



Midlothian Chapter 2265 **NEWSLETTER**

Serving Current and Retired Federal Employees Since 1921

Chapter e-mail: narfe2265df@gmail.com

April - June 2025

President's Corner

Debbie Fisk

As the days grow longer and the air carries the promise of spring, I hope this season brings renewed energy and inspiration to each of you. Spring is not only a time of growth in nature – it is also a time of activity and renewal for our Federation and our chapters.

I want to thank you for your continued dedication to the mission of NARFE and to each other. Your commitment to advocacy, education, and community helps ensure that federal employees and retirees across Virginia remain informed and empowered.

Looking ahead, we are just weeks away from our Virginia Federation of NARFE Annual Conference, which will be in Harrisonburg, Virginia on April 6 – 9, 2025. This year's event promises to be an engaging and meaningful opportunity to connect, learn, and celebrate the strength of our Federation. I strongly encourage Chapter 2265 members to attend. Whether you are a seasoned member or a first-time participant, your presence matters, and your voice will be heard.

Another vital part of this season is our upcoming Federation elections. This year, we will be electing our next slate of officers, and I urge every member to participate in the process. Leadership at all levels of our organization is crucial to our future, and your involvement ensures that we remain a vibrant, representative, and forward-looking Federation.

Please take a moment to review the election materials and candidate statements which are on the vanarfe.org website and make your voice count. Your vote helps shape the direction of the VFN and strengthens our collective mission. I anticipate voting will be set up on the website the second week in April. I would

appreciate your support and vote as I will be running for VFN President.

I want to ask for your vote because I want to **amplify the voice** of the federal employees and retirees which will **safeguard our future**, and **deliver on the mission** of advocacy, transparency, and organizational growth. But, I cannot do this without **YOU!**

As always, I want to express my sincere gratitude to each of you for your tireless service and passion for our organization.

Warm regards,
Debbie

All About National Legislation

Debbie Fisk

Recent legislative and administrative developments have significantly impacted federal retirees and active employees:

Social Security Fairness Act Enacted

On January 5, 2025, President Joe Biden signed the Social Security Fairness Act into law, repealing the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO). These provisions had previously reduced Social Security benefits for many public-sector employees, including teachers, firefighters, police officers, and federal workers under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). The repeal is expected to increase monthly benefits for approximately 3.2 million public employees, with some retirees seeing increases of up to \$1,000 or more. The Social Security Administration (SSA) has begun issuing retroactive payments dating back to December 2023.

Federal Workforce Reductions and Restructuring

The Trump administration, through the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) led by Elon Musk, has initiated significant reductions in the federal workforce. These measures include staffing cuts across various agencies, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Critics argue that these cuts could negatively impact essential services, including veterans' health care and tax return processing.

Proposed Changes to Federal Employee Benefits

Congressional Republicans are considering proposals that would require federal workers to pay more for retirement and health care benefits while potentially receiving reduced payouts. These measures aim to decrease government spending but have raised concerns about the potential impact on federal employees' financial security.

Reintroduction of the Federal Retirement Fairness Act

Bipartisan lawmakers have reintroduced the Federal Retirement Fairness Act, which would allow federal employees who began their careers in temporary positions to "buy back" time served for retirement purposes. This legislation aims to ensure that these employees can retire on schedule without penalty.

Standardizing Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAs)

Senator Alex Padilla introduced a bill to standardize cost-of-living adjustments for all federal retirees, addressing disparities between the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). Currently, FERS retirees receive lower COLAs compared to their CSRS counterparts. The proposed legislation seeks to ensure equitable COLAs for all federal retirees.

Opposition to SSA's In-Person Identity Verification Policy

The SSA's new policy requiring in-person identity verification for beneficiaries has faced opposition from lawmakers, advocacy groups, and retirees. Critics argue that this requirement creates barriers for

vulnerable populations, particularly older adults and those in remote areas with limited internet access. The policy coincides with the closure of numerous SSA field offices, exacerbating accessibility issues.

Legal Challenges to DOGE's Access to Personal Data

A federal judge has temporarily barred DOGE from accessing SSA systems containing personal data of millions of Americans. The court order also mandates the deletion of any personally identifiable data that DOGE may possess. The ruling resulted from a lawsuit arguing that DOGE's access violated privacy laws and posed security risks.

These developments reflect ongoing debates and actions concerning federal employees' benefits, workforce structure, and the administration of essential services.

State Legislation

Deborah Fisk

The 2025 Virginia Legislature Recap

The 2025 Virginia General Assembly convened on January 8 and adjourned sine die on February 22, 2025, completing its scheduled 45-day "short session." During this period, legislators introduced a total of 1,994 bills—1,236 in the House and 758 in the Senate. Of these, 917 bills successfully passed both chambers and were forwarded to Governor Glenn Youngkin for his consideration.

Key Legislative Actions:

- **Budget Amendments:** The General Assembly approved amendments to the biennial budget, which included provisions for tax rebates and bonuses for state employees and teachers. Specifically, a \$200 rebate was allocated for taxpayers, and bonuses were designated for state employees and teachers, with disbursements planned before the upcoming elections.
- **Environmental Initiatives:** Lawmakers committed \$40 million to the Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (SLAF) to aid localities in mitigating polluted runoff from urban and

suburban areas. An additional \$50 million was allocated to the Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF) to bolster resilience against both coastal and inland flooding. Furthermore, \$26 million was directed to the Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share program to support farmers in implementing conservation practices that enhance water quality.

- **Social Media Regulations:** The Assembly passed SB 854, requiring social media platforms to verify users' ages. For users under 16, parental consent is mandated to access addictive feeds, with usage limited to one hour per day without such consent.
- **Reproductive Rights:** The House of Delegates approved resolutions to enshrine rights to abortion, voting, and marriage equality in the state constitution. These proposed amendments must pass in two consecutive sessions, with an election between them, before being presented to voters for ratification.
- **Campaign Finance Reform:** After multiple attempts in previous sessions, legislation was passed to prohibit the personal use of campaign funds, aiming to enhance transparency and accountability in political financing.
- **Public Safety Measures:** New regulations were approved requiring all vehicle passengers to wear seatbelts, including those in back seats. Additionally, legislation was enacted to allow police monitoring of school zones for stop sign violations and to mandate systems that slow down vehicles exceeding 100 mph.
- **Cannabis Legislation:** The Assembly passed bills to establish a regulated and taxed cannabis marketplace. However, similar efforts in previous sessions faced vetoes from Governor Youngkin, and it remains uncertain whether these new measures will be enacted.

Virginia Federation of NARFE Challenges:

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

- Senator David Suetterlein (R) VA 4th District, sponsored SB782, Failed. It was left in Finance and Appropriations. Current law provides that on or after January 1, 2026, the standard deduction shall revert back to the amounts that existed before taxable year 2019, which was \$3,000 for individuals and \$6,000 for married filing joint.

- Age 65+ Deduction
 - This issue recommended by the VFN was not addressed in any bill this year.
- Exempting a Segment of CSRS Pensions Equivalent to Social Security Retirement
 - Two bills, HB2575 and SB943, pertaining to VFN's priority regarding the exemption of a portion of Civil Service Retirement System Benefits from Virginia state income tax, failed this year.
- Nursing Home Priorities
 - None of the issues recommended by the VFN were addressed in any bills this year.

Contextual Challenges:

The session was conducted amid concerns over significant federal job cuts announced by the Trump administration, potentially affecting approximately 315,000 federal workers in Virginia. In response, a bipartisan committee was formed to assess and address the potential impacts of these layoffs on the state's economy and workforce.

Additionally, the session's commencement was disrupted by a water crisis in Richmond, leading to a temporary postponement of legislative activities. The crisis prompted state investigations and highlighted the need for infrastructure improvements to prevent future occurrences.

Overall, the 2025 Virginia legislative session addressed a broad spectrum of issues, from environmental conservation and public safety to social media regulation and reproductive rights, reflecting the state's commitment to adapting to emerging challenges and enhancing the well-being of its residents.

Our Current Representatives

VA Congressional District 1

Rob Wittman – 2055 RHOB, Washington DC
>DC Office: 202-225-4261

VA Congressional District 4

Jennifer McClellan – 2417 RHOB, Washington DC
>DC Office: 202-225-6365

VA Congressional District 5

John McGuire – 1013 LHOB, Washington DC
>DC Office: 202-225-4711

U.S. Senators

US Senator Mark Warner (D-VA)
>DC Office: 202-224-2023
>Richmond Office: 804-775-2314

US Senator Timothy Kaine (D-VA)
>DC Office: 202-224-4024
>Richmond Office: 804-771-2221

Membership

Lynn Osborne

Membership numbers are holding steady now. We've picked up some National Members, most likely due to the dismissal of many federal employees.

The NARFE membership report is now back online and we're trying to catch up with activity within the chapter the past several months. As of April 2, there are 186 Chapter Members and 134 National Members, for a total of 320 Members.

Program News

Lynn Osborne

April 16 program - TBD

May 14 program will be "10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's and Dementia" presented by Jill Carroll, Greater Richmond Chapter, Alzheimer's Association.

June 11 program will be presented by Shawn Smith, Senior Medicare Patrol - Learn how to read and understand your Medicare statement.

If you've recently heard a great program that would be of interest to the Chapter, please reach out to Lynn and give her the subject and contact.

The second Wednesday of each month is the day to remember!

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL THERE!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

APRIL

1 Ellen Spiggle; **5** Mary Ann Boyd, Vickie Botkin; **10** Bob Zombron; **12** Joseph Seay; **21** Dorothy Jackson; **22** Ray Yamoka; **25** Ruth Lynch

MAY

1 David Wagner; **11** James Smith; **13** Ruth B. Scott, Janice Wilson; **16** Mary Lou Gorman; **21** Cathy Dorsett; **28** Dianne Diana

JUNE

1 Kathleen Kelton; **2** Russell Van Allen; **3** Don Utton; **7** Mary Fenner; **11** Brenda Cordle; **16** Gladys Werts; **23** Barbara Dance

Service Officer

Virginia Bozarth

Happy Spring! If you ever are in need of guidance or questions concerning federal benefits or the death of a loved one, please reach out. If I don't know the answer I have others in VFN who are knowledgeable in the area of OPM and can help.

I hope you have started getting your affairs in order, or reviewing your papers and making any adjustments that are needed. Your papers need to be organized and shared with your survivors, who will need a number to call at your death. NARFE has prepared an essential guide, "Be Prepared for Life's Events, What Your Survivors Should Know." This booklet is available on the NARFE website, search for Form 100.

What exactly does a Service Officer do?

- Becomes the face and voice of NARFE – helps members apply for benefits, life insurance, etc.
- Relays information as needed on Medicare and Medicaid, Social Security, and retirement benefits.
- Writes notes to families of those who have passed to offer information and support.
- Offers the “Be Prepared for Life’s Events” to NARFE members.

NARFE Pending Legal Actions

Debbie Fisk

As of March 25, 2025, the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) is involved in two significant legal actions:

1. **Challenge to Executive Order 14171 (Schedule P/C):** On February 6, 2025, NARFE, in collaboration with the Government Accountability Project (GAP), filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia against President Trump's Executive Order 14171. This order introduces "Schedule Policy/Career" (Schedule P/C), previously known as Schedule F, which reclassifies certain federal positions, potentially stripping them of merit-based civil service protections. NARFE contends that this action violates the Civil Service Reform Act and undermines the integrity of a nonpartisan, professional federal workforce.
2. **Lawsuit Against Unauthorized Data Access by DOGE:** On February 10, 2025, NARFE, alongside a coalition of labor unions representing over two million workers, filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland. The suit aims to halt unauthorized access to sensitive personal data by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), led by Elon Musk. The plaintiffs allege that DOGE improperly obtained private information from the Departments of Education, Treasury, and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), violating the Privacy Act and compromising the security of millions of Americans.

These legal actions underscore NARFE's commitment to safeguarding the rights and protections of federal employees and retirees. For the most current information on these lawsuits, please refer to NARFE's official communications and updates.

Social Security Fairness Act 2025

Debbie Fisk

As of March 2025, **you no longer need to apply for WEP/GPO relief** because the **Social Security Fairness Act was signed into law on January 5, 2025, fully repealing both the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO).**

Here's what that means for you:

- **If you were previously affected by WEP or GPO:**
You **don't need to apply** for any special relief. The **Social Security Administration (SSA) is automatically recalculating and adjusting benefits** for impacted individuals.
- **Retroactive payments** have already started going out (as of February 25, 2025), with:
 - **Average lump sums** of around **\$6,710**
 - **Increased monthly benefits** beginning **April 2025**
- **If you are newly applying for Social Security:**
The repeal means **WEP and GPO no longer reduce your benefits**. You can simply apply for benefits through the standard SSA channels:
 - Online: ssa.gov
 - By phone: 1-800-772-1213
 - In person: at your local SSA office

If you were previously **denied spousal Social Security benefits** due to the **Government Pension Offset (GPO)**, here's what's changed and what you should do now:



Now that GPO is repealed:

You can reapply for spousal (or survivor) benefits — **and you should**. GPO used to **eliminate or drastically reduce** Social Security benefits for

spouses/survivors who received a federal, state, or local government pension **not covered by Social Security** (like CSRS). That is **no longer allowed**.

What You Can Do Now:

1. **Reapply for the benefit** — even if you were denied before.
 - Call SSA at 1-800-772-1213 to start the process.
 - Or **visit your local SSA office** to file in person.
 - You can also start online at ssa.gov
2. Request retroactive payments.
 - If you would've been eligible **before the repeal**, you may receive **back pay**.
 - SSA is processing retroactive payments **automatically** for many, but it's wise to confirm your case with them.
3. **Have documents ready:**
 - Your marriage certificate
 - Your spouse's Social Security number and benefit info
 - Your own pension documentation (if applicable)

Tip:

SSA may not notify everyone who was denied under the old GPO rule — so it's up to you to reinitiate the application if you were affected.

Alzheimer's Research

Faye McKay, Chairman

Taken from *Alzheimer's/News Today*.

Dr. Lindsey Shapiro, PhD in Neuroscience, has researched some areas in Alzheimer's Disease that may play a part in Alzheimer's risk.

Age at menopause may interact with factors related to the health of synapses, or nerve cell connections, to influence the risk of Alzheimer's disease in women. Associations between biomarkers of poor synapse health and higher levels of Alzheimer's-related proteins in the brain, as well as steeper cognitive

declines, were stronger when menopause was experienced at a younger age, the researchers said. These interactions were not as strong when women had received hormone replacement therapy.

Alzheimer's does not affect the sexes equally. Not only are women at a higher risk of the disease, but they tend to experience faster disease progression. About two-thirds of Alzheimer's patients with dementia are women, and female patients see faster cognitive declines even when they have a similar degree of toxic proteins in the brain as their male counterparts, according to the authors.

To read the article, go to [Alzheimersnewstoday.com](https://alzheimersnewstoday.com).

The Beginning of Federal Service in the US

Cindy Graunke

Have you ever wondered about how Federal service began?

The origins of Federal service in the United States can be traced back to the establishment of the Federal civil service in 1871. This system was created to manage the civilian workforce of the Federal government, ensuring that employees were selected based on merit rather than political affiliations. The Civil Service Reform Act of 1883 further solidified this approach by introducing competitive hiring processes and safeguarding the integrity of public service.

Federal service has evolved significantly over time, adapting to the nation's changing needs and challenges. For example, during wartime, Federal employees played crucial roles in managing resources and implementing policies. The establishment of agencies like the Office of Personnel Management in 1978 marked another milestone in workforce management, emphasizing innovation and inclusivity.

Federal service has an incredibly rich history, with milestones that showcase its growth and adaptation to the nation's needs. Here are a few key moments to explore further:

1. **The Early Days (1789):** Federal service began with the founding of the United States government under the Constitution. Positions were initially filled through patronage, with appointees often chosen for their political connections.
2. **The Civil Service Act of 1871:** This was one of the first attempts to regulate Federal employment. It provided a structure for hiring and set the stage for modern civil service reform.
3. **The Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act of 1883:** After widespread criticism of the patronage system, this act established the principle of hiring based on merit. It created a system of competitive exams and shielded employees from undue political pressure.
4. **Expansion During Wartime:** Federal service expanded significantly during the World Wars to meet the demands of managing resources, coordinating logistics, and supporting the war effort. The role of Federal employees during this time cannot be overstated, as they worked tirelessly on programs like the New Deal and mobilization efforts.
5. **The Hatch Act of 1939:** This act restricted political activities of Federal employees to ensure neutrality and maintain trust in the civil service.
6. **Post-War Growth and Modernization:** Following World War II, the Federal workforce grew to manage new agencies and programs. Landmark events, such as the establishment of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in 1953 and the Office of Personnel Management in 1978, shaped the modern civil service.
7. **Equal Opportunity and Representation:** Milestones in diversity and inclusion, such as Executive Order 9980 in 1948 (which desegregated Federal workplaces) and the increasing roles of women and minorities, reflect the evolving workforce.

The History of Memorial Day

Originally called Decoration Day, from the early tradition of decorating graves with flowers, wreaths and flags, Memorial Day is a day for remembrance of those who have died in service to our country. It was first widely observed on May 30, 1868 to commemorate the sacrifices of Civil War soldiers, by proclamation of Gen. John A. Logan of the Grand Army of the Republic, an organization of former Union sailors and soldiers.

During that first national commemoration, former Union Gen. and sitting Ohio Congressman James Garfield made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery, after which 5,000 participants helped to decorate the graves of the more than 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers who were buried there.

This national event galvanized efforts to honor and remember fallen soldiers that began with local observances at burial grounds in several towns throughout the United States following the end of the Civil War, such as the May 1, 1865 gathering in Charleston, South Carolina organized by freed slaves to pay tribute and give proper burial to Union troops.

In 1873, New York was the first state to designate Memorial Day as a legal holiday. By the late 1800s, many more cities and communities observed Memorial Day, and several states had declared it a legal holiday.

After World War I, it became an occasion for honoring those who died in all of America's wars and was then more widely established as a national holiday throughout the United States.

In 1971, Congress passed the Uniform Monday Holiday Act and established that Memorial Day was to be commemorated on the last Monday of May.

Memorial Day is commemorated at Arlington National Cemetery each year with a ceremony in which a small American flag is placed on each grave. Traditionally, the President or Vice President lays a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Source: <https://www.pbs.org/national-memorial-day-concert/memorial-day/history/>

NARFE

Midlothian Chapter 2265

Member Profile

Name: _____ Date: _____

Month and day of birth: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

Member ID Number: _____

Date Retired (if applicable): _____

From which agency did you retire: _____

If still working, Agency name: _____

Job title: _____

Hobbies/Interests: _____

Are you willing to volunteer your services to assist our Chapter in any of the following capacities?

***Chapter Officer____, Membership____, Programs____, Alzheimer's____, Technology____,
Special Activities____, Hospitality____, Legislation____, Greeter____, Speaker____
(Please complete and mail to address below or bring to Chapter meeting)***

Do you have comments?

**Membership Committee
NARFE Midlothian Chapter 2265
P. O. Box 565
Midlothian, VA 23113**

NARFE - PAC

Debbie Fisk

NARFE-PAC Month was in March; however every month is NARFE-PAC month. Our Federal Agencies, Active Federal Employees and Retired Employees are facing more crises at this time in modern history. The NARFE Political Action Committee is crucial in getting our concerns, questions and requests for answers to Congress, EVERYDAY.

NARFE-PAC needs your help to make it a success. You can make a difference in the fight for our earned benefits by contributing to the PAC either online, through the mail, via the form in the magazine or at our next federation meeting.

The PAC is our association's political action committee, a unique tool that provides NARFE members more opportunities to share the real story of our community with lawmakers. These opportunities grow relationships and make our leaders better informed about issues affecting federal retirees.

Our support of NARFE-PAC goes a long way in the fight for our earned pay and benefits, allowing NARFE members to fight back against threats to cut our cost-of-living adjustments and healthcare. To comply with federal law, we must use our best efforts to obtain, maintain and submit the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions to NARFE-PAC exceed \$200 each calendar year. NARFE-PAC is for the benefit of political candidates and activities on a national level. NARFE members have the right to refuse to contribute without reprisal, and NARFE will neither favor nor disadvantage anyone based on the amount of a contribution or failure to make a voluntary contribution.

The suggested amounts are only suggestions and not enforceable. Only members of NARFE may contribute to the PAC. Contributions from nonmembers will be returned. NARFE-PAC contributions are not deductible for federal income tax purposes."

"Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same."

— Ronald Reagan

"I believe our flag is more than just cloth and ink. It is a universally recognized symbol that stands for liberty, and freedom. It is the history of our nation, and it's marked by the blood of those who died defending it."

— John Thune

Chapter 2265 Committees

Alzheimer's:

Faye McKay
804-378-0826

Audit:

Brenda Cordle: 804-744-2969
Ann Simpkins: 804-379-3631

Chaplain:

In memory of
Charlie Wilson

Greeter:

Ann Simpkins
804-379-3631

Hospitality:

Cathy Dorsett: 804-674-4039
Ann Simpkins: 804-379-3631

Membership:

Verona McLeod
804-744-4589

National Legislation:

Vacant

Net Coordinator:

Deborah Fisk
804-748-8722

Newsletter:

Lynn Osborne
804-275-2102

Parliamentarian:

Lynn Osborne
804-275-2102

Programs:

Verona McLeod
804-744-4589

Public Relations:

Cindy Graunke
240-674-5199

Service Officer:

Virginia Bozarth
804-275-0820

Special Activities:

Lynn Osborne
804-275-2102

State Legislation:

Steve Stastny
804-271-8690

Sunshine:

Vacant

Telephone Tree:

Vacant



=====

NARFE Chapter 2265
P.O. Box 565
Midlothian, VA 23113

Dated Material

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
RICHMOND, VA
PERMIT NO. 3022

DATES TO REMEMBER

April 16

Monthly Meeting/Program
Program TBD

May 14

Monthly Meeting/Program
“10 Warning Signs of
Alzheimer’s and Dementia”

June 11

Monthly Meeting/Program
“Learn how to read and understand
your Medicare statement”

All monthly meetings begin at 10 am.

Need additional resources or content?
Check out the links below:



<https://www.narfe.org/>



www.VANARFE.org



<https://www.fedhub.narfe.org>

Chapter Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/vfn2265>