

HIGHLIGHTS of the 2006 Virginia Federation of Chapters (VFC) Convention

The 52nd Annual VFC Convention was held April 23-26, 2006 at the Holiday Inn Select Koger Center in Midlothian with the theme "NARFE – Your Future – Our Focus." There were 320 registered delegates, delegates at large and guests with the actual attendance reaching 300 representing 50 of the 56 chapters in Virginia. The Presiding Officer was VFC President Ann M. Collins; the Parliamentarian was John F. Eaton.

Special convention speakers included: Charles L. Fallis, NARFE National President and Past VFC President (1995-97); Joan Veazey, NARFE National Alzheimer's Chairperson; State Delegate Phillip Hamilton (District 93); Dr. Randy Fitzgerald, Feature Writer for the *Richmond Times Dispatch*; and Bill Austin, NARFE Region X Field Vice President.

Congressman Tom Davis (VA-11) again hosted a reception for convention attendees as he has done annually for nearly 10 years. State Senator Jeannemarie Devolites-Davis (District 34) accompanied him. Both gave remarks to the convention delegates and guests. On behalf of the VFC and chapter members, VFC President Ann Collins presented Congressman Davis with a plaque in appreciation for his many years of dedicated and willing service and support to NARFE members in Virginia. Also, Senator Devolites-Davis received a token of appreciation from the VFC for her continuous support of NARFE issues at the General Assembly.

Federation Executive officers elected/re-elected were Ann Collins, President; Dave Smith, 1st VP; Bill Martin, 2nd VP; Bob Miller, Secretary; and Darlene Myer Rhodes, Treasurer. Area Vice Presidents elected/re-elected in caucus sessions were: Area I-Ralph Hoyle; II-Betty Warren; III-Bob Boyd; IV-Joe Lee; V-Allen Wright; VI-George Hawkins; VII-Glenn Zech; VIII-Art Klotz; IX-Bill Masterson; and X-Bill Boning. Also, during the Caucus meetings, primary and alternate area representatives were elected for the Nominating Committee and those representatives designated Janie Michel as the Committee Chair.

Appointments by the VFC President for Committee Chairs are: National Legislation – Charles Delaplane; State Legislation – Bill Schmidt; Public Relations – Carolyn Wilson; Membership – Dennis Martin; Alzheimer's – Wilton Ward; Co-Service Officers - Sue and Jim Righter; Pre-Retirement Coordinator – Barbara Nugent; Senior State Legislative Representative - Oscar Honeycutt and State Legislative Representative - Carroll Graham. In addition, three new members were appointed by President Collins to the Constitution and ByLaws Committee for 3-year terms expiring 2009: Betty Warren (Chapter 974); Elizabeth Kormos (Chapter 1882); and Bill Boning (Chapter 1241). Helen Ahearn (Chapter 682), now beginning her last year of a 3-year term, was appointed Committee Chair.

Other appointments continuing are: VFC Net E-Mail Coordinator – Bill Martin; Co-Webmasters – Sidney Sachs and Stan Palen; Chaplain - Charles Collins; Parliamentarian - John Eaton; Newsletter Editor and Data Base Coordinator - Mary Ann Garth; Sergeant at Arms – Charles Casey; Senior Navigator Liaison – Dick Murphy; and Travel Coordinator – Jann Masterson.

Three NARFE members contributed their musical talents to the Convention program. The beautiful soprano voice of VFC Treasurer Darlene Myer Rhodes provided the *Star Spangled Banner* during the opening ceremony; her spouse, John Rhodes (Chapter 893) gave a profound

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rendition of *TAPS* during the Memorial Service, and pianist, Eunice Wolford (Chapter 2265), provided wonderful renditions of numerous all-time favorites for the listening enjoyment of attendees during the Tuesday evening reception and banquet.

Chaplain Charles Collins conducted the Memorial Service which included recognition of 307 NARFE members in the 56 Virginia chapters who passed away during the past year. In 2005, the VFC lost three past presidents. A special memorial tribute was given to VFC Past Presidents James C. Richards (1999-2001); Ernest F. Kerekes, Sr. (1997-1999); and J. Donald Edwards (1979-1981).

Among the recognitions at the banquet, VFC President Ann Collins announced two special tributes for long and exceptional service to the VFC. Presentations of engraved crystal mugs were presented to Senior State Legislative Representative Oscar J. Honeycutt (Past VFC President 1991-1993) and Parliamentarian John F. Eaton as tokens of appreciation for their dedication to the VFC for many, many years. Both have served as appointees for several VFC Presidents and both have agreed to stay on in their present capacities to continue to serve the VFC and NARFE.

Membership Committee – VFC Membership Chair Dennis Martin’s report included recognition of VFC Parliamentarian John Eaton, who was presented a certificate of Honorary Life Membership by President Collins. Also, an engraved crystal mug was presented to Marie Collins, Peninsula Chapter 682, as Top Recruiter for 2006 with 68 new members. The VFC ended 2005 with 19,915 (a net decrease of 161 from 2004). Although the VFC overall did not meet the goal of at least 5% net increase in membership, seven chapters exceeded the goal within their chapters. These chapters each received a certificate of appreciation and a check for \$100 for exceeding the VFC goal of 5%: Falls Run Chapter 2343; Manassas Chapter 356; Colonial Heights Chapter 1472; Louisa Chapter 2065; Suffolk Chapter 1743; Seaside Chapter 1827; and Dulles Chapter 1241.

Alzheimer’s Committee – VFC Alzheimer’s Chair Wilton Ward announced the 2005 goal of \$55,000 was exceeded with \$58,848 contributed. Special recognition was given to four chapters that raised over \$5,000: Falls Run Chapter 2343; Springfield Chapter 893; Midlothian Chapter 2265; and Woodbridge Chapter 2070. In addition, Colonial Beach Chapter 595 was recognized with the largest average contribution per member, being over \$18. The Alzheimer’s goal for 2006 was set at \$55,000 since one of the large contributing chapters does not plan to have a golf tournament in 2006. During the convention, additional funds of \$2,162 were raised for Alzheimer’s from the silent auction, raffle of a beautiful counted cross-stitch picture handcrafted and donated by Jim Wilson (Winchester Chapter 180), and half of the 50/50 ticket sales (with seven \$50 winners).

Candidates (office shown in parenthesis) for NARFE National office that either gave remarks to the Convention delegation or provided a statement to be read by the VFC Secretary: Dr. Dan Galvan (National President); Bill Austin (National Vice President); Nathaniel Brown (National Secretary); Steve Henderson (National Secretary); Richard Ostergren (National Treasurer); Joe Beaudoin (Region X NFVP); and Clay Shannon (Region X NFVP).

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Convention delegates approved the change in the venue for the 2007 VFC Convention from Fredericksburg to the same location as the 2006 Convention, Holiday Inn Select, Richmond (Midlothian), April 22 – 25, 2007. Also, Shirley Vaughn, Chair of the 2008-09 Convention Search Committee, presented a comprehensive report for discussion. Delegates approved the Roanoke area for 2008 (April 21 – 23, 2008) and the Northern Virginia area for 2009 (April 24 – 26, 2009). The 2009 dates offer a weekend convention for current federal employees (CFE) to attend without taking annual leave. Details will be provided later.

Constitution and ByLaws Committee Chair Mike Michel presented four VFC Bylaw Amendments and the Committee's recommendation for adoption of all four. The Convention delegation action is shown below in bold. (The VFC Constitution and ByLaws are also posted on the VFC web site at www.vanarfe.org.)

A-1 Modify Article VI of the Bylaws to effect changes in the composition of the Board of Directors to eliminate the Non-elected members. This amendment would eliminate the committee chairs from the "voting" Board of Directors: Alzheimer's, National Legislation, State Legislation, Public Relations, Membership, and Service. **REJECTED.**

A-2 Eliminate the position of the Immediate Past President from the VFC Board. **REJECTED.**

A-3 Changes to the VFC Bylaws for clarity, to better define roles/duties, and in general, make a more readable and workable document. These are clarifications covering convention delegates, lead delegates, proxies, voting strength, balloting, resolution submissions to the VFC Board, etc. **ADOPTED AS AMENDED.**

A-4 Modify Section 2B of Article I of the VFC Bylaws. Change chapter dues to the Virginia Federation from \$2.00 for each regular member to 20% of the individual chapter's dues (i.e. 20% of \$5 = \$1.00; 20% of 8.00 = \$1.60; 20% of \$10.00 = \$2.00). **POSTPONED INDEFINITELY.**

Seven resolutions were presented for discussion during the Convention. Second Vice President and Resolutions Committee Chair Vincent Agnelli presented resolutions R-1, R-2, R-3, R-6, and R-7; the Committee recommended adoption of all. Resolution R-4 was presented by State Legislation Chair Carroll Graham with the Committee's recommendation for non-adoption. Resolution R-5 was presented by Membership Chair Dennis Martin with the Committee's recommendation to adopt. The Convention delegation action is shown below in bold.

R-1 Non-Resident National Officers – Study advantages/disadvantages of: changing NARFE's organizational structure to allow some or all elected officers to be non-residents; possibly establish CEO type position on site; possibly reduce number of Regional Vice Presidents. **ADOPTED – to be referred to NARFE National.**

R-2 One Member One vote – Recommends National elections to be done by direct balloting of membership. Although there was a strong majority, the resolution lacked 2/3 vote by the delegates for adoption. Total voting -193; 113 for and 80 against. **REJECTED – to be referred to NARFE National.**

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R-3 OPM Application for Medicare Modernization Act Subsidy – Recommends petitioning Congress and Administration to cause OPM to apply for subsidy under Act of 2003 like other employers to obtain 28% subsidy of cost per employee for drug coverage. **ADOPTED – to be referred to NARFE National.**

R-4 Age Deduction – Recommends VFC seek legislation to index age deduction annually by percentage of the CPI. The State Legislation Committee did not recommend adoption. **REJECTED.**

R-5 Single Dues Structure – Recommends National set one national dues with 30% going to chapters and 5% going to federations. (Currently chapters set own dues and federations receive 10% of national dues amount). **ADOPTED AS AMENDED – to be referred to NARFE National.**

R-6 Reminder to the VFC Board of Directors of Requirements of Article II in VFC Organizational handbook – Recommends VFC Organization Handbook be reviewed and updated during 2006. **ADOPTED for VFC implementation.**

R-7 For NARFE to request OPM take action to require board certified and otherwise specifically qualified geriatric staff in all FEHB plans. **ADOPTED - to be referred to NARFE National.**

Save the date for the 2007 VFC Convention, April 22 - 25, 2007, Holiday Inn Select, Richmond (Midlothian), VA.

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