



Midlothian Chapter 2265 NEWSLETTER

Serving Current and Retired Federal Employees Since 1921

Chapter e-mail: narfe2265df@gmail.com

March/April 2021

2021 Chapter 2265 Officers

President: Cindy Graunke

Vice President: Don Utton

Secretary: Lynn Osborne (*temporary appointment*)

Treasurer: Ed Heflin

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Cindy Graunke

What have you been up to? Next month it will be nearly a year that we have been wrapped up in this pandemic. Many folks started breadmaking, others intensified their reading, and others began kayaking or bicycling. When the isolation first began, I decided to call each week someone whom I hadn't talked with for some time. I chose to organize family and friends for regular virtual meetings. As time goes by, however, I find that it is easy to slip out of these good intentions.

Our NARFE meetings, that I so looked forward to, seem so far away from my new reality. Our Chapter has held several Zoom meetings. Our latest offering was from the Alzheimer's Association on brain health. These offerings have brought me full circle. I am eager to see all of you online.

If you have not had an opportunity to tune into our virtual meetings, I urge you to do so.

Date Change for VFN Conference

Our VFN Conference, which was scheduled for April 11-14, 2021 at the Double Tree Hotel on Koger Center Boulevard, has been moved to October 10-13. This is in response to concerns about COVID-19 and slow rate of administering vaccines. In response to this change,

our Chapter meeting is moved from October 13 to October 20.

Do you have Blue Cross/Blue Shield Health Insurance?

If you have BCBS Basic coverage and pay for Part B Medicare premiums, you may be eligible for an \$800 BCBS benefit to help defray the costs of premiums. www.fepblue.org/mra

What You Need:

1. Evidence of Part B Premium (to be uploaded)
2. Set up an account on WageWorks
<https://participant.wageworks.com/>

To file a claim:

1. Select a Provider: *Social Security Adm.*
2. Service start date *1/1/2021*; Service end date: *12/31/2021.*
3. Common Service: *Co-Payment*
4. Select from Others: *Medicare Part B Prem.*
5. Amount of Premium (12 x monthly amount); For Example, \$148.50 x 12 = \$1,782
6. Upload evidence of Part B (This can be your recent adjusted annuity form). You may also mail this if you need to.

If you have a spouse on your plan and he or she pays Part B Premiums, you will need to establish a separate account. For a couple, you may be eligible for \$1,600 (\$800 each).

March is NARFE Advocacy Month

Help support NARFE advocacy by utilizing the NARFE website.

<https://new.narfe.org/advocacy/>

NATIONAL LEGISLATION

Don Utton

Democrats in Congress Reviewing USPS Problems. Biden inherited a USPS crisis. Here's how Democrats want to fix it.

Washington Post Story, Jacob Bogage (February 6, 2021)

The nation's mail service is slower and more erratic than it's been in generations, via the confluence of an abrupt reorganization and pandemic-era anomalies that has fueled demands for reform and fundamentally different ideas on how to achieve it.

On one side is Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, who, with the backing of the U.S. Postal Service's governing board, is expected as soon as next week to outline a new vision for the agency, one that includes more service cuts, higher and region-specific pricing, and lower delivery expectations.

But congressional Democrats are pressing President Biden to install new board members, creating a majority bloc that could oust DeJoy, a Trump loyalist whose aggressive cost-cutting over the summer has been singled out for much of the performance decline. The fight over the agency's future is expected to be fraught and protracted, leaving Americans with unreliable mail delivery for the foreseeable future.

Meanwhile, customers are fuming on social media and to postal workers about late holiday packages and days-long delivery gaps. Only 38 percent of nonlocal first-class mail arrived on time in late December, compared with 92 percent in the year-ago period, according to data reported in federal voting lawsuits. The agency has not disclosed performance data in 2021.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2021/business/usps-performance-whats-next-biden/>

Warner & Kaine Press U.S. Postmaster General on Continued Widespread Mail Service Delays for Virginians, Feb 1, 2021

WASHINGTON – After hearing firsthand from hundreds of Virginians regarding continued widespread U.S. Postal Service (USPS) delays, U.S.

Sens. Mark R. Warner and Tim Kaine (both D-VA) fired off a letter to the U.S. Postmaster General urging him to address the troubling delay of life-saving medicines, groceries, supplies, and much more in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. In their letter, the Senators call on U.S. Postmaster General Louis DeJoy to rescind policy changes that are delaying mail delivery, to publish data on COVID-19 cases of postal workers by Postal Area, and to take additional steps to ensure mail-order medications are expeditiously processed.

“We write to express deep concern regarding widespread mail delivery delays across Virginia in recent months. We have heard from hundreds of our constituents that recount unacceptable delays in the delivery of everything from Christmas and birthday cards to mail-order medications and credit card bills. Furthermore, we seek answers about operational decisions and other circumstances that have contributed to such delays and what is being done to prevent future failures,” the Senators wrote to U.S. Postmaster General Louis DeJoy.

<https://www.warner.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases>

McEachin Urges Administration, Board of Governors to Install New Leadership at U.S. Postal Service

Press Release, (February 5, 2021)

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman A. Donald McEachin (VA-04) today urged President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. and the United States Postal Service (USPS) Board of Governors to immediately take the action necessary to oust U.S. Postmaster General Louis DeJoy and install new USPS leadership to fill vacant seats on the Board of Governors. The previous administration left vacant Democratic positions on the Board of Governors, while actively filling other open positions with Republican party loyalists, who helped install the former President's longtime ally Louis DeJoy as Postmaster General.

“The Constitution empowers the federal government to provide a working postal system, but under current USPS leadership, the system is not working. The previous administration's negligence must be urgently

addressed before further harm is done, but the USPS cannot appropriately address the ongoing mail delivery crisis if leadership positions are left empty,” said Congressman McEachin. “I respectfully urge the Biden administration to fill the three currently vacant Democratic seats on the Board of Governors as soon as possible.”

Today’s announcement follows nearly eight thousand new complaints received by Congressman McEachin in less than 48 hours from constituents across Virginia’s Fourth Congressional District detailing issues with mail delays, missing mail and misdelivered mail.

<https://mceachin.house.gov/media/press-releases/mceachin-urges-administration-board-governors-install-new-leadership-us-postal>

CONGRESSIONAL UPDATES

Bob Zombron

CDL VA 7th Congressional District

The Electoral College

The United States is a constitutional federal republic. We are ruled by representatives elected by the people. The United States Electoral College is the group of presidential electors required by the Constitution to form every four years for the sole purpose of electing the president and vice president. Each state appoints electors equal in number to the elected congress i.e. senators and representatives.

The Electoral College after many popular vote recounts in individual states, after the Nov. 3 election, declared Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. president of the Republic of the United States of America and Kamala Harris vice president. It is required that the presidential winner receive at least 270 votes. Mr. Biden received 306. President Trump received 232. The Electoral College vote count made Biden’s victory a reality on January 6, 2021. As Vice President Pence, as required by law, announced Joe Biden’s presidential victory, an insurrection occurred in and around the capitol building in Washington D.C., where the vote was tallied. Apparent supporters of President Trump sieged the capitol. On January 20, President Biden and Vice President Harris were inaugurated under heavy

guard by approximately 27,000 National Guard and federal troops in fear of another insurrection and attempt to take over the government. Trump claimed that his election was ‘stolen’ and that he should be declared the winner, allowing a second term as president. These events by a partially armed mob are unprecedented in our democratic form of government. Biden also won the popular vote by about 7-million votes.

In late January, it was reported that 140 police officers were injured and 135 rioters arrested. Five people died during the attempted takeover by the mob.

Consequently, President Trump was presented with the Articles of Impeachment by the House of Representatives for contributing to the insurrection before he left office. The impeachment articles charged by the House led to a Senate trial between February 9 and 12. On February 12, former President Trump was acquitted by a senate vote of 57-guilty and 33-not guilty. Sixty-seven votes were needed to find him guilty for contributing to the insurrection by verbal inference to aid the outcome of the riot and storming of the capitol.

After the trial was over the Senate Minority leader, Mitch McConnell, most vehemently condemned former President Trump for his participation in enabling the riot by his verbal rhetoric. However, McConnell voted to acquit Trump because the Constitution does not spell out - if a president can be impeached after he leaves office. However, he indicated that the former president may be liable for his actions in a civil court. The senate is mainly concerned with whether an issue is constitutional or not. An investigation is ongoing to thoroughly fact-find the causes, events and those responsible for the riot.

I’m still trying to understand why all this mayhem took place. Greed appears to be the case. Congress needs to find out how to prevent occurrences like this in the future. This is a very serious matter – people died, many were injured, items were stolen, and federal property destroyed. Being optimistic I have to believe that our representatives and senators in congress will contribute to a solution.

Meanwhile Congress has a lot of things to make right and somewhere in the process restore faith to federal employees, retirees and the general public. Federal workers need a safer work environment. Write Congress with your ideas and also suggest that they consider bills that will help ease the burden for federal employees and retirees.

NARFE is There for You!

We are primarily a volunteer grass roots non-partisan and political organization that exists to promote the general welfare of our members, all federal employees and retirees. To achieve our goal in order to improve compensation and benefits NARFE is there for you. However, in order for the association to work for all of us, it requires our participation. Call or write our legislators so they know our needs; we should write, email or call them to reflect your situation and the need for increased compensation and benefits. I invite you to support NARFE advocacy by utilizing the NARFE.org/advocacy website. You can send a prepared letter or use your own creativity. Also, when you receive the March 2021 issue of NARFE Magazine you will find an article on NARFE-PAC. The PAC supports political candidates and incumbents that support the federal community. Simply – when they get elected, they should be rewarded to help continue supporting us. This Political Action Committee accepts funds separate from the NARFE association. Membership dues are not part of the PAC. Therefore, you should make a separate contribution. Page 9 of the March issue of NARFE Magazine has a form that can be used to make a contribution. Contributions to the PAC are strictly voluntary and optional. NARFE thanks you for your advocacy in whatever way you choose. March is advocacy month.

The 117th Congress (2021-2022)

Every member of the House of Representatives has either been newly elected or reelected. Our Representatives Spanberger, McEachin and Scott and Senators Warner and Kaine have been voting on issues and legislation that could have and did benefit the federal community in the 116th Congress (2019-2020). Unfortunately, all bills considered and passed in the House did not rise to the Senate for a vote. So, we start

over. Hopefully the feeling that Congress will be more bipartisan this term will be to our advantage. My best advice is to keep in touch with the NARFE Advocacy Positions; read the NARFE Magazines, review NARFE's website and communicate with those elected to serve you in Congress.

Our Current Representatives

VA Congressional District 7

Abigail Spanberger (D)
1239 LHOB, Washington DC
>DC Office: 202-225-2815

VA Congressional District 4

Donald McEachin – 314 CHOB, Washington DC
>DC Office: 202-225-6365

VA Congressional District 3

Bobby Scott - 1201 LHOB, Washington DC
>DC Office: 202-225-8354

U.S. Senators

US Senator Mark Warner (D-VA)
>DC Office: 202-224-2023
>Richmond Office: 804-775-2314

US Senator Timothy Kaine (D-VA)
>DC Office: 202-224-4024
>Richmond Office: 804-771-2221

SERVICE OFFICER

Virginia Bozarth

Please let me know if there is any member or spouse who may need help with a federal benefit or contacting OPM. I may not know the answer to the question, but I can reach out to those who do and find an answer for you or connect you to someone who can help. I hope you are all well and staying safe. If there is anything, I can do to assist you please give me a call or email.

What exactly does a Service Officer do?

- Becomes the face and voice of NARFE – helps members apply for benefits, life insurance, etc.
- Relays information as needed on Medicare and Medicaid, Social Security, and retirement benefits.
- Writes notes to families of those who have passed to offer information and support.
- Offers the “Be Prepared for Life’s Events” to NARFE members.

Proposed Changes to Chapter 2265

By-Laws and Constitution

The Executive Committee moved that both the Bylaws and Constitution be revised to reflect changes from VFN and the national organization, as well as items pertaining to our individual chapter. Below are the changes which will be voted on during our March 10 Zoom meeting. The notice for the meeting will include the copies with the changes annotated.

Bylaws

- Combine First Vice President and Second Vice President to Vice President.
- Specify that annual audit ending December 31 will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and presented to the membership at the March meeting. Previously, the bylaws required that the audit be complete by December 31 of each calendar year.
- In Section 3 – We added Hospitality to the chairs appointed by the President. Previously, Hospitality was not mentioned.
- In Section 4 – Added VFN 7th District Congressional Liaison, if applicable to sit on the Executive Committee. (This means that if a member of our chapter is serving in this capacity they will sit on the Executive Committee).

Constitution

- Amend constitution to remove “convention” and substitute with “meeting” as we no longer have delegates and each member has a vote.
- Remove Article VI – No longer applicable because of the one member one vote adopted by the national organization.
- Change Article VII – to VI because article VI is deleted.
- Change Article VIII to VII because article VI is deleted.

PROGRAMS

Verona McLeod

If you joined us for our January meeting you know that we had a great program involving Brain Health. There

was a lot of informative information provided. If you were not in attendance, you missed a treat. We are continuing to present programs/speakers, when possible, to provide information regarding your health and welfare, as well as entertainment. Since we are still in the mist of the pandemic, we will continue to have virtual meetings until further notice. You will continue to be informed, via email, of the meeting date, time and access. Access can be via ZOOM or telephone. Inasmuch as our Program calendar cannot be confirmed for the entire year in advance, we will be notifying you of programs as they are finalized.

Our March guest will be from the Virginia Insurance Counseling Assistance Program. She will discuss basic Medicare, Medicare Advantage, Medicare Part D, and costs saving programs. She will also be able to answer questions regarding Medicare claims. So, mark your calendar as a reminder to tune in and participate. April is our normal State and Local Legislation months. We will be coordinating with representatives from those offices to confirm availability to speak with us about legislation that is pertinent to keeping us informed. Prior to the pandemic, we were always told that members didn't like attending meetings. Now you don't have to attend in the normal sense, you can tune in and listen without leaving your home. Please take advantage of the opportunity to participate in your Chapter meetings and to learn valuable information from our quest. See you at the next meeting(s).



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

MARCH

4 Frank Walker; **6** Connie Thomas; **10** Kim Newton; **12** Faye McKay; **17** Judy Reid; **18** Bob Potts, Denny Arner; **24** Verona McLeod; **29** Bill Gayle, Dolly Carter

APRIL

1 Ellen Spiggle; **5** Mary Ann Boyd, Vickie Botkin; **9** Patsy Dunn; **10** Bob Zombron; **12** Joseph Seay; **15** Marian Turner; **19** Dianne Springfield, Warren Olds, Jr; **21** Dorothy Jackson; **22** Ray Yamoka; **25** Ruth Lynch

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Lynn Osborne, Acting Secretary

NARFE Midlothian Chapter 2265

Monthly Meeting Minutes, January 12, 2021

The Monthly meeting of the Midlothian Chapter 2265 was held virtually via Zoom on January 13, 2021. President Cindy Graunke called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the NARFE meeting. Thirteen members and nine guests logged onto the meeting (Guests: Taylor Lee, Tina Thomas, Moe Nolet, Wynn Hasty, Juanita Vauhan, Willie Holt, Veronica Fountain, Beverly Rank, and Yvette).

Pledge of Allegiance: Members repeated the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Introduction of Guests: President Graunke introduced and welcomed the guests.

Birthdays/Illnesses: President Graunke announced the passing of Bonnie Behm on December 30, 2020

Thought of the Day: Ann Simpkins brought Thoughts of the Day on Patience and Positive Attitudes.

Officer Reports:

Treasurer: Ed Heflin reported:

4,251	Checking
<u>12,578</u>	CD's
16,829	Total

A donation of \$652 to Alzheimer's was mailed to VFN Alzheimer's Chairman, Donna Shackelford. If anyone wants to donate to Alzheimer's please mail check to the Chapter's P.O. Box.

President: President Graunke reported she has developed the 2021 Chapter Calendar and 2021 Goals and Action Plan. Board Meetings will be held quarterly as in 2020.

Committee Reports:

Net Coordinator: Debbie Fisk reported online training continues. Contact her if you are interested.

NARFE-PAC: Bob Zombron emailed his report as he couldn't get his sound to work. He asks us to support

NARFE-PAC. Use NARFE.org/advocacy to state your support.

National Legislation: Don Utton reports members of Congress are stepping up to sponsor the WEP/GPO Bill. Write your legislators with your thoughts.

Programs: Verona McLeod requested members to contact her with suggestions for any informative program for 2021.

Special Activities: Lynn Osborne reported no trips planned at the current time.

New Business:

- VFN has extended the financial audit date for Chapters.
- The VFN Annual Conference has been rescheduled to October 10-13, 2021, at the Doubletree Hotel in Midlothian.

Program:

Verona McLeod introduced Tina Thomas and Taylor Lee who spoke on "Healthy Brain and Mind," Alzheimer's.

The next Board Meeting will be February 2, 2021.

After a Trivia Question the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 P. P.M.

ATTITUDE

by Charles Swindoll

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company...a church...a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past...we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have and that is our attitude...I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you...we are in charge of our Attitudes!

ALZHEIMER'S COMMITTEE

Faye McKay

Here are some of the facts in the newsletter for February 10, 2021 published by the Alzheimer's Association.

Research has shown that people living with dementia may have a higher risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus. Also, they are more likely to have worse outcomes according to a study led by Case Western Reserve University.

The risk for contracting the virus was found to be twice as high for people with dementia as compared to the general population. Further study showed that the risk was even higher for African Americans with dementia. The overall risk for hospitalizations is about 25% for general public and two-thirds for dementia patients and over 70% for African Americans with dementia. Sadly, over 20% of patients with dementia died when they contracted the virus as compared to just 5% without dementia. This study was published in the Journal of the Alzheimer's Association.

In the February 4, 2021 newsletter by the Association there is an article about an African American woman named Arthena Carson who was diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's at the age of 51. She had seen the progression of the disease in her father, who became a shell in himself and decided she needed to take action. She is speaking out for people living with the disease and to future generations. She is a part of a group called Early-Stage Advisory Group (ESAG). She uses a sense of humor, along with passion and purpose to inspire others in the community dealing with this disease.

More information can be found about both of these articles in the Alzheimer's and Dementia e-news from the Alzheimer's Association for February 2021.

On the Road with *Lynn*

I have not planned any trips for 2021 as we are still in crisis with COVID. I'm sure many do not feel comfortable getting on a bus with 30 or more people who you do not know nor where they've been or if they were around anyone who has the virus. Vaccines are rolling out, but it will be a while before all are vaccinated, so I just think it's wise to not start scheduling trips.

Signa Tours advised me that the International Tattoo event has been moved to June 6, 2021, at the Scope in Norfolk. They also have a trip May 27, 2021 to the Henrico Theatre to see "Country Royalty" music of Hank Williams and Patsy Cline. If you are interested in either of these trips please contact Signa Tours directly 804.379.6500 and ask for Karolyn.

Continue to wear a mask, wash your hands often, and stay socially distanced. Register to get your COVID vaccine and check on your neighbors, family and friends. You'd be amazed how happy someone will be to hear from you!

Stay safe and well!

Lynn - 804.275.2102 or jcolmo68@comcast.net



Chapter 2265 Committees

Alzheimer's:

Faye McKay
804-378-0826

Audit:

Shirley Alexander
804-275-8405

Chaplain:

In memory of
Charlie Wilson

Greeter:

Pat Warhurst
804-658-1208

Hospitality:

Cathy Dorsett: 804-674-4039
Ann Simpkins: 804-379-3631

Membership:

Pat Warhurst
804-658-1208

National Legislation:

Don Utton
804-896-1804

Net Coordinator:

Deborah Fisk
804-748-8722

Newsletter:

Lynn Osborne
804-275-2102

Parliamentarian:

Lynn Osborne
804-275-2102

Programs:

Verona McLeod
804-744-4589

Public Relations:

Norma Smith
804-379-6712

Service Officer:

Virginia Bozarth
804-275-0820

Special Activities:

Lynn Osborne
804-275-2102

State Legislation:

Steve Stastny
804-271-8690

Sunshine:

Pat Warhurst
804-658-1208

Telephone Tree:

Vacant



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NARFE Chapter 2265
P.O. Box 565
Midlothian, VA 23113

Dated Material

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
March, 2021						
	1 First Day of Women's History Month	2 Read Across America Day	3	4	5 Employee Appreciation Day	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Daylight Savings Time Starts	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20 March Equinox
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Palm Sunday	29 National Vietnam War Veterans Day	30	31			