

MINUTES:

THE 2023 NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION (NARFE) OKLAHOMA STATE CONFERENCE APRIL 27-28, 2023

HOSTED BY: CHISHOLM TRAIL CHAPTER 749, EL RENO/YUKON, OK. 73099

**LOCATION: THE CANADIAN VALLEY TECH CENTER (CVTECH); EL RENO CAMPUS
6505 E HWY 66, EL RENO, OK. 73036**

THURSDAY APRIL 27, 2023

The Conference opened at 09:05a.m. The welcome and call to order was done by the Master of Ceremonies, Rod Sheaffer. The invocation was by Scott Kinney. The presentation of colors was by Unit 353 Mustang Army National Guard with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Rod Sheaffer. Rod then introduced James Gillispie, Federation President, who welcomed the attendees and any guest also other necessary announcements were made. The approval of the agenda was made by the president, who then introduced the speaker Ms. Gayla Lutts, CEO/Superintendent of CVTECH. Ms Lutts talked about the vo-tech facility and its programs.

The roll call of officers and chapter presidents was done by the Secretary, Jean McBride. Her report is on file. Our President then introduced Gerry Winkeler, Oklahoma's Alzheimer's officer. Gerry Winkeler spoke on the 10 warning signs of Alzheimer's. Having people from the audience participate until NARFE headquarters presentation via the internet started.

Via Zoom Meeting, NARFE headquarters staff member, John Hatton, went over updates from headquarters. He explained how necessary grassroots advocacy was in helping congress know how they influence or affect federal employees locally. And that the federal employees make up a large group of constituents for them. We have lobbyists in D.C. to help lobby for us with congress to let them know how the bills they are passing affect federal employees' livelihood. John mentioned the committee Sen Lankford was over.

NARFE attempt to protect and increase benefits for all federal employees. John listed areas where they have been successful. Key concerns were addressed such as forcing all federal employees to take Medicare Part B. This is a part of the postal reform bill. Another key concern WEP/GPO. NARFE continues to push for reforms on this bill. NARFE secured 305 co-sponsors. However, the last congress did not bring it up for a vote.

Advocacy priorities for this year going forward are to protect earned retirement and health benefits we currently enjoy. Now with the debt limit looming congress may want to cut our benefits. More accurate COLAS for CSRS and FERS retirees, how the COLAS are formulated is a concern. FLTCIP (Long Term Care), premiums are a concern because of the huge increases. NARFE is requesting a partial refund option for enrollee.

LEGCON is in June this year. This will offer grassroots advocacy training for members. A question-and-answer period was offered by John.

One question/answer regarding Medicare part B was: John said, requiring Medicare B will bring premiums down on postal plans. John Hatton will provide his presentation to those requesting via email.

Jackie Bryant, Coordinator over our membership department and recruitment. Nora McDonald, was introduced by Ms. Bryant, who is over this department, Johan DeCastro also spoke to us about the changes within this department.

Jackie Bryant spoke on membership strategy by describing the job she does for our membership through digital marketing. Agency relationships, events and publications ads and various other presentation resources such as u-Tube, and PowerPoint presentation are available. Under retention resources you will find contact information for various events such as a death reporting.

Under brand awareness, advertising in local publication that reach active federal employees. They are currently updating their member engagements through survey and email. Other resources to give the member information about benefits and what NARFE offers its members was given. All these are designed to give more worth to the NARFE membership. Time ran out on the feed from headquarters. Her presentation was emailed to us by President Gillispie. The presentation ended at 10:26a.m.

Gerry Winkeler then resumed her presentation on the 10 warning signs for Alzheimer's. The book, "The 36 hour day" was mentioned as a help to understand people with Alzheimer's. Any chapters that take up funds for this organization will need to send money to Gerry for their chapters to get credit for the donation. Checks should be made out to NARFE Alzheimer's research. Question and answer period was given Gerry concluded at 10:40a.m.

BREAK RELEASE: by Randy Freeland, our Past-President was from 10:42AM to 11:00AM

DOOR PRIZES started from 10:55AM to 11:00A.M.

The Legislative Forum was given by Pamela Burnett at 11:09AM. Pam offered her slides to anyone that requests them. She went over the Equal COLA act, HR 866. The Civil Service act HR100 SB399 this Bill will have Federal Employees hired and fired based on merit. She mentioned that all the bills are listed in our NARFE magazine, and the need to be an advocate by calling our representatives.

LEGCON 23 is June20-22, 2023. On June14, a know before-you-go session is offered from 12-2-CT this is a virtual meeting. It will help you be effective on a local level. A bill now offered to the Senate is SB 290 which is to double their pay. LEGCON will cost \$150 for registration Pamela went over how to register for that event. Okla. has 5 representatives and 2 senators they are:

District 1: John Hern

District 2: Josh Brecheen

District 3: Frank Lucas

District 4: Thomas Cole

District 5: Stephanie Bice

Senator: James Lankford

Senator: Markwayne Mullin

John Hatton will be the speaker at the LEGCON 2023 conference.

The number of federal employees in Oklahoma was given. The total is 95,032. Federal Annuitants, 47,519, Active Federal employees are 40,441, and 7072 are Postal Employees as of 2021. As of April 2023, Oklahoma has 1849 members out of a 95,032 total base. Pamela concluded her presentation at 11:23A.M.

President Gillispie introduced mobile NARFE and spoke on membership. James spoke for our historian Joann Dungan. She needs our pictures, and record on our chapters. The federation also needs a service

officer. George Wiland is helping with these duties until that position is filled. If you are in need of a service officer, please let a board member know. Our Webmaster, Nancy Stanphill, was not able to attend this year's State Conference. A question was raised on obtaining information on our website. If you log on to Oklahoma NARFE and do not see a capitol image, get out immediately and go in again.

We broke for lunch at 10:36A.M. and resumed at 1:00P.M. the President mentioned mobile NARFE.

DOOR PRIZES resumed at 01:00P.M. Meeting resumed at 1:07P.M.

BUSINESS MEETING:

CALL TO ORDER: by James Gillispie at 1:07P.M.

Memorial service was presented by Rod Sheaffer and a special mention for Jeff Vaughan, one of our past-presidents.

MINUTES FROM 2021 STATE CONFERENCE: was presented by the Secretary, Jean McBride-Samuels. A motion to approve the minutes by Johnny Hanlon was made and 2nd by George Wiland. The minutes were approved as posted on our web-site.

TREASURER'S REPORT & TWO-YEAR BUDGET: was presented by Johnny Hanlon. A motion to approve was made by Kenneth Dungan and 2nd by Karen Hackett. The audit report will be presented in tomorrow's meeting.

The incentives were discussed and reports by Marshall Richards who brought up the M112 and how people try to work the system. Incentive for 2 or 3 years was discussed some people thought this benefit was just for new members. Dues withholding benefits were also discussed.

Some other issues discussed were that we go to one day conference and that we hold them in areas where there is a high concentration of federal employees. To have it on a Saturday and have the chapter pay for the registration fee for the attendees of the conference. Our President reminded us that the next conference will be in 2025 and that a chapter is needed to volunteer to host that event. Much discussion was made on how to get and keep members. How hard it is for an outsider to get invited into the federal offices was discussed.

Willa Olden spoke on the Area Agency on Aging. They met the first Tuesday of April. She was not able to make the meeting but they meet and ask for or look at bills within our state to help the aged. There is a need for volunteers within this agency as well. Willa reminded us that our culture is changing and the youth do not want to meet or want to pay for memberships. Also, it is the youth that are taking advantage of or abusing the elder.

A break was taken at 2:43 until 3:00p.m. we reconvened at 3:13p.m. with door prizes. At 3:19p.m. President Gillispie introduced the next speaker, the Alzheimer's Coordinator for our region, Linda Richards, who talked about the amount of money each state in her region gave to Alzheimer's research. The Alzheimer's walks are coming up soon. She reminded us that the money raised in Oklahoma stays in Oklahoma. The name Alzheimer comes from a doctor in 1906 who discovered it and was called the founding father. Soon we will have over 13M people in America with the disease. Dementia diseases have many umbrellas and can come on you fast. Staying active helps the mind fight against this disease. Linda mentioned she would be stepping down from this position.

At 3: 36p.m.our President introduced our Region VI V.P., Marshall Richards who gave his report on what was going on at headquarters. He also talked about the perks NARFE has within the magazine and the Postal Manager convention in Denver that headquarters did not know about and he ask why don't we know and try to recruit from that group? Marshall talked about the loss of chapters and members. And the overall loss within the region. 14%

of our membership died last year. A NARFE credit card is in the future, there will be some revenue from that. Marshall talked about the opposition he has faced by other VP's regarding offers and perks for our members. He also mentioned that he knows that dues increase cause people to leave NARFE not an incentive for staying. Webinars have NARFE memberships attached to them. Marshall states he will be stepping down. 2024 national convention is in St. Louis, MO. He has not had an in-person meeting since 2019 with the other V.P's. New Hampshire is in danger of losing its Federation. A questions and answer period was offered and many questions were offered. Marshall wants us to remember that NARFE also helps stop federal employees from losing benefits.

4:02p.m. James Gillispie gave his STATE OF FEDERATION report. He spoke on how many people we have lost since he started as president in 2019 when the membership was 196,283 now it is below 150,000. A chapter-by-chapter review was given. Two chapters have closed with one in process of closing now. They are: chapters 369, 1722, and 1017 in process of closing.

We have reached our Alzheimer's goal of \$14 million and on the way to reaching \$15million. When closings a chapter, it is important that enough signatures are on the accounts so that the funds can be accessed once the president and secretary/ treasurer pass away. The loss of Jeff Vaughan was mentioned and the importance of dues-withholding as a life saver for us as a membership, 36.79% of Oklahoma membership is currently on dues-withholdings. James spoke about the postal reform bill and how 10% is added to those that do not take part B however, there is a forgiveness of that 10% offered that people can check into. WEP/GPO was mentioned the bill on the Senate side is S.597 and the house it is HR82. There are many co-sponsors however James encourages us to call our congress leaders and ask them to back these bills then vote to give us our earned benefits restored to us. The President mentioned PAC funds and how they were allocated. Special thanks was given to all those that helped him succeed while president of this federation.

A break was given and we resumed at 4:21p.m.

Randy Freeland, our Past President went over some of the questions previously raised on (2) two- and (3) three-year memberships. This incentive is for renewing members only according to headquarters.

We adjourned at 4:30 P.M. Banquet to follow.

Day two of the Conference began at 9:00A.M. with a call to order given by Rod Sheaffer and prayers given by Scott Kinney. Rod Sheaffer also led us in the Pledge of allegiance. He then introduced our Key-Note Speaker: Jay Steagall, Oklahoma State Representative for the region.

Representative Jay Steagall had a power point presentation and spoke to us regarding our state's government, his career in the armed forces and his work within the community. After his presentation there was a question-and-answer period and many questions concerning our state were asked and answered. Mr. Steagall, told us to call him at the state capitol or email him if we had any questions or concerns, he said he would be glad to help.

Break announced by Randy Freeland at 10:00A.M.

Door Prizes were given.

BUSINESS MEETING RESUMED at 10:30A.M.:

Randy Freeland introduced the reports section of the meeting beginning with the Audit Committee Report.

The Audit Report was made by Rod Sheaffer. The people on the committee were Rodney Sheaffer, Claudia McElvania and Johnny Hanlon. A checklist and submission was made to the secretary and placed on file. The committee found no irregularities after checking every quarter.

Randy Freeland introduced Larry Barnett who was overseer of the ballot votes for state officers. There were 47 total votes. Mr. Barnett turned in to the secretary his report on the results of the vote.

Our new officers are:

Federation President: Pamela K. Burnett

1st Vice- President- Membership: Betty Reitz

2nd Vice-President- National Legislation: Jean McBride

3rd Vice-President- State Legislation: George Wiland

Secretary: Randy Freeland

Treasurer: Johnny Hanlon

District I Vice-President: Gary Flinchum

District II Vice-President: Ron Vick

District III Vice-President: Jerry Walker

District IV Vice-President: Harry Fritzler

District V Vice-President: Karen Hackett

Marshall Richards swore in all the officers and President Gillispie gave special mention to all the Federation Officers that are not elected such as the office currently vacant Service Officer, the Historian and the Alzheimer officer.

The Alzheimer's committee/fundraiser report was given: With the quilt raffle, and the silent auction moneys totaled \$1,129. Linda Richards said this amount surpasses the amount given in Texas. Rosalind Finch and Georgia Griggs served on this committee.

President Gillispie states that the next NARFE Oklahoma State Conference Location will be in Edmond in 2025.

With no other business, Rod Sheaffer made a motion to adjourn, Ardi Sheaffer 2nd we adjourned at 11:10A.M.

Ardi Sheaffer conducted the Door Prizes for the Conference.

There were 41 members in attendance.

Signed D. Jean McBride- Samuels, Secretary.