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THE WYANDOTTE SCOUT

Vol. 42, #6; November & December, 2017
 Byron Nichols, Editor

Sunflower Chapter 1160 @ Eisenhower Rec. Center 2901 N 72 nd St., KCK 66109 (driveway south of school)	11am Bingo; Noon Lunch; 12:45pm Program (if any); Business Meeting 1pm (after program). Times are approximate and subject to change	2nd FRIDAY in NOVEMBER No Meeting	2nd FRIDAY in DECEMBER 12/08/2017
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President: Byron K. Nichols	816-333-5151 byron666@earthlink.net	Vice-President: Carolyn Taylor	913-205-7228
Recording Sec'y: Jane Lenderman-Kruse	913-441-3484 quill@planetkc.com	Treasurer: Jane Lenderman-Kruse	913-441-3484 quill@planetkc.com
Alzheimer's, Exec Cmte: Kathy Zunick	913-281-3335	Membership: Ernestine Smith	913-287-8529
Editor, Roster: Byron K. Nichols	816-333-5151 byron666@earthlink.net	Sunshine: Ernestine Smith	913-287-8529

**As usual, this newsletter may be viewed online on the Kansas NARFE site: www.ksnarfe.org.
 If bad weather occurs and driving becomes hazardous (i.e. if the KCK school district cancels classes), we will cancel a meeting. Usual attendees will be notified by phone as soon as possible**

The November meeting will not be held due to the Eisenhower Recreational Center will be closed for observation of Veterans' Day. The election of officers usually held at the November meeting will occur at the December meeting.

September Meeting: Four members played Bingo before lunch. Six attended lunch.

The business meeting was called to order at 1:30 pm with six voting members present. The pledge was recited in unison. The minutes for the August meeting were read by Secretary Kruse and accepted. Jane Kruse then read the August treasurer's report, which was also accepted. We sang for three birthdays: Wanda Collins (not present), Ernestine Smith and Sylvia Williams (not present). Bills were authorized to be paid (\$48.90 for the September/October Scout postage and \$28.35 for the September Alzheimer's contribution. As of this meeting we are down to 87 members.

We had a short discussion of meetings attended at the CONK convention in August, then auctioned a lap blanket received from the PAC committee for \$5 as a contribution to Alzheimer's.

The attendance drawing (\$5) was won by #6, Carolyn Taylor, and the half-and-half drawing (\$6.50) was won by #858547, Carolyn Taylor (both contributed to Alzheimer's). The meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm.

October Meeting: Six members played Bingo before lunch. Seven members attended lunch

The business meeting was called to order at 1:30 pm with six voting members and one social member present. The pledge was recited in unison. The minutes for the September meeting were read by Secretary Kruse and accepted. Jane Kruse then read the September treasurer's report, which was

also accepted. Bills were paid: \$23.75 for the regular Alzheimer's collection. We now have 81 members due to deaths & status changes (see below).

It appears the candidates for chapter offices will be the current officeholders with the exception of Vice-President. Kay Frye will probably run for VP. We are sorry to hear that our ex-president TJ Robinson is going into hospice. We hope his wife LaVerne is alright.

The attendance drawing (\$5) was won by #3, Ernestine Smith, and the half-and-half drawing (\$7) was won by #858555, Byron Nichols (both contributed to Alzheimer's). The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm.

November Meeting: Cancelled due to observation of Veterans' day.

December Meeting: Election and installation of chapter officers. Combined Thanksgiving and Christmas luncheon will reflect the season. Bring holiday cards to trade if you wish. Merry Holidays and Happy New Year!

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 last game (Blackout); which funds the winners' prizes. Please Come! (We **can** make some change!)

Membership Update (9/1 to 10/31/17):
 New: None. Reinstated: One. Dropped for non-renewal: One. Transfer into chapter: None. Transfer out of chapter (includes optional membership): Four. Deaths: One. Voluntary cancellation: One.

Membership transfer from deceased member to spouse: None. We now have 81 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 November:

Howard A Berry Carol J Smith
Terry M Ehrhart Vernon J Weller
Frances C Rodina

Members with birthdays in December:

Yvonne L Edwards Herbert A Schnieders
Gary L Marks Edwin Shutt
June M McConnell Mason B Tucker
Ada G Nichols Camille E Weems
Janeria M Phillips

Bolded = attends meetings regularly

If you were born in November or December and not in the above list, please notify the editor at the newsletter return address or the e-mail address in the officer list above.

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

The House narrowly passed a fiscal year 2018 joint budget resolution by a vote of 216-212, concurring with the Senate and ending the tax reform threat to the federal community. House and Senate leadership agreed to avoid going to conference and to move forward with the Senate's amended version of the budget resolution, which did not include cuts to federal pay and benefits. This joint resolution lays the foundation for major tax reform legislation, which will be unveiled in the coming days. Passage of this joint budget resolution is a big win for active and retired federal employees. Instructions to cut federal benefits by \$32 billion, initially in the House budget, were not included in the final resolution.

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) recently announced the overall average increase in total premiums for the 2018 Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program will rise by an average of 4 percent. The Federal Benefits Open Season runs from Nov. 13 to Dec. 11. The November issue of *narfe* magazine will feature an Open Season special section which has the 2018 premiums for nationwide fee-for-service plans and some of the largest HMO plans in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program. Information about new plans and plan terminations, FAQs and other reminders also are included. Due to the delayed availability of information for the issue, the magazine went to press later than usual. The issue has been posted online in advance of print publication at <http://www.narfe.org/narfemagazine/>.

The U.S. Postal Service will finally see its payments into the federal employee pension account calculated using assumptions from its workforce specifically, rather than the federal workforce as a whole. The calculation has long been a sticking point at the mailing agency. USPS leadership has for years argued its payments into the Federal Employees Retirement System and the Civil Service Retirement System have been too pricey due to the difference between the demographics of its employees and the rest of government.

There will be a 2.0 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for federal civil service annuities, Social Security benefits and military retirement annuities in 2018. Each year's COLA is determined by comparing the change in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) for the third quarter months of the year (July, August and September) with the average for the third

quarter of the last year in which a COLA became effective. To trigger a COLA for the upcoming year, the average CPI-W for the third quarter must be greater than the previous third-quarter average.

In mid-October, the House of Representatives passed the TSP Modernization Act of 2017, H.R. 3031, by voice vote. The bipartisan bill, introduced by Reps. Elijah E. Cummings, D-MD, and Mark Meadows, R-NC, would provide more flexible withdrawal options for Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) accounts. The bill is now awaiting action in the Senate. The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee already approved a nearly identical bill, S. 873, so the prospect of passage by the full Senate appears good, although timing is uncertain.

Don't forget to read your NARFE magazine each month. It has more complete news and information than can be summarized here.

If any member who doesn't attend meetings wishes to contribute to the Alzheimer's Fund **please write "Chapter 1160" in the memo line and make your check out to "NARFE/Alzheimer Research"**. Send your check to the **Alzheimer's Chair** (see the officers' block above). We will 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 or reminders 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. **~61%** of our members required to pay dues are already using withholding, why not you? Applications are on the NARFE website at: www.narfe.org or in the *narfe* mag.

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 will go to NARFE/Alzheimer's Research. Send them either via a member you know who goes to the meetings or to the Alzheimer's Chair in the officers' block above. 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 # open from 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 about address changes, deaths, etc. at 1-800-456-8410 or E-mail memberrecords@narfe.org.

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NARFE Legislative Hotline: 1-877-217-8234
This may be a way to contact your Senator/Representative without as long a wait on hold as calling each office directly. Be sure to not represent yourself as a spokesperson for NARFE, only a concerned retiree.

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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 to the return address block on page 1 and I will send you one (members only).

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