



The Shawnee Signal
Chapter 1162 Shawnee Mission Kansas
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association
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www.narfe-chapter1162.org

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Louise Lloyd, President

As I start to write this article, we have had the first chapter meeting of this new year, and it was exciting to have four individuals attend the meeting who had not been to one of our chapter meetings before. Several of them indicated an interest to become more involved, which is always wonderful to hear when you are the president. And now more than ever before, we need more of our chapter members to become involved in carrying out our mission to protect our earned benefits.

There are so many ways to become involved, we have a number of committees. However, from my perspective, no committee is more important than our **Membership Committee**, which is chaired by Harold Hutcheson. Harold has tried to make phone calls himself the past several years to welcome new members, as well as making some phone calls to invite other members to our meetings, but there is no way he can contact all the members in our chapter. At the present time, our newsletter is the only way we can feasibly contact all of our members.

Individuals generally respond more favorably to getting involved when they have a personal invitation, so I would ask you to please consider volunteering to help Harold make a few phone calls each month. You can call Harold to volunteer, or speak with him at a chapter meeting. And this is something you can do, even if you aren't personally able to join us for meetings. So please give this serious consideration, even if you can't make calls every month. This service to our chapter will be invaluable in helping to strengthen our chapter and keep us in closer communication with our members. You can call Harold at **913-780-3073**, or visit with him at our chapter meetings.

Also, I wanted to share that for this year, our board members agreed that we would like to increase our emphasis on recruiting new members, as the more members NARFE has, the more political clout we have as an organization, and there is no time more in need of that clout than now. So as an added incentive to recruit members, the board agreed that quarterly, we would reward any chapter member who recruits a member for our chapter \$5.00 for each person they recruit. We have budgeted a small amount for those awards, but we would love to be in a position to have to consider increasing this budgeted amount because we gained a number of members recruited by our chapter members. So we hope you will think of individuals you might recruit and talk to them about NARFE. Additional information will be included in the March newsletter. But feel free to contact me or any of the chapter officers if you have any questions.

Kansas Federation Convention – April 10th – 12th, Junction City – Louise Lloyd

The NARFE Kansas Federation is holding its annual convention in Junction City, April 10th -12th. We are allocated 29 delegates, so contact our secretary if Elizabeth Bornman if you would be interested in attending. Chuck Timanus, Public Relations Director from NARFE HQ who will speak at the convention. Also, Richard Thissen, our Region V Vice-President will be with us, and share so capably the latest news both from NARFE HQ as he is a member of the National Executive Board, as well as sharing from his experience with attending meetings of the other federations in Region V.

The Federation is once again having a fundraising drawing for \$1.00 per ticket. **1st prize \$250, 2nd prize \$100, 3rd prize, \$50.** Only NARFE members are eligible. Contact the President or Secretary for tickets. We hope you'll support the Federation fundraiser as it helps to defray some of the costs incurred by the Federation. Serving as Secretary for the Federation this year has shown me that the money raised is not wasted as the federation board members are extremely dedicated, and go above and beyond what one could envision unless you have served on the federation board, so I hope you'll seriously consider supporting this fundraiser.

OPM has established a new Tax Hotline that retirees can call to change the federal tax withholding on their monthly annuity payments. The number is **800-307-8298**.

Eddie Acosta, 1st Vice President, Alzheimer's

Alzheimer's disease robs whoever has it of their mental capacity day by day until they can't function. Early identification becomes very important. Our speaker last month reminded us that each person has three main components-intellect, personality and spirit. There have been many promising discoveries made but unless more research is conducted these promising discoveries remain just that-potentially promising. For the last 10 years NARFE has committed to contributing \$1million dollars per year with an ultimate goal of raising and contributing \$12 million by 2012 and we are well on the way to achieving that."

With the Kansas Federation Convention to be held in Junction City from April 10 – 12, 2011, it's definitely time to think about the Alzheimer's "Live" and "Silent" Auctions. Please start gathering your "new and Antique Quality" items that could be donated for these auctions. The convention committee has requested that all items contributed have an auction value of \$5.00 or more. We encourage you to bring items that you wish to donate to our **February and March** chapter meetings.

And don't forget to bring your Best Choice labels/UPC codes which we are collecting to raise money for Alzheimer's research. You can also send them to me at mail to me at **5216 Bond, Shawnee, KS 66203**.

Louis Bornman, 2nd Vice President, Legislative

As I plan for attending the NARFE Legislative Conference March 5th – 8th, I am looking for input from current (and recently retired) federal employees on the impact the salary freeze will have on you. I want to have this information available for meetings we are scheduling with our Representatives and Senators at the end of the conference. I want to be able to show through firsthand comments what the impacts really are of using federal employees as the scapegoats for reducing federal spending. How will this influence your plans for retirement? Will you decide to work longer or will you retire earlier? How do you see the pay freeze impacting your decision to stay or leave federal service (whether retirement or resignation)? How do you see the pay freeze impacting your agencies ability to hire new employees? What would the impact be on your agency if a large number of employees decided to retire suddenly, like this year, or within the next two years? Please email me at: BornmanL@aol.com, write me at Louis Bornman, 12308 W 74th Terrace, Shawnee, KS 66216, or call me at 913-268-8526.

Also remember to stay in touch with your local state Representative and Senator as there are reports from Topeka of legislators looking at the Kansas employee's retirement system for possible cuts and taxation considerations. This could also have implications for them considering taxing Federal retiree pensions as well.

NARFE Advocacy Campaign

NARFE is launching an aggressive advocacy and communications campaign to fight anticipated cuts in federal retirement, pay and health benefits and to increase awareness about the value of public service in response to the attacks on federal employees and annuitants. Lawmakers are using reports that federal employees are overpaid and receive overly generous retirement and health benefits to justify cutting such compensation. The **Campaign theme: "America's federal public servants protect the heartbeat of this great country."** Federal workers add value to everyday life. Federal workers have sacrificed, will sacrifice, but should not be singled out. In sum, changing the public narrative that has made federal workers and annuitants politically toxic.

NARFE's Legislative Advocacy will include in-state and district meetings with key Members of Congress. While all federations and chapters will be asked to be part of this campaign, NARFE will concentrate on key targeted states and congressional districts. On-the-ground organizers will assist federations and chapters in targeted states. An Advocacy toolkit will be made available to all federations and chapters.

Online Petition: Tell your friends and family (particularly non-NARFE members) to visit: www.protectamericasheartbeat.com.

2011 Kansas Silver-Haired Legislature Elections

In the February 2011 issue of the monthly publication of the “Best Times” on page 5, a notice was published that the election for membership in the Johnson County Silver-Haired Legislature is scheduled for Monday, March 14th. Johnson County is represented by six at-large legislators. County residents who are at least 60 and are registered voters may vote for the candidate of their choice. If you unable to get to the election sites on March 14th, you can request an absentee ballot from the Area Agency on Aging on or before March 7th. Information about the candidates, as well as the election sites and times, will be available March 1st – 14th at <http://hsa/jocogov.org> or by calling 913-715-8860.

The “Best Times” is monthly publication of Aging Information & Action of Johnson County, in partnership with the Area Agency on Aging, a division of Johnson County Human Services.

Proposed Kansas Senate Bill (SB 98)

Based on a recent e-mail from Jim Miller, the State Legislative Chairman for the Kansas Federation, Jim shared that a tax bill was introduced recently that should be of interest to many individuals and organizations. Based on Jim’s initial scan of the proposed legislation, he indicates that the proposed legislation would change/eliminate some sales tax exemptions, add sales tax to most services (accounting, legal, haircuts, etc.), eliminate corporate income tax, lower personal income tax rates and eliminate sales tax on many food items.

This proposed bill should be of concern to us, as there could be potential ramifications particularly if they were to totally eliminate the corporate income tax along with the other proposed tax changes. The unanswered question would seem to be how would a state that is already struggling in the current economy make up for the loss of all these tax revenues. Would a tax on various services provide sufficient revenues or would they be looking to other sources for revenues. We will try to keep you posted on any developments that could potentially impact our federal pensions.

Contacting State Elected Officials

To contact your state senator or representative while the Kansas Legislature is in session, you can contact the Johnson County Courthouse, 913-715-5000 and ask to be connected to your legislator. You may also contact the legislators via the website www.kslegislature.org. There is a lot of excellent information available on this website. For example, it contains the various committees within the state legislature, with information regarding the committee, including who is serving on the committee. If you don’t know who your legislators may be, you can also determine that on the website. There is also a link to hearing live broadcasts of the senate or house sessions.

A Kansas Legislative Hotline is also available for updates about the status of current bills:

In-State - 800-432-3924. Out of state - 785-296-2149.

The Legislative Hotline is available to telephone callers (703)-838-7780 and toll free at 1-877-217-8234, posted on the internet at www.narfe.org, made available to NARFE-Net Coordinators, and sent to over 54,000 GEMS e-mail addresses.

Contact Information : Senator Jerry Moran – jerry_moran@moran.senate.gov; Hays KS office telephone 785-628-6401
Senator Pat Roberts – pat_roberts@roberts.senate.gov; Washington D.C. telephone: 202-244-6521

CHAPTER WEBSITE [narfe-chapter1162.org] Bob Steinert Webmaster

The news from the White House and Congress regarding federal employment, pay, health and retirement benefits changes so rapidly that it presents a problem how to report on it in the chapter's website. So, I've taken a new approach. Both political parties select speakers to present their positions on critical issues on their parties' weekly radio addresses which are available as videos. When the president and the parties make them available, you can view these videos on the chapter's website home page by clicking on Legislation & Politics. This page will be updated frequently as new videos become available.

NARFE Meetings in Each State with Respective U.S. Representatives.

In the past few days, each of the 441 U.S. Representatives will have received a letter from the NARFE President encouraging them to meet with the Federation President and their delegation. In addition, each Federation President will be sending a letter to the respective U.S. representatives requesting a time to meet with them during the Constituent Work week February 21st to 25th. The letters from the federation presidents are tailored to reflect federal employee and retiree counts in their district. Representatives from the respective chapters in Kansas are being asked to attend these meetings, so if Congressman Yoder's office agrees to a meeting, members from our chapter will get the opportunity to meet with Congressman Yoder. More details will be available at our February 22nd meeting.

Sunshine Committee – Don Faidley is the chair of the Sunshine Committee, so be sure to contact Don if you know of any members who may be sick or in the hospital, so he can send a card. Don can be contacted at 913-671-7368 or email: Djfaidley@aol.com.

Reminder: Don't forget to bring your egg cartons and plastic grocery bags to chapter meetings for donation to the Community Center of Shawnee, Inc..

Future Meeting Dates/Activities:

February 22nd, Chapter meeting, 1:30 p.m. Overland Park Lutheran Church, 79th and Lowell, **Program:** David LaRoche, Federal Highway Administration, Topic: Traffic Signalization Issues, Concerns and Solutions

March 4th, Executive Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m. at Denny's Restaurant, 95th & I-35 Exit, Lenexa.

March 9th, Social Luncheon at Hometown Buffet, 73rd @ Quivira at **1:00 p.m.**, RSVP Agnes Shellhammer, 432-0091

March 22nd, Chapter Meeting, 1:30 p.m., Overland Park Lutheran Church, 79th and Lowell. **Program:** Ed Schulte, Johnson County Area Agency on Aging.

April 1st, Executive Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m. at Denny's Restaurant, 95th & I-35 Exit, Lenexa.

April 10th – 12th Kansas Federation Convention, Junction City, Kansas, Courtyard by Marriott.

April 26th Chapter meeting, 1:30 p.m., Overland Park Lutheran Church, 79th and Lowell.

May 6th, Executive Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m. at Denny's Restaurant, 95th & I-35 Exit, Lenexa

August 29 – 31st – College of NARFE Knowledge (CONK) – South Sioux City, NE

Meeting Cancellation Policy: A chapter monthly meeting will be canceled during the winter months if Shawnee Mission School District cancels classes due to inclement weather.