



REGION X REPORT Spring 2021

**William "Bill" Shackelford
Region X Vice President**

I would like to express my sincere thanks for 6 1/2 years of support. It has been my honor to serve NARFE members from Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

VISION

I am pleased to give you this report of our activities in the past year, and what a year it has been. If NARFE is going to attract more active Federal employees into the organization, a change in the way we do business is vital.

CHALLENGES

It was fitting that we positioned ourselves as "the federal benefits experts" with our brand launch in 2019, because never was this expertise needed as it was in 2020, with the COVID-19 pandemic. It is critical that NARFE enter its second century strong, relevant, and firmly established as the go-to resource for our members and prospective members, the federal community, policymakers, the media, and the public.

DECISIONS

NARFE has been going through an unprecedented period of change. Our organization is evolving to answer the needs and desires of future Federal employees and retirees. Despite all the challenges we encountered in the past year, NARFE leaders, NARFE members, NARFE staff all found ways to keep the organization up and running thanks to technology that allowed us to deliver on our commitment. NARFE continued to provide its valuable guidance, timely resources, and powerful advocacy throughout the pandemic, with specialized webinars, magazine articles and other resources that helped us navigate the impact of COVID-19 on our lives.

Those resources are easier to find now. I hope you have had a chance to check out NARFE's new website. New Federation and Chapter website templates will be available soon. While the current Region X Federation websites are excellent, the templates may provide useful components, thereby allowing some benefits from an integrated search that will aid you to find what you need on either website through optimization for smart phone, tablets, & computers, putting all that NARFE know-how at your fingertips wherever you are. Between the website, the magazine, and newsletters coming out of National Headquarters, it is easy to keep up with your NARFE member benefits, legislative developments, and common questions about your federal benefits.

MISSION

The first sentence of NARFE's mission statement is "**To support legislation beneficial to current and potential federal annuitants and to oppose legislation contrary to their interests.**"

When it comes right down to it, NARFE's brand stands upon two robust pillars:

- Federal Benefits Institute
- NARFE Advocacy

The Federal Benefits Institute is growing. NARFE Headquarters has discovered that the Institute is well positioned to become the pre-eminent resource regarding federal benefits information. More than questions and answers, it increasingly is the one-stop shop for all things federal benefits for the federal community. We have invested in experts with national name recognition among the federal community. Stronger relationships with our experts, who include Tammy Flanagan and Mark Keen, mean more value for your membership. The knowledge that an answer is just an e-mail or phone call away is priceless. NARFE webinars are offered more frequently on topics that are in high demand. First, the Federal Benefits Institute: These webinars provide valuable information that helps you save money, time, and worry. NARFE offers up to 18 webinar programs a year, produced by Institute experts and our communications team.

On the advocacy side, NARFE continues to be a most respected voice on Capitol Hill. In 2021, we are building strong relationships with the new Administration and Congress. We have a rich opportunity to enhance NARFE's influence, advance our legislative goals and expand recognition of NARFE as a valuable source for federal benefits expertise. NARFE's advocacy team provides Congress with the tactical information that they need to make the best decisions on legislation that affects the federal community. NARFE's significant influence has kept recent budgets from taking funds out of Feds' pockets, created a paid federal leave program, pushed for movement on stalled bills affecting the WEP, and more. And its grassroots mobilization has allowed thousands of NARFE members to tell their stories to legislators and make their voices heard.

NARFE successfully defeated proposals to cut benefits to federal retirees and prevented the effort to reorganize the Office of Personnel Management in such a way that would have exposed it to political influence. For federal employees, NARFE helped ensure pay raises in consecutive years, helped secure paid parental leave, and helped pass the Government Employee Fair Treatment Act, which guarantees back pay for furloughed federal employees during shutdown events. NARFE also helped get legislation through related to pandemic relief, including the suspension of required minimum distributions on retirement accounts and emergency funding for the postal service.

Many of you answered the call to help NARFE get this legislation through. Everyone is grateful to all our grassroots advocates for the stories brought forward on how these issues affect you personally. It makes a real difference in helping convince lawmakers to cosponsor critical legislation that will make a difference in your life. More than 50,000 letters were sent to legislators through the online Legislative Action Center in 2020, and more than 20,000 phone calls were connected via NARFE. This does not even take into consideration the number of ZOOM meetings that were held with your Representatives and Senators or the letters you wrote to local news editors. Keep up the great work.

We made it through a NARFE election, a National election, and a transition to a new administration and—here we are, ready to focus on the 117th Congress. We will continue to advocate for:

- A federal pay increase in 2021 and beyond
- Modifying postal reform proposals to preserve health care choices for postal retirees
- Enacting full colas for FERS retirees
- Supporting current efforts to reform the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP)
- Ensuring adequate oversight of proposals to reorganize the Federal government
- Providing substantive feedback on efforts to modernize the civil service

I can assure you that NARFE will do everything in its power to move the needle on the many legislative issues that have stagnated for so long. And should federal benefits wind up (as they often do) under the lens of scrutiny for potential cuts, NARFE will be there to protect them.

NARFE-PAC

NARFE-PAC contributions helps us to build strong relationships on Capitol Hill, which is a key component to winning legislative fights. Here is an update on the success in Region X, comparing efforts during the 116th Congress (2018-2020) to partial efforts during the 117th Congress (January – March 2021).

- 1) Here is an update on the success in Region X, for the 116th Congress (2019-2020) to partial efforts during the 117th Congress (January 2021 – March 2021).

	Ending 12/31/2020	Ending 3/31/2021
Contributors	1,950	635
Donations	\$ 119,644.00	\$ 22,237.00
Average Donation	\$ 61.36	\$ 35.02

- 2) For Region X Federations, here is the comparison for the 116th Congress (2019-2020) to partial efforts during the 117th Congress (January 2021–March 2021).

KENTUCKY FEDERATION

	Chapter Members	
	Ending 12/31/2020	Ending 3/31/2021
Contributors	207	58
Donations	\$18,146.00	\$2,874.00
Average Donation	\$87.66	\$49.55
	National-Only Members	
	Ending 12/31/2020	Ending 3/31/2021
Contributors	173	56
Donations	\$9,307.00	\$1,364.00
Average Donation	\$53.80	\$24.36

NORTH CAROLINA FEDERATION

	Chapter Members	
	Ending 12/31/2020	Ending 3/31/2021
Contributors	386	154
Donations	\$32,698.00	\$6,899.00
Average Donation	\$87.66	\$49.55

	National-Only Members	
	Ending 12/31/2020	Ending 3/31/2021
Contributors	499	159
Donations	\$31,115.00	\$5,748.00
Average Donation	\$53.80	\$24.36

TENNESSEE FEDERATION

	Chapter Members	
	Ending 12/31/2020	Ending 3/31/2021
Contributors	187	66
Donations	\$12,408.00	\$2,369.00
Average Donation	\$66.35	\$35.89

	National-Only Members	
	Ending 12/31/2020	Ending 3/31/2021
Contributors	207	158
Donations	\$12,606.00	\$6,142.00
Average Donation	\$60.90	\$38.87

VIRGINIA FEDERATION

	Chapter Members	
	Ending 12/31/2020	Ending 3/31/2021
Contributors	1,031	346
Donations	\$93,028.00	\$17,793.00
Average Donation	\$90.33	\$51.42

	National-Only Members	
	Ending 12/31/2020	Ending 3/31/2021
Contributors	983	308
Donations	\$62,339.00	\$11,834.00
Average Donation	\$63.42	\$38.42

WEST VIRGINIA FEDERATION

	Chapter Members	
	Ending 12/31/2020	Ending 3/31/2021
Contributors	101	44
Donations	\$ 8,764.00	\$ 2,064.00
Average Donation	\$ 86.77	\$ 46.51

	National-Only Members	
	Ending 12/31/2020	Ending 3/31/2021
Contributors	88	27
Donations	\$ 4,277.00	\$ 713.00
Average Donation	\$ 48.60	\$ 26.40

3) For Region X Federations, NARFE-PAC disbursements to specific members of the 116th Congress (2019-2020) are shown here.

KENTUCKY FEDERATION

DISTRICT/SENATE	NAME	PARTY	AMOUNT
03	John Yarmuth	Democratic	\$5,000.00

NORTH CAROLINA FEDERATION

DISTRICT/SENATE	NAME	PARTY	AMOUNT
01	G.K. Butterfield	Democratic	\$1,000.00
03	Greg Murphy	Republican	\$1,000.00
04	David Price	Democratic	\$1,000.00
08 (Candidate)	Patricia Timmons Goodson	Democratic	\$5,000.00
12	Alma Adams	Democratic	\$1,000.00
Senate (Candidate)	Cal Cunningham	Democratic	\$5,000.00

TENNESSEE FEDERATION

No NARFE-PAC disbursements to Tennessee members of the 116th Congress

VIRGINIA FEDERATION

DISTRICT/SENATE	NAME	PARTY	AMOUNT
01	Rob Wittman	Republican	\$10,000.00
02	Elaine Luria	Democratic	\$7,500.00
03	Bobby Scott	Democratic	\$2,500.00
04	Don McEachin	Democratic	\$5,000.00
07	Abigail Spanberger	Democratic	\$8,000.00
08	Don Beyer	Democratic	\$10,000.00
10	Jennifer Wexton	Democratic	\$10,000.00
11	Gerry Connolly	Democratic	\$10,000.00
Senate	Mark Warner	Democratic	\$10,000.00

WEST VIRGINIA FEDERATION

DISTRICT/SENATE	NAME	PARTY	AMOUNT
01	David McKinley	Republican	\$10,000.00
Senate	Shelly Moore Capito	Republican	\$10,000.00

4) For Region X Federations, NARFE-PAC disbursements for the 1st Quarter (January 2021–March 2021) to specific members of the 117th Congress are shown here.

KENTUCKY FEDERATION

DISTRICT/SENATE	NAME	PARTY	AMOUNT
03	John Yarmuth	Democratic	\$5,000.00

NORTH CAROLINA FEDERATION

No NARFE-PAC disbursements to North Carolina members of the 117th Congress

TENNESSEE FEDERATION

No NARFE-PAC disbursements to Tennessee members of the 117th Congress

VIRGINIA FEDERATION

DISTRICT/SENATE	NAME	PARTY	AMOUNT
11	Gerry Connolly	Democratic	\$2,500.00

WEST VIRGINIA FEDERATION

DISTRICT/SENATE	NAME	PARTY	AMOUNT
01	David McKinley	Republican	\$1,000.00

HEALTH OF CHAPTERS AND FEDERATIONS

At this time last year in Region X, Chapter membership in our 118 Chapters was as follows:

- More than 200 members = 14 Chapters
- Between 100 and 200 = 24 Chapters
- Less than 100 = 80 Chapters

Overall in Region X, Chapter membership in our 113 Chapters is as follows:

- More than 200 members = 11 Chapters
- Between 100 and 200 = 21 Chapters
- Less than 100 = 81 Chapters

For Region X Federations, Chapter membership breaks down as follows:

KENTUCKY FEDERATION

- More than 200 members = 1 Chapters
- Between 100 and 200 = 3 Chapters
- Less than 100 = 9 Chapters

- Largest Chapter in Kentucky = Central Kentucky-Lexington Chapter 97
- Smallest Chapter in Kentucky = Golden Burley-Maysville Chapter 1943

NORTH CAROLINA FEDERATION

- More than 200 members = 1 Chapters
- Between 100 and 200 = 5 Chapters
- Less than 100 = 24 Chapters

- Largest Chapter in North Carolina = Raleigh Chapter 192
- Smallest Chapter in North Carolina = Wilkes Chapter 979

TENNESSEE FEDERATION

- More than 200 members = 0 Chapters
- Between 100 and 200 = 2 Chapters
- Less than 100 = 19 Chapters

- Largest Chapter in Tennessee = Nashville Chapter 227
- Smallest Chapter in Tennessee = Kingsport Chapter 935

VIRGINIA FEDERATION

- More than 200 members = 8 Chapters
- Between 100 and 200 = 10 Chapters
- Less than 100 = 20 Chapters

- Largest Chapter in Virginia = Springfield Chapter 893
- Smallest Chapter in Virginia = Caroline County Chapter 2112

WEST VIRGINIA FEDERATION

- More than 200 members = 0 Chapters
- Between 100 and 200 = 1 Chapters
- Less than 100 = 10 Chapters

- Largest Chapter in West Virginia = Eastern Panhandle-Martinsburg Chapter 1236
- Smallest Chapter in West Virginia = Princeton-Mercer Chapter 2226

The single major concern that continues to plaque NARFE is chapter closures. At the beginning of my first term as Regional Vice President, in November 2014, there were 174 Chapters in Region X. As of May 1, there are 113 chapters in our Region. Over the last year, there have been 5 Chapter closures. At the present time, Federation Presidents are preparing paperwork for an additional 4 pending closures.

All Region X Federations have excellent officer/leadership training. However, the primary reason and a long-standing problem within NARFE for chapter closures is the lack of members willing to take advantage of this training and step-up and assume a leadership position.

Individuals who have stepped down from leadership positions are **ALWAYS** willing to assist in the development of new leaders. Each of us, who have held leadership positions, can identify one or two persons that have served as mentors on NARFE procedures and issues.

Currently some of your fellow members in West Virginia are holding both Chapter and Federation Officer positions. There are a few individuals that are holding three positions. They are serving their Chapter, the Federation as well as holding a position as a Congressional District or Senatorial Leader. If you are interested in holding a Federation position or assisting the incumbent, Contact your Federation President.

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT STRUCTURE

Building and maintaining relationships with congressional staff is critical to advancing NARFE's priorities. The 2014 Future of NARFE Committee and the two subsequent Strategic Planning Committee reports recommended that Congressional District Leaders (CDLs) be established in each Congressional District. Additionally, there were to be two Senatorial Legislative Leaders (SLL) in each state.

Progress has been made in this area with some states having established and filled the positions, other states are in the process of doing so, while some states have not yet taken any action. The establishment of CDL/SLL in each state will serve as the basic structure for National-only Federations.

Led by Congressional District Liaison, the goal is to develop, maintain and strengthen a relationship with your member of Congress and his/her staff to further the NARFE Advocacy Program. If you are interested in holding a Congressional District or Senatorial Leader position or assisting the incumbent, Contact your Federation National Legislation Officer.

In Region X, based on the official counts of the 2020 Census, West Virginia will lose one seat and North Carolina will gain one seat. Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia will remain unchanged.

CALL TO ACTION

NARFE is facing a big challenge in membership recruitment. Even while NARFE Headquarters staff are implementing strategies, projects, and tactics to move the organization into the data-driven and digital age and help NARFE reach more potential members, influencers and followers, the association will not be as robust and strong without more involvement from its current members. Every one of you possess the unique ability to speak from the heart and from experience. Word of mouth and personal experience are powerful tools that can attract federal employees to become new members – especially during these trying times.

Recruiting new members, with a focus on current federal employees, and keeping members engaged with NARFE are critical to growing NARFE membership. Online member communities are recognized by thousands of nonprofit organizations as the most valuable tool to ensure strong member engagement (at local and national levels) through the timely delivery of high-quality content, manage effective regular communication with members, especially in their critical first year of membership, and foster connections among members and between members and the association.

As of April 30, the overall NARFE membership level was as follows:

● Chapter Members	=	82,778
● National-only Members	=	81,899
TOTAL	=	164,677

As of June 30, the overall NARFE membership level was as follows:

● Chapter Members	=	81,218
● National-only Members	=	81,136
TOTAL	=	162,354

NARFE ONLINE MEMBER COMMUNITY

Recruiting new members, with a focus on current federal employees, and keeping members engaged with NARFE are critical to growing NARFE membership. Online member communities are recognized by thousands of nonprofit organizations as the most valuable tool to ensure strong member engagement (at local and national levels) through the timely delivery of high-quality content, manage effective regular communication with members, especially in their critical first year of membership, and foster connections among members and between members and the association.

The Membership Advisory Committee was briefed that the NARFE Membership Development Team, in an effort to evaluate and secure the tools NARFE needs to significantly enhance our recruitment and retention efforts, has determined the ***Higher Logic*** online community platform has all the features the association needs to connect members at the local (Chapter) level and across the country, make our member communications far more effective, and significantly boost engagement with both current and prospective members. It also has the capability to incorporate paid advertising and sponsorship opportunities, thus helping to defray most of the cost to host and maintain the platform. It is the unanimous opinion of the Membership Advisory Committee that a NARFE online member community will be critical to helping us achieve our goals of increased chapter engagement,

member recruitment, improved retention, and non-dues revenue growth. The Membership Advisory Committee approved the Membership Development Team's request to move forward with having Higher Logic develop and implement a NARFE online member community which is the key to engaging and recruiting members for the next 100 years.

At the National Executive Board (NEB) meeting on April 23, 2021, the NEB approved the disbursement of funds to cover the first-year development, implementation, and management costs to develop and launch the Higher Logic online community. The total financial commitment for the first year is \$100,500.

Some of the benefits of implementing a Higher Logic Online Member Community include:

- Foster chapter growth by engaging members with chapters virtually, enhancing their ability to attract members and increase via an online presence that **does not** require a webmaster
- Replace NARFE's old "blog" and provide topic-specific sections – enable NARFE members to network across the country and exchange ideas and possible solutions to the similar challenges they face, thus driving increased engagement and promoting stronger connections to NARFE
- Improve first-year member retention by mapping out, automating, and executing a more effective "Welcome" and onboarding communication strategy, enhancing their engagement during critical first year of membership
- Attract prospective members and provide a way for them to experience NARFE via access to "teaser" content that requires them to share their contact information; prospects are automatically targeted with communications that engage them more deeply with NARFE and which may ultimately lead to membership
- Provide personalized experience via custom communications based on the member's preferences, activity, and connections on the platform
- Connect members regardless their device through optimization for smart phones, i.e., mobile-friendly web platform or downloadable mobile app, tablets, and computers
- Allow most, if not all, communications currently handled by the NARFE E-Mail System (NES) whereby Chapter and federation leaders could use the Higher Logic communications and marketing automation features to communicate with their members

Calendar year 2021 has so much promise as we continue to bounce back from the pandemic. NARFE will always protect the earned retirement and health benefits of federal employees and retirees, just as it has for 100 years, a notable accomplishment for any organization. And now that the businesses we like to frequent for our meetings are opening again, we have a great opportunity to meet up with friends who might want to join NARFE. Here are just a few other ways you can help introduce someone to NARFE:

- Get a few extra copies of NARFE Magazine from headquarters and hand them out to Feds you know.
- Share a NARFE news item or the NARFE Centennial video on your social media page.
- Forward NARFE NewsLine to a friend
- Wear a new NARFE T-shirt, available from ShopNARFE

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Our duty to serve federal employees and retirees and be a resource for the broader federal community remains the same today as it was before the COVID-19 pandemic. Your patience in dealing with the office closure and understanding of headquarters limited remote abilities is greatly appreciated. Remember, all that we do is made possible by you. Thank you for your membership, for your leadership, and for everything you do that helps NARFE be a better organization.

All NARFE members have the potential to make a difference and can contribute to the overall growth and success of NARFE. Your involvement and participation are an absolute necessity.

What's On Your Mind?? I welcome your ideas. After all, the future of NARFE is in our hands. Send me an e-mail with your thoughts or concerns to **RVP10@narfe.org**

REMEMBER –Together, we can move NARFE forward!!