

The Heartbeat of the Nebraska Federation

Issue Number 12

Fall 2018

Alice Stevens, Editor

Notes from the Region V Vice President

It's the time of witches and werewolves so do have a very fun and bewitching Halloween.

Right now, NARFE is in a very interesting transition time to a new National Executive Board. We have a new National President, Ken Thomas; a new Secretary/Treasurer Kathleen Hemsley; a new Region I, Region II, Region IV, and Region V Vice President. Cindy Renee` Blythe will be beginning her Region V tenure on November 1. Half of our National Executive Board members will be new so it will be a learning curve for them and a time to watch what might be a interesting time for all of us until they get up to speed.

I want all of you to know that I have had a marvelous 7 years representing you with the National Office and I want to thank every one of you for your patience when I might have not been as fast to respond to your concerns; but most of all for your hospitality and friendship through these years. I could not have done my job without you.

The cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for 2019 was released this morning. CSRS retirees and Social Security recipients will receive a 2.8 percent in their benefits next year. Because the COLA was greater than 2 percent but less than 3 percent, FERS retirees will see a 2 percent increase in their annuities next year. This is very good news for all of us. Of course, we don't know what Medicare costs will be as they have not been announced yet. Let's only hope that we will get the keep some of this increase in our pockets.

I have been traveling the seven (7) federations during the past three weeks and find everyone encouraged about the future of NARFE and the new conference style annual meetings that we will be holding. There has never been a more important time for all of you to remain steadfast with your support; and, to ask new members to join our ranks as new members and with contacts to your Congressmen. Our Legislative office is ranked # 10 on the hill; but, they need our local grassroots contacts to keep our benefits.

There is a lot of optimism in the air and I hope every one of you will join that enthusiasm and help your federation officers in positions where needed. Contact your officers to let them know how you help them serve your local members.

Carol R. Ek
Region V Vice President

Notes from the Region V Vice President Elect

For the past several weeks, I've had the pleasure of viewing the beautiful scenery that is Region V. I've been attending Executive Board meetings around Region V with Carol; trying to learn the ropes. Everyone has been very welcoming. The more I travel the more I look forward to embarking on this new stage of my NARFE career.

The first National Executive Board (NEB) meeting that I will be attending is scheduled for November 28-30. We all know that Ken Thomas was elected as our National President. I am looking forward to this opportunity to represent all of the members in Region V.

Now would be the perfect time for you to let me know what issues you want me to address with the NEB. Remember that Region V issues may be shared with other regions and that best practices are often a result of try and try again. We only learn from making mistakes and discussing our results with others.

Since the change from conventions to conferences is in full swing, I will be asking those federations that switched in 2017 what type of program they used and how it was received by their membership attending. This is a good move for NARFE and Region V.

I'm looking forward to attending all the Region V conferences and meeting new people!

Cindy Blythe
Region V Vice President Elect

Notes from the Federation President

I hope you all had a great summer. Personally, it went to fast for me. My summers highlight was attending FEDCON 18 in Jacksonville Florida representing the Nebraska Federation. I want you all to know that the National Office has a strong staff of professional employees dedicated to helping active and retired federal employees. Membership into NARFE increases the opportunities. We have a strong Advocacy Department willing to help and work with you. I challenge you to go on the NARFE website and click on the Legislative Action Center icon. The Advocacy Department is willing to assist you in any legislative issue you would like to address at the federal or state level.

I was impressed with the marketing efforts that the national office is working to improve and market NARFE's image. They are working on implementing a NARFE app for the I-phone or android phone.

I attended the session on chapter support: It was made clear that with the optional membership model we need to strengthen our chapters to answer the following two questions: Is the chapter program relevant to me? Am I getting or receiving value for the dues paid?

I hope all chapters have or are changing their bylaws to reflect the one member-one vote the Federation approved last May. That refers to your articles pertaining to "Convention Delegates." Nancy Stenger sent out for your consideration a draft bylaw template.

The Nebraska Federation is here to help all NARFE members and the remaining chapters active here in Nebraska.

Chapters need to reach out and identify a meeting time and place that attracts NARFE members. Chapters need to define their purpose. Is there an opportunity to vary time and location to attract a greater number

of members to our meetings? Is there an opportunity to hold joint meetings with nearby chapters for training workshops or webinars?

Take a look at our Federation website at nebraskanarfe.org. We need your help in posting chapter minutes as well.

We have a lot of work ahead of us. The Nebraska Federation needs your support and ideas in strengthening chapters and the federation. Please feel free to contact me by email rmoore6@charter.net. Or phone at (308) 672-3626.

Ronald W. Moore
Federation President

Notes from the Vice President

GOOD NEWS! The 2019 cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) annuities and Social Security benefits will be 2.8 percent. The cost-of-living (COLA) for retirees under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) will receive a 2 percent COLA.

Alice Stevens
Federation Vice President

Notes from the Federation Secretary

The Nebraska Federation website -- nebraskanarfe.org -- is set up to provide information to Nebraska members -- current and hopefully future members. If the chapter sends me the meeting minutes and/or newsletters I will create a page for the chapter. The minutes and/or newsletters may be sent via email or snail-mail. Please contact me if any member has a question, a suggestion for content or if there is a broken link. I will be working on the History page and also creating a page for Alzheimer's in the near future.
zinger.stenger@yahoo.com

Notes from the Federation Service Officer

The 2018 Federal Benefits Open Season will run from: November 12–December 10, 2018.

Visit the 2018 Federal Benefits Open Season Toolbox:
<https://vaww.va.gov/OHRM/Benefits/OpenSeason/>

Change your FEHB online at: <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>

Dawn Ennis | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Employee Benefits Specialist | Nebraska-Western Iowa Health Care System

4101 Woolworth Ave, Omaha, NE 68105 | office: 402-995-5516

E-mail: Dawn.Ennis@va.gov

Hours of operation: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:00am-3:00pm. Wednesday 9:00am-12:00noon, or by appointment.

George Swanson
Federation Service Officer

Notes from the District #3 Representative

Greetings from Western Nebraska

Chapter 2110 has been making strides in attracting new members. At the September meeting they had several non-members attend with at least 2 joining. Four of the chapter members participated in the Alzheimer's Walk in North Platte on September 23. The Chapter is also hosting a BCBS informational meetings on October 22, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. Central Time.

On October 16, 2018, I had the pleasure of attending the Chapter 1064 (Panhandle) annual meeting. There were several items of discussion which included Advocacy, Chapter Membership growth, the importance of the Service Officer and the upcoming NARFE mobile app. It was stressed that letting people know what we (NARFE) is about is important for membership growth. Also, doing this "face-to-face" is more effective than sending out letters.

NARFE headquarters staff work diligently to protect, and to change for the better, the benefits for federal employees, both retired and active. They need the assistance of the "feet on the ground" members (you and me) to support those efforts.



NARFE Chapter 2110 participated in the annual Alzheimer's walk at Cody Park in North Platte on September 23, 2018. Pictured left to right are Carol Wilson, Sharon Riley, Mickey Aden, and Barbara Allen.

Beth Fries
District #3 Representative

Federation Officers

Ron Moore, President	308-632-3023
Alice Stevens, Vice President	308-384-1634
Nancy Stenger, Secretary	402-834-0338
Janna Cornelius, Treasurer	308-379-0405
George Swanson, Service Officer	402-292-1156
Bob Voboril, Alzheimer's Chair	402-564-3344
Bob Voboril, Historian	402-564-3344
Pam Swanson, PAC Coordinator	402-292-1156
Arthur Christianson, District #1 Rep	402-421-8494 (for chapters 0144, 0199, 1370)
Dennis Kamprath, District #2 Rep	308-384-3294 (for chapters 0366, 1509)

Beth Fries, District #3 Rep

308-539-1672 (for chapters 1064, 1717, 2110)