

**NARFE Chapter 1192**  
**April 3, 2019 Chapter Meeting Minutes**

**CALL TO ORDER** President Bennett called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m., at the Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick, Washington.

- Lorie welcomed 30 attendees, 4 of whom were guests, and called for a moment of silence to remember our EMTs, fire service personnel, police – all who serve as volunteers or in paid positions who protect our freedoms, NARFE, and the NARFE leadership. She then led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Guests were: Terry and Kathy Maurer, who will be providing the presentation today, Marilyn Darke, and Kerry Harris.

**OFFICER/FEDERATION/DISTRICT/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**President/Special Programs** *President Lorie Bennett*

- Annual chapter food drive for Tri-Cities Food Bank at the last meeting collected \$268 as well as non-perishable food donations. Thank you for your support of the annual chapter food drive.
- **REMINDERS:**
  - NARFE Federal Benefits Institute – webinars, 2 p.m., Eastern Time
    - April 11 – Federal Benefits & Divorce (*James Marshall*)
    - Past webinars are available on the NARFE website
    - This is a NARFE membership free “perk”.
  - Members who do not cancel a confirmed luncheon reservation for the chapter meeting by 10 a.m. Monday before the meetings will be charged for the meal.
  - Check the back table or the chapter website for minutes, newsletters, etc.
  - Also check the website for lunch menus, meeting programs, newsletters.

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President** *Pat Turner*. No report.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President/Service Officer** *John Cavanaugh*. No report.

**Director at Large** *Nancy Crosby*. No report.

**Director at Large** *Bob Stewart*. No report.

**Secretary/Sunshine** *Secretary Faye Vlieger*. (Could not attend the meeting.)

- Darleen Wall is taking minutes today for Secretary Faye.
- Sunshine – updates since the March meeting:
  - Rudolph Manuel passed away but no sympathy card was sent due to no known next of kin.
  - Cloyd Bowers, husband of Fay Bowers, passed away and a sympathy card was sent.
  - Coy Jarrett father of Jim Jarrett passed away and a sympathy card was sent.
  - Frances Reese, 94, former member, 1997-2016, passed away recently.
  - Ron Light, former member, lost his wife/former co-worker, Kathy Sonderman Light, in February.
- Reminder: Please continue to send “sunshine” updates to Secretary Faye.

**Treasurer’s Report** *Liz Bowers*.

- Total balance on hand in checking and savings as of March 30, \$16,850.01. Savings: \$13,023.18; Checking: \$3,826.83
- For this year, we still have more going out than coming in; so, the board is continuing to carefully watch the budget.
- **Monies collected at the April Meeting (compiled after the meeting)** Luncheon, \$504 (28 @ \$18); NARFE-PAC, \$21; 50/50, \$22; Alzheimer’s, \$9.

**Newsletter/Public Relations** *Mary Binder*.

- March/April/May newsletter – reminder about hidden numbers :
  - Check for hidden numbers.
  - Reminder! Newsletter now quarterly vs. bi-monthly.
- March 27, Annual TCRCC meeting – Mary, Nancy, Pat attended. Very interesting presentation on “apps” by “Your Nerdy Best Friend,” Beth Ziesenis. Mary has contact information for anyone who wants to follow up.
- 2019 NARFE Photo Contest, August 1 thru April 8 – Theme: “Living in the USA.” Copies of handout with instructions were at the meeting.
- 2019 Senior Life Show – June 13, Three Rivers Convention Center, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. This is a free event.
- 2019 *Visit TRI!-CITIES* is now available; copies were at each table. Mary said this is a good reference brochure for the Tri-Cities, especially for visitors.

**Legislative: *Mary Binder***

- **LEGcon19**, March 10-13 – Mary provided a handout with a summary report of the conference, along with highlighting some key points. (Summary report follows the minutes.)
- Federal – members can now order NARFE’s congressional directory for the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress. Information and order form are on page 12, April *narfe* magazine. Mary said this is a good reference directory.
- State – the Washington State legislature is still in session. Regular session ends April 28. Much proposed and passed legislation has been in the local news, e.g., the legal smoking age is now 21. Also, the state’s primary will be moved to March for 2020 but to vote, voters will have to state whether they are a Democrat or Republican. Mary said there is concern that having to do this will preclude some voters from voting as they may be independents and/or do not want their names on a party’s list as it will result in solicitations for contributions. She said she’ll be talking with Jason Mercier, director, government reform, Washington Policy Center, for additional clarification.

**WSF: *Nancy Crosby, Lorie Bennett, Mary Binder***

- WSF President (*Nancy*)
  - Region IX Training Conference, May 17-18 – updates:
    - The registration form for Chapter 1192 members is available in a fillable form on the federation website: [www.narfewa.org](http://www.narfewa.org). Click on the program box to fill in the form, make a copy and send the file to Darleen per instructions on the form.
    - There is no charge for chapter members attending the conference, including the banquet, but we do need you to mark your food preference for the banquet. Since there is no charge for the banquet, if you have registered and do not attend the conference you will be charged for the meal unless you contact Darleen by May 9<sup>th</sup>. We will also have forms at our meetings and you can give them to Darleen there.
    - Jessica Klement, NARFE’s vice president for advocacy, will be the guest speaker. She will be providing a legislative update. Also, NARFE is working on a “rebranding” initiative. This will involve many changes – everything from a logo to identifying NARFE as “the federal benefits experts.” With the changes come questions, e.g., who will be covering costs, implementation date, etc.
  - Next WSF board meeting, Wednesday, April 10, La Quinta Hotel, Tacoma.
- District V VP Mary: No report.
- Alzheimer’s Chairman Lorie: No report.

**NARFE-PAC *Bob Stewart.***

- Chapter meeting donations, January through today's meeting are \$245 of which \$21 is from today's meeting.
- The NARFE quarterly PAC reports have not yet been posted to the NARFE website. They will cover the period January 1 through March 31.

**Alzheimer's** *Larry Williams*. No report.

**Membership** *Johanna Caylor*. No report.

**Webmaster** *Larry Williams*. No report.

**Caller Coordinator** *Darleen Wall*. No report.

**OLD BUSINESS** None.

**NEW BUSINESS** President Lorie welcomed back Membership Chairman Johanna from snow birding. Johanna announced that member Dolores Rizzo was now at Guardian Angel assisted living.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS** Mary Binder re-emphasized WSF President Nancy's encouragement for members to attend the Region IX Training Conference. Mary also provided additional background information on the history and focus of this conference.

**Free Lunch Drawing Winner** *Pat Turner*.

**Drawing** John Harris, \$44 collected; \$22 won.

**April Birthdays** None.

**April Anniversaries** Johanna and Jim Caylor; Ruby and the late Jim Ulseth.

**Next Exec Board Meeting** April 3, after the Chapter meeting, Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick.

**Next Chapter Meeting** Wednesday, May 1, noon, Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick; doors open at 11:30 a.m. Lunch and business meeting begin at noon; program follows.

**May Chapter Meeting Program** Michele Gerber, president, Benton-Franklin Recovery Coalition, will provide information on the coalition and its work to address addiction in the Tri-Cities. (POC: *Pat Turner*)

**Closing Remarks** *President Lorie Bennett*

- Reminder! May 17-18, Region IX Training Conference. Please consider attending. It is free to all our chapter members!
- Happy Easter. Happy Passover.

**MEETING CLOSED** 12:47 p.m.

Prepared by:

*Faye Vlieger/Darleen Wall*

**CHAPTER MEETING PROGRAM** Terry and Kathy Maurer, antique appraisers, provided an updated on the world of antiques and appraised items members brought. (POC: *Mary Binder*)

## **LEGcon19 – Highlights**

**WHAT:** 2019 NARFE Legislative Training Conference

**WHEN:** March 10-13, 2019

**WHERE:** Hilton Alexandria Mark Center, Alexandria, Virginia

**WHY:** Provide NARFE members training/information on the legislative process and key legislative issues affecting/potentially affecting them; provide an opportunity to meet with elected officials/their staffs; and, provide an opportunity to interface with NARFE leadership/members

**WHO:** About 250 NARFE members attended, down from previous years. Region IX had 16 attendees with 9 from the Washington State Federation, including Region IX Vice President Rich Wilson, 5 from Eastern Washington and 3 of those from Chapter 1192 – Mary Binder, Nancy Crosby, Pat Turner. A number of members from the Federal Managers Association also attended general sessions as they were having a conference at the same time in the same hotel.

**THEME: LEARN•ADVOCATE•LEAD**

**BACKGROUND:** NARFE holds this training conference every 2 years in March, which is shortly after a new Congress convenes – this time, the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress.

**SPONSORS:** BlueCross BlueShield Federal Employee Program; GEHA®; HearUSA; The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program™; United Healthcare®; Nationwide®

**NARFE-PAC:** NARFE reps staffed a table with current brochures, were available to answer questions. Besides making donations, a number of attendees signed up to be sustainers!

**CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS:**

1. **Seminars: (PowerPoint presentations are on the NARFE website, [www.narfe.org](http://www.narfe.org))**
  - a. **Advocacy 365** – explained how to view advocacy as a year-round effort, including being prepared by setting goals and getting focused, and involving members
  - b. **Be Prepared – Mock Congressional Meetings** – dos/don'ts from seasoned NARFE Capitol Hill veterans
  - c. **Congressional District Leader Training** – detailed developing a CDL structure at the federation level
  - d. **Inquiring Minds Want to Know: The Benefits of Sharing Your Story with Media** – explained the connection between telling your story to local media, advocacy objectives and gaining visibility for the federal community
  - e. **Making the Most of NARFE's Hill Day** – follow on to Mock Congressional Meetings; a reminder – freshmen in Congress are “so disconnected to policy ... don't know the issues...”
  - f. **NARFE-PAC Leader Training** – how to effectively engage fellow NARFE members
  - g. **State Advocacy 101** – provided state-level best practices/ways to become involved
  - h. **The Role of NARFE-PAC** – how NARFE's political arm fights for us/our earned pay/benefits and how members can become more involved
2. **NARFE and Guest Speakers:**
  - a. **Ken Thomas, NARFE president** – NARFE represents 200K paid members/more than 5M current/retired federal employees/annuitants; learned more about his career
  - b. **Jessica Klement, NARFE staff vice president of advocacy** – recapped 115<sup>th</sup> Congress threats/accomplishments; 116<sup>th</sup> Congress NARFE legislative priorities; recent shutdown; grassroots advocacy; NARFE-PAC; and NARFE's involvement in assisting members/nonmembers, media, etc., with information during the recent partial government shutdown (NARFE became a “go-to-resource” during that time)
  - c. **Rep Anthony Brown (D-MD)** – focusing on COLAs, pay raises, avoiding shutdowns; the federal budget is a “national security investment” no matter what it is called
  - d. **Rep Jamie Raskin (D-MD)** – wants to “... resurrect/defend public service as a noble cause” ... “this is a democracy ... public service reflects the beliefs of the American people” ... “the idea of a federal government as an institution is under attack” ... we need to “get back to constitutional basics...”
  - e. **Rep Don Beyer (D-VA)** – “NARFE has the best staff on The Hill!” ... “Virginia Democrats are fiscally conservative and socially progressive” ... supports: paid family leave bill w/bereavement; CPI-E; SS solvency; SS Fairness Act; repealing GPO/WEP; NARFE's position on postal reform regarding Medicare Part B; balanced budget; addressing entitlements; negotiating drug prices; increasing revenue
  - f. **Sen Tim Kaine (D-VA)** – “NARFE was rock solid, absolutely fantastic” during the 35-day shutdown ... the president's budget is a “shock and ah budget” and is DOA;” ... “have an ask” when you visit an elected official ...
  - g. **Sen Mark Warner (D-VA)** – has a “soft spot in his heart” for NARFE and is very supportive ... “don't tune out and turn off,” if you do, either extreme will then win” ... he is focusing on respect for federal workers; adequate pay; the retirement system
  - h. **Sen James Lankford (R-OK) (Video Recording)** – believes in keeping retirement promises to feds; having feds “held harmless” if furloughed; improving hiring times and having a “seamless process from hiring to retirement”
  - i. **Congressional Staff Panel (Kathleen Connor, district director, Office of Congressman Jamie Raskin (D-MD); Kathleen Gayle, communications director & legislative assistant, Office of Congressman Rob Wittman (R-VA); Ashley Poling, director, government affairs, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Minority)** – discussed the structures of their offices; shared tips for meetings – tell them your stories;

*have eye contact; send thank-you and other follow-up emails; leave material; have clear "asks"*

- j. David Lusk, founder, Key Advocacy (focus on grassroots efforts and the power of personal storytelling)** – 7 years is average to pass legislation; 89 new House members; 1913 = last time this many new "freshmen" in Congress; 25 = average meetings per day for congressmen; 18 months is the average staff turnover time in congressional offices; "advocacy is NOT politics; it IS informing and educating;" story-telling is 34 times more effective than emails; 3 "Cs" = be clear (state your purpose up front; be concise (succinct); have a charge (smart action or activity)

### **3. Day on Capitol Hill:**

- a.** Tips for securing a legislative vote – build relationships; find common ground; say "thank you;" be relevant and adapt your message; no jargon; tell a compelling story – personal story, if possible; know it is OK to say, "I don't know;" max is 3 topics
- b.** Visits:
  - i.** All 10 Washington State congressional offices and both senators' offices
  - ii.** Mary, Nancy, Pat met with Congressman Dan Newhouse and Elizabeth Daniels, his communications director – positive visit; since the meeting, he has co-sponsored H.R. 141, repeal of GPO and WEP
  - iii.** Nancy and Pat also met with Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal (D-07) and Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-05)
- c.** Key legislative talking points: oppose "substantial and undeserved pay and benefit cuts for the federal community" in the FY19 presidential budget; oppose postal reform if it requires current retirees to enroll in Medicare Part B; support the Fair COLAs for Seniors Act; support repeal of GPO/WEP

### **4. Summary:**

- a.** Long, intense, but informative, "training" days
- b.** Day on Capitol Hill was positive and productive
- c.** The more partisan climate in today's politics was evident with most elected officials who spoke despite NARFE's guidance that it is a political but nonpartisan association
- d.** NARFE became a "go-to" resource during the recent partial government shutdown
- e.** Quotes to remember:
  - i.** "Don't tune out and turn off; if you do, either extreme will win." (Senator Mark Warner)
  - ii.** Advocacy is NOT politics; it IS informing and educating." (David Lusk)

**Mary Alice Binder**  
**Legislative Chair**  
**Tri-Cities Chapter 1192**  
**March 31, 2019**