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FEDERATION OF
CHAPTERS

TENNESSEE FEDERATION NEWS

News of Interest to Active and Retired Federal Employees

March 2011

Cunningham meets with Congressman John Duncan

The first paragraph on page 8 of the February magazine should hit home with all of us. NARFE President Joseph Beaudion calls the congressional battle ahead “the most challenging fight in a generation” to defend federal employees’ and retirees’ earned retirement pay and health benefits. To win this battle is going to require all of us to contribute. President Beaudion has started a new program for those without an e-mail address to alert them by telephone messages (robo) calls of upcoming matters that need to be addressed with our legislators. For those who have an e-mail address, please join the GEMS network by going to the National Website www.narfe.org and click on join GEMS, or simply call 800-456-8410.

Recently I enjoyed a one-on-one meeting with Congressman John Duncan, our 2nd District Representative. I explained my dissatisfaction with the way that federal employees’ and retirees’ were being portrayed by the Congress. I also expressed my concern about the disparity in the Medicare Part B premium increase that held social security beneficiaries harmless for the increase but did not allow civil service retirees’ that same benefit. We paid a percentage of our wages toward Medicare just as workers on social security, therefore we as civil service retirees should be treated equitable.

The Congressman said that he would keep my concerns in mind. I just received a letter from Congressman Duncan stating that he did not want to do anything to decrease employee salaries nor anything that would be unfair to the workers.

We in the federal community, both active and retired, should all be willing to contribute toward reducing the national debt but that contribution should also be made by all Americans.

This issue of the newsletter includes the registration form for our State Convention as well as committee chairs. Please consider getting the registration form in as soon as possible.

Remember folks, let’s get out and exercise to the extent possible, it will make you feel better about yourself.

- Larry Cunningham, Federation President
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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.

Reversing non-payment of dues is key to improving membership

Most of you folks have not seen this information, so I thought I would share with ya'll the monthly membership totals provided by NARFE Headquarters. My membership recap (see below) reflects the running monthly totals from January 2010 thru December 2010. I have noted the four months showing an overall gain of members which are May, October, November, and December. The remaining eight months, which show an overall loss of members, are shown on the right half of the report. We had an overall loss of 9,367 members for the entire year. This figure is 1,952 higher than the loss for 2009 of 7,415 NARFE National members. These are the numbers that we have to figure out a way to turn around and start showing an overall gain of members. The last three months of the year were fairly good in that we gained a total of 1,477 members, and maybe this trend will continue throughout year 2011. I'd like to point out on the Membership Losses that the "Dropped For Non-Payment" column reflect 78% of the 40,020 total members lost while the "Reported Deaths" were only 21%. The 78% is the number that we must hone in on if we are going to turn around our retention problem.

| Mon | MEMBERSHIP GAINS | | | MEMBERSHIP LOSSES | | | |
|-------|------------------|----------------|---------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|---------|
| | New Members | Reinstatements | Totals | Cancellations | Dropped for Non-Payment | Reported Deaths | Totals |
| Jan | 1,551 | 852 | 2,403 | 45 | 2,202 | 767 | (3,014) |
| Feb | 1,145 | 476 | 1,621 | 25 | 3,167 | 757 | (3,949) |
| Mar | 2,030 | 765 | 2,795 | 36 | 2,788 | 1,035 | (3,859) |
| Apr | 2,470 | 763 | 3,233 | 22 | 2,891 | 882 | (3,795) |
| May | 2,414 | 770 | + 3,184 | 21 | 2,619 | 476 | 3,116 |
| Jun | 1,911 | 844 | 2,755 | 24 | 2,673 | 824 | (3,521) |
| Jul | 878 | 715 | 1,593 | 10 | 2,367 | 579 | (2,956) |
| Aug | 690 | 707 | 1,397 | 15 | 3,229 | 537 | (3,781) |
| Sep | 821 | 786 | 1,607 | 26 | 2,789 | 626 | (3,441) |
| Oct | 2,669 | 667 | + 3,336 | 46 | 2,524 | 500 | 3,070 |
| Nov | 2,429 | 721 | + 3,150 | 43 | 2,120 | 708 | 2,871 |
| Dec | 3,004 | 575 | + 3,579 | 58 | 1,875 | 714 | 2,647 |
| Total | 22,012 | 8,641 | 30,653 | <u>371</u> | <u>31,244</u> | <u>8,405</u> | 40,020 |
| % | | | | 1% | 78% | 21% | |

2010 Total Members Lost - (9,367)

2009 Total Members Lost - (7,415)

NARFE Total Membership - Jan 2010 - 310,302

NARFE Total Membership - Dec 2010 - 300,935

We here in the Great State of Tennessee had an "up and down" type year 2010. We had a total membership of 4,401 members in January 2010 and closed out the year with a total of 4,324 members so, we showed an overall loss of 77 members for the entire year. It could have been much worse, but it also could have been a lot better. The last three months of the year showed an overall increase of 38 members, so maybe we will continue with a positive growth for year 2011.

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

**NARFE 55th Tennessee State Federation Convention
Opryland Radisson Hotel, Nashville, TN**

~~ April 18-19, 2011 ~~

PRE-REGISTRATION FORM
(One Person per Form)

NAME _____

Chapter Name and No. _____

| | | |
|--|---------|----------|
| Pre-Registration Fee (Includes Banquet) | \$55.00 | \$ _____ |
| Banquet Only (Mon., April 18) | \$35.00 | \$ _____ |
| Registration Only (Tues., All Day) | \$20.00 | \$ _____ |
| Late Fee after March 18 | \$10.00 | \$ _____ |

Indicate your status with check mark:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federation Officer | <input type="checkbox"/> Federation Past President |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Delegate | <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate Delegate | <input type="checkbox"/> Guest |

*******Please remit by March 15, 2011*******

Check payable to:
Bob Miller - 210 Dover Place - Franklin, TN 37067
615-794-7348

Optional Entertainment Opportunities
(Please indicate interest by check mark.)

- Grand Ole Opry Show** -- Tuesday night, discount tickets, (May wish to remain overnight.)
- Visit Opry Mills Outlet Mall** -- Any time; no tickets required.
- General Jackson Showboat** ride on the Cumberland River (Lunch Buffet and Show). Daily Tennessee luncheon schedule requires boarding by 11:15 a.m. Evening dinner cruises require boarding by 5:15 p.m.; Sunday dinner cruise requires boarding by 6:15 p.m., and includes a one-of-a-kind experience in the glittering two-story Victorian Theater on board. Tickets available at <http://www.generaljackson.com/>

112th Congress from Tennessee

Senator Lamar Alexander (R)

455 Dirksen Senate Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20510
 (202) 224-4944
 Memphis: (901) 544-4224
 Jackson: (731) 423-9344
 Nashville: (615) 736-5129
 Chattanooga: (423) 752-5337
 Knoxville: (865) 545-4253
 Tri-Cities: (423) 325-6240

Senator Bob Corker (R)

SD-185 Dirksen Senate Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20510
 (202) 224-3344
 Memphis: (901) 683-1910
 Jackson: (731) 424-9655
 Nashville: (615) 279-8125
 Chattanooga: (423) 756-2757
 Knoxville: (865) 637-4180
 Tri-Cities: (423) 323-1252

TN 1st District

Representative Phil Roe (R)

419 Cannon House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515
 (202) 225-6356
 Kingsport: (423) 247-8161
 Morristown: (423) 254-1400

TN 2nd District

John J. (Jimmy) Duncan, Jr., (R)

2207 Rayburn House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515-4202
 (202) 225-5435
 Knoxville: (865) 523-3772
 Maryville: (865) 984-5464
 Athens: (423) 745-4671

TN 3rd District

Representative Charles Fleischmann (R)

511 Cannon House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515
 (202) 225-3271
 Chattanooga: 423-756-2342
 Oak Ridge: 865-576-1976

TN 4th District

Representative Scott DeJarlais (R)

Washington Office
 413 Cannon House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515
 (202) 225-6831
 Chattanooga: (423) 756-2342
 Oak Ridge: (865) 576-1976

TN 5th District

Representative Jim Cooper (D)

1536 Longworth House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515
 (202) 225-4311
 Nashville: 615-736-5295

TN 6th District

Representative Diane Black (R)

1531 Longworth House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515
 (202) 225- 4231
 Murfreesboro: (615) 896-1986

TN 7th District

Representative Marsha Blackburn (R)

217 Cannon House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515
 (202) 225-2811
 Memphis: (901) 382-5811
 Franklin: (615) 591-5161
 Clarksville: (931) 503-0391

TN 8th District

Representative Stephen Fincher (R)

1118 Longworth House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515
 (202) 225-4714
 Jackson: (731) 423-4848
 Dyersburg: Opening soon

TN 9th District

Representative Steve Cohen (D)

1005 Longworth House Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20515-4209
 (202) 225-3265
 Memphis: (901) 544-4131

Emails can help you get involved

In prior Federation articles, I raised the question of how many of our members in Tennessee have email and whether that email was shared with NARFE Headquarters. The objective or purpose in having our emails listed with NARFE Headquarters is so we can receive legislative updates, GEMS messages more quickly.

Many of you have been very good about responding and very positive in your comments. Others have told me they do not own computers and cannot participate in emails. I want to thank all of you.

However, in my quest to contact our members for the purpose of obtaining emails and then forwarding that on to our NARFE Headquarters, I have "bitten off more than I can chew." So again, I need your help.

For those of you who are members and have emails, but that e mail address has not been shared with NARFE Headquarters, there is an easier way. Please go to the NARFE website. Click on Members. A pop-up screen will appear. Type in your last name and your membership number. Remember, your membership number is on the address label of your NARFE monthly magazine. Then click on "sign in." The screen will come up and in the left-hand column, you will see the words: "JOIN GEMS." Click on that. Again, you will be asked to type in your membership number and your birth date. After doing that, click on "submit" and NARFE Headquarters should have your email address. Simple as that. If you have any problem, please call me and I will be happy to walk you through.

I am convinced, that as members, we all need a sense of involvement. Emails can help. Some of you email me with questions, and I am delighted to answer. It makes me feel important and since you cared enough to ask, then you are involved. That is what it is all about. Many times, our members think their membership is not important or they do not feel they are an important part of something. You are important. Do not let your membership lapse. As federal employees, whether we are retired or still working, we face some tough times ahead. We must all

work together and be involved. Now more than ever.

Thanks for all you are doing.

Carey Frazier, ctfraz@comcast.net
(615) 373-4817, 6025 Murray Lane,
Brentwood, TN 37027

Convention Committee Chairpersons

| Committee | Chairperson | Chapter |
|-------------------------------|----------------|---------|
| Credentials | Julia Metcalf | 1382 |
| Rules | Ronnie Collins | 1956 |
| Resolutions | Carlos Henning | 519 |
| Constitution & Bylaws | Dean McAlister | 860 |
| Financial Ways, Means & Audit | Hank Shelton | 1576 |
| Membership | J.C. Whitney | 870 |
| Legislation | Jim Glenn | 2035 |
| Service Officer | John Hicks | 956 |
| Public Relations | Tom Duncan | 227 |
| NARFE-PAC | Larry Minniear | 108 |
| Alzheimers | Joan Gates | 204 |
| Nominations | Herb Arnett | 204 |

The above members have been selected to serve as committee chairpersons for this year's convention. Those chosen to be committee members will be selected later. All elected positions in the Federation are open for nominations. The offices of Secretary (monthly stipend \$50), East Tennessee Vice President, and Membership Chairman will have no incumbent as those officers have decided not to run. Anyone interested, or know of someone who may be interested, should contact Herb Arnett at herbarnett@narfetn.org or (865) 384-9512.

NARFE expects its “most challenging fight in a generation”

Does it seem to you as though we are in a period of exceptionally perilous times with regard to federal employee pay, pensions and benefits? Lately I have been more concerned than ever and according to a recent “NARFE Legislative Update,” National is expecting the most challenging fight in a generation during the current congressional budget process.

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) has promised to eliminate tens of billions of dollars from the budget and said federal workers will not be immune from cuts. In addition, a series of measures proposed by House conservatives to reduce the federal deficit included several that would severely impact the federal workforce. The Republican Study Committee, who unveiled the plan, called their proposal the “Spending Reduction Act of 2011.” It would extend President Obama’s pay freeze on federal employees from two years to five, cut the civil service by 15 percent through attrition over a decade, and prohibit federal workers from serving as union officials on government time.

Furthermore, freshman Representative Dennis A. Ross (R-FL), chairman of the House subcommittee on federal workers, the Postal Service and labor policy, said that he plans to focus first on potential cuts to the federal payroll.

To help illustrate the challenges ahead, the tables at the end of this article show the percentage that leaders of the 112th Congress voted in favor of NARFE issues in the previous Congress. Representative Nancy Pelosi was Speaker of the House and did not vote.

The Civil Service Retirement Act was signed into law in 1920, and the first meeting of NARFE was held on February 19, 1921. So NARFE was established soon after the retirement system began and has been working on our behalf for more than 90 years. While I believe most NARFE members realize how important the Association has been in protecting our pay, pensions and earned benefits all of these years, the 93 percent who are eligible for membership but have not joined just do not seem to get it. Per-

sonally, I shudder to think where we would be without NARFE. All of us have heard the saying, “You never truly appreciate what you have until it’s lost.” In recent years, NARFE membership has been on the decline, and it is incumbent on all of us to do everything we can to keep from losing the only organization that exists solely to protect the earned benefits of federal employees, retirees and survivors. Thank your for being a NARFE member. I have made a commitment to continue maintaining my NARFE membership, and I hope that you will too.

This is the last newsletter you will receive before our Federation Convention in April. Recently, several members have questioned me about the convention dates (17, 18 and 19) listed on the delegate form as well as several other publications. According to previous programs, the convention will be held April 18-19, 2011. As far as I know, nothing will be scheduled on Sunday, April 17. I look forward to seeing everyone at the convention.

- Larry Henderson, Federation 2nd Vice-President
3007 Berrywood Dr., Humboldt, TN 38343-2761
731-784-0675, henderson@click1.net

House Leaders

| Position | Name | Voted for NARFE ISS |
|---------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Speaker | John Boehner | 20% in 111 th |
| Majority leader | Eric Cantor | 20% |
| Majority whip | Kevin McCarthy | 20% |
| Republican conf. chair | Jeb Hensarling | 0% |
| Minority leader | Nancy Pelosi | No vote |
| Minority whip | Steny Hoyer | 80% |
| Assistant minority leader | James Clyburn | 100% |
| Democratic caucus chair | John Larson | 100% |

Select House Committees

| Committee | Chairperson | Voted for NARFE ISS |
|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Oversight & Government Reform | Darrell Issa | 20% |
| Budget | Paul Ryan | 0% |
| House Appropriations | Hal Rogers | 20% |
| Ways & Means | Dave Camp | 25% |

(Continued on next page)

Challenging fight (continued)

Senate Leaders

| Position | Name | Voted for NARFE ISS |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Majority leader | Harry Reid | 100% in 111th |
| Majority whip | Dick Durbin | 100% |
| Democratic policy committee chair | Charles Schumer | 100% |
| Minority leader | Mitch McConnell | 0% |
| Minority whip | Jon Kyl | 0% |
| Senate Republican conference chair | Lamar Alexander | 0% |

Select Senate Committees

| Committee | Chairperson | Voted for NARFE ISS |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Appropriations | Daniel Inouye | 100% |
| Budget | Kent Conrad | 100% |
| Health, Ed., Labor & Pensions | Tom Harkin | 100% |
| Homeland Security & Govt. Affairs | Joseph Lieberman | 67% |

NARFE works to improve bad PR

I doubt anyone will disagree that these are difficult times. Unemployment is high, the deficit is in the trillions, and Congress is in the process of balancing the budget – our concern has to be that it is not on the backs alone of the active and retired federal employees or their spouses. Many retirees and active employees as well think our annuity, health, and other benefits are set in stone, but they are wrong. As the old saying goes, what Congress gives, Congress can take away. We must constantly be vigilant, doing what we can to protect those benefits.

Last September, at the convention in Grand Rapids, the membership recognized the need for a dues increase and did approve one that will take effect with membership renewals starting in March 2011. Now, with the economy in such dire condition and an aggressive group of politicians doing what they can to balance the economy, NARFE is going to need to take bold steps to do what it can to protect our earned benefits.

In my opinion, it is time we took extraordinary measures to counter the ongoing and increasingly bad publicity we are getting from Congress and the

public as well as in the newspapers. While we have not completely recovered financially, with our recent dues increase, I believe it is time that we invest in actions that will help us retain those earned benefits and counter the bad publicity we are receiving. If we do not use funds that are available to do what we can to improve our situation, we might see the time where we have funds in the bank but have lost many of our benefits. I just don't think we can allow that to happen.

The NEB has approved a contract with M&R Strategic Services. According to Dan Adcock and Joe Beaudoin, M&R has worked with many similar nonprofit organizations, and with their expertise and assistance, we are in the process of launching a PR effort in targeted states to refute false statements and mobilize our members. In addition, the NEB has approved an additional \$250K for advertising in selected markets, both inside and outside the DC area.

The idea is to advertise in areas with large numbers of both active and retired federal employees, as well as in areas represented by influential politicians who have the ability to help ... or hurt us. We want to do what we can to influence them to help. As Joe Beaudoin has said "It will not be cheap; however, if we continue to do business as usual, we are (in my opinion) doomed."

Two other activities in process at NARFE are the NIAC and the Membership committee. Both are national programs using field members. The NIAC (National IT Advisory Committee) is looking at all electronic activities from reports to banking, and it has five field members who will finalize their recommendations this coming July at the Federation Presidents meeting. The other is really two committees, both on Membership. One committee will be working on recruitment and the other on retention. Both have five members from the field. It too will report at the July meeting.

The bottom line is that NARFE is actively pursuing activities that we feel will protect our earned benefits. Please feel free to let me know of your concerns and of any questions you may have. I'll do what I can to help. You can reach me by email at narfe2065@hughes.net or by phone at 540-872-3345.

- Bill Martin, Region X Vice-President

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

2011 NARFE State Convention

Radisson Hotel
at Opryland

April 17-19, 2011

Hosted by the
Hermitage/Donelson
Chapter

Protecting the Future for Retired and Current Federal Employees

Safety tips for fall prevention

1. Keep your hands empty while walking whenever possible. Free hands allow you greater access to grab on to furniture, walls, or rails for support when needed.
2. Remove clutter and obstructions from all walking pathways in your home.
3. Wear sturdy shoes that provide active support. Make sure your shoes fit your feet and always wear shoes that have backs. Avoid house slippers, flip flops, and going around without shoes or walking around with only socks on your feet.
4. Install sturdy and supportive rails on all stairs or steps in the home. Even if it's only a short step down it's important that you have something to grab onto for support going up or down the steps.
5. Install motion or sound activated lights in your home so you aren't walking around in the dark or groping blindly for switches. Also install nightlights in all rooms that come on automatically whenever it is dark.
6. Do daily exercises that promote balance. A loss of balance is one of the most common reasons for falls among seniors.
7. Don't climb step ladders or stools. Instead of climbing to reach things that are high up or located on top shelves, consider investing in a grab bar or asking someone to come over and help you rearrange your kitchen so that frequently used items are within easy reach and those that are rarely used are stored higher.

TENNESSEE FEDERATION OF CHAPTERS, NARFE

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Piney Flats, TN 37686
(423) 538-9220

