



***The only organization  
solely dedicated to  
protecting and  
preserving  
the pay and benefits of  
ALL federal workers  
and retirees***

## NEWSLETTER

**Karen Anne McCann, President**

**May 2026**

### REMEMBERING MAY DAY

*Our ties as federal employees, as chapter members*

*By Karen Anne McCann, President*

Remember as a child running around the May Pole? That is a memory that comes to mind when the month of May comes around. It also becomes warmer, weather wise and sometimes not. Good ole Mother Nature does what she wants.

On another note, our Chapter 16 had its Spring luncheon at Round Table Pizza with the attendance of 23 members. The salad bar was good as usual; pizzas were a bit slow in being served despite being notified ahead of time about our large group. However, we had an excellent time visiting with many of the members telling us what they did when working. I should have recorded them so I could have given you the highlights out of our large group. All in all, it was a good time.

#### **Mare Island secrets**

Robin Leong opened the discussion and pointed out the fellowship of these chapter meetings. Several speakers mentioned working on matters that were secret. Some of the information has since appeared in books like *Blind Man's Bluff*. Someone mentioned that what was once considered secret can now be found on google.

My own story is not as dramatic. My late husband, Chuck, spent 10 years in the Navy. The last three years he worked in sonar analysis. Part of my recollection is that he would come back after 6 weeks of sea trials and bring back smelly clothing, contaminated with diesel fumes, which my daughter, Laura Jean, points out as part of her recollection.

After retiring Chuck ended up working 28 years on Mare Island, mostly at Shop 67 and then to ship planners. I worked in the non-federal Navy Exchange. My recollections are those of a family member. When Mare Island closed Chuck came to a NARFE meeting but was not an active member. I got introduced to NARFE by Monte Simmons. (*Ed. Note.* The editor is responsible for any inaccuracies in the president's narrative.)

#### **In NARFE related legislation**

Back to matters of current NARFE concerns, Helen Zajac wrote a very good article that each and all of you should read on page 2 in this issue of our newsletter. Totally informative. Even if you think it doesn't apply to you, read it and be informed.

**(continued on page 2)**

## LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Congress is debating several issues that have a direct impact on several issues impacting our interests.

Homeland Security Shutdown: On the heels of a record length 43-day shutdown last year, we are now amid a 35-day (and counting) shutdown of Department of Homeland Security (DHS). No solution is likely to come soon. It is past time to end the partial government shutdown of the U.S. Coast Guard, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). NARFE is urging Congress to engage in good faith bipartisan negotiations, over the Homeland Security appropriations bills (Shutdown Fairness Act, H.R. 7137/S.3168) to end the partial government shutdown.

Collection of Personal Medical Records: The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) released a notice that it intends to collect data from Federal Employee Health Benefit (FEHB) and Postal Service Health Benefit (PSHB) plan carriers on service utilization and cost, including medical and pharmacy claims, as well as provider information. OPM's rationale for this data collection is that it would enable them to provide better oversight of the programs, but there is a lack of adequate explanation on why the information is needed, how it will be used, how it will be secured, and what safeguards will be implemented to protect enrollees' private data from its employer.

While OPM may have legitimate reasons for collecting and analyzing this information, these reasons should be articulated to and easily accessible for the individuals whose data will be involved.

NARFE is urging Congress to request transparency, specificity, and guaranteed protection from OPM regarding FEHB/PSHB collected health data. Additionally, OPM should commit to only collecting personally de-identified information to reduce the risk of privacy violations and inappropriate use against employees.

Protect FERS and Solve USPS Funding: The United States Postal Service (USPS) recently made the decision to suspend their employer contributions toward the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) program. This action comes as a precautionary measure to ensure they can continue funding current USPS employees.

While this action does not provide any near-term threat to the timely payment of FERS annuities to postal or other federal retirees, it sets a dangerous precedent for the secure funding of postal and federal retiree pensions. Continued failure to pay employer contributions would create an unfunded liability for the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund (CSDRF) that would need to be addressed in the future.

NARFE is urging Congress to demand USPS pay its employer contributions to CSRDF for its FERS retirees. Congress must find a financially viable path forward for USPS to maintain critical service to the American people while honoring commitments to postal retirees made in exchange for their service. NARFE suggest that Congress extend USPS' borrowing limit, which remains capped at the level set in 1990, but is also open to a more balanced approach to the investment of health benefit funds and future contributions toward retirement – as long as pension payments remain guaranteed

There are sample letters on the NARFE website, <https://www.narfe.org/advocacy/legislative-action-center/> for you to send, with your personal comments, to our U.S. Senators and Representative(s). Please consider taking this action!

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### **McCann, (continued from page 1)**

Where were all of you who didn't show up for the pizza? Where were you at previous meetings? I really would like to see you, meet you, and have you enjoy our meetings. We do have interesting meetings AND bring your suggestions of speaker topics that you are interested in. Contact Robin Leong and let him know your desires. Hope to see you at our next meeting on May 12th at 1:30 PM, Florence Douglas Center, 333 Amador St., Vallejo 94590.

**NEED INFORMATION? PLEASE CALL  
ONE OF THESE FRIENDLY MEMBERS:**

President, Karen Anne McCann  
 First VP, Robin Leong  
 Second VP, James Porter  
 Secretary, Laura Jean Pearson  
 Treasurer, Melanie McCrossin  
 Legislative Chair, Helen Zajac  
 Hospitality, Monte Simmons  
 HQ Federal Benefit Inst. 1 800-456-8410 option 2  
 Sunshine, Connie Boucher  
 Publicity, open  
 Membership, Robin Leong  
 Web coordinator, Melanie McCrossin  
<https://www.facebook.com/NARFE16>  
[\(https://www.narfe.org/chapter0016/\)](https://www.narfe.org/chapter0016/)

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

As of 4-22-2026.  
 Total Current Chapter Members 227, Total National Members in Chapter Area 158, Total Chapter plus National Members 385.  
 Current Chapter Members Breakdown: 1 Year 72, 2 Year 23, 3 Year 24, Dues Withhold 97, and Life Members 11.  
 Members added: none.  
 Member who passed away: Dorothy Mulfich.  
 Member who will be dropped: Armando Banaag.  
 Prospective members: Orin Clapp, Shannon Edwards, and Carol Tedesco.  
 Members who renewed: Leonard Flores, Edgar Brown, Cary Morrison, Steven Jacobs and Michael Barnes. Thank you!  
 Memberships expired March 31, 2026: Pat Chapman and James Carpenter. Please renew. We will miss you.  
**Robin Leong, Chair**

**HOSPITALITY REPORT**

There were 23 members and guests at the March meeting. Pizza and stories. See page 1 for more details.  
**Monte Simmons, Chair**

**SUNSHINE REPORT**

We sent a sympathy card to the family of Dorothy Mulfich. She passed on April 16, 2026.  
**Connie Boucher, Chair**

**Celebrating May Birthdays!**

May 5 Sam Davis, May 24 Paul Banford, and May 31 Rosemary Pinkstaff.

**ALZHEIMER'S REPORT**

Robin Leong sent information to the Executive Board about ongoing research into Alzheimer's, on Sat, Mar 21 at 8:44 AM. It said,  
 "Morning, I sent you that long video link for the San Francisco Chronicle 6-hour video on aging. Highlights include a session on Alzheimer's, one on finances, another on getting your genome so you can make sure you work on preventing any of the diseases you might be susceptible to a stage 2 and prolong your life.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OhcqMDyQes>

"There is a discussion on Alzheimer's. It said that for 20 years scientists have known about tau and clusters of amyloid plaque causing it. They finally found something that works for some people. This was to point out that there are many advances in science that could prolong aging that you should be aware of."

"I'm attaching an article in Scientific American Oct 25 article that member Joseph Furnish gave me to read about bird migration."

This article was titled *Hope Swells in Alzheimer's Research*. It said that there were more than 100 trials aimed at slowing down the disease. It reminds us that exercise, social interaction, better nutrition may delay the onset of the worst symptoms. Blood tests at present are less of a screening tool and more a confirmatory approach. The article ends on a hopeful note. It says...*for the first time since the condition's initial description in 1906, scientists and clinicians are providing both dementia patients and their family members with glimmers of hope.*

***The article was written by Lauren Gravitz, Contributing Editor.***

Thank you Robin for bringing this information to our attention.

**Our donations go to national for research.**

**Checks should be made out to NARFE**

**Alzheimer's Research.** Write our chapter number 16 on the check and send it to PO Box 1164, Vallejo, CA 94590. In our new fiscal year, we have a total of \$485. Thank you for your donations: Gail Barker, Jacqueline Menke, Janet and Gordon Triemert.

**James Porter, Chair**

**ALZHEIMER'S DONATION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of donation to national: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# NARFE

Vallejo Chapter #16

PO Box 1164

Vallejo, CA 94590

**May 2026**

**Return service requested**

**Dated Material – Time Value**

## SPEAKERS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Our May 12, 2026 speaker is Peter Bauer, (CMS/OPOLE) speaking on FEHB and Medicare. See page one for anecdotes on our April 14 pizza get-together.

We are sending email newsletters each month, and by US mail every other month to those who do not have email. This issue is being sent by email only.

*(This issue was edited by Ivars Lauersons, with editorial assistance by Melanie McCrossin.)*

**Next meeting is Tuesday,  
May 12 @ 1:30 pm**

**Please respect the activities of  
groups that share the room with  
us for short periods.**

**Executive Board** meets the second Tuesday of each month at 12:30 p.m.  
**Regular meeting** is the second Tuesday of each month at 1:30 p.m.  
Both monthly meetings are held at the Florence Douglas Center,  
333 Amador Street, Vallejo, CA 94590.