



# THE SHAWNEE SIGNAL

Chapter 1162 Shawnee Mission Kansas

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association

Vol. 29, No.2

February 2007

**NEW CHAPTER OFFICERS FOR YEAR 2007.** President, Elizabeth Bornman; 1st Vice President, Flo Biehl; 2nd Vice President, Clara Smith; Secretary, Wayne Smutz; Treasurer, Bob Steinert; Service Officer, Howard Zion; Executive Board, Lorna Larson and Tom Raby.

## CHAPTER PRESIDENT

*Elizabeth Bornman*

We are off to a good start this year. Would like for all members of our chapter to get more involved in the local level. We need you to help in many ways that you may have an interest.

Remember to connect with your local State Senators. They are currently looking at KPERS retirement system. It has been an issue with one side demanding action on a COLA for retirees and the opposition hinting if a COLA is granted, to take a harder look at KPERS (and other retiree groups) income tax free status. We are only one of twelve, who currently do

not pay state income tax on our retirement. This could be trouble for us as retirees and those non-members who are simple minded enough to believe they don't need NARFE.

If you have any issues you believe we need to pursue as a chapter, please contact any of the chapter officers. We would love to talk with you. I hope to meet and welcome anyone at our next meeting who hasn't been actively attending to see where you can plug into the chapter. •

## MEMBERSHIP AND LEGISLATION

*Thomas Raby, February 2007*

Welcome to our chapter, Marcia Smith, Linda Spitzengel and Donald Whitman.

I've monitored the M112's (Chapter Monthly Report) for over two years. Generally we've averaged 2 deaths per month. The latest report, Feb. 5, 2007, has seven deceased members. This is a big personal loss for those of us that knew one or more of these NARFER'S.

Our condolences go out to the family and friends of: Wilma Clisso, George Filkins, Ben Gardner, James Stephen, Clarence Pfeifer, Lester Rector and Joan Schneck.

The listing of a deceased member on this report is not always timely since we aren't aware of some deaths until later. We ask each of you to let us know when you learn of a death. Also, please keep us informed of any members that move into assisted living, or nursing care. This will help get the newsletter and other

information to members. Clara Smith has been attempting to reach all chapter members by phone to help keep us up-to-date on member status and keep our mailing list current. Bob Steinert has an overwhelming job with the newsletter, so any information available is helpful.

**Good news:** Bills have been introduced to eliminate the GPO and WEP. These are **HR 82** and **S 206**. Don't sit and wait; contact your representative and senators urging that these bills get passed this year.

Our chapter is allowed 32 delegates to the federation convention. Lets have a show of support in Junction City this year. We can't strut and brag about being the largest chapter in Kansas if we don't have a showing at chapter meetings, and at the convention. **Remember: I have applications for both retirees and current federal employees that are postage paid, see me.** •

## Chapter Officers and Committees

Elizabeth Bornman	President	913 432-0091	Florence Roy	NARFE-ALZ.	913 663-1987
Flo Biehl	1st Vice President	913 268-8526	Tom Raby	Membership	913 829-6025
Clara Smith	2nd Vice President	913 441-8723	Flo Biehl	NARFE-PAC	913 631-5559
Wayne Smutz	Secretary	913 888-3423	Clara Smith	Public Relations	913 441-8723
Bob Steinert	Treasurer	913 764-7456	Tom Raby	Legislative	913 829-6025
Howard Zion	Service Officer	913 236-8131	Bob Steinert	Editor	913 764-7456

***This And That Page***

CHAPTER 1162 SHAWNEE MISSION  
STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS  
YEAR 2006

## RECEIPTS

Dues	\$6,773	
Interest	134	
Recruiting	4	\$6,911

## DISBURSEMENTS

News Letter & Web site		
Newsletter	2,624	
Internet Web Site	124	
Meetings:		
Chapter	370	
Federation	800	
National	2,240	
Executive Board	29	
Chapter Party	199	
Others:		
Officers	68	
Committees	183	
Federation Per Capita Tax	815	
Donations	100	
Admin. Services	68	7,620
Net Cash Increase or (Decrease)		(709)
Beginning Cash		8,816
Ending Cash in Bank		\$8,107

CLASSIFIED ADS and HELP WANTED  
By Elizabeth Bornman

## PROGRAM CHAIRMAN

IF YOU CAN MAKE ARRANGEMENTS AND THINK OF IDEAS FOR INTERESTING TOPICS AT OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS, WE ARE LOOKING FOR YOU TO BE PART OF THE EXECUIVE BOARD. CALL ELIZABETH BORNMAN 913-268-8526

## SOCIAL CHAIRMAN

To help with the June meeting potluck and Christmas dinner, call Elizabeth Bornman if you can be a part of the executive team.

AUCTIONS ITEMS FOR ALZHEIMER FUND RAISER FOR THE KANSAS FEDERATION STATE CONVENTION. BRING TO THE MONTHLY MEETINGS IN FEBRUARY, MARCH AND APRIL. ITEMS MUST BE WORTH AT LEAST 3 DOLLARS AND BE NEW OR ANTIQUE QUALITY

Remember to bring your Best Choice labels, egg cartons, and plastic sacks to the monthly meetings.

Delegates to the Kansas State Convention 29 April to 1 MAY 2007 at Junction City, KS. See Wayne after the monthly meeting or give him a call if interested. We have room for at least 30 individuals.

We need to increase the number of members on your calling committee. If you are not able to attend the monthly meetings but want to get involve, then this is a job for you to call about 20 members a month to remind them of the meeting and or why they don't won't to attend. If you feel you can do this each month call Clara Smith the 2nd Vice President.

We WELCOMED at our January meeting Warren Edwards (FHWA)-DOT and Jerry Conner (DOE) who recently relocated to the Kansas City area. We hope to see more of them in the future

**Don't want the newsletter.** As a member of Chapter 1162, you are entitled to receive a copy of *The Shawnee Signal* newsletter in the mail. However, if you don't want a copy in the mail, then notify Bob Steinert by phone (913) 764-7456 or by e-mail and state that you want to be taken off the mail list for the newsletter. Email address is: editor@narfe-chapter1162.org.

Members who have an Internet connection can read the newsletter on the chapter's Web site. The address is <www.narfe-chapter1162.org>. We encourage members with Internet connections to read the chapter newsletter online.

The most active pages for members on the Web site are the chapter newsletters and bulletins. Current newsletter is posted online during the week before chapter meetings. And bulletins are posted when a significant event occurs that would be of interest to the chapter members.

## NARFE SUPPORTS RETIREMENT MODERIZATION AND OPPOSES EXPANSION OF HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

By Dan Adcock, NARFE Assistant Legislative Director

Margaret Baptiste, President of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) today praised the Administration's continued commitment toward modernizing the federal retirement claims process system, but expressed concerns about other proposals in the President's fiscal year (FY) 2008 budget, including a plan to expand Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) and a proposal to reduce the share the government pays toward the FEHBP premiums of certain future federal retirees.

The Administration's budget enlarges a proposal made in 2006 which would allow Blue Cross/Blue Shield (BC/BS) to offer HSAs in the FEHBP by requiring the "Indemnity Benefit Plan" -- a second systemwide option -- to offer the controversial option. Despite being named in the statute which authorizes FEHBP, the Indemnity Benefit Plan has not been available since the Aetna plan insurance carrier left the FEHBP in 1990. The Administration appears to be ready to revive the plan as a way to jump start HSAs, which relatively few federal workers and retirees have joined.

BC/BS's current health plans are the largest and most popular in the FEHBP. As a result, the insurance carrier's brand loyalty and considerable marketing recourses could significantly increase HSA enrollment in FEHBP if they decided, and were allowed, to offer such an option. A second large insurance carrier, offered as the Indemnity plan, could have a similar and compounding affect.

"NARFE opposes HSAs because they could increase premiums for comprehensive plans since relatively healthy enrollees with higher incomes could be siphoned off into HSAs," Baptiste said. Such concerns were confirmed by a January 2006 report of the nonpartisan Government Accountability Office (GAO), which found that HSAs tended to attract younger and wealthier FEHBP enrollees.

In addition, NARFE questioned why the Administration would propose reducing the government employer share of FEHBP premiums for new retirees with less than ten years of federal service when the government is attempting to recruit the very mid-career professional who might be penalized by this plan. "It was common, among my generation, to

work for a single employer for an entire 30 year career," the NARFE President said. "Few workers do that any more. We fear the Administration's plan may discourage some of the best and brightest talent from considering federal service and it sets a bad precedent."

The President's budget included a previously offered proposal to resolve the inequity in the interpretation of a 1986 budget law that unfairly reduces the retirement annuities of certain Civil Service Retirement System employees who worked part-time in the latter years of their careers. "Allowing employees to work part time is a proven and successful management tool, but any plan to fix this problem should include relief for retirees whose annuities have been unjustly reduced," Baptiste added.

Baptiste commended the Administration's ongoing commitment to speeding up the processing of full annuity payments to new retirees and survivors and she said that NARFE supported their proposal to allow federal workers to contribute bonuses to the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). •

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**Regular Chapter Meeting February 27, 2007.** It's a business meeting with refreshments, of course, for all our members. Please come a few minutes early to ensure a good seat because our meeting room at the church hall is limited to 200 occupants. Our guest speaker will be Beverly Kelly, and her topic is "Assisted Living." Our meeting is at: Overland Park Lutheran Church on 79th Street at 1:30 pm.

### Regular Monthly Meeting

4th Tuesday of the month at 1:30 PM at Overland Park Lutheran Church, 79th and Lowell, Overland Park. Features: chapter business, refreshments and entertainment. No meetings July, August, December.

### Monthly Social Meeting

2nd Wednesday of the month at the Hometown Buffet, 73rd and Quivira at 1:15 PM. Call Clyde Shellhammer (913 432-0091) for reservations. Luncheon cafeteria-style food service.

### Executive Board Meeting

1st Friday of the month. Breakfast at 9:00 AM, meeting 9:30 AM. Location Denny's Restaurant, 95th and I-35 exit, Lenexa - adjacent to La Quinta Motel.

## Federation President writes about the issues and plans for Year 2007.

By John F. Surritte, President & National Legislative Coordinator.

This is our first newsletter for 2007. We have much to talk about.

First of all, the new Congress has introduced two new bills to eliminate the Social Security Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). Those bills are HR 82 in the House and S 206 in the Senate. In Kansas, Representatives Moore and Moran support HR 82. We need to contact Representatives Boyda and Tiahrt and Senators Brownback and Roberts to solicit their support for HR 82 and S 206. We will also continue to work for re-introduction of Premium Conversion Legislation.

This leads me to the NARFE Legislative Conference, which will be held in Bethesda, MD, on March 3 through March 6, 2007. NARFE will pass on much information we in Kansas will need to successfully lobby our Senators and Representatives. We now have four folks from Kansas who have indicated they will attend, Linda Surritte, Gary Townson, Elizabeth Bornman and myself. We still need folks to attend from Congressman Moran's District. Please solicit your

Chapter membership and encourage your members to attend. I am presently scheduling meetings with our Congressional members the morning of March 6. It's very important we have members from each Congressional District attend.

Our Junction City Chapter is making great progress on preparing for your 2007 State Convention. The convention will be held on April 29 through May 1. The program has been finalized and is included in this newsletter. The hotel is ready, the convention packages have been sent to each Chapter and all you have to do is send in your registration and make your hotel reservations. Please contact Jim Martin, Chapter President, or Dixie Thomas, Convention Coordinator, if you need assistance. I'm sure you will have a good time.

Don't forget the College of NARFE Knowledge, which will be held in South Sioux City, NB, August 29 through 31. This conference provides lots of good information, which will strengthen your Chapters in meeting the goals of our members. **Remember than your Federation Board has approved an incentive of \$60.00 per Kansas member to attend this conference up to a limit of \$2300.00.** Our National Field Vice President, Richard Thissen, will

provide more information at our State Convention.

Congratulations for your efforts in 2006. We had very good participation in contacting our Congressional delegation. While we have not yet been successful in passing GPO/WEP Repeal and Premium Conversion, we were successful in protecting our present benefits. Your work throughout the year, especially during National Lobby Week, played a big part in this success. We also had a very good year in raising money for Alzheimer's Research. According to my beautiful wife, Linda, you raised \$3.86 per member, far exceeding your goal of \$3.30. Kansas NARFE raised over \$19,000. Finally, we have work to do on membership. According to Mr. Thissen, we lost over 150 members in 2006. We can and must do better in 2007. You and I can do better. We have over 22,000 retirees and 34,000 active Federal Employees in our State. We need to find them and sign them up.

In closing, I've had a good time serving as your President this past year. I've met many interesting and dedicated folks. I hope to meet more of you in the future. **SEE YOU AT THE CONVENTION IN JUNCTION CITY.●**

The Shawnee Signal

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