

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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APRIL 2007 NEWSLETTER

**OUR NEXT MEETING IS ON APRIL 18, 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**

**APR 18 REGULAR MEETING (PROGRAM TBA)
MAY 16 REGULAR MEETING (PROGRAM 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 APRIL... As planned, we met with Speaker Nancy Pelosi's aides at the Federal Building on Golden Gate on March 1st. A group of eight of us talked with Nicole Rivera, Field Representative/ Caseworker and Mejgan Ali Afshan, Staff Assistant. Even though they were unable to assure us that Speaker Pelosi would cosponsor **H.R. 82 and H.R. 1110**, we felt that we got a fair hearing. NARFE's position is that receiving a federal retirement annuity should not affect the social security benefits to which he/she would be otherwise entitled. The GPO hits widows unfairly hard, and the 'W' in WEP can hardly be described as a "windfall."

Both Nicole and Mejgan were very knowledgeable and receptive to our views. We felt that we established a good solid relationship that will give us an opportunity to present more ideas and, in the future, obtain support for NARFE. Many thanks to Herman Bracey, DorisMarie Hagopian, Beatrice Bertwell, Dave Garcia, Fran Chan, Martha Raup, and Jesse Ramos for taking the morning to visit the Speaker's office!!

The new Federal Building at Mission and 7th has its first occupants! We're definitely hoping that some of the federal employees there will stop by for a visit to pick up NARFE materials during our social hour. You may have noticed that there have been quite a few articles in the papers about the style of the building. It's a unique design which includes "green" components, making it very energy efficient.

Chapter 65 needs volunteers to be on hand to greet potential members from the new federal building. If you like to meet people, here's your opportunity to practice your salesmanship skills. And please bring along some old copies of the NARFE magazine to distribute, perhaps in our meeting room or outside on the sidewalk to passing "Feds." We need your help. Guests are always welcome!

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

The Chapter wishes to publicly thank and acknowledge the generous donation to the Alzheimer's Association research efforts from Chapter 65 member Euphemia Felicitas. Her contribution will help to sustain the research efforts of the dedicated scientists across the country who are searching for a cure for Alzheimer's disease.

Raising funds for research and for support programs and services for individuals and families coping with Alzheimer's disease must continue. It is a disease that afflicts mostly seniors, very often at a time when the afflicted and their families are least able to cope with the effects of the disease. If you feel you can make a donation to the Alzheimer's Association, you can direct your donation to support programs and services to individuals with the disease and their caregivers. If this is the case, make your donation check payable to the "Alzheimer's Association". On the other hand if you wish your donation to be used solely to support research efforts into finding a cure for Alzheimer's disease, please make your donation check payable to "NARFE- Alzheimer's Research". In both cases, to simplify tracking the contributions from Chapter 65 members, 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 donation to the Alzheimer's Association.

SUNSHINE: MARY TAYLOR, 661-1476

Our Condolences go out to the families of **Ann L Blaser, George W Newman, and Earnest L Tunson.**

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

A warm **WELCOME** to **Helen A Black, Jonetta K Hines, Helen P Hope, Clotid J Jobe, Olive A Leininger, Robert B Welch, Everet V Willcox, and Olive L Wong.**

NARFE – CHAPTER 65
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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 March 8, 2007, **Senators John Warner (R-VA) and Jim Webb (D-VA)** and five original bipartisan cosponsors, including Senators John D. Rockefeller IV (D-WV), Olympia Snowe (R-ME), Susan Collins (R-ME), Trent Lott (R-MS), and John Sununu (R-NH), introduced legislation to allow Federal and military retirees to pay their health insurance premiums with pretax compensation. Rockefeller, Snowe, and Lott are members of the Senate Finance Committee, which has jurisdiction over the bill.

Senator Warner and Webb's bill (**S. 773**) would amend the tax code to allow Federal civilian and military retirees, as well as active duty military employees, to pay their health insurance premiums on a pretax basis as active Federal civilian employees can already do. Rep. Tom Davis (R-VA) introduced the House version of the bill, **H.R. 1110**, on February 16 with 28 bipartisan cosponsors.

"Federal and military retirees lose ground every year health insurance premiums skyrocket," NARFE President Margaret L. Baptiste said. "The Premium Conversion legislation that Senators Warner and Webb and Rep. Tom Davis have sponsored would help retirees and survivors living on fixed incomes keep pace with rising health insurance costs." **S. 773 and H.R. 1110** are supported by the Military Coalition, a group of 35 military, veterans, and uniformed services organizations, and most organizations which represent Federal and postal workers and annuitants. "Many federal employees don't even know they enjoy an average tax savings of about **\$820** a year because Premium Conversion is an automatic benefit handled by their employing agency. In fact, they may not know they have it until it is gone when they retire," Baptiste added. "That's why Federal workers who will want premium conversion in the future -- when they'll need it the most -- should be fighting for it now by helping us support this important legislation."

ANNUAL DISTRICT V MEETING: Eight members of Chapter 65 [Herman Bracey, Beatrice Bertwell, Dave Garcia, Fran Chan, Martha Raup, Dianne Joseph, Jane Ramos, and Jesse Ramos} found their way to the Three Flames Restaurant in San Jose for the Annual CSFC District V Luncheon on Friday March 16 sponsored by District V Vice President, Judy Lynn.

Our first speaker was **Forney Lundy, Region VIII National Field Vice President** who presented us with the latest available membership data: NARFE membership now stands at 341,814 of that total 21,144 are Current Federal Employees, and 59,000 are on Dues Withholding. In California, we have 31,647 members with 2,012 Current Federal Employees and 5,000 on Dues withholding. Thanks to OPM's semiannual mailings, we are doing a better in the recruiting area but overall membership is still declining though at a much slower rate. We must do a **better job at retention**

H Ray Harrington, CSFC Vice President was our next speaker and he spoke on the Legislative Training Conference held on March 3-6 2007. **CSFC President Helen Zajac, CSFC National Legislation Chair Lee Zajac**, five other members, and H Ray made the trip from California. After two days of training, March 6, was lobby day and the delegation divided into two teams and headed to meet with our elected official. He said they actually hit the offices of all our congress members and actually talked with Rep Sam Farr and Rep Tom Lantos. We should contact Rep Lantos and thank him for being a cosponsor of **H.R. 82** (repeals GPO/WEP) Also, we should contact Senator Dianne Feinstein and thank her for introducing **S. 206** (repeals GPO/WEP) and thank Senator Barbara Boxer for being a cosponsor.

A true assessment of our chances to get either of our legislative priorities passed is not very favorable, even with the change of parties in the congress, given the country's current unhealthy financial condition. Of the two priorities, it's thought Premium Conversion (**H.R. 1110 & S. 773**) has the best chance since Congress has adopted a revenue neutral position and its projected to cost \$12 billion over ten years and .

TREASURER'S REPORT: JESSE RAMOS 826-3337

Balance forward	\$3,579.70
Income	\$ 381.96
Expenses	<u>\$ 489.47</u>
Balance at 2/28/07	\$3,472.19