

**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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MAY 2007 NEWSLETTER

**OUR NEXT MEETING IS ON MAY 16, 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**

MAY 16 REGULAR MEETING
MAY 18-20 CSFC STATE CONVENTION COSTA MESA, CA.
JUN 20 REGULAR MEETING
JUL 18 SUMMER LUNCHEON AT CAESAR ITALIAN RESTAURANT

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 MAY...

Your Chapter officers have been busy this past month working to spread the NARFE word! Two delegates from Chapter 65, Fran Chan and David Garcia, will be going to the May 18-20 CSFC Convention in Costa Mesa, CA. We offer our many thanks to both of these Chapter members for volunteering their time, effort, and treasure. Chapter 65 is currently one of the larger chapters in the state and is entitled to a number of votes that goes with its size and therefore may have an impact on decisions made by the CSFC. Our delegates will be voting for new CSFC officers and on a number of resolutions proposed by Chapters and CSFC to improve and streamline our operations. Please think about volunteering to attend one of these conventions in the future. Any Chapter 65 member is eligible to be a delegate. Let us know of your interests!! You would meet NARFE members from all over California.

Herman Bracey, Joe Smith and I participated in two pre-retirement seminars at the Federal Building on Golden Gate Ave. in March. We were given a 10-15 minute time slot to talk about NARFE, its history and its future. We asked them to make becoming a member of NARFE a part of their retirement planning. National had supplied us with NARFE related literature and membership applications which were passed out to the seminar participants.

We are always looking for input from our Chapter members. What issues would you like to see discussed at our meetings? Health plans? Social Security? NARFE's legislative agenda? The contracting out of federal jobs? As you know, NARFE is also a service organization and we try to help you with your questions/problems, or, at the very least, point you in the right direction. You will notice that our newsletter now has a "**Members Speak Out**" feature. Send your comments, opinion pieces to our Editor, Herman Bracey. While NARFE is, and always has been, a non-partisan organization, some opinions will often be more closely aligned with one party or another. NARFE has always had solid friends on both sides of the isle in Congress. We need the support of all members of Congress to achieve our goals. Voice your opinion!

Two members, Fran Chan and Herman Bracey, will be present at the Public Service Recognition Week Luncheon which will honor the Federal Employee of the Year at the California Culinary Academy, on May 11. This will solidify, we hope, our connection to the Federal Executive Board, with the possibility of attending more venues to spread the NARFE word. Many thanks to Dianna Louie, Executive Director of the SF FEB and to Helen Zajac, President of California NARFE for letting us know about this event.

There is a good chance that we will hold a few of our monthly meetings in the new federal building next door on Mission and 7th. How would you feel about this? It would, of course, mean going through the normal metal detector protocol of federal buildings. But most people are getting accustomed to this by now, and I think that seeing the new building would make it worth the trouble. There are some rooms in the building which are available for community groups. Watch your newsletter for information on this. Finally, just a reminder that if you want to, you can always bring a "brown bag" lunch to our meetings.

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

The Chapter wishes this month to publicly thank and acknowledge the generous contributions of two of our members: John C. Fewlass's donation will enable the Alzheimer's Association to continue reaching out to individuals and families coping with the challenges of caring for someone with a progressive disease like dementia. June McAuliffe's donation will be used to support the research efforts of the Alzheimer's Association. If you feel you can afford to support the work of the Alzheimer's Association I urge you to do so; this is a disease that afflicts too many members of our generation.

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 the "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.

NARFE – CHAPTER 65
651 COLE STREET APT 2
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May 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

We thought it worthwhile to report here the comments of **CSFC National Legislation Chair, Lea Zajac** from a speech he gave earlier this year... As Helen and I travel throughout the state visiting chapters, we have often heard the comment from members, "What has NARFE done for us lately? -- we haven't gotten GPO/WEP or Premium Conversion passed". I have to remind them that **NARFE's number one priority has been, is today, and always will be, "to retain the benefits we already have"**. NARFE has done a good job at that -- we haven't lost any benefits for the past 12 years in spite of the fact that Congress has attempted to reduce some of our benefits during this period. In 2004, we dodged a \$38 Billion bullet, that if the Congressional Budget Committee had prevailed, would have reduced or eliminated some of our benefits, such as COLA's, the government's share of health care premiums, the computation of the current workers annuity, the survivor annuity percentage, etc.

NARFE's number two priority is to work on enhancing our benefits, which includes repeal of Government Pension Offset (GPO), Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and approving Premium Conversion (PC).

The basic reason for not getting GPO/WEP passed, aside from the federal budget deficit being about \$500 Billion and the war in Iraq, the cost of GPO/WEP repeal would be \$63 Billion over 10 years, and of the 42 million recipients of Social Security annuities, only about one million of the 42 million are affected by GPO/WEP. So it is a hard sell to ask Congress to spend \$63 Billion to support only one million annuitants. But, because it is so unfair to penalize those million annuitants, regardless of the cost, NARFE along with our friends in Congress, will continue the fight to repeal this unfair law in the 110th Congress.

Premium Conversion (PC), if passed would cost \$15 Billion over 10 years. PC would allow federal and military retirees to pay their health premiums with tax-free dollars. For example, if your annuity is \$20,000 per year and you pay \$2,000 per year in health premiums; you would pay income tax on \$18,000 instead of \$20,000. Depending on your tax bracket this would result in a savings of \$200 to \$400 per year. Current federal workers and Congress and their staff already have this benefit.

The basic reason this Bill did not pass in the 109th Congress was that Bill Thomas (R-CA), Chair of the Ways and Means Committee would not let this Bill out of Committee for a floor vote. Several visits were made by NARFE to Thomas' office in both Bakersfield and in Washington DC, and each time he held firm that the Bill was costly and it did not include Private Sector retirees. The good news is that Bill Thomas has retired and the new Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee for the 110th Congress is Charles B Rangel (D-NY). **(To be continued next month)**

MEMBERS SPEAK OUT: CHARLES MINISTER (415) 387-9545

The U.S. Government is now the #1 military power in the world. To maintain that standing it has launched an "endless war" in the Middle East that has already resulted in the deaths of over 3,200 U.S. GI's and the wounding of 25,000 and seen the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians with many women and children amongst them. The U.S. debt stands at \$8 + trillion with billions more in the chute. The U.S. military has built hundreds of bases in the Middle East and around the world to protect U.S. imperialist interests. Our civil liberties, pensions, health care and the future of our children and grandchildren are being shredded, wasted and threatened by these policies. More U.S. government workers are now under contract than under civil service protection. Housing and health care costs threaten to drive more and more people to the brink and divide the youth from the aged. The Democrats and Republicans are two peas in a pod and do not have interest in our present or future. NARFE faces a declining and disinterested membership because it concerns itself with narrow self-interest. We will not recruit more active and retired members with our head in the sand. We need to fight for our future as proud workers and that starts with the U.S. Out of the Middle East Now!

TREASURER'S REPORT: JESSE RAMOS 826-3337

Balance forward	\$3,472.19
Income	\$ 815.10
Expenses	<u>\$ 500.11</u>
Balance at 3/31/07	\$3,787.18

SUNSHINE: MARY TAYLOR, 661-1476

Our prayers and condolences go out to the families of **John P Leyden, Emily Ottoboni, Evodia P Meza, Ruth Trammell, and Harold B Ware.**

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

A warm WELCOME TO OUR LATEST MEMBERS: **Debra Bagnulo, John A Jackson, John L McGirr, Bernice M Smith, and Ralph Wentworth.** Chapter 65 also welcomes **Adele W Green** who transferred from another chapter.

Have you visited Chapter 65's new web site at
www.narfe65.org?