

NARFE Chapter 1116 Newsletter

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

JANUARY 2023

Next Chapter Meeting
Tuesday, January 10, 2023
1:00 PM
Vienna Community Center

Next Board Meeting
Thursday, January 26, 2023
1:00 PM
Vienna Community Center

2023 Board Chapter Officers

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
Chris Gieseler 703-849-0008

Treasurer
David Graf 703-938-2962

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

Hostess Jayne Seidman
703-938-2274

National Legislation
Daad Pierce 571-274-9334

State Legislation
Chris Gieseler 703-849-0008

Newsletter Team
Daad Pierce, Chris Gieseler,
Dave Graf, Mary Margaret
McGowan

Public Relations
Pec Chan 703-930-3596

Service Officer
Susan Larson 703-915-2566

Sunshine
Harriet Epstein 703-560-4137

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – KATHY ARPA

Happy New Year to all of you. It was good to see so many members and guests at our holiday party in December. We had a taste of the "powerful Arctic front" which brought heavy snows and winter weather hazards even in the Gulf Coast and the central Florida peninsula. Many people cancelled travel plans and hunkered close to home. Others had big family reunions after many years of separation. I hope you had a warm, safe, happy holiday.

As we begin 2023, we will see many changes in NARFE. We have a new NARFE President Bill Shackelford and a new Region X Vice President Robert Allen. Our chapter also has some changes. Susan Larson is our new Service Officer and Daad Pierce is our new Newsletter Editor. We welcome them and wish them all luck in their new positions.

We had a busy year in our chapter with several excellent programs. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, January 10th, 2023 at 1:00 PM. For those of you are looking for another form of transportation, you will find our program quite interesting.

Happy New Year!

Kathy

MEMBERSHIP REPORT – JAYNE SEIDMAN

During 2022, we gained 13 new members. Welcome to our newest members – Pat Bradley and Irene Coyne. We had 16 prospective members. Three members passed away.

Total Current Chapter Members	178
Total National Members in Chapter Area	<u>147</u>
GRAND TOTAL	325

One-year members: 51, two-year members: 25, three-year members: 46, Lifetime members: 21.

COMING UP

January 10, 2023: Chapter Meeting – 1 PM – Vienna Community Center. The program entitled “**HOW TO USE UBER AND LYFT TO GET A RIDE**” will be presented by Vienna Parks and Recreation staff- Derrick Cowles and Gagan Sandu. With transport ordered directly from your smartphone and paid for automatically, Uber and Lyft make getting around here and elsewhere as easy as tapping a button. Whether you are taking your first Uber ride or your hundredth, this presentation will give you some tips to make sure your ride experience is as smooth as possible. The presenters will assist attendees with getting the apps loaded on their cell phones. (Be sure to bring your cell phone, if you have one.)

January 27, 2023: NOVA Caucus Meeting - 11:30 AM at the American Legion in Fairfax

February 14, 2023: Chapter Meeting – 1 PM – Vienna Community Center

March 14, 2023: Chapter Meeting – 1 PM – Vienna Community Center

April 2-5, 2023: VFN Annual Meeting/Conference – Embassy Suites, Hampton, Virginia

TREASURER’S REPORT – DAVE GRAF

Since the Chapter’s December Newsletter, we received \$139.64 for membership dues collected by NARFE’s National Headquarters for November. The only expense was \$150.00 for our annual donation (as authorized in the approved Chapter budget) to the Town of Vienna, Parks and Recreation for use of the Community Center meeting rooms this year.

The 50/50 drawing for Alzheimer’s Research raised a net amount of \$75.00 at the December 13th Holiday Party. Checks and cash totaling \$665.00 were also contributed to the Alzheimer’s Research Fund. These donations were sent to the VFN Coordinator for the NARFE Alzheimer’s Research Fund. The total contribution for 2022 was \$1,435.50.

Also at the Holiday Party, donations for two other charities were collected: \$65.00 was donated to the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, and \$76.00 was donated to the local charity Committee for Helping Others (CHO). Thanks to everyone for their generosity to these charitable causes.

SECRETARY’S REPORT ON THE HOLIDAY PARTY – CHRIS GIESELER

The Chapter’s December 13, 2022 Membership Meeting and Holiday Party was held at the PanAm Restaurant, Fairfax, VA, the same location as last year. (We recently learned that this restaurant will be closing at the end of February 2023.) The scheduled starting time for the meeting was 11:30 am., but members and guests were arriving before and after that time and were engaged in socializing and chitchat, until President Kathy Arpa called the business portion of the meeting to order at 12:05 pm. Kathy then introduced our guests: Amira, Ann, and Heidi. She then welcomed our new member Pat Bradley. After the introductions, Kathy led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.



The main focus of the business meeting was the installation of the Chapter’s Officers for 2023. In this regard, Kathy introduced Ted Pasek, Area X Vice President, Virginia Federation of NARFE, (VFN) who administered the oath of office to the Chapter Officers: Kathy Arpa, President; Ralph Dantinne, 1st Vice President; Jayne Seidman, 2nd Vice President; Christian Gieseler, Secretary; and David Graf, Treasurer. Ted then offered his congratulations to the newly installed Officers, and a round of applause followed.

Figure 1 - Left to right: Ted, Kathy, Ralph, Jayne, Chris and Dave



Figure 2 - Left to right: Ted, Stella, Shirley, Margaret, Kathy

Next, Kathy acknowledged several members for their special accomplishments. These members included three Distinguished Members: Shirley Martin (35 years of NARFE membership); Stella Gieseler (20 years); and Margaret Murphy (15 years). Each recipient received certificates signed by NARFE President Ken Thomas and NARFE Secretary Kathryn Hemsley. (Distinguished Member awards are provided to NARFE members with 15 or more years of membership). Kathy also presented the honorees with commemorative pins and Distinguished Member NARFE membership cards.

Kathy presented Dave Graf (pictured here) with a special gift in recognition of the tasks he took on for the Chapter, beyond his duties as Chapter Treasurer. These tasks included honchoing the Chapter picnic, filling in for Chapter Secretary Chris Gieseler when Chris was unavailable to do



the minutes, reviewing the newsletter, and assisting with restaurant selection for the Holiday Party.

With the business portion of the meeting completed, luncheon was served. Towards the end of lunch, Margaret Murphy conducted various drawings: the 50/50 for Alzheimer's Research; poinsettias; and door prizes that several board members had donated. The Chapter took up collections for three deserving groups: Alzheimer's Research, Toys for Tots, and the Committee for Helping Others (CHO).

After concluding remarks by Kathy, the meeting ended at 1:35 pm.

SERVICE OFFICER REPORT – SUSAN LARSON



Susan Larson (pictured here) joined the Vienna-Oakton Chapter 1116 in the spring of 2022, after being recruited by Jayne Seidman.

Susan retired on June 30, 2018, after completing almost 42 years (41 years and 11 months) of service. Susan's entire Federal career was in the human resources arena, first at the Department of Justice (DOJ) and then at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). At DOJ, Susan was responsible for all matters relating to the Senior Executive Service (SES) managers, the annual awards program, and retirement and benefits programs. Her time at DOJ was very rewarding but 50-hour work weeks was hard to maintain. Susan left DOJ for the SEC in March 2003; at which time she also took on the responsibility of caring for her mother who was

diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

At the SEC, Susan served as the primary retirement and benefits counselor for the Commission. She also served as liaison between OPM and the SEC. Susan loved working in the retirement and benefits arena. She found great pleasure in helping employees understand their benefits and plan for retirement.

OPM News:

OPM recently announced that your Annual Notice of Annuity Adjustment is available to be viewed and/or printed online. If you log into your Services Online account at www.servicesonline.opm.gov and click on the Annuity Statement link, you will find your Annual Notice of Annuity Adjustment.

The notice provides you with your monthly rate, a survivor rate (if applicable), the 2023 monthly health benefit premium, and other changes or additions that occurred during the month of December.

If you have any questions concerning your notice, you should email OPM at retire@opm.gov or call Retirement Services at 1-888-767-6738.

BENEFEDS:

As a federal retiree or survivor annuitant who is enrolled in the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) for 2023, you should see your first deduction for the next plan year included on your February 1st annuity statement for your FEDVIP coverage in January. For a comprehensive view of your FEDVIP coverage, including any changes to your 2023 premium rate, log into your My BENEFEDS account at BENEFEDS.com.

Changes are coming to BENEFEDS.com. Additional login authentication information will be coming soon, so it is important to update your mobile phone number and confirm your contact information to ensure a seamless experience when you log into your My BENEFEDS account.

For additional inquiries, you may call BENEFEDS Customer Service Center at 1-877-888-FEDS.

LEGISLATION REPORTS – CHRIS GIESELER/DAAD PIERCE

Virginia Legislation:

- The regular session of the Virginia General Assembly starts January 11th and runs through February 25th, 2023. The Virginia Federation of NARFE (VFN) has been working on its legislative priorities and has already pitched several items to members of the Assembly. These legislative priorities have been spelled out in the VFN's 2023 Legislative Plan. VFN's State Legislation Chair will lead efforts to monitor pertinent legislative developments during the General Assembly's session
- Here is a link to the Plan.

https://vanarfe.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/2023_VA_Leg_Plan.pdf

- Three special elections—each set for January 10th, 2023--will fill vacancies in the Virginia General Assembly. Of particular interest to Chapter 1116 is the special election for House of Delegates District 35, formerly held by Mark Keam, who resigned last fall. Early voting is underway; see the Fairfax County Board of Elections website for more details. On Election Day, normal polling hours will be in effect: 6AM to 7PM. Other special elections will be held for House of Delegates District 24 (located between Staunton and Lynchburg) and State Senate District (located in the Norfolk-Virginia Beach area).

National Legislation:

- On December 29th, President Biden signed a \$1.7 trillion spending bill that will keep the federal government operating through the end of the federal budget year in September 2023.
- On December 23rd, the White House issued an executive order formally declaring a 4.6% average pay increase, comprised of an across-the-board pay raise of 4.1% plus a 0.5% locality pay adjustment, for civilian employees.
- On December 23rd, President Biden signed H.R.7900 (the FY2023 National Defense Authorization Act-NDAA) into law.
- On December 9th, President Biden signed into law H.R. 521 (the **First Responder Fair RETIRE Act**) that ensures federal firefighters, law enforcement officers, and other federal first responders qualify for full retirement benefits if they are injured on the job and return to the federal workforce. NARFE National President Ken applauded the signing of the bill that “corrects a longstanding problem.”

Other Legislation News:

- Changes in 2023 for social security taxes and other programs:
 - The 6.2 percent Social Security payroll tax will apply on up to \$160,200 of earnings, up from \$147,000. For FERS employees, that tax cuts off at that threshold and from there on they pay only the civil service retirement contribution.
 - The maximum tax-free amount allowable under the public transit subsidy program is rising from \$280 to \$300 a month.

SUNSHINE REPORT – HARRIET EPSTEIN

Our friend and past Chapter Secretary Anne Shea had a stroke and is now in rehab. If you would like to send her a card, her address is: 502 Walker Street SW, Vienna, VA 22180-6533.

Sympathy to the family of B.J. Thomas-McMillan, who passed away on December 11th after a long battle with cancer. B.J. served as Membership Chair of the VFN for several years.

If you know of someone who needs a little sunshine, please let me know. You can call me at 703-560-4137.

NOTE: If Fairfax County Schools are closed because of inclement weather, our Chapter Meeting is cancelled.

ADDITIONAL SCENES FROM THE HOLIDAY PARTY



Our new member Pat Bradley and Kathy >>



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

