



**Sunflower Chapter 1160
Kansas City, KS
Byron Nichols, Editor**

**MAY MEETING:
11:00 A.M., Friday, 05/13/11**

**JUNE MEETING:
11:00 A.M., Friday, 06/10/11**

**Both at the Pat Hanlon Senior Center,
1101 Ridge Ave., Kansas City, KS**

Chapter Officers		
President	Theodore J Robinson	913-371-7720 tjrobinson357@aol.com
Vice-President	LaVerne Robinson	913-371-7720 save900@aol.com
Recording Secretary	Wanda Collins	913-621-3849
Public Relations and Service Officer	Theodore J Robinson	913-371-7720 tjrobinson357@aol.com
Treasurer, Roster and Newsletter Editor	Byron Nichols	816-333-5151 byron666@earthlink.net
Alzheimer's Chair	Kathy Zunick	913-281-3335
Membership Chair	Shirley Newman	913-334-2544

March Meeting: Four to seven members and guests played seven Bingo games prior to the meeting. Some winnings were contributed to the Alzheimer's fund.

The business meeting started at 1:05pm with 9 members and 2 guests (a quorum). The president led the group in a prayer and the flag salute. Secretary Wanda Collins read the minutes of the February meeting, which were accepted. The treasurer's report was read by Byron Nichols and submitted for audit. Alzheimer's chair Kathy Zunick reported member Naomi Bowen gave her a slew of UPC codes, so now we have enough to send off for the annual \$30 plus \$30 bonus. The Kitchen committee reports we need more help ASAP. Shirley Newman of the Membership committee reported calling and sending letters to separating members; no responses as to rejoining reported. Sunshine chair Ernestine Smith reported calling 11 members and sending 3 cards for birthdays. She reports Birdie Allen is back at home now after falling twice, and needs 24-hour care. Bills were ratified and paid.

Our Area 1-A Vice-President Judy Etter visited and talked to us about her job as a VP.

We are planning on sending five people to the convention in Junction City in April: 4 delegates and 1 delegate-at-large.

The drawings: Attendance, #4, Dorothy Guest; Jackpot, #481038, T.J. Robinson. Both prizes were donated to the Alzheimer's Fund. The meeting was adjourned a little after 2pm.

There is a proposal to find a new meeting place and/or time so the members who work will have a better chance to attend. This will have to be other than the Hanlon Center, probably involving payment of rent or buying meals (if in a restaurant). If you are a member who wishes to attend at a day other than the second Friday or a time other than the middle of the day, please call or drop a note to an officer above. If we can get some feedback, it would make it easier to make a decision!

April Meeting: Chapter Memorial & Josef

Meditz Luncheon: Guests started arriving about 10:30am and visited with each other while preparations were made. The Memorial Service was held from 11:30am to noon, honoring these 18 members:

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|--------------------|-------------------|
| Johnnie Mae Bailey | Frances L Merritt |
| Annabelle Bruce | Ruth Overton |
| Gerald E Congrove | Albert C Relic |
| Floyd F Culp | Charles Simkins |
| Ruby N Hancock | Margaret I Swain |
| Nevada A Kibble | Carmen Thomas |
| Christine A Leaf | Karl E Wendt |
| Willie Mae Lyles | Elizabeth J White |
| Marie Macan | Travis Worten |

The Vice-President introduced the service. Dorothy Guest conducted a prayer and Wanda Collins read from scripture. "Amazing Grace" was sung. The names were read by Byron Nichols, with flowers placed for each by Shirley Newman, Ernestine Smith and Kathy Zunick. A poem was read by Ernestine Smith with remarks by former president Regina Barger. The ending song, "Blessed Assurance" was then sung by the attendees.

The luncheon was held from noon until almost 1pm, catered by Dickey's BBQ of south Overland Park. We had turkey and brisket, baked beans, mashed potato casserole, green beans, slaw, rolls, cobbler and pies. Also some ice cream cups and homemade cookies were brought. Only twenty-six guests attended, so we had enough food for many to take home.

Many played Bingo until about 1:45pm (some of the winnings were contributed to the Alzheimer's fund), when the party was dismissed. The jackpot ticket #481064 went to Henrietta Horseman and the Attendance drawing, #20 went to Georgia Story. Both were contributed to the Alzheimer's Fund.

Future Meeting: July – Indoor Picnic – Bring picnic-type food items such as chicken, BBQ, slaw, potato salad, beans; whatever your traditional picnic looks like. Having it indoor avoids the insects and the heat usually found at the lake picnic areas in the summer.

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Membership Update:

Deceased: Gerald E. Congrove, 75, KCK, 4/3/11, USAF Defense Mapping Agency; Elizabeth White, 83, KCK, 3/6/11, Dept. of Justice; Rachel Brady, 84, Merriam, KS, no date, IRS; Travis Worten, 102, Los Angeles, CA, no date, USPS. New Members, Reinstated, Dropped, Transferred: unavailable due to technical problems. We now have approximately 213 members.

Note to families of members: When a member passes on, please be sure to contact the chapter's Service Officer (T.J. Robinson, 913-371-7720 or tjrobinson357@aol.com) for assistance for which agencies to contact (such as OPM) or forms to file. Also, call us so that we may contact NARFE headquarters to either stop dues billing or withholding or to transfer membership to a widow or widower. Thank You.

Members with birthdays in **May** are:

Dorothy M Barrett	Larnell Johnson
Charles K Bornschein	Robert E Kavanaugh
Donald C Breiby	Lena M O'Malley
Phyllistine A Breiby	Mary M Oliver
Maria Dinges	LaVerne Robinson
Charles E Fithian	Valentine J Ruzick
M Louine Herman	Barbara R Stafford

Members with birthdays in **June** are:

Mary L Bentz	Velma V Koskan
Kathleen E Bush	Thomas P Lewis
Janet Dillman	Martha J Orth
Alvin L Drake	David S Podrebarac
Ardith A Gibbs	Alene Seiblom
Edna M Herzig	Gladys R Spacek
Constance L Holliday	Georgia C Story
Gladys E Koska	Evelyn J Tucker

BOLD = Attends many meetings yearly

The 30 members above have an age range of 66 to 104 and an average age of 85. Congratulations! If you were born in May or June and not in the list, please notify the editor at the return address on the last page or e-mail address in the chapter officer list.

Convention Report:

Our chapter sent four members: President T.J. Robinson, delegate-at-large (Parliamentarian) and three delegates: Shirley Newman (Time & Place), Byron Nichols (Resolutions) and LaVerne Robinson (Time & Place). After committee meetings were held, there was a round table discussion with presentations by various federal and state chairs. Since the death of National Treasurer Charles W. Saylor on March 3, Richard Thissen, the Region 5 VP assumed the position on April 3. The state Federation president for the previous year, Carol Ek, assumed the Region 5 VP position on April 15. A new state president will be elected in the convention.

Some interesting statistics mentioned in the presentation of the Alzheimer's Chair: Alzheimer's is now the 6th leading cause of death in the nation, but

it only gets \$480 million in federal funding (far less than cancer, HIV/AIDS, etc.). The \$9 million goal for donations by NARFE was met in January, and a new goal of \$10 million by the end of 2012 was set. NARFE is the #1 contributor to Alzheimer's Research of all organizations nationally, and NARFE's money alone has funded nine full-time researchers.

The Live Auction Sunday night netted a total of \$1,365.50. Some of the large-bid items: \$100 for a 3-foot diameter grapevine & strawflower wreath; \$140 for a basket containing wine, glasses, foodstuff and an overnight stay at a Ramada; \$150 for a king-size quilt with pillow and framed picture; and \$150 for a famous P.O. Box bank (about 8" x 12") from John Lancaster.

Monday morning's session started with presentations by various dignitaries, Federation officers and committees. There were only one nomination for each of the Federation offices, and were elected by acclamation:

President	Cindy Renee-Blyth (former 2 nd VP)
1 st VP	Dixie Thomas (incumbent)
2 nd VP	Ann Murphy (new, Manhattan Chap.)
Secretary	Louise Lloyd (incumbent)
Treasurer	Jerry Ketter (incumbent)

The afternoon session started with the Memorial Service. Our chapter had 13 deaths in the past year and nationally there were 176 deaths reported.

Next, the Bylaws and Resolutions committee reported on the items passed for consideration by the whole convention from their Sunday meeting:

1) Reduce the per-capita tax back to \$1 from the current \$1.50 – after discussion, a vote to table the resolution until next year failed by a tie vote of 54 to 54. A vote to accept the resolution failed by 36 yea and 76 nay.

2) Change the method of voting to change the per-capita tax from voice vote to paper ballot in order to give chapters with proxy votes a voice. This was approved with greater than 2/3 vote.

3) Change the seating at the national convention to allow visitors, alternates and helpers to sit with the delegates on the floor instead of in the back of the auditorium. This was adopted with nearly unanimous vote (sent to the national office for their consideration).

The members then broke into groups to elect Area VPs. Our area (1A) reelected Judy Etter. All other areas except Area 6 reelected their incumbents.

The National Legislative Chair then presented a report with some bad news: of the various proposals (most just speculation at this point) one would change our COLAs by using different indexes, making them smaller or nonexistent. Let's hope this doesn't happen.

At the Monday night Banquet, the state Federa-

tion officers were installed. Also, entertainment was provided by Harold Williams, singing old standard cowboy songs, many related to the famous trails in the state.

Tuesday's morning session saw the final reports from various committees, including Alzheimer's and PAC, as well as the Federation ticket drawing.

NARFE-PAC collected about \$1600 during the convention.

The Alzheimer's silent auction brought in \$2,710 (preliminary total), about \$700 over last year, for a grand total with the live auction of \$4,075. Next year's per-member goal for contributions has been set at \$5.50, the same as this year. As usual, many smaller chapters whose meeting attendance is higher than the large metro chapters contributed substantially more per member than the goal. Our chapter managed a feeble \$1.60 per member.

No one from our chapter won the Federation drawing for \$50, \$100 or \$250, but it took in more than twice the prize cost, for a \$418 profit. This is used for operating expenses of the Federation.

The Time & Place Committee reported on future sites for the convention. 2014 will be hosted by Chapter 1160 in Shawnee Mission. 2013 will be hosted by Chapter 280 in a Ramada Inn in Salina, from April 28 to 30.

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Remember -- for ALL meetings, if you wish to play Bingo, bring your nickels & dimes. We usually play from just after 11 AM until lunch. Please Come! (We **can** make change for \$1 bills!)

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Legislative, Financial and Health News (summarized from FEDWeek & GEMS Bulletins and NARFE Legislative Hotlines):

Congress: On April 14, the House passed a spending plan appropriating funds for the balance of the current fiscal year ending September 30. It passed the House with a bipartisan vote of 260-167. It then passed the Senate by an overwhelming vote of 81-19. As of writing, it awaited the President's signature.

On April 15, the House passed a budget resolution for fiscal year 2012, starting October 1, 2011, and sent it to the Senate. The measure, authored by Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (R-WI), passed the House by 253-193 on nearly a party line vote. Four other competing plans were considered and defeated. The bill would supposedly reduce spending by \$4.4 trillion over 10 years. \$375 billion of these 10-year savings would come from current and retired federal employees. The cuts include: 1) Require FERS & CSRS covered employees to contribute substantially more to their retirement (despite the fact that the retirement fund is mostly fully funded); 2) Freezing federal pay for **five** years; 3)

Reducing the federal workforce by 10% over three years by various means; 4) Create a voucher system for the Federal Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) in which we would pay a higher percentage of the premiums each year (possibly to the point where some would no longer afford their health insurance).

Both the House and Senate have recessed for Easter and Passover. Most members will return to their districts until May 2nd. This would be the perfect time to visit your congressional delegation and tell them face-to-face that federal employees and retirees reject being used as budget scapegoats. Also use the information at www.ProtectAmericasHeartbeat.org campaign to defend the benefits long earned by federal service.

NARFE has immediately responded to proposed legislation (S.644) introduced by Sen. Richard Burr (R-NC) to eliminate the defined annuity under FERS for employees hired after 2012 (leaving only Social Security). The problem is, under current law, if there is no FERS annuity, there will be no FERS survivor benefits. Also, future retirees and survivors would not be eligible to participate in the FEHBP. The bill hasn't advanced yet.

Another fiscal issue on the horizon is the government will hit its borrowing limit sometime about the end of May, which will start talks of a shutdown again. The Treasury does have several financial maneuvers to temporarily ward off hitting the limit, including borrowing from either the TSP government securities fund or the federal retirement fund, or both. In the past, employees have strongly objected to such steps, in particular the "disinvesting" the G-fund assets, which are investors' **personal property**, so that the government has use of the money and the fund **does not earn interest**. However, the administration recently signaled in its budget proposal that it is willing to use such maneuvers. When these maneuvers were used in the past, investors were paid the accrued interest retroactively (although maybe not all of it – and don't count on it happening this time).

Legislation introduced in March in the House (HR-828) would require the firing of federal employees with seriously delinquent federal tax debt, and would also bar the government from hiring anyone in that status or issuing a contract or grant to such persons. Sponsor Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-UT) cited IRS figures showing nearly 100,000 federal employees were delinquent on their federal taxes in 2009 (to varying degrees), and owed a total just above \$1 billion, an amount which has increased by \$400 million since 2004. The measure would not affect employees making installment payments on their debt. The proposal has been included in various forms in previously failed proposals.

TSP Funds: The TSPs target-date 2050 life-cycle fund finished its inaugural month with a 3.28%

gain, as all the TSP funds posted positive returns during February. The small company 'S' fund gained 4.52% and the large company 'C' fund was up 3.42%. The international stock 'I' fund returned 3.33%, the bond 'F' fund rose 0.26% and the government securities 'F' fund gained 0.22%. The returns on the other lifecycle funds were: income, 0.9%; 2020 2.15%; 2030 2.6%; and 2040 2.95%.

Consumer Index: For the third consecutive month consumer prices increased more than expected, mostly due to food and fuel. The March CPI-W rose 1.1%, or 2.1% above the 2008 3rd quarter average which our freezes were based upon. If the proposed extensions to the freezes are passed, we will be losing money big-time soon.

If any member who doesn't attend meetings wishes to contribute to the Alzheimer's Fund, you can send a check to the Treasurer (see the address on the back cover of the Scout). **Please make checks out to "NARFE/Alzheimer Research"**. We'll forward the contribution to the state coordinator and mention you with a thanks in the Scout. Thanks to all.

Note to members: Dues Withholding saves the national organization money (no bills to mail out) and it saves you about \$4.40 over annually paid dues (\$30.60 national plus chapter vs. \$35.00). You don't have to remember to write that check or risk being dropped. **64%** of our members required to pay dues are already using withholding, why not you? Applications are on the NARFE website at: www.narfe.org.

Reminder: Please send us your "**Best Choice**" UPC codes when you get a bunch! (It's not worth using 44¢ to mail one or two!) We get \$30 per 1000 codes (3¢ per code), plus an additional \$30 bonus once a year. The money goes to Alzheimer's Research. Send them either via a member you know who goes to the meetings or to the address in the return address block. Remember, we need only the bar codes, not the whole label. Saves postage \$.

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Membership Rosters are in an 8.5" x 11" format. Drop me a note at the return address block with \$2.00 each to offset printing and postage.

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OPM Retirement Information Center:
Write to: PO Box 45, Boyers, PA 16017-0045.
Phone: 1-888-767-6738 (1-88USOPMRET)
M-F, 6:30 AM to 7:45 PM Central Time.
Hearing impaired TDD# is 1-800-878-5707.
On the Web: www.opm.gov/retire.

Remarriage, divorce, death of spouse, change of address or financial institution or amount of life insurance under FEGLI (among many other services)

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NARFE Headquarters: 1-703-838-7760
(7 am to 3:45 pm Central Time)

Call to get official forms at this number. See the NARFE magazine for various web addresses.

Also, be sure to notify NARFE for address changes, deaths, etc. at 1-800-456-8410 or memberrecords@narfe.org.

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Other numbers of Interest:

Military Retirees: 800-321-1080
V.A.: 800-827-1000 TSP: 877-968-3778
Social Security: 800-772-1213

NARFE Sunflower Chapter 1160
c/o Byron Nichols, Editor
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