

# NARFE

FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

*Reaching Out*

*October 2024*

*Arlington, VA Chapter 7*

## National Active & Retired Federal Employees Association

**Meetings: 2nd Wed of Month Sept through May (except December) Beech Rm, Lubber Run Community Ctr, 300 N. Park Dr., Arlington - 12:15 p.m.**

### *President's Message*

*Pat Meyers*

Greetings, Everyone, NARFE has much happening during the fall season.so please keep reading.

There were about 70 members and non-members who attended the joint membership event in Vienna sponsored by Area IX and X chapters on September 14th. In addition to Nancy Palmerino and me, Jim Hall, Carol Savage, Dan Perch, Rita Rutsohn, Shirley Hogan and Gini Grigsby also were present. It was an information-packed afternoon with excellent speakers, I was honored to introduce NARFE President Bill Shackelford who spoke about the many benefits received through NARFE membership. John Hatton, VP for Policy & Programs who spoke about NARFE'S legislative priorities volunteered to send copies of his slides to the chapters. To obtain a copy, please contact Secretary Nancy Palmerino at nancyolive0110@yahoo.com.

Our October 9th meeting will feature a presentation by Tania Griffin, Communications & Outreach Coordinator for Arlington's Office of Voter Registration and Elections. Her office is charged with maintaining Arlington's list of registered voters and conducting elections. Tania will brief us on the upcoming election cycle, the role of her office and ranked choice voting which will be used in the County Board race. This is a critical election year so please join us, bring your questions AND plan to vote. Early voting has already begun in Arlington.

Chapter 7 also will have election of officers for 2025 during the October meeting. Although advance notice of willingness to run for a chapter office is requested by October 1 to the chapter secretary, nominations will be requested from the floor at the meeting. Please consider an officer slot, especially 2nd VP (membership)

October is also the month for the annual Walk to End Alzheimer's Disease. Northern Virginia NARFE chapters will participate in the walk on Saturday, October 19, 2024, in Manassas Virginia. NARFE will sponsor a table at the Walk to collect funds and hopefully attract new members as well. Participants may choose how much they wish to walk or not walk at all. See details later in the newsletter.

In November Chapter 7 will provide a free pizza lunch prior to the Blue Cross/Blue Shield presentation. Please let Nancy or me know by Monday, November 11 if you'd like to participate so we know how much pizza to buy. For those who don't do pizza, rest assured we'll have other refreshments as well. Our phone numbers are listed in the newsletter. See paragraph 1 above for Nancy's e-mail address. Pat's e-mail address is: pmmeyers2000@aol.com. See you in October!

*Legislative Corner*

*Ed Weiler*

### **The Virginia Federation of NARFE Chapters' (VFN's) 2025 State Legislative Plan: Some Things Old & Something New**

VFN will soon release its 2025 State Legislative Plan, and not a minute too soon. The legislative hopper down in Richmond for the 2025 Session of the General Assembly (GA) is already, well...hopping. Let's start with the new.

#### **Repeal of Sunset Provision for Virginia's Current Standard Deduction Amounts**

Unless the GA acts during its 2025 Session to repeal the existing sunset provision for the current enhanced standard deduction amounts (\$8,500 single; \$17,00 married), these levels will revert to those prevailing as far back as 2005 (\$3,000 single; \$6,000 married)! Fortunately, two companion bills (*HB88*; *SB108*) which would do just that have been carried over from the 2024 Session. As discussed in the April 2024 edition of this newsletter, two Senators who represent most of Chapter 7's membership (Sens. Favola-40 and Ebbin-39) sit on the Senate Finance Committee. On the House side, Rep. Sullivan (VA-6), who represents at least a portion of our membership, sits on that body's Finance Committee. And, although he does not sit on any of the revenue committees, Del Hope (VA-1), who represents a broad swath of our membership, warrants a nudge from us. Unless you are comfortable with the prospect of losing thousands of dollars of deductions when tax time rolls around in 2025, you've got some lobbying work to do.

Now let's turn to the two items held over from last year's State Plan that are still of vital interest to Chapter 7's CSRS annuitants.

#### **Reformulation of the Age 65+ Deduction**

Pardon me while I dig into the weeds on this one. In order to understand how you as a CSRS annuitant are unfairly treated by the Virginia Tax Code, go to Line 8 of the "Age 65 and Older Deduction Worksheet," found in the instruction booklet for VA Form 760. The allowable 65+ deduction amount is calculated from your Adjusted Federal Adjusted Gross Income (AFAGI). Perform the ensuing arithmetic prescribed in Lines 10-13 to determine how much (if any) of the \$12,000 deduction you might be eligible to claim. The inequity in this process lies within the determination of your AFAGI. Back up in Line 7, you are allowed to SUBTRACT any Social Security (SS) benefits, but NOT your CSRS annuity! While space limitations preclude an explanation of VFN's Rx for this situation, the details are spelled out in the 2025 Legislative Plan and associated talking points. Granted, this is tricky stuff. If you get lost in the details, ask for an explanation from your tax preparer or a friend. And then, rev up your lobbying machine.

## **Exempting a Portion of CSRS Annuity Income from VA State Income Tax**

There is a long and tangled history of VFN's attempt to seek redress on this front---too long to recount here. But once again, the disparate treatment between CSRS income and SS benefits comes into play. While SS benefits are totally tax-exempt, CSRS income is fully taxed. Rather than ask for a total exemption as it has done in the past, VFN is now requesting a partial exemption (60 per cent), which might be more palatable to our perennially reluctant legislators. Another factor suggesting that things might be different this time is the prevalence of several group-specific carve-outs (e.g., Firefighters) for tax relief that have been carried over from the 2024 Session. Hey guys! How about us for once?

## **Nursing Home Priorities (also held over from VFN's 2024 Plan)**

As such, this proposal serves as a statement of long-standing VFN priorities in the nursing home arena: minimum staffing levels, living wages, and funding for training and education of a skilled geriatric workforce.

The *2025 Plan* should be available @ [www.vanarfe.org](http://www.vanarfe.org) by no later than mid-October. Read up and take action.

## **2024 Walk To End Alzheimer's**

The Alzheimer's Association leads the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia. Join other Northern Virginia NARFE chapters in the 2024 Walk to End Alzheimer's on October 19th in Manassas. The location is the Harris Pavilion, 9201 Center St., Manassas, VA. Registration begins at 8:30 am, ceremony at 9:30 and the walk at 10:00 am. You can sign up at the event to just walk independently, walk with the Fairfax or Woodbridge team, or support a team and not walk at all. If you can not attend the event, but would like to support either team with an online donation, go to ALZ.ORG, click on Find a Local Walk, Find Team and enter either NARFE Fairfax Chapter 737 or NARFE Chapter 1270. NARFE will have a table at the event and will be distributing information as part of its recruitment efforts to encourage NARFE membership. More information about the event can be found at ALZ.ORG or by contacting Sonya Amartey | 703.766.9025 | [samartey@alz.org](mailto:samartey@alz.org)

## **November 16 – Open Season Health Fair**

All are invited to attend the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Open Season Workshop for Federal Employees and Retirees sponsored by Congressman Gerry Connolly (VA-11) on Saturday, November 16, 2024 from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA 22035. This year's workshop will feature a panel discussion featuring experts on FEHB programs and available health plan options from 10:00 am – 11:00 am. Representatives from various FEHB health plan programs will be available to provide information and answer questions concerning plan changes for 2025 from 11:00 am-1:00 pm.

## **Alzheimer's Report**

**Nancy Palmerino**

We collected \$35 in contributions for Alzheimer's research at our September meeting. This brings the total collected to-date for 2024 to \$846. We've set a goal of \$1,500 in donations for the chapter this

year. Your tax-deductible contributions, including any loose change that might be hanging around, are accepted at all our chapter meetings.

### **Membership Report**

**Nancy Palmerino**

We welcome new member Jackie Snelling and send well wishes for a speedy recovery to all our members who are not currently at 100%. We are sorry to report the departure of Evelyn Roll who has moved to Sarasota, FL and are saddened to report the passing of longtime member Judith Karinshak. We currently have 256 Chapter members and an additional 441 National members in our chapter area for a total of 697 Chapter and National members. Our chapter memberships include 60 1-year members, 34 2-year members, 90 3-year members, 61 dues withholding members and 11 Life members.

### **Contact Information**

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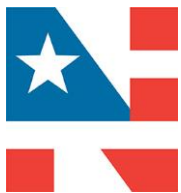
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