



# NARFE News Tri-Cities Chapter 1192

NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES (NARFE) ASSOCIATION  
ADVOCATES FOR CURRENT AND FORMER FEDERAL EMPLOYEES!!

VOLUME 2007, ISSUE 1

JANUARY-FEBRUARY-MARCH-APRIL 2007

MEETINGS: 1ST WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH @ 11:30 AM, RED LION HOTEL AT COLUMBIA CENTER - KENNEWICK  
NO MEETINGS - JULY & AUGUST

## 2007 CHAPTER 1192 OFFICERS

Clark Crouch, President/NARFE Net	946-1558
Verneice Skinner, 1 <sup>st</sup> VP & Treasurer	627-2053
Carl Gallion, 2 <sup>nd</sup> VP	967-9161
Joseph Kuhns, IPP	685-6848
Nancy Crosby, Secretary	735-3288
Verneice Skinner, Treasurer	627-2053
Don & Mary A. Binder, Legislative	585-1393
Mary Goldie, Co-Service Officer	582-8757
Nancy Schreckhise, Co-Service Officer	585-7558
Lyell Bingham, Alzheimer's Chair	946-9444
Wm. (Bill) Darke, NARFE-Pac	375-7757
Nancy Crosby Public Relations	735-3288
Vacant - PRelations Co-Chair	
Anne M. Ross, Sunshine	586-3355
Estelle Bellefeuille, Parliamentarian	783-8461
Carl Gallion, Hospitality	967-9161
Johanna Caylor, Membership & Newsletter	375-0739
Al Rizzo, Deacon	375-0446

## IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED, SKYDIVING IS NOT FOR YOU

- Your continued membership is important simply because the more members we have, the greater our voice in working to keep the benefits retirees and three five four four current employees have and to support or resist new retirement and employment issues as they arise. **The more members we have, the louder our voice, it's as simple as that!**
- For example, among the issues we're working on is legislation to allow civilian and military retirees to pay monthly **health insurance premiums with pre-tax dollars**, just as current employees do. That could save a retiree hundreds of dollars a year!
- Your membership is important to help maintain a strong political, but nonpartisan, voice in Washington! That is the truly vital aspect of keeping your NARFE membership current!

For **retirees**, the easiest, and most painless, way to do that and to help keep NARFE strong is to sign up for dues withholding! It is only

\$2.88 per month and you send NO MONEY with the application.

**CFE's** – take advantage of the 3- yrs for \$60.00 while you are employed. Don't forget, a membership for your spouse will further strengthen that voice!

## 2<sup>nd</sup> VICE-PRESIDENTS REPORT (Carl Gallion)

**What's happening in our Chapter** Over the last few months, our chapter and some of our members have really been busy. One huge task undertaken by **Estelle Bellefeuille** was to edit our Chapter By-laws and bring them up to date. She did a stellar job on this and our members passed these changes unanimously at our monthly meeting. One of the changes provides for a 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President. This office is intended to be the next chapter president "in waiting", so to speak.

Since the next election is not until November, your executive board nominated and approved **Verneice Skinner** as our 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President. Verneice is our current Treasurer and will relinquish that position as soon as a replacement is found. **Nancy Crosby** has accepted the position of Public Relations for our chapter and will also leave her current position as Secretary when a replacement is located.

Our elected Federation President, **Dwight Pace** (Spokane) has struggled with health challenges and needed to step down. WSFC V-P Dale Brighton (Wenatchee Chap-

## PRESIDENT REPORT

(Clark Crouch)

**Why Should I Renew?** Someone said the other day, "I don't know whether I should renew my NARFE membership. I never seem to have time to go to chapter meetings and I really don't understand some of the issues that NARFE deals with."

There's something a great deal more important than chapter meetings (and we do have a staff of professionals back in Washington to help us keep up with the issues).

ter) has assumed the WSFC Presidency. Our own **Clark Crouch** was nominated and approved unanimously by the Federation Executive Board to be our Federation Vice President. Congratulations to all those chapter members who continually give their all for the good of our organization

**DISTRICT V WORKSHOP** - I would like to thank everyone from our NARFE chapter who joined to make our Spring Workshop 2007 in Soap Lake, April 18<sup>th</sup>, a wonderful experience.....THANKS!

I hope you enjoyed our gathering...the exchange of information and to the pleasant conversations with our "center of the State" fellow NARFE'ers ....the accommodations were most pleasant and the food was very enjoyable.

I am particularly humbled to be the new District V Vice President and I promise to continue the fine work started by my predecessors Eula Pritchard and Marvin Nelson. This will afford me the opportunity to meet and work with each of our chapters in our District and to represent them at the State Federation meetings. Thank you one and all for all your support.

We were overjoyed to have Lanny with us at the Workshop. He expressed much appreciation for all who sent cards and well wishes during his recent hospitalization. He really looks great!! To me, our Spring Workshop is always a "warm-up" to our Federation convention. I'm really looking forward to our gathering next month in Silverdale. Many thanks to the attending delegates nine eight seven seven signed up to go. We still have room for 4 more delegates from Chapter 1192...and it's not too late if anyone changes their minds. Just let me know...ASAP.

Enjoy what promises to be a beautiful Spring! Again, many thanks for your continued support.

### **We Missed You at the Meeting - Our New Super Door Prize for Luncheon Attendees!!**

Our monthly meetings are quite informative and enjoyed by many...but we would still like to see more folks participate on the first Wednesday of every month (except July and August). We usually only see about 10% of our members at the Red Lion Hotel in Kennewick for our luncheons. Our programs have been really excellent since we switched to our whole executive board being on the program committee. IF you want to see a program on a subject you feel would be of great interest to our group, please forward your idea to someone on the board and we'll gladly promote it.

To "sweeten the pot," we looked at a new idea from our fellow-chapter, Wenatchee. At our April meeting, we introduced the **SUPER DOOR PRIZE**. Our board funded it with \$50 cash to start and it will grow by \$10 each month until it is awarded. It contains wine, prizes and we hope it will grow with dinners from local restaurants and maybe even some trips besides the cash. All **you** need to do is **be there** if your name is drawn - every chapter

member's name is in the drawing! We wish **Dana Kranz** had been there as her name was drawn as our first potential winner. Please try to attend our meetings and find out the latest on current legislation that affects current federal employees and retirees earned retirement benefits and meet lots of great folks ...and collect our Super Door Prize if your name is called!

### **SERVICE CENTER NEWS**

(Mary Goldie and Nancy Schreckhise)

**NARFE Scholarship Fund** - To make a tax-deductible donation to the NARFE Scholarship Fund, make your check payable to NARFE-FEEA Scholarship Fund and send to: NARFE Scholarship Award Program c/o FEEA 8441 Bowles Ave, Suite 200 Littleton, CO 80123-3245

**Member Discounts:** Membership in NARFE is not without privileges of its own. Earn back your membership dues with valuable savings on auto, long-term care, dental, life insurance, FEHBP and Medicare Supplemental Insurance, and more! From car rentals, to moving services, hotels, and travel offers, get the most for your money through trusted names you'll recognize. Start the advantages of NARFE membership by joining today!

Chapter 1192 Service Officers are available to assist and support members, their families and survivors to take the proper actions to obtain and retain their annuities and health care, long term care, and federal group life insurance benefits. The Service Center is located in the U. S. Federal Building at 825 Jadwin Avenue, Richland, WA. Room 137 and is open Tuesday mornings from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., telephone (509) 373-9536. You may contact the Chapter Service Co-Officers at home by calling Nancy Schreckhise at (509) 585-7558 or Mary Goldie at (509) 582-8757).

**NARFE-PAC** (Bill Darke-Chairman) "***Politics is the art of preventing people from taking part in affairs which properly concern them.***" Paul Valery (1871-1945)

A political action committee is a committee chartered to administer, disburse, and disclose funds contributed voluntarily and used solely for political purposes. NARFE-PAC helps fund the political arm of our organization in Alexandria, VA (Washington DC) whose sole purpose is to protect the benefits of individuals with a vested interest in the civilian retirement systems of the federal government. The funds are used to help elect Senators and Representatives from either political party who are sympathetic to the concerns of active and retired federal employees and who support fair and equitable federal retirement programs. Whether your interest is in full funding of retirement benefits, fighting proposed reductions in those benefits, or ensuring that adequate health benefits are available throughout retirement, NARFE-PAC is working for you.

We have now entered into a new two-year (2007-2008) PAC funding period. New lapel pins are available for a \$20.00 contribution. I have contributed to NARFE-PAC,

and hope you will all do so to help ensure that NARFE can continue to look out for our common interests.

**LEGISLATIVE** (Don and Mary Alice Binder)

**Change** – we are seeing it all around us. The longer, warmer and brighter days seem to bring an energy to many that may have been dormant during the shorter, colder and darker winter days. However, legislative activities have not been dormant, and it has been an interesting time for us as your legislative co-chairs.

Most significant to report is that we attended the recent 2007 NARFE Legislative Training Conference in Bethesda, Md. About 300 NARFE members were there, with more than half for the first time. Our Region IX had about 25 attendees with 14 from the Washington Federation, including WSFC officers Dale Brighton (President), her husband Tom; Vic Rohret (Secretary); and, Marvin Nelson (District V V-P). This biennial legislative training opportunity had a primary focus in three areas:

- to provide NARFE members training and information on the legislative process and key legislative issues affecting or potentially affecting NARFE members;
- to provide an opportunity to meet with elected officials and their staffs; and
- to provide an opportunity to interface with NARFE leadership and members.

NARFE's new president, Margaret Baptiste, said she remains committed to communicating with NARFE members as was her platform when she was elected at the National Convention last year. She also stressed that NARFE members need to contact their legislators directly; do not rely on NARFE's senior leaders alone to do this.

Conference attendees also had the opportunity to attend five breakout sessions, covering Social Security, health-care, the U.S. budget, contacting Congress, and NARFE-PAC. The presentations, handout materials, and question and answer opportunities were pertinent, very informative and helpful.

We had the opportunity, along with other Washington delegates, to meet with staff members for our state's elected officials. Walking the halls of Congress – what an awesome experience, and one we wish more people could do! Most staffers, speaking for our state's elected officials, knew of NARFE – some are even members. Most knew of NARFE's current key issues and were supportive. Both Senators Maria Cantwell and Patty Murray hold weekly coffee sessions for constituents visiting Washington, D.C. – more opportunities for Washington state NARFE members to discuss issues with their senators.

**Note: If you want more information about the conference, see the May 2007 NARFE Retirement Life.**

As for NARFE's key legislative initiatives, they remain the same – the Social Security offsets, **GPO/WEP** (Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision), and **Premium Conversion** to ease the high cost of health care by extending tax relief to federal annuitants

and military retirees. Both have been introduced in the House and Senate, and have co-sponsors. Watch for monthly updates in *NARFE Retirement Life*, which provides the latest information on the status of these initiatives.

Key to success is contacting our Congressional leaders and encouraging them to support these initiatives. Remember the saying, **the squeaky wheel gets heard!** In this day and age of budget challenges, fiscal accountability and responsibility, this is truer today than ever. NARFE senior leaders recognize this, too, and know that just maintaining the benefits we have as feds is a challenge, let alone trying to obtain more. The work ahead for NARFE to succeed with the GPO/WEP and Premium Conversion will continue to be difficult and will require constant monitoring. We can all help by contacting our representatives.

As your legislative chairs, we will continue to monitor these issues, and others that may pertain to federal employees and retirees. Since Don is frequently in Washington, D.C., he has and will continue to attend our senators' coffee sessions, as well nine three one eight as maintaining contact with other state elected officials. He has also had the opportunity to visit NARFE's national headquarters in Alexandria, VA., and meet with NARFE's senior leadership. If you have legislative questions, concerns or comments, please feel free to contact us. Our contact information is: [don\\_binder@msn.com](mailto:don_binder@msn.com) ("**underscore**" between don and binder) Don's cell #: 509-378-1013

[mary\\_binder@msn.com](mailto:mary_binder@msn.com) ("**underscore**" between mary and binder) Mary's cell #: 509-378-2494

As a reminder, here is contact information for our Washington State U.S. Congressional representatives:

**Senator Patty Murray** - 509-453-7462 (Yakima office)  
402 E. Yakima Ave., Ste 390, Yakima, WA 98901  
<http://murray.senate.gov/email/index.cfm>

email - [Senator\\_murray@murray.senate.gov](mailto:Senator_murray@murray.senate.gov)

**Senator Maria Cantwell** - 509-946-6937 (Richland office)  
825 Jadwin Ave., Rm G58A, FB, Richland, WA 99352  
<http://cantwell.senate.gov/contact/email.cfm>

email - [Maria@cantwell.senate.gov](mailto:Maria@cantwell.senate.gov)

**Representative Doc Hastings** – 509-543-0396 (Pasco office)  
2715 St. Andrew Loop, Ste. D, Pasco, WA 99301

<http://hastings.house.gov/ContactForm.aspx>  
email – [doc\\_hastings@housemail.house.gov](mailto:doc_hastings@housemail.house.gov)

ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT YOU'RE UNIQUE, JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE.

**Would you like to help your Chapter?** Say, do you have a little time to share? Maybe you need to get out of the house occasionally - Keep in contact with some of your former co-workers. Suppose you wanted to meet some very interesting and dedicated people in your local area...or even surrounding areas. Why, I'll bet you have talent or ability that you don't often let be known to others. Does any of this sound familiar?

Our NARFE chapter is always looking for people to step up to the plate to do chapter jobs. Right now, we need someone to be our **Chapter Secretary** - 2 meetings each month and plenty of assistance to learn the job. We are also looking for someone to take over producing our **Newsletter**. Perhaps you can create something different. What a creative job that can be, assembling, editing, and managing the distribution of a quarterly publication that is read by every one of our members. Maybe managing our funds is more your style. You could tackle our **Finance Committee**, helping with an audit or even be our **Treasurer**. We are always looking for people who can stand up and lead our chapter. I personally can tell you there is no greater reward than being a Chapter President. It's challenging, yes, but can be truly gratifying.

What ever your ability or desire might be...we've got a job for you. You will be pleasantly surprised to find people just like yourself who one zero four four contribute to our Chapter operation every day. We need telephone callers who contact and remind members of monthly meetings. Please contact one of our current leaders and they can help you find just the job you are looking for.

**HIDDEN NUMBERS**—The unclaimed hidden numbers in the last issue were: **Beryl Crouter (4221), Art Lassilla (0144), and Ellen Rokkan (2314)**. We would like to thank **Arnold Berlage** for noticing that there were only 3 hidden numbers in the last issue. Evidently in the final “cut of the newsletter” – a paragraph listing the 4<sup>th</sup> hidden number was deleted - **OOOPS!** Just shows to go you – some folks do look for their numbers. He was awarded **\$5.00** at the December meeting just for finding the error. The hidden numbers are the last four digits of members ID#. Four (4) new hidden numbers in this issue. If you read the newsletter on our website – be sure and look closely for your number!! Print and bring it to the May or June 2007 Chapter General Meeting and you will receive \$5.00 **OR** if you live out of state - mail the section with your ID # to Newsletter Editor and you will receive a \$5.00 reimbursement.

**SUNSHINE NEWS** (Anne Ross) Please call 586-3355 to notify me of anyone you feel may need cards.

**Sympathy and Condolences** to the following NARFE family members and/or co-workers: It is sad to lose friends but what great memories we retain. Ralph E. (Ted) Austin, Susan Avery (Son), Don Binder (Father), Janis Gilliam-(DOE-Ret), Judy Hames (Mother), Dave Malcheski (DOE-Ret), Bettye Milton (Sister), Julianna (Evie) Norman (Brother); and Jean Smith (DOE-Ret).

**NEWSLETTER** (Johanna Caylor-Editor): MEMBERS with email capabilities—IF you receive a hard copy of the newsletter and you have a computer, please send me an email and I will delete your name from the mailing list. It will be posted to our website for all members to read and/or download. (Editor)

**MEMBERSHIP NEWS** (Johanna Caylor) **WELCOME** to our **new** chapter members **NOVEMBER 2006** thru

**MARCH 2007** – Donald Alexander, Catherine Brekke (SS), Edward Brost\*, Kenneth Brutscher-Umatilla, Burr B. Elliott, Ernest Estrada (AZ), William (Bill) Fish, Melanie Fletcher\*, Bruce Ginther (DW), Max Cooper-Ford\*, Rosalio L. Guillen\*, Gary A. Hagedorn (USFWL), Betty Hollowell\*, Richard A. Holten\*, R. E. (Randy) Johnson\*, W. Connie Johnson (DW), Paul Kruger, A. N. (Al) Lake\*, Mary M. LaMont, Kandi J. Massey\*, Vicki A. Melting\*, Colleen A. Meyers\*, Gil M. Ramin, Edward H. Randklev\*, Robert L. Rosson, Joanne R. Shadel\*, Yvonne Sherman\*, Dale H. & Gail M. Splett\*, James Stapleton, and Debra Wilcox\*. (**Note:** \* = CFE's)

**Reinstated members:** Kathy Andrews-Smith\*, T. H. (Tom) Davies\*, Byron Nelson Hall\*, James D. Kautzky\*, Helen P. Mennecke, Santos U. Ortega\*, Herbert W. Scheurlein, and Paul W. Taylor. **WELCOME BACK!!!**

**Transferred Out:** Joseph A. Pickett and Lloyd Piper.

**Transfer In** – Eugene H. Harrelson (China Lake), and Norma Jean Van Patten (DoD). **WELCOME!!!**

**FEHBP Assistance Day** will be Wednesday, May 30<sup>th</sup> in the Federal Building Lobby (9:30 am) and the Jadwin Office (1:00 pm). The carriers are really just a touching base with the employees and retirees during the year. It also gives eligible participants a chance to know who their representative is in case they have issues and have problems getting them resolved. Health Providers will include: **Blue Cross/Blue Shield, KPS, Group Health, GEHA, and Mailhandlers**. NARFE will be represented with membership information for our ongoing **MEMBERSHIP DRIVE**.

**Dropped Members.** We have several members who “dropped” their membership during the past several months.....current federal employees, retirees and survivor annuitants. We hope that your renewal notice was misplaced and are suddenly missing your monthly NARFE – Retirement Life magazine for up-to-date information. If you have misplaced your renewal slips, retirees can mail your \$39.00 checks **payable to NARFE** - to Johanna (return address) for transmittal to the National Office. If you are CFE's and need another renewal notice, please contact me.

**ALZHEIMER's REPORT** (Lyell Bingham) A hearty thank you for the prayers and well wishes during my recovery from surgery this past winter and to all who continue to support our Alzheimer's fund raising by dropping your loose change and checks into the container at our Monthly meetings. The WSFC Alzheimer's Raffle tickets will be available at the May meeting. Prize is a \$100.00 gift certificate to any PIER 1 store. Tickets are \$1.00 each.

Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes.

That way, when you criticize them, you're a mile away and you have their shoes.

**Two Cabinet Departments Have Statutory Authority to Develop New Personnel Systems (Pay Banding)  
by Don and Mary Binder**

The 9/11 attacks had many outcomes – many very visible while others not so visible to the average citizen. One less visible outcome was President Bush's request to Congress for authority to establish federal government personnel systems that would provide "pay for performance." The general intent was to help make federal employment more flexible and competitive for 21<sup>st</sup> century needs. The President specifically requested that authority for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of Defense (DoD). Congress agreed and thus approved two separate laws permitting movement in that direction – the Homeland Security Act of 2002 and the 2004 National Defense Authorization Act. At this time, DHS and DoD are **the only two** cabinet agencies with this authority. While there has been much discussion between the White House and Capital Hill about expansion to other agencies, to date, Congress has taken no action in that regard.

So, as it relates to DHS and DoD, where are we today? DHS is basically at ground zero. Why? Several years ago, federal unions jointly brought a lawsuit challenging implementing **HRMax** – the proposed new DHS personnel program. As a result of court decisions and agency agreement, DHS is starting over within the guidance provided by the courts. The new program is called the Human Capital Operational Plan (HCOP). It will involve a 2008 pilot project designed to focus solely on the department's non-bargaining unit employees working in the intelligence and analysis component. **If** the pilot proves successful, starting in 2009, the department **could** move all DHS employees off the 15-grade General Schedule (GS) pay system and into a **pay-banding system** that enables salaries to be closely related to occupation and geographic location.

For DoD Congress authorized the National Security Personnel System (**NSPS**) as part of the fiscal 2004 National Defense Authorization Act. The new system involves changes in staffing and workforce shaping, classification, compensation and performance management. Phased-in implementation began in January 2006. At this time, about 50,000 DoD civilians are in NSPS. As with the pilot DHS plan, the GS pay system is being abolished. However, while phased implementation is taking place, many within DoD will **not** be included in NSPS at this time, specifically, all bargaining unit personnel – GS and Federal Wage System (FWS) – and any FWS non-bargaining unit personnel. By 2009 DoD is scheduled to evaluate and determine if FWS employees should be included. Further, DoD and unions representing **all** DoD bargaining unit employees are still working to determine if and when they will be included.

**In a future chapter newsletter, we will provide an update on the above and delve into "pay for performance" and its relationship to "pay banding."** In the interim, if you have any questions feel free to contact us at [don\\_binder@msn.com](mailto:don_binder@msn.com) or [mary\\_binder@msn.com](mailto:mary_binder@msn.com), (note "underscore" between our first and last names) or call us at 509 585-1393.

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[www.hapo.org](http://www.hapo.org) paid for the printing of this newsletter.



**2007 CHAPTER 1192 INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS**  
L to R - Nancy Crosby, Verneice Skinner, Marvin Nelson,  
Clark Crouch & Carl Gallion



**DISTRICT V – SPRING WORKSHOP**  
Carl Gallion-2007-2008 District V VP, Dale Brighton-WSFC President,  
REGION IX VP Lanny Ross, and Marvin Nelson

**National Active and Retired Federal Employees**

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**We're On The WEB!!!**

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