



FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

# Chapter 190 NEWSLETTER

Ventura County Chapter  
<http://www.narfe190.org>

Volume 2021 No. 2  
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>> NATIONAL ACTIVE and RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION <<

### CHAPTER PRESIDENT

**TONY PIZZA**  
rtpizza@verizon.net  
1553 Royce Court  
Camarillo, CA 93010-3150  
1-805-482-3453

### 1<sup>ST</sup> V/P (MEMBERSHIP)

**JUANITA DAVIS**  
redbird1997@aol.com  
1-805-488-5281

### 2<sup>ND</sup> V/P (LEGISLATION)

**GEORGE RAMIREZ**  
george.ramirez@gmail.com  
1-805-340-4996

### RECORDING SECRETARY

– (VACANT) –

### TREASURER

**CARL BAILEY**  
1mrbig1@verizon.net  
1-805-487-1801

### SERVICE OFFICER

**CAROL MOORE**  
cmoorecas1@verizon.net  
1-805-922-4864

### Committees

#### SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

**JUANITA DAVIS**  
redbird1997@aol.com  
1-805-488-5281

#### PROGRAMS

**GEORGE RAMIREZ**  
george.ramirez@gmail.com  
1-805-340-4996

#### CHAPLAIN

**JUANITA DAVIS**  
redbird1997@aol.com  
1-805-488-5281

#### PUBLICITY

**JESS ROMAN**  
jessie.romanjr@gmail.com  
1-805-320-5484

#### RIDESHARING

**JUANITA DAVIS**  
redbird1997@aol.com  
1-805-488-5281

#### ALZHEIMER'S

– (VACANT) –

#### HOSPITALITY / SUNSHINE

– (VACANT) –

#### NARFE NET COORD

**CARL BAILEY**  
1mrbig1@verizon.net  
1-805-487-1801

#### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

**VIC JOHNSON**  
vjohnson44@sbcglobal.net  
1-805-647-7420

#### NOMINATING COMMITTEE

THE BOARD

### FOOD SHARE DONATION TOTALS

You likely know about the many people who are waiting to get donated foods, a result of a lot of things to which they're "collateral damage." Help locally by sending a check, made out to **Food Share** to: Food Share, 4156 Southbank Rd, Oxnard, CA 93036.

#### NARFE CHAPTER 190 NEWSLETTER

NARFE Chapter 190 **NEWSLETTER** is published monthly by Chapter 190 of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, 235 East Olive Street, Oxnard CA 93033-4533. Annual membership dues includes subscription.

### FEBRUARY LUNCHEON: CANCELLED

Place: Elks Club,

801 South A Street, Oxnard

>> Use "A" Street entrance ONLY <<

Date: ~~Thursday, February 25~~

Time: ~~11:30 to socialize, 12:00 to dine~~

Cost: ~~\$13.00~~

Please make your reservations by NOON, Monday, February 22. E-mail Carl at [1mrbig1@verizon.net](mailto:1mrbig1@verizon.net) or call 805-487-1801 to make (~~or cancel~~) a reservation.

On Thursday, ~~February 25~~, we would've socialized at 11:30 and then served our lunch at noon. The menu:

~~Chicken Fried Steak~~

~~Mashed Potatoes & Gravy~~ ~~Vegetables~~

~~Green Salad~~ ~~Rolls & Butter~~

~~Ice Cream~~ ~~Coffee & Water~~

*Please help our cashier by paying for your lunch with smaller bills (\$1, \$5 and \$10) Thanks!*

### NO FEBRUARY PROGRAM

There will be no program again this month, as there will be no meeting at which to present it.

It's promising news: The pandemic may finally be losing steam. The numbers of persons infected, hospitalized and deaths are decreasing; numbers of folks vaccinated are growing, and vaccine suppliers may soon increase to three or possibly four.

The increased quantities of vaccine doses purchased has given rise to forecast having enough to vaccinate the entire population of the U.S. over the summer.

The "fly in the ointment" is that the virus can (and does) mutate. Scientists, however, believe having more people vaccinated will help control the variants.

It's way too early to let your guard down. Do wash your hands, use masks, and keep socially distancing.

We *will* meet in person again, once the vaccines have taken hold. When we meet again, it will still be necessary to make reservations for you and any guest you may wish to bring (potential members will be *especially* welcome!).

### NEED A RIDE – SHARE A RIDE

If you *need* or can *provide* a ride, call **Juanita** at 805-488-5281 or email her at [redbird1997@aol.com](mailto:redbird1997@aol.com). She is Chapter 190's rideshare facilitator.

## NOTES FROM THE TOP

Tony Pizza, President

The major subject of discussion this month among most of us is vaccination for the COVID-19 virus. People who are 75 and older have been eligible, and those 65 and older also just became eligible. More will be included when there's more vaccine available. Limited deliveries of vaccine have made getting an appointment difficult and frustrating, maybe impossible for some. We can only hope by the time you read this that the situation will have improved.

Did you know that NARFE will celebrate its 100th birthday in February? The cover story in the January/February issue of NARFE Magazine has a look back at NARFE's humble beginnings as an organization (then named the Association of Retired Federal Employees) founded to protect the benefits offered by the then-new Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). Since then, the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) has been added to the mix, but NARFE's main objective remains to protect our benefits; that's why maintaining your membership is so important. Enrolling new members is also important, as is having current employees become members. Membership numbers are important. The elected people who make the laws listen to numbers, especially if they know those numbers are organized and that they vote.

A recent survey asked NARFE members which resources they found most valuable, with these results:

1. *NARFE* magazine
2. Federal benefits articles and white papers
3. Federal benefits webinars
4. Personalized answers to benefits questions from NARFE's team of federal benefits experts
5. Discounts on travel, health services, insurance, etc., through NARFE Perks

Those results clearly indicate our members are focused on the answers and information NARFE provides to help them get the most of their federal benefits, the most visible tool for delivering that current information is the monthly *NARFE* magazine. It is worth noting that NARFE Perks also had a strong showing on this list, since those programs have tangible value to help offset the cost of membership.

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The elderly man was on the operating table, about to be operated on by his son, a famous and world-renowned surgeon.

The son dearly loved his elderly father and wanted to please his father and therefore his mother, too.

Just before they put him under, he asked to speak to his son: "Don't be nervous, son, do your best and just remember, if it doesn't go well, if something happens to me... your mother is going to come and live with you and your family."

- Tony

## SERVICE OFFICER NOTES

by Carol Moore

### **Resources for Seniors/Older Adults**

If you hadn't considered it before whenever you wanted to find information to help an older person (or even for yourself), you may want to check Eldercare. It's a public service of the U.S. Administration on Aging and can help you connect with services for older adults and their families. On a computer, you can go to <https://eldercare.acl.gov/Public/Index.aspx>; you may also call 1-800-677-1116 to reach someone at the national office.

In Ventura County specifically, for information regarding senior services available, call the Ventura County Area Agency on Aging at 805-477-7300 or go to <http://www.vcaaa.org> online. The VCAAA can connect you with local resources ranging from adult day programs to Alzheimer's resources, caregiving, elder abuse, food resources, health insurance, home repair, legal assistance, transportation and much more. (Wherever you are, you may also call 2-1-1 as an initial step to locating senior services.)

### **Resolutions for A Caregiver**

It's about now in every year when motivation to keep new year's resolutions begins to fade. If you're a caregiver, especially for someone with dementia, the stress may cause you to forgo those resolutions.

The best time to set new goals is the start of a year, but now isn't too late. Here are some suggestions to give you an opportunity to take time for yourself, get the help you need and provide the best care you can. Any one of them can help you be a happier, healthier caregiver. They take the form of "This year, I will..."

- Take care of my own health. If you aren't in the best of health, your caregiving will be sub-par.
- Get more sleep. If you're a full-time caregiver, the myriad responsibilities make it hard to get 7 to 8 hours of slumber nightly. If need be, add time in 15 minute increments to reach the time you need.
- Reach out to resources in my community, including support groups.
- Do something I enjoy. It will help refresh you mentally, making you better able at caregiving.
- Expand *our* world (meaning you *and* the person).
- Plan for future care. Some day you may not be able to provide care, so you may want to designate an alternate caregiver in your will.
- Make arrangements to include friends and family to help with care and support. It could include lawnmowing, grocery shopping, providing rides to appointments, preparing or delivering a meal or just giving you an hour's break.

Keeping so many resolutions may be stressful to a caregiver, so you might want to consider trying just one of them in support of your overall wellbeing.

**Unless we speak, Congress will assume our consent!**

**LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS**

A bill introduced in 2014 would have cut required the Department of Defense to cut its civilian workforce by 15%, which would have eliminated about 115,000 federal jobs based on that year’s numbers. It failed, but the thought lingered on. Now it’s back.

Representative Ken Calvert (R-CA) reintroduced the bill on February 9. It’s again titled “Rebalance for an Effective Defense Uniform and Civilian Employees Act,” H.R. 916. Based on current numbers, it would cut about 100,000 federal civilian jobs by 2025. It also specifies cutting Senior Executive Service numbers to a ceiling of 1,000. Once achieved, employment would be capped at those figures until 2029. (Military numbers would not be affected.)

If adopted, it would initially authorize incentives for voluntary separation and early retirement; that period would be brief. As drafted, if the 15% isn’t met voluntarily by October 2021, the Secretary of Defense will be required to initiate involuntary separations. The Secretary would also have authority to assign greater weight to job performance versus tenure in a Reduction in Force action than currently allowed.

You can call, write, or personally visit your Representative’s local office to add emphasis and ensure your voice is heard regarding this bill or any other pending legislation. (By the way, after you make contact, please let our Legislative Officer George Ramirez know, especially of the response you get.)

If you’re not sure what other issues Congress may be considering relative to federal employees and retirees, just it’s worth taking a few minutes just to check it out.

Remember, we must let Congress hear from us!

***Unless we speak, Congress will assume we agree!***

**ECONOMIC IMPACT PAYMENTS AND TAXES**

The second Economic Impact Payments (EIP) have been issued, often as a VISA card, to eligible recipients nationwide.

Federal income tax is not charged on the EIP, but receipt (of both payments) is to be entered in your tax return. Do that, even if you haven’t received yours yet. If you don’t yet have your EIP, the IRS will *credit* the amount against taxes owed (or increase your refund).

**CORONAVIRUS COLUMN**

Last month, this column advised against attempting to register for a vaccination if your group isn’t shown. That advice stands, but *NOW* (as of February 9) those persons eligible for the vaccine has been expanded to **INCLUDE** persons who are aged 65 and over.

Appointments can be made online at this address: [venturacountyrecovers.org/vaccine-information/portal/](http://venturacountyrecovers.org/vaccine-information/portal/) or by calling 805-477-7161. Many pharmacies may also provide vaccinations; check with them, too.

As good as the news may be, it is tempered by the accompanying note: “Appointments are limited because of limited vaccine supply.”

**COVID, DEMENTIA AND ALZHEIMER’S**

People with dementia have been speculated to be prone to infection and harm from COVID-19. Case Western Reserve University researchers sought to provide the answer from a study of existing data.

Data came from 360 hospitals and 317,000 health care providers across all 50 states, as electronic health records of 61.9 million people age 18 and over – about a fifth of the American population.

The records analyzed showed 15,770 patients had COVID-19; of them, 810 also had dementia. After adjusting for general demographic factors (age, sex and race) researchers found people with dementia had over three times the risk of getting OVID-19. When they adjusted for COVID-specific risk factors (like nursing home residency and underlying physical conditions), the gap closed somewhat, but people with dementia were still twice as likely to get COVID.

**PANDEMIC GIVES USPS RECORD REVENUES**

Online shopping and e-commerce during the COVID-19 pandemic boosted USPS volume and package revenue during the its busiest time of the year, the agency’s first quarter fiscal year 2021 report says.

Package volume increased by 25% over that period last year, and revenue on those packages increased by about \$2.8 billion, an 11.1% increase over last year’s numbers. It represents a first quarter income of \$727 million, rather than the \$387 million loss last year.

Never before in its 245 years was the post office so indispensable. Yet despite that good news, the current surge is sure to disappear once the pandemic ends.

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT** - see **Note** below

	<u>Members</u>
End of last month	369
New Members	0
Dropped or Transferred	<u>- 3</u>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>366</b>

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

End of the last month balance	\$ 1,771.06
Receipts	189.60
Disbursements	<u>(536.81)</u>
End of month balance	<b>\$ 1,423.85</b>

**Note:** *NARFE HQ is revising the membership database; these figures are determined manually.*

## TREAT ALZHEIMER'S WITH ULTRASOUND?

Sometimes familiar things can be used in new ways. That appears to be the case with ultrasound, which has been used primarily for imaging for some time, with limited options for other medical uses.

Several revolutionary ultrasound techniques have been developed, both the University of Toronto and the Medical University of Vienna. Researchers have made progress toward using targeted pulses of ultrasound. Doing so can provide ways to accurately treat a range of brain diseases, including Alzheimer's, which have previously had only limited options.

The technique studied by Vienna personnel activates still-functioning brain neurons to improve more brain functioning. They do this by activating deep regions of the brain in a targeted and non-invasive way. So far, results promise to

Alzheimer's column continues below...



**National Active and Retired  
Federal Employees Association  
235 East Olive Street  
Oxnard CA 93033-4533**

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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Alzheimer's continued...

improve treatment of brain diseases like Alzheimer's, stroke, Parkinson's, Multiple Sclerosis and neuralgia. It's a potentially genuine advantage for clinical practice to supplement current methods. It's virtually free from side effects, too. So far, published patient data show the transcranial ultrasound innovations to be safe and ready for broad clinical application.

Two non-invasive ultrasound techniques have been developed at the University of Toronto. One targets and *deactivates* overactive neurons; it may be relevant in future treatment of many neurological movement disorders. The other opens the blood-brain barrier to allow targeted delivery of drug, antibody or gene therapy. The two Toronto procedures are highly complex, requiring proven neuroscientific expertise to perform them as well as extensive patient briefing.

Studies of both Toronto techniques continue.

## YOUR NAME IN PRINT?

If you find your name in lower case somewhere in this newsletter (besides in the new member listings), your lunch will be free at this month's meeting. We pick a member's name at random; that name then appears john doe somewhere (It could be *your* name; last month, it was a different member.)

If you find *your* name, tell Carl when you make your reservation or when you check in. Your lunch will be free, so start looking now!

## NO NEW MEMBERS THIS MONTH

This month shows a record – not a good one – of *NO* new members. All three losses this month were for non-payment of dues. Hopefully, such non-payments reflect temporary COVID-related situations.

> Dues withholding avoids non-payment situations. <

## NEED TO UPDATE YOUR ADDRESS?

If you need to update information you provided to NARFE long ago, please contact **Carl Bailey**. He maintains Chapter 190's member information (including the addresses used to mail this newsletter).

Carl's email and phone number are in the box on this newsletter's front page.

## LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT MONTH

Our meeting date would be on Thursday, March 25, with reservations to be made by noon on Monday, March 22. The planned entrée: Pork Loin.

## FEBRUARY LUNCHEON-FINAL REMINDER

CANCELLED