

NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES
SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER 65
SENTINEL

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FEBRUARY 2010 NEWSLETTER

**OUR NEXT MEETING IS ON FEBRUARY 17, 2010 AT FOB, 90 7TH ST.
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 10:30 AM; 11TH FLOOR RM 11010
GENERAL MEETING 1:00 PM - LOWER LEVEL - "RM B-120"**

PHOTO ID REQUIRED TO ENTER BUILDING.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEB 17 TENTATIVE PROGRAM ON FEDERAL TAXES/MEET YOUR SERVICE OFFICER
MAR 17 ST PATRICK DAY LUNCH AT SF STATE VISTA ROOM (\$15)
APR 21 PROGRAM ON TRAVEL AND TRAVEL OPTIONS
MAY 19 BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS - HOW CPI IS CURRENTLY COMPUTED
JUN 16 EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS
JUL 21 SUMMER LUNCHEON AT THE CAFE BELLA VENEZIA (at Post/Jones)
AUG 29-SEP 2 NARFE 31ST BIENNIAL NATIONAL CONVENTION, GRAND RAPIDS, MI

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 FEBRUARY.. First I want to thank those of you who helped to make the January meeting a success. Your participation and attendance is most appreciated. Special thanks to Dianne Joseph and Martha Raup for their presentation about our fantastic Chapter 65 website which they developed and maintain. Your officers and board members continue to work to make Chapter 65 a dynamic organization. Please contact me if you are interested in taking responsibility for one of the numerous activities your board members and officers are doing or if you have an activity for the Chapter you would like to introduce and be responsible for. Moreover, I am looking for someone who would be interested in functioning as an assistant to our very capable and excellent Chapter newsletter editor, Herman Bracey. Please let me know if you could help out with this important function. The first to volunteer will receive an excellent bottle of wine to drink or to give as a gift.

Please set aside the 17th of March (St. Patrick's Day), when we will have a spring luncheon and brief meeting tentatively scheduled for The Vista Room at San Francisco State, 1600 Holloway Ave. If you have never been to the VISTA Room, you are in for a real treat. SF State's Vista Room is a fine dining establishment where guests are served gourmet meals. The meal is prepared and served by the staff and students at the University. The Vista Room features California cuisine, serving the highest quality food prepared from fresh ingredients purchased from reputable vendors. The restaurant is located on the fourth floor of Burk Hall and doubles as a hands-on lab for students interested in hospitality management and dietetics. Under the supervision of Chef Daniel Honan, meals are produced and served by students in foodservice management classes. The Vista room serves three course meals (with choice of soup or salad and three different entrees, plus a choice of deserts) for \$15 including tip and tax. A video about the restaurant can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGnYp6wRyKE>. Since this is a pay in advance arrangement, you should let me know as soon as possible if you are planning to attend. After advising me of your interest, you can write a check for \$15 to Gerald Hall and mail your check to me at the address above. I have personally gone to the Vista Room several times and have always found that I receive one of the best meals you can get in the City for \$15.00. Coffee and Tea are included in the price. If you have never been to the University, this will also give you a chance to explore their campus. Public Transportation is abundant with the M Muni and the 28, 29, and 17 buses all stopping within a block of the site. Parking is available on the campus and at Stonestown. I hope you will join us for this special St. Patrick's Day event. We are limited as to the number of reservations they can accommodate; so make your reservations early. Payment must be made by the 1st of March.

Finally, please feel free to contact me about programs or activities you would like for your organization. And don't forget to begin working on recruiting someone this year to be a new NARFE member. New members help to make NARFE more effective in protecting your pension and your benefits.

Coming Soon: Corporate Dollars for Elections: Yesterday, 1/21/10, the United States Supreme Court issued its decision in Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission. In a 5-4 ruling, the Court invalidated laws banning corporations (and labor unions) from using treasury funds for campaign ads advocating the election or defeat of specific candidates. Parts of the decision overturn nearly 100 years of law. "The outcome would be that corporate funds could inundate the airwaves this year on behalf of candidates whom corporations support. The floodgates are now open for larger corporate funding in presidential and congressional races," said Mr. Coyle. "Alliance activists will have to work harder than ever to offset the influence of the big drug and insurance companies," he continued. The opinion did not change rules barring corporations from contributing directly to candidates and political parties, or from making expenditures that are "coordinated" with candidates and political parties. The court also overturned part of a different campaign finance law that excluded companies and unions from spending on political ads that refer to candidates in the closing days of election campaigns. **From: The Alliance for Retired Americans.**

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"NARFE - Your Voice in Congress"

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 \$29.00 and Chapter 65 Dues are \$8.00 annually. Mail check for the full \$37.00, along with your **DUES RENEWAL NOTICE**, when you receive it, 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.

SUNSHINE: EDITH HIGA; 566-7358

Our prayers and condolences to the families of: **Thomas A Forbes and Barbara Robinson.**

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

A warm WELCOME to: **Wilhelmina Edwards, Marc A Lambert, Dorothy M Madrid, Autumn Storhaug and Michael J Tollefson.** We also WELCOME **Jane O Bodmer** for reinstating her membership.

LEGISLATION: BEATRICE BERTWELL, 650-834-7493

We request that all Chapter 65 members Take action on the following legislative measures:

Budget-Cutting Commission and Fast Track Procedure: Despite the short term increase in the debt limit enacted in late December (P.L. 111-123), another increase in the debt limit will be needed. Separate legislation (H.R. 1557 and S. 2834) to create a commission, which could force changes to entitlement and other program spending and tax policy through the use of a Congressional fast-track procedure, could be added to the debt limit legislation. NARFE is concerned that such a commission could single out the earned federal civil service retirement and health benefits for reductions. We ask you to urge your two U.S. Senators to oppose the fast-track commission proposal, use the NARFE Legislative Action Center (<http://capwiz.com/narfe/issues/alert/?alertid=14498696>).

Medicare Part B Premium Protection: Federal, state and local government retirees who are not eligible to receive Social Security have seen their Medicare Part B premiums jump from \$96.40 to \$110.50 in 2010. Current law protects ("holds harmless") most other beneficiaries from a Part B rate hike when there is no Social Security cost of living adjustment. On September 24, the House passed H.R. 3631, the Medicare Premium Fairness Act, which would protect over 1 million federal, state and local government retirees from the Part B premium increase in 2010. The Senate needs to approve this needed legislation, too. That's why Senators need to hear from you now if they are to resolve this inequity. You can do that by sending them an e-mail through the Legislative Action Center (using the following link: <http://capwiz.com/narfe/issues/alert/?alertid=14260196>)

DUES WITHHOLDING: HERMAN BRACEY, 651 COLE ST APT 2, SF, CA. 94117; We start 2010 by suggesting that every Chapter 65 member who hasn't done so to date consider signing up for dues withholding; you can save yourself the trouble of remembering to send off your check for those annual renewals and National will save the cost of mailing those renewal notices to you.

Signing up for dues withholding is simple. All you have to do is complete an application (one is included in every NARFE magazine; it's on page 40 in the January issue) and mail it to the National Office. You also may obtain an application from any chapter official. It takes approximately 60 to 90 days to place a member on dues withholding with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Once implemented, a member will not receive further dues notices and may withdraw from the program for any reason with a written request. In addition, a member never has to be concerned about paying his or her dues, keeping track of when they become due or having to write a check for dues. Currently the due withheld from your monthly annuity would be \$2.71; additionally the CSFC is giving a **\$10 rebate** to all NARFE members who sign up before March 10, 2010. Just send me a copy of the front and back of the signed form and I will see that you get your \$10 rebate.

It is understandable that some members want to have control over their funds and are, therefore, reluctant to sign up for dues withholding. They also may be concerned that a change in their annuity will result in errors that will take a long time to correct. That is unlikely to happen. OPM processes millions of annuity payments each month with numerous changes, and the error rate is almost zero. Modern technology has made this possible. Once you have signed up for dues withholding, if for any reason you are not satisfied with the program, you may cancel it at any time.