

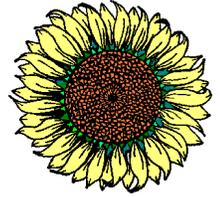


THE WYANDOTTE SCOUT

Sunflower Chapter 1160, Kansas City, KS

Byron Nichols, Editor byron666@earthlink.net

June & July, 2009 (Volume 34, Number 4)



JUNE MEETING: 11:00 A.M., Friday, 06/12/09 **JULY MEETING: 11:00 A.M., Friday, 07/10/09**
Both at the Pat Hanlon Senior Center, 1101 Ridge Ave., Kansas City, Kansas

NOTE: To save postage, we have changed publication of the Scout to every other month. Sorry for any inconvenience.

April Meeting: The April meeting was held a week early due to the senior center being closed for Good Friday. No formal business was conducted, as it was a special event.

About 25 persons played 8 Bingo games before lunch (about 10:45am to 11:45am). This time, cards were free, as prizes for the first seven games were awarded from a special fund. Fruit baskets awarded to the three winners of the last game, a 'blackout'.

We then held a Memorial service for members deceased from Nov'08 through March'09 (the memorial will be held at the April meeting from now on). Seven members were remembered:

Hortense Adams	Frederick Mahler
Neil Cordell	Stella McDonald
Edward Goeffert	Grover Rhodus
Alvan Lisbona	

The service was introduced by Vice-President Laverne Robinson. Chaplain Birdie Allen offered prayers, Kathy Zunick placed flowers, Byron Nichols read the names, TJ Robinson read scriptures from the Bible and President Barger said the eulogy.

Next came the fourth annual Josef Meditz, Sr. Memorial Luncheon, attended by 42 members and guests, with food from Meissen Catering Services. Guest entertainer Doris Davis played piano as accompaniment to the Memorial service and many jazzy tunes both during and after lunch.

Although the regular drawings for the Alzheimer's Fund weren't held, we did get some contributions, as well as the check for the Best Choice UPCs which were redeemed. A total of \$77 was collected. So far this year the chapter has sent **\$132.50** to the Kansas Federation Alzheimer's coordinator (about \$0.50 per official member).

The festivities ended at about 1:30pm.

2009 Kansas Convention: The 55th annual convention was held in Manhattan, KS on April; 26-28, attended by three from this chapter: President Regina Barger, Alzheimer's Chair Kathy Zunick and Treasurer Byron Nichols (your Editor). President Barger was, as usual, the convention Parliamentarian. For the Sunday afternoon Committee meetings, Kathy Zunick attended the Alz-

heimer's Committee and I attended the Retirement benefits (Service Officer) Committee. The early evening session consisted mostly of introductions to the Kansas board members, guest Tom Hawk, state representative for the 67th district and a report from the national Alzheimer's Chair, Barb Pretzer. The finale for the evening was the sale of 46 items in the Alzheimer's Live Auction by Hutchison auctioneer Gary Carson, a very entertaining fellow.

The Monday session started off with reports from the Credentials chair and the Rules committee, followed by the Kansas Federation officers. Elections for the federation officers was next. Most officers were unopposed for reelection, with the exception of the 2nd vice-president and the treasurer, Madelyn Brown, who didn't run for reelection. The officers are as follows:

President	Robert Cranmer
1 st Vice President	Elizabeth Bornman
2 nd Vice President	Cindy Blythe
Secretary	Carol Ek
Treasurer	Jerry Ketter (former Treas.)

After the morning break, there was a presentation by the national Legislative Specialist Jacob Cassady, about bills and regulations potentially affecting retirees. Then, Area Vice Presidents gave reports of their activities over the last year.

After lunch was the memorial service. Names were read by Secretary Ek and candles were lit by the Area VPs. A total of 177 deaths were recorded since last year, with 20 of those from our chapter alone.

The service was followed by a report from the Bylaws and General Resolutions committee. **We will probably see in September a referendum about a single dues structure**, far simpler than the current hodgepodge of dues levels. National AND Chapter dues would total \$40, with the national share of \$27, all Chapters getting \$9, and state federations \$4. A 10% discount would be offered for dues withholding, making the amounts, \$36 total, \$24.30 national, \$8.10 chapter and \$3.60 state. There would be no 2 and 3 year specials, current-employee specials, etc. For those chapters currently charging greater than \$9, the difference would have to be made up by vari-

ous local means, whether by a local billing procedure, bake sales, or whatever. (Our chapter currently charges only \$6 a member, but were thinking about a raise due to increased costs such as postage.) Chapters as a whole would vote on the referendum, receiving one vote for every 50 members, rounded up for fractions, just as delegates to the national convention are determined; ballots would not be issued and counted by the national organization for individual member voting. It will be very important for members to come to the future meeting, to be announced, for the vote.

After the afternoon break the Area delegations caucused and elected Vice Presidents. All remained the same (including ours for Area 1A, Eugene Harter) except for Area 1, where Flo Biehl was elected. Legislative Reports were given for both the state and national levels, then the business session was recessed for the day.

Entertainment at the evening banquet included piano music from the host chapter and a 'Cowboy Poet', Ron Wilson. Two drawings were held; one for cash prizes of \$250, \$100 and \$50 wasn't won by anyone in this chapter. Sales of \$1,081 meant a profit for the Federation of \$681 for operating expenses. The other drawing, for a beautiful quilt, took in \$544, all for Alzheimer's and was won by Larry Morgan of the convention's sponsoring chapter.

Money for the NARFE-PAC political lobbying group took in \$1,871, more than the recent Missouri convention. Other members of Area V are still to meet, and Richard Thissen, VP of Area V, will use this amount to wheedle more contributions from them. I have a few pins for 2009-2010 to send out to anyone who wishes to contribute \$20 or more to NARFE-PAC. Just send the chapter a personal check - no cash - made out to 'NARFE-PAC' and we will put the amount on a log and send it in. Anyone giving \$20 or more will get a pin, but any amount is appreciated. Remember -- Congress is always trying to either cut or delay our benefits. Effective lobbying has staved off most of these attempts over the last decade or so.

The Tuesday session is spent mostly to summarize credentialed attendance, money totals, etc. Final totals for Alzheimer's: Live Auction, \$1,381 (last year, \$1,615), Silent Auction, \$2,905 (last year, \$2,445) for a total of \$4,286 (last year, \$4,060). We also got a nice \$100 check from a member of the hosting chapter in addition to this. Awards were also given to chapters who managed to increase their membership (very few did except the small chapters) and those who collected more than the per-member goal stated for Alzheimer's of \$5 for the 2008 calendar year. Of the 45 chapters in the Kansas Federation, 19 managed to

collect more than the goal. A new goal of \$5.25 per member was announced for 2009. (Our chapter only raised a little over \$1.75 per member in '08; we didn't raffle any quilts, etc.)

The 2010 convention will be held in Topeka April 25-27 at the Downtown Ramada. Room rates will be \$71 per night (plus tax), which includes a full hot buffet breakfast for Monday and Tuesday mornings. Registration and meals cost of the convention were not announced, but probably will be roughly the same as this year, \$61.

May Meeting: About 8 persons played 7 Bingo games before lunch (about 11:15am to 12:15pm). \$8.67 of the winnings were contributed to the Alzheimer's fund. Prayer was offered by Birdie Allen, then 10 members attended the pot luck luncheon.

The business meeting, attended by 10 members, started at 1:15 with the prayer by chaplain Birdie Allen, followed by the flag salute. Birthday wishes were sung to Laverne Robinson. Minutes were read for the March meeting by secretary Wanda Collins, then approved.

The treasury report for March & April was read by Treasurer Byron Nichols and accepted for audit. Bills were ratified and paid.

The Alzheimer's ticket drawing was for #480228, Lillian Green, for \$4. The attendance drawing was #5, Laverne Robinson, for \$5. Both were contributed to the Alzheimer's fund. A total of \$21.67 was collected for Alzheimer's this month (Bingo, tickets and attendance prize from the chapter). So far this year the chapter has sent **\$154.17** to the Kansas Federation Alzheimer's coordinator (or, about \$0.58 per official member).

It was decided that our annual picnic at the July meeting will be at the Hanlon Center - it's air-conditioned and has no annoying bugs flying around. Also, the rental for a lake shelter has risen enough to make it not worth while. Bring the type of foods a normal picnic would have.

The meeting was adjourned at about 2:30pm.

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!)

Note to members: Dues Withholding saves the national organization money 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 website, www.narfe.org.

Membership Update: Deceased: Stella G. McDonald, 83, of KCK; 3/16/09, widow of a GSA retiree.

Members with birthdays in **June** are:

Mary L Bentz	Thomas P Lewis
Kathleen E Bush	Charles E Merritt
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
Velma V Koskan	

Members with birthdays in **July** are:

Alfred W Bridgeman	Norma J Kelly
Edward F Burgess	Christine A Leaf
Helen I Burke	Florence Lockridge
Gerald E Congrove	William N Moore
Corinne P Culp	Betty J Morrison
Jack U Decaigny	Donna L Piersee
Donald L Edwards	Theodore J Robinson
Richard D Fairbanks	Muriel Y Rucker
Ann J Felich	James C Welter
Lola M Forbes	GuyAnne Wilkins
Helen M Huff	Elzora L Williams
Zeilla M Jester	Dorothy F Witte
James M Johnson	

BOLD = Attends many meetings yearly

The 43 members above have an age range of 64 to 102 and an average age of 81^{1/3}. Congratulations! If you were born in June or July 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):

Congress: The House and Senate have adopted the conference report (#111-89) on the budget resolution for fiscal 2010. The resolution contains no reduction in federal retiree income security or health care, and language preserving the important tradition of parity in military and civilian pay increases. Budget resolutions don't have the force of law, but they guide committee action on legislation which implement the budget. It's still a wait-and-see whether this Congress actually protects us or sinks us. On April 2nd, prior to passing the budget resolution, the House barely defeated an amendment which would have cut entitlements such as Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid by \$1.3 trillion over ten years and would include a reduction of over \$10 billion in federal service retirement and health benefits. Members should still use the opportunity of the summer recess of about August to visit their local Congressman's office to

voice their concerns.

Also, on April 1st, the House approved H.R.1804, to allow FERS employees to credit unused sick leave toward retirement and make certain improvements to the TSP. The bill would automatically enroll new-hires in TSP with a matching contribution from their agency. It also starts a "Roth" style option, where contributions are after-tax but withdrawals, including interest, are tax-free. The bill still must be approved by the Senate, where the NARFE Legislative Department is already promoting it.

Health News: Long-Term-Care Open Season: The FLTCIP hasn't had a full Open season since inception in 2002. OPM says a new open enrollment period will be offered in which current enrollees could make benefit changes, make their premiums level, or switch to a new benefit package without underwriting. OPM has not specified the effective date or allowed changes, but soon.

CPI/COLA News: The CPI-W increased in March for the third consecutive month. It had declined for the previous five months in 2008. The March increase was 0.2%, for an overall index for fiscal 2009 of minus-3.8% still. Should the count through September finish negative, annuities would **not** be reduced, just frozen. The index for FECA benefits, on a calendar-year basis, is now 1.2% higher than 2008.

TSP Funds: All three stock-index oriented TSP funds posted substantial gains in April, with the small company S-fund leading the way with a 15% increase, then the International I-fund up 12.13% and the large company C-fund up 9.58%. For the last 12 months, these funds are still down by 33.5, 43.06 and 35.26 percents, respectively. The bond F-fund gained 0.49% and the government securities G-fund gained 0.21% for 12-month gains of 3.93 and 3.45%. The April and 12 month returns for the lifecycle funds are: Income, 2.37 & -4.71%; 2010, 3.2 & -9.62%; 2020, 6.79 & -21.42%; 2030, 8.2 & -25.91%; and 2040, 9.38 & -29.88%. A study has shown that there has been a substantial outflow from the stock funds, predominately into the most secure fund, the government securities G-fund, then the next most-secure, the bond F-fund. Some money has also fled the lifecycle funds in all but a few months of the past year.

The TSP has also said there is no truth to an Internet site and chain e-mail that the International stock I-fund has been victim of a fraud, that it is 'insolvent' and investments are being frozen. The hoax mentions someone who is not connected with the TSP. The I-fund is a passive investment fund that tracks a major index of international stocks and is NOT actively managed. It has suf-

DATED MEETING NOTICE

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

Continued from p.3

ferred some of the steepest losses of any of the funds lately (and some of the highest gains in past years). Don't be misled by any hoax e-mails.

= = = = =
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.

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)

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 memsrvcs@narfe.org.

Chapter Officers		
President	E. Regina Barger	913-342-8256
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 save900@aol.com
Treasurer and Newsletter Editor and Roster	Byron Nichols	816-333-5151 byron666@earthlink.net
Alzheimer's Chair	Kathy Zunick	913-281-3335
Membership Chair	Shirley Newman	913-334-2544

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 Chapter 1160"**. We'll forward the contribution to the state coordinator and mention you with a thanks in the Scout. Thanks to all.

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