

Gerald Larkin Wall
NEMCSA Board Member



Gerald Wall has been a member of the NEMCSA Board of Directors since 1999. Gerald and his wife Smokie (Sonja) moved to Gerrish Township in Roscommon County in 1995. Gerald became acquainted with their local county commissioner who asked him if he would like to represent Roscommon County on the NEMCSA Board. Mr. Wall's name was presented to the Board and he eagerly accepted the position which he has held for 17 years. Gerald has been an active, involved member and has served on many committees during his tenure, learning the various aspects of NEMCSA's varied programming.

What interests Mr. Wall the most about the NEMCSA Board is that they "do address the problems that concern me and the truly poor in America". His most rewarding insight in serving on the NEMCSA Board has been to see, "a lifting of all ships to a common level" and that "with help and a job, people who struggle can make it in this great country". Gerald says "it is a true learning experience to see how the problems of the poor can be addressed".

Gerald came from a family of ten children. They were poor but there was no government assistance in those days. He also says that his parents, born and raised in Mississippi, would not have taken any form of assistance. He remembers "my parents had dignity and respect, a very strong work ethic, a moral and religious attitude that they instilled in their children". His family was raised in the Baptist faith.

Gerald and his beloved wife Smokie were married for 50 years. She passed away in 2012. Smokie was born in Munich, Germany and also knew what it was like to be poor. She survived by eating scraps from a nearby U. S. Army base to stay alive after World War II. The Walls have one son, Karim, one granddaughter and two great grandchildren. They live in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Mr. Wall graduated in 1956 from the "college of hard knocks" he says, which was Southwestern High School in Detroit, Michigan. He was drafted into the U.S. Army during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. He became an administrative specialist and was honorably discharged. He then went to work for General Motors in Ypsilanti as an expeditor in the purchasing department until his retirement.

In addition to his service on the NEMCSA Board of Directors, Mr. Wall has been very involved in his community. He is a 32 degree Mason; a Michigan Firemen's Memorial Festival Committee (MFMFC) Board Member; a board member and chaplain of the local and state Sons of the American Revolution (SAR); a member of the Confederate Sons of America (CSA); is involved with his local police department; and is Chairman of the Roscommon County Republican Party. He has been a National Delegate to the Republican Presidential Convention five times.

Gerald also enjoys coin collecting, physical exercise and working in his yard.