

**NARFE CHAPTER 1192  
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
August 14, 2023, 1:30 p.m., Virtual**

**Zoom: VP Nancy Crosby** – Nancy was the Zoom host for the meeting. She welcomed members and guests, and reminded them to silence their electronic devices, if possible.

**Call to Order:** For President Pat Turner, VP Nancy called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m. and asked members who could stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to do so.

**Attendance:** Members present besides VP Nancy: Mary Binder; Liz Bowers; Johanna Caylor; Faye Vlieger; Darleen Wall; John Wetterling; Larry Williams. Absent: Lorie Bennett; Pat Turner. Three non-board members attended: Debbie Carlson; Nancy Pochert; Beki Van Buren. The guests have expressed interest in serving in officer or coordinator positions. [Note: Guest members are most welcome at board meetings, can ask questions/interact, but cannot vote.]

**Officer and Coordinator Reports**

**President: VP Nancy Crosby for President Pat Turner**

- Nancy asked if members had received the amended agenda she sent this morning. She said she still is having Charter internet challenges so Mary did not receive the changes she made to the draft agenda.
- Nancy provided an update on President Pat's healing journey and passed along Pat's regards to the board.
- Update on potential group activities:
  - Nancy recently called her Dust Devils point of contact to see if there were any group openings that had become available for this year. There is nothing, and Nancy said she did not think there would be. As previously reported, Nancy again said, "Lesson learned. Reserve as soon as reservations become available for 2024."
  - Regarding a Coyote Canyon Mammoth Dig Site tour, they are filled for this year. Nancy said she did invite a point of contact to a chapter meeting to make a presentation on the site. She offered March, April, May and June 2024 as options. She is waiting to hear back from the contact.
- This year's Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program open season is November 13 thru December 11.
  - GEHA will be offering a statewide webinar for NARFE members. Nancy said she would share further information/details when she receives it.
  - The new Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) program will go into effect January 1, 2025. All current and retired federal postal employees will be affected. Nancy and Mary said this coming year will be a challenging one for the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), which will administer both programs, and for NARFE, the USPS, and the health providers as they work to provide information to those who will be impacted. John said he had a conversation recently with a retired USPS employee who believes he is already being impacted. Mary recommended to John that the individual contact her or Nancy if he has questions. Also, OPM recently released a brochure on the new program. Mary said she would have copies at the September chapter meeting.
- Nancy asked Mary to update the board on her efforts over the summer to find members to serve as chapter officers or coordinators for 2024/2025. Mary provided these updates:
  - President – Nancy Crosby has agreed to run for president, if no one else steps up.
  - VP – Mary said she would run for VP to back up Nancy, if no one else steps up.
  - Secretary – Nancy Pochert has agreed to fill this position. She has an administrative background. Mary and Nancy will be meeting at Mary's house Tuesday, August 15, to begin training for the transition.

- Treasurer – Liz has said she would continue to serve, if no one else is willing to do so. To date no one has expressed interest in this position.
- Membership Coordinator – Johanna is willing to continue serving in this position.
- Legislative Coordinator – Mary is willing to continue serving in this position.
- NARFE-PAC Coordinator – John will be stepping down from the position at the end of the year. Mary said she and Nancy discussed possibly combining this position with the legislative coordinator's position as has been done at the state level as they are very intertwined.
- Public Relations Coordinator – Mary is willing to continue serving in this position. However, Beki Van Buren is willing to take over the newsletter as she has a background in writing, editing and newsletters. She and Mary will meet at Mary's house Wednesday, August 16, to begin the training and transition process.
- Caller Coordinator – Darleen said she is willing to continue serving in this position.
- Sunshine Coordinator – Faye said she is willing to continue serving in this position.
- Alzheimer's Coordinator – Larry would like to step down from this position. Mary shared that she is continuing to work on finding someone to serve in the position.
- Webmaster – Larry is willing to continue serving but Nancy Crosby will be working with Larry to learn how to post information to the website to assist Larry. Mary also updated the board on NARFE's new WordPress initiative. There is a new staff individual at headquarters who is working on this initiative. Some pilot tests are in progress. Also, Mary said her layout/design friend, Dominique, who has helped Mary for many years with NARFE and other things, is very familiar with WordPress. So, she could be a local source to assist with a transition if the board moves to WordPress.
- Debbie Carlson has volunteered to assist wherever she is needed, e.g., sitting with Liz at the sign-in table, monitoring the PAC contributions bowl at meetings, helping with speakers/programs, decorating for the meetings when Mary is out of town, etc.
- Mary thanked all new volunteers willing to step up and serve, and all those who are willing to continue serving.
- The slate of officers will be presented at the October chapter meeting; elections will be at the November meeting; and installation of officers at the December meeting. Officers and coordinators assume their new duties January 1.

**Vice President: Nancy Crosby** – No report.

**Hospitality Coordinator: Nancy Crosby** – Nancy said she is planning to meet with the new Red Lion Hotel catering point of contact in the October time frame to discuss next year's contract and menu. She recently learned there is a new sales and catering manager.

- Nancy said Mary was able to locate chapter menus back to 2012 and she will be using those as reference during fall meetings. The board discussed: the current menu, and satisfaction and dissatisfaction with it; changes over the years, e.g., no rolls to reduce costs and smaller portions to avoid waste; current challenges with overall quality and variety including the increases in food and labor costs; and, that the hotel no longer has a full restaurant – it does provide hotel guests breakfast and has a bar menu. A question asked – what is on the bar menu and should we more closely align with that?
- Liz suggested providing a copy of this year's menu to each attendee at the September meeting and ask them to annotate their top 3 favorites and cross off what they did not like. This could help Nancy in her discussions with the catering manager. Mary said she would make the copies for the meeting.
- Nancy said if someone wants to join her when she meets with the catering manager to let her know. They are welcome. Beki Van Buren said she is interested in going with her.

### **Treasurer: Liz Bowers**

- Liz emailed board members a draft 2024 budget just prior to the meeting. She went through the draft with the board, including the rationale for her analysis and estimates. She also noted the cost of printing/mailling a newsletter to a member now exceeds the member's \$10/year chapter dues. **[Note: Members will continue to be encouraged to receive electronic vs. printed/mailed copies of the newsletter.]** Liz encouraged members to provide her feedback/input on the draft budget.
- Currently, Liz reported, the chapter had more than \$700 in checking and more than \$19K in savings. Primary expenses since the June board meeting were for stamps and the chapter newsletter printing and mailing. Besides the one-time funds received for members transferred to the Tri-Cities chapter from the now-closed Wenatchee and Yakima chapters, the additional \$2.64 per meal members agreed to pay for lunches this year has helped keep income at more than expenses.

### **Secretary: Mary Binder**

- Next virtual board meeting – Monday, October 16, 1:30 p.m. [Nancy will send the link.]
- Mary reminded members to let her know when they will be out of town and/or off their computers or electronic devices for a period of time in case we need to reach them.

### **Washington State Federation (WSF): DVP I Mary Binder; Alzheimer's Coordinator Lorie Bennett**

- **DVP I Mary:**
  - Mary reported that it has been a busy summer with meetings and projects.
    - She and Bea Bull, her DVP counterpart for the western side of the state, have continued to work on updating policies and procedures, and federation officer and coordinator job descriptions.
    - WSF VP Mary Traxler has been working with a committee on a federation strategic plan that will be unveiled at the September federation annual meeting. A primary focus is on recruiting members.
  - The annual WSF meeting, and an Advisory Committee meeting, will be virtual, Wednesday, September 27, 10:00 a.m. Mary asked everyone to please note this on their calendars. WSF President Cray Henry has requested all federation chapter presidents provide a brief update about their chapters. Nancy will provide the Tri-Cities chapter update for President Pat.
  - Looking further ahead, a Region IX training conference is being planned for October 24-26, 2024, Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick. (NARFE's Region IX has 5 states: Alaska; Idaho; Montana; Oregon; and Washington.) Mary shared that having the conference here was the only choice on the table as it is a good and central location, and past attendees have liked coming to this area. Mary also shared she is chairing this initiative, by default. A conference committee has been meeting and has representatives from each of the 5 states. Mary said she has emphasized to the committee that she needs support from all the states as it is not fair to the Tri-Cities chapter members to again have to do the bulk of the work for a regional conference. To date, there has been good support, e.g., WSF Treasurer Arlene Patton has volunteered to handle registration and treasurer duties; Idaho Federation President Keri Gibbs is working with vendors; Region IX VP Steve Roy and WSF President Cray Henry will be coordinating speakers from NARFE headquarters. Mary said she will eventually need chapter volunteers as tasks evolve. More information to follow in the months ahead.
  - WSF President Cray Henry will be the program speaker at the Tri-Cities chapter meeting, September 6, and the Spokane chapter meeting, September 11. Mary said she would be working with WSF Secretary Linda Wallers on sending out a FedHub

message to all WSF members with email addresses regarding these meetings and the opportunity to meet President Henry. This would include chapter and national-only members. Nancy expressed concerns regarding sending out the message as reservations are needed for the Tri-Cities chapter meeting. She emphasized that individuals MUST make reservations to attend and/or to have lunch. That is, they cannot just show up without a reservation. Mary said that information will be included and emphasized in the announcement. After further discussion, there was agreement that the RSVPs would go to Nancy's email addresses and MUST be received by August 30.

- **Alzheimer's Coordinator Lorie** – No report.

**Newsletter Editor/Public Relations Coordinator: Mary Binder**

- Mary reminded board members who have not submitted articles/input to her for the September/October chapter newsletter to do so by Wednesday, August 16. With the Labor Day Weekend, the newsletter needs to be finalized, posted and mailed sooner than usual.
- Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce monthly lunch/meeting is Wednesday, August 23, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Three Rivers Convention Center. Member cost: \$30. The chapter is a Chamber member. Speaker is Congressman Dan Newhouse. To date, Mary, Nancy Crosby and John Wetterling are registered. Contact Mary or Nancy if you want to attend.
- 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Senior Picnic, Thursday, September 21, Howard Amon Park and Richland Community Center. Tickets are \$5 and available at the Richland Community Center; Pasco Parks & Recreation; Southridge Events & Sports Complex.
- 2024 NARFE calendar – information is on page 48, August *NARFE Magazine*, about obtaining the calendar.
- Upcoming outreach activities:
  - October 14, Walk to End Alzheimer's – the chapter will have a team and a table.
  - October 17, Senior Times Expo, Southridge Sports Complex – the chapter will have a table at the fall event.

**Legislative Coordinator: Mary Binder**

- National –
  - Repealing GPO/WEP remain top NARFE legislative priorities. Updated information is on page 10, August *NARFE Magazine*.
  - August is NARFE Grassroots Advocacy Month (GAM). During this month when most legislators are in their home districts/states, NARFE encourages its members to try to meet with them – an extension of work done during **LEGcon23** in June. Mary said she is hoping to have a meet/greet opportunity with Congressman Newhouse at the Chamber luncheon, August 23.
- State – Mary said she has continued to get state legislative updates through the Washington Policy Center (WPC). Recently, she attended a WPC “young professionals” event in Pasco. Chapter member Dot Stewart also attended. Guest speaker was the current Miss America, Grace Stanke, who is studying to be a nuclear engineer. Looking ahead, Mary said she has reached out to Sean O'Brien, WPC's new Eastern Washington director, about providing a state legislative update at the chapter's February meeting. Sean lives in the Tri-Cities and has an extensive legislative background, including having served for several years on Congressman Dan Newhouse's staff (W-04). [Note: Having Sean would be in lieu of Jason Mercier, WPC's former director for government reform. Jason provided a state legislative update at chapter meetings for more than 10 years but is now with the new Mountain States Policy Center. His replacement, Chris Corry, has been the state representative for the 14<sup>th</sup> legislative district since 2019. He is based in Yakima, and with the state legislature in session in February, it would be unlikely to have him as a speaker.]

**NARFE-PAC Coordinator: John Wetterling**

- John said he was left out from distribution when NARFE released the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter PAC reports. Mary forwarded the information to him. He contacted NARFE and learned a different database was used and his name was not on it. This has been corrected.
- Earlier in the summer, John said he attended what he thought was going to be a Congressman Dan Newhouse town hall meeting. Rather, it was a hearing on breaching the Lower Snake River Dams. He said he learned several agencies, e.g., the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Bonneville Power Administration, are holding meetings regarding the breaching but they are not open to the public.
- He reported he would not be able to attend the September chapter meeting but would have PAC information available to share with members. He is providing the information to Nancy.

**NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund Coordinator: Larry Williams**

- Larry reminded the board that the area's annual Walk to End Alzheimer's is Saturday, October 14, John Dam Plaza, Richland. The chapter's team is registered. To date, Larry and Mary have registered. The chapter will have a NARFE table; Johanna said she will help.
- Larry also provided an update on the FDA's approval of lecanemab [Leqembi™, Eisai], which has slowed down/reduced the presence of amyloid beta plaque for those diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's. He said Medicare will cover the cost of ["treatments that receive traditional FDA approval if clinicians register and enter data in a registry."]

**Webmaster: Larry Williams**

- Larry reported he is continuing to post information to the website.
- Nancy Crosby and Larry will be meeting so Nancy can learn how to post information to the website as a backup to Larry.

**Service Officer (Acting): Nancy Crosby**

- Nancy said that in a recent OPM announcement, the agency "...has released 3 new videos to help retired federal employees with the process of accessing their online retirement accounts." Mary will make copies of the release and have them at the September chapter meeting. The information will also be in the September/October chapter newsletter.
- The next NARFE Federal Benefits Institute webinar is Thursday, August 31, 2 p.m., EDT. Topic: "Thrift Savings Plan: Should You Stay or Should you Go?"

**Membership Coordinator: Johanna Caylor**

- Johanna said she is working on updating the lists the callers will need to make their annual calls to members. [Note: More details in the Caller Coordinator's report, below.]
- Johanna said a lot of newsletters are coming back with address changes.
- Johanna reported she has continued to work on getting distinguished member recognitions to members who were transferred to the Tri-Cities chapter from the now-closed Wenatchee and Yakima chapters. She is verifying mailing and email addresses, and will get updated information to Nancy and Darleen. [Note: From the June 13 board meeting, Johanna said if these members come to a chapter meeting, she will give them the recognition certificate and other material. If not, she will have NARFE send the material to them.]
- Johanna said she will be contacting Vic Rohret (from Yakima) as a follow up to a previous conversation she had with him regarding getting a couple of vans to bring former Yakima chapter members who are now Tri-Cities chapter members to the September chapter meeting. [Note: Additional information is in the June 13 virtual chapter board meeting minutes. Vic is a past WSF secretary.] Mary said she would contact Charles Rinker, the recent Yakima chapter president about the meeting. He is now a Tri-Cities chapter member.
- Johanna asked if the FEHB Program fall health fair schedule had been released. Mary said she did not know but would check. **[Note: Johanna subsequently had correspondence with Sheri Davis-Sipila, Washington's Premera point of contact. She learned the Eastern Washington schedule is still being worked. To date, only 3 date/locations**

have been set: Yakima Training Center, November 6, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m.; USDA-ARS, Wapato, November 6, 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, November 7, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m., Walla Walla.]

- Mary reminded the board about NARFE's annual membership drive, which has been September 1 through December 31 in past years. To date she said she has not seen information about this year's drive but it will most likely be in the September *NARFE Magazine*. **[Note: Mary received the magazine after the meeting. It does have the information. See page 50. It will be included in the chapter's fall newsletters.]**

**Sunshine Coordinator: Faye Vlieger** – Faye has updated her report and will send Mary a copy for the September/October newsletter and for secretarial records. Nancy confirmed for Faye that President Pat is receiving her mail at her home address.

**Caller Coordinator: Darleen Wall** – Darleen provided background information and an update on the upcoming annual calls to all chapter area members.

- Volunteer callers are assigned alpha lists of members to call. Two primary reasons for the calls are to verify member contact information and confirm if they want to be called for the monthly meetings. Per discussion at the June chapter board meeting, callers will be calling out-of-area members, e.g., those in Yakima, Walla Walla and Wenatchee, as for most callers these are no longer long-distance calls. In prior years, calls were only made to local members to avoid long-distance charges.
- Johanna is reviewing and updating member lists and will get them to Darleen. Darleen will also prepare a "proforma letter" for the callers – a template with information to use when making their calls that includes the meeting lunch menu, program information, whether a member is planning to attend the meeting/have lunch, etc. In answer to Nancy's question, Darleen said at this time she believes she has enough callers. With members potentially on travel, calls will be made prior to the Labor Day Weekend. Nancy has to provide the reservation count to the Red Lion Catering Office on Monday, September 4.

**Open Discussion Items:** Nothing for open discussion.

### **2023 PROJECTED MEETING PROGRAMS**

**NOTE:** Due to the length of this meeting, the board postponed reviewing the list of programs members suggested at the March 1, 2023 chapter meeting. It will be on the agenda for the October 16 board meeting.

**09/06/23 NARFE WSF President Cray Henry is scheduled as program speaker, providing info on his background, federation goals, etc. (Confirmed; POC: Mary Binder)**

**10/04/23 Overview of Benton or Franklin County Conservation Districts. (Confirmed; POC: Debbie Carlson – she will continue to follow up/coordinate prior to the meeting)**

**11/02/23 Annual Chapter White Elephant Fundraiser for the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund – members bring items for the auction. (Confirmed; remind members to bring items (no weapons), cash/checkbook; POC: Larry Williams)**

**12/06/23 Jeff Peterson and his mellow trumpet return for a holiday music program. (Tentative; POC: Liz Bowers – she will contact Jeff to confirm)**

**01/03/24 TR!DEC (Tri-City Development Council) and Hanford Communities updates from David Reeploeg, TR!DEC VP, federal programs; Hanford Communities executive director. (Confirmed; POC: Mary Binder)**

**02/07/24 State Legislative Update, Sean O'Brien, Washington Policy Center, Eastern Washington director. (Tentative; POC: Mary Binder)**

**03/06/24**

**04/03/24**

**05/01/24**

**06/05/24**

**09/04/24**

**10/02/24**

**11/06/24 Annual Chapter White Elephant Fundraiser for the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund – members bring items for the auction. (Tentative; remind members to bring items, cash/checkbook: POC: Larry Williams)**

**12/06/24 Holiday Music Program.**

**Adjourn: 3:31 p.m.**

**Prepared by:  
Mary Alice Binder  
Secretary**