



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

NEWSLETTER

Karen Anne McCann, President

June 2026

JUNE IS BUSTING OUT ALL OVER

Writing our legislators is always important

By Karen Anne McCann, President

GREETINGS. We had a nice turnout for our May meeting. 24 members in attendance. Our scheduled speaker was unable to attend the meeting, so Robin Leong told us a bit about next month's meeting concerning how the Chinese helped build communities in our area. Ivars made the suggestion of everyone present telling us what they did in their previous jobs. It was nice to know a bit about some of the people sitting across the room from you. Helen Zajac gave a good rundown of the many bills that need our assistance by writing to congressmen and letting them know that these bills are important to us. In our NARFE magazine, there are pages about bills that are waiting to be addressed. Write to your congressman and tell him to fight for us. It can and will make a difference in our monies, Social Security, as well as to the people who are still employed. Join us next month and come and be informed. Same place, same time: June 9th at 1:30 PM until about 3:00 PM. Douglas Center. See you there.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Cost of Living News: The inflation report for April was probably unwelcome news for consumers but potentially better news for retirees who depend on annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) and who may be hoping for a higher COLA in 2027. The COLA for 2025 was 2.8%.

According to the latest data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), the index used to calculate Social Security and federal retirement COLAs, rose 3.9% over the previous 12 months.

The broader CPI measure rose 3.8% annually in April, the highest inflation reading in about three years. Much of the increase was driven by rising gasoline and energy prices, although shelter, food, and transportation costs also climbed.

For federal retirees and Social Security beneficiaries, the April numbers are an important early signal about what the 2027 COLA may look like when it is officially announced in October and implemented for 2027.

The annual COLA for Social Security beneficiaries and federal retirees under CSRS and FERS is based on changes in the CPI-W during the third quarter of the year, specifically for the months of July, August, and September.

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THE NO SPEAKER REPORT

Our May speaker, Peter Bauer (CMS, OPOLE) on the topics FEHB and Medicare, cancelled too late for us to notify members. We had 24 at the meeting, one of our larger crowds, possibly because the topic of health care is one of our top draws.

What we talked about

Our meeting continued free form with a thorough legislative report, questions about the percentage we pay for health care, the possible privatization of the post office, the positive effect of adding a personal note to our programmed email letters to our legislators, an introduction of each participant because even with a small group, we do not know each person at the meeting, questions of why so few of the Napa chapter transferred to Vallejo, the national’s apparent disdain for local chapters, and a survey circulated by our FEDHub, divided between chapter members and national only members, about how to navigate NARFE through our decline in membership, and how we could add new members.

Murphy’s Law

In short, the meeting was about everything in NARFE. The survey, a copy provided by Melanie McCrossin and read by Robin Leong, formalized what had happened at our meeting. In a Murphy’s law variant, “Nothing works right until you throw it out.”

First Chapter meeting

On a personal note, my experience in NARFE started in 2007, a retired letter carrier in San Francisco plunged into a 100 plus members meeting. Most people seemed to be from Mare Island. Nobody talked to me, nobody noticed me. It could have been my last meeting. I made the mistake of volunteering, and because Carol Marx, the president, was leaving, was assigned to work on the chapter newsletter.

We prevailed through COVID

We have added a website and a Facebook page, with photos of members and speakers, thanks to Melanie McCrossin. We have continued our newsletter, but now with too few members to qualify mailing as a non-profit. Thanks to Robin Leong, who signed up about half of our membership to an email issue monthly. We use the post office to mail copies every other month to everyone who chose not to receive it by email. Our membership has declined. Now we ask what is your opinion about what is happening to NARFE and what can we do about it.

CA Federation Survey

Section 1. Chapter Membership

1. Do you belong to a local NARFE chapter? If so, how often does your chapter meet? (Your answer)
 2. If you attend chapter meetings, what do you find most valuable about attending chapter meetings? (Your answer)
 3. If you do not attend, what is the principal reason, e.g. schedule, program content, lack of value added, other? (Your answer)
- Does your chapter regularly schedule a program speaker? Do you feel like the programs and presentations offered meet your needs for information from NARFE? If yes, which ones are most important to you? If no, what subjects would you like to see covered in more detail? (Your answer)
4. Does your chapter send out a periodic newsletter? Do you find the information valuable in staying informed about NARFE activities? Are there other kinds of information you would like to be kept aware of? (Your answer)
 5. Do you participate in the chapter as an officer or other function? In what form? Would you be willing to increase your local participation? In what form? (Your answer))
 6. What could the NARFE Federation and/or your chapter do to make your chapter membership more meaningful or valuable to you? (Your answer)

Section II is for national-only members. Not included here.

Section III is for both.

- 1.If you could choose one issue that you feel is the most critical to the future success of NARFE and should be the focus of the organization in the near term, what is it and why? (Your answer)

Ivars Lauersons, Editor

LEGISLATIVE REPORT, (cont. from p. 1)

The government compares the average CPI-W for the third quarter of 2026 with the average from the third quarter of 2025. The percentage increase becomes the COLA for the following year.

April data does not determine the final COLA. However, a sharp increase in spring inflation often affects expectations for the eventual adjustment because it can carry into the third quarter.

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

President, Karen Anne McCann	246-5523
First VP, Robin Leong	643-1287
Second VP, James Porter	642-4980
Secretary, Laura Jean Pearson	925-586-7058
Treasurer, Melanie McCrossin	342-0928
Legislative Chair, Helen Zajac	644-7565
Hospitality, Monte Simmons	644-2159
HQ Federal Benefit Inst. 1 800-456-8410 option 2	
Sunshine, Connie Boucher	255-7968
Publicity, open	
Membership, Robin Leong	643-1287
Web coordinator, Melanie McCrossin	342-0928
https://www.facebook.com/NARFE16	
(https://www.narfe.org/chapter0016/)	

LEGISLATIVE REPORT, (cont. from p. 2)

The April inflation report showed energy costs once again playing a major role. According to the BLS report, energy prices rose 3.8% in April alone. Gasoline prices increased 5.4% during the month. Gasoline prices were up 28.4% over the prior year. Shelter costs rose 0.6%. Food prices increased by 0.5%.

Senate Takes Action to Withhold their Pay:

Senators unanimously approved a resolution to withhold their pay during government shutdowns, an attempt to make federal closures financially painful for lawmakers after a string of record-breaking impasses in the past year.

Under the resolution, senators' pay would be withheld by the secretary of the Senate whenever a government shutdown affects one or more agencies, then released once funding is restored. It will take effect the day after the Nov. 3 general election and does not apply to the House.

Two shutdowns in the past year created significant financial hardship for tens of thousands of federal workers, particularly at the Department of Homeland Security. The department reopened last month after a 76-day partial shutdown, the longest agency funding lapse in history.

Personal Advocacy: Continue to follow the Advocacy Action page on the NARFE website <https://www.narfe.org/advocacy/legislative-action-center/> to contact your congressmen regarding action you can take to encourage their support of our issues.

Helen Zajac, Chair

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

As of 5-19-2026.

Total Current Chapter Members 224. Total National Members in Chapter Area 153. Total Chapter plus National Members 377.

Current Chapter Members Breakdown: 1 Year 69, 2 Year 24, 3 Year 24, Dues Withholding 96, and Life Members 11.

Members that passed away: Dorothy Mufich (sorry for the misspelled last name in the May newsletter), and Ray Richetti.

Members that were dropped: Jo Ann Lane, Cathleen Thompson, and Latanga Rush. Please rejoin.

Members that are about to be dropped: Patricia Chapman (3/31/26);

Connie & George Coloma, Claire Lieske, and Steven Torres, membership expires on 5/31/26. I hope you have already rejoined.

Members that renewed: David Sterk, James Carpenter, Roger Boutte, and Burgess Schnitzius. Thank you.

Members that will get my second notice: Anita Castellano-Ogara, and Madonna Karr

Robin Leong, Chair

HOSPITALITY REPORT

There were 24 members and guests at the April meeting.

Monte Simmons, Chair

SUNSHINE REPORT

We sent a sympathy card to the family of Ray Richetti. He passed on April 24, 2026. He was 99. We sent a get-well card to our Secretary, Laura Jean Pearson.

Connie Boucher, Chair

Celebrating June Birthdays!

June 6 Sharon Davis, June 14 Robin Leong, and June 15 Connie Boucher.

ALZHEIMER'S REPORT

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.

James Porter, Chair

ALZHEIMER'S DONATION

Name _____

Amount of donation to national: \$ _____

NARFE

Vallejo Chapter #16
PO Box 1164
Vallejo, CA 94590
June 2026

Return service requested

Dated Material – Time Value

SPEAKERS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Our June 9, 2026, speaker is **John McCormick** author of "Chinese in the Napa Valley: The Forgotten Community That Built Wine Country." He and Robin Leong installed plaques in Napa and St. Helena telling the stories of Chinese contributions. Calistoga is next.

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 and US mail.

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

**Next meeting is Tuesday,
June 9 @ 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.