

July 2008



John Geiger,
SC Federation President

Message from the SC Federation President:

This past month has been a busy one as your Executive Committee met on June 9 in Columbia to conduct the Federation's business. You will be pleased to know that we are now complete in that we have Chairs for all our Committees with the volunteering of Betty Wessinger—Alzheimer's Committee; Hugh Wessinger—Resolutions Committee, and David Unwin—FEEA Scholarship and Disaster Relief. I would like to personally thank these three individuals for their willingness to step forward and assume the leadership in these key areas.

Preparation continues for the Louisville National Convention which gives all indications of being one of better attended. It is crucial that we identify the proxies so that your votes will count in electing the National leadership and supporting the resolutions that will add value for NARFE.

The Resolution Books will be available to Chapter Secretaries 60 days before the National Convention, but Resolutions and Bylaw changes are currently on-line at narfe.org, *Convention (Read More)*, *Bylaws and Resolutions*.

Later in this newsletter, Bill Nicol will mention August being "Meet Your Candidates Month." This important NARFE legislative effort comes at a time when we must be particularly vigilant. An example was last week's Senate vote on the 10.6% Medicare cuts which will have to be fixed upon the Senate's return. Both of our Senators voted against this bill and need to explain their rationale on an issue which is of keen interest to those who depend on Medicare. With the help of our NARFE Legislative Team at the National, Federation and Chapter level, and prompt notification through GEMS, we should be able to make presence known to our own Legislative Delegation.

I hope you all had a great Fourth of July Weekend and that you were able to enjoy our Nation's Birthday with Families and friends. Thanks for your continued support of NARFE as we continue to work on your behalf.

Regards,
John Geiger,
Federation President

MEMBERSHIP - RECRUITMENT

(Jeanette Morales Keepers, 1st VP SC Federation)

As SC Federation Membership Chair, I am supposed to give you the tools and inspiration to guide you in our on-going quest to "Recruit and Retain" NARFE members. Our collective goal is to increase our membership numbers on the rolls and to ensure we have a strong presence in Washington. I know I am preaching to the choir and that we all do our best to make sure this happens. But something Margaret Baptiste made abundantly clear in her editorial, printed in the May, 2008 issue of the NARFE Magazine, is that we're sitting on a gold mine of potential recruits: that is, all of

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the spouses of current members who aren't members themselves! We're talking easy recruits, folks! It's a win-win situation! You give your spouse the gift of a membership – not to be confused with a "gift membership" - you get credit as a recruiter, and everyone wins: you, your spouse, your chapter, our Federation, and most importantly, NARFE at the National level.

Please weigh the benefits for you and our organization, versus the minor expense in providing a very valuable gift to your spouse. Your spouse would now have a voice in deciding important issues including protecting against the erosion of our hard-earned retirement benefits. Granted, being able to attend chapter meetings and social functions wouldn't change, but the sense of empowerment at these would be priceless.

Another thing I would like to stress: always carry the latest membership applications with you for recruitment opportunities. Be sure to enter your chapter and membership numbers for the much-deserved credit, should they join. You can also include other informative tracts that are available at the NARFE website, www.narfe.org, by simply filling out the F-18 order form found there.



Jeanette Morales Keepers,
1st Vice-President, SC
Federation

One more important tool at our disposal, as Federation and Chapter Officers, is the M-112 report, available on the website and snail-mailed to most of us. We need to target those members who have been sent second notices, to encourage them to renew. We also need to contact those who are prospective members, to invite them to a local chapter meeting and to encourage them to join NARFE.

Let's all do our part, and then some, to keep NARFE strong!

Jeanette Morales Keepers
SC Federation 1VP
Membership Chair

Medicare FREE INTERNET Access For Personal Health Records

(Paul D. Donahue, SC NARFE Federation Web coordinator)

The trial program by Medicare in South Carolina to allow medicare customers to access their complete medical history on the internet is growing as more and more South Carolinians are getting wind of it. They even distributed the SC Federation June Newsletter issue, that included the article on MyPHRSC, to a number of other organizations in the state. There are now over 1,800 persons in SC that are taking advantage of this program. If you have questions or would like to know more about **MyPHRSC**, please call their toll free number at: 1 (888)697-4772 or email them at: questions@myphrsc.com

New Alzheimer's Coordinator and new Alzheimer's Banner

(Betty Wessinger - Alzheimer's Federation Chair)

I have been appointed Alzheimer's Coordinator replacing Laura Wilcox who moved to California. I look forward to serving the Federation in this capacity. I ask all Chapter treasurers to use the revised remittance form (alz form 1--rev. 6-2008) and mail your checks monthly or quarterly to me. I have been Columbia Chapter 87 Chair for a number of years so this has been of great interest to me. South Carolina Federation now has an Alzheimer's banner(3' x 5') that can be used by chapters for parades, yard sales, fund drives etc. I can ship it to you and you will need to ship it back to me for the next chapter's use. Give me 10 days notice when you want to use the banner. My email is hjwessinger@bellsouth.net.

Our new year began April 1st and contributions are going well. Keep up the good work.
Betty Wessinger

NATIONAL NARFE CONVENTION NEWS - LOUISVILLE, KY

(From NARFE National)

Chapters should appoint or elect convention delegates as soon as possible. Form C/08-2, Designation of Chapter Delegates, Voting Representative and Proxy, were mailed to all chapters in April. When completed, this form must be signed by both chapter president and chapter secretary. When used to designate chapter delegates and the voting representative, Form C/08-2 must be received by the Office of the National Secretary no later than June 30.



If a chapter does not send a delegate to the National Convention, a proxy delegate may be selected to represent it. Chapters wishing to designate a proxy delegate must submit Form C/08-2 to the Office of the National Secretary no later than August 23. None will be accepted if postmarked after that date. A delegate cannot hold proxies for more than three chapters.

Registration Deadline: Postmarked by August 15 - The registration fee for all convention attendees is \$50 if Form C/08-4, Pre-Registration, is used and payment is postmarked no later than August 15, 2008. The on-site registration cost is \$60. The convention—including the business sessions, regional caucuses, seminars and banquet—will be held at the Galt House Hotel & Suites.

Banquet tickets are \$50 per person. They are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Refunds will be available only if reservations are canceled at least 72 hours prior to the banquet. The Pre-Registration (C/08-4) and Banquet. Reservation (C/08-16) forms appear in NARFE magazine and on the NARFE Web site, www.narfe.org.

Due to the popularity of the 2008 National Convention all rooms at the NARFE Convention Hotel (The Galt House) are filled. Although the room block was increased from last convention, there are three large Conventions happening in Louisville on the same dates as NARFE.

- Arrangements for additional rooms have been made at the Holiday Inn, 120 W. Broadway. The Holiday Inn is offering free shuttle to and from the airport and the Galt House, and free parking. The rate is \$97.00 plus tax. Please call 502 582 2241 to reserve your room at the Holiday Inn.
- Arrangements for 40 additional rooms have been made at the Courtyard by Marriott, 100 South Second Street, Louisville, KY 40202. The hotel is offering free shuttle service to and from the airport, and a rate of \$97.00 plus tax per night. Parking is \$6.00 per day. You must make your reservation no later than August 1, 2008. Reservations made after this date will be based on availability.
- CANCELLATION: Any reservation cancelled after August 16, 2008 will be subject to 1st night's payment of room and tax. Should the hotel have the opportunity to resell these rooms, the penalty will be waived. To make reservations at the Courtyard by Marriott please call (502) 562-0200.
- The Saturday night Cruise sponsored by the Host Committee has been SOLD OUT.

Slate of National Officers to be voted on at the Convention are as follows:

NARFE - NATIONAL PRESIDENT:

- **Margaret L. Baptiste**, Two years ago you did me the great honor of electing me your National President and I am asking once again for your support as I seek re-election to the Presidency of NARFE.
- **Tom McKinney**, I have 30 years experience as a Certified Internal Auditor for the U.S. Army Audit Agency. Also, I was afforded with internships in Washington, DC at the U.S. State Department in 1967 and the U.S. Commerce Department in 1968. After retiring, I spent 5 years as the owner/operator of an apple farm in rural Pennsylvania.

NARFE - NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT:

- **Joseph A. Beaudoin**, After a great deal of consideration and encouragement from many NARFE members, I have decided to run for the position of National Vice President. I have the qualifications, interest and dedication necessary to represent you as the National Vice President.
- **Dan C. Galvan**, Since I joined NARFE in 1996, I have served in Texas as Chapter Vice President and President. In addition, I have served as Texas Federation Executive Vice President and Federation President. From 2002 through 2006, I have also served as your National Vice President.
- **Kenneth D. Nolan**, I've been told that having the support of your spouse is half the battle in becoming an officer of NARFE. Paulette and I met while she was working for the Social Security Administration as a Claims Authorizer in Philadelphia. She retired from 28 years of Federal service in 1988 and received her BA in computer graphics & design from The University of Massachusetts in 1998. I graduated from Widener University with a BA in 1972, and 27 Graduate Credits at UMass by 1995.
- **Clyde Jeffcoat**, I have the proven leadership capability, the intellect, and the energy to transform NARFE into the most powerful retiree advocate organization in existence. Prior experience: (1) Director of Finance and Accounting for the U.S. Army, (2) Deputy Auditor General of the U.S. Air Force, (3) Director of Information Technology Operations for the Department of Defense, and most recently, (4) President and Chief Executive Officer of IMC Magnetism Corporation.

NARFE - NATIONAL SECRETARY:

- **Nathaniel 'NAT' Brown**, As National Secretary I am announcing my candidacy for re-election to the Office of National Secretary.

NARFE - NATIONAL TREASURER:

- **Richard C. Ostergren**, As the National Treasurer of NARFE, I am announcing at this time my candidacy for re-election to the Office of National Treasurer.
- **Richard (Dick) Strombotne**, Since May, 2005, I have been the president of the Maryland Federation, after having served as vice-president and legislative director. Among other accomplishments, I shaped the agenda for the Maryland Federation's state legislative committee: emphasize income and property tax relief for seniors, formulate strategy for

lobbying on issues, and deliver testimony to the General Assembly committees.

NATIONAL FIELD VICE PRESIDENT - REGION III:

- **Robert S. (Bob) Harrell**, I am pleased to announce my candidacy for re-election to the office of Region III Vice President. With almost four years of working with members of Region III and participating with the other members of the National Executive Board, I feel that I am well qualified to answer most inquiries and I thoroughly enjoy the interaction within our organization.



Judy Kemp, Chapter 72
Service Officer

SERVICE OFFICERS RECOGNIZED

(NARFE National Headquarters)

NARFE has announced the winners of its first Service Officer Recognition Awards. NARFE service officers provide assistance and information on retirement income and benefit issues to chapter members.

“This corps of dedicated men and women volunteer their time and efforts generously, and they deserve to be recognized for the value they bring to the larger organization,” said David Snell, director of NARFE’s Retirement Benefits Service Department.

NARFE solicited nominations from chapters around the country and selected winners by state, region and one national winner. Judy Kemp, of Chapter 72, was the recognized for her dedication as Service Officer of the year for the SC Federation.

LEGISLATIVE

(Bill Nicol - Legislative)

NARFE has designated August 2008 as “Meet Your Candidates Month”. Details are provided in the July 2008 NARFE on page 20. Each Chapter President and Legislative Officer also received a letter on this topic dated May 12, 2008 and signed by National President Margaret Baptiste. This letter provides background on this effort and some suggested strategies. Enclosed with this letter is the 2008 Congressional Candidate Questionnaire focused on three major issues that will face the 111th Congress (2009-2010).

At the June 2008 meeting, the SC Federation Executive Board strongly encouraged all chapters to meet with the candidates or their staffs on these major legislative issues during August or in September if your chapter does not meet in the summer.

The six legislative districts in our state have NARFE members from several chapters. The following are the legislative districts and the chapters with significant membership in that district:

SC 01 Chapters 072, 997, 1013, 1015, 1082, 1958

SC 02 Chapters 087, 1021, 2258

SC 03 Chapters 825, 920, 934, 1079

SC 04 Chapters 121, 560

SC 05 Chapters 772, 960, 1180, 1786

SC 06 Chapters 072, 087, 960, 1170, 1786

Two sources of candidate information are:

www.thegreepapers.com/G08

www.cqpolitics.com

It is very important that chapters contact their candidates in their district and arrange multi-chapter forums, meetings or what ever you can schedule. Your District Field Officer has been tasked to

assist you. If you have any questions or comments or need any of the documentation already provided, please contact your DFO or call or e-mail me at 843-671-4721 or pennst63@aol.com

SUMMERVILLE CELEBRATES 40 YEARS AS A CHAPTER

(By Barbara Bryan, Chapter #1082 President, Summerville, SC))

The Summerville Chapter, known as Flowertown #1082, celebrated its 40th anniversary in April. It was chartered by NARFE National Headquarters in Washington, DC on March 25, 1968 and accepted into the South Carolina Federation of Chapters on April 5, 1968 with only 22 members. Now it boasts 244 members and continues to grow.

On February 4, 1986, Mayor Berlin G. Myers signed a Proclamation declaring 1986 the 65th anniversary of NARFE in Summerville and urged Summervillians to join in the observance. In addition to local observances, (then) South Carolina Governor Dick Riley repeated the Proclamation for all of South Carolina.



(Left) Judy Kemp, Dist 1 DO & Barbara Bryan, Chapter President



Seated, left to right: Patricia Tallman, 1st VP, Barbara Bryan, President, Kim Turok, 2nd VP
Standing, left to right: David Unwin, Leg. Officer, Charles Giavelli, Service Officer, Patricia Whitely, Sec., Freda Connell, Treas. Mable Collier, Chaplain

The first president of the chapter was Lee Blanchett who was Postmaster in Summerville at that time. Since then there have been 12 other presidents. Over the years, the Chapter meetings were held in quite a few different locations before it settled in its present meeting place-the Faith Sellers Senior Center. The meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of the month, September through May, at 1:30 p.m. Along with Summerville, membership includes the areas of Goose Creek and Moncks Corner, as well as more distant areas.

Summerville, along with the North Charleston Chapter, hosts a Service Center at the Charleston Air Force Base. Here they assist members and others with problems involving programs managed by OPM, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and others. Volunteers frequently provide help so that members and others can

correctly prepare and forward forms and reports that are necessary for their claims for benefits.

CONGRESSIONAL NEWS UPDATE:

(NARFE National Hotline)

On June 24, the House passed a NARFE-supported Medicare bill, H.R. 6331, which includes a key provision to avert a July 1 scheduled 10.6 percent payment cut for physicians who treat Medicare beneficiaries. As of Friday morning June 27th, the Senate had failed to overcome procedural obstacles to allow this legislation to be considered, so it appears Congress will go into its July 4th recess without resolving this issue. NARFE has consistently supported a legislative fix to the impending Medicare physician fee cut. Widespread doctor participation in Medicare is essential for current and future federal retirees. NARFE members should take note that this is not an unprecedented situation as in 2006 Congress missed an identical deadline, and a few weeks later

acted to retroactively reverse the physician fee cut, and in fact voted to increase payments to doctors. Barring last minute tactics, the expectation is for Congress to resume negotiations when they return on July 7 and to then retroactively fix doctor pay. It is important to know that all sides are in agreement to halt the physician payments cuts, but major differences over private Medicare plans, called Medicare Advantage (MA) are holding up action.

The House has recessed for the Independence Day District Work Period until Tuesday, July 8. Most Representatives and Senators will be out among their constituents attending parades and other public events. Many will host town hall meetings. These Members of Congress well know that federal retirees live in their districts. Some, however, may wonder whether NARFE, the organization which represents them, has a local and active presence. That's why face-to-face meetings by individual NARFE members or a group of members with your Representative, Senators and/or their staff demonstrates our most potent political power – our numbers.

There are at least four good ways to contact congressional offices to learn Members' schedules or arrange a meeting:

- 1) use the NARFE sponsored toll free number, 1-866-220-0044, to reach the Capitol switchboard and ask for your Representative or either Senator by name,
- 2) use the Legislative Action Center on the NARFE web site, www.narfe.org, (www.capwiz.com/narfe),
- 3) use the blue pages of most phone directories or 4) contact the NARFE legislative staff (703/838-7760 or leg@narfe.org).

The Fourth of July recess is also a good opportunity to invite incumbents and candidates to a multi-chapter forum for "Meet the Candidates Month." More information about "Meet the Candidates Month" can be found in the May (p. 15) and July (p. 20) issues of NARFE magazine. And more is coming in the August issue. Additional information is available at the top of NARFE's home page. (Or use <http://www.narfe.org/departments/hq/guest/articles.cfm?ID=1450>)

Congressional Quarterly, the highly regarded publisher, rates 52 contests for Republican seats and 37 contests for Democratic seats as highly to somewhat competitive. To see a listing of these races, with links to further information, use <http://www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?docID=ratings-house> To link directly to your own congressional district for demographic, historical and geographic info use the following sample: <http://www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?docID=district-OH-16> and then change the last five characters to your state's two letter postal code, a dash, and two digits for your congressional district number, 01 through 53.)

General findings of a survey of 1,300 NARFE members in 2007

(From NARFE Magazine)

58% are male, 40% are female and 2% failed to answer this question.

Average age of a NARFE member is 73.

Average Household Income is \$60,270 (Not just annuity but total income.)

78% of NARFE members live in their own house.

Only 23% of our members attend at least one chapter meeting a year.

39% said they contacted their senator in the past year.

62% of NARFE members have computer access. (This was only 44% seven years ago.)

68% of those having computer access have made internet purchases this past year.

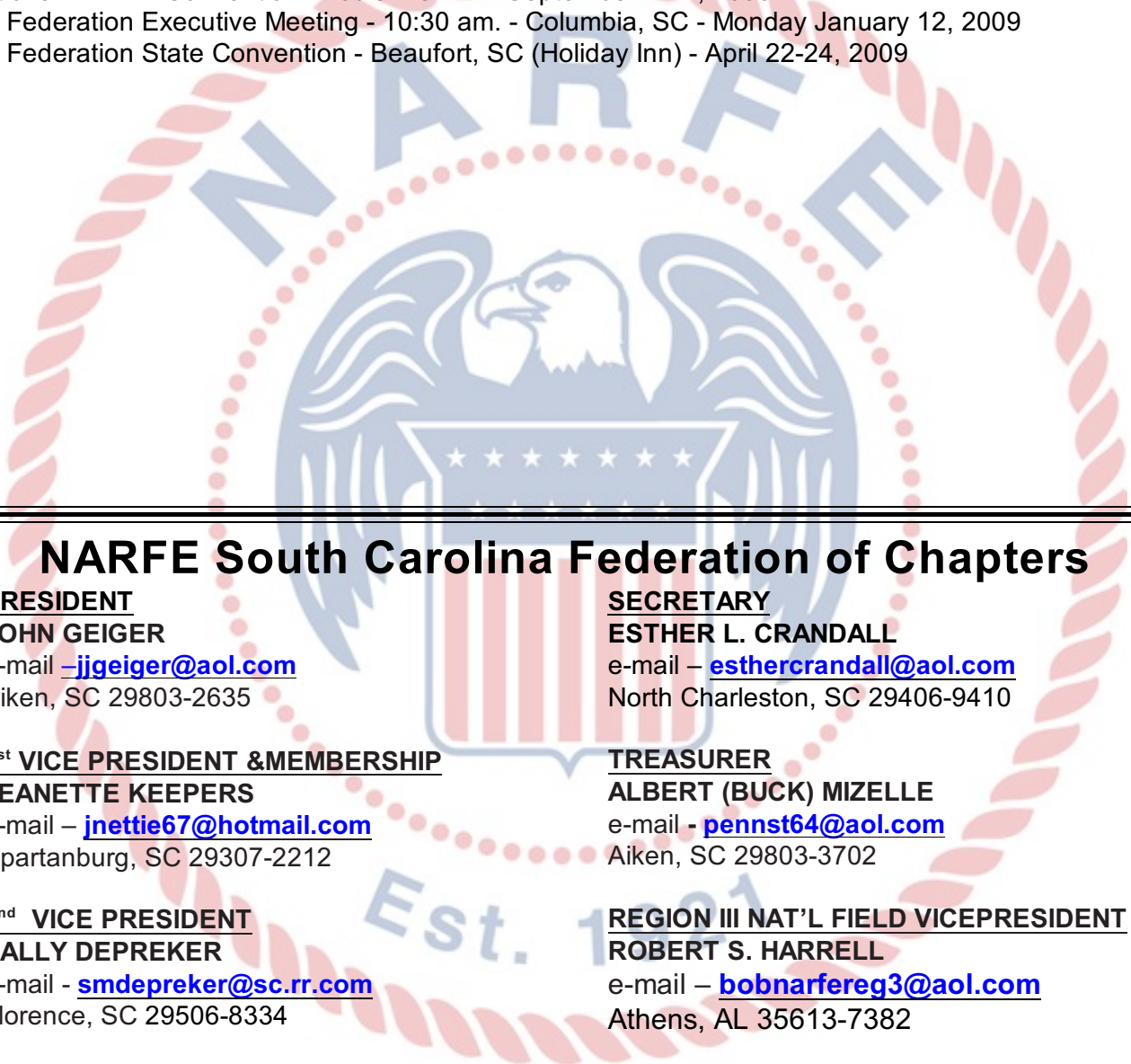
43% of the NARFE members visited the national Web Site at least once a month, in 2000 only 9% did.

12% of the members said they were interested in getting more involved in NARFE activities.

82% said they were NOT interested in getting more involved.
79% of the NARFE members read the NARFE magazine regularly.
95% said that Annuity Income/COLA was a very important issue to them.
71% of NARFE members are CSRS participants.
14% were in the FERS program.
The average NARFE member spent 30 years in the Federal Service.
Only 8% of NARFE members are Spouse-members.

UPCOMING NARFE EVENTS- Mark Your Calendar

National NARFE Convention - Louisville KY - September 7-11, 2008
SC Federation Executive Meeting - 10:30 am. - Columbia, SC - Monday January 12, 2009
SC Federation State Convention - Beaufort, SC (Holiday Inn) - April 22-24, 2009



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