



NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

CHAPTER 2065 NEWSLETTER

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CALENDAR

FEBRUARY	15	Chapter Meeting - 11:30 a.m., Roma's Restaurant, program: "Everyone Speaks!", all attendees
APRIL	18	Chapter Meeting - 11:30 a.m., Roma's Restaurant, program: TBD
JUNE	20	Chapter Meeting - 11:30 a.m., Roma's Restaurant, program: Maher Uganda Medical Center, Bob Maher and possible guest speaker

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope everyone had a great Holiday season and a nice New Year. We want to wish everyone a **Happy 2024**.

The executive board met this week to work on some items that we hope will help us as a chapter this year. First, we plan to change the timing of the newsletter: rather than publish it the month of each meeting, we plan to send it out a few weeks before each meeting as a reminder/invite to the meeting and to provide any information regarding the program and associated changes. We will continue to ask for any program ideas and suggestions for the Louisa Chapter; this is your chapter, and we need your input to make it relevant to each of you.

There is a notice in this newsletter regarding the Virginia Federation of NARFE (VFN) conference and annual meeting to be held in Harrisonburg April 7–10, 2024. I'm thinking of attending and am encouraging anyone else to join the group. There are sessions on a variety of topics relevant to federal employees and retirees. In the past there have been breakout sessions on computers, social media, protecting yourself from scammers and the like. If you have any question, please let me know.

2024 MEETING DATES and times:

February 15, 2024, at 11:30am Romas in Louisa

April 18, 2024, at 11:30am Romas in Louisa

June 20, 2024, at 11:30am Romas in Louisa

(July and August is summer vacation)

September 19, 2024, at 11:30am Romas in Louisa

November 21, 2024, at 11:30am Romas in Louisa

December TBD

Please note the meeting location may change depending on our program.

It continues to be a privilege to serve as your President and my New Years wish is that we get to see you at a meeting or at least hear from you.

KAREN CHEATWOOD, PRESIDENT

VFN MEETING NOTICE

The Virginia Federation of NARFE (VFN) has started to provide information and invite members to their Conference and Annual Meeting. Each of us are members of the VFN since part of your membership fee goes to the federation. This is a good opportunity to learn more about the federation, what they do for us and what NARFE Headquarters might be working on. The theme for the conference is **"TOGETHER WE WILL SUCCEED"**

The VFN Conference and 70th Annual Meeting will be held at **Hotel Madison in Harrisonburg, Va. April 7-10 2024**.

Planned guest speakers include VA Senator Kaine, VA Congressman Cline, and NARFE National President William Shackelford.

The registration fee includes Conference, Workshops, Welcome Reception, Banquet, and two lunches. There is a special rate at the hotel for attendees.

To register for the conference, advertise your business in the program booklet, have an exhibit table, or to learn more about this exciting event, click on <https://vanarfe.org/conference-2024/>

If anyone would like to know more information, both Dick Shrum and I can be contacted as we were on the federation board in the past.

KAREN CHEATWOOD, PRESIDENT

PROGRAM

Here we are – January – starting a new year and getting some of that snow that we hadn't seen in 700 days. We had about 35-40mm here at my home in Bumpass. (To clarify, I spent a lot of time in Europe during my career and sometimes revert to their metric system, so I'm describing the number of millimeters on my deck!) The forecasts are predicting more in the coming days and weeks, and some are saying that Global Warming may have ended...

We have not had a program in the last couple months, but I will note that our "Christmas Luncheon" was very enjoyable and had the best features that I would like to see in our programs. And as for our February meeting, the program will be *"Everyone Speaks!"* Given the decreasing number of members attending our monthly meetings, it has become more difficult to bring in speakers from various organizations and activities around Louisa due to the low numbers. At the same time, many in our Chapter are also members of those bodies, so we are asking them to stand up and give a report based on their personal interests and experiences, as if you're trying to get us to join and help out. For me, with a maritime background I became involved in many Lake Anna activities related to boating safety and the lake's environment, so I will talk a little about those. Some of you are also deeply involved in the military groups, and there is much to describe about them. If you're involved in several groups, don't hesitate to talk about all of them. And if you don't really have a specific organization, pick a topic based on your favorite pastime, some event in your career, or even a description of some American history that has caught your interest. The plan will be to give each speaker 5-10 minutes to make their pitch, with some time for questions, and don't hesitate to hand out any brochures and material on the organization. Everyone at the meeting will be expected to participate in

the program, but if you need a full hour to make your presentation, I will be asking Karen if we can vote on that!

We have given some thought to future programs. For example, the June meeting is looking for a follow-up report on this year's medical assistance trip to Uganda from Bob Maher and his team from Palmyra. This fall, we will have a medical insurance expert to provide guidance on changes to the system and particular information for Federal retirees. April is still open, so if you have any ideas or suggestions, I would be very happy to get them, and in the meantime, stay warm!

DICK SHRUM, PROGRAM CHAIR

NATIONAL LEGISLATION REPORT

Right after the new year, Speaker of the House Mike Johnson (R-LA) and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) reached an agreement on the top budget line for Fiscal Year 2024 government operations. This was necessary for Congress to be able to work on the appropriations bills.

I guess that I could use my Oct 2023 report as we are back in the same situation waiting to see what Congress will do as a partial shutdown is looming January 19th unless a CR extension is passed for Agriculture, Energy-Water, Military Construction-Veterans Affairs and Transportation-HUD appropriations. The Senate is currently working on a bill that will extend the CR to March 1st. It also covers an extension for the rest of the government from February 2nd to March 15th. Although we might think that this extension is a given, it has to be passed in the House where some republicans have said that they will not vote for another extension. We will continue to keep you informed.

The following are updates on items that we have been keeping track of:

Social Security Fairness Act of 2023 H.R. 82 and S. 597 – Co-sponsors have *increased* to 303 in the House (202 democrats, 101 republicans) and 50 in the Senate (40 democrats, 7 republicans and 3 independents).

There are a couple other bills related to Social Security, the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO). However, they also may include measures to ensure the Social Security fund will stay at necessary levels beyond 2033 which is the current projection the OASDI fund will not have enough money to continue paying at current levels. When action is taken on any of these initiatives, we will report it to you.

Consider going to the advocacy page of the NARFE.org website where there are prepared letters on some of the topics discussed above or that are important to federal employees/retirees. You can write your own letter/e-mail and they will ensure that it is sent to your representative

and senators plus notify you that the e-mail was sent. These topics include Saving the Civil Service Act, Long Term Care Premiums, Equal COLA, etc.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS (may need updates)

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Membership – *Vacant*

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Holiday lunch – *Vacant*

Commission on Aging – *Vacant*