

**NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES
SAN FRANCISCO
CHAPTER 65
SENTINEL**

HERMAN BRACEY, EDITOR

Meets 3rd Wednesday each month, Odd Fellows Hall, 26 – 7th Street, near Market, SF

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JANUARY 2007 NEWSLETTER

**OUR NEXT MEETING IS ON JANUARY 17, 2007 AT THE ODD FELLOWS HALL, 26 7TH ST, SF
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 10:30 AM; MEMBERSHIP MEETING 1:00 PM 6th FLOOR
SOCIAL HOUR, DOUGHNUTS AND COFFEE, BINGO 11:30 AM
CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

JAN 17 REGULAR MEETING
MAR 16 DISTRICT V MEETING 3 FLAMES RESTAURANT SAN JOSE, CA
MAY 18-20 CSFC STATE CONVENTION COSTA MESA, CA.

PRESIDENT: JANE RAMOS, 875 SANCHEZ ST., SF, CA. 94114; 826-3337 chilberg@ix.netcom.com

GREETINGS AND CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL CHAPTER MEMBERS WITH BIRTHDAYS AND/OR ANNIVERSARIES IN JANUARY... It was wonderful to see all the Chapter 65 members who attended our annual holiday luncheon at CAESAR'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT. As ever, the food was delicious and the ambience typically "San Francisco" and friendly. Mixed in among many of the usual attendees were quite a few first-timers whom names I was not swift enough to take down. However, we were pleased they came out to join in the festivities and hopefully they will join us in other chapter activities.

Dorothy Traver, our secretary for many years, was able to come even though she has been "housebound" for the past two years. **Judy Lynn, CSFC District V Vice President** installed our new 2007 officers: **President – Jane Ramos, 1st Vice President – Frances Chan, 2nd Vice President – Beatrice Bertwell, Secretary – Martha Raup, and Treasurer – Jesus Ramos.** She also presented Herman Bracey, our past President, and longtime Chapter 65 newsletter editor, with an award/ certificate of appreciation for all of his many hours and years of work and efforts for Chapter 65. It would be hard to give Herman an award that would truly recognize all he's done for our Chapter. Many, many, thanks Herman from all of us in Chapter 65! The luncheon concluded with the awarding of lots of door prizes. Five of the prizes awarded were books of raffle tickets for the upcoming CSFC Convention in Costa Mesa. Who knows, the winning ticket for the top prize of \$2007 could very possibly be among those given away.

This coming year also holds many new possibilities: **First**, we now have a very supportive friend in the House with Steny Hoyer as the Majority Leader. NARFE's legislative priorities will have a better chance of getting a hearing. **Secondly**, since the new Federal Building will be opening up this year at 7th and Mission, the Chapter should be able to entice a few current employees into the noon time social hour on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. They'll be able to pick up information on NARFE and find out how we can help in their retirement planning. If you haven't seen the new building, you might find it worth the trip to a Chapter meeting just to see the new building -- it's quite architecturally interesting and innovative. **Third**, We'll soon have a new Chapter 65 website, thanks to Martha Raup, our secretary, who has been working on developing this website for the past several months. This will be a place on the internet where you will soon be able to easily check to see "what's doing" in the Chapter. -- It promises to be a great website.

ALZHEIMER'S: JESSE RAMOS, 875 SANCHEZ ST., SF, CA. 94114; 826-3337

Let's do our best this year to help those who are now struggling with the effects of Alzheimer's disease by contributing generously to the Alzheimer's Association. Your donation can help in two ways: It can be used to support a broad range of programs and direct services to northern Californians with Alzheimer's, their families and caregivers; or your donation can be used to support Alzheimer's research. Rest assured that whichever option you choose to support, your donation will help in the struggle against Alzheimer's disease.

If you wish your contribution to be used to support programs and services to individuals and families coping with Alzheimer's disease, please make your donation check payable to "Alzheimer's Association". On the other hand, if you wish your contribution to be used solely to support Alzheimer's research, please make your check payable to "NARFE-Alzheimer's Research". To ensure that your contribution is correctly acknowledged as coming from a NARFE Chapter 65 member, write "NARFE-Chapter 65" in the memo section of your check. Mail your contributions to me at the above address; I'll then forward your donations to the Alzheimer's Association.

Jesus Ramos

SUNSHINE: MARY TAYLOR, 661-1476

We offer our prayers and condolences to the families of **Vincent R Hugli, and Richard A Lewis.**

MEMBERSHIP: HERMAN BRACEY, 651 COLE ST APT 2, SF, CA. 94117; 668-2337

WELCOME: Rodney App, Lizeth Canales, Diane Cantua, Leonida Gementere, Max Kurtz, Carmen Sales, Mary T Sandstrom, and Nahid Zoueshtiagh.

“HAVE A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!”

NARFE – CHAPTER 65
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JANUARY 2007

Remember....RECRUITING is everyone's job!!

NATIONAL WEB SITE: (<http://www.narfe.org>) CSFC WEB SITE: (<http://www.csfcnarfe.org>)

NARFE DUES: Currently National Dues are \$29.00 and Chapter 65 Dues are \$8.00 annually. Mail check for the full \$37.00, along with your DUES RENEWAL NOTICE, to NARFE, Membership Services, 606 Washington St, Alexandria, Va. 22314-1914.

SERVICE OFFICER: DAVID GARCIA 510 235-7750

Important numbers: OPM 1-888-767-6738 (Administrative Problems); NARFE 1-800-456-8410 (Membership Problems); SOCIAL SECURITY 1-800-772-1213 (Life Cycle Problems); LTC 1-800 582-3337 (For Applications and Information Kits); OPM Toll Number 1-724-794-5216.Senate

Republican Leader Announces Plans to Oppose Negotiating Drug Prices: Rep. John Dingell (D-MI) said last week that he will move to force the Bush administration to negotiate Medicare drug prices when he takes over in January as Chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee. Such a move would go beyond earlier efforts by Democrats in the Senate to allow the government to negotiate lower drug prices. Democrats say that if Medicare negotiated prices in bulk, it could save as much as \$60 billion over 10 years, but Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the incoming Senate Republican leader, says he will oppose proposals allowing Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices.

Eighty-five percent of the 1,867 adults polled in the Kaiser Family Foundation survey released December 8th said they favored such negotiations, including majorities of Republicans, Democrats and Independents. "Senator McConnell is going against what the public clearly wants," said Edward Coyle, Executive Director of the Alliance. House Democrats will likely take the middle ground on the Medicare drug benefit, pushing for government-negotiated prices but stopping short of creating a federal Medicare plan to compete with private insurers, Rep. Pete Stark (D-CA), in line to chair the House Ways and Means Committee's health subcommittee, said on Monday. He said he felt that a government-run plan would save money but is too ambitious for immediate action. Stark said he also wanted to reduce the number of private plans available to seniors. There are currently 40 or more plans operating in many markets; Stark would like to reduce that number to 15 or 20. *As reported from the ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICAN*

LEGISLATION: BEATRICE BERTWELL, 650 754-9962

Medicare Part B premiums will be linked to income, or "means tested," for the first time starting in January 2007. Currently beneficiaries pay 25 percent of the Part B premium, or \$88.50 a month, in 2006. In 2007, the Part B premium will increase 5.6 percent, to a base level of \$93.50 per month. However, in the New Year individuals with an annual income of more than \$80,000 (or \$160,000 for married couples) will pay more. "Annual income" for purposes of calculating the Part B premium will be the Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) on one's tax return from two years prior. For instance, in order to calculate an individual's Part B premium for 2007 the MAGI from his/her 2005 tax return will be used.

Means testing of the Part B premium was adopted as a provision of the controversial 2003 Medicare Modernization Act. NARFE opposed this provision, believing that it sets a dangerous precedent for linking other health insurance premiums to income and gives future Congresses an opportunity to alter income thresholds so that an increasing number of beneficiaries may be affected. I believe means testing of Medicare premiums may be a slippery slope where the public comes to think of Medicare as a welfare program primarily for the poor rather than a government service for everyone.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: HERMAN BRACEY 668-2337

I would like to apologize to our members for the incorrect information concerning Valet Parking at Caesar's Restaurant in the past two newsletters. I assumed the rate had not changed because no one told me otherwise. You can be sure I will check it out personally in the future.

For 2007, some of our younger members have accepted the responsibility of office and I feel very encouraged. We are starting to get better organized but we still need more participation from the membership. The attendance at our monthly meetings leaves much to be desired. This past year we tried having more entertainment at the meetings and it didn't seem to have any affect on attendance. We are open to your suggestions on what we can do to revitalize Chapter 65.

We are getting more and more members online and Martha Raup has come forward to create a web site for our Chapter. So we are moving into the Internet. In that vein, I am the NARFENET coordinator for Chapter 65 and never got around to getting all our members into the my computer so we could respond to the Action Alerts that come from Headquarters from time to time. I promise to do better this year but we still need more hands and more bodies.