

NARFE Chapter 1116 Newsletter

Vienna-Oakton Chapter 1116
1708 Palm Springs Drive
Vienna, VA 22182-2330

OCTOBER 2021

Next Chapter Meeting
Tuesday, October 19
1:30 PM
Vienna Community Center
Vienna, VA

Next Board Meeting
Thursday, October 28
1:30 PM
Vienna Community Center

2021 Board Chapter Officials

President
Kathy Arpa 703-205-9041
mkarpa@hotmail.com

1st Vice President & Programs
Ralph Dantinne 703-938-9757

2nd Vice President & Membership
Jayne Seidman 703-938-2274

Secretary
Kay Dellinger 703-573-1262

Treasurer
David Graf 703-938-2962

Board Members
Alzheimer's and
Photographer
Mark Arpa 703-205-9041

Hostess Shirley Martin
703-938-6580

National & State Legislation
Chris Gieseler 703-849-0008

Newsletter Team
Kathy Arpa, Chris Gieseler,
Dave Graf, Mary Margaret
McGowan

Public Relations
Pec Chan 703-281-5123

Service Officer
Mary Margaret McGowan
703-281-5123

Social
Marian Reeves 703-698-0436

Sunshine
Harriet Epstein 703-560-4137

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – KATHY ARPA

It was good to see everyone at our September 14th meeting. We welcomed our newest member, Darnell Wilson, and one guest, Dolores Inch. Bill Inch, our speaker, shared his experiences working for the federal government for over 40 years.

We have an interesting program coming up this month on October 19th, a week later than our usual meeting date, and many NARFE members from local chapters plan to attend. See details on page 2.

Three of us will be attending the Virginia Federation of NARFE (VFN) Conference in Richmond from October 10-13. There will be a variety of speakers, workshops, seminars, and a banquet. The following is the slate of officers for the Executive Board of the VFN: President - Robert Martin, Fredericksburg Chapter 0090; 1st Vice President – two candidates: Doris McAdams, Woodbridge Chapter 1270, and Joseph “Larry” McIlwee, Northern Neck Chapter 1823; 2nd Vice President - Frances Boatman, Roanoke Valley Chapter 0111; Secretary - Esther Nash, Fredericksburg Chapter 0090; and Treasurer - Thomas Rachele, Woodbridge Chapter 1270. During the Conference, I will be presenting a workshop to new VFN officers, Mark will serve as the official photographer, and Mary Margaret will attend the Service Officer Committee Meeting.

At the September 23rd chapter board meeting, the nominating committee presented the slate of officers for our chapter for 2022: President – Kathy Arpa; 1st Vice President – Ralph Dantinne; 2nd Vice President – Jayne Seidman; Secretary – Chris Gieseler; and Treasurer – Dave Graf. The election will be held at the November 9th chapter meeting.



Enjoy this beautiful fall weather!

Kathy

HOSTESS – Shirley Martin

It was good to see some familiar faces and some new faces at our September meeting. I would like to thank the members who assisted me by bringing refreshments. If you would like to help by bringing something for our October 19th meeting, **please** call me at 703-938-6580 by October 15.

COMING UP

October 10-13 – Virginia Federation of NARFE Conference - DoubleTree by Hilton Richmond Midlothian, 1021 Koger Center Boulevard, Richmond, VA 23235

October 19 – Chapter Meeting – Vienna Community Center – 1:30 p.m. - **note change of date** – Guest speaker Angela Barker, owner of “Need 2 B Neat” Professional Organizing Company, specializing in senior downsizing, de-cluttering, packing, and unpacking and more. For many people, organizing can be a very draining process, both emotionally and psychologically. Hiring a professional to help you along this journey is the key to success. Also report on VFN Conference

November 2 – Election Day Virginia Commonwealth and County

November 7 – Daylight Savings Time Ends – move clocks back

November 9 – Chapter Meeting – Vienna Community Center – 1:30 p.m. - Election of chapter officers for 2022; Virtual Blue Cross and Blue Shield 2022 health benefits (insurance) changes presentation

November 20 - Congressman Gerry Connolly (VA-11) 13th Annual Health Benefits, Dental & Vision Insurance Open Season Workshop for Federal Employees and Retirees - 10:00 am – 1:00 pm Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway

December 14 – Holiday Party – TBD - installation of officers by Ted Pasek, Area 10 Vice President

REPORT ON SEPTEMBER 14th CHAPTER MEETING – Kay Dellinger

President Kathy Arpa called the meeting to order at 1:35 pm. This is the first formal chapter meeting since May although there was a chapter picnic held in June. Kathy welcomed new member Darnell Wilson. Marc Owens led the Pledge of Allegiance. There was one guest. Members who celebrated birthdays in June, July, August, and September were recognized. Harriet Epstein spoke in recognition of the 20th anniversary of 9/11 and asked us to reflect in a moment of silence.

Ralph Dantine introduced our guest speaker and chapter member, William (Bill) Inch, (pictured here) who retired in 2020 from the position of Deputy Director, Customs and Border Protection, Cargo Systems Program Directorate, Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Bill began by giving an overview of the Department of Homeland Security, the third largest department with approximately 240,000 federal employees. DHS includes large agencies such as Customs and Border Patrol (CBP), the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and the Coast Guard. Other smaller but very well-known agencies within DHS are U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Secret Service, to name a few. He then spoke about the four units within the Customs and Border Patrol. These are the Customs Officers at Ports of Entry, the U.S. Border Patrol, Air and Marine Operations, and Trade. Trade focuses on importing and exporting. Our speaker fielded several questions from the attendees before concluding his presentation. Bill Inch is a chapter member!



Mark Arpa and Kay Dellinger are this year’s Nominating Committee for our upcoming chapter election of officers.

Officer and committee reports were presented.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT – JAYNE SEIDMAN

As of October 1, there are 183 chapter members and 162 National members for a total of 345 NARFE members in the area. One member passed away. Three members were dropped for non-renewal, and we have five new prospective members. Letters were mailed to nine prospective members on September 27th.

TREASURER'S REPORT – DAVID GRAF

Since the last newsletter, the Chapter received \$215.20 for membership dues collected by National for the month of August. A \$2.00 refund was received from the Oakton Post Office when the rental of the Post Office Box was discontinued, and the keys were turned in on August 26th. There have not been any expenses.

The 50/50 drawing for Alzheimer's Research at the September 14th Membership Meeting raised \$31.00 which will be sent to the Virginia Federation of NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund Coordinator.

Members who wish to make charitable tax-deductible donations toward the treatment, prevention and, ultimately, a cure for this disease and enable our Chapter to also get credit should make your check payable to **NARFE-Alzheimer's Research** and include **Chapter 1116** on the memo line. Send your checks to me at:

David Graf, NARFE Chapter 1116
1708 Palm Springs Dr
Vienna, VA 22182-2330

SERVICE OFFICER REPORT – MARY MARGARET MCGOWAN

I will be attending the VFN Conference next week and I am looking forward to meeting Arlene Arthur, the VFN State Service Officer, and other NARFE Chapter Service Officers at our committee meeting.

I have several copies of the "Be Prepared for Life's Events" booklet. You can pick one up at the October 19th meeting or call me at 703-281-5123 to request a copy.

LEGISLATION REPORT– CHRIS GIESELER

State Legislation

Special Session II of 2021 of the General Assembly is still in recess. We will monitor for any reconvening. Meanwhile, various committee hearings and meetings are scheduled for the rest of 2021.

The Virginia Federation's Legislation Chair is in the process of distributing the 2022 VFN Legislative Plan in trifold form to various members of the Federation. Members who attend the VFN Conference will receive copies for the chapter. Moreover, further communications from the Chair are expected later in October regarding future actions to implement that Plan.

National Legislation

Congress "reconvened" in late September to consider some important legislation of interest to the Federal workforce and retirees. Notably, on September 30, 2021, Congress passed a "continuing resolution" that authorizes spending for the federal government through December 3, 2021. The bill does not suspend the federal debt, so separately legislation will need to be enacted by October 18, 2021, so that the Federal Government does not default on its debts. (Even now, as of August 2, 2021, the Treasury Department has suspended investments into the Civil Service and Postal Service retirement funds and reinvestment into the "G Fund"; these will be reimbursed once the debt ceiling issue is resolved.) There is much debate on whether or how to suspend or raise the debt limit. The \$3.5 trillion human infrastructure bill is a major sticking point in the process. Meanwhile, the bipartisan infrastructure bill (which covers traditional infrastructure such as roads and communications), passed by the Senate, is waiting for House action.

Bill Tracker information in the October 2021 NARFE Magazine is up to date, based on information on October 1 data on [congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov). Also, on September 30, 2021, the House passed a bill, HR 3533, requiring OPM to establish one or more occupation series regarding software development and/or engineering, data science and data management. The bill now goes to the Senate.

On the regulatory front, the Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs) for federal retirees are expected to be about 6% for 2022 for civil service retirees; 5% for FERS retirees. The COLA calculation will be made once the Consumer Price Index for September 2021 is calculated later this month. (Bills pending in Congress would change the index that is currently being used for COLAs and/or would make the COLAs for both CSRS and FERS retirees the same [thus, no more "diet COLAs" for FERS types].)

OPM reform: OPM has submitted its report to Congress regarding its response to an earlier report (that contains about 20 recommendations) from a statutorily required study of OPM's structure and operations. The study was conducted by the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), and its written results were provided to OPM in March 2021. The study was a middle ground that NARFE had sought as a way around President Trump's proposal to disband OPM and transfer its functions to other agencies. The report contains recommendations for both Congress and OPM. OPM agreed with many of the recommendations but disagreed with other recommendations in whole or in part, e.g., to create a strategic planning and policy office. We'll wait and see whether Congress takes further actions related to OPM. Hopefully, OPM's operations regarding federal employees and retirees will improve in any case.

Covid vaccinations and testing: Recent Executive Orders, and implementing guidance subsequently issued on September 16, 2021, require most federal employees and contractor/subcontractor employees to finish receiving their (second) Covid vaccinations by November 8, 2021, so that full vaccination occurs by November 22, 2021. Postal Employees are exempt but must take weekly Covid tests. Agencies can make additional exceptions from the vaccine mandates. Technically, Executive Orders (EOs) Nos. 14043 and 14042 require agencies to implement a program requiring employee vaccinations and to include in most contracts, clauses requiring contractor and subcontractor employees to be vaccinated. The EOs do not contain penalties for noncompliance, but the implementing guidance notes that agency programs should provide for disciplinary actions, to include termination, for employees who fail to comply. Different processes apply if an employee is seeking an exception from the vaccination requirements.

The guidance also addresses visitors to federal facilities. In general, agencies can request vaccination status from visitors, but there is more to the story. If you wish to visit an agency at its official locations, it would be advisable to contact the agency first to determine what information they want or what to do if you don't have the requisite information.

SUNSHINE REPORT – HARRIET EPSTEIN

Sympathy is extended to the family of Josephine Cannon of South Carolina who passed away recently. If anyone knows of any of our members and/or members of their family who need a word of encouragement or get well wishes, please let me know at 703-560-4137.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Fall Planting

It is not too late to plant a tree. Stop by the Farmer's Market in Vienna, near the Vienna Community Center, on October 23rd for a chance to pick up a free tree. The Conservation and Sustainability Commission will give away 100 bare-root seedlings and provide planting instructions. You can also pick up a pumpkin, apples and cider at the Market.



**HAPPY
HALLOWEEN!**