



THE WYANDOTTE SCOUT

Sunflower Chapter 1160, Kansas City, KS

Byron Nichols, Editor byron666@earthlink.net

March, 2007 (Volume 32, Number 3)



NEXT MEETING: 11:00 A.M., Friday, 03/09/07 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.

February Meeting: Eleven members played Bingo prior to the meeting, with \$6 given in prizes. We then had our usual pot-luck lunch followed by the business meeting. Due to the secretary not being present, Wanda Collins was appointed the secretary pro-tem for the meeting. Correspondence was read and bills were paid.

Our President, Regina Barger will attend this year's Legislative Conference in Bethesda, MD in March, so we decided to help her expenses with a stipend from the treasury.

Eight members so far have decided to attend the state convention in April in Junction City. We will try to rent a large van so we may all travel together to save gas.

Bob Horseman won the registration drawing and Byron Nichols won the ticket drawing. Proceeds were returned for Alzheimer's. **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 change on the back cover of the Scout). Please 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. We thank **Tom Ksiasek** for his check this last month. The chapter has forwarded \$38.50 to the Kansas Federation Alzheimer's Chair so far for 2007. Thanks to all.

Future Meetings: In April we will have the second annual Josef Meditz Memorial Luncheon (instead of the regular meeting). Members do not have to bring or pay anything, and are welcome to bring prospective new members. The menu and what entertainment we will have has not yet been decided, but it WILL be catered. **See more information on the back of the newsletter.**

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We have again decided to sell chances on a baby quilt for Alzheimers', the drawing for which will be held at the April meeting after the Joe Meditz Memorial Luncheon. Various members will be selling the tickets, which may be purchased for \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Anyone desiring to purchase tickets by mail, please send a check made out to "NARFE Chapter 1160" and include your phone and address so we may fill in the drawing stub and contact you if you win.

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At ALL meetings, if anyone would like to come early enough before lunch (say, at about 11 A.M.), we plan to play Bingo, with PRIZES for the winners (as long as we have room in the budget for them). Please Come!

Membership Update: Deceased: Reginald Hamm, Sr., 99 (1/23/07, IRS); Daisy M. Lester, 86, (1/23/07, USPS); Elenor Jean Major, 91 (1/24/07, USDA); Johnnie Marie Fouse, 81 (2/1/07, Treasury); Florine L. Smith, 90 (2/6/07, USPS). Dropped for Non-Renewal: None. Second notices sent to Virginia L. Chiles, Emma DeSeure, Lorene B. Jones, Ivan E. Klautdt, John D. Knight, John W. Lewis, Margarete Walinow and Leonard H. Wesson of KCK; Rose Ann Krzesinski of Westwood and David G. Lesmeister of Bonner Springs. If these people intend to stay members, 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 March are:

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|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| John A Barrett | Kenneth E Mahoney |
| Rachel J Brady | Francis L Merritt |
| Margaret Flattery | Theresa M Ruzick |
| Robert L Flattery | Betty J Shannon |
| Vernon Gibbons | Yusuf Shareef |
| Edna I Gunther | Anastasia J Sutulovich |
| Della E Jordan | Barbara L Wells |
| Nevada Kibble | Bold = attends many meetings |

The 15 members above have an age range of 69 to 93 and an average age of 80. Congratulations! If you were born in March 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 CPI-W climbed 0.2% in January, but due to the declines in the first two months in the fiscal year, the index is still 0.8% lower than the end of the last year (September, 2006). The law does not provide for a reduction in benefits due to deflation over the fiscal year measuring period. Benefits under FECA (work-related injury) are measured over a calendar-year period, so the January raise is the first in the period. FECA beneficiaries are due a 2.4% COLA in their April benefit checks.

A catchall spending measure near final Congressional approval would leave unchanged the 2.2% general schedule raise paid in January to active employees. It also denies a pay increase to members of Congress.

Health Benefits (FEHBP) and others: The 2008 budget proposal seeks a change in the government FEHBP subsidy for certain retirees. They would still be able to continue coverage after retirement, but only those with ten (10) years of continuous coverage would get the full subsidy of premiums. The government would pay only half of its share for those with only five (5) years coverage (the minimum length currently), and phased increases from 5 to 10 years to the full subsidy. This is only a proposal, and hasn't been debated or formally introduced to Congress yet. NARFE President Margaret Baptiste questions this change as the government is supposedly

trying to recruit the very mid-career professional who may be affected by it. She fears the Administration's plan will discourage some of the best & brightest talent from considering federal service. Your Editor sees the change as only discouraging those who join federal service for a short-term employment to get better benefits than was offered in a person's previous private-sector job. I saw this many times in my 25-year-plus federal career.

OPM says its agency is looking into short-term disability insurance benefits for active federal employees, especially for new mothers, since paid parental leave isn't currently offered. The program would be separate from FECA, which covers job-related long-term illnesses & injuries.

Congress: On February 16, Rep. Tom Davis (R-VA) introduced a bill (HR 1110) to allow civilian and military retirees and active duty military to pay government health care premiums with pre-tax dollars as the active civilians do presently. This 'Premium Conversion' could provide the typical retiree hundreds of dollars in annual tax savings. An identical bill introduced in the last Congress died despite 340 cosponsors. The current bill has a list of prominent bipartisan cosponsors, many of which serve on the Ways & Means Committee, which has jurisdiction over all tax bills. Also, on January 30, Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA) introduced a bill (HR 726) to restrict the application of the WEP to individuals whose combined monthly income from Social Security and other pension benefits (federal or not) exceeds a minimum COLA-adjusted amount of \$2500 and to provide a graduated implementation of such provision on amounts above such minimum amount. Sounds like a 'soak-the-rich' provision to me and wouldn't be fair to many.

Sponsors of NARFE-supported legislation to repeal the Social Security Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) are working to increase co sponsorship to levels in the previous Congress. Bills have been filed in both houses already (HR 82 and S 206).

TSP Funds: The small-cap stock fund (S) led returns in January with a 3.14% gain for the month, followed by the large-cap stock fund (C) at 1.53%, the international

stock fund (I) at 1.31%, the government securities fund (G) at 0.43% and the bond fund (F) unchanged. The 12-month returns, respectfully, are 11.46, 14.52, 20.57, 5.0 and 4.31 percent. The January and 12-month returns for the Lifecycle funds were: 2040, 1.53 & 13.94; 2030, 1.42 & 12.8; 2020, 1.22 & 11.84; 2010, 0.89 & 9.65 and income, 0.63 & 7.09.

 This joke was forwarded by our secretary:

Early one winter morning while listening to the radio, Leroy and his wife Carol hear the announcer say, "We are going to have 4-6 inches of snow today. You must park your car on the even numbered side of the street, so the snowplow can get through." Carol goes out and moves her car. A week later while they are eating breakfast, the radio announcer says, "We are expecting 6-8 inches of snow today. You must park your car on the odd numbered side of the street, so the snowplow can get through" Carol goes out and moves her car again. The next week they are having breakfast again, when the radio announcer says "We are expecting 8-10 inches of snow today. You must park... " Then the electric power goes out. Carol is very upset, and with a worried look on her face she says, "Honey, I don't know what to do. Which side of the street do I need to park on so the plow can get through?" With the love & understanding in his voice, like all men who are married to blondes exhibit, Leroy says, "Why don't you just leave it in the garage this time?"

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. 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 who goes to the meetings or to the address in the return address block. **Thanks to everyone for their submissions!** * * * * *

* * * * * Remember, we need only the bar codes, not the whole label. Saves postage.

Our Chapter Officers:

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|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| 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 |

DATED MEETING NOTICE

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

*** FREE FOOD * FREE FOOD ***

Invitation to attend the **second** annual

Josef Meditz Memorial Luncheon

April 13, 2007 at the Pat Hanlon Senior Center
1101 Ridge Avenue, Kansas City, KS
(one block north of Central under the Fire Station)

Noon to 1 P.M. (or thereabouts)

Come early (10:30 A.M. or so) for meet-&-greet or other activities

A billiards table is in the facility as well as cards and a **Bingo** set.

This will be the second annual luncheon honoring Josef Meditz, 12-year Chapter President (1976 to 1987) and recruiter of over 100 members. He was a member for 35 years, from March, 1970 until his death in October, 2004, and performed this Chapter a great service.

We welcome any current and former member of this Chapter, especially those who were members while Joe was President, to attend. (Membership will be checked to the best of our ability.)

The luncheon will be catered and is to be funded by a bequeath to the Chapter from Joe's estate, therefore, it is **FREE** to all participants.

If you need a driver or family member to bring you here they will also be welcome.

Those who wish to attend will need to call or e-mail our Vice-President two weeks prior to the event (by March 31st) so the caterer will have enough food for everyone.

Contact LaVerne Robinson at 913-371-7720 or e-mail at 'save900@aol.com'.

Please RSVP ASAP !!

(Also, if you call to attend then later decide you can't, PLEASE contact us again so we don't have too much food prepared just to throw away.)

**We also need any pictures or memorabilia from activities which you attended with Joe, or the names of anyone whom Joe recruited. Anything you wish to keep will be returned.
Contact V.P. LaVerne Robinson, as above, with any memorabilia.**

We also plan to have entertainment, we just don't know who yet. Probably the same as last year.