



NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

CHAPTER 2065 NEWSLETTER

POST OFFICE BOX 1811

LOUISA, VIRGINIA 23093-1811

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ELECTED OFFICERS

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CALENDAR

JUNE	20	Chapter Meeting - 11:30 a.m., Roma's Restaurant, program: Revisiting the Uganda Medical Center, Jamie Hicks
JULY, AUGUST		Summer break
SEPTEMBER	19	Chapter Meeting - 11:30 a.m., Roma's Restaurant, program: TBD
NOVEMBER	21	Chapter Meeting - 11:30 a.m., Roma's Restaurant, program: Annual meeting

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are well into spring but I'm not sure that we've had weather that makes us feel warm and sunny. I hope that we get there soon. I have a few items to bring out so please read on and consider helping the chapter.

Dick Shrum, our 1st Vice President and Program Chair, has been doing those jobs since well before I joined the chapter in 2014. He has gone above and beyond the jobs in coming up with ideas and programs that have made our chapter alive and viable. Dick has brought information and humor to our meetings and newsletters and has been the righthand man to me as president. At the April meeting Dick announced that he will be stepping down as Program Chair. The real challenge in the job is inviting guest speakers/programs when the attendance is very small. We've brought this up in several newsletters as it is disheartening to have speakers and their associates/staff that number larger than the audience. Dick has come up with some fun alternatives and/or invited other organizations to join our meeting. However, it is now up to chapter members to provide ideas and suggestions for programs/activities/discussions that may make chapter meetings interesting and worth attending. Please contact Dick or me and provide any ideas and suggestions. *We need your input.*

If you read the April 2024 Issue of NARFE magazine starting on page 50, you'll realize that chapter officers hold more than one position. We also have several vacant volunteer positions that don't necessarily require attendance at meetings but call for effort on an intermittent or as-needed basis. The positions that are highlighted in newsletters are important and involve some effort and we would welcome volunteers for any of the positions mentioned in the NARFE magazine. Please consider supporting your chapter and let me know if you have any questions.

We've included statements in many newsletters indicating that we will never send emails asking any of you to send cash, gift cards or to transfer money. Before deleting these types of emails, whether they appear to be from any of your chapter or federation officers, report them as spam to your e-mail provider before deleting.

Marilyn and Gerry Root attended the Virginia Federation Conference in Harrisonburg as representatives of our Louisa chapter. Their report provided the statistics from the conference, and they have sent a copy of the Conference Brochure along with some other brochures. If anyone would like to view the brochure, please let me know.

The VFN Officers that were running unopposed were installed by NARFE National President Bill Shackelford.

The office of 1st Vice President is the only one that will be part of the federation voting which can be done online at <https://vanarfe.org/>. I just received the email from the Francis Boatman, VFN President that voting is now open and will close May 31st. Additionally, there are a few changes to the federation bylaws that will be on the ballot (I don't plan to vote on those changes as they are minimal.

Congratulations to VFN Officers:

Frances E. Boatman - President 2024 - 2025

Patricia Wolfe - 2nd Vice President 2024 - 2025

Jim Little - Treasurer 2024 - 2025

Doris McAdams - Secretary 2024 - 2025

Candidates for First Vice President are Debbie Fisk (who has been a guest speaker at our chapter meetings and has helped us on many occasions with Zoom meetings) and J. Larry McIlwee who is the current VFN 1st Vice President. Their statements are available at

<https://vanarfe.org/elections-2/2024-nominations/>

2024 MEETING DATES and times: June 20, 2024, at 11:30am, Roma's; September 19, 2024, at 11:30am Roma's; November 21, 2024, at Roma's; December TBD. (July and August is summer vacation)

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

It continues to be a privilege to serve as your President, but I would welcome any help and/or suggestions. I would also hope to see you at a meeting,

KAREN CHEATWOOD, PRESIDENT

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The NARFE 18 April meeting was opened at 11:35am by 1st VP Dick Shrum with a moment of silence and then the Pledge of Allegiance. A motion was made and 2nd to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

Gerry and Marilyn Root represented the chapter at the Virginia Federation Conference.

Chapter dues were paid to VFN for every member. A motion was made by Steve and 2nd by Dick to pay the bill and a motion was made by Charlie and 2nd by Steve to pay our liability insurance bill.

Dick mentioned that he plans to step down as 1st VP at the end of the year. We will need someone to step up.

Charlie gave the treasurer's report which we do not publish in the newsletter.

Our bylaws will be discussed at a later meeting

Dick talked about the NARFE informational emails. Our June program will be Jamie Hicks talking about the latest Uganda mission.

Sergeant Chuck Love from the Louisa County Sheriff's office was guest speaker at today's meeting. Some of the things he discussed were:

1. Accreditation of the department. It looks at policies and

procedures of state agencies. Only 30% of departments in Virginia are accredited.

2. Public Service programs
3. Shield - it's a communications program on major areas such as terrorism. It eliminates the 10 codes previously used by departments. It has National and Global participants exchanging information
4. Project 1st Responder - allows people to register with communication difficulty's, memory issues, wanderers etc.
5. Dept Chaplains – they talk with people who pose dangers to themselves or others and give an ear to deputies who have seen horrible things while on calls.
6. Child seat instructions
7. Middle school program - work with younger people because today's day and age make police to look like the bad guys and they become afraid of police.

The motion to adjourn was made by Charlie and 2nd by Steve.

BOB MAHER, CO-SECRETARY

PROGRAM

In my recent articles in the newsletter, I have spoken about Global Warming and other weather-related items. But this time, I must express the thanks that should come from us Louisa County and Virginia residents. So many of our fellow countrymen have been suffering from a range of extreme conditions – tornadoes, flooding, baseball-size hail, extreme wind conditions, etc. etc.

Our April program was especially good, with our speaker Sergeant Chuck Love of the LC Sherriff's Office who serves as their Public Information Officer and coordinator of much of their outreach to the community. He covered the current LCSO programs: animal control, apps and alerts, law enforcement academy and adventure program, chaplain corps, LCSO Foundation, project lifesaver, and the many youth programs and benefits. Of particular note was their SHIELD Program, a community-focused policing method to counter crime, threats, and even terrorism by engaging community members and partners. In addition, we had extended invitations to the community's American Legion and VFW organizations to join us for lunch and the presentation, which resulted in about 10 more attendees than usual.

The program for the upcoming June meeting will be "Part II" of a story we first heard about at our February meeting last year. The topic began 10 years ago when our Chapter 2065 member Bob Maher and his fellow members of Sts Peter and Paul Knights of Columbus Council in Palmyra created the St Francis of Assisi Health Clinic in Uganda. This presentation will be given by Jamie Hicks of Palmyra, who serves as a Nurse Practitioner in the NICU unit at UVA Hospital. She was in Uganda for two

weeks in January teaching their doctors and nurses how to treat and save newborns who are born in distress. And as we did last year to recognize the good work of the Palmyra KofC, we are inviting the local St. Jude Council members to attend.

Regarding future programs this Fall, we will have a medical insurance expert to provide guidance on changes to the system and particular information for Federal retirees. We are always appreciative of any ideas or suggestions you may have, and in the meantime, stay safe from the many severe weather situations passing through the country!

DICK SHRUM, PROGRAM CHAIR

NATIONAL LEGISLATION REPORT

Current Fiscal Year (FY)2024

Right after we prepared the March Legislative Report, the FY 2024 Appropriation Bills were passed:

- On March 9, 2024, the President signed into law: H.R. 4366, the "Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024," which provides full-year funding through September 30, 2024, for 6 of 12 appropriations bills.
- *FY2024 Further Consolidated Appropriations Act H.R. 2882 was signed into law on March 23, 2024, which provides full-year funding for the rest of the appropriation bills.*

Next FY2025 which starts October 1, 2024

Congress is already clashing on FY25 funding as House proposes big cuts with Republicans looking to ignore a deal Biden struck with them last year while Democrats are seeking increases for federal agencies.

- House Republicans are proposing an average of 6% discretionary spending cuts to non-defense agencies for fiscal 2025, putting it on a collision course with the Democratic-led Senate that is seeking to avoid such reductions.
- Republicans on the House Appropriations Committee released their top-line spending levels for each of the 12 annual funding bills Congress must pass each year, which included cuts for some agencies as high as 11%.
- The appropriators are putting aside parts of the two-year budget deal President Biden struck with House Republicans last year in exchange for raising the debt ceiling, saying they are instead sticking only to the spending levels detailed in the Fiscal Responsibility Act. In addition to that law, Biden and then-House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., agreed to other mechanisms that would ultimately allow both defense

and non-defense discretionary spending to increase by 1% in fiscal 2025.

- The bills written by [the House Appropriations] Committee will adhere to law set by the Fiscal Responsibility Act—with no side deals—and focus resources where they are needed most. The FY25 process will reflect the committee’s commitment to strengthening national defense, supporting the safety and security of the American people and reining in government to its core mission.
- Under these proposals, the departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, Treasury, State and related agencies would all receive cuts between 10% and 11%. The Pentagon would receive a 1% boost, while the Homeland Security Department would receive a bump above President Biden’s request and the Veterans Affairs Department would see its request met. The appropriations committee is set to begin marking up its fiscal 2025 bills next week.
- Democrats were ready to negotiate but said Congress must meet its prior agreement and ensure defense and non-defense funding both see increases of at least 1%.
- The Senate Appropriations Committee chair has said Democrats will not accept any spending bills that do not provide parity in the funding boosts to defense and non-defense accounts.

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 has increased to 319 [in the house](#) (208 Democrats, 111 Republicans) and 53 in the senate (41 democrats, 9 republicans and 3 independents).

- This bill eliminates the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) which reduces Social Security benefits for individuals who also receive a pension or disability benefit from an employer that did not withhold Social Security taxes and the Government Pension Offset (GPO) which reduces Social Security benefits for spouses, widows, and widowers who also receive government pensions of their own.
- This is the most support that a Social Security Fairness Act has gotten in any congress.

The other bills related to Social Security are [H.R.4583/S.2280-Social Security 2100 Act](#) which has 184 democratic co-sponsors in the House and 4 in the Senate.

- This modifies the Social Security system with respect to benefit calculations, fund administration, and beneficiary resources.
- The bill temporarily increases the primary insurance amount for Social Security benefits for all individuals. It also modifies benefit calculations for certain individuals, including temporarily (1) increasing benefits for widows or widowers in two-income households; and (2) allowing children of a deceased, disabled, or retired worker to remain eligible for benefits through age 25 if they are full-time students (Currently child benefits end at age 18 or when the recipient finishes high school).
- The bill temporarily eliminates the GPO and WEP.
- The bill also modifies the financing and administration of the Social Security trust funds by (1) subjecting income over \$400,000 to Social Security payroll taxes, and (2) combines the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund into a single Social Security Trust Fund

The [2024 Social Security Trustees Report](#) released on May 11, 2024, revealed a slightly improved outlook for the program. A year ago, the government thought benefit cuts would be necessary in 2034. Now, the Social Security Administration expects to fund all scheduled benefits through 2035, and the estimated funding shortfall after that point will be less than previously thought too.

As welcomed as that news is, the fact remains that Social Security cannot continue in its current form for long. Action of some sort -- to increase funding, reduce benefits, or both -- needs to happen, and the longer the government puts it off, the more difficult it's going to be for workers and seniors.

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. NARFE also gives you the ability to send comments to your representative and senator using Twitter (“X”) if that is your preference.

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**

VIRGINIA LEGISLATION REPORT

Hurray for Virginia, this is how collaboration and compromise begin.

- * Lawmakers agreed on a budget, and Gov. Glenn Youngkin signed it on Monday.
- * The budget passed 94-6 in the House of Delegates and 39-1 in the Senate, with Sen. John McGuire, R-Goochland, the lone nay vote. He is currently in a competitive primary race against Rep. Bob Good, R-VA05.
- * The deal prevented a potential government shutdown this summer, with lawmakers and Gov. Youngkin at odds over what should be prioritized. Democrats wanted more spending, while Youngkin wanted more tax cuts.
- * In the end, Democrats say they were able to include their priorities while avoiding any tax cuts.
- * Youngkin was unhappy about the lack of tax cuts, but he praised that there were no tax increases.
- * The General Assembly has commissioned a study of the state tax system in anticipation of a potential overhaul next year.
- * Another win for Youngkin in the new budget is that it does not require Virginia to reenter RGGI.
- * The budget also cut the Virginia Military Survivors & Dependents Education Program that provided a tuition waiver for spouses and children of military veterans killed or severely injured in the line of duty. The current program allows them to attend public colleges and universities for free. Now, they must first apply for other federal aid options first. The new language also prevents the program from covering graduate programs and limits it to Virginia residents.
- * Lawmakers went home Monday, but likely not for good. Instead of adjourning, they recessed, anticipating coming back sometime this summer to discuss skill games legislation.

Report Prepared by Deborah Fisk
VFN Secretary, ECC Committees, Chapter 2265 President,
Candidate for VFN 1st VP

For further information on the Virginia Military Survivors & Dependents Education Program - On May 15, 2024, Governor Youngkin issued an Executive Directive establishing a task force that will review the changes made to the VMSDEP and work to minimize the impact on military and veteran families. (This was a result of the VMSDEP Friends Advocacy Group's request to re-visit this legislation which impacts more than 6,000 spouses and children currently receiving

them.)

Report assembled by Karen Cheatwood

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Membership – *Vacant*

Sunshine – *Vacant*

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Commission on Aging – *Vacant*