



NARFE CHAPTER 1116 (VIENNA-OAKTON) NEWSLETTER

2634 Skidmore Circle
Vienna, VA 22180-7121

JUNE-JULY-AUGUST 2025

Next Chapter Meeting
Tuesday, June 10, 2025
11:30 a.m.

10500 Hunting Hills Place
Oakton, VA 22124

Next Board Meeting
August 14, 2025 - TBD

2025 Board **Chapter Officers**

President
Kathy Arpa 703-205-9041
mkarpa@hotmail.com

1st Vice President & Programs
Ralph Dantinne 703-938-9757

2nd Vice President &
Membership & Hostess
Jayne Seidman 703-938-2274

Secretary David Graf
703-938-2962

Treasurer & State Legislation
Chris Gieseler
703-849-0008

Board Members

Alzheimer's & Photographer
Mark Arpa 703-205-9041
Legislation
Jim Hathaway 703-255-7135

Newsletter Team
Kathy Arpa, Dave Graf

Public Relations
Pec Chan 703-930-3596

Service Officer
Vacant

Sunshine
Harriet Epstein 703-560-4137

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – KATHY ARPA

As we go to press, we are saddened by the passing of our friend and advocate Congressman Gerry Connolly, who passed away on May 21 after a short bout of esophageal cancer. We were fortunate that he spent time with us last year as we celebrated our 55th Chapter Anniversary. (See photos on page 7.)

Mayor Linda Colbert visited us in May and shared news about developments in and around Vienna. (See details on page 3.) We also enjoyed our annual Ice Cream Social served by Margaret Murphy, Judy Hathaway, Dolores Inch, and Ann Mercure. Special thanks to those who brought toppings and to Jayne Seidman for providing cookies. We will end the spring season before our summer break with a **chapter picnic at Jayne's home on June 10**. See article on page 2.

By now you should have received a ballot with information about voting for officers for the Virginia Federation and two by laws changes. Time is running out! **The deadline for submitting a ballot is tomorrow, June 5**.

This is our last newsletter until September. If critical issues arise, I will send an email to members with an email address on file.

Kathy

MEMBERSHIP REPORT – JAYNE SEIDMAN

As of June 1, 2025, the membership for Chapter 1116 was as follows: 171 Total Chapter members, 154 Total National Members in Chapter Area, Grand Total = 325. We welcome our new members Ana Han and Gail Tomimatsu. to our chapter. Encourage your friends and relatives who are current and former federal employees to join NARFE.

COMING UP



Tuesday, June 10 – Annual Chapter Picnic -- 11:30 a.m. (See details below.)

Tuesday, September 9 – Chapter Meeting – 1:00 p.m. -- Vienna Community Center – Vienna Town Council Candidate Forum. (See info about November Town Election on page 3.)

October 20-24 – NARFE Region X Conference – Staybridge Suites, 385 Jake Thomas Rd Pigeon Forge, TN (See Robert Allen's message below.)

Let's Picnic – Tuesday, June 10 – 11:30 am

Like prior years, Chapter 1116 members and guests will gather for a picnic at the Oakton, VA home of 2nd Vice President Jayne Seidman on **Tuesday, June 10 beginning at 11:30 am**. We will enjoy an indoor buffet in Jayne's spacious kitchen and dining room. (We have some excellent chefs in our chapter.) There is ample street parking in her quiet neighborhood. The Chapter will provide fried and baked chicken and beverages (lemonade, iced tea, and water). Each member and guest may either bring a dish to share (such as a salad, vegetable, or dessert) or give a \$10.00 donation. If you did not sign up at the May Membership Meeting, please call **David Graf at 703-938-2962** no later than **Sunday, June 9**, to sign up and indicate what you will bring to the picnic. Come and bring a potential member. All members *and* guests are welcome, especially our newest members! We have 19 new members since January 1, 2025!!

Directions from Tysons Corner/Vienna: Take Maple Ave./Route 123 South to Oakton. Turn **right** onto Hunter Mill Road (VA 624) -- go 0.6 miles. Turn **left** on Marbury Rd. -- go 0.3 miles. Take **1st left** on Hunting Hills Court -- go 0.1 miles. Take **1st left** on Hunting Hills Place -- go 0.09 miles. Jayne's house number is **10500 Hunting Hills Place - on the left**. Parking is available on the driveway and on both sides of the street. GPS works great.

Jayne's telephone number for last-minute contact is 703-938-2274.

Let the Party begin! Hope to see you there!

MESSAGE FROM ROBERT ALLEN, NARFE REGION X VICE PRESIDENT

All, I want to remind you of the upcoming NARFE Region X Conference October 21-23 at the Staybridge Suites in Pigeon Forge, TN. We are working on the agenda, and it looks like it will be a full 2 1/2 days. Cindy Blythe (pictured here), the NARFE National Secretary/Treasurer, will be the keynote speaker. We will have other NARFE HQ speakers as well, plus some local speakers. We will also have breakout sessions. Finally, we are planning to have an evening event at a local theater.



The registration and advertisement information will be published shortly, so be on the lookout for that in your email. We want this to be the best Region X Conference ever, so we need you there to make it so! I look forward to seeing you in October!

REPORT ON MAY 13th CHAPTER MEETING – DAVE GRAF

President Kathy Arpa called the Chapter Meeting to order at 1:10 pm on May 13, 2025, at the Vienna Community Center (VCC). Kathy welcomed guests and new members. Judy Hathaway led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Programs Chair Ralph Dantine introduced the guest speaker, Vienna Mayor Linda Colbert (pictured here). She discussed the status of various projects that are/will be occurring in the Town of Vienna.



- **Town Annex** (across the street from the Fire Department): The current plan is to build a Fitness Center, including a pool. The Town Council plans to vote in August on the proposal to raise the Town's Meal Tax by one cent to help fund the construction.
- **Traffic Synchronization on Maple Avenue:** The first phase of the project is expected to be completed by the end of August and the second phase by the end of November. The traffic light timings will adjust in real time to improve traffic flow.
- **Cross Walk Replacement:** The current brick crosswalks on Maple Avenue have deteriorated. They will be replaced by concrete sidewalks that will have a brick pattern, like those that have been installed on Church Street.
- **Vienna Connect Cell Phone Software.** The Town now has an application you can load on your cell phone. You can use it to send a picture of any item in Town that needs to be repaired.
- **November Town Election:** Five of the six council members will be on the ballot, as well as two new candidates. More may still submit the required documents. Linda will run for reelection as Mayor.
- **Parking:** The Town received a grant to help build a parking garage as part of the rebuilding of the Patrick Henry Library. It is expected to be completed in 2027. The Town's Planning and Zoning Commission is also reviewing parking requirements for commercial buildings and developing options to improve parking.
- **Proposed Tysons Casino:** The Town will continue to oppose the proposed Tysons Casino. All area residents are encouraged to contact their Fairfax County Board supervisor, state Delegate, and state Senator to state their opposition.



Following a question-and-answer period, there was a break to enjoy the Chapter's Annual Ice Cream Social as shown on the left.

Kathy called the Business Meeting to order at 2:15 pm. She thanked Margaret Murphy for chairing the Ice Cream Social. Kathy then passed around cards to sign for Chapter Member Shirley Martin who will celebrate her 100th birthday on July 2nd. Secretary Dave Graf read the minutes of the April Chapter Meeting. Treasurer Chris Gieseler gave the Treasurer and State legislation reports. He reported that the State Legislature's April 2nd "Reconvene Session" returned 160 bills to the Governor for final action. On May 2nd, Governor Youngkin signed the Budget Bill, including several line-item vetoes. Jayne Seidman reported that there had not been any change to our membership. We continue to have 168 Chapter members.

National Legislation Chair Jim Hathaway gave the National Legislation Report which focused on:

- There are three bills that would help federal employees and FERS retirees (the Saving the Civil Service Act, compensation for employees, and the Equal COLA Act for FERS retirees).

- The Republican budget proposal for FY 2026 would increase employee retirement withholding and reduce retirement benefits.
- Representative Don Beyer has introduced a bill that would provide a hiring preference for employees who were involuntarily removed between January 1, 2025, and January 1, 2027. (This would be like the long-time Veterans Preference.)

Sunshine Chair Harriet Epstein shared that she is now able to get past the loss of her son in January. Programs Chair Ralph Dantine announced that the June meeting will be the annual Chapter Picnic; and, that no chapter meetings will be held in July and August.

Kathy reported that there will be an election for VFN President and 1st Vice President and for two proposed By-Laws amendments. All Virginia NARFE members (with an email registered with NARFE Headquarters) should receive an Election Ballot via email by the end of May.

Margaret Murphy conducted a drawing for the 50/50 raffle to benefit the Alzheimer's Research Fund. The meeting adjourned at 2:57 pm.

TREASURER'S REPORT – CHRIS GIESELER

In May 2025, our Chapter received \$118.00 in membership dues collected by NARFE Headquarters and \$10.00 in cash from a continuing chapter member. We also received \$20 from the 50/50 drawing for Alzheimer's research, held during the May 13th Chapter meeting. We incurred \$564.10 in expenses in April and May 2025. This amount is comprised of reimbursements to--

- Margaret Murphy for the \$10.19 in expenses that she incurred in connection with the Ice Cream Social held at the May 13th meeting,
- Mark Arpa and myself for (1) the registration fees of \$190.00 (= \$95 x 2) that we both paid to attend the Virginia Federation of NARFE (VFN) Annual Meeting and Conference (Conference) held in Harrisonburg, Virginia, on April 6-9, 2025, (2) certain meals we consumed while at the Conference that were not included in the Conference registration fee, (3) my mileage incurred to attend the conference, and (4) my lodging for one night at a reduced rate (I am not claiming the other two nights' lodging). The total expenses paid to Mark Arpa were \$163.00, and to me, \$390.91.

The reimbursement claims for the conference expenses were approved by President Kathy Arpa. On April 24, 2025, I signed the check to Mark. On May 13, I signed Margaret's check, and Secretary Dave Graf signed my check. The maximum amount for expenses relating to the VFN conference that can be reimbursed is \$1,000, according to the Chapter's approved 2025 Budget. The Chapter incurred \$553.91 in VFN Conference-related expenses in 2025. Note--the remaining \$446.09 balance in this Budget line item cannot be used for other types of Chapter expenses unless the Chapter membership approves a motion to re-purpose those funds.

Other matters--

- The Chapter's electronic tax "form," the IRS 990-N, for tax year 2024, was submitted electronically to the IRS on May 12, 2025, and was accepted by the IRS. Thus, the Chapter is in compliance with the applicable 2024 federal tax-filing requirements. (Relatedly, NARFE HQ has requested that all Chapters provide HQ with a copy of the Chapters' respective 990-N forms that were submitted to the IRS. I will provide HQ with a copy of the printout of our 2024 990-N filing.)
- I am developing a method for tracking the Chapter's income and expense items, and for ensuring that those items are properly categorized vis-a-vis the Chapter's approved 2025 budget. I will be using the Excel version of our 2025 budget worksheet for this purpose and plan to complete this project in time to submit the Treasurer's Report for the August Board meeting. I will be in contact with Dave Graf over the summer regarding this project.

LEGISLATION REPORTS

NATIONAL LEGISLATION REPORT– JIM HATHAWAY

Honoring Representative Gerald Edward Connolly

This month's Legislative Action Report begins with the recognition of the passing of Gerald Edward Connolly, the U.S. Representative for Virginia's 11th Congressional District. Connolly, (age 75) who served from 2009 until his recent death, was a steadfast advocate for federal employees, championing their rights both locally and nationally. His contributions to public service have left a lasting impact, and his absence in the U.S. House of Representatives will be deeply felt by all federal workers.

H.R. 1. officially titled the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act.”

Recently, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1, a comprehensive tax and spending package that reduces earned federal benefits and implements policies affecting the merit-based civil service. The bill, which spans over 1,000 pages, was approved by a narrow vote of 215-214-1. It includes significant tax and spending reforms that will have substantial effects on federal employees and government operations.

Impact on Federal Employee Retirement Benefits

Among its provisions, H.R. 1 includes measures that will diminish the value of vested retirement benefits:

- Elimination of the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) annuity supplement, impacting retirees.
- Potential retroactive reductions for individuals who accepted voluntary early retirement as part of ongoing reduction-in-force actions.

Changes to the Merit-Based Civil Service

The bill introduces policy changes that may alter the structure of the merit-based civil service, including:

- Increased fees for appeals to the Merit System Protection Board (MSPB).
- Financial incentives for employees to transition to at-will employment.

It is important to recognize that the merit-based civil service does not exist solely to protect federal workers—it serves as a safeguard against cronyism and corruption, ensuring that government positions are filled by qualified individuals.

The End Goal of H.R. 1

Across the political spectrum—left, right, and center—there is agreement that aspects of civil service reform are necessary. However, opinions vary on the approach, extent, and methods of reform.

Over the years, good governance organizations have identified key weaknesses within federal agencies and civil service systems, including:

- Slow and complex federal hiring processes.
- Challenges in disciplining and removing problematic employees.
- An outdated job classification system that fails to reflect modern workplace realities.
- Bureaucratic inefficiencies, including excessive layers of management.
- A career-long employment model that may not align with short-term career needs.
- Lagging adaptation to modern technology, particularly information systems.
- Automatic individual pay increases that do not align with performance-based metrics.

The administration is linking individual and agency performance to its proposed civil service reforms, making this issue a high-priority initiative through:

- Executive orders and administrative actions.
- Oversight from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Key Objectives of Administration

The administration aims to:

- Reduce the size of the federal workforce to ensure presidential control over agency policy.
- Eliminate current protections for federal employees, particularly those in policy-making positions, to allow easier termination. This ensures that Administration policies are enacted quickly.
- Limit remote work and telework, with efforts to relocate a sizable portion of the 15% of federal civil service jobs currently based in the Washington, D.C. area.

As debate over H.R. 1 continues, its implications for civil service structure, federal benefits, and agency effectiveness will remain a crucial point of discussion.

VIRGINIA STATE LEGISLATION REPORT – CHRIS GIESELER

First, this is a reminder that early voting continues in advance of the **June 17, 2025**, Virginia Democratic primaries for Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General. You may have recently seen political ads on TV for these races.

Governor Youngkin has announced that a special election to fill Gerry Connolly's seat (11th House Congressional District) will be held on **September 9, 2025**. Candidates have until July 11th to file the necessary paperwork to be on the ballot.

Here are summaries of some of the 727 bills that became law in Virginia this year. Unless otherwise stated, the new laws go into effect on July 1, 2025. I decided to look at Virginia Senate bills (SB) but will cross reference House bills (HB) that are identical to the corresponding SB. The summaries focus on the new language being added to existing provisions of the Virginia Code. But there's "more to the story," once you consider how the new language relates to the rest of the Virginia Code section that is being amended.

- School boards are required to develop policies (1) restricting students' use and possession of cell phones and other "smart devices" (e.g., smart watches and tablets) during school hours ("bell to bell", including lunches and the time between classes) and (2) regulating use before and after school. A student who violates such policies cannot be suspended or expelled but is subject to other policies regarding student conduct. (SB 738 and HB 1961)
- School boards are also required to have policies (1) prohibiting "cyberbullying", defined in the bill to mean "bullying" (as defined in existing law) through the use of technology, including cell phones and other Internet-capable devices, and (2) providing protection of victims of, or witnesses to, cyberbullying, among other provisions. (SB 908)
- Any person licensed to sell mixed beverages for "offsite consumption" may now deliver such beverages to consumers within the Commonwealth, including delivery in the licensee's parking lot for orders placed electronically. (SB 811 and HB 1961, effective July 1, 2026)
- Counties, cities, or towns that allow exemptions from real estate taxes may require that an individual who qualifies for such exemptions pay any delinquent taxes, penalty, and interest owed by that individual to the jurisdiction. The Treasurer of such jurisdiction may also include information about the exemption of change-of-assessment notices and/or post such information on the jurisdiction's website. Proration of the real estate exemption may occur in the tax year in which an individual turned 65 years of age but had not yet filed an application for the exemption. (SB 816 and HB 2029)
- Juries may now decide if someone charged with reckless driving "where the degree of culpability is slight" is guilty of only "improper driving," which is a traffic infraction subject to a fine up to \$500. Previously, only the judge hearing the case without a jury could make that determination. (SB 847)

Please let me know if you have any questions about the bills (laws) described above, or if you would like more information about new or unfamiliar Virginia legislation that you have heard about.

SUNSHINE REPORT – HARRIET EPSTEIN

Our thoughts are with the family of Congressman Gerry Connolly, who passed away on May 21. He has been a frequent visitor to our chapter over the years and he will be missed. His funeral was on May 23 and was well attended.

We cannot forget to wish Happy Birthday to Shirley Martin (pictured here) as she celebrates her **100th** birthday on July 2, 2025.

If you know of someone who needs a little sunshine, please contact me at 703-560-4137.



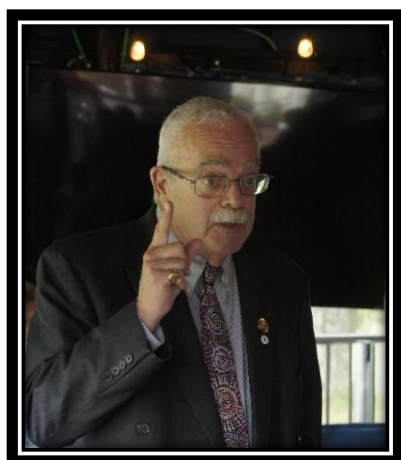
CHAPTER MEMORIES WITH CONGRESSMAN GERRY CONNOLLY JUNE 11, 2024



Leonard Levine, Harriet Epstein
with the Congressman



the Congressman with Kathy Arpa



The Congressman with Frances Boatman, VFN President