

Chapter 2363 Talking Points

Main Theme

E-NARFE Chapter 2363 is proving itself as an asset not a liability to NARFE overall.

Chapter Background

- Chapter 2363 numbered 27,480 members as of September 21, 2015. It grew rapidly to this point since Chapter 2363 was chartered on February 3, 2011. Membership growth seems to have tapered off and has hovered at around 27,500 - 28,000 over the past couple of months.
- Organizationally Chapter 2363 is nominally placed under Region X since we are serviced electronically out of NARFE Headquarters which is based in Alexandria, VA. But we vote at National Conventions on the basis of our own nationwide + abroad chapter membership, not as a part of the Virginia Federation or Region X.
- The Chapter's first president was David Snell, Director of Federal Benefits at Headquarters. Following an electronic election last year D. Thomas "Tom" Longo, Jr., of Lawrenceburg, Indiana became the Chapter's first non-resident president on November 1, 2014.
- The Chapter's other elected officers are Vice President Marc Harris of Florida, and Secretary-Treasurer Sandra Threadcraft of Georgia. Appointed chairpersons are Vilma Geisert of North Carolina as Membership Chair, Marc Harris as Legislative Chair and David Snell as chapter Service Officer. The elected officers' terms are two years and they can re-elected to successive terms if the chapter membership so desires.
- Recruitment for Chapter 2363 occurs primarily through electronic means by National Headquarters and is proving to be a success story in reaching out in particular, apparently, to the "Boomers Generation" as described at the July 2015 National Executive Board (NEB) / Federation Presidents' meeting in Reno. These are people born 1946-1964, currently aged 51-69, many if not most of whom are still actively employed. They are inclined, evidently, not to be "joiners" of volunteer organizations since they assume they will continue to work at least part-time well into retirement. Accordingly, numbers of them apparently find E-NARFE to be a good fit since they benefit from NARFE's advocacy efforts while not needing to join a local chapter.

- NARFE in turn benefits from their national dues revenue. Chapter 2363 does not have chapter dues nor receives "10% money" but National helps us out from time to time with officer travel-expense reimbursement.
- Chapter 2363 regards legislative advocacy as NARFE's core *raison d'etre*. We remind our members of the necessity to be responsive to Legislative Action Alerts and to send letters to their Members of Congress via the convenient electronic service NARFE's Legislative Department has set up for this purpose. Regarding advocacy on local and state legislative issues, we remind our people that, beyond contacting their local representatives directly, NARFE E-Divisions exist. At present existing E-Divisions are run by the respective Federations (not by Chapter 2363), and we put those E-NARFE members interested in local issues in touch with the relevant Federation presidents or Federation e-coordinators.

Recent Activities

Recent Chapter 2363 developments since Mr. Longo became President include the following:

- We have set up a chapter Advisory Committee comprised of currently 10-11 persons who have shown themselves closely interested in and attentive to E-NARFE matters, including where and how E-NARFE should fit into Future NARFE per the FONC exercise and current Strategic Planning.
- Chapter 2363 successfully urged National Headquarters to move forward to implement the 2014 Orlando Convention's stipulation to set up a new national NARFE blog open to all NARFE members. The new national blog went live on June 5. The preexisting E-NARFE blog open only to E-NARFE members that was very little utilized has been taken down, replaced by the national blog.
- With the help particularly of our Membership and Legislative Chairs, we have given special weight to a "service-to-our-members" philosophy wherein if someone posts a question or situation to Chapter 2363, they WILL get a reply, or a referral. You can imagine that with 27,000+ members such responsiveness can be a challenge at times, but it's what we do.
- We have built further on the voting precedent that past chapter president David Snell established at the 2014 Orlando convention, namely, proportional chapter voting on national officer candidates and major resolutions according to results of electronically polling our membership shortly prior to conventions. This means that, notwithstanding the large number of ballot votes we are entitled to by the one-delegate-per-50-members national bylaws rule, Chapter 2363 cannot and will not "steamroll" anything at a convention. Rather, we divide our ballot vote proportionally according to our members' desires.

- On August 25 we publicized on the NARFE national blog for the benefit of all NARFE members a NES message sent the previous day to Chapter 2363 members explaining and advocating for the benefits including 15% discount for retirees who sign up for NARFE dues withholding.
- On September 4, 2015 we formally recommended to Headquarters that it update outdated language on the member application form in *narfe* Magazine. The present language does not reflect actuality now that NARFE has established the new national unified blog - under E-NARFE it still refers to the now defunct E-NARFE blog. The new language we proposed also mentions legislative advocacy role possibilities for members of both traditional chapters and E-NARFE.
- In addition to the above, Chapter President Longo has opened email lines of communication between him and all NEB members including the Regional V.P.'s on matters pertinent to E-NARFE. Mr. Longo also plans to attend the November NEB meeting in Alexandria and future ones in order to "give a face" there to E-NARFE.
- Chapter 2363's leadership fully subscribes to the philosophies that Chapter 2363 and the local chapters, federations and regions are all on the same NARFE team, and that Chapter 2363 is an asset, not a liability or rival, for your and our efforts toward an effective Future NARFE.

Approved 9/23/2015:

/s/ D. Thomas "Tom" Longo, E-NARFE Chapter 2363 President