



# The Tennessee Federal Retiree

National Active and Retired Federal Employees

June 2006

## Special points of interest:

- Federation membership health addressed
- Newly elected officers
- Bringing chapters into 21st Century
- Financial report listed
- [www.nartetn.org](http://www.nartetn.org)

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## Civility: Where did it go?

Offering oneself to serve their fellow man used to be a noble and respected occupation. People used to show respect to those who were willing to give of their life to serve a greater good.

Today I fear that civility has taken a back seat to sensationalism. We seem to have a Jerry Springer/Russ Limbaugh environment invading our culture. Unfortunately our politicians across the country have not let Russ Limbaugh's "Attack Bill Clinton" success go unnoticed. It has become popular to replace thoughtful consideration with sound bites that will attract attention. It has led to an increase in one-sided talk shows that exploit half truths and to a congress that is so gridlocked that it can't even pass a budget until the budgeted year is almost over.

This approach to modern media success seems to be first identifying a flaw or shortcoming in a person of notoriety and then pound that point until it be-

comes nauseous. Next, repeat the process with anyone who does not agree with you.

This modern day practice reminds me of the McCarthy days of the 1950's when a communist's label was the target that destroyed many good Americans. Today what is popular are Democrats and Republicans attacking each other to deflect attention from their own shortcomings. The attack persona is increasingly being utilized to climb the ladder to political success. This seems to work well until their own shortcomings are exposed.

Maybe I am just getting old, but I long for the "Happy Days" - the "June Cleaver" families and persons displaying integrity and compassion to our fellow beings. I would like to see a return to a world where the first rule would be: "He who is without sin cast the first stone." What a world it would be and we would call it NARFE—heaven.

- Bill Austin  
Region X Field Vice-President

## Knoxville to host next year's convention

Our Tennessee state convention in Clarksville was a great way to start off a new year of growth for NARFE in Tennessee. By continued recruitment by all of our members, we may increase our numbers and the effectiveness of our legislative goals.

Next year we will be in Knoxville, then Middle Tennessee. It is not too early to start thinking of 2009 in West Tennes-

see. Maybe we can get two or three chapters to work together and have the best ever in the West.

This November we will have a new US senator to represent Tennessee, four men all have records that we need to look at to be an informed voter. We will also elect a new congressman in the 9<sup>th</sup> congressional district.

- John P. Shannon  
2nd Vice-President

## Federation membership health addressed by Reeves

We have continued to suffer declining membership in Tennessee and this is also true of NARFE at the national level. We continue to recruit new members although until recently our losses through death and dropouts has outpaced our growth. An analogy is to think in terms of taking one step forward only to find we are two steps back. So that we do not lose our political clout (if not already lost), it is imperative that we keep up our membership and expand our recruiting of the active federal employee. It is the job of each and every individual member to add their time and efforts to making a commitment to helping the organization in Tennessee to grow its membership, and in so doing, set an example for other of our sister states who are also having similar difficulties. We need fresh ideas and active participation in recruiting into the federal agencies and work centers to contact and

recruit active federal employees to our organization. Special attention should be given to members who have been dropped for non-payment of dues or who have received a second dues notice. Each chapter's officers should take the lead or encourage among their membership a dedicated and organized calling campaign of any members or potential members to join the NARFE organization and particularly their local chapters. Making personal calls or writing letters to these people and encouraging them to participate and to at least renew their membership is tantamount to saving our organization's political empowerment. We are encouraged by the recent gains in our membership during early 2006; however, we must not relax our vigil in this regard.

- Allen B. Reeves  
Membership Chairman  
abreeves@maxinter.net  
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**"We are encouraged by the recent gains in our membership during early 2006; however, we must not relax our vigil in this regard."  
- Allen Reeves**

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## Cunningham introduces himself as new 3rd vice-president

Greetings,

At the state convention, in Clarksville, I was elected to serve as the 3rd vice-president. I was unable to attend the convention due to a family illness. Since I was not in attendance, I would like to introduce myself with some background information. I retired from the Postal Service in 2001, as the Postmaster of Jefferson City, Tenn., with 35 years service. Throughout those years, I have been an involved member of organizations with missions that are similar to those of NARFE. I have served in elected positions as branch president, state secretary and treasurer, state president with the National Association of Postal Supervisors, and state area vice president with the National Association of Postmasters of the United States.

I have been a member of NARFE for about two years now, so I guess that makes me a junior member, with a lot to learn. I look forward to working with everyone, and I will gladly accept any and all help offered. If I can be of any assistance to anyone, please contact me.

- Larry Cunningham  
3rd Vice-President

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## Taylor looks forward to new position

April 18 saw the end of another year of NARFE business with the close of the annual convention. It has been my pleasure to serve as federation president for the past year. Again, I would like to thank the federation and chapter officers for their support during this period.

Now that my term has ended, it will give me more time to pursue my other NARFE job of Pre-Retirement Seminar Coordinator for Region X. These seminars are NARFE's effort to gain membership through current employees before they retire and are hard to reach. If anyone knows of government contacts within Region X, please let me know so that we can pursue seminars at their agencies. I am looking forward to another great year for NARFE and the Tennessee Federation. Hope to see all my friends at next year's convention.

- Herschel C. Taylor  
Immediate Past President

## Newly elected officers listed

The following individuals were elected for another term at April's annual convention:

John Hicks, President  
Carey Frazier, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President  
John Shannon, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President  
Larry Cunningham, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice-President  
Mary Ruth Cutshaw, Secretary  
Marie Anglin, Treasurer  
Allen Reeves, Membership  
Diane Taylor, Legislative

## Hicks gives thanks for election support

When Andy Anderson talked me into running for 3<sup>rd</sup> vice-president in late 2001, I didn't realize how fast time would go by and that I'd be sitting in the position that I'm now in as your Federation President. I would like to thank all who supported me in the election; I will give it 110 percent. I feel that we had a successful convention in Clarksville even with less than usual attendance.

We have a big year ahead of us, starting with the Region X President's meeting the first part of August, Federation Board meeting in mid-August, the National Convention in Albuquerque, N.M., the second week of September, and Legislative training in February 2007 for the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Speaking of the National Convention, all chapter presidents should have received your Delegate Form (C/06-03) and your Proxy Form (C/06-02) by this time. The deadline for your Delegate Form (C/06-03) to reach National Headquarters has been extended to July 10, 2006. The Proxy Form (C/06-02) deadline is August 25, 2006. If you have a member planning to attend the conven-

tion, please let me know. If you are going to use a proxy, please send the signed form to me as soon as possible so I can appoint a member attending the convention to represent your chapter. If you haven't received the forms, contact me ASAP. We would like to carry 100 percent coverage for Tennessee to the convention. The vice-presidents of your area will be contacting you on this matter. I would like to thank you in advance for your assistance.

Chapters that issue a chapter newsletter are to be commended. Please include the Federation President on that distribution.

We are happy to welcome aboard Larry Cunningham of Knoxville Chapter #204 as our new 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President.

As a parting thought, check out the Federation website at [www.narfetn.org](http://www.narfetn.org). We'd like to thank Ronnie Collins and Chuck MacKenzie for all their hard work.

- John T. Hicks  
Federation President

## Taylor accepts another year as legislative chair

As you can see, you're stuck with me for another year. Hopefully next year we will have another person in this job. I have thoroughly enjoyed the work and thank you for your confidence in me. We had a great convention, and if you were unable to attend, you missed a real treat. The Clarksville bunch did a wonderful job, and they deserve accolades for their work in putting this together. It is not easy for chapters to put together all the details of such an event, and we need to sincerely thank our host chapters when they are in charge of the convention. Donald Smith was the chair of the legislative committee at the convention, and he and the committee members did a good job. Thank you for your work! And thanks to Glenn Turner for stepping in and manning the NARFE-PAC table. We appreciate your assistance. Our friend Ed Bryan, district officer for District 5, and both state legislative officer and NARFE-PAC coordinator, was unable to attend the convention at the last minute because of serious illness in his family, and this was only the second convention he has missed in 20 years. We missed you, Ed, and pray that your daughter's health is returned quickly and completely.

We invited all senator and representative hopefuls to our convention to speak to our group representing all federal employees and retirees in Tennessee. Unfortunately, only Ed Bryant attended. Bob Corker from Chattanooga accepted the invitation but cancelled at the last minute, and we never even heard back from the others even after numerous

letters and calls. That included Van Hilleary who never supported our bills and Harold Ford who has cosponsored all our bills. Mr. Bryant gave a very good speech, and he assures us that he will support WEP/GPO but did not indicate whether he would support Premium Conversion. He did not support it in the past. Thank you to all of our Tennessee NARFE members for supporting us during March Lobby Week.

As a result of the nationwide alert, seven new cosponsors in the House were added to Premium Conversion for a total of 325, and one more senator to the Senate bill for a total of 60. For WEP/GPO, we have some additional cosponsors also.

H.R. 147 has 316, the largest number ever, and S. 619, has 24, six less than achieved during the previous Congress. You always come through for us, and we appreciate your continuing to contact and push our current legislators and possible future ones for Premium Conversion and repeal of WEP/GPO.

All our Tennessee Congressmen have signed on as cosponsor for Premium Conversion except Congressman Duncan from Congressional district 2. For H.R. 147, repeal of GPO/WEP, only Congressmen Jenkins (1st District), Duncan (2nd District), Davis (4th District), Gordon (6th District), and Ford (9th District) have signed on. Let's keep the pressure on! If we are not successful this year, remember that we have to start all over again next year with reintroduction of the bills. So help us keep the fire burning.

- Diane Taylor  
Legislative Chair



Senator Candidate Ed Bryant speaks at annual convention.

*"We invited all senator and representative hopefuls to our convention to speak to our group representing all federal employees and retirees in Tennessee. Unfortunately, only Ed Bryant attended."*  
-Diane Taylor

## Technology can simplify recordkeeping and reduce costs

We continue in pass into the technology era. There are now 230 members in the Federation E-mail net and it is growing. We still need contacts for the Kingston Chapter (2091) and the West TN KEN chapter (793). Also a considerable number of members are listed in the Headquarters GEMS system but not in the Federation net. I do not add people to our net unless they agree, so you need to contact me to sign up.

For small chapters (less than 200 members which are needed to qualify for the bulk mailing rate) with newsletters, Cookeville has started to distribute its newsletter by e-mail to those who have the capability to receive it. There are 34 on the distribution list at present with an anticipated savings of \$150 per year. I am sure there are also savings to the larger chapters with greater numbers of e-mail recipients.



In reviewing the records, there are several chapter legislative chairs that are not registered in the GEMS system. It is much easier keep updated by receiving the legislative hot line weekly via e-mail than to have to call the legislative hot line.

Recordkeeping can be a problem, but you can help by keeping your records updated with your e-mail capability. Go to the Headquarters' website ([www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org)) and log in. On the right side under MEMBERSHIP TOOLS, click UPDATE YOUR RECORD. Enter your ID and birth date and click SUBMIT. Change your data record as necessary and click UPDATE. If it is an e-mail address update,

don't forget to notify me.

- Chuck MacKenzie  
Federation Net Coordinator

## Bringing chapters into the 21st Century

The Tennessee Federation is moving forward with an updated website located at a new address on the World Wide Web. The new address is [www.narfetn.org](http://www.narfetn.org). Now it is time that our chapters in Tennessee have our own website on the Internet. Everyday people from all walks of life search the Web for information. Many of whom are federal employees or retirees. This is just one more way to get our message out, and if your chapter does not have a presence on the Internet, you are missing the opportunity to be heard by those people searching the Internet for information on federal benefits. Plus it would be easier for other NARFE members throughout the state and nation to be able to contact your chapter if your chapter was online. I

***"Everyday people  
from all walks of  
life search the Web  
for information."***

- Ronnie Collins

would encourage the leadership of each chapter to consider a website. I would be willing to assist any chapter to set up its website. Let me suggest that you look at the one created for the Cookeville chapter at: [www.narfecookevilletn.org](http://www.narfecookevilletn.org). I can very easily adapt it with the details for your chapter. My goal is to link the federation website and chapter websites to each other.

I could handle all the details to set up and maintain the website for your chapter for a very low cost. For information or questions, please contact me by email [rwcollins@bellsouth.com](mailto:rwcollins@bellsouth.com) or by telephone (615) 735-2486.

- Ronnie Collins  
Federation Webmaster

## Frazier urges members to continue writing letters

Recently, a group of us from the Nashville Chapter met with Congressman Cooper. He pointed out that the total deficit is over eight trillion dollars. He supports us on Premium Conversion but not WEP or GPO. Basically, he told us that the chances of our legislation being passed in the present Congress are about as good as a "snowball in hell." Leaving the meeting, I had a feeling of frustration and hopelessness. As I thought back over the past few years about all the energy we spend during "Lobby Week;" using some of our chapter meetings for writing letters to our Congressmen and Senators; E-mails, telephone calls and many of us writing individual letters and I thought WHY? Why are we spending all this energy when we know our legislation will never get out of committee and even if it does- the chances of passing are slim to none.

I thought about the fictional character "Rip Van Winkle." I will find a nice large shade tree, go to sleep under it, wake up in about 20 years and see how our country is doing and what politicians are running the country, and then make our move to get something done. (Of course, at my age, if I go to sleep for 20 years, I'm not sure where I will be when I awake- up above or down below- so I think I will stay awake!)

However, we all know that when we face challenges, we can not sleep. Congressman Cooper encouraged us to keep on doing what we are doing – namely keep knocking on the doors of our elected officials and let them know we are here, and keep reminding them of our concerns of the unfairness of WEP and GPO and the need for the passage of Premium Conversion. Premium Conversion would cost approximately \$12 billion over ten years and the combination of WEP and GPO would cost roughly \$63 billion over ten years. These are not small numbers. Our Nashville Tennessean in a recent editorial pointed out that the elimination of the federal estate tax would mean less revenue of almost \$20 billion. Why not keep the estate tax since it affects only the most wealthy? We all get annoyed in reading about "pork barrel" spending by various Congressmen and Senators and for some reason this continues, yet when we talk about our legislation, the response is: "It is too costly."

The bottom line is we must never give up. As the announcer used to say on radio many years ago: "Lets keep those cards and letters coming." We cannot quit.

*- Carey Frazier  
1st Vice-President*

## Condensed excerpt from convention minutes outlined

**Constitution & Bylaws Committee:** Charles MacKenzie reported that two resolutions were considered: one regarding expenses/compensation of officers (which was passed), and the other as to whether the convention should be held every one or two years (the resolution as submitted was defective and rejected). President Taylor took a poll of convention attendees, and the consensus that every year was the desire of this convention. Taylor advised those who want to change should come back next year with resolution that will cover all the bases, and this issue will be reconsidered next year.

**Finance/Ways & Means Committee:** Ferris Christian advised this committee met to review the current budget to see if resources are available to accomplish the goals of NARFE. It was recommended that the 2006 budget be increased \$2,000 due to inflation and cover expenses. Also recommended was that chapters do their officers' training, the newsletter be printed quarterly, and use electronic correspondence to cut down on travel.

Allen Reeves, membership chair, gave a presentation regarding the status of membership; shows charts of membership ups and downs; 4,786 members in Tennessee as of April 1. We need to recruit 114 more to pass 5,000 again, which is what we had in 1999. Remember to give special attention to those who have been dropped and received second notices.

Bill Austin advised he is running for National VP and spoke of his campaign efforts and would appreciate your support. The website is up and running thanks to Chuck MacKenzie and Allen Reeves. Ronnie Collins has taken over as webmaster.

**NARFE-PAC:** Glenn Turner advised PAC will continue to try to reach members by newsletters. Chapters should appoint a NARFE-PAC coordinator and encourage members to contribute. A total of \$475 was donated at this convention.

## Tennessee Federation Financial Report

By Marie Anglin, Treasurer

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Budget Total</u> <u>2005</u>	<u>Expenses</u> <u>2005</u>	<u>(Over) Under</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>Budget</u> <u>2006</u>
1. Executive Bd. Meeting:	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 3,933.70	\$ 66.30	\$ 4,400.00
2. Fed. Officers Grants	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 1,125.00	\$ 675.00	\$ 1,800.00
3. Office Expenses:	\$ 1,650.00	\$ 691.38	\$ 958.62	\$ 1,500.00
4. State Convention	\$ 2,600.00	\$ 1,906.59	\$ 693.41	\$ 2,650.00
5. Nat'l Convention/Pres. Exp.	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00
6. Fed. Newsletter	\$ 5,600.00	\$ 7,252.05	\$ (1,652.05)	\$ 7,000.00
7. Legislative Expenses:	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 3,223.43	\$ (2,023.43)	\$ 1,100.00
8. Visit Weak Chapters	\$ 150.00	\$ 886.39	\$ (736.39)	\$ 900.00
9. Visit to Chapters	\$ 3,850.00	\$ 1,166.03	\$ 2,683.97	\$ 2,000.00
10. Chap. Officers Training	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
11. Monitor St/Local Legist.	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
12. Prom. National Legislation	\$ 100.00	\$ 37.89	\$ 62.11	\$ 100.00
13. Civic Activity	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
14. Senior Activity/Also. Etc	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ 50.00	
15. Non Member Activity	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
16. Inc New Memo.-Ser Can, etc	\$ 200.00	\$ 47.26	\$ 152.74	\$ 200.00
17. Merit Awards	\$ 200.00	\$ -	\$ 200.00	
18. Public Relations	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ 200.00
19. Region X. Conference	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 1,112.91	\$ 687.09	\$ 1,500.00
20. Nat'l Pres. Conf/Natal Ex Bad	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
21. Nat'l Membership Seminar			\$ -	
a. Model Chap Mtg.-Macon GA	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 1,735.81	\$ 64.19	
22. Nat'l Legislation Seminar	\$ 100.00	\$ 85.69	\$ 14.31	
23. Other	\$ -	\$ 94.23	\$ (94.23)	\$ 100.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 28,300.00</b>	<b>\$ 23,298.36</b>	<b>\$ 5,001.64</b>	<b>\$ 27,550.00</b>

Total Deposits \$ 35,234.15

(See explanation of excessive revenue on Financial Report, some revenue from existing accts)

Revenues exceeded Expenses by \$11,935.79

## Contact information for newly elected officers

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## Note from the editor

The newsletter distribution is established by the National NARFE database. Address corrections or inquiries should be submitted to member records, toll free at 1-800-456-8410 or e-mail [memsrvcs@narfe.org](mailto:memsrvcs@narfe.org). Have your membership number ready, which can be found on the label of the Retirement Life magazine.



**Federation Web Site**  
[www.narfetn.org](http://www.narfetn.org)



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