

## NARFE CHAPTER 1927 BOARD MEETING MAY 15, 2025

Vice President, Mike Madges, opened the meeting by welcoming those in attendance to include Joyce Skinner, Sue Garcia, Al Griggs, Ev Lake, Mike Ryan and Nick Steiner. Chapter Leaders Scott Graham, Brian Normile and Mike Webb were not in attendance.

The March Board Meeting Minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

### **Officer/Committee Reports**

Treasurer's Report – As our Treasurer could not attend, Vice President, Mike Madges, reported that dues money from National continues to be received. In April, we received additional dues of \$135.88. Our disbursements for April were \$100 for Chapter Liability Insurance. Our current treasury balance on hand is \$1859.35.

### **NARFE Chapter 1927 Meeting Discussion**

Chapter Meetings for the Summer Months - Mike also led a discussion concerning Chapter meetings for the summer months. Many Chapter members stated that they were not going to be available to attend Chapter meetings due to already scheduled vacations, upcoming visits by friends and family, etc. So, we decided to pause our regularly scheduled Chapter meetings until the month of October. However, we are still going to have our Chapter meeting on Friday, June 6. Our next regularly scheduled Chapter meeting thereafter will occur on Friday, October 3.

Board Meetings for the Summer Months – Our next regularly scheduled Board meeting will be Thursday, September 18. Other Board meetings may be scheduled during the summer months, as needed. (**NOTE:** Board meetings are held on the third Thursday of odd-numbered months. All Chapter 1927 members can attend the Board meetings.)

### **Update On Newsletter Publication Process Review**

Mike Madges and Chapter President Joyce Skinner provided status on the latest happenings surrounding our Newsletter publication process. Joyce stated that the Dayton Post Office is no longer providing “hands on” in-person training on how to get the Newsletter published by mail. The Post Office developed an online version of the process, but the site provided to view the online training did not work. Joyce talked about the possibility of just uploading future Newsletters to the NARFE website for Chapter members and other interested parties to review. Joyce stated, however, that she had been in touch recently with a friend who is a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Association to discuss how their organization distributes meeting minutes and other information to their members. Joyce stated that she would set up a meeting soon with her friend and members of the Board to discuss options available.

### **Engaging and Retaining Active Chapter Members**

An open discussion ensued on how we can engage and retain existing and newer Chapter members. With new members being added to the NARFE roles either as National or Chapter members, NARFE needs to have a plan on how we cannot only attract new members, but also how we can encourage and retain both the current and newer members. We discussed the possibility of varying the time and place of our Chapter meetings. As most of the actively employed members are working full-time, should we consider having dinner meetings rather than just luncheon meetings so those working full-time could attend after work? We could also reinstitute attending meetings via Zoom as was done during Covid 19. It is assumed that most of the current “younger generation” federal employees would be familiar with using Zoom. In addition, members of any age would be able to take advantage of a Zoom meeting in a library or other public place that has WiFi access. We also discussed determining why some of the newer members who had been gifted with a one-year free NARFE membership did not renew their membership. We could do follow-up calls with these folks to seek their feedback. All present were encouraged to think about other ways that we could increase our membership as well as retain those Chapter members we currently have.

### **NARFE Ohio Federation Conference Assessment**

Our biennial State Conference was held on Saturday, May 3 in Bellville, Ohio. Forty-four Ohio NARFE members attended which included Chapter 1927 leaders, Joyce Skinner, Sue Garcia, Nick Steiner, Scott Graham, Mike Ryan and Mike Madges. The theme of the Conference was “To Survive, NARFE Must Thrive.” In-person presentations were given by Nora MacDonald, National Member Engagement Director; and Region IV Vice President, Ed Konys. (NOTE: Ed serves on the National Executive Board representing NARFE members across Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin and is a Chapter 1927 member). Remote presentations were given by John Hatton, National Vice President, Plans and Programs.

Nora informed the Conference about a brisk increase in NARFE membership almost exclusively among active employees. Working with marketing vendor, Street Level Studio, Nora introduced both an Open House and an Ambassador Program as possible means to engage and retain currently working NARFE members.

John reviewed with attendees the Congressional journey in getting the Social Security Fairness Act passed, thus eliminating the Windfall Elimination and Government Pension Offset provisions that previously restricted Social Security benefits for federal employees and others. He also briefed us on the current status of Republican efforts to achieve a budget bill and its implications for the federal community (see Benefit Threats and the Budget article below).

Ed Konys reviewed NARFE’s declining membership over time and the criticality of growing and retaining membership if NARFE is to survive. Ed emphasized the challenge before us and the need to engage and retain especially those active NARFE members we are gaining in this confusing and threatening environment.

Joyce Skinner accepted a certificate recognizing our Chapter as the second most generous in the state for NARFE-Alzheimer's Research.

## **Benefit Threats and the Budget**

As the Congress works on a budget bill to include extending the 2017 tax cuts, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee has adopted a series of proposals detrimental to federal employees. The Committee proposals would require all FERS employees to pay 4.4% of their salary toward retirement benefits. (Currently FERS employees hired through 2012 pay .8 % of salary and those hired in 2013 pay 3.1% of salary). Another proposal would eliminate the FERS special retirement supplement for FERS employees who retire before age 62. The supplement replicates the value of Social Security benefits until age 62. (Mandatory Retirement FERS employees would be exempted). Retirement benefits would be based on one's High Five instead of the current High Three beginning in calendar year 2027. New employees would be required to pay an additional 5% of salary unless they become "at-will" employees within a year of hiring. Employees would be required to pay a fee for filing an MSPB appeal (current estimate \$350). While these proposals are the work of one Committee and likely will be altered as work on a budget bill continues in the House and Senate, the reality is apparent that federal benefits will be impacted. While not in the above proposals, replacing our Federal Health Benefits with a voucher system and possible annuity COLA reductions could be other areas impacted. We strongly encouraged all NARFE members to use the Legislative Action Center on the [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org) website to personalize your views on this and other matters of interest. Upon opening the website, click on "Advocacy" and then "Take Action" to reach the Action Center. It should be noted that the above Committee proposals were adopted on a strict-party-line vote with one exception – that being our Congressman Mike Turner who opposed the proposed package.

## **"No Ordinary Time" Ad Campaign Update**

There were 1,800 hits on NARFE's digital banner found on the front page of the DDN website on twelve separate weekdays through May 7<sup>th</sup>. Clicking on the banner immediately directed the person to the Advocacy page on the NARFE website ([www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org)). Our one-quarter printed ads will run on ten consecutive Sundays through May 25<sup>th</sup>. Opening the QR code within the printed ad also directs the person to NARFE's Advocacy page.

Mike Madges also reminded attendees not to miss our June 6 Chapter meeting featuring Dr. Lee Hannah from Wright State University. Dr. Hannah's presentation will address the subject of our Electoral College: How we elect the President and why it matters. Dr. Hanna teaches courses in American politics and public administration and has published several articles on marijuana policy, education policy and the political parties. Please join us at this interesting and informative Chapter meeting!

**Please do not forget to leave a tip for our MCL servers!**

Meeting Adjourned

Submitted by Chapter Secretary Sue Garcia