

Serving Current and Retired Federal Civilian Employees, Spouses and Survivor Annuitants

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There was no April meeting. The next meeting is May 2.

WHERE: American Legion Post 177, 3939 Oak Street, Fairfax
TIME: Social Hour-11:30 AM, Lunch-12:00PM, Speaker/Program-12:30
COST: \$15.00 cash or check made out to NARFE Chapter 737
MEETING SCHEDULE: Monthly on First Tuesday – Except July & August
CONTACT: Email TedPasek@verizon.net if you plan to attend

We did not have a meeting on April 4th but Bob Sottile donated his food and collected food from his neighbors for Food for Others totaling 79 pounds!! Bob is outdoing himself with his donation efforts. Thank you, Bob!

May 2 – Ms. Mary Lipsey from the Burke Historical Society will speak about the work and successes of Clara Barton primarily during the Civil War. We will be collecting for Food for Others as usual.

June 6 - Fairfax Chapter 737 Annual Picnic at Van Dyke Part in Fairfax City. Bring your own lunch, beverages will be provided. Bring friends and family members to enjoy a good day of conversation and fellowship. Donations for Food for Others will be collected at the Picnic on June 6th.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear Members of Chapter 737:

The chapter picnic will be held on 6 June at Van Dyck Park in Fairfax City. Details will be published next month.

At our next chapter membership meeting not only will Mary Lipsey from the Burke Historical Society speak, but I will be taking photographs of the group. These photographs come in handy when we recognize members of the chapter for something special. (I take photographs only with consent.) Please plan to attend the 2 May membership meeting at the Fairfax American Legion Post. Check-in starts at 11:30 a.m., and we will sit down to eat at 12:00 p.m. The cost is \$15 per person. Details for using Zoom are:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84233003770?pwd=SVo2bjBuL1p6OFIvc3B5bGVKUjc5dz09>

This month, I am making an urgent appeal for volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee. Please inform me of your interest to serve on this required committee or meet with me at the May 2nd membership meeting. I am seeking volunteers who are not current members of the Board and who plan not to run for office.

Sincerely yours,

Charles "Mike" Fleming – Chapter President

WORKHOUSE TOUR

Thanks to Sharon Lenius for organizing the Lorton Work House art center and museum tour. Seven adults (Ted, John, Marian, Lucy, Jim, Al, Sharon) and one grandson attended the tour. I for one will be returning since there was so much more to see in the museum and art centers.



FOOD FOR OTHERS

In March we collected 196n pounds of food for "Food for Others". Needed items include:

Food Items (no more than 3 years expired, unopened, labeled, not homemade):

- Fresh fruits (oranges, apples, bananas, tomatoes, avocados, grapes, berries)
- Fresh vegetables (cucumbers, celery, peppers, lettuce, eggplant)
- Cooking Oil
- Dry goods – cereal, pasta, rice, (16oz packages), dried beans
- Canned vegetables tomatoes (crushed, peeled, diced, etc.), beans, corn, etc.)
- Canned meat (chicken, turkey, or seafood), 2oz – 15oz
- Canned fruit (packed in fruit juice instead of syrup) 11oz – 20oz
- Spaghetti sauce, 14oz – 1 lb (ideally in cans or plastic instead of glass)
- Fruit juice (100% juice) 32oz – 64oz

Perishable Food (Meat and Dairy unexpired, sealed, in original packaging):

Non-Food Items (New or Clean Reusable Grocery Bags 8 ½ x 14 x 15 and can openers)

Ted Pasek – Vice President

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

NATIONAL LEGISLATION- Upon Congress return from an Easter recess, April 3-14, a recent period of relative quite on key spending issues affecting federal employees and retirees will soon end.

This year's process of setting agency funding levels, which translate into employment levels, training and advancement opportunities, salary incentives and more for federal employees, has promised to be a contentious one since Republicans took control of the House in the last election.

An added difficulty is the need to raise the federal debt ceiling once the funding made available by financial maneuvers already invoked, including one involving the TSP's government securities G fund, is exhausted, likely by late summer.

The Biden White House has laid out its own set of proposals, including a 5.2 percent average raise for January 2024 while leaving federal benefits untouched, boosting operating funds and staffing levels for many agencies, and calling for an increase in the debt limit with no strings attached.

Republican leaders in the House have insisted on making reductions in spending a condition on raising the debt limit. Few details have emerged apart from a stated desire to repeal several laws enacted in Biden's first two years with

both the House and Senate in Democratic control, and to cap agency spending at pre-pandemic levels. The administration and other Democrats in turn have focused on the potential disruption to government services that would result.

One potential focus for House Republicans in the House Budget Committee will be proposals they often have raised in the budget process including requiring most employees to pay more for retirement benefits, reducing the value of benefits for future retirees, shifting more of the cost of FEHB insurance from the government to enrollees, restricting retiree COLAs and more.

As a fallback for a failure to act on the debt limit, Republicans have proposed a bill (HR-167) that would prioritize spending of revenues as they come in, starting with paying interest on the national debt and programs including Social Security, Medicare, veterans benefits and defense spending. Only after that would there be funding for other government operations including paying salaries of employees.

While the House GOP may call that bill or something like it to a vote, it would have virtually no chance of passage in the Democratic controlled Senate. **(FEDweek)**

VIRGINIA LEGISLATION- Virginia lawmakers returned to Richmond for one day on April 12 to consider Gov. Glenn Youngkin's proposed amendments to new bills and three he vetoed. The General Assembly responded in bipartisan fashion by upholding all three of Youngkin's vetoes, and approved most of his proposed changes to 77 separate measures.

One veto involved a House bill that would have required a state agency to review cases where grievance procedures were not followed. The other two vetoes were Senate bills. One would have allowed utility and broadband providers to leave service vehicles on private property for up to 72 hours. The other veto would have directed state police to study excessive vehicle noise, a reason to pull over a driver.

Many of the accepted amendments were technical in nature, including grammatical fixes on a bill on electric utility regulation. The Senate approved the governor's recommendations on a bill meant to crack down on intoxicating hemp products, in part by limiting the amount of THC allowed per package.

The Senate did reject a number of Youngkin's amendments, including his efforts to tinker with bills related to renewable energy, the harassment of judges, the parole process, and extending protection of consumer data for children from age 13 to age 18, .

Changes to the state budget was not up for discussion, with no action likely for several weeks. **(Washington Post)**

Tom Hart – Legislation Program

CHAPTER WEB SITE

Members are encouraged people to check out the website for information and program schedules. Information useful for chapter members can be submitted for posting. The website link is <https://vanarfe.org/Chapter-737/>.

Ruby Harney – Public Relations Chair

COMPUTER SECURITY

There are legitimate companies using QR codes, but scammers can use them to steal your personal information. Here are some tips for spotting and avoiding QR code scams:

<https://www.verifythis.com/article/news/verify/scams-verify/how-to-spot-qr-code-scams-to-steal-personal-information/536-b82efb5b-3014-4b4a-87dd-951bb1d9a46c>

PEW RESEACH ON THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF 118TH CONGRESS

This website,

https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2023/02/07/the-changing-face-of-congress/?utm_source=Pew+Research+Center&utm_campaign=58f361a3fe-QUARTERLY_FEBRUARY_2023&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-58f361a3fe-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D , has some fascinating statistics on the current congress.

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5340 GAINSBOROUGH DR.
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Postal Service (Time Value) Please Deliver By August 25, 2023

NEWSLETTER

The newsletter is published September through June. The chapter membership meets September through May and we have the annual chapter picnic in June.

Thanks to everyone who is getting the newsletter electronically. It is saving the chapter money. If you would like to receive your newsletter electronically, contact your Newsletter Editor at mays.jl@verizon.net to make the change. By receiving the E-Newsletter, it save the chapter money and you get the newsletter in color. The newsletter is also on the Virginia Federation website at www.vanarfe.org as well as the FEDHub platform at www.narfe.org .

Articles for the June issue of NARFE Fairfax Chapter 737 newsletter are due to the editor by e-mail at Mays.JL@verizon.net by **May 15**.

James Mays – Newsletter Editor