

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES  
MISSISSIPPI FEDERATION OF CHAPTERS**



ESTABLISHED

IN 1921

NARFE IS THE CHAMPION OF RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Ray Sheehy, President

**MISSISSIPPI FEDERATION CONVENTION REPORT**

April 25, 26, and 27, 2004  
Ramada Inn and Convention Center  
Tupelo, Mississippi

**Sunday, April 25, 2004**

District III Field Vice President Ken Martin addressed the Convention at 7:00 p. m. in Room 3 of the Convention Center. A Memorial Service was held immediately following. The Reverend Milton H. (Mike) Marcele of Hope Ministries officiated. President Sheehy read the names of the deceased as the Chapter President, a Chapter member, or the District Representative placed the flowers in the Memorial Vase.

**Monday, April 26, 2004**

CALL TO ORDER:

Ray Sheehy, Federation President, called the morning session to order at 9:00 a. m.

WELCOME:

William D. Dent, President of Host Chapter 1369, North East Mississippi, welcomed guests and delegates to the City of Tupelo.

OPENING PRAYER:

Mary Francis, Chapter 1369.

PRESENTATION OF COLORS AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Boy Scout Troop 85, Harrisburg Baptist Church, Tupelo, Troop Leader Randy Sharpe.

WELCOME:

Larry K. Otis, Mayor of Tupelo, Mississippi.

WELCOME:

Jimmy Pappas, Manager of Ramada Inn and Convention Center.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:

President Ray Sheehy introduced Charles Fallis, National President of NARFE, and Mrs. Fallis, Guy Haviland of the Florida Federation of NARFE and Mrs. Haviland, and Bob Harrell of the Georgia Federation and Mrs. Harrell. Mr. Haviland and Mr. Harrell are candidates for the District III Field Vice President position now held by Ken Martin.

ADOPT CONVENTION RULES:

President Sheehy distributed copies of the Convention Standing Rules. Dave Myers moved that the Rules be accepted. McLendon seconded the motion. The motion carried.

After a coffee break, the Convention reconvened at 9:45.

BUSINESS SESSION:

Initial Credential Report and Quorum Report, Roy Stewart:

President Sheehy reported for Roy Stewart that the required Quorum was present.

Introduction of Region III Field Vice President, Executive Board, Federation Past Presidents, and Chapter Presidents:

President Sheehy thanked Ken Martin in absentia for his speech before the Memorial Service on Sunday evening. (Mr. Martin and his wife, Carolyn, left immediately after to attend other commitments on Monday.)

He introduced the Executive Board, Federation Past Presidents, and Immediate Past President Viola Harrison.

Introductions were concluded with the 14 Chapter Presidents in attendance standing and introducing themselves.

Federation Committee Reports:

Membership:

Ellawese McLendon presented the Membership Report for Mary Pierson who was unable to attend due to illness. There are 3 chapters in the State that consistently add new members: Greenville, North Jackson, and Warren County. There was an overall loss of 12 members in the State so far this year compared to last year's net loss of 36. The loss is due to death or non-payment of dues. There is no solution for the first, but signing up for dues withholding is a painless way of ensuring that dues are paid. The M-112 report can be used to identify when members' dues become payable. Chapters can use this report to urge members to sign up for dues withholding when their dues become payable the next time. Mary also noted that more and more members who are still working are joining NARFE each month.

A new chapter was organized in Southaven in February. Two other new chapters are in the process. Members who request the formation of a new chapter do so because they do not want to drive 15 or 30 miles to a chapter meeting. New chapters will enhance the chances of recruiting new members and will be more convenient for the current ones. A handout on organizing a new chapter and Mary's report are attached (Attachments A and B).

#### Legislative-State:

Noel Sumrall, First Vice President and Legislative Chairman, reported that the COLA is currently 1.4 per cent with six months to go.

He presented statistics on the voting records of Mississippi's Senators and Congressmen in the 107<sup>th</sup> and 108<sup>th</sup> Congresses on the Premium Conversion and Government Pension Offset/Windfall Elimination Provision bills. Other statistics gathered at the Legislative Conference last year in Washington, D. C., concerned voting records from the 97<sup>th</sup> through the 106<sup>th</sup> Congresses. He concluded that work must be done on Mississippi Senators and Congressmen to improve and increase the support they give to NARFE.

He pointed out that in October of 2001 there were 23,707 annuitants in Mississippi, including employee retirees and annuitant spouses, receiving a total of \$35,472,000.00, and that these facts should be brought to the attention of our Congressional Delegation.

He noted that there is a toll free number for the Hotline available for those who do not have a computer, 877 217-8234.

#### Alzheimer's:

Tom Price, Alzheimer's Chairman, reported that 2,683 members donated a total of \$27,691.45 as of April 27, 2004. Eight chapters donated more than \$10 per member. Average member giving for the Federation is \$10.32. The 7-year total for the Federation is \$168,407.00. The Mississippi Federation ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation in total giving for 2003 behind only Virginia, and ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in per capita giving.

Chapter 968, Starkville, received \$100.00 for the greatest per capita giving in Tier I. Chapter 1388, Lowndes County, was 2<sup>nd</sup> and received \$50.00. In Tier II Chapter 1572, North Jackson, was 1<sup>st</sup>, and Chapter 1879, Jacinto, was 2<sup>nd</sup>. Chapter 1208, East Central Mississippi, was 1<sup>st</sup> and Chapter 1667, Newton County, was 2<sup>nd</sup> in Tier III. These chapters also received \$100.00 and \$50.00 awards respectively. See the attached report for additional details (Attachment C).

Jack Thomas announced that Jesse McDonald of the Starkville Chapter has volunteered to replace Tom Price as Alzheimer's Chairman. President Sheehy thanked him for volunteering.

#### FEEA Fund and Scholarship Program

Helen Thomas, Coordinator, reported that during 2003 a total of \$17,448.50 was awarded to 36 members affected by natural disasters. The average grant totaled \$484.68, and does not need to be repaid.

During 2003-2004 NARFE received approximately 1000 applications for scholarships and awarded \$60,000.00: 6 grants of \$1,000.00 each to each region. Mississippi had 6 applicants and one winner, Jenna Cobb, of Wiggins.

Two Chapters in the Federation continue to support the NARFE Scholarship and Disaster Fund: Ocean Springs, Chapter 1765, and Vicksburg, Chapter 1501. Helen thanked them for their donations. She urged each District Representative to publicize the program during their chapter visits, and urged each chapter president to appoint a person to promote giving and organize fund raising to support the program. The program can be used as a recruiting incentive and is helpful in promoting the image of NARFE as being concerned for more than just protecting our benefits.

For the history of the program and additional information see the attached report (Attachment D).

#### Newsletter:

Randall Johnson, Newsletter Editor, was ill and unable to attend.

President Sheehy noted that Mr. Johnson has been very ill and may be unable to continue. Bill Hodge was suggested as a possible replacement.

Tom Price stated that NARFE Headquarters is selling tickets on a computer as a fund raiser. He moved that the Federation buy 100 tickets on the computer in an effort to win it and give it to the new editor if one of the Federation tickets is drawn. The motion was seconded and passed.

Opal Anderson-Smith, the District 2 Representative, resigned for health reasons in January. A replacement has not yet been found although President Sheehy has someone in mind.

Viola Harrison, Immediate Past President, informed the President that he had failed to introduce his Parliamentarian when he introduced the Executive Board. He corrected the oversight and praised Helen Thomas for her expertise and assistance.

John Fairly of Chapter 209 pointed out as a post script to Mary Pierson's report that if members purchase a Lifetime Membership there will be no dues increases, and if they sign up for dues withholding they will save \$4.00 on the annual dues.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a. m. for lunch and resumed at 1:00 p. m.

## BUSINESS SESSION RESUMED

### Treasurer's Report:

Roy Stewart discussed a problem regarding the contract with the Convention Center. To obtain the \$55.00 room rate, he had to guarantee 100 room nights. As members signed in at the convention they were asked how many nights they would be staying. The total covered the number of required room nights. Some members did not stay the number of nights they indicated, however, or booked through a travel agency, or made other arrangements so that the requirement for 100 room nights was not met. To avoid paying an \$1,100.00 charge Roy planned to book two rooms for two nights to meet the 100 room-night quota. He asked that in the future members support the Convention by booking rooms at the facility where the Convention is being held and staying at that facility for the number of nights committed to at registration.

At the 2003 Convention Roy mentioned that there was money left in the Convention Fund that he would like to see used to provide free registration at a future convention. He asked for a motion to that effect. Tom Price moved that the 2005 Convention be a Jubilee Year with the registration fee rescinded. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Roy announced that there were packets of NARFE envelopes on the back table available to chapter presidents and secretaries. He requested that attendees turn in their expense reports to him so that he could reimburse them before the Convention ended to avoid postage costs.

The balance carried forward on the Treasurer's Report as of April 21, 2003, was \$15,792.35. After total receipts and total disbursements and matching funds transfers, the total cash on hand was \$17,328.57. Copies of the report were available from the Treasurer. The complete report is attached (Attachment E).

Roy also presented the Report of Auditor on Examination of Financial Records prepared by Montgomery and Daughter, Public Accountants, for John Montgomery who was unable to attend. The auditor's report includes a cover letter which commends Mr. Stewart "...for his skill and diligence in protecting the financial assets for the Mississippi Federation of Chapters, NARFE." The Auditor's report is attached (Attachment F).

### Final Credentials Report

Treasurer Roy Stewart reported that 15 Chapters were represented at the Convention. There were 99 delegates registered and 5 guests.

### NARFE PAC:

Mazine Winstead, NARFE PAC Chairman, requested that chapter chairmen send their PAC

contributions to her rather than directly to NARFE Headquarters. This will allow her to keep accurate records of how much is being contributed by the Federation. In addition, she will be able to ensure that each member who contributes \$15.00 will receive a NARFE PAC pin.

She reported that 17 Chapters contributed to the NARFE PAC through December 31, 2003, for a total of 75 members contributing \$1,327.00. The total for the 5 states of Region III, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands was \$26,744.79 contributed by 1,143 members. Contributions from 9,609 members from the 50 States, Guam, Hawaii, The Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Washington, D. C., totaled \$212,647.18 for the same period.

During the period January 1 through March 31, 2004, an additional \$41,936.90 was contributed by the 5 States of Region III and Puerto Rico. Mazine collected an additional \$266.00 from Convention attendees. Her report is attached (Attachment G).

#### District 1 Representative:

Tucker Russell has held the position for three years during which he has familiarized himself with his District. He sees his role as an encourager. Last summer he visited the Grenada Chapter and attended an excellent program at the Boyd Oliver Chapter. He recommends that Chapter Presidents talk to each other and communicate ideas for programs that will interest and attract old and new members. He welcomes invitations to visit chapters and share ideas for programs based on those he has seen at other chapter meetings in his district. He installed officers at three chapters last fall. He will be attending a picnic at Tupelo this summer.

#### District 3 Representative:

Lamar Warnock made it a point to speak to each Chapter President from his district who was present at the convention. He congratulated the three chapters from his district that received Alzheimer's Awards: Starkville, East Central Mississippi, and Newton County. He indicated that membership recruitment and retention are the central problems for him. His district lost one chapter this past year and may lose another. He requested that all NARFE members support Mary Pierson and the District Representatives in their efforts in this area. He asked that district chapters send interesting articles about chapter activities, fund raising ideas, membership drives, success stories, etc., to their district representatives who will send them on to the Newsletter editor. Publication will disseminate information and ideas throughout the Federation.

#### Pre-retirement Report:

Ellawese McLendon delivered the report for Mary. Dr. Dan Galvan has appointed Ken Glass to head the Pre-retirement Seminar program for NARFE. Mr. Glass has made application to the Government Services Agency (GSA) to be placed on the list of Pre-retirement Seminar Vendors to be considered by Federal agencies. Mr. Glass will prepare a curriculum and provide training for NARFE members who volunteer to help with these seminars (See Attachment B).

President Sheehy added that he has contacted the new Center Director of Stennis Space Center, Admiral Thomas Donaldson, and has been assured that NARFE will have access to Stennis for retirement seminars.

#### District 4 Representative:

Ellawese McLendon noted that she had had the opportunity to participate in an Extension Service Pre-retirement Seminar and highly recommended that anyone approaching retirement do the same.

She reiterated the importance of recruitment and retention, and of dues withholding, as a means to stop membership loss. She advocated interesting programs and variety as a means of attracting and keeping members. Homebound members should not be forgotten since they are also dues payers and need care and attention. She encouraged chapters to apply for and utilize matching funds available for recruitment.

She attended and participated in the Region III Biennial Seminar held in Columbus, Georgia,

September 30 - October 1, 2003. She is working on a possible new chapter as well as recruiting new members into current chapters that include Collins/Bassfield and Poplarville. She emphasized that forming a new chapter will not mean taking members from current chapters, but increasing the total membership. Pine Belt Chapter 670 held one meeting in Columbia in an effort to attract members that may not want to drive 25 to 30 miles to Hattiesburg to attend a meeting.

She asked that Chapter Presidents please send her short articles about chapter activities to be published in the Newsletter. Her report is attached (Attachment H).

After a short break, the Convention reconvened at 2:35.

President Sheehy introduced guest speakers Guy L. Haviland of the Florida Federation and Robert Harrell of the Georgia Federation. Mr. Haviland and Mr. Harrell are running for the position now held by Ken Martin, Field Vice President for Region III. Each candidate explained his background and the reasons to vote for him to succeed Mr. Martin. Their presentations were followed by a brief question and answer period.

Roy Stewart drew members' attention to the correct address of the Mississippi Federation Website: [www.narfe-mississippi.org](http://www.narfe-mississippi.org) located in the footnote on page 23 of the Convention Program. He also asked for a list of members who would be attending the National Convention in Reno. Ray Sheehy, Ellawese McClendon, Noel Sumrall, and Mr. and Mrs. Fallis indicated that they would be attending.

In his closing remarks President Sheehy noted that proxies for the National Convention would be sent to chapter secretaries and cautioned that they not be discarded. Tom Price advised that there must be at least 8 delegates from a chapter at the Convention or the chapter delegation will not be qualified to vote all of the votes for the chapter. Helen Thomas noted that a convention package is always mailed out at the end of April or first part of May that will contain all the needed information. The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p. m.

## **Tuesday, April 27, 2004**

### **CALL TO ORDER:**

President Sheehy called the meeting to order at 9:15 a. m.

### **OPENING PRAYER:**

Mary Francis, Chapter 1369, delivered the Invocation.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Aubrey Milstead, Sergeant-at-Arms, led The Pledge of Allegiance.

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:**

President Sheehy urged the Convention attendees to identify members who do not have an avid interest in NARFE and try to arouse their interest. He asked that potential members be identified and encouraged and helped to join and become active members. He stated that Mary Pierson points out in her pre-retirement seminars that insurance cost would no longer be paid with pre-tax dollars after retirement. This fact can be used as an incentive to join and become active in securing the legislation needed.

He urged that Chapter Presidents take a hard look at their meetings and try to make them fun by introducing some levity and by finding good speakers on various subjects. Not every meeting has to deal only with NARFE matters.

He noted that those present at the Convention were the workers in the Federation, and that they were most likely involved in other groups and activities as well because they don't mind working hard. He stressed the importance of thanking the officers, chairmen, and volunteers who do the work for the chapter.

He again expressed his gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. Fallis, Mr. and Mrs. Ken Martin, Mr. and Mrs. Guy Haviland and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Harrell for attending and participating in the Convention. He gave special thanks to Tom Price, the out-going Alzheimer's Chairman, Noel Sumrall, Tucker Russell, Lamar Warnock, Ellawese McLendon, and Viola Harrison. He thanked Mary Francis for her services as Chaplain, Mr. Pappas, Manager of the Ramada Inn and Convention Center, and Mr. Thomas Moman, of the North Jackson Chapter, who sang at the Banquet on Monday night.

After a short coffee break the Convention resumed.

President Sheehy had a special thank you for Roy Stewart for all the hours of hard work he did to organize the Convention while he was recovering from major surgery and caring for his wife who was also ill. Roy received a standing ovation.

#### TRAINING:

Training on the following subjects was conducted by the Alzheimer's and NARFE PAC chairmen and Ellawese McLendon for Mary Pierson.

Tom Price, Alzheimer's.

Ellawese McLendon, Membership and Chapter Growth.

Mazine Winstead, NARFE PAC.

Legislative-National

Noel Sumrall presented additional information on the status of the GPO/WEP and Premium Conversion legislation. He asked members to continue contacting our Congressmen on these issues, but recommended that e-mail, FAX, or phone calls be used rather than letters because of the anthrax scare of last year. He presented a series of charts with the e-mail addresses, FAX numbers, and telephone numbers for our entire Congressional Delegation including the numbers in Washington and all of their offices around the State.

#### CLOSING REMARKS:

President Sheehy again thanked everyone for coming. He invited Mr. and Mrs. Fallis to come again and bring Ken Martin who may be a National Vice President after the Convention in Reno in August. He explained the problem with the Distinguished Service Awards and promised that they would be redone and either mailed or hand-delivered to the Chapters. He asked the Executive Board to attend a short meeting in the Hospitality Room and declared the Convention closed.

Karen J. Brown  
Mississippi Federation Secretary