



**Regional Vice President's Report
William "Bill" Shackelford
March, 2018**

The National Executive Board (NEB) was held in Alexandria, Virginia from March 12 – 13, 2018. The location was at NARFE Headquarters.

MONDAY – MARCH 12, 2017

National President Richard Thissen opened the meeting at 9:00 AM with a moment of silent reflection followed by the Pledge of Allegiance lead by Region Vice President (RVP) Carol Ek (Region V).

Regional Vice Presidents introduced guests who were attending the NEB meeting from their respective Regions.

Membership Report – February Close-Out – President Thissen reiterated the membership statistics previously furnished in the Weekly Update dated March 11, 2018.

Positive growth – 18 Federations
Even Membership – 16 Federations
Over 90% Re-Instatement Rate Nationally
Decrease In Average Deaths Per Day – 21 Reported Deaths Per Day

Chapter Closures – National Secretary/Treasurer Jon Dowie provided an update on the closure of Chapters across NARFE nationally.

Since November, 2104 there have been 220 Chapter closures

2018 – 24 Chapter closures to date
2017 – 82 Chapter closures
2016 – 57 Chapter closures
2015 – 53 Chapter closures
2014 – 4 Chapter closures

Preliminary Audit Report – NARFE assets in 2017 reflect a positive gain of \$953,178 to the overall assets of our association. There was a slight loss in operations but the overall gain

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was in the investments made by NARFE. The NARFE Audit Committee will hold a Go-To-Meeting conference with the professional Auditors reviewing NARFE finances on March 29.

Federation Bylaws Review – Twenty-six Federations have submitted new Bylaws to NARFE HQ that have been approved by National Secretary/Treasurer office. Three other submissions are pending final approval based on decision of Federations members at upcoming Conventions/Conferences.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (ED) REPORT

New NARFE employees were introduced by ED Sido:

- Deputy Director of Public Relations Jill Talley
- Communications Assistant Precious Dorch-Robinson

Additionally, the announcement of a new hire was also made by ED Sido

Samuel (Sam) Bartels will join NARFE as the new Advocacy Assistant beginning March 19th. Most recently, Sam worked as a Field Organizer & Volunteer Coordinator for the Michael DeFusco Campaign for Mayor of Hoboken New Jersey where he oversaw the recruitment and management of the volunteer program and helped in the oversight of paid canvas efforts. He's also served as a legislative intern for both members of the Senate and the House, in addition to the House Natural Resources Committee. Sam has a Bachelors in History from State University of New York at Stony Brook and has also received a Masters degree in Environmental Resource Policy from George Washington University.

ED Sido provided a status update of the 2018 NARFE Operating Plan. The following topics were discussed during the 2018 Operating Plan status update:

- Standing Committees met at NARFE HQ in January with success/development of work plans
- Will be hiring new Staff Vice President in Finance Department
- Hired new NARFE Parliamentarian
- NARFE manuals are being updated
 - Chapter and Federation Officers Manual (F-10) – 1st draft completed
 - Policy and Procedures Manual – 1st draft completed
 - Membership Marketing Manual (FH-19) – 1st draft in progress
 - Public Relations Handbook (FH-9) – Under review for 1st draft
 - Legislative Officer and Congressional District Leader (CDL) Manual (FH-7) – Under review for 1st draft
 - Service Officer Guide (FH-10) – Under review for 1st draft
 - Regional Vice Presidents' Handbook (FH-14) – Under review for 1st draft
 - Member Records Manual (FH-6) – Under review for 1st draft
- Appropriate utilization of funds by Federations and Chapters
- FEDcon18
- Association Management System (AMS) database project

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- Federal Employees' Benefit issues which include creation/improvement of Federal Benefits Institute web presence and insure that presence is kept updated
- Expand outreach to prospective members
- Improve resources for field recruitment
- Continue development of sponsors/vendors/partners opportunities to enhance benefits for members to use such as "Find A Financial Advisor"
- Create a 'Train The Trainer" program for Federal HR executives
- Overall fundraising goal through calendars, notepads, etc. is \$1,652,580
- Expand advocacy efforts to Executive Branch
- Increase CDL/SLL participation by 10% to where Federations should be able to handle training
- Expand public relations efforts beyond advocacy
- Explore database improvements to track member demographics to allow for better engagement in advocacy campaigns
- NARFE-PAC goal for 2018 = \$1.5 million
- Continue "Network Science Initiative" to track origin of positive and negative perception of NARFE with Federal employees
- ED Sido will move forward with the Broker Assessment Value – Phase 1 of the asset portfolio with general consensus from the NEB.
- Continue with review of NARFE assets including NARFE HQ building

ELECTIONS / BALLOTING

During her report, ED Sido discussed the 2018 NARFE Election Timeline for the upcoming elections/balotting.

Committee Report – The April issue of the *narfe* magazine will have the final report of the 2018 Bylaws and Resolutions Committee. The June issue of the *narfe* magazine will also have the final report of the 2018 Bylaws and Resolutions Committee and the mail-in ballot.

MOTION #08-03-18

SUBJECT: NEB Sponsorship of Individual Member Submitted Amendments – Motion made by NS/T Dowie and 2nd by RVP Adelman to ratify a vote taken by email that the NEB accepts sponsorship of the three bylaws amendments submitted by a single member (with no comment/recommendation) to prevent the amendments from being declared out of order. The NARFE Bylaws Committee will handle in a normal fashion and recommend adoption or non-adoption to the membership. This will keep intact the guidance that has been promulgated that any member can submit bylaws amendments and resolutions. With a vote of 8 YEAS and 3 NAYS, the **motion passed**. NP Thissen abstained from voting.

Bylaws/Resolutions – The option of "ACCEPT ALL" or "REJECT ALL" will be included on both the on-line ballots and the mail-in ballots for the proposed bylaws and resolutions presented to the NARFE membership.

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Submission Of Ballots – Mail-in ballot **will not** be postage-paid. Member is required to insure proper postage is on the envelope. Return address **is not** at NARFE HQ. Ballots received at NARFE HQ **will not** be counted.

Ballot Results – Election and ballot results will be provided by the firm handling the election to designated NARFE HQ personnel in early July and, if necessary due to need for a run-off election, in early October. By consensus, the NEB designated the NARFE HQ personnel as Executive Director Barb Sido and NARFE Parliamentarian Collette Trohan.

Challenges – All challenges to the election results for the candidates can only be made through legal action in a judicial court.

ACTION ITEMS

MOTION #01-03-18

SUBJECT: Setting Of Cut-Off Date For NARFE Elections And Balloting Issues – Motion made by RVP Shackelford and 2nd by RVP Zajac that the date of March 15, 2018 be set as the date of record to establish voting privileges for the 2018 NARFE elections for National and Regional Officers and for other ballots issues, i.e., National Bylaws changes and resolutions presented to the NARFE membership. With a vote of 11 YEAS and 0 NAYS, the motion passed. NP Thissen abstained from voting.

MOTION #05-03-18

Amendment To Bylaws Article IX – At the October, 2017 NEB meeting a presentation was made by ED Sido, NARFE Parliamentarian, and NARFE Legal Counsel which addressed the need to be diligent in ensuring that Bylaws and Standing Rules are reviewed.

Motion made by RVP Shackelford and seconded by RVP Zajac that the NARFE National Executive Board sponsor an amendment to Article IX of the NARFE bylaws, and recommend its adoption to the membership by placing the question on the next membership ballot. After discussion, an amendment was made to the original motion to include the provision that any rejection of a proposal by the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee could be overridden by a vote of the NEB with a 2/3 majority. With a vote of 9 YEAS and 2 NAYS (RVP Richards & RVP Adelman), the motion passed. NP Thissen abstained from voting.

After inclusion of this amendment, the full amendment to Article IX of the NARFE bylaws and a recommendation for adoption by the membership by placing the question on the next membership ballot was passed with a vote of 11 YEAS and 0 NAYS. NP Thissen abstained from voting.

MOTION #02-03-18

SUBJECT: Articles of Incorporation Motion – Motion made by RVP Shackelford and 2nd by RVP Zajac that the NARFE National Executive Board approve the Second Amended and Restated NARFE Articles of Incorporation. The NARFE National Executive Board recommends the adoption of the revised NARFE Articles Incorporation to the membership by placing the

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question on the next membership ballot. With a vote of 11 YEAS and 0 NAYS. NP Thissen abstained from voting.

MOTION #03-03-18

SUBJECT: NARFE National Policy Manual – Another matter at the October, 2017 NEB meeting was a presentation was made by ED Sido, NARFE Parliamentarian, and NARFE Legal Counsel which addressed the need to ensure that NARFE Policy Manual, and NARFE Procedures Manual (P&P Manual) are reviewed and up-to-date. The NEB unanimously voted that this review would be conducted by the ED Sido and a report will be issued and given to the NEB by March 31st. After review and discussion of the first draft, the NEB, by consensus agreed that a more review and work was necessary and that ED Sido should prepare and present to the NEB a second draft for NEB review prior to the August NEB meeting in Jacksonville. Prior to the extension being granted to ED Sido, Motion #03-03-18 (Subject: NARFE National Policy Manual) was made by RVP Kirby and 2nd by RVP Wilson that the NEB approve the amended NARFE National Policy Manual. This motion was subsequently withdrawn.

Motion #04-03-18

SUBJECT: Contracts Approval – Motion made by RVP Wilson and 2nd by RVP Robinson that the Executive Director is authorized to sign contracts in the name of NARFE, however that the contracts valued at \$200,000, or more require prior approval of the National Executive Board. Following discussion of the process for review/approval of contracts by the NEB, the motion was presented for a vote. With a vote of 5 YEAS and 5 NAYS, the motion failed. NP Thissen and NS/T Dowie abstained from voting.

TUESDAY – MARCH 13, 2018

National President Richard Thissen opened the meeting at 9:00 AM with a moment of silence led by RVP Rodney Adelman reflecting on the passing of John Sweat, Past President of the Wyoming Federation on the evening of March 12. Moment of silence was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance lead by Region Vice President (RVP) Marshall Richards (Region VI).

“NARFE Next” Project Update – ED Sido provided a “NARFE Next” update for January & February.

The NARFE Next Project began in August 2017, and since that time the project team has sought to learn as much as possible about how NARFE should strive to create value for both current and future stakeholders.

- Conducted both formal and informal conversations with NARFE members and others in the Federal community
- Visualized NARFE's existing business model with both the staff and NEB. The visualization process revealed some important business model concerns. The NEB must to explore these concerns and questions.
- Participated in NARFE regional meetings and listened to attendees at those events
- Conducted a major survey of NARFE stakeholders to understand their short-term problems, intermediate-term needs and longer-term goals/aspirations

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- Validated the key themes developed through our discovery process with a second major survey that was completed in December 2017.

NARFE must be more than "all retirement, all the time" – NARFE must broaden its focus beyond retirement-related issues for Federal workers. NARFE's current stakeholders greatly value the association's efforts to protect their Federal benefits through advocacy and help them navigate the complexity of managing their benefits through the Federal Benefits Institute. If NARFE is going to attract more active Federal employees into the organization over the next 60 months and beyond, it must be able to offer products, services, experiences and other forms of value in ways that extend beyond retirement-related issues.

NARFE must adapt its business model for the future:

- NARFE's existing business model offers no unique value propositions for any identified stakeholder segments except companies and organizations offering products and services to active/retired Federal employees. We need unique value propositions for other stakeholder segments
- Two of NARFE's value propositions – 1) Confidence in a secure retirement from Federal service and 2) better informed decision-making around retirement and other important life events are retirement-related issues, while 3) belonging to local and national communities of shared experiences and interests is not of sufficient appeal to most active Federal employees to attract them into relationships with NARFE
- Operating NARFE's existing business model requires extensive organizational activity and cost, especially in areas that do not create direct value for stakeholders, in exchange for comparatively modest revenue streams.
- Most of the key resources, key activities and key partnerships in NARFE's existing business model are directed toward advocacy, which is extremely important and also very difficult to monetize.

Adapting NARFE's existing business model to its next configuration will not happen overnight but it must be done with intention once the decision to move in a new direction is made.

NARFE must modernize its technology platforms – A critical aspect of adapting NARFE's business model for new value creation is modernizing the organization's technology platforms to enable the organization to operate in a more fully digital way. The project team identified the considerable limitations that NARFE's current technology tools place on staff and stakeholders alike, as well as the continued expenditures necessary to maintain these technologies instead of investing in more capable platforms. The decision to acquire a new Association Management System (AMS) is an important first step, and additional steps will be required in 2018 and beyond.

New Value Creation Focus Areas – From the validation survey, which was conducted in December 2017 with more than 1,200 complete responses, the project team identified three focus areas for new value creation:

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- Strengthening the Personal and Professional Growth of Active Federal Employees – To build relationships with active Federal employees who are not interested in NARFE's current focus on retirement-related issues, NARFE must offer value focused on strengthening personal and professional growth with special emphasis on developing solutions, services and support that help active Federal employees make smart health and wellness decisions, lead healthier lives and nurture an overall sense of personal well-being.
- Enhanced Retirement Support for Both Active and Retired Federal Employees – NARFE must be more than "all retirement, all the time," and needs to look for new ways to apply the organization's existing capabilities to assist both active and retired Federal employees with retirement-related issues. Special emphasis will be placed on developing solutions, services and support that make a deeper connection between retirement planning and new efforts to strengthen the personal and professional growth of active Federal employees.
- Enhanced Health Insurance Support for Both Active and Retired Federal Employees – NARFE must look for new opportunities to assist both active and retired Federal employees manage the complexity around health insurance questions both before retirement, during retirement preparations and throughout their post-retirement years with special emphasis placed on developing solutions, services and support that clarify the importance of this health insurance continuum for all Federal employees.

Immediate Next Steps – During this next phase, the project team will develop prototypes of the value concepts for each of these focus areas. Prototypes are early presentations that can include mockups, narratives and storyboards, and may be presented either digitally or physically. The project team will create a manageable portfolio of concepts that can be tested with both active and retired Federal employees.

To facilitate the test of prototypes and gather feedback, the project team is in the process of organizing a "value creation collaboration network" composed of NARFE stakeholders from around the country. This network is not a traditional committee or task force, but a loosely linked group of contributors who will make very specific and critical contributions to building NARFE's capacity for new value creation including the following areas:

- Providing initial feedback on value concepts to refine them before they are shared with larger groups.
- Creating a connection between the value creation works that are taking place at the national level with other levels of NARFE activity.
- Sharing new value concepts with NARFE's targeted segments and gathering feedback to determine which concepts have traction and should be refined further, and which should be reconfigured or jettisoned entirely.
- Supporting staff efforts to gather feedback on showcase concepts during FEDcon18 in Jacksonville in August 2018.
- Operating as visible and vocal champions for the new value creation effort and identifying other potential constructive contributors to the work.

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The project team will coordinate the network's efforts over the next few months and anticipates developing valuable feedback by early June at which point the project team will determine which new concepts should be showcased during FEDcon18 in late August.

Moving Forward – Excellent progress is being made on the work and continue to move forward on the next steps in concert with the project team. The learning process is entering a new phase.

To maintain the forward momentum, the NEB and NARFE staff must consider the following questions:

- Which aspects of NARFE's current work is the organization willing to reduce or eliminate to free up resources for raising and creating work that can deliver new stakeholder value?
- Which areas of NARFE's most important work offer immediate opportunities for simplification and streamlining, including through the application of technology?
- What steps is NARFE prepared to take to reinvent its component structure to be simpler for all stakeholders, less expensive to maintain and more capable of contributing to new value creation, delivery and capture?
- As an organization with a long-standing focus on membership, how can NARFE increase its comfort with designing and developing stakeholder relationships beyond membership?

At the same time, it is important everyone to be mindful that adapting the business model of a nearly 100-year old organization to create new value will require sustained attention and investment, as well as substantial patience. We must learn as much as we can to ensure the directions we pursue will help NARFE thrive as a viable organization.

STAFF VICE PRESIDENT (SVP) REPORTS

- 1) Marketing and Member Resources SVP Bridget Boel

Membership

2017 year-end total membership of 208,825 represents both a month-by-month and an annual year-over-year slowing of the membership decline. New member acquisition rose to 13,060, a 28% increase over 2016.

Advocacy accomplishments, Institute growth, cumulative brand exposure via marketing, etc. has contributed to overall membership improvements.

Two sets of results, bellwethers for NARFE relevance among active and recently retired federal employees, are of particular interest:

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Webinar vs. All Member First Year Renewals

New members recruited via webinars are almost exclusively active federal employees. Webinars were designed not only to attract this group, but also to create a built-in retention tool. Once a member, the benefit is ongoing and free.

The first-year renewal rate for webinar joins is 59%. Our overall first year renewal rate is 56%.

The Institute appears not only to be attracting federal employees. Once members, they are finding value in ongoing membership.

OPM Mailing Response Rates

After a decade of response rate decline among recently retired federal workers, the last four years have seen increases – demonstrating a growing appeal among this target audience.

FEDcon18

Registration for NARFE’s premier training conference opened on February 1st.

Twenty-four breakout sessions are available to attendees in the following topic areas:

- Advocacy
- Federal Benefits
- NARFE Leadership & Lifestyle

Special workshops will include the following:

- Recruitment Best Practices
- Magazine Focus Groups
- NARFE Next Value Concept Assessment
- Public & Community Relations
- NARFE-PAC Training
- State Advocacy

Early morning wellness exercise, best practices round tables for NARFE presidents, a new member reception, Florida Night and the gala are among the optional activities. And five high-profile Keynote speakers will highlight general sessions at the start and end of each day.

In addition to the exhibitors, FEDcon will feature NARFETown, where subject matter experts will be available to engage with attendees at five kiosks:

- Advocacy

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- Federal Benefits Institute
- Communications
- Marketing & Member Resources
- NARFE Next

No hitches were discovered in the initial launch, so targeted marketing has begun via e-mail, online and in-house advertising. NARFE is currently on target to meet our exhibitor and sponsorship revenue budget. An update on registration was furnished at the NEB meeting. Early-Bird Registrations close on March 31. Rates rise from \$150.00 to \$175.00 for the Conference and the fee for the FEDCon18 Gala rises from \$65.00 to \$75.00

Registrations as of 3/12/2018 are 189; Target registrations is 800

Confirmation of Alzheimer's Association Keynote "Celebrity" Speaker is pending

Public Relations Department

As previously announced a new Public Relations Department has been created and will be headed by a Deputy Director of Public Relations. This position has been filled and the Department is headed by Deputy Director Jill Talley, who joined the NARFE staff on January 30th. The M&R contract has been allowed to expire with work history and media contacts transferred in-house.

With this new position, Public Relations has moved from the Advocacy Department to Marketing and Member Resources. Our goal is to broaden our public relations focus to include all areas of NARFE value:

- Advocacy
- Federal Benefits Institute
- Events
- New Products Programs & Services

Additionally, this position is now responsible:

- NARFE's Social Media Strategy
- Community Relations
- Change Communication
- NARFE Centennial Planning

Branding

A Request For Proposal (RFP) was written and sent to six agencies specializing in association branding in mid-January. TGD Creative Strategies & Solutions, located in Alexandria, VA, was selected.

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Work will progress in five stages:

- Brand Assessment
- Communication Audit
- Brand Messaging & Design
- Brand Application
- Brand Documentation

A kick off meeting and timeline development took place the week of February 26th. NEB members can anticipate a questionnaire during the assessment period and review of finalist among design and messaging options. To date, I have not heard anything regarding the questionnaire.

The project will be completed in time for launch at FEDcon18, including a video presentation at NARFETown.

Registered Financial Advisor

Much work has been done on the development of a *Find an Advisor* program with Morgan Stanley. As envisioned, this program will provide members with an easy access, online portal where they may find certified financial planners with training in federal benefits and discounted services. In return, Morgan Stanley will provide NARFE a referral fee.

As of this writing, we continue our legal and resource requirements due diligence. An early identified potential legal hurdle, whether or not NARFE would become a fiduciary under this program, has been cleared by our attorney. A go/no go decision will be made this first quarter with plans to launch, if advisable, at FEDcon18.

Federal Benefits Institute

Deputy Director James Marshall has now been in place for four months, the value the Institute offers continues to grow. Weekly meetings are providing ongoing professional development to the NARFE specialist staff. Webinars, while still including guest presenters Tammy Flanagan and Mark Keen, now also feature our own subject matter expert. Far more promotion of the Institute as a member benefit is now warranted and members have responded. Gone are the days of long down times between open seasons. Work is underway to create easier access to the information our members need on the website and guidance on additional subject matter will soon be available there.

The Institute plays a key role as NARFE is broadcasted as the go-to-resource for the federal community. Eight FEDcon18 sessions, a keynote address by Tammy Flanagan and a dedicated kiosk in NARFETown will highlight the Institute at the conference. Included in the Operating Plan later this year is an assessment of train-the-trainer opportunities for federal HR professionals as well as retirement and financial advisors. Inclusion on the GSA schedule and direct agency training is also under consideration

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As demand for access to NARFE's federal benefits experts grows, we are carefully monitoring response time and building greater efficiency. Additional resources will likely be needed in the future.

2) Communications SVP Susan Boswell

Readership Survey

The *narfe* magazine readership survey was completed in November/December 2017, and was sent to 65,000 email addresses, yielding a 4 percent response rate with 2,596 responses. The survey examined several key areas: value of membership, readership satisfaction and technology use. As NARFE considers the ongoing communications strategy, key findings that are being looked at include:

- **Why they join:** Three key reasons rose to the top: To receive information and guidance on retirement/health benefits (74%), to support NARFE's legislative fight for earned benefits (71%), and to receive *narfe* magazine (50%).
- **Why they renew:** The desire to support NARFE's legislative fight for earned benefits became the top reason for renewing (72%), followed by the ability to receive information and guidance on retirement/health benefits (62%), to read *narfe* magazine (52%), and to retain affiliation with the federal community (33%).
- **What benefits are important:** Survey respondents gave the highest rating to the following member benefits in this order: lobbying (77%), magazine (55%), and one-on-one assistance with federal benefits (30%).
- **Member satisfaction:** The vast majority (94%) of members said membership met their expectations and 57% were "very likely" or "likely" (30%) to recommend NARFE membership to a friend, colleague or spouse.
- **Avid readers:** 84% of members said they read 10-12 of the last 12 issues of the magazine, and 53% said they spent a half-hour to an hour reading the magazine, while 33.5% said they spent an hour to 1.5 hours reading the magazine.
- **What do they like to read about:** Most readers indicated satisfaction with the magazine's editorial coverage of topics, although some readers would like more information on two key topics: FEHB and health coverage, Q&A on federal benefits.
- **Moved to action:** Readers took action after reading the Q&A section (66%), Bill Tracker (53%), and For the Record (49%). They saved the issue (48%), made a decision based on what they had read (47%), or used the NARFE Action Center to contact their legislator on an issue (50%).
- **What special sections are valued:** Of the survey respondents who gave the highest rating, they valued the Open Season Report (55%), how they voted (49%), state-by-state record on key NARFE votes (42%), and state tax roundup (40%).
- **Online behavior:** Most readers go online everyday (82%). While online, they shopped (89%), did online banking/financial services (73%), visited publication websites

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(49%), accessed social media (46%), or accessed mobile apps (34%). However, when it comes to *narfe* magazine, the majority (96%) preferred to read it in print.

- **Demographics:** Gender: 57% are male and 38% are female; Age: 46% were 65-74; 21% were 75-84; 20% were 55-64. Membership: 21% have been members for 10-14 years, 21% have been members for 5-9 years. Membership: 14% have been members for 15-19 years. When they joined: 51% joined after retiring, 45% joined before retiring.

Hybrid Print/Online Elections Process

For the first time in 2018, each NARFE member had one vote. The Communications Department developed materials to implement the hybrid print/online election in collaboration with a vendor to provide an impartial, secure election.

- March magazine – Published candidate statements and federation election contact information.
- April magazine – Published the Bylaws and Resolutions report, and developed a Bylaws and Resolutions PDF book that could be downloaded from the NARFE website (www.narfe.org/2018Balloting) or requested by phone. Federation annual meetings were also published.
- May magazine – Article on preferential voting.

MOTION #10-03-18 (Ratified)

SUBJECT: Preferential Vote for 2018 – Motion made by RVP Adelman and 2nd by RVP Konyts to ratify the motion that the NEB accepts the Parliamentarian recommendation to use preferential voting for any run-off election in 2018. In the event no candidate receives the majority of the votes on the first ballot then ask that the membership adopts the Parliamentarian's recommendation through the initial 2018 ballot. With a vote of 10 YEAS and 1 NAYS, the motion passed. NP Thissen abstained from voting.

- June magazine – Ballot will be inserted into the magazine, with randomized voting (A-Z) on half of the ballots and (Z-A) on half of the ballots. Instructions for online and print voting will be provided, along with legally required information, and bylaws and resolutions. All of those who are members as of March 15, 2018 will be eligible to vote. A member ID and unique PIN number are required for voting.

The vendor will host a secure online voting website, which will launch on May 10, approximately the same time members will receive their magazine, although magazine receipt will vary by about a 1.5 weeks, depending on geographic region. For each individual member, the order of candidate presentation (A-Z or Z-A) on the online ballot will be identical to the magazine ballot. Those who have email addresses on file with NARFE will receive an email announcement about the voting website and instructions.

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Website

On January 16, 2018, NARFE launched redesigned and enhanced webpages accessible to non-members and the general public at www.narfe.org. The website features a redesigned masthead and user-friendly navigation with content organized into five sections under a drop-down menu:

- Federal Benefits
- Advocacy
- Membership
- Events
- Communication

Each section features a redesigned landing page directing the reader to content in that section. The website also has content about NARFE, the federal community and encourages visitors to support NARFE.

Content has been revised to provide more information about the benefits of joining NARFE, the role the organization plays in advocating for federal benefits and the products, services and events offered by the organization. The members-only section of the website and OAM remain the same.

The website features responsive design, allowing it to be viewed on any device, from a desktop to laptop to tablet or mobile phone.

The website was created by the organization-wide Web Team, with representatives from departments across the organization, who came together to develop these new webpages.

In 2018, the Web Team will explore options for a new website content management system (CMS) to host the webpages. This will allow NARFE to move the website off a platform that is technologically obsolete and facilitate a redesign of the entire NARFE website utilizing more contemporary principles of website design and further enhancing the site's architecture, navigation and usability. As a prerequisite, a new Association Management System (AMS) will need to be selected, to ensure full integration of technology platforms.

E-Newsletter Migration and Relaunch

Currently, NARFE has two key, large-circulation E-newsletters: NARFE NewsWatch (delivered every Tuesday) and Hotline (delivered every Friday). In 2018, NARFE will lay the groundwork to integrate these two E-newsletters into a single E-newsletter that provides the latest advocacy updates as well as news from across the organization, driving readers to the NARFE website for further information. This E-newsletter will provide greater return on investment through advertising revenues and will be hosted on an E-marketing platform that provides robust analytics and marketing automation features, benefiting organization-wide marketing efforts. The E-newsletter platform will need to be compatible with the Association Management System (AMS).

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3) Advocacy SVP Jessica Klement

National Journal Network Science Initiative

As many of you are aware, NARFE has partnered with the National Journal Network Science Initiative (NSI) team to conduct a comprehensive analysis of key stakeholders and influencers involved in shaping public perception of federal employees and retirees to help NARFE anticipate, prepare for, and influence emerging debates, particularly those around compensation and benefits and the size of government. The purpose of the research is to identify stakeholder communities to engage in order to influence and proactively shape conversations that enhance the image of federal workers and promote what they do for America.

Following several meetings internally and with the NSI team, our path forward in the research plan will focus on a combination of allies and detractors.

NSI research will start with confirmed and suspected detractors, including but not limited to: conservative think tanks and academics; conservative advocacy groups; and media voices. In examining detractors, NSI will examine their core messaging regarding federal employee myths and motivations for studying federal workforce issues, among others. From there, NSI will conduct an analysis of the detractors' networks, including ties to policymakers, media, and regional connections in areas we select.

In assessing assured or potential NARFE allies, NSI will specifically study the following sets of stakeholders: centrist and allied think tanks and academics; nonprofits, particularly with a public service-oriented mission; federal contractors and other businesses with regular government connections; and quiet and nascent allies from think tanks, non-profits, and major businesses. As NSI examines these groups, it will look at their motivations for working on federal workforce issues and identify specific opportunities for collaboration. As it will do for the detractor network, NSI will also examine how allies connect to policymakers, media and the geographic areas we select.

It is anticipated that a NSI research plan will be provided to the NARFE team in early March, and preliminary findings will be shared mid-April.

Policy and Lobbying Update

NARFE's lobbying team is focused on two main issues:

- 1) Opposing cuts to federal benefits
- 2) Opposing mandatory Medicare enrollment for postal retirees in H.R. 756.

The President recently signed a two-year bipartisan budget agreement that sets overall spending numbers for FY-2018 and FY-2019. The bill increased spending by nearly \$300 billion, only \$100 billion of which was offset. Offsets always are, and will continue to be, a primary concern for NARFE as the federal community is viewed as a piggy bank. NARFE

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notched the first legislative win for 2018 in February when none of the offsets came from federal employees or retirees.

The administration's FY-2019 budget to Congress included at least \$192 billion in cuts to federal pay and benefits (we're still working with OMB on exact numbers and understanding of specific proposals). The budget contains most of the provisions from the FY-2018 budget as well as TSP changes and a federal pay freeze for 2019, which the President has the authority to implement absent congressional action.

As Congress debates the budget, infrastructure investments and other priorities, NARFE will continue to show that federal employees and retirees have given enough and should not have to pay for other priorities. Given the shortened congressional calendar because of the 2018 mid-term elections, it is expected that Congress will not make notable progress on any major initiatives.

NARFE is also continuing to lobby in opposition to the current postal reform bill, H.R. 756, which would force current and future postal retirees into Medicare. NARFE objects to this precedent-setting changing of benefits in retirement. Due to the Medicare provision, two additional House committees have jurisdiction over the bill, and NARFE is continuing its lobbying efforts on those committees. At this point, it seems unlikely postal reform will move at all this year, let alone in its current form.

Due to the likely lack of action on the Hill on NARFE priorities, our lobbyists will have time to carry out many of the objectives laid out in the operating plan, notably building and strengthening relationships. Preliminary conversations with the leadership of the Republican Main Street Caucus and are continuing to strengthen relationships.

The Advocacy Department is in the beginning stages of narrowing a list of 50-75 members of Congress to build or strengthen relationships with those offices. Responsibilities will be divided among our lobbyists. From there, NARFE will employ a "scorecard" to assess if those relationships have advanced NARFE's priorities. Within NARFE-PAC, our lobbyists will be assigned to the party committees and other political events to further relationships. Future shut-downs are not an acceptable option. NARFE-PAC donations are used as leverage when in discussion with Congressional leadership.

Grassroots Update

The upcoming Federation Conferences/Conventions provide opportunities to address many of the goals laid out in operating plan on grassroots advocacy. Additionally, Molly Checksfield has had direct contact with Federations just starting to promote the value of CDLs and are interested in forming their own programs. Florida is a state worth acknowledging, as its leadership made this a priority and Molly presented to each of its eight areas.

Overall, there was an increased interest in grassroots activity from first-time users of the Legislative Action Center in 2017. The Advocacy Department is working to identify those individuals and get them further engaged in upcoming grassroots campaigns and NARFE.

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Efforts through the Legislative Action Center indicate that advocacy is on a “level playing field” between National members and Chapter members. As with Chapter members, National members may not be interested in leadership positions but have a strong interest in advocacy.

In view of the expanded areas of responsibility handling both national and state level legislation matters the Legislative Affairs Department has been renamed the Advocacy Department. The staff member who will be coordinating state legislation matters is Ross Apter, who started in earnest on capturing NARFE Federation State Advocacy programs, priorities and capabilities. In the January issue of the *Insider*, Ross requested information from Federations on their State Programs, and a larger survey to assess capabilities was sent towards the end of February.

NEB Ballot Recommendations – In addition, to the National and Regional Officer elections and the Bylaws/Resolutions approved by the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee and recommended for adoption by the membership by placing the question on the next membership ballot, the NEB also approved the following issues for inclusion on the ballot.

- Amendment To Bylaws Article IX
- Proposed Revised Articles of Incorporation

Merging Of Federations – In my RVP Report for the NEB Meeting which was held from November 28 – 29, 2017, I advised that Regional Vice President (RVP) Jim Crawford (Region I) announced that efforts are being made to keep the Vermont and New Hampshire Federations operating independently but a merger may be required in 2018.

After discussion of various options, with input from the Staff Vice Presidents of Membership/Marketing and Advocacy, President Thissen emphasized that the NEB will need to be prepared to do its “due diligence” to insure that the interests of NARFE members in both states are protected. The consensus of the NEB was that a merger of two Federations was not in the better interests of the dedicated members.

RVP Crawford will explore options to avoid a direct merger and concentrate on a structure that supports advocacy issues being handled by members within the Vermont Federation and allows for administrative matters to be coordinated by a New Hampshire member on behalf of the Vermont Federation. Such structure could have New Hampshire members serving as Vermont Federation President and/or Federation Secretary/Treasurer.

NARFE National Advocacy Standing Committee will develop guidelines to address this issue broadly.

Motion #06-03-18 (Ratified)

SUBJECT: Salary of National Secretary/Treasurer – Motion made by RVP Richards and 2nd by RVP Kirby that the salary for the National Secretary/Treasurer be as resident/full time until CY 18 (December 31, 2018) retroactive to January 1, 2018. This will result in a net year loss of \$53,000 to the approved 2018 budget. With a vote of 10 YEAS and 0 NAYS, the motion passed. NP Thissen and NS/T Dowie abstained from voting.

NOTE: In all matters discussed and voted by the NEB, National President Richard Thissen participates in the open discussions but abstains from cast a vote.

MOTION #09-03-18 (Ratified By NEB)

SUBJECT: National Secretary/Treasurer Salary 2020-2022 Term – Motion made by RVP Wilson and 2nd by RVP Shackelford. The basis for this motion was based on a request by incumbent National Secretary/Treasurer Jon Dowie that he receive NEB approval to relocate to his primary residence in Florida and that the NEB redefine the position as non-resident. During subsequent discussion, the NEB considered the following points.

- The strategic management of NARFE is evolving, and the hiring of an executive director to fulfill administrative and operational duties is now complete;
- The duties of the NARFE Secretary/Treasurer changed commensurate with this evolution;
- The duties of the NARFE Secretary/Treasurer may not justify a full-time salaried governance position and the duties of the NARFE Secretary/Treasurer continue to evolve; and
- Whereas,
- It is the fiduciary responsibility of the National Executive Board to ensure prudent use of the association's finances and save costs where possible;
- Due to the fact that the NARFE bylaws require that a membership vote be taken on changes to compensation of National Officers, it is imperative that adequate advance notice be given to future candidates;
- Therefore, beginning with the 2020-2022 term, the salary of the NARFE Secretary/Treasurer may be reduced to be commensurate with that workload by no less than 50% as determined by the NARFE National Executive Board.

Based on the discussion, a resolution developed by the NEB and it was decided that ratification by the membership would be appropriate by placing the question on the next membership ballot. With a vote of 8 YEAS and 2 NAYS, the **motion passed**. NP Thissen and NS/T Dowie abstained from voting.

Motion #07-03-18 (Ratified)

SUBJECT: COLA for Executive Director – Motion made by RVP Kirby and 2nd by RVP Adelman to ratify a vote taken by email for a COLA for the Executive Director effective 1 January. With a vote of 10 YEAS and 0 NAYS, the motion passed. NP Thissen and NS/T Dowie abstained from voting.

MOTION #11-03-18

SUBJECT: Merger of Vermont and New Hampshire Federations – Motion made by RVP Crawford and 2nd by RVP Kirby that the NEB approve the requests of the Vermont and New Hampshire Federations, and the Region I RVP, to merge the Vermont and New Hampshire Federations. Ratification of motion was postponed indefinitely.

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Utah Chapter 752 – Region VII Vice President Rodney Adelman initiated a discussion to determine the overall opinion of the NEB pertaining to the viability and sustainability of NARFE Chapter 752 in Clearfield, Utah. On the most recent Chapter Officer Roster (F-7), there was only Chapter member listed as an officer, serving as the Chapter President, Federal Legislative Officer, Service Officer, and NARFE-PAC Chair for serving 28 current Chapter members, eleven of which are Distinguished Members. As noted by RVP Adelman, according to the DC Code, under which NARFE is organized, there must also have a Chapter Treasurer, who may not be the same person as the Chapter President.

In an effort to conduct his due diligence, RVP Adelman asked for the NEB concurrence on a recommendation to close Chapter 752 by cancelling the Chapter charter, in accordance with the NARFE National Standing Rules, Rule III, paragraph (C). After some discussion, the NEB provided unanimous concurrence to RVP Adelman.

MOTION #12-03-18

SUBJECT: Closure of Chapter 0752 – Motion made by RVP Kirby and 2nd by RVP Shackelford that appropriate steps be taken to close chapter 0752. With a vote of 11 YEAS and 0 NAYS, the motion passed. NP Thissen abstained from voting.

#13-03-18 (Withdrawn)

SUBJECT: Federation Use of Electronic Communications – Motion made by RVP Wilson and 2nd by RVP Shackelford that the NEB authorizes federations to use electronic communications exclusively as they see fit until the responsibilities of federations in the implementation of One Member One Vote are clarified. Following discussion of Federation use of electronic communications, motion #13-03-18 withdrawn

The next NEB meeting will be held from August 23–24, 2018 in conjunction with the Federation President's Meeting and NARFE Biennial Conference (FEDcon18) at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Jacksonville, Florida. Unless deemed necessary to hold meeting in Executive Session, all meetings are open to all FEDCon18 attendees as observers. The schedule is as follows:

August 23–24 (Full days)	NEB Meeting
August 25–26 (A.M.)	Joint NEB & Federations Presidents Meeting
August 29 (P.M.)	NEB Meeting

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