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Sunflower Chapter 1160 Meets in January at the Hanlon Senior Center 1101 Ridge Ave, KCK 66102	11am Bingo; Noon Lunch; 12:45 Program (if any); 1pm (approx.) Business Meeting	2 nd FRIDAY in January 01/09/2014	2 nd FRIDAY in February 02/13/2014
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President: Byron K. Nichols	816-333-5151 byron666@earthlink.net	Newsletter Editor, Roster: Byron K. Nichols	816-333-5151 byron666@earthlink.net
Treasurer: Carolyn Taylor	913-205-7228	Alzheimer's Chair: Kathy Zunick	913-281-3335
Recording Secretary: Wanda Collins	913-621-3849	Membership: Shirley Newman	913-334-9444

THE WYANDOTTE SCOUT

Vol. 40, #1; January & February, 2015

Byron Nichols, Editor

Due to a delay in relocating our supplies and other equipment from Hanlon to the Bethany Community Center, we will meet at the Hanlon Center again in January 2014. In February, we will probably meet in the Bethany Community Center, 1120 Central Ave. (1/2 block north of Hanlon; enter the parking lot from 11th Street).

Due to the ever-decreasing number of chapter members, we will not renew our non-profit mailing permit in February as we can't make the minimum mailing of 200 letters without sending ourselves many newsletters (wasting paper, toner, etc.). This means normal first-class stamps will be used for postage. To keep expenses reasonable we will no longer be mailing newsletters to most chapter presidents. If any of these presidents don't have internet access and still want the Scout, please contact the editor at the above phone number or the return address at the top and I will put you back on the mailing list. The Scout will still be available on the Kansas NARFE website as usual. Thank you.

November Meeting: Prior to lunch we had a presentation from Ron Miller of Blue Cross to answer any questions about healthcare for 2015. The luncheon was our holiday meal, with meat supplied by the chapter (turkey & beef) and sides & desserts from members. As usual the food at the luncheon was all good and shared to take home. Seven voting members were present for the business meeting. No attendees had a birthday in November. Carolyn Taylor read the treasurer's report. Alzheimer's chair Kathy Zunick reported the \$60 Best Choice check had arrived. It was deposited with the normal collection. We also have enough UPCs to send in for another check next year as soon as we get the forms. Bills were paid (\$35.10 for the Nov/Dec Scout, \$56.91 for cups and meats, &70.75 for the Alzheimer collection). The registration drawing was won by Jane Kruse (\$5) and contributed to the Alzheimer's Fund; the half-and-half drawing was won by Sylvia Williams (\$6.50) and retained. The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 pm.

December Meeting: We didn't play Bingo prior to lunch due to the Hanlon center was locked and we had to call the county for someone to open up. We had six for lunch; as usual the food at the luncheon was all good and shared to take home. We took a short tour of the Bethany meeting place. It was deemed adequate for our needs if our equipment can be moved. The parking lot has plenty of spaces, and has a slight hill, but there are no stairs to enter the building. Six voting members were present for the business meeting. No attendees had a birthday in December. Byron Nichols read the

treasurer's report. We have had two deaths in the past couple of months; Robert Horseman and Muriel Rucker. Bills were paid (preauthorized \$16.50 for the Alzheimer's contribution). The registration drawing was won by Sylvia Williams and retained (\$5) and the half-and-half drawing was won by Kathy Zunick (\$3.50) and contributed to the Alzheimer's Fund. The meeting was adjourned at 2:34 pm.

January Meeting: No planned activity. Does anyone want our old large (18-32 cup) coffeemaker? We haven't used it in years.

Remember - for ALL meetings, if you wish to play Bingo, bring your nickels & dimes. We usually play from just after 11 AM until lunch. Cost is 5¢ per card per game, 10¢ per card for the Blackout game (these will fund the winners' prize). Please Come! (We **can** make change for ones!)

Membership Update: New: 0. Transfer into chapter: 0. Reinstated: 1. Transfer out of chapter: 0. Dropped for non-renewal: 2. Voluntary cancellation: 0. Deaths: 2: Robert W. Horseman, 93, 12/1/14, KCK, USPS; Muriel Rucker, 94, 8/4/14, KCK, Soc Sec Admin. We now have 141 members.

Note to families of members: When a member passes on, please be sure to contact NARFE headquarters to either stop dues billing or withholding or to transfer membership to a widow or widower. Thank You.

Members with birthdays in January:

Helen J Ambrose Mabel O Johnson
Ida Louise Bland Mary J Relic
Donald C Castor Harold W Rucker
Louisa A Fletcher Dorothy L Weller
Aleta M Johnson Louis E White

Members with birthdays in February:

Roland B Berg Dorotha V Linam
Betty B Cramer E Ruth McIntosh
Lillian B Green Violet Rutherford

Bolded = attends meetings regularly

The 16 members above have an age range of 71 to 95 and an average age of 87 1/3. Congratulations! If you were born in January or February and not in the list, please notify the editor at the return address e-mail address in the officer list above.

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

Congressional actions: Before adjourning for the year, Congress passed the following acts: 1] A \$1.1 trillion spending package dubbed "CRomnibus", which funds most of the government until the end of the fiscal year in September, except Homeland Security, which was funded earlier with a continuing resolution that expires in February. Nothing in the omnibus bill negatively affects federal employees or retirees. 2] Passed the National Defense Authorization Act, which included a 5-year extension of the Reemployed Annuitants provisions. 3] Passed the 'self-plus-one' coverage in the FEHBP, which will be available in 2016.

With the end of the 113th Congress, all legislation that has not passed both houses of Congress and signed into law by the President will expire and will have to be reintroduced in the next Congress.

NARFE Accomplishments: NARFE was able to prevent several attempts to enact legislation which was detrimental to federal employees, annuitants and their families, such as: 1] Prevented damaging alteration to current retirees' annuities, including a switch to the 'Chained CPI'. 2] Stopped proposals to increase retirement contributions for active employees, eliminate the defined-benefit pension of the FERS retirement system for new hires and end the FERS annuity supplement. 3] Successfully opposed provisions in the Senate Postal Reform bill which included changes to FEHBP requirements that USPS retirees enroll in Medicare and changes to the FECA system. 4] Got the House to vote unanimously to provide back pay to federal employees furloughed during the October 2013 shutdown, and 5] Worked to insure that Capitol Hill staff maintained benefits in the Health Insurance Marketplace, including preserving their employer contribution, when a provision in the Affordable Care Act required that they leave FEHBP.

COLAs and Pay Increase: The automatic cost-of-living-adjustment for CSRS and FERS annuitants will be on your January OPM statement. The COLA was set in October at 1.7%. The President's request for a 1% pay increase will go into effect the first pay period of 2015, which was the same amount received in January, 2014. Also, the raise will not apply to Congress again this year.

If any member who doesn't attend meetings wishes to contribute to the Alzheimer's Fund **please write the chapter number on the check (Chapter 1160) and make your check out to "NARFE/Alzheimer Research"**. Send your check to the **Newsletter Editor** (see the return address area). We'll forward the contribution to the state coordinator and mention you with thanks in the Scout. **Thanks to all.**

Note to members: Dues Withholding saves the national organization money (no bills to mail out) and it saves those who renew annually \$6 each year (the equivalent of Chapter dues) [\$40 national plus \$6 chapter vs. \$40 total under dues withholding (effective as of August, 2011)]. You don't have to remember to write that check or risk being dropped. **62%** of our members required to pay dues are already using withholding, why not you? Applications are on the NARFE website at: www.narfe.org.

Reminder: Please send us your "Best Choice" UPC codes when you get a bunch! (It's not worth the postage to mail one or two!) We get \$30 per 1000 codes (3¢ per code), plus an additional \$30 bonus once a year. The money goes to NARFE/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 postage).

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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 6:45 PM Central Standard Time.
Hearing impaired TDD# is 1-800-878-5707.
On the Web: www.opm.gov/retire. E-mail: retire@opm.gov.
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 (hq@narfe.org)
606 N. Washington St, Alexandria, VA 22314
(phone 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 E-mail memberrecords@narfe.org.

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Other numbers/websites/e-mails of Interest:
V.A.: www.va.gov; 800-827-1000
TSP: www.tsp.gov; 877-968-3778
Social Security: www.ssa.gov; 800-772-1213
FEDVIP: fedvip@opm.gov FEGLI: fegli@opm.gov
FEHBP: fehbp@opm.gov

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Membership Rosters are in an 8.5" x 11" format.
Write me a note at the return address block with \$1.00 each to offset the envelope and postage.
Copies at the meeting are free.

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