



Kaw Blue Communiqué

Volume No. 18 Issue No. 1

Manhattan, KS Date March, 2012

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	Ann Domsch	537-5147
1 st VP	Bill Fuller	776-6296
2 nd VP	Elaine Liddell	776-5559
Secretary	Barb Pretzer	539-6766
Treasurer	Barbara Hackbart	494-2425
Past Pres.	Don Erickson	539-6004
News Editor	Judy Grossnickle	537-2457

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

(By: Elaine Liddell, Program Chairman)

Please plan to attend your meeting. We meet at RC McGraw's, 2317 Tuttle Creek Blvd. Lunch is served at 11:15AM.

Wednesday, April 18

Susan Withee

Adult Services Manager
Manhattan Public Library

"Library Services--Bet you don't know them all!"

Wednesday, May 16

Aaron Apel

BigPoppi Bicycle Co.

"Biking Across Kansas, Local Historical Rides"

Wednesday, June 20

Gabrielle M. Thompson, Attorney at Law
"The Necessity of Being Prepared"

HOT TOPICS!

- Congress approved a hike to NEW Feds' pension contribution to 3.1% (up from 0.8%). It covers 1/2 of the cost of extending unemployment for rest of 2012. It also reduces lawmakers' under FERS pension to the same rate as other Fed employees.
- OPM's has a backlog of 50 million retirement claims. On an average it takes 156 days to process each one. To remedy this more staff and an updated Information Technology system are needed.
- House passed legislation, H.R. 3835, to extend the current two- year pay freeze for another year.



Area 3 Vice President, Don Cooper, leads the oath of office to the 2012 Officers: 1st VP, Bill Fuller; President, Ann Domsch; Secretary, Barb Pretzer; 2nd VP, Elaine Liddell; and Treasurer, Barbara Hackbart.

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IN MEMORIAM

Nelva May Wilcox: Member, Born: July 2, 1918; Died: Jan 29, 2012. Our condolences to her family.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

(By: Ann Domsch, adomsch@ksu.edu)

Who cares what Washington is doing with our annuities? SOMEONE is going to look out for us. Is this what you think? Well, let me tell you, NO ONE is looking out for us except US! That is why it is so important for us to recruit new members to help in that fight. NO ONE, I repeat NO ONE will look out for us but US!

When you talk to people about joining NARFE be sure and point out that NARFE dues are a small price to pay for what they could potentially lose. We all need to be recruiting every day. If you feel you cannot ask people to join, give the Executive board the names and we will contact them.

We also need to make that phone call or send an email when our national president asks us to do this. He sits in Washington and knows what is happening with the Congress. We do not have the time to do this research. So please respond to their request. Time is usually short when we get these requests, so don't delay do it today!

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

(By: Dick McChesney, Legislative Committee)

At the time this writing, several bills in Congress threaten government employee benefits. Examples:

- Extending a third year to the federal pay freeze.
- Requiring employees to contribute an additional 1.5% of their salary towards retirement.
- Establish a new retirement plan which would reduce the current retirement benefits by about 40%.

Continued in the next column

Legislative Report, cont from previous

- Overall, requiring employees to bear a lot of the cost of extending the reduced social security withholding called the payroll tax holiday.

Don't think retirees are exempt from benefit reductions. For example, we may see legislation to change the method of computing cost of living allowances (COLAs) to a "chained COLA". This would reduce COLAs. Additionally efforts may be made to reduce the government contribution of federal health insurance premiums.

At the State level, Topeka Chapter members Jim Miller and Ron Richey are attending a lot of Kansas House and Senate committee meetings. They are monitoring anything which may affect our retirement annuity exemptions from State income tax. This is especially important this year since Governor Brownback has recommended all exemptions be eliminated.

Above are a few reasons to stay actively involved in NARFE to protect our earned benefits. The best way is to attend Chapter meetings and to accept leadership positions. Another way to stay currently informed and participate nationally is to receive NARFE Hotlines and NARFE News Watch messages. Those who have Internet should be signed up to receive these messages. It is easy to sign up. Call 800 456-8410. All those who don't have Internet can listen to these messages by calling toll free 877 217-8234.

OUR SERVICE OFFICER SAYS

(By: Don Erickson, Service Officer)

Did you know that benefits for survivors, such as a survivor and group life insurance, are not automatically paid upon the death of an annuitant: they must be applied for?

When an annuitant dies, these three basic steps should be taken immediately:

- Notify OPM of annuitant's death;
- Return un-cashed Treasury checks, and if payments are sent to direct deposit, notify the financial institution; and,
- Obtain several copies of the death certificate.

How should you notify OPM of the death of an annuitant?

- Call OPM: The survivor may phone OPM at 888-767-6738
- or send a fax to 724-794-1112
- Or Write to OPM, Retirement Operations Center, Boyers, PA 16017
- or E-mail OPM at <https://apps.opm.gov/retire/death/death/html>

Samples of the notification letter may be obtained from the service officer.

POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC)

(By Ann Murphy, PAC Chairman)

Who decides what happens to the dollars we contribute to NARFE-PAC? Our elected National NARFE Officers with input and recommendations from our State elected officers make the decisions.

After a candidate applies, the decision on if and how much they receive is based upon several factors: What committees do they serve on? How have they voted in the past on our issues? and What is their chance of winning?

NARFE-PAC cannot support everyone who is in our corner, so the decision becomes, how can our PAC contributions do the most good? **Contribute today, and receive a PAC pin!**



**State Convention:
April 22-24
Salina, KS**

ALZHEIMER'S UPDATE

(By: Michael & Kay Cardella, Alzheimer's Chairman,
785-539-3448 e-mail: milinscol@Gmail.com)

Kay and I would like to thank all of the Kaw Blue members for your donations to NARFE Alzheimer's Research during the past year. By now each of you are aware of our country's large Federal deficits. Federal money is tight, so it is important that we continue our support of the NARFE Alzheimer's research to find the cause and cure for this **demon** disease.

Our state NARFE convention will be held April 22-24 in Salina. Once again we need your donations for the auction. The items contributed should be worth more than \$5.00 in value. They should either be new or antique. Hand made items sell well and are welcome. Please bring your items to the March and/or April meetings. Kay and I will mark them with our chapter's name and number. Then our chapter will receive credit for the funds raised by our donated items during either of the two auctions.

ALZHEIMER'S GETS A BOOST. An article in the New York Times reported recently that scientists are beginning to close on possible diagnostic tests and treatments for this incurable disease. The current administration is carrying out a law enacted in 2010 and have issued a (Draft Framework) for an aggressive campaign to prevent and treat Alzheimer's effectively by 2025.

The goal is going to have to overcome the Federal deficit problem. Many other diseases are competing for the scarce Federal dollars. Alzheimer's research deserves to be a priority. Alzheimer's currently afflicts more than five million Americans and that number could triple by 2050.

Our president will soon ask congress for an additional 80 million dollars for Alzheimer's research in 2013.

The Federal government spent about 450 million dollars on Alzheimer's Research in 2011. This is far less than was spend on cancer, aids or cardiovascular disease, all of which are promoted by strong lobbies. Promising research advances suggest that scientists could make substantial progress if given more funding this year.

MEMBERSHIP

(By: Bill Fuller, Vice President for Membership)

Membership is the cornerstone of successful and effective organizations! That means all current members really need to contact prospective members, review the benefits of membership, and invite guests to attend one of our Chapter meetings. NARFE depends upon interested and involved members for its recruitment success, realizing that each new member brings fresh ideas and differing perspective on how to realize organizational objectives.

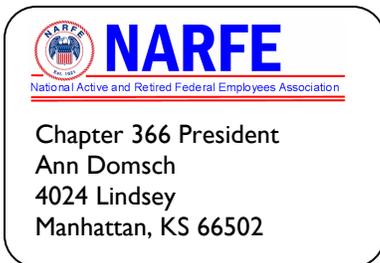
The Membership Committee is planning to meet soon to set goals and plan membership events. These goals can serve as a blueprint for our Chapter's continued success and effectiveness. We welcome members to join us in making these important plans.

More than three dozen guests attended our chapter meetings during the Membership Recruitment Event we conducted the last three

MEMBERSHIP SCOREBOARD			
MONTH	GAIN	REINSTATED	LOSS
Jan—Feb	1	4	3
Memberships in peril: 13			
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of Feb: 261			

months. Most recently, representatives of the Membership Committee outlined benefits and encouraged NARFE membership to employees of the USDA Agricultural Research Center. These activities have resulted in several new members. The most recent report issued by our national office lists our chapter membership at 272, however a number of others are in the process of becoming members.

There were three contestants for our membership incentive program: Al Schmaderer, John Drach and Elaine Liddell. The winner was John Drach.



Forwarding Service Requested
Judy Grossnickle, Editor