

# NARFE 101 NEWS

NATIONAL ACTIVE & RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

## Augusta Chapter 101

NARFE CHAPTER 101, P.O. Box 3993, Augusta, GA 30904-3993

September 2010

This month, Carolyn Gardner and I attended the NARFE National Convention in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It was a very interesting time. There were two candidates for President and Vice-President, and three for Treasurer and National Secretary, as well as three candidates for our Region III Vice-President. If that wasn't enough, there were a number of actions regarding National dues and a great floor debate. This was a major discussion point as the delegates and candidates attempted to support their own position and denigrate the position of those opposed. Such passions made for great theater and I savored the developments as they played out.

National President Margaret Baptiste testified before the Debt Commission urging protection of the compensation and retirement value of benefits for federal workers, retirees and their spouses and survivors. Baptiste noted that while entitlements will be a focus of the group, federal retirement and health benefits differ from other entitlement programs. "There is one significant difference: civil service retirement and health benefits are earned by employees, and designed to attract and retain a skilled workforce. They are not modeled on social insurance, health-based, or means-tested," Baptiste said.

Locally, one of our long-time NARFE members Sarah Brown contacted me, urging that a letter be written to Harley Drew, because she was concerned about comments made on his show regarding federal employee salaries. The specific USA Today quote was: "Federal civil servants earned average pay and benefits of \$123,049 in 2009 while private workers made \$61,051 in total compensation, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis." A number of members at the meeting also heard similar comments on the Harley Drew show. We ended up having an important discussion regarding the inaccuracies of "average" salary comparisons and, how during these "budget cutting" times, it seems that the federal worker, retiree, and annuitants, are in for a struggle to maintain the benefits that they have earned. I certainly remember the "cost savings" achieved on the backs of federal employees and retirees in the 1980's that are still with us. The members at the meeting suggested that a "general" letter speaking to the irrational basis for comparing average salaries in the private versus public sector be prepared and made available as the discussion comes closer to home. Such a letter is now being drafted and when it is reviewed and finished, it will be posted on the website and likely reproduced in the newsletter for appropriate use by the members. Employee compensation is a challenging topic, for sure!

\*\*\*\*Ralph Angelo, Chapter 101 President



# NARFE

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association



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## \$40 Dues Resolution Is Voted On and Passed by Delegates

For the second consecutive National Convention, delegates quickly dispensed with proposed changes in the Association's Bylaws but not before considerable debate about a dues increase.

Delegates to the NARFE National Convention solidly backed a resolution to increase dues in balloting at the Convention. At issue was an amended resolution that raised dues higher than the level recommended by the Bylaws Committee in its convention report.

The report of the Bylaws Committee was presented by Chairman Jefferson Vaughn of Oklahoma. The committee action of combining 14 resolutions submitted by chapters and federations that dealt with dues amounts and/or structures resulted in a single Resolution BC 10-01. The committee-backed resolution called for an increase in annual dues to \$34.

However, an amendment from the floor was offered by Region V Vice President Richard Thissen to increase the dues to \$40 for one year, \$72 for two years and \$102 for three years, with \$34 per year for dues withholding. Delegates voted to replace the committee-recommended resolution with the amended version.

National President Margaret L. Baptiste then opened the floor for discussion on the amended version, which included a number of arguments pro and con. Several delegates rose to oppose the amendment, saying their chapters were opposed because it might be a hardship on some members. But others spoke in favor, saying members will pay higher dues if they believe they are getting a service for their money, with one delegate urging voters to put their money into something that is vital to their financial future. The proposed amendment was placed on the Wednesday ballot and needed a two-thirds vote to pass. The vote on the dues increase was 4,409 affirmative votes to 1,672 negative votes, a percentage of 72.5 yes votes, easily exceeding the needed two-thirds (4,049 votes) required to amend the Bylaws. National President Margaret L. Baptiste announced that the rates will go into effect immediately, but said it will take Headquarters a few months to make necessary changes in paperwork.

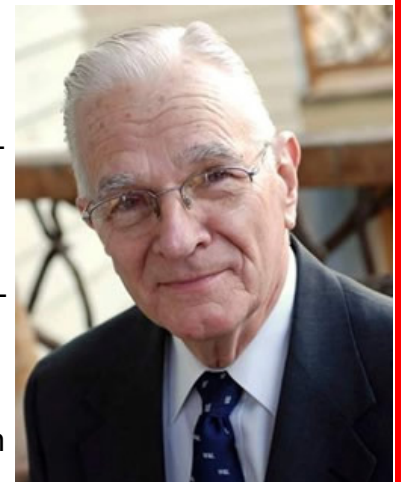
The amounts are for national dues only; it is still up to chapters to set their own dues.



## Don Stewart Elected Region III Vice President

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Don Stewart was elected Region III Vice President. Don began as Chapter Vice President and worked his way through the ranks to Florida Federation President and currently serves on the National Committee on the Enhancement of NARFE into the 21st Century. Members may recollect that Don made a presentation to Chapter 101 during the March Evening dinner meeting. Don stated that recruitment and retention are high priorities for NARFE to validate its strength of purpose. The goal is to protect our earned benefits through an effective legislative program. In these threatening times with the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform having been formed to review entitlements, it has never been more important that we as grass roots activists join with NARFE's coalition partners in vigilant oversight of legislation.



Don replaces Bob Harriel, who did not seek reelection to the Region III post but in a surprise move, ran unsuccessfully for the National Treasurer Position.



# Open Season Ahead!

## Health Care Reform



### Federal Employees Health Benefits Program

The Office of Personnel Management has announced that the 2010 Federal Benefits Open Season will be Monday, November 8, 2010 through Monday, December 13, 2010.

During Open Season, federal employees and retirees can enroll in or change their health, vision and dental plans. Federal employees can also enroll in a flexible spending program. As usual, NARFE magazine will carry information on Open Season options beginning with the October issue and continuing in the November and December issues. Don't miss an issue!

The Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program can help you and your family meet your health care needs. Federal employees, retirees and their survivors enjoy the widest selection of health plans in the country.

All information is available at the website: [www.opm.gov/insure/health](http://www.opm.gov/insure/health)



Past President Margaret Baptiste is shown with Chapter 101 member and former Georgia Federation District 3 Vice-President Carolyn Gardner. Ms. Baptiste attended the Region III Caucus session on Tuesday as a member of the South Carolina Federation.

### Keynoter Berry's Goal: Honoring Feds' Service

The federal government's "chief people person" John Berry, Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), addressed the Opening Business Session of the NARFE National Convention. Berry, who has been on the job for about a year and a half, joked that he had had to wait to talk to NARFE members until the Association had a convention. He surprised National President Margaret L. Baptiste by presenting her with OPM's highest award, the Theodore Roosevelt Award.

Baptiste, in turn, presented Berry with a copy of the newly published NARFE 90th Anniversary book, *Celebrating 90 Years of Service, 1921-2011*, after her presentation that traced NARFE's achievements since its founding.

Berry admitted that OPM's retirement unit has "struggled with complex challenges for many years now." While he said he couldn't fix them "overnight," he pledged "this administration's full attention and efforts. This has to be fixed. You worked too hard for too many years." He told the NARFE members that when "you make the decision to transition out, you're still a member of the federal family. You deserve prompt and accurate delivery of the benefits you've earned."

Berry called his efforts "early in our transformation effort," and asked for patience. He said he was "cautiously optimistic" that they are on the right path.

# DEAF WIFE ?..

A man named Ralph, feared his wife wasn't hearing as well as she used to and he thought she might need a hearing aid. Not quite sure how to approach her, he called the family doctor to discuss the problem.

The Doctor told Ralph there is a simple informal test the husband could perform to give the doctor a better idea about her hearing loss.

"Ralph, here's what you do," said the doctor, "stand about 40 feet away from her, and in a normal conversational speaking tone see if she hears you. If not, go to 30 feet, then 20 feet, and so on until you get a response."

That evening, the wife is in the kitchen cooking dinner, and Ralph was in the den. He says to himself, "I'm about 40 feet away, let's see what happens."

Then in a normal tone he asks, "Honey, what's for dinner?" No response.

So Ralph moves closer to the kitchen, about 30 feet from his wife and repeats, "Honey, what's for dinner?" Still no response.

Next he moves into the dining room where he is about 20 feet from his wife and asks, "Honey, what's for dinner?" Again he gets no response.

So, Ralph walks up to the

kitchen door, about 10 feet away. "Honey, what's for dinner?" Again there is no response.

So he walks right up behind her. "Honey, what's for dinner?"

(I just love this)



"Ralph, for the FIFTH time, CHICKEN!"



## BULLETIN: NARFE Convention Elects New Officers

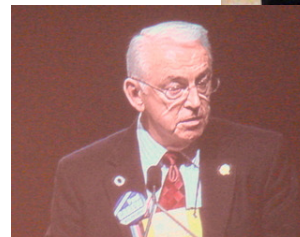
September 1, 2010

Joseph A. Beaudoin, Winchester, VA, was elected National President of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association in balloting today at the 31st Biennial NARFE National Convention in Grand Rapids, MI. He is the current National Vice President.

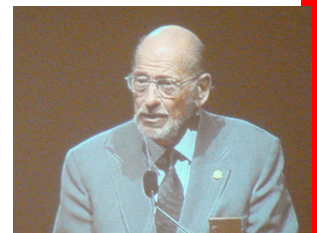
Paul H. Carew, **Region X Vice President**, Pittsboro, NC, was elected National Vice President.



Elaine Hughes, **past president of the North Carolina Federation**, Asheville, NC, was elected National Secretary.



And Charles W. Saylor, **Region II Vice President**, Towson, MD, was elected National Treasurer. Charlie attended the Georgia Federation Convention last May in Augusta.



# Kudos!

## NARFE 101 NEWS

### Alzheimer's Report NARFE Going for \$10 Million!

*Louise Shay, Alzheimer's Chairman*

Convention delegates signaled approval for NARFE to set another new target in its fundraising for Alzheimer's research. By their applause, they agreed with the recommendation of the NARFE-Alzheimer's National Committee to set a new goal of \$10 million in 2012.

Barb Pretzer, chair of the committee, reported that as of July 31, NARFE had raised a total of \$8,787,824. "We very likely will reach \$9 million in the next few months," Pretzer said. At the last convention, NARFE adopted a goal of \$9 million by NARFE's 90th Anniversary in 2011.

This year, NARFE is marking 25 years of working with the Alzheimer's Association to fund research projects.

At its meeting, the NARFE-Alzheimer's National Committee selected four more projects to fund for a total of \$560,000, she reported. In all, NARFE has provided funding for 49 projects.



### Sunshine Report

*Linda Cratic, Chairperson*

**Sympathy cards were sent to the families of Elynore Sheppard and Jim Faglier.**

**Get well wishes to Eulala Weddle and Barbara Duncan.  
Sympathy card sent to family of Ruth Crawford was returned.**

***"The greatest pleasures of which the human mind is susceptible are the pleasures of consciousness and sympathy" - Parke Godwin.***

Balance on Hand		
Last Report:		\$3,083.84
Receipts:		
VAH Cr Union (Advertising)	\$ 75.00	
NARFE (dues)	255.84	
Meals (May Meeting)	314.00	
Chapter 101 Convention		
Proceeds	1,646.26	
Total	\$2,291.10	
Total Accountable		\$5,374.94
Disbursements:		
Newsletter Printing	\$ 143.78	
NARFE Labels	40.00	
First Baptist Church	316.00	
Sunshine Supplies	10.94	
Total	\$ 510.72	
Balance on Hand August 31, 2010		\$4,864.22

### Treasurer's Report

*Elaine Bollinger, Treasurer*



## NARFE 101 NEWS

Welcome to our newest Chapter 101 members!  
JUANITA M. DOBBBINS of Augusta  
SISSI C. DOZIER of Hephzibah

NARFE's Member Records office handles a host of member inquiries on a daily basis. Included in these contacts are change of address requests, dues inquiries and chapter assignments. Effective June 1, 2010, the e-mail address for the Member Records office will change to [memberrecords@narfe.org](mailto:memberrecords@narfe.org).

The toll-free number – 800-456-8410 remains the same. Be sure to make a note of the new e-mail address as well as the phone number so you will have them on hand if you need to contact Member Records.

# NEW MEMBERS



### Augusta VAH Federal Credit Union

1267 Augusta West Parkway • Augusta, GA 30909  
Main Office: (706) 855-2224  
[www.avahfcu.org](http://www.avahfcu.org)

# Freedom 50 Checking

There is a new way of checking,  
exclusively for members ages 50<sup>(+)</sup>

Free Freedom 50 Checks

Free Money Orders

Free Cashiers' Checks

Free Traveler's Checks

Dividends paid on the average daily balance

Access to online Freedom Branch

Access to Freedom Line Audio Service

No monthly service fees

No minimum balances required

Unlimited check writing

PAY TO THE  
ORDER OF

*Members of NARFE 101 are eligible to join  
Augusta VAH Federal Credit Union,  
where people matter most!*

Note: The member (main accountholder) must be at least 50 years of age to qualify.  
Limit of one box Freedom 50 style per order. Discount on other check styles available.

**Four worms and a lesson to be learned!!!!**

A minister decided that a visual demonstration would add emphasis to his Sunday sermon. Four worms were placed into four separate jars.

The first worm was put into a container of alcohol.

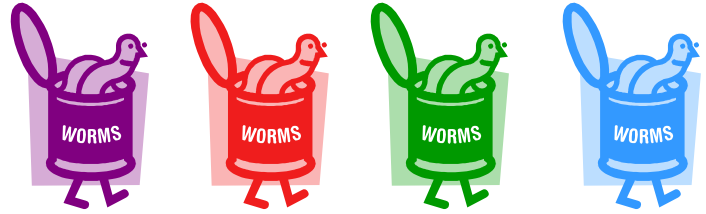
The second worm was put into a container of cigarette smoke.

The third worm was put into a container of chocolate syrup.

The fourth worm was put into a container of good clean soil.

At the conclusion of the sermon, the Minister reported the following results:

# 4 Worms in church



The first worm in alcohol - Dead

The second worm in cigarette smoke - Dead

Third worm in chocolate syrup - Dead

Fourth worm in good clean soil - Alive!!

So the Minister asked the congregation; "What did you learn from this demonstration?" Maxine was sitting in the back, quickly raised her hand and said, "As long as you drink, smoke and eat chocolate, you won't have worms!"

That pretty much ended the service!

## LEGISLATIVE

During previous periods of Entitlement Reform, policymakers first discussed cutting the "big three" – Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. However, when lawmakers realized the political liabilities of cutting a program like Social Security, which has 40 million beneficiaries (77 million by 2030), they have turned to the "captive audience" of federal retirees -- a much smaller constituency (2.3 million retirees and survivors). In fact, during the budget crises of the 1980s and early 1990s, federal retirees and survivors lost \$50 billion in deferred, reduced and canceled cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) while 40 million Social Security beneficiaries COLAs were not cut.

As far as a federal employee raise in 2011, the most likely answer at this point is an average increase of 1.4 percent. That is the amount that was proposed by the administration early in the year. Also, an appropriations bill that includes a 1.4 percent average raise for federal employees has cleared a Senate committee. A House subcommittee has approved a 1.4 percent increase for military personnel although the House has passed an appropriations bill for the

## Entitlement Reform

Department of Defense which includes a 1.9 percent increase for military personnel.

In other words, an average raise of 1.4 percent is not necessarily the final figure as anything could happen by the time a final figure is passed by Congress and approved by the President. Don't forget, this is an election year and nothing focuses the attention of Congressional representatives more than retaining their seat for another two years. One does get a sense that there is not going to be a groundswell of support for a pay increase in the pay of federal employees in 2011.

In 2010, for the first time, there was no cost of living increase for federal retirees. What about in 2011? It isn't official yet but you will not be getting a COLA in 2011 either.



NARFE, Chapter 101  
National Active and Retired  
Federal Employees  
Ralph Angelo, President  
2017 Pheasant Creek Drive  
Augusta, GA 30907

*You worked hard to earn your  
benefits. We're working hard to  
preserve them!*

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**NARFE 101 NEWS** Visit the Chapter 101 Web Site: [www.narfe.org/chapter101](http://www.narfe.org/chapter101)



NARFE Augusta Chapter 101 **September Evening Dinner Gathering** will be at 4:30 PM on Tuesday, September 21 at the new Golden Corral of Augusta, 231 Bobby Jones Expressway (next to the old Golden Corral). Dinner for Seniors is \$9.69. Tea, soda, milk or coffee is an additional \$1.99, if you want it. Tip for service staff is not included and should be left at your table (please leave about 10 percent or, more if you wish). Please plan on arriving at the cashier between 4:30 PM and 4:50 PM to be seated in the reserved dining room, so that you may begin to go through the buffet line. Let the cashier know you are with NARFE. Golden Corral® restaurants accept the following major credit cards.



Reservations are required in order to reserve the right size dining room. Make your reservations no later than **September 20** at Noon by calling the Recording Secretary:

Donna Germany (706) 855-9888 or e-mail her at [dwgermany@yahoo.com](mailto:dwgermany@yahoo.com).

You just need to leave her a message or send an e-mail; you will not receive a confirming call back.

**golden  
corral**