

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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"What the new year brings to you will depend a great deal on what you bring to the new year." - Vern McLellan

This quote could also apply to your membership in NARFE and Chapter 893 as well as the new year. What the chapter brings to you will depend on what you contribute or how you participate in NARFE and the chapter. Some ideas for you to consider:

1. Contact your legislators to support the NARFE goals.
2. Help maintain Chapter 893's leadership in supporting Alzheimer's research.
3. Contribute to NARFE and the Virginia Federation of Chapters Political Action funds.
4. Attend regular chapter meetings this year. If programs don't appeal to you, offer suggestions to improve attendance.
5. Support special events such as the Chapter Holiday Luncheon, Chapter June Luncheon and the annual Virginia Federation of Chapters Convention.

The Annual Virginia Federation of Chapters Convention will be held April 3-5 in Hampton, VA. The conference will be held at Embassy Suites by Hilton Hampton Convention Center, 1700 Coliseum Drive, Hampton, VA. More information will be coming soon.

6. Volunteer to lead or support chapter activities such as the Spring event, or perhaps a chapter outing!

It takes all of us to make the chapter a success; what will you do?

Happy New Year!

Marcy Stennes,
President

ALZHEIMER'S

Happy New Year!! Let's hope there are a lot of positive things in 2023! Speaking of positive, in November, there was an announcement of positive/very encouraging results from global Phase 3 clinical trial of a drug called lecanemab, slowing the rate of cognitive decline in study participants by 27% over 18 months. FDA accelerated approval and it was finalized on January 6th. Some risks are shown for the drug, but the "good" apparently outweighs the risks.

The Alzheimer's Association and the Alzheimer's Impact Movement (AIM) commend the passage of the FY23 budget which included policy priorities to address Alzheimer's and dementia. This legislation included key provisions of the bipartisan Equity in Neuroscience and Alzheimer's Clinical Trials (ENACT) Act (S.1548/H.R. 3085), language to strengthen the FDA's accelerated approval pathway, a \$226M increase for Alzheimer's and dementia research funding at NIH, and \$33M to implement the BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act (P.L. 115-406).

There are also some interesting finds after studies: (1) Your daily multivitamin may slow brain aging - the **Journal of the Alzheimer's Assoc** found that taking a multivitamin-mineral supplement every day for 3 years resulted in a statistically significant cognitive benefit. (2) Ice cream, candy and soda may RAISE the risk of cognitive decline - new research found that eating a large amount of ultra-processed food can significantly accelerate cognitive decline. Unfortunately, ultra-processed foods (including pizza!) make up more than half of American diets. Take steps to include eating a balance diet, exercising regularly, getting good sleep, staying cognitively engaged, protecting from head injury, not smoking and managing heart health. (3) Wearing hearing aids may reduce risk of dementia. Individuals with hearing loss who used hearing restorative devices had a 19% decrease in risk of long-term cognitive decline. This data appeared five months after FDA announced it will allow hearing aids to be sold over the counter, expanding access to millions.

In 2022, Alzheimer's and other dementias will have cost the nation **\$321 Billion**. Thanks to the increased research funding from the federal government and nonprofit organizations, like the Alzheimer's Assoc, 2023 is sure to bring even more advances and discoveries for people living with, and at

risk for, Alzheimer's disease and all other dementia. However, we must consider that not all are successes: the drug Aduhelm that received an accelerated FDA approval in June 2021 caused an outcry from many Alzheimer's experts. Major health systems, including the Cleveland Clinic and Dept of Veterans Affairs, decided not to offer it, citing its uncertain benefits and risks of brain swelling and bleeding. After Medicare sharply limited its coverage, the drug was essentially sidelined from the marketplace.

"WE", Chapter 893, can do our part. For 2022, our Chapter goal was \$4,000, but we raised \$4,316.00 (which included a generous RMD donation)! For 2023, the new goal is **\$4,500** - allowing us to surpass our goal in an even bigger way!!! Remember: ALL our donated money thru the Chapter goes directly for research. Checks should be written to NARFE/ Alzheimer's Research, with Chapter 893 noted in memo line. The NARFE Magazine offers info/form on sending directly to Alzheimer's, BUT, even with Chapter 893 noted, it is credited to the Virginia Federation, not the Chapter. IF you choose to do it that way, **PLEASE** contact me with your check information so that I can ensure, thru the VFN Alzheimer's Chair, that it is included in our Chapter's donated amount. Checks to the Chapter should be mailed to Margaret Yowell, 5822 Fitzhugh St, Burke, VA 22015. Please contact me at 703 451-3287 or FITZHUGHLADY@aol.com if you have any questions.

Thank you for all YOU do to help with Research funding!

Margaret Yowell, *Alzheimer's Chair*

CHAPTER 893 HOLIDAY PARTY

Our Chapter Holiday Party was held on 14 December at the Springfield American Legion with 24 attendees. Our guests were Mr. William (Bill) Shackelford, NARFE President Elect and his wife Donna, Virginia Federation Alzheimer's chair. Mr. Shackelford discussed his priorities for NARFE and took many questions. He also installed the Chapter officers and board members: Marcy Stennes, President; Otis Langford, Vice President, John Olsen, Treasurer; and Board Members Joan Capella, Margaret Yowell and James Wagner. Winners of the Alzheimer's raffle baskets and 50/50 drawing were: Donna Shackelford, Bill Shackelford and Otis Langford.

NARFE 118TH CONGRESS LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



THE LITTLE THEATRE OF ALEXANDRIA (LTA)

Two of NARFE's priorities for the 118th Congress are:

Support Reform or Repeal of the WEP and GPO

The Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) unfairly reduces earned Social Security benefits based on government employment. The Government Pension Offset (GPO) unfairly reduces or eliminates the Social Security benefits government retirees could collect based on their spouse's work record by two-thirds of their own government pension. NARFE supports fully repealing the WEP and the GPO. We also support efforts to reform the WEP and GPO, as we recognize that even partial relief would represent a substantial improvement over the status quo.

Support Improved Integration of Medicare with the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB)

Federal annuitants enrolled in both FEHB and Medicare Part B pay two sets of premiums for overlapping, and often duplicative, coverage. While they benefit from lower cost sharing payments (deductibles, copayments, and coinsurance), they pay more up front. For this reason, many federal annuitants decline Medicare Part B, and NARFE continues to oppose mandatory Medicare enrollment. Furthermore, FEHB plans often provide prescription drug coverage in lieu of Medicare Part D. This leaves FEHB on the hook for a greater amount of retiree health insurance coverage than most employer-sponsored plans typically assume, raising costs for the entire program. Improving coordination between FEHB and Medicare – without shifting costs onto retirees – would help increase Medicare enrollment and reduce costs for both FEHB and enrollees. Toward that end, NARFE supports expanding reimbursement for Part B premiums, as some FEHB plans currently do, waiving Part B late enrollment fees for individuals covered by FEHB, ensuring FEHB plans gain access to any prescription drug pricing negotiated by the Department of Health and Human Services for the Medicare program, allowing FEHB plans to integrate with Medicare Part D, and ensuring FEHB/PSHB participants integrated into Part D receive adequate reimbursement for any Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (IRMAA) they must pay.

MEMBERSHIP

We celebrate the lives of the following members who passed since our last newsletter:

Ruth E. Arthur Michael B. Miller Dianne Walker

Gerry Frazier, *Membership Chair*

If you are a fan of witty British humor, then this is the perfect play for you! **Lettice and Lovage**, a comedy satire written by the author of *Equus* and *Amadeus*, and written specifically for Dame Maggie Smith, centers around an overly exuberant tour guide who loves to embellish the history behind an English country house. Ultimately, she is fired, but she refuses to go without a fight. Watch as Lettice and Lovage engage in a battle to the death of all that is sacred to the Empire and to the crown.

All patrons are required to wear a mask, even if vaccinated, while inside LTA (including during the performance). Date for NARFE's attendance at this performance is pending. When date is known, an email will be sent out to the membership.

Joanie Capella, *Theatre Community Liaison*

SUNSHINE

If you know of a Chapter member who has lost a loved one, or a member who is sick or injured, please let Debbie Pumphrey know at debbiepdc@gmail.com or 703-337-4548, so she can send out an appropriate card.



CALENDAR EVENTS

PLEASE NOTE – ALL CHAPTER MEETINGS WILL BE IN PERSON AT LA FIAMMA RESTAURANT, 6124 FRANCONIA ROAD, ALEXANDRIA, VA

February 1, 2023, NARFE Chapter 893 Board Meeting, 1:00 pm.

February 8, 2023, NARFE Chapter 893 General Meeting, 12:00 pm.

Speaker is AARP Tax Representative Wes Gewehr. Bring your tax questions for the 2022 tax season.

Wes, a Washington-area native, grew up in Bethesda, Maryland. Married to his wife, Sharon (also a Washington-area native), for 51 years, he has one daughter and two granddaughters. He has lived in Arlington, VA, for almost 50 years. He graduated from Lehigh University with a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering ('69) and a Master of Science in Management Information Systems ('72). After graduating, he served with the Air Force at the Department of Defense Computer Institute until 1976. His career then took him to the Department of Commerce, U.S. Patent and

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



CALENDAR EVENTS CONTINUED

Trademark Office, where he retired as the Deputy Chief Information Officer in 2004. He then moved to the private sector as a consultant with Robbins-Gioia, where he served as the R-G executive site lead supporting the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection's large scale information technology modernization program. He retired again in 2011.

Wes began volunteer tax preparation service with the IRS Tax-Aide and VITA programs in 2010. He was a site manager for a Tax-Aide tax preparation team in Arlington for several years and now serves as the Virginia state training specialist. In addition, he has worked for George N. Woglom, CPA, as a Registered Tax Preparer since 2010. Wes is a member of the National Association of Tax Professionals.

March 1, 2022, NARFE Chapter 893 Board Meeting,
1:00 pm.

March 8, 2022, NARFE Chapter 893 General Meeting,
12:00 pm. Speaker TBD.