



National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association



Maryland Federation Newsletter

FALL 2010

President's Message



Ted Jensen

Greetings fellow members. Usually I review our Federation's goals and status in the newsletter, but this time I think we need to focus on National problems and solutions before we head to Grand Rapids for the Convention. Just a few notes before we get to those topics.

First, congratulations to St Mary's County Chapter #969 for recruiting 44 new members and being recognized for that achievement in the National Recruiting contest. At least part of this success story stems from the generally high level of community involvement of many chapter leaders and members. They are always out in the community doing good things and being visible. All of our chapters do this to some extent, and it's exactly what we should be doing in my view. Our commitment to public service does not end when we retire. For more evidence of that, see Jeanette Green's article in this issue.

Thanks are due also to Evelyn Kirby and the others who planned and executed our July 20 Convention planning meeting. It was a very useful and productive session. At this point we have 61 delegates registered for the Convention, and all chapters either sending representatives or proxies. Our chapters and the Federation have submitted some thoughtful resolutions for consideration in Grand Rapids. Three Maryland members are running for National office, Ron Bowers for Region II VP, Charley Saylor for Treasurer and Dick Strombotne for President. Thanks to everyone for this high level of participation.

I'm pleased to note that our State and Federal Legislative Committees are geared-up and fired-up for the upcoming sessions in Annapolis and Washington. As you'll see in the excellent articles in this issue, we're ready to engage on multiple fronts. Please study the issues and support the SLC and FLC members when they call on you for action.

NOW TO NATIONAL PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS.

The NEB's release of several reports on NARFE's finances this spring triggered a flurry of discussion and resolutions

across the country. The Maryland Federation's leaders took a long hard look at the facts. We concluded that the budget problems at HQ stem directly from the alarming drop in membership, are very serious, and require bold and immediate action if NARFE is to survive as an effective organization. We shared the facts and our conclusions as widely as possible with all of our members. We acted on those conclusions by submitting a package of three integrated resolutions. Taken together these proposals address NARFE's immediate financial problems and the critical need to increase membership through retention and recruiting. These resolutions are summarized in this issue and available on the National website in their complete form.

We have asked for and received a fair amount of feedback on these proposals, and have carefully reviewed all the other resolutions submitted by other Federations and chapters around the country. The discussion has been thoughtful and passionate, which bodes well for our organization.

HERE'S WHAT WE'VE HEARD FROM OTHERS SO FAR: SOME

- ♦agree that our proposals are on the right track
- ♦think we've over-stated the problem
- ♦agree a dues increase needed; but not now
- ♦think we should not increase dues until COLAs return
- ♦think dues increase will cause more membership losses
- ♦think we can avoid an increase; more cost cutting at HQ
- ♦argue that we wouldn't need an increase if we did a better job on retention
- ♦like our compromise solution on single NARFE dues, others strongly oppose it
- ♦agree with our Association dues proposal; think the \$7 rebate to chapters per new member is not enough

Speaking personally now, I have revisited our original conclusions and proposed solutions based on everything I've heard and seen so far. I wish I could agree with those who think we're not in real trouble and don't need to take

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FEDERATION DIRECTORY

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT

TED JENSEN
301-845-2088
TJENSEN.NARFE@GMAIL.COM

1ST VICE PRESIDENT LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

EVELYN KIRBY
410-604-1141
EKIRBY@ATLANTICBB.NET

2ND VICE PRESIDENT MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

BARRY GRIER
410-586-9828
FORBARRYG@AOL.COM

SECRETARY

JEANETTE GREEN
301-645-3319
JEANGREEN@AOL.COM

TREASURER

PAST PRESIDENT 2005-2009

DICK STROMBOTNE
240-632-9881

DICKS.NARFE@COMCAST.NET
WWW.STROMBOTNE4NARFEPRESIDENT.COM

PAST PRESIDENT 2001-2005

RON BOWERS
410-308-0420

NARFERBOWERS@MSN.COM

PAST PRESIDENT 1997-2001

CHARLENE COHEN
301-770-8747

CLCOHEN3@COMCAST.NET

PAST PRESIDENT 1987-1991

MARTY WISH
301-598-3366

MWISH1@VERIZON.NET

NARFE NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
606 N WASHINGTON STREET
ALEXANDRIA VA 22314-1914
703-838-7760
HQ@NARFE.ORG

CONTACTS

◆ ALZHEIMER'S/LUPUS COORDINATOR

MARTIN GILBERT
301-593-3630
GILM513@AOL.COM

CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

CHARLENE COHEN
301-770-8747
CLCOHEN3@COMCAST.NET

CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT

BERNIE GOLDSBOROUGH
301-737-1315

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES EDUCATION & ASSISTANCE FUND

BARBARA WALTER
301-598-8882
REDSLITTLE@VERIZON.NET

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE & NARFE-PAC COORDINATOR

RON BOWERS
410-308-0420
NARFERBOWERS@MSN.COM

MD/PAC TREASURER & BUDGET OFFICER

DAVE ROSEMAN
240-401-6628 OR 301-424-5652
DAVE.ROSEMAN@COMCAST.NET

NARFE NET/WEBMASTER

BARBARA JACOBS
410-969-5980
GB1519@VERIZON.NET

PUBLIC RELATIONS

****VACANT****

RESOLUTIONS

SAJ DURRANI
301-774-4607
SAJDURRANI@AOL.COM

SERVICE OFFICER

HAROLD FORST
410-661-4625
HFORST@AOL.COM

STATE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

ED BICE
301-464-3748
DE3637@VERIZON.NET

UNITED SENIORS OF MARYLAND REPRESENTATIVE

CHUCK THOMAS
410-992-7984
CGTHOMAS1@VERIZON.NET

◆ See Alzheimer/Lupus change on page 6
MARYLAND FEDERATION NEWSLETTER

CHAPTERS & PRESIDENTS

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301-439-1634 EPELLANT@AOL.COM
DISTRIBUTION - GERALD GILLMAN
301-681-7269 GERALDGILLMAN@AOL.COM

President... *continued from page 1*

immediate strong action, *but I can't*. HQ says it has enough money to fund operations for the rest of this year and part of 2011. That sure looks like a crisis to me. We could get by for a while by dipping further into our reserves and some more cost cutting, but then what do we do? If we wait until the economy gets better and COLAs come back, how long will that take and what happens in the meantime? Sure we could avoid an increase if we dramatically improved our retention rates, but what magic makes that happen in the short term? Yes, there are some good cost cutting ideas being floated, but can we and will we act on them at Grand Rapids or are they realistically in the 2012 or later time frame which might be too late? We had a saying in the Social Security Administration that applies here: "HOPE IS NOT A PLAN." I come down on the side of doing what we have to do right now even though it's painful. *That's a dues increase.*

A dues increase effective in 2011 gives the new NEB team breathing room to focus on the longer term needs of NARFE, allows our first class paid staff to continue operations, and gives HQ the resources to step up our advertising and recruiting efforts. With deference to all the individuals and chapters and Federations who work hard at recruiting, we still rely very heavily on HQ to do the heavy lifting on advertising and recruiting. HQ needs the money to do that, and to support chapters and Federations in their recruiting efforts. *(Retention, in my view, is mostly up to individual members, chapters and Federations, and more a matter of effort than money. We need to do a better job on our end of the deal).* Our proposals would generate the extra funds needed by HQ.

I should also clear up some confusion we may have created about the impact of our proposals on Federation revenues. We suggest cutting the Federation rebate from 10% to 8%. That sends most of the added revenue from a dues increase to HQ where we think it's most needed. However, 8% of the increased dues would still provide slightly MORE revenue per member to Federations than the 10% of the smaller national dues that Federations get today.

Turning now to membership and our proposal to establish "Association" dues, the numbers are clear and painful to me. In 1991 we had 451,717 members, of which 338,283 were chapter members. At the end of March 2010 we had 309,116 members, of which 282,870 were chapter members. I draw two conclusions from these numbers. One, we are not overstating the problem—NARFE is in fact in serious trouble which will only get worse if we don't find ways to rebuild our membership rolls. Two, we have

always had, and continue to have, a substantial number of members who don't want to be members of chapters for whatever reasons. We need to apply more resources and modern methods to recruiting and retention, and I'm confident that we can do that. But I think a big part of the solution to rebuilding our membership is finding a way to accommodate the members and potential new members who don't want to join chapters. We need them. Our Association dues proposal does that, while preserving a steady revenue stream for chapters. The "grandfathering" approach provides time for an orderly transition to a new system that works for those who want to participate in chapters and those who don't. Note: ONLY NEW MEMBERS WOULD PAY ASSOCIATION DUES STARTING IN 2011. *(Based on feedback we've seen, the \$7 rebate to chapters may be set too low. It would probably be better to set that rate at \$9).*

In closing, we're in a difficult place, but we can fix our problems and preserve NARFE as an effective organization to serve the needs of future generations as it has served us. To make that happen, we need to act decisively and be willing to make some sacrifices.

IT'S UP TO US. NO ONE ELSE CAN DO IT.



Mary Lou Blessing

Mary Lou Blessing, Chapter President

Members of #409 Made It Happen

Frederick Chapter 409 was able to donate \$1,500 to Alzheimer's research: \$1,000 went to National Alzheimer's and \$500 to our local chapter. Kristen Weddle of our local Alzheimer's Association accepted our check and brought us up-to-date on the status of research and on-going clinical trials - exciting news for many.

What enabled this contribution? At our monthly meeting we have a "bake" table at which members purchase chances for these items and the money from these "blue tickets" form the basis of our contribution. This program is successful through the efforts of Sandy Stephens, Betty Potts, Betty Lind, Kathy Siggins, Kay Nowstrup [recently deceased] and of course our "bakers" who provide all the goodies and the members who purchase the "blue tickets" each month. All are essential and appreciated.

How do you fund *your* contributions? New and interesting ideas are always welcome.



Dick Strombotne

A Comprehensive Dues Increase Approach — Overview of Three Resolutions

At the Maryland Federation Board meeting held on May 3-4, 2010, the Executive Board approved a set of three resolutions that, when taken together, represent a comprehensive approach to address the need for additional revenues for NARFE HQ. These resolutions will continue to provide discounted membership rates, proven effective for increasing member retention. They would start NARFE on the path to unified dues and establish Family Memberships.

RESOLUTION No. 10-07

Increase National Dues and Reduce Federation Rebate Rate. This resolution would amend the National Bylaws to do two things.

1. Increase National dues by approximately \$9.00 per year for annual and multi-year regular members and members on dues withholding, and create a new 5-year membership. (*New National Dues: 1-yr for \$38, 2-yr for \$70, 3-yr for \$99, 5-yr for \$155, and DW for \$32.40.*)
2. Reduce the federation rebate rate from ten percent to eight percent. (*Federations would receive a small increase in the amount of the rebate in each case.*)

The changes would go into effect on July 1, 2011, unless the NEB finds it feasible to have an earlier effective date. The purpose of these changes is to remedy the severe financial situation at NARFE HQ and to provide an additional \$500,000 per year to support an aggressive recruitment campaign to reverse NARFE's steady loss of members.

RESOLUTION No. 10-06

Establish Unified Dues, Increase Dues, and Reduce Federation Rebate Rate.

This resolution is the keystone of the comprehensive dues increase approach. It contains the increases to National dues and other provisions of Resolution No.10-07. It starts NARFE on the path to implement unified dues, a concept that has received much support in recent conventions and in the recent referendum. *New members after July 1, 2011* would pay **Association dues** that are about \$8 more than the corresponding amounts in the current National/Chapter dues system for multi-year and dues withholding memberships. (*Association Dues: 1-yr for \$46, 2-yr for \$86, 3-yr for \$123, 5-yr for \$195, and DW for \$40.20.*) Chapters would receive \$7.00 annually for each of their new members.

Paid-up life memberships would be available to new members based on Association dues principles; current members could also purchase life memberships.

Current members, who are paying National/Chapter dues, would continue with their current arrangements but could transfer to the new Association dues system any time after July 1, 2014, at their option. The NEB can accelerate the effective date, if it is feasible.

RESOLUTION No. 10-01

Bylaws Change – Establish Family Membership with Discounted Dues

This resolution adds discounted Family Membership dues to Association dues. It would be open to *spouse couples* and would offer a savings compared with twice the corresponding Association dues for annual and multi-year memberships and dues withholding for individuals. (*Family Membership Dues: 1-yr for \$84, 2-yr for \$158, 3-yr for \$225, 5-yr for \$360, and DW for \$72.00.*) Chapters would receive \$7.00 annually for each one of their new members.

Family Memberships would be effective only if a unified dues system is approved; if approved it would have the same effective date as the unified dues system. The NEB could make changes to the Family Membership dues system after July 1, 2016.

A REQUEST

CHAPTER SECRETARIES

IN REGARD TO THE CHAPTER OFFICER ROSTER (FORM F-7), PLEASE CONTINUE TO SEND THE **OLD FORM F-7** TO THE FEDERATION SECRETARY, **Not** THE NEW HQ FORM THAT IS ON THE INTERNET. THE "OLD" FORM CONTAINS ALL THE INFORMATION I NEED TO MAINTAIN THE FEDERATION DIRECTORY.

REPORT GIVERS

PLEASE MAKE A COPY OF YOUR REPORT FOR USE AS A BACKUP. WHEN TRANSCRIBING YOUR REPORTS A HARD COPY HELPS ENSURE THE ACCURACY OF THE TRANSCRIPTION.



THANK YOU.

Jeanette Green,
Secretary



Evelyn Kirby

Convention Delegate Training

Our practice training was offered July 20 at the Comfort Inn in Bowie for delegates planning to attend the upcoming National Convention. Forty-five members met to discuss a variety of topics. These ranged from a convention overview and expected highlights to anticipated convention rules, parliamentary procedures, candidates seeking national office, logistics, and resolutions coming before delegates in Grand Rapids. Each area was led by a member of the Federation Executive Committee or the Federation Parliamentarian, John Stackpole.

Written evaluations received indicated that participants felt the day was beneficial and provided worthwhile information and background. Maryland expects to have 61 delegates at the convention casting its 403 votes. All resolutions, *in full*, can be seen at the convention section of NARFE.ORG.

Here are a few points about some of the resolutions:

- ❖ 16 relate to dues. (7 for dues increases, some for unified or single dues and 1 linking dues to COLAs)
- ❖ Two seek to restore Honorary Membership and two ask for Family Membership.
- ❖ One seeks backing for DC Statehood.
- ❖ Several ask for what appears to be over-managing work being done well by HQs and others.
- ❖ Four appear to be out of order as written and should not be presented for vote.
- ❖ One calls for a Committee to revise National Bylaws, though NARFE'S President can establish a standing committee for this anytime.
- ❖ One combines the positions of National Secretary and National Treasurer, which raises an array of issues – not the least of which is that five individuals are currently campaigning for the now separate posts;
- ❖ One wants to amend a locality pay situation affecting certain high-three computations back to 1994. Another asks that \$75 billion in pension overcharges collected by OPM be returned to the Postal Service.
- ❖ Ten of the 46 resolutions submitted came from Maryland, including one to study whether NARFE should set up a 501(c)(3) organization as a subsidiary that could accept tax-deductible contributions.



Ed Bice

State Candidates Surveyed

The State Legislative Committee (SLC) met during June and July. They initiated the committee's actions for the 2010 September primary election and the 2011 General Assembly session in January.

The SLC discussed and finalized the 2011 legislative program. Then the legislative pamphlet was written and reproduced. This being an election year with a September 14th primary date, the committee devised a strategy to be used to solicit support from the candidates for our program. It was decided to send all candidates a copy of the legislative pamphlet, an introductory letter explaining the purpose of the survey, and the survey form itself.

On the survey form individuals were requested to indicate their support for our three priority issues by checking either "yes" or "no". In addition, we asked them, if elected, would they sponsor or co-sponsor legislation on the following:

- 1) Equalize the dollar value for the senior exemption for all seniors over the age of 65 or blind.
- 2) Allow an annual tax credit for the payment of long-term care insurance.
- 3) Reduce the tax burden on senior homeowners.

The committee mailed 526 letters to all candidates with a requested return date of July 28. The results will be tabulated and all chapters will receive the results of our efforts so that members can use the information prior to the primary election.

Members of the SLC and various chapter members have attended candidates' campaign fundraisers around the state this summer. During these fundraisers we have had the opportunity to support candidates who have indicated their support in the past for our legislative agenda. Also we were able to meet other legislators and state officials and discuss our agenda and make arrangements for further discussions with their staffs. Attending these fundraisers is a function of our MD/PAC. The actions are considered crucial to any success that we will have in regard to our 2011 legislative program.

MANY YEARS AGO IN SCOTLAND
A NEW GAME WAS INVENTED. IT WAS RULED,
"GENTLEMEN ONLY... LADIES FORBIDDEN"...
AND THUS THE WORD GOLF ENTERED INTO THE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE.



Ron Bowers

Around The Districts

While the Federal Legislative Committee (FLC) has not held any meetings recently, communications have continued, as have contacts with the National Legislative Division. As the campaigns for the Congressional elections have increased in advance of the September 14 Primary Elections in Maryland, the NARFE/PAC has received requests from some of the campaigns. I have also contacted them about specific events as I became aware of them.

DISTRICT 1

NARFE/PAC made a donation of \$1000 to Representative Frank Kratovil's campaign and ten of us from five chapters attended a picnic in September. I have since attended two other private home receptions with Mr. Kratovil and spent about ten minutes in a personal conversation with him.

DISTRICT 2

Since Representative Ruppberger's offices are less than a mile from my home. I visited his campaign office a while back. His campaign is quite low profile right now, but will be increasing in the weeks ahead. There is a pending request for funds from his campaign office.

DISTRICT 3

Representative John Sarbanes was a guest at a party held in DC in February. Chris Farrell from the National Office attended this and NARFE/PAC donated \$1,000 to John's campaign. I also attended another State political event at which I had a chance to talk with him briefly.

DISTRICT 4

FLC members Jim Cowie (*Ch 581*) and Barbara Iba (*Ch 357*) have visited the office of Representative Donna Edwards. NARFE/PAC has received no requests for funds.

DISTRICT 5

Representative Steny Hoyer has not yet made any requests to NARFE/PAC. FLC Members Cel Aguiqui (*Ch 1260*) and Bernie Goldsborough (*Ch 969*) make frequent contacts with his office.

DISTRICT 6

Representative Roscoe Bartlett never asks for donations from NARFE/PAC. FLC members and officers from Chapters 306, 409 and 2306 have been in frequent contact with his office.

DISTRICT 7

We received notice of an event for Representative Elijah Cummings too late for any action, but NARFE/PAC has since sent his campaign a donation of \$2000. Representative Cummings is a senior member of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee.

DISTRICT 8

Representative Chris Van Hollen has been a strong supporter of NARFE since his election. In addition to working for our interests in his committee assignments, he has continued the partnership with our Federation of Chapters in the district in the annual FEHBP forum during the "Open Season." NARFE/PAC donated \$5000 to his campaign.

THE SENATE

I informed National about a party for Senator Barbara Mikulski that also was held in DC. Chris Farrell attended the party. NARFE/PAC donated \$2000 to the Senator's campaign. Senator Mikulski has been quick to respond to the needs of Federal employees and retirees with amendments to bills as needed. While not always fully successful, she is one of our staunchest and persistent allies in Congress.

Maryland is a very compact state. The largest single employer in Maryland is the US Government. The large number of Federal employees and retirees who are voters gives the Maryland Federation some advantages. Every Congressional district has at least four and as many as eleven chapters with members in their districts. All of our Members of Congress commute to work in DC. That makes them easily accessible to us. The senior members of the Maryland delegation to Congress are also leaders among their peers, especially Representatives Hoyer and Van Hollen.

These advantages help to encourage our Representatives and Senators to support our interests. They also provide a good "selling point" for gaining and retaining members.

ALZHEIMERS/LUPUS-TEMPORARY CHANGE

Barbara Jacobs will assume 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



Jim Cowie

Deferred Annuity Update

There are strong arguments in favor of the Deferred Annuity Fairness Bill, HR 4979. The main reasons are:

- ◆ The added value generated by contributions of the early retiree being available to the Trust Fund during the deferral period is assigned to the retiree, not retained by the Fund.
- ◆ Personnel policies can become more flexible which may help long term employees who are RIFFED or who consider voluntary retirement before age 62.
- ◆ There is an expectation of a profit over 10 years as the added amount of more retirees leaving their contributions in would exceed any extra paid out to eligible annuitants *particularly significant in the current political environment.*

So why aren't more Representatives signing on as cosponsors of this legislation? My suspicion was confirmed by a recent interview with Congresswoman Donna Edwards.

She agreed that there was a very solid case on policy grounds, but said it was dangerous in the current political climate to do anything new for any element of the Federal Community. She also said soundings indicate there may not be solid support for this bill within the Federal Community itself.

This suggests that NARFE needs to improve its publicity to its members and to the Federal Community at large as to why this bill deserves support. Current employees need to understand that there could well be circumstances in the future where they could benefit, and that providing fairness to deferred annuitants does not change the fact that those who devote their whole career to Federal Service rightly have higher annuities per year of service.

The Caucus within NARFE of affected members will need to keep after their Representatives. They need to urge the Representative to evaluate the legislation on its merits. They need to make it clear that the opposition is inspired by prejudice against the Federal Community and not the merits of the legislation.

Send requests for clarification or comments to: Jamescowie@att.net (NARFE Caucus Coordinator for this issue)



Charley Saylor

Be Prepared

I have geared this article to delegates for the National Convention in Grand Rapids and the best information I can provide to them is to be prepared. The Maryland meeting on July 20 was a great preparation tool. One of the main points of this meeting was to inform the delegates, new and experienced, that the resolutions book should be read in advance of the convention. These resolutions are dealt with very quickly in most cases and even those that are discussed are limited to 12 minutes of debate. And some of that debate provides little substance to the resolution itself. The committees that meet before the start of the convention will consolidate and amend some of the resolutions. These committees will have advice from some of our staff members whose job is it to provide accurate and factual information when and where needed. Some of the information given was that some resolutions were out of order or illegal. This could well be the case. However, experience has taught me that opinions of what is legal and what is not legal varies and at times surprises us all. So be prepared to deal with all the resolutions as presented by the committees. Leave the legal v illegal opinions to the parliamentarian who, of course, could be overruled by a division of the house.

That's all for the nitty gritty of the convention. There will be time to have fun and I invite you all to come to my hospitality room which will be in my suite at the hotel on Monday evening between 6 and 7 PM. On Sunday all candidates will have a table provided for them in the convention hall and this will provide you the opportunity to visit all of them, plus the other exhibitors, and ask questions. The other candidates will also be having hospitality rooms at various times. Attend as many as you can and don't be afraid to *ask questions* on issues that concern you and demand specific answers where it is possible for the candidate to be specific.

I have provided you all with my bio, my goals and position papers. If you did not receive any of this material email me csaylor2@verizon and I will send you an attachment. If you don't have a computer call me at 410-938-8783 and I will mail you a copy of whatever you need.

YOU'RE IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

MARTIN GILBERT, ALZHEIMERS/LUPUS COORDINATOR
VIRGINIA SUNDERLAND, CHAPTER #1363
BOB WESLOH, HOWARD COUNTY #1734



Barry Grier

Plan Your Work Work Your Plan

All right Chapter Presidents and Membership Chairs, I hope you've been working on your strategic plan to increase your membership while you were sprawled out on your lawn chairs this summer listening to your old Bobby Darin tapes or Motown's Greatest Hits. Just what do you have in mind, in terms of energizing your membership and creating some sure fire recruitment ideas to increase your membership rolls? Let's face it folks, membership out-ranks everything else.

It might be worth your while to arrange to have a brainstorming session with your chapter officers prior to your first meeting. It would be a great time to go over what went well and what didn't during the past year.

It also may be a good time to take a serious look at your various committee members and determine whether they are productive or are just representing "bodies" on the committee. We need workers not just bodies to fill these committee posts. Your most recent members may be a good "pool" for new committee members to choose from. Some of us who have been around a long time get a little lazy in our positions and responsibilities.

Recruitment and Retention are two of our top priorities. Just what is being done to further the chapter's goals in these two categories? How many of your members are on Dues Withholding (DW)? Since it's been proven that DW is a sure way to retain members, it would be wise to explain the benefits of DW and why it makes sense for your members to consider signing up.

Pull out your old NARFE recruitment journals and see if there are some ideas that you may not have considered. Another good source would be the *NARFE* MAGAZINE articles that have highlighted past successes. Don't forget about your "Membership Development Manual." It's full of suggestions to enhance your recruitment efforts.

In fact, give the folks over at St. Mary's Chapter 969 a call to see how they managed to get so many members recruited in the last national recruitment campaign. You may consider contacting some of the other chapters that rated even higher than St. Mary's to get their recipe for successful recruiting. They didn't get on the list by osmosis. They got on the list by devising recruitment campaigns that worked!

In an effort to keep our eye on retention efforts, don't forget to give your membership reports a good going over and contact those "Second Notices" and "Dropped Members" to see if you can keep them on board or reinstate them. As you may have guessed, recruitment and retention are a constant in any chapter and it would be prudent to put the best and more eager members of your chapter in charge of these two very important responsibilities.

Did I mention goals? Well this is a perfect time to give some serious consideration to what your membership goals may be for the remainder of the year. Perhaps a chapter membership contest would be a good start. What you want to do is motivate your membership to take it upon themselves to become a part of your overall recruiting plan. **Plan your work. Work your plan.**

Too many times we leave it up to a few members to do all the work. Of course, we all have heard of that one before. However, if you don't include your members in developing your goals and/or special projects what can you expect? It may help to take a survey to find out where your members stand. Personally, I prefer a face-to-face survey during a chapter meeting.

You may consider contacting some of your Active Federal Employees (AFE's) to be your NARFE representatives in their respective agencies to distribute NARFE materials and contact those employees with less than five years to retirement to consider a NARFE membership. Give your AFE member a NARFE T-shirt to wear on "Dress Down" Fridays. You'd be surprised how many federal employees don't know what the letters "NARFE" mean.

It might also help your meetings if you wore NARFE T-shirts and hats during your meetings. It provides a look of unity of purpose and may impress as well as energize your new members.

How are your supplies doing? Do you have enough "prospective" cards? What about applications, magazines and all the recruitment tools that you need in planning your membership campaign. Have you done any "Park n' Rides?"

Is there a NARFE recruitment poster on all of your Post Office Employee Bulletin Boards? That's the employee

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Dave Roseman

Our Mom and Pop PAC

PACs come in many sizes and serve a variety of purposes. In Maryland, there are mega PACs such as those of cable companies, power companies, and insurance companies. They have professional representation (*paid lobbyists*) and major dollars to donate. There are special interest PACs set up to lobby for specific outcomes or positions such as slots or repeal of specific sales taxes.

The NARFE MD/PAC doesn't have the big bucks, nor do we have professional lobbyists to represent us. What we do have is enough money to attend fund raising events, a comprehensive legislative program, and an ability to get out to our members. Where we need significant improvement is visible participation by our membership in the entire process. The members of the State Legislative Committee do not know all of the State representatives, nor do they know their opponents, nor the views of both. In addition, legislators prefer to have support from their own constituents, i.e. voters. It is votes that count with legislators. It is this last factor that drives our PAC and the way we need to operate to maximize our effectiveness.

First, we need each chapter to be knowledgeable of their legislative delegations' positions on legislation of interest to NARFE members. They need to invite the delegates to their Chapter meetings, send them copies of their newsletter, educate them in NARFE's legislative program objectives,

and explore the possibilities of getting them to introduce or co-sponsor NARFE legislative initiatives. They need to be aware of fund raising events being scheduled by their delegates as well as their delegate's opponents in primaries and the General Election. They need to advise the State Legislative Committee of these events, providing their recommendation as to whom we should support and why and how much of a contribution we should make. They should also advise us as to whom they would propose sending to the event itself.

If on the other hand it is the State Legislative Committee that first becomes aware of the event through a request from the delegate, we will contact all of the appropriate chapters asking for their recommendations. It is important that Chapters respond quickly and with as much information as possible. Generally our funds are limited and time is of the essence.

In either case, with all the information assembled the State Legislative Committee will make a quick decision and communicate directly with the appropriate chapters. Chapter attendees to these events need to be familiar with NARFE's legislative priorities and communicate these to the delegate(s). They also need to provide a written report of the event to the PAC Treasurer. As the PAC Treasurer I will do everything I can to support our Chapters in their efforts as will all the members of the SLC. Together *we can* achieve our goals.

Plan ... *Continued from page 9*

bulletin board inside the Post Office. Not the bulletin board with all the fund raising fliers and other community events.

Advertise, advertise, advertise. Let's not forget to get the word out about NARFE in your various communities. A good place to start, that is often overlooked, is your homeowner association newsletters. Generally, the cost is pretty reasonable, if at all, and hits hundreds of households. Community newspapers present another advertising opportunity through which the NARFE "Matching Funds" program could be of assistance. For information on this program email pubrel@narfe.org.

By the way, you might want to consider sprucing up some of those chapter newsletters out there. I saw one the other day where the print was so small you would need the Hubble space telescope to read it! Trust me. Your

newsletter represents one of the first impressions of your chapter. It could influence a wavering member to stay on board. So, keep those newsletters inviting, colorful and full of good information.

Have you planned your programs for the rest of the year? Believe it or not, your chapter program guest speakers provide a lot of interest to your members and prospective members as well as keeping your present members on board. If you are having boring, uninformative meetings don't expect new members to stick around.

Recruitment and Retention, as you well know, are the life blood of our organization and we should leave no stone unturned in our efforts to succeed. I know you can do it.

Plan Your Work. Work Your Plan.



Sam Girson

NARFE “GEMS”

The last time I left a challenge for you on GEMS (Global Electronic Messaging System) was at our Mini-Convention in May. We have made some progress throughout the Federation and show a net gain of +63 members signed on to GEMS from May 4 to July 15, 2010. Progress is also slow in most of the other Federations across the country. Does this pace reflect a lack of interest, concern, or is it due to the summer hiatus?

The Maryland Federation has about 22% of its members on GEMS. What does it take to reach the other members who have computers or access to them? They are out there! We have highlighted this in Chapter 1143, including a direct mail letter mailed to “all” of our members, yet we had no change in the number of members on GEMS. I trust that many of the Chapters have been getting the word out at meetings, in newsletters and e-mails. There also have been supporting articles published in the *NARFE* Magazine and messages on GEMS. Has anyone tried phone squads?

How do we motivate these members? Maybe they are thinking no COLA was an aberration and won't happen again in 2011. Maybe some think we'll get another \$250.00 stimulus payment (*some did not*) in lieu of no COLA. Maybe some think the average double digit percentage increase in FEHBP Premiums won't happen again. These are still unknowns, as is the uncertainty of what may result from Health Care Reform implementation, what may come

out of the National Fiscal Responsibilities and Reform Commission (NFRRC) that could impact our compensation and benefit package, plus other Entitlements such as Medicare, Social Security, Medicaid; and, any tax changes?

We don't seem to be getting the message across – *how exposed and fragile our member's economic/financial position is at this time!*

So, what is the answer? There is no “*magic bullet.*” There are many ways to work in the legislative arena. We have to be persistent and keep awareness at the forefront. We must continue to utilize any and all methods; we must also make the point that GEMS offers a vital communication element of *TIMELINESS and QUICK RESPONSE!* *Timing* is very critical these days if we are to work toward preserving and protecting our benefits and our pocketbooks. This is why we must get greater member participation in GEMS to actively support and lobby on a **TIMELY BASIS!**

For starters, all it takes is one phone call to NARFE National Headquarters (1-800-456-8410) to get on GEMS. You can also go to the NARFE website (www.narfe.org) and follow the prompts.

We all need to keep pushing and promoting GEMS. We need to get ahead of the curve, because the NFRRC will be making recommendations this coming December! ***Let's be active at the front end and not re-active when it may be too late!***

Pat Farmer, MGA Board member



Pat Farmer

Save These dates

As promised in the last newsletter, I want to pass along information on upcoming events sponsored by the Maryland Gerontological Association (MGA). Their website is: www.mdgerontology.org.

The Howard County and Laurel chapters of NARFE are cosponsoring with the MGA and the United Seniors of Maryland a talk by Senator Ben Cardin on the “Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act and Health Care and Education Affordability Reconciliation Act.” The forum will take place **Wednesday, 10a.m. Sept. 8** at Vantage House, 5400 Vantage Point Road, in Columbia. Find out what the new health care reform law will mean for seniors, as well as affordable health care for all Americans. The forum will include: Benefits to you, your family, your employer and all Americans; discussion of the new law and its impact; What's really in the law?; and the alarming state of health care

in our country. Once the flyer is finalized, I will send the information to the Federation for forwarding to you.

Mark your calendar for another timely topic - “Work Opportunities for Seniors in a Slow Economic Recovery.” MGA is partnering with the Maryland Department of Aging to bring you this forum on **Tuesday, Oct. 5** at the University of Maryland Baltimore Campus Tech Center in Catonsville. This forum will: Identify trends in older adult labor force participation; discuss the impact of the recession on older workers; and highlight resources that provide training and job-search information for workers 50 plus. Once speakers are lined up, I will send out final details and registration information through President Jensen.

Another date to put on your calendar is **Tuesday, Oct. 26**. This is the date of the Fall Dementia Conference MGA sponsors each year. More on that later.



Jeanette Green

Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame, Inc.

Organized in 1987 the Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame, Inc, has honored up to 50 nominees annually. A maximum of five nominees are selected to receive the prestigious GERI award for most outstanding and exceptional contribution. All nominees must be recommended by a sponsor, no self-nominations accepted. All nominees selected receive induction into the Hall of Fame, membership certificate, official MSCHF lapel pin and are featured in the Blue Book. Nominees

selected are presented at the Annual Awards Luncheon in Glen Burnie in October.

Nominees must be sixty years or older, a resident of Maryland, shall be an active volunteer at time of nomination and shall qualify in any one or combination of the following:

- * given voluntary service of educational or community humanitarian nature
- * made exceptional contributions as a volunteer in efforts to improve the lives of people regardless of race, creed or national origin
- * advocated as a volunteer on behalf of Maryland senior citizens
- * demonstrated leadership as a volunteer with skills in management, creativity and program service administration
- * *Paid work in any category will not be considered.*

MARYLAND NARFE INDUCTEES THROUGH 2010

1994 Marie Grove – Ch. 1522 Susquehanna	2006 Marie Doyle – Ch. 1519 Glen Burnie
1996 Harold Forst – Ch. 1522 Susquehanna	2006 Keith Steele – Ch. 581 Gaithersburg GERI
1996 Frank Hansing – Ch. 1127 Rockville	2006 Genevieve Steele – Ch. 581 Gaithersburg GERI
1996 Evelyn Thrift – Ch. 264 Hyattsville	2007 Shirley Aurand – Ch. 306 Hagerstown
1998 Jean Weir – Ch. 1522 Susquehanna	2007 Frank Young – Ch. 581 Gaithersburg GERI
1999 Carleton Brown – Ch. 1522 Susquehanna	2007 Jean Young – Ch. 581 Gaithersburg GERI
2000 Clyde Ludwig – Ch. 581 Gaithersburg	2008 Jo Bond – Ch. 1972 Waldorf/La Plata
2001 Charles Ferrell – Ch. 581 Gaithersburg	2008 Joseph Vaughan – Ch. 2306 Carroll County
2002 Henry Herman – Ch. 581 Gaithersburg	2008 Marty Wish – Ch. 1887 Wheaton/Glenmont
2003 Jeanette Green – Ch. 126 W. Charles/Indian Head	2008 Doris Wish – Ch. 1887 Wheaton/Glenmont
2003 Marshall Grotenhuis – Ch. 581 Gaithersburg	2009 Patricia Brown – Ch. 2262 Upper Marlboro
2004 Delbert Foster – Ch. 581 Gaithersburg	2009 Kenneth Jones – Ch. 581 Gaithersburg GERI
2004 Bernie Foster – Ch. 581 Gaithersburg	2009 Larocca Jones – Ch. 581 Gaithersburg GERI
2005 Annabel Liebelt – Ch. 581 Gaithersburg	2009 Ed Wurm – Ch. 306 Hagerstown
2006 Gordon Brown – Ch. 258 Bethesda/Chevy Chase	2010 Phelicia Boyer – Ch. 126 W. Charles/Indian Head
	2010 Richard Strombotne – Ch. 581 Gaithersburg

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



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

Maryland Federation Newsletter

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Scheduled Events NARFE National and Federation Other Items of Interest Please put these dates on your calendar

2010

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| August 29-Sept, 3 | National Convention |
| Sept. 8 | Senator Cardin to speak (See 'Save' p.10) |
| October 5 | Federation Board Meeting |
| October 5 | Seniors/Work Opportunity (See 'Save' p.10) |
| October 22 | Membership and Service Officers Training |
| October 26 | Dementia Conference (See 'Save' p.10) |
| December 1 | Winter Newsletter Deadline |

2011

- | | |
|------------|---------------------------|
| February 1 | Federation Board Meeting |
| May 2-4 | Maryland State Convention |

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