

NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER 65

**SENTINEL**

HERMAN BRACEY, EDITOR

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

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826-3337

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771-7892

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650 754-9962

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239-8702

**SUNSHINE**

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661-1476

**ALZHEIMER'S**

Jess Ramos  
826-3337

**TELEPHONE**

DorisMarie Hagopian  
776-5199

**BINGO TRES**

Joseph Smith  
650 755 -8261

**WEBMASTERS**

Dianne Joseph  
Martha Raup  
334-6380

**IMM PAST PRES**

Herman Bracey

**Sen Barbara Boxer**

Senate Office Bldg  
Wash DC 20510  
Phone 1 202 224 3553  
1700 Montgomery St  
SF Ca 94111  
Phone 415 403- 0100

**Sen Dianne Feinstein**

Senate Office Bldg  
Wash DC 20510  
Phone 1 202 224 3841  
1 Post St Ste 2450  
SF Ca 94104  
Phone 415 393-0707

**Cong Nancy Pelosi**

House Office Bldg  
Wash DC 20515  
Phone 1 202 225 4965  
450 Golden Gate Ave  
SF Ca 94102  
Phone 415 556-4862

**Cong Tom Lantos**

House Office Bldg  
Wash DC 20515  
Phone 1 202 225 3531  
400 S El Camino Real  
San Mateo Ca 94402  
Phone 650 566-5257

**NARFE Hot Line**

Ph 1 866-220-0044  
White House  
Ph 1 202 234 1111  
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Ph 1 800 839-5276

**MARCH 2007 NEWSLETTER**

**OUR NEXT MEETING IS ON MARCH 21, 2007 AT THE ODD FELLOWS HALL, 26 7TH ST, SF  
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 10:30 AM; MEMBERSHIP MEETING 1:00 PM 6<sup>th</sup> FLOOR  
SOCIAL HOUR, DOUGHNUTS AND COFFEE, BINGO 11:30 AM**

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**MAR 16 DISTRICT V MEETING 3 FLAMES RESTAURANT SAN JOSE, CA  
MAR 21 SOLOIST MICHELLE WANG/ST PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATION  
APR 18 TBA  
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 MARCH...** Our Chapter officers hope that as many members of Chapter 65 as possible can and will attend the District V Annual Meeting at the Three Flames restaurant in San Jose on March 16. There will be a small contingent of Chapter 65 members attending, and we would all welcome any member who'd like to join us. Why not make a day of it, and learn a bit more about NARFE? The price has been reduced to \$15 for a lunch of either Sautéed Chicken Breast or Corned Beef and Cabbage with all the trimmings. Call me for details. The deadline is March 1.

And you still have time to register for the California Biennial Convention in Costa Mesa May 18-20, 2007. We must register you before March 19 and send in a \$10 registration fee (paid by the Chapter.) Please seriously consider being a delegate. NARFE needs input from its members --- and that means you.

We received a video from the Federal Long Term Care Insurance program recently. It's only 17 minutes long and gives an overview of the program. If you want a copy of your own, you can get one (free) by calling 1-800-582-3337.

The New York Times is doing a series of articles on the contracting out of federal jobs. The first one was published on February 4, 2007 and was very informative. It states: "Without a public debate or formal policy decision, contractors have become a virtual fourth branch of government." What does this mean to you as a federal retiree or employee? Do you think that the job you performed for the government could or should be done by a contractor? Why not join us or a discussion of these issues. Is there anything that can or should be done about it? Should this become an issue for NARFE?

We'll usher in spring at our March meeting on the 21st. It's also our St. Patrick's Day celebration and an interesting program is planned by our Program Chair, Betty Clark. Join us if you can. Guests are welcome, too. The More the Merrier!

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

This month, the Chapter wishes to publicly thank and acknowledge the generous donation to the Alzheimer's Association from members Garry Kataoka (who continues to make monthly donations to the Association) and Herman Bracey.

As I mention in every newsletter, 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 donation 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.

**SUNSHINE: MARY TAYLOR, 661-1476**

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

**WELCOME: Gib Sims, Patricia Golembiewski, and Virginia Thomsen Lee.**

**CHAPTER 65 WEB SITE: (www.narfe65.org)**

As a direct result of the time, effort, and expertise applied by Martha Raup and Dianne Joseph, we are pleased to announce that Chapter 65 now has its own web site. Martha and Dianne have done a wonderful job and the web site looks just great. One of our members who checked it out remarked, "Now we are somebody." All I can say is, Thank You, Thank You for a job well done.

NARFE - CHAPTER 65  
651 COLE STREET APT 2  
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MARCH 2007

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

**NATIONAL WEB SITE:** (<http://www.narfe.org>); **CSFC WEB SITE:** (<http://www.csfcnarfe.org>); **CHAPTER 65 WEB SITE:** (<http://www.narfe65.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.

**LEGISLATION: BEATRICE BERTWELL, 650 754-9962**

On Friday, December 16th, Rep. Tom Davis (R-VA) introduced legislation, H.R. 1110, to allow civilian and military retirees and active duty military to pay their government health care premiums with pre-tax dollars, in other words, premium conversion. Premium Conversion would provide the typical Federal retiree with hundreds of dollars in annual tax savings. Davis, who saw his identical bill in the 109th Congress die, despite gathering 340 cosponsors, introduced his 110th Congress legislation with a prominent bipartisan cast of original cosponsors that does not yet include our Representatives from the Bay Area. On the GPO/WEP side of things, Senate Bill 206 now has increased its co-sponsorship to 15 while H.R. 82 has gone from three to 221 cosponsors unfortunately still not including Pelosi.

Our President, Jane Ramos was able to schedule a meeting with Nicole Rivera of Speaker Pelosi's staff for March 1st at 11 a.m. Nicole Rivera's area of responsibility is Federal employee affairs and she is, happily, interested in learning more about NARFE. We'll bring NARFE material and talk about GPO and WEP. It would also be a good idea to review the talking points on the NARFE website about this before going. The original plan was to present Speaker Pelosi with a Gift Membership to Chapter 65. Unfortunately, we won't be able to carry out our plan because of the new ethics rules on gifts to Congresspersons. We will meet in the second floor cafeteria at 10:30 AM.

**TREASURER'S REPORT: JESSE RAMOS 826-3337**

<b>Balance forward</b>	<b>\$3,730.78</b>
Income	\$ 985.30
Expenses	<u>\$1,136.38</u>

**Balance at 1/31/07        \$3,579.70**

**PROGRAM: BETTY CLARK, 239-8702**

Today at our meeting we were introduced to the Hearing Dogs Program by Gwyen Martin of the San Francisco SPCA. These Hearing Dogs are specially trained to respond to any number of sounds, phones, doorbells, smoke alarms etc to assist hearing impaired people. When they hear these particular sounds they get very excited and run back and forth from the object to their partners until the partner responds to the object, place from which the sound emanates. Mr. Martin was accompanied by his demo dog, Runner; is a Shih Tzu mix and a real darling. Everyone loved him as he was put through his paces.

The San Francisco SPCA initiated the Hearing Dog Program in July, 1978. The Hearing Dog concept, when applied to an Animal Shelter framework, has resulted in a unique and exciting combination, offering assistance to deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals, while at the same time, giving previously homeless animals a chance for useful lives of love and service. At present, the program places dogs with California and Nevada residents only. We have made over 645 placements and look forward to placing many more alert, hard-working canine partners.

Many deaf or hard-of-hearing people find that at some time they face the reality of missing important auditory signals -- crucial, possibly life-saving warnings that most hearing people take for granted. Particularly for those individuals who live alone or in households where there are no hearing people, it can be important that they be alerted to certain occurrences: a knock at the door, the buzz of a smoke detector or a fire alarm; the sound of a prowler. SF/SPCA Hearing Dogs can offer a practical alternative for many non-hearing people. SF/SPCA Hearing Dogs can be constant companions capable of responding to many different stimuli and alerting their guardians to important sounds.

To apply for a Hearing Dog a person should have a serious hearing loss and be 18 years or older. However, we will place a dog with a younger person on an individual case-by-case basis. Applicants are asked to return their applications together with a \$20 application fee. An in-depth interview is conducted with each applicant in their home. The interview is necessary so that we can learn as much as possible about an applicant's lifestyle and family environment. If you are interested the number to call is: **(415) 554- 3020 or (415) 554-3022 (TTY)**