

August 2009

**Message from the SC Federation President**

(From John Geiger - Federation President)

This time 2 weeks ago, I was getting ready to head to Grand Rapids, Michigan, for the 2009 Federation Presidents Meeting. This 2-day meeting was a great opportunity to meet the Presidents of the 48 (of 54) Federations who were in attendance, receive some very valuable training from the NARFE Enhancement Committee members, discuss mutual challenges and success stories from across the country, and share some face time with the National Executive Board (NEB). All of this was conducted at the Amway Grand Plaza which allowed us to experience Grand Rapids, the site of the 2010 National Convention. It was very interesting to hear recruiting and retention initiatives from each of the Federations that provided great ideas for all-from metro bus signs to health fairs and everything in between. Dan Adcock, NARFE National Legislative Director, presented an excellent talk on Health Care Reform with implications on how it will affect the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP). Look to the September NARFE Magazine and the weekly GEMS emails for the latest on this crucial subject, which saw the House adjourn for the summer recess without action.



John Geiger,  
SC Federation President

This ties right in to every South Carolina Federation member's part in the Grass-Roots Advocacy Month. With the House members already returned to their districts, and the Senators following August 7, our plans should be clear to keep the pressure up our Legislative Delegation by meeting with them, attending Town Hall opportunities, and reminding them we are a force. Chapter Presidents, please let me know of your plans and actual meetings so we can keep tabs on our overall progress. Our keen interest continues in the SC Delegation supporting Premium Conversion and repeal of Government Pension Offset/Windfall Elimination Provision. With regard to Health Care Reform, it's a moving target so far and NARFE has taken "NO position on current Health Care Legislation" (per the latest GEMS), so we need to stick to our agenda. Good luck as we make the best of the available time to appear on our Delegation's collective radar screen.

The 2009 NARFE Dues Referendum procedures explanation appeared in this month's NARFE Magazine (p.42 August 2009). Each member should vote, whether with the Chapter or by Special Coupon for those unable to make a Chapter meeting. The voting window begins in early September and extends to December 8. In discussing this with Nathaniel Brown, NARFE National Secretary, at the Grand Rapids meeting, he strongly encouraged voting as early as possible to make sure that we receive everyone's vote in time. Your participation is critical as we look to the continued viability of NARFE for the years ahead.

Finally, I can personally assure you that your 2010 Federation Convention planning continues for the Spartanburg Convention to be held April 21- 23, 2010 at the Marriott Spartanburg at Renaissance Park. Jeanette Keepers, our First Vice President and Convention Chair, is working hard with her Committees to produce an outstanding 46th Annual Convention.

Thanks to each of you for your service, your continued support of your Chapters, the SC Federation and NARFE.

Best regards,

John Geiger  
President,  
South Carolina Federation of NARFE Chapters

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## **MESSAGE FROM THE FEDERATION 1<sup>ST</sup> VICE PRESIDENT**

(Jeanette Keepers, Spartanburg Chapter 560)

### **Membership Report**

It's very interesting to me how things and events have a way of juxtaposing themselves with what's going on in our daily lives. I was visiting my brother in Boulder, CO, in July and learned a very important lesson. He's an active member of NARFE and has been for at least three years now. His wife, who recently retired from Federal service, joined while still employed, but is now in the "Retired" portion of our members. As a mid-level supervisor (GS-13), he finds it very disconcerting that his superiors are not pushing membership or even the concept of NARFE to his fellow employees.



Jeanette Morales Keepers, 1<sup>st</sup> VP

He knows that I'm the Membership Chair in the SC NARFE Federation and urges me to stress to our Headquarters at National the importance of getting the word out to all those young, uninformed Federal employees. I mentioned that there are retirement seminars and the like, but he says it's obviously not working. I turned it around and asked him what he's doing about the situation, besides telling his supervisors and the Human Resource folks. I stressed to him that the most successful and proven way of getting employees (and retirees) to join NARFE is on a one-to-one basis. Each NARFE member needs to consider him- or herself a recruiter. While he's shared the NARFE magazine with his co-workers, my brother falls short when it comes to carrying the applications and informative brochures with him for NARFE membership. I'm still working on him!

This brings me to the lesson I learned while visiting my brother and I shared it with the 2010 Convention Planning Committee. Based on my brother's input and my discussion with him, we were able to come up with the theme for our Convention: "Building a Stronger NARFE – One Member at a Time."

My brother is still doing more to recruit and to spread the word than most of us. I ask you, "What have you done lately?" Let's get the word out to both active and retired Federal employees to recruit, retain and build a stronger NARFE.

Jeanette M. Keepers  
1VP/Membership and Convention Chair

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## **MESSAGE FROM REGION III NATIONAL VP**

(From Bob Harrell, National VP Region III)

The end of summer is fast approaching and NARFE has had a very successful year. In the meantime, most of our chapters are resuming regular meeting schedules. With the return to their scheduled chapter meetings, many choices need to be made. One very important decision is "how many of our members are we going to assist with attending the Region III Leadership Training in October". In the past, this training seminar has proven very beneficial to the members in attendance; thus, helping them to prepare for leadership roles in NARFE and their chapters. Also, each member has been or will be informed of the importance of passing the "Dues Referendum." Each chapter will be voting on the referendum during their September to November meetings. The preparation for this referendum has been received as one step forward. During the conventions and through correspondence with chapters, it was revealed that many chapters do not have news letters as a means of contacting their members. Therefore, NARFE decided to include in the "NARFE Magazine" a coupon whereby each member could complete and mail to their chapter president to indicate their preference on the referendum. The manner in which a chapter uses this additional information must be determined by the members in attendance at the meeting when ballots are recorded.

The above items are very important to the future of NARFE. As each of you give serious consideration to this message, I will close with my many thanks for all you do for NARFE and for the support you have given me while serving as Region III VP.

See you in Columbus, GA, on October 6-8, 2009.  
Bob Harrell

## **IMPORTANT SERVICE OFFICER DOCUMENTS**

(Larry T. Shaff, Federation Service Officer)

There are two important Service Officer documents, namely,

-- NARFE Duties and Responsibilities: Chapter Service Officer, F-58. This four page document describes the five major duties of the chapter service officer. The titles of these duties are

1. Meet the practical needs of chapter members
2. Facilitate liaisons between members and the Office of Personnel Management
3. Help expedite applications for benefits
4. Help members obtain information about the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHP) and Medicare
5. Help members obtain information about programs of other agencies

-- Service Officer Guide, FH-10. This approximate 50 page handbook contains detailed information on many subjects such as survivor benefits, withholding income taxes, health benefits, life insurance, changes in marital status, Social Security and Medicare benefits, etc.

Both of these publications are available from the NARFE national office at no cost. The most expeditious method is to place an order on the NARFE website. After entering the website as a member, select NARFE Leadership under Departments. Along the left side of the leadership page under Forms select Requisition for Printed Supplies (F-18) and complete the interactive form for F-58 and FH-10. If you prefer to order by mail use the printed Requisition for Printed Supplies, F-18, that should be available from your chapter secretary. If the secretary does not have the requisition I can mail a copy to you. The form can also be obtained from the NARFE website. After signing in as a member, select Downloadable Forms under What You Can Do Online along the left side of the display and scroll down the list of forms to F-18 Requisition for Printed Supplies. The form can now be selected and printed. Another option is to ask me for the documents (telephone 843-842-6708, e-Mail shafflj@aol.com). I will place an order on the NARFE website and have the publications mailed to you.

Larry T. Shaff  
Federation Service Officer

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## **CHANGE TO FEDERATION GUIDELINES**

(Larry T. Shaff, Bylaws Officer)

During the June 8th Executive Board meeting a change was made for the procedure to notify the Federation Secretary of the attendees for Federation Conventions. This new procedure required a revision to the Secretary's duties in the Operating Guidelines as shown below.

### **OPERATING GUIDELINES, Dated January 2009, SOUTH CAROLINA FEDERATION OF NARFE CHAPTERS**

In the Secretary section delete paragraph 4 and substitute the following paragraph.

*4. Approximately 1 month prior to each federation convention the Secretary will request each Chapter President submit a list of the names of chapter members who will be attending the convention as a delegate, an alternate delegate, a member, or a guest. The list is to be signed by both the Chapter President and Chapter Secretary and submitted to the Secretary at least 2 weeks prior to the convention. The Secretary will review the lists and verify each name is a current NARFE member and the number of delegates allocated to each chapter is not exceeded (one delegate for each 25 members and each fraction thereof). Any discrepancies will be resolved with the applicable Chapter President.*

(This change has been made in the copy of the Guidelines stored on the Federation Website. You can download the complete set of Federation Guidelines from the website. Simply click your mouse on this hyperlink.

[http://scnarfe.org/Federation\\_Guidelines\\_4-09.pdf](http://scnarfe.org/Federation_Guidelines_4-09.pdf))

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## **REGION III LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR**

(Chapter 219, Columbus Ga - Host for the biennial Seminar)

The Region III Leadership Development Biennial Seminar is being conducted in Columbus, GA on October 6,7,8, 2009 at the Holiday Inn, 2800 Manchester Expressway.

All members are invited to attend and bring emerging leaders from each chapter for this opportunity to develop new skills and learn how to conduct effective meetings, learn what works and what doesn't, get new program idea, membership and retention tools, communication within and with other chapters, provide assistance needed on the subjects required to be an effective leader and have an active, vibrant chapter.

Registration Cut-off date is September 15, 2009. Cost is \$40 per person.

Registration forms with hotel information can be downloaded from [www.ganarfe.com](http://www.ganarfe.com) using this hyperlink: [http://www.ganarfe.com/region3\\_registration.pdf](http://www.ganarfe.com/region3_registration.pdf)  
Forms may be reproduced to provide enough copies for interested members.

## **MARRIOTT HOTEL SPARTANBURG AT RENAISSANCE PARK**

Centrally located in downtown Spartanburg, SC, this stunning, new Spartanburg hotel is located within walking distance of restaurants, entertainment, quaint shops, and historic Spartanburg walking tours. Beautiful rooms, terrific restaurants, hallmark Marriott service, ample parking and easy access make this Spartanburg, SC hotel ideal for our NARFE Annual Convention in 2010. Spartanburg Marriott hotel rooms are oversized with refrigerator, safes & hi-speed internet access and excellent meeting rooms. Walk to historic Spartanburg attractions & shopping, Wireless internet access in hotel public area. Visit the nearby Chapman Cultural Center, Spartanburg's newest jewel! Shows, science & history museum, art displays, craft classes and more.



- \* The Spartanburg Marriott hotel at Renaissance Park
- \* 299 North Church Street
- \* Spartanburg, South Carolina 29306 USA
- \* Phone: 1-864-596-1211
- \* Fax: 1-864-596-1219
- \* Toll-free: 1-800-327-6465

## **NEWS FROM OUR CHAPTERS**

- ◆ Jessie Adams, Secretary for the NARFE Florence Chapter #960 edits the message that is sent out by the newsletter editor each month, notifying Chapter Officers that the Federation Newsletter has been published on the Internet and how they can download it. It is then resent to all members of Chapter #960 so they can then access it and read about the current activities of the SC Federation. A good way to keep your members informed.
  
- ◆ Every three or four months the Greenville NARFE Chapter 121 mails out a postcard to all its members to remind them of the meeting place of NARFE, date and time and also gives them a schedule of the upcoming speakers for the next four months. It has been a good way to increase attendance at the Chapter meetings since they frequently see new members or prospects coming in clutching a postcard in their hands. A miniature version of the postcard is shown on the right. It costs 29 cents to mail a card and the printing is done by one of the members using 4X6 Cards from Wal-Mart costing less than \$2 for 200. Total cost to send out 150-160 cards is about \$55 per mailing. The card is also mailed to most of the Federal Offices in the area as a recruitment tool.

Greetings Fellow NARFE Member!

I hope your summer is going well. Our NARFE Chapter had a very busy spring and are looking forward to our speakers and luncheons for the remainder of the year. Chapter 121 of NARFE, The Greenville Chapter of the National Active & Retired Federal Employees, continues to meet at 11:30 AM, at **Stax Grill**, 850 Woods Crossing Road, Greenville SC 29607. This is across the street from the Haywood Mall - in the same shopping center as the old Circuit City and Toys-R-Us. It is easy to get to with plenty of parking available. I'd like to invite you to join us in our summer meetings.

Our schedule for the next few months is:

July 31 ---- Larry Lee, Science Officer of the National Weather Service at Greer

August 28 ---- Jane Goolsby, Senator Lindsey Graham's Aide in Greenville.

September 25 ---- Marshall Patin of the Greenville County-Twin Chimneys Landfill

October 30 ---- Sandy Ward, Blue Cross-Blue Shield representative

You can see our newsletter at [http://121.scnarfe.org/Chapter\\_Newsletter.pdf](http://121.scnarfe.org/Chapter_Newsletter.pdf)

Since you are already a NARFE Member, we'd like to have you share in our active fellowship of people with like interests and concerns. Mark your calendar. We look forward to seeing you.

Regards,

*Joe McCarty*



- ◆ In Memoriam: We mourn the recent passing of Ted Horoschak, who was a Foreign Service Officer with the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Shortly after retiring and moving to Beaufort County he joined the Hilton Head Island chapter. He quickly became an important asset to the federation when he accepted the position as Federation Convention Chair for the 2005 convention held on Hilton Head Island. His superb planning

and coordination in this position was vital to the highly successful convention. Our sincere condolences are extended to his widow, also a member of the chapter, daughter, son-in-law and two grandchildren

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### **HISTORICAL NOTE**

(Charles Neal - Federation historian)

The Greenville Chapter of NARFE, Chapter 121, is named the James Chester Thomas Chapter of NARFE, but who is James Chester Thomas, the man the chapter is named for? In 1960, Charleston Chapter 72, , Columbia Chapter 87, Greenville Chapter 121, and Spartanburg Chapter 560, along with eight or ten North Carolina Chapters comprised The Carolinas Federation of Chapters. Mr. Thomas and other SC leaders sought to unite SC Chapters in the formation of a separate Federation. By 1963, largely through the single-handed efforts of Mr. Thomas, chapters were organized at Newberry, Anderson and Greenwood, Thus giving S. C, more than enough chapters to constitute its own Federation. After some informal sessions, and consultation with National Officers and Carolinas Federation officials, Mr. Thomas wrote on April 3, 1964. "I am pleased To announce that the final organizational meeting of The new Federation of Chapters will be held at the Jefferson Hotel, Columbia, SC." Delegates of the seven Chapters met April 23, 1964, Elected Mr. Thomas Temporary Chairman, voted to withdraw from the Carolinas Federation, and to form the South Carolina Federation of NARFE Chapters. A petition was prepared, a full slate of officers was elected, and installed, with Mr. Thomas as Federation President, and the new South Carolina Federation of Chapters of NARFE was born. Thus the Greenville Chapter namesake was the 'father' of the SC Federation!

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### **NARFE EVENTS CALENDAR**

NARFE Region III Leadership Development Seminar, Columbus Georgia - October 6-8th, 2009.

NARFE Executive Board Meeting, Columbia, SC - January 11, 2010.

SC Federation Annual Convention, Marriott Hotel, Spartanburg, SC April 21, 22, 23, 2010

NATIONAL NARFE Convention - Grand Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids, MI in 2010

NATIONAL NARFE Convention - Nugget Hotel, Reno, NV in 2012

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