

May 2024



MANASSAS CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

NARFE Chapter 356, Manassas, VA - Organized September 9, 1953

Chapter email:
narfe356@hotmail.com

No Chapter Luncheon Meeting in May. We are now Meeting Bi-monthly. Our Next Luncheon Meeting will be in June.

Next Meeting Date

June 19

New Location

*Logan's Roadhouse
7731 Donegan Drive
Manassas, VA*

**Lunch
11:30 AM**

**Program
12:30 PM**

Logan's is located in the Bull Run Shopping Center by the pond near Sudley Road.

From The Chapter President

As we turn the calendar to May, let's take a moment to give a shout out to our fellow public servants as we observe Public Service Recognition Week during the week of May 5-11. In the words of our NARFE President William Shackelford "we are proud of the work active federal employees do today for our nation and at NARFE we celebrate the service of federal employees every day."

We also want to congratulate the following Virginia Federation (VFN) officers who were elected by acclamation at the VFN annual conference held this past April in Harrisonburg, VA: President, Francis Boatman; 2nd Vice President, Pat Wolfe; Secretary, Doris McAdams; and Treasurer, Jim Little. Our members will remember Jim who formerly served as the Area IX Vice President and frequently attended our chapter lunches. These officers will serve for a one-year term, beginning July 1. You will be receiving shortly an on-line ballot to help elect the VFC 1st Vice President, for which current Secretary Deborah Fisk and current 1st Vice President Larry McIlwee are running. The candidates' statements for this position can be found at www.vanarfe.org. There are several minor adjustments to the VFC Bylaws on the ballot, which can also be found on the VFC website. We also congratulate our own Secretary Carol Campbell who will replace John

Bankson as Area IX Vice President. John, another frequent attendee at our lunches, will be stepping down in July.

It is not too early to start thinking about attending the biannual NARFE conference, FEDCON24, which will take place this year in St. Louis at the Hyatt Regency St. Louis at the Arch from August 18-20. Registration is now open at www.fedcon.narfe.org and if you book your hotel by July 19 you can take advantage of NARFE'S special group rate of \$130 per night. Registration cost from May 18-August 7 is \$175, \$200 thereafter and \$250 on-site. Anyone interested in attending should contact me as the chapter can provide reimbursement for the cost of your registration fee. Following the conference, all NARFE members will be asked to vote on national Bylaws amendments and for the NARFE President, National Secretary/Treasurer and Regional Vice Presidents. Current President William Shackelford and our Region X Vice President Robert Allen will be running for a second two-year term. Look for the candidates' statements in the June/July issue of the NARFE magazine and on the NARFE website at www.narfe.org. I encourage you to be an active participant in NARFE and to vote for the VFC First Vice President and our National NARFE officers and Bylaw amendments.

Mary M. Brandt
President

Future Meetings:

Chapter luncheon meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month. Beginning in 2024, we will meet bimonthly on the even numbered months.

Our Executive Committee will continue meeting virtually on the first Tuesday of each month.

June 4—Executive Committee

June 19—Juan Rivera, Manassas Airport Director

July 2—Executive Committee

August 6—Executive Committee

August 21—Speaker TBD

Legislation Update and News of Note

Change to the Cost-of-Living Calculation (COLA) Formula

On March 21, Sen. Bob Casey (D-PA), Chairman of the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging, introduced the Boosting Benefits and Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs) for Seniors Act, [S. 3974](#). The legislation aims to aid seniors with rising living costs by proposing a significant adjustment in the calculation of COLAs to better reflect the expenses faced by older adults. Sens. Richard Blumenthal (CT), Peter Welch (D-VT), John Fetterman (D-PA), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Bernie Sanders (D-VT) co-sponsored the bill. The current COLA formula is based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners (CPI-W). The bill advocates for using the Consumer Price Index for Americans aged 62 or older (CPI-E), which more accurately accounts for seniors' spending patterns, including a greater emphasis on medical expenses.

Source: NARFE NewsLine, April 2, 2024

Repeal of the WEP and GPO

On April 16, the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security held a hearing on the Social Security Fairness Act, which would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO), the second hearing this Congress focused on these issues. The hearing featured think tank witnesses rather than representatives from those directly impacted; however, NARFE President William (Bill) Shackelford submitted written testimony for the record which stated in part that: "For over four decades, the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) have unfairly reduced, and even wiped out, the earned Social Security benefits of public servants, punishing those who chose to answer the call to serve their nation, states and local communities. These two 40-year-old provisions of the Social Security Act that were intended to prevent public sector retirees from "double-dipping"

with pension benefits, but instead block them from receiving the full benefits to which they say they are entitled for work outside of public service....WEP and GPO were arbitrary, unfair and punitive when they were enacted, and remain so today." It is unclear what direction the Congress will take. Many lawmakers supported a full repeal of the WEP and GPO, however, others seek to keep the provisions, but reform their calculations.

Source: NARFE NewsLine, April 23, 2024; Federal News Network, April 18, 2024

Schedule F

On April 4, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) published new regulations designed to insulate federal workers from a revival of Schedule F. The regulations guarantee employment protections unless a worker voluntarily waives them. It also ensures that any future administration cannot apply broad descriptions of positions, like those of a "confidential" or "policymaking" nature, to career civil servants for the purpose of converting them and sets up an appeals process before the Merit Systems Protection Board for any employee moved out of the competitive service or between schedules in the excepted service. The regulations are set to take effect in May. NARFE President Bill Shackelford issued the following statement: "NARFE applauds OPM's commitment to upholding the merit-based, nonpartisan civil service and welcomes this final rule, which clarifies and reinforces long-standing protections for our public servants....Publication of this rule creates a procedural roadblock in the way of any future administration looking to undermine merit-based protections via a return of Schedule F, or other similar efforts....While OPM's actions are a step in the right direction, a rule alone cannot prevent a return of Schedule F in the future. It's up to Congress to clarify its statutory intent further, by passing legislation such as the Saving the Civil Service Act, H.R.1002/S.59, to more fully protect the nonpartisanship of the civil service."

Source: Government Executive, April 5, 2024; The Federal Times, April 4, 2024; www.narfe.org

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Social Security Numbers to Be Removed from Documents Mailed by Federal Agencies

On April 12, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issued a final rule that removes Social Security numbers in documents mailed by Federal agencies in an effort to prevent fraud and potential identity theft in partial implementation of the 2017 Social Security Number Fraud Prevention Act. That legislation prohibited federal agencies from using Social Security numbers in any mailed document unless deemed necessary by agency leaders. As such, OPM's final rule amends its privacy procedures to incorporate the law for all records it maintains and "uses to identify, track and correspond with agencies, federal employees, contractors and annuitants, among others." The rule also partially redacts the numbers where feasible and ensures their removal from the outside of any package, envelope, or any envelope window. The rule is scheduled to go into effect on June 26.

Source: Government Executive, April 12, 2024

Alzheimer's Corner

Marilyn Markman, RN

Ever wonder where Alzheimer's came from? Well, here is the story - November 3, 1906, a clinical psychiatrist and neuropathologist named Alois Alzheimer reported "a peculiar severe disease process of the cerebral cortex." He had been following a 50-year-old woman for 5 years noting progressive sleep and memory disturbances, aggression, and confusion. Upon her death he examined her brain and found many abnormal clumps (now called amyloid plaques) and tangled bundles of fiber (now called neurofibrillary, or tau, tangles). These plaques and tangles in the brain are still the main feature of Alzheimer's. In 1910 a psychiatrist, Emil Kraepelin, wrote a text that included "Alzheimer's disease" and that was the beginning of Alzheimer's!

Today most of us are aware of the Alzheimer's Association and a little less well-known Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA). Here is some information about these 2 organizations:

Alzheimer's Association - In 1980 Jerome H. Stone and a group of caregivers recognized the need for an organization that would unite caregivers, provide support to those facing Alzheimer's, and advance research into the disease -Alzheimer's Association was born. Now a leading nonprofit voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research, it has a 78-chapter network across America with a charity score of 96% - 4 star rating. In fiscal year 2023, total revenue equaled more than 432 million dollars. The first well-known Alzheimer's walk was August 19, 1995. In 2000, the walk moved from August to November to tie in with other activities during National Alzheimer's Awareness month.

The association has stopped publishing the magazine "ALZ", however it can be accessed online at their website by [using this link](#). Our local chapter is:

National Capital Area Chapter
3553 S Clark St suite 203
Arlington, VA 22202
703-359-4440

Alzheimer's Foundation of America (AFA) - In 2001 AFA was founded by Bert Brodsky whose mother lived with Alzheimer's from 1980-1992. His goal was to make sure that no other family living with Alzheimer's disease would have to follow the journey alone. AFA is dedicated to meeting the educational, social, and emotional needs

of individuals and families affected by Alzheimer's. This nonprofit, based in New York City, unites more than 2,000 members coast-to-coast and has a 96% charity score - 4 star. They can be reached at:

Alzheimer's Foundation of America
322 Eighth Ave 16th floor
New York, N.Y. 10001
866-232-8484

Some of the services and programs AFA provides include:

- Counseling information by licensed clinical social workers – free, open 7 days a week.
 - National memory screening programs.
 - [Care Connection](#) - monthly webinars with guest experts for family and professional caregivers.
 - AFA teens and AFA on campus- to educate and engage students.
 - The [National Educating America Tour](#) - which brings information about Alzheimer's related progress and services to communities across the country. Next tour. Salt Lake City, UT- May 15,2024 1-3pm MDT
- There are more services listed on [the AFA website](#).

AFA Publications:

- [Alzheimer's Today](#)-free quarterly magazine for caregivers of people with Alzheimer's. Click the link to sign up or call 866-232-8484 to start a subscription.
- Booklets, brochures and DVD's on care related topics, such as dementia warning signs, brain health and wellness, communication tips, healthy aging, and wandering.
- Children's book "[Dancing with Grandad](#)" an Alzheimer's story for children and their families. This is an educational resource that adults can use to talk to young children about Alzheimer's.

I've called both organizations and found them to be very helpful. These two organizations are doing their part to support and educate us. NARFE is doing its part with research thanks to your continued donations - keep up the good work!


You can help to support our chapter's Alzheimer's fundraising goal with your donations. Checks should be written out to "NARFE Alzheimer's Research" and in memo write "NARFE Chapter 356". Send checks to:

NARFE Chapter 356
8818 Cather Ave.
Manassas, VA 20110-6104


Your checks will be forwarded to the Alzheimer's Association through NARFE. You will receive confirmation from us as well as the Alzheimer's Association.

Previous Chapter Meeting, April 17th

Chapter 356 held its regular monthly meeting, with eleven members and three guests present. The guest speaker, Jim Lewis, a local Civil War Historian, presented a historical forensic story about the skeletal remains of six Civil War soldiers discovered by a local relic hunter in what was to become a McDonald's in Centreville, VA. He described the ensuing excavation, exhumation, and research led by archeologists and forensic anthropologists from Fairfax County and the Smithsonian Institution that led to their identification and subsequent internment with full military honors in Massachusetts, their home state. The historic marker below, authored by Mr. Lewis, was installed at the site and recounts the local story he presented at our meeting



MYSTERY OF THE CENTREVILLE SIX




★ ★ ★

The Long Road Home

In June 1994, a well-preserved male skeleton was found buried in a then-wooded area a few yards in front of you and reported to authorities. Remnants of a woolen uniform jacket with military-style brass buttons covered the upper half of the remains. Three years later, forensic anthropologists and archaeologists from the Smithsonian Institution and Fairfax County Archaeological Services explored the site further and found five additional burials, all in a row. Initial efforts to identify the men were inconclusive. Who were they, and why were they buried here?


After the extensive examination of forensic data as well as genealogical and military records, researchers concluded that the men were among the earliest casualties of the Civil War. They died during or after the sharp fight about two miles in front of you at Blackburn's Ford on July 18, 1861, when



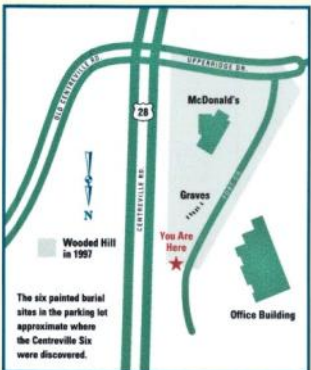
Excavation team at work, 1997
Courtesy Mike Johnson, Fairfax County Park Authority.

Soldiers' remains identified as:

- 1st Sgt. Gordon Forrest, 32, Co. G, printer
- Pvt. Thomas Roome, 31, Co. G, courier
- Pvt. James Silvey, 23, Co. G, upholsterer
- Pvt. William H. Smart, 21, Co. G, wood turner
- Pvt. George Bacon, 22, Co. H, oil mill worker
- Pvt. Albert F. Wentworth, 17, a year younger than the minimum age, Co. H, conductor



Pvt. Albert F. Wentworth
Courtesy Dalton Rector



The six pointed burial sites in the parking lot approximate where the Centreville Six were discovered.

Additional information may be found online in the local newspaper CentreView, May 22-28, 2019, pp.3 and 6 titled "[Bringing Closure to a Civil War Mystery in Centreville](http://centre-view.com)" (centre-view.com).

A short business meeting was conducted after the presentation, with officer and committee reports. The Minutes of the February 21, 2024, chapter meeting, as reported in the March Newsletter, were approved, and the Treasurer's Report was adopted. The current chapter membership stands at 122 with two members dropped for non-renewal and one new member.

Secretary Carol Campbell and Bill Briscoe attended the VFN Conference held at the Hotel Madison in Harrisonburg from April 7-10. Campbell relayed that there was a wealth of information presented and many outstanding speakers,

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exhibits, elections, installation of officers, a Memorial service, and a banquet. Robert Allen, Region X Vice-President, reported that there are 18,568 NARFE members in Region X, which includes VA, NC, TN, KY, and WV. VFN has 10,368 members. There are over 300,000 Federal active and retired employees in VA.

John Bankson, Area IX Vice-President, congratulated Carol Campbell on becoming Area IX Vice-President. The NARFE National Convention, held every other year, will be held in St. Louis, Missouri, August 18-20. National elections will be held and three resolutions to be voted on. He encouraged members to attend and visit NARFE websites for webinars.

The House Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security held a hearing on April 16 on repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO).

The raffle for the Alzheimer's Fund collected \$26, with the winner donating her share.

The Northern Virginia Caucus meeting will be held on Friday, April 26, 2024, at the American Legion in Fairfax.

The next regular monthly meeting for Chapter 356 is scheduled for June 19 at Logan's Roadhouse, 7731 Donegan Drive, Manassas, VA 20110. This location may better serve our needs with more private meeting space available. The next Executive Committee meeting will be held via Zoom at 1:00 on June 4, the first Tuesday of the month. All members are welcome to attend the committee meeting and any member wishing to do so should contact one of the chapter officers to obtain the Zoom link.

Carol Campbell
Secretary



Guest speaker, Jim Lewis, a local Civil War Historian

NARFE WEBINARS

Upcoming NARFE Webinars:

No new webinars yet announced.

Recent NARFE Webinars:

Key Questions You Need to Answer As You Approach Retirement: a 2-Part webinar on April 25 and May 2, 2024

There are some critical questions that federal employees, nearing retirement, must face that can have lasting effects on your financial security and the needs of your family. It is important to understand what happens when you follow the map that you've laid out for your future before you begin the journey. To help make the best decisions for your upcoming retirement, Tammy Flanagan and Herb Casey will walk you through the important decisions you must make as you near retirement.

[Click here](#) to find links to dozens of valuable, expert-led presentations that you can watch on demand, anytime, anywhere. And remember, this is just one of many exclusive NARFE resources available to help you get the most out of your federal benefits, and one of the many reasons it pays to be a NARFE member.

Chapter Membership Report

1 new member
1 reinstatement
2 dropped for nonrenewal

Welcome to our Chapter
Carol Rusaw

Chapter 356 membership as of
May 4 is 123 members.

CHAPTER 356 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

President	Mary Brandt	703-753-3954
Vice President	Priscilla Saboe	703-361-1150
Secretary	Carol Campbell	703-389-4702
Treasurer	Richard Horte	703-368-8767
Membership Comm.	Helen Brooks	703-791-6737
National Legislation	Vacant	
Program Comm.	Vacant	
Service Officer	Priscilla Saboe	703-361-1150
Sunshine Comm.	Priscilla Saboe	703-361-1150
Alzheimer's Comm.	Marilyn Markman, RN	703-791-4329
Chapter Chaplain	Vacant	
Newsletter Editor	Richard Horte	703-368-8767

Chapter Email Address: narfe356@hotmail.com

Use this address to contact officers and committee chairs by email

Email Address Changes

Notify NARFE or our chapter whenever you change your email address to continue to receive this newsletter.

Manassas Chapter Newsletter Online

We distribute our newsletter to Chapter members using email addresses on file at NARFE. If you are not receiving NARFE email, please contact us or NARFE Headquarters at Member Services (703-838-7760). Our newsletters are also available at the Virginia Federation website at www.vanarfe.org/newsletters/. Scroll down to Current Chapter Newsletters, Area IX, Chapter 356.