

Newsbrief 82

December 2011



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Former FAO and Other UN Staff Association

Associazione dei Pensionati della FAO e di altre Organizzazioni delle Nazioni Unite

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A Word from the President

Dear Friends,

Welcome to this issue of our Newsbrief which begins, as usual, with the words I like most of all when writing its opening page, which are the two first words you read: “Dear Friends”.

This is the time of the year when we are looking back to the beginning of our careers with a United Nations Organization, first as ‘Staff Members’ and afterwards as ‘Pensioners’. Quite a few of our friendships with colleagues, having one of the many different nationalities which distinguish the United Nations, were born in that period and became part of our lives.

This is also the time when books are balanced and ledgers closed and we remind our friends of the continuing ties that bind us, hoping they will still be with us a year from now. Your Executive Committee is already preparing the reports it will send to you before the next General Assembly takes place, which will most likely be held on Wednesday the 30th of May 2012, once again in the familiar Headquarters of FAO, after having enjoyed the warm welcome and hospitality of WFP and IFAD in the preceding two years.

This year has had its share of problems to resolve but also some successes. Moving the offices, though efficiently done, inevitably caused a loss of time for the office staff and the Executive Committee. Nevertheless FFOA has played its role in maintaining good relations with the host Organization and with the staff representative bodies and UN pensioner’s associations. In particular we may mention the contribution that the FFOA representatives have made to the JAC/MC and its negotiations on medical coverage.

The Executive Committee looks forward to collaborating with the new Director-General of FAO and his team, expecting that certain decisions will soon be taken which had to be postponed until the new guidelines and policies for FAO Management had been decided and formalized.

Meanwhile you will be able to enjoy our traditional Christmas Party on Wednesday, the 14th of December, when many of you will be able to enjoy the company of old colleagues and new friends. For those who live too far away from Rome to enjoy this and other occasions, the FFOA Website is flourishing with lots of up-to-date information and welcomes your observations and suggestions.

As you may know, the next year will be the last year of the mandate of the present Executive Committee, which means that with the first two Newsbriefs of 2012 the forms will be distributed which allow those members meeting the required conditions, to submit their application to stand for election. I strongly encourage interested members to participate and rejuvenate and strengthen the present team.

On behalf of the Executive Committee it is a real pleasure for me to wish our members, wherever they may live, a really relaxing and pleasant holiday period with their loved-ones!

*Anton Doeve
President*

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Medical Insurance

(Responsible: **G. Eberle**, I. Novelli, A. Prien, S. Salvi, E. Seidler, J. Smidt)

The year that ends showed once again that it is possible to contain cost increases, and hence contributions from participants, acting on a variety of elements and management tools or procedures. Our claims' processor, Vanbreda International, is also convinced about this and has been working toward this goal, particularly during the last decade; this has had an overall positive impact and is appreciated.

About fifteen suitably designed measures have produced savings in 2010 of around 6.7 million dollars. The largest contribution came from the use of a large US network of service providers (doctors, hospitals, clinics, laboratories, etc., originally through UHC and now through CIGNA), with significant reductions in costs (30% or more). Next came the growth of the list of clinics, medical centers and specialized physicians in Rome and in other locations, that have agreed to charge reasonable fees, as well as agreements with pharmacies to use discount prices, selected screening programmes, etc. In turn, the effective cost control system that has been put in place has enabled us to obtain more favorable terms and conditions from Vanbreda International (claims processor) and Allianz (insurer).

Since 2007 our insurance premiums increased on average by 3% per year, compared with average cost increases of 7 to 9% p.a. for the international health sector. It is hoped that this positive trend continues for as long as possible.

200th Session of the JAC/MC

On November 21, 2011 the JAC/MC (Joint Advisory Committee for the Medical Coverage) held its **200th** meeting. Established in 1990 this committee, with FFOA representatives, has been instrumental in the planning, design, control and improvement of BMIP/MMBP medical plans. The Committee has always a long agenda of works, deals with technical and delicate matters and calls on international experts when needed. The Committee is a clear example of collaboration between various stakeholders (administrations including IFAD, WFP and ICCROM, active staff and retirees).

One of the most complex and delicate issues under review is the sharing of BMIP costs between administrations and participants and then between the various groups of participants (such as General Service, Professional, and retirees). Be sure that your representatives will defend the interest of pensioners and foremost the need to preserve the BMIP/MMBP and possibly improve it further.

Medical Insurance information session

On November 2, there was a presentation by Ms Katja Habets, Vanbreda officer based in Rome. The meeting was attended by a large group of FFOA members who asked questions on various benefits, how to submit claims, and on a number of related issues. Answers were provided directly in the meeting room.

We now wish to highlight the following: a) If you travel to the U.S., you can ask Vanbreda to release you a card before departure stating that you are covered by the CIGNA network. This will enable you, if needed, to have access to a large number of medical facilities, to benefit from discount rates and arrange for direct billing; b) You should know that controls have been intensified to protect the plans from damage caused by fraud. Vanbreda may request additional information on expenses incurred. Information concerning treatment should be forwarded confidentially to the Vanbreda Medical Adviser who may contact the treating doctor for further clarification; c) Fraud or attempt to defraud risks exclusion from the BMIP/MMBP plans; d) It is expected that there will not be large increases in the level of contributions from participants for 2012.

Pensions

(Responsible: A. Prien, G. Eberle, A. Marcucci, M. Purnell, S. Salvi, E. Seidler, J. Smidt, B. Szynalski)

Certificate of Entitlement. Most pensioners have received their Certificates of Entitlement and should send them back immediately but not later than the end of 2011 to avoid any delay in payment of the pension. If you have not received one (and retired earlier than this current year) you should contact the UNJSPF in New York and request one (by email: unjspf@un.org or letter: UNJSPF c/o United Nations P.O. Box 5036 New York, NY 10017 USA).

The Pension Fund at the FAFICS Council

Mr Seidler reported on his attendance at the FAFICS council meeting in Geneva in July 2011 and specifically on the presentations made by Mr. Cochemé and his staff regarding the status of the UNJSPF. The key points were:

- At the end of June, the Fund exceeded the historic 2007 high and was \$42.673 billion
- Returns in Fiscal 2011 (end April) were a solid 11.9% which compared to 32.2% in fiscal 2010 and minus 28.3% in Fiscal 2009
- Equities at the time were at attractive valuations and the portfolio was 67% equities (normally 60%) and 27% in fixed income securities
- The Fund is considered stable and sound with Benefit payments of \$1.97 billion per year and Contributions into the Fund of \$2.03 billion so the Fund was able not to use its capital to pay benefits and the surplus of receipts over payments allowed the Fund to increase its capital base
- Investment Income in 2010/11 was \$1.244 billion (from Dividends, Interest and income from sale of securities) whilst Dividend Income from the equity portfolio was \$563 million
- An Asset Liability Management Study (completed Spring 2011) recommended an increase in inflation linked bonds, a decrease in fixed income bonds, increased allocation to real estate, increased allocation to emerging markets and private equity funds, the addition of commodities and an elimination of cash holdings (currently 3% of the Fund). This investment strategy it was claimed would shorten the time to reach 100% cover of inflation adjusted benefits
- Fund's current security margin is 39.6% with a current funding ratio of 139.6% based on the Fund valuation at 31 Dec 2009. If the pension adjustment system (to take account of inflation) is taken into account then the funding ratio drops below 100%
- Actuarial situation was reported as 2009 minus 0.33%, 2005- plus 1.29%, 1999 plus 4.25% and 1993 minus 1.49%
- Fund participants at end 2010 were 121,138, an increase of 3% over 2009
- Benefits in payment were 63,830 at Dec 2010 as compared to 61,840 at Dec 2009 – an increase of 3.2%
- Active participants in the Fund (active and retirees) were 185,410.

UN Joint Staff Pension Board Meeting in July 2011

The 58th session of the UNJSPB took place from 11 through 15 July 2011 in Geneva. Ms Nanayaa Nikoi, representative endorsed by the Director General of FAO, was elected Chairman. The FAFICS representatives were its President, AFICS New York, and Vice-Presidents from Associations in New York, Australia, Austria, and Ethiopia. Most of the discussions focused on the budget for 2012-2013, with little attention paid to FAFICS priorities for improved benefits.

The session was surprised that the Fund Secretariat were proposing an increase of US\$216 million for the Fund's budget, a 23 per cent increase from the previous years. This included an increase per participant and beneficiary from US\$197 per year to US\$248 per year. A working group laboured long hours to produce an estimate for submission to the UN General Assembly of US\$194,164,000 (comprising Admin Costs, US\$98,407,600; investment costs, US\$92,938,200; audit costs, US\$2,613,800; and Board expenses, US\$204,400). The CEO thanked the Working Group for its support of key projects. The Representative of the Secretary-General cautioned that savings achieved on investment management might be less than lost investment returns.

The Fund's investments at the end of March 2011 had increased from US\$38.348 billion in 2010 to US\$42.889 billion. Over the long term the Fund still exceeds the real rate of return of 3.5 per cent. It is also favourably placed as regards liquidity as payments in equal or exceed payments out.

The report of the Committee of Actuaries recommended some changes in the assumptions used for withdrawal and retirement rates, percentage of retirees who are married, and of those who take the lump

sum. An alternative asset valuation method was being studied and will be shown as well as the current asset valuation method for the actuarial valuation for the 31 December 2011.

The Working Group on plan design in 2010 recommended that negative movements of more than 2 per cent in the CPI data should cause the benefit entitlement to be frozen (rather than reduced) until subsequent movements of the CPI overtook the negative movement. FAFICS stressed its desire to have the proposal approved. The Board requested the Consulting Actuary to estimate the cost of eliminating the negative cost-of living adjustments and would reconsider the proposal in 2012 when the actuarial valuation of 31 December 2011 would be available.

FAFICS emphasized the importance of increasing the normal retirement age in the context of increased longevity on the actuarial valuation, and this was discussed with a presentation of the work of the Working Group of the High-level Committee on Management on the Mandatory Age of Separation.

FAFICS expressed concern that the criteria for the Emergency Fund should become more flexible and that follow-up letters seeking additional information should be less bureaucratic in tone.

The issue of small pensions affects mainly, but not only, retirees in Africa and Asia and the comprehensive review that the Fund will undertake will be submitted to the Pension Board in 2012.

The note on the development of operational and pension benefit management, showing the growing volume and complexity of the Fund operations, was welcomed. FAFICS emphasized the need to strengthen client services particularly regarding the unnecessarily complicated documentation required to confirm that a person is a survivor. It was disappointing that the proposal to include names of potential survivors on the Certificate of Entitlement was not agreed by the Fund.

Among many administrative matters the Board also considered a revised job description for the next CEO; study on early retirement provisions; review of pensionable remuneration, and a report on the monitoring of the impact of currency fluctuations on pension benefits.

FAFICS also invited the Board to share its celebration of the long and productive life of Mme Charlotte Lamunière the oldest known UN retiree who had just died in Geneva at the age of 109.

Update on the Pension Fund Investments

The Pension Fund reached a total of US\$44 billion in July 2011 and was down to \$38 billion in September and \$41 billion in October. The distribution of investments then was 60 per cent in equities, 32 per cent in bonds, 4.5 per cent in real estate, 0.7 per cent in alternatives and 1.3 per cent in cash. Around 30 per cent were in US dollars and the rest in other currencies.

Social Activities

(Responsible: **J. Smidt**, G. Monciotti, I. Novelli, B. Szynalski, A. Van Arkadie)

Social assistance. As in the past, some personal assistance may be obtained by members in need by applying to the FFOA office (Tel. 06-57055623 or 57056016). If anyone knows of a member who deserves help, please let the office know under strictly confidential conditions.

Cultural and leisure activities

The following events took place since October 2011 and were much enjoyed by our members:

Babette's. The luncheon at the Babette restaurant in October attracted 16 members who appreciated a pleasant social gathering in the courtyard on a sunny day and the usual excellent buffet lunch. We will return there and encourage more members to come along to this economic and enjoyable venue.

Castel Porziano (12 October). FFOA participants will keep the walk though the beautiful forest and the visit to the new museum as a good memory.

San Martino al Cimino (1st November). We learnt a great deal about Donna Olimpia, the secret Woman Pope who was in power at the Vatican between 1644 and 1655.

The walk during the **Jewish quarter between the antic Ghetto and the Tiberina Island**, initially planned for 20 October, took place on 11 November owing to heavy rains on the former date. Seven FFOA members had the pleasure of walking through this historic area of Rome with its many shops and bars.

Naples (19 November). Twelve FFOA members and their families visited the famous crib of S. Gregorio Armeno, the Vomero, the Dome and the Caravaggio.

Future visits. Members interested should contact the FFOA Office to pay in advance and also if required to provide personal details for security reasons. Members with email are informed as early as possible of our cultural and leisure activities. Members without an email, may call the FFOA Office (which has a copy of

the programme) on 06-57055623 or 06-570556016 (office hours from 9.30 – 13.00 hours, from Monday through Friday) to find out about planned events. For example, at the time of preparing Newsbrief 82, the following events were being organized (and members with an email had already been informed): trips to the **Terme near Viterbo** (1st December) and **Greccio** (4th December) where Saint Francis of Assisi is present at the birth, surrounded by people, constituting in this way the first real crib in the world. On 13th and 14th December “**the Glass Slipper**” based on the story of Cinderella, will be presented in English. It is ideal for the Christmas season and suitable for all ages. The association www.artsinenglish is a non-profit association and is sponsored by one of our members.

Concerts. In October a new series of concerts of the pianist **Enrico Camerini** have started in the Sala Baldini of Rome, close to Piazza Campitelli (Marcello theatre). The next concerts take place on the following Saturdays at 17.00 hours each: **10th December 2011, 14th January, 18th February, 17th March, 14th April and 12th May 2012.** The repertory of Maestro Camerini is particularly broad including classical, romantic and modern pieces of music. Tickets (15 euro) may be purchased at the ticket counter (entrance of Sala Baldini) before the concert. For information and reservation, please contact Tel. 06-35453120 or www.enricocamerini.it. The programme of each concert may be obtained 20 days before by calling the above-mentioned telephone number.

FAO Staff Coop. As usual, we encourage our members to consult the FAO Staff Coop (Tel. 06-57053142) to obtain a copy of their programme, including local excursions and cruises.

News from the Executive Committee

Appointment of a new member of the FFOA Executive Committee. On 9th November **Ms Georgia Shaver** was co-opted as a member of the Executive Committee. Ms Shaver has just retired from her post as the first Ombudsman in WFP. She worked for 31 years with the UN and WFP, with 18 years in senior posts in African countries including as WFP Representative in Mozambique and Ethiopia. Previously she was also elected Chairman of the Field Staff Association and President of the Association of Professional Staff in Rome. A hearty welcome to this new member.

Office Move. Please note our present location at E-005 and E-025.

Office Closure. The FFOA office will be closed for Christmas and New Year from **Monday 19th December 2011** through **Friday 6th January 2012**.

The FFOA End-of-Year Party is taking place on **14th December at 16:00 hours**. It will be in the **Indonesia Room on the 8th floor of Building B**, and the charge will be **€10**. **Do advise the office that you intend to come but come anyway and meet old friends.**

Can YOU help? “Think not what your Association can do for you but what you can do for your Association” (Adapted from J.F. Kennedy’s inaugural). Volunteers for various tasks, not very onerous, are needed, including for translation of Newsbriefs or other documents from English to Italian (even just once a year). Arrange details with any member of the Executive Committee.

Paying your subscription. Please help our Treasurer by paying your annual subscriptions for 2012 (€25) as early as possible.

News from the Electronic World

(Responsible: Pino Pace)

Quarterly Pension Notifications. You may have noticed that it’s now some time that the UNJSPF has discontinued the mailing of quarterly notifications on cost of living adjustments to our pensions or they arrive so late as to be useless. The latest I have received is dated January 2011, after which deep silence. Well, following the indications provided it would be beneficial to share my experience with those of you who wanted to obtain the same information. Here is what I did.

I logged on our website (www.fao.org/ffoa), I went to the “Weblink” page and from there to the UNJSPF site. Once on the main page, I clicked on the “Welcome” and then on the “Beneficiary” buttons to get to the Main Menu of the site. I then noticed that a message on Cost of Living Notifications was appearing on that page, reporting the regrets by the Fund about the delays being experienced in mailing the relevant documents. However, I also noticed that a “Cost of Living Notifications” function was appearing on the left-hand menu-bar on the same page and I clicked on it. The display “Click to log in” appeared in the centre of the page, thus inviting access to “your Secure Documents page”. In order to proceed I went to the Login button shown on the top of the left-hand menu-bar and I clicked on it. The following page asked for entering

Retirement Number and Password, which I did (please remember that the Retirement Number is the identification number (R/.....) , where the five dots represent the five-digit number shown on the upper left side of any of the previous Notification Letters you have received from the Fund). The following page showed three options, the second of which was “Cost of living Notification”, which led me to a list of the most recent (last 2 years) personal notifications issued by the Fund. I clicked on the latest one (October 2011) and I got on the screen the letter I should have received by traditional mail by the end of October. Should you consider this tip as useful to other members, and relatively easy to follow in the step-by-step approach I have tried to explain, please invite them to follow the same route, obviously after having registered on the FFOA website (www.fao.org/ffoa).

PS: By the way, by surfing from the “Weblink” page of our site you will be surprised by the amount of useful info you can access on internal and external domains Try it and have fun!

The FFOA Database. You can easily update your record. Just click on FFOA web site: www.fao.org/ffoa and follow the instructions. Newsbriefs, General Assembly Reports and other important documents can be accessed on this web site.

News from the UN Organizations

FAO

World Food day was celebrated at FAO Headquarters on 17th and 18th October. The 60th year of FAO in Italy was commented on by several persons including the Mayor of Rome and the Italian Foreign Minister. Because of the large number of visitors expected, pensioners and visitors were excluded from entering the building on those two days without adequate advance notice. On previous occasions the Executive Committee members were invited to participate at the ceremonies. A crowded and successful couple of days resulted with a large number of the 35 FAO Goodwill Ambassadors present.

The 10 km Run for Food on Sunday 16th October for the World Food Day, was started by FAO Goodwill Ambassador and athletics legend, Carl Lewis. Numbers had doubled from last year. Regrettably few pensioners participated but their support was assured. The 5 mile non-competitive run or walk also had many participants. This was the sixth occasion organised by the Athletic Association Bancari Romani (GSBR) in partnership with the three Rome-based UN agencies and Biodiversity International. CASA helped with the race and organised a Cultural Show with a splendid blend of music. Volunteers again set up a Food Fair with a Bar, a Savoury Food Stand with various international finger foods, and a Sweet Tooth Stand with a rich assortment of goodies. This made €2,205 for the cause, which will be donated to the Telefood projects for the famine in the Horn of Africa.

WFP

The second session of the Executive Board took place the week beginning 14 November and was marked by the presence of the Italian President, Giorgio Napolitano, who wished to stress the importance for Italy of the World Food Programme which was celebrating the 50th Anniversary of its foundation in 1961. As part of the series of events which will follow in 2012, a dinner was held for invited guests and the Executive Board on Thursday 17 November. Italian Friends of WFP Committee procured the services of one of the top Italian Chefs, Filippo La Mantia to prepare the menu, food was provided by Italian producers and Pedevilla, the WFP caterer helped with the arrangements. All this was a pro bono cooperation making this a very special occasion, followed the next day by a meeting in the Auditorium for staff, both serving and retired, with again, a dessert offered by Maestro La Mantia. It turned out that the person present who had joined the Programme earliest was Irene Ursic-Ruisi, 1962 vintage, before WFP had become operational in the field. Congratulations Irene.

Regarding the 50th Anniversary of WFP (Newsbrief 81 refers), all WFP pensioners are invited to send ideas of what they feel might best mark this event. They will all be welcome to participate and are also invited to send their reminiscences, anecdotes and pictures to c/o Bronek Szynalski, either at WFP – Comitato Italiano per il WFP, Via Carlo Veneziani 60, Parco de Medici, 00148 Roma, Italia, or by email bronek.szynalski@wfp.org or broversz1@alice.it.

The Executive Board approved a budget for 2012 of US\$ 4.82 billion, of which the PSA is US\$ 3.75 billion. Whether this will effectively be pledged is still a matter of conjecture and high hopes. It is to be noted that Ramiro Lopes da Silva, one of the Deputies of the ED, has been elected Chairman of the UN Nutrition Committee, which recognises WFP's important role in this area.

The one sad news is that Maria-Grazia Iuri, the first female to attain a D2 grade in WFP, when she became Director of Finance division, died mid-October. She is recorded by Mario Zanini, one of her ex-

colleagues, as “an impressively hard and developed worker, competent and very experienced in her field, always available, with her human approach, to help other colleagues try and resolve their problems”.

On a lighter note, the Christmas concert organised by WFP Italian Friends Committee will take place on 16 December in WFP Auditorium at 2100 hrs and will feature NOA, the singer who sang in Roberto Benigni’s *La Vita è Bella*. Look her up on the web...she is very well known and respected.

FFOA once again expresses our gratitude to the WFP management and printing staff for printing this Newsbrief in time for the Christmas break.

IFAD

The pensioners of IFAD, who were available in Rome, along with a number of their spouses or partners, had their annual pre-Xmas lunch on the 30th of November, in the Orto Di Roma. A good time was had by all, catching up with many of their colleagues, and hearing reports from John McGhie (who organized the lunch) on recent developments concerning the IFAD Credit Union; and from Alan Prien, regarding the Joint Advisory Committee on Medical Coverage: particularly that Committee's recommendation to keep the contributions by participants to Vanbreda International at the same level in 2012.

News of the Staff Associations

Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS)

FAFICS continues to represent the pensioners but there is nothing special to report.

The Federation of International Civil Servants Associations (FICSA)

The next (65th) session of the Council of FICSA will be in Copenhagen on 13-17 February 2012 hosted by WHO/EURO Staff Association (World Health Organization). Unless a volunteer FFOA member living near Copenhagen is found, FFOA (an Associate Member) will be represented by the Association of Professionals in FAO as so often in the past. Several of the negotiations in progress are of concern to Pensioners.

Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations (CCISUA)

The Association has followed an extraordinary Assembly in June with a resolution and protracted negotiations on the new Mobility Policy (staff being obliged to move between countries at least every seven years). The main issues of concern are the mandatory nature of the new policy, incentives for mobility and staff representation on the proposed mobility-related staffing committee.

The association has also supported the FICSA recommendation for a petition supporting the use of a 120-month moving average exchange rate for calculation of local-track benefits to replace the use of the 36-month average. This reflects the staff concerns about the declining US dollar and its impact on pensions.

The Association of Professionals in FAO (APF)

The APF is working on number of issues some of which are of direct or indirect interest to pensioners. They (and FFOA) support a mandatory age of separation of 65 but without prejudice to staff who currently may retire at 60 or 62. A FICSA survey showed that a majority of the staff supports this and a much larger majority would themselves retire at 65. This would improve the financial outlook of the Pension Fund and so would be advantageous for existing pensioners. They urge support for the FICSA petition for a 120 month (instead of 36 month) average exchange rate to be applied when calculating new pensions for staff retiring outside the US dollar zone. While not affecting existing pensioners directly, any move to emphasize the decline of the dollar and the growing disparity between old and new pensions is welcome. It would also be good if FICSA could be persuaded to take more interest in what happens to pensions after retirement. They are negotiating (with difficulty) a solution for the new mandatory Mobility Policy that would be agreeable to all parties, and also for improvements in the “Culture of Trust and Fairness”. Policies are being prepared with an eye to the future negotiations under a new Director General.

The WFP Professional Staff Association (PSA)

The WFP-PSA enjoyed very good attendance at its Annual General Meeting on 11 October. This event was combined with a two-day training for Staff Representatives, facilitated by GFTU – General Federal Trade Unions – on “Staff Management Relationships at WFP”, through the PSA’s affiliation with CCISUA.

The WFP-PSA is a partner in the GFTU-supported Active Ageing Project funded by the European Commission. The objective is to prepare staff for to a healthy and productive retirement or for alternative

career options after working as a WFP staff member through providing on-line tools for WFP staff and information for PSA representatives to advocate for support from management for these efforts. The launch of the project last 25-26 October in London generated great expectations for provision of the materials by mid-2012.

The PSA participated in a Staff-Management Council meeting in October where important topics were discussed, including Promotions, the Indefinite Appointment Contract Conversion exercise and the budget for the coming year, including potential impact on staff.

The eleven-member PSA Staff Council will continue to focus its work on the needs of its membership and the priorities expressed by them. It can be reached by sending a message to wfp.psa@wfp.org or by calling the office at +39 (0)6 65133535.

New FFOA Members

A hearty welcome to our new members listed below:

Ms ABOU-SHADY, Farida
Ms CHERKI-BITTI, Michelle
Mr DIDIEGO, Umberto
Mr FECI, Damaso
Mr GUERRINI, Vincenzo
Ms KOCKEN, Els (Elizabeth)
Mr LANDART, Gilbert
Ms LE BRAS-MIANI, Cécile

Ms MAHABIR, Edith
Ms MAJASTRE, Claire
Ms MARTINELLI, Jelena
Ms MERCADO, Elizabeth
Ms MORO, Cristina
Mr PADMAPERUMA, Udeni
Ms SHAVER, Georgia
Mr TAVANI, Mario

All retirees ought to join the Association, to support its work, representing the pensioners and for their own interest. Our members should encourage their ex-colleagues to join FFOA!

IN MEMORIAM

Ms DUFFY, Mary	06 giugno 2011
Mr MASREVERY, Jean	29 luglio 2011
Mr VASTAG, Geza	11 settembre 2011
Mr WAGNER, Kani Paul	12 settembre 2011
Mr SICILIANI, Lamberto	02 ottobre 2011
Mr MADANL, Dewan	04 ottobre 2011
Mr PALMIERI, Massimo	09 ottobre 2011
Mr NABHAN, Hassan	18 ottobre 2011
Mr ROSELL MAURI, Cadmio Helios	20 ottobre 2011
Ms IURI, Maria Grazia	23 ottobre 2011
Ms CABLE BERGAMINI, Maureen	02 novembre 2011
Ms MORO, Daniela	10 novembre 2011
Mr LAMBRINIDES, George	11 novembre 2011
Ms JANSEN DALMASTRI, Catarina	18 novembre 2011

On behalf of all the members of FFOA, we express heartfelt sympathy to the families and friends of the above-mentioned former members.

Ms Agnes (Nancy) Burt de Fabritiis (1919-2011)

Nancy (FAO stenographer 1972 – 1981) passed away on 24 May 2011 (see Newsbrief 80) in her 92nd year after finally succumbing to illness. Her mind, however, remained alert until the end, still full of vivid personality and Scottish humour for which she was so well known. Her generosity and warm-heartedness were an inspiration to us all, so her passing should not be ignored. Let us remember her, dressed in tartan with the skirl of the bagpipes in the background singing her favourite Scottish songs, all part of a heritage which she never forgot. Our condolences go to Fiorenzo.

“But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flow’r, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snowfall in the river,
A moment white – then melts for ever.”
Robert Burns (1759-96), Scottish poet

Your Good Health

(FFOA publishes items concerning health of interest to pensioners but does not guarantee their accuracy or efficacy).

Feeling tired? Contribution from M.F. Purnell

A recent article based on research findings suggested that in spite of a healthy diet many of us lack vitamins and minerals. What symptoms and ailments indicate a possible nutritional deficiency?

Tiredness. Deficiency: Iron. Recommended daily allowance (RDA): 14.8 mg for women and 8.7 mg for men. Needed to make red blood cells, and haemoglobin which transports oxygen around the body. A common deficiency, in childhood, menstruating women, and people who suffer minor bleeding in the intestines such as those with a peptic ulcer or who take regular aspirin. Good sources are: red meat, eggs, green leafy vegetables. Vitamin C helps the absorption of iron, so it is a good idea to drink orange juice with meat. Note however that excessive amounts of iron can be harmful.

Frequent infections. Deficiency: selenium. RDA: 75mcg for men and 60mcg for women. It boosts immunity and protects cells from damage. We should all consider increasing our intake. Good sources are Brazil nuts, and some other nuts.

Back and leg pain Deficiency: Vitamin D (among other causes). RDA 10 mcg for men and women. Needed for bone growth, absorption of calcium in the gut, and a healthy immune system. Everyone needs it, particularly young children and older women. Good sources in diet are rare. The most readily available source is sunlight on the skin, 20-30 minutes on face and forearms three times a week should provide enough of a store for winter.

Third Age: Keep fit with sports! Contribution by Sabatino Salvi, from INTRAGE

Physical activity is good for body and mind. Yet sports are often lacking in our daily activities, from laziness or fatigue, and may be done incorrectly or even harmfully. One of the many sports that can be practised without limits of age is Golf.

Playing golf; because it's good. If you are looking for a more intimate and personal balance between body and mind, fitness and quality of life are inextricably bonded. They can be found in an elegant sport: **golf**.

This game is suitable for all ages, but it is particularly suitable for (the “**over 60’s**”) aging people thanks to its cardiovascular benefits. Aerobic activity allows the player, though no longer young, to develop and maintain a better cardiovascular capacity, that stimulates vasodilation and prevents heart attacks and other diseases related to lack of physical activity.

Although an individual sport it is often enjoyed with other players, thus promoting socializing and meeting new people. Golf is by no means a static sport, and requires good physical preparation: essential for performing precise and powerful shots, but also to prevent injuries and accidents.

The most important movement of the game is the “swing”, that is the trajectory made by the club in preceding and accompanying the shot. This movement requires coordination, flexibility and strength to hit and cast the ball to great distances with maximum precision. Long walks of four or more hours are part of the game, on beautiful and natural courses that benefit body and mind. Before starting to play golf it is advisable to practice stretching, in order to prepare the muscles to perform the necessary movements.

Contributions by Irene Ursic Ruisi

Warm water is good for you. For those who like to drink cold water, this article is applicable to you. It is nice to have a cup of cold drink after a meal. However, the cold water will solidify the oily stuff that you have just consumed. It will slow down the digestion. Once this 'sludge' reacts with the stomach acid, it will break down and be absorbed by the intestine faster than the solid food. It will line the intestine. Very soon, this will turn into fats and may lead to cancer. It is best to drink hot soup or warm water after a meal. The Chinese and Japanese drink hot tea with their meals, not cold water, maybe it is time we adopt their drinking habit while eating.

Common symptoms of heart attack. A serious note about heart attacks - You! should know that not every heart attack symptom is going to be the left arm hurting . Be aware of intense pain in the jaw line. You may never have the first chest pain during the course of a heart attack. Nausea and intense sweating are also common symptoms. 60 per cent of people who have a heart attack while they are asleep do not wake up. Pain in the jaw can wake you from a sound sleep. Let's be careful and be aware. The more we know the better chance we could survive.

Members' Corner

Something to make you laugh

It all began with an iPhone...

March was when our son celebrated his 17th birthday, and we got him an iPhone. He just loved it. Who wouldn't?

I celebrated my birthday in July, and my wife made me very happy when she bought me an iPad. Our daughter's birthday was in August so we got her an iPod Touch.

My wife celebrated her birthday in September so I got her an iRon.

It was around then that the fight started. What my wife failed to recognize is that the iRon can be integrated into the home network with the iWash, iCook and iClean.

This inevitably activates the iNag reminder service.

I should be out of the hospital next week!!!

Thoughts for the year end and season greetings

"Wishing everyone a joyful Christmas time and a happy New Year in 2012"

"Auguri a Tutti per le Festività e per un ottimo 2012"



Many people look forward to the new year for a new start on old habits. (Anon)

Cheers to a new year and another chance to get it right. (Oprah Winfrey)

New Year's Day: Now is the accepted time to make your regular annual good resolutions.

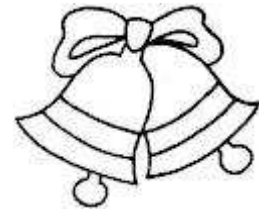
Next week you can begin paving hell with them as usual. (Mark Twain)

But can one still make resolutions when one is over forty? I live according to twenty-year-old habits. (André Gide)

"Meilleurs Voeux pour Noël et une Bonne et Heureuse Nouvelle Année 2012"

"Felices Fiestas e Feliz Año Nuevo 2012"





An der Schwelle des neuen Jahres lacht
die Hoffnung und fluestert, es werde uns
mehr Glueck bringen:

(Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809 – 1892), English poet)

On the threshold of the new year hope
laughs and whispers that it will bring
us more luck.



Ein neues Buch, ein neues Jahr
Was werden die Tage bringen?
Wird's werden, wie's immer war
Halb scheitern, halb gelingen?

Theodor Fontane (1819-1898), German journalist, narrator, and theater reviewer)

A new book, a new year
What will the days bring us?
Shall it be as it always was
Half failure and half success?

"Frohe Festtage und ein gutes Neues Jahr 2012"

"Prettige Kerstmis en Geelukkig Nieuwjaar 2012"



Das neue Jahr sieht mich freudlich an, und
ich lasse das alte mit seinem Sonnenschein
und Wolken ruhig hinter mir.

(Johan Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), German poet, scientist and politician)

The new year looks at me in a friendly way,
and I leave the old one with its sunshine and
clouds behind me.



FFOA and its Services

Membership and Subscriptions: Membership is open to former UN Staff who receive a benefit from the UNJSPF or have served a UN Organization for at least five years, and to their spouses. The *Annual* membership subscription is € 25.00 and Life membership is € 375.00. Payments can also be made in US dollars; for the equivalent amount the FFOA Office should be contacted.

FFOA has three main functions, and performs them as best it can.

Representation: FFOA represents the pensioners in negotiations, with FAO, WFP, and IFAD, (for example medical insurance, entry passes) and the UN, via FAFICS where necessary (notably pensions). Also in Italy with banks and government agencies.

Information: On matters of importance or interest to UN pensioners, by **newsletter**, annual **General Assembly**, and on its **web site**, and by mail, telephone or email, or by informal discussion **in person**.

Social Activities: Voluntary assistance is offered in emergencies, whether medical, small financial or other problems; details from the FFOA office. Volunteers willing to be available occasionally for such assistance should give their names to the FFOA office. Social lunches and excursions to interesting sites near Rome are organised; details in the Newsbrief or from the FFOA office.

The FFOA Emergency Fund May provide a loan of up to €1500 to anyone suffering temporary financial hardship, strictly confidentially. (At present the Emergency funds are exhausted). Assistance can also be provided in the preparation of requests to the Emergency Fund of the UNJSPF in New York.

The New FFOA Website (Responsible P. Pace) to enjoy the FFOA website get access through www.fao.org/ffoa. Your comments are welcome. Please send your contributions, or any request for clarification, to ffoa-webmaster@fao.org by clicking on the icon at the bottom of the left-hand bar of the home-page.

Retirement homes, Case di Riposo, around Rome. The **FFOA** office can advise regarding the various possibilities.

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