

Chapter 1747, Greater Bowie-Crofton Area

Chapter Membership Action Plan for 2011

Although our current practices pertaining to membership seem to cover a great number of the practices mentioned at the October 22, 2010 Training Workshop on Membership (Recruitment and Retention), there were several items brought out there and in the report issued after the workshop that merited our consideration. Following are the activities which will continue, although we will be making some adjustments to them, plus some new plans.

Current practices handled by the Membership Chair:

1) Personalized welcome letters (on chapter letterhead) to new chapter members in these categories: retired federal employees, active federal employees, survivor annuitants, those assuming memberships of recently deceased NARFE retiree members, and those transferring to our chapter from another chapter. Included in the welcome letter is a brief overview of our meetings/activities, and an invitation to the next meeting with information on the program; also included is info on our newsletter and website. A current newsletter is also included. **To be added: Info on our Service Center.**

2) Personalized letters to those who have received a "second notice" from national NARFE and to those who have been dropped. Included with these letters are: info/forms on dues withholding and multi-year dues options. With the letter to dropped members is a form (filled in with their name and member ID) for reinstatement. In both cases, we have supplied a business reply envelope addressed to NARFE. These letters also include information on the next meeting/activity and a request to the member to attend. (Note: Traditionally, we continue to send dropped members chapter newsletters for three months.) An additional letter was developed for those who request that we transfer them to a chapter near their new (usually out-of-state) residence; this request occasionally occurs when they submit an address change to the chapter.

NEW PRACTICES TO BE CONSIDERED/ADOPTED/ACTIVATED BY EX.-BD.

1) Establish Membership Co-Chairs: One will handle Recruitment, basically sending out welcome letters, the other will handle Retention (sending out second notice letters and letters to dropped members).

2) Establishment of a Membership Contact Subcommittee. Members of this subcommittee will be responsible for contacting those members who have received second notice/dropped letters. These subcommittee members will

work with/report to the Membership Committee Co-Chair responsible for Retention.

3) Public Relations Program/ Expansion of Current Program. Currently, the program includes, but is not limited to, sending meeting notices to media outlets including The Washington Post, two Bowie weeklies, the Crofton Crier, and several other local/regional weeklies. In addition, the meeting notice is sent to the Bowie TV station. **NEW: Additional media outlets are being explored at Ft. Meade and two Bowie federal worksites.***

Currently, colorful 8.5 x 11 in. flyers advertising chapter meetings are prepared for posting on bulletin boards in a variety of locations, including Bowie and Odenton Senior Centers, libraries and several supermarkets. Although we do not know if these flyers are effective, we shall attempt to determine if any new members (or guests at our meetings) were influenced by them. **In the meantime, we are exploring placing the meeting flyers at Ft. Meade and two Bowie federal worksites.**

4) As yet, we have not taken advantage of NARFE's Matching Funds Program, but will be actively seeking a project(s) to utilize it. While our executive board a while back had considered one project, it was not activated, but that project as well as others will be pursued. One possibility to be discussed is placemats for restaurants (particularly those we use for our holiday/other luncheons).

5) Greater emphasis on recruitment by Chapter members. While we held a membership recruitment contest in 2010, it was not at all successful, despite much publicity at meetings and in our newsletter. However, we shall continue to stress the value and success of one-to-one recruitment and retention efforts to our members and highlight all successes in detail in our newsletter. (Note: One long-time member invited several former coworkers to our December 2010 holiday luncheon; this resulted in at least two new members. A story about it will appear in our next newsletter)

6) An even more warm welcome than usual will be given to new members at their first meeting; a board member will be encouraged to sit with each new member. In addition, our welcome won't stop there; each new attendee will be contacted by phone/e-mail by that board member to ask them their impression of the meeting/event and if they have any suggestions for improving on it.

Currently, we invite all members (at meetings and in our newsletter) to suggest future program topics; although none have been recently offered, we will continue this practice. Several years back, we surveyed new members on topics they'd like addressed in forms included with welcome letters; using the survey form again will be considered by the executive board (although 99% of the topics suggested were those already being presented). Note: A program

suggestion survey sent last year to all members produced few responses and no new ideas .

* Within a week, letters will be sent to Fr. Meade and the Bowie federal worksites to request meetings between Chapter officers and representatives of these workplaces to discuss placing NARFE information on bulletin boards, making NARFE magazine and our Chapter newsletter available to their employees. Also to be discussed will be if there are any areas in which we can work together, such as providing retirement information and/or speaking about NARFE at their facilities.

Recommendation to MD-Federation:

Expansion of “Chapter Activists Base” -- One Result of Hosting Federation Conventions

In 2010, Chapter 1747 actually expanded our base of “activists” during the 2010 Maryland Federation Mini-Convention; the 18 Chapter 1747 members who signed up to participate/attend set a chapter participation record at a convention. It is now evident that the 2011 MD-Fed Convention will more than double the number of chapter participants who played some part in the 2010 mini- convention.

Our board members agree that **the Federation should rotate Fed. convention sites in order that other chapters will be able to involve a greater number of members in these conventions; we believe that even 1-2 days of activism presents a whole new outlook on our organization and its work and will encourage and inspire more chapter activism. It’s apparent that it worked in Ocean City, is working in Chapter 1747, and should work in other chapters equally well).**

Submitted by: Dorothy Campbell, on behalf of the Executive Board
January 3, 2011