



THE WYANDOTTE SCOUT

Sunflower Chapter 1160, Kansas City, KS

Byron Nichols, Editor byron666@earthlink.net

December, 2006 (Volume 31, Number 12)



NEXT MEETING: 11:00 A.M., Friday, 12/08/06 at the Pat Hanlon Senior Center, 1101 Ridge Ave., KCK

For those of you with computers: Look for the newsletter on www.KSNARFE.org in Item #14, in COLOR.

November Meeting: We played Bingo again before lunch; 10 people played with 3 winning \$7 between them. The usual pot-luck luncheon was held from noon to 1:00 PM.

The business meeting, attended by 16 members, started at 1:10 with an invocation, the Pledge and some announcements. Bob Horseman was the attendee with a birthday in November.

The meeting was suspended for our Memorial Service program, moderated by president Barger. Committee chairperson Lillian Green played the piano and the group sang "Amazing Grace." Birdie Allen then led a prayer. The names of the 25 deceased members were read by Byron Nichols, with flowers placed by Henrietta Horseman and Ada Nichols. A eulogy was presented by President Barger, followed by the closing song, "In the Garden," sung by the membership.

The business meeting resumed with the reading of the October minutes, correspondence and the Treasurer's report. Alzheimer's Chairperson Kathy Zunick reported receiving over 80 more UPC codes and that she was ready to send in a thousand collected previously (enough for the \$30 bonus). The bills were ratified and paid. We voted to send a full page ad for the upcoming state convention in April, being held in Junction City. Secretary Robinson presented to members of the Executive Board carryall bags, ID pouches and various souvenirs from the national convention in Albuquerque. ID pouches were also given to the remaining members present.

Betty Shannon won the \$5 Attendance Drawing. and the \$5.25 Jackpot Ticket drawing. Both prizes were contributed to the Alzheimer's fund. We sent a check for \$15.50 to the fund, for a total so far this year of \$408.95. **If any member who doesn't attend meetings wishes to contribute to the Alzheimer's Fund, you can send a check to the Treasurer/Editor at the return address on the back cover of the Scout. Make checks out to "NARFE Chapter 1160".** We'll forward the contribution to the state coordinator and mention you with a thanks in the Scout.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:33 p.m.

Future Meetings: At ALL meetings, if any-

one would like to come early enough before lunch (say, at the 11 AM time above), we plan to play Bingo, with PRIZES for the winners (as long as we have room in the budget for them). Please Come!

At the **December** meeting (the NEXT one), we will have our annual Christmas Luncheon. Ham and Turkey will be provided by the Chapter. Other dishes already being brought include: deviled eggs, yams, mashed potatoes, cornbread dressing and various cakes and pies. If you aren't able to bring a dish for something we are lacking, please feel free to contribute a couple of bucks to the kitchen fund, which buys plates, napkins, coffee, tea, bread, etc. We were trying to get entertainment scheduled, but a confirmation hasn't occurred yet as of press time. We will also have various dignitaries from the state federation as well as guests from other chapters.

Membership Update: Deceased: Charles W. Gibbs, 83 (10/20/2006, Marines, USPS). Dropped for non-renewal: George E. Mercer of KCK. Second notices sent to Gerald E. Congrove of KCK and Georgia Trieb of Tonganoxie. If you intend to stay a member, please send dues to the NARFE national office ASAP (see NARFE magazine for the address).

Note to members: Dues Withholding saves the national organization money and it saves you almost \$5 over annual dues. You don't have to remember to write that check or risk being dropped. Applications are in the NARFE magazine each month.

Members with birthdays in December are:

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|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Birdie Allen | Fred O Peterson |
| David H Bezell | Margaret A Peterson |
| Paul J Breitenstein | Janeria M Phillips |
| Yvonne L Edwards | Mary E Richard |
| Mary Lee Fouts | Herbert A Schnieders Jr |
| Zenobia B Freeman | Edwin Shutt |
| Carl L Holmberg | Albert W Stevenson |
| Alvan M Lisbona | Robert S Truesdell |
| Gary L Marks | Mason B Tucker |
| June M McConnell | Camille E Weems |
| Ada G Nichols | Elizabeth J White |
| Mary Nancy Palcher | Majorie M Williams |
- Bold** = attends many meetings

The 24 members above have an age range of 56 to 98 and an average age of 80. Congratulations! If you were born in December and not in the above list, please notify the editor at the return address on the last page or e-mail address in the masthead above.

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

COLAs, CPI, Pay Raise: The next COLA for retired and disabled federal workers will be 3.3%. Social Security, civil service, foreign service and military retirees will receive the adjustment in their January checks. FERS annuitants age 62 and over receive the full amount on the Social Security portion, but only 2.3% on the FERS annuity add on.

The Labor Department reported October's CPI-W with a decrease of 0.7% from September. October's index is down 1.1% from the 2006 third-quarter base index. Due to possible inactivity from the lame duck Congress, the next pay raise may not get enacted until next year, so a temporary COLA may go into effect, probably a little over 2%. All bets are off about the final number after January, though.

Congress: The current continuing resolution allowing the government to spend money expires on December 5. The Senate will meet the week after Thanksgiving to attempt to pass some of the remaining nine appropriation measures already passed by the House.

There are five House races still undecided as of November 17, two of which need special elections in December to decide, so the final party makeup of the House is still not finalized, but both houses will be controlled by Democrats.

Health: OPM has sent out guidance on some significant changes in the FEHB program for the upcoming year, but no plans in our local area seem to be affected much. Inflation in health care has seemed to have moderated, so average premium will only raise about 1.8% (your plan may vary). For a closer look, go to the web at <http://fedweek.sparklist.com/t/295331331/746697/384/0/> in the "Hot Free Info" section of the FedWeek website.

There are several special enrollment provisions important to retirees who may consider joining the new Federal Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) during the current Open Season which runs through December 11. Annuitants are eligible if retired on an immediate annuity under most government retirement programs, including disability, and whether or not they are eligible for the standard FEHB system. Those who retire on a deferred annuity are NOT eligible to enroll or con-

tinue their enrollment into retirement once separated. Also, in the future, if a retiree drops FEDVIP enrollment one year, they can rejoin in another year (unlike FEHB) since it is a separate system. Contact OPM for more details. Also, enrollment MUST be done by phone or online using the new "Benefeds" online portal (www.benefeds.com). Without access to a computer, retirees may call 877-888-3337 (TTY: 877-889-5680) to enroll. Paper enrollment forms will only be available to those unable to call during normal business hours, and must be gotten through their agency, which will then request it from OPM. Enrollment cannot be done through the FEHB form (SF 2809) or through an agency self-service system; but those sites may provide a link to the Benefeds site. Also beware: Many insurance companies are sending out flyers in the mail or e-mail about their 'new' vision and dental plans, but are NOT authorized members of the FEDVIP system. You must enroll through the Benefeds system and NOT directly with any carrier if you wish to enroll in FEDVIP. The official companies are: for Dental: Aetna, GEHA, MetLife, United Concordia, Triple-S, GHI and CompBenefits; for Vision: Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Spectera and VSP. The first coverage will be effective as of December 31.

TSP Funds: No new TSP offerings were recommended by the consultant studying current and future offerings from the TSP. It was concluded current options are about comparable to private sector 401(k) plans, and employees should not be exposed to the risks associated to smaller market sectors such as real estate investment trusts (REITs), for example. The plan currently offers three stock oriented funds, one bond fund, one government securities fund and five lifecycle funds which mix investments in those funds.

All three stock-oriented funds posted substantial gains during October; the small stock (S) fund increased 4.99%, the International stock (I) fund up 3.87% and the large stock (C) fund up 3.27%. Those three have gained 16.93, 27.54 and 16.32 percent, respectively, over the last 12 months. The bond (F) fund was up 0.73%, the government securities (G) fund up 0.43% for 12-month gains of 5.22% and 4.97% respectively. The Lifecycle fund returns for October and their 12-month returns were: 2040, 3.28 (17.41); 2030, 2.94 (15.91); 2020, 2.51 (14.36); 2010, 1.79 (11.71); and Income, 1.04 (7.8%).

Tuesday, November 7, 2006

For Immediate Release

Mark Lassiter, Press Officer 410-965-8904 FAX
410-966-9973

News Release: SOCIAL SECURITY

Public Warned about E-mail Scam

Jo Anne Barnhart, Commissioner of Social Security, and Patrick O'Carroll, Jr., Inspector General of Social Security, issued a warning today about a new email scam that has surfaced recently.

The Agency has received several reports of an email message being circulated with the subject "Cost-of-Living for 2007 update" and purporting to be from the Social Security Administration. The message provides information about the 3.3 percent benefit increase for 2007 and contains the following "NOTE: We now need you to update your personal information. If this is not completed by November 11, 2006, we will be forced to suspend your account indefinitely." The reader is then directed to a website designed to look like Social Security's Internet website.

"I am outraged that someone would target an unsuspecting public in this manner," said Commissioner Barnhart. "I have asked the Inspector General to use all the resources at his command to find and prosecute whoever is perpetrating this fraud."

Once directed to the phony website, the individual is asked to register for a password and to confirm their identity by providing personal information such as the individual's Social Security number, bank account information and credit card information.

Inspector General O'Carroll recommends people always take precautions when giving out personal information. "You should never provide your Social Security number or other personal information over the Internet or by telephone unless you are extremely confident of the source to whom you are providing the information," O'Carroll said.

To report receipt of this email message or other suspicious activity to Social Security's Office of Inspector General, please call the OIG Hotline at 1-800-269-0271. (If you are deaf or hard of hearing, call the OIG TTY number at 1-866-501-2101). A Public Fraud Reporting form is also available online at OIG's website www.socialsecurity.gov/oig.

SSA Press Office 440 Altmeyer Building 6401 Security Blvd Baltimore, MD 21235 410-965-8904 FAX 410-966-9973

This message was generated by the NARFE Global Email Messaging System (GEMS).

Another Goody For The Oldtimers

My Mom used to cut chicken, chop eggs and spread mayo on the same cutting board with the same knife and no bleach, but we didn't seem to get food poisoning.

My Mom used to defrost hamburger on the counter AND I used to eat it raw sometimes, too. Our school sandwiches were wrapped in wax paper in a brown paper bag, not in icepack coolers, but I can't remember getting e.coli

Almost all of us would have rather gone swimming in the lake instead of a pristine pool (talk about boring), no beach closures then.

The term cell phone would have conjured up a phone in a jail cell, and a pager was the school PA system.

We all took gym, not PE... and risked permanent injury with a pair of high top Ked's (only worn in gym) instead of having cross-training athletic shoes with air cushion soles and built in light reflectors. I can't recall any injuries but they must have happened because they tell us how much safer we are now.

Flunking gym was not an option... even for stupid kids! I guess PE must be much harder than gym.

Speaking of school, we all said prayers and sang the national anthem, and staying in detention after school caught all sorts of negative attention.

We must have had horribly damaged psyches. What an archaic health system we had then. Remember school nurses? Ours wore a hat and everything.

I thought that I was supposed to accomplish something before I was allowed to be proud of myself.

I just can't recall how bored we were without computers, Play Station, Nintendo, X-box or 270 digital TV cable stations.

Oh yeah... and where was the Benadryl and sterilization kit when I got that bee sting? I could have been killed!

We played 'king of the hill' on piles of gravel left on vacant construction sites, and when we got hurt, Mom pulled out the 48-cent bottle of Mercurochrome (kids liked it better because it didn't sting like iodine did) and then we got our butt spanked.

Now it's a trip to the emergency room, followed by a 10-day dose of a \$49 bottle of antibiotics, and then Mom calls the attorney to sue the contractor for leaving a horribly vicious pile of gravel where it was such a threat.

We didn't act up at the neighbor's house either because if we did, we got our butt spanked there and then we got butt spanked again when we got home.

DATED MEETING NOTICE

**<ID#> 1160 <ExpDt>
 <FirstMid> <LastNm>
 <Addr1> <Addr2>
 <City>, <State> <Zip9>**

Happy Holidays (if possible) to everyone, especially the shut-ins, sick, and/or injured who can't make it out!

(Oldtimers... continued)

I recall Donny Reynolds from next door coming over and doing his tricks on the front stoop, just before he fell off. Little did his Mom know that she could have owned our house. Instead, she picked him up and swatted him for being such a goof. It was a neighborhood run amuck.

To top it off, not a single person I knew had ever been told that they were from a dysfunctional family. How could we possibly have known that?

We needed to get into group therapy and anger management classes? We were obviously so duped by so many societal ills, that we didn't even notice that the entire country wasn't taking Prozac! How did we ever survive?

LOVE TO ALL OF US WHO SHARED THIS ERA, AND TO ALL WHO DIDN'T- SORRY FOR WHAT YOU MISSED. I WOULDN'T TRADE IT FOR ANYTHING!

Pass this to someone (over age 40, of course), and brighten their day by helping them to remember that life's most simple pleasures are very often the best!

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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)

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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.

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OPM Annuitant Express

To start, stop or change withholdings or get a duplicate 1099-R: Call 1-800-409-6528; or on the web at www.opm.gov/retire (you must apply for a pin # to change your allocations).

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Membership Rosters are available in an 8.5" x 11" format with larger type. Drop me a note with \$1.00 each to offset printing and postage (My address is on the return address above).

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Reminder: Please send us your "Best Choice" UPC codes when you get a bunch! (It's not worth using 39 cents to mail one or two!) We get \$30 per 1000 codes (3 cents 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 goes to the meetings or to the address in the return address block. Thanks. * * * * *

* Thanks to **Esther Woodard** for forwarding her Best Choice UPCs. Remember, we need only the bar codes, not the whole label. Saves postage.

Our Chapter Officers:

President	E. Regina Barger	913-342-8256
Vice-President	LaVerne Robinson	913-371-7720 save900@aol.com
Recording Secretary		913-371-7720
Public Relations	Theodore J Robinson	save900@aol.com
Service Officer		
Treasurer		816-763-4729
Newsletter Editor	Byron Nichols	byron666@earthlink.net
Roster		
Alzheimer's Chair	Kathy Zunick	913-281-3335
Membership Chair	Shirley Newman	913-371-4444