



NARFE
MISSOURI FEDERATION
ANNUAL CONFERENCE
(via Zoom meeting platform)
April 27, 2023

The conference opened at 10:32 a.m. with the greeting from President Emerson Kretzer since Laura Cowart, 2nd Vice-President, is unable to attend as her husband remains hospitalized. Our thoughts are with them as well as all seeking recovery.

After President Kretzer's initial greeting, there was a moment of silence in honor of fellow Federation members who are no longer with us. Immediately following the moment of silence, Emerson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Kretzer symbolically accepted the gavel. He stated that this year's conference has no national NARFE speaker scheduled despite efforts due to national speakers being unavailable during this scheduled time for the conference.

President Emerson Kretzer focused his remarks on membership and legislation. Our Missouri membership now stands at 2,632 members with 1,267 in chapters and the others are national members only. He challenges each member to recruit at least one new member this year. We need to continue to grow our membership by reaching out to the younger federal employees to keep NARFE strong and viable to better deal with Congress. We all need to reach out and contact Congress with our fears and concerns over our pay and benefits. Congress could be looking at us as ways to cut costs with the debt ceiling fiasco created by them. We need Congress to act responsibly and timely with the debt ceiling before it's too late.

President Kretzer reported that there are several bills in Congress that need support and action on them.

The Social Security Fairness Act of 2023, H.R. 82/ S.597, would repeal the WEP/GPO. By early April, it had 223 co-sponsors and 290 are needed for at least 25 days to have it come to the floor for a vote.

The Equal COLA Act, H.R. 866, would give FERS retirees the same COLA as the CSRS retirees. Currently, it's one percent less than for FERS.

Saving the Civil Service Act, H.R. 1002/ S. 399, would prevent the return of the Schedule F federal employee which would make them at will employees, which means they could be fired for no reason whatsoever, and have no recourse against the decision.

Comprehensive Paid Leave for Federal Employees Act, H. R. 856/ S.274, would increase the leave available to federal employees for dependent care.

President Kretzer urged taking action by going to the NARFE website where there's more information and letters that can be filled in and sent to congressional representatives. We need to make our voices heard loud and clear and let Congress know we want action on these legislative bills. Call, email, and write.

Another good way to contact your congressional representatives is to register for and attend LEGCon 23, June 20 – 22, which is virtual this year. The first two days have general sessions, guest speakers, and breakout sessions. The last day will be spent as virtual advocacy, where attendees will be able to speak with their congressional representatives. The Missouri Federation will reimburse the \$150.00 registration fee for Missouri NARFE members who register and attend. Registration and payment is on the national NARFE website. For Missouri Federation reimbursement, pay to attend and then submit a voucher to the Missouri Federation for reimbursement.

Public Service Recognition Week is May 7-13, 2023. Many thanks for all you have done in the past and all that some are continuing to do as federal employees.

The conference then moved to the treasurer's report. Treasurer Marcy Nelson thanked Bob Hagedorn and Denise Kretzer for auditing the Missouri Federation financial records and finding all in order. Marcy reported the following fiscal numbers (2022): Balance - \$50,368.71; Checking - \$34,121.42; CD - \$16,247.29. She stated that the new fiscal year's budget was approved at the Missouri Federation board meeting held before this conference and will be posted to the Federation website.

Secretary Kay Crayton reported that since the in person conference last May in Springfield, there have been some Missouri Federation officer changes as well as Congressional District changes. She expressed gratitude to those who have resigned for their service to NARFE as well as for their guidance and encouragement to get involved working with the Federal Executive Board. Since meeting last in Springfield, Tricia Barret is now the Congressional District Leader for District 3. William Cooper is now the Service Officer. Craig Pettiborne is the Acting Legislative Chair – National.

Our last Memorial Service was held in 2022 in Springfield. Since this year the conference is virtual, the next Memorial Service will be held at the in person conference in 2024. Next year we will honor fellow members who passed from May 2022 through April 2024. Chapter Presidents

and Secretaries, please keep this in mind and forward relevant information to the Federation Secretary early next year.

Region V Vice-President Cindy Reneé Blythe followed with her report. Congress and their staff at this point in April have returned to DC. LEGCon, June 20-22, is coming up with a Know Before You Go virtual training session on June 14th to prepare for the virtual Congress visit on June 22nd. She stressed the importance of making NARFE members' concerns heard.

The Social Security Fairness Act is now 58 co-sponsors shy of the required 290 co-sponsors with 232 co-sponsors.

The Equal COLA Act, which would remove the 1% reduction affecting FERS retirees, has 20 co-sponsors. It's important to urge House members to sponsor this legislative bill.

Region V Vice-President Blythe stated there's a feeling that NARFE has expanded too far. This view believes there are organizations in place such as unions to handle current employees. Responses, as well as Region V Vice-President's view, is NARFE is important to both current employees as well as retirees. She believes in the need to support current federal employees especially those within 3 to 5 years of retirement. She stated Nora McDonald has been newly hired for member engagement. She offered to provide the latest national NARFE org chart which has been received and forwarded to the FEB.

There are 7 states in Region V with a total of 11,751 members. There are 116 local chapters. Overall NARFE membership is 139,824 and is decreasing. This is why existing members need to make the effort to recruit new members. The more active members, the more can be accomplished. NARFE in the states of Nebraska and Iowa are attempting to get annuities at the state level exempted from state taxes for example.

More information is expected this year on the new Postal Health Benefits service coming in 2025. This new health benefits service for postal employees will replace the Federal Employees Health Benefits coverage for eligible Postal Service employees, Postal Service retirees, and their eligible family members.

The federal Long Term Care insurance is undergoing its 5 year renewal. There's concern about the cost of this insurance going up as people drop out of the coverage with increased costs.

National NARFE has just published updated By Laws although the copies are limited to 5 copies per Federation. Region V Vice-President Blythe discussed with the FEB about exploring printing options at the Federation level.

Bob Hagedorn, past President, NARFE, then reported that the annual audit he and Denise Kretzer performed was a clean audit with no issues found. Treasurer Marcy Nelson keeps great records. Checking had \$34,121.42 and the CD \$16,247.29.

Marcy Nelson and Kay Crayton have agreed to work together on Time and Place for next year's in person annual Federation conference. As a reminder, the election of officers is also next year.

In closing, it's noted that this year's virtual Federation conference had a quorum as defined in the By Laws which states a quorum is 20% of the registered Association members being present at the call to order by the President. There were 18 in attendance. The conference adjourned at 11:13 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Kay L. Crayton

Secretary, Missouri Federation