

August 2024



FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

Chapter email:
narfe356@hotmail.com

Next Meeting Date

August 21

*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.

MANASSAS CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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

Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) Activities, Ann Cain, Outreach Committee Chair, LLI-Manassas

Our luncheon speaker will talk about the activities of Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI), a program for seniors who want to keep their minds active while meeting new people and having fun. Dues are \$125 per year. Members may take as many classes as they would like, depending on available space. LLI-Manassas was organized in 2003 to provide area residents quality, affordable educational and social opportunities in a supportive environment for people 50 and up.

Ann Cain is the former president of LLI-Manassas and currently serving as its outreach committee chair.

years ago and the unintended consequences of not keeping beneficiary information up-to-date. As I have noted previously, the paper beneficiary forms for Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) accounts were not transferred to electronic format at the time of the most recent TSP electronic conversion; so, while TSP assures that the paper format remain on-file, you might consider logging onto your account (or creating same) on www.tsp.gov and adding your beneficiary information to the new electronic system. And while you are at it, consider completing and keeping up-to-date NARFE Form 100, "Be Prepared for Life Events," a handy guide to help organize personal and financial information in one location for survivors. This form can be found on the NARFE website at www.narfe.org under Member Quick Links at the Federal Benefits Institute and also the Member Forms links.

Just a reminder, there is still time to register for NARFE'S biannual conference and training session, FEDCON24, which is being held in St. Louis, MO, August 18-20. You can register on-line at www.fedcon.narfe.org. After the conference, NARFE will hold elections for national officers (candidate statements are in the June/July NARFE magazine) and several Bylaw amendments (see the August NARFE magazine).

Future Meetings:

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

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

September 2--Executive Committee

October 1--Executive Committee

October 16--Health Benefits Update, Kathy Bass, Anthem Blue Cross

November 5--Executive Committee

From The Chapter President

Welcome to the lazy hazy days of summer! I suspect most of us in an effort to beat the heat are spending more time indoors, which presents a great opportunity to update your beneficiary information on retirement accounts, life insurance policies, and bank accounts, if you have experienced life events such as divorce, estrangement, death, marriage or a falling out with your now not so favorite niece. I would recommend reading the article reprinted in the July 30 NewsLine e-mail regarding a recent federal court decision on the validity of a beneficiary form filled out nearly 40

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

We were pleased to have had so many of our members join us for our June luncheon at our new location, Logan's Roadhouse. I hope everyone enjoyed our speaker, Juan Rivera, and learning about the forthcoming commercial flights from Manassas Regional Airport as much as I did. If you haven't joined us in the past, please consider doing so on August 21. We are working with management at Logan's to make our luncheons run smoothly and more timely to accommodate our speakers. To that end we will offer a special group menu at a reasonable fixed price. Although there will be fewer selections, you will still have a choice of seven luncheon options and we will be receiving a discounted price of \$14 with beverage included plus tax and tip.

Mary M. Brandt,
President

Legislation Update and News of Note

FY 2025 Appropriations

The House Appropriations Committee by a 31-25 vote along party lines advanced the 2025 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies spending bill on July 10. The legislation would cut the Social Security Administration's (SSA) budget by \$450 million next fiscal year. The money set aside for SSA is \$1.7 billion less than President Biden's budget request. On August 1, the Senate Appropriations Committee voted 25-3 to advance its version of the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies spending bill, which would increase the SSA's administrative budget by \$500 million or provide \$14.7 billion in funding, setting up a stand-off with the House. The Senate's proposal would fall short of the \$15.4 billion requested by the Biden administration in the president's fiscal 2025 budget request, but it is around

\$1 billion more than the \$13.7 billion slated for the agency under the GOP-controlled House's version of the legislation.

On July 11, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved bills funding the Department of Agriculture, Veterans Affairs, as well as the legislative branch—in unanimous, 27-0 vote. However, the Senate could not come to a bipartisan agreement on how much money to allocate for the remaining nine funding measures, but did agree to increase funding for both defense and non-defense agencies above levels agreed to in a two-year budget plan President Biden struck with House Republicans last year. Non-defense agencies would receive a total of \$13.5 billion in extra spending, while the Pentagon would get an extra \$21 billion. The House, meanwhile, has already approved some of its fiscal 2025 measures, but President Joe Biden has threatened to veto them over the cuts they contain, which would force average cuts of 6% at non-defense agencies.

Source: Government Executive, July 10, July 11 and August 2, 2024

2% Pay Raise for Federal Workers in FY 2025 Appears Likely

The Senate Appropriations Committee unveiled and unanimously advanced spending legislation on August 1 that effectively endorsed President Joe Biden's proposed 2% average pay increase for federal workers in FY 2025. The committee approved four FY 2025 appropriations bills, including the Energy and Water Development, Defense, Labor, Health and Human Services, and Financial Services and General Government Appropriations acts. That latter bill would traditionally be the method for overriding the president's proposed pay plan. The committee was silent on federal workers' compensation rates, effectively endorsing the Administration's proposal, which was a significant decrease in pay raises proposed in prior years and deviated from the longstanding practice of parity between civilian and military pay as the president proposed a 4.5% raise for military service members.

Source: Government Executive, August 2, 2024

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

Federal Union Officials Could No Longer Be Paid for Representational Work

Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT) recently introduced The No Union Time on the Taxpayer’s Dime Act (S. 4868), which would end the longstanding practice by which union officials in federal agencies can be paid for time spent on representational work. When Congress enacted the 1978 Civil Service Reform Act, lawmakers instituted several restrictions on union rights not present in the private sector: federal employee unions cannot bargain over pay; they cannot go on strike; and they are required to represent all workers in a bargaining unit, not just dues-paying members. In order to take on the increased workload of representing non-union members, Congress provided that union officials in federal agencies could be paid their normal government salary when working on representational matters rather than their normal duties as federal employees. That includes negotiations with management, pursuing grievance or Federal Labor Relations Authority proceedings or litigation on behalf of one or more bargaining unit employees, as well as representing an employee during disciplinary investigations or proceedings. But it doesn’t include internal union business, like soliciting people to join, electing union leaders or collecting dues. The proposed legislation would provide that “any activities performed by an employee relating to the business of a labor organization shall be performed during the time the employee is in a non-duty status.”

Source: Government Executive, August 2, 2024

The House and Senate are in recess and will reconvene on September 9.

In Memoriam

David Doliber

We are sad to let you know that David Doliber, one of our most longtime members and former President of our Chapter passed away on July 18. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

David joined NARFE in July 1992. He became our Chapter Secretary in 2007 and then served as President for five years from 2011 to 2016.

David was born and raised in Marblehead, Massachusetts. He graduated from Bentley University in 1967 and began his federal career as a bank examiner with the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency. He retired in 1994 as a senior accountant with the Department of the Treasury.



Alzheimer's Corner

Marilyn Markman, RN

There are two things families dread as a loved one's Alzheimer/dementia condition progresses.

First, is telling a person he/she for safety reasons is no longer able to drive. When we earned our first driver's license, we had the feeling of freedom, independence, and yes, maturity - remember those feelings?

So, we have been driving many, many, years for many, many miles, going where we want when we want. All of a sudden, your beloved family says, "No more driving for you!" A few may realize they should give up the keys- a minor accident, a close call, etc. but, even if that happens, most will make excuses.

After all the avenues have been explored- hiding the keys, dismantling the car, having family, neighbors, and friends drive the person to the store, church, visiting friends, etc. - if they are still trying to drive, there is one last thing you can do. Talk to the doctor and he/she can write to the DMV and explain the situation - a course and/or a test can be taken. If not passed, the license will be revoked. The patient may be very angry with the doctor, but at least not angry with the spouse or family.

The second hardest thing to do is move your loved one to managed care. When the safety of the patient and /or the health of the caregiver become an issue, it is time. One spouse wrote and said he wasn't sleeping; he was afraid his wife would wander or fall. Showers were very short for the same reason. Now, he visits her every day, knowing she is in good hands.

The first step could be an independent living arrangement - a place where there is support for the person who is basically self-care, providing meals and housekeeping and assistance with transportation and other things.

Next step is a long-term care facility, including assisted living and rehabilitation centers. These state-licensed facilities give 24-hour care by trained staff for

support with activities of daily living, personal care, recreation, medication management, etc. Some facilities provide special care units or memory care units. These are locked units where there is no wandering and safety is of utmost importance. When the demands of care can no longer be met by the caregiver, and it is not safe to be at home, a facility should be considered. This is a very hard decision, but it is the right one. Some actually thrive on the daily routine and the socialization and the caregiver thrives knowing their loved one is safe.

To be continued in my next column with more information especially about the costs of the various levels of care that these many options provide.

While retirement communities and long-term care facilities are very important to Alzheimer's patients, research is also very important. This is where you come in- donating through NARFE will support the very necessary ongoing research to cure this devastating disease.

You can help to support our chapter's Alzheimer's fund-raising 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.

NARFE WEBINARS

Upcoming NARFE Webinars:

No new webinars yet announced.

Recent NARFE Webinars:

**Thrift Savings Plan: Should You Stay or Should You Go?
July 25**

Federal Benefits Expert, Mark Keen, CFP, will educate TSP participants about the TSP, including the investment options, cost, and unique features and drawbacks that participants should be aware of. This webinar will also discuss alternatives to the TSP for those who may find their needs better suited by a traditional and/or Roth IRAs, and what to consider so that you can make the most informed decision for yourself and your 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 dropped for nonrenewal
- 1 passed away

Welcome to our Chapter
Thomas Polacci

In Memoriam Recent Passing
David Doliber

Chapter 356 membership as of
July 31 is 120 members.

Email Address Changes

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

CHAPTER 356 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

President	Mary Brandt	703-753-3954
Vice President	Priscilla Saboe	703-361-1150
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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
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Use this address to contact officers and committee chairs by email

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.