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## **Open Forum**

Questions were written on cards which were turned-in to the Chair. Chapter numbers were requested, but names were optional.

The Chair, Ray Harrington (RH) acted as moderator. Panel members were Andy Morgen (AM), Dan Adcock (DA), Helen Zajac (HZ), and Dick Ostergren (DO). The Chair requested that everyone should use microphones at all times for questions and comments.

Q. What is the actual date for the CSFC convention at the Hilton in 2011?

A (Lea Zajac): April 14 -20, 2011. This includes the pre-convention Executive Board meeting and a two day post-convention Executive Board meeting, and then you check in a day early, so that makes seven days. The actual convention is April 16-18. Easter in 2011 is April 24th.

Q. Ch 73: How about preparing a new/current “What has NARFE done for you lately” for use in the fall when chapters work health fairs where active employees attend?

A (HZ): The new F-122 is on the website, dated 05/09, which can be downloaded, and as soon as supplies of the older version are gone, they will start shipping the newer version from this year.

(DA): In fact, we are already working on an even newer version.

Q. Ch 352: Dan, how long have you been with NARFE? How’s the new job? How many employees are in your office?

A (DA): I’ve been with NARFE since September 1993, and it’s a really great job. I’m coming up on my one-year anniversary as Legislative Director — the job is everything I thought it would be, and more! I had a great teacher and mentor in Judy Park, in all the years we worked together. I’m doing much as I did before I was Legislative Director, although obviously I now have more managerial responsibilities than before, and I’m much more involved with the PAC than in the past. I inherited a great staff, and I’ve been lucky with replacements for people who’ve moved on. I’ve always thought NARFE was a great organization to work for, and great people to work for, people who appreciate what you do. That’s very rewarding. There’s a lot of immediate gratification in this work. Even though I work for people who used to work for the government, in terms of what I do, we have a lot of autonomy. We have very supportive National Officers, like Helen and Margaret Baptiste. We enjoy our work and hope to be doing it for some time to come.

Q. Ch 53: What was the name of the state senator who spoke this morning? Is NARFE going to take a stand on revising the state constitution?

A (RH): Mark DeSaulnier, State Senator, 7th District.

(AM): What you need to do is to put in a resolution for the next state convention, for NARFE to look at the state constitution and what you want changed. You have the power here to tell the Federation what to do; that’s why we come to conventions. So put in a resolution to the State Legislative Committee.

Q. Ch 531: Federal retirees (and employees) need all the good publicity they can get. Is any effort made to let the media know about NARFE’s support of Alzheimer’s research and student scholarships, etc?

A (DO): The short answer is yes. The Public Relations Director works very closely with chapters. We have to get that information out there and use it to our advantage, to let the

public know that we've raised more than \$8 million for Alzheimer's, that we are more than a one trick pony, that we're also involved in community activities.

Q. Ch 1335: For new officers and members please emphasize the importance of "Points to Ponder." List some of the topics and how to find them on the CSFC website.

A (RH): Lea and Helen (Zajac) invented "Points to Ponder."

(HZ): You can go to the California Federation web site, [www.csfcnarfe.org](http://www.csfcnarfe.org), and using either the search feature or the site map, you will find "Points to Ponder." There are several different types, such as membership, legislation, chapter operations, etc. They are designed as an educational tool for anyone to use, and I would thank those chapters that incorporated them in their newsletter during the time when they were first issued. It was Lea's idea; he felt we needed to improve communications with our members, and thought this would be a good way to do it. It was first put out on the NARFE-Net, and now they are on the web site for anyone to go back and look at them and maybe use some of the information.

(AM): I want to add the "Points to Ponder" is a rich source of information. I edit the Palm Springs newsletter, and several months ago some members asked, "What do we get for our Per Capita dues?" It just so happened that there was a "Points to Ponder," written by Lea Zajac, with exactly that information, from six or seven years ago, but it's still good today. It is a mother lode of information, with answers to all kinds of questions your members may have.

(Werner Gumpert): If you bring up "Points to Ponder," the first thing you'll see is a subject matter index and you can click on whatever subject interests you, and you'll be at that "Points to Ponder."

Q. Andrew Spears, Ch 511: Is it absolutely required to submit a 990-N type of data to the IRS, even if the chapter didn't make or never made enough money?

A (DO): The 990-N postcard form is required by the IRS from every chapter in NARFE, whether or not you made any money. You have three years to get it in, now down to two. If you don't file you could lose your non-profit status. This has come about due to recent legislation which Congress required the IRS to get this information.

(Unidentified): I'm a CPA, and I file non-profit tax forms. If you do not file the 990-N, then you'll have to file the full form, and that will cost you \$2,000.

Q. Ch 40: A 104 year old called and stated she could no longer pay her dues at 104. Shouldn't she have been notified before this that her dues are free?

A (RH): What you're saying is that there was an opportunity to put her in the Honorary program before it became Distinguished Member.

(DO): This was a failure by the chapter, because it was the chapter that recommended Honorary Members, not National.

(RH): You had to be 85 with 20 years of membership. Now it is called Distinguished Member, and they pay dues.

(Unidentified): When she called I was shocked. I should have thought she should not have to pay dues. She should have been notified.

(DO): 99% of our members do not provide their birthdays. The first we find out is at the end of the year when chapters get new presidents, and they try to go on-line. And what's required to go on-line [for the reports section]? A birthday! Once we get the birthday there is no problem. If we had birthdays it would make things a lot easier. And if you're

100 years old and you've been in NARFE, just give me a call and I'll take care of it. Anyone who is 104 years old deserves a break.

Q. Julia Wald, Ch 61: Why are the first renewal dues notices sent out two months in advance and without a due date? The notice gets lost and ignored.

(DO): It is sent out two months in advance as a reminder. It is also sent out at the time of renewal, and it is sent out again two months later to remind the member that payment is overdue, and then it's sent out a fourth time as a special cover on the magazine. It costs lots of money to send out all that mail.

Q. Ch 53: If the dues referendum passes will we still pay per capita dues to the Federation?

A (AM): That is something that will be discussed at the next Executive Board meeting. But we will prepare ourselves, whether or not the referendum passes, because if it doesn't pass, there's no problem.

This will be watched very carefully, but we won't have any results until December or January. We'll be looking very carefully at what should be done, and we'll do it. We will keep you informed.

Q. Ch 2323: Is it possible to have the agenda of the convention before the week of the convention?

A (RH): The program was sent out a week after I received it — a delay for which I take the blame. The program is in a state of flux — even here, every night I go back to the program, adding things, moving them around,

(AM) I will do my best to have the 2011 program out as soon as possible. But there are always last minute changes, which is why we go over the program at the convention. We are very flexible.

(Lea Zajac) Basically, the program stays the same from year to year, with only name changes and other minor adjustments.

(Ida Willis, Dominguez Hills Chapter 2323): First timers don't have a program, first timers don't know what's going on, and what time the meetings start, or even what time to be here! I could not get an answer. We need the program in advance.

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Entertainment Break: The STARR STEPPERS are an elite tap dance group of seniors from the Rossmoor Retirement community in Walnut Creek who perform to the songs you know and love. They are directed by Diana Starr, who also leads the Happy Hoofers, the Hot Flashers and other dance groups in a community that knows its dance. Please welcome the Starr Steppers.

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### **Open Forum (continued)**

Q. Ch 281: Why doesn't NARFE headquarters arrange for automatic withholding of money from our annuities every month for NARFE-PAC, like the letter carriers?

A (DO): You'll have to talk to OPM about that. OPM takes care of dues withholding for NARFE. By the way OPM does not take care of letter carriers as they are Postal Service. Also, it should be noted that NARFE-PAC is not a 501(c)(3). But you could always set up a monthly automatic payment to NARFEPAC through your bank.

Q. Ch 21: Before the ballot on the referendum is mailed to chapters and DALs, will there be specific instructions on approved methods to obtain members votes? Also: will there

be instructions on how to convert individual members' votes to those allowed by the referendum, i.e., one vote for every 50 members?

(Jeannie Sprenger, Long Beach Chapter 21): In other words, we want to make sure that our chapter membership can be heard. We could take a vote at a chapter meeting, but we may have only 30 people there. On the other hand, if we put a ballot in our newsletter and say "mail it back," it reaches 426 members but we won't get many back. So: will there be any instructions on obtaining members votes?

A (RH): The Federation is not going to tell chapters how to conduct their elections. You can conduct your election according to your bylaws in any form you want to do it.

(Jeannie Sprenger): If we had 10 votes in favor and 30 against, how would we mark our ballot? In the 2003 referendum there were 122 ballots that were invalidated. Is there a mathematical way to convert to put it on the ballot, to make sure it is not invalidated?

(DO) You in the chapter control your votes. Your chapter will get one ballot with "yea" or "nay." How you split your votes is up to you.

(Daniel Mahoney, American River Chapter 1590): In my chapter there are 272 possible voting members. Say 40 show up at a meeting, 30 vote one way, 10 vote the other way. I have 5 votes for 250 members. So you have a three to one ratio. How do I split them?

(DO) You have to vote with whole numbers. You can go majority rules, 5-0, or split 1-4, 2-3, 3-2 or 4-1, what ever you decide.

(Bob Davidson, Palomar Chapter 455) In our chapter we will take two votes: shall we go all or nothing, or do we do a percentage split? That will be up to the chapter to decide. It's very simple. You guys are the ones that set it, not National.

Q. Anytime we have a politician tell us something, can we get in writing to hold him accountable?

(Unintelligible): What I'm trying to say is this. When we have speakers here at the convention, they say something on which they may or may not follow through. Are we writing this down so we can challenge them?

A (RH): Everything is being recorded and will be transcribed as accurately as possible, and will be in the convention summary, which will be sent out to all chapters and chapter Presidents and will be on the Federation web site.

Q. Ch 478: Why can't OPM do withholding for CFC?

A (RH): They can do it for active employees but not for retirees.

(DO): Give Dave Snell [NARFE's Director of Retirement Services] and he can give you more information. His number is in the magazine.

Q. Trudy Licht, Ch 400: Proposition 1A will effect us as seniors, NARFE or not. Here's some info against Prop 1A. (A flyer "Save our Seniors" was attached.)

A (RH): The important thing is that everybody study the issues and make their own choice. The California Federation is not going to take a stand of Propositions 1A to F. Get informed and then vote.

Q. Ch 1841: Is there some way we could incorporate a worship service before the Sunday meetings start? Maybe 30 minutes. (During the 2011 Convention.)

A (AM): We have never incorporated any religious or non-denominational service at any convention, and I don't think we'll start now.

Q. Tom Buggie, Ch 706: How about a show of hands on the referendum?

A The Chair/Moderator called for a show of hands. [It was about 85% in favor and 15% opposed.]

The Chair thanked the panel members for their participation.  
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