

NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES
SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER 65
SENTINEL

HERMAN BRACEY, EDITOR

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**JUNE 2013 NEWSLETTER
NO MEETING THIS MONTH
SEE YOU AT THE HARD KNOX CAFÉ FOR LUNCH
AT 12:00 PM AT 2448 CLEMENT STREET**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUN 19 LUNCH AT HARD KNOX CAFÉ - 2448 CLEMENT ST (NEAR 25TH AVE)
JUL 17 ANN LINSAY, DEPT LABOR BENEFITS OFFICER - PREPARING FOR RETIREMENT
AUG 21 STAFF MEMBER FROM CONGRESSWOMAN NANCY PELOSI'S OFFICE

PRESIDENT: JERRY HALL, 229 De Montfort Ave, SF, CA 94112, 412-0488, fritz1313@hotmail.com

GREETINGS AND CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL CHAPTER MEMBERS WITH BIRTHDAYS AND/OR ANNIVERSARIES IN JUNE... I would like to report to you about the NARFE California Federation convention in Sacramento earlier this month. But first, I want to thank those members from our chapter who attended the convention to represent you at the convention. Martha Raup, Dianne Joseph, and Maryann Swazo, and I attended the convention on your behalf. I am most appreciative of Martha, Dianne, and Maryann's efforts. They actively participated and represented our San Francisco Chapter throughout the two day convention.

Again we learned that membership in NARFE is declining both nationally and in California. Unless we all take responsibility for recruiting and retaining members, we cannot expect membership to be constant or to grow. At a time when federal benefits are an easy target for those who do not value federal service and the sacrifices of federal workers, we must have a strong and growing membership if we expect congress to listen. If our membership continues to drop and members do not speak up, Congress will merely conclude that federal workers and retirees are satisfied with the proposed cuts they are considering.

We were fortunate to have Congressman Ami Bera, Sacramento District 7, speak to the convention. His message of the importance of public service, serving our communities, working for the common good, resonated with the attendees. He indicated that he strongly believes in role of government to benefit the community and build the middle class. He stated he valued and appreciated the many contributions of Federal workers and retirees.

National President Joseph Beaudoin gave the keynote speech, continuing to voice his position that federal workers and retirees have contributed enough to help reduce the federal deficit and it is not appropriate for congress to extend pay freezes even longer. "Our nation's federal workers perform important jobs, and it is critical that the federal government offers salaries competitive with the private sector in order to keep the most qualified Americans working for our country. Getting our fiscal house in order will require tough decisions, but there are other solutions to reduce our deficit that do not rest solely on the backs of middle-class federal families. To date, federal employees' contributions to deficit reduction total \$103 billion and are continuing to rise. This is an average loss of over \$49,000 per federal employee." Additionally, he spoke against changing the COLA formula and basing it on the Chained-CPI which will severely reduce retirees' annuities." Making extreme cuts to pay and health and retirement benefits, or changing cost-of-living adjustment calculations, unfairly singles out those who protect our nation."

I did not add in last month's newsletter that besides visiting NARFE's website and sending emails to the congress or president, you can call the Capitol using NARFE's toll-free number 1-866-220-0044 and ask the operator to connect you to your representative's or senator's office. Moreover, you can call the White House at 1-888-225-8418, ask for the comment line and leave your message for the president. You can have your voice heard in Washington, but it requires that you make the effort to speak up for what is fair and right.

If you have not yet sent in your reservation and check for our June 19th luncheon, please do so by June 10th. If you misplaced your May newsletter with coupon and choices, you can get the May newsletter online at our NARFE65.org website by clicking on newsletters.

TREASURER'S REPORT: DIANNE JOSEPH, 179 CHILTON AVE, SF, CA 94131; 334-6380

Balance on 4/1/13	\$3,644.63
Income	\$ 317.53
Expenses	\$1,456.70
Balance on 4/30/13	\$2,505.46

(Please see the treasurer's report on our website, narfe65.org for a breakdown of income and expenses.)

SUNSHINE: EDITH HIGA, 566-7358

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the friends and family of **Ralph Selleck and Mitsuko Y Slater.**

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

THANK YOU to Dorothy Boccignone-Kara, Ann Nutt, Alma G Ramirez and Maudine Williams for reinstating their memberships.

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

CALIFORNIA STATE FEDERATION OF CHAPTERS:

The following NARFE members were elected as CSFC Officers for a two year term at the 4TH Biannual CSFC Convention held in Sacramento, CA by acclamation:

President – Richard Ostergren
Executive Vice President – Dee Shallenberger
Secretary – Ray Harrington
Treasurer – Forney Lundy

Also our own Chapter 65 President **Jerry Hall** was elected **District V Vice President.** He asks for your continued support and greater participation from all our members.

Visit **OUR CHAPTER 65 WEB SITE:** (<http://www.narfe65.org>) for more Chapter information, photos, archived newsletter, etc. **NATIONAL WEB SITE:** (<http://www.narfe.org>); **CSFC WEB SITE:** (<http://www.csfcnarfe.org>) **NARFE DUES:** Currently National Dues are \$40.00 and Chapter 65 Dues are \$8.00 annually. Mail check for the full \$48.00, along with your **DUES RENEWAL NOTICE, when you receive it,** to NARFE, Membership Services, 606 Washington St, Alexandria, Va. 22314-1914.

Information from: *Alliance for Retired Americans*

Fees for Medical Procedures Vary Inexplicably from Hospital to Hospital. There are often huge, discrepancies in fees hospitals charge for the same procedure. Count **Jonathan Blum**, Medicare's deputy administrator, among those who don't understand the logic the hospitals use to arrive at those fees.

"It doesn't make sense," Blum said when asked to explain the reason. He noted that the higher charges don't necessarily reflect better care. Even the American Hospital Association calls the current billing system, "complex and bewildering," says *USA Today*.

To bring some clarity to the pricing, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services published the costs for 100 common procedures at 3,337 hospitals (<http://www.cms.gov>). The government hopes publishing comparative costs will promote competition and lower prices, especially as the Affordable Care Act begins taking effect.

"Geographical location; the complexity of the ailment; the length of the hospital stay; and the cost of running a teaching hospital are all factors," said **Ruben Burks**, Secretary-Treasurer-of the Alliance. "But even if all the known factors are taken into account, the numbers are mystifying."