

# NARFE

Since  
1921

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# National Association of Active and Retired Federal Employees Virginia Federation of Chapters Chapter 595 Serving Colonial Beach, Westmoreland, and King George

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Dear Members of Chapter 595,

Now is the time to vote!

**VOTE VOTE VOTE**

The Virginia Federal of NARFE (VFN) is having the annual election. You should have received two emails: one from President Frances Boatman announcing the election and one email that was actually the ballot. As I have said in the past when it comes to the email ballot, if I can do it, anyone can do it! If you did not receive the emails mentioned above, please let me know as soon as possible (703 314-9109). A few people have said that the emails went to junk mail, etc. So look again for the ballot. One way to find it is to do a search of your email for the word **Vote**. This is an extremely important election as both the President and the 1st Vice President are being elected. This has rarely happened in the past. The future of the VFN will be determined by the two individuals who will eventually be elected. The deadline for voting is June 5, 2025. As soon as you receive this newsletter, please vote. You can also vote on a paper ballot that is on the [vanarfe.org](http://vanarfe.org) web page. The home page has a link to the ballot "[Click on this link](#)". The instructions are in the middle of the page.

Now our next meeting is Tuesday, June 10, 2025 at noon at Ledo's Pizza and Pasta restaurant, McKinney Blvd in Colonial Beach. As you know we have been moving around from place to place for the last year since the Hunan Diner closed. I have just received some information about several possible meeting places. So we will have lots to discuss at our June meeting. Also we will discuss plans for the summer picnic and preliminary plans for our Harvest Supper which is scheduled for Saturday, November 1, 2025 at the Colonial Beach Moose Lodge. This will be the last meeting before September.

So as you can see, a lot is happening and we need you to come out to take an active role in the planning for the future. Please join us at Ledo's on June 10.

**I want to thank everyone who have been making donations to our food bank. The donations this month go to King George Department of Social Services.**

Leslie Ravenell  
President

**MEETING NOTICE**

**June 10, 2025**

**12 PM at Ledos.**

**Our speaker is John Ashton a world traveler**

**Describing some of his trips.**

Our speaker this month will be John B. Ashton. John is a native of King George, having graduated from KGHS in 1973. He is a world traveler and will describe some of his travels. He currently lives in Washington DC but still travels extensively, especially in the Far East.

Here is John Ashton's Biography and a bit of history.

Born and raised in King George, graduated from HS in 73. I studied photography. Enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard during the Vietnam conflict, and spent 3 years. Traveled to Beirut, Lebanon during the first Lebanese civil War and worked for United Press International (UPI). Lived in Israel, Belgium and throughout the Europe. Middle East and North Africa. Studied Arabic, Middle Eastern History, Chinese History, Political Science and Economics. Returned to the United States in the 1980's and worked on Capital Hill for a Committee for a Free Afghanistan. And worked closely with the Reagan Administration, Heritage Foundation, Paul Weyrich, and lobbied Congress for aid to fight The Russians in Afghanistan. I moved to New York to do photography for a news service, which led me to Russia where I covered the Reagan-Gorbachev Summit, the 1000th Anniversary of the Russian Orthodox Church, and the 40th and final Communist Party Conference. While in Russia I studied the language which I already spoke since High School. And Russian History. I returned to New York and became the house photographer for the Club Tatou, also doing private celebrity work, many of whom I knew. From New York I traveled Europe to cover Elton John's 1992 summer tour, but after only 3 shows I saw the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. I decided to take my cameras and photograph that conflict for Time Magazine. I immediately saw the horrific crisis and started volunteering to help the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). I worked with UNHCR and set up an Aid agency in Germany to distribute meds to the three warring factions. At this time I met the leaders that were charged with war crimes by the ICC. I spent 4 years as a professional witness to genocide and ethnic cleansing at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). After which is focused on Asia where I followed up on my Asian studies. During the interim I returned to King George to assist my mother until her passing. I continue to focus on economics and China, Russian policy.

Jim Lynch 1st VP

**The following are from: FEDweek Weekly Issue**  
**Wednesday, May 28, 2025**

**Switch to High-5, Increase in Required Retirement Contributions Dropped as House Sends Key Budget Bill to Senate**

UPDATED: The House has passed a sweeping tax and spending bill on a 215 – 214 vote that sends it to the Senate where similar divisions within the GOP regarding deficit spending and Medicaid are being played out.

As the bill was being readied for the House floor vote, Republican leaders deleted from the bill a provision to require that annuities of federal employees retiring in calendar year 2028 or later be based on the employee's highest five consecutive salary years rather than the currently used highest three. [Continue](#) >

## OSC to Probationers: You're on Your Own

The Office of Special Counsel has said it will not pursue investigations into whether firings of probationary federal employees should be overturned because agencies violated civil service laws and rules, saying that “agencies have the right to summarily terminate any probationer for any reason not otherwise prohibited by law.”

In a brief before the MSPB, the OSC said it has concluded that the mass firings of probationers in February “did not violate the statutory and regulatory requirements as alleged and thus cannot constitute” a prohibited personnel practice . [Continue reading](#)