

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. Come on out to the next meetings for informative speakers and charitable activities. At the meetings we collect books for exchanging, books for donating for sale for Alzheimer's research, food for local food banks and other charitable activities. The next meeting is:

WHEN: December 3

PROGRAM: This year we will welcome the Holiday Season with music by Brian Franke on guitar again. In addition to the musical interlude during Registration, we will be having a short Sing-a-Long after the luncheon to begin our Holiday Song Bingo. This idea is thanks to Brian Franke who will provide the Bingo Cards with popular Christmas melodies in the number slots. Brian will be "calling," playing the songs and we have to cover the slots if we recognize the songs. Plan to sing or hum along with us on December 3rd.

WHERE: The American Legion Post 177, 3939 Oak St, Fairfax City

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 .

January 7, 2025: Shawn Smith, State Director, Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP), talking about the many Medicare Frauds. This will be on some of many types of attempts that are made to take over your Medicare account. This is an interesting and challenging presentation.

Feb 4th Speaker TBD

Mar 4th Speaker TBD

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

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear Members of Chapter 737:

The chapter election was held on Tuesday 5 November during the luncheon membership meeting. The result of the election is:

President Mike Fleming
Vice-president Ted Pasek
Secretary Jim Mays
Treasurer Donna Shackelford

The next membership meeting will occur on Tuesday December 3rd. Sign-in will begin at 11:30 a.m. and the luncheon will begin at 12:00 p.m. at the Fairfax American Legion Post 177 located at 3939 Oak St in Fairfax City. In lieu of a guest speaker, there will signing and bingo games.

For those who cannot attend the membership meeting in person, it will be broadcast via Zoom at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85717402521?pwd=1LuPIIS92bcVvn7iWdV8KdbN3wmQbV.1>

The cost of the luncheon has risen to \$20 per person, because the Legion Post raised the cost of the luncheons. Donations for Food for Others will be welcome.

If you plan to attend the December 3rd membership sing-along and games, please inform Ted Pasek at tedpasek@verizon.net by e-mail. Making a firm reservation for the luncheon is very important.

Sincerely yours,

Charles "Mike" Fleming – Chapter President

TREASURER AND MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Treasurer/Membership: 10/29/2024

Finances

Balance as of 9/30/2024	\$7,443.82
Disbursements	281.00
Income	266.00
Balance as of 10/29/2024	7,428.82

Membership

As of 10/29/2024

VA Chapter Members	4,122
VA NOM Members	<u>6,205</u>
Total for VFN	10,327

737 Chapter Members	238
737 NOM Members	<u>326</u>
Total	564

Alzheimer's donations as of 10/29/2024 \$294.00

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

(As of November 13, 2024)

NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE NEWS- Donald Trump, returning to the White House in January, is poised, according to the Associated Press, to spur the most dramatic reimagining of the staffing of government in more than a century. Trump has vowed to revive Schedule F, a controversial aborted effort at the end of his first term to strip the civil service protections of potentially tens of thousands of career federal workers in "policy-related" positions, effectively making them at-will employees. Trump and many of his former staffers have frequently bemoaned that "rogue bureaucrats" inhibited his policymaking power during his first stint at the White House. Though President Biden quickly rescinded Schedule F when he took office in 2021, before any positions could be converted out of the federal government's competitive service, Biden's rule was never codified by Congress and could easily be reversed. Trump and his allies have been working on an initiative to restore Schedule F in absentia. Both the Heritage Foundation and America First Policy Institute, which have organized dueling unofficial transition projects, have endorsed reviving Schedule F, going so far as to creating lists of upwards of 50,000 current career civil servants to strip of their removal protections and threaten with termination. And the America First Policy Institute, which the New York Times reported has recently gained favor with Trump after Heritage's Project 2025 transition project and policy playbook proved unpopular with voters, has called for more sweeping changes, such as converting the entire federal workforce into at-will employees and outlawing collective bargaining at federal agencies altogether. In addition to Schedule F, the new administration is expected to use several other tactics to excise federal employees, such as mass transfers of senior executives and relocation of agency offices. Trump did this in his first term, moving the Bureau of Land management headquarters from Washington, DC, to Grand Junction, Colorado. In a 2023 campaign video, Trump promised to move "as many as 100,000 government positions" out of DC. Other former Trump officials have suggested entire federal offices should be slashed in addition to individuals being fired.

Unions that represent federal employees are gearing up for the fight. EPAs union leadership told CNN its lawyers are crafting legal challenges against Schedule F, but some experts said they may not be enough to fend off mass firings. Legal advocacy groups like the American Civil Liberties Union and Democracy Forward that have fought the first Trump agenda in court have been considering ways to set up an infrastructure that would connect civil servants who are targeted with unlawful tactics. **(CNN, Government Executive)**

With Republicans on the cusp of unified control of Washington, Congress appears primed to extend the deadline for a government shutdown well past President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration. Lawmakers are discussing a temporary measure that would fund the government into March. **(The Washington Post)**

On November 12, 2024, the U.S. House of Representatives passed House Resolution 82, commonly known as the "Social Security Fairness Act of 2023," with a resounding vote of 327 to 75. The U.S. Senate will now take up H.R. 82 before President Joe Biden decides the bill's future.

H.R. 82 aims to eliminate two Social Security provisions, the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO). H.R. 82 was co-authored by Louisiana Republican Congressman Garret Graves and Virginia Democratic Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger. **(KALB News Channel 5)**

VIRGINIA LEGISLATIVE NEWS- The "blue wall" which former President Donald Trump penetrated nationally to win the race for the White House against Vice President Kamala Harris, stood strong in Fairfax County. Local residents voted 2:1 Democratic to Republican for political races from the White House to the U.S. Congress, as more votes statewide also voted for Harris. \

The U.S. Senate race echoed the broader 2:1 pattern, with incumbent Democratic Sen. Tim Kaine earning 372,685 votes against 178,023 casting ballots for Republican candidate Hung Cao, a retired U.S. Navy veteran.

In U.S. House races, Democrat Rep. Gerald "Gerry" Connolly retained the seat for the 11th District with the same 2:1 margin over Republican Mike Van Meter. In the 8th District, Democratic Rep. Donald Beyer beat a challenge by Republican candidate Jerry Torres. In the 10th District, Democratic candidate Suhas Subramanyam defeated Republican competitor Mike Clancy (replacing Democrat Jennifer Wexton who did not seek reelection after being diagnosed with a form of Atypical Parkinsonism).

Residents voted overwhelmingly to amend the Virginia constitution so that surviving spouses of soldiers who die in the "line of duty" are extended a tax exemption, like the surviving spouses of soldiers "killed in action," with 491,667 voters casting ballots for the referendum, compared to 49,366 against. **(Fairfax County Times)**

Tom Hart – Legislative Program

VIRGINIA FEDERATION OF NARFE (VFN) OCTOBER BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

Bill Shackelford was re-elected National President for a second term. Cindy Blythe was elected Secretary/Treasurer and Robert Allen re-elected as Region 10 VP.

The 2025 Annual Conference will be held at the Hotel Madison in Harrisonburg on April 6-9, 2025. Registration will be \$95 and includes some meals. The goal is to exceed 150 registrants, vs 116 in 2024. The conference speakers are excellent and their subjects include VFN as well as topics of personal interest, such as health or downsizing.

Alzheimer's donations nationally totaled \$16,308.607 and Virginia was #1 nationally. Good work and thanks for your donations!

The State Legislative Plan for 2025 is now available and will be available at meetings and soon on the VANarfe.org web site.

These are just a few notes from the October board meeting but many discussions included increasing membership, attracting new active members, and increasing participation at the chapter and VFN levels.

SECURITY IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

Key Signs of Identity Theft

1. **Unfamiliar Charges on Your Credit Card:** Monitor for any unauthorized charges, even minor ones.
2. **Receiving Bills for a New Credit Card You Didn't Apply For:** Thieves may use your personal info to open credit accounts in your name.
3. **Unrecognized Bank Withdrawals:** Small, unrecognized transactions could indicate fraud.
4. **Unexpected Denials of Credit:** Could be due to fraudulent activities affecting your credit score.
5. **Suddenly, Unexplained Changes in Credit Score:** Fraudulent activity may lead to credit score fluctuations.
6. **Calls from Debt Collectors about Debts You Don't Owe:** This can indicate unauthorized borrowing under your identity.
7. **Data Breach Notifications:** A data breach at a business you use can expose your personal information.
8. **Missing Monthly Bills or Mail Addressed to Others:** Changes in mailing patterns may be due to someone rerouting your mail or using synthetic identity theft.
9. **Bills for Medical Services You Didn't Use:** Health fraud can result in unexpected medical expenses under your name.
10. **IRS Rejection of Tax Return:** If the IRS indicates a duplicate filing, someone may be fraudulently claiming your tax refund.

What to Do if You Suspect Identity Theft

- **Contact Credit Bureaus:** Place a fraud alert with one of the three major bureaus (Experian, Equifax, or TransUnion), which will notify the others.
Initial Alerts: Active for one year; it triggers extra identity checks on new credit requests.
Extended Alerts: Active for seven years and require confirmation on new credit requests after identity theft.
- **File an Identity Theft Report:** Use IdentityTheft.gov, the FTC's identity theft resource, to create a recovery plan.
- **Stay Vigilant:** Regularly review your credit report, bank statements, and financial activity to catch unusual behavior early.

John & Constance T. Bails Ph.D. CO - Service Officers

WINDFALL ELIMINATION PROVISION (WEP) AND THE GOVERNMENT PENSION OFFSET (GPO)

The House has passed the Social Security Fairness Act for the men and woman affected by WEP/GPO. The windfall elimination provision reduces the Social Security benefits of retired federal employees who spent a portion of their careers in the private sector in addition to a federal, state or local government job where Social Security is not intended as an element of their retirement income, such as the Civil Service Retirement System. And the government pension offset reduces spousal and survivor Social Security benefits in families with retired government workers.

NOW, **Senate Bill 597** which is the Senate companion bill to H.R. 82 needs to go straight to the Senate for approval.

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



Postal Service (Time Value) Please Deliver by November **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 so 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 benefits.

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

James Mays – Newsletter Editor