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### Federation Chapters:

Email pictures of what your Chapter is doing with names and descriptions to:

[Merilyn9716@aol.com](mailto:Merilyn9716@aol.com)

Deadline for the  
 January 2018 issue  
 December 15, 2018.

## The Prez Says ...



*Rhonda Mooney*

Our 2017 Federation Convention in Nashville was a great one! The Donelson chapter did an awesome job. The hotel was very nice and we were fortunate to have NARFE Legislative Director Jessica Klement as our keynote speaker. She is a dynamic speaker and provided a lot of timely and useful information. Other guests were Region X Vice President Bill Shackelford and Region X Alzheimer's Coordinator Donna Shackelford. They both shared a lot of good information. Our own Ed Evans did an outstanding presentation on "How to Set Your Chapter on Fire". Thank you to the convention committee, committee chairs, delegates, and members for making this a great convention. Also thank you to the Murfreesboro chapter for hosting the Hospitality Room.

I am honored and appreciate the opportunity to serve as your Federation President. I really enjoyed working with the west Tennessee chapters for the past four years and I am happy for this opportunity to continue working with the Federation Executive Board (FEB) as we serve

all the chapters and members in Tennessee. I would like to thank Larry Minniear for his service as our Federation President for the past two years. We have three new members on the FEB - Wayne Baker is our 2nd Vice President, Billy (B J) Godwin is our 3rd Vice President, and Yvonne Hamilton is our Membership Chair. We have not had anyone in the membership chair position for the past several years so I am excited that Yvonne has stepped up to serve in that position. Welcome to our new FEB members and thank you to our returning members for your continued service.

There is a lot happening in NARFE and we will do our best to keep you informed. If you have not already provided your email address to NARFE, please consider doing so. You can then opt to receive timely legislative updates from NARFE's Legislative Department and there are prepared letters on the website that you can send to your elected representatives. It will also be helpful when your chapter and the federation need to get information to you.

James Glenn mentioned some of the threats to our benefits in his article. We need to be vigilant and contact our elected officials and ask them to protect our hard earned benefits. It is even

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Tennessee Federation Officers

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## We're All in This Healthcare Maze Together

During the early, dangerous years of our nation's foundation, Benjamin Franklin was quoted as warning, "We must, indeed, all hang together or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately."

While the times are very different now, as my Galaxy S8 continually reminds me, yet there remains danger afoot for many of us.

American Federal retirees are moving into a very dangerous period, even now. Just how dangerous seems to depend upon which political party you belong to and support. Each has its dire expectations.

Even most of those who originally supported the Affordable Care Act, aka Obamacare, agree it has terminal problems. Here in Tennessee only one insurer is covering individual plans in most counties. And Tennessee's decision not to expand Medicare is a real problem to those needing hospital care.

A version of the American Health Care Act has been passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, but the Senate leaders have as well as said they will take it under advisement and write their own bill.

At least the new bill passing the House includes an \$8 billion high-risk pool for those with pre-existing conditions. That will be a lifesaver for millions of us.

Meanwhile, we the people, regardless of political leanings, we have accidents, come down with illnesses, and we need healthcare attention that will not financially crush us, making us homeless, putting us out on the street.

There has been discussion about alternatives such as a system where the government pays and controls all doctors, hospitals and medical decisions. If you think that will work, take time to talk to a military veteran. We already have that system through

the Veterans Administration. Be prepared for some disturbing stories.

There is also the faith-based system, which has been around for a while and seems to be expanding among religious groups. Basically, as friends and neighbors, you make medical decisions for and pay for one another.

Finally, there is the public market system which says that public need and availability will determine prices. But government is not involved except to guarantee equitable treatment to all.

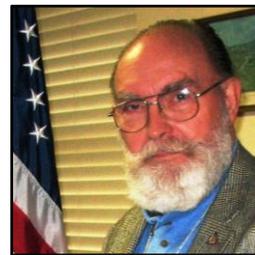
All these plans are still hovering over our heads like some big cloud formation and we have yet to learn if the result is rain or sunshine.

Most of this is not news to you. But what I suggest is that we who belong to NARFE rest in a most precipitous position to insure our members do not fall through the cracks. Of course, our first line of defense is the health plan with which we retired. But even some of these carriers are having to change fees and services.

But, most important, is that second line of defense – you. The chapter members are in a special position to check on one another, to share information about new and old healthcare programs. Two heads are always better than one when it comes to solving difficult situations.

I suggest chapter members close ranks with other members, especially those who are home-bound and can't get out. An active chapter telephone committee can work wonders through keeping keeping in touch with membership, helping where help is needed, and providing good counsel as needed.

*(Continued on page 4)*



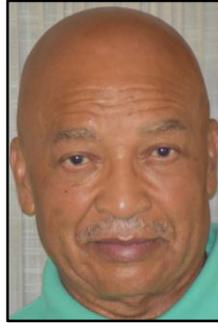
*Ed Evans*

## New 3rd Vice President Speaks at Chapter 870



I visited with the Clarksville Chapter 870 after the 61st Annual Convention to share in their committee reports.

I encouraged the chapter members present to choose NARFE and Chapter referring to the on-



*Billy J. Godwin*

line redacted renewal application notice. I also spoke concerning retention and recruiting.

The two members speaking are Mr. Joe Couch and Mrs. Merry Nell Wooten, giving their report from the committees they served on during the convention.

– *B.J. Godwin, Federation 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President*

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## Tennessee Federation Officers

*(Continued from Page 2)*

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(Continued from Page 3)

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## The Prez Says ...

(Continued from page 1)

more important now that we all work hard to recruit new members. The more members we have, the louder our voice will be heard on Capitol Hill. We also need to work hard to retain the members that we have. You may want to consider dues withholding - that is a way to save 15% on national dues and there is also a savings for multi-year renewals. I'm sure you will be hearing more from our new Membership Chair with ideas to aid in our recruiting and retention efforts.

Major changes for NARFE in the last year include the passage of Optional Chapter Membership (OCM) and One Member One Vote (OMOV) at the National Convention in August 2016. Implementation of OCM and OMOV at the Federation level will require revisions to our Federation Bylaws. The Federation Board will be discussing this at our Board Meeting in August. As you have probably read in the NARFE magazine, Barbara Sido was hired as NARFE's Executive Director in May. She has a very impressive resume and I believe we will see good things from her. I will be attending the Federation Presidents' Meeting in July and I hope to come away with a lot of current and useful information. Barbara Sido will be at that meeting and

I look forward to meeting and talking with her.

Many of you received the email "Open Letter to All NARFE Members in Region X" from Region X Vice President Bill Shackelford. In this email, he explained a proposed resolution that would permit current NARFE National President Richard Thissen to run for one more term of office as President. Currently the term limit for NARFE National President is two consecutive two-year terms and Richard Thissen is now in his second term. This resolution would permit him to run for a third term. Immediate Past National President Joe Beaudoin sent an open letter to the National Executive Board (NEB) stating the reasons he believes this is not a good idea. Some of you may have received a copy of his email. In a separate article in this newsletter titled "Proposed Bylaws Amendment," I will provide information regarding this resolution. I have received many e-mails regarding this from several folks in addition to Bill Shackelford and Joe Beaudoin. It is my goal to provide information that you can use to make an informed decision. My thoughts on the subject will be included but I encourage each of you to make your own decision.

It's not too early to start making plans to attend the 2018 Federation Convention which will be held in Jackson on April 16 and 17, 2018. The Jackson chapter has already begun the planning and are looking forward to seeing a lot of you there - so mark your calendars now!

Again, I thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Federation President.

— Rhonda Mooney  
Federation President  
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rmooney@narfetn.org

## We're All in This...

(Continued from page 2)

Consider the welfare of one another. Hemingway put it rather explicitly when he wrote, "Ask not for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee." We're all in this together, folks. Let's do what we can to ensure we all come through it together.

Ed Evans  
Federation 1st Vice President  
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## Proposed Budget Cuts Will Force All into Action

As we have been told, this was going to be tough year and would probably be even tougher next year. As Jessica told us at the convention, the top priorities would be healthcare this year, tax reform next year, and everything would hit us after that. Now it seems that we will have no reprieve and the president's budget includes deeper cuts than have been proposed before and are targeting employees and retirees more than any other time in history. COLAs eliminated for FERS retirees and reduced for CSRS retirees by .5% each year. Increased contribution to annuities of one per cent per year, FERS annuity supplement eliminated, and the highest five years used instead of three.

The good news is that no one (even OMB director Mick Mulvaney) thinks all of these proposals will pass. The bad news is that even if some of them pass, it will take away earned benefits from and break the contract we made when we started working years ago. As our President Richard Thissen stated: "Every day federal employees and retirees put our country first. This budget is a giant leap in the wrong direction!"

What can we do about it? Exactly what we have done in the past, only more so. Speak up, but we must have everyone on board and it will take an extra effort from us all. Send your letters, encourage your friends and former coworkers to join in the fight (yes, it will be a battle because there a strong group in DC who want to cut back on everything, no matter who it affects).

As I have stated before, I think our biggest problem as a country is the growing national debt. The result of two wars and the economic buyout have left us with a staggering amount of debt and our legislators are trying

pay back the government with cuts to federal agencies which is just not enough make a difference. Remember, employees and retirees have already contributed \$120



*Jim Glenn*

billion toward lowering the debt and enough is enough. Let your legislator know how you feel. We can hope there are still some members in Congress with principles who will vote with conviction for the fair and equitable result when it counts.

NARFE headquarters will still be watching and addressing threats as they materialize but still will rely on us to let our legislators know what is important to us, which issues matter, and it will affect the vote!

As always, learn as much as you can and do take actions when requested to by NARFE headquarters.

– James Glenn

*Legislative Chairman*

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### To Receive Your Federation Newsletter by e-mail, send your e-mail address to:

[Merilyn9716@aol.com](mailto:Merilyn9716@aol.com)

Please include your street address so we can take you off of our postal mailing list for the newsletter. Also, please include your telephone number should we encounter a problem.

The more members who sign up, the more we will be able to save in mailing costs.

*Thank you, thank you,  
thank you!*

## Tennessee Federation Appointed Officers

*(Continued from Page 4)*

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### Public Relations Officer

Vacant

### Special Project Officer

Vacant

# Proposed Bylaws Amendment Causes Concern

## By Federation President Rhonda Mooney

I want to share with you the most recent information that I have regarding a proposed by-laws amendment. The information that I am providing is the latest as of July 7 when this article was prepared.

First, some background information: The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) initially sent to the National Executive Board (NEB) a proposed amendment to the National Bylaws that would permit current NARFE National President Richard Thissen to seek a third term. This was to have been a one-time exception for the current President and would revert back to the two consecutive terms limit afterward. The NEB approved the use of a special referendum to allow the amendment to go forward for a vote by the full NARFE membership and stated it was neither endorsing nor not endorsing the amendment; they just approved it going to the membership for

vote via special referendum with a cost of between \$22,000 and \$35,000. The SPC then revised the proposed amendment to say, in part, "The president shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in that office, except that the president may request permission from the National Executive Board to run for a third consecutive term. Such permission shall require a two-thirds vote of the NEB and the vote shall be taken by ballot." At an NEB meeting via Go To Meeting on July 6, the NEB voted to rescind their approval of the initial referendum and voted to discuss the revised resolution at the Joint NEB/Federation Presidents' Meeting the following week in Jacksonville. The discussion at this meeting will include input from Federation Presidents.

The reasons given by the SPC for requesting this bylaws amendment included: it would allow the current president to leverage important relationships built on Capitol Hill and that he has  
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## Service Officer: What You and Members Need to Know



*Larry  
Cunningham*

The chapter service officer's primary duty is to be responsive to members' questions and needs, particularly in the area of federal benefits. The position exists for the purpose of having an individual nearby in the community who is knowledgeable about federal benefits and procedures, who can assist members who may be having difficulty trying to contact federal

agencies for help with a particular problem. These may include civil service retirement matters, Social Security and federal insurance programs, including the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program (FEHBP) and Medicare.

Another important duty that service officers provide is to furnish chapter members with up-to-date information on changes in federal retirement, health and life insurance benefits. This includes sharing information on the annual Federal Benefits Open Season when it becomes available, as well as any changes in the federal

**6** benefit laws, regulations and rules.

The F-100, "BE PREPARED FOR LIFE'S EVENTS' What Your Survivors Should Know" is also furnished by the service officer. The purpose of the guide is to help you organize your personal and financial information in one location so your survivors will have the information they will need to handle your affairs upon your death. While one's death is a difficult topic to discuss, reviewing this information with your family will help them to understand the steps they will need to take. You should ensure that your family members review this guide with you and know where it is located. You should also review this guide periodically to ensure the information is up-to-date.

Contact your local Chapter Service Officer for any additional services they provide. We have some very good Service Officers in Tennessee and they are there to serve.

*– Larry Cunningham  
Federation Service Officer  
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# We Will Survive If We Volunteer and Work Together

First things first. Let me introduce myself as one of the "New kids on the block", as a Vice President of the Tennessee Federation. This means I am in the process of learning my duties to the chapters in East Tennessee. I haven't visited any of my Chapters yet, but do have some visits scheduled. I am an active member of Chapter 204 in Knoxville, try to attend all of the meetings and Federation Conventions. The thing that has surprised me the most is the closing of Chapters throughout the state. In East Tennessee, we will be closing three more Chapters soon, unless something can be worked out. I tend to be intellectually curious and wonder why. Maybe this comes from spending 27 years as a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, as I think about the cause and effect. There are no easy answers to declining participation by our members at Chapter meetings and activities. Of course, we are not alone in this decline. Every organization suffers from the same malady. However, I think the advent of what I call "Personal" Technology is removing the need for "socialization", and the growth of E members. It remains to be seen what will be the end result of this phenomenon for our Federation and our National Organization.

Your Federation Officers hope to meet on a regular basis, either in person, by phone, or email. Our objective is to serve you! Before each meeting, we research and provide input on topics

under discussion. During the meetings we discuss the agenda items and take appropriate action. As a board, we are aware that many, if not all, Chapters need more members to become involved. If you are not actively supporting your Chapter and want to, contact your Chapter Officers or Federation Officers to find out how you can help. I have learned the primary reason for Chapter closings is the lack of volunteers to serve as a Chapter Officer. Without enough volunteers, Chapter Officers may try to do everything themselves. This doesn't allow time for them to do their best work and leads to burnout. When you see a job that needs to be done, volunteer to do it. Then invite a fellow member who hasn't been active to help. That invitation may be all it takes to get that member involved and build a friendship. I think I speak for the Federation Officers in saying we will help in any way possible. By working together, we will survive and grow.



A. Wayne Baker

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## Proposed Bylaws Amendment...

*(Continued from page 6)*

been a lobbyist for six years and is known as the Face of NARFE on Capitol Hill. Also, that a third term would allow him to facilitate the transition of the new NARFE Executive Director.

There were immediate concerns and opposition to this proposed bylaw change including from Immediate Past National President Joe Beaudoin and Past National President Margaret Baptiste as well as many members. Some of the concerns that have been voiced by many include: this sets a bad precedent, Jessica Klement and NARFE's Legislative Department are considered by those on Capitol Hill to be the face of NARFE, and even without a third term current president Richard Thissen will be in office until November 1, 2018 so that should be

sufficient time for a successful transition for the new Executive Director.

My guess is that, if the NEB approves the revised proposed amendment going to the membership for a vote, the ballot and information about the resolution will be in the September magazine. It has been stated that this would be the first test of the One Member One Vote (OMOV) procedure. Since this is a new procedure I asked several questions regarding the voting process under OMOV so that I could share with our members. The questions I asked were specific to this vote and some of the answers I received were disturbing. I inquired as to how discussion will occur and was told that there were

*(Continued on page 12)*

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT OUR CHAPTER MEETINGS



Vietnam Veterans of America served us as Opening Ceremonies Color Guard for the 2017 Convention. Photo by Kathy Nash



From left to right are Federation Legislative Chair James Glenn, National Director of Legislation Jessica Klement, and Region X Vice President Bill Shackelford updating the Convention attendees on what is happening in Washington, D.C. Photo by Ed Evans



From left to right are Federation Network Coordinator Ronnie Collins instructing 2017 Convention attendees on how to set up a website for your chapter, Region X VP Bill Shackelford, National Alzheimer's Chair Donna Shackelford and Convention Parliamentarian John Cushenberry.

Photo by Ed Evans

To the right is Convention Opening Ceremonies Speaker Evans Freeman, Field Representative for Senator Lamar Alexander. Photo by Ed Evans



Shown above: one of the guest speakers at the Opening Ceremonies of the 2017 Convention was Jennifer Vedral-Baron, VA Director, Tennessee Valley Healthcare System. She is pictured at the podium. To the left is Convention Master of Ceremonies Yvonne Hamilton and to the right are National Legislative Director Jessica Klement, Region X VP Bill Shackelford and National Alzheimer's Chair Donna Shackelford.

Photo by Ed Evans



# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT OUR CHAPTER MEETINGS



Nashville's Corps of Engineers Deep Water Boys entertained at the Convention Banquet.

Photo by Kathy Nash

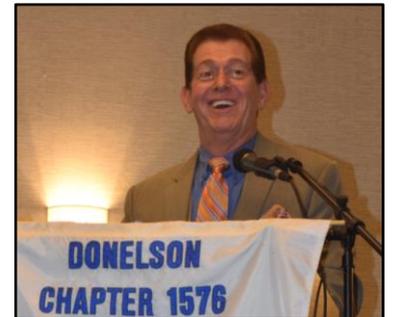


Pictured to the left, Cleveland Chapter 860 accepted the Weida White Tolly Memorial Award Trophy for having the highest per capita of \$44.16 from Federation Alzheimer's Chair Joan Gates.

Photo by Ed Evans



Pictured are representatives of NARFE's Affinity Partners, GEHA, Blue Cross/Blue Shield Tennessee, United Healthcare, APWU Health Plan, and Aetna. Photo by Ed Evans



At the Convention Banquet Dr. Van Richmond, a Motivation Speaker, chose the convention theme "Lighting Your Chapter on Fire" for his highly entertaining speech.

Photo by Ed Evans

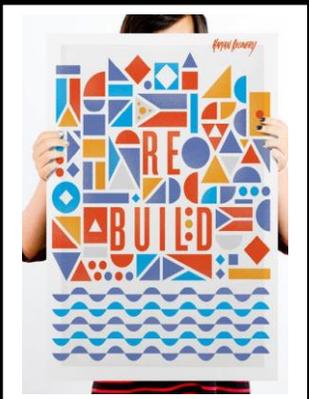


Members of Donelson Chapter 1576 hosted their annual picnic this past June. Special guests included former Federation Treasurer Marie Anglin and current Federation President Rhonda Mooney sitting on the left with Yvonne Hamilton and Bob Miller and Oscar Krosnes on the right. Photo by Ed Evans



A Photo by Larry Minniear at a Chapter 108 meeting. The speaker was Greg Martin, County Commissioner for Hamilton County. He spoke on Alexander Hamilton. Very interesting presentation.

**Office  
Inspirational  
Posters . . .**



**Protect the Future: Get Back to the Basics**



*Yvonne Hamilton*

First let me say “Thank you” to all that contributed to making the 2017 Convention a success. Each and everyone who attended played an important role in making this one a memorable one.

I am excited to work with everyone to make this an exciting time of “swelling the ranks”, or in other words, to increase our numbers in each Chapter.

As I read, research and contemplate my next move, I am moved to “get back to the basics” of recruitment. There is a great amount of “heart-felt” feelings within me when I see the words of the caption above. These words are also

on the NARFE application for membership. As a retired CSRS employee, I am especially concerned about those that are current “Active” employees.

We each know why we became a member of this organization and should always be prepared to share with others “your story” or the numerous opportunities that membership will afford them.

I would like to think that someone is just waiting for you to share, ask them to belong and maybe even willing to serve!

Looking forward to seeing what we can do together.

– *Yvonne Hamilton, Membership  
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**To Economize, Choose to Receive Your Newsletter Via Email**

First, I would like to thank everyone for their help in making the 2017 Convention here in Nashville such a success. Without question and without hesitation, our members stepped-up and volunteered. Many long-vacant positions have now been filled. It warmed my heart.

Due to rising costs, and a lot of brain-storming, it has been suggested that we offer the newsletter to as many members as possible via email rather than through the mail. Fear not. If you do not have email or access to a computer, you will still receive your newsletter in the mail, but we are hopeful a majority of our members will choose to receive the newsletter by email to save on postage and printing costs.

If this is something you are willing to do, please send me your e-mail address. I will also need your postal information so I can compare it to the national mailing list. Fill out the form below and mail it to me or send me the information in an email. Thank you ahead of time for your timely response.



*Marilyn Evans*

– *Marilyn Evans  
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## NARFE Members Fight Alzheimer's Together

Our Alzheimer's supporters have been wonderful, and all of us should give ourselves a big THANK YOU because our total raised for the year 2016 was \$9,116.96 with three chapters giving over \$1,000.00. The Cleveland Chapter No. 860 won the Weida White Tolly Memorial Award Trophy for having the highest per capita of \$44.16, and the Certificate for the Highest Total of Donations \$1,896.71. Two other chapters had over \$1,000. Knoxville Chapter No. 204 had \$1,623.00, and Dickson Chapter No. 727 had \$1,161.00. Trophies were also presented to them for their generous donations.

Our Silent Auction/Raffle at the convention was an enormous success. We had such wonderful things. Some them we raffled off and others we let the people bid on them. I cannot begin to tell you about all the items, but we had a beautiful handmade quilt; a gorgeous crocheted red rose throw that everyone wanted to win; a lady from the Dickson Chapter crocheted a lovely queen size bedspread which was beyond description.

There was a fountain, a quilt and shams, and of course Larry Henderson made sure no one else got the YETI cup, and then got the coffee pot to go with it.

I could not do this without your support, and the help of Mack and Pat Stanley, and Mike Gates who worked with me to make the Silent Auction/Raffle a success.

I am so proud to be your Alzheimer's Coordinator, and I would like everyone to remember when we make our donations that we are the only Alzheimer's group that 100% of our donations go to Alzheimer's Research for an end to the dreadful disease.

– Joan Gates  
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Joan Gates

## Office Inspirational Posters . . .

(Continued from Page 10)



If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there.



### In Memory of **Max Coats**

**Former NARFE Tennessee Federation Newsletter Editor**

Dear NARFE Friends, I wanted to let you all know that my father Max Coats passed away. He was very

dedicated to NARFE and its mission, and I know he was sad to step down when his Parkinson's worsened. He was very proud of his military service in the U.S. Army and his civil service with the Department of Defense. His family is sure gonna' miss him! If you would like to view his obituary, go to: <http://www.oakley-cook.com/m/obituaries/Max-Coats/Memories>.



Lisa Varney

Max W. Coats, age 81, of Piney Flats, Tenn., passed away on Monday, May 8, 2017, at his residence. Mr. Coats was born on February 2, 1936, in Wellsville, New York, son of the late Wade Ingle Coats and Vera Leslie Gorton Coats. After graduation from High School, Mr. Coats served in the United States Army. He served three years in Hokkaido, Japan, and served a four-year apprenticeship at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine. After ten years at Portsmouth, he transferred to Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo, California for 23 years.

Mr. Coats retired in 1991.



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### Proposed Bylaws Amendment...

*(Continued from page 7)*

no plans for discussion nor an opportunity for members to submit questions or make comments in the magazine. I asked if questions and concerns of those not in favor of the proposed amendment would be included or addressed but I still don't have the answer to that. Also, there will be no return envelope included in the magazine. I had hoped that there would be a postage paid envelope but even if it isn't postage paid I believe a self-addressed envelope would have been helpful. Those with email will have the choice of voting by mail or going to a website to vote. I believe the OMOV voting procedure needs to be tweaked and I hope to discuss that at the Joint NEB/FPs' Meeting next week.

After discussion with our Tennessee Federation Board members, I emailed Region X Vice President Bill Shackelford and asked him to vote against the revised resolution (which in essence

would allow any future 2nd term national president to ask permission from the NEB and, if 2/3 of the NEB were in favor, that president could run for a third term). I also asked him to vote to rescind the initial referendum and it was rescinded at the NEB meeting July 6th. The revised resolution will be voted on next week.

I hope this information will be helpful if the amendment does come up for vote. I will share the information that I receive at the Joint NEB/Federation Presidents' Meeting with all our Federation Board members and chapter presidents as soon as possible after the meeting. I will also include that information in the next Federation Newsletter. Please feel free to contact me or any of our Board members if you have any questions.

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