

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING  
SC FEDERATION OF CHAPTERS OF NARFE  
JANUARY 9, 2012

President Bill Nicol called the meeting held at Seawells in Columbia to order at 10:00 a.m. He welcomed those present, but expressed disappointment at the number of Chapter Presidents who were absent. Chaplain Nellie Bodenhamer offered the invocation. Sgt-at-Arms Charles Giavelli led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Secretary Esther Crandall read the roll call. Parliamentarian Robbie Ann White determined there was a quorum. There were 13 voting members present, with a total attendance of 30, which included officers, DFO's, Committee Chairs, Chapter Presidents, Region III National Field VP Donald Stewart, and guests.

A motion was made by Charles Giavelli and seconded by Paul Donahue to accept the minutes of the May 23, 2011 meeting as published. Motion carried, and the minutes were approved.

Correspondence: Bill Nicol read a letter from the National President to Larry Shaff thanking him for his work on the National Bylaws Committee.

Treasurer Joe McCarty reported that he had sent per capita dues notices to DFO's. He reminded those who drove to the meeting to turn in a reimbursement request. He provided a report of budget versus expenditures through December 31, 2011. Assets on hand are \$26,125.92. Paul Donahue moved, Charles Giavelli seconded to accept the report. The motion carried unanimously.

Region III VP Don Stewart reported that our biggest problem is membership loss. MGI was contracted and made a report that didn't reflect anything we haven't already been doing. We have to aim high, with each Federation trying to get 1,000 reinstatements before the convention. He reported that the Bylaws Revision Committee submitted very important input. The National Office needs new equipment and will replace as we have the funds. Don is optimistic that NARFE does a lot, but we have to concentrate on what needs to be accomplished in membership recruitment and retention. Contributions of \$299K paid for the Protect America's Heartbeat campaign. The Retirement Seminar program was dropped because it cost more than it benefited. We need to find the process to get into local pre-retirement seminars. The National Office will push for a "Who Do You Know" campaign in April.

District Field Officer Reports:

#1 - Margaret Baptiste reported that as Past National President, she had had the opportunity to attend meetings in Pawleys Island and Hilton Head. She also spoke at the SC Convention of the Rural Letter Carriers in North Charleston. She was assisted by then Chapter 72

President Frank Stevens at this event. She reported that Barbara Bryan, Summerville Chapter President, suggested, and the other two District chapters agreed to participate in the Summerville Flowertown Festival in the spring. They hope to give the Association greater exposure in the area. Barbara Bryan reported that Summerville is slowly losing members. Their Vice President calls members who receive second notices and all new members. Their meeting notices are in the paper, and they just signed up for Calling Post. Mimi Scharf reported that the Charleston Chapter had problems getting officers, but that had been solved. Esther Crandall reported that North Charleston's membership is steady. They are using Calling Post as a meeting reminder. They continue to have a problem filling several officer and committee chair positions. A welcome letter is sent to each new member. The Vice President calls each member receiving a second notice.

#2 - Ernest Williams reported that Columbia Chapter 87 continues to support all of NARFE's initiatives and programs. All officer positions have been filled for 2012. One of their challenges is to improve member participation on committees. From April-December 2011, Chapter 87 donated \$2563 to NARFE Alzheimer's Research. Aiken Chapter 934 has been active with their monthly meetings (except June-August), with normal attendance at 20-25 members and guests. They have an informative speaker at each meeting. Their Legislative Chair, John Geiger, also provides the latest information affecting chapter members and reports on visits he made to legislative delegations, both state and federal. Last month, they began an additional method of meeting notification via "robocalling." Orangeburg Chapter 1170 is still struggling for survival. Only 2 to 3 members attend chapter meetings. Clara Gillentine, Columbia Chapter VP/Membership Chair, reported on her efforts on recruiting and retention. She calls each member who receives a second renewal notice. If unable to contact by phone, she sends a letter. She also calls each member who has been dropped for non-renewal. If unable to reach, she sends a letter. Members who are dropped are contacted again when they are actually dropped. From December 2010 through December 2011, out of 131 members who received a second notice and were contacted, 19 reinstated, in December one said that she had paid her dues and one said she was going to renew. In November six members said that they had mailed their dues. The chapter maintains contact with members through a 22-member committee. In October, each chapter member was contacted to alert them to look for the upcoming chapter newsletter, which would contain important health insurance information and a reminder to attend the Christmas meeting. Through these phone calls, the chapter has disconnected phone numbers and that three people on the roster were deceased. In the area of recruiting, the chapter has formed a Retention and Recruitment Committee that is arranging an exhibit at Ft Jackson during their Armed Forces Day celebration.

#3 - Robbie Ann White reported that Clemson is doing well as their new President, Fred Delcamp, has taken office. A membership plan is taking form for the new year. Programs were excellent in

2011, and the new Chair seems to be very good. The Anderson chapter is active with Harry Brown continuing as President. Attendance at meetings is good. Harry is active in distributing membership packages and has excellent programs. Greenwood is still not actively meeting. She has contacted a few members and some prospective new members in the Greenwood area. She is hopeful of starting back with a few meetings a year until they can get the chapter running again. As DFO, she distributes information to District 3 Presidents and others with e-mail addresses. She feels that the more everyone is informed, the better and stronger the organization we will have. She reminded us that we still get \$8 for active members signed up, so we should use our membership and chapter number on the applications.

#4 - Jeanette Keepers reported that newly-elected Greenville President, Mitch Upton, could not attend because of a previously scheduled medical procedure. Mike Donahue, the new Vice President, was ill and could not attend. Jeanette has retained the position of President in Spartanburg. Also attending the Board meeting was Virginia "Jinx" Jenkins, their new VP. Jinx and Mitch Upton attended the Leadership Symposium, and as part of their commitment, they have accepted leadership positions. Joe McCarty reported that the Greenville chapter meets monthly with interesting and informative speakers. The chapter uses e-mail notification for meetings and to distribute the chapter newsletter. Calling Post is used for those without e-mail. Calling Post is working very well. They have had no complaints and a number of positive comments. Quarterly meeting notice postcards have helped somewhat with meeting attendance although its effectiveness seems to be in decline. Spartanburg and Greenville both have the typical problems of an aging membership and the recruitment and retention. The chapters have been contacting by phone any member sent a second notice and then a letter with application forms, etc., when they have been dropped for non-payment of dues. This has had some limited success and is likely worth the effort. The Greenville area does not have any one large single federal employer. Many of our members have moved to the area after retirement. We have not had any good way of getting to these people as they move in except through personal contact. Jeanette Keepers reported for the Spartanburg chapter that their significant problem is that they are dealing with aging, illness, Alzheimer's, death, and economic constraints. Recruitment is pretty much non-existent due to four of the five reasons listed above. Retention, or the reason given for not renewing membership, is based on the fifth reason, economic constraints. Some members say they'll rejoin at a later date. Another told her that by not renewing, he would be able to pay his heating bill. Many of the messages she left on answering machines were never returned. She feels like they think of her as just another telemarketer. In closing, she said that it is very depressing for her to report that, unless they can get things turned around, Chapter 560 will be at less than 100 members by year's end. And, unless they can get members to step up to leadership positions, Chapter 560 just might be history.

#5 - Virginia Pratt was absent and did not provide a report.

#6 - Jesse Adams reported that in 2009 Florence had 156 members and now has 187. Linda Kossow/Pagani's written report pointed out that 2011 was a "let's stay alive year" for Myrtle Beach. They have discontinued having rummage sales and participating in parades due to health issues. They have had good speakers at monthly meetings including topics such as exercising from a lounge chair, hospice, and a veteran exploring effects of Agent Orange. In March, the Myrtle Beach chapter will be 45 years old. They are having a birthday party with some "artifacts" found in the records. Members of the Retirement Club, which was formed while NARFE in Myrtle Beach was awaiting a charter, are invited to attend the celebration.

#7 - In Mamie's absence, she provided a written report as well as written reports from Chapters 1015 and 1021. The Hilton Head chapter is very active in their community and has a steady growth in membership each year. The Beaufort chapter is also active in their recruiting efforts. She has visited Parris Island to get permission to talk with the civil service employees on both Parris Island and the Air Station and is awaiting a return call from the Civil Law Office. Beaufort is having trouble getting free ads in the paper. They participated in the 52nd annual Beaufort Water Festival parade, and annual Veteran's Day parade, and the annual Christmas parade. A more concerted effort will be made to connect with the military presence in Beaufort. The Walterboro chapter is not really active. They have changed their meetings from monthly to quarterly.

#### Committee Reports:

Alzheimer's - Betty Wessinger reported that four more researchers were hired last fall with the contributions collected from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011. As of October 31, 2011, NARFE members have given a total of \$9,399.712 for Alzheimer's research. At this time, we are \$600,000 short of our goal of \$10M. We still have time to meet that goal. Since April 1, 2011, SC has sent \$4966.33 given through chapters. Members sent \$1422.10 directly to Chicago, and \$866.49 was given to 50/50 winners through ticket sales last April. This makes \$4284.92 total amount collected from South Carolina. We still have three months before our convention, so Betty is hoping we can get another \$1,000 by March 31 of this year. All Chapters are reminded to have their Treasurers send all Alzheimer's money to Betty by March 25, 2012.

Newsletter - Harry Brown thanked all for the input and Paul Donahue for placing the newsletter on the web site. He asked for chapter input, including photos. Jesse Adams asked that the columns be used to save space and that it be issued before the first of each month.

FEEA - Margaret Baptiste reported that she has made numerous requests in the Federation newsletter for members and chapters to help

support other members through donations to NARFE FEEA to assist in times of emergency and to aid those applying for scholarships. In July, she, Sondra Pfaehler and Mimi Scharf judged the SC scholarship entries. They made a difficult decision and returned the results to Sandy McKinney, the Region III coordinator. So far this year, four SC chapters have contributed \$513 to NARFE FEEA. She reminded members that FEEA had taken on the disaster area after the Oklahoma City bombing. After Hugo, South Carolina members received about \$5,000. We are helping other NARFE members when we support NARFE FEEA, so please encourage members to contribute to our NARFE FEEA funds.

Legislation - John Geiger is still trying to get a Legislative Point of Contact for Districts 1, 4, and 6. Protect the Heartbeat of America has succeeded in putting us on the Congressional Radar Screen. National call-ins at key times have had an effect - continue your efforts. Five of six of our Representatives and Senator DeMint are aligned with the Tea Party calling for smaller Government and use of Federal Employees to reduce the deficit. They have consistently voted for Government Shutdown (against CR's) and against raising the Debt Ceiling.

Membership - Sally DePreker reported that membership is an area of grave concern for us all because without LOTS of members, NARFE cannot make its voice heard in Washington. A NARFE Membership Toolkit is being developed and will be ready in July. Special training for recruitment and retention is also being developed and will be provided at the National Convention. A membership webinar will be available in September that will offer "one-on-one" coaching for leaders and members on recruiting tactics. She encouraged everyone to check out the NARFE Chapters and Federations Online Activities Module (OAM), which is located on the NARE Website's NARFE Officer Home Page.

Web Coordinator Paul Donahue reported that, as compared to the National NARFE web site, ours is geared to what we in South Carolina are doing in the present. Ours is an informational site, updated by Paul when information is forwarded to him for posting purposes. Over the years he has made futile attempts at recruiting interested members to consider maintaining their chapter website. Some have tried; sadly, all have failed. Our website will only be as good as the information contained therein. At the very least, our officer listing should be updated each year after elections. We're supposed to do that anyway through our annual F7, which can easily be sent to Paul. What's that about two birds with one stone?

Unfinished Business - Sally encouraged all chapters to be in the process of selecting its nominee for the first annual Judy Kemp Outstanding Service Award. District Field Officers will select district nominees by March 1. President Nicol will name a committee to select the Federation's winner. The winner will be recognized at the convention in April and will receive a free registration and room at the convention.

New Business - Historian Paul Donahue reported that he attended both Executive Board meetings in 2011. He wrote a series of brief history articles for the Federation Newsletter on the birth of the SC Federation and also on the North Charleston, Summerville, Hilton Head, Greenville, Columbia and Clemson chapters, with help from various chapter members. He has bound five volumes of SC NARFE Executive Board Meeting Minutes, with sundry correspondence items having been collected from 1965 through 2010. He has bound two volumes of Federation Annual Convention programs, also from 1965 to 2010. At the 2011 convention, he presented Anniversary Certificates to Florence, Greenville, Newberry, Spartanburg, and Rock Hill.

At last year's Federation Convention, some members were introduced to the latest in technological advances, especially in the area of multi-party video-conferencing communications." It was our way of convincing you- our members - that we can actually conduct meaningful business meetings without leaving the sanctity of our homes. With the current cost of gas and the added cost of a meal necessary to secure a suitable meeting place, a few hours of driving time, all of a sudden the luxury of your very own den or office seems very appealing. Consider both from a monetary as well as a time-saving aspect. At Hickory Knob, we introduced a product aptly named GO TO MEETING. Paul had been introduced to this concept by other NARFE members currently enjoying its benefits and extolling its virtues. Basically, it is a web-conferencing software program that enhances your desktop and laptop, especially if outfitted with a Webcam. In this way you can become an integral part of the conference call, even to be able to share data files from your computer with the other conferees. One person is designated as the "meeting moderator," who controls the meeting by inviting participants via e-mail and who can designate any other participant to take over the meeting. Go To Meeting costs \$49/month and can be used by up to 15 participants at a time. Paul was able to explore its capabilities for 30 days before he would have to commit to a year's contract. After he cancelled, he was deluged with all sorts of enticing offers reducing those fees to \$39/month. Prior to Christmas, the latest enticement dropped the monthly fee to an all-time low of \$29/month. Paul forwarded this offer to President Nicol, who asked him to make this presentation today, which he hereby offers as a New Business Item. After discussion, President Nicol suggested that the meeting after the convention would be nice as a Go To Meeting, but not the January meeting. Margaret Baptiste moved and Jeanette Keepers seconded that we pursue a 30-day Go To Meeting trial period after the convention. The motion carried. Bill Nicol and Paul Donahue will set it up.

Margaret reminded all chapters that it is very important for all to be represented at the National Convention because of bylaws amendments.

Bill Nicol pointed out that Public Relations and PAC chair positions are still vacant. Betty Wessenger could use some help with Alzheimer's, preferably someone who lives close to her.

Bill Nicol will chair the 2012 Convention. He will follow the same format as last year. He asked for topics for the agenda.

The next meeting will be in June 2012.

Following the benediction by Chaplain Nellie Bodenhamer, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ESTHER L. CRANDALL  
Federation Secretary