



**OFFICERS and CHAIRS**

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2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	Ken Rowen	785-842-8847
Secretary	Dianne Throop	785-841-1408
Treasurer	Clara Arnold	785-842-1680
Membership	Betty Scribner	785-865-8235
Service	Wanda Lyon	785-764-2210
Public Relations	Gordon Montney	785-760-0595
Newsletter	Wendy Hambly	913-845-0121
NARFE PAC	Val Romano	785-843-6858
NARFE Net Coor	Jim Turrentine	785-842-3674
Alzheimer's Chair	John Scott	785-542-3510
Legislative Chair	John Surritte	785-856-0558
Sunshine	Reba Bryant	785-843-4407

**August 18th MEETING INFORMATION**

Meet at Conroy's Pub. The program begins at noon, lunch (\$9) at 12:30, followed by a business meeting. Lunch is on the Chapter if it is your first visit. The August program is Officer Robert Neff of the Lawrence Police Department presenting "Home and Internet Safety."

The September program is Funeral Home Director, Matt Daigh, with the Rumsey Funeral Home. He will present a program on preparing for the end of life and making advance arrangements.

**July 21st Meeting Recap**

Betty Scribner, Membership Chair, showed the PowerPoint presentation entitled *NARFE...What Is It and Why Would You Want to Join?* The presentation, developed as a recruiting tool for the Chapter, was well received by the 28 members present. September 14<sup>th</sup>, Betty and Tom Huntzinger will recruit at USGS. Presentations for other area agencies are being scheduled.

Betty opened with some interesting facts and reasons for taking an active part in the recruitment of new members and retention of current members.

- 2004-2010 NARFE lost nearly 60,000 members.
- Although the 2009 membership drive brought in 23,323 new members, a 15% increase over 2008, and reinstatement of 10,000+ members. Those numbers were not enough to offset the loss of 32,000 members who did not renew, 359 who cancelled, and 8,200 deaths. The result was a decline in membership.
- Loss of those 7,415 members in 2009, equals a loss of \$200,000 in revenue.
- Only 6 federations increased membership between 2008 and 2009.
- Projecting this trend of decreasing membership, indicates NARFE membership will be ~290,000 in 2011 and ~259,000 by 2015.

We must expand our recruiting and retention efforts to reverse NARFE's declining numbers. Size does matter--numbers count on Capital Hill. Since 1987, our COLA averaged an annual increase of 3.03%. Those increases are a direct result of NARFE's efforts. To ensure continued protection of our hard earned benefits, we need to focus on Recruiting and Retention of NARFE members. Each of us needs to do his/her part.

**KUDOS & THANK YOU'S TO:**

- ★ **Dianne Throop** for agreeing to handle the Save-A-Label Alzheimer's Fund Raiser. See the Alzheimer's section of the newsletter page 2.
- ★ **Betty Scribner** for her continuing efforts in recruitment and retention—Nice presentation ☺.
- ★ **Linda Surritte** for submitting the Alzheimer's quilt photo to the NARFE Magazine and getting Free State Chapter 378 of Lawrence national recognition! Check out the August issue pg 50.
- ★ **Linda and John Surritte** for their generosity in again matching funds for Alzheimer's donations ---Report deserving members to Wendy Hambly---

**SUNSHINE CHAIR Reba Bryant**

Robert Eggert passed away Thursday, July 22, 2010. Bob, who regularly attended Chapter 378 meetings, was at the Chapter's July 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. He'll be missed.



I sent Virginia Price and Roberta Crider "thinking of you" cards and a sympathy card to Ralph Chance's family. Please let me know about illness, special

birthdays, celebrations, or honors our members receive, so I can send an appropriate card. Email: [rebabryant@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rebabryant@sbcglobal.net)

**MEMBERSHIP CHAIR Betty Scribner**

Welcome to guest Gary Schmidt at the July 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

Progress to Date: a) Recruiting slide show at the final polishing stage, b) Recruiting at USGS on Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>, c) Plans to present at other agencies, d) Website committee making progress with getting the website functional.

**FEATURED MEMBER****John Surritte**

The primaries were August 3rd and elections for a new governor, Senators, and Representative are not far off, so this month, in addition to “Getting to



Know Our Candidates,” we are “Getting to Know our Legislative Chair, John Surritte.

John retired from the US Postal Service in 2000 with 34 years of federal service.

For 18 years, from 1982 until retiring in 2000, John was an SES Financial Executive.

Prior to that he was a letter carrier for 7 years, while attending college, then a mid-level finance manager for 9 years.

He and his wife, Linda, came to Lawrence to retire.

They have 3 children, Michelle, Todd and Nicholas and 2 grandchildren, Lily, age 5 and Luke, age 2.

In addition to NARFE activities, John loves to play golf and travel. The photo was taken on St Simons Island in Georgia in March during one of their trips.

John has held numerous positions in NARFE. He was Chapter President, State 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, State President, and State Past President. He also served as the Federal Legislative Chair for Kansas Federation from 2004-2010. John currently serves as Free State Chapter 378’s Legislative Chair. He does a great job of keeping the chapter abreast of legislative activities, encouraging members to be informed voters in the coming elections, and to contact our elected officials. He takes an active role in relating NARFE’s views to officials currently in office and those running for office.

John says, “I really like how the Chapter has become more active. Linda and I enjoy the meetings and all the new members. The present Chapter leadership is doing a very good job. It is a pleasure being a NARFE member.”

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*I know of no safe repository of the ultimate power of society but the people. And if we think them not enlightened enough, the remedy is not to take power from them, but to inform them by education. Thomas Jefferson*

**LEGISLATIVE****John Surritte**

As Immediate Past Chapter President, one of my responsibilities is to solicit individuals to be on the ballot for the various chapter offices for 2011. In September, I will determine if the present officers wish to run again. In October, I will ask other potential candidates to be on the ballot. Of course anyone can run at any time, independent of whether or not the incumbents want to run again.

I also want to remind members to meet the candidates for National and State offices after the August 3rd primary. Tom Huntzinger and I are hoping to put together a Chapter sponsored “Meet and Greet the Candidates” following the primaries. This event would be in September or October.

**NARFE NATIONAL**

**The National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform is looking for ways to cut the budget. Pay attention—help prevent cuts to Federal Worker Benefits--our benefits could be put on the chopping block.**

NARFE makes it easy to CONTACT your senators and representatives. On the NARFE web page (narfe.org), scroll down the home page to find the icon shown here. Click on that icon to get to the **NARFE Legislative Action Center**, where you will find a composite message. Below that, there is a SENDER INFORMATION section. Fill in the Sender Information, then, scroll down to the blue box that says “SEND MESSAGE.” Click on that blue box to automatically send the message to the appropriate congressmen and a confirmation to your email account. It is painless. Remember numbers count!

If you don’t want to do all the clicking, below is the address for the Composite Message page. <http://capwiz.com/narfe/issues/alert/?alertid=15019201>.

See a copy of the letter you will generate from the NARFE Legislative Action Center on page 3.

Also, it was noted at the meeting that Republicans are interested in changing annuity benefits from the average of the high 3 years to the average of the high 5 years. Pay attention active federal workers, lest your retirement shrinkith.



**NARFE NATIONAL continued:**

The following is the body of the letter you can generate via the **NARFE Legislative Action Center** as described on the previous page. NARFE adds the appropriate letter format and addresses it to your congressmen.

*I am writing to express my concerns about how my earned federal civilian retirement and health benefits could be affected by the budget-cutting recommendations of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform. As the commission begins its work, I urge you to keep the following points in mind:*

1) *During previous periods of entitlement reform, policymakers first discussed cutting the "big three" - Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. However, when lawmakers realized the political realities of cutting a program such as Social Security, which has 40 million beneficiaries (77 million by 2030), they have turned to easier targets - including the "captive audience" of federal retirees — a much smaller constituency (2.3 million retirees and survivors). In fact, during the budget crises of the 1980s and early 1990s, federal retirees and survivors lost in excess of \$50 billion in deferred, reduced and canceled cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs), while Social Security COLAs were preserved. A stark example was the application of the once-used sequestration process of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings law which eliminated civil service COLAs but held Social Security recipients harmless.*

2) *Federal civilian retirement does not face the same solvency challenges as trust funds that support Social Security and Medicare. Indeed, the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund (CSRDF) is fully funded and actuarially sound. According to the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service: "Using a 75-year projection period, the Office of Personnel Management estimates that the total value of securities in the trust fund will grow throughout the projection period, ultimately reaching about 4.2 times payroll, or nearly 18 times the amount needed to pay annual benefits. In summary, by definition, under the financing arrangements set out in current law, the system is not now and never will be 'insolvent' or without adequate budget authority for payment of benefits. Again, because the budget cost of the system can never exceed the cost of monthly benefits*

*to living annuitants, the cash required from the Treasury or taxpayers will never exceed the cost of those monthly payments."*

3) *While Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid will consume two percentage points more than the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the next 10 years, civil service retirement's share of the GDP will shrink by 0.06 percent, with the decline in the number of annuitants covered by the closed former retirement system, the Civil Service Retirement System.*

4) *Federal retirement will not be directly affected by the boom in the senior population because the federal retirement population is a function of the size of the federal work force, not the general population.*

*Can I count on you to preserve COLA equity between all federal retirement programs and defend the integrity of a system that provides deferred compensation and benefits to individuals who have dedicated their careers to public service? I request that you reply to this letter.*

**ALZHEIMER'S FUND****John Scott**

As of July 2, our Chapter contributions were \$1360, an average of \$12.71 per member, which made us the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest Kansas Chapter Donor. July Meeting donations were \$122, resulting in a year to date total of \$1482.

Here are some ways **YOU** can add to Chapter 378's contributions to the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund:

1) Linda and John Surritte have generously pledged to match Alzheimer's donations made during August, September, and October up to \$500. November is *NARFE Alzheimer's Month*, so they will turn in the matching funds in November. Remember, if you contribute by check you will have a record for your charitable tax deductions.

2) **Chapter 378 can raise money for the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund** by collecting "Best Choice" labels.

Every 1,000 UPC's (proof of purchase bar code) on BEST CHOICE labels, earns Chapter 378 \$30 for Alzheimer's. In addition, Associated Whole-sale Grocers, the sponsoring company, offers a Bonus Certificate worth \$30 when redeemed with the first 1,000 labels each year.

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Dianne Throop has graciously volunteered to collect the labels you each have. You can bring them to meetings or email or call to make other arrangements. You don't have to wait to use the item. I found it easy to remove the UPC portion of the label with a box cutter. Some you may have to soak in a little warm water before attempting to remove.

The program runs from January – December. We are getting a late start this year, but we already have 22 labels – only 978 to go to earn \$30 and the extra \$30 bonus! ☺ Checkers is one of the grocers in Lawrence that carries the Best Choice brand. There are more than 2,700 Best Choice food, household, and health & beauty products from which to choose. Please participate and enlist your friends and relatives to save labels with you. Labels from aluminum cans are not accepted, but the UPC from the carton is acceptable.

#### **SERVICE OFFICER**

**Wanda Lyon**

June's Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) decreased from May's to -0.08%. This percentage must be a positive (+) number for a COLA in 2011.

The following is reprinted from Iowa NARFE Chapter 551 newsletter: "The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) should be notified promptly upon the death of an annuitant by family members or whoever is handling the deceased's affairs. The Funeral Director does not provide this service. The Service Committee recommends calling OPM [M-F, 7:30 am - 7:45 pm EST] at (724) 794-2005 [or 888-767-6738] and selecting the menu option to report a death. They will want the date of death and either the deceased's Social Security number or Civil Service claim number. The Chapter Service Officer is always available to assist. Survivor benefits (e.g. survivor annuity and Federal Employees Group Life Insurance benefits) must be applied for; they are not automatic. OPM will mail the necessary application forms upon being notified of an annuitant's death. Death certificates must be submitted with the claim forms, but are not necessary to make the initial call."

The updated version of *Be Prepared for Life's Events* is available online. It is downloadable. An advantage in using the downloadable version is being able to fill it out on the website before downloading. Then download the completed copy containing your information that is easy to update.

551(785)764-2210 or [lyonden@sunflower.com](mailto:lyonden@sunflower.com)

#### **GETTING INVOLVED**

Do you know someone who is a civilian federal active or retired employee? If so, share some information about NARFE with them. Here are some facts taken from the NARFE website ([narfe.org](http://narfe.org)). You can use this information to explain the importance of being a NARFE member.

#### **NARFE'S LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

"NARFE is the only association dedicated to safeguarding and improving the earned rights and benefits of America's retired federal employees. A team of government relations professionals in Washington tracks congressional action and agency proposals that affect your federal retirement benefits. NARFE's Legislative Department works simultaneously to preserve and enhance civil service annuity and health care benefits.

Some of NARFE's legislative accomplishments include:

- Stopping reductions in federal civilian retirement benefits;
- Continuing to fend off cuts to the Medicare and Social Security programs;
- Protecting annual cost-of-living adjustments;
- Bringing about Federal Long Term Care Insurance for active and retired federal employees; and
- Developing the framework for the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)."

#### **NARFE KNOWLEDGE**

1. In 1962 an automatic annuity adjustment known as what was passed by congress?
2. What did the "Association" work to insure relative to the FEHBP in 1969?

#### **MEMBERS TO DO LIST**

- ✓ Get to know your National and State candidates.
- ✓ Help protect your benefits. Get on the NARFE Legislative Action Line and send your Congressmen a message.
- ✓ Participate in the Chapter 378's Alzheimer's Fund Raisers. The Surritte's are offering matching funds. Save the UPC's from Best Choice labels for Alzheimer's Fund Raiser.
- ✓ Email your birthday to Wendy Hambly at [WAH@copper.net](mailto:WAH@copper.net).

NARFE Knowledge Answers:

1. *Cost of Living Adjustment*
2. *Insure that retirees were included in open season*