



Midlothian Chapter 2265

NEWSLETTER

Serving Current and Retired Federal Employees Since 1921

Chapter e-mail: narfe2265df@gmail.com

July – September 2023

PRESIDENT’S CORNER

Debbie Fisk

REFLECTIONS

The 2023 VFN Conference was held in Hampton, VA from April 2 – 5. As I began to sort through my bag of coupons, promotions, and swag, I found myself reflecting on my time spent with fellow NARFE members over those few days.

Reflections are intriguing phenomena. Because I am a photographer, in the most basic sense, they are simply a reversed image. However, upon closer inspection, it becomes clear that even with only a few degrees difference in perspective, some details can be seen more clearly when compared to direct observation, while others become obscured. Perhaps this is why we often refer to deep thought and critical analysis as a time of reflection.

It is hard to attend one of these events without finding a friendly face everywhere you turn. It is great to find a supportive community within our Virginia Federation knowing how large the NARFE population is and how remote it is on any given day. That is what NARFE is, a large community network with a common goal, safeguarding out hard-earned benefits. It takes all of us working together to make it sustainable. Some say, “teamwork, makes dream work.”

I have always found time to volunteer because it is in giving to others that we find our greatest satisfaction. With a voice to communicate I believe volunteering has impacted my life by building my self-confidence, relationship skills, and social skills. Helping others and devoting time to this organization has supplied me with a sense of pride. I now know that I have the ability to

accomplish a wide spectrum of tasks. Volunteering can give you a positive outlook on life.

We learn from our volunteer efforts. We learn to better communicate by finding multiple methods for describing situations and accomplishing goals. My favorite statement, “Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.” You make a living at what you get, you make a life by what you give. Volunteers reflect compassion, unselfish caring, patience and just plain loving one another.

It is my hope for this chapter that we expand our list of active volunteers this year. That we work together to accomplish goals. As I reflect on the foundation of those who came before us, I want to make sure we are good stewards of that legacy as we move forward into the next generation of proud NARFE members.

Join us for fun and fellowship each second Wednesday of the month. Our program director works hard to bring interesting programs monthly, and you can count on coming away from the meeting knowing that we are family and we can count on one another.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

The Shrunken Gavel

House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, after eking out an agonizing, five-day 15-ballot victory savored the gavel for the first time at 1:13 am Saturday morning, 1/7/2023.

His first remarks to the congress “My father always told me: It’s not how you start – it’s how you finish.” But it is how McCarthy got there that signals a new depth of dysfunction for the American government.

This matters because McCarthy’s desperate fight for speaker provides a preview, not just of a new era of

divided government, but a new reality where even basic governance will require the art of pursuing harmony and consensus among a divided forum.

Speaker McCarthy will have his work cut out for him. He will preside over a GOP that is ungovernable, and a House that is so narrowly split that little productive work looks possible. We may have just witnessed an incredibly shrinking speakership given the concessions McCarthy had to give to win the vote.

NARFE will work tirelessly to advocate for our earned benefits. It is important that every one of us is aware of their priorities and help in any way we can with direct communications with our legislators.

Check out the website, share with your Chapter members and please contact your representatives.

- NARFE Legislative Priorities for the 118th Congress:
- Oppose any cuts to Earned Federal Retirement and Health Benefits
- Support Reform or Repeal of the WEB and GPO
- Support for Full COLAs for Federal Retirees
- Strengthen the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Retirement Services (RS) Division
- Protection for Enrollees in the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program
- Support Improved Integration of Medicare with the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB)
- Support Market Rate Increases to Federal Pay Rates/Oppose Federal Employee Compensation Cuts
- Improve Government Operations and Protecting the Merit System

Federal Fact Sheets and Legislative Priorities Packets are available at narfe.org/advocacy. There is a great deal of information for you that you may find interesting.

What About WEP/GPO in 2023?

Debbie Fisk

VFN 4th District CDL

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (FY23 budget) was wrought with disagreement between

parties and infighting among party organizations. Critical to us was the inclusion of a full repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO).

For some of us, our dream to see the penalties removed during the 117th Congress came to an end on December 31, 2022, but do not lose hope because the movement has accomplished great things last year. We have grown awareness in Congress and the public arena and educated those affected, expanding our grassroots effort exponentially.

Solvency of the trust fund played a major role in closing down negotiations in the 11th hour of 2022. With predictions that in 11 to 13 years the fund could be almost broke, that is a sobering fact for most of us. Yes, social security is an earned benefit, but to think that when our youngest retirees reach the age to retire in 11 to 13 years they may face a fund that is empty; one can begin to understand. However, that does not negate the fact that legislators did not work harder in the 117th Congress to make sure funding was addressed as part of the legislation. It is no secret that the fund has been failing to meet standards of solvency for years.

In the 118th Congress there is continued discussion and review of managing the fund in a way that will be sustainable for years to come and retirees will also receive the money they rightfully earned. Rep. Garret Graves and Abigail Spanberger are continuing to pursue H.R. 82, to date there are 250 cosponsors. Only 40 more are required to force a vote on the House Floor and it with the current progress we will reach our goal more quickly than years passed.

Also, let us begin to talk with Senators Kaine and Warner about S.597 that was introduced by Senator Sherrod Brown. This is the companion bill to H.R. 82 that will help bring repeal to WEP/GPO which we all know is the fair and right thing to do. These are earned benefits that are withheld from hard working citizens.

More importantly, the movement has come further than ever before, and we have no intention of giving up. NARFE leadership will once again join forces to focus on the repeal movement and design better and

more effective methods to get the job done in the 118th Congress.

VA STATE LEGISLATION

After over two decades of work by Delegate V. Watts and many dedicated advocates, there is legislation that has begun to address nursing home staffing standards. It is not everything that we asked for but is a beginning that can be further examined.

H.B. 1446 Certified Nursing Facilities; minimum staffing standards, administrative sanctions were signed by Governor Youngkin on March 24, 2023. Although the effective date is in 2025, we feel incredibly grateful to all who supported this important legislation over the years and we know it will make a tangible difference in the lives of the elderly in Virginia.

Chair F. Boatman was asked to please ask the board to approve a Virginia State PAC donation for two important facilitators of this important legislation as a thank you for their determined effort:

Delegate Vivian Watts (Chief Co-Patron)

Delegate Robert Orrock, Sr. (Chief Patron)

We continue to educate and solicit Virginia State PAC donations by form/check and online/credit card.

Our Current Representatives

VA Congressional District 1

Rob Wittman – 2055 RHOB, Washington DC

>DC Office: 202-225-4261

VA Congressional District 4

Jennifer McClellan – 2417 RHOB, Washington DC

>DC Office: 202-225-6365

VA Congressional District 5

Bob Good – 461 Cannon HOB, Washington DC

>DC Office: 202-225-4711

U.S. Senators

US Senator Mark Warner (D-VA)

>DC Office: 202-224-2023

>Richmond Office: 804-775-2314

US Senator Timothy Kaine (D-VA)

>DC Office: 202-224-4024

>Richmond Office: 804-771-2221

PROGRAMS

Verona McLeod

Your NARFE Chapter continues to plan programs of interest to each member. We've had some interesting programs for the first half of the year. We have more exciting programs planned for the second half as well.

The Chapter picnic will be held **July 12** at our normal meeting location, Hopewell UMC, beginning at noon. Each attendee is asked to bring a dish/dessert. The Chapter will provide chicken and paper products (See Flyer). This year we have not designated a specific month for National Legislature or State Legislature. Instead, Legislators will be invited to the picnic so that they can mingle in a less formal setting.

Most of the programs for the remainder of the year have been finalized; a few are still being coordinated:

August 9 - Program on scams, fraud, and public safety, presented by the Chesterfield Police Department. This program is still being coordinated.

September 13 - Program is in the coordination phase with a Horticulturalist from an Orchid Farm.

October 11 - Kathy Bass from Anthem/Blue Cross Blue Shield is the presenter.

November 8 - is Alzheimer Fundraiser Month. We're planning a "Souper Bowl" (See flyer) whereby there will be multiple types of soup available for lunch at a nominal cost. You may also choose to make a donation to Alzheimer's Research.

December 13 - A Christmas Luncheon is being planned. This will be a time to dress in our Christmas attire with a catered affair at our beautifully decorated meeting location, Hopewell UMC. Some of our members have agreed to decorate the normal meeting location with "Everything Christmas" to make the luncheon a joyous occasion.

Mark your calendars for these dates and plan to make time in your schedule to attend these meetings.

"The life of the nation is secure only while the nation is honest, truthful and virtuous."

— Frederick Douglass.

MEMBERSHIP

Verona McLeod

Membership continues to be a major concern of NARFE. We've tried to schedule programs of interest. We've had "lunch and learn" sessions and other initiatives to encourage participation. Unfortunately, our meeting attendance hovers around 20 members (approximately 10 percent of our total membership). We're open to your input if you can offer any help in this area. With the deficit crisis looming and budget cuts inevitable, we need to stay alert, informed, and aware of what that potentially means for us as federal retirees. NARFE lobbies on our behalf and will have a tough job saving our benefits as we go through the country's financial issues. We all need to do our part to help retain our membership as well as recruit new members. Doing so supports NARFE as they continue to try and protect our benefits.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

JULY

2 John Hewlett, Jr.; 6 Patricia Lane; 9 Helen Willis; 17 Nancy Price; 19 Shirley Alexander, Louis Ciavarelli; 22 John Donahue; 23 Robert Warren

AUGUST

9 Carol Lipinski; 10 Sarah Boettger; 16 Russell Melroy; 18 Mary Nissen; 19 Carolyn Hardman; 20 Brenda McCormac; 21 Pat Sowers; 22 Ann Simpkins; 24 Lois Thomas; 28 Joanne Montague; 29 Tony Michalek; 30 Joseph Rein

SEPTEMBER

3 Thang Pham; 7 Carolyn Matthews; 15 John Gamble; 22 Roy McLeod; 27 Sylvia Coleman; 29 Judy Archer

SERVICE OFFICER

Virginia Bozarth

Are your affairs in order? Have you organized your papers and listed numbers for your survivors to call at your death? NARFE has prepared an essential guide, "Be Prepared for Life's Events, What Your Survivors

Should Know." This booklet is available on the NARFE website, search for Form 100.

If you or anyone you may know has a need for help with federal benefits or the death of a loved one, please reach out and I will try to help. I may not know the answer to the question, but I can get in touch with those who do and find an answer for you or connect you to someone who can help.

What exactly does a Service Officer do?

- Becomes the face and voice of NARFE – helps members apply for benefits, life insurance, etc.
- Relays information as needed on Medicare and Medicaid, Social Security, and retirement benefits.
- Writes notes to families of those who have passed to offer information and support.
- Offers the "Be Prepared for Life's Events" to NARFE members

Some people could be given an entire field of roses and only see the thorns in it. Others could be given a single weed and only see the wildflower in it. Perception is a key component to gratitude, and gratitude is a key component to joy.

Amy Weatherly

ALZHEIMER'S

Faye Mckay

"Critical Alzheimer's & Dementia Priorities Signed Into Law"

The Alzheimer's Association and the Alzheimer's Impact Movement (AIM) commend the passage of the fiscal year (FY23) budget which was signed into law on December 29, 2022 to include policy priorities to address Alzheimer's and Dementia across the nation. This legislation received bipartisan support from several organizations. The Alzheimer's Association and the AIM also commend the bipartisan

congressional commitment to those who are directly affected by this disease. This will mean more people of the underrepresented population will be able to participate in dementia-related clinical trials and gain access to new and innovative treatments. The NIH and their critical investment will insure a "robust" research budget to impact public health response. Thanks to the bipartisan congressional champions and dedicated advocates, our nation has taken action to address health disparities in Alzheimer's and Dementia research.

Taken from Alzheimer's Association news article - 12/29/22

The Alzheimer's Association applauds NARFE for surpassing the \$15 million fundraising milestone.

Since 1983, NARFE contributions have helped fuel Alzheimer's Association care, support research programs, and have included sponsorship of 85 research grants examining wide-ranging, disease-related research. During this time, NARFE has distinguished itself as one of the Alzheimer's Association top research funders.

NARFE has announced it will continue its long-standing support of the Alzheimer's Association full mission, agreeing to raise another \$1 million for the Association by the end of 2025.

NETWORK COORDINATOR

Debbie Fisk

Do you know how to check your NARFE profile? Do you know that if you ask a chapter officer to update your file it is not automatically posted? If you go into your profile and update your records, the information is updated right away. For a chapter officer to do the work, someone from Headquarters has to verify the information, so there is a delay in getting your update completed.

If you do not know how to check your profile, please reach out to a chapter officer. We will be happy to help you with it. There will be a concentrated effort in 2023 to update all member files. You may be aware that our Congressional District information has not been

updated, so you can see how behind Headquarters is because of short staffing.

Please visit the vanarfe website at: <https://vanarfe.org/> You will find a wealth of information there and we are adding new items daily. Very soon there will be Conference 2023 as well as nominees for the 2023 Board of Directors on the site. Currently the Nominating Committee Chair and the President are accepting names to be reviewed by the committee. The deadline to submit is January 30, so there is still time.

If you want to go directly to our chapter page, the link is: <https://vanarfe.org/chapter-2265/>

To clarify, there is a NARFE (National) page <https://www.narfe.org/> and our VFN page which the link is above.

In addition, we have FEDHub which is comprised of NARFE Communities. In the future there is a plan to expand this into Chapter Communities.

FEDHub – If you are new to FEDHub, NARFE's exclusive online member community, you may want to start with the "Quick Start Guide" found on the top left of the FEDHub home screen menu to learn more about the service.

BUT – please try out these two smart device applications. You will really like them.

In the FEDHub top menu look toward the right for the link "FEDHub Mobile App." That page will show you step by step how to get and use the app which is summarized below.

Connected Communities – Log In Domain Name: fedhub.narfe.org You will then be prompted to use your usual community credentials (your narfe login ID and Password)

On this app you will land on the first tab of the app – the community feed. Tabs are located at the bottom of the screen. Near the top the "Filter By" button lets you choose what you want to look at: a specific community, type of message, or filter by specific content such as the word "COLA." Everyone is automatically a member of the Open Forum

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Chapter 2265

Annual Picnic

**July 12, 2023
12:00 pm**

**Hopewell United Methodist
6200 Courthouse Rad
Chesterfield, VA 23832**

**Chicken and drinks provided. Bring a
Side Dish or Dessert to Share**

**Local Congressional Reps
Invited**



Join us for

Souper Bowl

**#2265 Fundraiser for
Alzheimer's
November 8th**

Immediately Following Chapter Meeting

\$10

Assorted Soups, Bread & Dessert

BACK HOME

If I had the power to turn back the clock,
Go back to that house at the end of the block –
The house that was HOME when I was a kid,
I know that I'd love it more now than I did.

If I could be back there at my mother's knee,
And hear once again all the things she told me,
I'd listen as I never listened before,
For she knew so well just what life had in store.

And all the advice my dad used to give,
His voice I'll remember as long as I live;
But it didn't seem really important then;
What I'd give just to live it all over again.

And what I'd give for the chance I once had,
To do so much more for my mother and dad;
To give them more joy and a little less pain;
A little more sunshine – a little less rain.

But the years roll on and we cannot go back,
Whether we were born in a mansion or in a shack;
But we can start right now – in the hour that's here,
To do something more for the ones we hold dear.

And since time in its flight is traveling so fast;
Let's not spend it regretting that which is past;
But let's make tomorrow a happier day
By doing our "good to others" – TODAY

Author Unknown

Chapter 2265 Committees

Alzheimer's:
Faye McKay
804-378-0826

Audit:
Brenda Cordle: 804-744-2969
Ann Simpkins: 804-379-3631

Chaplain:
In memory of
Charlie Wilson

Greeter:
Ann Simpkins
804-379-3631

Hospitality:
Cathy Dorsett: 804-674-4039
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State Legislation:
Steve Stastny
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Sunshine:
Vacant

Telephone Tree:
Vacant



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Dated Material

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Community, but there are many others. Click the “+” button to add a new post in your current community.

NOTE: From the Connected Community App you cannot edit your profile or account settings, you will be prompted to view and edit them within a browser.

VoterVoice – download the app on your smart device, enter your email used on your narfe profile record. There is a place for password but I leave it blank. On the next screen “Find Organization” enter “NARFE”, then from the list of organizations presented below the search box tap “NARFE.”

The home screen carousel rotates through top advocacy issues. If you select an issue, you will see a summary of the bill in question, and how you can help. Just like the computer version, you can take the text of a message template, customize it with your background and position on the issue. Based on your profile the app will select your elected US Congressional

Representative or US Senator and send your customized letter to them.

There are many options in VoterVoice. Click the “hamburger menu” (three horizontal lines, sometimes called the “options menu”) at the top left of the screen to see your choices. I recommend you fill in your profile to save later typing. The directory gives you an easy list of all elected officials for your address as well as nearby media with contact information.

Dates to Remember

Chapter Picnic – July 12

Monthly Meeting – August 9 (*see Programs for details*)

September 13

October 11

Souper Bowl Fundraiser – November 8, after meeting

Christmas Luncheon – December 13