

A VIEW FROM FEW

AN ORGANIZATION FOR OPPORTUNITY AND EQUALITY FOR WOMEN IN
GOVERNMENT

Space Coast Chapter, Kennedy Space Center, FL

April 2000

SPACE COAST CHAPTER, FEW

1999 - 2000

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy April 1st to one and all. Hope no one pulled a fast one over on you. And for those you who have tried to get in touch with me this month, I apologize if we didn't

connect. I have been out of the office and pretty much out of town this past month. But now I am back, so once again your e-mail box will probably runneth over.

My last trip included a trip to Augusta, GA for the Southeastern Regional Training Program along with five other members of the Space Coast Chapter. As always, we had a great time which included everything from the drive up, the training sessions, the folk dancing classes, the good food, the nightly card games, and the singing our way home to the oldies. Most important was the great networking we did with other Chapters and government agencies. The Savannah River and Garden City Chapters did a great job with the training program and their southern hospitality was exceptional.

March was our Annual Membership Drive. Clara Anderson gave an overview presentation of FEW and the Space Coast Chapter. I am pleased to welcome three new members to our Chapter, Dawn Partlow, who works for SGS, Debbie Ward and Tracy Anderson, both NASA employees. Welcome new friends! We look forward to a long and lasting relationship with each of you.

I recently sent out several articles having to do with pending Legislation either in the House or Senate. This information is provided to keep you abreast of things that may affect you or your family. Please take the time to read these articles and if action is appropriate, take it, don't wait on someone else to do something about the issues that affect you.

The next major event we need to support is the KSC All American picnic, scheduled for April 15th, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. We, as an organization, are going to help in the Children's Carnival area and need as many volunteers as we can get - including family and friends. I will send out a special notice on this event. We're getting a late start on this one, but I know I can count on your support.

LEGISLATION

Connie Dobrin



Genetic Non-Discrimination Applies to FEHB

President Clinton's recent order barring discrimination against federal employees based on genetic information (see February 16 FEDweek) also has implications for the Federal Employees Health Benefits program. OPM says that just as employment decisions may not be influenced by genetic testing, so too will there be no negative influence by genetics on enrollment opportunities or care and treatment options under the FEHB.

Administration Pushes FEHB Premium Plan

The Clinton administration says it soon will issue rules to allow employees of all executive branch agencies to pay their FEHB premiums with pre-tax dollars, as outlined in its recent budget proposal. It notes that similar plans already are available widely in the private sector as well as in state and local governments, the U.S. Postal Service, the federal courts and several small quasi-independent executive agencies in the banking sector. This is called a health insurance "premium conversion plan" in which the employee's taxable income is reduced by the amount of health insurance premiums the employee would otherwise have to pay. It produces savings on federal, Social Security, Medicare and, if applicable, state and local income taxes. The government contribution toward premiums would not be affected.

Retirees Left Out

The administration says that under IRS rules, such conversion plans are available only to current employees, meaning that retirees are left out—a sore spot for the National Association of Retired Federal Employees, which believes retirees should get the same break.

CIO SURVEY SAYS: MOVE FASTER

Information Technology Association of America (ITAA), has recently conducted its 10th annual survey of CIOs, called "Federal IT Into the New Millennium: Ready, Set, Go!". The survey focused attention on the most crucial issues confronting federal CIOs: ever-increasing changes at an ever-accelerating pace. 34 CIO and IT management officials (from 31 agencies) were surveyed for the report. Based on those interviews, ITAA's survey reports these findings, forecasts and tests for CIOs throughout the federal government:-- Electronic government is the future. Americans will increasingly look for the government to find new ways to make itself more accessible and easier to deal with.-- Government must move faster. Competition in the private sector is conditioning citizens to get what they need at an ever accelerating-pace. The Federal

government will be expected to keep-up.-- Government will be built on IT. CFOs and CIOs must work together to coordinate new systems and budgets that properly fund and direct the drive to build e-government. -- IT leadership must be strong. Although federal IT leadership and management has been growing, the pace must be increased. CIOs must build effective teams, partnerships and deliver.

-- IT functions increasingly contracted out. The federal government can't produce enough IT workers. Increasing reliance on outside help for skilled IT work force for all IT functions. -- Risk management and project management skills must increase. Federal employees must improve risk-management and project management skills in an ever-changing IT world. Increasing pressure to produce quick – and effective – results. -- CIOs must build on Y2K success. CIOs must use the lessons they learned from their success with Y2K and push forward with the rapid changes needed for the crucial issues they must now confront.

Government-wide Buyouts Proposed

For the second year in a row the White House has proposed reinstating government-wide buyout authority, raising employee hopes in many agencies that they might become eligible for separation incentive payments worth up to \$25,000 pre-tax. But the same factors that last year caused Congress to ignore the idea to death are still in place this year. The primary concern is that the government is no longer cutting jobs at the rate it did in the mid to late 1990s, so there would seem to be less need for "soft landing" authorities such as buyouts. Another factor working against broad buyouts is that the two largest agencies that are undergoing the types of major job reductions and reorganizations in which buyouts are a useful management tool—Defense and IRS—already have the authority.

Job Reduction Numbers Examined

While the administration's fiscal 2001 budget proposal projects 100,000 fewer federal jobs than in the current fiscal year, a close examination of the numbers reveals that more than half of that loss will be temporary jobs at Commerce associated with this year's census. All but five of the 20 largest agencies project increases in employment from actual 1999 levels, although most of them slight. The Justice Department would be the biggest gainer, up some 10,000 to 131,000.

Pre-Tax Plan Applies Only Within FEHB

The Clinton administration's plan to allow active executive branch employees to pay their Federal Employees Health Benefits program premiums with pre-tax dollars would apply only to purchases of health coverage made within the FEHB program, the administration says. Thus, the tax break would not apply to supplemental plans designed to

fill in gaps of FEHB coverage—such as dental and vision care. Many employee organizations sponsor such plans.

Flexible Spending Account Idea Stirs

The FEHB pre-tax initiative has stirred renewed interest in an idea that has been raised numerous times in the past but that has made little progress -- creating a flexible spending account benefits program inside the government. In such programs, common in the private sector and in state and local government and already in place in the U.S. Postal Service, employees are given a set amount of pre-tax dollars from which to choose benefits most important to them, including various forms of insurance and even day care tuition costs. The administration says it continues to consider the feasibility of extending the concept to the executive branch. But there's no timetable for such a proposal.

TSP RESULTS MIXED FOR FEBRUARY - TSP CHART AVAILABLE

The Thrift Savings Plan recently released its February results and the funds' performances were mixed. The C Fund, which invests in common stock, was down for the second straight month dropping 1.93% in February, on top of a 5.03% January drop. The F Fund, which invests in fixed income bonds, was up 1.22% in February, reversing a three month slide in the fund's performance. In January, the F Fund was down 0.34%. The G Fund, which invests in government securities, was up 0.53% in January on top of a 0.56% gain in January. Over the last 12 months, all three funds are up: the C Fund is up 11.57%; the F Fund is up 1.07%; and, the G Fund is up 6.29%. To help you keep track of TSP results this year, FEDreport.com has posted a TSP Chart on its website showing fund performance for the most recent 12 months. It can be reached by clicking on FEDreport.com's "Free Info" page at www.fedreport.com.

It will be updated monthly as TSP results are released. We encourage you to print out a copy of this chart and pass it around to your coworkers.

OPM NOW OFFERING RETIREMENT SERVICE CREDIT PAYMENT CALCULATOR

The Office of Personnel Management is now offering an online Retirement Service Credit Payment Calculator for federal employees' use. This calculator is designed to be used by individuals covered by either the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) who want to make a payment to get retirement service credit for a period of employment when retirement deductions were not withheld from salary. The calculator provides an estimate of the payment due to receive retirement service credit. To use the calculator, click on <http://apps.opm.gov/deposit/index.cfm>.

MEMBERSHIP

Aneta Ott

As of January, 2000, Space Coast Chapter changed its procedures for dues collection in order to agree with National's policies. Dues must now be submitted on a prorated basis (which equates to \$2.50/month) by February 1st of each year. Several members have not paid this year's dues. If you have any questions as to whether you are paid up or not, please contact Aneta Ott, 867-2737.

And a special welcome to our three newest members:

Debbie Ward
Tracy Anderson
Dawn Partlow

We look forward to seeing you real soon!

Make a Difference Day Project

Rebecca Fasulo

The Space Coast Chapter selected the Pregnancy Resource Center in Melbourne as their project for "Make a Difference Day Project". This agency provides free services to women (many teens) who are pregnant and need help. Much of this support is in the form of training. The women earn points by attending various training classes. With their points, they are able to purchase things in the "Hope Chest". They need lots of diapers and baby things. The chapter voted as a group to donate two baby swings and two high chairs for their "Hope Chest."

We also conducted a diaper drive. Many local businesses were contacted for donations or discounts on diapers and an article was put in the local paper to solicit funds. NASA/ Kennedy Space Center employees responded with money for diapers after seeing announcements at the Space Center about this project which resulted in collecting \$240. The end result was 50 packages of diapers were donated. K-Mart stores in Merritt Island and Rockledge gave a 10% discount for all the diapers.

The high chairs, swing sets and diapers were delivered by truck to the Pregnancy Resources Organization on Saturday, October 23, 1999 by Becky Fasulo, Vickie Hall, and Karin Biega. A briefing and tour of the facility was conducted for chapter members. The Pregnancy Resource organization was thrilled and very appreciative of the donations made and assured the Chapter they would put them to good use for the young mothers.

Because of our efforts, we have received a letter of thanks and recognition from the Make a Difference Day Editor. There were nearly 2 million people nationwide

who spent October 23, 1999 helping others. There will be 114 honorees selected for their outstanding efforts. These projects, along with 500-plus local honorees, will be announced in the April 7-9 issue of USA WEEKEND magazine. Whether we are recognized or not, we did a great thing and helped many young mothers.

And for Space Coast Chapter members, this was the continuation of our Make a Difference efforts because many members had participated the previous day with other Kennedy Space Center employees in Days of Caring where we painted the halls of Baxley Manor. Once again, I want to thank everyone who helped either by contributions or time spent shopping for the items. Space Coast Chapter can be proud of their Community Outreach efforts.

REGIONAL AWARDS

Clara Anderson

Space Coast Chapter submitted documentation for the following Regional Awards: Chapter Newsletter, Chapter Programs and Special Project Award for our Make A Difference Day project to Pregnancy Resources, Inc. We will submit these same award nominations for FEW National Awards. We can certainly be proud of the participation of Space Coast Chapter for a myriad of activities, both within the community and within FEW.

Just an update from the President: Space Coast Chapter won 1st place at the Regional Training Program for our nominations for Chapter Programs and Special Project.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Christy Vanasse

The Scholarship Committee is actively reviewing 28 applications received from high school and college students across Central Florida. The selection process will be a very difficult one for the committee due to the high caliber of the applicant's. The finalists will be notified no later than April 30th

Thought for the Day

Plunge boldly into the thick of life.

Goethe

CHAPTER SUPPORT

Vickie Hall

Membership and dedication pay off. As a means of rewarding dedicated members, it has been agreed that for any Member who has attended at least **six Business/Program meetings** and participated in at least **one Community Outreach project**, the Chapter will pay for the individual Member's dinner in June at the Awards and Installation Dinner, time and place TBD, providing funding is available within the Chapter's budget.

NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Vickie Hall

It's that time of year again to elect your Chapter officers. These individuals that will lead you and our organization into the future. If you are interested in serving as President, President Elect, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer for our Chapter, please contact one of the Nominating Committee members immediately. Committee members are Sharon White, Sandy Gates and Connie Dobrin. You may also contact one of the Committee members, or myself or Ann Piepenbrink if you would like to serve on or Chair any of the Chapter's Standing or Special Committees (as listed in the front of the Newsletter). We need some new ideas and I encourage each of you to take the challenge and accept one of these leadership roles.



Clara Anderson retired from NASA in 1997 after 30 years of government service. She was a "military brat" and who lived in California, Hawaii, New Mexico and graduated from High School in Alaska. She then moved back to California and worked at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard during Vietnam. Subsequently she moved to Virginia (Army Ft. Story), Connecticut (VA), Japan (Air Force DoD Schools), Thailand (unemployed) back to Virginia (Army Ft. Eustis) and luckily Florida. She worked for the Air Force at CCAFS before coming to NASA in 1976.

Of course Clara had to start in the "clerical pool" before being selected for a clerical position on the Executive Staff. There she I learned not only the inner workings of KSC, but where and how to get things done. "My career with NASA truly was a Cinderella story; from clerk steno GS4 to Chief, Administrative Office for Shuttle. Just shows how education, hard work, mentoring, and networking (FEW) pays off," Clara said.

Since retiring Clara has spent a lot of time working on FEW issues both locally and at the National level. She has been a member of the Space Coast Chapter of FEW since 1978 and has held nearly every position within the organization – except secretary. Space Coast Chapter will be hosting the 2002 National Training Program in Orlando and Clara is acting Chair. You will all be hearing from her soon.

Her mom, Mavis Timmons is also a member of our chapter, having moved here from Texas. Mavis worked for the Navy in Orange, Texas during World War II where she met Clara's dad. Clara's husband Del is an Engineer and Co-owner of The Communications Group in Rockledge. Her daughter Wendy is a Pediatrician in Lynchburg, Virginia and Peter is just starting as a Pilot with Air Midwest. They have two boys and a girl. Her son Shannon is a MSCE (computer nerd) in Melbourne and his wife Susan is a marketing rep with a firm in Vero Beach. They have one daughter.

TIDBITS FOR LIFE

Various Sources

Don't squat with your spurs on.

Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment.

Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier 'n puttin' it back in.

If you're ridin' ahead of the herd, take a look back every now and then to make sure it's still there.

If you get to thinkin' you're a person of some influence, try orderin' somebody else's dog around.

After eating an entire bull, a mountain lion felt so good he started roaring. He kept it up until a hunter came along and shot him ...

The moral: When you're full of bull, keep your mouth shut.

Never kick a cow chip on a hot day.

There's two theories to arguin' with a woman. Neither one works.

If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is stop diggin'.

Never slap a man who's chewin' tobacco.

It don't take a genius to spot a goat in a flock of sheep.

Always drink upstream from the herd.

When you give a lesson in meanness to a critter or a person, don't be surprised if they learn their lesson.

When you're throwin' your weight around, be ready to have it thrown around by somebody else.

The quickest way to double your money is to fold it over and put it back in your pocket.

Never miss a good chance to shut up.

There are three kinds of men.
The one that learns by reading.
The few who learn by observation.
The rest of them have to pee on the electric fence for themselves.

HEALTH CORNER

Submitted by Vickie Hall

NEW YORK (Reuters Health) – Nearly 80% of people in the US believe that what they eat is more important than how much they eat -- even as they scarf down fast-food chain "supersized" portions and corner-store muffins that have ballooned in size from 1.5 to 8 ounces.

The finding suggests that when it comes to losing weight, many people may be ignoring the importance of limiting overall calorie intake, according to Melanie Polk, director of nutrition education at the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR), which commissioned the survey.

And many people may not be aware that portion sizes -- and even standard restaurant plate sizes -- have grown in the last few decades, along with the average American waist line.

"It seems that with all this emphasis on fat over the last few years, our focus seems to have been distorted at the expense of portion size," said Polk in an interview with Reuters Health. "We sort of lost our perspective. And that would make sense given that more than half of Americans are overweight at this point."

In the survey, which was conducted by Penn, Schoen and Berland Associates of Washington, DC, on behalf of the AICR, more than 1,000 people aged 18 and older were interviewed about their eating habits and weight-loss strategies. The survey findings appear to confirm recent data from the National Institutes of Health that suggest that 55% of Americans are overweight and 25% are obese. The survey found that:

- 62% of people say they are above their ideal weight, with 10% saying they need to lose 50 pounds or more;
- only 1% could correctly estimate standard serving sizes for 8 different major foods ranging from pasta to potatoes, as defined by the US Department of Agriculture;
- only 12% consider the Nutrition Facts food label guidelines when portioning out food, and 67% of people say they never measure out food;
- 56% decide how much to eat based on how hungry they are, and 26% eat everything on their plate no matter how much is served;
- and 34% continue to eat whatever they have become used to eating, regardless of changing caloric needs due to drops in daily activity levels or aging.

The good news is that most people can begin to change their habits right away and on their own., Polk said. "We don't want to be measuring out our food all the time," she said.. "That

takes all the joy out of eating... but one of the best things that you can do to become more aware of what you are eating is to take a day and measure out some serving sizes and see how much it takes up the plate."

While consulting a registered dietitian can help, "some things people can do on their own -- saying 'hey, this is a lot more than I need, and I need to cut down,'" she said. People need to take into account their age, gender, and activity level when choosing what -- and how much -- to eat.

"So cutting down on portion size is one thing, and the other thing that can set you in the right direction is eating a more plant-based diet," she said.

Article taken from the following website:
<http://www.healthcentral.com/news>

Space Coast Chapter Newsletter Editor
Rutha Williams



Please send news articles or items of interest for this Newsletter to Rutha Williams at EC-H1 or e-mail Rutha.Williams-1@kmail.ksc.nasa.gov

Please feel free to share this Newsletter with your friends. And for anyone interested, a Membership Application is attached as the last page.

The April issue of this Newsletter is dedicated in Memory of
Suzie Goff

**FEDERALLY EMPLOYED WOMEN, INC.
SPACE COAST CHAPTER
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

This form may also be used to notify the Membership Chairperson of any changes you have in personal data. Include name and corrected data only.

New Applicant Notice of Change

Name: _____ Home Phone: _____

Home Address: _____ Birth date: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Agency/Company: _____ Work Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Committees you would like to work on or Chair:

Finance ____ Bylaws ____ Seminar ____ Programs ____
Community Outreach ____ Legislative ____ Scholarships ____
Sunshine ____ Environmental ____ Historian ____

Officer positions you would be interested in serving:
President ____ President Elect ____ Vice President ____
Secretary ____ Treasurer ____

Other areas of interest or things you would like Space Coast Chapter to address or provide a program covering a specific topic: _____

The following information is requested by the National Office for statistics only.

Position/Title: _____ Series/Grade: _____

Circle One: SES GM GS WG Military Other

Please remit check payable to Space Coast Chapter for \$30 to HM-A-1/Aneta Ott.