
A VIEW FROM FEW

AN ORGANIZATION FOR OPPORTUNITY AND EQUALITY FOR WOMEN IN
GOVERNMENT

Space Coast Chapter, Kennedy Space Center, FL

May 2000

SPACE COAST CHAPTER, FEW
1999 - 2000
Officers and Committees

President	Vickie Hall
Finance	Clara Anderson
Public Relations	Jean Grenville
Newsletter	Rutha Williams/Patricia Leonard
NTP/RTP Planners	Ann Piepenbrink/Aneta Ott
Nominations	Sharon White
Webmaster	Debbie Ward
Presidents Task Force	Clara Anderson
President Elect	Ann Piepenbrink
Seminar Chairperson	Barbara Powell
Compliance/Diversity	Sue Dickinson
Vice President	Aneta Ott
Programs	Jean Grenville
Parliamentarian	Carolyn Burnham
Community Outreach	Jean Grenville/Becky Fasulo
Treasurer	Christy Vanasse
Membership	Aneta Ott
Sunshine	Jan Hall
Environmental	Becky Fasulo
Secretary	Jane Eitel
Scholarships	Christy Vanasse
Legislation	Connie Dobrin
Historian	Arden Belt
Past President	Vickie Hall
National Awards Chair	Karin Biega
National Scholarship	Clara Anderson
Regional Manager	Becky Fasulo
Regional Nominations	Vickie Hall



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to you all once again. I would like to take this opportunity to say THANK YOU to several of our

members for the support they have provided to our organization this month.

First, a big THANK YOU to Debbie Ward, our new Webmaster. Debbie has been busily working to get our website set-up so that it can be viewed by one and all. She has updated much of the information on our website and we are now included in the Kennedy Space Center website under Employee Organizations and the alphabetical listing of Kennedy Space Center organizations. Please be sure to check it out at <http://www.ksc.nasa.gov/groups/few/>.

Secondly, I would like to THANK all the FEW members and family members that supported the KSC All American Picnic: Tracy Anderson, Debbie and Steve Ward, Jean Grenville, Jim Hall, Joanne and Cassie Abernathy, Barbara Krause and Becky and Lenny Fasulo. It sure was a hot one but a lot of fun was had by all!

Sharon White and her committee have also been quite busy this month pulling together a slate of officers for the coming year. And just as a reminder Nominations remain open until our next meeting, so if you are interested in serving as a Chapter Officer, please contact Sharon at Sharon.White-1@ksc.nasa.gov. Also if you are interested in chairing a particular committee, please send me an e-mail message. Good job Sharon, we sincerely appreciate your efforts.

Finally I'd like to THANK Jean Rhodes for the very informative program she presented at our April meeting.

What a great group of people to work with. Your support is truly appreciated by this Chapter.

On another note, Tracy Anderson, Chairperson of the Federal Women's Program Working Group and a new Space Coast Chapter member, and I have been discussing how the FWPWG and FEW can better serve each other by working on joint projects. More to come on this in the future. I think we can definitely be an asset to each other. So when you see a project being announced in our Newsletter or by special announcement, please be sure to lend a hand.

EMAIL DRIVING SOME USPS JOB CUTS

In the next 5 years, some 9,000 Postal Service jobs will be cut as part of an effort to save \$4 billion. The cuts will come primarily from attrition and hiring freezes. Currently there are 11,000 vacant Postal Service jobs. The need for the additional job reductions is being blamed on opposition from the mailing industry to rate increases and the growing acceptance and popularity of email.

Senate Backs Earnings Test Repeal

The Senate has joined the House in approving legislation to repeal the earnings test that reduces Social Security benefits for those aged 65-69 who continue receiving wages or self-employment income while drawing those benefits. President Clinton has said he will sign the bill, which must now go back to the House for technical amendments. The current limit means a loss of \$1 in Social Security benefits for every \$3 earned above \$17,000 a year. The legislation would not affect a more stringent earnings test applying to those aged 62-64 and drawing Social Security benefits. There is no earnings test at age 70 and above.

Welfare Hiring Exceeds Commitments

Federal agencies have hired about 16,600 people through the government's welfare-to-work project to date, 6,000 more than they committed to under the three-year-old program. The program uses various hiring authorities, most of them to place employees in entry-level jobs. The program was somewhat controversial when it first began because of concern that the hirers might take positions that employees displaced in agency cutbacks could fill, but that does not appear to have been a significant problem. The most active agencies in the program include Commerce, Defense, Treasury and Veterans Affairs.

IRS REPORTS ON FED'S TAX DEBTS

According to an IRS report, federal employees owe over \$2.4 billion in delinquent taxes. The report is part of the Federal Employee/Retiree Delinquency Initiative, an IRS effort to address federal employee tax compliance problems. However, federal employees as a whole are significantly better than the general population, with an average delinquency rate of 5.25% compared to 8.12% in the country overall. Additionally, 40% of federal employees are paying off their back taxes compared to 19% for the country as a whole. The percentage of delinquent employees in Cabinet departments range from a high of 9.26% to a low of 3.8%.

LONG-TERM CARE BILL PASSES THE FULL COMMITTEE

The House Committee on Government Reform passed the "Long-Term Care Security Act" (H.R. 4040) last week. This bill would allow agencies to offer long-term care insurance to federal employees, annuitants, military members, retired military members, and their families. However, agencies would not pay the premiums; the entire cost would be paid by the insured. We'll continue to keep you posted.

Earnings Test Repeal Will Benefit Large Numbers

The Social Security Administration estimates that more than 800,000 Social Security beneficiaries or dependents are currently affected by the earnings test applying to those ages 65-69 and that another 100,000 persons have not even filed for benefits because they are continuing to work beyond that age or are a dependent of someone who is. Both the House and Senate have passed legislation to repeal that test, which results in a reduction of \$1 in Social Security benefits for every \$3 earned over \$17,000. The test is primarily of interest to FERS retirees because Social Security is a main part of their federal retirement benefits but also could affect CSRS retirees who have enough Social Security credits to qualify for a benefit.

Offset Bill Passes Key Barrier

Legislation to soften the effect of the government pension offset has passed a key hurdle, by attracting co-sponsorship from 220 House members, a majority. The GPO reduces Social Security spousal or survivor benefits by \$2 for every \$3 the beneficiary gets as an annuity from a retirement system that doesn't include Social Security such as the federal CSRS system. In many cases, that wipes out the Social Security spousal or survivor benefit entirely. The bill would exempt the first \$1,200 a month of combined CSRS and Social Security benefits from the offset. A companion Senate bill has 19 sponsors.

UPDATED FEDERAL LEAVE INFO – on FEDreport.com's Website

The federal government has just released updated Federal Leave information – and we've posted it on FEDreport.com's website for you. This is the most comprehensive and up-to-date information available on every type of federal leave, including information on Annual Leave, Emergency Leave, Sick Leave, Leave Without Pay, Military Leave and other leave situations you may face. To get your own copy of the new Leave info, simply go to our website at <http://www.fedreport.com> and click on the FREE INFO button on the top of our homepage. Please print off a copy for future reference – and don't forget to make copies for you colleagues.

C Fund Posts Second-Best Month Ever

The Thrift Savings Plan's common stock C fund had the

second-best month in the history of the program in March, posting a 9.74 percent gain that brought its 12-month return to 17.74 percent. The gain, which followed losses of about 5 percent and 2 percent in January and February, was the strongest return since the C fund's

creation in 1988 except for an 11.41 percent gain in December 1991. There have been only two other months with gains exceeding 8 percent—8.83 percent in July 1989 and 9.44 percent in May 1990. The government

securities G fund gained 0.55 percent in March for a 12-month return of 6.37 percent, and the bond F fund gained 1.32 percent for a 12-month return of 1.86 percent. Meanwhile, money in the G fund is being invested at a 6.25 percent annual rate in April. Earnings Test Repeal Signed President Clinton has signed into law a measure (HR-5) repealing the "earnings test" for Social Security recipients aged 65-69 who continue to have employment-related earnings. The provision currently affects some 800,000 Social Security beneficiaries. The repeal is effective retroactive to the beginning of this year, meaning that payments averaging about \$3,500 will go out to those who have had Social Security benefits withheld because of the earnings test this year. Only Part of Earnings Test Issue Addressed The repeal, which primarily is of interest to federal and postal employees retired under the FERS system, does not affect a separate earnings test for Social Security beneficiaries aged 62-64. There is no earnings test for those age 70 and above. Nor does the new law directly affect the status of two other Social Security reductions of significant interest in the federal-postal community, the windfall elimination provision (WEP) and the government pension offset (GPO).

Tax Crackdown Coming?

The IRS is sending letters to federal agencies describing the percentages of their employees who are delinquent in paying federal taxes, after compiling a report showing that federal employees owe nearly \$2.5 billion. Among agencies with the highest delinquency rates are Education, 9.3 percent, Housing and Urban Development, 8.6 percent and Labor, 7.7 percent. Overall, a lower percentage of federal employees is delinquent than is the general population, 5.3 to 8.1 percent, but the IRS prodding likely will have repercussions in many agencies.

NATIONAL AWARDS **Clara Anderson**

The Past President's Task Force has the responsibility for submitting awards to both Regional and National. Our Chapter submitted documentation for the following National Awards: Chapter Newsletter, Chapter Programs and Special Project Award for our Make a Difference Day project to Pregnancy Resources, Inc. As you may

remember, Space Coast Chapter won 1st place at the Regional Training Program for our Chapter Programs and Special Project.

Chapter Awards **Clara Anderson**

The Member of the Year and Distinguished Service Awards are your opportunities to recognize individuals within and outside the Chapter for providing support over and above the norm. Please take the time to nominate someone you feel is deserving of

these awards. Specific criteria for each of the awards was sent out on April 18th and nominations will remain open until May 31, 2000. Please send your nominations to DDAnderson@worldnet.att.net.

Regional Training Program **Jane Eitel**

The Regional Training Program (RTP) in Augusta, GA was a great success as far as I am concerned. The sessions that I attended were most interesting. One of the sessions was a two-day session on racism. One had to really look into their inner most feelings to discover if there was racism or not. It is strange because we think of racism as color. But this class was entirely different and one came away with different feelings from those present at the beginning of the class. All the other classes that I attended were also excellent, but that one really stood out in my mind.

The members who attended combined business with pleasure. We laughed a lot, ate a lot and had a great time. Now I am looking forward to New Orleans in July.

PRESIDENT'S INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON WOMEN **Linda Bradley**

The Space Coast Chapter of SWE hosted a Women's History Month Celebration at the Radisson Resort at the Port in Cape Canaveral Florida March 8,2000. The speakers at this event were Frances Sullinger, Senior Diplomacy Advisor, U.S. Department of State, LTC Theresa Morris of DEOMI, and Linda Bradley, President Elect of the Space Coast Chapter of NAWIC and employee of United Space Alliance .

As of result of this meeting, Mrs. Sullinger invited me to attend and participate in the President's Interagency Council on Women who sponsored the event "Celebrating America's Commitment to Women" on March 30, 2000 at the State Dept. in Washington, DC.

The U.S. Secretary of State, Madeleine K. Albright, and the Presidents Interagency Council on Women,

comprised of more than 50 women representing all Government Agencies were in attendance to celebrate America's preparations for the fifth anniversary of the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing Plus Five) to be held in June 2000 at the United Nations in New York City (which I have also been invited to attend and am planning for that now).

I arrived at the State Department on Thursday March 30th at 12:30, was badged and escorted to the Information Fair on the lower level of the State Department Exhibit Hall. There were over 30 displays and informational material available from Federal agencies and departments highlighting their programs that benefit women and children.

At 1:00 I was escorted to the Dean Acheson Auditorium for a briefing from Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, a video message from First Lady, Hillary Rodham Clinton, and presentations from four women who spoke on Welfare to Work Success, Microentrepreneur Success, Vital Voices Initiative and Supporting Women in Afghanistan.

The program was broadcast live in the United States through GSA downlinks and around the world through State Department TV and C-SPAN.

Later that afternoon, Frances Sullinger (who I invited to join me) and I were invited to attend a reception at the Sam Rayburn building at the Congressional Office Complex at the Capitol hosted by the Space Transportation Association, Congressional Aerospace Caucus and United Space Alliance. The reception was

"An Evening with the Astronauts" honoring the Astronaut Crew of STS-99. The Honorable Dave Weldon, Congressman from Florida, introduced Dan Goldin, NASA Administrator, who introduced the STS-99 Crew. The Crew showed a video and talked to the pictures they took from Space on their historic Imagery and Earth Mapping Mission earlier this year STS-99.

The reception was filled with Congressional representatives, CEO's, Lobbyists, Senators and VIP's from various Aerospace and Government agencies. United Space Alliance, CEO, Russ Turner, Mike McCulley, USA COO, and Andy Allen, USA VP of Shuttle Upgrades were all in attendance. We all had an opportunity to speak one on one with the Astronauts and the other dignitaries in the room. What an exciting and memorable event to have been invited to, I am still on cloud nine.

This trip was very informative, educational and had a profound influence on my professional and personal life ... I am still trying to digest all the information I received, the events I attended, the people I met and the life changing experiences I was so fortunate to be a part of. I want to thank SWE for asking me to speak at the Women's History Month Celebration, where I met Frances Sullinger and was invited to attend this event in

Washington. This was a once in a lifetime opportunity and I am very pleased that I was able to take advantage of it.

World March of Women 2000 **Ruby Jennings**

A worldwide series of coordinated women's rights demonstrations is well underway. Women from around the globe are organizing national events in over 138 countries---including Korea, Haiti and Palestine. All of the events share a common demand: an end to poverty and violence against women, two problems that plague women no matter where they live. The National Organization for Women is taking the lead in organizing the U. S. march which will be held on Sunday Oct. 15, 2000, in Washington, DC. Worldwide events began on International Women's Day (March 8, 2000) and will culminate on October 17, the United Nations International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, when women representing every participating country will meet at the UN in New York City to demand improved programs to eradicate poverty and violence against women. The US march will bring thousands to Washington just weeks before the 2000 elections. A march was held here in Brevard County on March 8.

MEMBERSHIP REWARDS **Vickie Hall**

Last month I included a brief item on this topic. If you have attended at least six Business/Program meetings and have participated in at least one of the following projects: KSC Voters' Registration Drive; Florida Coastal Cleanup; Days of Caring @ Baxley Manor; Make A Difference Day (Pregnancy Resource Center); Salvation Army Christmas Stockings; Baxley Manor Christmas Angels; or the KSC All American Picnic, the Chapter will pay for your dinner in June at the Installation and Awards dinner.

The Chapter would like to **THANK YOU** for your dedication and support, so please send me your name and the months of the meetings you have attended along with the projects you have supported by May 31st. Please do not assume I know who you are. If you qualify I need this information by May 31st

HEALTH CORNER **Submitted by Vickie Hall**

Low Back Pain Is Inevitable, Expert Says But Surgery and Other Treatments Are Rarely Needed

By Peggy Peck
WebMD Medical News

April 17, 2000 (Philadelphia) - Benjamin Franklin once said that two things are inevitable: death and taxes. So, too, is low

back pain, according to Richard A. Deyo, MD, who predicts that every American will experience low back pain at some time in his or her life.

Moreover, a backache is rarely a once-in-a-lifetime event, says Deyo, who is a professor of medicine at the University of Washington, in Seattle. And although the annual price tag for low back pain is estimated at \$50 billion, Deyo says much of that is spent on unnecessary treatments.

He says that left alone -- without bed rest, spinal manipulations, or surgery -- low back pain will usually ease within a few days, or at worst, a few weeks. This was illustrated dramatically in 1988, Deyo says, when "Isiah Thomas of the Detroit Pistons suffered a back injury during the NBA playoffs. The next day, Thomas [was in so much pain he] could not get out of bed, and then two days later, he returned to lead his team to a victory."

Low back pain, Deyo tells WebMD, should be considered a chronic condition that may flare up in response to injury or overuse.

Deyo shared his approach to treating low back pain at a recent meeting of the American College of Physicians-American Society of Internal Medicine, an organization that represents many of the nation's primary care physicians.

Although many doctors believe that all patients with low back pain require an X-ray, Deyo disagrees. "In only 1 in 2,500 adults will an X-ray detect something that wasn't suspected by the initial physical exam," he says. Moreover, he says, when the lower spine is the focus of an X-ray, reproductive glands are exposed to high levels of radiation. "Getting a spinal X-ray is the equivalent of a daily chest X-ray for several years," Deyo says.

People with low back pain should have a thorough physical exam, rather than an X-ray, he says. For example, if the doctor finds pain shooting down the patient's leg, known as sciatica, there is probably pressure on a nerve, he says. This condition may require surgery, he says. But he prefers to observe these patients on a weekly basis for a few weeks before referring them to a surgeon.

To illustrate his point, Deyo cites a case of a patient close to his heart: his wife. "She called me one day at work and said she had tingling in her heel," he says. "By the next day this had developed into full-blown sciatica with foot drop [or weakness]. She was actually catching her foot on the stairs." His wife, also a physician, decided to "wait it out. Within a few weeks, the foot drop and the other symptoms cleared."

Similarly if raising and crossing your leg causes pain, this "indicates that there is very likely a herniated disc." Herniated discs do not require surgery, says Deyo, who adds that after age 60, "36% of the population has herniated discs, but those herniated discs do not cause pain." Deyo says that although

60% of adults seek treatment of back pain, only "about 1% to 2% of these cases go to surgery, and even that may be more surgery than is really necessary."

He says he is not opposed to short-term spinal manipulation therapy because it may help with pain relief, but he cautions against "going to a chiropractor who says that you will need a treatment once a week for the rest of your life to avoid a return of symptoms. That's just not needed." He also says that he is opposed to a common practice by chiropractors of "routine total spine X-ray. Again, this isn't needed and is an unnecessary radiation exposure."

Asked whether corsets or support garments can help, Deyo says that the best studies suggest there is no benefit, but some people find them helpful. "If a patient tells me that something works, then I tell the patient to go for it." He says, too, that there is "very little science behind the so-called orthopaedic mattresses, and the advice about firm mattresses or bed boards really probably has more to do with a caution about avoiding sagging mattresses, which may make movement difficult."

Finally, Deyo says, the best way for doctors to treat people with back pain is to assure the patients that they will most likely get better soon and to follow up that advice with tips about strategies for limiting further episodes of back pain.

For example, patients with desk jobs should be urged to "get up and move around every hour or so," he says. People should also consider exercises that extend and flex the back, to strengthen the muscles. But the best advice is to "avoid activities that bring on symptoms. A few years ago, I found that running brought on back pain, so I switched to biking."

© 2000 Healtheon/WebMD. All rights reserved.

Article taken from the following website:
http://health.excite.com/news_content

FEW SPACE COAST CHAPTER MEMBER SPOTLIGHT Rebecca Fasulo

I was born in Mt. Vernon, Ohio and lived there until after I graduated from Mt. Vernon High School. I lived in Michigan and worked in the medical field until I moved to Florida in 1989. I started at NASA in 1990 in the clerical pool. I have worked in Procurement and Payloads as a secretary. I became an administrative support assistant in the Space Station and Shuttle Payload Directorate in October 1998. With the KSC 2000 reorganization, it looks like I'm returning to Procurement in their Admin Office.

I have been a member of Space Coast Chapter, FEW, since 1992. After I attended my first FEW Training Seminar, I decided I wanted to be a part of the professional organization. I never believed that I would ever be the president or seminar chair. Now that I have served two terms as President and chaired the seminar twice, I guess anything is possible. I have also served as the vice president, and president-elect. I have served on the scholarship, environmental, community outreach, seminar, past presidents task force, and program committees. Many of which I have

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.

**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.