



National Active and Retired Federal Employees Aspen Hill, a Cooperative Chapter Newsletter-Expanded Edition

Aspen Hill Chapter
1892
Rockville, Maryland

April 2025--Expanded Edition (Usually Published monthly September - June) Vol. 42, No. 7

WHERE AND WHEN

Unless otherwise noted*, our Members Meetings are held on the 4th Tuesdays at 1:00 PM at the Holiday Park Senior Center, 3950 Ferrara Dr., Silver Spring, MD 20906, 240-777-4999; ample free parking; covered parking in rear. Additionally, most meetings are captured on Zoom and recorded. (April Pizza Party, see page 3)

UPCOMING MEETINGS/ACTIVITIES (Open to all)

Chapter:

- **Members Meetings:** Apr 22, May 20*, Jun 10*
- **Newsletter Input Deadlines:** Apr 15
- **Board Meetings:** Apr 2, May 7, Jun 4

Outside Events:

- **Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board (MCCAB) -** Thursday April 17, 2025 at 7PM, virtual, contact Luisa Cardona at 240-777-8101 for link.

Our Facebook Page: NARFE Chapter 1892, Aspen Hill.

Chapter Webpage: <https://sites.google.com/view/narfe-chapter-1892/home>

BALLOTS??

NARFE Maryland Federation's Election for New President and Secretary

You should have received an e-mail message, with an attached ballot. Paper ballots were not automatically sent out. **If you did not receive a ballot and need one, please call 301-785-6782 or 301-589-7465, and a ballot will be mailed to you.**

Send your ballots:

By regular mail - NARFE/MD Ballot and Teller Committee, P.O. Box 1016, Bowie, MD 20718 or

Electronically - narfemd22@gmail.com

Ballots **must be received by April 18, 2025**, at 11:59 PM (Eastern Time), to be included in the tabulation of votes!

President's Message

When too many problems hit me at once, I sing "One More Time" by Redbone, just to get through. I've been singing it a lot lately. Trying to help Federal employees who only wanted to make a good difference in the world, who are now vilified, is mentally and physically challenging.

In the long run, the courts will help balance the power of an administration over stepping. In the meantime, there are websites, like the Maryland Public Servants Resource Website (<https://response.maryland.gov/federalpublicservants/>) that provides information on unemployment insurance, career transition support and job opportunities, health coverage, housing, food, cash, and other assistance, and legal resources.

There's the Montgomery County site, (<https://montgomerycountymd.gov/OPI/fed-worker-resources.html>) that lists "Resources for Workers Impacted by Recent Federal Government Action", with information on interest-free loans, employment and career support, childcare, crisis intervention, housing, and more.

There are other programs and town halls sponsored by Interfaith Works (iworksmc.org) and several of our representatives and senators (<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Members/District>) to answer questions and identify resources.

Please continue to write to your legislators (<https://narfe.org/advocacy/legislative-action-center>), support rallies and protests, and give to charities (helping impacted former federal employees) and to the NARFE PAC.

Keep the faith--Sarah

State Legislation

By: Paul Schwartz, NARFE Region II Vice President

Several bills are moving through the process towards enactment. One of particular interest is the "Protect the Federal Workforce Act", House Bill 1424 and its Senate version Senate Bill 683. It made it out of the House and is currently being reviewed in the Senate. When passed, it will expand the state's Catastrophic Event Account to include former federal workers who are in a financial bind because of "closure, relocation or mass layoff" of the government unit they worked at.

The bill would also affect the Federal Government Shutdown Employee Assistance Loan Fund, a state fund that makes no-interest loans to federal workers in the state who are not being paid because of the actions of the federal government. It budgets \$10 million for the expanded fund.

In addition, the bill was amended in committee to expand the authority of the Maryland Attorney General's Office so that it would sue on behalf of federal workers affected by a temporary shutdown or, in the current environment, a mass firing or agency closure. It adds \$1.5 million to let the attorney general's office pursue such cases. We await passage in the state legislature and then to the Governor's desk for signature.

Note: See Legislative Update Commentary, by Steve Greenberg, Chapter 1892 Vice President, on Page 5 of this newsletter.

Membership Report

Welcome February's new members, Eleesha Lewis, Philip Millman, Regina Germain, Tina Pfefer, Debbie Isbell, Susan Smith, Melissa Green Parker, Toby Levin, Sharon Laskowski, Tia Morton, Judy Kuntz, Alan McHugh, and Myra Coffield! We are so glad that you decided to be part of Chapter 1892! We have 15 new prospective members, too many to list!

WE NEED ED!

I am voting for Edward Holland for President of the NARFE MD Federation. I feel that if I don't tell you this, I would not be doing justice to our members. If Ed Holland is not successful, I fear the Federation will continue to be run with the poor behavior we've seen for the last two years.

We need a Federation run with integrity, transparency, unification, and attention to the mission.

With Edward Holland at the helm as MD Federation President, we have a proven administrator with political experience who can help us move forward. He will give us a fresh start to inclusiveness in decision making.

Please, please vote. Especially at this time of crisis for Federal employees when we need the best.

Sarah Richards

Chapter 1892 Leadership

President.....**Sarah Richards**
301-589-7465.....NARFEsrichards@aol.com
Vice-President.....**Steve Greenberg**
301-526-4078.....patzere4@gmail.com
Region II VP.....**Paul Schwartz**
240-838-2200.....pksyanks@aol.com
Secretary.....**Myron Chace**
301-330-4713
Treasurer.....**Jim Bachmaier**
301-642-6742.....bachjchauf@verizon.net
Membership.....**Nina Chace**
301-330-4713
Alzheimer's.....**Cathy Hobbs**
301-785-6782
USPS Mail Manager.....**Merle Biggin**
301-814-6047
NARFE PAC.....**Bob Kammer**
301-847-9820
Newsletter Editor.....**Filomena Chau**
301-642-6741
Sunshine.....**Minnedore Green**
240-839-7043
Special Projects.....**Diane Boehr, Linda Jacks**
.....**Martha O'Conner**

WELCOME SPRING PIZZA PARTY



Celebrate Spring at our **April 22** meeting!

Where: Mama Lucia of Olney Restaurant
18224 Village Center Dr.
Olney, MD 20832
301-570-9500

When: Tuesday, April 22, 2025, lunch starts at 12:30pm. Speaker starts at 1:30 PM (Paul Schwartz, NARFE Region II Vice President).

Meet to catch up, discuss how to help displaced Feds, eat pizza (or your preferred food). Pay only for what you eat. Join us! Spouses/friends members from other NARFE chapters are welcome.

How to attend this meeting:

In person - Mama Lucia restaurant, Olney, MD.

(RSVP by Tue., 4/15: bachichauf@gmail.com or call 301-589-7465, so we can reserve space.)

Online - access the speaker part only at 1:30 PM via Zoom using a computer (best way), tablet, or smart phone. Just hit this link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84654406850?pwd=Ky4PTu0RMeNxbV8bxHDF9dGA1OQ0y.1>.

Meeting ID: 846 5440 6850; Passcode: 307663

Audio-only - call 301-715-8592 and key in the ID and Passcode above if requested.

Note: if possible, the speaker will be recorded and available on Chapter website.

Note: Don't miss out! Make life easier; transfer to or join Chapter 1892 by calling 800-456-8410.

Breaking News

"Free help with financial planning for federal employees shaken by upheaval", Color of Money, *The Washington Post*, Wednesday, April 2, 2025, (Page A14) by Michelle Singletary.

February 25, 2025 Big Event

Scams, Cybercrime, and Enhancing Life Using the Internet Safely



Bill Peyser

Over 100 people attended (either online or in person) the Big Event. **Bill Peyser delivered the first presentation, *Scams and Cybercrime—What you Need to Know to Protect Your Identity/Financial Assets***. Mr. Peyser volunteers on cybercrime with the Montgomery County

Department of Police and its "Keeping Seniors Safe" program. Cybercrimes are committed using information in the public domain or from stolen information. 2024 was a record year for stolen data. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI's) Elder Fraud Report for 2023 indicates more than 880,000 victims lost \$12.5 billion. Over 100,000 victims are over age 60: 6,000 seniors each lost more than \$100,000! Some scams begin with a stolen identity from personal identification information (PII) or medical information. Scammers may contact you (using phone, email, or text message) about investment opportunities, impersonating law enforcement official/family member offering help with technology problems, or romantic overtures.

How to protect yourself? Mr. Peyser advised using a railroad crossing sign's warning: Stop, Look and Listen. STOP--Don't respond right away or give in to pressure or sense of urgency. LOOK--Check for signs of errors, misinformation, and suspicious statements. (Continued on Page 4.)

(Continued from Big Event, Page 3)

LISTEN--Consult family members and trusted advisors. With computers, use good passwords, change them frequently, do not reuse them. Install antivirus devices. Establish multifactor authentication for personal computers. Notify credit bureaus. Set a credit limit to freeze credit. Review credit card statements for suspicious or unauthorized charges. Protect information on paperwork (medical statements, IRS tax forms, and Medicare reports). Safeguard Social Security account numbers. Do not answer the phone if the caller is not on a list of trusted contacts. Make use of the "Do Not Call" registry. Do not give out any PII. Contact banks, credit bureaus, or confide in others you trust.



Dolores Miller and Jane Dean

Mr. Peyser introduced two guests, Jane Dean and Dolores Miller, who were victimized by scammers.

They advised: do not get complacent; do not give money to anyone. Do talk with someone if you have been scammed. One group mentioned was the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) fraud

support group (aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/fraud-victim-support-group/). NARFE has alerts and information on FEDHub; it also has webinars with advice about personal data and finance protection.



Teri Mumm

Teri Mumm delivered the second presentation, *Enhancing Life Using the Internet Safely*. Ms. Mumm is Digital Navigator Manager, University of the Maryland Extension - Marylanders Online. This free program bridges the digital divide throughout the state by

promoting digital equity. Ms. Mumm's remarks focused on internet safety for older adults. Marylanders Online tries to improve digital literacy, build digital navigation skills, offers training to

trainers, staffs tech centers, and works with programs, such as AARP's Senior Planet.

Being knowledgeable in the digital world means having expanded access to health care information, educational and job opportunities, civic engagement, making social connections, and benefits. Be cautious with e-mail, especially when presented with e-mail links. Stay informed and educated, stay updated, ask for help. Digital navigation resources include AARP Senior Planet, Office of the Maryland Comptroller, local libraries, and community centers. **Use the Marylanders Online free tech support help line:** toll-free 1-866-206-8467. There was discussion about artificial intelligence (AI). AI can be a wonderful tool, when focusing on skill building. There is a danger with AI misrepresenting information, being inaccurate or misleading. Always double check!



Cathy Hobbs presides at the Alzheimer's table. (Cathy is Alzheimer's Chair, NARFE Aspen Hill Chapter)

NARFE - PAC Donation

Your chance to make a difference--donate to the NARFE PAC. Remember your donation goes to NARFE advocacy, which advances to Congress NARFE's national legislative program to protect Federal employees/retirees' benefits, pensions, and more. NARFE's team of registered lobbyists is backed by an informed network of grassroots activists, in every state and congressional district.

NARFE members can fill out the form found on page 11, in NARFE's April 2025, magazine and make a check payable to: NARFE-PAC. Send the form and check to: Budget Finance, 606 North Washington St, Alexandria, VA 22314.

NARFE members can also donate to the PAC at: <https://www.narfe.org/advocacy/narfe-pac/narfe-pac-member-homepage/>

Legislative Update Commentary

By Steve Greenberg, Chapter Vice President

This has been an exceptionally difficult column to write. Inasmuch as the purpose here is to document and report on the legislative process, it is impossible to do so with an administration seemingly bent on twisting, bypassing, or breaking that process entirely. It is far from clear what the overall effect of these actions is meant to be, particularly when each news cycle brings additional reports of actions that are bringing the constitutional process to a grinding halt.

That system was never simple in its details, but the broad outlines are clear to anyone who took a grade school civics class (no longer taught in Maryland, it seems) or has seen a certain hip-hop Broadway musical (which doesn't get EVERYTHING right but tries hard). The US Constitution created three co-equal branches of government. The legislative branch proposes, discusses, enacts, and provides funding for the laws that rule the country. The executive branch, with some discretion, implements and enforces these laws. The judicial branch ensures that the laws are just in and of themselves and are applied uniformly and fairly. The situation at the state level will vary considerably in detail, but the broad strokes are the same.

The Oval Office seems to be unimpressed with all of this. With a virtual blizzard of executive orders, and a non-constitutional band of techie foot soldiers, the drive is on to demolish major portions of the government created by the Congress and sanctioned by the courts and public opinion. No one who has ever worked in the federal service (as the readers of this column have) would say that the federal government is free from inefficiency and even corruption. But the unsupported claims that have been made are breathtaking, and the remedies proposed are severe and disproportional. One thinks of burning down an office building because of an unconfirmed report of a leaky faucet on the 5th floor.

The courts have struggled to keep up with all this, but there is a growing list of decisions going against the will of the Oval Office. In response, some partisans of the Oval Office have begun impeachment procedures against judges who have

ruled against them. This has prompted the Chief Justice to remind these partisans that the remedy for a lower court decision that goes against you is the appellate process, not impeachment. Sooner or later, the Supreme Court will be very, very busy.

Through all of this, the actual legislative branch has been relatively quiet. This should be no surprise to those who followed the various confirmation hearings. A government shutdown was avoided, but only barely, and the process wasn't pretty (well, continuing resolutions [CRs] and such never are). One side simply lined up behind their leader, even to the point of ceding some power to him, in a way that the courts might need to examine. The other side seemingly has no leader. So, the legislative branch is hobbled.

I'm writing this in New York City, on a train platform named for one of the great liberal senators of the late 20th century. But even before he entered the Senate, he communicated and actively worked with a demonstrably conservative president. Together they proposed and saw enacted some of the most innovative legislation of the era; legislation that benefited ALL Americans, working from within the established legislative system. It's time to remember that kind of bipartisan cooperation, and use it to keep the legislative process, and constitutional government in general, on track. If not, we could be looking at the biggest constitutional crisis in this country since 1861.

Alzheimer's Update

Thank You for Your Support - I'd like to say a special thanks to NARFE members for your continued support of Alzheimer's disease. One day a cure will be found, and the first survivor is out there!

Source: Olivia A. Williams, Chair of the NARFE-Alzheimer's National Committee, March 2025 *NARFE Magazine*, page 45

Mobilize Montgomery

Mobilize Montgomery is an initiative between Montgomery County Government, Maryland Department of Labor, WorkSource Montgomery, Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation, Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, the City of Gaithersburg, Rockville Chamber of Commerce, the Maryland Women's Business Center and Rockville Economic Development, Inc, as well as local chambers of commerce, to better support employers and employees affected by the federal government budget cuts.

The partners above recognize the impact of these recent changes on our community. Together, they're committed to providing resources to help you navigate this challenging time. Whether you're a business owner, contractor, or employee, explore key resources below on financial assistance, workforce programs, job fairs, and more. Former Federal employees who have been displaced and looking for jobs will be interested in the job fairs, etc.

Mobilize Montgomery can be found at: <https://mobilize-montgomery.com/>

**NEXT MEETING: Welcome Spring Pizza Party & discuss how to help displaced Federal employees--
Join us, Tuesday, April 22, at 12:30 PM - See Page 3.**

In Memoriam

John Parascandola, long time member, passed away November 30, 2024 at the age of 83. As a federal employee, his work included the Chief, History of Medicine Division, National Library of Medicine and the Public Health Service Historian (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) Author of four books, including *The Development of American Pharmacology...*, and *Sex, Sin, and Science...* which both won important prizes. He was the recipient of many more awards including eminent ones from the American Chemical Society and the Surgeon General. After retirement, John taught classes on topics such as the "Mummies and Mad Doctors in Film and Literature" reflecting his interest in quirky topics and old horror films. His laughter and good humor will be missed.

James Cultice, long time member, died January 26, 2025 at the age of 84. He was a senior analyst at the Bureau of Health Professions, Health Resources and Services Administration (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) and chief author of many important articles on physician and pharmacist supply projections and was the developer of the physician's supply and demand model for the U.S. His passion for ensuring that the Country had enough medical professionals was legend across America and will be missed.