

NORRISTOWN CHAPTER 372

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OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS

I am leaving the presidency to a very competent and reliable man GEORGE SHAL. I hope and pray that you will give him the cooperation and help I have enjoyed for the last ten years. I have found being your president very rewarding.

We have rewritten the constitution and bylaws, with your input and assistance, twice.

The most challenging task we performed was the 2002 NARFE STATE CONVENTION. While difficult, it was also a very good learning experience and enabled us to comprehend the workings of NARFE. I enjoyed a staff dedicated to having a successful convention, which we accomplished. That convention was one of the top dollar raisers the state ever had; we raised \$5,000.

This chapter also has presented several resolutions to the state and national conventions for consideration. A resolution submitted by Dennis Fitzgerald was adopted at state and national conventions two years ago.

We have also presented resolutions concerning WEP and GPO but were not successful in getting them adopted.

I am not leaving the chapter and I intend to be active. George has taken on the task of teaching me how to be web-master and I intend to function as the chapter's web-master.

Please visit our web-site, WWW.narfe372.org, you may see some of my mistakes in the near future.

Again, I can't thank you enough for your confidence and trust over the past ten years.

YOUR EX-PRES Ted Mason

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Elections and Change: Part of the American Experience

As is often the case during elections, things can get tense... and sometimes, hazy; just look at all that has and is happening during the Presidential Primaries. Candidates move in and out... and the landscape evolves. After all the smoke has cleared, a change may be noticeable. Mostly, that change is minor and the things that have been good.. will continue to happen.

There are changes for our own NARFE chapter this year, as well. Our President, Ted Mason, stepped-up to accept a leadership role as Second Vice President of the Pennsylvania Federation of NARFE. This places increased responsibilities on Ted, especially during a national convention year. Ted has much work ahead as he supports the Pennsylvania chapters in maintaining their national voice on important issues.

Somehow, during the hazy chapter elections process, I found myself elected President of our chapter. This is a role I accept with some reticence. I work full time at Montgomery County Community College, and I need to ensure that both organizations get the best service I can offer. At times, I may not be fully up to that task. During those times, we may all need to rely more on each other to get things done and to have them done well. Expecting those times of need to continue, I ask each of you to help smooth out any rough spots in our chapter and to step forward to help, no matter how meekly you may desire to do that. We need each other's support. Support is our strength and that strength is our power.

We are starting a new year of chapter activities. The website has the minutes of past meetings and sometimes a peek at what is coming up. Over the next couple of meetings, we will also discuss plans for the summer. We are considering a good old fashioned

Chapter Picnic. Attend the monthly meetings if you can... or keep up by following the postings on our website. And of course, our newsletters should help ensure that you know what is going on.

Ted Mason will still be involved in our monthly meetings. Ted has also volunteered to take over the duties of Chapter Webmaster. He will keep us all informed and updated on the Chapter website: www.NARFE372.org And, more important to me personally, Ted has also agreed to assist me with my new duties. My need for help starts right from the beginning.

And, to Ted.... thanks for all that you have done for our Chapter!

I look forward to good year for our chapter and the general NARFE membership. There is much to do

Respectfully submitted,

George Shal

LEGISLATIVE NEWS:

Despite the efforts of NARFE on the National Level, nothing has been accomplished regarding the repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO), or the implementation of Premium Conversion.

However, NARFE has succeeded in helping to preserve our earned economic and health security benefits for at least another year. This is an annual struggle as our hard earned benefits are always targeted as cost savings measures. The preservation of our health insurance benefits is and will continue to be one of NARFE's highest priorities.

The congress of the United States, including both the Senate and the House of Representatives, has, in the opinion of this writer, deteriorated into a complete farce that is unable to accomplish anything meaningful except under very rare circumstances such as the recently enacted tax rebate program. Our politicians appear to only be interested in playing political games with both parties equally sharing the blame. They seem to have forgotten that their job is to try and run the country for the benefit of all Americans, not just their party members.

Illustrative of the above is the preoccupation of the House of Representatives with holding extended hearings on the use of steroids and performance enhancing drugs by professional baseball players. This group of posturing congressmen wasted several weeks on this nonsense, while the economy is going down the drain. Their time would have been better and more profitably spent trying to resolve the mortgage and credit crisis.

Also, do not overlook the activities of Pennsylvania's senior Senator - Arlen Specter. While the economy has been floundering, Mr. Specter has devoted a large amount of time to threatening to investigate the National Football League for alleged "cheating". Curiously, while he was doing this, his Chief of Staff was trying to obtain hard to get Super Bowl tickets directly from the league office. Again, working on the economic problems of the country would have been a better use of his time, and avoided the appearance of impropriety.

The upcoming primary in Pennsylvania will give everyone the opportunity to vote for the candidate of their choice. My recommendation is: Vote early, Vote often, Vote frequently, or vote late. But above all else

VOTE !!!

MEMBERSHIP NEWS:

CURRENT EMPLOYEE INCENTIVE PROGRAM:

NARFE is discontinuing its "Current Employee Incentive Program". Effective January 1, 2008, all new CFEs will join NARFE at the standard first-year membership fee of \$33. After the first year, those CFEs will renew at the standard NARFE dues rate. Those CFEs who joined prior to January 1, 2008 will be grandfathered and as long as they remain a CFE they will be able to renew at the old CFE rates. Once retired, they will renew at the standard NARFE dues rate.

Although the incentive program has been discontinued, the \$8 finder fee will continue for members or chapters who recruit CFEs.

CHAPTER RECRUITMENT OR RETENTION CONTEST:

A special recruitment and retention rewards program for chapters is being tested by NARFE and will be in effect from January 1 to June 30, 2008. Cash prizes will be awarded for both recruitment and retention and each of these categories will include two contests, one based on gross numbers and one based on percentages.

First place will receive \$500, second place will receive \$300 and third place will receive \$200. Chapter winners will receive special recognition and a check at the 2008 NARFE National Convention. If the program is beneficial in stimulating recruitment and retention at the Chapter level, it will be repeated annually.

As you know, our Chapter does not participate in any formalized recruiting programs. If you have the opportunity to recommend Chapter membership to former co-workers or friends, please be sure to have them include your membership number and the Chapter number on the Membership Application that they submit. That way, not only will the Chapter get the benefit of the recruitment for the contest, but you will receive the \$8 recruitment fee if they are Current Federal Employees.

MEETINGS

As noted above our meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month. (EXCEPT January and February); there is no meeting on these two months. Also we have a Christmas/Holiday Party is the first Wednesday of December held at a different location. Our Meetings are held at 1:00 PM at the Old Country Buffet at Germantown Pike and route 202 (Dekalb Pike). We usually get there earlier so we can eat lunch (cost about \$6.58 with a senior citizen card); the earlier you get there the more you can eat. This restaurant cannot be seen from route 202 (Dekalb Pike). There is a traffic light on Dekalb Pike (202) at the entrance to the hospital. The Old Country Buffet is behind the Kentucky Fried Chicken across the street from the hospital. We usually have a guest speaker.

2008 METING DATES

March 5, 2008, April 2, 2008, May 7, 2008, June 4, 2008, July 2 2008, August 6, 2008, September 3, 2008, October 1, 2008, November 5, 2008, and December 3,2008.

OTHER ITEMS

If you want to be reminded of our monthly meeting; call Theodore Mason at 610-539-5650 and you will be called the Sunday prior to our Wednesday meeting.

We encourage all members to come to our meetings. Most meeting we have a speaker that has items of interest to retirees. We also discuss items of interest such as WEP/GPO, the new Medicare premiums that will be introduced based upon our earnings.