

2008 Convention Highlights NARFE

Virginia Federation of Chapters

The 54th Annual VFC Convention was held April 21-23, 2008 at the Roanoke Plaza Hotel with the theme "Working Together Today for a Better Tomorrow." There were 301 registered delegates, delegates at large and guests with actual attendance reaching 271 representing 44 of the 56 chapters in Virginia (9 additional chapters were represented by proxy). The Presiding Officer was VFC President R. David Smith.

The convention was opened with the presentation of colors by the Virginia Tech Corp of Cadets Color Guard followed by VFC Treasurer Darlene Myer Rhodes leading the delegates in singing the Star Spangled Banner. Roanoke Mayor Nelson Harris welcomed the attendees to Roanoke.

Special convention speakers included: Honorable Bob Goodlatte, Representative for the Sixth Congressional District; Honorable William T. Bolling, Lieutenant Governor of Virginia; Joseph A. Beaudoin, NARFE Region X Vice President; and Dan Adcock, Assistant Legislative Director, NARFE Headquarters.

Federation Officers re-elected were Dave Smith, President; Bill Martin, 1st VP; Carolyn Wilson, 2nd VP; Bob Miller, Secretary; and Darlene Myer Rhodes, Treasurer. Area Vice Presidents elected/re-elected in caucus sessions were: Area I-Sharon Rose; Area II-Betty Warren; Area III-Jack McMurchy; Area IV-Joseph Lee; Area V-Jessie Barksdale; Area VI-Del Dyer; Area VII-Luther Santiful; Area VIII-Donald Shiffert; Area IX-Bill Masterson; and Area X-Richard Giangerelli. Also during the caucus meetings, primary and alternate area representatives were elected for the 2009 Nominating Committee and those representatives designated Shirley Atkins as the Committee Chair.

Appointments by the VFC President for Committee Chairs are: National Legislation - Charles Delaplane; State Legislation - Bill Schmidt; Public Relations - Patricia Taylor; Membership - Dennis Martin; Co-Service Officers - Sue and Jim Righter; Alzheimer's - Wilton Ward through October 2008 with Barbara McDiarmid taking the position November 1st; Pre-Retirement Coordinator - Barbara Nugent; and State Legislation Representatives - Oscar Honeycutt and Carroll Graham. In addition, two new members were appointed by President Smith to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee for a 3-year term expiring 2011: Joan McDonald, Chapter 893, and William Swann, Chapter 1682. Betty Warren, Area II VP, now beginning her last year of a 3-year term, was appointed Committee Chair. Other appointments are: Parliamentarian - Mary Swain; Webmasters - Stan Palen and Sidney Sachs; VFC Net E-mail Coordinator - Bob McConahy; Chaplain - Deaver Carr; Newsletter Editor and

Database Coordinator ñ Mary Ann Garth; Sergeant at Arms ñ Charles Casey and Travel Coordinator ñ Jann Masterson.

Chaplain Deaver Carr conducted the Memorial Service which included recognition of 388 NARFE members in the Virginia Chapters who passed away during the past year. In 2007, the VFC lost Harold Lee Durham, Past VFC President 1985-1987. John Rhodes played taps at the conclusion of the service.

Congressman Bob Goodlatte briefed the assembly on significant issues in Congress including Social Security and Health Care that need protection. These benefits need to be protected in a bi-partisan way. Some options being considered are personal savings accounts, raising the retirement age, raising the top limits on paying into the plan. He supports pre-tax dollars for federal and military retiree health care costs and supports elimination of the WEP/GPO.

Dan Adcock, Assistant Legislation Director, delivered a plaque from National President Margaret Baptiste to Orville Overboe as the Virginia Federation Service Officer Award Winner. Then he provided the latest legislative information from Headquarters. The cost of WEP/GPO Elimination has risen to 80 billion dollars and it is very unlikely this legislation will move forward. Premium conversion has a better possibility if attached to another bill, such as the alternative minimum tax issue. Next year there will be a new Congress ñ all in the House and 1/3 in the Senate are up for election in November. We will need to educate the new members on NARFEís priority issues. We need to support the NARFE PAC fund and promote our issues with our members of Congress.

Joseph Beaudoin, Region X Vice President, gave the NARFE National report to the convention by addressing a number of issues. Headquarters is operating okay with three National Officers and a resolution will be presented to continue with three officers; NARFE dues or single dues will probably pass at the 2008 Convention; Virginia was commended in its recruitment and retention; we need HQ legislative staff to identify bills that may have adverse impact on our benefits so we can be notified to contact our representatives; and pre-retirement seminars have generated \$66,000 in funds and anticipate over \$100,000 in the coming year.

Joseph Beaudoin presented framed certificates to Wilton Ward, VFC Alzheimerís Chair, and to top Recruiters in 2007 - Marie Collins, Charles Barefield and Barbara Nugent. He also presented VFC President Dave Smith with a plaque in appreciation for his dedicated service 2007-2008.

Dave Smith, VFC President, emphasized: Membership (thank you for 2007 increase); Recruitment; Use of M-112 Report; Retention; Legislation; Alzheimerís success

(raised \$60,048 in 2007); Outreach Events; Matching Funds; Use of Websites (narfe.org & vanarfe.org); Chapter Training; and Goals for 2008 (increase membership by 5%, increase dues withholding by 5%, raise \$12,000 in state political funds and finish raising \$85,000 in PAC funds).

Carolyn Wilson, VFC 2nd Vice President discussed the 2008 VFC Chapter Officers training classes held in Richmond, Portsmouth, Roanoke and Manassas during February and March. The classes were for chapter officers and for those with in interest in learning more about the position and NARFE in general. Instructors were Bill Martin, Carolyn Wilson, Bob Miller, Sam Harris and Dave Smith. A total of 151 people attended the classes.

Darlene Myer Rhodes, VFC Treasurer gave the delegates an overview of the VFC finances of income and expenses for the fiscal year to date, as compared to the 2007-2008 budget.

Richard Strombotne, Maryland Federation President, is a candidate for National Treasurer and he addressed the convention delegates on his qualifications and vision for the position.

Paul Carew, North Carolina Federation President, is a candidate for Region X Vice President and he also addressed the convention delegates seeking their vote at the National Convention.

Richard Giangerelli, VFC Representative on the Region X Retention Committee, presented much information concerning where NARFE has been in membership and some ways to address the retention issue. He showed over ten charts concerning ups and downs in membership. Suggestions to address retention included: keep members informed by newsletters, telephone tree, letters and/or e-mail, get members involved in chapter activities early on, make them feel welcome at meetings, etc.

Convention attendees enjoyed the hospitality room provided by The Glebe, a retirement community of Virginia Baptist Homes in Dalesville, VA.

Lieutenant Governor William Bolling gave an impressive keynote banquet speech by pointing out the positive things happening in Virginia: growth in population, business friendly, excellent education available, cutting edge in communications and electronics. He also pointed out challenges including transportation, current economy, funding needs for Medicare, health and education programs, etc.

Banquet entertainment was provided by the Virginia Gentlemen Barbershop Harmony Chorus.

John Eaton, VFC Parliamentarian 1995-2008, was recognized with a plaque in appreciation of his distinguished service to the VFC and presented by Dave Smith, Joe Beaudoin, Ann Collins and Oscar Honeycutt (current and past federation presidents).

Program Committee Reports were included in the 2008 Annual Reports provided to all convention attendees; however, here are a few of the Committee Chairs' comments:

National Legislation ñ Charles Delaplane cut his report short since Dan Adcock had already briefed the group on NARFE's legislative issues including Premium Conversion and Elimination of the GPO/WEP. He advised NARFE PAC contributions have totaled \$33,707 for the 110th Congress which is less than half the two year VFC goal of \$85,000. Hopefully, contributions will pick up soon. He provided a list of PAC fund recipients so far in this congressional session.

State Legislation ñ Bill Schmidt called attention to his printed report and gave a brief report of the VFC State Legislation Program results. The State Legislation Committee will be meeting in late June to develop the 2009 General Assembly Plan. Area Vice Presidents and a State Legislation Representative from each area are invited.

Membership ñ Dennis Martin called attention to the VFC receiving about 2500 new members in 2007; however, we ended up with only a 78 member increase for the year. More attention needs to be placed on retaining our members. Membership certificates and checks were presented: Chapters that increased membership over 5% during 2007 with a \$100 check to each: Loudoun 1133 ñ 12.33%; Petersburg 28 ñ 8.79%; Bedford 1068 ñ 8.00%; Tidewater 66 ñ 6.71%; Colonial Williamsburg 685 ñ 6.58%; and Page Valley 1793 ñ 5.97%. Four top recruiters in 2007 were recognized with certificates and checks for \$50 each: Joseph A. Beaudoin ñ 48; Marie B. Collins ñ 40; Charles C. Barefield ñ 20; and Barbara M Nugent ñ 19.

Alzheimer's ñ Wilton Ward congratulated the group for raising \$60,048 for Alzheimer's Research in 2007, well exceeding the goal of \$52,000. The convention delegates adopted a goal of \$55,000 for 2008. Top chapters in raising Alzheimer's Research funds: Woodbridge 1270 - \$6,464; Winchester 180 - \$5,498; Falls Run 2343 - \$4,026; Springfield 893 - \$3,850; and Fairfax 737 - \$3,406. Top chapters in average giving per member for Alzheimer's Research: Falls Run 2343 - \$45.75; Imperial Plaza 1510 - \$20.10; Louisa 2065 - \$11.94; New River Valley 1134 - \$10.97; and Seaside-VA Beach 1827 - \$9.55.

Public Relations ñ Pat Taylor highlighted some of her activities during the year. She is working with the local PBS station WHRO to possibly set up a political debate in

Hampton between the candidates running for Senator Warner's position. This is another way to publicize NARFE.

Service ñ Sue Righter discussed some of the programs they can provide to chapters as guest speaker. The two latest programs developed are Personal Safety and Getting Out of Debt and Staying Out of Debt. She and Jim are available to make chapter presentations.

Electronic Communications ñ Bill Martin, Committee Chair, emphasized the importance of members keeping their NARFE personal files updated, including e-mail addresses. There is so much valuable electronic information coming from Headquarters and the Federation that members are missing out if they do not provide their e-mail addresses and/or do not access the National website www.narfe.org and the Virginia www.vanarfe.org.

2009 VFC Convention ñ Bill Martin, VFC 1st Vice President, provided information on the next convention scheduled May 1-3, 2009 at the Reston Hyatt Hotel.

2010 VFC Convention Site ñ A motion was made for the VFC President to appoint a search committee to select the 2010 VFC Convention Site with final approval by the VFC Executive Committee. Motion Approved.

Resolutions presented to the delegates for action during the convention were:

VFC-08-R-01 Serving NARFE Members Electronically ñ That NARFE HQ initiate a program whereby members may elect to have all communications including the monthly magazine, provided via the internet. These members will have access to the NARFE Website where all services of NARFE will be provided. ADOPTED AS AMENDED

VFC-08-R-02 Retirement Financial Planning ñ That NARFE HQ undertake an initiative to endorse financial planning, specifically addressing the unique features of the FERS and CSRS programs for Federal employees. This initiative will provide referrals to NARFE approved financial planners, on-line questions and answers, and financial topic articles in the monthly magazine. Agreements with financial planners should be for the mutual benefit of NARFE members and financial planners, e.g. reduced fees for referred members. REJECTED

VFC-08-R-03 FEHBP Program Premium Structure ñ That NARFE National seek new legislation in Congress to establish a new pricing category entitled "Self plus One" for the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program (FEHBP) using whatever means at their disposal. The new legislation would cause the Code of Federal Regulations, Title

5, Volume 2, Part 890, Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, to be modified appropriately in sections throughout. REJECTED

VFC-08-R-04 Site Selection for NARFE National Convention ñ Proposed sites shall be investigated by the NEB to determine their suitability to host a Convention and reports shall be made to the NEB of site feasibility. The NEB shall have authority to select future convention sites. WITHDRAWN BY INITIATOR

UNNUMBERED RESOLUTION ñ Model Nonprofit Corporation Act ñ That NARFE Board of Directors have this American Bar Association revised Model Nonprofit Corporation Act evaluated and have guidance prepared for the support of Federation, Chapters and members in opposing the proposal and in offering recommendations for its modification and improvement when considered by a State or other jurisdiction as well as similar action in the District of Columbia where NARFE is chartered. RESOLUTION RECEIVED BY E-MAIL APRIL 17, 2008 FROM INITIATOR. CONVENTION DELEGATES VOTED NOT TO CONSIDER.

UNNUMBERED RESOLUTION ñ Board Certified Medical Personnel ñ That NARFE encourage the Office of Personnel management and other areas of the Federal Government, such as Congress and the Office of the President, to work to increase the number of health care providers who are board certified in, or have training in, geriatrics. RESOLUTION HAND DELIVERED TO VFC SECRETARY AT CONVENTION. CONVENTION DELEGATES VOTED NOT TO CONSIDER.

UNNUMBERED RESOLUTION ñ Change the Required VFC Dues Levied on Chapter Members ñ That the first sentence of Article I, Section 2B be changed to: ìAnnual VFC Dues shall be 20% of the amount of chapter dues for each chapter voting member as defined by NARFE Bylaws.î RESOLUTION FOR BYLAW CHANGE RECEIVED FEBRUARY 8, 2008 PAST DEADLINE; HOWEVER, CONVENTION FIRST VOTED FOR BYLAWS COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER. WHEN RESOLUTION CAME FOR DISCUSSION AND VOTE, IT WAS REJECTED.