



2014 OFFICERS and CHAIRS

President	Tom Huntzinger	785-766-6717
1 st Vice President	Roger Lemmons	785-840-9594
2 nd Vice President	Elaine Seeman	785-331-2280
Secretary	Leonard Short	785-840-8401
Treasurer	Cheryl Travis	785-865-7580
Membership	Dianne Throop	785-841-1408
Service Officer	John Rowe	785-856-8759
Public Relations		
Newsletter	Wendy Hambly	913-845-0121
NARFE PAC	Linda Surritte	785-856-0558
NARFE Net Coor	Jerry Feese	785-842-4330
Alzheimer's Chair	John Scott	785-542-3510
Legislative Chair	John Surritte	785-856-0558
Sunshine	Mary Margaret	785-842-8847
	Rowen/Clara Arnold	785-842-1680

KUDOS AND THANK YOU'S

- ☞ Those who stepped up to the plate to serve Chapter 378 in 2015--see names above.
- ☞ All those who have sent reservations and remittance for the Christmas Party.
- ☞ Roger Lemmons for arranging our Party!

ALZHEIMERS John Scott

The National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association is proud to announce that the Association has met its cumulative giving goal of "\$11 million in 2014" raised to support Alzheimer's research. NARFE, in partnership with the Alzheimer's Association, has been engaged in the fight to win the war against Alzheimer's disease since 1985. NARFE members consistently have given generously of their time and dollars, finding creative ways to expand their fundraising efforts. At the NARFE National Convention in August, delegates voted to set a new goal of \$12 million by 2016. The program is strictly voluntary in nature, with 100% of all donations going to support Alzheimer's research. Members can give via the NARFE website, or use the coupon on the donation page in every issue of narfe magazine.

2014 CHAPTER 378 DONATIONS

Month	Chapter Donations	YTD Total
July	\$113	\$368
August	\$11	\$379
September	\$85	\$464
October	\$258	\$722
November	\$376	\$1098

If you wish to receive The Alzheimer's Association e-news, sign up at:

http://www.alz.org/join_the_cause_narfe_email.asp

DECEMBER 17TH PARTY Roger Lemmons

NARFE Chapter 378 will meet December 17th for the 3rd annual Christmas Party at the Lawrence Country Club, 400 Country Club Terrace, Lawrence, KS. Judy Chadwick, accordion player extraordinaire, will entertain us, and Santa's Helper will again be visiting. So be on your best behavior!

Lawrence Country Club on WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17th, at 11:15 am. Spouses and active or retired Federal Employees are welcome.

Head count & prepayment REQUIRED, so please completed and return this form with remittance by DECEMBER 12th to:

WENDY HAMBLY, 25029 Dehoff Dr.

NARFE CHRISTMAS PARTY

Tonganoxie, KS 66086

NAME(S) OF THOSE ATTENDING:

1. _____

2. _____

(please print clearly)

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

CHOICE OF MEAL(S)	# OF MEALS
The Soup, Salad, & Sandwich Buffet includes soup, a variety of meats, cheeses, breads, garnishes, full salad bar, potato chips, and brownies.	
Quiche (Ham, Cheddar, Broccoli) includes Fresh Fruit.	
TOTAL # OF MEALS:	
COST PER MEAL (includes gratuity)	X \$16.00
TOTAL REMITTANCE	
ENCLOSED:	

Check payable to: NARFE Chapter 378

NOTE: Beverages other than coffee or tea will be on a cash basis and subject to tax & gratuity.

Note: Santa had a budget, but no funding for the grab, so the gifts may not be what you wanted. Should be a great time of celebration and happiness over gifts from Santa's return shop/garage sales/rummage sales. In addition to the meal, fellowship, and gifts, Judy Chadwick, accordionist extraordinaire, (she's really good), will entertain us.

January’s speaker is Laura Calwell, a representative from *Friends of the Kaw*, she will speak about the condition of the Kansas River and possibly other tributaries.

NOVEMBER 19TH MEETING RECAP

Gayle Sigurdson, Lifelong Recreation Programmer, from Lawrence’s Parks and Recreation (P&R), gave an informative presentation tailored to classes and facilities of interest to those in the +50 category. She distributed a handout she developed for that age group, which I have attached in the email as a separate pdf file.

She began with some statistics about why retirement doesn’t always go as planned. Depression can interfere 40% of the time and a decline in physical health can interfere 60% of the time.

Ms. Sigurdson said people think of recreation as activities, but she suggested that one should relax and cultivate real interests. Definitions of recreation include, “inherently beneficial” and “a means to an end that can enhance wellness.” For example, one can learn from reading or escape to other lands or times. In retirement, people miss the “water-cooler” talk and interacting with others. Joining a book club or Friends of the Library can provide social interaction. Others want to contribute to community.

Ms. Sigurdson gave the following examples of how recreation can help provide structure and daily routines, improve and maintain physical health, and strengthen relationships:

- ◆ Daily routine and structure can come from enrolling in regular classes, walking the indoor track at the new Rock Chalk Park which has a wide lane for wheelchairs and strollers, scheduling a regular tee time, or playing pickle ball.
- ◆ Physical Benefits can come from meditation or joining a choir, as both activities can improve breathing and lung capacity. Archery is being added to the P&R program. Bows are adjustable for level of strength.
- ◆ Strengthening Relationships may result from giving new aspects to old relationships by taking a class together and having coffee after class, or deepen family relationships by having Dad/Daughter or Mom/Son date nights. Some of the upcoming classes offered through P&R are *Buying-Selling-Trading on the Internet*, *Social Media*, and *Genealogy Projects with the Watkins*

Museum. One could get together adult children to sort family photos. Travel may be another area for expansion in P&R offerings.

- ◆ Mental Health and Cognitive Sharpness might be improved with the Mahjong class which will meet at the Castle Tea Room.

Recreation can keep you interested in life and people. There is a *Lifelong Recreation* e-mail newsletter for seniors. In spring a hiking guild with 3 levels (challenging, average, and completely accessible) will form.

Lawrence is becoming more “pedestrian friendly” for walking and bicycling.

Q and A:

Q-Any changes planned for Holcolm Center?

A-There are always changes being made. A suggestion for more room in the weight room was made. Trying to add a personal trainer, who can show one how to get started correctly with weights. Dance is a good way to condition. Joan Stone will have an *Introductory Dance* class in the spring.

For more information contact Gayle Sigurdson at: 785-832-7920 or email gsigurdson@lawrenceks.org

LEGISLATIVE John Surritte

The COLA for 2015 is 1.7%.

New NARFE National President, Richard Thissen, warns there will be several threats with the new 114th Congress that begins in January...including the Chained CPI, which would decrease cost-of-living adjustments for federal retirees, and increased retirement contributions for federal employees are expected to be debated again as the focus returns to sequestration and the budget. I ask all members to take an active role in defending their earned benefits as these issues arise.”

MEMBERSHIP Dianne Throop

Dianne Throop, email: d.throop@sbcglobal.net

NARFE NEWSWATCH November 11, 2014

Register now for NARFE's 2015 Legislative Training Conference

Plan to be a part of one of our Association's most exciting and important events, NARFE's 2015 Legislative Training Conference, March 14-17, at the Renaissance Capital View Hotel in Arlington, Virginia. The conference offers NARFE leaders and grass-roots activists the opportunity to learn from NARFE Legislative Department staff, hear from national speakers and network with fellow NARFE

advocates. Attendees will go to Capitol Hill to meet with members of Congress and staff on the conference's final day. First-time participants are especially encouraged to come and hone their advocacy skills. The deadline to register with both NARFE and the hotel is Feb. 3. A conference registration form is available on p. 11 of the November issue of narfe magazine, or you can register online at www.narfe.org. There are only 300 spots available, so don't wait, register now!

Federal worker benefits season is now open — Here's what you need to know (The Washington Post)

The annual federal employee benefits open season began Nov. 10 (**and ends December 8, 2014**), in which employees and retirees can change their insurance coverage and employees can set up flexible spending accounts for 2015. The program of greatest interest typically is the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, which covers about 8 million employees, retirees and family members.

The FEHBP features 11 nationwide plans plus about 250 plans available regionally. Premiums vary widely and on average are increasing 3.8 percent for enrollees in 2015.

Eligible employees who are not currently enrolled in FEHBP may join the program during the open season. Retirees generally cannot enroll but like employees, those already enrolled can change their plans or switch between self-only and family insurance.

Both employees and retirees may enroll or change coverage in the separate Federal Dental and Vision Insurance Program during the election period that runs through Dec. 10. Enrollees can choose one type of coverage or the other, or both; premiums are increasing by about 2 percent on average in each. There are four vision plans, all national, and 10 dental plans, six of them national and the four others regional.

Although the government pays about 70 percent of total premium costs for employees and retirees under the FEHBP program — the U.S. Postal Service pays more for its active employees although not for its retirees — there is no employer contribution toward FEDVIP coverage.

Plan brochures, enrollment procedures and other information can be found at: www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance.

Under the FEHBP and FEDVIP programs, enrollment continues unchanged from year to year

if an enrollee takes no action. However, one special consideration in the health insurance program is that several carriers that cover about 25,000 enrollees and family members total will be dropping out or restricting their coverage areas, forcing enrollees to choose a new plan.

In the flexible spending account program, a new enrollment is required each year. In that program, employees may set aside on a pretax basis up to \$5,000 for certain dependent-care expenses and up to \$2,550 for certain health-care expenses not covered by insurance.

There are two significant changes in that program for the 2015 plan year. The minimum set aside in each account is dropping from \$250 to \$100. Also, a “grace period” policy will apply only to dependent-care accounts; under that policy, costs can be charged to a plan year if they are incurred up to 10 weeks into the following year. For health-care accounts, a carryover of up to \$500 from one year to the next will be allowed instead.

The flexible spending account program does not feature an employer share and does not apply to retirees. Detailed information on that program is available at:

www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/flexible-spending-accounts.

From the *FEDERALTIMES*, November 20, 2014: *Federal Times Editor Steve Watkins sat down with FEHBP expert Walt Francis and author of the annual “Checkbook's Guide to Health Plans for Federal Employees,” to discuss what federal employees should look for when choosing a plan. “OPM runs a really good website. OPM.gov/insure and there’s all kinds of resources and tools there including the ability to plan benefit details side by side, advice on and information on how to even understand things like health savings accounts and how does that coordinate with Medicare and so on. The Checkbook website goes a step further than OPM and our website is guidetohealthplans.org.”*

<http://www.federaltimes.com/article/20141120/MGMT01/311200011/FEHBP-expert-Walt-Francis-Take-time-research-plan-options>

THINGS TO DO

1. **Send in reservation and remittance for Christmas Party by December 12th.**
2. **Thank those serving Chapter 378 in 2015 as officers or chairs.**
3. **Be good so Santa’s Helper doesn’t bring you a lump of coal!**