



# ANNANDALE CHAPTER NEWS

---

## National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association Chapter 1159 (Annandale)

P.O. Box 1463, Annandale, VA 22003

Serving Current, Former & Retired Federal Employees and Spouses  
and Survivor Annuitants

Like us on Facebook at NARFE-Annandale 1159

Find us on the web at: [www.narfe.org/chapter1159](http://www.narfe.org/chapter1159)

We meet at St. Alban's Episcopal Church Parish Hall  
6800 Columbia Pike, Annandale, Virginia

### FEBRUARY 2024

**Our originally scheduled speaker from Fairfax Solid Waste Management cannot make our March meeting. Instead, join us, either in-person or via Zoom, for our next meeting at 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, when Jim McGovern from eAsset Solutions will describe how technology equipment is recycled. REMEMBER, there is a change of location for our meetings in 2024. We will meet in the Parish Hall at St. Alban's Episcopal Church, 6800 Columbia Pike in Annandale. For details regarding the program, as well as information on registering for the Zoom meeting, see page 4.**

**PREZ SEZ** – - February 2, 2024 has been and gone. What's the significance of this date? It's when Punxsutawney Phil—that Seer of Seers, Sage of Sages, Weather Prognosticator Extraordinary—emerged from his burrow (with a little help from his handlers) to make his much-anticipated forecast and, according to *The Farmer's Almanac*, did NOT see his shadow. As the legend goes, that means the country can expect above-average temperatures for the next six weeks. It's just the fourth time since 2014 Phil hasn't seen his shadow, and the famed marmot has only forecast an early spring 21 times since 1887.

Contrary to popular belief, Phil doesn't actually have to see his shadow; he just has to cast one to make his wintry prophecy. (*PREZ SEZ continued on next page*)

*(PREZ SEZ continued from page 1)* According to the Groundhog Club's records (yes, there's a club for everything!), which span from 1886 to 2017, the various incarnations of Punxsutawney Phil have produced 107 predictions of more winter and 18 of early spring. Of course, we won't delve into Phil's record for accuracy.

Speaking of accuracy, NARFE has asked that we remind members to update their information on the NARFE database if you have changed email or snail mail addresses, or any other change. It's really a very simple process but if you need help, please contact me and I'll be happy to walk you through it. One other item of business, we are looking for a new Public Relations (PR) Chair. The purpose of this position is to let potential members know that the Annandale NARFE Chapter is here and what we are doing. The PR Chair gets the chapter's meeting information out to available media and informs the public as to where our meetings will be held as well as the subject of our coming program. We can only continue to exist with the help of volunteers so please step up and lend a hand. Please contact me if you are interested or have questions.

*Kim Rendelson, Chapter President*

**February Program:** **Jennifer Wilcox** from the National Cryptologic Museum gave a presentation on the history of cryptology, the evolution of cryptologic technology and secure voice communication, and the role of language analysts in the National Cryptologic Museum. At its core, cryptology is the practice of encoding and decoding secret messages. It may involve ciphers (algorithms that convert a message into what appears to be a random string of characters) or codes (arbitrary symbols such as letters or numbers representing components of the message).

Cryptology's history goes back to **Johannes Trithemius**, a German abbot in the late fifteenth to early sixteenth century who invented a cipher using a rotating system to correlate successive columns of words to letters, which would then translate into a prayer. In the American Revolutionary War, **Dr. Benjamin Church** was the Chief Physician to the Continental Army. He was also a traitor. He developed a simple cipher system to send information on Washington's troop movements to British **General Gage**. One of his letters was intercepted and interpreted for its traitorous purpose, after which he was jailed. During the Civil War, the Union Army developed codebooks and sent coded telegrams to officers, which the *(continued on page 3)*

*(continued from page 2)* Confederates never deciphered. Of particular note was the work of **Elizabeth and William Friedman**. She was a cryptanalyst in both World Wars, and assisted in solving international smuggling cases during Prohibition. Her husband William led the research division of the Army's Signal Intelligence Service.

Ms. Wilcox highlighted technology's role, especially the use of the wired rotor in various systems such as the German WWII Enigma machine. The Allies' ability to decipher its encrypted messages directly contributed to the German defeat. Also of great importance was secure voice communication. Native American tribes, particularly the Navajo, played a significant role in creating secure language codes during wartime. SIGSALY was a WWII encryption technique involving speech inversion. Modern cryptology works with portable, secure cell phone systems, computers, and supercomputers. Ms. Wilcox highlighted the contributions of African American and female professionals, including **Carroll Robinson**, the first black engineer hired by the National Security Agency (NSA) and early computer programmers.

At the end, Ms. Wilcox discussed the role of language analysts in the NSA, emphasizing that they do more than just translate; they also analyze nuances, slang, and context. She talked about the Venona project, a post-World War II effort to decipher Soviet communications, which was successful in identifying **Ethel and Julius Rosenberg** as espionage agents. She also touched on controversial cases such as the downing of a US spy plane over Armenia during the Cold War and the attack on the USS Liberty by Israel, which resulted in the death of three NSA civilians. The museum is affiliated with the NSA, and is located in Annapolis Junction, Maryland, just two blocks from Fort Meade. It is open to the public for tours and field trips.

Snacks were provided by: **Mary Ann Munley, Joyce Price, Jenna Arvanitis, Kim Rendelson, Ed Reniker, Phil Gilliland, Carol Rubin, Clare Balbi, Frank Toth, Fran Walinsky and Sharon Sellers**. A total of **43** attended (**29 in-person and 14 on Zoom**).

*(This article was compiled from a summary provided by Zoom's Artificial Intelligence tool.)* **Fran Walinsky, Secretary**

**In Remembrance of Lorin Goodrich** – We regret to announce the death of Lorin Goodrich on January 21<sup>st</sup>. Lorin was a long-time member of the Annandale Chapter



Executive Board, having served as the Chapter's Secretary, President for 3 years (from 1998 to 2001), and as the Public Relations Chair for almost 20 years. Lorin was very active in the community. In addition to his involvement in the Annandale Chapter, he was an usher at the Kennedy Center and he served as executive director at the Reunion Music Society, a volunteer at the Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind, a docent at the Newseum, president and treasurer at the Chapel Square West Community Association and president with the Lifetime Learning Institute of Northern Virginia. Lorin had a smile that brightened any room he entered and he was relied on by the Chapter Board for his years of experience in the Chapter and good counsel. He will be sorely missed by all.

**A Few Details for Our March 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting** – At 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 6<sup>th</sup>, we will meet in the Parish Hall at St. Alban's Church. Our speaker, **Jim McGovern** from Falls Church-based eAsset Solutions Cycle will describe how technology equipment is recycled, and how data/document destruction is assured. To attend on Zoom, let **Doug Jones** know ([doujones500@verizon.net](mailto:doujones500@verizon.net) or **703-425-3361**) no later than **Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup>**, so he can send you the meeting link and passcode.

**Alzheimer's Report** – We have a start on our Alzheimer's Research goal of \$4,000, and 10 months to complete the project. **Mary Ann Munley and I** were on a Zoom connection with a couple of employees on the Alzheimer's Association staff. Almost two hours of facts and information. We'll explore having a future Chapter presentation by Association representatives. If you would like to start out the new year providing a donation, either bring a check to the March 6<sup>th</sup> membership meeting, or mail a check to: **Treasurer, NARFE Chapter 1159, P.O. Box 1463, Annandale, VA, 22003**. Please make checks payable to *NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund* and include *Chapter 1159* on the memo line.

*Phil Gilliland, Alzheimer's Chair*

**Legislation Report –**

**Federal: *Fiscal Year 2024 Budget*** -- Still no resolution of the 2024 Federal Budget. Currently, agencies are funded under 2 “laddered” Continuing Resolutions (CR) which hold federal spending to 2023 levels. The CRs expire either March 1<sup>st</sup> (4 appropriations) or March 8<sup>th</sup> (8 appropriations). The House just started a short recess. Upon return to session, the House has a very short window to either pass the 2024 budget (unlikely due to insufficient time) or legislate another CR. Stay tuned.

**2025 Federal Budget** -- While Congress is attempting to reach resolution on the 2024 Federal Budget, the Administration is already thinking about the 2025 Fiscal Year, and has proposed a 7.4% average pay increase for federal employees. (In January 2024, Federal employees received 5.2%).

**HR 82** – The Social Security Fairness Act would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision/Government Pension Offset (WEP/GPO). Currently the bill has 306 co-sponsors. However, the bill has not yet been scheduled for a House vote. But you can (and should) take action by sending a message to your legislators asking them to push HR 82 to a floor vote. While our Chapter’s House and Senate legislators are co-sponsors, a call to each of them would not be wasted – pressure by many does get attention in Congress.

**Virginia:** The General Assembly is still in session and currently working to get Virginia’s two-year State Budget passed. The General Assembly is approaching their Crossover period which is when bills passed in the House and Senate “crossover” to the other entity for a vote. No firm news yet on bills.



***Mary Ann Munley, Legislation Chair***

**Inclement Weather Policy --When Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) are closed or virtual only because of inclement weather on the day of a scheduled chapter meeting, the chapter meeting (both in-person and on Zoom) for that month is cancelled. If the FCPS open only 2 hours late on the day of a chapter meeting, the in-person and the Zoom meeting will be held.**

**POSTAL ANNUITANTS TAKE NOTE** -- Read and respond appropriately to anything you receive in the mail concerning the new Postal Service Health Benefits Plan (PSHBP). Ignoring it will not make it go away!! The Medicare B Special Enrollment (without penalty) begins April 1, 2024. By now each Postal annuitant should have received a postcard concerning this Medicare B Special Enrollment period. The Medicare B Special Enrollment (without late enrollment penalties) pertains only to postal annuitants (and their affected family members) who are eligible but not currently enrolled in Medicare Part B.

Next fall, when the PSHBP Open Season begins, all Postal Annuitants MUST select one of the new PSHB plans, or they will be automatically placed in a health plan. There are several sources of information available regarding the PSHBP-- [www.KeepingPosted.org](http://www.KeepingPosted.org) is a website for Postal Annuitants and has excellent resources for information (and videos) concerning PSHB, including a 5-part video series (total of all five less than one viewing hour). NARFE has a great webinar (free to NARFE members and presented by **Tammy Flanagan**) “To B or Not to B” which provides the pros and cons of Part B which might be helpful.

**NARFE-PAC needs YOUR support.** The time is now – please donate in this important election year. All 435 House seats and 34 Senate seats are up for election this year. In addition to your letters/emails to members of Congress, the NARFE PAC is a very important part of the strategy for gaining Congressional support. NARFE PAC funds help to secure face to face lobbying at events attended by NARFE HQ staff or NARFE members. These contacts build strong working relationships with members of Congress, and help educate those newer members not familiar with the federal workforce issues. While NARFE PAC will never be a SUPERPAC – it keeps our NARFE message out in front of Congress. By law, NARFE PAC funds must be voluntary contributions from individuals – NARFE Dues or General Funds cannot be used. NARFE PAC is only used for Congressional lobbying and is non-partisan. A NARFE PAC contribution form can be found on page 9 of the Jan/Feb 2024 *NARFE Magazine*, or, you can donate online through NARFE’s website. Any amount you donate to NARFE PAC is welcomed – but also relevant is the number of people donating, so please give! (*Reminder: PAC contributions are not tax deductible.*)





**Adopt-A-Road Litter Pick-up** – Please join us at **10:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup>**, when we will have our first Adopt-A-Road litter pick-up for 2024. We will meet at the corner of Evergreen Lane and High Place in Annandale. Let **Doug Jones** ([doujones500@verizon.net](mailto:doujones500@verizon.net)) know if you plan to attend, so he can notify you if any changes occur. Also, please mark your calendars for the other pick-ups scheduled for this year: **May 23<sup>rd</sup>, July 25<sup>th</sup>, September 19<sup>th</sup> and November 14<sup>th</sup>**.



**2024 VFN Annual Conference** -- The 2024 Virginia Federation of NARFE (VFN) Conference will be held from Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup> through Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at the Hotel Madison & Shenandoah Valley Conference Center in Harrisonburg. The 2024 Conference theme is “Together We Will Succeed.” The NARFE lodging rate is \$107 plus tax per night (cut-off date to receive the special NARFE rate is March 7<sup>th</sup>). Registration is due by March 15<sup>th</sup> and the cost for the Conference & Banquet is \$90. (Note: for the first 3 Chapter members who register, we will reimburse \$75 for registration and banquet fees – for more information on reimbursement contact **Chapter Treasurer Jack Bagnulo** at [jbagnulo@cox.net](mailto:jbagnulo@cox.net).) The registration form, as well as Conference details, are available on the VFN website ([www.vanarfe.org](http://www.vanarfe.org)).



## **Community Corner**

**Mailbox Thefts** -- When sending important mail, especially financial information or checks, take it to the Post Office. The blue postal mailboxes are not secure due to thefts of postal master keys throughout the country. They are often compromised and the contents stolen. Stolen checks are chemically washed to remove the intended recipient and then cashed by the perpetrator.

**Mark your calendars and join us on April 3<sup>rd</sup> when we will have a presentation on “Simplifying Your Lifestyle and Possessions: A Guide to Organizing, Decluttering, and Downsizing. Discover What to Sell, Keep, or Donate.”**

**Executive Board**

**President**

Kim Rendelson  
[krendelson49@gmail.com](mailto:krendelson49@gmail.com)  
703-204-0388

**1st Vice President**

John Bankson  
[johnboy1607@outlook.com](mailto:johnboy1607@outlook.com)  
703-256-2295

**2nd Vice President**

Pat Drobnek  
[drobp@aol.com](mailto:drobp@aol.com)  
703-967-3935

**Treasurer**

Jack Bagnulo  
[jbagnulo@cox.net](mailto:jbagnulo@cox.net)

**Secretary**

Fran Walinsky  
[walin5@aol.com](mailto:walin5@aol.com)

**Legislation**

Mary Ann Munley  
[mamunley@gmail.com](mailto:mamunley@gmail.com)

**Newsletter Editor**

Doug Jones  
[doujones500@verizon.net](mailto:doujones500@verizon.net)

**Alzheimer’s**

Phil Gilliland  
[pmgilliland@outlook.com](mailto:pmgilliland@outlook.com)

**Public Relations**

*Vacant*

**Membership**

Doug Jones  
[doujones500@verizon.net](mailto:doujones500@verizon.net)  
703-425-3361

**Programs**

Gabe Goldberg  
[NARFE@gabegold.com](mailto:NARFE@gabegold.com)

**Web Coordinator**

John Bankson  
[johnboy1607@outlook.com](mailto:johnboy1607@outlook.com)  
703-256-2295

**Service Officer**

Carol Lutz  
703-916-8546

**Hospitality**

Sharon Sellers  
703-915-8765

**Outreach**

Rosemary Arnolts  
703-578-7619

**Member at-Large**

Pat Jack  
Mary Lou Vroman

**Greeter**

Mara Yachnin



**HAVE HEART, SPRING IS  
ALMOST HERE!**

**“If we had no winter the spring would not be so pleasant.” —Anne Bradstreet**