

KANSAS NARFE FEDERATION OF CHAPTERS

Jim Gaskell, Area 2A Vice-president

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May 19, 2008

Area 2A NARFE Chapter Presidents:

Juanita B. Payne, NARFE Chapter 550, Pittsburg

Roger Cottrell, NARFE Chapter 0799, Chanute

Richard Dixon, NARFE Chapter 792, Ft. Scott

Carl K. Grigsby, NARFE Chapter 1763, Coffeyville

Lee Cain, NARFE Chapter 1763, Independence

MAY 2008 NEWSLETTER

Information for the NARFE Chapters, May, 2008 by Jim Gaskell, Area 2A vp.

Hopefully the following information will be helpful to both you and chapter members in our effort to protect our promised benefits from the federal government as retirees, active employees, spouses, and/or survivors.

State NARFE Convention: Four of our Area 2A chapters attended the Kansas NARFE convention in Hutchinson this year: Bourbon County, Chanute, Independence, and Pittsburg had representative present. I do appreciate the work of your chapters in getting your delegates to the State Convention. I urge you to stress the importance of members to attend and learn more about NARFE from the many presentations we have from local, state, regional and national persons bringing information to us.

Election results for the Kansas Federation Officers: New President Gary Townson, former first VP, was unopposed; New first VP Mary Fritzson was also unopposed; 2nd VP Elizabeth Bornman ran against Peggy Hughes of the Hutchinson Chapter and won 130 to 114; Secretary Carol Ek and Treasurer Madelyn Brown were both reelected unopposed. A great set of officers and I asks you give them your full support.

A sad note on Gary Townson, our newly elected NARFE president. He sent the following message a few days ago: *I have serious health problems which have been identified since the Federation (meeting). It is with deep sadness and regret that I, effective May 16, 2008 must step down as Kansas Convention (president). After meeting with doctors from several different disciplines, I have been advised to drastically reduce my commitments. Admitting this is an embarrassment to me because I have always felt I was emotionally strong enough to handle whatever life presented me. In the ten years since I was diagnosed with lung cancer, I began to believe I could do anything I set my mind to. That opinion has now been proven to be an egotistical error. I could write many pages of apology, justification and excuses but that would not change the bottom line. My*

health will not allow me to continue as an Officer in this association. I think highly of NARFE and all it does for the protection of not only its members but also all the rest of the Federal employees, both active and retired. I sincerely wish I could continue to take an active part in the furtherance of it. Unfortunately, I can not.

I am angry at my weaknesses and humiliated that I must exhibit them in public. I therefore will address my conditions in private.

Thank you for your friendship and support. May God bless and strengthen you as you continue to fight the good fight. NARFE Federation President,
gary townson

Should any of you wish to send Gary a note his address is: 212 E. Brownie St., Rose Hill, KS 67133-9706. Phone: 316-776-2684 or e-mail at: gesst@prodigy.net

The resolution offered by the Chanute chapter to increase the per-capita tax charged to chapters to fund the federation won by a fairly large margin. The tax goes from \$1.00 per head to \$1.50 and is effective starting in 2009. About 30 chapters participated in the voluntary effort to send in the extra \$.50 cents dues this year. Our chapters in Area 2A supported this suggestion and I appreciate your support.

The Memorial ceremony was moving, as usual, with 208 NARFE members passing in the last year, the same as the previous year.

Area Vice-presidents were also elected. Since I had no competition, I was elected by our Area 2A chapter delegates. I do appreciate your faith and trust in me for another year. Hopefully I will be able to help you maintain chapter membership in 2008-2009. Four of the eight Area vice-presidents could not serve another year and they were replaced with other members from their area.

Alzheimer's: Statewide, nearly \$5.00 per member was donated to Alzheimer's Research. Therefore the new state goal was raised for 2008 from \$4 to \$5. The Live Auction collected \$1,590, a little less than last year. The Silent Auction collected about \$2,445, more than last year. There were also more items donated for which to bid. In total, \$4,035 was collected, an all-time high for the convention! A new national goal is expected to be raised to 8 million dollars by the end of 2008. This goal will be determined at the National NARFE convention in Louisville

Our 2009 Convention will be held at Manhattan at the Clarion Hotel (this is on the southwest corner of Manhattan and was formerly a Holiday Inn). The dates for 2009 are April 26-28, 09.

Four of our Area 2A chapters discussed some interesting information on Dues Withholding to offer to your chapter regarding how you can reduce your annual dues and get a reward while doing it. The idea discussed is to have a chapter consider if they want

to offer a \$5.00 (or different amount) to either new and/or present members who convert from the way they pay their dues now to Dues Withholding. I ask each Chapter presidents to present the information on Dues Withholding you received from me after our convention. It is a voluntary program but one I have found to help greatly in retention of existing members.

If you have a time I can come visit your chapter either now or in the fall, please let me know. I would like to talk about Government Pension Offset, Windfall Elimination Provision, New Medical Insurance options OPM is promoting, Dues Withholding and likely more if you have interest. Advise members they can bring questions they may have about benefits and/or NARFE. Bring a friend and introduce him or her to NARFE. Always encourage visitors to come visit your chapter.

Recruiting new members: Remember how you were recruited to NARFE? Did a friend or fellow worker asking you to become a member? We all know at least one or more persons either working for the federal government or are retired or are survivors of a federal retiree. All these persons can benefit if they become members. I have had several persons I have been talking to and encouraging to become members for a couple years. In the last 4 month, I have been successful in getting five of them to join. You may be the best person to ask someone to join because you know them and they trust you to give them the truth. We do not get members wholesale; we have to get them one by one. A group of persons we are failing to reach is the spouse of employees or survivors of deceased employees. These have a great stake in being sure the government keeps their promise to continue the benefits we (or our spouses) have earned. Some of our most active and responsible NARFE members are survivors because they know what is at risk. Let people know that the benefits we have as federal employees or retirees was approved by Congress and any changes to reduce those benefits can also be done by Congress. It is our continued vigil that keeps our benefits in place. Should anyone ask you, "What has NARFE done for me lately?" tell them that Congress has not been able to approve any reduction in Retiree's benefits since 1993 because thousands of NARFE members have called, written, e-mailed, or talked with OUR legislators about the effect the suggested or proposed changes in benefits would have on us. They get the connection – thousands of us will vote for them **or their replacement come the next election!** That is our job and we need to continue to stay on top of anything and everything they try to do to reduce any of our promised benefits.

OPM RETIREMENT INFORMATION CENTER: Write to PO Box 45, Boyers, PA 16017-0045 or phone 1-888-767-6738. Remarriage, divorce, death of spouse, change of address or financial institution or amount of life insurance under FEGLI (among many other services).

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, death, and etc. at: 1-800-456-8410.

Should you have questions concerning any of the material presented above, please give me a call or e-mail so I can clarify or expand on t Sincerely,

Jim Gaskell, Area 2, V.P.

CC: Mary E. Fritzson:Acting Pres., KS NARFE Federation of Chapters
John Suritte, Past Pres, KS NARFE Federation of Chapters
Gale Beck, Area 2 VP, NARFE Trainer, Iola