pigeon Forge. All members and guests are invited. A registration form is printed in this issue of the newsletter. While it is fresh on your mind, complete the form, mail it in and make your reservations with the MainStay Suites at (865) 428-8350 or toll-free (888) 428-8350.

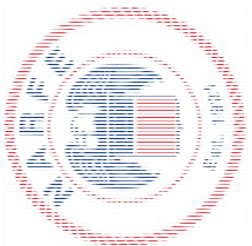
-Larry Cunningham
 lcunningham@narfetn.org
 (865) 933-0229



In Afghanistan a helicopter transports an IED-detecting Belgian Malinois named Oopey, sitting next to his handler, Air Force Staff Sgt.

-viralspell.com

NON-PROFIT ORG.
 U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
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