

## **FIRST TIMERS ORIENTATION - QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**APRIL 2011**

### **What is a Federation?**

Every state is a Federation. The Objectives of this Federation shall be to unite all regularly chartered chapters of NARFE in California into a State-wide organization for the mutual benefit of all members; to coordinate the activities of the member chapters in safe-guarding and improving the interests and welfare of all persons eligible to be members of NARFE; to support and assist the National Association in all its authorized projects; to promote and actively participate in the retention of current members and recruitment of new National and chapter members; and to encourage and assist in the formation of new chapters.

### **What's the Federation Executive Board - what do they do?**

The officers of this Federation Executive Board are: President, one Executive Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer (or a Secretary-Treasurer) and Ten District Vice Presidents.

The purpose of the Federation Executive Board is to promote the aims and objectives of the National Association. (A) To organize new chapters. (B) To visit chapters and promote greater Chapter activity, including the solicitation of members. (C) To reactivate weak and closed Chapters. (D) To stimulate fraternal cooperation among all Chapters in the area for their mutual benefit and for the benefit of the Association. (E) To maintain constant vigil upon the status of legislation in the various Legislatures in the state and to take such action with respect to any such legislation as is beneficial to retirees.

### **Why does the Federation have Conventions?**

The Federation has Conventions to allow chapters to elect the Federation Officers, change the Federation Bylaws, recommend changes to the National Bylaws/policies/procedures, and establish/modify polices and procedures of the Federation. Federation Conventions offer the opportunity for members to hear speakers they would not ordinarily have at a chapter meeting. Also, Federation Conventions are an opportunity for members to hear directly from and meet with the leaders of the National Association, Federation and to network with other members from throughout the entire state. More importantly members have the opportunity to meet new people from different parts of the state who share the same goals, and learn from their experience.

### **Why are Conventions two years apart?**

In 2004, the delegates voted to change the Federation Bylaws to hold biennial conventions.

### **Who should attend the convention?**

All chapter officers and members that desire to learn the latest information on how to become a more effective leader and to share information gathered at the convention with their individual chapters and members.

### **Why are there no breaks during the convention?**

In order to maximize the amount of information provided to the delegates in consideration of the investment they have made to attend a convention, conventions have been shortened to encompass three days only; therefore to maximize the convention experience, no formal breaks are scheduled. Members are free to take their own personal breaks during the convention. If there were scheduled breaks of say 15 minutes, it would be at least 30 minutes before all delegates would actually be in their seats, due to the limited number of facilities available adjacent to many convention rooms, and much valuable time would be lost.

### **Why is the convention take 3 days?**

The convention is required to follow the order and rules outlined in the by-laws of the Federation. The convention is actually 2-1/2 days, with 1/2 day being devoted to committee meetings. Providing the information about all candidates for office, resolutions and committee reports is a challenge to place in the span of 2-1/2 days.

### **Why do we have so many reports at convention?**

We have so many reports at conventions because this is the only opportunity for Federation Officers, Committee Chairs, and Special Assistants to share the work they have accomplished since the last convention with the members of the federation.

**What's a Standing Committee?**

A Standing Committee is appointed by the Federation President, from a list of volunteers provided by each chapter, prior to the Convention. These Committees focus on issues related to National Legislation, State Legislation, Constitution and Bylaws, Service, Audit, Nominations, Public Relations between conventions and serve for two years, culminating their two year efforts by meeting just prior to the convention.. Each District should have a representative on each committee to serve as a liaison between the Federation Committee and each chapter within the District.

**What's a Convention Committee?**

A Convention Committee is appointed by the Federation President, from a list of volunteers provided by each chapter prior to the Convention. These Committees serve just prior to and only during the convention to help facilitate the agenda of the convention and shall include Credentials, General Resolutions (for Resolutions not otherwise allocated), Rules, National Bylaws, Ballot and Tellers, Sergeant at Arms and others as appropriate. These committees shall handle such Federation matters as the committee name implies. Members of committees shall serve from date of appointment until convention adjournment. Committee reports will be made to the Convention delegates upon request of the Federation President.

**What's a Convention Host Committee?**

The Convention Host Committee is the committee formed by a Chapter, or District who locates a convention hotel and prepares a bid (based on obtaining a Request for Proposal which can be obtained from the Federation) to host a convention by notifying the Federation Secretary. Chapters/Districts are encouraged to host a Federation Convention to provide variety in locations throughout the state. If two Chapters/Districts wish to host a Convention, the information is provided to the delegates at the previous convention and the voting representative from each chapter will vote the wishes of the chapter to select the convention site. The successful Chapter/District will begin planning and preparations to host the next convention following a guideline prepared by the Federation.

**Who decides on the speakers at convention?**

The speakers at the convention are chosen by the President, with input from the members of Federation Executive Board.

**Who decides where the Convention will be held?**

The members attending a Federation Convention vote on sites that are presented at the convention. If no Chapter/District bids on a convention, the Federation Executive Board must locate a convention site, and host the convention.

**Why does it cost so much for the Convention Hotel Rooms?**

The cost of the hotel room is based upon the number of members who stay at the hotel during the convention, and how much time and space is used within the hotel by the convention. Most hotels include the charge for the meeting rooms in the price of the hotel room, rather than charge a separate price for each meeting room.

**Why are the meals so expensive?**

Meals are expensive due to cost of the meal plus tax and service charge. For this convention the tax is 8.75% and the service charge is 21% which is common in the hotel banquet industry.

**Should my chapter supplement my attendance at Conventions?**

Chapters are encouraged to assist members defray some expenses during a convention and many have special fund raisers to provide those funds. However, it is up to each chapter to decide if they will help members defray some of their expenses during a convention. The chapter gains knowledge and experience from investing to help their members and delegates attend Federation Conventions. This is a win-win proposition for chapters and the Association.

**What is the Recognition Luncheon?**

The Recognition Luncheon is an opportunity for those attending the convention to recognize and honor those members who have provided leadership to the Federation in years past.

**Why do we have a Banquet?**

We have a banquet to install the officers that were elected during the convention and to network and socialize and celebrate the culmination of a successful convention with other members of the Federation.

**Who hosts the Convention?**

The Convention Host Committee sets up all details of the convention until the gavel bringing the convention to order. From that point on the Presiding Officer (Federation President) is responsible for conducting the business of the convention until adjournment.

**Who can run for Federation Office?**

Any member in good standing in both the National Association and a Chapter affiliated with this Federation, who is a resident of the State of California, is eligible to hold any office in this Federation. No person shall be a nominee for more than one Federation office at the same convention.

**What is a Resolution?**

A Resolution is the way for members and chapters to make a change in the operations of the Federation or the National Association. The by-laws explain the procedure for submitting a resolution. Each resolution shall be restricted to a single subject and related changes.

**Who can submit a Resolution?**

Resolutions may be submitted by Chapters, Federation Executive Board or Standing Committees

**Where do I get a copy of the Federation Bylaws - National Bylaws?**

Each Chapter receives two copies of the Federation Bylaws and they are also available on the California Federation website [www.csfnarfe.org](http://www.csfnarfe.org). The National Bylaws may be ordered from National Headquarters on Supply Order F-18 or downloaded from the National website, [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org).

**What is a delegate?**

A delegate is elected to represent their chapter by adhering to the by-laws of the member's chapter. The number of delegates representing each chapter in the Federation is determined by the number of voting members in each chapter. (Presently each chapter is entitled to one delegate for every 25 members in good standing or any fraction thereof.) Example: Chapter has 125 members = 5 delegates.

**Why are some delegates designated as Voting Representative?**

The Voting Representative is responsible for casting the total votes the chapter is entitled. Some Chapters may instruct their Voting Representative how to vote, based on the wishes of the majority of chapter members; others allow the Voting Representative to vote as they desire. The votes must be in whole numbers not fractions, as may be split between options on the ballot. Example: Chapter X has 5 total votes, Yes 3 No 2 not 3.5 and 1.5.

**What's a District?**

A district is a group of chapters located in a contiguous geographical area. The California Federation has ten districts. The Federation Vice President is responsible for assigning and reviewing the district assignments.

**How are the Districts determined?**

The Districts are determined by the Federation Executive Board following a study by the Executive Vice President and input gained from the Chapters and District Vice Presidents.

**Can a chapter request a change to another District?**

A chapter can request a change to another district. The request will be referred to the Executive Vice President to study and make a recommendation to the Federation Executive Board. Considerations are location of chapter and workloads of affected District Vice Presidents.

**Why do we have DVP's?**

We have District Vice Presidents (DVP's) to represent the chapters of the districts on the Federation Executive Board. The DVP also provides training and assistance to chapters upon request.

**Should I attend a District Meeting?**

Every member should attend their District Meeting to meet and network with other members in nearby chapters.

**What is a District Caucus?**

A District Caucus is where the business of the district is conducted at the convention. The DVP gives a report of the past two years activities, sharing information which may help all chapters. The most important duty of the District Caucus is to elect the District Vice President.

**Do I have to attend a District Caucus?**

If you want to have your input to your District Caucus, you must attend. This is where you can get acquainted with the leaders of other chapters within your district.

**Why have Service Officer Training at the Convention?**

The Convention is an opportunity to have all who want to become involved in Service to fellow members to receive the information necessary for a successful Service program from the Service Standing Committee Chair.

**What about other training for Chapter Officers?**

If enough members express a need for Chapter Officer training it can be arranged at upcoming conventions. The best venue for Chapter Officer training is at the local level. The District Vice President, or members of Standing Committees are available to provide such training. The trainer can come to the chapter or district to do the training on a case by case basis.