



**NARFE**  
FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

www.narfe.org/mn

## Minnesota Federation

Volume 15

Issue 1

March 2021

### President's Message Earl Knutson

#### President's Message - Earl O. Knutson

In this issue, larger than usual, you will find the new Standing Rules. These rules "flesh out" the materials found in the Bylaws. Please acquaint yourselves with them, then vote to accept or reject using the enclosed ballot. That ballot also allows you to vote on the candidates for the various offices. Again, please vote your preferences, then mail the ballot as instructed.

Some good news: Donna Kimmes has stepped forward to be the Federation's Service Officer. She succeeds Marilyn Johnson, who served in that position with distinction for 7 years and was one of those who recommended Donna. Donna's contact number is 218-751-5900.

Then some sad news: Chapter 2328, Thief River Falls, has voted to close their chapter. This was the home chapter of the Federation's past president, Karen Thygeson.

Distressing news: we do not have a candidate to replace our retiring secretary Roxanne Janovich. Invitations had been posted in our previous newsletter and in mass emails. Additionally, seven individuals recommended by Board members were contacted, but all were taken up with ongoing matters. The Board will now discuss how to proceed.

More good news: We were able to reschedule the 2021 conference from May to October 18-19 so we should be way past the pandemic. Our venue, Breezy Point, should be in glorious fall color!

### NARFE/ Minnesota Webmaster Report Earl O. Knutson

Our website, [narfe.org/mn](http://narfe.org/mn), is built within the framework provided by the NARFE-National. Opportunities to customize are limited. One change I've made is to move our archived minutes and treasurer's reports into *Archives*, at the very bottom of the first screen. This makes those records a little more difficult to find, since we do not have a password system.

With help from past newsletter editors, particularly Joyce Booher, newsletters going back to Volume 1 Issue 1, March 2007, have been collected and are now posted on the website.

#### Treasurer's Report - Clayton Olson

Reports are produced quarterly and are posted in the website, under *Archives* at the very bottom of the first screen.

#### Secretary's Report - Roxanne Janovich

A full set of meeting minutes is posted in the website, under *Archives* at the very bottom of the first screen.

### Service Officer Donna Kimmes

Let me introduce myself. I have been asked to fill behind Marilyn Johnson who has been our MN Federation

Service Officer for several years. It is indeed an honor to be asked to follow in her footsteps.

I have been Service Officer for Chapter 1049 in Bemdji, MN for several years. In 2016, I received the award for MN Federation Service Officer of the year and also Region V Service Officer of the year.

Prior to retirement I worked for USDA, Forest Service in Cass Lake, MN as Personnel Assistant and was responsible for providing employees information about their benefits.

If you do not already have a F-100 booklet, Be Prepared for Life Events, I encourage you to request one. This document can be very helpful to spouse or family member if you are unable to make changes to benefits yourself. I can be contacted at 218-751-5900 or via e-mail at [dskimmes@paulbunyan.net](mailto:dskimmes@paulbunyan.net).

## \*\*Conference Date Change\*\*

The Minnesota State Conference date has been changed to **October 19th and 20th** because of the Coronavirus Pandemic. Changing the date for the conference was decided by the Federation Board for safety and health reasons because the May date was determined to be too risky. NARFE's 100-year anniversary celebration will be held at the Breezy Point Resort, north of Brainerd near Pequot Lakes. The updated registration form for the conference can be found in this newsletter. The conference agenda is in the planning stages, but promises to be an enjoyable learning experience and a celebration of NARFE's 100-year anniversary. *Carolyn Billing, Conference Co-Chairman*

# FEDERATION OFFICERS AND CHAIRPERSONS APRIL 1, 2020

## ELECTED OFFICERS:

### President:

Earl Knutson 320-222-1613  
[eoknutson@gmail.com](mailto:eoknutson@gmail.com)  
1400 Willmar Ave SE Unit 203  
Willmar, MN 56201-4757

### 1st Vice President Membership:

Bill Svendsgaard 952-546-2850  
[bill.svendsgaard@gmail.com](mailto:bill.svendsgaard@gmail.com)  
2412 Flag Ave South  
St. Louis Park, MN 55426-2334

### 2nd Vice President - Legislation:

Jim Ryan 763-232-7311  
[ryangv@msn.com](mailto:ryangv@msn.com)  
2741 Lee Ave North  
Golden Valley, MN 55422-3642

### Secretary:

Roxanne Ivanovich 651-681-9548  
[rianovich@comcast.net](mailto:rianovich@comcast.net)  
1555 Quarry Road #303  
Eagan, MN 55121

### Treasurer:

Clayton Olson 952-886-0060  
[claytonolson32@gmail.com](mailto:claytonolson32@gmail.com)  
10650 Beard Ave South #122  
Bloomington, MN 55431-3614

## ELECTED FIELD OFFICERS:

### District 2 - Heart-land:

Mary Jane Reetz 218-828-4277  
[mjrconservation@yahoo.com](mailto:mjrconservation@yahoo.com)  
11338 Silver Bay Road  
Brainerd, MN 56401-2422

### District 3 - Hiawatha & Pioneer-land:

Harold Weed 507-388-7779  
[haweed@eventis.net](mailto:haweed@eventis.net)  
2225 St. John Court  
N. Mankato, MN 56003-2422

### District 4 - Metro-land:

Steve Packwood 651-890-4616  
[sspackwood@comcast.net](mailto:sspackwood@comcast.net)  
2170 James Street  
Eagan, MN 55122-2335

### District 6 - Viking & Arrowhead-land:

Carolyn Billing 218-736-5843  
[carolynbilling@charter.net](mailto:carolynbilling@charter.net)  
1060 Village Circle #201  
Fergus Falls, MN 56537-4802

## PAST PRESIDENT:

John Schmidt (218) 736-7123  
[schmidt1@prtcl.com](mailto:schmidt1@prtcl.com)  
1206 Oakwood View  
Fergus Falls, MN 56537-4405

## APPOINTED CHAIRPERSONS:

### Alzheimer's Coordinator:

Jan Crackel 320-235-8559  
[jancrackel@charter.net](mailto:jancrackel@charter.net)  
1809 Lower Trentwood Circle NE  
Willmar, MN 56201-2274

### NARFE/Minnesota Webmaster:

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Willmar, MN 56210-4757  
([narfe.org/mn](http://narfe.org/mn))

### NARFE PAC Coordinator:

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### Newsletter Editor:

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Lakeville, MN 55044-7681

### Service Officer:

Donna Kimmes (218) 751-5900  
[dskimmes@paulbunan.net](mailto:dskimmes@paulbunan.net)  
3148 Frohm Rd SE  
Bemidji, MN 56601-7313

## REGION V VICE PRESIDENT

Cindy Renee Blythe 787-589-2266  
[mrsdocbusy@yahoo.com](mailto:mrsdocbusy@yahoo.com)  
10262 Fairview Road  
Burlingame, KS 66413

**Past President  
John Schmidt**

Time for reflection as we celebrate 100 years of our Minnesota Federation. The challenges we face are conferences instead of conventions, weaker chapters and Federations, change in organizational structure, declining membership, and change in how we do things.

Our real challenge is for an individual to feel connected to the goals, objectives, and reason we came together as a group. Each individual has a stronger voice than a group of in a chapter. As we mature, malaise sets in, we become less passionate. Younger employees instill that passion but they feel things are ok with current benefits. Unfortunately they do not know who we are. We see a shift in how members are recruited with our national office having a larger role in recruitment.

So what should we do? Stay involved. Be active. Contact your member of Congress. Celebrate our 100 years. Meet future challenges in spite of the deep divisions in our country. Maintain our common goal regardless of the strong rhetoric in the news media and social networks

**2nd Vice President - Legislation  
Jim Ryan**

I'd encourage grassroots action of our NARFE members in Minnesota in support of

1. H.R. 304 [sponsored by Gerry Connolly, D-VA] the Equal COLA Act that has the support of 5 Democrats but is not supported yet by any in the Minnesota delegation,
2. H.R. 392 [sponsored by Gerry Connolly, D-VA] the Federal Adjustment of Income Rates (FAIR) Act that has the support of 16 Democrats but is not supported yet by any in the Minnesota delegation, and
3. H.R. 82 [sponsored by Rodney Davis, R-IL] the Social Security Fairness Act that has the support of 18 Republican and 27 Democrats but is only supported in the Minnesota delegation legislation by Pete Stauber.

These house bills have been identified as worthy of support of NARFE congressional priorities.

**NARFE Pac Coordinator  
Art Lemke**

First, let's all wish NARFE a well deserved 100<sup>th</sup> Happy Birthday. It was February 19, 1921, when 14 federal retirees met in Washington, D.C. to form an association dedicated to improving the welfare of retired federal employees. A short 100 years later, NARFE is now not only working for the federal retiree, but also the federal worker and survivors. "We've come a long ways baby."

You are all asking me, "What present can I give to NARFE on its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday." Well here it is, let's all donate to NARFE-PAC. I could go on and on about NARFE-PAC. You all know my feelings about NARFE-PAC. Instead, March is NARFE-PAC month. By now you should have all received your March, 2021, NARFE magazine. Please take the time to read the great article on Page 26 entitled, "Stand Out With NARFE-PAC", by Ross Apter. Now go to Page 9 of the magazine and fill out the form to contribute to NARFE-PAC. If possible become a monthly sustainer.

Any questions go to [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org)

**Treasurer  
Clayton Olson**

Our fiscal year will end on March 31, 2021. What a year! No annual meeting, very few chapter meetings, Federation officers held meetings on Zoom. With chapter meetings not being held, field officers had few visits.

We saved a lot of expenses by holding our meetings on Zoom. We need to determine if we may continue to use Zoom for some of our meetings in order to balance our budget for next year and beyond.

By not traveling to hold meetings this year our cash balance went from \$14,500 in April 30, 2020 to \$20,000 as of December 31, 2020.

**Alzheimers report  
Jan Crackel**

Looking forward to celebrating the 100 year Anniversary of NARFE. Donations to Alzheimers Research are down this year due to pandemic closings and lack of meetings. Hopefully that will change soon, The largest fundraiser in MN has been the silent auction/ live auction held during conference. My plan is to continue the tradition. Please plan what you will be able to donate. Hopefully you will attend the conference but if not, you could send the donation with someone from your chapter who will attend.

I have not been in charge of this before so if there are any suggestions or ideas you can share, they are welcome. Any assistance you can offer at the conference is very welcome.

I will send forms and more information prior to the conference. Cell phone contact: 320-220-5637.

**District 2 Heartland  
Mary Jane Reentz**

I have this short report:

The chapters in our area have not been meeting this year. Hopefully with the vaccine roll-out, we will be up and running soon!!

**Distric 3 Hiawatha & Pioneer-Land  
Harold Weed**

Happy Birthday NARFE!! One hundred years young 1921-2021.

A shout-out to the District 3 Chapters Albert Lea/Austin, Faribault, Mankato, Marshall and Rochester. Those of us 65 and older are in line to receive both vaccine doses soon (and many of you may have already received the vaccines). Once that happens, and the facility that hosts our meetings is open, we may be able to once again meet on a regular basis. Masks and social distancing are still recommended. It is a wait-and-see situation but a brighter picture is emerging.

Thanks to all members who have accepted leadership positions in your local chapters. Without you, we would not have Chapters. If we have no Chapters, we have no members to keep an eye on Congress. It is a constant struggle to maintain the benefits we enjoy and NARFE legislative department along with NARFE Chapters do an excellent job in keeping Congress up to date on our issues.

Looking forward to seeing many of you at the Federation Conference at Breezy Point on October 19 and 20, 2021.

**District 4 Metro-Land  
Steve Packwood**

None of the chapters in my district are meeting in person, but Minneapolis's Executive Board is meeting and White Bear is doing Zoom.

I have sent a few batch e-mails to my chapter, and have participated in Federation Board Zoom meetings. As the vaccine rollout progresses further, I hope to restart chapter meetings in the future.

Steve Packwood,Field Officer

**District 6 Viking & Arrowhead - Land  
Carolyn Billing**

**Medicare Premium Reimbursement**

Blue Cross Blue Shield Basic Option (BCBS) and Government Employee Health Association (GEHA) High Option has a Medicare B premium reimbursement program for members who are enrolled in Medicare A and B.

**BC/BS Basic Option:** Enrollees are eligible to be reimbursed up to **\$800.00** per calendar year for Medicare B premiums. For information on how to obtain the reimbursement visit [www.fepblue.org/mra](http://www.fepblue.org/mra) or call **(800) 706-2583**.

**GEHA High Option:** Enrollees are eligible to be reimbursed up to **\$600** per calendar year for Medicare B premiums. For information on how to receive the reimbursement visit [www.geha.org/mra](http://www.geha.org/mra) or call **(800) 821-6136**.

The claim form and instructions can be retrieved from the Minnesota NARFE website at [www.narfe.org/mn](http://www.narfe.org/mn). The application form and proof of Medicare B premium payments are mailed to Box 14053 Lexington, KY 40512.

If assistance is needed contact Carolyn Billing.

BCBS SERVICE BENEFIT PLAN

Employer Name

ID Code\*

Your ID code is a 4-digit combination of your day of birth and the last 2 digits of your SSN. For example, if you were born on the 8th day of the month and the last 2 digits of your SSN are 12, your ID Code would be 0812.

Date of Birth (MM/DD)

Zip Code

**2 CLAIMS FOR OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSES**

Check one:

- My Medicare premiums are automatically deducted from my Social Security or Annuity check. (Enter annual amount)
- I pay my Medicare premiums after-tax. They are not automatically deducted from my Social Security or Annuity check. (Enter monthly/quarterly amount)

Service Start Date (MM/DD/YY)

Service End Date (MM/DD/YY)

\$ Out-of-Pocket Cost

**3 SUBMIT YOUR PROOF OF PAYMENT**

Include proof of payment as an attachment to this form that shows you pay Medicare Part B premiums. Remember to keep the originals of the documents you submit.

If you checked the first box in step 2 above, please submit a copy of your Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) statement or Annuity Statement.

If you checked the second box in step 2 above, please submit a copy of your Medicare Bill along with your proof of payment (such as a cleared check or bank or credit card statement).

# 2021 MINNESOTA STATE NARFE CONFERENCE

## REGISTRATION & RESERVATION

### WHERE:

BREEZY POINT RESORT  
9252 Breezy Point Dr  
Breezy Point, MN 56472

### WHEN:

Tuesday, October 19, 10a.m. start  
Wednesday, October 20, noon adjourn

### MOTEL RESERVATION:

**Room rate: \$99+ \$7.375 tax**  
Phone: 1-800-432-3777 Ext 7176  
Reservation Deadline: October 1, 2021  
Reservations must be made with credit card  
requesting NARFE rate & use group #281488  
Room cancellation must be made  
at least 24 hours prior to arrival date.  
Room reservations accepted after  
September 1st are subject to  
room & rate availability  
*Check in time: 5 p.m. — Check out: Noon*  
*(breakfast buffet included in reservation cost)*

### REGISTRATION:

**\$95**  
(includes conference, banquet, lunch, breaks)  
By September 1, 2021, make check out to:  
Minnesota NARFE Federation  
Mail to: Roxanne Ianovich  
Federation Secretary  
1555 Quarry Road #303  
Eagan, MN 55121  
A separate registration form must be  
completed for each individual attending  
**No Refunds After September 1st**

Tuesday Lunch Options:  Ham & Cheese Croissant

Roast Beef Croissant

Special Diet Request: \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter: # \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration sent to Federation Secretary (Date): \_\_\_\_\_

Status:  Member  Guest  1st Timer  State Officer  National Officer

**Committee Assignments:**  Membership  Legislation  Audit  Service Officer  
*(requests not guaranteed and based on need)*  Alzheimer's  NARFE-NET  Bylaws  None

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Registration form along with check to: Roxanne Ianovich (address above)

Keep copies for your records and Chapter Records

**Mail with your check to:  
Roxanne Ionovich  
1555 Quarry Road #303  
Eagan, MN 55121-3518**

# 2021 MN Federation of NARFE Election Ballot

## Who Can Vote & How to Vote:

- > All Chapter and National Minnesota NARFE members in good standing (dues paid) are eligible to vote. Exercise your right and vote for Minnesota Federation Officers and Standing Rules Amendment.
- > Voting will **NOT** be done at the State Conference except for the Field Officer positions.
- > Use either the ballot in this newsletter or one copied from the Minnesota Website.
- > Vote by marking an (X) for your choice or complete a write in choice.
- > Mail the ballot to Roxanne Ianovich, Federation Secretary at 1555 Quarry Road #303, Eagan, MN. 55121-3518 by **APRIL 15, 2021. MARK THE ENVELOPE: BALLOT.**

## **President:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Earl Knutson**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Write In** \_\_\_\_\_

## **1st Vice President Membership:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Bill Svendsgaard**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Write In** \_\_\_\_\_

## **2nd Vice President Legislation:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Jim Ryan**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Write In** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Secretary: (If interested in this position write your name in the block, otherwise leave the block blank)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Write in** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Treasurer:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Rick Ziton**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Write In** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Standing Rules Amendment: (Found in the Newsletter.)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Accept**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Reject**

## **NARFE Membership Number: (Found on the newsletter label or your membership card.)**

**Membership Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Roxanne Ianovich  
Federation Secretary  
1555 Quarry Road #303  
Eagan, MN 55121-3518**

**BALLOT**

# Minnesota NARFE Federation Standing Rules

These Standing Rules, and any changes in these Standing Rules, become effective upon a vote of acceptance by the Federation Executive Board, Minnesota membership, and publication on the Federation website.

## VOTING PROCEDURES

### **Section 1. Nominations and Elections:**

Nominations to serve as a Federation Officer shall be submitted in writing to the Federation President by January 15 of the Conference year. The member running for the position must be a Chapter or National Member in good standing (membership dues paid). Election is by ballot prior to the Conference. The ballot shall be sent to chapter and national members and shall appear on the Minnesota website by March 15 of the Conference year. Instructions for returning the completed ballot will be given in the ballot form

### **Section 2. Resolutions and Amendments:**

- A.** Proposed Amendments to the Bylaws shall be approved by the originating Chapter or originating group of National Members submitted in writing and sent to the Federation Secretary by January 15 of the Conference year.
- B.** The sponsor of the amendment shall be allowed a one-page document to explain and give reason(s) why the amendment should be approved.
- C.** The Federation Officers have responsibility of:
  - 1.** Reviewing amendments and suggesting changes for clarity.
  - 2.** Merging similar submitted amendmentsThe final text shall be ready to go out for vote by March 15 of the Conference year.
- D.** Amendments regarding National Bylaws shall follow the rules and regulations of the National Bylaws and be submitted through the Federation Secretary, who reports the Federation action following the voting. It is not necessary to send to Headquarters resolutions or amendments pertaining only to the Minnesota Federation.

## FEDERATION CONFERENCES

### **Section 1. Bid Letters and Conference Speakers:**

- A.** By January 1 of a conference year, the Federation President shall, with the advice of the Executive Board, adopt written facilities requirement for the next (biennial) conference. The president shall request proposals from no more than six candidate facilities by January 15 to be received by March 1.
- B.** The Federation Executive Board shall promptly make the selection of the conference location.
- C.** As soon as the facility is selected by the Federation Executive Board, the Federation President shall notify all bidding facilities of the selection outcome.
- D.** The Federation President shall secure the National Office speaker based on recommendations received from the Federation Executive Board. This shall be completed as soon as Headquarters states the request can be made.

### **Section 2. Appointments:**

- A.** The Federation President shall appoint a Conference General Chairperson.
- B.** The Conference General Chairperson shall appoint the Conference Registration Chairperson and committee members.
- C.** The Federation President shall appoint the following Special Interest Chairpersons. Each meeting will be led by the corresponding Federation Executive Board Member, or member in good standing appointed by the Federation President. When registering for the conference, members sign-up for the Interest Group they want to attend.

1. Membership.
2. Legislative
3. Audit
4. Service Officer
5. Alzheimer's
6. NARFE-NET/Website
7. Any other Interest Group deemed necessary

**D.** The Federation President shall make the following appointments if deemed necessary.

1. Conference Parliamentarian
2. Sergeant of Arms

**E.** The Federation President may appoint moderators to conduct workshops at the Federation Conference.

**Section 3. Votes:**

**A.** There will be no voting at the Conference except in the Field Officer Caucuses.

**B.** Officer elections and resolution/amendment voting shall be completed prior to the Conference with the results announced at the conference.

**Section 4. Quorum:**

Seven or more chapters and/or seven groups of ten National Members in good standing representing more than one region shall be present in order to hold the Minnesota Federation Conference.

**Section 5. Conference Rules:**

**A.** Any NARFE member wishing to attend shall submit a registration form to the Federation Secretary.

**B.** Only members in good standing shall participate directly or indirectly in the debate of any subject.

**C. When speaking from the podium or the floor a microphone must be used.**

**D.** A member, upon being recognized by the Chairperson shall identify oneself as to name and city of residence. **The microphone shall be used.**

**E.** A member shall not speak more than twice on the same topic unless given permission by a two-thirds vote of those present.

**F.** No member shall interrupt another in remarks except to call a point of order or request information.

**G.** Each Special Interest or Work Group Chairperson shall give a summary report of their meeting, including recommendations and dissenting opinions.

**H.** Subject to these rules, or the absence of a specific rule, Robert's Rules of Order Current Edition shall prevail.

**Section 6. Order of Business:**

**A.** Guest Speakers and announcements may be scheduled at any time within the framework of the Order of Business. The National Office Keynote Speaker shall be scheduled prior to the other speakers in order to set the tone of the conference.

**B.** The following order is recommended but not limited to:

1. Welcome. 2. Invocation. 3. Presentation of the Colors. 4. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
2. 5. Roll call of Federation Officers, Chapter Presidents, National Member Representative
3. Introductions of Guests and Federation Chairpersons
4. Previous Conference Minutes

5. Treasurer's Report
6. Reading of Communications
7. Election and Voting Results
8. Keynote Speaker
9. Special Interest Groups and District Caucus Reports
  - a. Credentials
  - b. Membership
  - c. Legislative
  - d. Audit
  - e. Alzheimer's
  - f. NARFE-NET and Website
  - g. PAC Update
  - h. Alzheimer's Update
  - i. Field Officers
10. Memorial Service
11. Introduction of New Federation Board
12. Conference Adjournment

**Section 7. Conference Minutes and Reports:**

- A.** The Federation Secretary shall prepare the conference minutes and reports. Copies shall be distributed as follows:
1. Each Minnesota Chapter—one for the president and one for the secretary.
  2. Each Federation Executive Board Member
  3. Region 5 Vice President
  4. National Headquarters
  5. Minnesota Website
- B.** The Federation Secretary shall send Resolutions and Amendments needed for National consideration to Headquarters, along with a letter of explanation in accordance with National Bylaws rules and regulations.
- C.** The Conference Chairperson, in collaboration with the Federation Secretary, shall ensure thank you notes are written to the speakers, vendors, conference center, and others as deemed necessary.

**Federation President** \_\_\_\_\_

**Federation Secretary** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_



FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

Chuck Glover - Editor  
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Lakeville, MN 55044-7681

## **NARFE's Centennial: A Century of Service**

**Narfe has been a leader in promoting public service since 1921, working tirelessly to support our nation's civil servants by defending and advancing their earned benefits. Now, 100 years later, NARFE continues to advocate for federal workers and retirees, as well as providing unparalleled and unbiased information to help members make the most of their pay and benefits.**