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TENNESSEE FEDERATION NEWS

News of Interest to Active and Retired Federal Employees

March 2010

Emails make communication efficient

The words, communication, involvement and participation all have a nice sound. Words such as letters, smoke signals, telegraph, telephone, radio, television all come under the heading of communication. The space age brought computers. A lot of us have cell phones. We can send an email message, not only locally but to friends and relatives in other countries. We send pictures of our grandchildren through email. Now, I hear of "Facebook" and "Twitter" and the last word does not mean birds talking to each other. About two days ago, I read where Apple Computer has invented a "Tablet." I have absolutely no idea of what it is about. I am not sure I really care. However, I need not worry. My grandchildren will explain everything to me.

We have roughly 4,400 NARFE members in Tennessee. We have 35 chapters spread across the state. Some of the chapters have newsletters. We have a Federation Newsletter which is published four times per year. All of our members receive the NARFE magazine which comes out monthly. Yet with all of these communication tools, we have trouble getting the word out. Is it possible we have come so "bombarded" with "stuff" on television; the daily monotony of going through our mail; the telephone call from a charity of which we never heard; have our senses become somewhat "dulled"? Is our mental state a type of: "I have been-there done-that you cannot show me anything I have not seen before? Do not bother me!"

We need better communication between our Federation and our chapters.

Our chapter officers need to have better communication with chapter members. Recently, I began to wonder: What percentage of our members have a telephone listing on the M-114 which lists all our members in Tennessee? What percentage of our members have emails? Is the information current on the M-114? I wonder.

I reviewed the M-114 for all 35 chapters in Tennessee. Some 85 percent of our voting members have a telephone listed. It varies from a low of 66 percent to a high of 100 percent. For our non-voting National members, there is a listing of only 56 percent showing they have a phone. I was curious about our National non-voting members as some of these members have been with NARFE a very long time. They are very important even though because of health and age reasons, they might not be able to attend a chapter meeting. Overall, our percentage of telephone listings is good.

Only 22 percent of our voting members have an email listed. It varies from a low of 3 percent to a high of 81 percent. Only 4 percent of our National non-voting members have email. I recently sent an email out to all our chapter presidents so they could look at their chapter.

We need to work on emails. It is very possible a high percentage of our members have emails, but they are not on our NARFE listing. Why is this important? There are several reasons. Email is easy. It is not intrusive. With the push of a button on my computer, I can communicate with all chapter presidents and

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Emails make communication efficient (continued)

board members across Tennessee who have email. By the same token, they can contact me. NARFE Headquarters publishes "GEMS messages" which come through email. The GEMS messages are important and they are free. Basically, they are constant updates to our legislative goals in Congress and other matters of equal importance.

We publish our Federation Newsletter four times per year. The annual cost is approximately \$6,000. If all our members had emails, then we could save that \$6,000. This will never happen. However, let's suppose that 60-75 percent of our members had emails. We could still achieve a significant cost savings.

Communication is the key to people feeling involved. If you send me an email asking some question and I respond, then we are talking. If we are talking, then we are part of something. You are involved, I am involved. Your membership dues come due and you say to yourself, "Ah, what the heck, I am not going to renew; NARFE does not do anything for me, and I am tired of belonging." However, if you have been "talking" to other members, though phone calls or emails, then you will say, "No, I will not let my membership dues go unpaid as I belong to something." The "talking," phone calling, emailing and receiving GEMS messages about issues facing us as federal employees keeps us involved. We want answers. We want to know why. Communication is the key to learning.

I have asked our chapter presidents to review the listings of emails in their chapter. At a chapter meeting or maybe one or two chapter meetings, let five or six people bring cell phones to the meeting. Everyone will go to a quiet corner and call the person with no email listing. Ask them, "Do you have an email? Would you be agreeable that we have your email on our NARFE listing so we can send emails directly to you, and if we get enough emails, we can save money in Tennessee?" Some will say yes; some will say no. If we do not start updating our email listings on our M-114, then it will never get done. It will not happen.

Let us begin. Allow a period of time of 12-15 months and then take a reading. Then how many of our members will have emails? If I can help in any way, please let me know. I can make phone calls. (Don't ask me about Facebook, Twitter or the Tab-

let!)

In closing, let me say this will be my last article to write as your Federation President. In Tennessee, we have a tradition the Federation President serves only two years. My two years will be up at the Convention which is April of this year. Let me thank all of our members, our chapter officers, our Federation Board and Joe Beaudoin and Paul Carew, the latter two as Regional X Vice Presidents, who have helped me in many ways. I am grateful to all of you.

- Carey Frazier

Tennessee Federation President

(615) 373-4817

ctfraz@comcast.net



Springtime in the Smokies

This is a lovely time to visit our area. The shows, theaters and all the attractions are open and running. We have about completed preparations for the 2010 State Convention in April 18, 19 and 20.

Lodging has been arranged at the Oak Tree Lodge on US Highway 441 at the end of Sevierville, just before entering Pigeon Forge. They have provided quite economical rates (from \$45 to \$75 per night). Damon's Restaurant will be taking care of the banquet on Monday night, and they always do an excellent job. Shopping, restaurants and some attractions are all within walking distance.

We encourage everyone to give the Oak Tree Lodge a call and make reservations. Their toll-free number is 1-800-637-7002. State that you are with NARFE to receive the group rate.

One other thing, each chapter attending is asked to provide a door prize which will be given to lucky ticket holders at the conclusion of the Monday banquet. Hope to see and make you welcome at our 2010 Convention.

- Gene R. Carpenter

President

Sevierville Chapter

Ask yourself what you can do for your Association

Near the end of 2009, I sent a memorandum to all chapter presidents in West Tennessee in which I listed NARFE accomplishments for the year. It may surprise some to know that the list filled almost one typed page and included very good to excellent gains for federal employees and retirees. These accomplishments are well documented in other publications, but I will mention one here because it requires CSRS annuitants, not collecting Social Security, to be pro-active. A 1040, 1040A, or 1040NR must be filed with "SCHEDULE M, Making Work Pay and Government Retiree Credits", attached to receive the "\$250 Government Employee Tax Credit."

When I started writing this article I planned to list a few of the NARFE accomplishments for 2009 and discuss what a bargain we receive for our dues payment. But my thoughts soon took another direction. I began thinking about what we do for the organization as active and retired federal employees as a group. Less than 7 percent who are eligible are NARFE members. Only about 10-12 percent of our members regularly attend chapter meetings, only about 15 percent have a GEMS email address, and less than 10 percent of those at best respond to NARFE's "URGENT ACTION



ALERT" messages. So it occurred to me that maybe we should rephrase a famous quote by President John F. Kennedy. Perhaps there is good reason to say, "And so, my fellow members, ask not what your Association can do for you; ask what

you can do for your Association."

Some will read this and think it is an absurd idea because you already do "all that you possibly can for NARFE." While there are probably a few who do, as devoted as most of us may be, there is almost always the potential to do more. Fortunately there are numerous avenues for increased participation. Membership numbers are vital for success so recruitment and retention are essential, talk to a friend or associate about joining NARFE. Go to a chapter meeting. If you already attend, invite a guest. Think about serving as a chapter officer. Join the "Sunshine Committee." Participate in telephone calling trees. Volunteer to start a chap-

ter newsletter or contribute an article to an existing publication. Organize or participate in a meeting with a member of your congressional delegation (Remaining key 2010 House recesses include: Passover and Easter, March 29 – April 9; Memorial Day, May 31 – June 4; July 4, July 5 – July 9; and August, August 9 – September 3; with a targeted adjournment date of October 8). List your email address in the GEMS system – it will not be shared outside of NARFE and will not generate junk email. Respond by email, FAX or telephone to your first NARFE Action Alert. Contribute to NARFE-PAC and the NARFE Alzheimer's Fund.

Of course there are also other levels for increased NARFE participation. Our 54th Federation Convention hosted by Chapter 1678 is scheduled for April 18-20 in Sevierville. In case you have not noticed, the "2010 Convention Registration Form" is designed to include the following categories of attendees: Delegate, Alternate, Federation Officer, National Officer, Past Federation President, Guest, and Member. So there are a number of opportunities for participation. The reservation cut off date is March 18, 2010, and I encourage you to make this the best attended convention in Federation history. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

In addition, our 31st Biennial National Convention is being held August 29 – September 2, 2010, in Grand Rapids, Mich. Remaining Convention deadline dates are listed for your information as follows: Resolutions must be received by the Office of the National Secretary by May 20; Form C/10-2, "Designation of Chapter Delegates, Voting Representative and Proxy" must be received by the Office of the National Secretary by June 30 for chapter delegates and the voting representative or August 13 for proxy delegates; and the Preregistration Form (C/10-4) accompanied by a fee of \$55 must be postmarked or submitted online by August 6. Whether this is your first convention or tenth, it is an excellent way to support the Association devoted exclusively to serving and protecting the earned entitlements, rights and benefits of all federal retirees, employees and survivors. Please ask yourself what you can do for your Association.

- James L. (Larry) Henderson

Tennessee Federation 3rd Vice-President
(731) 784-0675, henderson@click1.net

Membership trend improving

As I write this, I do not have the membership totals for January 2010, so I will provide the year-end totals through December 2009. We here in Tennessee had our third month in a row showing positive membership numbers. For the month of December, we had an overall gain of 7 members giving us a new total for Tennessee Federation of 4,415 members. Even with all the deaths lately, we have shown an increase in overall membership for October, November and December. For these three months, we had a total gain of 18 members, and even though it doesn't seem like many, it's better than showing a loss.

NARFE National membership totals are also looking a little better in that they showed an increase in overall members for the same three months that we did. They had a net gain of 362 members for the month of December, giving a new grand total of 310,539 members to close out the year 2009. The national membership has increased by 2,410 for the last three months of 2009, and we've increase ours, here in Tennessee, by 18.

Hopefully this positive trend will continue, and our overall numbers will keep increasing.

NARFE National closed out the year 2009 with an overall gain of 33,550 members and showed an overall loss of 40,965 members for a new grand total loss of 7,415 members throughout 2009. This alone looks kind of bleak; however, 17,398 members were lost throughout 2008, and 9,414 members were lost throughout 2007. So, as bleak as it may seem, at least 2009 was the best of the last three years even though it did result in more negative numbers. Things may be looking up, and maybe our numbers will be positive and continue to increase in 2010.

- JC Whitney
 TN FED Membership Chair
 (931) 358-4855
jcwhitney@cdelightband.net

NARFE State Convention 2010

April 18-20, 2010

Oak Tree Lodge, Sevierville

Guests must call the toll free number 800-637-7002 for their individual reservations and state they are with NARFE to receive the group rate.

Delegates needed for convention

By now, chapters should have already chosen their delegates for the upcoming Federation Convention in April. If not, please get that done as soon as possible. The delegate form has two parts: upper and lower. Both need to be signed by the chapter secretary. The top part goes to Linda LeMay, and the delegate brings the bottom part to the convention.

Each chapter is authorized one delegate for each 25 voting members or fraction thereof. Example: 50 members = 2 delegates; 51 members = 3 delegates. Members do not have to be delegates to attend the convention. Anyone that is a member, a spouse, or a guest can attend, the fees are the same. Delegates as well as members, spouses, and guests, who are planning to attend need to complete a convention registration form and send to Glenda Huff, 415 Mountain View Dr., Seymour, TN 37865. Remember to make your motel reservations directly with the Oak Tree Lodge.

If no one from your chapter will be attending, please contact someone from another chapter to carry your chapter proxy. If you have a problem finding someone, let me know and I will help you with that.

Hope to see you all at the convention. Until then, stay active and exercise as the extent possible. A little movement is better than no movement at all.

- Larry Cunningham
 Federation First Vice President
 865 933-0229
larrycunningham@narfetn.org

Haiti Relief – Every Bit Counts

The stories and the pictures that have reached us have been appalling. We have witnessed natural and man-made disasters before, but the scale of the destruction in Haiti caused by a Richter magnitude 7.0 earthquake has reached new heights. A television reporter touring Port-au-Prince likened it to the destruction from an atomic bomb. Whole sections of the devastated city and other cities in Haiti will face the bulldozer, and then massive rebuilding before their citizens can attempt to regain their lives and livelihoods.

The amount of damage and human suffering from the worst earthquake in 250 years, matched only by the seemingly overwhelming task of providing for those who have lost everything, has brought out the best in all of us. Organizations both large and small have collected large quantities of medical supplies, food, clothing and other necessities of daily living for shipment to Haiti. Many, including our fellow NARFE members have volunteered their time and talent by traveling to the area to assist in the search for survivors, provide medical care, clear debris, and other necessary life-saving projects. Most of us can assist through cash contributions.

NARFE members can provide support to Haiti Relief through cash donations to the American Red Cross and other appropriate organizations. To enable this effort further, President Obama signed into law an immediate tax deduction for Haiti charitable contributions. This legislation will allow taxpayers to receive the tax benefit from donations made to the Haiti effort in this tax season, rather than having to wait until they file their 2010 tax returns next year. Specifically, cash donations to charities for the Haitian relief effort given after January 11 and before March 1 of this year may be treated as if the contribution was made on December 31 of last year so that the contribution can be deducted from 2009 income.

The need is great and every bit counts.

- Paul H. Carew
Region X Vice-President

March is designated as NARFE-PAC month

Our Political Action Committee (NARFE- PAC) was established in 1982 to increase our influence over our elected officials. We use our NARFE-PAC funds to help elect representatives who are friendly to our NARFE causes. NARFE must be able to defend members' earned benefits. For this reason, we often refer to our NARFE-PAC as our Federal Employees Defense Fund. This is a fund for the benefit of all active and retired federal employees. It is therefore in the interest of all NARFE members to help fund our NARFE-PAC. The month of March is designated as NARFE-PAC month. All contributions, no matter the amount is appreciated. Please see each issue of our NARFE magazine for a contribution form.

- Glenn Turner
NARFE-PAC Coordinator
glennturner01@comcast.net
(615) 352-1907

Email Address Changes

In order for NARFE to be able to send you Action Alerts and urgent notifications using the Global Electronic Messaging System (GEMS), they need your email address.

To be sure that your email address is listed correctly in your member profile, send it along with your name to GEMS@narfetn.org.

It will only be used for official NARFE-related messages.

Address Changes

Names and addresses for newsletter distribution come directly from

NARFE'S National Office.

To correct your address, please contact the National Office at (800) 456-8410.

**Tennessee Federation of Chapters
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association**

2010 Convention Registration Form
54th Federation Convention
Hosted by Sevierville Chapter 1678
Sevierville, Tennessee
April 18-20, 2010

Please Print or type all information

Chapter No. _____ Chapter Name _____ Location _____

Name _____ ID# _____ Phone: _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

CIRCLE ONE: [Delegate] [Alternate] [Federation Off.] [Nat. Off.] [Past Federation President] [Guest] [Member]
Spouse _____ ID# if NARFE Member _____

CIRCLE ONE: [Delegate] [Alternate] [Federation Off.] [Nat. Off.] [Past Federation President] [Guest] [Member]

CONVENTION FEE OPTIONS [Select for yourself and spouse]:

- FULL REGISTRATION FEE: \$45.00 (Incl. Registration and Banquet)
- CONFERENCE ONLY \$20.00
- BANQUET ONLY \$25.00
- LATE FEE \$5.00 (After March 18, 2010) TOTAL enclosed _____

Registration forms must be submitted by March 18, 2010 (Late or on-site registration extra \$5)

Make checks payable to: NARFE

Mail to: Glenda Huff, 415 Mountain View Dr., Seymour,
TN 37865-4321

For additional information, contact Ben King, Convention
Chair at 865-453-9139 or Gene Carpenter, Chapter
President at 865-428-1502

Oak Tree Lodge
1620 Parkway
Sevierville, TN 37862
Phone: 800-637-7002

Your reservation is to be made by contacting the hotel
directly. Rates are \$45 to \$75 plus tax.

RESERVATION CUT OFF DATE: March 18, 2010

Directions

From I-40, take exit 407, Hwy 66,
toward Sevierville.

Approx. 10 miles to Hwy 441.
follow 441 through Sevierville,
approx. 4 miles.

Hotel is on the right across from
Tanger Outlets Mall.

**Delegate Form
2010 NARFE State Convention
April 18-20, 2010**

TOP PORTION (to be returned to the Federation Secretary)

Please print or type:

Chapter No: _____ Chapter Name: _____ Location: _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Delegate _____ Alternate _____ Proxy for Chapter _____

I wish to serve on the following committees: Membership _____ Legislation _____ Service Officer Committee _____

Public Relations _____ Rules _____ Nomination _____ Alzheimer _____ Resolutions _____ Credentials _____

Constitution & Bylaws _____ Financial Ways & Means and Audit _____ PAC _____ Time & Place _____ Ballot & Teller _____

Signature of Chapter Secretary _____

-----Cut delegate form in two separate pieces-----

**Delegate Form
2010 NARFE State Convention
April 18-20, 2010**

BOTTOM PORTION (to be carried by the proxy holder to the Convention)

Please print or type:

Chapter No: _____ Chapter Name: _____ Location: _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Delegate _____ Alternate _____ Proxy for Chapter _____

Signature of Chapter Secretary _____

Instructions: If you plan to attend the Convention as a delegate or alternate fill out both the top and bottom portion; Chapter Secretary must sign. Leave blank the "Proxy For Chapter." Please return top half to the Federation Secretary, Lynda LeMay, 1608 Hunt Lane, Pleasant View, TN 37146, in enclosed self addressed stamped envelope. The Delegate will carry the bottom portion to the Convention and present to Credentials Committee.

If no one from your Chapter will attend, please find someone from another chapter who will serve as proxy. The name, address of the person serving as proxy should appear above and the "Proxy For Chapter" should have Chapter Number of the Chapter not sending any delegates. The Chapter Secretary should still sign. The top half should be mailed as outlined above and the bottom half carried by the proxy holder to the Convention. If there is any question, please call Carey Frazier at (615) 373-4817.

We're on the web!
www.narfetn.org

Protecting the Future for Retired and Current Federal Employees

Chapter 204 Officers for 2010



President Larry Cunningham, Chapter 204, passes the gavel to incoming President James Demaree.



L-R: Kathy Arnett, 2nd Vice President; James Demaree, President; Frank McClelland, Treasurer; Camellia Duncan, Secretary; and Herb Arnett, Legislative and Service Officer.

Not pictured: A. Wayne Baker, 1st Vice President.

TENNESSEE FEDERATION OF CHAPTERS, NARFE

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