



SHAWNEE SIGNAL
Chapter 1162 Shawnee Mission Kansas
National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association
November-December 2013

Vol. 35, No. 8

Louise Lloyd, Editor, lalloydks@yahoo.com

www.narfe-chapter1162.org

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Newsletter

Louise Lloyd
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Sunshine

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ANNUAL CHAPTER CHRISTMAS PARTY

DECEMBER 10TH



The NARFE Chapter Christmas Party Committee invites you to join us for the Annual Chapter Christmas luncheon and Installation of Officers. The luncheon will be held on Tuesday, December 10th beginning at **11:30 a.m.** at Carlo's Copa Room. The Copa Room is an excellent Italian Restaurant located at 14944 W. 87th Parkway in Lenexa. The Copa Room is on the northeast corner of 87th & Lackman, just east of the Hen House. You can enter through the "private party room doors" on the front of the building.

In addition to the luncheon and installation of officers, there will be a silent auction of items donated by members to raise additional money for Alzheimer's research. More information about this auction can be read in Judy Arnold's Alzheimer's article on the back page of this newsletter. And in keeping with tradition, there will be some great prizes given away including a number of gift cards.

Menu: Italian Buffet consisting of the following:

Two meats: Chicken Spiedini; Meatballs/sauce **Two Pastas:** White Wine Basil Butter Penne Pasta; Pasta with the Copa Room's Sugo (red sauce) Salad, Rolls and Butter and Dessert. Coffee, tea, water also provided.

The cost is **\$15.00** per person and includes taxes and gratuity. Make checks payable to "NARFE Chapter 1162". To make a reservation you can pay at the November 26th Chapter meeting, or send your check by December 6th to: Mary Haswell, 2308 N. 114th St. Kansas City, KS 66109. Contact Mary with any questions at 913-400-7303. Please note the Copa Room has indicated they will work with us to handle special dietary restrictions, so when making your reservation please indicate if you have specific dietary restrictions.

Chapter President – Louise Lloyd

We are now rapidly approaching the holiday season. And along with that it is once again time for the annual election of chapter officers that will take place at the November 26th Chapter meeting. Most of the existing officers are willing to run for office once again. However, the existing officers would welcome other interested parties to run for any of the offices. Having served 3 terms, I know I would certainly welcome anyone who would like to serve as chapter President. There are two board of director positions that need to be filled, as the terms are up. These positions are not allowed to have multiple terms in office. If you feel you would like to submit your name as a candidate for a chapter office or board member position, please do not hesitate to contact Edward Acosta at 913-420-4061. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the chapter meeting if the member is present, or has given consent to run for office.

Please note that effective November 1st, the existing Chapter 1162 website will be closed down. Bob Steinert who has been very dedicated in both developing and maintaining the website for a number of years has asked to step down from the webmaster position. I want to thank Bob for all his hard work and many hours spent over the past years providing us an outstanding website. We were extremely fortunate to have Bob serve as our webmaster. Plans for launching a new website are underway. It is hoped that we might have the website up and running early in the new year. More information will be in the January newsletter.

On a lighter note, I hope many of you will join us for our annual Christmas Installation /luncheon meeting on December 10th at Carlo's Copa Room Restaurant at 87th and Lackman. I can promise that the food will be very delicious. I had the opportunity to sample several of the items and they were really delicious. You won't want to miss out.

As the year draws to an end, I wish all of you a Happy Thanksgiving, and hope you have a wonderful and blessed holiday season!

In Memoriam

Betty Calabrese
Lillian E. Dougan
Bernard Young

Reminder: Don't

forget to bring your egg cartons & plastic grocery bags for donation to the Community Service Center of Shawnee, Inc.

Sunshine Committee:

Contact Don Faidley if you know of any members who may be sick.

Note: No newsletter will be published in December.

Future Meeting Dates/Activities:

November 26th, Chapter Meeting, 1:30 p.m., Overland Park Lutheran Church, 79th and Lowell. **Program:** Health Insurance: Speakers from both Blue Cross and Blue Shield, and GEHA.

December 6th, Executive Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m. at Denny's Restaurant, 95th and I-35 exit, Lenexa.

December 10th, Chapter Christmas Party/Luncheon and Installation of Officers, 11:30 a.m. at the Copa Room, 14944 W. 87th St. Pkwy, (northeast corner of 87th and Lackman,) Lenexa, Ks. RSVP by December 6th to our Treasurer Mary Haswell.

January 3rd, Executive Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m. at Denny's Restaurant, 95th and I-35 Exit, Lenexa

January 28st Chapter meeting, 1:30 p.m. Overland Park Lutheran Church, 79th and Lowell.

February 7th Executive Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m. at Denny's Restaurant, 95th and I-35 Exit, Lenexa

Note: Meeting Cancellation Policy for Chapter Meetings: A chapter monthly meeting will be canceled if Shawnee Mission School District cancels classes due to inclement weather. This policy **does not** apply to the December 10th luncheon as we will be under contract for the number of meals we turn in, unless possibly a blizzard were to occur and the staff were not able to work. If this were to happen we will contact those who planned to attend.



Legislative News - Louis Bornman, 1st Vice President -Legislative Chair

Now that the last budget battle has ended at least temporarily, we all need to be alert to the conversations going on in Congress and between our Congressman and Senators. Repeatedly I hear them talking about "entitlement reform" when they have speaking engagements at various events and particularly when those events include people in the financial community. You need to remember that when these folks talk entitlement reform they are not just talking about the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or unemployment. That is because the term entitlements also includes your federal employee pension, your Federal Employee Health Benefits, military retirement, veterans benefits, and social security. And of course the hot topic of those entitlements that many think should be reformed is to change the Consumer Price Index (CPI) used to compute Cost of Living Increases (COLAs). The main proposal is to change from the CPI-U to the Chained CPI which would have the effect of reducing COLAs by 30 percent. Over time that will compound and add up to a lot of money. Over a 30 year retirement, which is not unrealistic, that could result in you receiving 11 months of pension benefit instead of 12. Not a pleasant thought. Please be sure to contact our Congressman Kevin Yoder and our two Senators, Jerry Moran and Pat Roberts and let them know that cutting our COLAs is not the right thing to do. PS. Shawnee County District Attorney Chad Taylor revealed plans this week for a "listening tour" of the state to test potential support for launching a campaign for the Democratic Party's nomination for U.S. Senate in a challenge to Republican Senator Pat Roberts.

In a letter dated 9/4/2013 to Kansas House Representative Melanie Meier, Dennis Cram, Director of Policy & Research for the Kansas Department of Revenue (KDOR), states that KDOR "has changed its interpretation of K.S.A. 79-32,117(vii), **effective 9/4/13**, that the subtraction modification now applies to distributions from the Thrift Savings Plan. "Therefore going forward, amounts received by taxpayers as distributions from a Thrift Savings Plan account, whether received as a lump sum payment at retirement or rolled over into a qualified retirement account, will not be subject to Kansas income tax." In a 10/17/13 e-mail, KDOR clarified "**This does not apply retroactively**. If a taxpayer rolls TSP funds into an IRA, then it is recommended that those funds not be commingled with other funds that are not exempt." If the taxpayer commingles funds in a retirement account with non exempt funds, then the taxpayer will be responsible to document and substantiate the amount of any claim that any portion of a distribution from the account is exempt as federal benefits.

Contact Information:

Senator Jerry Moran – jerry_moran@moran.senate.gov; Olathe, KS office: 913-393-0711. D.C. Office: 202-224-6521

Senator Pat Roberts – pat_roberts@roberts.senate.gov; Overland Park Office: 913-451-9343. D.C. Office: 202-224-4774.

Congressman Kevin Yoder – Kansas City, KS telephone: 913-621-0832, Washington D.C. Office: 202-225-2865
www.yoder.house.gov. (Visit website to sign up for his newsletter)

The Legislative Hotline is available to telephone callers (703)-838-7780 and toll free at 1-877-217-8234, posted on the internet at www.narfe.org, made available to NARFE-Net Coordinators, and sent to over 54,000 GEMS e-mail addresses.

Alzheimer's News - Judy Lukas Arnold

Last month at our October Chapter meeting, our program was devoted to Alzheimer's dementia. Michelle Niedens, Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Director of Education, Programs, and Public Policy for the Heart of America Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, spoke to us about the disease.

Although Alzheimer's is very complicated, we know much more about it through research than we ever did in the past. Several extremely important prevention practices are: eat a heart-healthy diet; exercise physically and mentally; and stay connected to "purpose", spiritually and socially. Brain screenings revealing plaque can determine when one has Alzheimer's and show significant differences between early and middle stages of the disease. However, better cognitive screening tools need to be developed. The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services has taken the lead for studying these and related issues. Progress has been made in finding various types of Alzheimer's; learning of medicines, which are effective in maintaining memory functions and which vary by disease stages; and even in discovering cures and mechanisms for reversal.

Another piece of business conducted during our meeting was the group's decision to hold a Silent Auction for the cause of Alzheimer's research at our December Holiday Party. Bring any items you wish to donate with an established reasonable minimum amount you wish to raise and we'll see if we can't boost our per member donation average closer to the \$5.50 state goal. I also plan to give a report of our successes year-to-date then. I'll re-cap our contribution to the State Federation endeavor, announce our earnings from the Best Choice labels, and discuss plans for the upcoming year.

Service Officer, Elizabeth Bornman

Remember Open season for re-evaluating your health plan starts November 11th thru December 9th. Choose the right one for your life style and needs. **We will have a representative from GEHA and Blue Cross and Blue Shield** at our November meeting. Come with questions if you have any.

The office of OPM announced that the average premium for the 8 million people enrolled in FEHB will increase on average by 3.7 percent for non-postal employees and all annuitants in 2014. OPM said it is less than the national average increase in 2013. OPM said there are no significant benefit changes for 2014 and overall more plan choices. Visit the OPM website for the full 2013 dental, vision and FEHB plans and rate charts for comparison www.opm.gov/insure/openseason/factsheet.asp.

The most important thing that has occurred is the COLA increase for 2014 of 1.5 percent increase to our annuities' next year, the same increase given to Social Security recipients. NARFE is prepared to oppose any changes to the COLA formula that would have an adverse effect on retirees. The premiums for Medicare Part B will remain unchanged at \$104.90.

A reminder that retirees can sign up for the Dues Withholding option to obtain a 15% discount (\$6) on your annual NARFE dues. Dues withholding applications are included in each monthly NARFE magazine, and applications are also on the NARFE website at www.narfe.org.

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