



**The Shawnee Signal**  
**Chapter 1162 Shawnee Mission Kansas**  
**National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association**  
**October 2014**

[www.narfe-chapter1162.org](http://www.narfe-chapter1162.org)

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**In Memoriam**

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

NARFE's Legislative Hotline: (703)-838-7780. Toll free at 1-877-217-8234. Posted on the Internet at [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org).

**President's News - Louise Lloyd**

As I write this article, the Kansas City Royals have just won three games straight against Los Angeles Angels and now plan to play for the American League pennant against Baltimore. So there is more excitement in Kansas City than we have seen in a very long time. And the political scene for the upcoming elections in Kansas is pretty exciting as well. Two very important elections are garnering a lot of national attention, both the U.S. Senate race and the race for Governor. Potential control of the U.S. Senate is at stake. And the race for Governor has candidates with very different philosophies and backgrounds. All we need to decide on who we think will best represent our interests and issues. Please be sure to exercise your right to vote. Lower voter turnouts are more typical in non-Presidential election, so your vote can be even more significant under this scenario.

In January, once all the newly elected officials are in office, a number of issues that have been dragging out by the Congress will be back under discussion. Having a strong viable NARFE membership is more important than ever to give us more clout with the congressional delegation. A reminder, NARFE will pay each member who recruits a member through December 31<sup>st</sup>, \$10 per member recruited. The individual needs to specify your name, NARFE ID number, and chapter number on the application. Currently the new member fee is \$40 to join a traditional chapter or an eNARFE chapter. An application form is included in every NARFE magazine. And new applicants can sign-up on line as well.

All NARFE members should have a short "elevator" type speech that they could share with a potential member in a very brief time. The best speech will be based on answering four key questions: What is NARFE? What does NARFE do? What are the benefits of NARFE membership? Why should I join? Following is a sample NARFE speech that you could utilize to formulate your own speech using your own words: ***NARFE is the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Assn. It is the only organization solely dedicated to protecting and preserving the pay and benefits of ALL federal workers and retirees. NARFE has two primary roles: Your Legislative Voice: In-house influential lobbyists advocate on Capitol Hill on behalf of the federal community. Your Information Resource: NARFE provides clear information & trusted guidance on complex federal benefits issues. As a member of NARFE you receive: NARFE Magazine: the prime source of information & guidance on critical legislation & benefit issues. Access to a team of Federal Benefits Service specialists for answers to complex benefits questions. Legislative alerts on issues directly impacting the federal community & an online Legislative Action Center to quickly & easily contact your member of Congress. Member-only eligibility for scholarships, disaster relief grants, and discounts on products and services. When you join NARFE, you will protect your earned pay and benefits, ensure you can get trusted guidance on complex pay and benefit questions, and support the federal community.***

Election of officers will be held at the November meeting. If you are willing to run for an office, contact any of the chapter officers to let them know which office you would be willing to serve and they will provide your name to the nominating committee. We need more members to step up into leadership roles to bring new ideas and help us continue to keep the chapter viable.

I do encourage everyone to attend our October 28<sup>th</sup> meeting. Our speaker, Vern Ott, will share about his experience as a veterinarian assisting participants with their dog teams in the Alaskan Iditarod. It should be a really interesting presentation.

**Legislative News - Louis Bornman 1st Vice President and Legislative Chair**

Advanced voting begins 20 October and runs through 1 November and Election Day is on 4 November. It is vital that you get out and vote. We are constantly under attack by members of congress over our pay, pension benefits and health benefits. Examine the voting record of each national candidate running for reelection as shown in the October edition of NARFE magazine. If you don't like it maybe you need to consider voting for their opponent. You need to think about the state races also. While they generally have no direct bearing on our pay, pension or health benefits they affect all of us. The current legislature and executive branch of the Kansas state government are passing laws and creating policies that are detrimental to everyone except the wealthy and corporations. If you own a house check your county property tax statement and you will see that the allocation for many areas went down but the largest increase was for education. I believe mine went up 30% for education. That is a result of the States cuts to education funding. If that continues it will require more cuts to other county services to make up for the state cuts to education. This is bad for everyone, including seniors who still own a home, as well as all your grandchildren and great grandchildren. The state has also passed legislation that puts the state into a health care compact with several other states. If approved by the U.S. Congress it would allow the states in the compact to run MEDICARE based upon block grants from the Federal Government (from the federal MEDICARE program). The Johnson County Commission on Aging has published an article in the *Best Times* magazine which expresses several serious concerns about this program. In fact several legislators threatened the Commission with a lawsuit if they published the article because it is critical of the compact. If all of this, and more, bothers you then maybe it is time to change the Kansas state legislature and administration.

**Future Meeting Dates/Activities:**

**October 28<sup>th</sup> – Chapter Meeting, 1:30 p.m.**, Overland Park Lutheran Church, 79<sup>th</sup> and Lowell, Program: Vern Ott, Veterinarian/owner of State Line Animal Hospital will do a presentation on the Alaskan Iditarod.

**November 25<sup>th</sup>, Chapter meeting, 1:30 p.m.** Overland Park Lutheran Church, 79<sup>th</sup> and Lowell, Program: FEHBP Representatives, i.e, GEHA, Blue Cross

**December 9<sup>th</sup>, Christmas Party/ Luncheon Noon**, Dwight Cowles American Legion Hall, 7500 W. 75<sup>th</sup>. Street.

**Service Officer – Elizabeth Bornman**

The Office of Personnel Management shrank its retirement claims backlog in September, receiving about 1,000 claims fewer than it expected.

For the month of September, OPM had expected to receive 7,300 claims and process 8,000 claims, which would have resulted in an inventory of 13,142 unprocessed claims. However, fewer federal employees than expected filed for retirement in September. The agency reported it received 6,350 claims and processed 6,680.

Even though OPM projected it could clear an additional 1,320 claims, it was left with a backlog of 12,767 claims. That is 375 fewer than it had planned for at the end of the month.

The remaining inventory demonstrates a drop of 330 claims since the previous month. The number has dropped by more than 10,000 claims since a peak of more than 23,500 in February.

OPM has been tracking and reporting on progress toward cutting the retirement backlog since January 2012. At the time, the backlog topped out at more than 60,000 claims and OPM was the subject of congressional criticism and federal-employee frustration.

In May of this year, OPM started reporting the percentage of claims it processed within 60 days. In the five months so far reported, the percentage has climbed from 76.6 percent in May, around 77 percent in June and July, to 78.5 percent in August, and now 82.3 percent in September.

Looking ahead to numbers for October, OPM expects to receive 7,800 claims and projects it will process 8,500.

Note: TSP - A will is not a substitute for formal beneficiary designation. The TSP has no formal rules regarding spousal rights. In fact, any individual, one's estate or a legal entity/corporation can be named as a TSP beneficiary. Married participants are not required to name their spouses as their tsp BENEFICIARY. These participants may want to instead name their children as TSP beneficiaries. You can download the required form TSP-3 from [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov). The form needs to be updated and resubmitted as personal circumstances' change. If you have any questions concerning this issue give me a call.

Reminder: Retirees can sign up for the Dues Withholding to obtain a 15% discount (\$6) on your annual NARFE dues. Dues withholding applications are included in each monthly NARFE magazine, and applications also on NARFE website [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org).

**Alzheimer's News – Judy Lukas Arnold, Alzheimer's Chairperson**

October is such a wonderful month! Autumn is underway, the trees are in their colorful splendor, and the costumes and fun of Halloween awaits us. But a true scare of these times is the devastation of Alzheimer's, a disease affecting more than 5 million Americans. One such story I heard last month was from one of my mother's doctors. He told of how heartbreaking it was to have a parent, who didn't recognize him, who set fires, and who hid in a closet in fear of a caregiver. Just hearing him renewed my dedication to helping in the cause of Alzheimer's eradication.

**High-Risk Factors:** Recent studies indicate that high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, and smoking can contribute to Alzheimer's. Although it can be disheartening to realize the co-morbidity of these factors, it is also encouraging to know that each of them are more a result of lifestyle than genetics, which means we have power to reduce our risks.

**State News:** Kansas NARFE's new Alzheimer's Chairperson is Joanne Miller of the Topeka chapter. In her first letter to all of the local Chairs, she reported from a 2013 Gallup poll. In that, it was found that Kansas is considered to be the sixth-most charitable state. This was determined from rates of money given to charitable causes, time volunteered, and a combination of both. Personally, I have observed and been gratified by your generosity, but it is validating to be a part of this ranking.

**Fundraisers:** 1) By the time you read this, the annual Walk to End Alzheimer's will have taken place at Corporate Woods. Although NARFE does not get special credit for participating, it is such a super event, I hope to take part in it. 2) Again, please support our second Holiday Fundraiser, to be held on 12/9. 3) Always, save those Best Choice labels for me!

**Reminder:** Don't forget to bring your egg cartons & plastic grocery bags to meetings for donation to the Community Service Center of Shawnee, Inc.

**Contact Information:**

**Senator Jerry Moran** – [jerry\\_moran@moran.senate.gov](mailto:jerry_moran@moran.senate.gov); Olathe, KS office telephone 913-393-0711. D.C. Office: 202-224-6521. *Signup for newsletter:* [www.moran.senate.gov](http://www.moran.senate.gov)  
**Senator Pat Roberts** – [pat\\_roberts@roberts.senate.gov](mailto:pat_roberts@roberts.senate.gov); Overland Park Office: 913-451-9343. D.C. Office: 202-224-4774. *Signup for newsletter:* [www.roberts.senate.gov](http://www.roberts.senate.gov)  
**Congressman Kevin Yoder** – Overland Park, KS telephone: 913-621-0832, Washington D.C. telephone: 202-225-2865. *Signup for newsletter:* [www.yoder.house.gov](http://www.yoder.house.gov)

**OPM Retirement Information:** Remarriage, divorce, death or spouse, change of address or financial institution or amount of insurance under FEGLI, **1-888-767-6738**

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