



Volume 2 Issue 1
Newsletter Editor

Published Monthly
Dianna Finch
dfinch@tampabay.rr.com

January 2012
813-671-2824

ANNUITY ADJUSTMENT FORMS FROM OPM

We usually receive two Annuity Adjustment forms each year, one at the end of the prior year and the other near the beginning of the New Year. Its a good idea to keep the most recent pair of these as they have a lot of good information on them: your CSA or CSF number, details about your annuity, the toll free number and address for OPM, procedures for notifying OPM of deaths and other events, changing your address and how to contact OPM. The information on these OPM Annuity Adjustment forms will always be up to date.

John Ledman
Service Officer

Reminder....all NARFE members can see the eNARFE Florida website. We would appreciate Chapters adding a link to eNARFE Florida in their websites (I can help if needed), and mentioning eNARFE Florida in their newsletters and chapter meetings.

Also, please tell all recruiters that Non-NARFE members can view an abbreviated version of the eNARFE Florida website to get a taste of what is in store if they join.

We now have approximately 80 members! We stand ready to work with all Florida members to help recruit and retain NARFE members in Florida! Also, please tell all recruiters that Non-NARFE members can view an abbreviated version of the eNARFE Florida website to get a taste of what is in store if they join.

If you have any questions, email Ben or I.
Marc Harris President,
eNARFE Florida (www.narfe.org/florida)

DEADLINE FOR D/W 2012 CONTEST IS APRIL 30, 2012

There are approximately 90 more days to enter the NARFE FLORIDA D/W CONTEST FOR 2012.

Looking for a good way to retain members? D/W is the answer to that question! It is very rare for a D/W member to discontinue their membership. Plus, Membership Chairs to not have to remind this group of members to pay their dues! Saving time and costs of sending out reminders, both for the chapter and for National.

Any NARFE member that receives an annuity from OPM is eligible to sign up for this program, and to add their spouses.

To enter the contest, obtain a D/W 2 Application for existing member, or D/W 3 for a new member, fill in all blocks, sign and date on reverse, and mail to: Beulah Greene, 14222 Hilton Head Drive, Fort Myers, FL 33919.

Any questions call: 239-482-6713, or email
poandboqre@comcast.net

Thanks for supporting this program.

Beulah H. Greene
D/W Chair for NARFE FL, Inc.

District Meetings

February is the month when we normally hold our district meetings. The president or a representative is required by the By-Laws to visit all districts annually. Two years back I asked all Districts Vice Presidents to use instructors from their own district to training district members. This was done to reduce the amount of travel funds being spent by Federation personnel who were asked to provide training at the district meetings. Every district has qualified personnel that can and should be used to conduct training sessions. Section 4, paragraph c, should be read by the District Vice President prior to planning your district meeting. The Federation Vice President has oversight of these meetings.

The annual Federation Convention will be held May 8 thru May 10 at the Hilton Hotel in Altamonte Springs, FL. District Vice Presidents have already received their convention packets. We will provide training at the convention. Support the Convention by attending the Convention. This is the time of the year when the elected officers on the Executive Board will run for reelection or a higher position. These men and women travel at their own expense when they are campaigning. They receive no monetary gains for the work they do.

This is also the year where we will solicit bids for the 2014 Convention and the 2015 Convention. We have contracted with the Hilton in Altamonte Springs for the 2013 Convention. If you feel, that you would like to go somewhere else in the future contact the chairperson of the Time-Place-Site Committee when the name of the chairperson is announced. Names for the various convention committees must be sent to Federation President and Federation Secretary by February 28. I would prefer to pick up the completed report at the District Meeting.

Ken Carter
President NARFE Florida Inc.

2012 Federation Convention Reminder

The **Cut-Off dates** are rapidly approaching and those planning to attend the 2012 FL Federation Convention are reminded:

HOTEL: Reservation must be in by **April 9, 2012**; otherwise, you can expect a much higher room rate. Call the Hilton at: 407-830-1985 and remember, our **Group Code # is - NARFE1**

Credentials: Credentials must be in by **April 10, 2012**, remember, a separate form must be filled out for each delegate, and each Chapter that is sending one or more delegates must also select one of the delegates to be the "Chapter Voting Delegate". All delegates attending the convention may vote on any floor vote, but only the Chapter Voting Delegate may vote the full vote of the chapter when there is a Roll-Call-Vote or a Ballot Vote.

Proxy Vote: Must be in by **April 22, 2012**. Only a Chapter Delegate may carry a proxy vote to the convention to be cast at either a Roll-Call-Vote or a Ballot Vote.

Those **Federation Executive Board members** that are attending as a "**Delegate-at-Large, MUST also be a Chapter Delegate** if they will be the Proxy carrier for a chapter not sending a delegate.

Banquet Reservations: Must be in by **April 24, 2012**. The Tues. Night Buffet, the Wed. Night Plated Dinner and the Thurs. Night Banquet Dinner - reservations are coming in slow, PLEASE, do not wait until the cut-off date to send in your reservations. Preplanning of the convention events is very time consuming task and last minute reservations on these events can add even more pressure to the various event chairman.

Please help us to perform our task of having a problem free convention by submitting in all necessary forms in a timely manner.

John Ventura
2012 Convention Chairman

Greetings all: I am starting my first federation newsletter article, for 2012, with what I consider to be a very important question. "Have you contacted your U.S. Congressman or Senator lately?" If the answer to this question is yes, you are doing your job as a member of NARFE, if not, you are not using one of the most important and effective tools NARFE has to offer. In these troubled times every member must serve as a lobbyist. I am of the belief, that people join NARFE most specifically, to protect their earned benefits. The best way to do this is to let our representatives know exactly how we feel, through our E-mails Phone calls and Letters.

I recently received a letter from my congressman in response to my phone calls and E-mails. Instead of responding to my queries and requests for support, I received a full page critique of current administration policies. He never answered any of my requests and/ or questions. Has this ever happened to you? If nothing else, this experience confirmed his position on the preservation of our earned benefits. What is the best way to deal with this situation? By applying my favorite phrase, "VOTE YOUR POCKETBOOK". Does this sound like partisan politics? Anyone who has done any research in this area will find out that we have friends on both sides of the aisle. I'm saying it again "VOTE YOUR POCKETBOOK"

Tony Torchia
Federation Legislative Officer

PS National President Joe Beaudoin is asking all members to mark the date Feb. 15th as NARFE's Call Congress day, read about it in the upcoming NARFE Magazine.

Federation Calendar of Events

January Board Meeting (Hilton)	Jan. 27-28, 2012
District Meetings	Feb. 2012
May Financial Budget Committee	May 7, 2012 1:00 PM
May Federation Convention	May 8-10, 2012
National Convention Reno	Aug 28—Aug 30, 2012

Dates will be announced as established.

Ken Carter
President

PRE-TAX TREATMENT OF FEHB & FLTCIP PREMIUMS FOR RETIRED PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS

Although Federal annuitants are not generally eligible for the premium conversion benefit that is available for Federal employees, retired Federal public safety officers, including retired Federal firefighters, are eligible for this benefit. The premiums for Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) and/or Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP) must be withheld from the annuity. The annual maximum exclusion is \$3,000. This is a link to the OPM Benefits Administration Letter that describes this benefit: <http://www.opm.gov/retire/pubs/bals/2007/07-201.pdf>

Can we talk about it?

By: Marc Harris

It is time for a reality check. NARFE continues to lose members, no matter how hard we try to keep them. eNARFE is one HQ initiative that is helping, to some extent, turn the tide. However, is it time for some other new approaches and options? I think so, and others do, too, yet we never talk about it. We wait to be told by HQ what to do, and not take any initiative ourselves. Well I think it is time we took more initiative in Florida.

I have spoken to a lot of NARFE members, in Florida and around the country, most of them in leadership positions. The consensus is that most people join NARFE and remain members because they want to support an organization that fights to maintain and improve their earned retirement benefits. Most also join for the magazine, and a small percentage join for the social aspects of the traditional chapter.

However, nearly everyone agrees that 95% or more of our members could care less about meetings and the social events, or are interested in meetings and social events but are too ill or incapacitated, or live too far away from their Chapter, to take advantage. Even though we all know that, we continue to do what we have been doing. The usual approach to increase and retain members is to try to improve monthly meetings, train current officials and their replacements, provide membership incentives, provide refreshments, subsidize meals, have social events, do newsletters, send emails, maintain a website, have monthly meetings even in the summer in Florida, etc. We have all seen these recommendations. They are good ones, and some times, they work, many times they do not work. And they do not work because a large majority of our members just want to be a member and support the cause!

Here are some ideas of my own and from others I have spoken to relating to traditional chapters:

- Replace monthly chapter business meetings with periodic social events aimed around holidays, such as Easter, July 4, Labor Day, Christmas, etc. If members want to meet more often, encourage it, but they would not be NARFE meetings.
- Members like to come to social events, not "business meetings"
- In order to lessen chapter dues, do not subsidize these events...those who want to participate pay their way...those who do not or cannot participate would not subsidize them.
-
- Set up simple websites to be used primarily as recruiting tools and as a place to store newsletters and other information about the chapter. See www.narfe.org/chapter1002 for a sample.
- CAP funds can be used to pay for them. Properly set up, they will take very little effort to be up-to-date.
-
- Make more use of email to keep members informed. The new F-7 forms and email will greatly enhance this capability.
 - For those without email, ask how many really want to get a monthly/periodic newsletter.
- You might be surprised in how few really want it. So why waste your time and money?
-
- Have a mission oriented operating plan and budget and take actions to minimize chapter dues. I have written an article on this issue for you to consider.
 - If no one wants to be an officer of a chapter, so be it. Combine the chapter with another. Same thing if the chapter is being poorly run.
- Do not spend a lot of our scarce volunteer time (your time), NARFE dues money (for travel expenses and possibly accommodations), and angst twisting arms.
- Offer members of the chapter the option of moving to another traditional chapter of their choice, including an eNARFE Chapter.
- Well run chapters will attract members.
-

Active and retired feds are in a war to protect their benefits. NARFE needs to regroup and refine how we fight the fight. We need to become more mission oriented and refocus our time and money on recruiting and lobbying, and away from supporting chapters where no one wants to lead or is capable of leading.

I know some of you will agree with these recommendations and some will not, but at least think about them and let's have the discussion?

In the next newsletter, I hope to provide some proposed changes to NARFE Florida operations for discussion, cost saving changes intended to build on last year's reduction in the number of DVPs, and having meetings using Go-to-Meeting.