



Kaw Blue Communiqué

Volume No. 15 Issue No. 3

Manhattan, KS Date: September, 2009

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MONTHLY PROGRAMS

(By: Marjory Mortvedt, Program Chairman)

Please plan to attend your meeting. We meet at the Bamboo Buffet, 2304 Stagg Hill Road, Manhattan, KS, next to Briggs. Lunch is served at 11:15AM.

Wednesday, October 21
Pamela Maxwell

Federal Employee Program BC/BS
"What's New This Year"

Wednesday, November 18
Barb Pretzer

NARFE's National Alzheimer's Chair
"Alzheimer's Update"

Wednesday, December 16
To Be Announced



**2009 Kansas Delegation to the
9th Biennial
COLLEGE OF NARFE KNOWLEDGE
South Sioux City, NE**

HOT TOPICS!

- Economic conditions forecast no Retiree COLA.
- Sen. Tom Coburn (R-OK) in an 80 minute filibuster said . . . "By the way, if you are a Federal employee and unhappy with me . . . you should pay attention to something. There is no guarantee to your Federal pension based on the economics we face today in this country. If you think it is guaranteed, you have another thought coming because the world economic system is going to determine whether we can honor that pension. That is what is coming. We are very close."
- NARFE talking paper on the National Health Care Reform — <http://www.narfe.org/departments/legislation/articles.cfm?ID=1803>
- The Kaiser Family Foundation (NOT associated with Kaiser Permanente or Kaiser Industries) prepared a side-by-side nonpartisan analysis of the major health care reform — <http://www.kff.org/healthreform/sidebyside.cfm>

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

(By: Dick McChesney, Chairman)

I hope some of us had contact with Congresswoman Jenkins and Senators Brownback and Roberts while they were in Kansas for their August recess. These were opportunities to reinforce NARFE's positions with them. Some highlights from our National Office are:

- NARFE has taken NO position on the health care reform legislation currently receiving serious consideration in Washington. That's because the status of the leading bills is extremely fluid and is subject to change. Neither the House nor the Senate bills would open the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) to non-federal civilians nor would FEHBP be offered as the proposed public health care plan. More in depth analysis on the legislation will appear in the September NARFE magazine and will be sent to NARFE members by e-mail to those who are enrolled in GEMS and Rapid Response.
- For NARFE members who are interested in receiving an accurate, nonpartisan analysis about the major health care reform bills, including the Senate Finance Committee, Senate Health Education, Labor and Education (HELP) Committee and the House Tri-Committee -proposals, visit the Kaiser Family Foundation side-by-side bill comparison web site:

www.kff.org/healthreform/sidebyside.cfm.

Still unresolved -- civil service issues in House and Senate bills (H.R.2647 and S. 1390). Passage of these bills, would allow federal agencies to re-employ federal retirees on a limited, part-time basis without offset of annuity from salary. The House passed provisions to allow FERS employees to credit their unused sick leave towards retirement. (Continued in next column)

(Continued from previous column)

Members with computers are encouraged to join the Rapid Response Team by e-mailing memsrvcs@narfe.org and joining the program, you will receive NARFE Legislative Hotline (when Congress is in session), but even more importantly, any urgent action requests. Legislation changes quickly on Capitol Hill so NARFE's ability to quickly engage us in the grassroots correspondence with our legislators is a powerful way to protect our earned benefits.

ALHEIMER'S NOTES

(By: Elaine Liddell, Alzheimer's Chairman)

Alzheimer's — what a dreaded disease! The Alzheimer's Association reports that by 2010, there will be nearly half a million new cases of Alzheimer's disease each year. It is the seventh-leading cause of death in the United States and the fifth leading cause of death for people age 65 and older. This is a true public health crisis with no end in sight. It is important that as members of NARFE, we continue to support the valuable research that may find a link for a cure or to possibly slow progression of the disease.

Thank you to all who have donated—cash or auction items; and also memorial checks. The latest update from Janice Neuschafer, Kansas Federation Alzheimer's Chairperson, lists donations from our Chapter 0366 is \$1,832.65, averaging **\$6.50 per member**. This is truly wonderful! The Kansas Chapters have collected a total of \$21,765.89, averaging \$4.59 per member.

We must not stop working! Baskets will be on the tables for your donations at the meetings. If you don't attend the meeting, please send your donation to me.

A tentative date for the NARFE-Alzheimer's benefit garage sale is September 26. Bring your donations to my house, 701 Canfield Drive, or if you need assistance, I will be glad to pick them up, just call me at 776-5559.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

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

As we get back into session and start our meetings this fall we all need to think about what is happening in our nation's capital. This is a time that we need NARFE and NARFE needs us. We need everyone to stay tuned and to respond as the need arises. Probably all of you saw the statement by Sen. Colburn, but if not, here it is. He said, "By the way, if you are a Federal employee and unhappy with me trying to defeat this amendment, (making unused sick leave for FERS employees creditable as time served in their annuity computation), you should pay attention to something. There is **NO GUARANTTE TO YOUR FEDERAL PENSION BASED ON THE ECONOMICS WE FACE TODAY, IN THIS COUNTRY. IF YOU THINK IT IS GUARANTEED, YOU HAVE ANOTHER THOUGHT COMING BECAUSE THE WORLD ECONOMIC SYSTEM IS GOING TO DETERMINE WHETHER WE CAN HONOR THAT PENSION.** (emphasis added) That is what is coming. We are very close."

This is very scary and shows how little Senators know and care about the people they serve. We have contributed to our retirement plan and it is not a gift but a benefit for which we paid. Be sure to write, call or visit your congress people especially while they are home.

We, federal employees and annuitants, have a sound retirement system and a model group health insurance program. We worked hard and paid for these benefits during our federal careers so we could depend on them in our retirement. But, to do so, we must make certain that those protections are not diminished or destroyed by congress. **STAY VIGILANT AND BE PROACTIVE!**

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Contact Member Records toll-free at 800-456-8410, or send change of address by postal mail to NARFE Headquarters, ATTN: Member Records, or by e-mail to memsrvcs@narfe.org.

TAKE POLITICAL ACTION!

(By: Judy Grossnickle)

Politicians are infamous for "taking the path of least resistance." A lawmaker that does not hear from us has no motivation to help us. So what's in it for them? Our undying support if they assist us, and our disappointment if they do not. That's why we follow-up when they do nothing or hurt us. Don't forget that we can use our "clout" most effectively when we contribute to PAC. The PAC funds are used as contributions to the candidates and lawmakers who support the NARFE goals.

We can also reward legislators by working on their election campaigns. Most politicians are loyal to individuals and to groups that help elect them. NARFE members who have worked on a political campaign will always have an advantage over those who did not when trying to persuade a lawmaker.



Voice your opinion!

***Call, Write, or E-mail Ann Domsch or
better yet attend the meeting when we vote
on the Dues Referendum!***



COLLEGE OF NARFE KNOWLEDGE

(By: Judy Grossnickle)



Don Cooper, Barb Pretzer, Dennis Grossnickle and myself attended the CONK held on August 24 - 26, 2009 in South Sioux City, Nebraska.

The main emphasis this semester was the NARFE Dues Referendum and the National Health Care Reform.

Basically, NARFE, doesn't have a position on the Health Care Reform because the reform hasn't been written yet in either the House or the Senate. Listed in the HOT TOPICS column are two web sites you may access for more information.

As reported in the last issue, the dues referendum is fast approaching. This would change the dues structure to \$40.00 per member unless you are on dues withholding. The dues withholding members get a \$4.00 reduction in the yearly dues. From the \$40.00 (\$36) membership: National would get the bulk with \$4.00 (\$3) going to the Federation and \$9.00 (\$8) to the Chapter.

MEMBERSHIP

(Dave Schafer, 1st Vice President—Membership
539-7842; davideschafer@msn.com)

Welcome to new members Ruth Hanson, Christine Kravitz, and Herman Westmeyer. To those receiving 2nd notices for membership renewal, if you convert to a "Dues Withheld-NARFE" status with OPM it would reduce renewal reminder expenses and save you a few dollars each year. If you want a form to convert your status, please give me a call.

Our chapter needs to retain all of our members and we need to recruit more members. Our goal is to have 300 members. We dropped 3 in the last 3 months!

MEMBERSHIP SCOREBOARD

MONTH	GAIN	REINSTATED	LOSS
Jun—Aug	3	0	6
Memberships in peril: 15 (3 in Jun, 7 in Jul & 5 in Aug)			
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP as of 8/31/09: 285			



NARFE

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

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Forwarding Service Requested
Judy Grossnickle, Editor