

May 2025



FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

Chapter email:
narfe356@hotmail.com

Next Meeting Date

June 18

*Logan's Roadhouse
7731 Donegan Drive
Manassas, VA*

**Lunch
11:30 AM**

**Program
12:30 PM**

Logan's is located in the Bull Run Shopping Center by the pond near Sudley Road.

Future Meetings:

Chapter luncheon meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month. We meet bimonthly on the even numbered months.

Our Executive Committee will continue meeting virtually on the first Tuesday of each month.

June 3--Executive Committee

**June 18--Chapter Meeting,
Transitional Healthcare as We
Age**

July 1--Executive Committee

MANASSAS CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

NARFE Chapter 356, Manassas, VA - Organized September 9, 1953

No Chapter Luncheon Meeting in May. We are now meeting bimonthly. Our next Luncheon Meeting will be held in June.

From The Chapter President

Since 1985, the first week in May has traditionally been designated as Public Service Recognition Week, although this year I have not seen any mention of efforts to honor our public servants. In fact, just the opposite seems to be on trend. If you have the occasion to encounter any of our federal workers this week or any week for that matter, thank them for their service and the work they do for you and for our country. You know better than most how important their work is and, if your experience was anything like mine, how professional, hard-working and dedicated public servants are. Stand with them and let them know that you support them. And thank you to all of our members for your service to our country.

The Virginia Federation of NARFE (VFN) held elections of officers at its recent convention. The following officers were elected by acclamation: 2nd Vice President – Patricia Wolfe; Treasurer – Jim Little; Secretary – Doris McAdams (who will step down if elected as First Vice President); and our own Secretary Carol Campbell was reelected as Area IX Vice President. Congratulations! The following offices are being contested: for President, Deborah Fisk and Larry McIlwee; and for First Vice President, Eddie Eitches and Doris McAdams. You will be receiving shortly an e-mail ballot enabling you to help elect these officers. Information on the candidates' back-

grounds and positions are available on the VFN website (www.vanarfe.org). I urge you to exercise your right to vote!

Just a reminder that registration is still on-going for NARFE'S LEGCon25, which will take place virtually June 9-11. LEG-Con25 will provide training to prepare members to advocate with members of Congress, culminating with a virtual lobbying day where you can join your fellow NARFE members in presenting NARFE'S message directly to lawmakers and their staff. You can register at: www.narfe.org under the News and Events tab.

Mary M. Brandt
President

Legislation Update and News of Note

Proposed Cuts to Federal Pay and Benefits

On April 5, the Senate passed an amended version of the House budget resolution, H.Con.Res. 14, by a vote of 51-48. NARFE opposed the resolution due to its instructions to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform to cut at least \$50 billion in mandatory spending from programs within its jurisdiction, which would target federal retirement and health benefits as the primary source of savings. On April 30, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee voted mostly along party lines to advance its portion of the budget reconciliation legislation. Included in the panel's proposal are plans to require all current Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) enrollees to contribute 4.4% of their basic pay each paycheck toward their pension, and new hires would be required to elect between paying an additional 5% of their salaries toward their retirement benefits or waiving their civil service protections and serving as at-will employees. The measure also changes the formula used to calculate federal retirees' annuities from an average of the highest three years of salary to an average of the highest five years of salary for participants in both FERS and the older Civil Service Retirement System, beginning with those who retire in January 2027. And it eliminates the FERS supplement for federal workers who retire before Social Security takes effect at age 62, albeit with exceptions for employees in jobs that are subject to mandatory retirement ages, like law enforcement officers and air traffic controllers. The elimination of the FERS supplement, which is set to take effect immediately upon the bill's enactment into law, would negatively impact a number of those federal workers who had accepted their agency's deferred resignation program that offered employees the chance to be placed on paid administrative leave provided they agree to resign or retire by the end of the fiscal year in September. John Hatton, NARFE staff vice president for policy and programs, indicated that since the FERS supplement is designed to replicate

what a federal retiree would receive from Social Security once they turn 62, its elimination would amount to a significant decrease in a retiree's post-employment income.

Source: NARFE NewsLine, April 9, 2025; Government Executive, May 2, 2025

Proposal to Add Protections for Probationary Federal Employees

On April 10, Rep. Johnny Olszewski (D-MD) introduced the Protect Promoted Workers Act ([H.R. 2880](#)) to add more protections for federal employees who have entered a probationary period due to promotion to a competitive service, excepted service or Senior Executive Service position. Under the legislation, protections under certain sections of Title 5 would be extended to recently promoted competitive service, excepted service or Senior Executive Service employees. They would get due process protection when subject to more than 14 days of suspension, reduction in grade or pay, or furlough of 30 days or less and actions could only be taken for cause. The bill would give SES members further protections, such as at least 30 days advance written notice of any job action taken by the agency — unless there is reasonable cause to believe that the employee has committed a crime. The bill also provides the employee would have: no less than seven days "to answer orally and in writing and to furnish affidavits and other documentary evidence"; legal representation; and a written decision and specific reasons for the action provided by the agency. SES employees would also be entitled to the option of a hearing, the opportunity to appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board, and other evidentiary rights.

Source: Government Executive, April 16, 2025

Hiring Freeze Extended

President Donald Trump extended his administration's hiring freeze of all federal civilian positions for another 89 days in a memo released on April 16, specifying that no new positions may be created, and vacant roles may not be filled. The initial executive order, issued January 20, was set to run through April

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20, but will now last until July 15. The extension continues exceptions for agencies involved with national security, public safety, immigration or law enforcement functions, and it reiterates language in the initial hiring freeze aiming to protect the “provision of Social Security, Medicare, or veterans’ benefits.” Despite that exemption, the Defense Department is operating under its own hiring freeze initiated last month by the Defense Secretary. The Social Security Administration, which is currently at a 50-year staffing low, is planning on reducing an additional 7,000 employees from its 57,000-person workforce. Also exempt from the hiring freeze are political appointees hired through Schedule A or C of the excepted service, as well as any other non-career senior executives. The memorandum also includes instructions that, upon expiration of the hiring freeze and implementation of a hiring plan, agencies may hire no more than one employee for every four that depart, with immigration, national security, law enforcement, and public safety being the only exceptions.

Source: Government Executive, April 17, 2025; NARFE NewsLine, April 30, 2025

Imposition of Schedule F

On April 17, President Donald Trump moved forward with the implementation of Schedule F—now renamed the Schedule Policy/Career, which would strip those federal employees working on policy matters of civil service protections, making them in effect at-will employees. President Trump announced via social media that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) would be issuing a proposed rule on April 23 that would allow him to remove civil service protections from as many as 50,000 or more civil servants. NARFE President William Shackelford issued a statement in opposition to the proposed rule, arguing: “Removing merit-based civil service protections opens the door to replacing nonpartisan, professional civil servants with political loyalists.” NARFE previously filed suit challenging the Trump administration’s efforts, which began with a January 20 executive order that

began the process of implementation. That challenge remains ongoing.

Source: Government Executive, April 18, 2025; NARFE NewsLine, April 21, 2025

Changes to the Hiring and Pay for Schedule C Appointments

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has issued new guidance encouraging agencies to increase pay for Schedule C hires up to and including the federal pay cap of \$195,200 and to cut career HR officials out of the onboarding process. OPM stressed that Schedule C appointing authority requires approval by OPM’s White House liaison. Traditionally, career HR employees evaluated an incoming appointee’s resume and experience, ensured they are properly vetted, and provided input about the appointee’s proposed starting salary. According to one source familiar with federal HR practices, this action appears aimed at expediting the replacement of career workers with political appointees by removing career-employee guard rails from the process.

Source: Government Executive, April 14, 2025

President Trump’s Proposed FY 2026 Budget

On May 2, President Trump unveiled an initial version of his \$1.7 trillion fiscal 2026 discretionary funding budget, which included cuts of 22% to non-defense agencies. The Defense Department would see its funding increased by 13% to more than \$1 trillion. Of the major federal non-defense agencies, all but the Departments of Homeland Security, Transportation and Veterans Affairs, as well as the Social Security Administration, would see their funding cut by at least 15%, and the Departments of Interior, Labor, Housing and Urban Development and State (and other international programs included in its budget), as well as the Small Business Administration, Environmental Protection Agency and National Science Foundation would all see reductions of at least 30%. The latter two agencies would have their budgets cut by more than half. The Internal Revenue Service would see its budget cut by \$2.5 billion, with the elimination of 19,000 jobs. The Education Department, which has

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already seen a 50% reduction in staff would see additional staff reductions. The Veterans Affairs Department would cut around 80,000 jobs. NASA would see a 24% overall budget reduction. The National Park Service would see its operations budget slashed by 31%. Other major changes include a proposal to consolidate wildland firefighting, currently split between the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service and other agencies, into one entity within the Interior Department. The Transportation Department would receive significant new resources for the Federal Aviation Administration to modernize and boost its air traffic controller workforce. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration would see its research and operations budget slashed by \$1.3 billion, a 29% cut. The National Institutes of Health would lose \$18 billion, a cut of about 38%. Climate-related programs would also face severe cuts; for example, the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy office within the Energy Department would see its budget cut by nearly 75%. The budget would eliminate \$15 billion in previous funding related to clean energy and other efforts to combat climate change.

Source: Government Executive, May 2, 2025

Federal Workers Legal Defense Network

As federal employees continue to face widespread layoffs, various unions and advocacy groups on April 16 launched an organization, entitled Rise Up Federal Workers' Legal Defense Network, to provide legal advice to affected government workers. The network directs federal employees who believe they were wrongfully terminated or have concerns about their rights to submit information and be matched with an available attorney. From there, respondents will be directed to contact the lawyer for an initial conversation and a potential consultation, both of which would be free. Participating organizations include AFL-CIO, the American Federation of Government Employees, National Treasury Employees Union, the national legal organization Democracy Forward, and the nonpartisan good government group- the Partnership for Public Ser-

vice. The coalition's website notes that any legal representation after the conversation and consultation is at the attorney's discretion and could be free, discounted or their normal billing rate. Federal employees can request legal assistance at: <https://workerslegaldefense.org/federal-workers>.

Source: Government Executive, April 16, 2025

Previous Chapter Meeting, April 16th

Chapter 356 held its regular monthly meeting, with fourteen members and one guest present, including Virginia Federation of NARFE (VFN) Secretary Doris McAdams. Following lunch, a business meeting was conducted, with officer and committee reports. The Minutes of the March 19, 2025, Chapter meeting, as reported in the April Newsletter, were approved, and the Treasurer's Report was adopted. Membership Chair Helen Brooks reported that the current chapter membership stands at one hundred thirty-four, which includes twenty new members. The NARFE membership database continues to be revised. Alzheimer's Chair Marilyn Markman continues to do a great job of presenting the latest information on Alzheimer's research in the newsletters. The Alzheimer's Association continues to be the NARFE designated charity with donations exceeding sixteen million dollars.

President Brandt reported on the recently passed Concurrent Budget Resolution, which charges the House Government Oversight and Reform Committee to identify \$50 billion in cuts to federal pay and benefits. Some of the proposals being considered would: 1) replace the Federal Employee Health Benefit Program with a voucher system in order to reduce the government's share of health care; 2) change the retirement formula from a high three to high five-year basis; 3) reduce or eliminate annual cost of living increases; and 4) increase the amount current federal workers pay into the Federal Employee Retirement System. Brandt suggested that members keep informed of emerging threats to federal pay and benefits via the NARFE magazine, weekly NARFE NewsLine e-mails and our Chapter Newsletter. She encouraged members to attend Congressional Townhalls and to express their concerns to their legislators through the NARFE Legislation Action Center or through the contact link found on legislator's websites. Vice-President Saboe continues to be available to answer questions or con-

cerns regarding the recent implementation of the Social Security Fairness Act or other Social Security benefits based upon her many years with the agency.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the scheduled speaker on the Cold War Museum at Vint Hall was unable to attend; however, chapter member Herb Thompson provided a few remarks on the Museum based upon a past visit.

Chapter 356 members Bill Briscoe, Steve Gill, and Carol Campbell attended the VFN Conference held April 6-9, 2025 in Harrisonburg, VA. Special thanks to Steve Gill, a first-time attendee, for the following comprehensive report on the Conference. VFN celebrated its 70th Anniversary, with its theme "Our Future-Stronger Together". There were 130 members and guests in attendance with thirty-one first-time attendees. Of the thirty-seven VFN chapters, twenty-seven were represented at the Conference. Seven past presidents were in attendance. A workshop for first-time attendees was also presented. John Allen, NARFE Region X Vice-President, attended the Conference. Region X is comprised of the Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia Federations of NARFE. The Region X Conference will be October 20-23, 2025, in Pigeon Forge, TN. Virginia is #1 in membership in Region X and leads the Nation in Alzheimer's donations, with over \$1.6 million or 10% of the total of \$16 million nationally.

NARFE President William Shackelford provided remarks at the conference on the following topics: 1) Automated Membership System (AMS) upgrades - assessing member operations and work-in-progress; 2) FEDHub - member on-line discussions; 3) efforts to sell or rent portions of the NARFE Headquarters building (originally 120 employees and now stands at 31) to generate revenue; 4) Investments - operating in the black for the past five years with Morgan Stanley as its investment company; and 5) Membership is down to 130,000 although recently it has been trending up with 3,200-member increase from last year. Problems continue with the membership "aging out"

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with the average age being eighty. One hundred and twenty-two VFN chapter members and 95 VFN National members passed during 2024. Shackelford placed emphasis on more social media, ads, and radio spots (WTOP), ads on D.C. buses and subway, more podcasts and use of FEDHub to reach a greater audience and encourage membership.

President Shackelford was also at the White House ceremony when former President Biden signed the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset (WEB/GPO) repeal legislation. He had his picture taken with the President and handed him a membership application. At which time, the President remarked he will be eligible for NARFE after January 20, and President Shackelford responded that he is eligible now!

NARFE Staff Vice-President John Hatton, Policy and Programs, gave a presentation on past activities, 2025-2026 priorities, and emerging threats. These priorities and emerging threats are on the National website. There were also Zoom presentations from Senator Tim Kaine and former Congress member Abigail Spanberger. Senator Kaine thanked NARFE employees for their on-going contributions and advocacy towards active and retired Federal employees. A commendation was presented to Ms. Spanberger for her efforts to introduce, with a colleague, and overcome obstacles to get the WEP/GPO repeal legislation passed and signed into law.

At our luncheon meeting, VFN Secretary Doris McAdams also offered positive comments regarding the VFN Conference. She also reported that VFN election ballots will be emailed in May. There are two candidates for President, two for first Vice-President, including McAdams. She has been sworn in as VFN Secretary for 2025-2026 but will resign if she wins the First Vice-President Office. Doris is also coordinating the Job Fair for Federal Workers and Contractors sponsored by Congressman Beyer in Alexandria on May 3rd.

The raffle for the Alzheimer's Fund collected \$80, with the winner donating her share.

The next regular monthly meeting for Chapter 356 is scheduled for Wednesday, June 18, at Logan's Roadhouse. The next Executive Committee meeting will be held via Zoom at 1:00 pm on Tuesday, May 6, the first Tuesday of the month. All members are welcome to attend the committee meeting and any member wishing to do so should contact one of the chapter officers to obtain the Zoom link.

Carol Campbell
Secretary



Chapter 356 members attending the Virginia Federation Conference in April. From left: Bill Briscoe, Carol Campbell, and Steve Gill.

Alzheimer's Corner

Marilyn Markman, RN

At our last meeting NARFE Alzheimer's funding was mentioned. I started thinking about what other entities are funding Alzheimer's. So, I went to my friend Google and was very surprised to see 9 non-profit organizations listed, not including NARFE. I think you would be interested to see who is working to prevent, treat and cure Alzheimer's. You will be stunned at the amount of money being used to end this disease, I know I was. With so much information this will be in 2 parts, starting off with the non-profits you are most familiar with, and of course NARFE is #1.

NARFE www.narfe.org

In 1985 NARFE became a dedicated partner with the Alzheimer's Association. NARFE Chapters across the country have raised \$16 million through fund raising events and donations. Annually the NARFE Alzheimer's National Committee composed of representatives from each of NARFE's 10 regions meet. At this meeting they select research projects to fund focusing on areas such as: molecular pathogenesis and physiology of Alzheimer's and other dementias; diagnosis assessments and disease monitoring; and dementia care and impact of disease including population studies

Since 1985 NARFE has funded 94 research projects and is a member of the Alzheimer's Association Zenith Society-its highest donor recognition level.

ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION www.alz.org

The Alzheimer's Association is well-known for its Alzheimer's work. The leading nonprofit in the United States it is a worldwide voluntary health organization dedicated to Alzheimer's care, support and research. One of its biggest fundraisers is the Walk to End Alzheimer's held at different times all over the world.

Founded in 1980 to :

- Support individuals and families
- Fund research into causes, treatments and prevention of Alzheimer's
- Raise awareness and advocate for policies that support people with dementia
- Provide resources such as 24hr helpline, education programs, support groups and care consultation

Funding for 2024:

77%- Alzheimer's disease care support, research awareness and advocacy
18%- fundraising
5%- administration

ALZHEIMER'S FOUNDATION OF AMERICA
www.alzfdn.org

Founded in 2002- created to be a resource for families. Its mission-provides support services and education to individuals, families, and caregivers affected by Alzheimer's and related diseases. 86% of funds are allocated directly to programs and services.

Services include:

Helpline 24/7 -staffed by social workers

National Memory Screening Program

Magazine ALZ Today published 4 times/year-and it's free

Young Leadership Program-AFA Teens-founded by a teen to help educate and support teens who have been impacted by Alzheimer's

American AFA Touring educating Americans by touring the country

ALZHEIMER'S DRUG DISCOVERY FOUNDATION
www.alzdiscovery.org

Founded in 1998, it is the only non-profit dedicated solely to developing drugs and diagnostics for treatment and prevention of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias including Frontotemporal, Vascular, and Lewy Body Dementia.

With over \$370 million, the ADDF supports 729 projects, 546 research projects. Its portfolio includes grants and mission-related investments supporting Alzheimer's drugs, developing biomarkers, prevention programs and other projects. ADDF lead significant advancements such as FDA approved diagnostic Pet Scan for Alzheimer's and Precocity AD; the first available blood test for early detection

There is so much going on in the Alzheimer's world that we don't know about. We do know that all these non-profits, scientists and researchers will continue until this dreadful disease is gone! We also know that with your support through NARFE Alzheimer's Research we are helping with this fight.

You can help to support our chapter's Alzheimer's fund-raising goal with your donations. Checks should be written out to "NARFE Alzheimer's Research" and in memo write "NARFE Chapter 356". Send checks to:

NARFE Chapter 356

8818 Cather Ave.

Manassas, VA 20110-6104

Your checks will be forwarded to the Alzheimer's Association through NARFE. You will receive confirmation from us as well as the Alzheimer's Association.

NARFE WEBINARS

Upcoming NARFE Webinars:

Family Benefits: Spouse, Children, Former Spouse Benefits & Survivor Benefits

Thursday, May 22, 2025, 2:00 p.m. ET

Knowing the ins and outs of federal benefits for you and your family can be daunting. From figuring out who and how to cover family under your federal health plan to understanding what to do should you or a family member pass away, join NARFE federal benefits expert, Anthony (Tony) Opat, for an informative session exploring the range of federal benefits available to you and your family. This webinar will cover eligibility, how to apply, recent updates, and answer common questions, so you leave informed and empowered!

[REGISTER TODAY](#)

Recent NARFE Webinars:

Sorting Out the Options During Agency RIFs

If you'd like to learn about the retirement options offered to federal employees affected by the massive government downsizing, this webinar, presented by NARFE Federal Benefits expert Tammy Flanagan is designed for you. (Recorded April 24, 2025)

New NARFE Member Welcome

Get acquainted with all the benefits of membership and learn more about its 3 pillars: advocacy, education and community from Senior Director, Member Engagement, Nora MacDonald. (Recorded April 22, 2025)

Pre-Retirement Planning

To help you reach your retirement goals, NARFE federal benefits expert Wes Battle, CFP®, ChFEBCSM, AIF®, RICP®, will inform and provide you with the necessary tools to achieve the best retirement. (Recorded April 10, 2025)

[Click here](#) to find links to dozens of valuable, expert-led presentations that you can watch on demand, anytime, anywhere. And remember, this is just one of many exclusive NARFE resources available to help you get the most out of your federal benefits, and one of the many reasons it pays to be a NARFE member.

Chapter Membership Report

Welcome to our Chapter

Anne Dubey
Stephen Gregoire
Joan Harchelroad
Carmen M Molina-Rodriguez
Scott Newton
John Wack
Carmelia Wesley

Chapter 356 membership as of
May 05 is 138 members.

Email Address Changes

Notify NARFE or our chapter whenever you change your email address to continue to receive this newsletter.

CHAPTER 356 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

President	Mary Brandt	703-753-3954
Vice President	Priscilla Saboe	703-361-1150
Secretary	Carol Campbell	703-389-4702
Treasurer	Richard Horte	703-368-8767
Membership Comm.	Helen Brooks	703-791-6737
National Legislation	Vacant	
Program Comm.	Vacant	
Service Officer	Priscilla Saboe	703-361-1150
Sunshine Comm.	Priscilla Saboe	703-361-1150
Alzheimer's Comm.	Marilyn Markman, RN	703-791-4329
Chapter Chaplain	Vacant	
Newsletter Editor	Richard Horte	703-368-8767

Chapter Email Address: narfe356@hotmail.com

Use this address to contact officers and committee chairs by email

Manassas Chapter Newsletter Online

We distribute our newsletter to Chapter members using email addresses on file at NARFE. If you are not receiving NARFE email, please contact us or NARFE Headquarters at Member Services (703-838-7760). Our newsletters are also available at the Virginia Federation website at www.vanarfe.org/newsletters/. Scroll down to Current Chapter Newsletters, Area IX, Chapter 356.