



NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

## **CHAPTER 2065 NEWSLETTER**

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### **ELECTED OFFICERS**

<b>PRESIDENT</b>	<b>Karen Cheatwood</b>	<b>703-606-6513</b>	<b>karenlaurasara@gmail.com</b>
<b>1<sup>ST</sup> V.P. /PROGRAM</b>	<b>Dick Shrum</b>	<b>540-872-5409</b>	<b>dickshrum@hughes.net</b>
<b>2<sup>ND</sup> V.P.</b>	<b>Lee Miller</b>	<b>540-872-4696</b>	<b>leeandjulie7@gmail.com</b>
<b>SECRETARY</b>	<b>Marilyn Root</b>	<b>540-632-0241</b>	<b>rootger34@gmail.com</b>
<b>TREASURER</b>	<b>Charles Alvarez</b>	<b>540-894-4804</b>	<b>alv10214@aol.com</b>

### **CALENDAR**

<b>JULY</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>Executive Board Meeting - 11:30 a.m., TBD</b>
<b>AUGUST</b>		<b>Possible joint meeting, information to follow</b>
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>Chapter meeting, information to follow</b>

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

I'm afraid that this letter may be all over the place, but I need to touch on a few topics and I also want to start with what is near and dear to my heart: the loss of Bill Martin. His Celebration of Life was moving and touching and beautiful. Bill was a very giving, caring, and involved man. He will be missed by all of us. His advice and views, especially about NARFE and this chapter, have been instrumental in keeping us together. I will try my best to follow in those footsteps. Mostly, I will miss his advice and positive outlook. You will hear more as I have asked the folks at Lake Anna Rescue what the chapter can do to honor Bill and add that honor with his late wife, Gail, at their facility.

Even though Bill stepped down as chapter President at the end of 2020, he was still very involved by being our membership chair, NARFE PAC chair and network coordinator. We need help here as membership chair is very important for us. Please let me know if you are willing to help.

As you'll see in the short information on the Secretary's report from June, we had a nice turnout, but the lack of an appropriate meeting place short-circuited our wake. The best laid plans of mice and men, or maybe Murphy's law, was truly at work.

We have added a few pages to this newsletter regarding the NARFE elections being held this year. Voting electronically opens July 15<sup>th</sup> and goes through Aug 31<sup>st</sup>. More information should be coming in the NARFE magazine. Each of us should be interested in these elections as it may vote in folks that may or may not be ready to move the organization to where it can really protect our benefits. So, besides doing that, keeping the organization viable is important for NARFE and to us as members in making the organization strong again and keeping it growing. The attached pages only talk to those offices that have more than one candidate and apply to us in Region X/Virginia. If you don't care to read all the information, the candidates highlighted in green are those that I plan to vote for. If you would like information about voting, please let me know.

We've been asked to join in with Chapter 2265 in Midlothian for their August Advocacy meeting. I'm waiting for further information and will pass that along in a separate email. I'm hoping to attend and am willing to take anyone that would like to join me. They are trying to have Senator Kaine or one of his staff attend since one topic that is important to them, and to many of us, is the repeal of the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP).

- ~ GPO - A law that affects spouses and widows or widowers if you receive a retirement or disability pension from a federal, state, or local government based on your own work for which you didn't pay Social Security taxes. Social Security may reduce your spouses, widows or widowers benefits. In this case, folks who might get social security from a spouse get little or nothing based on their CSRS annuity or government salary.
- ~ WEP affects how social security calculates your retirement or disability benefit. If you work for an employer who doesn't withhold Social Security taxes from your salary, any retirement or disability pension you get from that work can reduce your Social Security benefits. Such an employer may be a government agency or an employer in another country. It can be reduced by as much as \$500/month

Both provisions affect members in our chapter plus you may also know others that are affected.

I want to thank Bob Maher for responding to my question about the VFN State Legislative Plan focus. We didn't get there but it helps me, as your chapter president and acting state legislative coordinator, to know that members are listening. The VFN plan should be available later this month and I will send it out when it comes. Note that the 1<sup>st</sup> item on the plan is to lobby the state legislature to pass a law that will allow federal retiree's annuities to be exempt from VA taxes, as is the case for Social Security and military pensions. We will be asked to support this effort that will benefit each of us, so be prepared to write letters to your state senators and delegates when the time comes.

**FUTURE MEETING DATES. (All on the 3rd Thursday of the month, except July and August), please stick these dates on your cell phone or write these dates on your calendar** summer break; Sep. 15<sup>th</sup>; Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>; Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> for our annual meeting and Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> for our Christmas Luncheon.

Thank you for reading and responding, if appropriate. I appreciate the honor of being chapter president and would welcome any help that you can provide. If I can be of service to anyone, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Take care of yourselves and enjoy the beautiful weather,

**KAREN CHEATWOOD, PRESIDENT**

### **NARFE Minutes Jun 16, 2022**

Although we had nice attendance for the meeting, and had the President of the Virginia Federation join us, our meeting ended up being a luncheon of friends. As it turned out, Roma's was closed during the week, so we ended up at Los Tres Potrillos. We had a nice chance to visit, the food was good, the service was great. But being in a crowded restaurant, the associated noise and volume precluded having a regular meeting.

We did agree that the executive board would meet sometime in the next month or two to discuss future plans and we'll keep everyone informed.

**Karen Cheatwood, for/ MARILYN ROOT, SECRETARY**

## **National NARFE President**

**Voting recommendations are highlighted in green**

(Note, I reduced the info from the e-mails that I received. Complete candidate statements are in the May NARFE Magazine. <https://www.narfe.org/magazine-issues/narfe-magazine-may-2022/> (p. 44 in your copy and p. 46 in the online copy)

### **Gary Roundtree Sr.**



For over 25 years, I have been serving on government boards and nonprofits boards in leadership. Optimism personifies me as an individual, who believes NARFE is working towards a better future. I value the federations, chapters, members, and teams' contributions made to NARFE over one hundred years of existence to achieve our goals.

We all must recognize that change is inevitable.

Please let me be clear and concise on this important fact, on declining membership at federations and chapters. I am a die heart chapters and federations supporter. I will on day one brings forward various plans with a call to action for an operation to Recruit to Grow chapters and federations and strengthen their leadership at both levels.

**Trust** - This is an especially important quality a leader must have and know. Leadership requires delegation. When leaders trust their team to complete their assigned tasks; it encourages positive morale and mutual respect. Why is this relevant? When leaders are honest with employees, and members especially during challenging times, coworkers trust them in return, enabling the entire organization to operate with integrity.



**Jon W. Dowie**

Previously as your National Secretary/Treasurer, I always asked myself one question “**What would benefit all the members of NARFE the most?**”

Developing a video production facility at one tenth the estimated cost and using it to produce videos, and capture webinars was a great accomplishment during that time in office. We now **have a webinar library that is a great asset** to our members, and could be of value to all Federal Employees. Through the acquisition for sponsorship of production of our webinars, we produce non-dues revenue. The reduction of government supported HR office availability, the pandemic and the deployment of smart telephones has made our digital assets more valuable. **How can I contribute to development of our digital assets?**

**First** would be the **development of a cell phone application** for

the membership.

**Second**, the new logo for NARFE is great, but we might consider changing the meaning to the **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION REPRESENTING FEDERAL EMPLOYEES**. We have much confusion between “active and retired” among prospective new members. Besides, we should portray the organization as active and doing something. Representing the interests of our members is our main job.

**Third, Shouldn’t NARFE be providing digital training and support to all our chapters and Federations?** Yes, of course, we should and NARFE will in the future.

**Bill Austin**



I am not usually an alarmist, but national trends are troublesome. Membership is down, chapters are closing, national finances are strained, and local politics has departed with the closing of chapters.

I have a plan to reinvigorate NARFE. This is the short version: **Legislation:** Reorganize and refocus NARFE starting with the Federations, especially the Legislative program. Create LCOs within every state. The size of the state makes no difference. It is the local congressional staff that we want to become our friends. They influence their Representative.

**Membership:** Negotiate the return of federal union retirees to NARFE membership. That is where our members used to come from. We have got to get them back.

**Finance:** We must **Right Size NARFE Financially**. Mistakes of the past must be rectified. Increasing dues again is out of the question. We have approximately 40 staffers at Headquarters scattered over four large floors. Attempts to sell the building have failed. We should create income by leasing part of the space. It would be to our advantage to attract federal unions as our tenants.

**Headquarters structure:** Separate the functions of the President/Chairman of the Board and the Executive Director. There is no need for both of them to reside in DC.

I am so concerned about NARFE’s financial situation that I will serve without accepting a salary. That will cost avoid more than \$200,000.

## **Bill Shackelford**



We must be creative in reversing our declining membership. I've spoken about the need for NARFE to escape from the current antiquated organizational structure. The first point that needs to be made clear is that my position on restructuring is not aimed at dissolving Chapters. The current optional Chapter membership will remain. Since traditional zip-code based Chapters are closing at a rapid pace, primarily due to the lack of individuals willing to assume leadership positions, we need to begin thinking about some alternate structures of our organization.

We must remain guided by NARFE's mission and continue to defend the earned pay and benefits of Federal employees, retirees and annuitants which is done through our grassroots advocacy efforts. Restructuring the membership to align with Congressional Districts (CD) would be one method to increase membership

involvement and maintain our history of success as an advocacy group by adjusting its direction with emphasis on including all remaining Chapter members and National-only members in recruitment and legislative events. The purpose of the CD will be to ensure that the lines of communications are open for meeting the advocacy mission of NARFE. While some may refer to the Congressional District alignment as "Chapters" the structure will be different since it will be based on the geographic area of each members' Congressional representation on Capitol Hill. Additionally, it is hoped that an increased advocacy effort might attract individuals of the younger generation who are eligible to be NARFE members.

I agree that "one size does not fit all" but we need a beginning point. In fact, many of the Federations support the concept of "one size does not fit all." It's time to correct past organizational errors before NARFE wastes away, becoming nonexistent.

Everyone must get involved so that the appropriate advancements and changes can be made to make NARFE viable and stronger. This involvement will require individuals "stepping up" into Congressional Liaison roles, either as primary liaison or secondary assistant liaison. Increased use by the CDCs of electronic meetings would allow all NARFE members in the CDC to participate and permit an improved exchange of vital advocacy information.

## Region X Vice President:

### **Robert Allen**



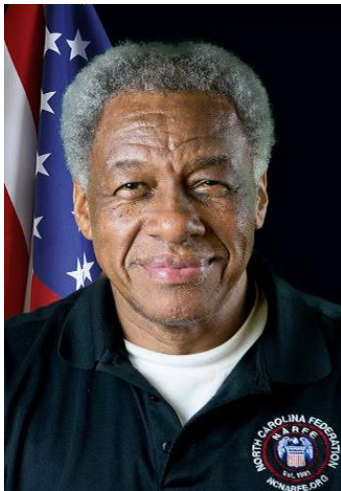
I'm all about the 3 Ms: **mission, membership, and makeup**. These are critical areas the National Executive Board (NEB) must focus on. First, NARFE must be all about the **mission**.

We can't accomplish this, though, without looking at our **membership**. You've all seen the numbers--about 150,000, down from our peak of about 500,000. We must reverse this trend and it takes concerted recruitment, retention, and reinstatement efforts. My job on the NEB will be to make sure our membership efforts are well thought out, feasible, and cost-effective.

The third M is our **makeup**. Our structure has several layers of bureaucracy needing review: 1. Is our structure relevant to our mission? 2. Is the NEB right-sized? 3. Should the roles and responsibilities of the headquarters staff, our federations, our

chapters, and our members change?

### **Charles Talley**



**Three Rs Rethink, Reimagine and Rebuild** are the platform on which I am standing.

We must rethink our advocacy strategies. We must encourage all members to be congressional district leaders (CDLs) but I submit everyone needs to be a congressional district activist long before they vote and lawmakers are elected. We must elect legislators that support our mission because as we see in today's environment once elected you cannot get some to compromise.

We must Reimagine the organizational structure of NARFE at the Chapter, Federation and National Levels. What, When, How and Why we did it 10, 5, or 2 years ago simply will not work now.

We must Rebuild our membership base through collaboration and cooperation

## Bylaws changes:

There are several bylaws changes that will also be on the ballot for this year. The information is included in the June magazine. I plan to **vote as the bylaws committee suggests**.