

***Serving Current and Retired Federal Civilian Employees, Spouses and Survivor Annuitants***

<b>President</b> Charles "Mike" Fleming 703-631-5869 charles.fleming@bhox.com	<b>Vice President</b> Ted Pasek 703-322-9322 tedpasek@verizon.net	<b>Secretary</b> Jim Mays 703-978-0317 mays.jl@verizon.net	<b>Treasurer/ Membership Chair</b> Donna Shackelford 703-830-6590 kamiahan@aol.com	<b>Chaplain</b> Karen Hauck 703-501-1058 k-sign@juno.com	<b>Co-Program Chair</b> Ted Pasek 703-322-9322 tedpasek@verizon.net
<b>Service Officers</b> John & Constance Bails 571-220-2860 jbails@aol.com	<b>Legislation Program</b> Thomas Hart 703-573-4730 thart7@cox.net	<b>Newsletter Editor</b> Jim Mays 703-978-0317 mays.jl@verizon.net	<b>Co-Program Chair</b> Sharon Lenius 703-801-2551 leniusa@gmail.com	<b>Alzheimer's Program</b> Maurita Washington maurita_austin_washing ton@hotmail.com	<b>Public Relations</b> Ruby Harney 703-425-7404 rrharney2@cox.net

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. **Due to park pavilion demand, the chapter fifth annual picnic will be on May 31 this year.** 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:** May 31

**PROGRAM:** Fifth Annual Chapter 737 Picnic Note: this is a Saturday, not the usual time and place, so plan ahead and invite your friends and neighbors, especially active workers (or former workers) who are interested in the activities of the Administration. Drinks will be provided, bring your own food.

**WHERE:** Van Dyck Park at the Upper Pavilion in Fairfax City

**TIME:** 11 am-1 pm

**COST:** FREE!!!!

**CONTACT:** If you plan to attend email [TedPasek@verizon.net](mailto:TedPasek@verizon.net) .

Fourth Wednesday of each month: VFN Training at [vanarfe.org](http://vanarfe.org) .

Sharon Lenius sale of books at the April meeting book exchange raised \$90.29 for Alzheimer's at McKay's books.

THIS IS THE LAST NEWSLETTER UNTIL REGULAR MEETINGS BEGIN IN SEPTEMBER, AFTER THE SUMMER BREAK.  
SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER!

**PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

Dear Members of Chapter 737:

The next chapter program meeting will be a picnic. It will take place on Saturday 31 May at the pavilion in Van Dyck Park in the City of Fairfax beginning a 11 a.m. Please inform Ted Pasek at [tedpasek@verizon.net](mailto:tedpasek@verizon.net) if you plan to attend the picnic. Consider inviting fellow retired Federal employees, active employees and your friends to join you at the picnic.

I understand that the job fairs sponsored by Representative Don Beyer have drawn many attendees. NARFE has been a participant in these job fairs. NARFE maintains a webpage on news related to Federal workers at: <https://www.narfe.org/blog/category/news/> if you are interested to learn about NARFE's response to such matters.

Beginning with the picnic, Chapter 737 will take a Summer vacation. The next program meeting will be held in September. However, planning for the September and subsequent 2025 program meetings will occur during the Summer nonetheless. Offering your help to run the Chapter will be appreciated. Please send inquiries about helping Chapter 737 to Ted Pasek at [tedpasek@verizon.net](mailto:tedpasek@verizon.net) or to me at [charles.fleming@bhox.com](mailto:charles.fleming@bhox.com)

Sincerely yours,

**Charles "Mike" Fleming – Chapter President**

**MAY 6 MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

The meeting featured Ms. Kristy Kennedy & Ms. Ginger Noce from Silver Bridges Consulting. They have over 20 years in the senior living industry. Their subject was "Understanding the Senior Living Landscape." This is what you need to know and do when considering and planning your future downsizing and living arrangements. The Silver Bridges Consulting presentation was full of valuable information for people looking for long term care. Theyb will do a needs assessment, community visits, care options, a recommendations report, accompany client/loved one tours, contract negotiation assistance, and care plan meeting support. They also identified other long term care resources such as: the Veterans 'Aid and Assistance' program and the Washington Area Village Exchange. They can be reached at 202 717-6233 or [info@silverbridgesconsulting.com](mailto:info@silverbridgesconsulting.com). Additional information is at [SilverBridgesConsulting.com](http://SilverBridgesConsulting.com) .

After the Pledge of Allegiance the meeting attendees were led by Sharon Lenius in a reaffirmation of the Oath that federal employees take upon their induction into the federal government. Sharon provided information leaflets produced by the United States Air Force that described the various phrases of the Oath. The current "Oath" was adopted by Congress in 1884. "The Oath is more than a formality...It provides the foundation of our service".

### **FOOD FOR OTHERS**

The chapter has been collecting food at the membership meetings to help those less fortunate in Fairfax County. At the May meeting we collected 86 pounds of food. The first food donation occurred on 2/13/2019. Since that date, NARFE Chapter 737 has donated 7,605 lbs. of food to Food for Others.

**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](http://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/MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

**FINANCIAL** - As of April 1, 2025, our account balance was \$7,661.28. We received a total of \$594.84 during the month, and I disbursed \$687.16, leaving us with a balance of \$7,568.96 at the end of the month.

**MEMBERSHIP** - Our chapter members were 257, and our National Only members were 348, giving us a total enrollment of 605.

**ALZHEIMERS** - For April we received \$297, giving us a year-to-date total of \$436 donations.

### **LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

**NATIONAL LEGISLATION-** House Republicans have advanced a series of proposals attempting to cut costs by reducing the value of federal retirement annuities, increasing contributions into the government's retirement system and requiring federal employees to decide between taking a reduced paycheck or keeping their civil service protections. In a markup of the Oversight and Government Reform Committee on April 30, 2025, Republicans voted to push forward with six proposals to be included in the GOP's budget reconciliation package. If adopted into the final version of the legislation, the proposals would make the following changes:

- Raise the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) contribution rate to 4.4% across the board.
- Eliminate the FERS annuity supplement for all federal employees, except those in occupations subject to mandatory early retirement.
- Change the FERS annuity calculation from "high-3" to "high-5" of an employee's salary.
- Make all new federal employees "at will" unless they accept an additional 5% FERS contribution.
- Charge federal employees a \$350 fee to file an appeal with the Merit Systems Protection Board.
- Require an eligibility audit of all Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) enrollees and remove any ineligible participants from the program.

GOP committee members did exclude one earlier possibility for changing federal benefits. A proposal to convert the government's FEHB contributions to a flat-rate "voucher" model was taken off the table for the reconciliation package. Oversight Republicans also voted down a number of proposed amendments from Democrats during the markup that sought to limit the impacts of the federal benefits changes. The legislation now heads to the House Budget Committee for further consideration. Oversight Committee James Comer (R-KY) said the proposals included in the reconciliation bill align with the Trump administration's broader vision for the federal workforce. (Federal News Network)

A preliminary budget proposal issued by President Trump for the fiscal year starting in October calls for no pay raise for federal employees in January and substantial cuts in funding for non-defense agencies. In contrast to federal civilian pay, the proposal "recognizes America's servicemembers' sacrifice to the Nation with a 3.8 percent pay raise."

The "skinny" budget proposal is to be followed by a more detailed one that addresses additional federal workplace benefits and management issues. In his first term, Trump repeatedly included proposals similar to those recently approved by a House committee crafted to serve as a 10-year budgetary outline. The proposal overall would increase defense spending by 13 percent while cutting non-defense agencies by some 23 percent. However, the non-defense side includes DHS which would be in for an increase of some 65 percent, mostly for border enforcement and immigration-related policies. Apart from DHS, the non-defense side would see a reduction of about a third. (Fedweek)

### **The Oath of Office**

"I, (*state your full name*), do solemnly swear (*or affirm*) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well; and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God (optional)."

**VIRGINIA LEGISLATIVE NEWS-** Governor Glenn Youngkin signed Virginia's budget bill into law on May 2. "Very good budget today, I'm very happy with it." Youngkin said. Youngkin signed off on most of the Democratic-controlled General Assembly's budget changes, including \$1,000 bonuses for teachers and a 1.5% bonus for some employees on top of the 3% raises they are already set to receive in the next fiscal year. In addition, the budget includes about \$1billion in tax relief in the form of rebate checks. Virginians who filed their taxes individually this year will receive a \$200 check by October 15. Those who filed jointly with their spouse will receive \$400. However, Youngkin did use his line-item veto power to remove 37 items from the budget – to the tune of around \$900 million, mostly affecting infrastructure projects at public colleges and universities. Youngkin said the cuts will save Virginia money if actions taken by the federal government impact how much tax revenue the state brings in. (ABC8 NEWS)

### **PICNIC SAFETY TIPS FOR SENIORS**

May 2025

Prepared by Fairfax Senior Living News

#### **1. Beat the Heat: Stay Cool and Hydrated**

- Drink at least 8 cups of water daily - more when it's hot.
- Avoid drinks with alcohol or high sugar, which can dehydrate you.

#### **2. Protect Yourself from the Sun and Bugs**

- Wear a wide-brimmed hat and lightweight, long sleeves.
- Apply SPF 30+ sunscreen at least 15 minutes before going outside.
- Use insect repellent to protect against mosquitoes and ticks.
- Sit in shaded areas or bring an umbrella or canopy.

#### **3. Practice Food Safety**

- Keep cold foods in a cooler with ice packs.
- Keep food cold and keep refreshed by packing frozen water bottles.

#### **4. Dress for Comfort and Stability**

- Wear non-slip shoes for walking on grass or uneven surfaces.
- Bring a folding chair with back support or a soft picnic blanket.
- Use a walker or cane if needed—and let someone know where you'll be seated.

#### **5. Know Your Medications**

- Some medicines cause sun sensitivity or dehydration.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist if your medications require special care in the sun.

#### **6. Plan for Emergencies**

- Always carry: A charged cell phone, a list of emergency contacts and any essential medications
- Let a friend or loved one know where you are and when you'll return.

#### **Final Reminder**

A little planning goes a long way. With these tips, you'll enjoy the sunshine, snacks, and smiles of picnic season—safely and joyfully.

**John & Constance Bails - Co Service Officers**

### **ADVOCACY UPDATE**

**Act Now** - Comment in Opposition to OPM's Proposed Rule to Eliminate the Merit-Based Civil Service

The Office of Personnel Management issued a proposed rule to eliminate merit-based civil service protections for 50,000 or more federal employees by creating a new excepted service schedule, Schedule Policy/Career (P/C), formerly Schedule F. There is a short public comment period, ending May 23, 2025, and NARFE is urging all members to submit personal comments in opposition to the rule. [Read more.](#)

**Act Now** - Protect Earned Federal Retirement and Health Benefits from Budget Cuts

Following the passage of concurrent budget resolution, H.Con.Res.14, which required at least \$50 billion in cuts in mandatory spending under the jurisdiction of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform to offset the costs of funding Republican tax and spending policy priorities, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform advanced legislation to meet its target. [Read more.](#)

### **MAY 2025 ISSUE OF NARFE MAGAZINE**

The May 2025 issue of *NARFE Magazine* examines mass tourism and how to plan your next trip to avoid large crowds. We also take a look at President Donald Trump's federal workforce initiatives. All sides of the political spectrum agree that civil service reforms are needed. Is the Department of Government Efficiency the answer?

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



Postal Service (Time Value) Please Deliver by **May 22, 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 information on federal 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 **Aug 15**.

**James Mays – Newsletter Editor**