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The Heartbeat of the Nebraska Federation

Issue Number 3
January 2016
Alice Stevens, Editor

Notes from the President

I hope each of you had a great Holiday and I wish you all a Happy New Year!

Much is happening with NARFE and with us individually as retired federal employees. Getting new members is needed to stop the drop in membership that plagues NARFE as membership numbers continue to drop. Nebraska gained 14 new members last year. Region V grew by 267 new members. This number is not enough to maintain our chapters and the Nebraska Federation. Nationally the membership is over 225,000.

Will you join me in working to increase our numbers in Nebraska by 30 new members in 2016? Please take a look at the "Elevator Speech" in the newsletter taken from the NARFE Website at <http://www.narfe.org>. We need chapters to take Advocate Roles at the State and Federal level.

Urge your Representatives to Co-sponsor H.R. 711

Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, Kevin Brady, R-TX, has introduced legislation, the Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act of 2015 (H.R. 711), that would reduce the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) penalty for hundreds of thousands of federal retirees. A provision within Social Security law, the WEP, significantly reduces the Social Security benefits of local, state and federal retirees who worked in Social Security-covered employment and who also receive a government annuity.

H.R. 711 would not repeal the WEP, but would reduce the penalty by replacing the current formula with a fairer one for individuals turning age 62 after 2017. For individuals who turn(ed) 62 prior to 2017, H.R. 711 would reduce their WEP penalty by a certain percentage (no more than 50 percent) for future Social Security payments. That reduction would be determined by the Social Security actuary, and based on how much the bill saves through an additional provision that would require improved enforcement of the WEP for state and local government retirees.

Doris Carpenter, President Chapter 0199, alerted me to the need for us to work together to have Nebraska Unicameral exempt retired Federal Employees annuities from State taxation. **Presently, in Nebraska, Tier I and II RR benefits are exempt. SS for taxpayers with an adjusted gross income of \$58,000 or less for Married Filing Jointly, and \$43,000 or less for all others — are exempt from Nebraska's personal income tax beginning in 2015.** Nebraska is one of few that tax retired federal employee's annuity income.

You are needed at the Federation Conference in North Platte May 1, 2, & 3, 2016. Programs at the conference will address how Membership and Advocate roles needed in our chapters and the Nebraska Federation can happen.

If we cannot grow our membership and become stronger advocates with our congressional delegates at the federal and state level, we are limited in addressing the latest NARFE Strategic Plan.

Concerns I presently have with the Strategic Plan:

1. A professional director should be hired at \$200K +.
2. Chapter membership will become optional.
3. Federation funding may be reduced or eliminated.
4. One person one vote.

I have enjoyed visiting four chapters this month. I am impressed with the dedication shown and their fantastic meeting facilities.

See you in May.

Ron Moore
Federation President

Notes from the Vice President

I have been Federation Vice President for the year of 2015. During the year of 2015, I have attended all the meetings for the Federation Board, I also attended the Federation Convention in Columbus, Nebraska. I also attended CONC (College of NARFE Knowledge) in Sioux City, Iowa. During 2015, I have sent E-mails to our Representatives on Capitol Hill when asked by NARFE Headquarters, Heartbeat of America. I have also done whatever the President has asked. Also I have worked with the other chapters with their membership.

Pam Swanson
Federation Vice President

Notes from the Service Officer

During 2015, I volunteered 230 hours at the Retiree Activity Office at Offutt AFB as part of the NARFE Service Center network, we also had a table at the Retiree Day at the Exchange on base passing out about 500 magazines and other materials. I am always ready to answer questions pertaining to applying for retirement, changing address, reporting a death and filling out the paperwork. I also talked to a lot of military personnel about civil service after their discharge.

George Swanson
Federation Service Officer

Notes from the Legislative Chair

During the year of 2015 I have been in contact with all of Nebraska's Congressional office to let them know what issues were important to NARFE members both active employees and retirees. I also attended the town hall meetings they held. I receive updates on a regular basis from NARFE Headquarters online through daily media monitoring Legislative Hotline and from President Thissen. I have encouraged all members to be grassroots in their area and be in contact with their Senators and Representatives on the National level and with their State Representatives.

George Swanson
Federation Legislative Chair

Notes from the Alzheimer's Chairman

From May 1, 2015, through January 11, 2016, Nebraska Federation Chapters have donated \$3704.78 to NARFE Alzheimer's Research. Sincere thanks to every member who contributed to this commendable amount and to every chapter for their fundraising efforts.

Again this year all chapters are asked to donate a basket or item for the Alzheimer's Silent Auction at the Federation Convention being held on May 1-3, 2016, in North Platte, Nebraska.

The silent auction at the 2015 convention in Columbus, Nebraska, resulted in a grand total of \$425.00 for Alzheimer's research. It would be wonderful if we could exceed that amount at the next convention.

Kathy Wright
Federation Alzheimer's Coordinator

Notes from the District #1 Representative

My district of responsibility consists of three chapters: 199 in Lincoln, 144 and 1370 in Omaha. I attended the Chapter 144 meeting in July. Of course, being the chapter president, I have attended all Chapter 1370 meetings. I have yet to make it to any of Chapter 199's monthly meetings. I also participated in the fall Nebraska Executive Board meeting in Grand Island. I have had occasional phone contact with the district chapter presidents and several federation officers. While our federation might have an issue or two, there exists an open channel of communication to address these issues.

Chuck Skripsky
District #1 Representative

Notes from the District #2 Representative

District 2 includes Grand Island, Columbus, Norfolk, and Hastings. We are all working hard to recruit new members and to have meaningful and informative meetings. I visited each chapter in 2015 with the intent of encouraging and informing them of Federation activities. I want to encourage everyone to take part in NARFE activities.

Alice Stevens
District #2 Representative

Notes from the District #3 Representative

BIG ITEM

STATE NARFE CONVENTION IS MAY 1, 2, AND 3, 2016.

EVERYONE PLEASE MAKE PLANS TO BE THERE.

LOCATION: QUALITY INN, NORTH PLATTE.

The North Platte chapter is working hard on a good program for everyone. Hopefully everything will fall into place.

We plan on seeing everyone at the convention.

Roger Eggleston, Convention Chairman
District #3 Representative

Notes from Chapter 1902, Columbus

The survey that was conducted last fall indicated that we will keep our Chapter going for 2016. Bylaws were changed to only having 2 officers - President and Secretary-Treasurer. We will evaluate at the end of the year 2016 to see if our Chapter will continue. As of January 13, we have 54 members plus 3 National members. However, four members have been dropped or have been sent 2nd renewal notices. PLEASE renew your membership. You are very important to NARFE. You count to fight for our rights and benefits. There are changes being proposed to take away them or decrease them. SO, renew your membership. If you need help, contact Bob Voboril.

Chapter Meetings.....

All monthly meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of each month, except July, August, and November, at Columbus Family Resource Center (Old Behlen Hospital) at noon with a great meal (\$4.00). Call for a meal reservation at 402-563-4444 two days before meeting date.

January Meeting: Our speaker will be Nebraska Federation President, Ron Moore of Gering, Nebraska, on Thursday, January 29th. Call in your meal count on January 27th. Hope you can be present and welcome Ron to Columbus.

February Meeting: Speaker will be Joann Mancuso, coordinator for the Big Pals-Little Pals on February 25th. She will inform us on adult mentoring with youth from 6 to 19 years. Again, call for meal count on February 23

March Meeting: The topic is Gardening & Flowers on March 24th. Again, call for your meal on March 22nd.

April Meeting: Come on April 28th. No program but, a business meeting will be conducted with some important business. Call for meal on April 26th.

May Meeting: Report on Nebraska Federation convention at North Platte, Nebraska, on May 26th. Come to hear the Future of NARFE and business conducted. Meal count is on May 24th.

June Meeting: No program, but always important business to discuss on June 23rd. Call meal count on June 21st.

Our Secretary would like to have your E-mail, if you have one. There are many great messages given. Your e-mail will not be used only for NARFE. Notify Bob Voboril, rmvobor@megavision.com

Carroll Enzinger, President
President

Bob Voboril,
Secretary, Treasurer

Notes from Notes Chapter 144

Chapter 144 meets the first Wednesday of each month except January. We meet at the Amazing Pizza Machine, 139th and Millard Avenue with lunch at 11:00 followed by the meeting and the program speaker. We average attendance of 35 members and guests. We have lost around 100 members in the year of 2015, not to death, just didn't want to rejoin.

2015 Programs

January: No meeting

February: No meeting due to snow and no program.

March: Mr. Reinhardt, ENOA

April: Michaela Williams, Consultants Care

May: Retired Capt. David Mann, Fire Prevention

June: Convention report

July: Maggie Cope, Open Door Mission

August: Stacy Westbrook, South West Precinct OPD

September: Clayton Freeman, Alzheimer's Association

October: College of NARFE reports

November: Burke High School Swing Choir.

December: Kim Hauptman, Blue Cross/Blue Shield

Our chapter will be represented at the 2016 Convention and the 2016 National Convention. Everyone carries an application with them where ever they go and diligently call upon the second notice people.

Pam Swanson
President

Notes from Region V Vice President

January 2016, will soon be just another memory to add to our book of memories; but isn't it wonderful to be able to enjoy and reflect on what the future will bring.

I know your officers of the Nebraska Federation have been working to finalize the plans for the 2016 Convention which will be held in North Platte, Sunday (May 1) through Tuesday (May 3). You will be getting additional information from the officers soon giving you the new program they have been working on. I know they are hoping you will take advantage of their hard work by attending to get news on what is happening right now in NARFE, meet new friends and visit with old friends, and enjoying the comradery of you fellow NARFE members. Please plan to attend to learn firsthand what's happening in NARFE.

Some facts about Nebraska you may not know are:

The Nebraska Federal Family consists of: Employee Annuitants 10,549; Survivor Annuitants 3,026; Monthly Annuities (\$) 29,472; Active Federal Employees 9,679; U. S. Postal Service 4,584

There are 1,364 in Agriculture; 136 in Commerce; 4,064 in Defense; 74 in Justice; 36 in Labor; 21 in Energy; 1 in Education; 217 in Health and Human Services; 317 in Homeland Security; 29 in Housing and Urban Development; 410 in Dept. of Interior; 166 in Transportation; 74 in Treasury; 2,510 in Veterans Affairs of the total eligible to be members.

In other words 6.4% of you are working every day to protect the benefits of all of those eligible. As NARFE is the only organization whose entire effort is to protect these benefits; don't you believe everybody should become a member. I know how difficult it is to recruit these new members but this is the time to remain solvent, **WE NEED TO RETAIN THOSE MEMBERS WE HAVE AND TO RECRUIT NEW MEMBERS.**

In the 2015 114th Congress, with NARFE leading the way, we thwarted ALL attempts by Congress to cut the earned pay and benefits of federal employees and retirees; we successfully prevented a disproportionate and unfair increase in Medicare premiums; we supported efforts to protect TSP participants from receiving bad financial advice; we worked to keep NARFE members informed regarding the data breaches at the Office of Personnel Management (OPM); and, our media coverage reached new heights. Our Legislative team in National Headquarters is rated in the top 10 by the members of Congress on Capitol Hill. We are one of the GO TO legislative teams.

I wish I had the time and space to go into a lot more detail because this organization is important to every Federal Annuitant and Active Employed Federal Employee. Everyone is important and anyone, whether a present member or not, may attend the Federation Convention where all of this will be discussed. Discussions will be held both in person and from the National headquarters through SKYPE. Once again, plan to attend and bring a friend to learn more about what is taking place right now in your world.

Carol Ek
Region V Vice President

Federation Officers

-	
Ron Moore, President	308-632-3023
Pamela Swanson, Vice President	402-292-1156
Nancy Stenger, Secretary	402-834-0338
Janna Cornelius, Treasurer	308-379-0405
George Swanson, Service Officer	402-292-1156
Kathy Wright, Alzheimer's Chair	402-558-2677
Bob Voboril, Historian	402-564-3344
Charles Skripsky, District #1 Rep	402-342-4351 (for chapters 0144, 0199, 1370)
Alice Stevens, District #2 Rep	308-384-1634 (for chapters 0362, 1239, 1509, 1902)
Roger Eggleston, District #3 Rep	308-534-5966 (for chapters 1064, 1717, 2110)



PROTECT America's Heartbeat



NEBRASKA'S FEDERAL FAMILY

Employee Annuitants	10,549
Survivor Annuitants*	3,026
Total Annuitants on Roll*	13,575
Monthly Annuities (\$000s)*	29,472
Active Federal Employees**	9,679
U.S. Postal Service Employees***	4,584

Total Active and Retired
Federal and Postal Employees: 27,828

Nebraska's NARFE Community
NARFE Chapters: 10 NARFE Members: 1,594

Nebraska's Federal Employees

There are 1,364 in Agriculture; 136 in Commerce; 4,064 in Defense; 74 in Justice; 36 in Labor; 21 in Energy; 1 in Education; 217 in Health and Human Services; 317 in Homeland Security; 29 in Housing and Urban Development; 410 in Dept. of Interior; 166 in Transportation; 74 in Treasury; 2,510 in Veterans Affairs of the total eligible to be members.

NE Elected Officials for Fed Pres
Legislative Action Center

<http://cqrcengage.com/narfe/app/lookup?10&m=43217&lookupinput=69341-1568>

Find Your Elected Officials: Congress, Governor and State Legislators use: http://cqrcengage.com/narfe/State_Advocacy

Federal



[Barack Obama](#) President



[Joseph Biden](#) Vice President



[Benjamin Sasse](#) Senator Republican



[Deb Fischer](#) Senator Republican



[Adrian Smith](#) Rep. Republican_NE-03

State or Territory



[Pete Ricketts](#) Governor Republican



[Mike Foley](#) Lieutenant Governor Republican



[John Stinner](#) State Senator No Party_NE-S048



[Doug Peterson](#) State Attorney General Republican

<http://openstates.org/ne/legislators/NE100083/john-stinner/>



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