

**NARFE Chapter 1192**  
**December 6, 2023, Meeting Minutes**

**CALL TO ORDER** Vice President Nancy Crosby called the NARFE Chapter 1192 (Chapter) meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. Present at the meeting, held at the Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick, were 21 Chapter members and six guests.

Nancy reminded members to silence electronic devices and should anyone need to leave early to please feel free to do so. She asked members who could, to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and to then remain standing as she asked for a moment of silence – in memory of the attack on Pearl Harbor (December 7, 1941) and for more peaceful times in our world. Our active duty and retired military as well as our government workers and their families were remembered. Their service is valued and appreciated.

Nancy welcomed:

- Mary Lynn Schmid and her husband Dan. Mary Lynn is a senior account manager with BlueCross/BlueShield's federal employee program.
- Musician Jeff Peterson and his assistant/wife, Adrienne Peterson.
- Santo Ortega – a member since 2002 but attending his first meeting.
- Pat Slape – a long-time member who has not been at a meeting in a while.
- Alicia Mercado, a guest of member Nancy Pochert.
- Luz Marshall, a guest of member Faye Vlieger.

**CHAPTER/FEDERATION/DISTRICT OFFICER AND COORDINATOR REPORTS**

**President** *Vice President Nancy Crosby for President Pat Turner.*

- General comments/updates:
  - Nancy stated she was unable to provide an update on President Pat's recovery; however, if she did hear anything she would pass it on to Chapter members.
- New Chapter officers were sworn in:
  - As District 1, VP, Mary Binder installed Nancy Crosby as President; Liz Bower as Treasurer; and Debbie Carlson as Secretary.
  - Mary was sworn in by President Nancy.
- Nancy reported that effective with the January 3 Chapter meeting, luncheon's will be held at the Clover Island Inn, Kennewick. A three-month "test" run of the new facility will be conducted after which time a final decision on whether meetings will continue at Clover Island Inn will be determined.
  - Chapter meetings have been held at the Kennewick Red Lion for more than 35 years.
  - Staff from Ignite Hotels, LLC, (Kennewick's Red Lion corporate company) told Nancy they would no longer waive the setup fee for the Chapter meetings.
  - Effective, January 1, 2024, the Chapter would have to pay between \$200 and \$400 per meeting for the setup cost; a cost the Chapter cannot absorb).
- Short reminders:

- 2024 Dust Devils baseball games – Saturday, June 22, and Saturday, September 7, are the dates for these Chapter group activities; cost will be \$750 (25 attendees at \$30/each).
- The FEHB Program 2024 Open Season will be open through December 11.
- Reminded attendees that material on PAC, Alzheimer’s, Chapter, and Federation information is available on the side tables.
- The Chapter hosted a health fair on November 7, at the Richland Public Library, with representatives from Blue Cross/Blue Shield, GEHA and Kaiser Permanente in attendance. Seventeen current or retired federal service employees attended the event and as a bonus the Chapter signed up four new members.

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

**Hospitality Coordinator** *Nancy Crosby*. No additional report.

**Service Officer (Acting)** *Nancy Crosby*. No additional report.

**Treasurer’s Report** *Liz Bowers*.

- A Chapter 2023 financial summary was at the bottom of the master meeting sign-in sheet. The combined checking and savings account, as of December 1, was \$21,277.83.
- Rev 2 of the DRAFT 2024 Chapter Budget (Budget) was made available for review with members reminded that if they wanted a copy, they needed to provide Liz with their e-mail address. The Budget continues to be worked on.
- **Monies collected at the December meeting** Lunches, \$400; Alzheimer’s Research Fund, \$4; NARFE-PAC, \$12; 50/50 drawing, \$56 collected/\$28 awarded and donated back to the Chapter’s general fund; general donations/other income, \$40.19 (4 boxed lunches/\$10each; \$.19/donation).

**Secretary** *Mary Binder*. Mary thanked Debbie for volunteering to serve as the Chapter’s secretary and said that Debbie would be taking the minutes for today’s meeting as part of the transition.

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

- January/February Chapter newsletter is due out by the end of December.
- Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce November monthly lunch meeting was attended by Nancy, Mary, and Liz.
  - The November 29 meeting was on the “State of Higher Education.”. Speakers were WSU Tri-Cities Chancellor Dr. Sandra Haynes; CBC President Dr. Rebekah Woods; and Heritage University President Dr. Andrew Sund.
  - The discussion was on trends that are changing the landscape of higher education, the effects of technology and artificial intelligence, how their respective institutions are closing the skills gap, and more.
  - There will not be a Chamber meeting in January 2024.
- Copies of the “NARFE/Tri-Cities Chapter 1192, 2024 Upcoming Events/ Activities/Programs” were placed at each place setting on tables. It provides dates, website references, and other important information. For your convenience a copy of the document is attached to these minutes.
- Reminded attendees that Senior Benefits Solutions (Kennewick) continue to pass along names of individuals who have questions on Federal government items. The Chapter has received new members from the referrals.

**Washington State Federation (WSF) DVP I Mary Binder.**

- Mary quickly mentioned WSF's prime focus is on membership with WSF President Cray Henry playing a lead role in the effort.

**Legislative Coordinator Mary Binder.**

- Mary said that NARFE's top legislative priorities remain on repealing GPO and WEP, and equal COLA for FERS employees. Although there has been progress on the legislation for both these priorities, the needed legislation has not passed.

**NARFE-PAC Coordinator John Wetterling.**

- John reported that as of the third quarter \$700,000 was raised for NARFE-PAC of which \$331,00 was disbursed as follows:
  - \$179,000 to candidates
  - \$105,000 to non-candidate committees
  - \$47,000 to leadership PACs
- While the first quarter contributions were up, compared to two years ago, contributions (and contributors) are down.
  - A factor in the lower contributions is membership.
  - A reminder that there are still four quarters to contribute. Donations can be made directly to the NARFE-PAC by credit card, check, or have it taken monthly from your annuity payment. Please see and read the article in the November issue (page 12) of how the NARFE-PAC works on selecting candidates they donate to.

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

- Larry reported the November white elephant meeting brought in \$2,420 which brings our calendar year totals to \$2,730. The walk to end Alzheimer's brought in \$540, which is not included in the above number as the funds go straight to the Alzheimer Association and not through NARFE; however, the \$540 does add to NARFE's national goal.
- Summed up contributions as being a "good year."

**Membership Coordinator Johanna Caylor.**

- Reminded Chapter members that the annual fall membership drive runs through December 31. Chapter members will receive \$10 for signing up new members.
- A "gift membership" might be a good idea for friends or family members eligible to join NARFE.
- Johanna reported on the passing of member Ron Cone Senior.

**Sunshine Coordinator Faye Vlieger.**

- In recapping mailings of sunshine activities Faye noted the list of cards being mailed out was about three-quarters of a page in length. This "low" is less than the average one and one-half page from past years. She said the low reporting could be due to not knowing when a Chapter member needed a card. A case in point was the October passing of Ernest Amundsen. The obituary mentioned a service would not be held so a card could not be sent to the family through a funeral home.

**Caller Coordinator Darleen Wall.**

- On behalf of Darleen, Nancy thanked the Chapter's callers for their work in contacting members and reminded members to please return messages callers leave.

### Old Business

- No old business.

**New Business** – Mary Lynn Schmid provided members an update on Blue Cross/Blue Shield changes for 2024. She answered member questions both during the presentation and then after the meeting. She also had several pamphlets and other material for those at the meeting.

### Announcements

- No announcements.

### Open Discussion

- No open discussion.

**50/50 Drawing** \$56 collected; \$28 to June Ollero who donated her win to the Chapter.

**December Birthdays** – no one at the meeting,

### December Anniversaries

- Liz Bowers: 51 years
- Terese Pratt: 51 years

**Next Chapter Meeting** Wednesday, January 3, Clover Island Inn (from the Inn's lobby take elevator to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor; turn right, and another right; meeting room is at the end of the hall. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. for social time; meeting/program begin at noon.

### January Meeting Program

- David Reeploeg, vice president, federal programs, Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC) and the executive director Hanford Communities, will provide information on both organizations and their importance to the Tri-Cities.

**Next Chapter Virtual Board Meeting** Monday, December 18, 1:30 p.m.

- Non-board members, contact Nancy Crosby to attend; she will then send the Zoom link.
- All members welcome, but only board members can vote at these meetings.

### Closing Remarks *VP Nancy.*

- Reminded members to contact her or Treasurer Liz about attending a meeting IF they do not get a call from a caller.
- Thank you to Mary Lynn Schmid for her presentation and willingness to spend time after the meeting ended to answer questions Chapter members may have.
- Thank you to Jeff Peterson, for another year of his holiday music.
- Wishes to all for a safe and Merry Christmas.

**MEETING ADJOURNED** 12:55 p.m.

Prepared by:

*Incoming Secretary Debbie Carlson for*

*Mary Alice Binder*  
*Secretary*

**MEETING PROGRAM** Jeff Peterson and his mellow trumpet returned with a holiday music program of soft jazz, muted trumpet, and voice. [Note: Jeff has been providing the Chapter's holiday music program since 2017, including in 2020 via Zoom! He and his wife, Adrienne, who attends with Jeff, are retired Department of Defense teachers and taught for DoD schools in Japan and Okinawa. They retired in 2015 and returned to the Tri-Cities where they had taught prior to working for DoD. Jeff plays locally at several venues. They are not NARFE members but have been provided the *NARFE Magazine*, other material, and were introduced to Ellen LeVee, Chapter service officer, in case they have questions.] (*POC: Liz Bowers*)

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION:**

- Chapter website: [www.narfe1192.org](http://www.narfe1192.org)
  - minutes, newsletters, meeting programs, updates, etc.
- Federation website: [www.narfewa.org](http://www.narfewa.org)
  - updates, and current and historical information