



FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS

TRI-CITIES CHAPTER 1192 NARFE NEWS

National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association
Advocates for Current and Former Federal Employees

NARFE: www.narfe.org Washington Federation: www.narfewa.org Tri-Cities: www.narfe1192.org

Announcement! New Chapter Meeting Location – Clover Island Inn, Kennewick. Details below!

2024 Chapter 1192 Officers & Board Members

President, Nancy Crosby	509.735.3288
Vice President, Mary Binder	509.378.2494
Secretary, Debbie Carlson	509.380.7210
Treasurer, Liz Bowers	509.430.1836
Alzheimer’s, Debbie Carlson	509.380.7210
Caller Coordinator, Darleen Wall	509.308.2765
Legislative, Mary Alice Binder	509.378.2494
Membership, Johanna Caylor	509.375.0739
NARFE-PAC, Mary Binder	509.378.2494
Newsletter, Mary Alice Binder	509.378.2494
Public Relations, Mary Alice Binder	509.378.2494
Service Officer, Nancy Crosby (Acting)	509.735.3288
Sunshine, Faye Vlieger	509.961.1095
Webmaster, Larry Williams	509.783.8554

CHAPTER MEETINGS/PROGRAMS

Meetings: 1st Wednesdays, except July/August

11:30 a.m., Clover Island Inn, Kennewick

Lunch: \$25; RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

(Vegetarian meals available, if ordered ahead)

Avoid a charge! Cancel reservations you can’t keep!

Note: Executive Board meeting days/times vary.

Upcoming Chapter Meetings

January 3 – David Reeploeg, VP, federal programs, Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC) and executive director, Hanford Communities, will discuss both organizations and their importance.

Menu: pork loin w/baby red potatoes, veggies, salad, roll, dessert



February 7 – Sean O’Brien, executive director, Energy Forward Alliance, will provide an overview of this new alliance, and insights into the legislative process.

Menu: 1/2 grilled cheese sandwich, soup or stew, salad, roll, dessert



*For Chapter and National-Only Members
Outside the Tri-Cities Area!*

You are MOST WELCOME to attend a chapter meeting, including lunch! A RESERVATION IS NEEDED. Please call Nancy Crosby or Darleen Wall by noon, Sunday, prior to a chapter meeting. See phone numbers, above.

January – February, Volume 2024, Issue 1

President – Nancy Crosby

Happy New Year! On behalf of our chapter officers and coordinators, I want to wish our NARFE members – chapter and national-only – and their families a wonderful 2024.



BIG CHANGE! PLEASE NOTE! Our January 3

meeting will be at the Clover Island Inn, Kennewick! After more than 35 years at the Kennewick Red Lion, we have had to end our time there. The hotel’s corporate wanted a \$300-\$400 set up fee, per meeting, effective January 1, a fee previously waived. This is a cost the chapter could not sustain. Negotiations to reduce or eliminate the charge were unsuccessful.



After exploring several area options, meeting with and/or talking to various area catering managers, our board settled on a 3-month trial at Clover Island Inn. Mary Binder, Debbie Carlson, John Wetterling and I met with the banquet manager and had lunch at the Inn. We were pleased with the reception we received, the flexibility offered to us, and lunch was great, too. There is quite a bit of handicapped parking, no stairs to climb, and 2 elevators with access to the 4th floor where we will meet. For those new to the Inn, the view is spectacular!

So, while the change was unexpected and challenging, we are hoping you will be pleased with the new location. Also, we will be asking for feedback. Management wants to know about problems that may arise so they can be addressed.

NEW OFFICERS AND COORDINATORS. At the December chapter meeting our Washington State Federation (WSF) District I VP Mary Binder, installed 3 of the 4 chapter officers for the 2-year term, 2024/2025. I was installed as your new president. As vice president, I had been filling in for Immediate Past President Pat Turner after her terrible car accident in April. I am looking forward to continuing to serve you now as president for the next 2 years. We continue to wish Pat all the best on her recovery journey.

(Continued on page 2)



Left to right, installation of 2024/2025 chapter officers, Debbie Carlson, Liz Bowers, Nancy Crosby.

(Continued from page 1.)

Also being installed, Debbie Carlson as the chapter's new secretary and Liz Bowers, who is continuing to serve as chapter treasurer. After these installations, I was able to install Mary as our new chapter VP.



Chapter President Nancy installing Mary as VP.

Besides the officers our chapter bylaws require, we have several "coordinators" who provide invaluable assistance. To note:

- ◆ Johanna Caylor has served as the chapter's membership coordinator for MANY years. She diligently works to keep our membership records up to date.
- ◆ Darleen Wall is the coordinator for our callers. Even though Darleen now lives in Arizona, she has continued to lead this team. Besides Darleen and me, each month Janice Lake and Nancy Glaesemann make calls to members about the upcoming chapter meeting, lunch and program. **To note, we are the only chapter in our WSF with such a system to keep in touch with our members!**
- ◆ Ellen LeVee is assisting me with "service officer" duties, that is, helping members with questions and concerns related to everything from health benefits to retirement.
- ◆ Faye Vlieger is our "sunshine" coordinator, sending out cards/notes to members and families who need

some sunshine, whether for an illness, condolence on a loss or a special anniversary!

- ◆ Larry Williams has agreed to continue serving as our webmaster.
- ◆ Mary Binder is our legislative, public relations and newsletter coordinator. New starting in 2024, NARFE-PAC will be rolled into legislative duties, which is something the WSF has also done.

The efforts of these members are what has made our chapter a leader in Washington state. Through their efforts and member support, we can: bring informative and interesting programs to chapter meetings; provide updated information on NARFE, our 5-state region and our state federation; stay in touch with our members; provide "personnel-type" assistance; and, bottom line, stay connected with each other. I thank them for all they do for our Tri-Cities Chapter 1192.



Service Officer (Acting) – Nancy Crosby

Whew! Another health benefits "open season" is behind us. It was a journey. The chapter hosted a successful first-ever health fair at the Richland Public Library, November 7, thanks to Ellen LeVee's efforts. Ellen also fielded several calls from members and area federal retirees referred to us by Senior Benefits Solutions. These individuals had questions about health benefits and changes. Then, too, Mary Lynn Schmid, senior account manager, Blue Cross/Blue Shield provided us additional information at the December chapter meeting. Along with NARFE's Federal Benefits Institute, we are here to assist members. Please feel free to contact us!

Watch for announcements on new NARFE webinars in a NARFE Magazine or via electronic updates. Recent past webinars are archived at www.narfe.org/federal-benefits-institute/narfe-webinars/.

REMINDER!

The next *NARFE Magazine* is a combined January/February issue.

WSF District I Vice President – Mary Binder

2023 was a busy NARFE year in District I, which covers all of Eastern Washington. Most significantly, we closed 2 more NARFE chapters, Wenatchee Chapter 239 and Yakima Chapter 238. At the peak, there were 11 chapters in Eastern Washington! Now, 3 remain: Spokane Chapter 32; Colville Valley Chapter 1247; and Tri-Cities Chapter 1192. While closing a chapter is emotional, I am pleased most members kept their NARFE membership.



THE top priority for 2024 is recruiting members. Think – RECRUIT JUST ONE NEW MEMBER! What a difference it could make. Ideas? Questions? Let me know!

Public Relations – Mary Binder

Looking back to 2023, it was a busy “outreach” year, especially in the spring, summer and fall months. From veterans and senior events to postal conventions and monthly Chamber of Commerce business luncheons, we have been present to talk about and answer questions about NARFE and our chapter. As I often say, you just never know where you may meet a prospective member!

My goal for 2024 is to continue these “outreach” efforts and add even more! If you have ideas and suggestions, please let me know.

Some reminders:

- ◆ The annual CFC campaign began September 1 and ends January 15. Details at: givecfc.org/donors.
- ◆ NARFE’s annual photo contest is underway thru February 2. Winning photos will be in the 2025 NARFE calendar. Details at www.narfe.org/photocontest.
- ◆ Applications for the 2024/2025 NARFE/FEEA Scholarship Program (for high school seniors related to NARFE members who plan to attend college in 2024) are due by March 14, 3 p.m., EDT. Go to www.feea.org/our-programs/scholarships.



Legislative/NARFE-PAC – Mary Binder

First, a thank you to John Wetterling for his service as the chapter’s PAC coordinator since 2020! He dedicated many hours to reading and analyzing PAC reports and correspondence from NARFE, and then compiling and reporting information at chapter meetings.



Looking ahead, our chapter board has agreed to test combining legislative and NARFE-PAC coordinator duties. This is being done at our Washington State Federation (WSF) level. At NARFE headquarters, too, they both fall under “Advocacy.” There is such a close connection between the functions that it makes sense.

As I was asked recently, “What is NARFE-PAC?” I thought it would be good to start the year with a brief tutorial. From NARFE’s PAC brochure, “NARFE-PAC is NARFE’s political action committee ... it helps defend and advance the earned pay and benefits of America’s current and retired civil servants by funding campaigns of Fed-friendly congressional candidates. It is funded “solely by voluntary and direct contributions from NARFE members.” NO membership dues or other NARFE non-dues revenue is used for NARFE-PAC. Through the PAC, NARFE builds and strengthens

Contacting our Federal Legislators

The Honorable Dan Newhouse, 4th Congressional Dist. U.S. House of Representatives

Phone: 202.225.5816; Fax: 202.225.3251

<https://www.newhouse.house.gov>

3100 George Washington Way #130, Richland, WA 99354

Phone: 509.713.7374; Fax: 509.713.7377

The Honorable Patty Murray, U.S. Senate

Phone: 202.224.2621; Fax: 202.224.0238

<http://www.murray.senate.gov/email/index.cfm>

402 East Yakima Ave., Suite 420, Yakima, WA 98901

Phone: 509.453.7462; Fax: 509.453.7731

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, U.S. Senate

Phone: 202.224.3441; Fax: 202.228.0514

<https://www.cantwell.senate.gov/contact/email>

825 Jadwin Ave., Suites 206, Richland, WA 99352

Phone: 509.946.8106; Fax: 509.946.6937

relationships with lawmakers in Congress so our voices are heard. **It is political but non-partisan.** Again, through the PAC, NARFE provides support to “Fed-friendly” congressional candidates and elected officials.

NARFE-PAC operates on the same 2-year cycle as Congress. So, currently, 2023/2024, which coincides with the 118th Congress. For the 2 years, there are 8 quarters. January 2024 begins the cycle’s 5th quarter. NARFE has quarterly reports that recap member contributions and distributions made to candidates. These are at the “Advocacy” tab and then “NARFE-PAC” on the NARFE website, www.narfe.org. (Member login required.)

Contributions are welcome, but especially needed during election years such as 2024. See page 9, January/February *NARFE Magazine* for contribution information. And, looking ahead – **March is NARFE-PAC month.** More details at chapter meetings and in the next chapter newsletter.

Now, let’s switch to legislation. In the combined January/February *NARFE Magazine*, page 6, you will find NARFE’s Action Alert: Support Equal COLA Act, H.R. 866/S.3194 for Fair Retirement Security. Passing this legislation would align “FERS COLAs with CSRS and Social Security beneficiary adjustments.” It is quick and easy to use the NARFE Legislative Action Center to send a message to our elected leaders asking for their support with this and other legislation. Need assistance? Please contact me.

Also in the January/February *NARFE Magazine*, pages 8-9, a “progress report” on other “key NARFE legislative campaigns.” Included are updates on repealing WEP/GPO and the increase in long-term care insurance premiums.

Lastly – the 60-day, 2024 Washington State Legislative Session begins January 8. Bills not passed last year were retained for this session. A supplemental budget should also be passed. Watch for updates.



Return Service Requested

NARFE
Washington Federation of Chapters
Tri-Cities Chapter 1192
2802 W. 40th Ave.
Kennewick, WA 99337-2666

TO:



New Meeting Location, January 2024!
See Page 1.
435 N. Clover Island Drive, Kennewick

Treasurer – Liz Bowers

2023 was a great financial year for us! With the closing of 2 NARFE chapters in Eastern Washington, we received a little more than \$5,000. Then, by keeping our luncheon attendance up, we were able to pay for all our guests/speakers without dipping into our reserves – a first in several years. Thus, we ended the year with slightly more than \$6,000 than in 2022.



Membership Chairman – Johanna Caylor

As of December 14, our Tri-Cities chapter had **513** members – **251**/chapter; **262**/national-only in the chapter area – so, basically the same as my last report. **Welcome New Members!** From our fall outreach/recruiting: David Brouwer; Jill Fennell (nat'l only); Steven Hilberg; Vicki Melling; David Woehler; Allison Wright. **Welcome Back!** Recently reinstated members: Kathi Andrews-Smith; Terry Berkompas; Mike Griffith. **Snowbirds!** Yes, it is time for my annual reminder. PLEASE let me know if you are changing your address, even temporarily, especially if you receive a mailed chapter newsletter! (Note! Printing and mailing a newsletter now exceeds a member's \$10 annual chapter dues. So, having correct information is more important than ever.)



Dues withholding: Painless! Only \$4.33/month! Send NO MONEY with your application or renewal form. We currently have 111 members on dues withholding! **Gift memberships:** A great option – for a new retiree, current employee, birthday/special occasion! **Contact info:** Ph: 509.375.0739; Email: annahojx2@gmail.com.



Webmaster – Larry Williams

Websites with more information: (chapter) www.narfe1192.org; (WSF) www.narfewa.org.

CALLER COORDINATOR UPDATE!

New year! New venue! Our chapter callers are ready! They look forward to connecting with members each month not only to notify them about meetings but to see how they are doing. It is a “cool” in our communication toolbox that helps us stay connected with our members. So, when a caller leaves a message, **PLEASE** return the call so we know you have been notified. If you do not want to be contacted each month, let me know. If your phone does not accept messages, also contact me to arrange for an alternate notification method, e.g., a text message. Thank you. **Contact info: Darleen Wall, (H) 623.556.0869; (M) 509.308.2765; Email: jdwall2@frontier.com.**



THANK YOU FOR THE CALL!

Sunshine News – Faye Vlieger

(Since the November/December newsletter)

Members who passed:

Ernest W. Amundsen; Ronald Cone Sr; Ray White (our oldest member at 103)

Thinking of you/get well/sunshine wishes:

Nancy Pochert; Bob Stewart; Larry Williams on the passing of his sister, Blanche

Know someone needing a little “sunshine” or a special-occasion card? Call me, 509.961.1095, or email me, ainvlieger@aol.com.



Alzheimer’s Research Fund – Debbie Carlson

Larry Williams, our immediate-past Alzheimer’s Research Fund coordinator, reported 2023 was “a good fundraising year” for our chapter. Besides donations at meetings, we raised \$590 at the October Walk to End Alzheimer’s and \$2,420 at our November “white elephant” fundraiser. (Walk money stays local but DOES count toward NARFE’s Alzheimer’s Research Fund goals.) So, for the year, about \$3,270! **Thank you to all donors!**

