



**NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED  
FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION**

**CALIFORNIA FEDERATION**

**SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE**

**2019 SEVENTH BIENNIAL CONVENTION**

**April 24 - 25 2019**

**CROWN PLAZA HOTEL  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA**

## **THEME: A SAFE HARBOR FOR YOUR FEDERAL BENEFITS**

Prior to the start of the Convention, a NARFE Orientation – NARFE 101 was presented by Convention Host Committee Chair Robert N. “Bob 2” Davidson II, and Forney Lundy, Past Region VIII Vice President.

**Call to Order:** President Lea Zajac called the 2019 convention to order.

**Presentation of Colors:** VFW Post 9578 from Alpine, CA

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Past Region VIII VP, Forney Lundy, Salinas Chapter #1496

**Veterans of Foreign Wars:** Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you very much for having us at your convention.

**National Anthem:** (without music)

### **Welcome by Robert N “Bob II” Davidson, Convention Host Chair**

Good Morning. This is our 7<sup>th</sup> biennial convention. Welcome to NARFE President Ken Thomas and his wife, Arlette, Federation President, Lea Zajac, Region VIII Vice President Helen Zajac, the Federation Executive Board, Federation members, and guests. We welcome you to America’s finest city, San Diego, CA. Some of you may want to challenge me on that, but it is our official slogan. I think they trade marked it. If you are from out of town, please take advantage of the numerous tourist traps, I mean attractions. But most of all, I want you to participate in the Convention activities. In your delegate bags, is a mini program, which you need to put in your pocket. It has all the training sessions, activities, speakers, and everything else that makes a Federation Convention. Additionally, there is a Program Book filled full of information and facts to help you know the various dignitaries and who is currently leading our Federation and all sorts of other facts and figures. Plus, it is in a much larger format for those of us that need a larger font size to read. Check out the various vendors out in the Kona Coast Foyer. A lot of them are people from companies that advertise in our magazine. This is a chance to talk to those people. Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is out there. They have changed the rules. So those of us who are retired can participate in CFC. If you want to do that it comes right out of your check. Also, Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) is out there. Rules are changing this fall. Make it a whole lot easier for us to take money out. How many of you have TSP plans? About a dozen or so. Hopefully, you had lots of money in there. But I do not know, I just retired, and I had 30 years to put money in there. As I have told our many first timers, talk to each other. Find old friends. Make new friends. We are NARFE and there are no members of NARFE who do not want to make our association better. Once again, I welcome you to the Convention. Please Participate in the discussions, training seminars we have over the next two days. Again, welcome to San Diego. Thank you very much for attending.

### **Welcome by Lea Zajac, President of California Federation**

Thank you, Bob. You did such a wonderful job there is not much for me to say, except I welcome you all to this convention. We have been working on this for a couple of years now. It is a little disappointing that we did not get a lot of attendees. We have 127 registered for the Convention, including guests, but what I can tell you is we really have the cream of the crop here. The Best of the Best; Steve Hanger, is the hotel representative I have been working with the last couple of years. He has been fabulous to work with. Steve, I really appreciate all your help.

### **Welcome from Steve Hanger, Crowne Plaza Hotel:**

Before I say anything, I am going to throw it right back and say, this has been one fine gentleman to work with. You are incredibly lucky to have him representing you. So, on behalf of the Crown Plaza Hotel, I say welcome to San Diego and welcome to our hotel. We are pleased you selected us. We know you had many options out there and we know we are but one. So, thank you for giving us the opportunity to be your host

over the next couple of days. We hope that you have a great convention. We can help to facilitate the social aspects of your convention starting with what we hope will be a great lunch today and then a closing banquet tomorrow evening. We know you have a busy schedule today and this evening and a limited time for dinner. Therefore, we have decided to offer a dinner buffet, early bird dinner buffet from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm tonight. \$18 inclusive of everything, tax, tips. The Menu for that will be out at the registration desk, shortly. We also, note tomorrow you will have a limited amount of time for lunch, so we are going to offer another buffet for lunch, as well. Both will be in our restaurant where hopefully you have availed yourself of the breakfast buffet which is included in the room rate for staying with us. Beyond that I just want to say we are here to offer any support that we can. If you are staying past the convention and you want to do any fun activities in San Diego, our bell staff and front desk staff will assist you in setting up any opportunities. One I would point out would be the Old Town Trolley, which many of you know is one of the hop-on-hop-off type of concept that's our San Diego narrative tour that takes you to various points of interest in San Diego, The USS MIDWAY, Coronado, Balboa Park, etc. And you can get off the bus, tour for a little bit and jump on the next one that comes through. They pick up here at the hotel and take you to Old Town, where the tour begins. In addition, if you have any spare time and you want to go to Old Town to Fashion Valley, we offer a complementary shuttle. You can meet it in the lobby. It operates in the morning from 7 to 11 am and again in the afternoon from 2:30 to 10 pm. Complementary services: the bell staff and transportation staff will take you to various areas and pick you up at predetermined time. So, we hope we can help facilitate a great stay for you. I will wrap up by saying thank you once again and hope you have a wonderful stay.

### **Introductions:**

**Lea Zajac, Federation President** introduced Robert Ruskamp, Federation President of Nevada, Donna Neece, Federation Treasurer of Nevada and Patricia Whitely, a visitor from South Carolina who was visiting her son in the area.

### **Memorial Services lead by Dee Shallenberger, CSFC Immediate Past President.**

This is the time when we will remember all the members of the California State Federation who have died since our last convention in Reno. Their memories will always be in our hearts by remembering these NARFE members from our time, so they are not lost. As their cherished memories will never fade. To honor the deceased members of the Federation as I read the number of deceased members in each Federation District, the District Vice President, representing that District, will put a rose in the vase and light a candle for those we are remembering. The white rose already in the vase is to honor the Federation Officers who died during these two years, whom I will mention as I go through the districts. District I: District Vice President Old Bob Davidson, 215 members; District II: VP Gregg Pericich, including *George Bardwil*, former DVP; District III: Mary Venerable, including *Nick Shestople* former DVP; District V: DVP Jerry Hall, 273 members including *Dick Ostergren* Federation President from 2013 to 2015; District VI: DVP Dottie Schmidt, 145 members including *Ken Boffin* Federal President from 2003 to 2004; District VII: DVP Bob Martin, 187 members; District VIII: DVP Linda Ingram 114 members; District IX: DVP Steve Smith 83 members including *Judy Mayora*, Federation Executive Vice President and longtime DVP IX; District X: DVP Ron Griffin including *Karen Baird* former DVP District X and *Don Ross*, Federation President from 1997 to 1998. Total number of members we have lost in our Federation since the last convention is 1,279 members.

### **Lea Zajac, Federation President:**

You should all have a copy of the Memorial Booklet, which is a list of all our deceased members since our last convention, in your tote bag. We used to call them Delegate bags, but someone else said no, these are tote bags. There should be several things in the tote bag, including the badge that you wear. Also, for those of you going to the luncheon and/or banquet there should be a meal ticket in there. Everyone is assigned to a table and there should be a table number also on your ticket. You each have a proposed Federation By-laws,

that we will be voting on later today. There are two missing pages, number 5 and number 6 that are being printed that you will get later today.

**Karen Ross, Credentials Chair:**

Karen Ross is our Credentials Chair, and she is going to give us a report on how many members are here and what chapters are represented. What you might want to do is pull out your program book out and go to the back page and record what Karen Ross is going to report.

Karen Ross: Thank you. I want to say bless her heart for Vivian Nathanson who has been doing this in the past. Number of Delegates is 90. Number of Delegates-at-large is 13. Number of National Officers is 2. Number of visitors and guests is 13. Minus the number of Delegates-at-large also serving as Chapter Delegates is 2. Total number of persons registered is 118. Number of Chapters in the California Federation is 72. Number of Chapters represented by delegates is 41. Number of Chapters represented by proxy is 7. Number of members of the Executive Board represented is 14.

The final part of my report is that we still have 5 Districts with Chapters who have not picked up their voting credentials, yet. Those are Districts 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8. Thank you.

The Credentials Report was accepted by the Delegates.

**Lea Zajac: Federation President:**

Next on our agenda, is to have a report from the Rules Committee Chair, Dottie Schmidt substituting for Mike Siminski.

**Dottie Schmidt: Rules Committee Chair:**

Thank you, Lea. I am glad to be here as it is nice to see as many members and guests as are here. We are going to talk about the rules. Conventions always have rules. There are pages of these on your tables. I had over a 100 out there. If there are not enough, please share. So, let's start.

The following Rules shall apply to the conduct of business at conventions of the California State Federation of Chapters, National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association. Any rule may be suspended, amended, or rescinded by a majority vote of delegates present and voting.

RULE 1. The Convention shall be called to order by the presiding officer.

RULE 2. Meetings of the convention shall be called to order at the times stated in the official program unless changes are announced by the presiding officer or are changed by a majority vote of the delegates present and voting on the question.

RULE 3. Delegates shall be seated in the front section of the hall separated from the visitors' section and only registered delegates present shall be permitted to vote on any question.

RULE 4. To obtain the floor, a delegate must rise, go to a microphone, be recognized by the Chair, and state their name, and the name and number of their chapter.

RULE 5. Should two (2) or more delegates rise at the same time, the presiding officer shall decide who is entitled to the floor.

RULE 6. No delegate shall interrupt the speaker who is addressing the convention, except to call for a point of order, or to raise a question of privilege.

RULE 7. If a call for a point of order is made while a delegate is speaking, the delegate speaking shall pause until the question of order has been decided. The time needed to dispose of the privileged motion shall not be counted toward the speaking delegate's time limit.

RULE 8. No debatable motion or resolution shall be brought to a vote until the author or a delegate from the originating chapter is given an opportunity to speak on it.

RULE 9. Speeches in debate shall be limited to five minutes, unless extended by the presiding officer or by a majority of the delegates present and voting on the question.

RULE 10. No delegate shall speak more than twice on a question unless permitted to do so by a majority vote of the delegates present and voting on the question. This rule shall not apply to a member of any Federation Committee when the question being discussed pertains to matters ordinarily coming under the jurisdiction of said committee, nor shall it apply to the author of the resolution or the maker of the motion being then debated.

RULE 11. Resolutions presented by committees shall be subject to amendment or substitution from the floor. Such amendments may be referred to the appropriate committee if the substance of the change has not already been considered in committee. The item shall then be returned to the floor with recommendations (and minority report, if any) for full debate and convention action.

RULE 12. Except for convention committee resolutions, no resolution, unless it is printed in the resolutions book, shall be considered for convention action, unless otherwise ordered by two-thirds (2/3) of the delegates present and voting.

RULE 13. Any resolutions, or amendment to a motion/resolution currently on the floor, which has been approved for consideration under Rule 12, shall, before discussion or debate, be submitted in writing to the Chair. The Chair will determine if the submission shall be given to the appropriate committee for review and recommendation prior to its consideration by the delegates or be open for debate and vote at the time of submission.

RULE 14. A convention committee may amend, combine with similar resolutions, prepare a substitute for, or reject from further consideration, any resolution over which it has jurisdiction. Convention committees shall not substitute language which changes the meaning and intent of the original resolution without the concurrence of the originating chapter and/or the author. A written report of the committee's recommended disposition of resolutions shall be made available at least three (3) hours prior to the consideration of these resolutions on the convention floor. The report shall list together all resolutions the committee recommends be adopted, amended, debated, rejected, or substituted for the combining of similar resolutions.

RULE 15. The committee chair, when reporting, shall read the effective substance of the resolutions, and may also briefly explain the committee's rationale for its recommendations, and then recommend adoption, debate by the convention, amendment, rejection, or substitution. All groups of resolutions recommended for adoption or rejection shall be considered as individual groups and [except as stated in Rule 16] be considered at the same time without debate, except as recommended by the committee, and be adopted or rejected in gross by a single vote.

RULE 16. Upon request of a delegate and with the concurrence of a delegate from a different chapter, any resolution upon which debate is desired shall be removed from its group [Rule 15] and be considered separately.

RULE 17. A single vote will be taken on all remaining resolutions recommended by the committee for adoption and a single vote will be taken for the remaining resolutions recommended by the committee for rejection. Resolutions which the committee recommends amendment, substitution, or debate shall be considered individually. Those resolutions that were withheld from their group will be considered individually and be voted adopt or reject.

RULE 18. Twenty (20) minutes shall be allowed for discussion of any resolution which is to be considered individually with speakers alternated, pro and con, if possible [see Rule 9]. Unless extended by two thirds (2/3) vote of the delegates present and voting, when the time has expired, the resolution shall be voted upon.

RULE 19. A roll call or ballot vote shall be granted upon the request of 10% or more of the delegates on the floor at the time of the request or upon the order of the presiding officer.

RULE 20. When a roll call or ballot vote is being taken, a motion to adjourn shall not be in order until the voting has been completed and the result of the vote has been announced by the presiding officer.

Rule 21. When voting upon a resolution, the vote shall be taken for or against the adoption of the resolution. Before a vote is taken, the presiding officer shall announce clearly that the vote is on the resolution, not on a committee recommendation.

Rule 22. Nominating and seconding speeches shall be limited to one nominating speech of three minutes and two seconding speeches of two minutes each, for each candidate, whether nominated by the Nominating Committee or from the floor. Each candidate shall be permitted to make one, four minute, maximum, campaign speech.

I think that is it. I do not think I have left anything out.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** Thank you Dottie.

**Forney Lundy, Salinas Chapter 1496,** I move we accept the Rules as presented.

It was seconded and the delegates voted to adopt the rules.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** Raise your hands to adopt. Oppose Raise your hands. Rules have been adopted.

We also need to approve the program you have in front of you. If there is no objection, the Program as presented in the booklet will stand for the next two days and with minor changes made if necessary. Hearing no objection, the Program Agenda stands, and we will proceed accordingly.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** It gives me great pleasure to introduce our NARFE National President, Ken Thomas. And I have to tell you, when Ken Thomas was officially elected to office, I called him on the phone and said, “Ken, you have to attend our convention in California” which he promised to do.

**Ken Thomas, National President:** Whenever I go anywhere something always happens. It does not matter if I go into a grocery store, if my wife is left out in the car, she always asks me, “Well what happened this time.” Well first I hate grocery stores, that is number One. Two is this way (stepping down into the audience) I get to be a little bit closer to my people. OK, this badge has my name on it. The interesting thing about it is when I took it out of the package, there was a tag stuck on the front of the badge. And on the bottom of it, it says “NARFE National President large.” Now, let me say, this is my fifth conference I’ve attended, and I still have 26 more to go. And everyone so far, except this one, I have always been scheduled the first speaker after lunch. Now, they also know, while I was out campaigning last year I went to different conferences, convention, training conferences, just what ever and I picked up 14 pounds. Ok, so “large”, it suddenly makes sense. I am trying to figure out who in the heck was the person who told them this.

So, let me start by saying “Thank you to the group who organized this” Let me also say Thank you to young Bob Davidson for picking me and Arlette up at the airport. He found us under the Spirit of St Louis. We also want to thank the committee and you know the funny part about what Lea said that he called me first thing, I had just put the phone down after I had been notified that I had won the election and I’m trying to figure out how in the hell did he know before me? It was that quick. Anyway, I want to talk to you today about a number of things.

First, I am going to tell a couple of stories because I think it’s important for you to know what happens in the world of your National President. then I am going into a short discussion of “Shut down central”, “Media hits”, “FEEA” and “Alzheimer’s Memoranda of Understanding”, “Rebranding”, “OAM vs AMS”, “Referendum”, “Non-dues revenue”, and “Building replacement”. Now let’s see how quickly we can get through this. OK. First of all, on or about the first week in October I found out that I was going to be your new National President. So, shortly after that, one day later, I received an email from somebody in HR. Ok, these little initials, for those of us from government service, I’m used to “Personnel”. Ok so they sort of changed the goal posts a little bit. They call the people now HR, “Human Resources”. So, I received an email from the person who’s Human Resources for NARFE. And he enthusiastically welcomed me and said, “Ken glad to have you onboard, but we need to “onboard” you.” Now this was a term I had heard, but it didn’t exist in my time, back when the dinosaurs roamed the earth. But the thing is “onboarding” is a process. And he said in his email, “If you just fill in your name, social security number, and your phone number, you can start the process.” So, I entered my name, my social security number, and my phone number. “ERROR” Thinking I had made some kind of an error, I entered again. “ERROR” Now, I’m an old IT guy so things that belong to computers I sort of understand. So, to me there can’t be an error, the second time. So, I

entered it a third time. Only this time I said, to myself, you know what, let me go think this over and since I've been retired, about 16 years or so maybe they have my phone number back in DC. Because I lived in the Nation's capital for 47 years, my career was there, my family was partially raised there, and I grew up there. So, there was reason to believe I had the same phone number for 47 years maybe they were using that. Plugged that in. "ERROR" So, then I sent an email back to the HR guy and said "I don't know what I am doing wrong, but the information I'm entering does not work. Please advise." One day goes by. Two days go by. Three days go by. On the fourth day I sent a follow up email, saying, "Please contact me. Have not heard from you. Need to do the onboarding process. Please advise." Day goes by. Another day goes by. Another day goes by. Send another email, same thing what's the problem? Tell me what it is. I can fix this. Day goes by. Another day goes by. Another day goes by. I am two days away from arriving at National Headquarters to begin my career as your National President. So, this is two days before November first. Send another email. A day goes by. November first arrives. Guess where I was five minutes after arriving in that building? I was sitting in the HR guy's office waiting for him to arrive. So, Charles Dickens wrote the novel, "Great Expectations" and I guess at that point I was thinking, this guy will be here any minute. An hour goes by. Somebody comes in and says, "Ken, I don't believe he is coming in today." So, I go about the business of managing National President. That was on a Thursday. Friday comes, and he finally responded to me and I was "onboarded". We solved that situation quite quickly. According to the \$100,000 contract he was given a 30-day notice. The question really is why we contracted this out and why did we permit a contract employee that much money for two days a week.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak with you today.

Let me share with you some of the topics of my message. I will be speaking to you about:

- Shutdown Central
- Training Conferences:  
FEDcon18 and LEGcon19
- Adding to NARFE's tool belt:  
AMS  
Branding Initiative – new logo, and
- Grassroots Advocacy

So, let us get started . . .

For those of you who do not know me or have not met me, I am a retired civil servant having worked for the federal government for more than 35 years.

I get what it means to be a civil servant – that sense of pride in doing something for the greater good – and the unfortunate lows of enduring government shutdowns. For me personally, I was in seventeen of the twenty-one government shutdowns including the second longest which lasted twenty-one days.

I've been in your shoes, and for many, I still am.

Before I get into the details and updates on some projects at Headquarters, I would first like to thank you for being a NARFE member. Without you, the organization simply would not exist. And, without your insight, experiences, and passion, NARFE would not be the incredibly strong and powerful voice that it is for the federal family.

Just as each of you served the American people with honor and integrity, headquarters must provide NARFE members with exceptional benefits and outstanding support services. Where we have fallen short, we must improve. In my short time at headquarters, I see that sense of duty. Respect and responsibility is felt and believed in every department. It's what drives us to do better every day and ensures your investment in the association is met with actionable results.

NARFE is the go-to resource for the federal community, hands down. This means not just for members but prospective members, the media, Congress, and the public. Becoming the go-to resource for the federal community did not happen overnight.

Still fresh in my mind is the unnecessary 35-day government shutdown from earlier this year. At a time of chaos and confusion, NARFE took the helm, stepping up for federal employees where agencies and government officials let them down. We implemented a multi-platform, multi-pronged effort to inform and serve members, the media, policymakers, and the public.

The main focal point was NARFE's Shutdown Central webpage that contained news developments, FAQs, media statements, links to federal agencies, personal shutdown stories and applications to NARFE's financial grant program. We also hosted a webinar covering issues from paid leave, back pay, healthcare, retirement, legislation and more.

Shutdown Central was a lifeline for members and prospective members who were unable to get information from their respective agencies and wanted to know how they could help their colleagues in a time of great need.

Experts at NARFE's Federal Benefits Institute responded to hundreds of calls and emails from concerned and frustrated employees and retirees. Expertise in complex federal benefits is hard to come by; there are not many professionals equipped with that knowledge and skillset. The telephone never stopped ringing at NARFE's Federal Benefits Institute, and benefits specialists never stopped answering.

Shutdown Central also played a role in NARFE being a go-to resource for the media. A highly regarded, nationally syndicated financial columnist turned to NARFE. This journalist could have reached out to any number of advocacy organizations, but she chose NARFE because of, in her own words, our "expertise in federal benefits." The result of that experience was a lengthy feature article about NARFE and its resources that appeared in the *Washington Post* and in newspapers across the country. Overall, our media outreach efforts during the shutdown reached 366 million people, and NARFE was introduced to millions of readers and listeners that were unaware of who we are and what we do.

Throughout those 35 days, NARFE's advocacy team reached out to members of Congress, providing details on federal workforce issues, policies, and regulations. The very people who make laws for this country came to NARFE for assistance and shared our resources with their constituents. Why? Because they recognize and trust our expertise when it comes to earned pay and benefits of active and retired federal employees.

The legislative branch is another part of NARFE's vast audience, and we have been fortunate to develop relationships with members of Congress and their staffs as the go-to resource for the federal family.

Changing gears, the shutdown was all encompassing but not the only example of how NARFE is the go-to resource for the federal family. Over the course of the past 12 months, NARFE produced two training conferences, one of which marked a first for NARFE. The first-ever FEDcon18 brought together more than 700 federal employees and retirees from across the United States for training, education, and networking.

And, just last month (March 2019), LEGcon19, NARFE's Legislative Training Conference, welcomed hundreds to our nation's capital to strengthen their advocacy skills. On the final day, we took to



Capitol Hill, meeting with our respective members of Congress. Both events gave members and nonmembers an experience they could not have gotten elsewhere.

New to NARFE's tool belt, we launched several initiatives at Headquarters to improve the way we interact with members and the public. With data being the key to so many new advancements, NARFE, with help from one of the association sector's leading technology firms – set out to develop a new association management system (AMS). The new system will allow Headquarters to interact with members in a more data-driven capacity. The technology is in the final stages of development, and staff is currently undergoing training on the new system.

You have heard the phrase “a picture is worth a thousand words.” The image NARFE presents to ALL segments of our vast audience is of extreme importance. NARFE's image – as demonstrated through logos, icons, and descriptive language – had reached a point where it no longer resonated with our members and the public. It was a 1947 brand with a 1947 message. So, we ventured into a rebranding effort.

Most often people associate the word “BRAND” with simply a logo or tagline. But it is much more than that. When done effectively, branding requires a serious in-depth look at how we communicate, who we are, where we have come from and where we'd like to go.

Coming up on our centennial in two years, NARFE needs to enter the next century of service strong, relevant, and firmly established as the go-to resource for ALL of our stakeholders. And, in order to attract new members, NARFE must aggressively market itself to current federal employees with a brand that meets their needs and expectations.

While the logo and messaging associated with NARFE are changing, this is not some grand departure for us. As a matter of fact, it uniquely describes what we already do. It is important to remember that when we engage all segments of our audience, NARFE's brand becomes more powerful.

But that power and expertise is not just found at Headquarters. You – NARFE members – are also experts... experts on your own benefits and how cuts to those earned benefits affect you, your community, your state, and the future of civil service. Your grassroots efforts help promote policies that maintain a strong, effective federal workforce for generations to come through promises kept, fair treatment and competitive compensation for those who elect a career in public service.

Most recently, we saw this grassroots advocacy in action during LEGcon19. Nearly 250 members headed to Capitol Hill to fight for what all of you have earned and to advance legislation that would enhance those benefits.

For many of you who could not attend LEGcon19 or did not raise your voice during the government shutdown, you still can play a powerful role and start advocating for the federal community today. Visit NARFE's advocacy webpage and legislative action center and you will learn how to address your concerns to Congress and encourage fellow NARFE members to do the same.

If our opponents get their way, budding and upcoming professionals will be hard-pressed to envision a career with the federal government. Think of what a disservice that would be to the American people who depend on and deserve the best and brightest entering the civil service.

We should not have to fight for benefits we earned. That our legislators and president are trying to hurt the very people who currently work or have worked in government is appalling. But the sad reality is that we must fight. That is why you play such an important role in the future of NARFE. Advocacy staff can meet with members of Congress dozens of times and the communications department can speak with reporters every day, but it's your participation in grassroots advocacy that positions NARFE within the halls of Congress as the go-to resource and experts on all things federal workforce.

As I wrap this up, I would like you to remember that NARFE is many things to many people. Yet, to all of them, NARFE is their choice. They choose NARFE for a reason.

Having managed federal employees for decades, I have seen firsthand that **change** can be hard, and accepting or adapting to it, uncomfortable.

But a new look does not change our commitment to federal employees and retirees. A new tagline does not change our high editorial standards. A new description does not change our unwavering commitment to the federal community. These changes simply enhance what NARFE has been doing all along.

Thank you and I wish you success at your conference.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** Next we will hear briefly from our Exhibitors who support our Convention by having tables in the Foyer and giving away items of use to us.

Blue Cross/Blue Shield – Richard Gracey  
Kaiser Permanente – Vinita Singh  
Tru Hearing – Cynthia Schoonover  
Bekins - April Milner  
Clear Captions – Dena Weber

Please visit their tables outside and thank them for their support and participation.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President Announcements:**

The drawing for \$2,019 will be tomorrow afternoon, April 25. Tickets are still available for purchase.

### **RECESS FOR RECOGNITION LUNCHEON**

**Immediate Past President Dee Shallenberger** presided at the Recognition Luncheon honoring Federation Past Presidents and their spouses for their service. Recognized were Forney Lundy (1999-2001), Lea Zajac (2001-2003 and 2017-2019), Helen Zajac (2004-2007); Dottie Schmidt (2011-2013) and Dee Shallenberger (2015-2017) and husband Ed.

### **CONVENTION RECONVENED**

**Lea Zajac, CSFC President:** The Annual Meeting of the California Federation is now in order. The primary purpose of the Annual Meeting is to hear a report from the Federation President on the State of the Federation and a report from the Federation Treasurer on the financial status of the Federation. Now is the time for our Annual Meeting where you receive a report from our Federation President and Federation Treasurer. The Annual Meeting also provides an opportunity for members to address any matter that relates to NARFE. California Federation is the largest and the first formed. Every state is a federation. 54 Federations include District of Columbia, Philippine Islands, Panama, and Puerto Rico. In California we have about 17,000 members; about 45% are National Only members. There are about 214,000 federal retirees in CA, so there is ample opportunity for recruiting. Most federal retirees do not know NARFE exists. We do not have enough advertising reaching these people. Unfortunately, the Privacy Act keeps us from getting the names and addresses of these people. Somehow our membership chairs need to be working on this. Right now, we have 72 chapters in California. Unfortunately, we are in the process of closing 5 of those 72 chapters. And one of the reasons we are losing those chapters in the past two years is the renewal letters which have gone out were confusing. There are two boxes first one is for \$40.00 and the second is to renew with \$40.00 plus chapter dues. Members marked the first box and were automatically put in National Only. They were transferred from Chapter to National Only. They had not intended to leave the chapter.

Your Federation President has been fighting this issue for two years as we tried to get the renewal letter changed. There was a lot of resistance to this from the past Administration at Headquarters. We finally had a Federation President's meeting this last July. The Federation Presidents all got together as a common front and we went to National and said, "Look (I will just call them the old regime, or old administration), we want the renewal letter changed. After all you guys work for us. Come on we are the Federation officers, and we represent all 54 Federations. And we want that letter changed because it is confusing to the membership. So, change those boxes around. Make that first box to mark that I am renewing my chapter membership as well as my NARFE membership. And low and behold, it made a big difference." Unfortunately, the damage has already been done because over the last two years a lot of you lost members because they went to National Only, just because they marked the wrong box. Now a lot of your chapters have gone back and asked them, "Did you really want to move your membership from the Chapter to National Only." No, no, I do not want to leave the Chapter, and so they got transferred back to the Chapter. You know, Chapter Officers should not have to go through that pain to contact every member who renewed to get them to come back. So, over the last two years we have lost many members to National Only. Therefore, some chapters are closing, they just threw up their arms and said, "Wow my chapter members are being forced into National-Only, only because they mismarked the renewal box." That has been resolved. The renewal letter has been changed. Will those who had to deal with this, please raise your hands? Oh, nearly everyone. That is unfortunate. You can still go back and contact those members and see if they really want to go to National Only. I recently send out a survey to every chapter who had email capability and I pointed out we are losing 2,000 members every month for the last seven years. Seven years ago, we hired a Marketing Director who was supposed to help to reverse this trend. At that time, we were losing 2,000 members because they did not renew their membership. Yes, some said it was the increase in deceased members. But there is a separate list of deceased members. We are continuing to lose 2,000 members a month because members do not renew their membership. Wouldn't it be nice to know why they dropped their membership? Obviously, NARFE is doing something wrong because we are not meeting their expectations. Maybe, the Chapters do not show enough value to be a member anymore. I do not know.

I did send out a survey; to California members to get some information back on why one would drop their membership. What do you think NARFE should do to retain you as a member? Unfortunately, I only heard back from members who have been members for 10 years or more. The members I need to hear from are those with two or fewer years in our membership. My attempt, this is for California, was to try to get some information back on why would you drop your membership? What do you think NARFE should do to retain you as a member? And unfortunately, I got nothing from the newer members. All are from members who have been members for 10 years or more. In the survey, the letter I sent out, I said, "Over the next six months there will be 12,000 members who will drop their memberships. This is based on statistics, an average of 2,000 members. So, in this letter I said, "You 12,000 members, whoever you are, don't drop your membership over the next 6 months. Stick with us but tell us why you would even think of dropping your membership." Those are the people I would like to hear from. Not that I do not wish to hear from you here in attendance; you people are the dedicated ones.

Do you have any questions concerning membership or renewal?

**Federation Treasurer Yoggi Riley** stated that she would give her Treasurer's Report later.

### **Questions & Answers:**

**Question:** At NARFE Headquarters we have this membership person. We are losing 1,200 people each month. Are we paying this person money? Or do they volunteer?

**Response:** Lea Zajac: The Marketing Director gets a good salary

**Member Response:** I think we should fire her.

Lea Zajac Response: That is one of the questions on the survey. Not to fire her, but do you think she is doing a good job or not? A lot of you said “no”. {The Marketing Director has since resigned }

Question: We are having a lot of problems getting the access to federal employees. We cannot get into different buildings. They will not let us go to their seminars. We are having trouble recruiting that way.

Response: Lea Zajac: I understand that you are right. Ever since 911, security has tightened up so much. That Federal buildings just are not receiving visitors. Even if you tell them you are with the NARFE organization, we are having difficulty getting in. So, you are not alone; it is nationwide. I think Headquarters is working on a program where they will go out with a letter to the federal agencies advising them about NARFE and what we do. We are working with the Fed-Postal Coalition and with many other agencies who are coalition partners with us. Our Marketing Department is also using online advertisements for our “White Papers” which are available to members on our website and with other websites, such as Government Executive, so people will contact us. They are also offering webinars to federal employees for a small cost, which includes a NARFE membership for one year at a reduced rate.

Question: We have had a tremendous drop in membership. We had 2,000 and we are down to 800. Consequently, our membership person found that they were going into National-Only and that is a real problem for us. I also try to get people currently working, employees, to join with out much success. I have gone to quarterly “meet and greets” in the evening, because our normal meetings are during the daytime. So, I went to evenings. Thinking the people who are working would come. We offered free food and information and such. And out of the past three years I have been doing this, almost four, we have gotten 2 people to join. I think that is sad that we cannot even get people who are even interested. I do not know the answer, maybe you do.

Response Lea Zajac: I do not have an answer to that. I know several chapters have done the same things. Advertising evening meetings has not been successful. This is one of the parts of the problem where we need to somehow figure out how to entice the active federal employees to get interested in NARFE. They are not really getting the information. Most of them do not know what NARFE is doing for them. We are working on it.

Question: I go to the hospital all the time. Just have a regular onset of people joining, especially the retirees. But now the active people do not join until they retire. The problem that I see is not the cost or whatever, its apathy. And I do not know what National needs to do to help us or give us some guidance or some support. But when I send my membership request for things, they send me, last year’s calendars, and box of outdated magazines. Which are ok. But anything else for membership, they say, “Oh we don’t have any membership support items or give away items anymore”. If we are trying to get members, we need to have material available.

Response Lea Zajac: Wait a minute, do not go away. Let me make sure I understand you. Are you saying you requested material from National and they said they did not have any to send to you?

Member Response: Exactly, the lady said, “Oh, we have a membership lady, who goes out and does membership recruiting; but we don’t have any excess to give out to anybody.” And I said, “Don’t you have calendars or magazines, or any extra printed materials, or pencils, or anything.” And she said, “Oh, no.” Yet, I got in the mail outdated calendars and outdated magazines and that was the extent. I never got a note, I never got a response, I never got a follow up phone call, nothing. I have called and called National Membership and I do not get a response.

Response Lea Zajac: Do you know the name of the person you talked to?

Member Response: I probably do, but I do not have it with me. I probably can retrieve it.

Response Lea Zajac: That's the kind of information I need to fix the problem, who did you talk with, what date and what time. Once we get the specifics, we can send those specifics to HQ to get the problem fixed.

Member Response: The number I called is the number on the Magazine that says Membership Contact 800-456-8410. It was a voice mail to leave a name and number for a return call, which I never received. So, I accept that other people are getting the same response. You know there is a problem, it is just not a local problem.

Response Lea Zajac: I understand. You know when you are having that kind of problem, if you could contact me at the time it occurs, we could get that straightened out. Again, it is particularly important to specify the date and time you received the message. HQ cannot fix a problem that they are not aware of.

Question: I learned of NARFE at a pre-retirement seminar many years ago. In Pasadena Chapter we have a 30 maybe 60-minute presentation at the seminar and handed out magazines and such. I filed it away. A couple of years later went through and I signed up at that point. I think that NARFE needs to put some effort into renewing their relationship with the people who put on the preretirement seminars. Not as competitors, like we try to do now. But maybe paying them fifty bucks to give us an hour to present NARFE to people approaching retirement. That is our primary target. We need members. And people who are approaching retirement are probably more receptive to what can happen to their pension. We need to do more working with the preretirement seminar people instead against them.

Response Lea Zajac: Unfortunately, we used to have a person from the Office of Personnel Management who gave the preretirement seminars (PRS) and came to the federal agencies. Congress took that away from the Office of Personnel Management and gave the PRS to the Agricultural Department. They are not very receptive to NARFE representatives to speak at preretirement seminars. That is something we must work on. Thanks for bringing that up. We have our National President here and I am sure he is taking notes.

Question: I want to address the same thing. I joined NARFE as a life member out of a preretirement seminar while I was working. The idea of us getting into the preretirement seminar is really, important. The other thing is the first time I went to a convention, we were going to have the Director of OPM help us to get access to federal activities through OPM. As you know OPM is our boss. They are the ones who pay us as retirees. So, every new OPM Director seems to promise us the moon. Yes, we will help you and then they are off to something else. They do not give what I consider the top cover to get into the federal agencies. I spoke to a federal agency about a week ago in San Diego. We go in through one of the employees. We were there to give a recruitment speech. Basically, we do have a problem with the renewal letter.

Response Lea Zajac: Thank you.

Question: Just another thought to throw out to you. I came from the military side of the house and I can tell you every military installation has a group. I do not mean just NARFE groups, I mean for example, federal financial associations. Where people go to luncheons during the normal workday. If we can get in and try to develop a relationship with those same groups maybe we can be a speaker at their meetings, during their lunch time and promote NARFE as well. So, I throw this out because perhaps at the Federation or the National level you might have a relationship with those groups.

Response Lea Zajac: I will say this, back at Headquarters they do have a Federal-Postal Coalition with nearly all those folks you are talking about. Where we are missing the boat is with the local organizations. Locally we do not get involved with those other associations except the CA Postal Employees Legislative Coalition.

Question: I feel this information is good. This is a Membership problem and if you are thinking of relying on getting into the agency you have got a problem. But the point is that your members need to be recruiters. You need to, and in this case whether the president of the chapter or the membership person, needs to emphasize the importance of and we all know be informed about what NARFE is doing. So, you can approach people you run into them all the time and interest them into coming to a meeting. Do not appoint them to something as soon as they get there. But come to a meeting and give them the information of importance. We have relied upon this because I used to get into the federal agencies. But you must figure a way to get in. I worked in the shipyards and they say Gate 5 opens and closes both ways. Under the circumstances we cannot get in, but the whole thing is that if you get to the person that's in charge, or Human Relations or someone in HR that does training would be a good contact person. So, don't just sit back and wait for it to come to you. You must go out there and act. So, we can get new members. So, we can get new *young* members to come in and start helping us continue our goal.

Response Lea Zajac: Thank you.

Question: I am one of those younger members. I was recruited out of a retirement seminar about twelve years ago. I tried to contact the same HR person at 32<sup>nd</sup> street North Highlands. I was told that we do not really want a seminar because all they were doing was selling life insurance or selling this or that. We no longer want you here because it is inconvenient. How do we get around "inconvenient"? Tell them what you are, what you do, and I have a badge that says I was an employee. I found out about a year ago, that it had expired, and I needed to go get a new one. The Marine Corp gives you one, along with a sticker for your car; Navy does not. But we use to go to seminar at the Marine Corp base here. They do not have funds any more to put that on like they used to. I think we have gotten two members out of three or four visits who went to Chapter 669 in Chula Vista. But they closed. We needed National level to say, Hey, maybe our Congressional Representatives can break through and say, "Hey, these people are not the enemy. They are not selling anything. They are there to help employees with their retirement." Any time Congress is in session, our benefits are endangered. Getting active employees, you must have access to them. I have access but not that much.

Response Lea Zajac: I will say this. All these federal retirees Congress keeps trying to change our COLA or reduce it or eliminate it. They talk about increasing our health plan insurance premiums. We have been successful over the last twenty, well since the early '90's. Federal retirees have not lost a thing because of NARFE. The letters we write, visits we make to Congress, have preserved the Federal retiree's benefits. We have not lost anything since 1993 when we had the so called "diet cola" We have not been as successful with active employees, but we have been pro-active. People who were hired after 2014 in the federal government, are paying more to their retirement fund than we did. We paid 7% when we were working. Now anyone going to work for federal government after 2014 are paying 11.4%. They are paying 4.4% more for their retirement and they are not getting additional benefits. Now, NARFE fought that, but we lost. But what we did get, Congress wanted to make that retroactive to all federal employees but decided to make it effective only for new hires. We were successful in that regard.

Question: We need a three-prong attack. By the Federations and the National, well-funded, on organizations within federal government employees. On young people, both temporary and contract, as well as those eligible for retirement, and to the public. For the organization we need to publicize NARFE in their online and hard copy publications. So, their people know what NARFE is and how unions no longer help their members when they retire. They can help their union still in retirement. We could with the young people we need to let those temporary employees and contract people know that we would fight for them to have jobs with retirement for the federal government. And the third is publicity. On my computer, I get ads from NARFE. We should not as a National organization be paid from them to ask our members to join the

Organization. And going back to the young people, we need to have a new type of chapter which makes them feel like their needs are addressed.

Response Lea Zajac: Thank you.

Question: One of the things we really need to do is kick up the energy level a little. When we are there recruiting, we need to have some kind of “big bang” to come out of NARFE. One of the things your Federation is working on the State Legislation Committee is a proposal for California State tax treatment of federal workers for a request of equity. We are looking to get federal annuities to be treated the same as Social Security. You know in California they do not tax Social Security benefits. California does not tax public pensions but does tax federal pensions. California is deemed discriminatory in its taxing; therefore, a bill is required to exclude income from federal annuities from state income tax. Now the committee is small. There are only a few of us. We are to the point now where we have been working on it for a couple years. As matter of fact, we were featured in the NARFE Magazine a little while back. We are the point now we are going to be drafting a bill to take to the State Legislature. We need support from the folks in this room and other NARFE members that may have experience in this kind of language or provide some feedback for a brain storming session to get this in front of our legislators. Michael Bandera is the Chairman of this committee. Our meetings are always open. We are looking for feedback from everybody. I will tell you what the four-day rule is as successful as some others have been in getting this passed, that would be the “big bang” we need for our organizing efforts.

Response Lea Zajac: Thank you. Ok, we are not taking any more questions as we are running behind, I see. One more.

Question: I will be brief. I would like to see the government pension offset GPO repealed. Given back to us and repealed and unfortunately, both the GPO and WEP have taken part of our Social Security. They have gone up and have gone back to committee at least ten times in the NARFE Magazine I have seen several of the bills going up and being sent back to Committee. I think National should take a position and help lift this up to a higher level. I do not see that happening. But I hope it happens soon.

Response Lea Zajac: Thank you. The problem with a complete repeal of GPO and WEP is that it would cost the Government about 80 Billion dollars over 10 years.

There have been Bills to repeal both GPO and WEP, but we did not make enough noise about them. We, NARFE membership, did not contact our Congressmen enough to get them to think that “Well, maybe we, Congress, can support that.” So, when those Bills come up, folks, we must let our Congressmen know how important these issues are to federal retirees by sending our Congressman letters, emails, phone calls, and visits and that gets their attention. Unfortunately, when we had these GPO/WEP bills before, the Congressman did not get much of a response from their constituents, so they didn’t act on them. So, something to think about next time these bills are introduced, flood the Congressmen’s office with input from your members. If you can add some personal experiences, that is even more helpful.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:**

I’m going to have Yoggi Riley give her report as Federation Treasurer and then we have got to move along. We spent more time on questions than I thought we would. Later, tomorrow we will have an open forum and you can have a second opportunity to ask your questions in that open forum.

**Yoggi Riley, Federation Treasurer:** This report will be very brief. Well as I stated in the Program Book, it has really been my pleasure to serve you. I have served two terms. The first term was a learning experience. The second term I was beginning to think there was some rule that said if you cannot find a replacement, you

cannot leave. Now I know that is not the case. Not for this treasurer. So, it is time for me to move on and I think it's probably time for someone else to step-up and see what is happening to their money.

I am happy to report the Federation has collected our Per Capita dues for the last year 100%. The number of chapter closings have been increasing significantly over the last few years. As stated, there are 72 Chapters. Total dues for this year for the Federation were \$8,900. We had projected \$11,000. There will be good news along the way and a little bit of sad news, but the best I can give you our treasury at the beginning of April is \$151,661. We heard this morning, that we will owe money to our hotel because our lodging (attendance) is less than the contract required. But we are solvent. We have been doing some things to save money. When I first took office somebody said why don't you guys stop spending so much money on Executive Board Meetings? Avoid all those Executive Board Meetings. We took that to heart. This past year with President Lea Zajac, we had more tele-conferences and we saved a lot of money for E-Board travel. This has been a significant savings for the Federation.

We have things we have been trying to do to increase our membership, or to make new revenues, and new ideas. I am listening to a lot of things you say. With my possibility of being elected to the Vice-President and Membership Chair, I am looking at some of you people and guess what committee you will be on to try to build some of these ideas together. But we have been instituting new incentive programs. The incentive programs were the creation of this \$10 dollars from the Federation including the \$8.00 from National for recruiting active new members. So, there are different ways you can treat that. In the beginning I can take the \$10 I knew I was getting from the Federation, give it to the new member and say your membership only cost \$30. That was some of the exciting things especially at health fairs. We have been giving \$75 to a member for every ten members they recruit during a convention cycle. Last convention in Reno we had 6 members in 2017 who received a \$75 bonus. I am happy to report this cycle we are at 12 members who will be receiving a \$75 bonus for signing at least 10 new members. I would also like to recognize two chapters, first Salinas Chapter 1496. Would the Salinas Chapter members please stand? These guys have been twisting arms at health fairs and every other way they can. The other is San Francisco Chapter 65, would your members please stand? We need to take the lead from these two chapters and follow in their footsteps.

I know how hard is to put on conventions. My background in organizations, unions, Associations has been to attend a lot of conventions and it takes a lot of work. So, I always handled Ways and Means. What about tickets, that is for the raffle. I'm talking about something like twisting arms and the DVP's collect baskets so I am encouraging you to participate because in that way we can offset some of our expenses for the Convention, by buying tickets for the baskets. Incentive Opportunity Drawing is something that hopefully is going to pay off. Who does not want to walk away from this Convention with \$2,019? But at least participate every time you get the opportunity.

So, the last thing I want to say, although this is my last Treasurer's report, I am going to assist the new treasurer in any way. Not that I can tell you they are a headache; I was at a loss when we lost Dick Ostergren. He was my mentor, my tax man, and I have been to HRBLOCK and anybody else to get directions to get our taxes filed in the proper manner. And I think we were above board with that, even if we were a little late. So, thank you very much and thank you for giving me your support.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** Thank you Yoggi. We are going to speed along here now. So, we can get more of these reports. I hope they will be a little shorter. So, we are going to start with our Barb Leetch, she is our Region VIII Coordinator for Alzheimer's. We also have Connie Vickers, who is Alzheimer's Coordinator for the Federation.

**Barb Leetch: Region VIII Alzheimer's Chair:** Thank you Lea. I did have five minutes, am I down to two now?



**Lea Zajac:** Three and half minutes.

**Barb Leetch: Region VIII Alzheimer's Chair:** Three and half. Ok, I try to make a good impression in front of our National President being the Regional Coordinator, but just do not have time to. We know that Alzheimer's is still a devastating disease. It is still the 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in the United States and every 65 seconds someone else is developing Alzheimer's. Reached our goal of 13 million dollars and we are well on our way to reach our goal of 14 million dollars by the end of 2020. So, thank you everyone for your contributions. As we heard from our National President the new contract between NARFE, and Alzheimer now will include the money from the NARFE walks and the Longest Day. Example: the NARFE members raised 60 thousand dollars last year during our walks. Every year we get more members. Let me talk for a minute about the Longest Day. It is June 21<sup>st</sup>, the summer solstice, the longest day of the year in terms of daylight. You are invited to participate in fund raising events to help fight the darkness of Alzheimer's. Now the funds are all going to research. You can go to the Alzheimer's Website for more information. I want to talk about some promising research, it is called the "Sprint mind." It is the first randomized clinical trial to demonstrate that intensive medical treatment to reduce high blood pressure can significantly reduce the occurrence of Mild Cognitive Impairment known as MCI. The study found a 19% reduction in the risk of MCI, which is a risk factor for Dementia, which everyone experiences Dementia passes through an MCI phase. We have prevented new cases of MCI, new cases of Dementia. This study strengthens the evidence that what is good for the heart is good for the mind. Connie Vickers, can you come to the stage? Connie is the Federation Alzheimer's Coordinator. I would like to recognize you for your outstanding service in being the Federation Coordinator.

**Connie Vickers: Federation Alzheimer's Coordinator:** Good Afternoon everybody, my name is Connie Vickers from San Diego, Chapter 4. I would like to thank all of you for your efforts in donations and reports. Recognizing Chapters with high per capita donations. Lompoc Chapter per capita donation of \$8.54 rate. Signs used have different colors. Blue represents someone with Dementia or Alzheimer's. Purple represents someone who has lost someone to Alzheimer's. Yellow is for someone who is supporting or caring for someone with Alzheimer's. Orange is for everyone who supports a world without Alzheimer's. NARFE is a big part of that. Thank You. Certificates are being mailed out to those supporting Alzheimer's research.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** I have been remiss in not presenting small tokens of my appreciation to each of these various Chairs and Committees. My wife stacked them up and just reminded me, "When are you going to pass these out?" I need to catch up with those who have gone before.

Now our NARFE PAC Coordinator, Juanita Pardun and she is new. She is also serving as our Convention Recording Secretary.

**Juanita Pardun: NARFE-PAC Coordinator:** NARFE-PAC means National Active and Retired Federal Employee Political Action Committee. NARFE-PAC is a way to support those Congressmen who support our NARFE issues. It also allows our members to attend local events sponsored by the Congressman and have an opportunity to meet them and hear from them. Often their office staff will attend these events and you can meet them, exchange a business card, and go back and meet with them about our NARFE issues. HQ receives a request from a CA congressman's campaign and sends it to the CA NARFE-PAC Coordinator for approval. I then contact the DVP who in turn contacts the chapters in that Congressional District to receive a yeah or a nay for approving the funds. I receive their response and send it to HQ. If there is an event associated with those funds, the DVP makes the arrangements for members to attend and lets me know, so I will forward the list to HQ. Please consider a NARFE-PAC donation – or better yet, become a NARFE-PAC sustaining member and contribute a minimum of \$10 per month from your credit card.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** A small token of my appreciation. Ok, our next speaker will be really brief on talking about FEEA. Our Helen Zajac, Region VIII Vice President.

**Helen Zajac: Region VIII Vice President:** Thank you Mr. President. I want to talk about the history of FEEA, the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund. We partnered with them in 1996 after the tragedy in Oklahoma City with the Alfred Murrah Federal Building being blown up. Our NARFE members were so concerned, they donated \$100,000. That was when we joined with Federal Employees Emergency Assistance (FEEA). As the National President stated earlier the contract has been renegotiated. We used some of that money earlier this year for the government shutdown. 412 NARFE- FEEA grants (\$41,200) were given to active federal employees. That was a \$1000 grant to each applicant. The other side was in scholarships. Six scholarships per region were awarded last year. This year we found there were not enough contributions to the scholarship fund, so we decreased scholarships to two per region. We have decided it is not good to have a separate disaster fund and scholarship fund. As of March first, of this year, we have changed that. The Magazine coupon will show NARFE-FEEA Fund. We will determine how much will go to each fund. That is a little bit of a change and should not be too painful for you to support.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** Our next speaker would have been “Old Bob” Davidson on Constitution and By Laws, but we have run out of time.

**Robert (Old Bob) Davidson: Bylaws Committee Chair:** Thank you, but you cannot get away from that. The first thing I want to do is to recognize the Committee. Besides I, we have Linda Ingram, Mike Siminski, and Charlie Mattis. Every chapter was sent a copy about three weeks ago, March 25<sup>th</sup>, of the committee report and a copy of the only resolution we must consider today at this convention. That is a new set of By Laws. You also received a copy when you picked up your registration packet. Pages 5 & 6 did not get printed. You will be receiving these two pages. Front table did not get them. We went through the By Laws. National voted one person, one vote at their last convention. National Only Members were not represented in voting. They have a right to vote. To be an affiliated Chapter in the Federation, every Chapter pays \$1.00 per member to the Federation. The National Only Members do not pay this. The change allows the National Only Members to pay the \$1.00 to the Federation to become an affiliated member of the Federation. This allows them to vote the same as Chapter Members. We also said that we want in contrast to the National Policy, our members and those members who attend our conventions to have the right to discuss and debate on resolutions and issues. We also discussed and consulted our National Office and Roberts Rules of Order, to simplify the By Laws. They had 27 pages. They are so detailed; I think walking up the stairs is covered. To change any part, you must wait until the next convention, every two years, to vote on any changes. Two thirds of everyone voting at the convention are needed to change them. We took out all the little detailed things which should never have been there to begin with. We have referred to the Federation Policies as set by the Federation Executive Board. Our proposed By Laws are only eight pages long instead of 27 pages. Our Federation name has changed. In the new By Laws, we are called The California Federation. The names in all documents will need to be changed. This report was furnished prior to this Convention to all chapters and delegates, so they might fully understand this important resolution. The Committee recommends acceptance. The Committee wanted National to accept the resolution prior to this Convention, but National said we had to vote it in before National would even look at it. This is where we are. When we sent it out to the Chapter, we asked for comment. There was one comment. The referendum policy was approved at the last Convention, 2017, as part of the By Laws. With this By Law change the Referendum Policy will be placed in the Federation Policies. If something comes up between periods, we can get it out to you as referendum, but it is expensive. The comment we got, “Said the fact that we asked those who wish to vote on the operation of this Federation must attend the Convention or the Annual Meeting at which voting will take place. No more proxies no absentee ballots.” If you are interested enough in the organization and you like to debate the issues, get to the Convention or Business Meeting and then you can vote. I was told that was “voter suppression”. Now I do have to disagree with that terminology. It is not. The people who come to the conventions are interested in the operation of this Federation. You are the people who should have the vote. People who sit on the outside half of the time do

not read it any way. I was so gratified this morning when Tony Pizza, Chapter 190, came up to me and said, “Bob, you’re missing pages 5 & 6.” I said, “Thank you Tony, you read it.” I had 5 or 6 other people come up and say the same thing. Our President has left the room.

**Robert Davidson (acting for Lea Zajac):** I will open for discussion on the resolution to change the By Laws and accept the proposed By Laws submitted by the Committee.

Question: I understand the collection procedures for the \$1.00 would be in the Policies, but how would that be done?

Response Robert Davidson: I don’t know, I have to be honest about it. We will still be operating under the old By Laws until National gives us the approval of these By Laws. When that occurs, our new President will appoint a new By Laws and Policy review, whatever she wants to call it. We will then start the new policies to go with the By Laws. We will be as transparent as we hope National will be.

Question: If I am poverty stricken, and cannot attend a convention, can I vote?

Response Robert Davidson: It will be difficult. You would think we ought to be able to mail it. But it costs about \$13,000 to mail out ballots. National can put ballots in the Magazine. We do not have a mailing going out. That is why you must come to the convention.

Question: My name is James Gray, President of Napa County Chapter 281. In 2016 justification for the one person one vote was that everyone in the United States gets to vote for the President, etc. This is not true; the Electoral College does. Do you have any feedback from the younger generation on this one person one vote in the Chapters?

Response: Ken Thomas, National President: Ohio came up with particularly good idea. Put an advertisement in the Magazine with a mailing address to the Federation to receive a ballot. They would have to verify their eligibility to vote.

Question: That’s OK for the Federation what about the Chapters?

Response: Ken Thomas, National President: Chapters?

Response: Robert Davidson: May I speak to that?

Ken Thomas, National President: Yes

Response Robert Davidson: This has nothing to do with Chapters. They will continue to vote as they have in the past. National Only members are not members of a Chapter, so they have no vote in the Chapter, unless they join the Chapter.

Question: This is an election year for my Chapter. Do I have to mail out ballots to all my members?

Response Robert Davidson: How did you do it last year?

Member Response: Members who came to the meeting voted.

Response Robert Davidson: That is the way you do this year, unless you change your By Laws.

Member Response: That is not what I was told by National.

Response Robert Davidson: Then we have a problem with National, don’t we?

Robert Davidson: We received a message from National that they were not going to hold up Chapter By-Laws. New Chapter By-Laws will be held up until Federation By-laws are approved, because Chapter By-Laws may never be approved. That is how you handle your Chapter.

Question: The new title of California Federation abbreviates to CSF. As a Service Officers, when I see this, I think of the Prefix for claim numbers of survivor annuitants. So, I do not think CSF is a good idea. What you would change it to, unless it would be CSFA, with the A be Affiliation?

Response Robert Davidson: OK. One of the advantages we have, under the current By-Laws, you can offer an amendment to the main motion.

Member Response: I move to make the new title of the California State Federation be California State Federation Affiliation (CSFA).

Response Robert Davidson: Would you do me a favor and put that in writing?

Member Response: Yes.

Response Robert Davidson: So, we know exactly what we are voting for. Repeat it back. We have amendment on the floor, ladies, and gentlemen. The motion was to change the new title to California State Federation Affiliation. Can everyone hear me? To make a motion to change the name to California State Federation Affiliation. Or CSFA.

Robert Davidson: Do we have a second? Mary Venerable seconded the motion. Now we are open to discussion on the amendment.

Discussion: I oppose this amendment. What about just CF, California Federation?

Response Robert Davidson: Discuss it with the President.

Discussion: With all due respect Bob, I question this procedure and think this should be turned back over to the Federation President for further discussion.

Response Robert Davidson: Parliamentarian, is it appropriate for the President of the Organization to turn it over to the Committee Chair?

Response Parliamentarian: If he wishes to delegate it to you, that is his right.

Discussion: There is already an Article 3 Section on Federation talking about paying a dollar to become affiliated with a chapter. It is a bit confusing. I would suggest California State Federation of NARFE or CSFN.

Discussion: I suggest California State Federation. It provides everything.

Point of Order: Helen Zajac Chapter 16 Vallejo. I raise a point of order because in looking at the actual By-Laws that currently govern this Federation, dated 21-20-13. In Article 6, Section 3, Paragraph C, "All resolutions originating with member chapters, Executive Board or Standing Committees shall be received by the Federation Secretary not later than 75 days prior to the opening of the Federation Convention." And in Paragraph E, "Secretary shall distribute one copy of the resolution to each Chapter President, registered convention delegates, Federation Officers, and Federation Past President 50 days prior the opening of the Federation Convention." I heard earlier in the Chairman's remarks that these proposed By-Laws were submitted to the Chapters on March 25<sup>th</sup>. I do not believe this, being less than one month, would meet either of these requirements in the By-Laws. I would like a Parliamentarian's ruling on that.

ED Shallenberger, Parliamentarian: That is true.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** The Parliamentarian says that is true. So, we have two choices, we can either say “Sayonara” or we can vote to set aside those provisions of the By-Laws and continue considering the resolution.

**Parliamentarian:** That would be a two-thirds vote.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** That would need a two-thirds vote according to our Parliamentarian.

Discussion: I move to table it.

Response Lea Zajac: What are we tabling Linda Beigel?

Discussion: The proposed By-Laws.

Response Lea Zajac: Right now, we have an amendment to the By-Laws.

Discussion: We do not have a main motion on the floor. We cannot have it.

Response Lea Zajac: We have a main motion on the floor. Now we have a Parliamentarian ruling. And the consideration in this point in time is if the convention wishes to set aside those provisions of the current By-Laws that would prevent the new By-Laws from being voted on in this convention.

Discussion: I do not think we can do that after the fact, can we?

Response Lea Zajac: Oh yes, we can.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** Do I have a motion to set aside the provisions of the current By-Laws that would prevent the proposed By-Laws from being voted on in this convention? Do we have a motion? Come up to the mike.

Motion: Karen Ross Chapter 352: I move we set aside the current By-Law restrictions to address the change for National Only Members?

**Lea Zajac Federation President:** You want to set aside the provisions of our current bylaws.

We have a motion and a second to set aside the provisions of our current By-Laws, the ones we are operating under today to consider the proposed By-Laws as sent to every Chapter on March 25, 2019. All those in favor of the motion? Get your Blue Cards out; this is just for voting of those present. This is not a proxy vote.

Point of Order: We cannot vote without a discussion.

Lea Zajac: Would you like to discuss it?

Discussion: Yes, I would. I think we need to either approve these By-Laws as written, the Proposed By-Laws, then amend the future process as needed OR else go back to the 27 pages as suggested by National Headquarters.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** Any further discussion? There is a motion on the floor that we set aside the 2017 By-Laws under which we are operating.

Helen Zajac, Vallejo Chapter 16: No, the 2011 By-Laws are the last ones approved by National Headquarters.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** Well, the 2011 and 2017, have the same provisions. Karen Ross made the motion, and we have a second. All those in favor of setting aside the By-Laws. All those opposed,

please raise your cards. 16 Oppose. How many voting people do we have here? We need to have a hard count. Sergeant of Arms would you kindly do the counting for us?

Point of Order Mr. President. I would point out what you propose to do is illegal. If you throw out the current By-Laws, to vote on the new ones, they do not become effective until National approves them. So, we are without By-Laws at all.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** We are only setting aside for the purpose of this convention, those particular By-Law provisions of the 2011/2017, whichever you wish to call them, which prevents us from voting to accept the new proposed By-Laws.

Discussion: Just that section of the By-Laws?

Lea Zajac, Federation President: Just that section.

Discussion: I withdraw the Point of Order.

**Lea Zajac: Federation President:** Would everyone who is in favor of this motion please raise your hands again. Please keep them up until you have been counted. With 73 yes; 21 No; 94 total; the motion passes.

Now, we had a motion on the floor to change the name of Article 1 to California State Federation. That was the amendment to Article 1 of the proposed By-Laws, which is the main motion. We have had a period of discussion. The other was not a motion, it was a statement. So that is what we are voting on now, there is no further discussion. All those in favor of the motion to change the Article 1, page 1, change the name from California State Federation to California State Federation Affiliation. All those in favor.

We are voting on the motion to amend the By-Laws, the name change. Ok, it is obvious the vote to change the name is more than two-thirds of the members voting are voting in opposition to the name change. Therefore, it does not carry. We are now back to main motion and the main discussion on the proposed By-Laws. Is there any further discussion on the proposed By-Laws?

Discussion: I just want to note that on page 7 there are two references to Federation Convention Annual. We do not have annual meetings. Is this correct?

Response Lea Zajac: That is what the new meetings will be called.

Discussion: And will they be held annually?

Response Lea Zajac: Each year we will have an annual meeting. We are required by the DC Corporate Law to have two membership meetings. Every other year we will have a conference style meeting. The other year will be another annual meeting where the DC Corporate Law requires a report from the President and report from the Treasurer. We have been doing this for some years. One year we have a “training” meeting. That constituted an annual meeting. But now because of the requirements that we have National Only members. There will be annual meeting one year, even numbered, and another annual meeting odd number year, which will be a conference style meeting. We will have voting and discussions of any resolutions presented.

Discussion: So, the even number years there will be a gathering of all members of the Federation invited to a hotel.

Response Lea Zajac: Yes.

Discussion: We did get a chance to review the By-Laws. What method do we use to get the information out to our members? We can use E-mail. But what about those who do not have E-mail? They are going to have to be notified about the voting.

Response Lea Zajac: We are aware of the problems of E-mails vs postal mail. Therefore, your Executive Board will have to determine how, perhaps using your newsletter. You are the backbone of this organization.

Discussion: The proposed By-Laws say you must vote at the Convention.

Response Lea Zajac: That is true. Are you talking about you do not want to vote at the convention? You want a different method?

Discussion: Yes.

Response Lea Zajac: What are you suggesting?

Discussion: Use the NARFE Magazine.

Response Lea Zajac: Thank you for your comment.

Discussion: I just want to mention it has already been tested. It was in our Magazine that everyone gets, and it did not say just E-mail.

**Lea Zajac Federation President:** Any further discussion? If there is no further discussion, then the motion is on the floor. All those in favor, will you please raise your hand with the blue voting card. We are voting on the proposed By-Laws to accept as written. If you want to speak, you must get to the microphone.

Discussion: We cannot vote here for this. We must vote under the current rules. We set aside the current rules.

Response Lea Zajac: That was a specific provision of the current rules for one motion. This is for the entire proposed By-Laws.

Discussion: We cannot vote under the new By-Laws. We need to go to the machines and vote.

Response Lea Zajac: I have discussed this with our Parliamentarian and our Federation Past Presidents, we don't need machines (computers) unless we vote by acclamation, and we would have to vote to vote by acclamation, the vote would have to appear on a written ballot along with the vote for officers. You are correct in that unless we have a motion to vote by acclamation that is accepted by the delegates attending here it will appear on the ballot. Vote is tonight after 5 pm. That is agreed to by the Parliamentarian and Federation Past Presidents. We are finished with the proposed By-Laws.

Does everyone understand we will have a written ballot after 5 pm to vote on the Proposed By-Laws?

Will Patton, would you run up here and tell us about the candidates we have for office. The four resident officers are President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, we will not address the District Vice-Presidents because tonight you all will vote for them for the next two years in your caucuses.

**Will Patton, Nominating Committee Chair:** Before I start, I would like to introduce my committee. They all are working on the Nominating Committee and they will be at the caucuses this evening helping with the election of each District Vice-President. Now we have for President, Linda Ingram. Are there any nominations from the floor for Federation President? For Vice-President we have Yoggi Riley. Are there any nominations from the floor for Federation Vice-President? Candidate for Secretary is Sandra Griffin. She has been doing it for a year and doing very well. Are there any nominations from the floor for

Secretary? For Treasurer we have Jerry Hall. Are there any additional nominations from the floor for Treasurer? Ok, is there a motion to close the nominations? It was moved and seconded that the candidates be elected by acclamation. We now have a new board.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** We will now hear from our Federation Executive Vice-President about the Ballots and Tellers. He will tell you all about it.

**Jim Mathews, Executive Vice-President:** I'm Jim Mathews and would like to thank the members of my Committee. When we hold the election, it will be in the Kona Room. To vote you must have a voting credential that indicates that you are entitled to vote and how many votes you have. The ballot, which has not been created yet, will look like this. The number of votes for and votes against. When you vote, it is whole votes only, no half of a vote on one side and half on the other. No Roman Numerals, no check or X marks. Arabic numbers only. It will not be hard as there is only one issue. I am going to go, with my committee and prepare the ballot. The Committee will meet me right now outside the door for about ten minutes. Voting will be after 5 pm in the Kona Room. It is during the caucus's time. My priority is to get the ballot ready. Thank you.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** Our next speaker is Janice Niederhofer, Founder of Humankind Alliance, Undercover Rose and a Member of Marin County Chapter 400.

**Janice Niederhofer, Founder and CEO of Humankind Alliance, and Undercover Rose.** National President Ken Thomas, Convention Host Bob Davidson II, CA Federation President Lea Zajac, and all the folks who made it possible for me to speak and serve NARFE today. I am here today on my own time and dime because I believe in the power of NARFE and its amazing members! First, I want to talk a little about Healthy Humor and using laughter for good. The benefits of Humor include stimulating many organs in the body, improving your immune system, Activate and relieve your stress response, relieves pain, soothes tension and increases personal satisfaction. I know that Congress has been attacking our earned benefits for a number of years, but I would like to applaud the dedication of your members throughout the years, especially Lea & Helen Zajac, they are quite a team to have been dedicated to NARFE for so many years and are still volunteering. They should be an example to the many members here in the audience. To give of your time and talent is only to help make the organization better and encourage others to join in that task. Albert Einstein has a quote, "Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile", and that should be a quote to resonate with all members to willingly work to support NARFE and its mission. NARFE's vision ensures that great work is done to help those rights and benefits of the federal community, members receive the highest quality services and products, and all members are left with the knowledge and understanding that their needs and wants are being taken to the highest levels of government for resolution. In that way membership who have dedicated their lives to federal service – the blood, sweat and tears of our Nation – will carry on that legacy and that of our great nation for generations to come! "Don't question the value of volunteers. Noah's Ark was built by volunteers; the Titanic was built by professionals". (David Gynn)

Adults spend more than 11 hours a day watching, reading, listening to or simply interacting with media; about 3 and a half hours per day on smartphones; about 24 hours a week are spent online for non-work-related searches; and if you are 50-71 years of age, watching more than 5 hours of TV per day you are 65% likely to have difficulty, or unable to walk almost 10 years later. If you get 7 hours of physical activity, there is no effect on your ability to walk. These stats are from the National Institute of Health/AARP.

Volunteering is priceless, as there are 63 million strong contributing in invaluable ways across the nation. Helen Keller stated, that "Life is an exciting business, and most exciting when it is lived for others." That is exactly what volunteers do. Winston Churchill also said, "You make a living by what you get, but a life by what you give".



There are surprising benefits to volunteering. *Benefit #1: Connecting with others.* One of the best ways to make new friends and strengthen existing relationships is to commit to a shared activity together. It strengthens your ties to the community and broadens your support network. It provides the opportunity to practice and develop your social skills. *Benefit #2: Good for Mind and Body.* Helps counteract effects of stress, anger, and anxiety. It combats depression. Makes you happy. Increases self-confidence. Provides a sense of purpose. Helps you stay physically healthy. *Benefit #3: Maintains skills or learn new skills.* Maintain your work skills, pass them on or learn a new skill using your wisdom. It provides you with renewed creativity, motivation, and vision. It provides an opportunity to mentor. *Benefit #4: Brings Fun and Fulfillment to Your Life.* It's a fun and easy way to explore your interests and passions. It is meaningful and interesting, providing you a relaxing, energizing escape from your day-to-day routine. It provides you an opportunity to learn something new – perhaps a leadership role. Never stop growing. As William James said, “Act as if what you do makes a difference....it does”.

You know what NARFE can do for you. What can you do for NARFE? Take immediate action: Sign up a friend or colleague. Practice your Elevator Speech and volunteer!

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** Announcements:

Voting for the Bylaw Resolution will take place in the Kona Room which is across the hall. There will be an entrance door and an exit door. I will be checking to make sure there are signs on the door.

There is not a lot of time for dinner before the caucuses, so if you want to eat in the Steakhouse it will have to be after the caucuses. The dining room is open until 10 pm. We have arranged a dinner buffet set up which will cost \$18.00.

Let me have your attention. Where the Program says District VIII in the Peacock Room 2, we are combining District IX and District VIII in the Peacock 1 Room. I am corrected on the time, it will be 6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Other District Caucuses will begin at 6:00 p.m. in the rooms designated in the Program Book.

We are in Recess until tomorrow morning at 9:00 a.m.

The Ways and Means Drawing and 50/50 Drawing will be held by Yoggi Riley, Chair, San Fernando Valley Chapter #0061.

### **CONVENTION - SECONDDAY**

**APRIL 25, 2019**

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** We are now in session. At nine fifteen is when we will have our presentation from HQ Legislative Director who will be giving us an update. The audio/video technician has done some dry runs to verify the equipment, so we won't have problems later.

**Karen Ross, Credentials Chair,** will give us the final credentials report. She started off by thanking Sandy Griffin for her help as the Secretary and thanking the ladies that were at the registration table for their support. I also want to thank Mr. Mathews of the Ballot and Teller Committee for his assistance. Most of all I would like to thank the team of committee members who volunteered to work the credentials committee with me and particularly Pat Smith of the Tehachapi chapter. The final report: Number of Delegates is 91. Number of Delegates at Large 14. Number of Alternate Delegates is 1. National Officers 2. Visitors and Guests 13. Total number of members registered 118. This agrees with the total of above. The number of Chapters 72. The number of Chapters represented by delegates 41. The Number of Chapters represented by proxy 7. The number of members of the Executive Board who are here who are delegates at large 8. The

Delegates at Large include the Executive Board members and Federation Past Presidents. So those two numbers will be 14. The total for the potential number of votes we have is 344. Thank you.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** A motion to adopt the Credential Committee's report has been made and seconded. Is there any discussion? All those in favor of accepting the Credential Committee's report, signify by saying Aye. Motion carried.

**Bob Martin, District VII Vice President** stated that \$400 was contributed to Alzheimer's yesterday. Hold onto your tickets for today's drawing. The 50/50 tickets are blue. Baskets are on the green table. We have a bonus this year, yellow tickets, the vendors have given several items to raffle off. So, hold on to all of your tickets.

**Legislative Advocacy Update from HQ on Video presented by John Hatton:** 116<sup>th</sup> House Budget has \$203 billion, \$32 billion of this will come from federal employee's retirement and health benefits which will increase the deficit by \$1.5 trillion. The good news is every new Congress gives us an opportunity to keep everything without losing any benefits. A 1.9% pay increase is recommended but was held up by the shutdown. The raise was passed in February retroactive to January 1.

Budget issues are like the prior Congress. We will need to continue to press Congress for the goals of NARFE. Let's take a look at what they are. The budget is eliminating cost of living adjustments for FERS retirees. Reducing by .5% for CSRS retirees. Increasing retirement contribution by 6% of pay for current employees. Eliminating the FERS annuity supplement which bridges the gap for employees retiring before eligible for Social Security. No supplement for those with mandatory early retirement such as law enforcement. Change the number of years used in computation of retirement benefits. The typical impact to FERS employees about to retire is about \$1,000 a month. CSRS impact Hearing in House next month to cover these items. We need and appreciate all the support we can get from the NARFE members to reduce or eliminate these items. We will again be talking about the 2020 budget impact. We will be asking for 3.1% for pay raise using the Cost-of-living index. DOD is looking for the same. Social Security Fairness Act HR 141/S 521. GPO unfairly reduces Social Security Benefits for CSRS retirees and some state retirement systems. I know California has this provision. Last Congress the Senate proposed reducing by \$100 per month reduction in WEP penalty, while the House they proposed reducing by \$50.

What can you do to help? First as NARFE members, you are your own best advocate. Explain the policy and impacts. There is power in numbers. The Action Center on the website is your best source for advocating your needs. Email your Congressperson your concerns. Personalize it. It helps the Congressperson understand your concern. Secondly, Congressional District Liaisons (CDL's) do not replace the Chapter member but maintains a relationship with the Congressperson and keeps them informed as to the impact of legislation on the federal community. CDL's should also report Congressional interaction in the Legislative Action Center. Currently CA has 37 CDL's. If you have not updated CDL or SL, contact Advocacy at NARFE.org. NARFE-PAC is the 3<sup>rd</sup> leg of our Advocacy stool. NARFE-PAC is our Political Action Committee. It helps Congressional people sympathetic to NARFE to get into office and stay there. As they rise in Congress, they help us to further our goals. Leadership is needed to build relationships with lawmakers. Keeps our goals on a national level. First Cycle for the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress, NARFE had collected a total of \$264,978; CA contributions were \$15,448 from 355 contributors and 68 sustainers. The Mean contribution was \$43.52. Local fundraisers are important to attend as they keep us in good relationship with Congress.

## **Questions and Answers for John Hatton, NARFE HQ.**

**Question Bob Martin DVP VII:** Medicare Part B concerning Post Office changes

**Answer:** Thank you for bringing this up. We are looking at other options. I don't know where the Post Office stands. Such as: future retirees instead of current retirees.

**Question Yvonne Williams Chapter 1330:** WEP Question: Who supplied the figures to determine how many are eligible and cannot claim it at this time. How do they know?

**Answer:** Office of Management and Budget reported \$40 billion each. That was a few years ago. The Social Security Actuarial would have some of the information. I don't know all the steps.

**Question Yoggi Riley, Federation Treasurer:** I have Medicare A & B. I made a choice then. I hope everyone continues to have a choice. I ask NARFE President about privatization of government agencies. This a very scary situation.

**Answer:** We have different views. We have issues with this. On behalf of our Postal Service, we are not happy with privatization.

**Question Yvonne Williams:** WEP/GPO calculations: are they overstated? Could we survey our members and get a good sampling?

**Answer:** I don't know if we could do a good sample of this. CSRS decreased population creates a problem.

**Question Joe Beyer Chapter 0706:** Thanks for doing this. When out in the public, how do we answer the question, "What is NARFE doing about the National Debt?" 22 trillion National debt currently. As a person who is 76, I am told I am a "generational theft" person. In 10 years, the National Debt will be 33 trillion, conservatively speaking. What are you doing about the National Debt, which is being left to our children, and grandchildren? This is being brought up consistently.

**Answer:** Debt issue. Reduction of federal employee's pay, increased retirement contributions, etc. This is not being done by other people. Reduction of government agency budgets is an example. Tax increases to the general population is another. It's not fair to put pressure on federal employees. That is how I would answer that kind of question.

### **Lea Zajac, Federation President:**

**Jim Mathews, Executive Vice President and Chair of the Ballot and Tellers Committee:** Ok, I will get the results of the election on the California State By-laws for 2019. Thank you to the members of the committee. You did an outstanding job yesterday in the hour we had to set up. We resolved the discrepancy between us and Credentials. There were 344 authorized votes. Number of votes cast 344. Number of invalid votes cast 0. The results 298 yes, 46 no. So, the By-law change passed. I submitted the reports to the secretary.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** Thank you Jim. We are on schedule. **Will Patton, Nominating Committee Chair,** will give you the results from the District Caucuses last night on the District Vice Presidents.

**Will Patton, Nominating Committee Chair:** I would like to thank all the members of the committee who participated. They seemed to like the job. The results are District I (Old) Bob Davidson; District II Gregg Pericich; District III Mary Venerable; District IV Ron Griffin; District V Dee Shallenberger; District VI Dottie Schmitt; District VII Bob Martin; and District VIII Stephen Smith.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** DVP IX DVP Mike Siminski had to drop out because of health reasons. The District was in process of closing chapters, leaving 4 chapters in district. So, District IX will be combined with other districts. In the past California had 118 chapters and eight districts. We expanded the districts to ten because it was too cumbersome to manage 118 chapters with eight districts. Now we will be back to eight districts.

It is now time to hear from our Region VIII Vice President, Helen Zajac.

**Helen Zajac, Region VIII Vice President:** Good morning to our members, guests, and our Visitors from Nevada. I have some good news and some bad news. *Our speaker Janice Neiderhofer suggested that we each walk around the room and introduce ourselves to someone we didn't know.* I see that as a great way to involve all members in the discussion at a meeting. In my own chapter we have groups who sit together because they are "good friends, or perhaps worked together". They even have preassigned seating, as I learned one day in my own chapter meeting. I sat in a spot and a lady came up and said, "I'm sorry but you are sitting in my seat." She was older and had a cane, so I moved to another seat. Anyway, I think we are in too much of a hurry to get settled in for the meeting and carry ideas of our federal agency with us. We think about our various agencies (Navy, Army, USPS, FBI) and how different our training was, so we don't take the time to talk with all members in our chapter. Heaven forbid we ever try to cross over and talk to someone from a different agency. Congress is doing just that right now; the line is drawn, and they keep to their own party, never wanting to talk with the other party. We don't need to follow their lead. We need to start talking with all our members, *especially the new members.* Too many times a new member comes to the meeting, doesn't know anyone; there is no greeter, so they look around and sit in the back row. Some Chapter Presidents don't ask if there are any new members, and the new member is not introduced. No one asked if the new member would be interested in getting involved in the chapter; not asking them to be President, but to work on a committee.

The real "turn off" for these new members are the age old statements "that you are new, you don't understand", "we always do it this way and we are not going to change". Not only is this a turn off for the new members, but also for several of our longtime members, who grow tired of the same thing every meeting. The sad thing is the chapters are failing. We are not embracing all the members. We need to change periodically to keep the interest of the members. It has been said there is nothing as constant as change. The one thing we need to work on is "change." We need to call the newer members and see if they will come to the meeting. Perhaps, pick them up. We need to break open the meetings and get them involved, by personally talking to them. This doesn't mean a steamroller when the new member walks in you say, "Oh, great you can be our new President." That is also a turnoff. Although, we have one member right here (points to Lea Zajac) who attended his very first NARFE meeting and was elected Chapter President. He willingly accepted that challenge and has been a dedicated member for the past 27 years, holding Federation and Chapter offices for every year. We need to ask members, if they have a skill which they would like to share and help the Chapter. We have some people who have leadership skills. They can fill positions if you give them a chance. We need to help the new members to get active. You need to mentor the new member. When Lea and I joined our Chapter, Past Federation President, Ray Richetti, took us under his wing and encouraged us to be active, attend Chapter meetings, District meetings, Federation, and National meetings or conventions. I hope you take this back to your chapter and share it with your members.

Since 2014 NARFE has lost 983 Chapters. We currently have 980 Chapters. We have lost more Chapters in the last five years, than we currently have. California is in the process of closing five more chapters. Nevada is in process of closing six chapters. Hawaii is closing one maybe two. Hawaii is having more members transferring over to National-Only world. If it continues, we will have to close more chapters. We need to contact our members. You have the information in the OAM, both "transfer out", and "dropped for non-renewal". A lot of those people will come back. This is a task for your Membership *COMMITTEE*, meaning more members than just the Chair. Guam Secretary became President when the President left. The

Secretary is 87 years old. She has been keeping the chapter going for many years. This year she wrote a letter and said she can't do this anymore. There is no one to take her place. Guam is an island and there is no way to gain new members. Hawaii said they would take the members, but the Guam members voted not to merge with Hawaii. I am not sure what is happening in the Philippines. I have written to the new Federation President in the Philippines and have received no response whatsoever. I looked at their membership roster and it looks like some of the chapters should be closed due to declining membership. I have no way to communicate with them. I mailed material for the voting on the new By-Laws before the National Convention last year, 2018. The material came back in January of 2019 with no forwarding address. I have not received any response to my emails.

The following is for all members. There is a list of all available forms, etc. on the NARFE website. This list is called F18. It has a list of supplies available to the chapters. There is a lot of good information here. Chapters need to keep the supplies on hand up to date. The F18 shows the updates of the supplies. The dues withholding is especially important as it saves money for the members. You can save 15% of your National dues. It is easier to pay out \$3.42 each month than the lump sum once a year. A lifetime membership is also available. I became a lifetime membership in 1996, when I realized I could make a onetime payment and never had to pay National dues again. You do have to pay your Chapter's dues. This can be set up on your credit card to automatically pay the Chapter's dues once a year. There is also a gift membership form. This works well for those who are about to retire, or for a friend who is not sure about joining. When Forney Lundy, our Past Region VIII Vice President retired from FAA, his employees gave him a lifetime membership.

Some new items. There is a flyer on our website, showing the NARFE webinars. It can be printed out and left in areas where there are some active federal employees. If you can put it in bulletin board, or newsletter, it would be wonderful. Put it on your website. Some chapters have a website and if you don't have one you need to get one. It is a good way to put out information to members and non-members alike. There is also a flyer about the next webinar, which has more specific information.

The Community Relations Guide has some great ideas in it. One of which is a suggestion to work with a local animal shelter. One day a week this person goes and walks the dogs. While doing this she has had four dogs adopted from the shelter. If you are walking a dog, you could be wearing a NARFE shirt, or badge, or something to indicate you are a NARFE member. Someone sooner or later will ask "what's NARFE", and you will have an opening to talk about NARFE. Then you have an opportunity to use your "Elevator speech". The elevator speech is on the website and takes less than a minute to tell a potential member about NARFE. At the same time, you provide an application form. Alzheimer Walk is another place to advertise for NARFE. There are all kinds of walks. You could speak to a high school or college government class. There are many public events. You could make a presentation to a civic group, Lions, SIRS, etc. Somewhere in their group, there are federal employees and/or retirees. Brainstorming in your chapter – "how can we promote NARFE" is also another idea.

Another new document is the Chapter Development Manual. This is the results of a committee last year. There are a lot of good ideas about speakers at meetings, and where to find them; Communications; Newsletters, and Social media items. The more we get the NARFE information out into the public the better we are. One of our biggest problems is "name recognition." You could walk down a street in San Diego and maybe one out of ten might know what NARFE is. Do a self-assessment of your chapter; is the location of the meeting place meeting the needs of the members; are members tired of the same location, i.e. Senior Center; the time/day of the week. The answers may surprise you and just by changing something, more members might attend.

There is also a *Public Relations Handbook*. This is the way for you to get the information out to the public. The Chamber of Commerce can provide information about how to get the word out to the community. *National HQ will also help provide statements/camera ready copy to be used in advertisements.* By-law's guidelines have been suggested by National Headquarters for both Chapters and Federations. If you have not updated your bylaws since Feb 2019, you need to sit down with your members and update your By-Laws.

One other thing the National office has done is print advertising. It was a prototype done at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio in their air base newsletter. *With the help of National they prepared advertising to place in the newsletter. There are different themes: Benefits; what to know about your benefits; "How to make the most of your benefits"; "Feds, are you leaving money on the table"; "Where can Feds find national influence with local connections?".* Any of these should resonate with anyone who is still working.

A couple new things with legislation. *FH7, National Federation Legislative Chair, Congressional District Leader and Legislation Senatorial Leader Guide. All the power point presentations from January's Legislation Seminars are available to be downloaded online.* If you have questions, do not hesitate to ask. My name and email address are in the front of the Program book.

### **Questions from the floor:**

Joann Wiest: When will the chapters have their revised bylaws approved?

Helen Zajac response: Federation bylaws will be sent to National after this convention for review. Once they are approved, then the Chapter bylaws will be reviewed. If there are problems, then they will be sent back with notes as to what needs to be done.

Question: Where is the template for the Bylaws?

Helen Zajac response: It is not on the forms page. It was an email I sent to all DVPs. It is also posted on the NARFE website.

Sandy Griffin: The dues withholding form is missing.

Helen Zajac response: It is in the Magazine every other month. It is also available on the F-18 order form listing. You will need your Social Security number and CSA or CSF annuity number to complete the form.

Question: Can you set up charitable contributions from your annuity?

Helen Zajac response: CFC Charitable Contributions may be set up as deductible from your annuity.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** Jerry Hall, District V Vice President will be our next presenter. While he is setting up let's take a break until 11 am.

**Jerry Hall, District V Vice President:** We are going to cover recruiting and retention and having fun doing it. There is no reason not to have fun. I thought I would start out with a story and the story is the title, "Save My Chickens". "Save My Chickens" is about a farmer who kept losing chickens because they were crossing the street. He called the sheriff, who said "Well, what do you want me to do about it?" The farmer said, "I don't care. I just want to save my chickens. Do something about those crazy drivers out there." So, the sheriff went out and made up a sign saying, "School Crossing". Well, traffic just got worse. Sheriff put up a new sign, "Children at play" This didn't do any good. So, the sheriff said, "Why don't you think up a sign?" The farmer put up his own sign. The Sheriff didn't get any more phone calls from the farmer. Which was good, but the Sheriff got curious and went out to the farmer's home to find out what sign the farmer had put

out. Sheriff drives out there. His jaw dropped when he saw the sign. The sign said, "Nudist Colony. Look out. Watch for chicks."

So, we are going to work on that. NARFE is losing chicks. The farmer went outside the box when nothing else was working. Let's look for something that gets people's attention. Let's go outside the box. Look at what we need. We could sit here and talk forever about the numbers. I don't want to talk about it. That is not productive to me. What is productive for me is, OK, how can we solve the problem? What would we have to do? What kind of activity would we have to do to make people more interested? Want to belong to NARFE. Stop leaving NARFE. This is our challenge. Our challenge every day. I am a strong believer in you must go to the FED's. The biggest source of members are those who are still working. However, we have to find the FED's. To take my place and your place. Someone without health problems. You must focus on the real people who are federal employees who get more things thrown at them than get thrown at us. So, I hang out at federal buildings. You get to know people. If you don't have connections, you are not going to get anywhere. You will meet people who do go and meet people and recruit significant numbers. I know I hear people who say I can't get into the buildings and/or they ignore me. One thing the San Francisco Chapter does is invite federal employees to be present. We just had a TSP presentation. We almost always invite someone from the federal service, and we had two federal employees from different union/agencies. We now have new recruiters. Work with other organizations. We get into the building because we know the people in the Agency who run the Administration Section of the building. The people change constantly. So, you constantly must keep up with the change. Make sure the contact is passed off to the next person in your position. You are the person who connects with the people there in the organization. When we talk with them, we are making connections. We have been invited by the Unions to speak about NARFE. They were trying to recruit new members and I said hey we can help and recruit new NARFE members; these two groups work together. Work with their Union advance their Union and recruit the employee for NARFE. I am going to stop for a minute. I want Martha to tell you what a chapter does to get into 7 or 8 health fairs every year. Most are military. We are old. We are retired.

Martha Raup continues: The first thing I want you to do is, at break time, go out into the hall and get to know the people with the health programs. Once you establish a relationship, they will invite you to come to the health fairs with them and set up a table. That is how we get in. There are many government agencies there. There used to be a large Hospital at Fort Ord; it closed. Now it is recreation center with 900 employees. Once you get in, here's what you do. National gives you a \$10 rebate from Sept. 1st to Dec. 31st for each recruit. The Federation gives you a \$10 rebate all year long. So that's \$20. We make up a little sign that says, "Join NARFE. Today only. Half price, \$20." Most will give you cash. Some will write a check. Deposit the cash and/or checks in your Chapter's bank account. Then the Chapter Treasurer writes a check to NARFE for \$40 for each new member. Two or three weeks later you get the rebate checks. All the recruiters must agree to give the rebate checks to the Chapter Treasurer, who then deposits it in the Chapter's bank account. Here we recruited 36 new members using this method. Of course, by the end of the year the chapter is going to lose 50% to 60% of those new members, but the remainder stay. We have a good recruitment team. They are a part of the Membership Committee. Another thing to talk about is how to retain members. First thing is to communicate to your members. Only 10 to 20% will attend a meeting. So, by looking at the reports we know who has renewed their membership. We send postcards to those who renew their dues. We also send letters or call those who don't renew.

Jerry Hall: This is just a normal chapter that got together and made things happen. We did make membership plans. We collected them and did nothing. Plans we don't need. Action is what we need. You can start somewhere. Don't sit here and say, "I can't do that". "I don't believe that." We were talking about how we get the word out. There is someone here I want you to meet. I met him here today. How to get the NARFE name out?

Chapter 1658: We use a 21' pontoon boat with signs at parades. We go to health fairs.

Jerry Hall: The chapter gives money to runners going from Bakersfield to Las Vegas. It takes about 17 to 18 hours. They get \$100. It comes from donations and incentives we get. NARFE gets its name out. Ok as you can see now, we are on YouTube. The point is it is another way to get the name out. Getting people together to help. How do you find out when and where fairs are? Jeri Benson knows everything. We have two Jeri's, Jeri Hardison and Jeri Benson.

Jeri Hardison: There is a Federal Building in Long Beach and Kathleen Hansen is the Federal Program Manager. She is a member of our Chapter and provides us information about local federal events.

Jerry Hall: It's a connection. You need it. And so that's how you find it.

Question: Are they listed in the phone book?

Jerry Hall: Absolutely. I'm not afraid to walk into the Social Security Office. I walk in and ask them if I can leave some magazines. We have several Social Security people. We have Post Office people in our chapter. Ok, how do you get people to join? Martha says she gives them a cut rate on their membership. But are there other people who figured out something with their short little "elevator speech" which can get them to sign up.

Statement: One of the things we do is we have them fill out the interest card with the prospect of winning a FREE year's membership.

Jerry Hall: This at least gives us contacts. We can collect them. Order them online from NARFE HQ, you will get 100 to 200 cards, then get people to fill the cards out, and contact them. We can make contact at health fairs, retirement seminars, meetings, etc.

Statement: When I retired eleven years ago, I did not know about NARFE. About 6 month later I got a letter, it briefly and concisely explained what NARFE was about and invited me to join. It sounded so reasonable, I joined. Then I found out there was a chapter in my area, and I thought it would keep me working.

Jerry Hall: It was probably an OPM letter. They did a genuinely nice job and then other organizations wanted things sent out. Very recently they stopped doing it because they couldn't send out letters for one association without the others. It was unfortunate. The gentleman who spoke back here was correct. We go to Federal Executive Board and they will give us a list of attendees of the pre-retirement seminars. I tell them I appreciate the opportunity to speak at their pre-retirement seminars.

Mel Teigen, Chapter 1718: One of the things we do at our Chapter is we order excess magazines from NARFE Headquarters. Several of us deliver them to hospitals, dentist office, and medical offices. We did not get as many as we thought we would, but we have been getting some. We have been doing this for several years.

Jerry Hall: Good idea. Get the word out. Pass out magazines. Think of ways to do it.

Statement: I've been getting 6 extra magazines a month. I just got off the phone with Jackie Bryant, who has been helping me with that.

Jerry Hall: Make sure your NARFE membership number is on every application. If you are receiving incentives, you will be notified. For the National office they will give you a listing of all those you recruited what their address is and so on.



This is what not to do at health fairs. I have seen this happen more than once. Bob is at the table to help recruit. He is reading his book. A potential member comes up and he continues to read his book. He is not paying attention. Mary comes up and starts to talk to Bob. The potential member is still here waiting to hear the “elevator speech” someone is supposed to give him. Recruiting at an event requires your full attention. It may be boring at times, but you need to overcome it, and pay full attention to people; people who are potential members. I don’t sit down at the events. I stand up, so I look interested in the people walking by. In 1921 there were no pension. 1950 health programs became available. The idea is that you start a conversation, tell the member about NARFE, its benefits and when they became available, get them to sit down and fill out an application or an interest card. If they won’t fill it out on their own, help them fill it out. Sit with them and help them. HELP them. Write a check or cash or write check later. Whatever it takes.

Next, let’s do something right. The better approach is to get people to talk. If someone comes by and says they are a NARFE member, then give them an application, and get them to recruit someone. That’s what we do it. They are like, ok. The issue is people going into the National Only chapter. So, people did not know what they were doing when they left the Chapter. So, we called them and asked them did you know you were leaving the Chapter. Some were letter or emails. There were some who said I didn’t want to leave the Chapter. They really didn’t want to leave the Chapter. We signed them up for free with the Chapter. When the renewal date came up, they then paid both the National and the Chapter dues. After all, you are not going to get anything from them for the Chapter until the renewal date anyway. If you read the slide really carefully, you will see she says Jerry how do I pay the Chapter membership? She is showing the renewal letter which doesn’t have the Chapter on it. She had not joined the Chapter at the time the letter was sent. So, she didn’t know how to renew her Chapter membership. The Chapter Treasurer wrote her a letter explaining what happened and how to take care of it. Jackie Bryant, headquarters, helped to get the member into the Chapter. HQ now has a renewal letter which includes the Chapter membership on it. It is a strategic move on our part to make sure they are getting the right letter.

How many retired and active employees are in California? It is about 500,000 people. How many are members? About 10%. We need to understand that. If you are ever going to talk to anyone.

Question: If you could implant one story or one idea into everyone’s head that needs to hear this message so they could enact and engage their purpose, what would that story or idea be?

Jerry Hall: We need to stop waiting for someone at the top to fix something. We can fix things now. We can fix our community. We can fix the way we do things. We can fix our communications. The way to make things better is for you to believe you can do better. I believe that. And if you believe that you CAN make things better. Use your skills. You know what your skills are. Make them work. Take the risk. Everything is a risk. Smile. You have to be genuine. If you are genuine, then things will go easier. If you know why you are in NARFE, then it will come out. You are old only if you believe you are old. I am not old. I may be 70, but I’m not old. Care enough to do what needs to be done. Our role in the community is to recruit new members. Otherwise, we fall apart and there will be no Chapters.

The fact of the matter is there is a new application form. It is being considered. Helen and I have been working at it. Why don’t we just give a first-year complementary membership in the chapter? Let’s just do that. A lot of you said it was a good idea. We had to get through National. They wanted to modify it. I was just for giving it to them. But Helen Zajac agreed they wouldn’t do that. We have to give the member a choice. We now give them a choice on the “Free year chapter membership.” There are two application forms. National’s looks better. We will allow you to say, “We are giving you a free one-year membership in the local chapter. Here is the information about your chapter.” That’s the idea. I think this will be a good thing. It’s the same kind of application that’s currently in the Magazine.

The latest technology isn't always easy to use. "Amazon partnered with AARP to present the new Amazon Echo Silver. The only smart speaker device designed to be used specifically by the greatest generation. It's super loud and responds to any voice even remotely close.

Jerry Hall: Technology is providing fixes for everything, hearing, seeing, walking, etc. Someone had a question?

Question: The new application says it's including a one-year free chapter membership. But you have to elect to join the chapter. That doesn't make much sense. It's FREE!

Jerry Hall: I agree with that but National is not comfortable with that. Thank you all. (Note a copy of this presentation is on the CA Web Site: [www.csfnarfe.org](http://www.csfnarfe.org))

**Lea Zajac, Federation President**: Thank you Jerry. Yoggi, do you want to do your part, now?

**Yoggi Riley, Federation Treasurer**: As Jerry said we have to think out of the box. Our Vice President, Jim Mathew, has the list of those who will be receiving incentive checks of \$75.

**Jim Mathews, Federation Vice President**: Will the following members who have recruited 10 members or more please come forward to collect your checks: Marcos Torres; Gean Taylor; Jeri Benson; Ruth Anne Guy; Alihandra Totor; Monte Simmons; Joanne Nemeth; Carol Aman; Gerald Hall; Michael Crahan; Forney Lundy and Yoggi Riley. Let's congratulate these members for their hard work in recruiting new members.

**Yoggi Riley, Federation Treasurer**: This is our first ever drawing to reward those members who have signed up for Dues Withholding; \$250. This is for Chapter members only. The first bucket will have the page numbers and the second bucket will show the line number of the winner. Page number – 16, Line number – 13. Winner – Roy Dutter, chapter 1568.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President**: We are in recess for Lunch, on your own. Following Lunch will be four Leadership Seminars held in the rooms specified in the Program Book. The seminars are: How to Use the new AMS; Computer Seminar on NARFE Website; All you ever wanted to know about Medicare, Medicare B and Medicare Advantage and Chapter Secretary and Treasurer. Each will be repeated, so you can see at least two seminars.

**Lea Zajac: Announcement**. FEEA Table will be open in the foyer. Alzheimer drawing ends at 3 pm. Be back at 3:15 pm for the Open Forum. We are in recess.

### **RECESS FOR LUNCHEON AND SEMINARS**

**Lea Zajac, Federation President**: We are back in session. It is now time for the Open Forum consisting of written questions and questions from the floor. Ask any question if it is pertinent to NARFE. Jerry Hall can answer some of the questions about recruitment and membership. Karen Ross has a desk outside to collect for FEEA.

Written Question: What is the estimated cost of rebranding the NARFE Logo? Chapter banner, etc. Where will the money come from? Ken can answer this for Headquarters.

Ken Thomas, National President response: Mind set is the biggest problem. We really didn't think about replacing the banners because to me the banners represent Hannibal crossing the Alps. I understand they must have a certain logo. You can continue to use them. Think about hanging the banners on the walls of this room. They do not attract the look we want to achieve for the new NARFE. We are looking for the 30- to 40-year-olds. And to them the banners mean nothing. So, replacing banners, the chapters may do it.

Same with the badges, leave it up to the chapters. Also, remember, Helen told you we have lost half of our chapters. Will the banners mean anything?

Written Question: Is it possible to create a more efficient membership renewal process? Standardization. January to December instead of the anniversary date.

Ken Thomas, National President response: Hopefully, the new AMS system can handle this situation. Right now, I understand why this would be of interest. If you became a member in Sept, then you would have 3 months left of the year. Prorating would be difficult for Headquarters to accommodate.

Written Question: Suggest future “Dues withholding” drawing prizes be given to more people. Suggest to three at \$100 each, instead of a \$250 prize for one.

Response, Yoggi Riley: This would increase expense. Maybe Headquarters would add to it.

Written Question: Based on this convention, what is the future of chapters five to ten years from now? For basic planning information. Will we follow the arc when the chapters are gone? Request answer from National President, Ken Thomas, or Regional Vice President, Helen Zajac.

Helen Zajac, Region VIII Vice President: My thoughts on that would be to continue having chapters and continue to grow chapters for communication and visibility. I live in Northern California and we are few and far between. When you look at the distance to get from, say Eureka, and go to a chapter meeting in, say Sacramento. It is a long way to go. I don't think we are serving our membership, if we eliminate the chapters. I know a lot of times we hear “Oh, we have too many chapters anyway, so why don't we have just one chapter in each Congressional District.” Well, I have an issue with that. I happen to live very close to CD 2 and CD2 runs from the Golden Gate Bridge all the way North to the Oregon border on the West side of Highway 101 (about 674 miles). That is an incredibly significant geographic area. If you only have one chapter for your members it will be difficult for them to ever get to a meeting/luncheon – and where would you hold it? A lot of our members still do not attend meetings. I still feel it is particularly important for meetings to occur for communication. Whether a “Go to meeting”, or a “Skype”, or a written message they get every quarter or every 6 months. We need to keep communications with our members. The more chapters we lose, the harder it will become to communicate in a timely manner with our members. When we were planning this convention, we sent out e-mail messages to all our National Only members in California and invited them to attend this convention. How many people here are National Only members? One. We also posted this information on our California website and we got only one response. She did make the effort to come. She was a prior chapter member. I don't know how our President feels, but this is how I think.

Ken Thomas, National President response: Your National President is a Chapter guy. But he is also aware we are down 983 chapters since 1980. Realistically, I would say chapters are going to be very limited in ten years, if there are any. AARP has very few chapters left. Chapters at one time were a way of life. They are no longer the way of life. I am an advocate of electronic transmission of data. Skype, Webinars, Go-To-Meetings, Go-To-Webinars. NARFE has Webinars and Go-To-Meetings because they borrowed the license I got for the state of Florida back in 2010. It saves NARFE \$25,000 a year in meeting expenses a year. They are not easy. There are certain ways you have to orchestrate meetings. But they are a way to get information out. I also believe that is needed. But the thing about it is for most I am a chapter member. I am trying my best to assist two chapters in Virginia, one with over 600 members who are trying to close.

Lea Zajac, Federation President response: District X (now IV) is so spread out, they are lucky to get three or four people to come to a meeting. So, we have talked about it. I suggested we could have a conference meeting once every two months with chapter members, Chapter Presidents, and anyone else who

wants to join in and have a meeting. Just need a phone to have a conference meeting. So far four chapters have expressed an interest.

Question, Pauline J: My first question is about marketing. There was some criticism about the Marketing Director. Is it possible to get a report of outreach that has been done? Second Question: Can we find out about outreach done to certain affinity groups, such as different government groups?

Ken Thomas, National President response: When I get back to the office, next Thursday, I am supposed to sit down and evaluate the Director. One of the sticking points is our marketing. I had a brainstorming session with our marketing team. In that session someone said something to the effect that even though we had lost members, we should be thankful that we have flat lined at losing 8,000 members per year. That to me is one of those moments when we should probably need to say you need to go. Marketing is one of the proponents of this “rebranding” effort. We have to market to a different market if you will. We have to change the look of the organization. We have to change the Magazine. We have to change the way our award-winning Magazine looks. Change the way we advertise, even though each page costs \$7,000. This doesn’t include the Front and Back page, inside and outside. Those are more expensive. So, if we are marketing for a different group, we need to bring in people who understand that group. I am afraid our Marketing group, as it stands, doesn’t understand the group they are marketing to. We cannot continue. We cannot afford the losses we are sustaining every single year for the last couple of years for the losses that we had represent \$200,000 plus in revenue. We cannot afford this. Are we doing outreach? Yes, we are. We have new affinity partners. If you look in the back of the Magazine, you will find quite a few new partners. Do we reach out to different groups? We do. One of the things I suggested to our Marketing department, and it’s a sore subject with me, there is a website called “GovEvents.” January first, I always check it to see how many programs they offer and how many are already listed for government employees. This year there were 1,800. They are all over the country. My question to the Marketing Department is how come NARFE is not out there renting a table, adding speakers available, and representing NARFE at these meetings? There was one held regularly in June with 8,000 to 10,000 at the meeting. If we are there with a table, NARFE items, and have a speaker, it would seem to me you might get at least one application from that meeting. I was told it cost too much for table. I called and the initial price was \$3,000 for a 3-day period, but after talking for a while it went down to \$300 for the 3 day period. For that we also got the names of the attendees, the department they worked for, their federal mail drop, their federal phone number, and their federal email address. That’s exactly how it should be. They tell me it’s too costly, we can’t get the staff out there. We need to do a better job of getting people out there. Better affinity out there. Things have to change.

Question, Rita Chapter 1539: The people out in the hallway are not federal employees?

Ken Thomas, National President response: No, your National President also goes to Military Officers Association. They have the same agenda as we do, frighteningly so. Their Headquarters is just down the street from our Headquarters. I’ve been told that 6 years ago they were approached about doing things together. They declined. We are doing things with other federal groups.

Question, Rita: Could we join with them now?

Ken Thomas, National President response: They have similar problems, but we have different items. Their retirement system and appropriations are different. In a way the military is not under attack by Congress.

Written Question For Ken: What has been done to detect and prevent the type of situation you described when you were going through the “on board” process? i.e. hours and \$100,000 contract.

Ken Thomas, National President response: We solved that situation quite quickly. According to the contract he was given a 30-day notice. I honored the contract, and he is no longer with us. The question really is why we contracted this out and why did we permit a contract employee that much money for two days a week. Now let me explain something about the pay structure we have at National Headquarters. There are 45 people now. I am known as number 17. It is an inside joke. I am number 17 because that is where I am on the pay schedule. There are 16 people making more money than I am as National President. My salary is set by the Membership. Theirs is not. The person making the most money at Headquarters (number 1) is a support staff person making over \$150,000 a year. She lives 30 miles north of us. NARFE Headquarters for years and years gave a four to six percent automatic raise. You showed up to work and you got the raise. Remember, none of these are federal employees. If the federal employees got the COLA that was given that year, then the Headquarter employees got both. Now you understand why I was #17? Due to longevity, the salaries are over \$100,000. This is one of the problems that needs to be addressed. But I am told, “Ken, you can’t get the best talent.”

Question Ken Chapter 706. I would like to see a change in the membership application where they are asked if they want to belong to a chapter. I would like to see the member made a member of a chapter for the first year. This would give us the opportunity to show the member the benefits of a chapter. These people don’t know anything about NARFE or the chapters. Why even ask them if they want to be in a chapter, make them a member of a chapter.

Lea Zajac response: This was addressed earlier in Jerry Hall’s presentation. A new member could be assigned to a chapter for one year. Attendance is not mandatory.

Helen Zajac, response: We have a Membership Advisory Committee of which I am the Chair. We have been working on a new application form. It has not been approved and we don’t know when it will be approved. Jerry gave us information during his presentation. We wanted to go back to the way it was. A new member was automatically assigned to a chapter by their zip code. In 2016 “optional chapter membership” in National By-Laws meant we could not arbitrarily place a person in a chapter. We are now working on an option allowing them to choose to be part of a chapter.

Ken, Chapter 706, further statement: You have to be smart about it. If that is what it is, that’s what it is. But you need to address that with the new member. It is another item to be addressed. Another gentleman said to me, “They don’t really know what they are getting into.” That’s correct. At the same time, you need to offer chapter membership to the new member. The new form needs to address this.

Question: Jeri Benson, Chapter 1658: I wonder if you could explain to me the membership types. Auto renewal. I don’t know what that is.

Jerry Hall District V VP: It is basically for those using credit cards. So, every year NARFE can charge the annual membership dues.

Question Jeri Benson: I didn’t know that was possible. If they sign up, then NARFE will bill? Where is it on the application?

Jerry Hall, District V VP: You put in the Credit Card number, etc. And then select “automatic renewal”. You can also sign up on the NARFE website.

Written question: Does the Federation at least annually inform National-Only members who their CDL is?

Lea Zajac, Federation President response: We have correspondence to National-Only members who have email addresses. We invited them to a training session on CDL’s - 2 came. But CDL’s are supposed to be a team of 4. They are supposed to visit their Representative at least once a month. Take the Magazine to

them. As far as correspondence goes, National Headquarters, tells them their Congressional District. We are not going to spend the postage to tell National-Only members who their CDL's are and that they are a member of the California Federation. National Only members are entitled to the same activities that the chapters have, i.e. Conventions, annual meetings, training, etc. We have already done this type of invitations with those who have email, but not all National-Only members provide their email.

Point of Information: Bob Martin, District VII VP: Yesterday we did a brief presentation on state legislation on pay parity. People came up to me and I passed out all of my business cards. So, if you need points of contact here they are: (1) South Mike Bandiera 562-420-2214 other number 442-202-3068. Recently moved. Email [michaelbandiera@yahoo.com](mailto:michaelbandiera@yahoo.com) (2) North Bob Martin 925-458-1260. For those who prefer email [rnm94565@yahoo.com](mailto:rnm94565@yahoo.com). Looking for input and to fill vacancies in committee.

Question Yoggi Riley, Chapter 61: When "one-member one-vote" passed at the convention there was language in the actual motion that stated there would be conventions. Why was that taken away and will it come back?

Ken Thomas, National President response: History wise I know why there was a change in 2016. It was orchestrated due to something to a particular group. It was to remove Chapter 2363 your electronic chapter because Mr. Longo, who was President of that Chapter wanted a place at the table. He kept threatening the National President. He wanted to be part of the National Executive Board. The reason why was because of the number of members he controlled. So, when it passed, then Mr. Longo no longer had access to all of the members data of the extinct Chapter 2363. That was the way that was handled.

Now as to the By-Laws change, I would not have a clue why it went from a "convention" to a "conference." Part of it was the change as to how NARFE conducted business. Part of it was to eliminate some of the discussion, some of the voting, some of the things being done at the convention vs conferences. Conferences become training. That's where you do the majority of the meeting. Why? I don't know.

Yoggi Riley continues: Ken, if people going to the Florida Conference, knew they would have no voice, no involvement in the Conference, except to be preached to, that does not leave a very welcome feeling for members to go the long distance to see a webinar. To go clear across the country and have no voice, no discussion, cannot be recognized to speak, then you are not involved. You took away a basic right for us to go and be involved in a convention.

Lea Zajac, Federation President: Ok that closes the "open forum".

The next item on the agenda is "New Business." This Federation President does not have any new business to discuss other than what is the position of those in the audience? Would you like to continue with Conventions or Conferences? A show of hands. Conventions. Tomorrow the Executive Board of the Federation will be discussing the location of the Convention/Conference. The North does not support the South and vice versa. Because it is too far to travel. Our thinking is having it in the Central part of California. Does this make sense?

Question: When you speak about a "Conference", you are talking about having discussions, debates, but do away with some of the fancy, expensive stuff. It costs people to come to this Convention anywhere from \$750 to \$1,000. If we can arrange a Conference, without the banquet, without some of the expenditures that go into entertainment, we could have a day and half, one overnight possible 2 overnights, and could discuss issues and debate issues, to do exactly what we have been doing at this Convention. But at a lot less cost per person and perhaps more than 120 people would have attended this Convention. And yes, we are considering establishing a permanent conference point halfway between so San Diego and Redding. People don't have to drive eight hours to get to the Conference. Our state is so long. It takes so long to get from one

place to another. We split the difference. It costs less. We still get as much work done. And we can still say hello to old friends without going through this stupidity that we had in Jacksonville. I went to Jacksonville to see what it was all about. I wouldn't pay 60 cents to walk across the street to go to another one. It was fun. But I don't want to go to a conference for fun. It is for business. After the business is done, then have fun. As far as the Conference is concerned, squeeze it in, make it less expensive, we may get more people to attend. We are now automatically opening it up to National-Only members. We should get some response out of that.

Linda Ingram, Federation President Elect: I want to comment. The difference between Conferences and Conventions. Conferences are for training and Conventions are a business meeting. I would like to combine them. What we want to have is a convention where we can have discussion and debate with decision and agreement. And then we go off and implement it. If we can make this a two day, in the middle of the state. I would like to get feedback from the people here and those who are not here. I do believe we should stick to the "Convention" title.

Statement: I am a mother of a Forestry employee: I could convince them to join me at a Convention in the center of the state, if it happened on the weekend. Then the family could have fun, while the Convention would be occurring. We might actually be able to attract some of the "working" federal employees.

Lea Zajac, Federation President: Let me just say to get a reasonable lodging rate, the hotel specifies the days of the week which will give us the best rate. The first thing we specify is that the lodging rate should not exceed \$125/night and that food and beverage should not exceed \$10,000. We got a break on this hotel because we got them down to \$7,500 on food and beverage. However, we did not make the number of room nights. In our contract we thought we would have 175 people as we have had in the past few years. At this convention we have only 125 people; and the Federation will have to cough up \$3,000 for not making room nights. It is difficult in California to find a hotel which will give you lodging at under \$150.00. We got this hotel in San Diego for \$118.00 and included breakfast. Travel is a problem when the convention is in the South or the North. So, if we want more attendees, it appears that conventions should be in the central part of the State.

From the floor: Can we put this to the entire membership?

Lea Zajac: Of course.

From the floor: Could we have the survey instead of just the information in the minutes?

Lea Zajac: I am just getting a consensus from those who came to this convention.

From the floor: I would like to have this discussed in the Executive Board meeting.

Lea Zajac: We will

Question Lakewood 2025: Did any of the vendors kick in some money for the luncheon or the banquet?

Lea Zajac: The reception for the National President cost about \$2,000, the vendors take care of that expense. We have not addressed the vendors about sponsoring the luncheon or the banquet.

Question Paul R, Chapter 61, San Fernando Valley: What about having these conventions on weekends? This would encourage more active federal employees to attend. Hotels may be more expensive on weekends.

Question Paul R, Chapter 61, San Fernando Valley: I am also interested in the Investment Fund. Are we solvent?

**Ken Thomas, National President response:** We have an investment committee that is made of members of the Executive Board who keep track of the investments. The investment fund, right now, is sitting between eight and ten million dollars. This investment fund has grown over the years. It was begun in 1950's. So, it's not as if it sprouted to eight million by itself.

The building itself, if you want to look at as another investment is worth about \$10 million. Most of the money in it is sitting underneath it in the parking garage. If the building were up to code, I could rent out about 50 parking spaces per month. In that area it would bring \$240 to \$260 per space per month. So that's our status. Any other questions about our financial status?

**Question From the floor:** Can the building be brought up to code?

**Ken Thomas, National President response:** Yes, the building can be brought up to code. The cost estimates are between \$1.5 and \$1.8 million dollars. Remember we only have 45 staff employees and we only use about a third of the building. The rest is empty. I could rent out two of the floors plus the parking spaces underneath. So, when membership decides it wants to spend that kind of money we could upgrade. Because we have a Building Committee that I appointed, and they are looking at the building to either sell it; keep it or bring it up to code. We could send part of the advocacy staff to the Hill and send remaining staff remotely to a different location, Oshkosh, Wisconsin? It doesn't have to be Alexandria. It could be in Santa Barbara, CA.

**Lea Zajac response:** Now I will answer his first question. Why don't we have our conventions on weekends? What we do, Paul, is we give them a range of dates from April 16 to June 15 and we ask for the best price we can get. They come back and tell us on these dates it costs this much. And the only objection is not to include any holiday. Unfortunately, this convention is the day after Easter for the Executive Board Meeting. If it were on weekends only, it would cost us more money.

**From the floor: Depending on where?** There are places like Cupertino where it is cheaper on weekends because of Apple working during the week.

**Question Yoggi Riley:** We shouldn't be discussing our financial problems in an open forum. I don't know the statute of limitations for this, but has any investigation been done on the problem? Possible charges? I can't stand the idea of letting bygones be bygones. That was our membership money.

**Ken Thomas, National President response:** To start with I did not do a forensic audit. To do so would lead to criminal charges being filed all the way back to 2000. I don't care who did it. The issue is that they lied to us. They moved funds. Is that a state or federal offense? The previous administration moved money from investment funds to the operations account. The audit should have come back that they had embezzled funds. There is another component to this. Do I put this in the Magazine, the award-winning Magazine that goes out to over 200,000 members plus affiliates and the Congress? If I did that, the first thing my father would say would be to tear up his membership. He did not raise me to do this. Not that I would do it, but because someone did it. About a third of our membership would leave because they would feel we had squandered their money. What these people did was instead of following the budget, was they did things we would not have done. We have enough money to run our organization for about a year. Our budget runs about 11 Billion dollars. So, you are hearing your President scripted. So, what you are going to get is "transparency." You may have not heard it before, but this is what you are going to get now.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** Thank you. Sergeant-At-Arms, are you prepared to retire the Colors? The Executive Board meeting will be held in this hotel for the next two days. Now, before we have the Retirement of the Colors, I need to thank all our members who worked on committees to support this Convention.



We have a visitor from South Carolina. Would you come up and tell us why you drove all the way to our convention.

**Pat Whitely, President of Somerville, SC Chapter:** Somerville is a suburb of Charlotte, SC. I came to visit my son who lives in Lakeside. I was a former employee of Naval Training Center in San Diego for 25 years. I always look for something to do with NARFE while am here and I think I hit the mother lode this year. We have our conference next week.

**Lea Zajac, Federation President:** Thanks for coming, we were happy to have you here. We will now Retire the Colors.

The Chief Sergeant-At-Arms, Joanne Wiest, led the Sergeant-At-Arms team in retiring the colors.

**Good of the Order:** Before we have the drawings. Is there anything for the “Good of the Order?”

A comment from the floor: Getting the young people to come to the meetings is difficult. We need the banquet and luncheon. Socialization is needed. Outside activities. Chapters need to have fun too.

**Announcements:**

Please leave your badges in the red bucket next to the door as you leave.

**Karen Ross FEEA Donation Coordinator:** I would like to thank Chapters 400, 970, 706, 1317, and 1082 for their contributions to FEEA at the last minute. We received \$320.55. I would like to turn this over to Helen Zajac and divest myself of the money.

**Barb Leetch, Chair of the Raffle Prizes:** Thanks to all of you who bought raffle tickets. I will now draw for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize of \$100 – Gary Darcy; 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize of \$250 – Sam Modica; 1<sup>st</sup> Prize of \$500 Jeanette Castor; and for the Grand Prize of \$2,019 – Mike Kunsman. Congratulations to all the winners.

**Lea Zajac Federation President:** The meeting is now adjourned Sine Die.

**EPILOGUE**

I extend my sincere apologies for the lateness of this Summary.

I want to thank Juanita Pardun, Second Vice President, American River #1596, for volunteering at the last minute (just before the convention started) to record and transcribe this two-day event. She is a newer member and had not even attended a convention, but she said she would take care of it. It was a larger job than she anticipated, and it took a bit longer than she had anticipated. Fortunately, she did finish most of her transcription in time for President Lea Zajac to review and mark up what was completed while he was in the hospital, prior to his ultimate death in July 2020. I cannot tell you how difficult this task has been, as I do miss Lea so very much.

I did format this document using Juanita’s transcript, and other available documents.

The Federation Secretary Sandy Griffin proofread this for grammatical and punctuation errors, and I have incorporated her comments herein. Thank you, Sandy.

This is a tribute to Lea and his dedication to NARFE with his last major effort for NARFE after serving his fourth term as our Federation President; the longest serving California Federation President to date and holding either a NARFE chapter or federation officer position every year since 1992.

Helen Zajac  
Past Region VIII VP