



WINTER 2024 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



GARY ROUNDTREE SR., PH.D.

240-749-0014 / groundtreesr@hotmail.com

What are 6 Top Benefits of Membership Organizations: Are They Still Relevant Today?

In researching this topic, I want to share with NARFE members throughout the Maryland Federation and other federations in the association, an article written by **Ryan Tracey**, September 16, 2016, as follows.

"In this article, I will share the advantages of joining membership organizations, as well as discuss whether they are still relevant for membership driven organizations today."

Membership Organizations: Advantages And Considerations

"Twenty years ago, membership organizations were crucial aspects of a professional career. They opened up opportunities for networking and professional development that simply weren't matched by other sources."

"However, in this age of social media whereby a world of peers is only a tweet away, the benefits of joining a membership organization are rightly being questioned. So, are they still relevant? I say yes."

"Even in today's hyper-connected global society, I recognize the following 6 benefits of membership organizations for professional volunteers and leaders."

6 Benefits of Membership Organizations

1. Professionalism

“I’ll get this one out of the way first. It might be the most cynical of reasons to join, but there’s no doubt that membership of a respected organization is seen as a plus by prospective employers. Your association with the brand sends the message that you are serious about your profession, and you are willing to put your money where your mouth is.”

2. Education

“A membership organization typically runs professional development events such as workshops and webinars, and perhaps publishes a periodical, all of which are designed to raise awareness of important issues facing its target audience. Personally, I don’t find everything the organization offers informative--- sometimes it’s pitched at the wrong level, or I’m a few steps ahead already—but every now and then I’ll find a gem that makes all the difference.”

3. Perks

“Sometimes the organization’s offerings are for members only, or else members are offered a substantial discount. A prime example is the Australian Institute of Training and Development’s (ATTD) annual conference, for which registration was offered to members last year at a 25% discount, easily covering the cost of membership.”

4. Networking

“Social media has injected steroids into the sport of professional networking, but the real power of a membership organization lies in the opportunities it affords for local networking. I follow literally thousands of people around the globe via twitter, but by attending local events sponsored by any local organization, I meet great people in my hometown whom I wouldn’t have met otherwise.”

5. Profile

“A membership organization provides you with an avenue to “give something back” to the profession, perhaps by presenting at one of its events or by authoring an article in its magazine. While this is an admirable thing to do, it’s a win-win transaction as it also raises your profile in the professional community.”

6. Recognition

“Membership organizations also sponsor industry awards. These awards are important because they shine a light on outstanding work that should be showcased but might otherwise have remained undiscovered.”

The Strategic Imperatives of Membership Organizations

“Despite the benefits offered by membership organizations, competition for a share of most professionals’ wallets is becoming increasingly intense. Not only are the

organizations competing among themselves, but prospective members are now presented with a smorgasbord of career-oriented alternatives. “Moreover,” ... “high quality and free options for networking and professional development are proliferating. So, what is a membership organization to do?”

“The first strategic imperative of a membership organization is to offer something unique to its members. In my opinion, this means going hyper-local. Sure, I can read blogs written by rock stars in Europe and North America, and even participate in an online course delivered by the likes of Stanford University, but, what these sources can’t provide is something specific to my world. What are the environmental conditions in my market? What are the hottest topics in my region? Which laws and regulations should I be mindful of? How much should I charge for my work? What do my peers get paid? Who’s leading the way here? The local membership organization should provide answers to questions such as these?”

“The second strategic imperative of a membership organization is to transform and adapt to continue to remain relevant to its members’ needs. Long gone are the days of presentations about 6-week inductions and articles about ice breakers. “The modern” ... “professional expects his or her membership organization to keep abreast of the latest trends and be on the front foot with emerging technologies and pedagogies.”

The Future of Membership Organizations

“I predict a viable future for membership organizations that continue to evolve to meet the needs of their members. At the end of the day, it all boils down to return on investment. If each individual member feels that he or she is receiving value for money, then that’s what really matters.” ~ **Ryan Tracey**



Maryland Federation President Gary Roundtree Sr., Ph.D., recruits new members for NARFE at the DAV Convention from August 5-8, 2023, at Harrah’s Resort in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

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*The Maryland Federation Newsletter is published three times a year: Spring, Fall and Winter by the Maryland Federation of NARFE, P.O. Box 3527, Laurel, MD 20709.  
Editor/Production Manager/Distribution Manager: Vacant*

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FIRST VICE PRESIDENT/LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR REPORT



EDWARD HOLLAND

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT / LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR
301-848-3476 / hollandnmd@aol.com

NARFE National President William Shackelford submitted a comment letter to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) on November 17, 2023, expressing support for its proposed rule to safeguard civil service protections and merit system principles.

President Joe Biden signed a continuing resolution (CR), H.R. 6363, into law on November 16, avoiding a lapse in appropriations and government shutdown. The bill extends current agency funding levels into 2024.

NARFE highlights a pivotal moment in the ongoing fight to repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO). The House Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security held a crucial field hearing on Monday, November 20 to address the profound impact of WEP and GPO on public servants. To join the latest WEP/GPO Repeal efforts, please refer to guidance from FLC Chair Frank Lee.

The House of Representatives passed a continuing resolution to extend current agency funding levels into 2024 by a vote of 336-95.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has unveiled the findings of the 2023 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS), shedding light on the state of federal workers' job satisfaction and engagement.

NARFE National Bylaws Committee

As a member of the NARFE National Bylaws Committee, I enjoyed meeting with fellow committee members, throughout November, to discuss the process for reviewing anticipated proposed bylaws amendments.

Maryland Legislative Director

As Legislative Director, I preside over an awesome team consisting of: FLC Chair Frank Lee / SLC Chair Paul Schwartz / FLC Vice Chair Teresa Baker / MDNARFE-PAC Coordinator Bob Doyle. I look forward to continuing supporting them.

September/October/November Activities:

Edward Holland participated in a Montford Point Marines of America virtual legislative discussion. He was also invited to attend Chapter 1770's annual Holiday Luncheon that day in Bel Air, Harford County. **SLC Chair Schwartz** stood in for him. He participated in a virtual League of Women Voters of Maryland Legislative Training and a League of Women Voters of Calvert County's Legislative Evening with Your Delegate at the Prince Frederick Library, Calvert County; three virtual SLC meetings; attended a MDNARFE-PAC approved virtual fundraiser for Maryland Delegate Michael Rogers; and a Rural Maryland Council Legislative Committee Meeting, and designated MDNARFE-PAC Coordinator **Bob Doyle** as his alternate.

FLC Chair Frank Lee provided guidance on how best to submit a written statement to assist with WEP/GPO Repeal.

FLC Chair Frank Lee / SLC Chair Paul Schwartz / FLC Vice Chair Teresa Baker /MDNARFE-PAC Coordinator Bob Doyle were invited to attend a virtual AARP MD Advocacy Session.

MDNARFE-PAC Coordinator **Bob Doyle** participated in the 2023 Annual Rural Maryland Council Meeting in Annapolis, Anne Arundel County.

Edward Holland and SLC Chair **Paul Schwartz** attended the 2023 Annual Maryland Military Coalition's Legislator of the Year Award Ceremony at the Annapolis Naval Club, Anne Arundel County (see photo).

Edward Holland / SLC Chair Paul Schwartz / MDNARFE-PAC Coordinator Bob Doyle / Assistant Congressional District Leader Dr. Tiffany Daniel /Assistant Congressional District Leader Denise Perry participated in the 2nd Annual Maryland Military Coalition

Legislative Listening Session at the Michael Busch Library in Annapolis, Anne Arundel County (see photo).

Edward Holland and NARFE MD Secretary Melody Kebe attended and presented certificates to honor Chapter 251's 70th Anniversary in Galesville, Anne Arundel County.

Veterans Affairs - September through first part of December Activities:

Edward Holland, Dir., participated in a Maryland Military Installation Council Meeting in Crownsville, Anne Arundel County; presided over a Veterans of Foreign Wars meeting in Charles County; was presented a quilt in a moving ceremony by the Quilts of Valor Foundation in Lexington Park, St. Mary's County; participated in a Veterans of Foreign Wars meeting in Charles County; and participated in a Charles County Military Alliance Council Meeting in Charles County.

Dr. Tiffany Daniel, Dep. Dir., participated in a veterans' town hall at the Veterans Service Center in Frederick County; an AARP Luncheon for Mental Health and Veterans with MD Secretary Anthony Woods in Annapolis, Anne Arundel County; a Unity Ministries Church veterans' affairs event, sponsored by the Office of Prince George's County's Veterans Affairs; a Maryland Military Installation Council Meeting in Crownsville, Anne Arundel County.

Edward Holland, Dir., Dr. Tiffany Daniel, Dep. Dir., and James Wade, Member participated in the 2nd Annual Maryland Military Coalition Legislative Listening Session at the Michael Busch Library in Annapolis, Anne Arundel County (see photo).

James Wade, Member participated in a Veterans of Foreign Wars Family Freedom Festival in Howard County.

Representative to Fraternal Order of Police

On November 10, **Edward Holland**, in his capacity as an FOP State Legislative Chair, presented a legislative proposal to FOP leadership to better streamline WEP/GPO Repeal as it pertains to interacting with organizations seeking the same goal. Moreover, at said meeting, he was assured that he had been re-appointed to FOP National Election and Veterans Committees.



Photos from October 5, 2023, Maryland Military Coalition Listening Session



Photo taken Nov. 1 at the Maryland Military Coalition (MMC) Awards Ceremony.
L-R: 1st VP Edward Holland, MD Delegate Edith Patterson (D-Dist. 28), and SLC Chair Paul Schwartz

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE REPORT



FRANK LEE

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE CHAIR

410-672-5065 / fllee0716@verizon.net

As the Federal Legislative Chair, I have taken a number of steps to promote the development of relationships between our Congressional District Leaders (CDLs) and congressional leaders, including having CDLs attend an annual party sponsored by Representative Steny Hoyer in September; encouraging CDLs to attend a Senatorial Candidates Forum in October to meet Senatorial Candidates; have CDLs encourage members of their chapters to submit statements to the House Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee in support of our efforts to repeal the WEP/GPO; and sending a report to the CDLs on the status of the bipartisan effort to repeal WEP/GPO in the House of Representatives. We plan to continue our efforts to promote the development of relationships between our CDLs and congressional leaders in the future. In support of these efforts, we have submitted a budget request for funds to support the FLC Chair and FLC Legislative Committee in 2024.

Bipartisan Effort to Repeal WEP/GPO

<https://rollcall.com/2023/11/28/bipartisan-consensus-elusive-on-government-retirees-benefits/>

The House Ways and Means Committee held its first hearing in years on the two provisions, dubbed the Windfall elimination provision and government pension offset, last week in Louisiana. Backers are hopeful the panel will take up bills to get rid of the laws as a next step in 2024, according to an aide, when some of the most vocal opponents may have their last chance.

Lawmakers enacted the so-called WEP and GPO provisions initially in the late 1970s and early 1980s to make sure that public employees like state government workers, firefighters, police and teachers don't get unfairly high Social Security payouts.

The intent was to prevent these public sector employees from "double dipping" — receiving both their own government pensions as well as full Social Security benefits, even though they didn't fully pay into the Social Security system via payroll taxes during their careers due to their time working as government officials.

But now most lawmakers are on board with overturning the laws, which opponents say dock benefits too severely, make it harder for public workers to retire comfortably and create a disincentive to entering public service.

While many House members want to strike the provisions and grant higher payouts for public workers, Ways and Means members and leadership tend to step in with a dose of reality. Repealing WEP and GPO would be costly and possibly grant unfairly high benefits to some retirees, they say, contending that a new formula is needed to avoid draining Social Security's retiree trust fund even sooner as it faces insolvency in the coming decade. Ways and Means has yet to find bipartisan agreement on exactly how to do that.

Ways and Means Chairman Jason Smith, R-Mo., said he plans to keep working toward a fix, saying both provisions have done a disservice to people who work for their communities. He and other panel members referred to the Louisiana hearing as only a first step in their efforts. "At the core of this issue is fairness," he said. "Congress must find a bipartisan way to provide public servants with the fair treatment that they deserve."

Graves said at the hearing that it's time "to push the gas even harder" to press for GPO and WEP repeal, as his bipartisan bill would do. It has 300 co-sponsors, including 201 Democrats and 99 Republicans.

But leaders of the effort could face more political pressure to make a stand over the next year. Redistricting in Louisiana could result in a tougher reelection race for Graves,

and the lead Democratic co-sponsor, Rep. Abigail Spanberger, of Virginia, is running for governor.

“We urge the committee to build upon this current momentum and take the final steps necessary to send our legislation to the U.S. House floor for a vote,” Graves and Spanberger said in a joint statement after the hearing. “Because Virginians, Louisianians, and Americans across the country who paid into Social Security deserve their full retirement benefits — just like everyone else.”

The hearing also underscored the Louisiana delegation’s loud voice on the issue. Johnson and Majority Leader Steve Scalise, both Louisianians, have consistently co-sponsored Graves’ bill, though they face the same cost issues that have plagued past efforts.

Last Monday, Rep. Clay Higgins, R-La., made the strongest promises on WEP and GPO to a panel of current or retired Louisiana public workers representing police, firefighters, teachers, and state employees, promising a bill would pass by the end of next year. “My colleagues up here and I, we’re tired of hearing about excuses from previous Congresses, we’re tired of politics, we’re tired of hearing how much this is going to cost,” Higgins said. “Because here’s a real simple fact, Mr. Chairman, I don’t care how much it costs — it’s not our money. This money belongs to the people that have earned it.”

The Congressional Budget Office estimated last year that striking WEP and GPO without replacements would cost \$183 billion over a decade and make Social Security unable to fully fund benefits about six months sooner.

Budget Chairman Jodey C. Arrington, R-Texas, is sponsoring the lead GOP bill to overhaul the WEP by replacing it with a new formula based on how much of a career the beneficiary spent working in Social Security-covered jobs. He took over the measure from retired former Ways and Means top Republican Kevin Brady of Texas and expanded it some to allow more potential recipients to take whichever formula offers a higher payout in benefits. Even with Ways and Means taking up the issue and a speaker who’s been an ally in the past, the panel’s top Democrat said that the cost remains a critical hang-up. “If this was easy, it would’ve been done,” Rep. Richard E. Neal, D-Mass., said.

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## **HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL NARFE/MD MEMBERS**

**“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”**

**~ Eleanor Roosevelt**





## STATE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE (SLC) REPORT



**PAUL K. SCHWARTZ**

STATE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR  
240-838-2200 / [pksyanks@aol.com](mailto:pksyanks@aol.com)

One of the most important concerns we always face as we approach the upcoming legislative session in Annapolis in January is whether there will be actual legislation that we can support in various ways. Fortunately for us there is. Both Delegate Robin Grammer (R) and Senator Benjamin Brooks (D) reached out to us to solicit our support for their sponsored bills on tax relief.

This is important for two reasons. First, it is evidence that legislators recognize that NARFE is a player and that support by NARFE is something to be sought after. Second is that we will, once again, have the opportunity to raise our voices on behalf of the issues important to all of us, like tax relief for seniors. Senator Brook's bill will seek a senior tax credit. Delegate Grammer's bill repeals state taxation of retirement income in Maryland.

On another front, we are continuing our efforts to change the way fiscal notes for legislation are calculated by the Office of Legislative Services. To aid our efforts, we have joined forces with the Maryland Military Coalition (MMC) to raise the issue to all appropriate parties and seek the needed change. The problem, of course, is that the current method of calculating the fiscal note simply does not include all elements and relative factors in the calculation. Both MMC and NARFE have had extensive dialog with members of Legislative Services and the Comptroller's office, and we are encouraged that they at least now understand our position that simply calculating the immediate loss of revenue of a particular bill without incorporating the long-term impact on the Maryland economy of that bill does not present a complete and accurate cost of the legislation.

Please remember the importance of you reaching out to your state representatives. You can learn more about our priorities and efforts by going to the MD NARFE home page. That page will provide you with a great deal of information. It will also assist you in identifying and accessing your representatives. Simply Google MD NARFE, go to the Maryland Federation of NARFE home page, then go to the upper right-hand corner and click on Legislative-State Page and then scroll down to the link that says, "What Can You Do About This?" AND THEN DO IT!





L-R: U.S. Rep. David Trone, candidate for U.S. Senate, and SLC Chair Paul Schwartz at the Maryland Federation Town Hall on Oct. 24, 2023.



State Legislative Chair Paul Schwartz MDNARFE-PAC Treasurer/Coordinator Bob Doyle  
Paul Schwartz and Bob Doyle spoke about state legislative efforts in support of seniors at the Chapter 969 Meeting Nov. 17, 2023, in Leonardtown.



Audience at the Nov. 17 Meeting of Chapter 969 St. Mary's County

## MDNARFE-PAC REPORT



**BOB DOYLE**

MDNARFE-PAC TREASURER and COORDINATOR

H 410-798-0079; C/Text 301-693-1774

[bdoyle47@verizon.net](mailto:bdoyle47@verizon.net)

I recently gave a presentation on the MDNARFE-PAC (MNP) to the St. Mary's Chapter 969 on the history and current activities of MNP, so I thought I would share this for the Winter Newsletter. (As most know, PAC stands for "Political Action Committee," which is a popular term for a political committee organized for the purpose of raising and spending money to elect and defeat candidates.) MNP was started in 2008 to be, in the words of **Dave Roseman**, former Federation Treasurer and one of the MNP founders, our "Mom and Pop" PAC – a small PAC compared to the mega-PACs in Maryland representing the cable companies, power companies, pharmaceutical companies and insurance companies (among others). As Dave put it in 2008, "the MNP doesn't have the big bucks, nor do we have professional lobbyists to represent us. What we do have is enough money to attend fundraising events, a comprehensive legislative program, and an ability to get out to our members."

The goals of the MNP as first adopted in 2008 and still true today are these:

- To provide financial assistance to candidates and members of the MD General Assembly who are committed to uphold and to actively support the MD Federation's state legislative goals.
- To build and strengthen relationships with candidates and legislators by sending NARFE members to fundraisers, allowing for face time and an opportunity to discuss MD NARFE's legislative priorities.
- To serve as a separate, segregated fund of the Federation, financed solely by voluntary contributions from NARFE MD members. No membership dues or other non-dues revenue of the Federation fund MDNARFE-PAC.

I was curious about the founding and early years of MNP regarding how much was raised, so I looked at the MNP reports filed with the MD State Board of Elections (SBE). In Maryland, all PACs are required to register with the SBE when first formed, and file required public reports on income and expenditures annually in non-Gubernatorial election years and quarterly in Gubernatorial election years. For 2008, its first year,

MNP had an ending bank balance of \$255! Among the first contributors were **Ed Bice**, the longtime Chair of the State Legislative Committee and the current MNP Chair, and **Larry Lange**, our current Federation Chaplain. As the MNP got rolling, it had a better second year with an ending balance in 2009 of \$3,411. That was probably our best year for donations, but there have been steady numbers over the years.

As a comparison to these early years, here are our 2023 totals for MNP income and expenses for 2023 as of October 30, 2023:

|                       |                               |         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------|
| Income (Donations)    | (21 Members from 16 Chapters) | \$787   |
| Expenses              | (14 Fundraisers)              | \$1,010 |
| Bank Balance 11/30/23 |                               | \$2,039 |

In a further comparison, our MNP numbers are very small compared to the NARFE national PAC (NARFE-PAC). Here are the national numbers for 2023 (all numbers through 9/30/23):

Income

Donations from National Members -- \$314,041.57

Donations from Chapter Members -- \$391,561.50

Total -- \$705,603.07

Disbursements to Federal Legislators or Candidates -- \$741,000

Also recall that as stated above, the MNP has received \$787 from Maryland Chapter members thus far in 2023. Here are the numbers for contributions from Maryland members to the National NARFE-PAC in 2023 through 9/30/23:

|                      |    |                                                         |
|----------------------|----|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 363 National Members | -- | \$17,362 (these are National Members with MD addresses) |
| 414 Chapter Members  | -- | \$30,586                                                |
| Total                | -- | \$47,948                                                |

I found all these numbers by looking at the websites of the MD SBE and the main NARFE website where you need to go to the specific pages for NARFE-PAC. For NARFE-PAC, you can even see how much each Chapter contributes – for 2023 thus far, Chapter 258 Western Montgomery County leads with 59 members contributing \$4,995. and bringing up the rear is Chapter 410 West Mar-Cumberland with three members contributing \$85.

MNP continues to work for you. For the upcoming 2024 Maryland General Assembly session, we have attended 11 fundraisers, for nine different legislators, including the following:

House Speaker Adrienne Jones (D – Dist. 10, Baltimore County)  
Senator Mary Beth Carozza (R – Dist. 38, Somerset, Wicomico & Worcester Counties)  
Senator Sarah Elfreth (D – Dist. 30, Anne Arundel County)  
Delegate Linda Foley (D – Dist. 15, Montgomery County)  
Senator Michael Jackson (D – Dist. 27, Prince George’s, Charles & Calvert Counties)  
Delegate Dana Jones (D – Dist. 30A, Anne Arundel County)  
Delegate Mike Rogers (D – Dist. 32, Anne Arundel County)  
Senator Jeff Waldstreicher (D - Dist. 18, Montgomery County)  
Senator Craig Zucker (D – Dist. 14, Montgomery County)

We anticipate attending additional fundraisers as the Session gets closer to beginning in January.

I appreciate the contributions from many members who donated to the MDNARFE-PAC during 2023, including great results at our two in-person Board meetings in Bowie in February and October where we collected respectively \$270 and \$442, a total of \$712. At these Board meetings, most of our contributors are Chapter Presidents and other Chapter officials, and Committee members. We receive very few contributions from the rank-and-file members.

While our next Board meeting is coming up in February, please communicate to your Chapter membership that they can make an investment in advancing progressive senior legislation in Maryland by supporting MDNARFE-PAC today! (Note – MDNARFE-PAC contributions are not tax-deductible for Federal or state tax purposes. Further, contributions to MDNARFE-PAC must be made only by individual members, and not by Chapters using Chapter funds. Members should make checks payable to: MDNARFE-PAC, and mail to:

Robert Doyle  
Treasurer MDNARFE-PAC  
4226 Carvel Lane  
Edgewater, MD 21037

Note: Sources for this article: MNP documents from 2008, current MNP records and historical and current statistics from MD SBE and National NARFE-PAC.

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MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY – 2024 SESSION

The 446th Legislative Session of General Assembly will meet in Annapolis, Maryland
January 10 to April 8, 2024

MEMBERSHIP REPORT



EDWARD REED

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT / MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

301-739-1641 / edr3eagle@gmail.com

Every NARFE MD Chapter President and Chapter Membership Chair must decide what must get done now and what can wait. While membership has slowly been in decline for years now, it is imperative that recruiting new and potential new members becomes the centerpiece of focus.

This priority cannot wait to be addressed any longer by National NARFE Headquarters alone. Every Federation and every Chapter and Member must become recruiters, if the NARFE Organization is to be relevant in the future.

The vital importance of a strong organization's survival depends on a strong membership number to be relevant if our voices as federal active and retired civil servants will be heard throughout the halls of Congress, White House, and State Legislative branches.

Membership goals are about building and nurturing relationships with your target audience to gain and keep more members for your organization. Your membership aims help you answer the question of whether you are fulfilling your membership value proposition.

You must first measure progress on your objectives with metrics and markers. Sometimes it is often good to create SMART goals for your membership campaigns. SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time bound.

The goal of membership can vary depending on the organization. However, in general, membership goals are set to gain and keep more members for the organization by proving the value that membership offers to them.

Membership objectives help organizations answer the question of whether they are fulfilling their membership value proposition. They measure progress on this aim with metrics and markers. Analysis of these metrics should reveal aspects of the membership that need improvement or challenges that need overcoming. These will form the basis for

the goals and objectives that the organization aims to achieve over the next year.

Here is a research statistic done by the Michigan State University, that has been written down and shared with various students and researchers: SMART goals with teams can increase the chance of success by 33%.

Now, the MD Federation of NARFE's current total membership numbers, as of 11/29, 2023, stand at 10,085 (4,705 Chapter Members and 5,380 National Members). Let us "GO FORWARD" and, in the words of our NARFE National President Bill Shackelford, "Place our emphasis on Recruiting, Retention and Reinstatement" of new, current and former NARFE members! Fulfillment of these efforts will require an aggressive approach by all current Active NARFE Members to ensure that NARFE remains viable in the future. Let's ALL Be Aggressive in our 2024 Membership Efforts!

SECRETARY'S REPORT



Melody Kebe

FEDERATION SECRETARY
melodykebe@gmail.com

No report this issue.



Stuart Sklamm

srsklamm@msn.com

Treasurer Stuart Sklamm resigned his office as Treasurer as of October 19, 2023. The members of the Maryland Federation of NARFE thank Stu for his many years of service as the NARFE/MD Treasurer.

REGION II VICE PRESIDENT REPORT



LARRY WALTON

REGION II VICE PRESIDENT

443-831-1791 / lrwalto@yahoo.com

As I begin this article, I personally hope that every one of you had a happy, safe, and prosperous holiday season and I wish you the same in the New Year.

Since being sworn in as Region II Vice President back in January 2023, at a February National Executive Board meeting, I decided to continue the course of focusing on the declining membership dilemma affecting the entire organization, including my region.

I began my own research by surveying the landscape, considering the environment of our areas, demographics, ethnicities, education, religion, creed, and values that are closely held in the five federations in our region, as an entity of NARFE.

To develop a plan that produces results for all five federations as a collective group of members with the same goals, mission, and purpose, one must know each federation's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, that arise to do damage and disrupt our organization's core purpose as the only organization solely dedicated to the general welfare of all federal workers and retirees.

Data analysis that goes into strategic planning, and the various techniques that provide the valuable assessment tools needed to identify core strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats lead to fact-based analysis, fresh perspectives, and new ideas.

When it comes to the many operations, functions, procedures involving various processes and the effectiveness of each federation's core mission and purpose in adding value and providing training to all members of Region II, which includes these five state federations, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. Region II is one of the leading examples of all NARFE Regions that have an RVP in this association.

One key element going forward, with what the previous Region II VP Dr. Gary Roundtree Sr., implemented during his tenure from 2021 through 2022, was a new approach, and way to use technology for learning the skills needed to grow our membership numbers among the five federations.

Finding a new way of organizing, coordinating, reinforcing, communicating, advertising the value of NARFE, through enhancement tools that are available to all to be laser focused on our purpose and mission strategy with NARFE vital resources available to those who volunteer to provide better membership value to all our members with statistical data analysis surveys that use lean six sigma processes of improving daily operations functions as an association driven by membership.

After coordination with the five Region II Federation Presidents, Dr. Gary Roundtree Sr., Ph.D., (MD), President Rich Zuck (PA), President John Szpyhulsky (NJ), President Vinnie Warr (DE), and President Lynn Hill (Washington, D.C.), a decision was made to continue the unified plan Operation Recruit, to recruit new and potential members, at large organization conventions and conferences as either a sponsor, vendor, or partner with these organizations, to enhance awareness that NARFE provides a valuable service for all federal workers and retirees every day, advocating for and protecting their retirement benefits. The first convention at which Region II recruited for NARFE was August 7-13 in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

The National Executive Board (NEB) held its Federation Presidents and NEB Meetings August 27 – 30, 2023, at the Sheraton Suites, Alexandria, Virginia.

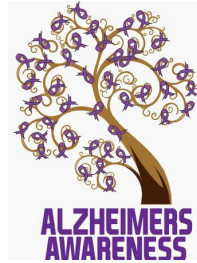
Another NEB meeting, held virtually on October 20, 2023, was mostly about the timeline for national bylaws amendments and election voting.

On December 8-9, 2023, the NEB held another meeting to discuss current issues confronting the organization, such as membership and other relevant matters of concern on the agenda, moving forward to improve the organization from top to bottom.



L-R: Region II VP Larry Walton and MD Federation President Gary Roundtree Sr., Ph.D., recruiting in Atlantic City.

FEDERATION ALZHEIMER'S REPORT



VIRGINIA BENDER

MD FEDERATION ALZHEIMER'S COORDINATOR

860-823-9312 / vbender21804@gmail.com

854 Tern Ln. Apt. 204, Salisbury, MD 21804

Plan for legal matters related to Alzheimer's or another dementia.

Planning for the future is important for everyone, but legal plans are especially vital for a person diagnosed with dementia. The sooner these plans are put into place, the more likely it is that the person living with dementia will be able to participate in the process.

What you can do with ALZNavigator www.ALZ.org Search for ALZNavigator

Learn what to expect and how to prepare for the future.

Get connected with local resources and find support.

Gain the confidence to live well through every stage of the disease.

Sleep issues are common in people living with Alzheimer's.

People living with Alzheimer's, or another dementia may have issues sleeping or increasing behavioral problems that begin at dusk and last into the night (known as sundowning). As many as 20 percent of people living with Alzheimer's will experience confusion, anxiety, and agitation late in the day.

1. Limit naps, and make sure the person gets enough rest at night. Being overly tired can increase late-afternoon and nighttime restlessness.
2. Plan activities that use more energy early in the day. For example, try bathing in the morning.
3. Set a quiet, peaceful mood in the evening to help the person relax. Keep the lights low, reduce the noise levels, and play soothing music.
4. Try to have the person go to bed at the same time each night. A bedtime routine, such as reading out loud, also may help.
5. Limit caffeine.
6. Use nightlights in the bedroom, hall, and bathroom.

For more information, contact www.ALZ.org or call 1-800-272-3900

REPORT FROM PAT FARMER, NARFE/MD REPRESENTATIVE TO THE MARYLAND GERONTOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

This is a summary of a Holiday Message sent from our Maryland Gerontological Association (MGA) Executive Director Joann Francavilla.

Over the last year, the dedicated MGA Board of Directors has worked tirelessly to bring MGA back to life as a relevant and trusted resource for professionals in the field of Aging.

In 2023, MGA offered a free membership program to re-engage and plant seeds of growth to build our infrastructure. To date, we have over 300 professionals who have agreed to be members and 1,000 individuals on our email distribution list. We have also expanded our board membership geographically throughout the state, to include new professions and professionals at different stages of their careers. Over the past year, MGA has offered 23 Category 1 Social Work CEUs, both through MGA programming and our relationships with partner organizations. We have hosted seven Free Virtual Seminars on topics such as, Ethics, Courageous Conversations, and updates on the Maryland Multisector Plan for Aging. In May, we hosted over 100 professionals at our 38th Annual Conference, the first in-person event since 2019. The conference was supported by 27 Sponsors and Exhibitors.

Behind the scenes, MGA launched a new website. www.maryland-mga.org, a weekly newsletter, strengthened partnerships and its infrastructure. Looking forward to 2024, our committees have been designing a robust member benefit program, planning monthly educational programs, networking events, and our 39th Annual Conference on May 21, 2024.

If you, or a family member or friend in the field of aging would like to join MGA, go to the website, www.maryland-mga.org.

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### **THANK YOU**

This is my last issue of the Maryland Federation Newsletter as your production manager, editor and distribution manager. I want to thank all the officers, chapter presidents, committee chairs, our Federation photographer, and any other contributors who provided reports, information, and photographs for each issue of the Federation Newsletter over the many years I have produced the news for you. It has been a pleasure to provide you and the Federation this support and service. Best Wishes to all NARFE/MD members.

*Pat Farmer*

## IN MEMORIAM



**Linda Lee Cohen**

**Linda Lee Cohen, MD, MPH**, was born on August 22, 1938, in Louisville, Kentucky, and passed away on October 20, 2023, in Rockville, Maryland, at age 85. She was the daughter of Dr. Armand E. Cohen and Jean Kohn Cohen. A graduate of the University of Michigan and Columbia University Medical School, she spent her entire career in the public health field. During her tenure with the U.S. Public Health Service, she helped numerous hospitals in the state of Louisiana to meet Medicare standards. She worked for many years as a medical device regulator for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, focusing mainly on ophthalmological devices.

Dr. Cohen held many leadership roles in Toastmasters International and helped to establish 27 Toastmasters clubs in the Washington, D.C. area. She was NARFE Chapter 1892 Aspen Hill past president. Her life was one of service, helping thousands of people, just as she loved to do.

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Photo Memories of Dr. Linda Lee Cohen Provided by Ron Shansby, President Chapter 1887

PHOTO COLLAGE ~ AROUND THE FEDERATION ~ YEAR IN REVIEW





A BLAST FROM THE MARYLAND FEDERATION PAST



L-R: Past State President Ted Jensen, Past Region II Vice President Dr. Gary Roundtree Sr., Past Region II VP Evelyn Kirby, Senator Ben Cardin, Past State President Ron Bowers, and the late Jim Cowey

AROUND THE FEDERATION



CHAPTER 306 Hagerstown

Photograph taken by John Hess.

Hagerstown Chapter 306 held a membership meeting on November 10, 2023, and honored their veterans.
L to R: Randy Burns, Charley Ware, Ed Reed, Bob Snyder, Jill Thompson, Eugene Gay, and Russ Wingerd.

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## MARYLAND FEDERATION OF NARFE OCTOBER 24 BOARD MEETING AND TOWN HALL

*Photos by Maryland Federation Photographer Melinda Scott*



**Independent Candidate for Senate  
Emmanuel Osuchukwu**



**L-R: Region II VP Larry Walton, moderator of the Town Hall,  
Rep. David Trone, Candidate for Senate, and Chapter 1936  
Co-President Barbara Cuffie who asked the candidate questions.**



**L-R: 2nd VP Ed Reed, Secretary Melody Kebe, Region II VP Larry Walton,  
President Gary Roundtree, Rep. David Trone, Chapter 1936 Co-President  
Barbara Cuffie, and 1st VP Ed Holland.**



**L-R: Phil Woodruff, Chapter 2262 President, Angela Hyman, Chapter 1747 President, and  
President Gary Roundtree, Installing Officer**

## VENDORS AT THE OCTOBER 24 BOARD MEETING

MANY THANKS TO MARYLAND RELAY, UNITED HEALTHCARE, AETNA, GEHA, AND  
CAREFIRST BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD



## REMEMBERING OUR VENDORS IN OCEAN CITY





## ADDITIONAL NARFE RECRUITMENT PHOTOS

### Marine Corps League National Convention 2023 in Oklahoma City



NARFE/MD President Gary Roundtree Sr., Ph.D. recruiting for NARFE in Oklahoma City.



Audience at Marine Corps League Convention

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DAV Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey



FEDERATION DIRECTORY (abbreviated)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President / Gary Roundtree Sr., Ph.D. / 240-749-0014 / groundtreesr@hotmail.com
1 VP / Legislation / Edward Holland / 301-848-3476 / hollandnmd@aol.com
2nd VP / Membership / Edward Reed / 301-739-1641 / edr3eagle@gmail.com
Secretary / Melody Kebe / 240-472-5798 / melodykebe@gmail.com
Assistant Secretary / Virginia Bender / 860-823-9312 / vbender21804@gmail.com
Treasurer / Vacant
Assistant Treasurer / Patricia Bell / patricia.bell8@verizon.net
Immediate Past President / Sudha Haley, Ph.D. / 410-535-4998 / sudhabhagwat2002@yahoo.com
Past President / Dan McGrath / 757-436-1095 / mcgrathsop@aol.com
Past President / Ted Jensen / 301-667-3165 / grandpated1@gmail.com
Past President / Ron Bowers / 410-308-0420 / narfebowers@msn.com

COMMITTEE CHAIR CONTACTS

Alzheimer's Coordinator / Virginia Bender / 860-823-9312 / vbender21804@gmail.com
Chapter Development / Edward Reed / 301-739-1641 / edr3eagle@gmail.com
FEEA Coordinator / Eleanor Kaul / 410-896-4354 / eekaul@comcast.net
Federal Legislative Committee Chair / Frank Lee / 410-672-5065 / fllee0716@verizon.net
NARFE-PAC Coordinator / Frank Lee / 410-672-5065 / fllee0716@verizon.net
Budget Officer / Maria Ray / 410-279-4333 / msray0505@gmail.com
MDNARFE-PAC Treasurer / Bob Doyle / 410-798-0079 / bdoyle47@verizon.net
Program Director/PR Director / Edward Holland / 301-848-3476 / hollandnmd@aol.com
Resolutions Chair / Bessie Johnson / bessevents@hotmail.com
Chaplain / Larry Lange / 301-644-1875 / llange3751@aol.com
State Legislative Committee Chair / Paul Schwartz / 240-838-2200 / pksyanks@aol.com
Webmaster / Morse Solomon / narfemdfed@gmail.com
Social Media (Facebook/LinkedIn) / Howard Gordon / 301-464-2745 / flash@acm.org

REGION II (DC/DE/MD/NJ/PA)

Region II Vice President / Larry Walton / 443-831-1791 / lrwalto@yahoo.com
Region II CAB Appointee / Howard Gordon / 301-464-2745 / flash@acm.org
Region II Alzheimer's Coordinator / Kathy Siggins / 301-829-2462 / siggimax@mindspring.com

CHAPTERS AND PRESIDENTS

126 Western Charles/Indian Head Ron Bush
251 Annapolis Carla Duls
258 Western Montgomery County Lois Ann Beaver
306 Hagerstown Patricia Nix
409 Frederick Elinor Abrell
410 West-Mar/Cumberland Daniel Moore
422 Laurel Samuel Raines
969 St. Mary's County Joe Moffatt
1143 Leisure World Vacant
1260 Southern Prince George's County Co-Presidents Brenda Hill Johnson and Tiffany Daniel
1466 Calvert County Vacant
1522 Susquehanna Barry Decker, Interim
1734 Howard County Teresa Baker
1747 Greater Bowie/Crofton Angela Hyman
1770 Bel Air James Wood
1887 Wheaton/Glenmont Ron Shansby
1888 White Oak Marcia Swanson
1892 Aspen Hill Sarah Richards
1936 NW Baltimore Metro Co-Presidents Barbara Cuffie and Bessie Johnson
1972 Waldorf/La Plata Edward Holland
2262 Upper Marlboro Phil Woodruff
2274 Ocean Area Virginia Bender
2306 Carroll County Charles Harrison

NOTE: See Federation Directory for complete information on all officers, committee chairs and chapter presidents.



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

Maryland Federation Newsletter

Protect Your Retirement

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<https://www.linkedin.com/company/narfe-md-federation> LinkedIn

<https://www.WWW.MDNARFE.ORG>

Maryland Federation Website with links for Easy Browsing!

Maryland Federation of NARFE
Post Office Box 3527
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2024 CALENDAR

January	1	Completed Budget Due; Presented at Feb. Board
January	19	Registration Due for Feb. 6 Board Meeting
February	5	Executive Committee Meeting, 3-6 p.m., Bowie
February	6	Board Meeting, Comfort Inn, Bowie
February	17	Call Letter to Mini-Conference
March	7	Spring Newsletter deadline – articles due to Newsletter Editor