

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: February 4

PROGRAM: Ms. Mary Lipsey from the Historical Society will speak on "Escaping Detection." Looks at women who participated actively but secretly in the Civil War, as spies and as soldiers.

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: \$20.00

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

Mar 4th : Shawn Smith, State Director, Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP), will be talking about Medicare Frauds. This will be on the types of attempts that are made to take over your Medicare account. This is an interesting and challenging presentation.

April 6-9: 2025 VFN Annual Meeting at Hotel Madison, Harrisonburg, Va.

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

Inclement Weather Policy – If Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) close because of inclement weather on the day of a chapter meeting, the in-person meeting is cancelled. The in-person meeting will still be held if the FCPS opens 2 hours late. If the in-person meeting is cancelled the meeting may still proceed on-line via Zoom.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear Members of Chapter 737:

The 2025 new year is in full swing with the president of NARFE Chapter 737 again serving the chapter while residing in Milwaukee. By means of Zoom, I am able to conduct meetings of the board of directors, and I am able to attend monthly program meetings a thousand miles away. Modern technology which allows me to do so is amazing. According to the rules of NARFE, it is sufficient for someone to serve as president no matter where he resides, in order to keep a chapter active and in good standing. It would be better, of course, for the chapter to have a president who resides in the Fairfax area where I used to live when I worked for the Federal government.

In that light, the chapter will welcome anyone who will volunteer to help organize monthly program meetings, to lead field trips, to manage the finances of the chapter, and to help other volunteers who run the chapter. Inquire with me if you have an interest to serve the chapter in some capacity.

For those who cannot attend a membership meeting in person, you can use Zoom like me to see a presentation:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85717402521?pwd=1LuPIIS92bcVvn7iWDV8KdbN3wmQbV.1>

Though the cost of the luncheon is now \$20 per person, the all-you-can-eat catered buffet luncheons are well liked and they are deemed a bargain. Chapter 737 has established the custom of collecting donations for Food for Others at the monthly membership meetings. Typically, the chapter collects about 200 lbs. of canned goods and other groceries at a membership meeting.

Sincerely yours,

Charles "Mike" Fleming – Chapter President

NARFE NATIONAL AGENDA WIN



Congratulations on the passage of the Social Security Fairness Act. National President and Fairfax Chapter 737 member, Bill Shackelford represented NARFE at the signing of the WEP/GPO bill by President Biden on Sunday January 5, 2025. This provides law enforcement, fire fighters, and teacher groups as well as Federal retirees Social Security benefits.

The WEP and GPO provisions reduce or eliminate Social Security benefits for those who are covered by a government (federal, state or local) sponsored guaranteed pension plan, such as federal employees who are covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). The WEP currently impacts approximately 2 million Social Security beneficiaries, and the GPO impacts nearly 800,000 retirees.

FOOD FOR OTHERS

Don't forget to bring your food donation to be taken to "Food for Others" to help those not so fortunate in Fairfax County. The Chapter delivered 109 pounds of food collected by Bob Sottile and 48 pounds collected by the chapter in December for 157 pounds total.

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

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

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/MAEMBERSHIOP REPORT

As of 11/30/2024 Balance in checkbook was \$7,078.76 and we had income of \$319.00. Our disbursements were \$855.02, leaving a balance of \$6,542.74.

Our membership for the Chapter as of January 7 was 233 Chapter members and 326 National Only members, for a total membership for Chapter 737 of 559 members. The total membership growth was 44 which seemed to result from the signing of HR 82 January 5th.

The donations for Alzheimer's Research for the calendar year totaled \$7,916.00.

Donna Shackelford – Treasurer/Membership

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

(As of January 13, 2025)

NATIONAL LEGISLATION – Congress passed and President Joe Biden signed into law on December 21 a bill to temporarily extend funding for the federal government and provide much needed assistance to communities and individuals impacted by recent disasters. The bill passed both chambers with bipartisan support, first in the House by a vote of 366-34 and then in the Senate with a final vote of 85-11.

The agreement extends funding until March 14, 2025, averting a government shutdown. It also provides approximately \$110 billion in disaster relief, including \$29 billion for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Disaster Relief Fund (CDBG-DR) and \$12 billion for HUD's Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery Program. FEMA is responsible for responding to the immediate needs of disaster survivors, including safe shelter and temporary housing, while CDBG-DR plays a critical role in long-term disaster recovery, financing the construction and preservation of affordable housing and other infrastructure in disaster-impacted areas.

Disagreements within the Republican party over whether to include an extension of the debt ceiling in the package – a demand of President-elect Trump – had stalled negotiations. The "debt ceiling" is the legal limit of how much the U.S. can borrow to pay for programs and services which Congress has already approved spending. The debt ceiling expires in 2025.

In response to demands by President-elect Trump and his billionaire confidant, Elon Musk, House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) pulled an initial bipartisan agreement from consideration before it could receive a vote and brought

forth instead a "slimmed-down" bill that included a two-year suspension of the debt ceiling. That proposal, however, also failed to garner the support it needed to pass the House, receiving a final vote of 172-235. The final agreement signed by President Biden does not include a debt ceiling extension.

Coservative Republicans argued against extending the debt ceiling without including spending cuts. In the House, Speaker Johnson vowed to increase the debt ceiling by \$1.5 trillion next year and seek \$2.5 trillion in spending cuts, using a process known as "budget reconciliation" that requires a simple majority of 51 votes to pass the Senate, rather than the 60 votes usually required. With majorities in both the House and Senate, reconciliation would allow Republicans to pass bills without Democratic input. **(National Low Income Housing Coalition)**

In addition to another government funding deadline and a debt limit that must be addressed by mid-2025 to avert a calamitous default, Trump and Republicans need to confirm his personnel through the Senate, and they want to pass part-line bills to beef up immigration enforcement and extend Trump's expiring 2017 tax law. **(NBC News)**

On January 5, President Biden signed the Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82, into law, repealing the Windfall Elimination provision (WEP) and the Government Offset Provision (GPO). NARFE National President William "Bill" Shackelford and NARFE Vice President for Policy and Progress John Hatton joined Biden at the signing ceremony. **(NARFE Voices)**

VIRGINIA LEGISLATIVE NEWS – The Virginia General Assembly was set the return on January 8, but had to delay the start of most business until January 13 because of a water outage in Richmond.

In an upbeat State of the Commonwealth Speech, Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R) called for tax cuts, dismantling the state's package of environmental laws and making it a felony to fly a drone over critical infrastructure.

"The State of our Commonwealth is strong, very strong. Let me be clear: this strength is because of the work that we have all done together," Youngkin said in remarks, sounding bipartisan as he kicks off his last legislative session as governor.

Like all Virginia governors, Youngkin is prohibited from serving a second consecutive term, so he will look this year to cement his legacy ahead of statewide elections this fall. All members of the Democratic-controlled House of Delegates are on the November ballot along with governor, lieutenant governor and attorney general, creating political tension as the 46-day session began.

"To keep Virginia booming with more jobs, and more opportunity, we must continue to lower the cost of living with tax relief," Youngkin said, touting job growth and economic success that he said have marked his time in office.

He is proposing \$1.1 billion fund to offset the car tax for low and middle-income residents for three years; eliminating the tax on tips at a cost of \$70 million per year; and changes to corporate income taxes. Those cuts would be in addition to some \$5 billion in tax cuts that the General Assembly has passed over the past three years.

Having declared last year that Virginia would withdraw from adherence to California's emission standards, which set an aggressive schedule for converting new car sales to electric vehicles, Youngkin has also called for dismantling the entire package of environmental laws adopted five years ago under Democratic control.

"The Virginia Clean Economy Act, passed in 2020 simply is not working, it is driving up rates, driving down reliability, and constricting our economic growth," Youngkin said in prepared remarks. He praised the proliferation of data centers – those highly automated hubs of internet infrastructure that use vast amounts of power and water – as keys to Virginia's economic prosperity.

Youngkin also spoke about the topic of drones, stating that we are seeing increased threats to our national security, with increased drone incursions over sensitive and critical infrastructure sites. He called for the General Assembly to make it a felony to fly drones over critical infrastructure. **(The Washington Post)**

Tom Hart – Legislative Program

SERVICE OFFICER NOTE: NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION – MAKE AN EMERGENCY PLAN

(by Courtney Arroyo, Department of Emergency Management and Security)

Looking for a New Year's Resolution? The Fairfax County Department of Emergency Management and Security has a resolution for you – and it is easier than you think! Disasters can occur to anyone, anytime, anywhere, so it is vital that you prepare for them. One of the easiest and most beneficial ways to prepare is creating an emergency plan! Emergency plans are the backbone of emergency preparation, as they serve as the blueprint of what to do before, during, and after an incident.

To complete one, all you need is a pen, some paper, and a conversation. Basic emergency plans usually consist of information such as meeting spots and local and out-of-state contacts. However, taking the time to create a full emergency plan is highly suggested. By taking time to think through a plan, you can think of various situations and how you would have to adapt your needs to work around the disaster. For example, if you have medical equipment that needs power, do you have a plan if the power goes out? Critically thinking through scenarios such as this allows you to cover a wide range of situations and gives you the opportunity to talk to your family members and caregivers about how to find solutions.

Use the Community Emergency Response Guide to look at some of the hazards that can affect Fairfax County and use the emergency plan template to begin putting together your emergency plan

Link. <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergencymanagement/cerg> (to view manual press Control and Click on the Link).

John & Constance Bails - Service Officers

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



Postal Service (Time Value) Please Deliver by **January 24th, 2025**

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

James Mays – Newsletter Editor