



## Donations Needed for Alzheimer's Silent Auction

We need auction items from chapters and individuals to help raise funds for Alzheimer's research. Please help! Popular items from past years include basket of cheer, electronic items, jewelry, watches, gift cards, quilts, small appliances, games, wine baskets, and spa baskets. Bring items to registration table at convention.

## The Prez Says ...



*Larry Minniear*

The Tennessee Federation Convention is right around the corner. Are you going? Are you registered? It will be a great time. Pigeon Forge has something to offer for everyone. Come learn about NARFE and have a mini vacation while you are

at it. We would enjoy your company.

I have asked this question many times with as many different responses. Here goes one more time. What do you want your organization, NARFE, to look like going into the future? Do you care enough about it to attend the Federation Convention? We will have a number of speakers (both in person and via skype) who will address this topic in depth. If you have concerns, now is the time to get the facts and make your voice heard.

Primary election time will have come and gone in Tennessee by the time you read this. It will be time to look forward to the general election and any primaries in August. I realize many people are thoroughly disgusted with politicians from both parties at all levels. I do not blame you. They promise and then forget – way too often. However, good or bad, this is the process from which we select our leaders. The problem is not necessarily the process (in some cases, yes it is) it is the fact that the people with the most potential to lead are discouraged from running for office. The news media has tried (all too successfully) to manipulate the candidates

and the elections to satisfy their desire for good ratings. That does our country no good whatsoever. We need to support good intelligent candidates for the right reasons. This has not been happening. The only way it might change is if you and your friends get involved. Make your voice heard.

The same holds true for leadership in our NARFE organization. Way too often we continue with the same local officers for too long. Equally as bad, is we allow personal interests to cloud the election thought process. You need to vote with one thing in mind. What is best for NARFE as a whole and for the future?

As I have said many times. It matters little what our organization structure looks like if we have no members. It is EVERYONE'S responsibility to work membership. Think about any friends or acquaintances you have. Do they have a federal connection? There is your opening. Invite them to a meeting. They say they are not a joiner or they do not like meetings. That is not a problem. We still need their membership. Point out how important membership totals are when dealing with Congress. We need them. We need YOU making that contact. National Office cannot grow membership as well as local contacts. It is NOT their job – it is YOURS!

Be a good NARFE member – recruit a friend! See you in Pigeon Forge!

*-Larry Minniear*

*Tennessee Federation President*

*1401 Highcrest Court*

*Hixson TN 37343-4320*

*423-875-5612*

*lminniear@narfetrn.org*

## Tennessee Federation Officers

### President

Larry Minniear  
1401 Highcrest Court  
Hixson TN 37343-4320  
423-875-5612; lminniear@narfetn.org

### First Vice-President

Rhonda Mooney  
351 US Hwy 45 W  
Humboldt, TN 38343-8506  
731-267-2336 cell;  
731-784-9469 home  
rmooney@narfetn.org

### Second Vice-President

Ed Evans  
808 Sandburg Pl  
Nashville TN 37214-4051  
615-872-8978;  
eevans@narfetn.org

### Third Vice-President

Colin Mike Gates  
341 Eaton Village Trace  
Lenoir City, TN 37771-8705  
865-986-7526  
cgates@narfetn.org

### Secretary

Merilyn Evans  
808 Sandburg Pl  
Nashville TN 37214-4051  
615-872-8978;  
mevans@narfetn.org

## “One Man’s Opinion”

NARFE’s Mission Statement is always on page four of the monthly magazine. The central theme is to support and promote legislation beneficial to its members.

The FONC was formed to come up with the best way to take NARFE forward within this theme. The original proposal was presented at the Orlando National Convention. Several of us on the Federation board went to the convention thinking there would be a big discussion of the ideas and some compromise reached. Not much discussion occurred, and the proposal passed with 85% approval to go forward and the promise members would be included in the decisions for the plan. This did not happen.

The plan the committee came up with will be presented at the national convention and is on the national website for us to review. The plan changes dramatically the organization of NARFE, but still stresses the need for continuing legislative efforts. Everyone agrees legislation is the most important issue we face. Each member should take a look and make your own assessment of the plan presented. The decision on our future is not an easy one. NARFE definitely has its financial problems, low membership, and lack of members who are willing to serve as officers in most of the chapters. Many chapters are closing from lack of participation.

I guess I don’t have a better plan to magically increase our numbers and have everyone want to serve as an officer. I do think either way we go there will have to

be active and realistic recruiting in addition to better communication of the need to continue the priority of contacting our representatives on legislative issues. Grass roots advocacy is still the most effective way of influencing Congress and keeping our issues on the forefront.

In my opinion, if we adopt the plan of the FONC committee, we will lose the best part of what we have now. That is, the NARFE members who take the officer positions in the chapters and are really concerned with protecting our benefits. In the chapters I have visited as Federation Legislative Chairman, there are always members who keep up with the latest activities in Congress and bring everyone up to date on the issues. A lot of these people are also at the Federation Convention

each year representing their members and taking back what they have learned. This idea for working within the present structure to accomplish the same goals (specifically the “State Representative and Congressional District Leaders”) was offered to the FONC and national officers by our past president Larry Henderson, but I haven’t seen any acknowledgement of consideration from the committee.

Thanks for listening to “One Man’s Opinion.”



*Jim Glenn*

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



## Understanding proposed changes is vital



Rhonda Mooney

I hope everyone is making plans to attend our Federation Convention in Pigeon Forge on April 25th and 26th. This is probably one of the most important Federation Conventions that you will ever attend. There

are a lot of proposed changes for NARFE, and it is vital that we all understand these changes.

NARFE National President Richard Thissen will speak at our Federation Convention via Skype and hopefully there will be time for a question and answer session. You may remember that a couple of years ago the Future of NARFE Committee (FONC) made recommendations for changes in the way NARFE does business. At the 2014 National Convention a resolution was passed to use those recommendations as the basis for a plan to ensure NARFE can continue its mission well into the future. National President Thissen subsequently appointed a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) and a Strategic Planning Team (SPT) to use the 35 recommendations from the FONC as a basis to continue planning NARFE's future. At the November 2015 NARFE National Executive Board (NEB) meeting the draft strategic planning document was presented to the Board. The NEB considered this information in preparing resolutions to be presented at the 2016 National Convention in Reno in August. These resolutions are HUGE changes for NARFE. The strategic planning document is posted on the NARFE website. If you have not already done so, please read this document. Our Federation Convention will be a great opportunity

to hear more about the proposed changes and to ask questions. Our Region X Vice President Bill Shackelford, who is a member of the NEB, will be attending our Federation Convention. I have a lot of questions and hope to come away from the Convention with a better understanding of the proposed changes and the SPT recommendations.

As a reminder - The 2016 NARFE Scholarship Program runs through April 29. The program is open to eligible children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren (including step children, step grandchildren, etc) of a current NARFE member. Applicants must be a high school senior planning to attend an accredited college full time in a degree program in the fall/winter of 2016 and have a grade point average of at least 3.0 on an unweighted 4.0 scale. The application and additional information is on page 47 in the March NARFE magazine. Sixty \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded to winners of this year's competition. Winners will be announced in August. With the high cost of a college education a \$1,000 scholarship could be very helpful.

I am looking forward to our Federation Convention and I hope to see a lot of you there.

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

## Tennessee Federation Officers (Continued)

### Treasurer

Norris Alderson  
1444 Bernard Way  
Franklin, TN 37067  
nalderson@narfetn.org

### Legislative Chairman

James Glenn  
120 Windrift Ct.  
McMinnville TN 37110-3716  
931-473-5074;  
jglenn@narfetn.org

### Membership Chairman

Vacant

### Immediate Past President

Larry Henderson  
3007 Berrywood Dr.  
Humboldt TN 38343-2761  
731-784-0675  
jhenderson@narfetn.org

## Newsletter editor bids farewell

After more than a decade, the time has come to step down as the newsletter editor. My daughter Lisa Varney and I appreciate the opportunity to serve NARFE members in this position.

Merilyn Evans has graciously agreed to take over these duties, and we wish her the very best in her new role.

*Max Coats  
Newsletter Editor*

## It's time for an eye exam

If you can't remember the last time you had an eye exam, and it's been longer than a year, you are overdue. Eye exams are not just about vision. Doctors can detect things like diabetes and high cholesterol from annual eye exams, not to mention eye diseases that have no known symptoms, like glaucoma.

According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO), glaucoma is a leading cause of irreversible blindness in the United States. It has no noticeable symptoms in its early stages, and vision loss progresses at such a gradual rate that people affected by the condition are often unaware of it until their sight has already been compromised. The AAO advises

that the best defense against developing glaucoma-related blindness is by having routine, comprehensive eye exams.

<http://www.urbanoptiques.com/vision-care-focus-on-vision-care/vision-care-articles/nine-signs-you-need-an-eye-exam>

*Ed Evans  
2nd Vice-President  
Tennessee Federation of Chapters*



NON-PROFIT  
ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
OXFORD, NC



Max Coats, Newsletter Editor  
1419 Enterprise Road  
Piney Flats, TN 37686  
423-538-9220  
tnnarfe@btes.tv