

Minutes

Meunier-Perry Chapter, NARFE

Thursday, January 17, 2019

- President Blake Crawford called the meeting to order at 11:32 AM.
- Blake introduced the members present who have transferred from other locations:
 - Cherie Chapman and
 - Richard Cullerton
- Blake introduced our speaker, John Eroszonak, Board Vice-President of Neighbor to Neighbor, and Corey Green, Volunteer Coordinator.
 - Neighbor to Neighbor is a volunteer-based organization whose mission is to promote independence, relieve isolation, and connect homebound adults to their community through transportation.
 - They focus on providing non-emergency transportation for seniors over 60 (who are unable to drive) to access essential services in Horry and Georgetown Counties (from Little River to Georgetown). Transportation requests can include medical, grocery, banking, and other quality of life appointments and events. They also provide non-emergency transportation to medical appointments for chronically ill or physically disabled individuals between 21 and 60 years of age.
 - Clients must be able to get into and out of a car with minimal assistance from a volunteer.
 - Isolation is a big problem in this country. Nearly 1 in 5 adults over 50 are at risk for social isolation, which can have serious health risks. An American's life expectancy exceeds their safe driving expectancy by 6 years for men and 10 years for women.
 - Clients contact Neighbor to Neighbor for ride requests at least three business days in advance. The Mobility Manager enters the date, time, location, and other information into their computer. Volunteers can self-assign themselves to the ride requests, or the Mobility Manager can contact the volunteers to fulfill the request.
 - Once the volunteer accepts the ride request, they contact the client. Once the trip is complete, the volunteer calls or logs in to indicate the ride is complete.
 - Neighbor to Neighbor volunteers undergo background and driving record checks. They provide their own gas and auto insurance. However, volunteer liability insurance is provided by the organization. Volunteers cannot accept payments from clients.
 - Volunteers enjoy flexible schedules; backup support by phone, e-mail, or online; an in-depth orientation; no heavy lifting; and tracking of volunteer miles and hours that can be submitted for tax purposes.
 - In 2018, Neighbor to Neighbor in Horry and Georgetown Counties had 30 new volunteers, 325 clients, 7,401 free rides (with 101,205 miles driven), and 7,182 hours of service provided. They also partnered with many other community organizations, businesses, and churches.
 - Neighbor to Neighbor needs more volunteers and more events to let the community know who they are and what they do. With continued growth, however, comes an increased need for donations and grants for software, marketing tools, daily office needs, and more staff (they currently have 4 full-time employees and 1 part-time employee).
 - For more information about Neighbor to Neighbor, you can call 843-839-0702 or access their website (www.gracefullyaging.org).

- A motion was passed to allow Joyce Jones (Secretary) to read an abbreviated version of the Secretary's minutes from the November 15, 2018 business meeting (omitting items that refer to things that have passed, such as information about the Christmas party). The full minutes will be posted on the chapter website.
- Joe Arsenault (Treasurer) gave the Treasurer's Report for the last two months.
 - The beginning balance on November 15, 2018 was \$2,580.58.
 - Receipts totaled \$1,849.48, primarily from the South Carolina Federation Conference.
 - Disbursements totaled \$214.00.
 - The ending balance on December 13, 2018 was \$4,216.06.
 - Receipts for the next month totaled \$767.93, primarily from our Christmas luncheon payments.
 - Disbursements totaled \$640.00 for Christmas luncheon expenses.
 - The ending balance on January 17, 2019 was \$4,343.99.
- Lynn Vos (Sunshine Officer/Membership Officer) acknowledged chapter members who have birthdays this month.
- Cathy Linta-Leader (Legislative Officer/Webmaster) reported on a variety of legislative issues:
 - It is day 27 of the federal government shutdown. You can contact the D.C. offices of Senators Lindsey Graham and Tim Scott, and Congressman Tom Rice at 866-220-0044. A letter requesting that Congress end the shutdown is also available on NARFE's website (www.narf.org).
 - NARFE partnered with the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund to offer \$100 grants to active federal employees who are not receiving a paycheck during the current shutdown as a result of being furloughed or working in excepted status. You can visit Shutdown Central on the NARFE website about how to apply.
 - Lindsey Graham urged President Trump to temporarily reopen the government while negotiations continued and attempted to persuade him not to declare a national emergency as a way of bypassing Congress and building the wall unilaterally.
 - Both the Federal Aviation Administration and the Internal Revenue Service are bringing furloughed employees back to work.
 - Lots of bills have been introduced as a result of the shutdown, including funding bills for a variety of agencies, departments, activities, and employee groups.
 - A group of nine Republican Senators introduced legislation to permanently end government shutdowns. It would create an automatic continuing resolution for any regular appropriations bill not completed by the October 1 deadline.
 - The Government Employee Fair Treatment Act was signed by the President. Among other items, the legislation would guarantee that furloughed federal employees will be paid retroactively and stipulates that all employees shall be paid as soon as possible after the lapse in appropriations ends.
 - The Trump administration's task force recommendations for saving the U.S. Postal Service were more modest than expected. However, it did urge elimination of collective bargaining over compensation, freezing postal workers' wages, and increases for out-of-pocket contributions toward retirement.

- A Government Accountability Office study of the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund revealed it is only 44% funded. If the current trend continues, where the U.S. Postal Service cannot contribute their required payments to the fund, it will be depleted in fiscal year 2030.
 - When a new Congress convenes, in this case the 116th Congress, legislation from the previous Congress expires and needs to be reintroduced. Please urge Senators Graham and Scott, and Congressman Rice to introduce and/or support legislation affecting federal employees and retirees.
 - Governor Henry McMaster's budget proposal includes a tax exemption of retirement income for retired military veterans.
 - If someone would like to take over Cathy's responsibilities as Legislative Officer, she would be open to training anyone interested.
 - And don't forget to check out our chapter's website (www.1015.scnarfe.org) for recent business meeting minutes and chapter newsletters, plus a link to Shutdown Central.
- Linda Pagani introduced our new Alzheimer's Research Officer, Alice Villavicencia. Alice noted that it is important for all of us to know what is going on in this area, including research and development that can lead to a cure or a way to prevent this disease. She would appreciate help from our chapter members. Please show up for the Alzheimer's Walk and continue to make donations to Alzheimer's Research.
- Billie Nichols (Newsletter Officer) noted:
 - The current NARFE membership roster for Chapter 1015, along with changes received from bi-weekly reports from NARFE, is used to send the chapter newsletter each month to dues-current members. As of January 17, 130 members received the newsletter by e-mail and 14 received the newsletter by USPS mail. The other members either do not want the newsletter mailed, or efforts to reach them have not been successful.
 - As of January 17, 19 of 22 Pawleys Island Chapter members have transferred to Chapter 1015.
 - We also have three prospective new members.
 - One member passed away in January.
 - If you know members who have paid their national and chapter dues, but who are not receiving their newsletters, please let Billie know at 843-839-0598.
- President Blake Crawford made some announcements:
 - The next executive committee meeting will be Thursday, January 24, at the Surfside Library.
 - Our next business meeting will be Thursday, February 21, 2019, at 11:30 AM at Damon's. Our speaker will be from the Freedom Readers organization.
 - If you have ideas for newsletter articles, please get them to Billie.
 - If you have ideas for future business meeting speakers, please get them to Blake.
- Barbara Bryan conducted the 50/50 drawing.
 - The meeting was adjourned at 1:28 PM.

Minutes taken by Joyce Jones, Secretary