



NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL
EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION
FAIRFAX CHAPTER 737



<https://vanarfe.org/Chapter-737/>

September 2024

Serving Current and Retired Federal Civilian Employees, Spouses and Survivor Annuitants

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The chapter membership normally meets on the first Tuesday of the month September through May with the annual chapter picnic on the first Tuesday in June. **The next chapter meeting is AN EXCEPTION with a Special Event afterward:**

WHEN: September 14, Saturday

PROGRAM: We will meet on a Saturday to make the meeting available for actively employed Federal employees. This is a test to see if the chapter active employee members are interested in attending meetings. A special event will be held after the chapter meeting. See the notice after the Presidents Corner.

WHERE: The Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St SE, Vienna, VA

TIME: Social Hour-11:30 AM, Lunch-12:00PM, Program-12:30 followed by Chapter 737 business

COST: \$17.00

CONTACT: If you plan to attend email TedPasek@verizon.net .

Fourth Wednesday of each month: VFN Training at vanarfe.org

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear Members of Chapter 737:

The new season of Chapter program meetings will begin with an innovation on 14 September when the September membership meeting will take place at the Vienna Community Center beginning at 1:30 p.m. It is hoped that by scheduling this program meeting on a Saturday, actively employed Federal employees will attend it. It is unlikely that this meeting will be broadcast via Zoom.

If you plan to attend the September 14th membership meeting, please inform Nancy Palmerino at nancyolive0110@yahoo.com by e-mail with a copy to Ted Pasek at tedpasek@verizon.net.

Because we will hold a Saturday 14 September program meeting, there will not be the program meeting customarily held on the first Tuesday of September.

Along with a new season of membership programs, this is the season for asking members to serve the chapter in various ways such as helping to produce membership programs, promoting NARFE's efforts to attract donations for research on Alzheimer's disease, or serving in some position on the Board of Directors. Please inform me of your interest to serve the chapter in some way.

Sincerely yours,

Charles "Mike" Fleming – Chapter President

SPECIAL EVENT

A Special Event for Northern Virginia active, retired, and prospective Federal and Postal employees is planned. This event is directed to all Northern Virginia active employees, newly retired or already retired Federal and Postal employees who are not members of NARFE. Join us on Saturday, September 14, 2024 at the Vienna Community Center from 1:30 and 3:30 p.m. The Community Center is located at 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna, VA 22180. The Fairfax Chapter is NOT meeting on September 3rd, so everyone can attend this special event on Saturday, September 14th,

Are you worried about what might happen to your pay and benefits because of continued efforts to reduce the federal work force, reduce your pensions, eliminate your Cost-of-Living increases? Come and interact with your

counterparts and interesting speakers. Learn about ongoing legislation and what NARFE is doing to help and how you can help.

Please register with Nancy Palmerino at nancyolive0110@yahoo.com. This is to gauge the attendance and provide snacks. Any questions, please contact Ted Pasek at tedpasek@verizon.net.

JUNE PROGRAM MEETING

Virginia Delegate David Bulova gave us a briefing on the results of the budget process in Richmond. Given the house and senate are essentially even, he said it was interesting to be working in a collaborative environment to get bills developed to address issues important to the citizens of Virginia. Despite the bi-partisan collaboration, Governor Younkin vetoed a significant number of the bills he was sent.

FOOD FOR OTHERS

Food for Others received 157 pounds of food that was collected at the June picnic.

Don't forget to bring your food donation to be taken to "Food for Others" to help those not so fortunate in Fairfax County. At the last Chapter meeting we collected 30 pounds in April.

Needed Food Items (no more than 3 years expired, unopened, labeled, not homemade):

- Fresh fruits (oranges, apples, bananas, tomatoes, avocados, grapes, berries)
- Fresh vegetables (cucumbers, celery, peppers, lettuce, eggplant)
- Cooking Oil (ideally in cans or plastic instead of glass)
- Dry goods – cereal, pasta, rice, (16 oz packages), dried beans
- Canned vegetables, meat (2oz – 15oz), and fruit (packed in juice 11 oz – 20 oz)
- Spaghetti sauce, 14 oz – 1 lb (ideally in cans or plastic instead of glass)
- Fruit juice (100% juice) 32 oz – 64 oz

Refer to the www.FoodforOthers.org/give-food website for a list of most needed items and information on the Power Pack Program (P3) that provides for food insecure children on weekends when they are out of school.

Ted Pasek – Vice President

TREASURER/MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The chapter financial report includes the month of May. Starting May 1, our balance was \$7,106.31. Since that date, I have written checks totaling \$533.45 and we have had income of \$826.48. This leaves a balance at the end of August of \$7,399.34.

Our membership numbers over the summer months reflect the following totals:

Chapter 737 Chapter Members are 236 and we have 313 National Only Members, for a total of 549 members in our Chapter. The Virginia Federation of NARFE has a total of 10,231 members.

Donna Shackelford – Treasurer and Membership

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

(As of August 12, 2024)

NATIONAL LEGISLATION- Lawmakers left Washington for an August recess having made scant progress toward passing the 12 annual spending bills, or appropriations, that keep vital agencies and government programs running. Current federal financing expires Sept. 30, the end of the 2024 fiscal year. Without new funding or an extension, vast portions of the government – including functions of the Transportation Department, Internal Revenue Service and National Park Service – would go offline. Military service members would miss paychecks but would be required to remain on the job.

The Republican-controlled House has passed five of the dozen bills – all on virtually party-line votes with such steep budget cuts and culture-war policy provisions that they stand no chance of becoming law. The Democratic-controlled Senate has not passed any appropriations bills but has greenlighted seven of them through the committee process with broad bipartisan support.

With lawmakers on recess all of August, Congress will almost definitely need a stopgap funding bill, called a "continuing resolution" or CR, to avert a shutdown. They come back to Washington just weeks before the deadline.

Rep. Tom Cole (R-Okla.), chair of the House Appropriations Committee, said he hoped a final government funding package could come together between November and the start of the new year, acknowledging that a temporary funding bill would be necessary. That doesn't mean the funding process will be easy, though.

Cole and House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) have put forward legislation with major boosts for the Defense Department and veterans' programs, while cutting public health, education, transportation, housing and the State Department. The bills jettison a deal struck last year with President Biden to exclude \$69 billion in funding from

counting against annual budget caps.

The bills also include archconservative policy provisions on cultural issues. The Defense Department bill would prohibit funding for military service members to travel for reproductive health care and activities that “bring discredit upon the military, such as a drag queen story hour for children or the use of drag queens as military recruiters.”

The State Department would also prohibit the use of federal funds to help civilians from Gaza settle in the United States. Another bill prevents funding from going to the FBI’s diversity and inclusion department.

Those policies and the funding cuts stake out hard-right bargaining positions for the CR fight to come.

Democrats broadly support a short-term bill that would extend funding past Election Day but end before the end of the year. Republicans, meanwhile, are open to a longer CR that extends into the new year, banking on former president Donald Trump to retake the White House and galvanize conservative control of Washington.

VIRGINIA LEGISLATION- The Virginia General Assembly voted at a special session held on July 18 to roll back cuts to a popular tuition waiver program for military families, resolving a self-inflicted political crisis and putting off a serious budget debate until next year.

The state budget passed earlier this year contained language that sharply curtailed the program, which had ballooned in cost since being expanded over the past few years, forcing schools to increase tuition and other costs for others who pay to attend. Military families and their advocates protested the changes, setting off a massive wave of political backtracking in a state that prides itself on having one of the nation’s biggest concentrations of active duty and retired military residents. Gov. Youngkin, whose administration initially sought the cutbacks, appointed a task force to study the issue then called on lawmakers to go ahead and reinstate the military family tuition waivers.

In deciding on July 18 to reinstate the popular tuition waiver program for military families, lawmakers voted to set aside \$45 million a year over the next two years to help colleges and universities deal with the expense, on top of \$20 million per year that was already in the budget.

All sides agreed that the issue needs a long-term fix so the program doesn’t grow out of control. Gov. Youngkin’s task force is expected to recommend changes later this year, as is a task force appointed by the Senate.

The Washington Post

Tom Hart – Legislative Program

NARFE GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY NEWS

The National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association is the only organization solely dedicated to the general welfare of all federal workers and retirees. NARFE delivers valuable guidance, timely resources and powerful advocacy. For 100 years NARFE has been a trusted source of knowledge for the federal community, Capitol Hill, the executive branch and the media.

It’s a crucial time to rally support for the Saving the Civil Service Act, H.R. 1002/S. 399. This legislation is vital in preventing any future administration from implementing Schedule F, a statutory loophole that would reclassify civil service positions and strip away the protections that safeguard our federal workforce. With Congress in recess, now is the perfect time to gain support for this bill and ensure that merit-based principles remain the cornerstone of our civil service system, protecting federal employees from potential political patronage. Contact your legislators and help secure the integrity of our federal workforce.

On August 7th, Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Chairman of the Senate Finance Subcommittee on Social Security, and Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), urging them to bring the Social Security Fairness Act, S. 597, to the Senate floor for a vote.

The Equal COLA Act, H.R. 866/S. 3194, would provide the full cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) annuities, which would be in line with the full COLAs that CSRS retirees and Social Security beneficiaries currently receive. The FERS COLA is held at 2 percent if the full COLA falls between 2 and 3 percent, and it reduces FERS COLAs by one percentage point if the full COLA exceeds 3 percent.

Enrollees in the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP) are facing alarming premium increases that were unforeseen and are causing significant financial strain on federal workers and retirees. Premiums for FLTCIP coverage – intended to remain stable for the life of the enrollee – have risen to levels far beyond what was originally quoted to enrollees when they purchased their policies. Premiums have increased on each contract renewal (by as much as 25 percent in 2009, and as much as 126 percent in 2016). Approximately 265,000 federal employees and retirees are grappling with these exorbitant premium hikes that are making it extremely difficult to maintain their coverage.

NARFE encourages members to contact their congressman or Senator on issues that are important to them.

Return Service Requested
NARFE - Fairfax Chapter 737
5340 GAINSBOROUGH DR.
FAIRFAX, VA 22032-2741



Postal Service (Time Value) Please Deliver by **Aug 25, 2024**

NEWSLETTER

The Fairfax Chapter 737 newsletter is published September through June to provide information on the Chapter membership meetings in those months.

Members should log on to their NARFE account and go to the membership database and update their records. Physical newsletters are coming back as undelivered and digital newsletters are bouncing back because of incorrect or obsolete addresses. It is important to get the national magazine, other NARFE benefits information and chapter newsletters. If you are not getting some of this information, go to <https://www.narfe.org/> to ensure your data is current so you get your full range of information.

Articles for the **October** issue of the NARFE Fairfax Chapter 737 newsletter are due to the editor by e-mail at Mays.JL@verizon.net by **September 15**.

James Mays – Newsletter Editor