

THE NAARVA



VOICE

VOLUME 25 ISSUE 1

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WINTER 2025

From The President's Desk...

As we embrace the close of 2024 and look forward to 2025, I want to take a moment to hope each of you and your families had a safe and joyous holiday season. Whether you were spending time at home or traveling to be with loved ones, may this season brought you peace, happiness, and cherished memories.

Winter Travel Safety Tips

For those traveling this winter, please remember these essential safety tips:

1. **Prepare Your Vehicle:** Ensure your vehicle is in excellent condition by checking the battery, tires, brakes, and fluids. Carry an emergency kit with essentials such as blankets, water, a flashlight, and a first aid kit.

2. **Monitor Weather Conditions:** Stay informed about the weather

along your route. Adjust your plans if hazardous conditions are predicted.

3. **Plan Your Route:** Use GPS and maps to plan your trip and identify rest stops. Inform someone of your travel itinerary.

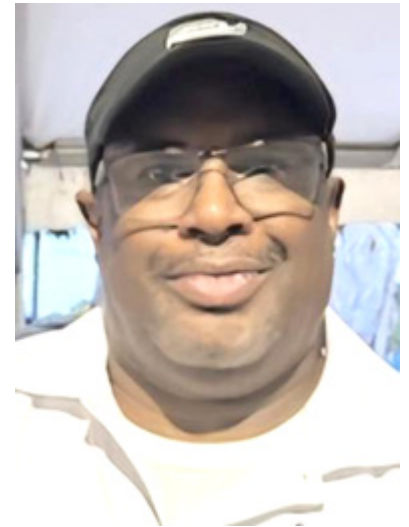
4. **Drive Cautiously:** Reduce speed on icy or snowy roads and maintain a safe following distance. Remember to keep your gas tank at least half full to avoid freezing lines.

5. **Stay Connected:** Ensure your phone is fully charged and have a car charger handy. Keep emergency contacts and roadside assistance numbers accessible.

Let's prioritize safety so we can all enter the new year healthy and well.

Honoring Our Members

It is with a heavy heart that we acknowledge the passing of several members of our NAARVA family this year.



Our thoughts and prayers go out to all the families grieving the loss of their loved ones. May you find comfort in the memories shared and the support of our community.

2025 Elections

As we look ahead, I want to remind everyone that the 2025 NAARVA elections are just around the corner. This year, we will be holding elections electronically, ensuring accessibility and convenience for all members. Please take the time to review the nominees' bios, which are now available. Your participation is vital in shaping the future of NAARVA.

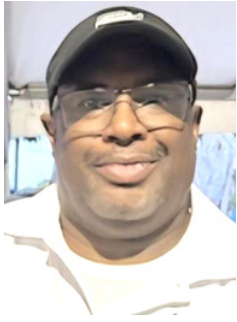
Thank you for being an integral part of this organization. Together, we continue to strengthen our bond and create opportunities for fellowship, support, and growth.

Wishing you safe travels and a prosperous New Year.

**Warm regards,
Rodney Thompson President,
NAARVA**



NAARVA Executive Board 2023 - 2025



RODNEY THOMPSON
President



BRIAN K. SKIPPER
1st Vice President



IRIS RAINES
2nd Vice President



ELAINE STANDIFER
General Secretary



STANLEY COUSINS
Asst. Gen. Secretary



JAMES CAMPBELL
Financial Secretary



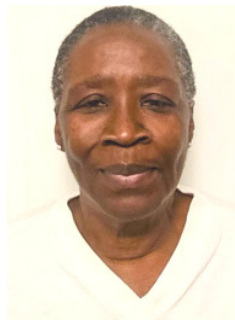
ALBERTA WILLIAMS
Asst. Fin. Secretary



SARAH RUNNELS
Treasurer



ANDREA JOHNSON
"AJ" HARVEY
Assistant Treasurer



LINDA TRILEUR
Director, Eastern Region



VENSON H. MILLER, SR.
Director, Southern Region



SYLVIA ALLEN
Director, Central Region



LIZ HEMINGWAY
Director, Western Region

Appointed Positions

Rev. Garland Scott
National Chaplain

Connie Malone
Parliamentarian

Jean Hampton - *Ecologist*

Ronald (Ron) Standifer -
Historian

Elaine Standifer
Public Relations Coordinator

Stanley Cousins
*Constitution &
By-Laws Chair*

Joellen Davis
National Scholarship Chair

Beth Gill
Benevolent Coordinator

Lonnie Fyles
Nominations/Elections

James H. Gregory, Jr.
*NAARVA Voice Editor
(Newsletter)*

Diane Bowman
Property Review Chair

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS

The NAARVA President is responsible for appointing volunteers for various committees, and you may be called upon, please think about serving when it's your time to serve.

~ Meet Your Candidates ~

Dear NAARVA Members,

It is once again time for us to elect officers to the Executive Board of Directors of NAARVA, Inc. The Nomination/Election Committee received nominations for the Positions of President, 1st Vice President, 2nd Vice President, Financial Secretary, Assistant Financial Secretary, General Secretary, Assistant General Secretary, Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer. Below you will find the submitted statements of the candidates' qualifications, and expectations for advancing NAARVA to a better organization. Please read the statements and be ready to cast your vote.

The NAARVA National Elections of Officers for the year 2025 will be held from May 1, 2025 through May 15, 2025. The election process will be done electronically via your NAARVA E-mail address. If you do not have a NAARVA E-mail address please create one via the NAARVA web site. Candidates for all positions can begin campaigning after this newsletter publication.

**Lonnie Fyles, Chairperson
Nomination/Elections Committee**

For President...

**Rodney
Thompson**

**Position Desired:
President**



As the current President of NAARVA, I am honored to be a member of our organization for the past 13 years. As the previous 2nd Vice President, I worked as the liaison of the Constitution and By-Laws Committee, chaired the Membership Committee, and the Chairperson of the Youth Program. I am a member of the *Texas Sojourners* and served as Assistant Regional Director for the Southern Region for two terms. My background as a United States Army veteran and my career with the United States Postal Service, where I held roles such as President, Vice President OWCD Representative, and Steward of the National Letter Carriers Association Branch 3867, have all prepared me to lead and serve our NAARVA community effectively.

I am seeking re-election as President because I am committed to building on our achievements and continuing to grow NAARVA. Over the past term, we have seen increased recognition and engagement, and I believe there are still more opportunities to expand our reach. My focus will remain on enhancing our visibility, increasing membership, and fostering connections within our community. I look forward to the opportunity to keep leading NAARVA toward even greater success.

For 1st Vice President...

Brian K. Skipper

Brian served two terms as the NAARVA Central Region Director, starting the first of April of 2020. Brian serves as the President



of his local camping club, *the Akron Adventurers Kamper Club (AAKC)*, holding this position since 2017.

Born and raised in Akron, Ohio, Brian was educated in the Akron Public School system. He began employment with the City of Akron Ohio in 1984, from which he then moved to work with the Akron Board of Education that same year. He retired from the Board of Education in 2015. During his working career, Brian coached many youth sports including soccer, basketball, and football. He was also a Youth Advisor with the New Era Baptist District Association and helped to organize many events to benefit the youth in his community.

The Skipper family began their camping experience with Brian's in-laws and their RV. After experiencing this enjoyment of RVing, the Skippers purchased their first of several RVs. They have officially been camping since 2011, the same year they became members of their local camping club, AAKC, and NAARVA.

Brian enjoys traveling with his family and friends both with the RV and by air. He also looks forward to the fellowship with old friends and meeting new friends at the Central and National Rallies.

For 2nd Vice President...

Iris V. Raines

Currently, I am the 2nd Vice President of NAARVA.

I have been a member of our organization for 10+ years. I chair the Membership Committee and I assure you that every member of NAARVA receives a response to any inquiry regarding our organization through telephone calls or through our website. I am the liaison of the Constitution & By-Laws Committee, and the chairperson of the Youth Program. Additionally, I co-chaired the sale of our Charlotte, NC building. This sale increased our organization's revenue.

Membership has increased through networking with potential members and past members, and assisting the Regions with their growth through processes put in place to allow our members to understand our goals and see our progress.

I am a member of Chapter #65, *Georgia Elite Fleet RV Club*. For 10 years I was a member of the *Georgia Easy Riders RV Club*, serving as Financial Secretary for one year, and as President for two terms - four years. During my tenure as Easy Riders RV Club President, we created a website that greatly assisted in growing membership, as well as, ensuring the visibility of our Club and its members.

I am seeking re-election to the position I currently hold, NAARVA 2nd
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Meet Your Candidates...

(Continued from page 3)

Iris V. Raines...

Vice President. I have very strong communication skills, and I want to continue to deliver messages of achievements in our organization, as well as to continue to hear and listen to what our members want and need. The achievements we have realized in my first term; and the forces behind me, make me want to do more and strive harder to ensure that our organization is recognized as a leader in social networking through our RV experiences and partnerships that we have formed with various businesses.

Our leadership team's direction, and the real progress that we have made is apparent through you, our members, i.e.our receipt of your positive responses and feedback. Thank you for your responses. I believe my being granted a second term as NAARVA 2nd Vice President will benefit our membership and the leadership team.

For General Secretary...



Elaine Standifer

I am currently serving as NARVA's General Secretary. I have been a member of our organization for the past 28 years. As General Secretary I am the right hand of the President. I coordinate the Executive Board monthly Zoom meetings, prepare all Executive Board and national level minutes, record all Zoom meetings and ensure a quorum is needed for voting purposes. I assist various committees and Region Directors with Zoom meetings and assist the President and Executive Board with various projects. I create and send all constant contact e-mails to the membership keeping them updated on any and all NAARVA news. I supervise the NAARVA Headquarters staff and process payroll. I actively assist the membership team in recruiting new members to in-

crease our membership numbers.

Since 2017, I have been the National Public Relations Coordinator. I have held elected and appointed Executive Board positions in the past such as Assistant Recording secretary (2 years), Scholarship Chairperson (8 years) and Eastern Region Public Relations Coordinator (5 years). My background as a HR Manager/Vice President with major corporations has prepared me to serve NAARVA.

I am one of the Founders of the *D.C. Connection RV Club*, Chapter #34 and served as the first Secretary, Public Relations Officer and currently the Constitution and By-Laws Chairperson.

I am seeking re-election as General Secretary because of the commitment that I have in continuing the value of building NAARVA and its legacy for future generations. The opportunity to continue to campaign building partnerships with our friends in the recreation vehicle industry. The achievements NAARVA has accomplished during my tenure has encouraged me to give more of my time and effort to the growth of the organization. I look forward to the opportunity to continue to serve the membership and NAARVA.

For Asst. General Secretary...



Janice Campbell

SKILLS

Outstanding oral and written communicator: TEAM Player! Excellent at organizing, time management, and record keeping. Technologically savvy.

EDUCATION

MA, Organizational Leadership, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK; BS, Elementary Education, Cameron University, Lawton, OK.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Educator, U.S. Army Institute for Religious Leadership, Fort Jameson, SC, 2008 - 2020.

Educational consultant in the Directorate of Training and Education Division; trained, evaluated and certified all U.S. Army instructors; managed the

Instructor of the Year program; advised the command on all education matters related to training, compiled reports and evaluation of Army instructors, evaluated U.S. Army lesson plans, learning objectives; scheduled provided, and conducted staff and professional development; served four times as an Army-wide judge for the service's Instructor of the Year. Created forms and rubrics for lesson plan evaluations, instructor evaluations; streamlined and simplified U.S. Army forms; assisted writing and revision doctrinal publications.

Educator: Department of Defense Education Activity, 1999 - 2007.

Taught elementary and middle school students. Chaired various committees (Textbook Selection, Behavior and Discipline, Accreditation); conducted numerous committee, staff, and parental meetings and conferences; evaluated school performance in the U.S. and Europe; compiled numerous reports of meetings, student data; maintained various record of student data and other information.

VOLUNTEER/LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

As a Life Member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. for 30-plus years, I have held various positions of leadership, to include President, Vice President, Sergeant-at-Arms, Hostess, Secretary, Asst. Secretary, and Committee chairman.

HOBBIES

RVing, Pickleball, watching my beloved Dallas Cowboys, traveling with my hubby, sleeping, watching Law & Order: SVU. I am a Lifetime NAARVA member.

For Asst. General Secre-



Thomas O. Tucker

My name is Thomas O. Tucker. I am applying for the position of Assistant General Secretary within the national NAARVA. I'm currently a Member-at-Large participant with NAARVA National and

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Meet Your Candidates...

(Continued from page 4)

Thomas O. Tucker

Eastern Region. I was formerly a member of *Triangle Rvers* in North Carolina, and held a position on its Executive Board in 2019.

Though I am currently retired from formal employment, I have approximately 40 years of experience in the petroleum, agricultural, and pharmaceutical industries as a chemist, analyst, and Group Leader.

I joined NAARVA because my wife and I enjoy camping with like-minded friends and family, who enjoy the wonderful experience of traveling by RV.

I believe my office experience, particularly in secular employment, will be very useful to NAARVA, as we focus on the growth of this great organization and encourage member participation in its variety of programs.

My dedication to NAARVA is what challenges me to goals for NAARVA is to increase the membership and find ways to get our former members to rejoin, keep our members informed on what's going on at the executive level, get members-at-large involved more, fight to get the members-at-large on the executive board.

For Treasurer...

Sarah Runnels

I am a Board-Certified Emergency Room Registered Nurse by trade with over 25 years of experience in Emergency Care, Hospital Administration, Foster Care, Home Health, Infusion and Occupational Health offering a unique blend of cross-functional and dual roles that included Nursing Coordinator, Clinical Manager, Operations Administrator, Clinical Educator, Emergency Prepared Officer, Clinical Educator, Former Forensic Nurse Examiner, and CA/CP-SANE Owner and Administrator of Home Health Agency and Infusion.

I currently work for Federal Occupational Health (FOH) as a Nurse Co-



ordinator in downtown Houston. I retired from Memorial Hermann Northwest (Greater Heights) after 23 years of Emergency Rooms and Administration.

I serve currently on the National Executive Board as your National NAARVA Treasurer and Vice President for the *Texas Sojourners*. I have served on the *Texas Sojourners* Executive Board as Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Secretary. As your current Treasurer, the finance team is responsible for electronic payments, accepting multiple payment forms, electronic voting and polling, real time web update, updated website, upgraded to Business Banking with Chase, and many other things that have helped advance NAARVA.

I am married to the best husband (Mr. George AKA Captain) and we have two daughters (Pagan and Toni). I am GiGi to my three grands (Lil George, Joel and Kennedy) which are the love of my life.

My hobbies include working at the church, "Glamping" (Camping RV style), and getting Wind Therapy (Spreading my Wings/Goldwing) riding my motorcycle.

I am looking forward to continuing to advance NAARVA as your Treasurer.

For Asst. Treasurer...

Dorothy Redd

I am married to Curtis Redd and we have three grown children. I've instilled in them to be all that they can be and today, one is the Chief of Police here in the city of Rockford, IL, another owns her own clinic and one is an engineer. Today, my life is filled with things that I enjoy doing.

Because of my life experiences I can be an asset to NAARVA. My knowledge can help and inspire the organization to higher levels. I am applying for the position of NAARVA's Assistant Treasurer for the 2025-2027



Term. For the past 12 years I've held the position of Treasurer for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Rockford Branch 3028. In this role I complete monthly, and annual reports. In addition, I serve as the Finance Secretary at Mount Zion Baptist Church in Rockford, IL. This position requires keeping track of the church's finances and preparing the annual report for the end of the year's business meeting. I have held the position of Treasurer for my homeowner's subdivision for the past 12 years.

Finance comes easy for me and is one of my favorite things to do. I am a retired educator with 35 years of service in education and 20 years as a County Commissioner in Winnebago, IL. I still work 25 hours a week tutoring students, grant writing, and being an advocate for less fortunate individuals.

For Asst. Treasurer...

Andrea Jeanne "AJ" Johnson-Harvey

I am submitting my nomination application for the position of Assistant Treasurer. I have been a member of NAARVA for 19 years and have held positions at both the Region and National levels.

My experience in leadership positions began as secretary of *The Group Camping Club*. I was then elected president and served until I was elected as Eastern Region Executive Secretary. After serving in that position for several terms, I was elected to the position of Assistant Director, where I served until, I accepted an appointment on the National Executive Board as Assistant Financial Secretary. In this position I was responsible for developing and presenting our membership with the first Annual Budget to be voted on and accepted by our membership.

In 2023 I was elected to the position and am responsible for all rally related financial transactions. I have dedicated time and energy to the suc-

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Meet Your Candidates...

(Continued from page 5)

Andrea Jeanne “AJ” Johnson-Harvey

cess of NAARVA, and I seek to continue to do so as your elected Assistant Treasurer.

I have an extensive background in leadership, management, and administration. I began my career as a Legal Clerk in the New Jersey Army National Guard in 1981. I was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in 1985 as an Intelligence Officer. Over the next several years I served in various intelligence assignments and completed several levels of military schooling. I began my active-duty career in 1997 at National Guard Bureau in Washington, DC. While on active duty my assignments included supervisory and managerial responsibilities for anywhere from 3 to 75 personnel in Washington, DC, Carlisle, PA, and Tampa, FL. In July 2007 I deployed to Afghanistan where I served on the NATO staff until my redeployment in August 2008. In 2009 I deployed to Baghdad, Iraq where I served for seven months. I returned to Washington, DC in 2010 and served in several leadership positions until my retirement in January of 2016 at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

I hold a Bachelor of Science degree from Regents College, and a Master of Business Administration in Human Resource Management from American Intercontinental University. My awards include Department of the Army Staff Identification Badge, NATO Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal w/Campaign Star, Iraq Campaign Medal w/Campaign Star, the Army Achievement Medal, Army Commendation Medal (3rd Award), Meritorious Service Medal (5th award), Defense Meritorious Service Medal (2nd award) and Bronze Star.

I am married to Colonel Kevin Harvey (Ret.) of Jersey City, NJ. We are the proud parents of four children: Reginald 35, Cpt. Andrew Harvey 34, Emily 32, and Laurajeanne 28. We have been avid campers and RVers for over 37 years. Shortly after my military re-

tirement in 2016, my husband and I began to live and travel full-time in our RV, which we did for 6-1/2 years. We have crisscrossed the country several times and look forward to every new experience on our grand adventure. We settled in central Florida recently, and although we no longer live full-time in our RV, we continue to camp with our club, *The Royal Campers*, attend region and national rallies, and frequently hit the road for a new adventure.

For Financial Secretary...

James F. Campbell



I was born and raised in Marion, SC. Graduated from Marion High School in 1976 and enlisted into the U.S. Army. I married the former Janice Cephus from Temple, TX in 1980. I retired as a Command Sergeant Major from the U.S. Army in 2006.

Experience

Feb. 2024 - Present: Financial Secretary for NAARVA. Researched, implemented, and revised the current membership management software; Automated the dues collection process and digitalized the membership cards. Established a standard operating procedure to ensure compliance with NAARVA By-Laws and financial operating rules.

Jan. 2012 - Dec. 2023: Broker-in-Charge, Real Property Management Midlands, Columbia, SC.

Owner/operator responsible for hiring, training and supervising 5 employees which managed more than 300 single family homes and 10 commercial properties, Developed standard operation procedures for leasing, maintenance, financial accountability and vendor assignment/supervision. Processed payroll, W2s and 1099s.

Jan. 2007 - Apr. 2012: Realtor/Broker, RE/MAX Midlands, Columbia, S.C.

Served as an agent for the sale and purchase of real property. Earned several Realtor of the Month awards and was inducted into the Million Dollar Club.

May 1976 - Sept. 2006: Soldier U.S. Army, Texas, Kansas, Germany, Massachusetts, Oklahoma, Germany. Served as an Artillery Soldier in the U.S. Army for more than 30 years. Held all leadership positions from Corporal to Command Sergeant Major. Retired as the Commandant for the 7th Army Non-Commissioned Officers Academy.

Skills

Proficient with project management software to include Microsoft Office, QuickBooks and several other webbased integrated platforms. Team player • Excellent time management skills • Conflict management • Public speaking • Data analytics.

Education: May 2001

Bachelor of Science Business Management, University of Maryland University College, European Division,

Activities: Motorecycling, Pickle Ball, Shriner, Mason, Travel, Camping.

For Asst. Financial Secretary...

Alberta Williams



I currently serve as NAARVA's Assistant Financial Secretary. I was appointed to the position in April 2024. I am a member of the *Virginia Camping Cardinals* (VCC) and serve on the Grievance Committee. I've been a member of NAARVA for six years (2018-present).

As NAARVA'S Assistant Financial Secretary, I develop the Revenue Report for NAARVA as well as develop the fiscal year budget to be approved by NAARVA members during the rally. My duties also involve assisting the Financial Secretary in all areas of NAARVA finance and membership. As a member of NAARVA's Executive Board I provide valuable input when proposals are presented. I am a retired Federal Government employee with 30

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NAARVA Chaplain's Corner...

Jesus is "The Key" for Forgiveness



How do we forgive? How can we forgive someone that we feel has wronged us? This question is a controversial issue among Christians even today. We are living in a sinful, fallen world, a system that was designed to teach us self-gravitation. If we as Christians give into self-gravitation, it will lead us into selfishness, and when we are selfish, this selfishness washes away our Christ-like spirit and replaces it with an uninvited sinful spirit. With this uninvited sinful spirit implanted in our hearts, it becomes very hard for us to forgive anyone who has profoundly hurt or harmed

us to the very core of our souls.

So again, how do we begin to forgive someone who has harmed us? I may be asking the wrong question. The correct question should be: How can we, as Christians, forgive someone who has harmed us and refuse to admit or acknowledge the pain and the harm they have caused? Isn't that the question? We seek an apology, acknowledgment, affirmation, or some admission that they have harmed us and caused internal pain.

We, as Christians, have wrestled with this question and spent most of

our time pondering it. The devil uses this hurt and plays it over and over again in our minds like a bad movie, a nightmare, to separate us from the will of God. We know as Christians we have been forgiven of our sins by Jesus, and the

REV.
GARLAND
SCOTT
NAARVA
Chaplain



Word of God tells us that we must forgive others, but again, the real practical question is, how can we forgive someone who is not sorry that they have sinned against us? To make this question personal, I will ask each of you to say, "How can I forgive someone who has not asked for forgiveness of the sins they have committed against me?"

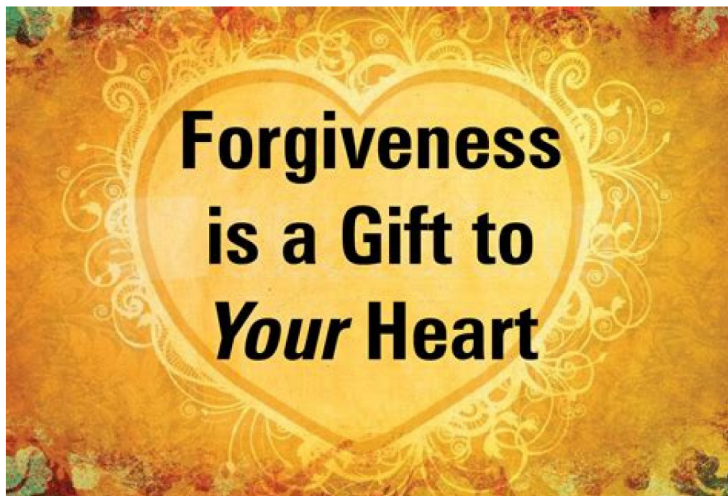
The Book of Mark addresses forgiveness. Mark 11:25, Jesus says, "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also who which is in heaven may forgive you your transgresses." Jesus tells us to forgive whether they have asked for forgiveness or not, whether they are sorry or not, whether they acknowledge it or not, and whether they admit to it or not; we forgive because we are commanded to forgive by God the Son, Jesus.

Oh, I know that is a hard commandment to follow, but this is the Word of God. Jesus points out a disparity in our thinking and relationship with Him and others. So, what is this disparity? Well, I'm glad you asked. Disparity is when we, as Christians, ask our Heavenly Father to forgive us when we sin against Him, and in return, He asks for us to forgive others when they have sinned against us. We cannot refuse to do this simple commandment because we refuse to let go of the hurt and harm manifested in our hearts.

Colossians 3:13, "Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any even as Christ for-

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Meet Your Candidates

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Alberta Williams

years of experience. I have 20 years of financial experience as a Financial System Analyst, Budget Analyst, Financial Manager and a Contract Specialist. I also have ten years of military experience serving in the US Army and traveling all over the world.

Traveling has always been a passion of mine and combined with my desire to stay healthy gives me a great opportunity to incorporate "Healthy Living" as one of NAARVA's core values. During the NAARVA's 2024 Camp Rally I lead the walking group every day for an hour. My vision for NAARVA is to ensure we are promoting "Healthy Living" as we share our passion for RVing, creating new adventures, and lasting friendships.

I believe bringing a "Healthy Living" program to NAARVA will help promote NAARVA's mission.

I am proficient with Microsoft Office, QuickBooks and several other web-based platforms. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from the University of Maryland and a Master of Science in Human Resource Management from Central Michigan University.

Fun facts about me include completing a 70.3 Half Ironman (1.2-mile swim, 56-mile bike and 13.1-mile run) and traveling to Africa to participate in the Victoria Falls Marathon. I've completed the Richmond and Hawaii Marathons and over 75 other races throughout the United States to include triathlons, duathlons and half-marathons.

Jesus is “The Key” for Forgiveness

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gave you, so also do ye.” Forbearing Christians are willing to endure with each other despite our differences and frustrations. Treating others with kindness, grace, patience, and compassion is Christ-like, but this world has taught us to be selfish and to place ourselves above all others. We all have a me-first attitude and selfishness.

There will be times when you disagree with your loved ones; it’s unavoidable. They will try to entice you into joining them in their anger, sharing the same selfish, sinful attitude. They will use profane language, raise their voice, point their finger, and might even make false accusations to entice you into joining them in an ungodly spirit of sinfulness. My advice to you is to stand strong in the Lord.

When I worked, my co-workers would say, “This is business, meaning this has nothing to do with Christ. God forbid. Let me make this abundantly clear: we as Christians are given God’s Word through the Holy Bible, and His Word contains how we should conduct ourselves as Christ-like, no matter where we are and whom we are with. There are many Scriptures in the Bible that tell us how to behave. I Corinthians 16:14, “*Let everything you do be done with charity.*” Paul said, “*Let everything you do be done with love.*”

Paul said our love for God, and others should be Christians’ highest goal and guide. It requires unconditional love — I cannot over emphasize “uncondi-

tional.” It should be demonstrated through goodwill and self-sacrifice; we should not be selfish.

The Bible is repetitive, emphasizing the importance of unconditional love. Love is the ecosystem in which our lives as Christians operate and thrive. How do we demonstrate this prevailing attitude of Christ-like? How do we become more like Christ? Romans 12:2, tells us “*to renew our minds. We need to be reborn and retrain our minds to be like a child, a child of God, forgetting all we know, placing aside our education, and acknowledging our will and desires are outside the will of God. Train your mind to follow Christ by studying His word and engaging in daily dialogue by praying to the Father.*”

If we must speak a hard truth to anyone, whether Christians or non-Christians, our motivation should come from a place of love. We should always strive to let our light shine no matter where we are.

No one is immune from being hurt. Part of being a social creature is interacting with other people. There is endless opportunity for hurt, harm, and misunderstanding within these interactions. Sometimes, the hurt is intentional; other times, it is not. But in the end, hurt is hurt.

While hurt and harm are unavoidable, what are we supposed to do? Our Heavenly Father gives us the power to choose how we will respond. We, as Christians, should choose to be Christ-like.

Forgiveness is an indispensable virtue for Christians. God holds it in high esteem because He sacrificed His Son to forgive us of our sins. To unlock the power of forgiveness, Jesus is “**The Key.**” With this key of love, we can forgive those who harm us. So, when you find it impossible to forgive, use “**The Key**” to discover an inner strength to overcome the impossible. Greater is He that is in you than he is in the World.

Praise God, Praise God, Praise God
Amen

SOUTHERN REGION



VENSON H. MILLER, SR.
Director,
Southern
Region

Hello Southern Region:

I am your Southern Region Director, Venson Miller and I want to take this opportunity to introduce you to the e-Board members that were installed at our Southern Region Rally in April 2024.

Pamela Clayton (Assistant Director), Ray Raines (Treasurer) Alexis Jones (Financial Secretary), Annie Jenkins (Secretary), Lynda Daniels (Assistant Secretary), and Tee Huling (Member-at-Large Liaison).

As a group working on your behalf, we are jointly planning the 2026 Southern Region Rally. The location has not been determined at this time. We want to get ahead of the game to ensure that we have a memorable rally. As you are aware, National membership voted to have one rally per year. The National Rally on the odd year, and the Region Rally on the even year. That translates to one rally per year. Having said that, as your Southern Region e-Board we want to ensure we have activities that we believe you will enjoy.

The e-Board is open to your thoughts and ideas! It is your Rally, and we are here to make it happen for you — our members. Feel free to contact us and let us know your thoughts, what’s on your mind — your likes and dislikes. Please communicate that message to your Club Presidents who are members of the Southern Region e-Board, they are your elected voice and are tasked with relaying your ideas to us.

Continued safe travels to you and your family.

Venson Miller

Deadline!

The deadline for the **VOICE** content submissions for Spring 2025 is **March 10, 2025**. If you do not have an e-mail call 704-333-3070 and a hard copy will be mailed to you.

A Word From the Editor...

Happy New Year!

2024 was a rewarding and rough year in many ways... We were rewarded with the joy of another NAARVA season, filled with friends, family, new experiences and just living. We roughed the loss of many faces familiar in and to our youth, both in family, and those we have held/used to mold and shape our specific lives and culture. We witnessed the passage of time in its slow, sometimes too fast, but always relentless in its progression, it continues whether we are ready or not.

We look forward to another NAARVA year blessing, while sizing up the new challenges that 2025 is bringing. We expect...no believe that the foundations keeping us to this date will continue to do so. To paraphrase Reverend Garland: we should always strive to let our light shine no matter where we are and what we do. This gives us and endless opportunities to address and overcome the impossible. This we know.

In this edition we start as always with words from our President, reminders of our current leadership, team (take note of some new faces), introductions to the next proposed NAARVA Leaders via the 2025 elections, warnings of potential scams, Reverend Garland's message, greetings from our Regional Directors (again note the new faces), and our Ecology Leadership emphasis. As we start this season of winter, remember in some societies winter is celebrated as the eve of birth, light, goodness and strength. Use this emphasis as we prepare for this New Year.

Until next time!

James



Education Station



Joellen Davis
NAARVA Scholarship Committee
Chairperson



Why Do We Need Scholarships?

The Carolyn J. Buford Scholarship Fund is dedicated and designed to help graduating high school students stay motivated to keep striving to acquire as much education as possible to help them thrive in the future.

The goal of the scholarship is to help awardees meet many of the financial obligations college requires. For many years NAARVA has proudly awarded thousands of dollars to successful high school graduates. NAARVA members proudly stand behind all applicants and wish every student success. We know that each awardee serves as an example for other young students to follow. NAARVA knows our awardees will become future leaders of tomorrow. We proudly salute them.

ATTENTION: Graduating High School Seniors! The 2025 NAARVA Scholarship applications will be posted on the NAARVA website, NAARVA.com. We encourage all NAARVA members to be alert, watchful and vigilant. Scholarship application forms will be available in early March.

As the Scholarship Committee Chairperson, I am proud to say that NAARVA awarded six scholarships last year and we are looking forward to awarding the full complement of Scholarships available for this upcoming year (4 - \$1,000.00 Scholarships and 2 - \$500.00 Scholarships). **Spread the word!**

**EDUCATION IS FOR
IMPROVING THE LIVES
OF OTHERS AND FOR
LEAVING YOUR
COMMUNITY AND WORLD
BETTER THAN YOU
FOUND IT.**

~Marian Wright
Edelman

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH EMAIL?

- Received an email from a NAARVA officer or another member?
 - Received an email you are unsure about?
- Received an email requesting money on behalf NAARVA?

Received Any emails as noted above? Please disregard.

Do not open!

Fraudulent and malicious emails are getting more advanced every Day.



NAARVA members, please do not respond to request for monies, voucher processing, vendor payments, PayPal or personal information, etc.!

NAARVA has established protocols for processing payments on behalf of NAARVA National, Regional and Chapters/Clubs that should always be used. Call the sender to confirm any request for money.

NAARVA Executive Board
December 10, 2024
#44 2024

Save the Date!
32nd NAARVA
National Camp Rally

July 13 - 20, 2025

Allegan County Fairgrounds
150 Allegan County Fair Drive
Allegan, Michigan 49010



NAARVA is excited to see you in July. It's going to be a great time in Allegan, MI with NAARVA's members as we roll in for a week of activities, fun and social events.



NAARVA ECOLOGY PROGRAM

“Loving Our Earth - Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Respect”

Jean Hampton, Ph.D., NAARVA Ecologist

It is well that NAARVA, as a community of travelers/adventurers, exhibits our RV family as one that presents communal effort to support preservation of a clean and nutritious environment here on earth for all. We outwardly and noticeably exhibit a “NAARVA vision”, purposed that future generations can, enjoy their lifetimes in an ecologically nutritious atmosphere. We, as a community, must lessen our ecological footprint toward the protection of our planet...this becoming a primary distinction and legacy of the NAARVA family and its Ecology Program (NEP).

The NEP, I’m pleased to repeat, was instituted as a superb response by NAARVA to announce our organization’s recognition of the need to combat unhealthy environmental declines occurring on our earth. Through NEP, we venture to present a combined effort to protect our planet.

One such effort is our focus on reducing human (anthropogenic) contributions to this weakening of planetary sustainability. We support mechanisms and causes designed to enhance ecological preservation. Recognizing the enormous natural values delivered by trees, and the urgency to replenish vanishing tree populations, NAARVA incorporates tree planting activity at multiple rally sites, and also supports tree planting through responsible, authenticated international reforestation organizations. NAARVA also participates in organized recycling efforts by collecting used disposables, particularly plastics to service area recycling initiatives.

Deforestation and unchecked plastic disposal/pollution are each major avenues of anthropogenic contribution to ecological and environmental disturbance. Every year our world loses over 10 hectares of forest, an area the same size as the state

of Indiana (92,000 square kilometers). Trees naturally absorb and store carbon produced by industrial and vehicular carbon dioxide emissions. Trees release life-supporting oxygen into our atmosphere, support wildlife, provide shade, reduce storm water run-off, promote mental and physical health by encouraging social relaxation and cohesion, filter pollutants, and reduce erosion along with a number of other environmentally supportive benefits.

Each year, between 24-34 million metric tons of plastic waste enter various water ecosystems with a large majority of that coming from land-based sources. Plastic pollution is a pervasive issue that presents a challenge to maintenance of water quality and healthy ecosystems. The mass number of plastics in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch (GPGP), one of five known oceanic garbage patch gyres, was estimated to be approximately 100,000 tons... a weight equivalent to more than 740 Boeing 777s. Without immediate and sustained action by federal, state, local, and community partners, as well as the private sector, the amount of plastic waste in our oceans is estimated to triple by the year 2040,

This past December 2024, I attended a showing of the Texas Environment Research and Policy film production “Plastic People: The Hidden Crisis of Microplastics”. As much as the film offers strong and convincing evidence of our looming global crisis of plastic pollution, the film soundly illustrated the dangers of micro- and nano-plastics. These plastics are tiny, inhalable, ingestible, and are discovered to be found in human blood, lungs, heart, liver, kidneys, brain, testicles, and even placental tissues. Can we imagine our babies being born as part plastic? Again... as plastics don’t

deteriorate like many other materials, they simply breakdown into micro- or nano-plastics, and are small enough to interfere with multiple biological functions. We don’t know the extent of biological damage that they may cause but the invading plastics, with their irregular and many times sharpened contours, are experimentally associated with various gastrointestinal dysfunctions, inflammatory stimulations, and developmental and reproductive disorders. Other living species are also found to contain substantial amounts of these miniscule plastics.

The film exposes unsettling and unforgivable deceptions of “big business” claims of plastic recycling. Effective
(Continued on page 13)

CENTRAL REGION

Hello NAARVA and Happy New Year 2025!

The Regional Directors are busy working with the NAARVA Executive Board preparing for the 2025 NAARVA National Rally. We want to encourage all members to attend the Rally in Allegan, Michigan at the Allegan County Fair Ground, July 13-20, 2025. Look for the rally schedule and program in January.

This is going to be a rally you don’t want to miss featuring food trucks, DJ Summerise from the Western Region, the annual golf tournament and card games with a NAARVA

Family Road Trip theme and lots of activities both onsite and time to explore Allegan and the surrounding area on your own.

In closing let’s keep our President, Rodney Thompson, in our thoughts and prayers as he recovers.

SYLVIA ALLEN

Director, Central Region



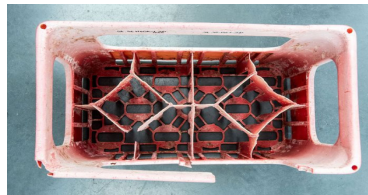
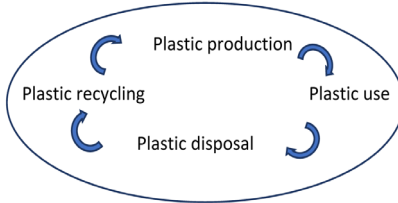


ECOLOGY:

recycling processes for plastic require essential and measurable results including: (1) a predomi-

nant yield of recyclable plastic material, (2) minimal use or production of fossil fuels (carbon-based compounds), (3) minimal waste products...all of which support a system of a circular economy... in this case a circular plastic economy: responsible production, use, disposal, and recyclability.

As stated in the NAARVA Voice Fall 2024, only 9% of the plastics ever produced has been recycled. And the United States only recycles 5-6% of its disposable plastic with the remaining plastic ending up in the environment, or in landfills, or burned...thus contributing to greenhouse gas emissions polluting our atmosphere.



This crate found in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch was produced in 1977. (It's still intact,you do the math.)



Plastics (straws, cups, utensils, bags, bottles) that we may use for less than 15 minutes, will last far beyond a human lifetime. Something we use for a few minutes shouldn't be allowed to pollute our environment for hundreds of years.

Each year, Americans throw away millions of plastics... cups, take-out boxes, other containers, utensils, and bags. This pollution ends up in our waterways and oceans, where wildlife may mistake it for food and eventually perish from starvation. Both land-based aquatic and oceanic currents are adversely affected by accumulating pollutants, further affecting both aquatic and terrestrial wildlife. We cannot throw away these used items. There really is no "away".

A workable approach to reduce plastic pollution is to manufacture less plastic. As campers we should lobby for the manufacture of recycled plastic material, and for adequate systems for disposition of used plastics. Certainly, we should purchase, pack, and use less of them.

Let's challenge ourselves to strengthen both our individual and collective resolve, and even more heartily endeavor to reduce our own personal ecological footprint. The NAARVA community is resolute regarding reforestation... though there is always room for expansion of these actions. As campers, we relish the accessibility, viability, and visibility of nature's beautiful and supportive provisions that we esteem and enjoy as we travel and explore our natural environments. We can resolve to further efforts in environmental preservation both individually and collectively as NAARVA campers. We must endeavor to live responsibly, to enjoy camping sites and travel routes as conscientious visitors with a mindset of promise that future visiting generations... our children and grandchildren have the blessed privilege of enjoying our earth the same as ourselves.

We should lobby each NAARVA club and/or region to establish an ecology team, proceed with planned eco-friendly activities, document with photos, and submit for publication. As the NAARVA ecologist, I would be elated to include such activities in our *VOICE* newsletter Ecology pieces. The *Texas Sojourners* have consistently donated funds to "One Tree Planted" to support planting trees across the globe. This past fall of 2024 the *Texas Sojourners*, with all fervor and delight, have submitted a donation to support the upcoming April 22nd Earth Day 2025. (Please review the Earth Day website: earthday.org)

Below is a list of camping actions all NAARVA members can endeavor to follow:

- (1) Travel as light as possible.
- (2) Use reusable, refillable drinking containers (such as stainless steel.)
- (3) Use reusable dishware and utensils; don't accept plastic utensils when purchasing food.
- (4) Use only reusable shopping bags.
- (5) Lessen waste; buy less, when possible, dispose responsibly, and compost when possible.
- (6) Carry in/carry out (do not leave anything at your campsite that wasn't there before.)
- (7) Use biodegradable products.

Glossary:

Fossil fuels: carbon-based energy sources: coal, oil, and natural gas from remains of plants and animals that lived millions of years ago. Fossil fuels are burned to produce energy; this burning produces large quantities of carbon dioxide which traps heat in our atmosphere and leads to climate change.

Non-renewable energy: energy from sources (mainly fossil fuels) that will run out or will not be replenished not only in our lifetime, but in many lifetimes

Renewable energy (green energy): part of the earth's natural environment such as solar (sun power), hydro (water-power), and wind power.

References:

Environmentamerica.org Dec 2024	Plastic pollution coalition.org
United Nations Environmental Program	Education.nationalgeographic.org
USEPA	pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
theoceancleanup.com	EnvironmentTexas
Google search	Earthcorps

**DISCOUNT
TIRE**

**AMERICA'S
TIRE**



Discount Tire & NAARVA Partnership

(NAARVA Account #72935)

What Discount Tire has to offer:

- **Free services:**

- Flat Repair
 - Tire Rotation
 - Tire Inspection & Inflation
 - TPMS Relearn / Rebuild / Reconnect
- Low pricing on tires
 - Most common sizes are kept in stock

Account Details:

5% off better and best product. Retail price on labor. Customer will provide form of payment. Certs and products will be case by case.

If any questions arise, please call driver.

Free Labor invoices must also be written up under this account number. **This is the national account for NAARVA.**

NAARVA Executive Board
June 7, 2024
#20 2024

You Play, We Pay

NAARVA MEMBERS 65+ CAN
HAVE THEIR DUES REIMBURSED
FOR FREE!

Grouper



NAARVA Members:

Unleash Your RV Camping Potential– For Free! Great news for our RV Camping enthusiasts! In an exciting partnership with Grouper, National African American RVers Association now offers free memberships to eligible Medicare Advantage and Supplement plan holders. Don't let membership fees keep you from enjoying your passion for RV Camping. Check your eligibility today and get your National African American RVers Association membership reimbursed without any cost! Check your eligibility today! Groupergroups.com/NAARVA

Step 1: Check Your Eligibility Visit Groupergroups.com/NAARVA with your health plan details. The registration process is quick and easy, taking just about 5 minutes.

Step 2: Activation Once your eligibility is confirmed, Grouper will send a check directly to you to reimburse your National African American RVers Association membership dues.

Step 3: Dive into RV Camping! With your membership dues reimbursed, you can fully engage in RV Camping activities and immerse yourself in the vibrant community at National African American RVers Association.

Here's a sample list of events that qualify as activities.

1. Participate in a group activity at a campground
2. Bike riding
3. Pickleball
4. Beanbag baseball/ cornhole
5. Card bingo
6. Host a chapter outing
7. Joining a NAARVA chapter
8. Attending a NAARVA National, Regional rally or Chapter outing/event
9. Serving on a committee or Board
10. Line dancing
11. Enjoying an evening by the campfire with fellow RVers

Need Assistance? For any questions or assistance, please contact us at info@hellogrouper.com or call 833-906-1700. Get ready to stay active and engaged with your passion for RV Camping.

NAARVA Executive Board

The NAARVA Voice — 15



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