

Minutes

Meunier-Perry Chapter, NARFE

Thursday February 21, 2019

- President Blake Crawford called the meeting to order at 11:33 AM.
- Ken Trinkley (Sergeant-At-Arms) led the Pledge of Allegiance and John Hughes (Chaplain) led us in prayer.
- Blake Crawford introduced our speaker, Samih Baalbaki, with Freedom Readers.
 - Freedom Readers is a non-profit organization whose mission is “to improve reading skills in low wealth communities by providing one-to-one literacy tutoring, free books for home libraries, and an inspiring, high-energy learning environment.”
 - Volunteers meet weekly with K-5 students (14 weeks during the spring semester and 8 weeks during the summer), usually in a school or a community center. Sessions usually last 1½ hours and focus on comprehension. During the summer, volunteers can work with groups instead of one-to-one sessions.
 - Students are encouraged to read regularly, read a variety of materials, and read for a variety of purposes.
 - At the end of the semester, student scholars prepare and present a speech, as a way of building confidence and learning how to use a microphone, eye contact, and voice projection.
 - In 2016, some 6,600 books were given to young scholars (through book donations or purchased from donations, fund raisers, and grants).
 - For more information about the organization, local sites, and how to volunteer, visit their website (www.freedomreaders.org).
- Joyce Jones (Secretary) read an abbreviated version of the Secretary’s minutes from the January 17 business meeting. The full minutes will be posted on the chapter website.
- Joe Arsenault (Treasurer) gave the Treasurer’s Report. The beginning balance on January 17 was \$4,343.99. Receipts totaled \$60 and disbursements totaled \$272.20. The ending balance on February 21 was \$4,131.79.
- As a token of our appreciation, Blake Crawford presented a \$50 check to our waitress at Damon’s.
- Cathy Linta-Leader (Legislative Officer/Webmaster) reported on a variety of legislative issues:
 - Federal employees will receive a 1.9% pay increase in 2019 and those federal employees who went unpaid during the shutdown will receive retroactive pay for that period.
 - A variety of federal legislation has been introduced this year, including bills that:
 - Would avoid shutdowns in the future;
 - Would result in no paychecks for Congressional members and the President in the event of another shutdown;
 - Would increase the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for retirees under the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) to equal the COLA for retirees under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS); and

- Would change Social Security calculations, including use the Consumer Price Index-Elderly (CPI-E) to calculate COLAs, raise the tax threshold for non-Social Security income, and increase the taxable income limit.
- For more information, how to contact Congressional members, and sample letters about bills affecting federal employees and retirees, check out the NARFE website (www.NARFE.org).
- Alice Villavicencia (Alzheimer's Research Officer) noted that she will put an article in an upcoming chapter newsletter about some current Alzheimer's research.
- Billie Nichols (Newsletter Officer) noted that the February NARFE membership roster for Chapter 1015 indicates we have 160 members. There are an additional four memberships pending payment of association or chapter dues. Information about membership and birthdays for each quarter will appear in chapter newsletters.
- Marci Vogel (Vice-President) handed out a Citation for Distinguished Service to Ken Trinkley, who could not be present at the December Christmas luncheon.
- President Blake Crawford called for new business:
 - Linda Pagani made a motion to donate our chapter's half of today's 50/50 drawing to Freedom Readers for books. Cathy Linta-Leader seconded the motion and discussed their need for more books. The motion passed.
 - Blake noted that the South Carolina NARFE Federation Conference is April 29-May 1 in Columbia. There are 3 available scholarships for \$125 each to help members attend. More information about the scholarships is in the February chapter newsletter.
 - The next executive committee meeting will be Thursday, February 28 at the Socastee Library.
 - Our next business meeting will be Thursday, March 21 at 11:30 AM at Damon's. Our speaker will be Kenneth Davis, Deputy Chief, Horry County Police.
 - On April 18, we will have our annual picnic at the Sons and Daughters of Italy lodge.
 - Gary Forrester, Clemson Cooperative Extension Service, will be our speaker at the May 16 business meeting.
- Barbara Bryan conducted the 50/50 drawing, which resulted in a \$50 donation to Freedom Readers.
- The meeting was adjourned at 1:20 PM.

Minutes taken by Joyce Jones, Secretary