



NARFE Florida, Inc.

a federation serving all NARFE chapters in Florida



Volume 1 Issue 3

Published Monthly

May 2011

E-NARFE Florida

E-NARFE chapters are a new member option authorized by the NARFE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD in DECEMBER of 2010. e-NARFE chapters were originally organized for active federal employees. But a check of the NARFE NATIONAL Bylaws stated that anyone could join a chapter of their own choosing.

E-NARFE Florida covers the entire state of Florida and utilizes the new e-NARFE chapter form of electronic membership. Members will have access to the latest news coverage related to federal workers and retirees, general benefits information and advice, also CSRS and FERS related information. All communications are electronic with the exception of the NARFE magazine which is mailed monthly.

An active screen name is required to join the electronic chapter. Approximately twenty percent of our current members have e-mail, so the electronic chapter would have minimal impact on current operations and budgets for our traditional chapters. Current members can transfer to e-NARFE Florida or any other chapter by completing a NARFE Member Request for Chapter Transfer, Form F-84. e-NARFE Florida is Chapter 2364. For membership information contact Marc Harris at MARC.HARRIS@NARFEFL.Net or Ben Pappa at RETATC@COMCAST.NET. 666-5216

Ken Carter
President NARFE Florida Inc.

Protect America's Heartbeat

The Protect America's Heartbeat campaign is well underway. The program was developed by M & R Strategic Services in conjunction with the NARFE Legislative Staff.

What is NARFE's Campaign to Protect America's Heartbeat?

The last several months have not been easy for federal employees' image. New legislators are calling for cuts to federal employee pay and benefits. Attacks from biased think tanks and media outlets blame federal employees for our nation's dire economic situation and consider us an easy target for significant cuts.

While we understand that all Americans must make sacrifices in these tough economic times, the federal budget must not be balanced on the backs of federal employees and retirees.

The time is now to defend the retirement, pay and health benefits we have earned and rightfully deserve. NARFE's "Campaign to Protect America's Heartbeat" does just that.

What's at Stake?

- Cuts in retirement annuities & benefits
- Reduction in critical services throughout the country
- Increased unemployment

Damage to state and local economies

The goals of the Campaign to Protect America's Heartbeat

Encourage your Congressman to oppose the reduction or elimination of some or all of the proposed cuts

Activate NARFE membership & encourage others to join the campaign

Put a local face on federal workers

How NARFE members can help

Educate elected officials and the public about our valuable role to the country

- Write letters to your Congressman and encourage others to do the same
- Write letters to the editor of your local paper explaining the value of federal employees.
- Attend town hall meetings that your Congressman holds Visit www.ProtectAmericasHeartbeat.org to take action and share your story

If you wish further information on getting involved in this campaign you may contact Jane Lemley at 863-607-4844 or email her at janelemley@mac.com. Your DVP has received more information about the campaign via email.

Jane Lemley

NARFE Florida, Inc.

Vice President

NARFE at the Crossroads

The year was 1988. Ronald Reagan was president and George Bush was Vice President. Federal spending was \$1064.1 billion, the Federal debt \$2601.3 billion, and the median household income \$27,225. Unemployment was 5.5% and the cost of a first-class stamp \$0.22. NARFE was 67 years old and had a membership of 540,000.

Fast forward in time to 2011, Barack Obama is president and Joe Biden is Vice President. Federal spending is \$3818.8 billion, the Federal debt is \$15476.2 billion, and the median household income is \$45,833. Unemployment is 8.8% and the cost of a first-class stamp \$0.44. NARFE is 90 years old and has a membership of 302,000. Of the 238,000 decrease in NARFE membership, only 21% is attributed to member deaths. NARFE is in decline. By losing members, it is losing market share. It is fast becoming a toothless tiger, an ageing organization trapped in a rapidly ageing world.

Remember, NARFE was established under conditions that were radically different from what they are today. NARFE's traditional methods and strategies have failed to address new and difficult challenges. The landscape is changing and change is both constant and certain. Change is everywhere. NARFE, as an older organization, has well-established traditions and is finding it difficult to make significant changes to operations or focus, even if doing so would help recruit new members and/or retain current members. In the last twenty years, membership in NARFE has diminished by more than 56 percent and at such an accelerated rate that it has significantly threatened the organization's ability to defend our earned benefits. It is in competition with other groups, not just for new members but for revenue. While NARFE's current membership represents only a small portion of its potential, in order to reach a critical mass of members, it must create strategic alignments with other like-minded organizations and improve outreach. People who join NARFE want to know "what can you do for me" and, if they are to stay members of the organization, "what have you done for me lately?"

If NARFE is to be successful, what can it do to change and create a significant growth opportunity? NARFE members have a lot of options and there's a lot of competition for their interest, time, and dollars. There are more than twenty associations and unions representing Federal government employees such as the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE), the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE), National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC), and National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU). NARFE, as an organization, has a place in the world and a vision for impact. But few things validate its value like engagement: more members, more people attending chapter meetings, more program participants at conventions, and more member contacts with local and national legislators. How do you build the necessary strong connections between the organization's mission and offerings and its members' interests and needs? How do you get on their calendar—or better, on their agenda? But growing attendance and membership means more than catching a person's attention. Building strong, enduring connections is an ongoing process. To be successful in

attracting attention and gaining support, NARFE must align its brand with the personal brands of constituents; members and potential members must feel that their time and money are well spent, and feel pride in an association that transcends a specific offering or benefit. It is important that NARFE members know and care about the organization and what it offers, see the value, and how it fits in their lives.

NARFE's mission isn't always enough to create a meaningful connection between the organization and its current and prospective members. By creating strategic alignments with other like-minded organizations, more clearly defining its value and position in the competitive landscape, and by crafting communications that resonate with members' values and needs, connect the organization with the membership on both rational and emotional levels. Creating strategic alignments, defining value and crafting communications will enable NARFE to engage more people, help realize its vision and sustain the organization both now and in the future.

Ken Thomas
District 9, Vice President
352

Why Should a Spouse Join NARFE

If your spouse is a Federal Retiree and belongs to NARFE then would it not make good sense for the spouse to also belong to NARFE. Your spouses pension and benefits need to be protected and the more membership there is the more clout we have to help preserve what your spouse has worked so many years for.

If your spouse passed away and you do not belong to NARFE, now would be a good time to join. You get your spouses pension and health insurance and by belonging to NARFE you will be kept informed as to what effects those benefits.

NARFE is also a very big contributor to the Alzheimer's Foundation and what better organization to belong to.

Dianna Finch
FI. Federation Newsletter Editor



Happy

Mother's

Day

May 8th

**Charlie Shannon,
Past District 3 Vice President**

Survivor Annuitant

NARFE is missing 180 potential members each year because upon the death of a member who has a spouse, we are not recruiting the surviving spouse as a member of NARFE. The Federation has only one spousal member for every 160 members or 0.63 percent.

The following information is from Jeff in Membership at Headquarters on April 12:

Deceased membership is transferred to a spouse only if the departed member was on annual dues. The spouse keeps the same ID numbers and his/her membership continues only until the membership dues expires.

If the deceased member was a Life or Honorary member, than the surviving spouse must sign up if they wish to be a member of NARFE.

Also if the deceased member was on Dues Withholding, the surviving spouse must sign up if they wish to be a member of NARFE.

There apparently isn't any way that a surviving spouse of a D/W or life members could be granted a temporary continuing membership in NARFE, for several months, using the deceased ID number, until she or he can sign up for Dues Withholding for themselves.

The average survivor probably lives an average of five or more years. This loss in membership of not signing the surviving spouse as NARFE member probably results in a five-year loss of a potential 900 or 5 percent of our total Florida Federation membership.

How to sign up a survivor member:

Along with the information the Service Officer or chapter member provides the surviving spouse, would be a filled out Dues Withholding application.

To complete the D/W form the Service Officer, Membership chair or other chapter members will need:

The survivor's Social Security number

The deceased member's CSA(F) number

The chapter member will not have the deceased CS(F) number or the survivor's Social Security number. He will need to look at the deceased STATEMENT OF ANNUITY PAID Form 1099 R that they attach to their 1040 Income Tax. The survivor will not look up these numbers themselves, a chapter member will have to do it for them.

We have only 26 percent of the members who could be on for Dues Withholding already signed up.