

THE SHAWNEE SIGNAL

Chapter 1162 Shawnee Mission Kansas

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE)

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29TH NATIONAL CONVENTION AT ALBUQUERQUE IS HISTORY, BUT IT'S NOT FORGOTTEN

Former National Vice President Margaret L. Baptiste was elected National President of NARFE on September 10th. She is the first woman and the first survivor annuitant to be elected NARFE President.



Baptiste, who only entered the race last week, received 3,451 votes to 2,827 for National Vice President Dr. Dan C. Galvan and 205 for former National President Charles W. Carter.

Baptiste, a native of the United Kingdom, began her acceptance speech by noting that this is the 50th anniversary of the date on which she came to the United States to work in New York City. She called her election "the culmination of all the wonderful, wonderful things that have happened to me in the last 50 years." Al-

luding to her status as a spousal member of the organization, she said the best thing that happened to her was five years after her arrival when she married her late husband, Al, a federal employee, which "made me eligible to be a member."

"I want to thank all of you," Baptiste said. "I am completely overwhelmed." She pledged to "continue to give you my energy, enthusiasm and commitment."

In the race for National Vice President, Region X National Field Vice President Bill R. Austin defeated Ronald Bowers, former president of the Maryland Federation, 4,664 to 1,752. Austin thanked delegates for the confidence they had placed in him. "I hope you will continue to give me your guidance as we try to take NARFE into the future," he said.

In the closest contest, Arizona Federation President Nathaniel "Nat" Brown received 50.49 percent of the vote, edging Florida Federation Secretary Steve Henderson 3,275 to 3,212 in the race for National Secretary. A subsequent recount requested by Henderson showed no change in the result. Brown praised his opponent for the "friendly" campaign that he waged. He told the delegates, "I will do everything in my power within the office of National Secretary to work with you, to help you to turn this organization around."

National Treasurer Richard C. Ostergren ran unopposed and was re-elected by acclamation on Tuesday. Ostergren declined to make a comment, having spoken on Tuesday after his re-election.

Chapter Delegates Write About Their Experiences at the Nation Convention

Five members of our chapter attended the convention as delegates. Four delegates gave us reports of events at the convention from their viewpoints and opinions. You can read their articles on pages 2 and 3 of this newsletter.

The delegates do not give a detailed description of the resolutions for there were at least a 100 resolutions the delegates had to deal with. There were four key issues: amendments of the bylaws, one member-one vote, mandatory chapter membership and a single national dues plan to fund national, federation and chapters..

We've read numerous articles in NARFE about the importance of this convention and how the outcome will shape our organization for years to come. We have also read that it will be a contentious convention according to President Fallis and it was at times.

The November issue of NARFE will cover the convention in greater detail. We'll know more about the disposition of the resolutions and perhaps an analysis of voting and what it all means for the future, if any. It appears the delegates left the convention leaving NARFE "status quo."

So, until the next election—the delegates will still elect officers, we'll still have to belong to chapters and pay chapter dues with multi level dues plans—and then we'll do it all over again.

NEW DENTAL-VISION SERVICES

The OPM announced the new dental-vision program September 20 after announcing premium increases for the federal employees health insurance program.

Federal employees and retirees will be able to enroll in the new program from November 13 to December 11. Coverage starts Dec. 31.

Federal employees will be able to pay their dental-vision premiums on a pretax basis through a payroll deduction.

Retirees will have no such tax break on their premiums. They can have their premiums deducted from their monthly pension checks.

Typical; dental plans will cover basic services - exams, sealants and X-rays; restorative procedures, such as fillings,

crowns and periodontal scaling; and some major services, such as root canals and complete dentures.

Visions plans will provide eye exams and coverage for lens, frames and contact lens. Other benefits, such as discounts on Lasik surgery, also may be available.●

DELEGATES CONVENTION REPORT

Agnes Shellhammer – Chapter President

The theme for the 29th National Convention was “Look to the Future ...Learn from the Past.” We should all think about that really hard, before making any decisions. In today’s world too many things are being done without any thought beforehand.

In President Fallis’ State of the Association address he pointed out it’s up to us. We are the ones to recruit new members and retain old members.

We have to make positive choices if we are to remain strong, we will all have to work hard together. Vice President Galvan spoke about the NARFE calendar and cards we all receive and also the NARFE magazine. He has made them quite profitable, do don’t complain when they show up in your mailbox.

Secretary Sullivan stressed recruiting and training. During the past three years we have gained 26,000 new members annually, one out of four is a current federal employee.

Treasurer Ostergren gave an upbeat assessment of the Association’s financial condition, saying bluntly to anyone who would contend otherwise, “You don’t have a clue what you are talking about.”

NARFE started 2006 with assets of \$11,646,053 as of July 31, that figure had grown to \$11,726,964 . At the same time liabilities have been reduced from \$3,914,580 to \$3,868,673. There was someone spreading a rumor that we were broke. That person sure got put in their place in a hurry!

This was my fourth time to attend the National Convention. The first three the attendees were well behaved and conducted themselves in an orderly fashion. But I must say at this one there was a certain crowd who was completely out of order and behaved like a bunch of spoiled brats. My mother would say, “they acted like they didn’t have any raising.”

I’m proud to say these people were not from our chapter, our federation or our region. Midwesterners have more manners than that. Many of us were not pleased with the way some things went, but we all were ladies and gentlemen and took it in stride. Overall it was a good convention. Much knowledge was to be gained by those who kept their mouths shut and their eyes and ears open. Gee!! Does this seem like a chapter meeting? I think this is a good place for me to get off my soapbox.

Florence Biehl’s – NARFE-PAC Chair

Bob [newsletter editor] asked me to write about my impressions of the recent NARFE Convention.

I am reminded that everyone will have different ones because we are all different. We are all united though in our quest to retain our benefits, regain some that we were promised and that have since disappeared and to try for premium conversion that active employees have. We also stand tall in our pride in serving our nation with our service when we were employed in the federal government.

Because we are all different, we all have different ideas on how our organization can best work. This was very evident at this convention.

Earlier we had all received a large booklet with proposed resolutions in it for us to study prior to attending. Committees will have looked them over and suggested which ones should

be brought forward. Makers of the original resolutions could ask for theirs to be considered separately.

Each of us had red and green cards in our packets. This allowed us to speak on a resolution if we wished. Responses were timed and each side had a turn. This made for an orderly exchange of ideas. It also made for some lengthy discussions.

It seemed like one gentleman must have written half the resolutions. Someone in the coffee shop thought that he must have had a long cold winter to have written so much of the resolution book. Most failed.

I marveled at the patience of Charles Fallis in his handling of the proceedings.

It was interesting to be a part of this even though somewhat tiring. I met other people at this convention that some thought the way I did and some that thought otherwise. That’s the reason for having the convention--putting all the ideas out on the table and deciding on which ones to act on--then moving forward.

Elizabeth M. Bornman –1st Vice President

It appeared at the convention that the current officers were supporting the One Member-One Vote (OM-OV) resolution. There was a lot of discussion on this issue and it even got a little heated by the President. However, it was defeated by a clear vote of the delegates.

Any member of NARFE can attend the convention. The percentage of those members not part of a chapter is so small as to have an impact on the overall vote at the convention. The delegates feel they represent their chapters and also vote any proxies they may carry in accordance with the wishes of the chapters they represent. The cost of mailing a ballot out to everyone and the percentage of most likely returns would not benefit the organization.

The other hot topic was on Mandatory Chapter membership. The headquarters reported that based on those who have dropped their membership in the past year 13% are against mandatory memberships. However, without chapters the headquarters would have to grow in size to support all the issues that effect states and national issues. I think this would most likely increase dues to support issues, whereas, chapters currently work on issues at no cost to NARFE.

Chapters must keep their members informed. They must have a newsletter. Hopefully they are creating web pages to keep all informed. That is why many say they don’t believe in chapter membership for they received no benefits from the chapter. Many live long distances from the meeting place and others cannot attend due to health constraints. This was a close vote. It’s not going away. It’s up to the chapters to keep the members involved in their operations.

The one-dues for all chapter members was defeated by 62%. Some of the chapters just couldn’t figure how to use the additional income. I just couldn’t believe that they weren’t able to recognize that the increase would benefit a significant number of chapters nationally. The issues aren’t going away. We will see it again at the next convention just like OM-OV and Mandatory memberships.●

CONVENTION DELEGATES REPORT

Tom Raby, Membership Chair

Chapter 1162 had 5 members attend the Convention. We all carried proxies for Kansas chapters that had no one attending the convention. The convention was well organized in many ways but seemed to be disconnected in others. I can only compare the Albuquerque convention with the Greensboro convention in 2002.



Chapter 1162 Delegates
L-R Flo Biehl, Elizabeth Bornman, Agnes Shellhammer, Jane and Tom Raby

The opening ceremonies on Sunday were quite interesting. The agenda included the Alzheimer's Association President and Representative Heather Wilson of New Mexico. Monday morning gave us the Mayor of Albuquerque and the Director of OPM.

After some necessary "housekeeping," we moved into the by laws. The committee had worked at more than 100 resolutions. Some were moved to other committees.

The Committee on Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws recommended that some resolutions be adopted as written. Others were amended and then recommended for adoption. The 3rd category was recommended for rejection. However,

convention rules allow for those resolutions to be withheld and subsequently voted on by the delegates. A large percentage of the recommended-for-rejection resolutions were withheld by delegates who were passionate about their resolutions. This always stirs tremendous debate and consumes a lot of time.

President Fallis appeared to "lose his place" several times because some delegates were disruptive. There was a lot of "dead air" while the parliamentarian worked on rules problems. Also, the lightning on some microphones was poor and President Fallis had trouble seeing delegates at the microphones. Too add insult to injury; all microphones were "open" and some people would start speaking into them without being recognized by the chair. This caused a lot of confusion. By contrast in 2002, at Greensboro, the microphones were not turned on until the chair recognized the microphone by number. Operation of the Video, Audio and Lightning was not very professional at Albuquerque. By Monday's end everyone was very glad to have a break.

Tuesday was basically nominating committee reports, nominating speeches and regional caucuses in the PM. We also heard the Site Selection Committee's report. This was a much easier day.

Wednesday AM we all lined up to vote. This took a lot of time because we were voting on 4 propositions in addition to National Officers and 2010 site selection, propositions that required a 2/3 majority had to be placed on the ballot. We went back to work after voting. There were some other committee reports and then we received the results of the election. The rest of the day was mixed with winners' speeches and bylaws. Thursday we had run-off between the two top vote getters for the 2010 convention site. We also worked on bylaws and waited for Alzheimer's prizes results. There was a lot of housekeeping and the banquet was Thursday evening. All in all it was a memorable experience. ●

Ⓜ Word Banned *from the Convention Daily Report*

Regardless of what other legacy the 29th NARFE Convention will have, it will be remembered as the one that removed the word "mandatory" from NARFE vocabulary, specifically with regard to chapter membership. As the convention wound down, Thomas Longo of Maryland moved that the word "automatic" be used in place of "mandatory" in all NARFE writings and discussion of chapter membership. He called it a "more neutral and palatable" word. On a voice vote, the required two-thirds majority was attained, and the "M" word was banned from NARFE. [Do they believe this will quell the noise from proponents for voluntary chapter membership? Editor]

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Your Shawnee Signal Newsletter

REGULAR CHAPTER MEETING is October 24 at the Overland Park Lutheran Church starts at 1:30 pm. It's a business meeting, reports by officers and committees, social time with refreshments and the Jerry Upman band playing your old favorites. Park your car in the North parking area and use the side entrance. Questions? Call Agnes Shellhammer at 432-0091.

NOMINATIONS.The nominating committee is seeking candidates for officer positions and executive board positions for our chapter for the coming year. All up-to-date members are eligible for these positions. Contact any of the nominating committee members: Clara Smith, Flo Biehl, or Tom Raby (telephone numbers listed below). The elections will be held at the November meeting. Nominations can also be made from the floor at that meeting, prior to the election. By contacting the committee, you can have your candidacy announced by the committee vs. a floor nomination. You cannot nominate yourself and please don't nominate anyone without their consent. **MAKE A DIFFERENCE; RUN FOR OFFICE!**

NARFE-ALZHEIMER'S FUND. Our members have contributed year-to-date \$898.50 and \$100 to the local Association's September Memory Walk.

Looking ahead. Chapter's December 12th Holiday Party will be held at Fire Mountain Restaurant, 10810 W 75th Street, Shawnee. Buffet food service. Call Elizabeth Bornman 268-8526 for details.

<u>Regular Monthly Meeting</u>	<u>Monthly Social Meeting</u>	<u>Executive Board Meeting</u>
4th Tuesday of the month at 1:30 PM at Overland Park Lutheran Church, 79th and Lowell, Overland Park. Features: chapter business, refreshments and entertainment. No meetings July, August, December.	2nd Wednesday of the month at the Hometown Buffet, 73rd and Quivira at 1:15 PM. Call Clyde Shellhammer (913 432-0091) for reservations. Luncheon cafeteria-style food service.	1st Friday of the month. Breakfast at 9:00 AM, meeting 9:30 AM. Location Denny's Restaurant, 95th and I-35 exit, Lenexa - adjacent to La Quinta Motel.

Chapter Officer & Committees

Agnes Shellhammer	President	913 432-0091	Florence Roy	NARFE-ALZ.	913 642-9477
Elizabeth Bornman	1st Vice President	913 268-8526	Tom Raby	Membership	913 829-6025
Clara Smith	2nd Vice President	913 441-8723	Flo Biehl	NARFE-PAC	913 631-5559
Wayne Smutz	Secretary	913 888-3423	Clara Smith	Public Relations	913 441-8723
Bob Steinert	Treasurer	913 764-7456	Frank McGough	Programs	913 432-7514
Howard Zion	Service Officer	913 236-8131	Bob Steinert	Editor	913 764-7456