



## NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

CHAPTER ####  
CITY/TOWN, STATE

Date

Name of Chapter Member  
Street Address  
CITY/Town, State Zip Code

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ (PERSONALIZE BY TYPING IN NAME OF CHAPTER MEMBER)

The local NARFE chapter has traditionally served as the backbone of the NARFE organization. The direction and governance of NARFE were essentially conducted through the chapters. This was done through chapter delegates to the National and Federation conventions. At the 2016 National Convention delegates voted to change from delegate votes to one member one vote. This has led to some concern about future functions of the NARFE Local Chapter.

The members of Chapter #### Executive Committee have discussed and examined these issues and realized, what we all intuitively have known, that there is significant value in belonging to a local NARFE chapter beside sending delegates to the National and Federation Conventions. The Executive Committee has distilled these factors in the attached paper entitled, "Why Belong to a NARFE Chapter??" I urge all members carefully review this paper and consider the value of chapter membership to your total NARFE experience.

I, or a member of the Chapter Executive Committee, will be happy to discuss any concerns or additional reasons for chapter membership you may have. You can reach me by e-mail at \_\_\_\_\_ or phone at \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

*/s/ Chapter President*

**NAME OF CHAPTER PRESIDENT**

Chapter President

Enclosure

## **WHY BELONG TO A NARFE CHAPTER?**

When the delegates to the 2016 NARFE National Convention voted for the One Member/One Vote (OM/OV) rule, they changed the governance structure of the organization. Up till that time, changes to the national bylaws and other governing documents were voted upon by chapter delegates to the national convention. These delegates acted on direction received from their respective chapters after due deliberation in the chapters. Going forward, all governance changes will be voted on by each individual member by mail ballot. As we go forward, we have to ask ***“What is the purpose of belonging to a NARFE chapter??”*** As happens so often, there are many important reasons and benefits for membership in a chapter which are not readily apparent. First and foremost is belonging to a community that has its member's interest at heart. Furthermore, there are several additional important reasons to belong to a NARFE chapter which are discussed below.

### **SERVICE OFFICER**

The NARFE mission statement has two main sections. The first deals with protecting our earned benefits and the second addresses the service function of NARFE, which is quoted below:

*To promote the general welfare of federal civilian employees and annuitants and potential annuitants, to advise and assist them with respect to their rights under retirement, health and other employee and retiree benefits laws and regulations, and to represent their interests before appropriate authorities*

The chapter service officer complements and assists the NARFE Federal Benefits Department by assisting and informing chapter members on federal civilian benefit issues. These may include civil service retirement matters. Social Security and federal insurance programs, including the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) and Medicare. When employees retire and have to work with Office of Personnel Management (OPM) rather than their former agencies' personnel offices, it can be a whole different world. The service officer cannot only assist members in finding their way through the OPM maze, but is truly a friend indeed.

### **CHAPTER NEWSLETTER**

If there were no chapter, there would be no chapter newsletter. Think about it; we have gotten so used to receiving that monthly newsletter that if it doesn't come via email or in the mailbox, we will surely all miss it. While the newsletter is only four or five pages long, it covers a multitude of topics of interest to NARFE members including:

- **Upcoming Events** – Chapter members participate in a variety of activities. In Chapter ####, we have our annual holiday luncheon, summer political picnics, and most recently our ***“Walk To End Alzheimer's”***. The early notice and details presented in the chapter newsletter are essential for the successful conduct of these activities.
- **Discuss Proposals By NARFE HQ** – The apparent direction of NARFE headquarters concerning notifying the membership of proposed changes to Association governance documents and other official matters appears to be through the NARFE Magazine. In this mode, the question arises as to whether both sides of the issue will be presented. The newsletter allows us to alert chapter

members to the issue, and to facilitate a discussion of the pros and cons of any proposed amendments or other official matters.

- **Legislation** – Proposed legislation concerning NARFE members is discussed monthly in the NARFE Magazine. The legislative report of the Chapter National Legislative Chair which appears in the Chapter newsletter zeros in on specific proposed legislation issues and how they will affect chapter members. This includes insights of the chapter legislative chair resulting from a more in-depth review of the proposed legislation along with recommended member action.
- **Membership News** – Provides more than a report of our total membership each month. It addresses new members, reinstated members, members who have passed away, and those who are experiencing serious medical issues. We formed the Chapter in **City/Town** because we are community with common background and experiences, and news of this community is of interest to the members.
- **Program Previews** – Through our very capable Program Chairman, we have experienced some wonderful, stimulating and inspiring programs. In fact, chapter programs are a key factor of the NARFE experience. Previewing the programs in the newsletter is an excellent way to be prepared and better enjoy the forthcoming program for that month's meeting.

## **CHAPTER MEETINGS**

Monthly chapter meetings complement the monthly newsletter. In that regard, they help clarify and enhance items in the newsletter:

- **Service Officer Access** – The Service Officer is personally available at chapter meetings to provide chapter members with up to date information on changes in federal retirement, health and life insurance benefits. This includes sharing information on the annual Federal Benefits Open Season when it becomes available, as well as any changes in federal benefits laws regulations and rules. The latter in coordination with the Chapter Legislative Committee Chair.
- **Governance Issues** – While the issues are presented in the newsletter, discussions at the chapter meeting help us clarify and enhance our understanding of the issue and the pros and cons. It is not an attempt to sway the members one way or another but to inform them, allow them to ask questions and voice their own view of the issue so that the membership may hear all sides to make an informed decision.
- **Legislation** – As with governance issues, the Legislative Chair report at the meeting is meant to clarify and stress those legislative issues of critical importance to the membership. It also gives members a chance to ask questions and to voice their interpretation of the proposed legislation if it differs from that of the legislative chair.

- **Support Alzheimer's Research** – Through our chapter 50/50 raffle every month, we are a very generous chapter when it comes to the support of Alzheimer's research. It is amazing how much money we collect every year for that good cause. In addition, we have our silent auction at the holiday luncheon and this year we participated in the local ***“Walk To End Alzheimer's”*** which raised a significant amount of money. This raises the question – ***“Would we be doing that if we did not have chapter meetings??”***
- **Programs** – The newsletter previews the programs we get to enjoy at the monthly meeting. They cover a wide range of issues and few, if any, programs have been disappointing. We strive in program selection to include informative topics on NARFE, local history, state and local government. The programs are definitely an essential part of our monthly meeting. Additionally, you as chapter members have the opportunity to suggest programs that are of interest to you as well as other members.
- **Socialize** – This is something we seem to do best at the monthly meetings. We all like to get together with friends who have enjoyed a similar background in their careers. It can stimulate us emotionally and intellectually. It's always good to be among friends.
- **Other Topics** – The monthly meeting also gives us an opportunity to be informed of activities in our community other than those connected with NARFE. It also gives the members a chance to exchange information on a wide variety of issues not connected to NARFE directly but of interest to seniors.

**There should be no question that the benefits of belonging to a NARFE Chapter are well worth the \$\$\$ dollars annual dues.**

In order to avoid confusion, it should be noted that chapter dues are collected by NARFE Headquarters concurrently with national dues. Hence, the ten-dollar annual chapter dues might not be readily apparent. And if one signs up for dues withholding the total dues bill is reduced by six dollars per year.