

NARFE Chapter 1116 Newsletter

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



MARCH 2023

Next Chapter Meeting
Tuesday, March 14, 2023
1:00 PM
Vienna Community Center

Next Board Meeting
Thursday, March 23, 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 Dantine 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
Kathy Arpa, 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

Our February meeting was very festive with a lot of red and pink attire and everyone in the mood to celebrate Valentine's Day. We had chocolate candy and plenty of brownies, cookies, and cupcakes. Maddy White from Congressman Gerry Connolly's office brought us up-to-date on the involvement of the Congressman on Capitol Hill and the latest developments as a result of redistricting in the 11th Congressional District of Virginia. (See details in the Secretary's report on page 2.) Our Treasurer Dave Graf presented the 2023 Budget, which was approved.

Our next meeting will be on March 14. Back by popular demand is one of our favorite guest speakers Linda Colbert, Mayor of Vienna, telling us about the latest new local businesses and restaurants in Vienna.

It is not too late to register to attend the Virginia Federation of NARFE (VFN) Conference in Hampton on April 2-5. Details below and at <https://vanarfe.org/conference2023/>. The approved Chapter Budget has some funds to help with the cost of registration, travel and lodging.

Kathy

VFN CONFERENCE – APRIL 2-5, 2023

You can still sign up for the 2023 VFN Conference to be held in Hampton, Virginia. Registration forms, together with a check for the cost of registration and banquet, must be mailed to the Data Base Manager, James R. Little, 11759 Buckley Court, Woodbridge, VA 22192-5725. He may be contacted at (703) 590-5878 or email jlittlex@comcast.net. An easier way to register is to fill out your registration form, pay by credit card, and send your registration directly from the website. <https://vanarfe.org/conference2023/>

Special thanks to the 15 Chapter members who contributed a total of \$375.00 as "Supporters of the VFN Conference". Your names will be published in the Conference Program.

COMING UP

March 1-31 – NARFE-PAC Month (see NARFE monthly magazine)

March 12 – Daylight Savings Time Begins

March 14 – Chapter Meeting – Vienna Community Center – 1:00 p.m.
Guest speaker – Linda Colbert (pictured here), Mayor of Vienna

March 17 – St. Patrick’s Day

March 20 – First Day of Spring

April 2-5 -- VFN Annual Meeting/Conference – Embassy Suites, Hampton, Virginia
Details at <https://vanarfe.org/conference2023/>

April 11 -- Chapter Meeting – Vienna Community Center – 1:00 p.m. -- Report on VFN Conference



SECRETARY’S REPORT ON THE FEBRUARY 14TH MEETING - CHRIS GIESELER

The Chapter’s Membership Meeting was held on February 14, 2023—Valentine’s Day—at the Vienna Community Center. After the meeting was called to order at 1:10 pm by Chapter President Kathy Arpa, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited, birthdays were recognized (Dave Graf and Mark Arpa), and guests were recognized.



Our Second Vice President Jayne Seidman introduced the speaker, Ms. Maddy White (pictured here). She is the Deputy Director of Outreach for Congressman Gerald (Gerry) E. Connolly (D-VA). Ms. White described how the 11th Congressional District boundaries have changed as a result of redistricting. The district no longer includes Prince William County. It now comprises the portion of Fairfax County outside the Beltway. Demographically, there are 11,000 more voters in the Hunter Mill and Providence Supervisory Districts alone.

With control of the U.S. House of Representatives having shifted to the Republican Party for the 118th Congress, Rep. Connolly’s assignments have changed. He is still on the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability (the Committee’s new name), including the subcommittees on (1) Government Operations and the Federal Workforce, and (2) Cybersecurity, Information Technology and Government Innovation. He also serves on the House Intelligence Committee and on the

Committee on Foreign Affairs and two of its subcommittees, including the one on the Indo-Pacific region. Plus, Rep. Connolly is on the Select Committee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government.

Ms. White stated that the previous Congress had been very productive. Rep. Connolly had the most bills enacted in the 117th Congress. The Inflation Reduction Act and the various Appropriations Acts provided a lot of money for roads and, also for our area, funds for health and child development centers and mental health care funding. She also cited the First Responder Fair RETIRE Act, which Rep. Connolly sponsored. It was enacted and gives retired first responders the same benefits they would have received if they had not been injured on the job.

In Rep. Connolly's office, Ms. White works on IRS, OPM, Social Security, security clearance and passport issues. She can be reached at (703) 256-3071 or via email at Maddy.White@Mail.House.gov. For other issues when staff do not know the answer, they will take the issue to someone in an agency who can respond to the issue. The office no longer handles matters regarding the data centers in Prince William County since that county is no longer part of the 11th District. But they are getting more complaints on local issues, especially the Virginia Department of Transportation and traffic in the western part of Fairfax County. Regarding Metrorail, Rep. Connolly wants a Special Inspector General for Metro to improve its accountability by determining whether Metro's funds are being properly used. Ms. White also noted that the IRS still has a large backlog of prior year tax returns to process.

The upcoming Annual Meeting/Conference of the Virginia Federation of NARFE was discussed. The Conference will be held April 2-5, 2023 in Hampton, Virginia. (More information about the conference appears on the front page of this newsletter.) Members were encouraged to attend the Conference. A final call for convention supporters was made by Kathy.

Following a break, Kathy provided an interesting discussion of the history of Valentine's Day. Thereafter, reports were given by the Secretary, Treasurer, and the Chairs for Membership, Legislation, and Sunshine. (See updated reports elsewhere in this newsletter.) Kathy presented information about upcoming Chapter meetings and events as listed on Page 2 of this newsletter.

Treasurer Dave Graf presented the proposed Chapter Budget for this year. It was approved by the attendees. There was a discussion concerning the declining membership in NARFE, largely the result of the aging of current members and attracting fewer new members. Kathy discussed the types of NARFE memberships, specifically Lifetime memberships and dues withholding. Lifetime memberships allow members to pay a one-time dues payment, depending on their age, to NARFE. They still get invoiced by NARFE for the annual Chapter dues if they want to be a member of their local chapter. For everyone else, rather than receiving a dues renewal from NARFE, the dues can be withheld by OPM from a retiree's/survivor's monthly annuity. More information is in the NARFE Magazine, including the form needed to request Lifetime membership.

Kathy announced that the Chapter needs a Newsletter Editor. Please let Kathy know if you are interested. The Newsletter Team will assist the new editor. The 50/50 drawings for Alzheimer's Research were conducted by Margaret Murphy and raised \$42.25. Lastly, March Newsletter articles are due to Dave Graf by March 1. A motion was made and seconded and the meeting adjourned at 2:46 pm.

TREASURER'S REPORT – DAVE GRAF

Since the February Newsletter, the Chapter received \$145.88 for membership dues collected by NARFE's National Headquarters for January. Also, \$2.00 was contributed to the Coffee Fund at the February 14th Membership Meeting. The only expense was a \$311.50 payment for the annual per capita dues to the Virginia Federation of NARFE (VFN).

The 50/50 drawing for Alzheimer's Research raised \$42.25 at the February 14th Membership Meeting. These donations will be sent to the VFN Coordinator for the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund.

The Chapter Budget for Calendar Year 2023 (as approved by the Board of Directors at its January 26th meeting) was adopted by the members at the February 14th Membership Meeting. The budget funds the regular operation of the Chapter for this year. To encourage members of our Chapter to attend the VFN Convention in April, funding was included in the budget to reimburse some of the expenses of our members who attend.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT – JAYNE SEIDMAN

Total current Chapter membership is 179; total National members in the Chapter area is 143, for a Grand Total of 322 members. We welcome our new member, Cornelia Newbold. Our longtime member and former Chapter Officer Nancy Linn passed away in February. (See the Sunshine Report on Page 6 of this newsletter.).

LEGISLATION REPORTS

National Legislation – Daad Pierce

- On February 1st, Representative John Garamendi of California, reintroduced the Fair COLA for Seniors Act (H.R. 716). The bill would provide more accurate COLAs for federal retirees by calculating their COLAs using the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E), which better tracks the spending habits of seniors than the current methodology. National President William Shackelford expressed NARFE's support for the legislation with a letter of endorsement.
- On February 1st, the House passed the “Stopping Home Office Work’s Unproductive Problems Act of 2023” or “SHOW UP Act of 2023” (H.R. 139), which had been introduced on January 9th. The bill would require each executive agency to reinstate the telework policies that were in place on December 31, 2019. Agencies would not be able to implement expanded telework policies unless the Office of Personnel Management certifies that such policies, among other requirements, would have a positive effect on the agency’s mission and operational costs. The bill has now gone to the Senate for consideration.
- On February 7th, Representative Don Beyer of Virginia and Senator Brian Schatz of Hawaii reintroduced the Comprehensive Paid Leave for Federal Employees Act (H.R. 856/S. 274). The bipartisan bill would expand paid leave options for the federal workforce. NARFE endorsed the legislation and will push for its advancement in the House and Senate.
- On February 8th, Representative Gerry Connolly of Virginia reintroduced the Equal COLA Act. The legislation would standardize the annual increase in annuity payments for retirees across the two retirement systems (FERS and CSR).
- On February 14th, Representative Gerry Connolly of Virginia and Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia, introduced the Saving the Civil Service Act (H.R. 1002/S. 399) in the House and Senate, respectively. This legislation marks the latest attempt by lawmakers to prevent the return of Schedule F, a statutory loophole created by the previous administration. NARFE has encouraged members to call on their lawmakers to cosponsor the bills.
- On February 21st Democratic State Senator Jennifer McClellan won the Virginia special election to fill the vacant House seat for the 4th Congressional District (Richmond area).
- On February 27th, the Office of Management and Budget issued a guidance memorandum (M-23-13) requiring Federal agencies to remove TikTok from their government-owned devices, subject to certain exceptions (law enforcement, research, etc.). This memorandum implements the “No TikTok on Government Devices Act” which was passed by Congress in December 2022. Agencies have 30 days to comply.

- On March 1st, Senator Sherrod Brown introduced a bill to repeal the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provisions of current law (S.597). This is a companion bill to H.R. 82 in the House.

Virginia Legislation – Chris Gieseler

The Virginia General Assembly ended its 2023 legislative session on Saturday, February 25th. As of this report, lawmakers are only saying that budget negotiations are ongoing. There is no news yet regarding a special session that would be required to vote on and pass additional budget amendments. Described below are certain significant bills passed by the General Assembly during its 45-day session.

- **Nursing Home Standards** (H.B. 1446). This bill addresses nursing home staffing and related matters and has been sent to the Governor for his signature. The bill has a delayed effective date of July 1, 2025. This bill was supported by the Virginia Federation of NARFE.
- **Budget Bill**. Although no agreement for sweeping changes to the state budget for both tax cuts and massive new spending was reached, the legislature passed a slimmed-down budget bill (H.B. 1400). It provides additional funding of \$250 million into the Virginia Retirement System, \$100 million to cover shortfalls in capital construction funding, \$133 million in direct aid to public education, and \$406 million to the Revenue Stabilization Fund for Fiscal Year 2024. That bill is awaiting signatures by the Speaker of the House of Delegates and the President of the Virginia Senate, before it goes to the Governor for his signature.

2023 Virginia General Assembly Elections. According to information from Debbie Fisk, VFN State Legislation Committee, over a dozen Virginia legislators are retiring as a result of the redistricting that has occurred in Virginia. These legislators include Democratic Senate Leader Dick Saslaw, Republican Senate Minority Leader Tommy Norment, and legislative veterans such as Republican Delegate Kathy Byron, Democratic Senator John Edwards and Democratic Delegate Ken Plum (the House’s longest-serving member).

All 140 seats in the politically divided General Assembly are on the ballot this year. Candidates will be running for the first time under the redistricted maps. Many legislators were paired in many of the re-drawn districts. This could lead to additional retirements.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- **Tuesday, June 20, 2023** – Primary (Democratic State Senator Chap Petersen is a candidate for District 37, which now includes most of the Vienna – Oakton area)
- **Tuesday, November 7, 2023** – General Election

SERVICE OFFICER – SUSAN LARSON

For all of you who have children, grand children or great-grandchildren who are high school seniors and planning to attend college, the article below may be worth **\$1,000** to your family member. YOU must apply immediately!!

2023 NARFE-FEEA Scholarship Program

The 2023 NARFE-FEEA Fund Scholarship Awards Program is now accepting applications. One recipient in each of the 10 regions will receive a one-time award of \$1,000 to put toward the 2023-24 school year.

Applicants must be:

- seniors in high school, and
- children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren of NARFE members.

The deadline to apply is **3 p.m. ET Thursday, March 16, 2023**. For more information and to access the application, visit www.feea.org/our-programs/scholarships/.

The scholarship program is funded by the NARFE-FEEA Fund, supported by NARFE members and administered by FEEA. In 1987, the Federal Employee Education & Assistance Fund (FEEA) established a scholarship program for children and grandchildren of federal employees. Ten years later, NARFE joined FEEA's Board of Directors and then created a scholarship program open to relatives of NARFE members.

SUNSHINE REPORT – HARRIET EPSTEIN

Our long-time member Nancy Linn passed away on February 15 after suffering a stroke two weeks earlier. Cards can be sent to her son **David Linn, 1532 15th Street NW, Apt. B, Washington, D.C. 20005-1900**. A memorial service will be held later. Nancy served as Second Vice President, Membership Chair and Service Officer in 2017-2019.

It was good to see Anne Shea, our former Chapter Secretary, at our February 14th Chapter Meeting. Anne suffered a stroke in early December. She was happy to be able to get out and see her friends at the Chapter Meeting.

Our First Vice President Ralph Dantine (pictured here) will be celebrating a special birthday on March 11. We are sending him special birthday wishes on his 80th birthday.

Congratulations to Dolores and Bill Inch and Kathy and Mark Arpa on the birth of their Grand Niece Katherine Yun Mei Long on February 21 in Philadelphia, Pa. Her parents are Dr. Jessica Meisner and Michael Long.

If you know of someone who needs a little sunshine, please call Harriet at 703-560-4137.

