



National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association



# Maryland Federation Newsletter

WINTER 2010

## *Moving in the Right Direction*



Ted Jensen

When delegates from around the country gathered in Grand Rapids last fall for the National Convention, we were an organization in need of change and re-building. Our membership was declining, our Headquarters budget was short about \$1.5 million a year, our internal decision-making processes were

a bit slow and creaky, our systems were a mix of ancient and modern and not very well integrated, and we were badly in need of new ideas to make NARFE membership more attractive to younger people. I left the Convention satisfied that we had made some good decisions and more hopeful for our future.

Attending the first National Executive Board meeting with our new National leaders reinforced my sense that NARFE is moving in the right direction. The dues increase we passed at the Convention will fix our short term budget problems and give us the resources to address our critical advertising and recruiting needs. A new committee already is at work drafting a complete rewrite of our national bylaws, and the Chapters and Federations have been promised an opportunity to review its work at several points and provide feedback.

Our new national officers are going at our other problems with enthusiasm, new ideas and energy, and a real willingness to involve the membership. National VP Paul Carew will lead a task force charged with developing a vision of the 21<sup>st</sup> century systems required to best meet our record keeping and communications needs. Each region nominated members for this team. Five people, including Pat Dempsey from our Federation, have just been selected and will start work early in 2011. National Secretary Elaine Hughes already has started work on a new strategic plan for recruiting and retention. We already have seen more sharing of information on our fiscal status from our new Treasurer, Charley Saylor. Our new President, Joe Beaudoin, has embraced new technology with NARFE's first robo call.

In short, we have a lot of work ahead, but we have a new leadership team and plans of action on the way to reinvigorate NARFE. Of course, at the same time we have to deal with potential threats from Congress. In the long run, however, I believe the best way to do that is to strengthen our organization.

### WHAT CAN WE DO?

I'm confident that our national leaders will do their best with input and support from the membership. The question is, what can we in Maryland do to help? There are three things, summed up as Recruitment, Retention and Education. Retention needs no explanation, and the Federation is adding initiatives to the on-going work of chapters and individuals to keep our members on board. I think Recruitment is a special obligation of the Maryland Federation because we have so many potential members in our area. If we can recruit a higher percentage of these potential new members, we can make an enormous contribution to NARFE's national membership rolls. Public Education is the third critical element. Too many of our fellow citizens do not know what the Federal government does for them and have a negative perception of Federal employees. In a recent poll, 68% thought it was just fine to cut Federal pay and benefits to reduce the Federal deficit. Almost no one on the other hand thought it was okay to cut Social Security benefits. This sends a clear message to our elected representatives. No matter how the current budget debate turns out, this negative public perception is our #1 problem. Individually and collectively we need to take advantage of every opportunity to educate and inform everyone we come in contact with about the value of public service. That's an obligation we have to our fellow members, our families and our country.

We'll talk about these matters and more at our next Board meeting on February 1 at the Bowie Comfort Inn. Now don't faint when you read this next item. We hope to have a new and improved choice for lunch! Other items on the agenda will be approval of the Federation budget for 2011 and 2012, updates

*Continued on page 8*

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581 Gaithersburg ..... Mary Anne Scott  
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1122 Northern P G County ..... Bob Doyle  
1127 Rockville ..... Jennifer Ramsey  
1143 Leisure World ..... Barbara Walter  
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1261 Delmarva ..... Eleanor Kaul  
1363 Bay Area ..... JoAnne Groves  
1372 Tidewater ..... Evelyn Kirby  
1466 Calvert County ..... Barry Grier  
1519 Glen Burnie ..... Stan Jacobs  
1522 Susquehanna ..... Harold Forst  
1734 Howard County ..... Burdelle Dowdell  
1747 Greater Bowie/Crofton . Dorothy Campbell  
1770 Bel Air ..... Reed Magness  
1887 Wheaton/Glenmont ..... Ruth Foss  
1888 White Oak ..... Marcia Swanson  
1892 Aspen Hill ..... Rudy Volin  
1936 NW Baltimore Metro ..... Barbara Cuffie  
1972 Waldorf/La Plata ..... Joanna Bond  
1990 Catonsville ..... Lou Brocato  
2166 Eastern Baltimore Area .. John Carduner  
2262 Upper Marlboro ..... Bob Jacobs  
2274 Ocean Area ..... Dan McGrath  
2306 Carroll County ..... Don Champ

### THE MARYLAND FEDERATION NEWSLETTER

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Jim Cowie

# Not Normal Circumstances

Normally, a report from the Federation Legislative Committee Chair would report progress in furthering the legislative agenda agreed to at the National Convention in Grand Rapids plus discussion of a few emerging topics. However, these are not normal circumstances, with the wide ranging proposals stemming from the work of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform and other study groups, and the results of the recent elections. Suggestions of actions that should be taken pose more risk to the welfare of the Federal Community (*Employees and Retirees and their Survivors*) than has been the case for many years. Headquarters has reported emerging details via GEMS messages, and it is hoped that every chapter will relay these to their members with strong encouragement that they should grasp the seriousness of the consequences of the proposals, make their views known to their Representatives, and encourage eligible non-members to join in NARFE's defense of their interests.

It is proposed here that NARFE should encourage suggestions from Federations and Chapters about how we should respond to the current situation. The feedback from members would be evaluated and favored concepts fed up the line, as well as responding to the proposals emerging from the National Executive Board (NEB).

## YOUR FEEDBACK NEEDED

It has been recommended that members immediately protest to their Representatives that they disapprove of steps in a draft proposal by the Chairmen of the Commission (*Bowles/Simpson*) that impacts on the Federal Community. While this is useful as a first step to remind them that *we are* an organized and active group of voters, this may not influence those Representatives who are for or against us, nor hold much sway with those who are open to reasoned argument including the public in general. In fact, such protests may be viewed by many as self serving.

Bowles/Simpson suggest that it may take eight years to evolve a comprehensive solution to the deficit issue, and they issued their preliminary recommendations because they expected that the final report will be constrained by the difficulty of achieving consensus across the divided members of the Commission. Hence their report will be overtaken rapidly by the debates which will evolve in the next Congress and beyond.

## PERSUASIVE POSITION PAPERS

NARFE may do well to develop position papers which offer a more persuasive response other than simply rejecting anything that affects us negatively. For example, we might indicate that we understand the problem, and will be willing to contribute our fair share to the solution, provided all interest groups do the same. We should seek to clarify the contributions of Government with brief, clear summaries on such topics as: The role of Government in National Security, The Economy, Creation of Jobs, etc. These documents could be available for down-loading from the NARFE Web site to be used to persuade people of the worthiness of our public service careers and our arguments in support of our recommendations. They should be written as sharp persuasive papers for the general reader, possibly with links to source documents at the end, to avoid those who are not computer literate from being turned off by communication styles that make them uncomfortable.

The Legislative Conference, March 5-8, should be adjusted to devote a significant amount of time to discussing our evolving responses and the documents that have been prepared to defend our position, with the expectation that these will continue to be issued as the drama continues.

This contribution reflects one member's reaction to the challenges we face and hopefully may have some influence on how we should proceed in support of the National Executive Board's suggested plan of attack. Reactions are welcome to [Jamescowie@att.net](mailto:Jamescowie@att.net)

### ALZHEIMERS/LUPUS-TEMPORARY CHANGE

Barbara Jacobs will continue the duties of Martin Gilbert until he recovers from his recent illness.

Make ALL checks payable to either:

Alzheimer's NARFE or Lupus/Narfe

Contact Barbara Jacobs at:

8071 Phirne Road East, Glen Burnie 21061

Phone: 410-969-5980 Email: [gb1519@verizon.net](mailto:gb1519@verizon.net)

### MD Senior Citizens Hall of Fame, Inc.

*The following NARFE Inductees were omitted from the listing in the 2010 Fall Federation Newsletter.*

2001 Frank Chase – Ch. 1734 Howard County

2005 Ted Hannah – Ch. 1887 Wheaton /Glenmont

2010 Patricia Myers – Ch. 969 St Mary's County

*(If you know of others so honored, please contact Jeanette Green.)*

# Membership Retention Report



Dick Strombotne

## Letter to Lapsed Members

On November 19, Maryland NARFE sent personalized letters to 475 lapsed members whose membership expired between January 1, 2010 and April 1, 2010, inclusive. The letter included an application form with the lapsed member's name, address, Member ID number, phone number and email address, if known, and a return envelope. The letter invited the lapsed member to rejoin before the recently approved increase in NARFE national dues goes into effect and save money. Indeed, by rejoining for three years at a cost of \$74 before 1/1/11, the lapsed member could save \$28 compared with the new 3-year dues of \$102. Eleven lapsed members who received the mailing were listed among the Reinstated Members in the monthly membership report (*M112*) for November. Results of the mailing will be known when the monthly M112 reports are available in December and January.

## New Dues Withholding Incentive Program (*DWIP*)

At its October 5, 2010, meeting the Federation Board established a new dues withholding incentive program (*DWIP*). Maryland NARFE will send personalized letters to groups of eligible members offering them a rebate of \$5 if they decide to sign on for dues withholding. The *DWIP* is modeled after the Colorado Federation's program which has a 20% success rate. The letters will be sent to all of the members who are in the final year of their membership through the OPM blind recruitment mailing and to others who are recent members. They will be sent shortly before members are due to receive the first dues notice from HQ and will include a partially completed application form and a return envelope. This will make it easy for members to apply for dues withholding.

## Renewal Dynamics in Maryland

Caution: fractions and percentages ahead! About 3/8 of NARFE members in Maryland will not receive a renewal notice in the next year because they either are life members, pay through dues withholding, or are not in the final year of a multi-year membership. Of the remaining 5/8 of total members who **are** asked to renew, about 60% pay immediately after receiving the first dues notice, which comes two months before their membership is scheduled to expire. About half of the remaining 40% renew promptly after receiving their second dues notice (*in the month their membership expires*). The other half will receive three issues of NARFE magazine after their expiration date; the

third issue has a wrap-around saying it is their last issue and their membership lapses unless they renew. About one-fourth of those lapsed members rejoin promptly and are listed as reinstated members. The net result is that about 8% of all members become lapsed members. For the most part, a comparable number of people become new members. As a result, the net decline in membership in Maryland NARFE approximately equals the number of reported deaths, about 1.7% of the total membership.

## Lessons on Membership Retention.

One obvious lesson from this picture of membership recruitment and retention is the value of reducing the number of members who receive renewal notices by increasing the number of members who are on dues withholding, are multi-year members or are life members. A second lesson is that lapsed members should be prime targets of future retention efforts.

## Membership News from the NEB

The new National Executive Board made a number of significant decisions regarding membership issues at their meeting on November 16-18, 2010. They approved new incentive dues of \$40 for one-year and \$72 for two-year memberships for members recruited through the OPM blind mailing list (*sent in March and September to new annuitants*). They also approved a motion by National Secretary Elaine Hughes to establish a Membership Growth Committee to develop a strategic plan for the mid-term range (*explicitly not short range and not long range*) regarding membership matters.

## Convention Resolutions



Saj Durrani

Deadline for receipt of resolutions by the Federation Secretary is 3 March 2011, which is 60 days prior to the start of the Convention on 2 May 2011. It is never too early to start thinking about the issues and drafting any resolutions you may want to propose. Similarly, the Committee would welcome receiving the resolutions early, so that it can recommend changes, if necessary, which may enhance the chances of their adoption at the Convention. *Only resolutions pertaining to the Federation are due at this time.* Please feel free to contact me at 301-774-4607 or [sajdurrani@aol.com](mailto:sajdurrani@aol.com) if you have questions.



John Padan

## Our 2011 State Convention

The Maryland Federation of NARFE Chapters will conduct its 40<sup>th</sup> State Convention on Monday May 2 and Tuesday May 3, 2011 at the Comfort Inn Hotel & Conference Center, Bowie MD. The change in venue from Ocean City and the brevity of the convention (*two days rather than three*) are experiments to learn if a more central venue and an abridged schedule will attract more members, including those who can now choose to commute from home.

The reason for this biennial convention remains the election of officers for the next two years and discussion of resolutions germane to the Federation (*national issues will return next year as we prepare for the 2012 National Convention*). These will be top priorities, but there also will be a reception on the first day, followed by a banquet with a live band. Exhibits and fun events, such as “50-50” drawings will be included in the agenda. We are inviting top-notch speakers to present topics of very current interest to our members. We also will have lively discussions on options that can help our federation excel and our membership thrive.

Hotel reservations must be made by March 31. After that, the NARFE convention rate will not apply. The rate for a room with a king bed or a room with two double beds is \$109.79 plus 11% tax. That is about \$4 less than we paid in Ocean City in 2009. It also includes a *full hot breakfast for all hotel guests!* Suites are \$125.10 plus tax. Call the Comfort Inn at 301-464-0089. The address is 4500 Crain Highway, Bowie MD 20716. It is just south of the intersection of US Route 50 and US Route 301. Most of you have been there as it is where the Maryland Federation meetings and mini-conventions are held.

The *Convention Call* will be mailed in December or the first week in January to Federation Officers, Chairmen and all Chapter Officers and Editors. It will include everything you need to know including banquet choices and will be sent by email to all chapter presidents who can forward it to chapter members with email access, if desired.

Please put the dates on your calendars and stay tuned!

**40<sup>TH</sup> STATE CONVENTION ON MAY 2 AND 3, 2011**  
Comfort Inn Hotel & Conference Center – 301-464-0089  
4500 Crain Highway, Bowie, MD 20716  
*Hotel reservations deadline for convention rate:*  
**March 31**



Sam Girson

## Save Your Benefits

This is a message to all members working to protect/preserve their compensation and benefits. Feeling the pinch in your pocketbook (*e.g. no COLA for two years, FEHBP premiums continue to rise, etc*)? Here’s why you need to be concerned now and in the future!

The debt/deficit commission is due to make formally adopted spending/cost cutting proposals to the Congress in December 2010. The commission is spot-lighting taxes, social security, medicare, medicaid and *your* federal compensation and benefits. This is just the beginning! Focus and attention will continue in the upcoming Congress!

### WHAT YOU/WE NEED TO DO!

Contact/lobby your senators and congressional district representative to register your concerns. We need to minimize any impact and assure even-handedness to protect and preserve your/our compensation and benefit package.

GEMS (*Global Electronic Messaging System*) “a free service of NARFE” is the preferred method to communicate on a timely and quick basis to congressional members. If you have access to a computer, sign on to GEMS (*see below*) and be an active participant in the lobbying process.

Use the NARFE website: [www.NARFE.ORG](http://www.NARFE.ORG) and follow the prompts. Log on as a member with your last name and Member ID. When the main Members’ page comes up, click on “Join GEMS” under the heading “What You Can Do Online” in the left hand panel. Fill in the form and continue from there. Or, call Membership Records: 1-800-456-8410

For those members with no computer, call the NARFE Legislative Hotline: 1-877-217-8234 to get current information. Then contact your local congressional representatives directly.

To the silent majority of our membership, *this is what NARFE is all about!* We must provide back-up support to Headquarters, the Federation and the Chapter effort if we are to be heard and have any impact. You/we must use this opportunity to support our position!

**Bylaws Review Committee (BRC)**  
Send suggestions for revising the **National By-laws** directly to BRC Chair, Mary Williams at [BRC@NARFE.ORG](mailto:BRC@NARFE.ORG). The 2010 Bylaws can be downloaded from the NARFE website [www.NARFE.ORG/PDF/FH-4.PDF](http://www.NARFE.ORG/PDF/FH-4.PDF)



Barry Grier

## Founded in 1921 - So Who's Bragging?

While operating a NARFE table at a recent benefits fair at the Hyattsville MD Department of the Treasury office, the most asked question that afternoon was “What is NARFE?” What that tells me

is that being founded in 1921 is not something to brag about if federal employees are still asking who the heck we are in the year 2010!

There is plenty of blame to go around if we must point the finger. National Board? Federations? Chapters? I think we all could own a bit of the blame over time. Sometimes I get the feeling that NARFE has been using the same methods for years in recruiting and retention that basically are not working. It seems that we are getting accustomed to doing business *as usual at all levels* of our operation.

Everything at National level probably is governed by need and costs. So, then the question is, are we putting the money where the most need is? And, if so, perhaps there is a need for more innovative ideas and professional marketing agencies to deliver our message. I'm talking about our name identity that obviously does not exist among a number of federal employees.

### RETIREMENT PREPARATION

I don't get it. To quote our Federation President, Ted Jensen: “We are not the enemy.” Yet, the headway we are making with federal employees leaves much to be desired. When the word “retirement” is mentioned at some of these agency benefit fairs the response is puzzling. They look at you like they have more on their minds than retirement. And they probably do. Their needs are more immediate dealing with management, changes in administration, promotions, collective bargaining, etc. The big question is: “Why isn't a NARFE presentation delivered at every pre-retirement seminar in every government agency office across the country?” And don't give me that stuff that private contractors are now running the seminars. What's that got to do with it? The most advantageous situation for NARFE would be to be represented at these events where federal employees with five years or less toward their eligibility for retirement are given information that will make their transition into retirement easier.

Such topics as Medicare, TSP, FERS, CSRS, OPM requirements and virtually every question regarding our federal earned benefits are covered during these preretirement seminars. *Why Not NARFE?* Again, folks, we are not the enemy! (*NEB, are you listening?*)

What about alliances: defined in this context as associations with the same common interests. Can you imagine what an impact a cover on our national magazine would have with Joe Beaudoin, NARFE National President; John Gage, President of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE); Patricia J. Niehaus, National President of Federal Managers Association (FMA); and Carol Bonosaro, President, Senior Executive Association (SEA) all sitting around the same conference table discussing their shared interests regarding federal retirees and political agendas?

### WHAT THE FEDERATION AND CHAPTERS CAN DO

Our Maryland State Federation and those federations across the country provide the guidance and support that our chapters need in creating a fertile ground for growth through recruitment and retention. And, in an effort in that regard, we are in the process of developing an internet and radio advertisement campaign that promises to give a real boost to chapter recruitment in this area.

Individual chapters have a job to do as well. Each chapter has its own unique territorial makeup and therefore developing a membership action plan is a must. My chapter with a little over 230 members has a different action plan than our neighbor St. Mary's Chapter 969 with over a thousand members. Both Chapters have the same common interests but different ways of getting the word out.

During our recent membership training seminar chapter presidents and membership chairs were given objectives to ponder over and come up with some suggestions and solutions to enhance chapter recruitment and retention through creative strategies.

Each working group of membership chairs and presidents came up with an array of strategies including:

- ❖ Join local parades and other community events displaying our NARFE banners.
- ❖ Organize chapter recruiting contests.
- ❖ Distribute NARFE magazines to medical offices, senior centers, and at Metro and Park and Ride lots.
- ❖ Advertise in the local press including homeowner association newsletters.
- ❖ Work with the Department of Aging offices.
- ❖ Encourage recent Federal Retirees to maintain communications with their former offices and coworkers and possibly set up contacts to distribute materials as well

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Evelyn Kirby

## Attacks Demand Fairness and Unity

You saw the November 30 headlines: “Obama Proposes 2-year Pay Freeze,” “President’s Salary Freeze for Federal Workers Gets a Cold Reception,” and “A Federal Pay Freeze, Not Ideal, but Justified,” in the *Washington Post*. The headline in *The Baltimore Sun* read “200,000 in MD Face U.S. Pay Freeze.” “NARFE Disappointed by President’s Decision to Freeze Federal Worker Pay” was NARFE President Beaudoin’s media statement. Probably in other parts of the country headlines varied, maybe reading ‘Bureaucrats Busted.’ This breaking news helped me focus comments I planned to offer on Deficit Commission cutting proposals. I’ll try to keep my points simple—but that’s hard because we have verbal diarrhea on Federal compensation and benefits from growing numbers of news-bite pundits with faulty assumptions and loud, finger-pointing skills. The Bottom Line is that when called for, we have to speak up and act as a group, take fair hits – *without whining* – and have *our facts correct* and in plain text!

### OUR BEST TOOLS

Unity, clarity and volume in getting the truth out to those who make our laws and, most importantly, to those who influence them, are our best tools. Our challenge is to keep as fair a tone on our financial package as possible in light of the dire deficit we face as a nation. We ought not ask for special treatment for ourselves, when other citizens are hurting. We have to insist that cutbacks and losses be fairly borne across all segments of the population. Shared sacrifice is called for. You know that. But we must not be singled out for more penalty than others. And, let’s face it...some employers are better than others. That’s the way it is. Uncle Sam should be a model employer to attract the best and brightest, not the second best. We must point out how we contribute to what’s good in this country...not its meltdown. Our goals were and are the gaining and maintaining of the general health, welfare, security and justice for all. This is tough work. We shouldn’t play favorites. We didn’t make a monetary profit nor reap mega bonuses. We always have *given at the office* and borne the stings of turndown times and arrows of scapegoat tactics. We will and must do *our share* for America--*again*. But we can call for fair treatment when compared to others in the boat with us.

As NARFE leaders, rally your members and others to carry the word that ***our equal treatment is not an option, it’s what’s right***. Sacrifice *by all* in this country is clearly called for – *including us*; but, with attention to hard facts, not

posturing or symbolic gestures. Further, we cannot assume past Congressional allies will argue against what impacts us in the wallet. They are being hit from every side and frankly, have bigger issues on their plates than some we present. Use every weapon in your arsenal to remind them, though, not to *offer us up* disproportionately. Preach the value of joining GEMS so word of any unjust threat is widely, instantly shared. Mobilize your members when the need for activism flares – however it works best for you. As a group we took hits in the past and adjusted to them. We can take ***justified*** hits now to help fix the current crisis, but we can’t go peacefully if the blows are ill-founded and only for grandstanding. I know we have good ideas to help America get over this big bump. Encourage your members to pass them on to those at the table looking for deficit cures. We shouldn’t mind tightening our belts...when others do. We ***all*** have a major problem to fix. *We do take strong exception to false facts, bad press, and rowing extra shifts while some loaf on their oars.*

### Kudo’s and Welcomes

It’s bittersweet to thank Ron Bowers for leading our Federal Legislative Committee (FLC) and NARFE/PAC work for the past year. His swan song was an excellent “2010 Meet the Candidates Report” that was released to HQ and is on the Federation’s web site. Applause and best wishes go to Ron as he joins the National Executive Board as Region II Vice President.

We are well served to have as new FLC Chair and NARFE/PAC Coordinator, Dr. James Cowie. Jim has shown his colors in a debut article here. He will convene the FLC shortly and is currently collecting PAC-related information from HQ to help us better manage that area. He joins me in urging chapters to send representatives to the upcoming March 5-8, 2011 Legislative Conference in Arlington VA. It is imperative to hone our legislative skills so we can present our concerns effectively to a new Congress – one that will scrub deep. As an incentive to attend this Conference, the Federation will be offering some reimbursements to attendees. More details will be shared in a memorandum to Chapter Presidents and FLC members. Be sure to share with your members the information in the packet from HQ that was mailed to Chapter Presidents in October.

In State politics, kudos to the State Legislative Committee (SLC) for reshaping the NARFE/ MD legislative program, sharing it with General Assembly candidates in the

*Continued on page 10*





## BUDGET REPORT

### NET WORTH

ESTIMATED NET WORTH		
EOY 2010		\$ 79,487
PROJECTED SURPLUS		
2010		\$ 3,530

	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>
EST. NET WORTH EOY	\$ 73,447	\$ 73,507
PROJECTED SURPLUS(DEFICIT)(6,010)		30

### BUDGET PROJECTIONS

BUDGETED INCOME	\$90,920	\$81,860
BUDGETED EXPENDITURES	96,930	81,830
BUDGET SURPLUS (DEFICIT) (6,010)		30

### INCOME

NATIONAL DUES (10%)	63,550	63,900
CHAPTER PER CAPITA DUES	9,200	9,000

#### INTEREST:

SAVINGS	110	110
CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT	810	750

#### INCOME:

STATE CONVENTION	12,500	0
MINI CONVENTION		3,600
OTHER INCOME	4,750	4,500

**TOTAL INCOME: \$ 90,920 \$ 81,830**

### EXPENDITURES:

AD HOC COMMITTEES	250	250
ADMINISTRATION, GENERAL	6,600	6,600
ALZHEIMER'S/LUPUS	100	100
CHAPTER ASSISTANCE & DEVL	8,800	7,200

#### CONVENTION:

MINI	\$0	14,800
MARYLAND STATE	35,600	400
NARFE NATIONAL	0	10,300

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	4,500	4,500
FEDERATION BOARD MTGS	10,400	10,400

#### LEGISLATION:

FEDERAL	6,600	1,000
STATE	5,900	5,900

MEMBERSHIP/RECRUITMENT	10,900	10,000
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NEWSLETTER	1,600	1,600
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RETIREE ASSISTANCE CENTERS	200	200
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SERVICE OFFICER	200	200
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TRAINING	5,000	8,000
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UNITED SENIORS OF MARYLAND	100	100
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WEB SITE	180	180
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**TOTAL EXPENDITURES: \$ 96,930 \$ 81,830**

## Moving... Continued from page 1

on the new threats to our benefits, plans for addressing our priorities in the next session of the Maryland Legislature, more information from Headquarters, and plans for the Maryland Convention in May.

### APPRECIATING OUR MEMBERS

We owe big Thank You's to Harold Forst, Lee Tuveson, Barry Grier and Dick Strombotne for providing an excellent training experience for Chapter Presidents, Service Officers and Membership Chairs in October. Kudos also to Barbara Walter, Pat Farmer, Jo Bond, Mildred Cannon, Meg Clarke, Ruth Kent, Tom Kitchens, Jenifer Rammsey, and Jackie Roberson who evaluated the applications for the 2010 FEEA Scholarship. Maryland winners were chapter member Granddaughters, Elizabeth Harvey (*Chapter 2306*), Caitlin Kowalewski (*Chapter 1770*), Lauren Stabler (*Chapter 1260*). Nancy Leonard again presided over two excellent health benefits forums sponsored by Congressman Chris Van Hollen. I'd be remiss if I didn't note the on-going contributions made by Barry Grier (*who has been tireless in getting NARFE into Federal offices to recruit*), Evelyn Kirby, Jeanette Green, Dick Strombotne, and Ron Bowers. I hope everyone appreciates the hours of work and creativity these people contribute every day for the good of our organization. Thanks to Alice Gates, who is phasing out as Zip Code Coordinator, and to Mark Noblett, who has volunteered to be our new Federation Auditor (*subject to the Board's approval*). Please note that this is Erma Pellant's last issue of the newsletter. Erma has done a great job for four years as our Editor and we all appreciate her work. The new Editor could be you, dear reader.

My final note is to pay tribute to our long-time friend and loyal NARFE member, Bob Wesloh. Bob passed away on October 3, 2010 after a long illness. I had the privilege of working closely with Bob at the Social Security Administration. He was one of the finest individuals and public servants I've ever known. He was an active volunteer while at SSA and had another full career after he "retired." Bob served as President of the Carroll County Chapter, as an active member of the State Legislative Committee, and as the Auditor for the Maryland Federation. Even when facing health problems in his later years, he agreed to serve as President of the Howard County Chapter. In my last conversation with him a few days before he passed away, he spoke of his commitment to NARFE and the good memories from our days at SSA. He was very active with other organizations and did more good for others than we can imagine. Thank you and goodbye Bob.





Ron Bowers

## The Quest for Fairness

November 16-18 I attended my first National Executive Board meeting as RVP for the region, which includes the District of Columbia, Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania as well as Maryland. I distributed to the Federation Presidents an informal report of some highlights of the meeting. The official report will be distributed as soon as I get it and it will be published in the next Quarterly News.

### A CRITICAL ISSUE

The main business of the National Executive Board (NEB) meeting concerned the most critical problem facing Federal retirees and employees, namely: the likelihood of some very unfair treatment of Federal civilian workers developing under proposals to reduce deficits. I will not take up this space with any details on proposals that are being made. There is very good coverage as the items arise that is quickly published by NARFE's excellent Legislative Department. That coverage can be received easily by enrolling in our Global Electronic Messaging System (GEMS) (See Sam Girson's article on page 5). The national website, NARFE.ORG, has the quick and easy means for getting the information all of us need to understand what is developing and to see what we can do about it.

Right now, more than at any time during the past two decades, we Federal Civilian workers have been under unfair attacks and misjudgments. It is especially disturbing since so many Federal civilian employees work side-by-side with active duty military workers to give the nation its security, and so many of us worked in agencies that provide such great benefits to the general populations as Social Security, Medicare, Medical Research, Agricultural Research and others that make life better for Americans. But be assured that NARFE will respond quickly to any unfairness and each of us must pay attention and do what we can to prevent our being singled out to bear an unfair share of the deficit reduction actions.

**Pay Attention to the Issues before Congress.**

**Get accurate information.**

**Spread the truth about Federal Civilian employees.**

**Let your representatives know what you want –**

**Call, Write, and Email them.**

**Do Your part to help us all.**

## Make Yourself Known



Ed Bice

In 2010 the State Legislative Committee (SLC) was faced with additional challenges as this was an election year. The Legislative program had to be developed. A letter, questionnaire and pamphlet was produced and sent to all candidates in mid-July. The questionnaire detailed our three priority issues ♦Equalize the Senior Tax Exemption, ♦Provide an Annual Tax Credit for Long-Term Care Insurance Premiums, ♦Reduce the Property Tax Burden on Senior Homeowners. Candidates responded "yes" or "no" to indicate if they would sponsor a bill on any of our three priority issues. Results were then provided to the chapters.

One of the objectives of the mailing was to get each chapter to put the questionnaire results in their September newsletters. Some chapters *did not* put the results in their newsletters as requested.

At the October Federation Board meeting, I urged the Chapter Presidents and others to visit their State Legislators and make themselves and "Our 2011 Legislative Program" known. During November the SLC sent two e-mails to Chapter Presidents and others addressing legislative visits.

In November, all of the winning candidates were sent a congratulatory letter including a request that when visited by an SLC member or other NARFE members they consider sponsoring or co-sponsoring a bill on one or more of our initiatives.

*All of the above efforts by the SLC and others were an attempt to get our 2011 program and NARFE members known to our legislators.*

When you read this we will have sponsors for two bills: *Equalize the Senior Tax Exemption* and the *Long-Term Care Insurance Premium Tax Credit*. How many *co-sponsors* will we have for these bills? That depends on whether our members have made themselves and our program known to our lawmakers.

During the 2010 General Assembly session the Federation provided some incentives for chapter members to attend bill hearings in Annapolis. They were: ♦\$5 reimbursements to those with receipts from the Navy/Marine Stadium parking lot. ♦\$35 per chapter each time they have *three* or more members attend a hearing. These incentives will be effective for the 2011 session.



Jim Cowie

## Region II Leads in Contributions

From January 2009 through September 2010 NARFE/PAC collected a grand total of \$1,329,676.34 from 53,996

members with an average donation of \$24.63. Region II contributed the most of all Regions (\$203,019.42).

### THE BREAKDOWN FOR REGION II

MD	\$86,662.92	from	3,163 members	(avg \$27.40)
PA	\$66,852.25	from	3,070 members	(ave \$21.78)
NJ	\$33,313.00	from	1,541 members	(ave \$21.62)
DC*	\$10,178.00	from	297 members	(ave \$34.27)
DE	\$ 6,013.25	from	248 members	(ave \$24.25)

(\*The average contribution from DC was only exceeded by the Virgin Islands with an average of \$34.54 from 11 contributors)

All chapters in Maryland contributed, with the largest total from Chapter 258, Bethesda/Chevy Chase that collected \$6,455.00 from 193 members.

We can congratulate these top performances. However we will not be able to rest on our laurels, since we are entering a period where our benefits are more at risk than they have been for many years, and the more we collect for NARFE/PAC the better we will be able to defend our interests.

Chapter Presidents will be provided with a recap of NARFE/PAC procedures and publicity, plus more details on the Maryland chapter results for the period listed. Headquarters indicates that the Chapter President should appoint a member to oversee NARFE/PAC activity within each Chapter, and I look forward to knowing who has been appointed and to working with them.

## Attacks ....Continued from page 7

summer, and again with victors in the fall. Give the SLC the support they request for dissemination and sponsorship of our priority bills. Attend hearings in Annapolis on key issues. NARFE is being recognized in the State Capital. Ed Bice is doing a fine job as SLC Chair. Dick Strombotne stepped down as Vice Chair, but will continue on the committee; Ed Wurmb has assumed the Vice Chair role, Joe Self is the new SLC Secretary, a position long-held by Sally Nichols who recently moved to Ohio. Thanks go to Sally and Dick for their dedicated service. Sadly, member Bob Wesloh, a gentle giant, passed away this summer and is missed.



Dave Roseman

## We Can Make a Difference

As the year winds down, activity of the MD/PAC has been relatively quiet. Our current balance is \$4,806.50.

During the past year we have made contributions to 20 campaigns and fund raising events for our state senators and delegates. We have had the opportunity to personally present our views to not only these state senators and delegates, but also to many members of the legislature and the Executive Branch of the State government. In addition, we also gave our views to other lobbyists who attended these events.

This collateral exposure helps develop an understanding in the broad business community concerning our goals and programs. We intend to make use of our entree into our legislators' offices this year and actively advocate for our 2011 State Legislative Program. We know that this year is going to be tough due to the major short fall in funds (approximately \$1.8 billion) that will result in cuts in spending and new taxes or tax increases. We need to make sure that active and retired federal employees do not take more cuts than their fair share and we are treated equally with other retired groups such as retired military personnel. This is going to require a very active and aggressive program by the State Legislative Committee and the MD/PAC.

We thank all of you who have made contributions to the MD/PAC and remind you this needs to be done yearly. For those of you who haven't donated, we ask that you start now. The Federal Employee is under attack by the Congress and we want to make sure that does not spill over to the State. *All of us working together can make a difference.*

## United Seniors of Maryland 34th Annual State Rally March 9, 2011

Francis Scott Key Auditorium, St. John's College, 60 College Avenue, Annapolis, Maryland

### ATTEND HEARINGS

Registration fee includes continental breakfast and box lunch. Parking available at Navy/Marine Corps Stadium. Free shuttle bus from Stadium parking lot. *For tickets:* <http://unitedseniors.net/join-pay.htm>. Hold down the control key and click on the link to go directly to the page to buy tickets. No paper tickets: *You will receive a packet at the registration desk.*

(Note Time: **In March** – Not January)



Jeanette Green

## Why the Form Matters

All F-7 forms are the same, right? Not exactly. The new F-7 does not require complete contact information (*phone numbers, etc*) needed for the members listed on the form. In order for our membership to be up-to-date on Federation concerns and events, we need to be able to get information to the Chapters and/or specific officers in a timely manner. That contact information for Chapter Officers and Chairmen is not on the new form. *Every time* there is a change in data relating to the leadership and/or meetings of a Chapter, we need to update that information—all of it (*address, phone and e-mail*). Without accurate information, communications breakdown.

The old F-7 was distributed in the Secretary's folder at a recent seminar. If unable to find the old form, e-mail your updated information to me ([JEANGREEN@AOL.COM](mailto:JEANGREEN@AOL.COM)) as soon as possible whenever your roster changes. Provide complete information, that is: the Full Name, Mailing Address, Phone Number, E-mail Address, Title/Position of member, your Chapter #, Dues, and Meeting Times and Location.

### REPORT GIVERS

When giving a report at a Federation Board meeting, please give me a copy of your comments for backup. A hard copy helps ensure the accuracy of the transcription.

Thank you for your support and vitally needed help.



Dave Roseman

## How and Why

Last February the Federation Board approved budgets for 2010 and 2011. Our second year budget is considered preliminary and helps to better show the difference in expenditures in years when we have a State Convention as opposed to alternate years without a State Convention. As of this date final figures are not in for 2010, but it is safe to say that with minor exceptions our actual expenditures and income are close to our projections. A final report will be made at our next meeting.

Our budget proposal for 2011 has significantly been modified, primarily due to the expected increase in income. National dues were increased and we expect to receive approximately 22% more in 10% Dues. Therefore we have restructured our State Convention so that the money we spend goes to encourage and increase attendance at the convention (*this includes an upgrade in luncheon food*).

In our proposed budget for 2011 and 2012 we have placed our money where our top priorities are: Recruitment, Retention and Lobbying our State and Federal legislatures. Major increases in the budget were made in Chapter Assistance, Membership/Recruitment, Training and Legislative activities. The budget committee believes that the proposed budget will provide a strong foundation for the Federation and its programs.

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## Founded...continued from Page 6

as attend pre-retirement seminars through the agency Human Resource offices.

❖ Make sure that chapter meetings are informative with guest speakers of interest and newsletters that provide information and are well designed. It was agreed that these two suggestions provide the "face" of every chapter and therefore should be given priority.

❖ Canvass other organizations you are a member of to see if any have federal retirees as members i.e. American Legion etc.

These strategies indicate that our chapters are aware of the problem of *name identity* and the need to develop meaningful public relations to enhance their presence in the community. All of this depends on the amount of commitment that each chapter gives to the process. Getting as many members involved in our various membership action plans as possible is crucial in an overall campaign.

### IDENTITY AND PURPOSE MATTER

Once again, I must repeat that we are not a social club but an activist organization whose job is to protect and preserve our earned federal benefits and getting the word out about who we are. *They can't join us if they don't know us!*

We all realize that among our membership are those who are not as energized as others. That's fair to say. However, it's just as important to maintain a chapter leadership that recognizes the need to carry the torch in implementing recruiting and retention objectives.

In carrying that torch, there have been many members who are burned out from this particular task and understandably so. But, their experience is vital in chapter operations and we should seek their advice whenever possible.

Some day, hopefully in the very near future, NARFE will be known throughout the entire federal workforce and our name identity will no longer be a problem. And, who knows, we may even find ourselves *bragging* that "NARFE was founded in 1921"!



National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association  
Maryland Federation of Chapters – Chartered April 5, 1956

# Maryland Federation Newsletter

*Protect Your Retirement*



**COME VISIT**

THE MARYLAND FEDERATION WEBSITE

AT

**WWW.MDNARFE.ORG**

WITH LINKS FOR *EASY BROWSING!*

MD FEDERATION OF CHAPTERS  
GERALD GILLMAN  
1604 DUBLIN DRIVE  
SILVER SPRING, MD 20902  
**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
SILVER SPRING, MD  
PERMIT # 5715

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## **NARFE National and Federation 2011 Schedule of Events** (Please put these dates on your calendar)

February 1	Federation Board Meeting
March 2	Spring Newsletter Deadline
March 3	Convention Resolutions Deadline
March 5-8	National Legislative Training Conference
March 9	United Seniors of Maryland Rally
March 31	State Convention Registration Deadline
May 2-3	Maryland State Convention
August 4	Fall Newsletter Deadline
October 4	Federation Board Meeting
Fall 2011 (TBA)	Federation Training Seminars

THESE ARE JUST REMINDERS.  
MORE DETAILED INFORMATION WILL BE SENT.