



REGION VIII REPORT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD (NEB) MEETING
HELD AT NARFE HEADQUARTERS, MARCH 12/13, 2018

Introductions: New staff members were introduced: Jill Talley, Public Relations Vice President; and Precious Dorsch-Robinson, Communications and Social Media.

National President, Richard Thissen, reported some good news. During the first 2 months of this year, we only lost 470 members; or 235 per month. 18 Federations had growth in February (none of the Region VIII Federations showed growth), and 16 Federations lost 10 or fewer members through February: Nevada (-4), PI (-4), and Guam (-6). The membership retention rate is 91.5% overall; which does not include either new or deceased members.

The audit showed that NARFE added \$953,178.00 last year to our assets. This is the fourth year in a row where we had added to our assets.

National Secretary/Treasurer, Jon Dowie, reported that this year to date, NARFE has closed 15 chapters. Based on this rate, we will lose an estimated 90 chapters this year.

Dowie has approved 26 Federation Bylaws. Chapter Bylaws will not be approved until their Federation Bylaws are approved, this will provide assurance to the chapter that the Federation Bylaws have been changed. Basically, the only change necessary will be to delete Article VIII (Delegate Voting) from the Chapter/Federation Bylaws.

Executive Director, Barb Sido, provided updates for the internal Operating Plan. She mentioned that in some Federations, State Advocacy work is missing. Federations should contact Ross Apter (rapter@narfe.org) for assistance in working with State Legislatures. She also stated that if States treat Military retirees differently from Civil Service retirees for state income tax, it may be a violation of Davis v. Michigan, and perhaps a lawsuit would be in order. NARFE Headquarters cannot file a class action suit because the lawsuit would not be applicable in all states.

Federation Conference Videos: For Federation Conferences, HQ has developed short video presentations from our National President and Executive Director. The purpose of these videos is to update the members who do not attend Federation Conferences and make it easy to get the word to all members, by showing them at a local chapter meeting. These videos are complete, and available on the NARFE website, home page under HQ Happenings. President Thissen's welcome speech can be found at: <https://www.narfe.org/member/articles.cfm?ID=4363> Executive Director Sido's HQ Update can be found at: <https://www.narfe.org/member/articles.cfm?ID=4362>.

Bylaws and Resolution Committee Report: The Bylaws and Resolution Committee Report is published in the April magazine. It is highly recommended that local chapters hold a discussion session at their meeting regarding the resolutions presented for balloting. Only those resolutions in the Ballot Section of the Resolution Book (and those four added by the NEB) will be voted upon; members will not be voting on all resolutions which were submitted. The Resolution Book may be downloaded from the NARFE website, or they can be mailed directly to you by ordering on line at, https://www.narfe.org/pdf/Bylaws_and_Resolutions_Book.pdf, or calling 707-838-7760, extension 270.

Four Additional Ballot Items: Four additional ballot items, added by the National Executive Board; three questions and one bylaw resolution are available on the website, or at: https://www.narfe.org/pdf/0618_ballot_items.pdf

Balloting: The NEB established the cutoff date for who can vote in the Election Balloting Process. The date established was March 15, which is 70 days from the deadline for voting. Any membership actions regarding new members or those who do not renew their membership before March 16, will not be allowed to vote.

This is the first time for this new process (one member, one vote (OMOV) and optional chapter membership), so we are working on concerns as they arise and trying very hard to make this process understandable to all.

HQ has developed a Frequently Asked Question and Answer document to explain the Election Process which can be found on the NARFE website at: https://www.narfe.org/pdf/0618_voting_FAQs.pdf.

The ballot will be available on line, May 10. The printed ballot will be in the May magazine. Deadline for receipt of all ballots is June 30, 2018. Return postage for the ballot is not included.

All members will be voting on the two positions of National President and National Secretary/Treasurer. All members within a Region, will vote only on the candidates for that Region.

All candidate statements are available on the NARFE website and in the March magazine. There will not be any open forums for the candidates, unless the candidates establish a forum, or establish a Blog, or YouTube Videos to provide more information regarding their qualifications. Candidates can issue two NES messages in addition to the statements in the magazine.

Blog: Subsequent to the meeting, several concerns were voiced about the NARFE Blog: it's instructions and it's use. A new Guide has been prepared to provide details on how a member may create a post or comment on the NARFE Blog. It can be found on the NARFE website (NARFE Blog) at: https://www.narfe.org/pdf/How_To_Create_Posts_or_Write_Comments_on_NARFE_Blog.pdf

Voting: All members will be voting on the resolutions identified by the Bylaws and Resolution Committee and contained in their report. There are a total of 28 resolutions (24 published in the Resolutions Book, plus four added by the NEB) to be considered; all resolutions received were printed in the Resolution Book (except the four presented by the NEB), for general information and at the request of many members who desired to see the resolutions which were submitted. No resolutions grouped together by the Committee will be allowed to be withheld for separate consideration. There will be no attempt by the NEB, or the Committee to prepare and issue any further comments, such as Pros or Cons. Chapter members wishing to do so, are encouraged to discuss at chapter meetings.

Should one of the four candidates for National President not receive a majority vote, the members will be asked to approve a means of Preferential Voting. Procedures for Preferential Voting have been established and approved by the NEB. This is an additional ballot item for all members to vote upon, see Question 1 on the ballot (see website for details).

Another necessary addition to the ballot is a revision to the Articles of Incorporation. This revision is the minimum required for a non-profit organization to exist and will be included in the ballot as Question 2 (see website for details).

Ballot Question 3 (see website for details), addresses the residency and salary for the NARFE National Secretary/Treasurer.

The residency or non-residency concern was discussed for the National Secretary/Treasurer. When the NEB approved non-residency status for the National Secretary/Treasurer in Motion 07-11-16, the workload was not as busy, and the concept seemed feasible. With the passage of one member, one vote and optional chapter membership a greater workload was generated. Further the number of chapter closings has increased, not to mention the time and effort by Jon Dowie to Chair the Strategic Planning Committee and finalize the report for issue. He has now assumed the Chair of the Standing Committee on Finance, in addition to his regular workload. This workload would not allow for a non-resident position at this time, nor would it allow for the possibility of a candidate being elected to the position expecting to receive a full time resident position. In fairness to all, the NEB drafted a resolution/question to be added to the ballot allowing for the National Secretary/Treasurer to be a non-resident position beginning with the year 2020-2022.

Proposed Amendment to Article IX (Amendments) of the Bylaws has been added as NEB01 and will appear on the ballot (see website for details). NEB01 contains the rationale for the change.

Remember you should consider your vote on these resolutions based on their own merit, for the benefit of the entire NARFE Association, and not merely vote the recommendation of the Committee.

Brand Identity: The study is continuing for Brand Identity looking at what people think about NARFE. How do we get them to think about NARFE? Our Staff Advocacy Vice President, Jessie Klement, has been working with the Democratic and Republican Standing Committees to educate them about the fact that we are not just a retiree organization; but that we are also supporting the Active Federal Employees. We would like to have the NARFE Brand name recognized at the national level. Once this is done, Federations and Chapters would follow. The results of the study will be released at FEDCon18 with Brand Guides, revised logo, and revised colors. These will be used when we speak to the external world. The NARFE website and magazine re-design are all part of this branding study. In addition, the publication *NARFE Insider* will be revised to contain more information pertinent to members.

Members are the most important part of NARFE – as there would be no chapters, no federations, no advocacy, and most of all NO CLOUT with Congress, without our members.

FEDCon18: The Premier FEDCon18 will be held at the Hyatt Regency, Jacksonville, Florida on August 26-28, 2018, with the Annual Meeting being held on the morning of August 29. Registration opened on February 1, 2018, and if you register prior to April 15, 2018 (an extended date), you will have the advantage of the early bird registration for \$150. Florida Night (August 27) with the Caribbean Chillers should put everyone in a festive mood.

The closing night Gala, (August 28) which includes dinner and live music, will celebrate NARFE's 97 years of service to the federal community. For the Gala event, registration is also available at the early bird price \$65, if you register prior to the extended date of April 15, 2018.

Six high-profile Keynote speakers, including the new Director of OPM, Dr. Jeff Pon, will highlight general sessions. In addition to the exhibitors, FEDcon18 will feature NARFETown, where subject matter experts will be available to engage with attendees at five kiosks – Advocacy, the Federal Benefits Institute, Communications, Marketing and Member Resources and NARFE Next personnel. OPM and Social Security representatives will also be present.

Thirty breakout sessions and workshops are available to attendees in the topic areas of advocacy, federal benefits, NARFE leadership and lifestyle. Special workshops will include recruitment best practices, magazine focus groups, NARFE Next (see October 2017 *NARFE Insider* for details) value concept assessment, public and community relations, NARFE-PAC training, and state advocacy.

There will be an *App* available during the conference, as there was in 2016. See the NARFE website for registration information, <https://www.event.com/events/fedcon18/registration-4863420f82684f1ebcdd9d4118725b50.aspx?fqp=true>.

There will not be any Regional Caucus held at FEDcon18, nor will members be seated by Regions. There will be no business conducted at FEDcon. There will be the Annual Meeting on Wednesday, August 29, where the National President and National Secretary will give their annual reports.

As of Monday, March 19, 2018 there are 235 members registered for FEDcon18; in Region VIII there are 15 registered; 12 from California, 1 from Hawaii and 2 from Nevada. Please note the early registration has been extended by two weeks to April 15, 2018. Don't miss this Premier Event! As of 4/11/18, 537 members are registered.

Membership: To increase membership, there are no lists available to purchase, rent or obtain from any source. Therefore, NARFE has been using the method of on-line lead generation with on-line ads, offers of white papers and webinars to obtain names of prospects who would be interested in joining NARFE. As potential members learn about NARFE, the more prospects we will have. We currently have a 9.3% conversion rate of prospects to members.

Fund Raiser Revenue: Calendars, note pads and greeting cards brought in non-dues revenue of \$1,600,000. Thank you all for your most generous support!

Congressional District Leaders: We need capable, willing members to step up to serve in the capacity of Congressional District Leader (CDL), as they serve a very important role in our Advocacy efforts. Each Congressional District should have a CDL and a team of 4-5 members, as well as a Senatorial Leader for each of the two senators.

Database Upgrade: A request for proposal (RFP) has been issued to eight vendors to provide the software to upgrade the current in-house data base system. A selection should be made by May 2018 with a completion date by the end of December 2018. The Configuration Advisory Committee (CAB) suggestions have been added to the implementation of the new program.

However, there are still a very small percentage of officers in the field who utilize the Online Activity Module (OAM) which was designed to assist chapters in recruitment, retention, and maintenance of chapter member records, and Online Activity Reports (OAR). In some chapters there is one person who utilizes the OAM, and often just for the means to complete the Officer Roster F-7. Many chapters still use the paper copy of the F-7 to mail it to HQ.

As a reminder, Federations and Chapters cannot distribute or share the data base with all members; it is not to be shared. All Officers/Chairs listed on the Officer Roster, F-7, have access to the OAM for use in completing their tasks.

To assist NARFE officers in using this versatile and powerful tool, the Configuration Advisory Board (CAB) created a series of instructional documents and tutorials. The OAM is where federation and chapter officers do many of the on-line tasks associated with NARFE. The OAM allows you to produce various

reports on member data, allows key officers to update the data, provides a convenient way to communicate with members and officers and allows you to create and maintain your own web site. This overview, with links to document, videos, and websites, was created by NARFE CAB to help you navigate the OAM. To access NARFE CAB's OAM documentation, which includes an overview on using the OAM, please [CLICK HERE](#)

Policy Manual: A revision to the National Policy Manual was distributed to the NEB prior to the meeting. At the meeting the NEB discussed the comments and further items need to be discussed. A revised version of the Policy Manual will be provided for review by May 1, 2018.

NARFE Business Model: At the November 2017 NEB Meeting the NEB participated in a visualization process which revealed some important business model concerns. NARFE Staff also provided insights on how NARFE should consider adapting its business models for the future, as well as fresh ideas for new products, services, experiences, and other forms of value. These reviews of NARFE existing business models offered no unique value propositions for any identified stakeholder segments except companies and organizations offering products and services to active/retired federal employees. NARFE needs unique value propositions for other stakeholder segments.

From the efforts to date, there are three focus areas for new value creation that will be explored during the coming months. (1) Strengthening the Personal and Professional Growth of Active Federal Employees. As part of this process, we will place special emphasis on developing solutions, services and support that help active federal employees make smart health and wellness decisions, lead healthier lives, and nurture an overall sense of personal well-being. (2) Enhanced Retirement Support for Both Active and Retired Federal Employees. NARFE must be more than “all retirement, all the time”. As part of this process, we will place special emphasis on developing solutions, services and support that make a deeper connection between retirement planning and new efforts to strengthen the personal and professional growth of active federal employees. (3) Enhanced Health Insurance Support for Both Active and Retired Federal Employees. As part of this process, we will place special emphasis on developing solutions, services and support that clarify the importance of this health insurance continuum for all federal employees.

This is a cooperative effort with a professional leading strategic communication firm and a group of NARFE members selected as members of the NARFE Next Committee.

Many new concepts are being developed and tested with the idea to release this information at the upcoming FEDCon18. Some of the ideas include: having Podcasts; Premium Institute Offerings for a fee, where NARFE can help members come up with a plan for health care; focus on early to mid-life career employees to show them how NARFE can help them in the long-run; Develop Event Meeting Toolkits for Federations to target National Division members to increase participation; Develop an *App* for Legislation advocacy; and a Decision Tree Tool to help AFEs transition through changing agencies, choosing health plans, choosing retirement options basically a one on one, “What should I be doing?”

After the meeting, the *NARFE Insider*, March 2018, has an article describing more about this evolution which includes an audit of our current brand communication to examine how we convey who we are through things like the NARFE logo, website, NARFE magazine, newsletters, social media platforms and more.

Advocacy Update – Jessie Klement, Staff VP, Advocacy

The President recently signed a two-year bipartisan budget agreement that sets overall spending numbers for FY-18 and FY19. The good news is that the bill increased spending overall by \$300 Billion, only \$100 Billion of which was offset. Offsets always are and will continue to be a primary concern for NARFE. This was our first legislative win for 2018 when none of the offsets came from federal employees or retirees.

There has been lots of first timers utilizing the NARFE Legislation Action Center. There doesn't appear to be much to fight over the rest of this Congress. Although there is still concern over the Postal Reform Bill. Should it pass as written, it would open the door for Congress to start changing the rules for other earned benefits. The March magazine PAC Wrap has not received a very good response to date. Further disappointing was that the Webinar, "Preparing for PAC Month" received only 52 participants. Please consider contributing to PAC either by a one-time donation, or a sustaining contribution. You might also wish to see the video of the Webinar, which is posted on the NARFE website. The Congressional District Leader (CDL) program has been well received and Federations are working on getting CDLs who display great enthusiasm for this task. The CDL position could also include members of the National Division.

Advocacy Agenda: Staff Vice President, Jessie Klement, reported that there is nothing in the Bylaws that requires the former Legislative Agenda, now Advocacy Program, to be voted on by the members; this was part of the Standing Rules for Convention. Members of the Advocacy Advisory Committee comprised of representative NARFE members will compile the Advocacy Program, which will allow it to be flexible with changing times. The Advocacy Program for the upcoming 116th Congress will be published in the January magazine.

Legislative Training Conference: For planning purposes, the 2019 Legislative Training Conference will be held at the Hilton Mark Center, Alexandria, VA, from March 7–13, 2019. March 13 will be the day for the visit to Capitol Hill.

Communications Department Update – Susan Boswell, Staff VP, Communications

There was a NARFE magazine readership survey completed in November/December 2017 and was sent to 65,000 email addresses. The survey examined several key areas: value of membership, readership satisfaction and technology use.

Most readers indicated satisfaction with the magazines editorial coverage of topics, although some readers would like more information on two key topics: FEHB health coverage and more Q & A on federal benefits.

Upcoming magazines will have more information on the upcoming election. March magazine will have the candidate's statements. Depending on your Region, you will only see candidates for Region Vice President on your ballot, along with candidates for National President and National Secretary/Treasurer. April magazine has the Bylaws and Resolution Committee Report. The May magazine will have an article on preferential voting. The June magazine will have the actual ballot inserted into the magazine. All members as of March 15, 2018 will be eligible to vote.

Election Services Co, the vendor, will host a secure online voting website, which will launch the on-line ballot on May 10, approximately the same time members will receive their magazine. Those who have an email address on file with NARFE will receive an email notification about the voting website and instructions.

The election results will be announced no later than July 6 by Executive Director Barb Sido, first via a simultaneous NES message to the candidates and the NEB, then the FPs, and then to all members for whom we have an email address plus a web post. That will also be published in the September magazine.

Website: On January 16, 2018 NARFE launched a redesigned and enhanced webpage accessible to nonmembers and the public. The organization-wide Web Team created the website, with representatives from departments across the organization. In 2018 the Web Team will explore options to facilitate a redesign of the entire NARFE website utilizing more contemporary principles of website design and further enhancing the site's architecture, navigation, and usability.

E-newsletter migration and relaunch: Currently, NARFE has two key, large-circulation e-newsletters: NARFE NewsWatch (delivered every Tuesday) and Hotline (delivered every Friday). In 2018, NARFE will lay the groundwork to integrate these two e-newsletters into a single e-newsletter that provides the latest advocacy updates as well as news from across the organization driving readers to the NARFE website for further information.

Marketing and Member Resources Department Update – Bridget Boel, SVP Marketing and Membership Resources

Branding: TGD Creative Strategies & Solutions, located in Alexandria, VA was awarded a contract for association branding. Work will progress in five states: Brand Assessment, Communication Audit, Brand Messaging and Design, Brand Application and finally, Brand Documentation. NEB members can anticipate a questionnaire during the assessment period and review of a finalist among design and messaging options. The project will be completed in time for launch at FEDcon18, including a video presentation at NARFETown.

Public Relations: The new position, Deputy Director of Public Relations, has been filled. Jill Talley joined the NARFE staff on January 30th. The M&R contract has been allowed to expire with work history and media contacts transferred in-house. This new position has moved from the Advocacy Department to Marketing and Member Resources. The goal for this position is to broaden our public relations focus to include all areas of NARFE value, i.e., Advocacy, the Federal Benefits Institute, events and new products, programs, and services. This position is now responsible for NARFE's social media strategy, community relations, change communication and NARFE Centennial planning.

Federal Benefits Institute: Webinars have focused on two presenters, Tammy Flannigan and Mark Keen. However, we now will feature our subject matter expert, James Marshall. Work is underway to create easier access to the information our members need on the website and guidance on additional subject matter will soon be available there. The Institute plays a key role as we broadcast NARFE as the go-to resource for the federal community. Later this year will be an assessment of train-the-trainer opportunities for federal HR professionals as well as retirement and financial advisors.

Membership: 2017 year-end total membership of 208,825 represents both a month-by-month and an annual year-over-year slowing of the membership decline. New member acquisition rose to 13,600, a 28% increase over 2016.

Fall Membership Campaign Wrap Up: During the fall membership campaign, NARFE members added 995 new members. We gained 576 new members from those who recruited just one new member. The Grand Prize Winner of an Apple watch (based on a ticket drawing) is Yoggi Riley of San Fernando Valley Chapter 61 who recruited 17 new members. Congratulations to Forney Lundy of Salinas Chapter 1496

who recruited 20 new members, and Alihandra Totar of San Francisco Chapter 65 who recruited 10 members. Many thanks to all who participated in and supported the 2017 Fall Membership Campaign.

Recruiting Materials: Demand has increased significantly for recruiting supplies to the point that direct calls to Jackie Bryant or Recruiting and Retention is no longer sustainable. HQ looked at the current processes and determined that adding the magazine and Webinar flyers to the F-18, Requisition for Printed Supplies, on the NARFE website or at: [https://www.narfe.org/pdf/F-18%20\(04-18\)fillable.pdf](https://www.narfe.org/pdf/F-18%20(04-18)fillable.pdf) would give HQ some of the controls needed. Orders placed through the online F-18 receive an automated email acknowledgement and are sent directly to the NARFE mailroom for processing. Anyone who orders recruiting supplies and provides an email address will receive a tracking number from the NARFE mailroom on the day that the package is shipped out. If you are not able to use the online form, the magazine and Webinar flyers are on the print version of the F-18 which can be mailed directly to you.

Merging Federations: RVP I, Jim Crawford, asked that this item be discussed at the NEB meeting. Two Federations in Region I are lacking the compliment of officers to maintain their current operation. New Hampshire (NH) and Vermont (VT) are asking to merge into one Federation.

The current lack of leadership in the VT Federation presents an immediate problem that needs to be addressed but merging the VT and NH Federations addresses a NARFE infrastructure problem at the expense of NARFE's Mission. With evidence at hand that several other Federations face similar leadership shortfalls, the merger also sets a dangerous precedent.

The current and future success of NARFE is dependent on an advocacy presence in every state. Advocacy cannot be merged. While all other NARFE activities are not geographically specific, advocacy requires leaders residing in-state. It is the strong opinion of the Staff Vice President, Jessie Klement, that any requests from a non-resident would be simply ignored. The real vulnerability facing NARFE is not simply a lack of leadership to perform all the traditional functions of a federation, but an inability to successfully fulfill our mission – first in VT and ultimately with every federation that chooses to follow suit.

Operational and administrative issues to support federation activities according to our current federation model appear to be the focus of the NEB as we consider merger as a solution. Such as:

- How to distribute 10% funds
- Merged federation executive board make up
- Compensation for services provided by NH for VT, among others.

Instead, we need to step back, consider the mission threat, and develop an alternative.

Can VT become a model for minimum federation role? With other activities, including recruitment, service and the dissemination of critical information provided by HQ and or the Region – only VT leadership need cover advocacy activities. Knowing that only a President and Secretary/Treasurer are required positions, other officer positions can be left unfilled. The core mission of NARFE, advocacy, becomes the minimum role of a federation.

Recruitment minimum leadership continue to be critical – but with fewer responsibilities, the positions are likely to be more attractive. Seeking new leaders from among national members with demonstrated interest in advocacy can significantly raise the recruitment pool.

VT might represent one model or level in a tiered approach to federation management based on capacity. Understanding that one size no longer fits all, options can be made available to federations struggling to do

everything we currently imagine a federation must do. The minimum tier may be entirely focused on advocacy while a stronger group might include chapter support and federation-wide newsletters. The strongest federations might consider a full-blown FEDcon model conference.

Reimagining Federations based on tiered options will allow NARFE to successfully pursue its core mission of advocacy now and into the future. We must not act hastily in a manner that could set a precedent and hinder our advocacy efforts overall. It's time for the NEB to consider the bigger picture.

After discussion, the NEB unanimously agreed to postpone the motion indefinitely.

Closure of Chapter 0752: RVP Rodney Adelman discussed this chapter, that is not affiliated with the CO Federation and has one person serving in five Chapter positions, has not held a meeting in over a year, and has not had an audit report for over a year. The RVP has spoken with the President with no conclusion. The RVP requested that appropriate action be taken to close the chapter. The NEB voted unanimously adopted this request.

Federation Use of Electronic Communications: Discussion ensued about allowing the Federations to use the NARFE Email System (NES) exclusively as they see fit, until the responsibilities of Federations in the implementation of One Member, One Vote are clarified. After further discussion, the motion was withdrawn.

NEB Meeting: The next NEB meeting will be held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Jacksonville, FL on August 23-24, 2018 in conjunction with the Federation President's Meeting on August 25-26, 2018 and after FEDcon18 (August 27-28) with the Annual Meeting held the morning of August 29 where the National President and National Secretary/Treasurer give their Annual Reports, with the NEB meeting following in the afternoon of that day.

Membership: (As of February 2018)

National Membership: 208,355 members; 1,054 Total Chapters
National Members: 84,659 members

Region VIII Membership: 21,791 members; 101 Chapters
Region VIII National Members: 8,284 members

CA Membership: 17,490 total members; 76 Chapters
CA National Members: 6,617 members

GU Membership: 108 members; 1 Chapter
GU National Members: 45 members

HI Membership: 2,301 members; 10 Chapters
HI National Members: 824 members

NV Membership: 1,605 members; 6 Chapters
NV National Members: 778 members

PI Membership: 232 members; 8 Chapters
PI National Members: 20 members

I do apologize for the length of this document, but even though a two-day NEB meeting, there was a great deal of information provided which I felt it necessary that, you, the members, know what your HQ is doing for you and for NARFE.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask.

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