

NARFE Chapter 1116 Newsletter

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

MAY 2023

Next Chapter Meeting
Tuesday, May 9, 2023
1:00 PM
Vienna Community Center

Next Board Meeting
Thursday, May 25, 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
Jim Hathaway 703-255-7135

State Legislation
Chris Gieseler 703-849-0008

Newsletter Team
Kathy Arpa, Dave Graf

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

At our April 11 meeting, Mark and I gave a report on the VFN Conference we attended earlier in the month. Following that, members introduced themselves and shared information about their careers in the Federal Government or private industry. It was quite interesting. Several members worked in the same field in different agencies. On April 29, Chris, Jim, Ralph, Mark, and I attended the NOVA Caucus Meeting. We met the two candidates running for President of the VFN.

It is time to Vote! There are two contested offices on the VFN Board which must be decided: President and Secretary. Running for President of the VFN are Frances Boatman and Doris McAdams. Running for VFN Secretary are Deborah Fisk and Esther Nash. The biographies of each candidate can be found at <https://www.vanarfe.org/candidates-statements/>.

There are two amendments proposed by the VFN Board of Directors. The first would change the quorum requirement for VFN meetings from .005% of membership to 10 members. The second amendment proposed by the VFN Board of Directors is to change Annual Meeting notification from 60 days prior to 30 days prior to the meeting. This change will help the Federation take advantage of the national magazine publication schedule to provide notice to NARFE members in Virginia. Both Amendments can be reviewed at <https://www.vanarfe.org/proposed-bylaw/>.

On-line voting began on May 1st. To vote, go to <https://vanarfe.org/2023-elections/> and, after reviewing the biographies and the proposed amendments, fill in the required information (an email address is NOT required, however your NARFE member number, which can be found on your NARFE magazine mailing label, must be entered. Then click on one candidate for President, one candidate for Secretary and to accept or reject each of the proposed Bylaw amendments. You must vote by 11:59 pm, May 31, 2023 and vote only once. Members who have not provided NARFE with an email address will receive a ballot by mail and will have the option of mailing their vote or casting their ballot online.

Hope to see you at our Chapter Meeting on May 9. Look for info on page 2 about our annual chapter picnic.

Kathy

COMING UP

May 9 – Chapter Meeting – Vienna Community Center – 1:00 PM – Guest Speaker – Peggy James, Director, Vienna Business Association (VBA) , and annual ice cream social

May 29- Memorial Day



June 13 – Annual Chapter Picnic – 12 noon - 10500 Hunting Hills Place, Oakton, VA

July – August – No Chapter Meetings

ANNUAL CHAPTER 1116 PICNIC

Like last year, Chapter 1116 members will get together for a picnic at the Oakton, VA home of 2nd Vice President Jayne Seidman on **Tuesday, June 13 beginning at 12 noon**. Depending on the weather, we will either use Jayne’s outdoor patio or be indoors. The Chapter will provide fried and baked chicken and beverages (lemonade, iced tea, and water). Each member and guest may either bring a dish to share (such as a salad, vegetable, or dessert) or give a \$10.00 donation. A sign-up sheet will be passed around at the May Membership Meeting. If you do not attend the May meeting and would like to attend the picnic, please call **Jayne Seidman at 703-938-2274** or **David Graf at 703-938-2962** no later than **Sunday, June 11** to sign-up and indicate what you will bring to the picnic. All members and guests are welcome!

Directions from Tysons Corner/Vienna: Take Maple Ave./Route 123 South. Turn **right** onto Hunter Mill Road (VA 624) -- go 0.6 miles. Turn **left** on Marbury Rd. -- go 0.3 miles. Take **1st left** on Hunting Hills Court -- go 0.1 miles. Take **1st left** on Hunting Hills Place -- go 0.09 miles. Jayne’s house number is **10500 Hunting Hills Place - on the left**. Parking is available in the driveway and on both sides of the street. GPS works great.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT – JAYNE SEIDMAN

Total Current Chapter Members – 175; Total National Members in Chapter Area - 139; for a Grand Total of 314 members in our area. Welcome back to K. Sheeran who has been reinstated. One member passed away.

TREASURER’S REPORT – DAVE GRAF

Since the April Newsletter, the Chapter received \$117.92 for membership dues collected by NARFE’s National Headquarters for the month of March. The only expense was \$180.00 to reimburse Mark Arpa for registration and other expenses when he attended the Virginia Federation of NARFE (VFN) Conference held on April 2-5, 2023, in Hampton, VA.

The 50/50 drawing for Alzheimer’s Research raised \$40.50 at the April 11th Membership Meeting. These donations have been sent to the VFN Coordinator for the Alzheimer’s Research Fund. The total contribution for calendar year 2023 is \$156.50.

Members who wish to make charitable, tax-deductible donations toward the treatment, prevention and, ultimately, a cure for this disease and enable our Chapter to also get credit should make their checks payable to **NARFE-Alzheimer’s Research** and include **Chapter 1116** on the memo line. Bring your cash or checks to our next Membership Meeting or send your checks to me at:

David Graf, NARFE Chapter 1116
1708 Palm Springs Dr
Vienna, VA 22182-2330

SECRETARY'S REPORT – CHRIS GIESELER

Chapter 1116 held its most recent Membership meeting on April 11, 2023, at the Virginia Community Center (VCC). Chapter President Kathy Arpa called the meeting to order at 1:08 pm. Dan Brinza led the assemblage in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. There were no April birthdays.

Kathy and Mark Arpa gave a short report on the VFN Conference they had attended earlier in the month. Kathy noted that there were 85 attendees at the Conference. Various workshops were given including: New Members and First Timers, VFN Website, Wellness by BC/BS, and Quilting. Kathy gave a presentation on FEDHub. Ted Pasek was re-elected as an Area X Vice President. Larry McIlwee was elected First Vice President and Pat Wolfe was elected Second Vice President. Candidates for President are Doris McAdams and Frances Boatman. Candidates for Secretary are Debbie Fisk and Esther



Nash. There was no candidate for VFN State Treasurer. Ballots for president and secretary have been sent to members in the Virginia Federation. A memorial service was held for NARFE members who had passed away during the past year. Mark Arpa (pictured here) provided the music for the service with his violin and guitar. Area Vice Presidents each took a rose and placed it in a vase as part of the memorial service. Names of deceased members were shown on the big screen by area and chapter.

A welcome reception was also held on Monday evening. At the banquet on Tuesday evening, new officers were installed and the former “Leadership Award”, which was renamed the “William Martin Leadership Award” for this year, was presented to Dr. Constance Bails (pictured here) by VFN President Bob Martin.



Following the report on the Conference, chapter members introduced themselves and shared information about their career in the Federal Government or private industry. Kathy introduced Jim Hathaway as our new National Legislation Chair.

Following the program, we took a break. (Hostess Jayne Seidman and several other members provided some delicious treats for us). Reports were given by the Chapter’s Secretary, Treasurer, Chairs of the State and National Legislation, , and Membership,. Updated information regarding all these activities appears in this newsletter. The meeting then turned to the schedule of upcoming Chapter meetings (which has been revised because of the availability of speakers.) Kathy reminded us that the next Membership meeting will be on May 9 and would feature Peggy James, Executive Director of the Vienna Business Association (VBA) and our popular ice cream social hosted by Margaret Murphy. Members signed up to bring their favorite topping.

Kathy announced that The Northern Virginia Caucus meeting would occur on April 28, 2023, at American Legion Post 177 in Fairfax VA/3939 Oak Street. Guest Speaker will be from the Department of Emergency Mgmt. & Security, Fairfax County Government. In addition, the two candidates for president of VFN will present their visions for VFN. Six members signed up to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 pm upon motion and unanimous vote of the attendees.

SUNSHINE REPORT – HARRIET EPSTEIN

Sympathy to the family of Maria Antal of Vienna who passed away recently. If you know of someone who needs a little sunshine, please call me on 703-560-4137.

SERVICE OFFICER REPORT – SUSAN LARSON

The decisions you make in retirement are important. Here are some of the worst mistakes federal retirees can make.

Moving before investigating – Relocating without thoroughly evaluating a new area can be an expensive mistake. Thoroughly assess and compare financial, emotional, cultural, medical, and other considerations such as proximity to family.

Not thoroughly reading email/email from OPM – OPM serves as a retiree’s payroll office. Always open and read any information you get from OPM. While some notices are general updates, many are personalized updates about your specific individual retirement benefits. Without keeping yourself up-to-date, you could also lose the ability to appeal any adverse action affecting your benefits.

Ignoring your change in life insurance needs upon retirement – The Federal Employee’s Group Life Insurance Programs (FEGLI) (options A, B and C) increase in monthly premiums by nearly 50 percent at ages 55 and 60. Many retirees who maintain the same coverage they had as employees are overpaying. Examine your needs to determine what purpose life insurance serves for you.

Not reading the annual federal benefits Open Season material – Just because you are satisfied with the health, long-term care, dental or vision insurance plan you have this year doesn’t mean you shouldn’t read the upcoming year’s information. Something changes every year, whether it’s a health plan dropping out of the program or plans merging, changing areas of coverage, dropping an option or increasing/decreasing premiums.

Changing FEHB coverage to Self Only when your spouse has his or her own nonfederal coverage – If you change your coverage to Self Only option and your spouse does not have his or her own Federal Employees Health Benefits coverage as a federal retiree, your spouse will not be able to continue FEHB coverage if you die. As a federal retiree, you must not only elect a survivor benefit but also have an enrollment covering your spouse in effect at the time of death for your spouse to ensure continued FEHB health coverage.

Choosing the wrong health care options for a federally employed family – If you and your spouse are both Feds, choosing between enrollment options (Family, Self-Only, Self Plus One) in FEHB plans is an important decision with financial implications that are unique to each family. For example, if one of you is still employed, it may be best for the employee to carry everyone on his/her employment FEHB plan. Not only can the employee take advantage of the “premium conversion” tax exclusion afforded only to active employees, but if either is old enough for Medicare, neither would be concerned with paying for Medicare Part B while covered under employment FEHB.

Closing your old bank account too soon – If you need to change the bank account you are using for your retirement direct deposits, do not close your old saving or checking account until you know for sure your retirement payments are being deposited in the new account. If the payment is sent to the closed account, it could be another month before the payment is reissued.

Neglecting to elect a survivor benefit upon marriage or remarriage – If you marry or remarry after retirement, you have up to two years to elect a survivor benefit for your spouse. Don’t forget, upon your death your survivor cannot continue your health benefits coverage unless you have elected to provide a survivor benefit.

Not checking your federal retirement benefits online – All retirees can view their current benefits and the amount of their next scheduled payment online, using OPM’s Services Online website at www.servicesonline.opm.gov By keeping track of your benefits, you will know ahead of time if your next payment is the correct amount and going to the right address. There are many things you can do in just a few minutes on OPM’s Services Online site that could take weeks or months to accomplish by phone or changes to what will be covered.

MEET OUR NEW NATIONAL LEGISLATION CHAIR – JIM HATHAWAY

From 1971 until 2000, Jim (pictured here) was employed by the U.S. Treasury Department as a criminal investigator and Special Agent in positions of increasing responsibility culminating as the Assistant Deputy Director for the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FINCIN). (A Bureau of the Treasury Department).



From 2000 until December 2021, he was employed by multiple Internet providers, designing, building, developing training, and operating the security systems for over 20 data centers across the United States and in Europe. Jim retired in 2021 as Global Account Manager for Amazon Web Services (AWS) for Securitas USA.

Education

Marymount University, Arlington VA
Master's Business Administration,

Saint Ambrose University, Davenport IA
BA History/Political Science,

Continuing Education via Periodic Training, Criminal/Computer Investigative Seminars
Member of various professional associations

LEGISLATION REPORTS

National Legislation – Jim Hathaway

[Social Security Fairness Act \(House Bill HR 82\) submitted by Representative Garrett Graves \(R- Louisiana\)](#)

The bill would repeal both the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) laws. It was referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means on January 9, 2023. The Social Security Fairness Act of 2023 (H.R. 82/S. 597) has most of the support in the House of Representatives. The bill reached 223 cosponsors in early April, marking a significant milestone in the 118th Congress for NARFE's fight to pass the bill into law. However, more cosponsors are needed to push the bill to a vote.

[Federal Annuities The Fair COLA For Seniors Act \(House Bill HR 716\)](#)

The bill would require the Social Security and federal retirement programs to use the consumer price index for the elderly (CPI – E) to calculate cost of living adjustment COLAs to the retirement benefits. The bill was referred to the House Committees on Ways and Means, Veterans Affairs, Oversight and Accountability, and Armed Services on February 1, 2023.

[The Equal COLA Act \(House Bill HR 866\)](#)

The bill was submitted by Representative Gerry Connolly. It would give Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) retirees the same annual cost of living adjustment as Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) retirees. It was referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability. The original version of this bill was introduced on Nov 20, 2018.

[The Federal Adjustment of Income Rates \(FAIR\) Act \(House Bill HR 536 / S. 124\)](#)

This bill would provide federal employees with an 8.7 percent average pay raise in 2023. It has been referred to both the House and Senate Committees for consideration.

Virginia State Legislation – Chris Gieseler

The Virginia General Assembly met in Reconvened Session (commonly referred to as a “veto session”) on April 12, 2023. The General Assembly upheld the three vetoes by the Governor. They also accepted his amendments to 64 of the 78 bills that he had returned to them after the General Assembly’s Regular Session ended on February 25, 2023. (For one of those 64 bills, only one of the Governor’s recommended amendments was adopted.) The bills for which the Governor’s recommendations were rejected in whole or in part will go back to the governor for acceptance or veto. He has until May 12, 2023, to act on those bills, or they become law as revised. I will provide information on the final status of these bills in the future.

After the conclusion of the Reconvened Session, three members of the House tendered their resignations. (I’m not sure if those positions will have to be filled by a special election or if the vacancy stays open until filled by the November 2023 elections for the 2024 term of the General Assembly.) The Senate acknowledged 10 members (25% of their total) who have indicated they will not seek re-election this year.

As to what the legislative priorities that the Virginia Federation of NARFE will be for 2024, I cannot say. It’s not known who will be the VFN State Legislation Chair going forward, as Debbie Fisk, who was the Chair, is seeking a VFN Office. Plus, with all 140 seats in the General Assembly up for election this year, we won’t know until after the November 2023 elections, who the members of the General Assembly will be nor which party will be in control of each house. So, stay tuned!

REPORT ON VFN CONFERENCE

The VFN Conference was held April 2-5, 2023, at the Embassy Suites by Hilton Hampton Conference Center in Hampton, VA. Ninety-two members and guests were registered. Guest speakers included William (Bill) Shackelford, National President of NARFE and Robert Allen, Region X Vice President. Reports were given by the members of the executive board as well as committee chairs. Election of officers was held. Larry McIlwee (absent) was elected First Vice President and Patricia Wolfe (pictured here) was elected Second Vice President by acclamation since there was only a single nominee for each of these positions.



Candidates for President of the VFN are: :



Doris McAdams



Frances Boatman

Candidates for Secretary of the VFN are:



Debbie Fisk



Esther Nash