

Statements of Candidates for National Office

narfe.org/2022-narfe-election-candidates-amendment-proposals/statements-of-candidates-for-national-office

January 31, 2022

As of 8 p.m. ET Tuesday, February 15, 2022, there are four declared candidates for National President and one for National Secretary/Treasurer. Scroll down to view the candidates.

Candidates for National President

Bill R. Austin

I seek your vote to elect me NARFE National President. From humble beginnings, I developed a burning desire to work hard and create a better life. There were no resources to attend college. So, I did the next best thing. I enlisted in the school of hard knocks – the US Army. I served three years and reached the rank of Specialist fourth class. I later earned a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science.



My greatest ambition was to become a Postal Service letter carrier. I did, but that old mail bag got heavy, and I accepted the fact that carrying mail was a hard physical job. I turned my attention to the union and then to the management ranks. I progressed up the ladder to regional manager positions with ever increasing levels of responsibilities. **I retired as a District Manager in Greensboro NC.**

A friend introduced me to NARFE. **I signed up.** I enjoyed NARFE so much that I was compelled to explore every role that NARFE had to offer. I held positions from **Chapter VP** to **National Vice-President.** While serving as NVP, my maker called me home to care for a deeply troubled youth. I found joy beyond description in that endeavor.

I am now inspired to return to NARFE as your National President. NARFE is facing tremendous pressures: 1. to perform politically 2. to find/retain members and 3. to right size financially. My success has always come from the people I lead. **Fixing Operations is what I do.** I am ready with your permission to fix NARFE. It will not cost you a dime. **I will not accept a salary.** NARFE can use a measure of financial relief. I will leave the day-to-day operations of NARFE to a competent CEO. I will function as President/ Chairman of the Board.

I have and will continue to share my vision for NARFE. It can become your vision too. I talk with members who share opinions. I incorporate their ideas into my vision and build upon them. So, you can count on me to listen to you. If you want to help me fix NARFE, **VOTE BILL R. AUSTIN.**

Note: If you would like more information about my vision/plan/leadership experience, I can send you a more detailed explanation. Send request to: billaustin@carolina.rr.com. For those of you who have no e-mail access, call 704-846-1945.

Jon William Dowie

I am a candidate for NARFE National President. As former Chapter Officer & National Secretary/Treasurer (2014-2018) my experience will enable NARFE to succeed.

During those terms we instituted Webinars which enhanced retention and recruiting. We instituted governance documents enhancing Board accountability. We insured that TSP (Thrift Advisory Plan) call centers were not reduced in size or number and that more flexible withdrawal options for participants were instituted. As the committee chairperson for the Strategic Planning Committee, we authored both previous Strategic Plans for NARFE. I was able to participate in marketing studies, including focus groups, that contributed to increasing our membership retention rate.



My current credentials include CPA, Certified Information Technology Professional, Chartered Global Management Accountant and formerly Certified Government Financial Manager. In addition, I am a member of non-profit section of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. I am the President of Sister Cities of St. Augustine sponsoring student exchanges with Spain as well as coordinating with the Mayors and City Councils in Spain, Columbia, and Florida. I am presently employed by a firm that developed a proprietary software as well as systems for the US Government, Boeing, Lockheed, and others.

As a former Chief Financial Officer for a publicly traded international firm and several privately owned firms, I have insight into complicated domestic as well as international arrangements. Serving on the faculty of Clemson University and later as the Technical Director of the National CPA Group provided me a unique ability to contribute to consensus of differing constituencies.

My Pentagon background in maintaining Congressional relationships is something that will be valuable to NARFE. Being Retired Navy Special Operations and a member of the Military Officers Association of America, when I speak for you on the hill, on many topics, I can speak for 500,000 voters!

The “Washington” environment is chaotic in normal times, but we have to continue to think strategically and act tactically.

NARFE has a loyal membership, an excellent governing Board, a dedicated staff, an award-winning magazine, and is admired for its effectiveness on “the Hill,” but we still have challenges. We have to make administration of Federations and Chapters more efficient and easier. Our members that are not in chapters have to be given opportunities to participate. Those members still working should be encouraged to enjoy the benefits of membership.

Please permit me to contribute toward resolution of our challenges by voting for me.

Gary Roundtree Sr.

I have a dream for NARFE: The membership decline will be slowed down thru actively engaging our current members and attracting younger feds to our association. As the old saying goes, “the devil is in the details.” Thru a collaborative effort of NARFE leaders and our members, positive change will ensure. I promise to be a continues source of encouragement of initiative, responsibility, and energy in serving the best interest of our members.



As your National President, a person rank and reputation in this organization will not be decided by his/her position title, the size of the job he does, and nor by the size of his staff, his office, or his budget. Let it be clear that as your national President, I will recognize the value of dissent and daring healthy controversy will be greeted as the hallmark of healthy change.

My NARFE Goals:

NARFE is at a crossroad where critical decisions must be made. However, like many other organizations, membership is declining, unlike the “baby boomers” the current generations are not “joiners.” My goal is to put in place an effective Recruiting, Retention, and Reinstatement (3R’s) Plan.

Input will be asked for from our members because they are our most value asset and are “where the rubber meets the road.” Members will have a valuable seat behind the wheel of NARFE.

For one true measure of an organization is its success in fulfilling the promise of a better life for its members. Let this be the measure of our organization.

Our goal is not the victory of might, but the vindication of right...not peace at the expense of freedom, but both peace and freedom, here in this hemisphere, and we hope, around the world. God willing, that our goals will be achieved.”

I will strive to continue to celebrate NARFE legacy and for NARFE to continue to supply tireless advocacy and trusted advice.

NARFE National Experience

2014-2016 – National Bylaws Committee

2019 – Federation President’s Meeting – Host Chair

2021 – Strategic Planning Committee

2021 – 2023 – Audit Committee Chair

2021 – 2023 – Compliance Officer

2021 – Present Regional II Vice President

Maryland Federation

President

1st Vice President Legislative Director

Acting Federal Legislative Chair

State Legislative Committee

Chapter

Legislative Officer

Service Officer

Other

I am a U.S. Marine Corps and Army Reserve Veteran

Green Belt in Lean Six Sigma

Ordained minister and a member of Department of Veteran Affairs National Black Chaplains Association

William “Bill” Shackelford

It is impossible to lead and serve if you are not willing to listen. Members require someone who will listen and address their concerns.

My decision to run for National President is to ensure continuance of our history of success as an advocacy group by adjusting its direction with emphasis on including Chapter members and National-only members (NOMs) in recruitment and legislative events. Chapters have played an important role in NARFE's history by helping members connect and get involved in local and national activities. Organizations must build on such traditions to evolve, survive, and thrive. After 100 years, it is appropriate for NARFE to move to a new model.



Approximately 51% of membership are NOMs. These individuals believe that lobbying of elected state and national officials should be the primary focus at all levels of NARFE to advance the goals of members and their spouses.

We must exercise appropriate advancements to make NARFE viable and stronger. The Future of NARFE Committee report provided a blueprint for reorganization. As Co-Chair, I helped develop the Committee recommendations which could solve many of NARFE's current challenges coupled with the Strategic Plan.

NARFE should restructure current Chapter format into Congressional District Chapters (CDC) by redrawing Chapter boundaries to coincide with Congressional Districts. The position of Chapter President would evolve into a position of Congressional District Leader (CDL) with overall responsibility of CDC activities. Every NARFE member would fall into the boundaries of a CDC. Members would have a choice to actively participate in CDC activities or not. Regardless of their choice, everyone would be receiving all communications, considerations, and benefits. The CDL would be the Point of Contact to interface with Congressional staff as well as Members of Congress.

I appreciate all members and their work for NARFE over the years. We must work together to address the challenges that OUR organization faces. I am confident that the many leadership positions that I have held equip me with a broad and deep understanding of NARFE's strengths and challenges.

National

2013-2014 – Chair of National Bylaws Committee

2014 – Co-Chair of “Future Of NARFE” Committee

2016-2017 – Executive Director Search Committee

2021 Strategic Planning Team

2021 – Chair Membership Advisory Committee

- Regional Vice President 2014-present
- Federation

President

1st Vice President

2nd Vice President

Chapter

President

Vice President

Service Officer

I respectfully ask for your vote and support by electing me as your NARFE National President.

Candidates for National Secretary/Treasurer

Kathryn Hensley

During 25 plus years as a NARFE member, I have served in most chapter and federation positions including president, and as a national officer.

My education at three universities and my experience in administration, finance, planning, technology, legislative, contracting, and program management positions in a 27-year career with the Defense Department and NOAA, eight years in state government, with two years at the Medical University of South Carolina, and many years as a community volunteer in key positions, prepared me for this position. Non-profit experience was gained at local, state, regional and national levels where I had board and president responsibilities.



Upon arrival at NARFE headquarters, it was evident that basic guidelines were out of date or non-existent and the financial base was shaky. Working with our membership and asking a lot of hard questions of staff, we are finally seeing some of the change we have talked about for over a decade.

We have learned how to handle disruptions. We've accepted postponement for proper functioning of an updated Association Management System (AMS) with the CAB now taking the lead on improvements. The regional vice presidents and national secretary/treasurer endured position reviews which helped us realize the necessity for an updated policy manual. Again, we will look at selling the headquarters building without plans or a financial review for staff returning full time and the impact loss of a large asset will have on NARFE's future.

For two years straight in this decade, our yearend financial reports are showing a surplus and the investment portfolio has grown significantly. The annual budget is now prepared with a scaled down travel plan, adjusted staff positions, and a careful approach to new contracts. After passing a required balanced budget, we have new policies that ensure future executive boards and managers have guidelines to follow.

While I am proud of what we accomplished, we have more work ahead. With a new membership plan and hard work from each of us, we should set the goal to break even recruiting new members by the end of 2022 and start 2023 with a net increase of new members.

In 2017, I first ran for National Secretary/Treasurer. As in 2020, I am respectfully asking for your vote for re-election to this final term. Join me on this journey and be a part of recruiting those new members.