

NARFE Chapter 372  
Norristown, PA

The regular meeting was held Wednesday, April 1, 2009 at the Old Country Buffet, East Norriton, PA

The meeting was called to order at 1pm by George Shal, President

Attendance: 32 Members and guests were present

The invocation was given by Si Nagel and George Shal led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance. George also asked for a moment of silence for our dear Ruth Oberg, Thor's wife who passed away last month.

Before George Shal introduced the speaker, he had everyone introduce themselves because of the large turnout.

Guest Speaker: Bryan Kendro, Representative Jim Gerlack's District Director, and although Bryan was a last minute substitution for the Congressman, he was certainly well received by the audience. Everyone had lots of questions about their benefits and about the stimulus plan. We were very happy to have him attend our meeting.

New Members were introduced: Paul Edgar, Larry Antonio, and Tony Thompson

The reading of the minutes of the previous meeting of March 4, 2009 was waived; and the minutes were approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Si Nagle reported a balance of \$ 3358.75. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report

Membership Committee Report: Eileen Fitzgerald reported that there are 305 Chapter members, 32 NO members, and 5 Honorary Members for a Grand Total of 342 members.

Other committee reports:

Sunshine Committee: Alice Snyder reported sending a sympathy card to Thor Oberg on the loss of his wife Ruth, to William Moran who is very ill, and to Helen Debus.

## Old Business Discussed

NARFE Legislative Seminar: Ted Mason attended the NARFE Legislative seminar in Washington DC. While there he took the opportunity to meet with staff of Senators Casey and Spector.

Al Henryson has been looking for alternate sites for our meetings in the event the Old Country Buffet should suddenly go out of business. He visited with Shannandel in King of Prussia. They would like to accommodate our group. The cost per person for lunch would be \$11.20 per person. Although the food is good and the place is beautiful, there would be a couple of drawbacks for our group. One was that there are many windows in the area where we would have our meeting which would interfere with our speakers who use projection equipment. The other is limited parking near the entrance. He also checked Ray's Diner which is on Germantown Pike around the corner from the Old Country Buffet. Ray's has a room which can accommodate 40 people. If we had our meetings there we would order off a menu and the waitress would provide separate checks. Eileen Fitzgerald also checked Christine's which is near Shannandel. She said that Christine's would not be suitable for our group. George Shal said that in the event of an unexpected closing of Old Country Buffet we would hold our meeting at Ray's because of its proximity to the OCB.

Peg Bergman mentioned that our next speaker will be coming from the Social Security Administration. Since we had decided at a previous meeting to give our old NARFE magazines to a Federal agency, she requested that people bring them to this meeting to give to the Social Security representative to take back and give out to his coworkers.

Peg Bergman mentioned that both Blue Cross and Aetna have indicated that they will participate in this our Health mini fair this year.

Peg Bergman reported on her findings regarding the August social event. Bus transportation is too expensive to go to places like the museums in Delaware, out to Lancaster, or to Longwood Gardens. That left us with three choices: Atlantic City to the casinos, take the Spirit of Philadelphia Cruise, or go to the Norristown Zoo and have a catered lunch there. The membership voted to go on the Spirit of Philadelphia cruise. We will take the cruise August 5, 2009. Members, their family and friends are invited. There will be more information on the website about the trip as soon as it is available.

## New Business Discussed:

The membership voted to reimburse Peg Bergman \$94.50 for stamps for the postcards which were sent out to promote the meeting.

The National Office of NARFE is expected to contact all members directly with a referendum for unified dues. George Shal wanted our membership to vote on what our recommendation was to our membership regarding this issue. After a lengthy discussion on the issue, it was decided that it is not in the interest of our chapter and the membership voted unanimously NOT TO SUPPORT unified dues. Therefore, the chapter is recommending that when the referendum is sent to you by National, that you vote AGAINST unified dues. ( Note: updated information from the Federation after this meeting indicates that the Chapter Secretary will receive the referendum for consideration at a future meeting.)

Peg Bergman asked the members present to indicate how many came to this special Saturday meeting because it was on a Saturday rather than on a Wednesday and a number of people raised their hands, indicating that we should probably think about holding some meetings on a Saturday. That needs to be discussed further. However, when Peg asked the membership how many people came because of the Speaker, over half those in attendance raised their hands. Guess we got the right speaker this time. It is important for members to make suggestions for programs as we do consider them when we set the agenda for the year.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to adjourn the meeting at 3:20pm

Our next meeting will be on May 6, 2009 at 1 pm at the Old Country Buffet