



NARFE
FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS
—
VIRGINIA
FEDERATION

Conference Guidelines

Procedures & Responsibilities

VIRGINIA FEDERATION OF NARFE

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CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Introduction

This document will outline the general duties and responsibilities of the Virginia Federation of NARFE Annual Conference. When fully populated, this document will give the Conference Coordinator, Conference Chair, and the Conference Committee the basic tools necessary to conduct a successful conference. It is intended as a living document that will be updated each year by the current Conference Coordinator and the Conference Chair to afford the next Conference Committee a head start to begin preparations.

Purpose

With this Guide in hand, the new Conference Committee can implement the procedures below with reasonable roadmap confidence. It also highlights the need to start early and ensure that all positions are filled prior to launching into each position's particulars.

Administration

According to the VFN handbook, the 1st Vice President will serve as the official Conference Coordinator under the supervision of the VFN President (VFN-HB-08). The second in command is the Conference Chair, who is usually the Area Vice President for the Area assigned to host the Conference.

The Conference led by the Conference Coordinator and the Conference Chair begin by soliciting conference committee chairs for all sub-committees to fully staff the conference committee. The Chair will delegate to Committee sub-committee chairs, who will carry out the duties listed within this document.

The Conference Coordinator will maintain a list of all committee members and update and publish as changes occur. The overall responsibility for the operation of the Conference is the Conference Coordinator, who shall consult with the VFN President on specific matters relevant to the Conference.

Annual Conference Theme - Members of the Committee will propose and vote on submitted suggestions for a Conference Theme at the first Committee meeting or via email. This theme will be used throughout the Conference and will be on all VFN conference documents.

Annual Meeting - The VFN Annual Meeting will take place as a sub-set of the Conference under the direction of the VFN President.

CONFERENCE SITE AND OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION

Conference Site (Hotel) – A search team will be assigned by the President at the first board meeting following the annual conference. The search team will report back to the President the list of hotels to be presented to the Board for final selection.

Conference Hotel Contract – A contract will be developed between the VFN

President and the board selected hotel. Negotiations could result in multiple-year contracts. The President will review and sign the agreement on behalf of the VFN. The contract should be shared with the VFN Conference Coordinator (VFN 1st VP) and the Conference Chair. The agreement will specify the number of conference rooms and a lodging room block. Minimum Food & Beverage (F&B) purchases and deposits may be required.

Hotel Coordination - Coordination between the Hotel's point of contact and the Conference Coordinator and Chair must begin early in the process. And it will continue once the contract is signed. The Banquet and Reception Chair will also be assigned a contact point under a separate agreement, signed by the President, for services rendered. Specific coordination of duties must be outlined and agreed upon early in the process by the conference committee.

Conference Bulletins Notification - Bulletin #1 - Each year, the Conference will develop an introduction to the Conference, usually referred to as Bulletin #1. The bulletin will include all pertinent information and a series of forms to coordinate activities for the Conference. Use the previous year's forms as templates. The Conference Coordinator will propose Bulletin #1 and the necessary documents to be reviewed by the Conference Chair. Bulletin #1 and all forms will be posted on the VFN Website www.vanarfe.org under the title "20XX Conference Documents." Some of the forms may be on-line fillable, some can be downloaded, copied, and sent in by U.S. Mail, or an online registration version may be available. The numbering of these forms will reflect the year of the Conference.

The number and content of each form will depend upon the needs of the Conference. The Conference Coordinator will be responsible for tracking the registration to maintain the registration list to estimate the number of participants expected to attend the Conference and or the Banquet.

Proposed forms:

- VFN25-01 Registration and Banquet Request
- VFN25-02 Supporter Form (Individual)
- VFN25-03 Multiple Supporters form
- VFN25-04 Facilities Requirements Form
- VFN25-05 Exhibitor Introductory Letter
- VFN25-05A Exhibitor Banquet Invitation
- VFN25-05B Exhibitor Contract
- VFN25-06 N/A
- VFN25-07 Advertising Introductory Letter
- VFN25-07A Advertising Contract Members
- VFN25-07B Advertisement Contract for Commercial and Patron

CONFERENCE BUDGET, FINANCIAL FUNDING & ALLOCATIONS

Conference Sub-Committee Budgets - Each conference committee chair will submit a proposed itemized budget before the 2nd conference committee meeting to the Conference Coordinator.

- If there are any items in question, the conference coordinator will contact the specific chair for review. Any items not on the proposed budget that are needed before or at the Conference must be discussed and reviewed by the conference coordinator.
- The Committee Coordinator or Conference Chair must approve all Conference expenditures, including Hotel and Conference Committee members' costs.

Treasurer:

- **Advance Funds** - The VFN Treasurer may also serve as the VFN Conference Committee Treasurer. Advance funds necessary will be determined by the committee. Funds collected and all expenditures should be reported separately by the Conference Treasurer.
- **Conference Financial Accounting Tally** - The VFN Conference Treasurer, will account for all income and expenses incurred during the Conference year. The Treasurer will provide an up-to-date status of funds for the Conference Coordinator and the Conference Chair. The VFN is responsible for fulfilling all-expense deficits.
- **Conference Final Financial Report** - Once all income and expenditures are finalized, the VFN Conference treasurer will issue a final Financial Report. This report will not be published immediately after the Conference end, but only after all transactions have been reconciled.
- **IRS Form W9 Certificate Certification** – The W9 may be requested by Commercial Firms who wish to contribute to the Conference. This may be in the form of Advertisements, Exhibitor Tables, or Sponsorships. The W9 will be filled out with the VFN Treasurer's coordination, verifying that VFN is a 501(c)(6) organization.

Database Manager: The Data Base Manager will develop an Excel Spreadsheet that will contain all registrations, banquet requests, meal selections, supporters, exhibitors, and any other pertinent information.

- The Database Manager will consolidate and organize all reports and share with the appropriate committee members. The Database Manager and the Conference Treasurer will reconcile information periodically. The Conference Treasurer will receive all checks.

Conference Officers' Duties & Responsibilities

VFN Conference Coordinator - The VFN 1st VP will hold this position. The specific duties, in addition to those stated above, include the following:

- **Program Agenda** - The President will develop the Conference Agenda.
 - The final plan will be sent to the Program Book chair and placed in the Program Book.
 - Conference Posters – (number to be determined) Conference Agendas will be printed, in color and placed throughout the conference areas by the facilities chair or their designed committee.
- **Conference Break-out Room Assignments** - The Hotel's point of contact, Conference Coordinator, and Conference Chair will manage the designation of breakout rooms in advance. Once agreed upon, they will be placed in the Conference Program Book. And on the conference agenda.

Conference Coordinator Chair:

- Will solicit membership of the conference committee, which will consist of the Board of Directors, Area & Chapter members and volunteers throughout the VFN.
- The goal is to fill all conference positions with different individuals with no need for anyone to fill more than one responsibility.
- Early in the Conference year, the Conference Chair will coordinate with the hotel point of contact to determine the number of Exhibitor Tables available, and then convey that number to the Exhibitor Chair.

Conference Chair - The Committee Chair will be responsible for making sure the conference committee responsibilities are carried out.

- Update the guidelines and procedures.
- Assist in filling all positions.
- Set up electronic meetings as necessary and, when convenient, set up in-person meetings for the committee.

Conference Secretary - The Conference Secretary is responsible for recording the minutes that include action items for each conference committee meeting.

- If the secretary is unable to attend a specific meeting a replacement from the conference committee members will be selected and the Committee Chair will be notified.
- Send draft minutes to the committee for additions and corrections to be returned within five days. Upon receiving comments and corrections, the secretary will share the minutes with the committee and maintain the official copy for VFN conference records.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE CHAIR ASSIGNMENTS

Registration Chair - The Registration Chair will develop an action plan and committee member(s) assignments list of who will carry out the duties and responsibilities for the registration process.

- Submit a recommendation budget request, itemizing all.
- Coordinate receipt of welcome bags from VFN NARFE Affinity partners and headquarters Chair.
- Receive conference bags from NARFE affinity partners if coordinated via the NARFE Affinity Partner Coordinator. Usually, the Conference Coordinator can be assigned to Past President to serve as coordinator because of familiarity with the Headquarters process.
- Prepare the appropriate number of Welcome Bags as indicated by the Conference Chair, who will present the estimated numbers at the conference Committee Meeting.
- Distribute welcome bags. Inside the Welcome Bag will be all the pertinent information needed for the Conference. The Registration Chair will ensure that enough bags are available for all attendees at the time of their arrival.
- Schedule members to cover the registration desk during the conference.

The bags will contain but not limited to:

- Conference Program Book
- Compact Conference Schedule
- Memorial Book
- Registration material
- Blank cards for attendees' questions
- Name badges
- Meal cards
- Assorted snacks or promotional items, obtained by various sources (such as vendors, local hosts, and visitor information).

Program Book Chair

Using the format from previous conferences, the Program Book Chair will begin to construct sections of the program book early on with changes as appropriate.

- Receive input from the Conference Coordinator,
- the Advertising Chair,
- the Exhibitors Chair,
- the Data Base Manager,
- Supporters Chair,
- Solicit volunteers to proofread and reviewers to ensuring correctness, editor, PR Chair, etc.

TRIBUTES TO VFN MEMBERS

Memorial Book Chair

- The Memorial Book Chair will contact all Area VPs to obtain information regarding member deaths in their respective Areas during the preceding year. AVPs should consult with Chapter Membership Officers.
- Construct a booklet with all the named Deceased by Area and Chapter.
- Coordinate with the conference printing coordinator to forward a print-ready copy to the designated conference printer to print color copies of the booklet (specific number to be determined by registration count). Upon receipt, the memorial books will be passed to the Registration Chair to be placed in the Conference Bag.
- The bill for the printing will be sent to the Conference Treasurer for approval. Once approved the invoice can be paid and a reimbursement voucher submitted, or an invoice forwarded to the Conference Treasurer for payment.
- Listing of all deceased will also be given to the Audio/Visual Chair for memorial presentation.

Memorial Ceremony Chair

- Usually, the VFN Chaplain serves as the Memorial Ceremony Chair. The Memorial Chair will facilitate and coordinate the Memorial Ceremony via the Conference Agenda.
- The Chair will purchase roses for the ceremonial vases.
- Facilitate agreement and payment for musical accompaniment, if needed; or piped in music from the hosting facility.
- Initiate instruction to all who participate as to how the program will be conducted.
- Assign a coordinator to assist in a rehearsal the day before as well as assist the day of the Ceremony for the procession.
- Reminder to all members to stand in reverence when their Area Vice President is presenting the honorarium.

Announcements and Question Cards

- Blank announcement and query cards will be purchased by the Sergeant at Arms and presented to the Registration Chair to place in the welcome bags.
- They may be printed with a blank line for the name of person & chapter submitting the announcement or question.
- Any cards submitted will be provided to the Sergeant at Arms for the Conference Chair or Conference Coordinator for an appropriate response.

FINANCIAL ADVERTISEMENT, SUPORTERS, & EXHIBITORS

Advertisement Chair

The Advertisement Chair will develop an excel spreadsheet that will contain data

received from all Advertisers. The Advertisement Chair will receive forms and communicate with the vendors. Upon receipt all funds will be forwarded to the Conference Treasurer.

Affinity Partners Advertising Coordinator

The Advertisement Chair will also receive information and checks from NARFE Headquarters for Affinity Partners.

- The Affinity Forms Advertisements will come separately, but the payment will come from NARFE Headquarters in one collective check. The check should be directed to the VFN Conference Treasurer.
- All Advertisement copies will be shared with the Program Book Manager, who will place the advertisements on the covers and last section of the Program Book. Registration fees may be paid online, or by check directed to the VFN Conference Treasurer.

Exhibitor Chair

- The Exhibitor Chair will solicit and receive requests for Exhibitor Tables at the Conference.
- The number of tables will be sent to the Exhibitor Chair, by the Conference Chair, so that table availability will not be exceeded.
- The Exhibitor Chair will record the Exhibitor form's data and forward the Exhibitors' information to the Program Book Manager. All checks will be directed at the VFN Treasurer.
- Coordinate and facilitate needs and accommodation for exhibitors.
- Assure correct assignments.
- Resolve any mix-ups.
- Be available to make sure everyone is following hotel and conference rules and regulations.
- Determine if the Exhibitor will also purchase an ad and make sure they receive the appropriate discount.

LOGISTICS, SUPPORT COMMITTEES

Facilities Management Chair

- The Facilities Manager shall oversee all-conference meeting room locations, coordinating with the hotel point of contact and the Conference Chair.
- Ensure that all rooms have appropriate signs placed outside the meeting rooms.
- Easels shall be placed at appropriate locations that will have information regarding times & locations of all rooms.
- The Facilities Manager will canvass the presenters and coordinate all breakout room speakers' needs.
- Coordinate with the hotel's point of contact and the VFN Audio/Visual Chair.

- Chapter banners will be placed in an area designated by the Facilities/Banner Chair, in coordination with the hotel point of contact.

Conference Banner

- The Facilities Chair will ensure a banner is purchased and printed for the Conference, indicating the committee selected theme. . Coordinate with the hotel point of contact to hang the main ballroom banner above the dais before the Conference. (Sunday)
- The bill for the banner will be forwarded VFN Conference Treasurer for payment.
- This Facilities Chair will coordinate with Hotel Staff to have the banner moved to the appropriate location, for the banquet and moved back to the General Session for the duration of the Conference.
- At the end of the Conference the Chair will ensure the banner is taken down and turned over to the next year's Facilities Chair.

Sergeant of Arms Chair

The Sergeant of arms will coordinate via the VFN President and the executive committee to ensure that the standing rules are current and up to date.

- The Sergeant of Arms will read the Standing Rules as printed in the Program Conference Book as indicated on the Program Agenda.
- Sergeant of Arms will wear visible apparel to be readily identifiable.
- The published Standing Rules will govern the Annual Meeting portion of the Conference.
- The Sergeant of Arms will also be responsible for: Counting votes from the floor, if needed, and keeping order during the Conference. In addition, receive and make announcements at the General Sessions.
- The Sergeant of Arms will coordinate with the Facility Manager posting of US Flag.

Evaluations - The Conference will have a separate Evaluation Sheet to record the impressions of the Conference from the conference attendees.

- The Evaluation sheet for the current year's Conference will be drafted by the Committee Chair and approved by the Conference Coordinator or Conference Chair.
- All attendees will receive an Evaluation Sheet, which will be placed in the Welcome Bag. The Sergeant of Arms will collect all the Evaluation Sheets and provide them with them to the Conference Coordinator or Conference Chair for review and analysis.

Name Badges & Ribbons Chair

- The Name Badges & Ribbons Chairperson will request the Data Base Manager's collected information for names and specific information needed for badges.

- A sufficient supply of badges and ribbon material will be purchased by the Badges & Ribbons Chair,
- Supplies from previous conferences might be on hand, but you may forecast at least 200 badges.
- Once the badges and ribbons have been completed, they are to be placed in envelopes available at the Registration Desk before the beginning of registration.

Alzheimer's Research Chair (ARC)

- The Alzheimer's Research Chair will occupy a room that holds auction items donated by the Conference's membership.
- The Chair will require the facilities manager to assure the room is locked when not in use.
- Request a key for the Alzheimer's Chair, if available.
- Alzheimer's Chair will organize and conduct a Silent Auction, 50-50 tickets, and raffle tickets with all Alzheimer's Research benefits. At various times during the Conference. The ARC will coordinate selecting tickets from a barrel in the General Sessions and announcing the drawings' winners.

Entertainment Chair

- The Entertainment Chair will solicit requests for entertainment for the Banquet, along with the suggested cost.
- Present a list of suggested options at the Conference Committee meeting for approval.
- Remind the Conference Coordinator to request the VFN Conference Treasurer to submit a check for the entertainer via the Entertainment Chair as agreed upon with the entertainment point of contact.
- Entertainment Chair will pre-coordinate the logistics with the Reception and Banquet Chair for placements and times of performances.
- The Entertainment Chair will contact the entertainer, once approved, of times, placement of set-up, etc.
- Most entertainers bring their own AV needs, but please check; if not, coordination with the Audio/Visual Chair and the hotel point of contact may be necessary.
- If a dance floor is to be rented from the Hotel, the Entertainment Chair will obtain prior approval for the floor's rental and cost. The rental of the dance floor is to be rented through the hotel's point of contact.
- Entertainment to be determined by the committee for the Reception and the Banquet. Usually nothing is needed for the reception—coordinate soft piped-in music from the hotel POC—usually no cost.

Reception and Banquet Chair - Request menu selections for Reception and Banquet per our budget. Once room assignments for the Reception and the Banquet have been determined, contact the Data Base Manager requesting the number of attendees for the reception and numbers of meals as well as food selections for the Banquet. When appropriate, relay those numbers to the Hotel Point of Contact.

- Obtain approval from the Conference Coordinator and Chair
- Once a decision is made about food by the Coordinator, the RBC will coordinate with the Entertainment Chair regarding the timing and placement of the entertainment.
- Order flowers for the Banquet Dias Table and forward the bill to the coordinator for approval and payment by the VFN Treasurer. Prior approval per the budget.
- Party favors for the tables and Door Prizes as determined by the committee.

Audio/Visual Chair - The Audio-Visual Chair is responsible for the conference AV needs, including all breakout sessions. Equipment such as microphones and screens for presentations. They will also obtain information from the Facilities and Banner Chair on specific breakout sessions, registration functions & any audio/visual needs from the Reception and Banquet Chair.

- The Conference Coordinator or Conference Chair must approve any additional audio-visual equipment not authorized to the original budget submission.
- Additional Audio-Visual needs will be coordinated through the Hotel's point of contact. Sometimes it is very costly. Prior approval from the Conference Coordinator or Conference Chair is needed.
- The Memorial Book information will be provided to the AV Chair for the Memorial presentation held during the memorial ceremony.

Greeter Chair

- Obtain greeter ribbons from Conference Chairperson
- Review guidelines presented by greeter chair.
- Note: Greeters are the first faces that attendees encounter
- If needed, the greeters will guide attendees to the Registration Desk and all other venues using the Hotel Layout posters.
- Assist attendees with information, times, and place of all events.
- Greeters will wear Greeter sashes and be ready to assist anyone in need.
- Assist members in finding seats in the main sessions and during the Banquet. There are usually extra seats in front of the general session room and the banquet hall.
- Greeter Chair will conduct a mini training session prior to the conference.

Conference Photographer Chair

- The Conference photographer(s) will be available to take photos at all events.
- Develop a system for the group, i.e., chapters, areas, group photos as requested.
- After the Conference, the photographer will forward all photos to the webmaster to be displayed on the website.

Color Guard /National Anthem Chair

- Contact the local organization to request color guard services.
- Request conference participation in writing.

- Identify the time and place of the event.
- Coordinate follow-up contacts before the Conference to remind the Color Guard of the event's time & place.
- Coordinate with facilities Chair a separate room for the Color Guard to change clothes and store their belongings.
- Please include any charge or token of appreciation in the budget proposal
- Obtain vocalist & ensure they know the time and place of the event.
- Coordinate any needs for a vocalist, such as audio equipment and accompaniment, etc.

Public Relations Chair – is responsible for publicizing the Conference as widely as possible, utilizing any public relations initiatives, i.e.

- contacting local newspapers,
- press releases etc.
- VFN social media and websites to advertise the Conference with specific date(s) and action items.
- submitted the proposed public Relations budget for the Conference.
- Contact and confirm coordination of conference speakers.
- Assure dignitaries are contacted and are aware of the time and place of participation in the program. Make sure the AVC and the FBC have addressed all speakers' needs, in advance.
- Greet or assign a greeter for all political and special guests.

Governor's & Welcome Letters

- The Public Relations Chair will prepare the request for the Governor's Welcome Letter early on during the preparation period. On the Governor's Office website, there are instructions on how to request a welcome letter.
- Once the request is received from the Governor's office, the Public Relations Chair will forward the welcome letter to the Program Book Chair for inclusion in the Program Book. The same efforts for all local public officials, included in the action plan by name with contact timelines.

The Committee Chair will contact the local Elected Official's Office or the Area Chamber of Commerce to invite a representative to welcome the VFN to the Area at the beginning of the Conference.

- The conference Chair or the Chair's designee will issue the invitation.
- Public Relations shall request National and State Legislative Chairperson suggestions when coordinating and inviting political representatives as a guest to attend the VFN conference. **This must start early!**

Conference Committee Meetings, Agenda's & Appointments

The Conference Committees will have multiple meetings before the Conference. The number, dates, and venue will be proposed by the Conference Chair and approved by the Conference Committee at the 1st or 2nd Conference Committee Meeting

- An ideal situation will be that all committee positions will be filled before the first meeting. The Conference Coordinator will develop a draft agenda for each meeting.
- The conference committee meeting will be held online and determined by the committee.
- A reminder will be issued from the Conference Coordinator before each meeting.
- There still may be a need for a call meeting or meeting after our regularly scheduled Board Meetings.

Timelines (Pre, During & Post-Conference)

The Conference Coordinator & Chair will propose timelines for the Conference. Each chair position will have a separate timeline and timelines to submit all-conference forms and conference events.

Management Award

The Annual VFN Management Award will be presented at the Conference by the VFN President. The nominations and selection process will be the responsibility of the Conference Coordinator. The President will also issue other awards for board members leaving and the President's Choice Award

Proposed By-laws, Amendments, and Resolutions

Proposals will be presented at the Conference by the VFN By-laws Committee if needed. Voting by all VFN Members for Elected Officers will occur within 60 days after the Conference.

Post-Conference Committee Meeting

- The Conference Coordinator will host a Post-Conference Meeting or other appropriate acknowledgement to thank the Committee members for their participation and commitment.
- The location and time will be proposed at the convenience of most of the committee members. The Conference Chair will assist the Conference Committee Chair, making reservations then announcing the event to all Committee members.

Conference Material Turnover

- Following the Conference's conclusion, we will schedule a meeting to turn over all items and materials used during the Conference to the responsible members for next year's Conference, if feasible. Please remain and make yourself available.
- If a member cannot be present to accept these items, the Conference Coordinator or Conference Chair will maintain the materials until the new chairperson can be identified. A physical typed list of all items and the materials will be turned over to the new chairperson and the next Conference Committee Chair if known.