



NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

CHAPTER 2065 NEWSLETTER

POST OFFICE BOX 1811

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ELECTED OFFICERS

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SECRETARY	Marilyn Root	540-632-0241	rootger34@gmail.com
TREASURER	Charles Alvarez	540-894-4804	alv10214@aol.com

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY	16	Chapter Meeting - 11:30 a.m., Roma's Restaurant, program: Bob Maher and Uganda Mission.
MARCH	15	Chapter Meeting - 5:30 p.m., Roma's Restaurant, program: TBD
APRIL	20	Chapter Meeting - 11:30 a.m., Roma's Restaurant, program: TBD

NOTE: If Louisa County schools are closed because of weather, Louisa County Chapter 2065's meeting is cancelled.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I sit here and contemplate the information that needs to be passed along, I really want to be outside since it's sunny and 60°. Since it's still January, I doubt that this is the end of cold weather.

Let me start by saying that the Virginia Federation (VFN) Service Officer, Arlene Arthur, held a zoom meeting the beginning of this month with chapter service officers and presidents. I'll digress here and say that Bill Martin felt the two most important reasons for belonging to NARFE are for the knowledge and activities related to legislation and the importance of service to our members. I happen to agree with him. Since our chapter service officer position continues to be vacant, I sat in on the meeting which covered ways for service officers to get the information that they need to be helpful to our members. The plan is to have a zoom meeting the first Monday of each month, which lasts about an hour. ***Please consider supporting your fellow chapter members in this way and let me know if you would like to help.***

Last month I talked about the Virginia General Assembly being in session starting January 11th. There has been a lot going on but it seems that a republican majority House of Delegates and a Democratic majority Senate along with the Short Session, and every Delegate and Senator up for election in November 2023 serious progress at the General Assembly is questionable. A part of this newsletter includes an update from the VFN legislative chair regarding a couple of the priorities set in the Virginia Federation Legislative Plan.

Your chapter officers agreed to serve for another year to try and keep our chapter going, it would be helpful if you let us know what types of programs you would like to see and what information that we can provide to keep you interested and engaged in Chapter 2065. We can't do this without your help and support.

2023 MEETING DATES and times:

Feb 16th 11:30am Thursday
March 15th 5:30pm Wednesday
Apr 20th, 11:30 Thursday
May 18th 11:30am Thursday
Jun 15th 11:30am Thursday
Sep 20st 5:30pm, Wednesday
Oct 19th 11:30am Thursday
Nov 16th 11:30am Thursday (Annual Meeting)
Dec 21st. 11:30am. Thursday (Holiday Luncheon)

Note: The dinner meetings are so that active/working members and those that may have someone drive them to the meeting can attend. The time of the year was selected so that it is still light out.

If you have any ideas, comments, or suggestion about

anything associated with our chapter and/or being a federal retiree or active employee, please contact me.

KAREN CHEATWOOD, PRESIDENT

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Five people were present for the meeting which opened with a prayer and the pledge. Minutes from November were accepted as well as the treasurer's report. The balance now is \$1,327.85.

Charles Alvarez made a motion to pay \$273 for the plaque in memory of Bill and Gail Martin for the gazebo at LARI. This was seconded by Marilyn Root and passed. Dick Shrum requested that LARI pressure wash the gazebo before he installs it.

VFN service officer, Arlene Arthur, will hold zoom meetings the first Monday of each month. President Karen Cheatwood will attend.

Bill Shackelford, who lives in Centerville, is now national president.

Repeal of GPO and WEB was reintroduced as HR 82. Sign in to advocacy and send a letter to your representative. At the state there is no movement on exempting a segment of CSRS retirement. Nursing home standards of care and staff requirements are at 3.08 hours per resident, a little less than the VFN goal.

Dick Shrum reported the national debt is now 31.5 trillion. The projected COLA is 4%. He listed several good sources of information. The February program will be by chapter member, Bob Maher on his mission trip to Uganda.

Karen won the 50/50 drawing of \$9 and donated her share.

MARILYN ROOT, SECRETARY

PROGRAM

As I sit and write this, I am recalling that two years ago we had 4-6 inches of snow in the neighborhood. Will you join me in hoping that it is not repeated this year. Yes, maybe a few flakes just to remind us that it is winter, but certainly not anything near what they're getting today to the West of us.

At our January meeting, we covered a broad range of information and activities across our 3 areas of major interest: NARFE; aging and health; and our local Louisa County area. For NARFE, I want to note that input to their annual Photo Contest for the 2024 Calendar is due by Feb. 10. The website also has particular emphasis on the several new draft bills affecting us Feds, an online Action Center to help send letters to our politicians and a Webinar on Advocacy Feb. 15. At the state level, note that the VFN Conference will be held April 3-5 in Hampton. On aging and health, our LouCo Parks & Recreation has a

wealth of events, such package deals for playing billiards and several YOGA classes, and the JABA center there has lots of information and senior activities, including some free lunches. And for our local area, view the Historical Society website for some excellent events, including a bus trip to the Smithsonian Museum on Feb. 11 for only \$20. Finally, for those looking for a new job and wanting to get back to work, note that 3 of our County Supervisor positions are up for reelection this Fall. Applications must be in by April for party candidates or June for independents, and there will be an Information Workshop Thursday Feb. 16 at 6pm at the County Building to obtain “how to” information.

For our February meeting, we are very pleased to have Bob Maher, one of our very own Chapter 2065 members. Some 10 years ago, Bob and other members of Sts Peter and Paul Council Knights of Columbus in Palmyra created the St Francis of Assisi Health Clinic in Uganda. Over the years, they made many major improvements, including power and water, and made annual trips there until Covid. This year’s travel and event in January was very major, focusing on a health mission that provided free treatment to over 1,000 visitors. To recognize the good work of the Palmyra KofC, we have invited the local St. Jude Council members to attend, published meeting announcements in The Central Virginian Newspaper, and will hopefully have a news article with pictures in the paper.

Looking forward, please note that the March meeting will be at 5:30 in the evening, which hopefully may allow active/working members and those needing assistance to attend. Given the different timeframe, I would welcome some suggestions on how we might handle the program portion in this new format. One I’m looking at deals with “black lives matter”, involving a report and videos provided by DWR. Another one suggested would involve a road trip to Richmond to visit the Virginia War Memorial, remembering all Virginian fallen heroes. Let’s discuss these at the meeting!

DICK SHRUM, PROGRAM CHAIR

NATIONAL LEGISLATION REPORT

Congress has been back in session this month and has been moving forward on a number of items that might be of interest to you, they include:

The big issue is that the government has reached the Debt Ceiling set in 2021. This causes the Treasury to implement some measures that can affect us all, one that is discussed is ‘Disinvest in the G Fund’. For folks that have funds in the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), this has an immediate effect but once the debt ceiling is handled by congress, the TSP has to make the G Funds whole again.

- × NARFE has produced a Frequently Asked Questions on the debt limit and what it means for federal employees and retirees. It can be found at - <https://www.narfe.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Debt-Limit-FAQs-Fact-Sheet-Updated-1-23.pdf>

Other items of interest:

- * The Social Security Fairness Act HR 82 was reintroduced in the house. This bill, if passed, would revoke two provisions impacting the retirement savings of a specific subset of federal retirees. The bill currently has 59 co-sponsors including Reps Abigail Spanberger and Gerry Connelly of VA.
 1. The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), originated in 1983, and reduces Social Security benefits for federal employees and other public sector workers who receives an annuity from their time in government, but who also worked in a Social Security-covered job, typically a private sector position.
 - WEP impacts roughly two million individuals, including employees in the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)
 2. The Government Pension Offset (GPO), dates back to 1977, and reduces or eliminates Social Security benefits of the spouses, widows or widowers of an individual with a government pension.
- * Secure act 2.0 was passed and signed into law. It has many implication for those that are retired as well as current employees. They include:
 - Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs): RMDs. are pushed RMDs from age 72 to age 73 starting this year. It also changes the RMD rule to age 75 for those born in 1960 or later.
 - RMD Penalty Reductions - Penalties for missing RMDs *were* reduced from 50% to 25% and even further to 10% if you correct it within a timely manner.

- Roth College Savings - The SECURE Act 2.0 allows unused 529 account funds to be transferred into a Roth IRA in the name of that beneficiary so that it can continue to grow tax-free for their benefit if select rules are followed.
- Spousal Inheritance Options – comes into effect in 2024 and gives the option of either taking that IRA and making it your own or making it an Inherited IRA and taking RMDs under your spouse's expected life.
- IRA Catch-up Contributions - IRA catch-up contributions were generally a flat \$1,000. The new rule changed the catch-up to be indexed to inflation in increments of \$100. This means that if you're 50 or older, you will have greater opportunities to save more on tax-preferred vehicles.
- TSP Factors - The new rule introduced removing RMDs for Roth retirement accounts meaning that retirement plans, like the TSP will no longer include the Roth portion in their RMD calculation. It also allows for work-retirement account participants to elect that matching contributions be put into the Roth component but participants will pay income tax on the additional matching contributions in the same year.

* The [Chance to Compete Act](#), passed the House last week. The bill will:

- ✗ enhance the federal hiring process by expanding the use of shared assessments among different agencies, in effect trying to expand cross-agency hiring.
- ✗ allow subject matter experts (SMEs) to conduct job interviews and be more directly involved in the federal hiring process, and
- ✗ would pivot hiring managers' focus toward candidates' skills and relevant experience, rather than their educational backgrounds and self-assessments.

* The Stopping Home Office Work's Unproductive Problems (SHOW UP) Act ([H.R. 139](#)), was introduced in the House, it requires agencies within 30 days to "reinstate and apply the telework policies, practices and levels in effect on December 31, 2019.

Consider going to the advocacy page of the [NARFE.org](https://www.narfe.org) website where there are prepared letters on topics that NARFE, with member input, had determined to be important to us or you can write your own and they will ensure that it is emailed to your representative and senators plus notify you that the e-mail/letter has been sent.

<https://www.narfe.org/advocacy/legislative-action-center/>

**Karen Cheatwood in coordination with;
RAY SIEWERT, ACTING LEGISLATIVE OFFICER**

STATE LEGISLATIVE REPORT

This state legislation update was provided by the Virginia Federation (VFN) State Legislative Chair. It provides updates on a couple of the goals that were established in the VFN Virginia Legislative Priorities. The House and Senate Short Session convened Wednesday January 11, 2023, with an anticipated adjournment is 02/25/2023, so there is a truly short timeline. Most bills have already been filed, but there is a rush to get the last ones prepared in the next couple of days. In a Short Session each legislator is allowed to submit 5 bills. With 100 Delegates and 40 Senators that could be upwards of 700 pieces of legislation. Currently there are about 330 new bills filed in the House and 230 new bills filed in the Senate. There are several bills that were carried over from the last session so there will possibly be close to 700 bills to evaluate during the 2023 session.

With the divided House and Senate, the Short Session, and every Delegate and Senator up for election in November 2023, serious progress at the General Assembly is questionable.

Changes in the 2024 Virginia General Assembly. One year ago, the Supreme Court of Virginia drew maps that will be used in state legislative elections this November without regard to the addresses of sitting legislators. The result is that 44 of 100 delegates were drawn into the same district with another colleague, most of them from the same political party. While some pairings have been resolved, 21 delegates still face the prospect of moving into a different district, running for a different office, retiring, or battling a colleague for the party nomination.

Of the 2023 Virginia Legislative Priorities, Nursing Home Staffing was #2. Status in the 2023 session:

- Nursing Homes: HB 330 sponsored by V. Watts was held over but she has submitted a new bill HB

1564 (Looks almost the same so I think HB 330 got a new number)

~ Debbie Fisk has collaborated with Erica Wood, Debi Taylor, and several others to join “Virginia Voices for Nursing Home Residents” to garner more voices behind this legislation. We are pursuing Op Eds, social media messaging and email to ask for support.

- HB 1564 Nursing homes; standards of care, administrative sanctions - Vivian E. Watts (chief patron)
 - SUMMARY AS INTRODUCED: Nursing home standards of care; administrative sanctions; Long-Term Care Services Fund established. Requires regulations establishing the staffing and care standards in nursing homes to require a minimum number of hours of direct care services to each resident per 24-hour period, which minimum increases in specified phases from 3.5 hours to 4.1 hours. The bill gives the Commissioner of Health the power to impose administrative sanctions on nursing homes and directs the Board of Health to promulgate regulations related to the criteria and procedures for the imposition of administrative sanctions or initiation of court proceedings for violations of the bill. The bill establishes the Long-Term Care Services Fund for the purpose of making grants to assist in the provision of activities that protect or improve the quality of care or quality of life for residents, patients, and consumers of long-term care services.
- HB 1446 Certified nursing facilities; minimum staffing standards, administrative sanctions - Robert D. Orrock, Sr.(chief patron)
 - SUMMARY AS INTRODUCED: Minimum staffing standards for certified nursing facilities; administrative sanctions. Sets nursing staffing requirements for certified nursing facilities, imposes administrative sanctions on a certified nursing facility if it does not comply with the staffing requirements, and provides for exemptions to the

administrative sanctions under certain circumstances. The bill has a delayed effective date of July 1, 2026.

Standard Deductions, although not one of the VFN Legislative Priorities, of interest to all of us.

- HB 472 Income tax, state; increases standard deduction Introduced by: Joseph P. McNamara
 - SUMMARY AS PASSED HOUSE: Passed the House and will be taken up in the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee. Income tax - Increases the standard deduction, starting with taxable year 2022, from \$4,500 to \$9,000 for single filers and from \$9,000 to \$18,000 for married filers (one-half of such amount in the case of a married individual filing a separate return). The increase would remain in effect until taxable year 2026, when the standard deduction is scheduled to be reduced to \$3,000 for single filers and to \$6,000 for married filers.
- SB 851 Income tax, state; increases standard deduction - Introduced by: David R. Suetterlein
 - SUMMARY AS INTRODUCED: Income tax; standard deduction. Increases the standard deduction, starting with taxable year 2023, from \$8,000 to \$12,500 for single filers and from \$16,000 to \$25,000 for married filers (one-half of such amount in the case of a married individual filing a separate return). The increase would remain in effect until taxable year 2026, when the standard deduction is scheduled to be reduced to \$3,000 for single filers and to \$6,000 for married filers.

Of the 2023 Virginia Legislative Priorities, CSRS tax reduction was #1 on the Virginia Legislative Plan: CSRS Legislation was not taken seriously by any legislator that Debbie Fisk was in communication with. Del Hope had exceeded his 5 bills, Del Robinson did not respond, and Del Orrock was part of the redistricting, and he is not going to run again.

Debbie is currently in communication with Senator Chap

Petersen and will try to begin a dialogue to know where we go from here in terms of finding a serious legislator who will look at our notes for the 2024 Session. Side note – I have been told that there is an internal communication platform used by our representatives. The LA’s log our communications and the Representative can see a total of hits they receive from their constituents. I think the acronym for the program is IHOD. Unfortunately, it does not help for a person in 10th District or 37th District to contact a legislator in the 5th District. They are interested in helping their constituents. So, when we locate possible interested representatives, we will need help from members in their district.

This is all a learning curve, but each time we learn a little bit more.

Submitted by Debbie Fisk (VFN Sate Legislative Chair), edited by Karen Cheatwood for our newsletter.

ALZHEIMER’S REPORT

Karen won the 50/50 drawing of \$9 and donated her share.

MARILYN ROOT, ALZHEIMER’S CHAIR

LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS (not yet updated for 2023)

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State Legislation – *Vacant*

Membership – *Vacant*

Public Relations – Dick Shrum 540-872-5409

Program – Dick Shrum 540-872-5409

Holiday lunch – Marilyn Root 540-634-0241

Commission on Aging – *Vacant*