



National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

Virginia Federation of Chapters

VFC NOTES – Winter 2008

Serving Current, Former & Retired Federal Civilian Employees, Spouses and Survivor Annuitants

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FEDERATION PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Membership – Thank you to the Virginia Chapters and its members for “holding our own” in membership numbers for 2007 with a very slight increase overall at 20,443 – up 0.38%. Our goal was to increase membership by 5% and I congratulate the top chapters: Loudoun 12.33%; Petersburg 8.79%; Bedford 8.00%; Tidewater 6.71%; Williamsburg 6.58%; Page Valley 5.97%; and Colonial Heights 4.57%. Other chapters ending the year with increased membership include Middle Peninsula, South of the James, Midlothian, Brentwood, Roanoke Valley, Wilderness Trail, Harrisonburg, Staunton-Augusta, Winchester, Fredericksburg, Colonial Beach, Alexandria, Manassas, Springfield, Woodbridge, Fairfax, Dulles and Metro Northern Virginia.

2008 VFC Goals - At the January VFC Board Meeting, we set goals for 2008: Membership Increase by 5%; Dues Withholding Members Increase by 5%; State Political Fund Raise \$12,000; and to continue the NARFE PAC to raise \$85,000 in 2007 & 2008. The Alzheimer's Committee will recommend its goal at the 2008 VFC Convention. We need to work together to achieve these 2008 goals. The VFC board members are available to serve the chapters, so please call upon us.

2008 VFC Convention – I encourage your attendance at the convention to be held at the Roanoke Plaza Hotel (formerly Wyndham Hotel) on April 20-23, 2008. More information is included in the 1st Vice President's report. Chapter Presidents and Secretaries have the Bulletin information and it is available on the VFC website www.vanarfe.org.

Resolutions – The VFC Board of Directors adopted three resolutions for consideration at the 2008 NARFE National Convention in Louisville, KY September 7-12. The resolutions have been forwarded directly to NARFE Headquarters. They include (1)

Establishment of Chief Operations Officer at Headquarters and for the National Officers to be Non-Resident Officers; (2) Revised Monetary Incentive for Non-Resident National Executive Board Members (NEB); and (3) Establish an At Large Non-Resident Officer Position with Emphasis on Active Federal Employees.

Region X Retention Committee – Joseph Beaudoin, Region X Vice President, has appointed a committee to prepare a training package for use in federations and chapters to assist in retaining our members. Clayton Shannon from Kentucky is chairman and Richard Giangerelli has been appointed to represent Virginia on this committee. They will make a presentation at the VFC Convention.

Chapter Officer Training – Classes for Chapter Presidents, Vice Presidents, Secretaries and Treasurers are in process. The first class was in Richmond February 4th with classes coming up in Portsmouth February 18th, Roanoke March 3rd and Manassas March 17th. The classes are also for persons who are interested in learning more about the positions and NARFE in general. Chapter Program Chairs will have opportunity to learn more about their responsibilities at the VFC Convention breakout sessions.

Realignment of Areas I & VIII – The Northern Neck Chapter 1823 has been reassigned from Area VIII to Area I. This will help balance the two Area Vice Presidents' responsibilities.

R. David Smith davesmith54@msn.com

❖ It is not fair to ask of others what you are unwilling to do yourself. Eleanor Roosevelt

1ST VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

During this quarter, I had the honor to represent the VFC at Arlington Chapter 7's 60th anniversary celebration. They were presented certificates by Margaret Baptiste, National President, Joe Beaudoin, Region X National Field Vice President, and me representing VFC President Dave Smith who was unable to attend the meeting. I also attended several other chapter meetings and installing new officers at three.

A major emphasis during this period has been preparation for the VFC Convention which takes place April 21–23, 2008, at the beautiful Roanoke Plaza Hotel, Roanoke, Virginia. We are hoping that each chapter has at least one delegate representing them during this convention. We will be considering several resolutions and deciding whether to recommend them further to the NARFE National Convention scheduled for September 2008 in Louisville, Kentucky.

Registration is going very well, and chapters are doing what they can to help by selling ads for the Program Book. Remember that this is an excellent way for each chapter to raise funds. Each chapter that sells \$500 or more in Products/Services Ads will receive funds in turn for 10% of their total sales. Ads cost from \$25 for a 1/8 page ad to \$110 for a full page ad. Program Book Advertisement Contract forms and ad templates can be printed off from the VFC web page www.vanarfe.org. Members can also print off all convention forms from that site.

The convention will start at 1 PM on Monday April 21st and end by noon on Wednesday, April 23rd. One real attraction is the banquet where you can select your entrée from three selections and you also have three choices to select for dessert. We are planning a reception on Monday evening and the banquet will take place on Tuesday evening.

Please do what you can to attend and at the same time do what you can to encourage other chapter members to do the same. A good time will be had by all and everyone will have an opportunity to participate in the business of the VFC and NARFE.

As mentioned by the President we are having training sessions in various locations in February and march. We are encouraging all current officers and other members who may be interested in some day assuming an officers position to attend. Lunch is provided and mileage paid for one car from each chapter.

We are continuing our effort to utilize electronic systems to communicate with the VFC members but are finding out that many email addresses we have are bad. Members change their email address but forget to update their record at www.narfe.org. By

not keeping their email address up to date, they miss out on pertinent messages from NARFE Headquarters relating to legislative actions on the hill. All that you need to do to update your email address is sign on to www.narfe.org using your last name and membership number which can be located on the address item of your NARFE magazine. Once signed on, you can update the record using your last name and birth date. If you run into any problem updating your record, please feel free to contact me at narfel2065@hughes.net and I'll assist you in the update process. It's my opinion that we will all be better served if we can rapidly communicate via electronic messaging.

In closing, I'd just like to share the theme for the 2008 VFC Convention with you ---- "Working Together Today for a Better Tomorrow" ... Let's all work together to do what we can for today and tomorrow.

William F. {Bill} Martin, VFC 1st VP

2ND VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Chapter Officer Training: Four training sessions have been set up. The deadline for registration for the March 18th training has been extended until March 3rd. The trainers at these sessions will be: Dave Smith, President, VFC; William Martin, 1st VP, VFC; Carolyn Wilson, 2nd VP, VFC; Robert Miller, VFC Secretary; and Samuel Harris, Treasurer of Tuckahoe Chapter 1727. The training sessions will begin at 10 a.m. and end at approximately 3 p.m. Lunch will be furnished by the VFC and mileage (\$0.41) will be paid to cars that have four passengers. This training is given every two years, so if you are presently an officer in your Chapter or would like to know more about the VFC and NARFE and possibly become an officer at a future time, please plan to attend. For registration, please e-mail NARFE 1472@comcast.net, mail to Carolyn Wilson, 6123C Duncan Road, Petersburg, VA or call Carolyn at 804-915-6650. Hope to see you there!

EVENTS ATTENDED:

State Fair: Members from several chapters, not only chapters in Area III, worked three hour shifts at the VA State Fair. Senior Navigator furnished the booth space for the VFC to use. It has been hard to track and find if any visitors to the booth have joined NARFE.

Peanut Festival, Suffolk, VA: Met the President Joe Silberholz to give him the "ZAPPER" for use at the Festival. The last day of the Festival, I went to Suffolk and worked the booth.

Virginia Coalition for the Aging and Elder Rights

Coalition Legislative Forum: Along with several of the program chairs, attended these forums. There were excellent long breakout sessions – I attended Issues

with Alcohol and Aging and Veterans Benefits and Related Issues. The Co-Service Officers are looking at preparing programs on both of these topics.

2007 Central Virginia Regional TRIAD Scam Jam for Seniors: Represented the VFC, NARFE at the Scam Jam. Set up a booth so attendees could learn more about NARFE. TRIAD is constantly working to get more counties, cities involved in TRIAD. In the past few months, just in VFC Area III, Colonial Heights, Petersburg, and Prince George have established TRIADs. The VFC strongly supports TRIAD.

Speaking Engagements and Visits to Chapters: Spoke at the Petersburg Senior Citizens meeting in October. Attended Chapter meetings at Tuckahoe, Louisa, and Imperial Plaza.

Carolyn Wilson NARFE1472@comcast.net



Pictured are the Instructors for the Chapter Officer Training Classes being held in Richmond, Portsmouth, Roanoke, and Manassas. They are L_R: Sam Harris, Treasurer Tuckahoe Chapter, Carolyn Wilson, VFC 2nd VP; Bill Martin, VFC 1st VP, and Bob Miller, VFC Secretary.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

With mild winter days, many of us are looking ahead to spring and the 2008 VFC Convention to be held in Roanoke, VA on April 21-23 at the Roanoke Plaza Hotel (formerly the Wyndham Hotel). Our hosts are the ten chapters in Areas V and VI. Each of Virginia's 56 chapters should select delegates for the VFC Convention to participate in voting for state officers, area vice president, resolutions, future convention sites, and other business matters. Chapter presidents and secretaries have received the "2008 Voting Strength and Chapter Dues", which indicates the Convention Votes for each chapter. Members who are unable to attend as voting delegates may register as "Alternate" or "Guest".

Chapters who are unable to send a member as voting delegate may designate, in writing, a proxy holder to act as Proxy Voting Representative. Area Vice Presidents have received a **PROXY VOTING DELEGATE** form or you may contact me at: vivmiller801@netzero.net or 703-683-3025.

Historical Note: 1994 was the year of the last VFC Convention held in Roanoke. Holiday Inn-Tanglewood was the site; Rose S. Musumeci was the VFC President; Oscar Honeycutt was the Immediate Past President. Convention Co-Chairs were Charles L. Fallis and A. Travis Poole, Jr.

Robert H. Miller, Secretary

TREASURER'S NOTES

Early in February an invoice was mailed to each chapter treasurer requesting their VFC dues be paid by May 31, 2008. These dues were calculated based on number and category of voting members reported in the January 10, 2008 National M110 report. We thank those chapters that have already paid their dues in advance of the May 31 deadline. As in past years, hopefully, we will have another 100% response rate this year.

The VFC continues to support and recognize our chapters for their efforts and accomplishments in membership recruitment and retention and their activities with their legislators. This year the VFC is providing training for our chapter leaders in four strategic locations within the state and will reimburse mileage for one car of four persons from each chapter.

It is a pleasure to serve the VFC Board and our chapters. Thank you for your support.

Darlene Myer Rhodes, VFC Treasurer

NATIONAL LEGISLATION

Rep. Tom Davis' (R-11th) announcement that he will not seek re-election next November is a major loss for NARFE in Virginia and the country at large. Rep. Davis has been a strong defender of employee and retiree benefits, and it will be difficult to replace him in that role. With Rep. Davis and Senator Warner no longer in Congress, plus last December's election of Rep. Rob Wittman (R-1st) to serve the rest of Jo Ann Davis' term, at the start of the 111th Congress in January 2009 at least three of Virginia's 13 Congressional seats will have turned over within a year.

Otherwise, in late January the Social Security Subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee held a hearing on a number of Social Security issues. Prominent among those were the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision. NARFE did not participate directly. But Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), a member of Ways

and Means but not on Social Security, was invited to sit on the dais and read a statement, and I'm told the statement he read was written by NARFE. Another highlight of the hearing was the testimony of an 89-year-old retired postmistress from Subcommittee Chair Michael McNulty's (D-NY) home town. She is a member both of NAPUS and NARFE, has long known Rep. McNulty, and described the problems the GPO presents her. So now both tax-writing committees in the House and Senate have held GPO/WEP hearings during this Congress, but NARFE members shouldn't get their hopes up. It's clear that the current top priority for those committees will be completing work on an economic stimulus package that the Senate and House can agree to and the President will sign. After that come any number of conflicts that have higher priorities than those of retired public servants. Remember also that although the number of State and local retirees affected by the offsets continues to grow, the number of affected federal retirees continues to decline, and NARFE's influence may wane accordingly.

However, there may be hope for the alternative version of premium conversion that Dan Adcock described in the January issue of "NARFE" Magazine (see p. 14). That measure is more likely to be introduced as an attachment to a larger measure, than as a stand-alone bill. It doesn't seem that the current economic stimulus effort will be that measure, but keep your fingers crossed for Premium Conversion Lite.

Finally, as this is written, the President's FY 2009 Budget has just been released. Past budget proposals from Presidents of both parties have occasionally been unfriendly to federal retirees, but defenders like Tom Davis have helped protect our benefits. This budget includes some health benefits proposals – health savings accounts in Blue Cross/Blue Shield, cuts in Medicare reimbursement – that have been shot down in previous years. Meanwhile, media in the Washington area seem to think Congress will treat this budget more or less as road-kill, i.e., to be shoveled into the ditch while Congress waits out the President's final year. But please stay alert for a possible request to contact your members of Congress.

Charles Delaplane

The problem with the gene pool is that there is no lifeguard

STATE LEGISLATION

Several bills have been introduced in the 2008 session of the General Assembly that address the issues outlined on the 2008 VFC legislative plan. Our request to have the House of Delegates change it's rule that allows subcommittee votes not be recorded on the

public access web site was refused, on a party line vote the first day of session.

Several Credit Freeze bills are working their way through the legislative process. Since the bills are opposed by commercial interests and credit reporting agencies, the passage of a bill this session is in doubt. We may see a study generated to give the Delegates and Senators a better idea of the actual economic impact on both commercial interests and on citizens of the state.

This third session since the JLARC 10 study on the impact of an increasing population of seniors has resulted in less interest in processing bills to address the issue. Measures taken in previous sessions may need to be evaluated to determine if there is a need for more legislation next session. Delegate Kenneth C. Alexander has introduced a bill to develop and maintain a 5 year plan to deal with these issues. Delegate Vivian Watts is again trying to get the state to establish a fixed level of care in nursing homes. Del Tim Hugo is carrying a bill to permit those seniors 75 and over to use handicapped parking spaces.

The concern about real estate taxes is being addressed in several ways. Additional counties and municipalities are proposed to be added to the regions eligible for tax relief for qualifying seniors and disabled persons and the qualifying income is proposed to be increased in some parts of the state. The Homestead amendment appears certain to be passed for appearance on the November 2008 ballot. Several other bills have been introduced to slow the rate of increase, but are unlikely to be passed.

Issues resulting from the Virginia Tech Shootings last year are the subject of much legislation this session. Efforts to significantly restrict the private sale of guns were defeated in both the House and Senate committees charged with processing such issues. Bills to restrict the access of persons with mental problems to the purchase of weapons did pass out of committees, as did bills to make it easier to affect involuntary committals for mental health problems.

Most of the major issues that face the General Assembly are at heart budget issues. The state has experienced a significant reduction in revenue for the present fiscal year, and it is anticipated that the growth level for the next will be about 3.3%. The two budget bills one by the House and the other by the Senate will be finalized by February 21st. At that point we will know how far apart the two houses are on their budget versions. Each house will have until the 27th to work on the others budget bill, before a budget conference committee will be appointed to work out the final budget for final approval before the date of adjournment on March 8.

Bill Schmidt

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The VFC membership for 2007 ended on a positive note with a total membership increase of 78 for the year. Six chapters achieved the VFC goal of an increase of 5% in membership for the year. The total number of dues withholding for the year increased by 73, for a 4.2% increase for the year. A total of 27 chapters achieved the VFC goal of increasing dues withholding by 5%. While we did not reach the VFC goal of a 5% increase in dues withholding, it was a significant improvement and adds support to the VFC retention initiative. Reviewing the membership statistics for the year and comparing them with last year's, it appears we are making some progress in retention. This is reflected in the fact that the number of reinstatements increased by 59 and non-renewals decreased by 80. Of significance was that second notices decreased by over 340.

All of these statistics reflect hard work by the members. Thanks!!

There are over 650 "Credit Union" members included on the VFC membership rolls and we are not certain how many of these are current or retired Federal employees. We may be in for a significant decrease in membership, only time will tell.

Dennis Martin

SERVICE REPORT

Since last October, 2007, we have visited these chapters around the Commonwealth of Virginia, as follows:

Nov. 6 #1823 Warsaw, Va. "Avoiding the Most Common Scams and Frauds"

"How Long to Keep Your Important Papers"

Nov. 13#1116 Vienna, Va. "Understanding Your Need for a Survivor Kit"

Nov. 15#2343 Falls Run, Va. "Avoiding the Most Common Scams and Frauds"

Jan. 2 #1159 Annandale, Va. "Understanding Your Need for a Survivor Kit"

"Lowering Your Risk of Identity Theft"

Jan. 16 #0028 Petersburg, Va. "Signs of Elder Abuse / Standards of Elder Care"

Jan. 24 #1665 Arlington, Va. "How Long to Keep Your Important Papers"

Illness forced the rescheduling of a Feb. 1 visit to #0111 in Roanoke, Va. for "Avoiding the Most Common Scams and Frauds."

We are updating the latest information on regional VFC Service Centers; it should be posted shortly on your web page. That's www.vanarfe.org under "**Service**" in the left-hand column.

We continually update our presentations; and we would appreciate suggestions for other topics of

interest. Call us at (703) 966-1122 or twobrownbears@starpower.net.

Please send your **Chapter** and **Area Service Officers** to the **Service Training Session** at the next VFC Convention on April 21 – 23 in Roanoke, Va. People interested in becoming **Service Officers** should also attend.

Sue and Jim Righter Co-Service Officers

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Since stepping into the VFC PR Chair position last April, my learning curve has been steep! Getting the "right" handouts for the various events, figuring out how to get the display boards and table covers to the chapters for use at events throughout the state, etc. Logistics, logistics!

I've ordered 3000 bags with the NARFE logo printed on each one. These have been popular handouts at health fairs, community events, and just about every chapter event held throughout the state during the past year. Distribution of the bags will be arranged soon, but if your chapter needs some now, please contact me so that we can work out the logistics (there's that word again!).

I've also placed an order for 1000 letter openers which will have the NARFE logo and a phone number for membership information printed on each one. These will also be distributed to chapters in the coming weeks.

Just a reminder that we have display boards and table covers available in four areas of the state. The contacts are: Area II VP Betty Warren in the Tidewater area; Area III VP Bob Boyd in the Richmond area; Area VI VP George Hawkins in the western part of the state; and Area IX VP Bill Masterson in the northern part of the state.

With the assistance of our webmasters, Stan Palen and Sid Sachs, we're trying to update the information on each chapter's link on the VFC webpage. When I checked out this information recently, I discovered that some still list information submitted in 2005!! Please check with your Chapter President to determine exactly who should be submitting this updated information, and then contact one of the webmasters. If a potential member goes to your site, you definitely want the contact information to be correct!

I've asked chapters to put their newsletters on our webpage. I sent out written instructions to chapter presidents, PR chairs, and/or newsletter editors on how to submit their publications, and several chapters responded by posting their newsletters. If your chapter doesn't have a newsletter, please check out this link to get ideas.

I have to say that I believe *a newsletter is the life line of a chapter!* I serve as editor of my chapter newsletter (Chapter 682), and I realize each month just how much some of our members appreciate the news they receive through this publication. It's the chapter's main source of COMMUNICATION with their members, and it can be used as a valuable recruiting tool, too. I received a handwritten note from a member of my chapter after our last issue. Obviously he read the entire issue. He followed up with a personal check for Alzheimer's research, and then his daughter mailed a check for our chapter's "Miles of Pennies" which also benefits Alzheimer's research. He also wrote a poem which I will publish in our next issue! This gentleman is 88 years young, and he and his wife just celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. Without our newsletter, we wouldn't have this fantastic communication with a member who is still interested in NARFE and his Chapter. So please get busy on those newsletters now!!!

I hope you've marked your calendars for the State Convention which is being held in Roanoke April 21-23. This is a terrific opportunity to renew old acquaintances, share ideas, and build a spirit of coordination and support.

And last, I'd like to remind you that I will gladly visit your chapter to discuss ideas for PR, to assist with getting your newsletter up and running, etc. All I need is an invitation! Hope to hear from you soon!!!

Pat Taylor, VFC PR Chair

ALZHEIMER'S REPORT

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Your Alzheimer's donations of \$58,978.81 in 2007 exceeded the goal of \$52,000 by 13.4% and established a record high for the VFC in annual donations. Congratulations! Donations were received from 53 of the 56 chapters in the VFC. The top 5 chapters are:

Top five by amount

Woodbridge	\$6454.03
Winchester	5498.95
Falls Run	4026.00
Fairfax	3406.00
Springfield	3250.00

Top 5 per member

Falls Run	\$45.71
Imperial Plaza	20.10
Louisa	11.94
New River Valley	10.97
Seaside {Va Beach}	9.50

Our new goal will be established at the VFC convention in April. Major fund raisers at the

convention will be our silent auction and a 50-50 with multiple winners. A successful auction depends upon many appropriate items being donated. Each chapter is requested to donate at least one such item. I know that many individuals will do so. Let's make the 2008 convention the most successful to date in donations for Alzheimer's research. In addition, volunteers to help with the auction and the 50-50 will be appreciated, check in with us at the convention.

During the fall quarter I was the program speaker at 4 chapters and visited one chapter for a special check presentation.

2007 was a good year for the NARFE Alzheimer's program. Keep up the good work, and thanks again for each donation over the past 6 years.

Wilton Ward VFC Alzheimer's Chair

PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINAR (PRS)

COORDINATOR

I attended and gave presentations at the following PRS seminars or Health Fairs:

Oct 4th and 12th – Defense General Supply, Richmond

Oct 18th – Health Fair at Jefferson Hotel for Human Resource personnel for the agents in the Richmond and Tri-city area.

Nov 15th – PRS to middle management, Defense General Supply, Richmond

Nov 19th – Annette Jackson, Chapter 28, Petersburg (who retired in 2007 from the IRS) and I traveled to Richmond and did a Health Fair at the Federal Building. We gave out 200 magazines and NARFE information before noon.

The PRS and Health Fairs are showing results in recruiting new members.

In the 3rd quarter 2007, I was the second highest recruiter in the VFC.

If your Chapter has a need for assistance in either Health Fairs, TRIAD or PRS, please tell me know.

Barbara Nugent

AREA I NOTES

Although it will not be official until the VFC Convention in April, and at the risk of being premature, I want to welcome the Northern Neck Chapter to the Area I family. I have heard only good things about the chapter and I'm looking forward to working with them in meeting the goals of NARFE. It's looking good in Area 1 as the three current chapters have elected officers for this year and appear to be off to a good start. Margaret Baptiste visited the Peninsula chapter for their annual holiday luncheon in December and installed officers. She gave a short talk which was well received and spent a great deal of time talking one on one with chapter members and guests which was

greatly appreciated by all. During this period, I held a quarterly council meeting in November which was attended by the three chapter presidents. I also attended the quarterly VFC Board in Richmond.

Sharon Rose Area I VP

AREA II NEWS NOTES

As part of my responsibility I visited all chapters during this quarter, chapter officers were installed, attended Chapter Holiday Luncheons and coordinated eight health fairs.

The five chapters in Area II have successfully garnered enough volunteers to nominate and elect officers who will lead the chapters for the next year.

October I visited Eastern Shore Chapter 1175. They meet twice a year. A delegate was elected to attend the VFC Convention.

Tidewater Chapter 66 - President John Ramirez has stepped down after eleven years of faithful service. The leadership has been passed to Vera and Bob Merritt, President and Vice President. This chapter is consistent in growth and their luncheon meetings are well attended. The VFC Convention delegate was elected. They are planning a silent auction and luncheon to offset the cost of sending the delegate to the convention.

Virginia Beach Metro 5 meeting attendance has doubled under the direction of President Lynne Papis. The programs are well planned and the chapter is moving forward.

Virginia Beach Bayside Chapter 974 has filled all elected position and appointments. They are planning a Spring Luncheon. Two new members (Alex and PJ Adkins) volunteered to co-chair Membership and are anxious to get started. The former Chairperson (Patsy DiVito) is moving to Florida. Thanks Patsy for all you do.

Seaside Chapter 1827 elected officers at the November meeting. This chapter has good officers and interesting speakers. They are planning their annual February Luncheon. Thanks to Dick Edwards and his committee for continuing to get the Area II Newsletter out on time.

Thanks to all the volunteerism from each one of you. I appreciate all that you do to make Area II one of the Virginia Federation of Chapters finest.

Betty L. Warren Area II VP

AREA III NEWS

I call the past quarter the "fat" quarter. It included the Thanksgiving meal, the Christmas meal and the Holiday meals for the Chapters in Area III. Let me tell you folks that is a lot of eating: the sacrifice you have to make being an Area Vice President.

This past quarter was not only the time for family and friends it was also time for most Chapters in Area III to do various things to raise money for the Chapter and to raise money for their Alzheimer's contributions. Chapters have had raffles, bake/craft sales and lots of other different things, all of which have been successful.

The past quarter was also the time of year where Chapters are locating candidates for officer positions for the upcoming year. There are seven Chapters in Area III and all of them have the same President returning for another year with maybe the exception of one, which is a little unsettled as of this writing.

All Chapters have worked on getting delegates and supporters for the 2008 convention. It has been a larger challenge this year with the Convention being in Roanoke and not in our back door.

As an Area we had a net gain of only 10 new members for the year and we failed to reach our 5% goal. Petersburg, Chapter 28, leads the area with a net gain of 16 new members, an increase of 8.79%. Colonial Heights had a gain of 4.75% with 10 new members followed by Midlothian with a net gain of 10 members or a 2.76% growth. South of the James had a 1.73% growth with 3 new members. Sadly, the Richmond Chapter lost 8.79% (21 members) followed by Imperial Plaza with a 5.77% loss (3 members) and Tuckahoe with a loss of 5 members representing a 3.75% reduction.

As a final parting shot: please remember that those who throw mud lose ground!

Robert Boyd, Area III VP

AREA IV REPORT

Greetings and best wishes to all members of NARFE, VFC Area IV. Winter time is upon us and the weatherman is providing his predictions as best he/she can. Living in Tidewater - we know the changes that can happen very quickly and catch us off guard.

Our recent endeavor with the Health Fair in November was very successful. Norma and I spent a full day at the Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth distributing over 800 NARFE Magazines and 2400 pamphlets, brochures, and application forms. Recruitment was the key information presented.

Our next endeavor is to participate in Chapter Officer Training, coordinated by Carolyn Wilson, VFC 2nd V.P. Information memo/letter has been provided to all Chapter Presidents in Area IV. Contact should be made if you have not signed up -now!

Then our next endeavor is to participate in the upcoming VFC Convention 21st to 23rd of April 2008. Request each Chapter in Area IV to encourage

members to attend if possible with chapter assistance if funding is available. Convention supporters can use the form VFC-54-4 to make their donation in the category they select and it must be sent to the committee before March 1, 2008. Chapter ads are important also and must be sent in before March 1, 2008. Please check with your Chapter President for the detailed information contained in the 2008 VFC Convention Bulletins #1, #2, and #3.

F-7 Chapter Reports have been submitted previously on time. Some changes may have occurred recently and therefore an update/correction should be submitted for accuracy and proper communication.

It is my privilege to announce that 15 Honorary Membership Certificates have been presented to Chapter members in Area IV. Thanks for their service and contributions to our NARFE organization.

Joseph D. Lee, Area IV Vice President

NEWS FROM AREA V

During this quarter we have worked on the Convention Organization and emphasized membership within the six Chapters. The Convention Organization is now in place and has started its work. We are encouraging all of our Area Chapters to get involved in the sale of ads, something that we need from all NARFE members. We believe that this will be a good Convention, but it will require support from all of our members. If all of us will get involved we can make this the best Convention, ever.

Membership continues to be a primary concern. We are getting new members, which is good, but we are losing because of non-renewal. This is an area that I believe we must turn around if we expect to increase our membership totals. I am encouraging all of the Chapters in Area V to contact all non-renewals and inform them of what NARFE is doing and has done to enable them to keep their retirement benefits, relatively untouched. Also, we need to emphasize that without them as members our strength deteriorates and we lose our effectiveness with the Congress. If that happens we will all be in deep trouble.

As we start the year 2008 we are optimistic, and believe that we are going to see a turn around in membership also, that we will see 300 register for the Convention. The theme this year is Working Together Today for a Better Tomorrow. If you believe this get your registration in and work with us to turn our membership into an upward swing.

James Nobles

I've learned.... That when your newly born grandchild holds your little finger in his little fist, that you're hooked for life.

Andy Rooney

AREA VII NOTE

Memberships continue to increase in Area VII; however, all chapters are not contributing to the increase. Each chapter has indicated awareness of this fact and has a plan in place to recruit and retain more members. Congratulations to the Harrisonburg (164), Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro (178), Winchester (180) and Page Valley (1793) Chapters for their contributions to the composite Area VII membership increase of 1.14%.

Page Valley continues to lead the way in consistently contacting local, state and national elected officials on matters of concern to NARFE. The letters and email messages are followed up with face-to-face meetings. Charlottesville and Winchester Chapters elected new Presidents in December. I congratulate the new officers and committee chairs for their willingness to assume positions of responsibility and I look forward to working with them. I enjoyed installing the new and reelected officers of the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Chapter. All chapters are to be commended for a successful 2007 year when memberships increased and new ways were found to better communicate with members.

I especially commend the Harrisonburg and Winchester Chapters for the quality of programs at monthly meetings that bring out large percentages of their respective memberships. Members often express their appreciation for the efforts of chapter officers to vary programs in such a way that NARFE issues are fully covered while consideration is given to other issues of concern to them. Members understand that NARFE cannot thrive in a vacuum or operate to the exclusion of other important concerns.

Luther L. Santiful, Area VII VP

AREA VIII REPORT

All chapters in Area VIII have a full slate of officers. Six of the eight chapters have new officers in some positions. One chapter has an entirely new set of officers. Two chapters had no change in positions as all current officers were reelected. I traveled to six of the chapters during December, and installed officers in five of the chapters. President Dave Smith installed officers in one chapter. There was a slight increase in membership during the last quarter. For the year 2007 there was slight increase in membership also. The fastest growing chapter is Chapter 90 Fredericksburg. Area VIII also had an increase in dues withholding members in 2007. As I travel to chapters in Area VIII I encourage them to stress the importance of supporting NARFE PAC, the VFC State Political Fund, and attendance at the VFC Convention in April.

Don Shiffert Area VIII VP

AREA IX REPORT

In the last Area IX report, I wrote that chapters in Area IX are spending lots of time on member retention. This time I am happy to write that Area IX had 99 more members at the end of 2007 than we started with in January 2007.

I was happy to have the opportunity to install officers in three of the Area's six Chapters. Also I enjoyed very much the Christmas Luncheons with four chapters. I weigh more than I did at the beginning of December which is not so good.

The Northern Virginia Caucus meetings provided Chapter presidents and other key officers in Area IX and Area X an opportunity to exchange chapter information and address Areas and/or Chapter issues. Shirley Keyes was elected to the position of Caucus Chair at our January Meeting. We are just beginning to learn some of the things that Areas IX and X will need to do to prepare for the sponsorship of the 2009 VFC Convention in Reston, VA.

Congratulations to the Woodbridge Chapter 1270 for raising and donating over \$6,200 to Alzheimer's research, more than any other chapter in the VFC.

AREA IX VP William Masterson

REGION X REPORT

As we approach spring and say goodbye to winter, we start to think about our gardens and planting flowers and other out door activities. We look forward to traveling and to seeing our relatives and friends again. Congress will make some of our trips a little easier by the rebates that should be coming our way around June. We will continue to be bombarded by requests for campaign donations as we approach the presidential election in November of this year. All of this is part of living in a free society and enjoying our retirement (for those of you who aren't retired yet – your time is coming).

Now you may ask what has this got to do with NARFE? Well, maybe nothing or maybe we should realize that we are able to continue living in our homes, continue traveling, continue enjoying our life style because of what NARFE has done for us. Oh yes, some of you will say; "you haven't been successful in repealing GPO/WEP and in passing Premium Conversion". Those folks look at these (apparent) failures as proof that NARFE hasn't done anything for them. Those same folks who say that NARFE hasn't done anything for them lately, will probably think twice about renewing their membership and will foolishly try to save about 10 cents a day by not renewing their membership. They will forget that over

the years NARFE has provided them with outstanding lobbyists who constantly monitor proposed bills that could or would affect their annuities and then, after identifying these bills, these same lobbyists (such as; Judy Park, Dan Adcock, Chris Farrell and Jill Crissman) start working with Congress to kill these bills before they see 'spring' and start to flourish. FYI – each year either the President or Congress submit bills that would reduce our annuities (e.g.- President Bush submitted his 2008 budget that included a reduction in FEHBP contributions by the government for future retirees – NARFE was instrumental in eliminating these items from the final congressional Budget Resolution). Of course, besides our legislative accomplishments, our number one goal is to maintain our present benefits. NARFE also provides numerous other services, such as; our outstanding NARFE magazine (with the Q&A section), our Service Officers who are there to assist us or our spouses - when we need the help the most, our Retirement Benefits Services who assist us with problems (such as with OPM), the many discounts that we receive from our affinity partners (e.g.- car rentals, travel, insurance, credit union, etc), our FEEA fund to help those members in need due to a disaster, our Scholarship program to assist our children or grandchildren, and of course, our support of Alzheimer's Research that will one day eliminate this dreadful disease that affects a number of our family members and friends. These are some of the benefits that you receive as a NARFE member for about 10 cents a day. Please think twice before deciding to cancel your membership or not renewing your membership – **"You Need NARFE and NARFE Needs You"**.

Joseph A Beaudoin Region X Vice President

- Some people try to turn back their odometers. Not me, I want people to know "why" I look this way. I've traveled a long way and some of the roads weren't paved.
- An older gentleman was on the operating table awaiting surgery and he insisted that his son, a renowned surgeon, perform the operation. As he was about to get the anesthesia he asked to speak to his son. "Yes, Dad, what is it?" "Don't be nervous, son; do your best and just remember, if it doesn't go well, if something happens to me. ..your mother is going to come and live with you and your wife...."