

The

# NSC FOGHORN™



Volume 11, Issue 2

Our Web Site is at <http://www.nevadaseniors.com>

February 09, 2012

## Special Points of Interest

## The PUC meeting 1/18/12 (Smart meter opt-out)

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By Knight Allen, NSC Director of Legislation

Last month I wrote about this and told you I was going to go to the meeting on January 18 and ask questions about the pricing structure. That didn't happen. I am not going to take off after the PUC here. The Hearing Officer made it very clear up front that in the Notice of Meeting & Agenda (which I had not seen) it was emphasized the only subject for discussion was going to be opting out of smart meters. That took me out of the game but I stuck around a while and got some very interesting information.

First, even if the PUC allows us to keep our analog meters we're going to get hit with a one-time \$180 charge. When a member of the Commission asked "Why?" since the meter is already in place and working, the representative from NV Energy said (are you ready for this?) they would replace the old meter with a "refurbished" analog meter because the ones currently in place are not accurate and are reporting less energy use than is actually happening. Ya like that?? Then, of course, there is the \$14 to \$15 per month extra charge to come and read the meter.

That brings me to the second very interesting piece of information. In the room in Carson City (the meeting was teleconferenced) were two representatives from the Attorney General's office. They were there in an official capacity and they lit into both the Commission and NV Energy because in the recent rate increase case the company was allowed to build into its cost structure the expense of physically reading every meter for the next three years when, in fact, they are already getting thousands of meters read automatically. The AG's opinion is because of the unjustified cost in the rate increase NV Energy has millions of dollars flowing right to its bottom line and can very easily charge nothing to anyone who wants to opt-out of the smart meter change over.

I believe these two pieces of information should be getting far more coverage than they are. However, you can't tell the media what to report or what not to report. But, at least now you know.

On a lighter note, I stepped into the elevator the day of the

(Continued on page 2)

### Feeling old?

### Inside This Issue

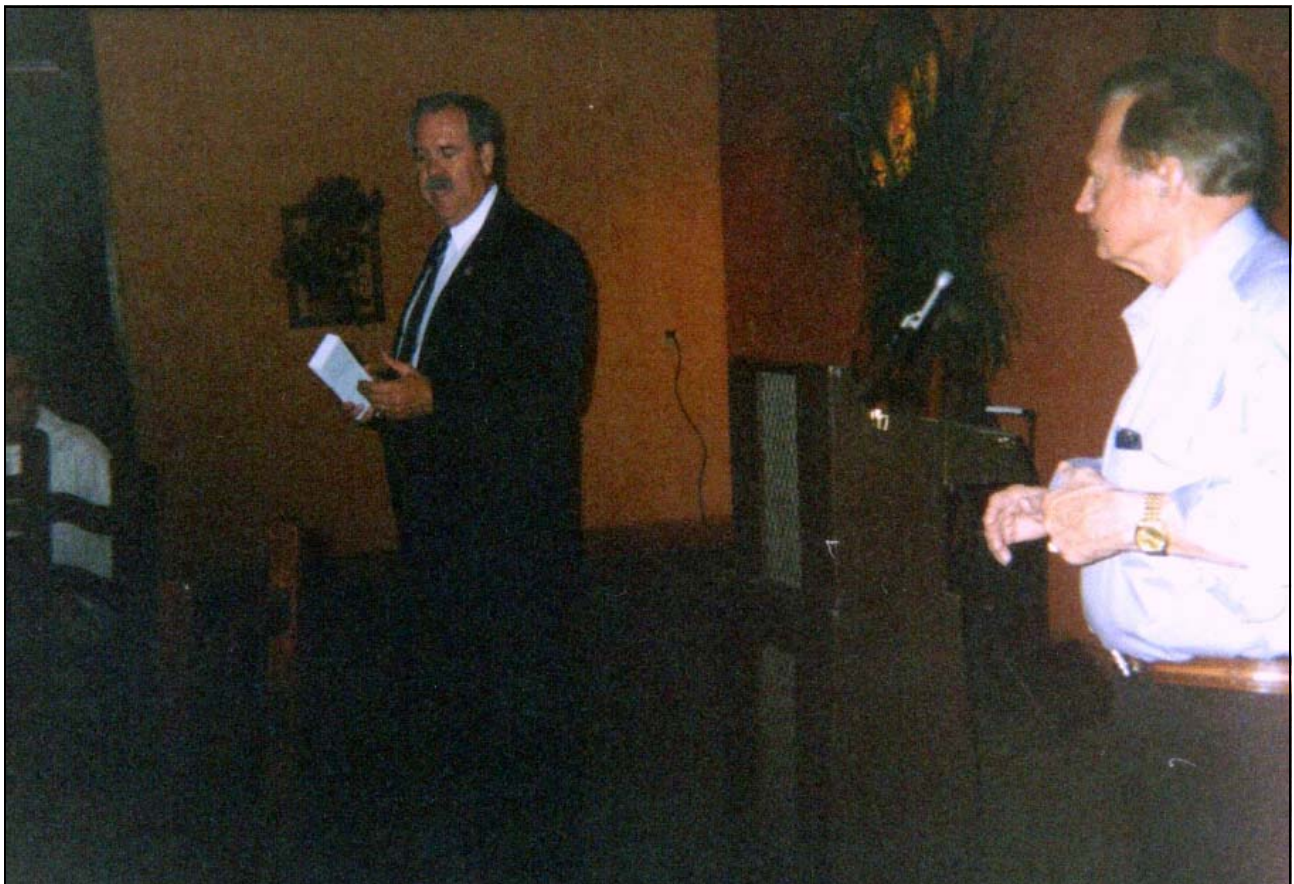
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meeting. I was wearing a jacket and tie and carrying my briefcase. I was met by a group of women who immediately started asking me if I was with NV Energy. Was I there to support smart meters? Was I friend or foe? Then, one of them came up with the big question, the one that went right to the heart of the matter: "Are you a Good Witch or a Bad Witch?" Just then the elevator door opened and me and my Ruby Slippers hit the floor running. (Witch should have been warlock unless they thought he was wearing a pants suit.)

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## **Wannabe Sheriff Keller & Ken Mahal**



From the archives.

Jerry Keller was running for sheriff and is shown speaking at a 2000 something NSC meeting at the Showboat or Castaways.

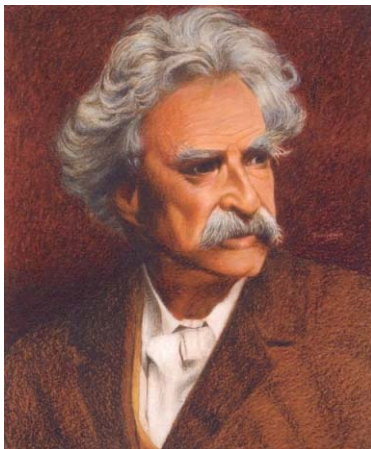
Notice Ken's dark hair and his physique. See what being NSC President does to you!

This picture was taken by me using a Kodak disposable camera, not an HP digital.

VWP

# “Please Don’t Quote Me”

“You are only young once, but you can stay immature indefinitely. – Ogden Nash



"Wrinkles should merely indicate where smiles have been." – Mark Twain

After thirty, a body has a mind of its own. – Bette Midler



Growing old is no more than a bad habit which a busy person has no time to form. – Andre Maurois

I don't believe one grows older. I think that what happens early on in life is that at a certain age one stands still and stagnates. – T. S. Eliot



## 2011 Was a Great Year for Immigration Embarrassments

### 1. Sweet Home Is Not in Alabama

In November, Alabamians got another reason to worry about the new immigration law their legislature passed. A police officer in Tuscaloosa pulled over a rental car that had no tag and asked the driver for his license.

The man could only produce a German identification card. So the officer, mindful of the new law, promptly arrested him. Detlev Hager, 46, was held at police headquarters until an associate was able to retrieve his passport and German driver's license.

It turned out that not only was Hager in the country legally, he was an executive with Mercedes-Benz who was here on business. The German automaker happens to be one of Alabama's leading employers and the company builds SUVs at a large plant in Vance, 20 miles east of Tuscaloosa.

A month later, the embarrassment repeated itself when police in Lincoln, Ala., arrested another foreign auto executive who was here legally, helping put Alabamians to work. This time it was a Japanese employee with the Honda Motor Co. One thing Alabama doesn't discriminate against is auto executives it seems. It treats them all badly, regardless of ethnicity.

### 2. Marco Rubio Rewrites Family History

Florida Sen. Marco Rubio has been on a short list of possible running mates for the Republican presidential nominee. Rubio, 40, has been called the "crown prince" of the Tea Party movement and has enjoyed a meteoric rise in Sunshine State politics.

Part of his public narrative was telling people how his parents had fled Castro's Cuba to seek freedom in the United States. The Tea Party ate it up. The problem with that politically alluring account is that Rubio's parents left Havana and became U.S. residents in May 1956.

Not only was Fidel Castro not in power then, he wasn't even in the country. Castro was in Mexico and wouldn't return to lead the revolution until a couple years later.

But when it comes to Florida politics, you never let a year or two get in the way of a good story.

### 3. USCIS Gives Texas Teen Colombian Sabbatical

Immigration officials in Texas deported 15-year-old Jakadrien Lorece Turner to Colombia in May, claiming she had entered the country illegally.

She told authorities in Houston she was a 21-year-old Colombian. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials and an immigration judge believed her, though she spoke no Spanish, had family in the area and had dubious IDs.

Turns out, she was a Texas runaway who had never set foot in South America. In January, the government flew her back to Texas. (at your expense – VWP)

Turner's family has hired an attorney who is threatening to file suit over civil rights violation.

### 4. New Mexico Gov. Martinez Prunes Family Tree

New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez, a Republican who used to be a Democrat, became the first woman in the state's history to win its highest office in 2010. A hardline position against illegal immigration was central to her victorious campaign and rapid rise within the GOP.

That position got a little uncomfortable in 2011 when Martinez was asked about her own family tree.

In September, she admitted that her paternal grandparents had entered the United States "without documents." She refrained from using the term "illegal."

In November, Martinez reversed herself, and said she uncovered evidence that suggested her grandparents "might have followed the process" after all, though the documents remain subject to interpretation. It seems immigration paperwork was about as complicated 80 years ago as it is today.

### 5. Wanted: Joke Writer for Herman Cain

Former pizza magnate Herman Cain earned a spot on the 2011 list when he talked about border security while campaigning for the Republican primary in Iowa. He said if elected president, he would build a fence along the U.S.-Mexico border.

"Somebody asked me, well, what kind of fence would you build? I tell you, it would be a combination of technology and a real fence. It would be about 20 feet high. It would have electrified barbed wire on the top. And on this side of it, it would have a moat the depth of a football field. And yes, Mr. President, it would have alligators in it."

Cain spent the next few weeks claiming he was just joking and saying "people should lighten up."

## Congressional Budget Office (CBO) Report on Federal Pay

Federal workers overall get just 2 percent higher wages than private-sector employees holding similar jobs, but they receive 16 percent more in total compensation because of generous benefits.

There are, however, great differences in wages and benefits depending on education levels; less-educated federal workers receive higher wages and benefits compared with private-sector employees, while those with advanced degrees are paid less.

A new CBO report dispels misinformation spread by both sides in a long-running debate over federal pay. It is not true that the average federal worker is paid twice as much as the average private-sector employee doing similar work and with similar qualifications.

It's even less true that federal employees are vastly underpaid, as public-employee unions would have you believe.

The CBO reported:

- Federal employees overall are paid about 2 percent more than private-sector counterparts.
- Most federal employees have defined-benefit pension plans that are becoming less common in the private sector making a significant gap in benefits. Federal employees receive 48 percent more in benefits on average than those in the private sector.
- The federal government paid 16 percent more on average in total compensation — wages, plus benefits — than private employers paid similar employees.

But for federal workers with professional or doctorate degrees it's not so good. Generous federal benefits cannot make up for the big wage gap between them and their higher-paid counterparts in the private-sector.

Compensation of Federal Workers				
Education Level	Percentage of Federal Workforce	Wages Compared with Private Sector	Benefits Compared with Private Sector	Total Compensation Compared with Private Sector
High school diploma or less	20%	21% higher	72% higher	36% higher
Some college education	29%	15% higher	71% higher	32% higher
Bachelor's degree	31%	2% higher	46% higher	15% higher
Master's degree	14%	5% less	36% higher	8% higher
Professional or doctorate degree	7%	23% less	2% higher	18% less

*Source: Congressional Budget Office*

The CBO report is also full of data that help illuminate the ongoing pay debate:

Federal workers make up a declining percentage of the U.S. workforce. The figure was 2.3 percent in 1980 and 1.7 percent in 2010. Since President Obama took office, the size of the federal civilian workforce (exclusive of the U.S. Postal Service) has increased by 7.2 percent (about 149,000 workers).

Federal civilian wages and benefits cost the federal government about \$200 billion a year. Of that amount, \$80 billion goes for civilian personnel who work in the area of national defense.

Close to two-thirds of federal civilian employees work in just four departments: Defense, 35 percent; Veterans Affairs, 14 percent; Homeland Security, 8 percent; and the Department of Justice, 5 percent.

Both Democrats and Republicans have used this report for partisan purposes and have misrepresented (lied about) what it means as usual. (see factcheck.org for more information on this and many other political subjects.)#

*Vern*

## At the January Meeting



Las Vegas Review Journal Editor Michael Hengel with Knight Allen.

Mr. Hengel has been editor of the RJ since 2010. Prior to this he was the publisher of daily newspapers in Arkansas, Oklahoma and Michigan. For his entire professional career, he has been a newsman.

Mr. Hengel, after graduating from the University of Missouri with a degree in journalism, rose through the newsroom, working as a reporter, city editor, news editor and editor. He has also edited daily newspapers in Vallejo and Ontario California.

He is 56 years old and he and his wife Brenda have four children, ages 20 to 30.

Mr. Hengel has redesigned, revamped and revised most sections of the RJ and other publications (i.e. Neon, View, Health Magazine, etc.) as well as the Website.

He gave us a lot of insight into how a newspaper works.

Thank you and good luck Mr. Hengel.. See you next

## Members

### Renewing Members:

**\*Belle Earl Chohanin\***

**\*Taska Miller\***

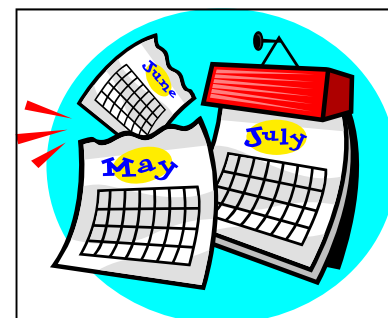
**\*Ray Taylor\***

**\*Beverly Wannamaker\***

**Thanks for your continued support**



*Happy Presidents Day*



Your membership anniversary date is on the Foghorn Mailing label. If the label is **RED**, please renew your membership, either by mail, or at the next meeting you attend.

Your name is removed from the membership list 90 days after expiration.

Membership dues are \$10.00 per person.

# From the Editor

It has come to the attention of Knight Allen and I that there is some confusion about this publication and who has done and does do what. (This is a sentence?)

The NSC Newsletter was started sometime in 2001 by Jeannie TabEEK. She did this on her own and paid for everything herself (paper, ink, labels and postage). She used a typewriter and type the news on one side and affixed a label and postage stamp on the other. It was quad-folded so the news was inside and the label and stamp was on the outside. I have only one copy dated September, 2001. There is only one article in this issue concerning the Nevada Power low income assistance fund that was in Governor Kenny Guinn’s budget that had been approved by the legislature. Governor Guinn was a “No New Tax” Republican who Jeannie pointed out had said that this was completely paid for but failed to point out that the ratepayers were the ones that were paying for it. She also remarked that with the increases in electric, gas and water rates we might all soon be eligible for the extra help. Times never change – same old, same old. She was going to send a copy of the newsletter to all legislators that voted for the bill, AB 661. She also reported that our speakers at the September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting at the Castaway Hotel/Casino would be Assemblywoman Barbara Buckley and Nevada Consumer Advocate Tim Hay. She did a very good job.

I am not sure how many issues of this newsletter were produced before, at my suggestion, we started publishing the “NSC Foghorn. I sort of knew how to use the various programs available to publish a newsletter. I picked Microsoft Publisher, a program I knew nothing about and away we went. The first Foghorn was published on February 13, 2002. I don’t have a hard copy of this one but probably it is on some back

up disk – I’ll try to find it. In those day we actually printed the newsletter using a Canon copier NSC purchased. Jeanie, Florence Petris and I had lots of problems with the copier and finally gave up and went to Kinkos and later OfficeMax which we use now. Florence used to pick up the newsletters at Kinkos and prepare and mail them. As her health deteriorated, I took over and do this now. I have always printed the labels

After thinking about it for a while, Ken Mahal (his idea) and the Board decided on the name. Ken and I wanted a name that signified alerting people to something that was going to affect them adversely and give them the opportunity to avoid a disaster. Now I had to find a picture of a foghorn to use as the logo. Finding the one we use was not easy. Some his columns were called FOG BLASTERS.

A few other people would give me columns (Florence, Knight) but generally the only contributor was Ken, who wrote the lead article. I designed the paper and wrote or found everything else as I still do. The things that have stayed the same since day one are the general layout and lead article usually written by Ken and now Knight, and the columns “Points of Interest”, “Please Don’t Quote Me”, “From the Editor” and “Today in History” which always is something that happened on the meeting date (which is the publishing date). The Members Page was at first called “Where Were You Last Month” and told about the previous month’s speaker and listed new members (there were 137 and increasing in April, 2002 – there are 67 and decreasing now). I’ve always been the photographer, using a digital camera, except when I would forget to bring it.

I won’t be at the February meeting but I will bring some NSC history artifacts to the March meeting.

### **Next Meeting**

**The next meeting will be  
Thursday, March 8th starting  
at 10 at >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>**



**After the meeting why  
don’t you eat and play,  
and stay all day?**

***Our March 8th Speaker will be:***  
***Sergeant Don Corburn***  
**Clark County Code Enforcement**

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**February 9, 1825**

## Presidential Election Decided in the House

No presidential candidate received a majority of electoral votes in the election of 1824, so the U.S. House of Representatives voted to elect John Quincy Adams, who won fewer votes than Andrew Jackson in the popular election, as president of the United States in accordance with the 12th amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Adams was the son of John Adams, the second president of the United States.

In the election of 1824, 131 electoral votes, just over half of the 261 total, were necessary to elect a candidate president. Popular votes were counted for the first time in this election, although they had no bearing on the outcome of the election. The results were announced On December 1, 1824. Andrew Jackson of Tennessee won 99 electoral and 153,544 popular votes; John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts received 84 electoral and 108,740 popular votes; Secretary of State William H. Crawford received 41 electoral votes; and Representative Henry Clay of Kentucky won 37 electoral votes.

The presidential election was then turned over to the House of Representatives as dictated by the U.S. Constitution. The 12th Amendment states that if no electoral majority is won, the three candidates who receive the most popular votes will be considered in the House.

Representative Henry Clay was disqualified from the House vote as a fourth-place candidate and agreed to use his influence to have John Quincy Adams elected. Clay and Adams were both members of a loose coalition in Congress that by 1828 became known as the National Republicans, while Jackson's supporters were later organized into the Democratic Party.

The Nevada Seniors Coalition, Inc. (NSC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization. No person is excluded on the basis of race, sex, religion or national origin.

**The organization's purpose is to promote the physical and social welfare of senior citizens, their children and grandchildren.**

The organizations' goals and objectives are:

- Improvement of political and governmental institutions and processes on local, state and federal levels.
- Identify legislative trends at all levels and set NSC priorities.
- Support domestic policies responsive to the needs and will of the Nevada senior population.
- Work to involve more seniors in government. to assure government is open, responsive and accountable.
- Keep members and the general public informed on current issues affecting them. Encourage them to make their voices heard at all government levels.
- Work with other organizations in a common endeavor when their issues and programs coincide with those of NSC.

On February 9, 1825, the House elected Adams as president of the United States with Clay's backing,. Jackson and his supporters derided Adams' appointment of Clay to secretary of state, the top cabinet post, as the fulfillment of a corrupt bargain.

Adams' time in the White House, with no popular support, was for the most part ineffectual, and the "Corrupt Bargain" continued to haunt his administration. He was defeated in his reelection bid in 1828 by Andrew Jackson, who received more than twice as many electoral votes than Adams. VWP



John Quincy Adams



Andrew Jackson