



Midlothian Chapter 2265

NEWSLETTER

Serving Current and Retired Federal Employees Since 1921

Chapter e-mail: narfe2265df@gmail.com

January – March 2024

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Debbie Fisk

The Gift of Time

“TIME is your most precious gift because you only have a set amount of it. You can make more money, but you can't make more time. When you give someone your time, you are giving them a portion of your life that you will never get back. Your time is your life.”

I wonder how many of us stop and think about this, especially with lives that are cluttered with so many distractions. If you give someone your time, then you are giving them a gift that will last forever and ever. Giving of your time is so valuable because it is something that those with which you share will cherish for a lifetime. Spending time doesn't cost a dime, and it can be a wonderful gift.

Devoting time to others is a gesture of kindness and love that can not only make us feel good but also make others feel good and deepen our relationships. And because each social interaction is different, we have countless opportunities for new positive experiences.

I think this concept has always been a part of the way my parents raised me; however, I get caught up in the daily routines and the unimportant minutiae. My new year's resolution is to take time, take the time to do what is profoundly important. The one thing I know is that the greatest gift God has given to man is that we equally have the ability to extend random gifts of kindness to one another. No person has a higher ability to use this gift of time. God was kind enough to give the same measure of time to all of us.

I have heard that “time is rare.” Time is not rare. Time can be found plentiful every day; it is the right use of

time that is rare. Two things slapped me square in the face recently. I received a lovely Christmas Card from my oldest granddaughter and my youngest daughter at Christmas. It simply said, “I owe you.” As I read on, they professed to owe me a lunch date and an afternoon at a local craft store so we could make a wonderful something that not either one of us needs. But it is time that is important.

This morning as I was preparing a report for NARFE, I ran across a familiar name, Patricia Warhurst. Each year we memorialize our members who we lost during the previous year. How could it be, Pat Warhurst was the very first person I met when I first visited Chapter 2265. She was our long-time Greeter, the first person you met when you entered the room. She was faithful to sending “Get Well Cards,” she was a joy to be around. Her life was well lived, and she never met a stranger. Her declining health in the past three years made her less seen at our meetings, but in my heart, she will always be remembered. She was my first friend in our chapter, and she always had time.

“...the way we spend our time defines who we are...”

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE MESSAGE

As we look to progress in the new year, we stand strong, prepared to take our grassroots efforts to the next level for all legislative issues of concern for our members, but especially striving for committee action and advancing H.R. 82 through the legislative process. That provision (the Social Security Fairness Act) would repeal the onerous WEP and GPO limiting Social Security benefits to government employees and their families.

We encourage each of you to pick up the phone and call your members of Congress.

Calling Your Members of Congress: The Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82/S.597

First, check to see if your representative and senators are cosponsors of the Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82/S.597.

Check H.R. 82 cosponsors here, and S. 597 cosponsors here. (The only Virginia Legislators that have not cosponsored are Reps Good, Cline, and Griffith and Senator Warner)

If they have not yet cosponsored:

Use Phone Script 1, urging that they cosponsor the Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82/S.597. If they have, use Phone Script 2, thanking them for cosponsoring the bill!

Use these instructions for Calling Your Representative/Senators:

1. Dial: 1-866-220-0044
2. Ask the operator to transfer you to your Representative's/Senator's office.
3. You will then be connected to your Representative's/Senator's office.

Phone Script 1: Urge Your Representatives and Senators to Cosponsor the Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82/S.597. Politely greet the staff person who answers the phone. Give your name and address and let him/ her know you are a constituent. Then say [Choose the appropriate language below]:

- I am calling to urge [Representative or Senator [X]] to cosponsor the Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82. This bill would repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP).
- These unfair provisions cost me and more than two and half million Social Security-eligible retirees who have dedicated their lives to public service thousands of dollars each year.
- Please protect the retirement security of all public service retirees by fully repealing the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP).

- Thank you for your time and consideration of my views.

Phone Script 2: Urge They Cosponsor the Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82/S.597. Politely greet the staff person who answers the phone. Give your name and address and let him/ her know you are a constituent. Then say [Choose the appropriate language below]:

- Thank You for Cosponsoring the Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82/S. 597:
- I am calling today to thank Representative/Senator [X] for cosponsoring the Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82.
- Your support in repealing the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) means a great deal to me and the more than two and a half million Social Security-eligible retirees who have dedicated their lives to public service.
- Your commitment to fairness and retirement security for federal retirees is commendable.
- Let's keep pushing for a vote on this crucial bill and ensure a brighter future for federal retirees.
- Thank you again for your unwavering support.

We anticipate the rollout of new educational resources for NARFE members in 2024, poised to sharpen our advocacy skills and deepen our comprehension of all key issues. NARFE staff is dedicated to furnishing us with the knowledge and tools required to drive substantial change. Let's make our voices heard, loud and clear to pave the way for a fairer future for all federal retirees!

Stay up to date at: <https://www.narfe.org/advocacy/>

CONGRESSIONAL UPDATES

Bob Zombron

What's Happening - In Congress?

We have a new Speaker of the House, Mike Johnson (R) of Louisiana. He was brought in – elected by the members – to bring order and a smooth-running Congress. Apparently, that task isn't so easy. It took months to get Congress to keep the government from

shutting down. Instead of approving a budget until September 30, the end of the budget year, they settled for a second Continuing Resolution – this time until March 1 & 8 depending on the department you are working for. The House and the Senate provided approval on January 18. Our Senators Tim Kaine and Mark Warner issued a joint statement on the Senate’s 77-18 vote. “It’s unfortunate that we once again need to step in at the eleventh hour to avert a government shutdown due to Congress’ inability to pass full spending bills in a timely manner.” In the House 107-Republicans voted for it and 106 against; the total vote was 314-108 in favor. Funding border security, Israel at war with Hamas; humanitarian aid for Palestinian civilians in Gaza and support of Ukraine at war with Russia to maintain democracy, were said to be main budget issues.

For now, federal retirees and social security recipients are funded throughout the year.

Repeal WEP/GPO!

NARFE has been a longtime supporter for repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset. The WEP repeal bill is of interest to CSRS retirees receiving a Social Security benefit. A repeal will give those qualified a boost in their social Security benefit. The Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82/S.597, addresses the long-standing issues. Congress has 304 cosponsors including 8 of 11 in Virginia. The bill has been advanced to the House Committee on Ways and Means; Reps. McClellan, Scott, Spanberger and Wittman are the greater Richmond area cosponsors.

NARFE-PAC

As a former president of this chapter and now the Political Action Chairperson I encourage all members to provide a donation to the NARFE-PAC. March is NARFE-PAC month. The form can be found in any edition of the NARFE Magazine. This is one of two ways that NARFE members can award our political representatives for their support of the many legislative bills that our congressmen and senators have sponsored in favor of federal employees and retirees. The second way is to consider voting for them on Election Day.

STATE LEGISLATION

The State Legislative team completed the 2024 Trifold during this quarter. If you do not have a copy, check with any board member or Steve Stastny, stevestas@comcast.net.

This year the initiatives were identified and reported to the VFN Board in October, the trifold content was approved by the board via email consent, and the trifold was printed in late November. Distribution was made by mail, sending to every Area Vice President for final distribution.

With good intentions, there was little commitment on the part of any legislator, thus far. On the part of the legislative team, we mail a trifold and letter to every legislator at their home office, we email a copy of the trifold with additional information in digital format, and finally create a mailing to arrive at the Richmond Office the week after January 10, 2024. We continue to have fewer VFN members either able to or interested in legislative outreach. It appears the trifold becomes a personal research paper, and I don’t think many constituents are able to make the effort to reach out to their representative(s) with the marketing collateral.

In the first effort to mail to representatives, there was a response from one, Delegate Dan Helmer. He reached out and I spent some time with him online. He is aware of our initiatives and was kind, but his area is insurance. He wanted to know more about how our members are affected by long-term insurance. This could be an item in the future, and he would be a good contact in the next review study.

I continued to work with Delegate Vivian Watts on income tax legislation and she has our information. She was interested but cautious. Any proposal she would submit would come from a progressive tax standpoint. I know there are tax bills on the agenda, but I see nothing, yet that resemble something we are interested in. Both my local delegate and senator are aware of our legislative plan.

Last session everyone was involved in the redistricting chaos and the November 2023 election. Unfortunately, this session will be filled with training and education of many new members. Change can be good, but we

had real help in Delegate Roxanne Robinson and Senator Chap Petersen. Unfortunately, they will not be part of the Virginia General Assembly this year.

Opening day was historic in the House of Delegates as Delegate Don Scott was sworn in as the first Black Speaker of the House. Members of the Democratic Caucuses of the Senate and House look forward to collaborating on an agenda that puts Virginia's families first by prioritizing the real issues that matter, such as improving public education, access to childcare, vital healthcare, and workforce development.

January 10, 2024, 38 Senators took the oath of office. Tammy Mulchi, 9th District special election to replace Senator Frank Ruff will take the oath the week of 01/15/24 after ballot certification. The new Virginia Senate will be remarkably different. With 18 new Senators representing various localities throughout Virginia, nearly half of the 40-member Senate are just beginning their service. The session will be challenging with many discussions around collective bargaining and individual priorities.

2024 House and Senate Committee Assignments were published on 01/12/24. Go to the Virginia General Assembly website to review the changes.

As they begin the 60-day session that will end a work period that's supposed to end with a new, two-year budget. Breakthroughs on the budget and other big policy items will again require bipartisan cooperation. Governor Youngkin faces a legislature under full Democratic control for the first time since 2021. That means some legislation could sail through the Capital only to perish under the Governor's veto.

Delegate Sam Rasoul has entered HB 1078, Family Care Giver, Delegate Vivian Watts has entered HB 886 Certified nursing home facilities, administrative sanctions, facilities subject to minimum standards.

Delegate Watts also sponsored HB 887 Income Taxes. This has nothing to do with our item, but there will be staff looking at Virginia State Income Tax law and Caregiver relief within this one.

With good news, there is a new VFN State Legislation Officer, Deborah Brown, Brentwood Chapter 1697. It is my hope that each of you give her the same loyal support that you gave me for the past four years. You can find out more about Deborah at our website: <https://vanarfe.org/state-legislation/>

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

Happy New Year to everyone.

Each year we try to model our chapter program calendar in accordance with what we think will be of interest to the membership. In 2023 we had some programs that were a big hit, so they'll be back for 2024.

January has become our nutrient and fitness month. The program is presented by an Anthem representative and concludes with chair yoga.

The Executive Board has decided that during the summer months, the meetings will be for pleasure/entertainment, no formal meeting. Last year everyone enjoyed bingo. That will be back in 2024.

The remainder of the calendar has not been finalized; however, we're coordinating to have a representative

from the Virginia Attorney General's office, and the interesting duo from Two Tellers Telling.

If there is a program of interest that you would like, please let any of the chapter members know so that we can bring that program to the chapter. Remember, your attendance and participation is critical to the continued existence of our chapter.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Verona McLeod

A New Year, A New Mindset!

We are embarking on a new year, 2024. Some people make new year's resolutions, other don't. Regardless of which group you fall into we are all federal employees or retirees and should commit to focusing more on retaining our federal benefits in the new year. In addition, we should focus on NARFE membership through actively recruiting new members and ensuring we remain in good standing by keeping our membership active/current. Even if you don't make a resolution for the new year, let's each challenge ourselves to support NARFE, who consistently lobby on our behalf. Our benefits are always threatened because we are federal employees, and our benefits can always be tapped to offset budget shortfalls. Chapter 2265's executive board is undertaking a massive membership initiative to make our chapter a more viable partner with the Virginia Federation. We can only be successful with this if you participate. There is always something each of us can do in support of the effort. Will you help?



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

JANUARY

11 Rose Acheson; **12** Suzanne Weeks; **14** Barbara Bartham; **15** Liz Mills; **17** Noel Boraski, Steve Long, Stuart Townes; **20** Betty "BJ" Gamble; **23** Sara Helgeson; **24** Cynthia Gifford, Sandy Powell; **25** Donald Long; **26** Charles H. Reed

FEBRUARY

3 Dave Burton; **20** Jenny Mohler; **21** Joyce Taylor, Lynn Osborne; **22** Stephen Stastny; **26** Virginia Rosen

MARCH

2 Cindy Capel; **4** Frank Walker; **6** Connie Thomas; **10** Kim Newton; **12** Faye McKay; **17** Judy Reid, Sharon Whitt; **18** Bob Potts, Denny Arner; **24** Verona McLeod **28** Linda Chester; **29** Bill Gayle, Dolly Carter

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

ALZHEIMER'S

Faye McKay

In an article published by the Alzheimer's Association during the Winter of 2023, it was noted that male caregivers can overcome some unique challenges. After raising four children with his high school sweetheart and wife, Elaine, Marty Schreiber became the caregiver for Elaine after she developed

Alzheimer's disease. They would go for walks and she would say, "Look at the pretty bird." Marty feels like he fell short because he missed out on sharing some moments of joy while she was on her journey and also failed to understand that she was a different person, in her own world.

Schreiber believes that his shortcomings as caregiver were due to his ignorance of the disease, as well as because of his gender as a male. He felt he had to be in control and he has seen this trait in many male caregivers. Now, Schreiber speaks to many caregiver support groups around the country.

At first, when Schreiber began caring for his wife, Elaine, he tried to do it all by himself. He went so far as to publish a book entitled "My Two Elaines: Learning, Coping and Surviving as an Alzheimer's Caregiver." In his book, he details the couple's experience. He finally realized that it was alright to seek help. This was actually courageous. And now there are other men, like Michael Williams, who share and speak with other male caregivers.

So, whether you are a male or female caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease, remember there are resources available to help you.

Electronic Communications

Cindy Graunke

As you may know, NARFE is using every electronic tool it can to get the word out about its mission, legislative activities and other important information for its members. I serve as the Area III representative. One of the important initiatives is getting the word out on the various platforms. Below are the links for both the NARFE and Virginia Federation websites; Facebook; X, and Instagram.

As you bundle up for some cold weather this winter, why not check some of these sites out.

NARFE and VFN Websites



<https://www.narfe.org/>

Dedicated to the general welfare of all federal workers and retirees, NARFE delivers guidance, resources and powerful advocacy.



www.VANARFE.org

Virginia Federation of NARFE goals mirror those of NARFE to protect the earned entitlements, rights and benefits of the federal retirees, employees and survivors.

NARFE and VFN Social Media Platforms



<https://www.fedhub.narfe.org>

FEDHub is NARFE's online community for members to connect to share advice, discuss concerns and solve challenges.



Facebook

(National, Virginia Federation of NARFE (VFN), VFN National Legislation and VFN Virginia Legislation)

<https://www.facebook.com/NARFEHQ/>

<https://www.facebook.com/vanarfe>

<https://www.facebook.com/vfnnatleg>

<https://www.facebook.com/vfnvaleg>



(formerly known as Twitter)

<https://twitter.com/NARFEHQ>

https://twitter.com/narfe_vfn

Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/vanarfe/>



February is Heart Month

What is Heart Month 2024?

Heart Month 2024 is a month-long initiative focused on heart health and cardiovascular disease prevention. It aims to educate individuals about the importance of maintaining a healthy heart and making lifestyle choices that support cardiovascular well-being. Heart disease remains a leading cause of death worldwide, and this observance seeks to reduce its impact through awareness and action.

How to Promote Heart Health

Improving heart health involves making conscious choices to reduce risk factors and adopt heart-healthy habits. Here are some ways to promote heart health during Heart Month and beyond:

- **Eat a Balanced Diet:** Consume a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy products. Limit saturated and trans fats, sodium, and added sugars.
- **Exercise Regularly:** Engage in physical activity for at least 150 minutes per week. Activities like walking, cycling, and swimming can help improve cardiovascular fitness.
- **Quit Smoking:** If you smoke, seek support to quit smoking. Smoking is a major risk factor for heart disease.
- **Manage Stress:** Practice stress-reduction techniques such as mindfulness, meditation, or yoga to reduce the impact of stress on your heart.
- **Monitor Blood Pressure:** Check your blood pressure regularly and work with your healthcare provider to manage it within a healthy range.
- **Control Cholesterol:** Maintain healthy cholesterol levels by following a heart-healthy diet and, if necessary, taking prescribed medications.
- **Maintain a Healthy Weight:** Achieve and maintain a healthy weight through a combination of balanced eating and regular physical activity.
- **Limit Alcohol Consumption:** If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation. Excessive alcohol consumption can contribute to heart problems.
- **Get Adequate Sleep:** Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep per night to support heart health.

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
Ann Simpkins: 804-379-3631

Membership:

Verona McLeod
804-744-4589

National Legislation:

Vacant

Net Coordinator:

Deborah Fisk
804-748-8722

Newsletter:

Lynn Osborne
804-275-2102

Parliamentarian:

Lynn Osborne
804-275-2102

Programs:

Verona McLeod
804-744-4589

Public Relations:

Cindy Graunke
240-674-5199

Service Officer:

Virginia Bozarth
804-275-0820

Special Activities:

Lynn Osborne
804-275-2102

State Legislation:

Steve Stastny
804-271-8690

Sunshine:

Vacant

Telephone Tree:

Vacant



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NARFE Chapter 2265
P.O. Box 565
Midlothian, VA 23113
Dated Material

DATES TO REMEMBER

February 14

Monthly Meeting

March 13

Monthly Meeting

April 17

Monthly Meeting

(moved due to the VFN Conference in April 7-10)

All meetings begin at 10 am.

Chapter Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/vfn2265>

2024 VFN Conference

Hotel Madison & Shenandoah
Valley Conference Center
710 S. Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

April 7-10, 2024

“TOGETHER WE WILL SUCCEED”

**Early Bird Registration by
February 15, 2024
\$75**

**Regular Registration
February 16 – March 15
\$90**