

**MINUTES OF THE 55TH ANNUAL STATE CONFERENCE
SOUTH CAROLINA NARFE FEDERATION
APRIL 29-MAY 1, 2019**

The 55th Annual Conference of the South Carolina Federation was held at Embassy Suites Hotel in Columbia, SC, from April 29-May 1, 2019. The Columbia Chapter (Chapter 87) hosted the conference.

Monday, April 29, 2019

Federation President Bob Shear called the 55th Annual State Conference to order at 4:00 PM and welcomed everyone to the conference. The C.A. Johnson High School AFJROTC Unit SC-065 Color guard presented the Colors. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by John Geiger, a Vietnam Combat Veteran.

Ernest Williams, Federation Conference Chair, welcomed everyone to Columbia on behalf of Columbia Chapter 87. He announced that the theme of the conference was, "NARFE-The Go-To-Resource for Grass Roots Advocacy for the Federal Community". Mr. Williams thanked Columbia Chapter 87 for helping him through the planning process. He also welcomed National Secretary Treasurer, Kathy Hensley, and Region III Vice President, Clarence Robinson.

Blaine Lotz, Executive Vice President, also welcomed everyone to the conference and recognized Past Federation Presidents in attendance: Kathy Hensley, Bill Nicol, John Geiger, and Jeanette Keepers. Margaret Baptiste was unable to attend.

Mr. Lotz welcomed Benita Phipps, a sponsor from GEHA, who spoke of the services that GEHA offers to Federal employees and retirees. She said that GEHA has contributed more than \$50,000 to Alzheimer's in NARFE's name. GEHA is a Chairman's Circle sponsor of NARFE. Ms. Phipps invited attendees to visit her exhibit.

Vice President Lotz introduced the Aetna representative, Susan Allgood. Ms. Allgood, a NARFE member, discussed the services that AETNA offers to Federal employees and retirees and said that she loves being a sponsor for NARFE. She invited attendees to visit her exhibit.

Mr. Shear also welcomed the sponsors and remarked that they had contributed a lot of money, around \$4,000.00 which helped to fund the conference. He reminded attendees to show their appreciation by visiting the exhibit tables.

President Shear called attention to the Program Booklet's Rules for the Conduct of Business on Pages 10 and 11. He also asked attendees to turn off their cell phones.

Don Myers, former Chaplain of Columbia Chapter 87 and retired Army chaplain, conducted a memorial service for members who had passed away since the last conference in 2018. He asked chapter members to stand as he read the names of deceased members from their chapter. Mr. Myers concluded the ceremony with a prayer.

Mr. Shear thanked Olivia Williams, Federation Alzheimer's Coordinator, for all her work promoting Alzheimer's. Ms. Williams reminded everyone that tickets were still being sold for the Alzheimer's drawing.

Mr. Ernest Williams announced that everyone should have a red ticket in order to participate in the drawing for gifts that were donated by Blue Cross Blue Shield.

Members who were working at the Alzheimer's table, as well as the NARFE-PAC and registration tables were recognized.

President Shear asked Bill Greenhill, President of the Greater Charleston Area Chapter 72, to come forward to receive a Certificate of Distinguished Service for Margaret Baptiste, who was unable to attend the conference. John Geiger was called to the podium to receive a Certificate of Distinguished Service. Olivia Williams, Pat Whitely and Clara Gillentine were also presented with Certificates of Distinguished Service.

Mr. Shear reminded everyone that the President's reception would begin at 6:30 PM and the meeting was recessed at 5PM.

Tuesday – April 30, 2019

President Shear called the conference to order at 9:00 AM. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Regional Vice President Clarence Robinson, a Vietnam Combat Veteran.

Announcements were made by Ernest Williams, Federation Conference Chair.

President Shear introduced Bridget Boel, Staff Vice President of Marketing and Member Resources, who made a power point presentation via go-to-meeting. Her presentation included the following talking points:

- Membership Status
- New Membership Marketing Initiatives
- Field Recruitment Resources
- Federal Benefits Institute
- Member Perks

Ms. Boel responded to questions and comments following her presentation. Mr. Shear forwarded an email of Ms. Boel's power point presentation to all attendees during the conference.

Kathy Hensley, National Secretary/Treasurer, was introduced by President Shear. Ms. Hensley brought greetings from NARFE National Headquarters. Her PowerPoint presentation included the following talking points:

- Shutdown Central – the longest shutdown ever
- Training Conferences – FEDcon18 in August and LEGcon19 in March
- AMS (roll out June 1st)
- Branding Initiative – New logo and Grassroots Advocacy

The meeting recessed for a fifteen-minute coffee break.

Following the break, Ross Apter, Political Associate for NARFE's Advocacy Department made a go-to-meeting presentation. His presentation included the following topics:

- 115th Congress Recap
- 116th Congress Legislative Priorities
- Grassroots Advocacy
- NARFE-PAC

A brief question and answer period followed the presentation.

Kathy Hensley returned to the podium to talk about by-laws and amendments. She presented chapter presidents with a new chapter by-laws template. She said this is a straight forward template and recommended that chapters fill in the blank spaces, have the chapter secretary sign it, and send the completed form to her. She said there will be a referendum coming up this fall to make a correction to the bylaws. The bylaws committee missed changing "convention" to "conference". The by-laws committee now works year-round. Ms. Hensley is in the process of revising the F-10 Chapter and Federation Officers' Manual. She also referred to the NARFE Chapter Development Manual FH-15 (01/19), Public Relations Handbook FH-9 (11/18) and Membership Marketing Manual FH-19 (10/18) that are now available.

Ms. Hensley responded to questions and comments.

The conference recessed at 11:40 AM for lunch and reconvened at 1:00 PM.

President Shear called the meeting to order and introduced guest speaker Holley Ulbrich, Co-president of the League of Women Voters of South Carolina. Ms. Ulbrich gave a brief history of the League and made clear that the League was non-partisan. The League forums include both political parties. Most of their issues focus on good government. Ms. Ulbrich said that the League is always willing to collaborate with other organizations.

Ms. Ulbrich answered questions following her presentation.

Vice President Lotz introduced Sandy Ward and Ann Marie Usher, representatives of Blue Cross Blue Shield. They talked about the standard and basic options that Blue Cross Blue Shield offers. Attendees were invited to stop by their exhibit and take advantage of their vision screenings.

Ms. Beth McClaine from Lutheran Homes was introduced. She explained that Lutheran Homes is a non-profit organization. Retirement homes across the state include: Heritage at Lowman in Chapin, Rice Estates in NE Columbia, Franke at Seaside in Mt. Pleasant, Rose Crest at Inman, and Trinity on Laurens at Aiken. Lutheran Homes also offer Be Well Home Services.

Ms. Olivia Williams came forward to make announcements about some Alzheimer's events coming up. The Longest Day Walk is scheduled for June 21, 2019. She also spoke about the National Alzheimer's Walk team, and fund raising.

Ernest Williams, NARFE-PAC Coordinator for the Federation, gave an update on NARFE-PAC goals for 2019-2020:

- Raise \$1.75 million
- Disburse \$1.25 million for political purposes
- Attend 110 local fundraisers
- Increase sustainer programs by 20%

SC Federation NARFE-PAC goals for 2019-2020:

- Raise \$14,650.00 in member contributions
- Solicit 220 member contributors
- Obtain 10 monthly NARFE-PAC sustainers

Mr. Williams thanked Deborah Riley for assisting at the NARFE-PAC table and responded to questions and comments.

After a fifteen-minute break, the conference was called to order and Regional Vice President Clarence Robinson was introduced. Mr. Robinson said there is a lot going on at National Headquarters and we are going to be dealing with change. He said that we are looking at the organization from the bottom up. Committees are working all year and he is Chairman of the Non-dues Revenue Committee. Any money received, that is not membership dues, is considered non-dues revenue. He requested that we continue to help the organization by supporting the note pads, calendars, etc. Since 2014, 983 chapters have been closed. We now have 980 chapters. Mr. Robinson said that we need to go out face to face and meet with people we know and invite them to our meetings. He stressed that we should concentrate on the benefits that we worked for throughout our careers and work to safeguard those benefits.

Pat Whitely, President of the Summerville chapter, gave the official ballot results for the past election of officers for 2019. She made suggestions for the future voting process and volunteered to assume the responsibility of ballot counting for the next election.

Mr. Shear introduced Clara Gillentine, who will be coordinating the FEEA Fund for the Federation. She reported that the fund is no longer a separate fund for scholarship and one for disaster but is now combined into one unified fund. Effective March 1st chapters were to begin raising funds for the unified fund only. A total of \$300.00 was raised during the conference.

Clara Gillentine, who serves on the National Membership Committee, gave an update on the activities of the committee. Two membership applications, with proposed revisions by the membership committee, were distributed to the attendees. The

proposed revisions were discussed, and some members felt the wording was confusing. Suggestions were made as to how the wording should be changed and Ms. Gillentine will forward those suggestions to the Membership Committee.

President Shear introduced the newly elected officers for 2019-2020. Each officer made brief remarks.

Mr. Williams conducted a drawing for gifts that had been donated by Blue Cross Blue Shield.

The NARFE Executive Director, Barbara Sido, was shown in a recorded presentation which covered the following topics:

- NARFE's Influencer Analysis
- Challenges and Opportunities
- NARFE'S Reputation as the Go-to-Resource for the Federal Community
- NARFE' Continuous Drum Beating
- Civil Service Modernization
- NARFE's Image
(Provided details on NARFE's bold efforts focusing on the image of FEDs, the Association's influencer analysis research project, rebranding initiative, enhanced digital communications strategy, and much more.
- NARFE Next – Service and Products
- NARFE Communications
- NARFE's Website
- Member needs and Customer Service – New AMS
- Other Projects – Working with newly established Committees

The conference recessed at 4:45 PM.

Banquet Notes – Tuesday, April 30, 2019

The banquet convened at 6:45 PM with 68 attendees.

The head table was introduced: Ernest and Olivia Williams, Blaine and Lynne Lotz, Bob Shear, Clarence Robinson, Kathy Hensley, and John Geiger.

Vice President Lotz recognized previous winners of the Judy Kemp Awards who were present: Bill Nicol, Kathy Hensley, Bob Muller, and Paul Donahue. The Judy Kemp Award was awarded posthumously to Larry Shaff from the Hilton Head Chapter. Bob Huisman, president of the Hilton Head Chapter, accepted the award on behalf of the Shaff family.

The banquet concluded with the presentation of Alzheimer's awards by Olivia Williams, Alzheimer's Coordinator.

Highest amount of money raised for the entire year:

- 1st Place - Columbia Chapter 87
- 2nd Place - Myrtle Beach Chapter 1015
- 3rd Place - Newberry Chapter 772

Winner of the 50/50 drawing:

- 1st Place - Ernest Williams

(Information regarding the Alzheimer's awards is incomplete pending receipt of a report from Ms. Williams, Federation Alzheimer's Coordinator. This information will be published separately in the next federation newsletter.)

Ms. Williams thanked all Alzheimer Coordinators, chapters and all attendees for their support of the Alzheimer's program.

Wednesday – May 1, 2019

President Shear reconvened the conference at 9AM and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Gerald White, WWII Combat Veteran.

Betty Hawkins, Federation Treasurer, announced that she needs to know that all chapters have filed their tax returns. She requested that all chapters send her an e-mail confirming this has been done.

Ernest Williams announced that the final amount of NARFE-PAC money collected was \$405.00 in cash and that one sustainer had signed up. He emphasized that all chapters should be collecting PAC money at each meeting. He also requested that all Chapter 87 members remain after the conference adjourned for a group picture.

Mr. Shear announced that Discovery Place drawing winners were Eddie Adams (gift basket) and Patricia Mescus (flowers). He also reminded attendees to contribute to the FEEA Fund.

A panel discussion about results of LEGcon19 followed. The panelists were: John Geiger, Bill Greenhill, Deborah Riley, Olivia and Ernest Williams, William and Linda Toney.

After a short coffee break, Bill Greenhill, President of Greater Charleston Chapter 72, gave a report on his advocacy efforts working with AARP of South Carolina. A brief question and answer period followed.

Joe Kohut, Federation Membership Chair reported on his membership activities in the Summerville Chapter.

President Shear asked all in attendance to fill out conference evaluation forms and to return name tag holders. He also stated that he would leave the discussion of the conference next year to the new president, as several people have shown an interest in hosting the conference.

Mr. Clarence Robinson administered the oath of office to the new federation officers:

President	Blaine Lotz
Executive Vice President	Ernest Williams
Secretary	Kevin Toevs
Treasurer	Betty Hawkins

Mr. Shear adjourned the conference at 10:40 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Clara Gillentine
Federation Secretary