



# KANSAS FEDERATION NEWSLETTER

EDITION 43

APRIL-MAY 2005

**DONALD L. COOPER**  
**FEDERATION PRESIDENT**

## **PRESIDENT**

**Donald Cooper**

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### **New Name - Same Logo - Same Objective.**

The new name of our organization - National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association is for real. The Logo - NARFE is the same. Our basic objective is still - Preservation of OUR EARNED BENEFITS.

What does this all cost? Under \$27 per year, if you have elected Dues Withholding. Using an old phrase "It Doesn't Cost - It Pays!" is very true. Where else can you get an offer to protect your earned benefits, by joint effort and group bargaining? All of this preservation doesn't automatically happen. NARFE is an opportunity. An opportunity to share. Sharing the benefits is only a part of the program. At the other end is an opportunity to share the responsibilities of leadership. A common thought is that NARFE is headed up by the elected National President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Let's turn that thought around to state that NARFE is MEMBER oriented. YOU are the Organization. The National Officers and Staff are there to serve you. That line of thought brings out the point that it's your organization, serving your needs and with that comes your need to think of your responsibilities.

Number one is being a member of the overall group. With numbers NARFE has strength. What is the potential threat to our earned benefits? The very people you have elected to serve you in the United States Congress are the ones who can impact your earned benefits, by altering the terms of what and how you receive those earned benefits. You have the National NARFE Office to aid you in keeping abreast of what is happening in your Congress and representing you in efforts to preserve your earned benefits. They can't do that without your input. Several members of your Federation and Chapters attended the National Legislative Conference in Washington. You will read about that in reports found elsewhere in this Newsletter.

I would like to urge each Kansas NARFE Chapter to seriously do planning for how they can most effectively respond to a call for contacting your elected Congressional Officials concerning actions that may impact your earned benefits. I would like to see each Chapter to have a written plan of how they can have the largest number of their membership actually make a timely contact with their Members of Congress. What I envision, is a Chapter plan that contains member names,

phone number, e-mail address, etc. to make it possible to swiftly "bombard" members of Congress whenever a call is received for NARFE members to make their presence know.

Next is the issue of membership. Kansas has 23,167 federal annuitants. Kansas has 5,725 NARFE members. (not all of the 5,725 are part of that 23,167 count. Part of that 5,725 number is spouses & currently employed members) Those facts bring out the need for each member to assume the responsibility of identifying those annuitants, who are not NARFE members, and ASK them to become members of NARFE. Kansas NARFE members need to look at the Federal workplace and identify the Currently Employed Federal Employee potential NARFE member. Tell those potential NARFE members of the values of being members of NARFE. Follow through, ASK them to become NARFE members. If you do not succeed the first time - ASK again.

You have a dedicated Federation Training Team, headed up by your Kansas Federation Training Officer, Gale Beck. Training Officer Beck has enlisted the assistance of John Lancaster, Immediate Past President of Kansas Federation; Carol Ek, Federation Secretary; Jodine Elwick, Federation Service Officer and Don Cooper, Federation President. This team has provided Training Seminars at Ottawa, Chanute, Colby and Dodge City. The Area Vice Presidents of those Federation Areas have also been a part of the team. The better informed members are more effective NARFE leaders. I thank the Training Team for their dedication to providing a great learning environment.

May we join together in fellowship and enlightenment at the Kansas Federation Annual Convention, Kansas City, Kansas on April 24, 25, & 26,

2005.

**Remember - NEW NAME - NEW OPPORTUNITIES !**

### **FIRST VICE PRESIDENT/FEDERAL LEGISLATION**

**John F. Surritte**

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### **The NARFE 9<sup>TH</sup> Biennial Legislative Leadership Conference**

This newsletter article will be entirely devoted to the Legislative Conference held February 26 through March 1, 2005. Although Kansas is not a large state in terms of population, we were well represented at the National Conference. Our representation of federal retirees nation wide is 1%, yet we had 2% of the attendees at the conference. Of the 17 attendees from our region, we had 6 folks representing us. A warm

**See the  
article from  
Regional Vice  
President  
Thissen  
concerning  
CONK on  
page 10.  
Good Training  
and close to  
Riverboat.  
South Sioux  
City  
Nebraska**

greeting of thanks to the Kansas attendees who made the sacrifice of money and time to represent your interests.

Attendees from Kansas included John Lancaster, Gale Beck, Gary Townson, Marjorie Mortvedt, Linda Surritte and myself. The state was represented well, with 5 members of our state Federation Board attending. A special thanks to Marjorie for representing the field. Marjorie is the legislative chair from our Manhattan Chapter.

The conference started Saturday evening with a social get together so attendees from all over the country could meet each other and share common issues. Starting Sunday morning, we attended several general sessions to update us on those issues NARFE is pursuing with Congress to protect our interests and benefits, as well as some needed changes we need to make our retirements more fair and equitable. There were also five breakout sessions designed to prepare us for our meetings on Capitol Hill Tuesday morning.

The general sessions were very informative. Speakers included the wide range of political viewpoints. A brief description of each session follows.

- G. William Hoagland, Office of the Senate Majority Leader, Bill Frist. Mr. Hoagland briefed us on the President/ Congressional budget process. President Bush has submitted a budget which proposes no benefit cuts for Federal Retirees. This basically means our COLA's and Health Benefits would be protected. Our goal is to stay out of the Budget Reconciliation process which would put our benefits at risk.
- Col. Steven P. Strobidge USAF-Ret, Director, Government Relations, MOAA. Steve outlined that the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) also supports many of our legislative issues, including COLA's, Premium Conversion, Health Benefits, etc. His point was at the local level we should be building relationships with each other so we can protect our retirement benefits.
- Francis X. Cavanaugh, First Chairman of the Thrift Savings Plan. Mr. Cavanaugh stated that the Social Security plan proposed by the President could not use TSP as a model because the administrative costs would be too high. For example, to administer private accounts under Social Security would add 100,000 administrators if TSP was used as the model. TSP used 11,000 administrators.
- Marshall Wittman, Senior Fellow, Democratic Leadership Committee. Mr. Wittman warned against high deficits, stating that they were the biggest threat to maintaining our retirement security.

The breakout sessions prepared us for the trip to Capitol Hill to see our Senators and Representatives. A brief explanation of each session follows.

\*Health Care Issues: This was a scary presentation. Health care premiums have increased over 7% the past few years. With our COLA's increasing less than 3% over the same period, it is obvious this is a bad situation. I personally

came away from this session with the feeling that Social Security Reform is not the main priority Seniors have to face in their retirement years. High health costs are a much more serious problem for us. We need and will continue to support Premium Conversion which will save the average annuitant over \$400 a year.

\* U. S. Budget Process: The main message was do what we can to stay out of the reconciliation process. If the Congress doesn't include our benefits to reduce the deficit we can't be hurt.

\*Contacting Congress to support our agenda. This is an area we must do better in the future. When NARFE Headquarters asked for our support with our Senators and Representatives, we must respond with letters, phone calls and emails. Also, anytime you can meet with our Senators and your Representative you need to do it. They need to be reminded of our long and honorable service to our country with struggling to balance the Federal Budget.

\*NARFE PAC: A simple message here. Money talks in Washington, DC. I know that with the average monthly annuity approximately \$1600 in Kansas, there is not a lot of extra money lying around. However, even \$15.00 a year can and will make a difference in getting our elected folks to listen.

\* Social Security: We want and will do everything we can to make sure that our retirees and their survivors get their earned social security benefits. What past laws have done to reduce these benefits is not right and must be changed.

Finally, we met with our Congressional elected officials on Tuesday morning. We met with them all. Unfortunately, the only elected official we met personally with was Congressman Dennis Moore. However, the other Senators and Representatives had a staff member meet with us. We outlined the issues we were concerned with and where we needed their support. While they did not, except for Congressman Moore, promise their support, they did say they would study and research our issues. We have also followed up with personal letters to each outlining what we need to insure our retirees and their survivors are treated fairly and equitably.

In closing, we need to support the following NARFE agenda.

\* Leave us out of any budget reconciliation process. The best way to protect our retirements is to leave us alone. We didn't cause the federal deficit.

\*We need and expect that each Kansas Senator and Representative support Premium Conversion. This is a benefit that all workers in America have and it not fair that retirees are singled out in denying this benefit. As stated previously, this would the average retiree over \$400.00 a year.

\*We need and expect that each Kansas Senator and Representative support the repeal of GPO/WEP. It is not fair that our retirees and their survivors have their social security benefits cut because they receive a federal annuity. They paid for social security over their working career and should receive their social security benefits.

Finally, when you're asked to send letters, phone calls or e-mails to your Senator and representative, do it. Our organization is only as strong as the VOICE of its members.

(Editor's comments: The bills for Premium Conversion are: S 484 (Sen. John Warner) and HR 994 (Rep Tom Davis)  
The bills for elimination of GPO/WEP are:  
S 619 (Sen. Feinstein) and HR 147 (Rep McKeon)

## **SECOND VICE PRESIDENT/PAC COORDINATOR**

**Gary E. Townson**  
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**316 776 2684**  
**gesst@prodigy.net**

I was one of the few attendees from Kansas at the National Legislative Seminar. Unfortunately, it was announced that this was to be the LAST NARFE Legislative Seminar held in Washington. The Executive Board felt it was too expensive an endeavor to continue. 'They' feel it would be better combined with the Area Training.

I do not agree! I have visited Capitol Hill on behalf of the National Association of Postal Supervisors (NAPS) every year (not every other year) except one since 1991. Face to face meetings with our Legislators and/or their Aides is essential for success as a grass roots lobbyist. Training at C.O.N.K. or other regional training meetings is terrific and I am not belittling them in any way. That being said, this cannot replace meetings with our people on Capitol Hill. They get too removed from the common people as it is. Not getting on their schedule in their Washington DC office just allows them to isolate themselves from us even further.

While we were in Washington, legislation to permit federal and military retirees to pay their health insurance premiums on a pre-tax basis was again introduced in the Congress. Using pre-tax dollars to pay for health insurance – a practice called “premium conversion” -- would yield an estimated \$434 in savings to each retiree.

Sen. John Warner (R-VA) and Rep. Tom Davis (R-VA) on March 1 introduced identical bills (S. 484 and H.R. 994) that would give retired federal employees the tax-advantaged opportunity to pay their portion of their FEHBP premium with pre-tax dollars, just as civil service and military service members already enjoy.

Our job is to help rebuild and add to the list of co-sponsors in support of the legislation. During the last Congress, the House bill attracted 342 co-sponsors and the Senate bill 57 cosponsors. Currently, only twelve House lawmakers (Coble, Danny Davis, Jo Ann Davis, Hoyer, Kolbe, Moran, Norton, Porter, Van Hollen, Waxman, Wolf and Wynn) and two Senators (Maria Cantwell [WA] & Susan Collins [ME]) have renewed their support.

This probably would have occurred even if we (NARFE LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVES) were not in Washington. It did, however allow every one of us to inform our Senators and Congressmen of the bills and to ask

for their support. If we were waiting until C.O.N.K. to get pumped up about Congressional contacts, how many members would have called or written to encourage our Legislators to support these bills?

I believe in grass roots legislative power. PAC funds are a great tool but only if they are requested. Several of our Legislators do not request funds from us. Every one of us knows our VOTES are requested. When I am in an office in Washington and speak to a member of Congress (or their Aide) from Kansas, I am not speaking just as an individual from Rose Hill Kansas. I am representing voting members from all of Kansas. My representation covers more than just my local Congressman Tiahrt (Kansas 4<sup>th</sup> District). I also represent members from District 1 represented by Jerry Moran, District 2 represented by Jim Ryun and Dennis Moore from District 3. I speak for in excess of 23,200 Federal Retirees, Disability Recipients and Survivor Annuitants each of which has a vote in Kansas.

PAC is important but face-to-face meetings can have a major impact. I would be glad to discuss this further with anyone at the Federation Convention in Kansas City.

## **SECRETARY**

**Carol R. Ek**  
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### **Notes from the Secretary Changes:**

**Federation Officers:** Barbara Brownell, Membership –  
Change E-Mail Address to bmbrownell@sbcglobal.net

#### **Area 1**

##### **Chapter 0002, Topeka**

**Correct e-Mail address:** Judy Shetter, President  
to jshetter@sbcglobal.net

**Correct e-Mail address:** Maynard G. Cox, Treasurer  
to mcox2@networksplus.net

**Correct e-Mail address:** Barbara M. Brownell, Membership  
Chair to bmbrownell@sbcglobal.net

**Correct e-Mail address:** Dr. Wm Brownell, Editor to  
wmbrownell@sbcglobal.net

**Add e-Mail address:** William H. Kastens, Service Officer  
to bm1930@sbcglobal.net

##### **Chapter 1162, Shawnee Mission**

**Add Alzheimer's Chair:** Lucille B. Donnell,  
9801 Broadmoor, Overland Park, KS 66212-1521,  
Telephone: 913-638-3415

**Add Membership Chair:** Thomas Raby, 15117 S. Symphony # 1203, Olathe, KS 66062-6126, Telephone: (913) 829-6025, E-Mail: THOMASRABY1@comcast.net

**Correct Address 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President and Public Relations**  
Elliott Browar to: 12940 Travis St., Overland Park, KS  
66202-3810 and e-mail address to easkb@aol.com

**Add NARFE/PAC Chair:** Mrs. Florence Biehl, 12819 West  
78 Terrace, Lenexa, KS 66216-3313, 913-631-5559, E-Mail  
Address: flobiehl@aol.com

### **Area 1A**

#### **Chapter 0027, Leavenworth**

**Change Membership Chair:** Greta Inkman correct telephone number to: 913-682-8088

#### **Chapter 2136, Doniphan County**

**Delete** Herbert H. Chance as President. Mr. Chance passed away January, 05.

**New President:** George N. Jorgensen, 1250 Oxide Rd, Troy, KS 66087-4276, Telephone: 785-985-2495.

**No 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President** elected as of 2/10/05

### **Area 3**

#### **Chapter 0366, Manhattan**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Correct E-Mail** for Sandra Mathewson to sbmathewson@cox.net.

**Membership: Correct e-Mail** for Sandra Mathewson to sbmathewson@cox.net

**Legislative Chair: Correct e-Mail address** for Marjory Mortvedt to extmmm@ksu.edu.

**Correct Service Officer To:** Barb Pretzer, 4817 Rockridge Ct. Manhattan, KS 66503-7856, Telephone (785) 539-6766; E-mail: bpretzer@ksu.edu.

**Correction PAC Chair To:** Bill Webber, 2904 James Ave, Manhattan, KS 66502-2054, Telephone (785)539-9262; E-Mail: weebear@kansas.net

**Correct Public Relations and NARFE-Net To:** almar63@cox.net

#### **Chapter 2137, Abilene**

**Secretary/Treasurer:** Correct E-Mail for Shirley J. Walkden to shirleyj@starband.net.

#### **Chapter 1933, Herington**

**Alzheimer's Chair:** Correct address of Paula Fike to P. O. Box 55

### **Area 4**

#### **Chapter 138**

**Membership Chair:** Add E-Mail address for Larry G. White: lwhitell@cox.net

#### **Chapter 757, Cowley County**

**Secretary:** Add E-Mail address for Max Handlin: mhandlin@cox.net

### **Area 5**

#### **Chapter 2032, Oakley**

Change meeting place to: Colonial Steak House

#### **Chapter 2291**

Chapter Membership Chair Josephine L. Bricker: Add E-Mail address: rags@colby.ixks.com

### **Area 6**

#### **Chapter 1709, Great Bend**

Newsletter Editor: William V. VanSkiike, 2404 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Great Bend, KS 67530-2401, Telephone (620) 793-8607

#### **Chapter 1995**

F-7 received 2/6/05 with no changes.

Convention is almost upon us and there's still work to be

completed. Please remember to turn in your chapter's "**Memorial Listing**" by **April 1<sup>st</sup>**. When these reports are late getting returned to me, it always makes twice the work to get them ready for actual convention use.

Fourteen (14) chapters will not be represented by voting delegates; however, they have designated proxies to represent their votes during convention. Forty (40) delegates-at-large; one hundred thirty seven (137) delegates; thirteen (13) alternate delegates; ten (10) guests; and three (3) representatives from headquarters have indicated attendance. This is only 58% of the total delegates eligible to vote. This sounds a little like the activity on our local level doesn't it?

On March 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, seven members of the Federation Executive Board and Richard Thissen combined efforts to bring news and views to members of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> area members. An abundance of information was given at these training sessions for members to take home to share with others. All who attended expressed their appreciation to all of the trainers who took time to come to them to share the latest information about their benefits and NARFE. However, once again only about 23% of the eligible participants showed up to learn more about NARFE and how they could become more active.

What do we do to get more people actively involved to preserve our earned benefits? We do not use scare tactics to ask you to become an active member of NARFE. We attempt to tell the story just the way it is to keep you aware that your participation is needed at conventions, at meetings, on the street, and with your representatives to keep what is yours!

Chapter 1709, Great Bend, celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary on March 10<sup>th</sup>. Certificates were presented to members who were charter members of that Chapter. It was a great party with more than one memorable moment. One that will remain is the Current Federal Employee who stood up to tell about taking time off to attend that meeting and how she was given her NARFE membership through a drawing at the Farm Service Agency convention in Hays last year. She told of how much she enjoyed the NARFE magazine and the many things she learned from it that could not be learned anywhere else. She also stated that she will remain a member of NARFE. This is just one of the many stories out there.

Remember to deliver your door prizes wrapped and your Alzheimer's gifts unwrapped to convention. See you there!

#### **TREASURER**

**Jerry Ketter**

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**IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT  
PUBLIC RELATIONS/EDITOR**

**John Lancaster**  
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I had the opportunity to attend the 9th Legislative Conference in Washington. This was my second time to be able to attend a Legislative conference. As this will be the last one held in Washington as now planned, I guess it will be my last as such, also. John Surritte, 1st Vice President has a very good summation of the conference in his column.

As chair of the Nomination Committee, we are always looking for candidates for the elected offices and President Cooper is always seeking someone to volunteer to help in one of the appointed offices. Just contact either of us for a job. They pay well and the best part is that you get to meet good people.

The Editor of the newsletter is relatively easy since very little typing is involved. The articles are sent via email and just pasted in place in the newsletter. This job is available, also. Remember, little typing and getting all the news first!

**AREA 1 VICE PRESIDENT**

**Tom Raby**  
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March 1, 2005 was this year's **lobby day**. NARFE lined up, with everyone else, to get a shot at members of congress. Kay Crossley, Area 1A VP, and myself were able to visit the Overland Park offices of Senator Pat Roberts and Representative Dennis Moore. We were well received. Kay Sharp, Director of Constituent Services for Sen. Roberts, is a good listener and expressed concern for our positions. Like many younger people, she learned about GPO & WEP from us. She stated that anyone affected should write to the Senator.

At Congressman Moore's office we met with Julie Merz, District Director. Julie was recently named to replace Connie Shidler, who has taken a position with a local law firm. Julie expressed interest in "putting a face" on the WEP or GPO offsets. You can call her at (913) 383-2013 if you are personally affected. Or you can direct your letter to Rep. Moore at: **8417 Santa Fe Drive, #101; Overland Park, KS 66212**. Those of you in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District of Kansas should not hesitate to write or call. Those in other districts can still prod you representative and senators.

You're going to hear a lot about losing members in the near future. Do your part to keep us visible by contacting your elected officials and by recruiting someone, **today**.

**AREA 1A VICE PRESIDENT**

**Kay F. Crossley**  
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Thanks to La Verne Robinson for taking on the Convention Chairperson responsibilities. She did a great job. The Kansas City KS Chamber of Commerce stepped up and those attending will all be able to enjoy the fruit of that contribution.

March 1 was Lobby Day and I took this opportunity to visit along with Tom Raby the Kansas City offices of Dennis Moore and Pat Roberts, We met with their respective District Administrative Managers. We shared the issues generated by John Surritte for the Washington D.C. Lobby Day. Both administrators were receptive to the information we shared with them. We expressed thanks for past positive and asked for continued support to NARFE issues in the future.

Thank you for this opportunity to the Area 1A Chapter membership. In many ways, the time passed too quickly. I am looking forward to seeing you at the April Convention.

**AREA II VICE PRESIDENT**

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Chapter visits have been few so far this new year due to other commitments. Chapter #384 the Emporia Chapter was visited in March and the Iola Chapter #2077 the previous month. Other commitments such as Training and the Legislative Conference have taken top priority.

The Emporia Chapter has purchased Magnetic signs with the NARFE Emblem on them, which can continue to be use for parades and other events in the Emporia Area. Other chapters may want to consider doing the same. Tri-River Chapter #2098 reports that they have (5) five delegates going to the state convention and two alternates. "Congratulations". The question is often asked where is TriRiver? Tri-River is Miami County, with cities such as Paola, Osawatomie, Louisburg and other small communities in the county.

**ALZHEIMER'S**. Several chapters in Area 2 collect "Best Choice" Labels and turn them in for cash to supplement their Alzheimer's contributions. Two chapters who collect these labels are Osage City Chapter #2099 and the Iola Chapter #2077. Other chapters will be recognized for their contributions in the next newsletter.

**TRAINING** . Training has been at the forefront the past few months, with a seminar at Chanute, January 24th. Colby, March 8th and Dodge City March 9th. It has been many years since these three areas have held training seminars; in fact several years before the turn of the century. Chapters

were well represented. Chapters who did not attend missed out on a lot of useful information on subjects such as; conducting chapter meeting, Alzheimer's, Legislation, Membership and a lot of good fellowship with other retirees, and former co-workers. If your chapter was not there, "you were missed".

Thanks to Richard Thissen, Region V, National Field Vice President for his contributions to these seminars, to Don Cooper, President; John Lancaster, Past President; Carol Ek, Secretary and Jodine Elwick for their contributions to the sessions.

Congratulations to "Great Bend" Chapter #1709 for celebrating their 25th Anniversary during the month of March. There are chapters who never make it to their 25th.

Looking Forward to seeing Area 2 chapter members and chapters represented from all of the other Areas in Kansas at the convention April 24, 25, 26 in Kansas City.

#### **AREA IIA VICE PRESIDENT**

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"MY SOAPBOX" From USDA article I have written:

I have a deep interest in protecting the benefits of federal retirees, whether they are mine or yours. I have discovered that we retiree's have a great partner in NARFE in our effort to protect our earned benefits. The National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association have been active in this effort since they first organized in Washington DC in 1921.

Currently NARFE is working with retirees to gain approval by our government for us to pay for our medical insurance cost with pre-tax dollars. Both active federal employees and members of our armed services have this benefit, but will be lost to them when they retire under current law. We are supporting the passage of the "Premium Conversion" bills in both the house and senate that will revise the IRS tax code to include retired federal employees and military retirees. With ever increasing costs of health insurance to retirees, this is no small thing that the government should provide. If we can win passage of these bills it will result in saving the average retiree \$434 annually.

The bills before Congress are H.R.994 and S. 484. If you are a retired federal employee or survivor, please consider contacting your Representative and both Senators urging them to co-sponsor their bill and support it when it gets to the floor for a vote.

This year as our government is searching for dollars to reduce the large federal deficit they could very well consider cuts to federal retiree benefits. One that will need special attention is the COLA for retirees. Cost of Living Adjustment is something NARFE has long supported and achieved a major victory in 1985. NARFE spearheaded effort which led to enactment of an amendment to the Gramm-

Rudman-Hollings Budget Enforcement Act of 1985, giving federal and military retiree COLAs the same protection from automatic sequestration that the original bill gave Social Security COLAs. This was a huge accomplishment that continues to help us maintain purchasing power.

I am currently serving as an officer of the Kansas Federation of NARFE Chapters as an Area vice-president in southeastern Kansas serving six NARFE chapters. I recently surveyed one of my chapters to find what one thing NARFE has done for them that helps them the most. The majority said that getting and protecting the COLA was the top thing they named.

I did some research on COLAs to see what impact they have had on the size of the annuity you and I receive. The COLAs for the past ten years totals 23.7 percent; the COLAs for the previous ten years was 34.8 percent and the COLAs for the previous ten years (1975 1984) was 76.6 percent. The COLAs for the past thirty years totals 135.1 percent.

As you have noticed, you do not get any additional pay raises after you retired. There are no more pay increases. The only tool we have to maintain our purchasing power is through the COLAs. It should be evident that we need to protect this earned benefit if we are going to maintain our standard of living. Anytime our government threatens to take away any of our earned benefits, be ready to respond immediately.

If you are not a member of NARFE, please consider joining the only organization that is pledged to work for the protection of our earned benefits. If you cannot find an application, give me a call, email or letter and I will get you an application. Even if you are not a member of NARFE, you are receiving benefits every month that are much greater than your annual membership cost. Put your shoulder to the wheel and join about 400,000 NARFE members in protecting YOUR benefits.

#### **AREA III VICE PRESIDENT**

**Judy Grossnickle**  
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"There is no place like Home, KS"

This past quarter it was my privilege to be invited to attend a meeting with the Black Squirrel Chapter 1947, Marysville. They held their meeting in Home, KS. Until this meeting I have never even heard of Home, KS. When I got there the highway, Highway 36, does not traverse the main street but there is a sign there that reads, "There is no place, like Home, KS." More surprising yet was the main street was not paved. But, the meeting was held in the banquet room of a tiny restaurant that served very good food at very cheap prices. The Black Squirrel Chapter 1947 consists of 45 members out of a possible pool of 138 annuitants.

"There is no place like Home, KS." And there is no

place like NARFE. As so often repeated it is the only organization dedicated to the preservation and retention of our earned benefits.

We have two big challenges facing our organization, the recruitment and retention of our members. Many members are failing to renew their membership which is why we should be encouraging them to sign up for dues withholding. It is the cheapest and easiest way to renew our membership without fuss and bother.

From my personal experience the best way to recruit new members is to invite them to lunch/dinner with you at your chapter meeting where they will be able to experience for themselves that the meetings are informative, fun and worthwhile.

The best selling point for membership retention and recruitment should be our members who exemplify the concept that there is "No place like Home, KS" and no place like NARFE.

#### **AREA IV VICE PRESIDENT**

**Clyde Woolfolk**  
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I guess I failed to get any news to the editor for the last newsletter. Time seems to fly by. We did spend some time in Texas for the Christmas Season. Returned home with the Flu symptoms and didn't get  
m u c h d o n e .

I felt that I should visit all of the Area IV Chapters before Convention time. The basic purpose was to help with forms deadlines if they had questions. I was able to visit Ninescah Valley Chapter (Kingman #1939) on February 7th, Salt City Chapter (Hutchinson # 537) on February 9th, and Cowley County Chapter (Winfield-Arkansas City # 757) on February 13th. I visited with Wichita Chapter (# 138) this Wednesday, March 16th.

I attended a training session along with two members from Chapter 537, Harold Gottsch and Bill Collins at Dodge City on March 9th.

Please remember that March is N.A.R.F.E.-PAC Month. With a donation of \$15.00 one can receive a new PAC pin and make a difference with our push with the Senators or Representations in Washington, D.C. Another cause supported by NARFE is the FEEA. The cards that come in the mail are sent without a bill but a donation is accepted to fund the Disaster Fund and the Scholarship Fund. (See Page 39 of the March issue of NARFE Magazine.

We still are progressing toward the goal set at the National Convention in 2004 for the Alzheimer Research. (\$7,000,000 by 2007) I would encourage as many persons that can, go to Kansas City for the State Convention the last week-end in April. Check with your local Officers for details.

#### **AREA V VICE PRESIDENT**

**Ronald Katt**  
**P.O. Box 232, Grainfield, KS 67737-0232**  
**785 673 4822**  
**ronkarol@ruraltel.net**

Eighteen members from Area V attended a NARFE Seminar in Colby, March 8, 2005. Those attending considered the Seminar a win-win meeting. Win one receiving legislative, membership, communications, officer, program and material information. Win two, personally meeting and visiting with Seminar presenters, National Field Vice President Richard V. Thissen and wife Ruth, State Federation President Don Cooper, Past State Federation President John Lancaster, Federation Secretary Carol Ek, Federation Service Officer Jodine Elwick and husband Ray and Federation Training Officer Gale Beck.

The 51<sup>st</sup> State Convention will be held at the Kansas City Hilton Garden April 24-26, 2005. As of this writing all Chapters have their first Convention reports filed. Based on Chapter reports, all Chapters will be represented at the Convention, two by delegate and four by proxy. Area V is looking forward to an informative, entertaining and successful convention.

#### **AREA VI VICE PRESIDENT**

**Bob Cranmer**  
**105 S. Grand, P.O. Box 502 Ness City, KS 67560-0502**  
**785 798 2849**  
**rcranmer@gbta.net**

Hello Everyone:

What a great couple of days we had, March 9 & 10. Training in Area 6 on March 9th and a 25th anniversary on March 10th.

Thanks to Gale Beck, Federation Training Officer, who set up a great training team: Federation President Don Cooper, Past-President John Lancaster, Secretary Carol Ek, Service Officer Jodine Elwick, and of course our NRVP Richard Thissen. Ruth Thissen and Ray Elwick were Guests.

Richard Goodnough, President Dodge City Chapter 1873, hosted the Area 6 Workshop on March 9th in the Dodge City Senior Center. All 5 area chapters were represented along with three members of the Hutchinson Chapter. There were 18 members, 5 instructors and 2 guests for a total of 25 present.

March 10, was the 25th Anniversary Celebration of Chapter 1709, Great Bend. Five charter members of the original 44 members were presented certificates by Federation President Don Cooper: Sal Bianchio, Armella Bianchio, Don Herold, Leo Polzin, and Daniel Nobles. The first President was Sal Bianchio, Don Herold Sec-Treas, John Meister VP and Doyle Clarke Leg. Chairman. February 26, 1980 Federation President Bill Miller presented the original charter to Golden Belt Chapter 1709.

NFVP Richard Thissen presented a copy of

the Charter to Chapter Officers, President Sharon Mauler, Vice-President Derinda Bussman, and Sec-Tres Marie Schepmann.

I would like to thank all of the Federation Officers and Guests who were able to help Chapter 1709 Celebrate their 25th Anniversary: Pres Don Cooper, Past Pres John Lancaster, Sec Carol EK, Area 2 VP Gale Beck, Service Officer Jodine Elwick, Ray Elwick, NRVP Richard and Ruth Thissen.

I would like to encourage all members to sign up their spouses as members.

Don't forget the Federation Convention April 24, 25, and 26, 2005. Kansas City , KS.

#### **MEMBERSHIP CHAIR**

**Barbara M. Brownell**

**6340 SW 25th Street, Topeka, KS 66614-5205**

**785 273 4120**

**bmbrownell@sbcglobal.net**

1. The NARFE Scholarship Application for the 2005 high school seniors. The Application is on pages 59 and 60 of the April NARFE magazine. The Application must be postmarked by May 2, 2005, to: NARFE Scholarship Award, Suite 200, 8441 W. Bowles Ave., Littleton, CO 80123-3245. Good luck to those seniors!

2. Are you aware that NARFE is losing over 1,000 members each Month? David F. Sullivan, National Secretary, is sending a "Monthly Chapter Drop Report" to each chapter's Membership Chair or to the Chapter President if their chapter does not have a Membership Chair and he is asking the Chair or President to phone or visit to the dropped members and asked them to reinstate their Membership. Mr. Sullivan will be sending the Monthly Chapter Drop Report (MCDR) **only** to the chapters whose members are dropped from non-payment. The monthly MCDR will continue to the end of the 2005 year. No Dropped Members--no Report from Mr. Sullivan-just reinstated Members!

3. Membership Services: Ken Doyle, Director of Membership Systems is responsible of the Membership and Management Reports, M-112 and M-114. Ken's e-mail: memsrvcs@narfe.org or kdoyle@narfe.org. Ken is in the Office of National Treasurer. David Sullivan will continue to supervise with the Chapter and Federation Development Federation and Chapter Service and Recruitment and Retention.

I hope to see ever so many Delegates and Members at the Federation Convention, April 24-26.

#### **STATE LEGISLATIVE CHAIR**

**Jim Miller**

**7220 SW Asbury Dr #219 W Topeka KS 66614-4718**

**785 478 0651**

**Jmiller332@cox.net**

While no specific bill has bounded out of the pack, the KS House has passed a bill that on the surface, leaves federal retirees alone. A proposal from Senate Minority Leader, Senator Anthony Hensley (D-Topeka) might have

implications for us, except, this is Kansas and even if his proposed bill had merit ,will be shot down. All we can do is stay in touch with our elected Representatives and remain alert for last minute " cherry-picking " moves that would remove federal retirees from the annuity package. Should that happen, make sure your ears are far enough away from the phone to protect them, when irate former members (who dropped their membership because they couldn't afford it or the " massive " dues increase) call, screaming, demanding to know why KS NARFE couldn't hold onto a benefit that fewer than 16 states permit. Correct reply... " What have YOU done to help NARFE carry out the legislative priorities agenda?" Then hold the phone at arm's length for the expected slamming down, at the other end.

For those of you who are trying to recruit potential members who refuse, piously claiming that their parent organization is doing everything possible, at both the state and federal level ? Ron Richey, Topeka Chapter State Legislative Chairman and I haven't seen a visible presence of other federal retiree organizations. . So, if these potential members would point out these stalwarts, Ron and I would enjoy adding them to our coalition.

There is still safety in numbers, and even more so if those are ACTIVE numbers.

The KS Legislature will adjourn at the close of the business session on March 25 and reconvene on March 30. There are possible plans to adjourn on April 1 or April 2, and reconvene on April 27 pursuant to final adjournment. Looks like a long Spring. We can work for and hope for a smaller fall for NARFE members !

#### **SERVICE OFFICER**

**Jodine A. Elwick**

**3037 Pepper Ridge Court Wichita, KS 67205-1930**

**316 722 9022**

**Rdjae@aol.com**

**Greetings!** Spring is almost upon us. The trees are beginning to bloom and the flowers are peeking through the ground. Easter is nearing and with it comes the promises of new beginnings.

I had the pleasure of being a part of the training sessions presented in Colby, Kansas, on March 8 and Dodge City on March 9. It is always great to bring information to our Chapters and to be able to help them better meet the needs of their members and non-members. **I wish to emphasize the importance of our Chapters to have a person performing the Service Officer duties.**

**#1.** Your Service Officer meets the practical needs of chapter members.

**#2.** Facilitates liaisons between members and OPM.

**#3.** Helps expedite applications for benefits.

**#4.** Helps members obtain information about Federal Employee Health Benefit Program (FEHBP) and Medicare.

**#5.** Helps members obtain information about programs of other agencies such as Social Security, Tricare for Life, Veterans Benefits, Unemployment Compensation, Other Service for Senior Citizens and the Thrift Savings Plan. This is also



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a good way to help retain spouses of deceased annuitants as members as well as recruit new members. This includes spouses who were not members and also by helping persons who have not been members to recruit them for your Chapter. You need to realize how appreciative folks are to have help with obtaining their benefits, especially at times of bereavement. There are Service Manuals available from NARFE to help.

In assisting one of our annuitants, I learned that the Office of Personnel Management assigns FERS retirees CSA or spouses CSF numbers that will have the first number of their identification as 8 or above. All Civil Service retirees will have numbers beginning with 1 through 7. I also learned that if a FERS annuitant has a dependent that has been covered by a FERS benefit may lose that benefit if that dependent is entitled to Social Security disability coverage. The disabled dependent may lose all FERS coverage.

Annuitants who have lost their spouse or spouses of deceased annuitants contemplating remarriage will not lose their Civil Service Annuity providing they are sixty years of age or over. The annuitant may include the new spouse for a reduced annuity upon their death providing they notify the Office of Personnel Management within eighteen months of the marriage. If the annuity has previously been changed to self only, it will be necessary to pay a refund to OPM back to the date of the death of the former spouse. The new spouse may also be included under your health benefits coverage.

I continue to find annuitants who have lost their spouse who have failed to notify the Office of Personnel Management and thus have their annuity returned to self only. Also their health benefits coverage needs to be changed to "Self Only," if there are no other dependent family members.

Again I want to stress the importance of naming an individual to perform the Service Officer duties for your Chapter.

I am available to assist with answering questions or to help resolve problems with which you need help. I can be reached by phone @ (316) 722-9022 or by E-Mail @ [RDJAE@aol.com](mailto:RDJAE@aol.com). We have an answering machine so you may leave a message and I will get back with you.

I also wish to congratulate the Great Bend Chapter for completing 25 years of service and to those Officers and members who continue their support. My husband, Ray and I enjoyed being a part of your celebration, visiting with old friends and meeting new ones. "Thanks Cranmers" for the invitation.

**It is important that the information provided here be shared with your Chapter members!!**

**KANSAS ALZHEIMER'S CHAIR**

**Linda A. Surritte**  
**5907 Longleaf Dr. Lawrence, KS 66049-5801**  
**785 856 0558**  
**lapavlov@hotmail.com**

Tickets have been distributed to Chapter Presidents and Secretaries for the quilt drawing to be held on April 26<sup>th</sup> at our Federation Convention in Kansas City. The winner does not need to be present to win. We are hoping that this will be a major fundraiser for us this year. This is a beautiful, multi-colored, log cabin patterned, Queen/King quilt. Please return **sold and unsold** tickets to me by April 16<sup>th</sup> using the submission form that came with the tickets in the President/Secretary's convention packages. Submitted checks should be made out to "Alzheimer's/NARFE". Again, special thanks to Jefferson County Chapter 2231 for the donation of this quilt.

Please remember to bring items for the live/silent auction also to be held at the April 24-26 convention. The silent auction items will be available for bidding on the first and second day of the convention this year.

Thanks to all of you for your continued contributions to Alzheimer's Research. Every dollar is one step closer to new knowledge and treatments and, hopefully someday, a cure.

*"Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there." --Will Rogers (1879 - 1935)*

**KANSAS NARFE NETTER/HISTORIAN**

**Jim Dodd**  
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**785 238 8041**  
**jdodd40955@aol.com**

We wish to thank those who have sent us their new e-mail addresses when they change servers. This makes it considerably easier to maintain the accuracy of the KS NARFE net list. Please be sure to also notify NARFE HQ of your address change if you wish to continue receiving the HQ e-mails.

I have changed the KSNARFE.org home page to conform with the new NARFE name and logo. I have also added Kansas Chapters newsletters to the Kansas newsletters page. The first chapter listed is chapter 383 in Junction City. If your newsletter is formatted in color it will be that way on the web site even if you don't actually print it that way. If you wish to have your newsletter on the page, just send it to me ([JDodd40955@aol.com](mailto:JDodd40955@aol.com)) as an attachment to your e-mail. Be sure to make the subject of your e-mail "newsletter from —" and make a note in the body of the e-mail that you are attaching your newsletter so I will not delete it thinking it is spam or a virus. By having your newsletter on the web site will make it a part of the KS NARFE historical records. (It will be converted to PDF format to make it accessible to everyone.)

I will be bringing the DVD's and other publications that are part of the KS historical records to the KS convention in KS City. They will be available for you to see there. If you have anything you wish to add to the records please bring them to the convention.

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**FROM REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT  
RICHARD THISSEN**

The College of NARFE Knowledge (CONK) will be held again this year at the Marina Inn, South Sioux City, NE August 29 through September 1, 2005. Hotel rate will be \$69.00 a night for two persons. A voucher for a \$6.95 breakfast will be available for \$4.00. Registration will tentatively be \$60.00 and include Monday sandwich buffet, Tuesday and Wednesday lunches and Tuesday evening banquet.

Training will include Regional Chapter Management Symposium, and seminars including Recruiting & Retention, Leadership Development, Chapter Communications and Chapter meetings/activities. Seminars on Secretaries, Treasurers, Convention Planning, Alzheimer's, and new NARFE Pre-Retirement seminars.

Full details will be available by your convention time. Thanks! Richard Thissen.

**KANSAS 51ST ANNUAL CONVENTION  
SUNDAY APRIL 24, 2005**

12:00 - 5:00 P.M. Registration  
12:00 - 5:00 P.M. Credentials  
12:30 - 5:00 P.M. Hospitality  
12:00 - 1:30 P.M. **Training Session**  
1:00 P.M. Audit & Nomination Committees  
1:30 P.M. All other committees  
3:00 P.M. **Round Table Forum**  
4:15 P.M. Executive Board Meeting  
5:15 P.M. **Buffet Meal**  
6:45 P.M. Opening Session & Auction  
Recess until 8:30 Monday  
7:30 - 8:30 P.M. Alzheimer's Auction

**MONDAY APRIL 25, 2005**

**BREAKFAST ON YOUR OWN**  
8:00 A.M. - 9:30 A.M. Registration  
8:30A.M. Business Session Opens  
Preliminary Credentials Report  
Rules Committee Report  
Reading of Minutes and Correspondence  
Officer Reports  
Audit Committee Report  
Nomination Committee Report  
**Election of Officers**  
10:15 A.M. Break  
10:45 A.M. Business Session Resumes  
Minutes Committee Report  
Resolutions Committee Report  
Constitution & Bylaws Report  
Area Vice President Reports  
12:00 **NOON LUNCH ( Luncheon Speaker - Region V Field  
Vice President, Richard Thissen)**  
1:20 P.M. Business Session Resumes  
1:25 **Memorial Service & Benediction**  
2:30 Area Delegate Caucus & Election of Area Vice Presidents  
3:15 Introduction of New Area Vice Presidents  
Acceptance of Offices -  
National Legislative Report & State Legislative Report  
NARFE / PAC Report  
Recess for afternoon  
5:30 P.M. **SOCIAL HOUR CASH BAR**  
6:30 P.M. Banquet  
Banquet Address: NARFE Director Legislation, JUDY PARK  
Installation of Officers  
Silent Auction Closes  
Recess for Evening & Reconvene at 8:30 Tuesday morning

**TUESDAY APRIL 26, 2005**

8:30 A.M. Business Session Resumes  
**Final Credentials Report**  
Alzheimer's Report & Awards  
Membership Report & Awards  
Retirement Benefits & Services Report  
Time & Place Report  
Invitation to 2006 Convention  
Remarks, Door Prizes, Closing Remarks, Adjournment  
11:30 A.M. Executive Board Meeting.



Happy Easter to each of you and your chapter members from the Kansas Federation Executive Board.

We all look forward to seeing you at the convention in Kansas City on April 24 thru April 26.

Make plans to attend CONK at South Sioux City in August.