



Region X Conference Discussion Ideas [Noreene Morgan – Kentucky Federation]

MARKETING – Let's stop beating ourselves up. Marketing will cost more \$\$\$, let's not throw good money after bad. Yes, marketing has its place, if you are selling a product people want to buy. Note what was reported in the Recruiter's Journal (article below I just recently wrote for our Federation newspaper). Our members spoke loud and clear. If selling National–Only memberships, marketing will definitely be successful! Because that is what our members want. So, let's give something to Marketing that can be sold - National–Only Memberships! We need to consider what the members want, so we can keep them. Not necessarily what NARFE wants to provide, because we certainly are losing our members. Anyway, good, energetic discussion points.

LEADERSHIP – Volunteers to step up to positions. In our own chapter the core membership that supports us at meetings (15 out of 194) have all served in various roles in the chapter and are over 80 years of age. We are talking to the choir, so to speak. NARFE has discussed “Leadership” thoroughly. The same group of officers attend annual leadership meetings for the last 10 years. There is no new blood to groom, so to speak. The same group hears the same rah-rah talk about leadership, year after year. Actually, any member of the group can probably recite what has been presented over years about leadership.

INNOVATION – I hang my hat on National–Only Membership for NARFE's survival. This may not agree with current policy, but a decision needs to be made. Does NARFE insist on doing business “same old – same old” manner because it is more comfortable or does it want to salvage the organization while there is still the chance?

Clout On Capitol Hill – Members Or Chapters?

We are repeatedly reminded, at meetings/conventions, NARFE Retirement Magazine, in chapter newsletters and in Federation newspapers about loss of NARFE members. Statistical reports received from NARFE National Headquarters clearly show member losses outnumber member recruitment. Sadly, this trend has continued for several years, negatively impacting our clout in Washington, DC leading to possible/probable threats to our earned benefits.

In NARFE Recruiter's Journal, August 2008 five (5) Reasons Members Drop Their Membership were:

1. NARFE has not lived up to its promises on WEP, GPO, and Premium Conversion.
2. The chapter meetings are boring and a waste of time; a social club for old people.
3. NARFE dues are too high for what you get.
4. Chapter members were cold and distant. I felt unwelcome.
5. If I could become a National-Only Member and get the magazine, I'd rejoin NARFE. That is all I want.

Well, folks, for #1 our fight continues; for #2 chapters improved obtaining speakers, programs, activities; for #3 well, we aren't going there, but everything else has gone up, so we live with it; for #4 chapters have and are doing better in this aspect; and last but not least #5 – what about #5? Why not offer National-Only Memberships? If this is what will bring back members, as well as entice active federal employees (AFEs still working and unable or not interested in attending chapter meetings) to be a member of NARFE, why not offer National-Only Memberships? This is what the membership is requesting, so why not encourage National-Only Membership? Customers are always right.....members are our customers. Why force chapter membership? If I understand correctly, members are our **"Clout On Capitol Hill"**, not chapters!

Let's oblige by providing our members what they want, not what we choose to give them. We draw more bees with honey, than vinegar.