

NARFE Chapter 1192

June 3, 2009, Chapter Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER President Nancy Crosby called the Chapter's regular monthly meeting to order, 12:07 p.m., Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick, Wash. She introduced the head table, welcomed 20 members, and asked Larry Musen to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. Regarding the Pledge, Larry advised members that there is no comma in the phrase "one Nation under God" although often the Pledge is said as if it were "one Nation, under God."

MEETING MINUTES Secretary Mary Binder highlighted the May Chapter minutes. There were no questions or comments. The minutes were approved. (Note: Chapter and Executive Board meeting minutes are posted on the Chapter's Web site, and copies are available at Chapter meetings.)

TREASURER'S REPORT Treasurer Philip LaMont reported the balance on hand as of May 31 was \$7,397.96. In May receipts were \$689.68 and disbursements, \$785.69, leaving a balance of \$7,301.95. Obligations are projected at \$1,663.60, leaving an unobligated balance of \$5,638.35. President Nancy announced that the Board had approved changing the Chapter's budget year to a calendar year cycle. To implement this, the next Chapter budget will be for 18 months – July 2009 through December 2010.

Monies collected at the June meeting Luncheon, \$216; Alzheimer's Fund, \$9; NARFE-PAC, \$20; Newsletter Fund, \$11; and 50/50 Raffle, \$31 collected/\$15.50 awarded.

DISTRICT/OFFICER/COMMITTEE REPORTS

District VP No report.

1st Vice President No report.

2nd Vice President No report.

Alzheimer's No report.

Hospitality President Nancy said there had been a menu change to what had been announced in the last Chapter newsletter and to the information the callers provided when calling members for reservations. Today's menu would be fish and chips, not stir-fried ginger pork and vegetables.

Legislative Co-legislative Chair Mary Binder shared that this week the Senate was scheduled to discuss proposed legislation that would allow employees enrolled in the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) to count unused sick leave toward their pensions – something CSRS employees can do, but not those in FERS. NARFE President Margaret Baptiste issued a letter supporting this legislation. Mary reminded members that our Chapter was instrumental in this initiative with a resolution that went to the NARFE National Convention last year and which the Convention approved. Getting proposed legislation through committee and onto the Senate floor for discussion is significant.

President Nancy reminded members that the Chapter's Web site does have updates, besides NARFE's Web site; also, members wanting information more directly can sign up for GEMS – NARFE's electronic e-mail system for providing updates.

Membership Chairman Johanna Caylor requested help at our Chapter's booth at the federal employees health fair, Wednesday, July 15, Federal Building, Richland, 9:30 a.m. Mary Goldie and Nancy Schreckhise volunteered.

NARFE-PAC For Chairman Don Binder, Mary Binder summarized information from the 1st Quarter Report of Contributions, NARFE-PAC 2009-2010 Cycle. Total NARFE contributions were \$52,570.26; Washington Federation contributions, \$2,425; Chapter 1192 contributions, \$395 – just \$10 less than the Spokane chapter's \$405 – and Spokane is a much bigger chapter! Mary thanked members for their support and encouraged continued support.

Newsletter The next Chapter newsletter is scheduled for the end of August. During the summer, President Nancy, Mary Binder and Johanna will explore layout, printing and mailing options to help with production and overall costs. Recently, President Nancy provided Federation Vice President Rich Wilson the Chapter's newsletter address Excel file. He revamped the format for mail merge – both for labels (with bar codes) and electronic distribution. Nancy said this would be very helpful.

Public Relations No report.

Service Officers No report.

Sunshine Chairman Anne Ross announced that Don Gier, a former Atomic Energy Commission/Department of Energy employee and neighbor of hers, recently passed away. President Nancy announced that Devon Atri, a former NARFE member and area DOE employee, also recently passed away.

Website No report.

NEW BUSINESS

Single -Dues Structue President Nancy provided an overview on the NARFE referendum proposing a simpler dues structure that would have most members paying the same dues. Two primary reasons for the proposal are to help simplify the current complex, multi-layered, hard-to-understand system, and to help simplify what Chapter and Federation treasurers must currently manage. This initiative was presented at last year's National Convention and barely failed. NARFE's national board opted to make it a referendum, which will provide all Chapters an opportunity to vote. More information will be forthcoming during the summer – NARFE magazine, NARFE and Chapter Web sites – and at the Chapter's September meeting. Voting will be in November; ballots must be returned by December; and, results announced in January. If the referendum passes, implementation is scheduled for June or July 2010.

LDS Mission Member Norma Van Patten announced that she and her husband have requested a 2-year LDS mission assignment so wanted to say "bye for a couple of years." They have not yet been notified of the location, but expect to be gone before the Chapter's September meeting. She said she would let the Chapter know where they ended up and provide periodic updates.

OLD BUSINESS

Hearing Aid Update Member Dick Bradley provided another update on the process he's gone through to get hearing aids. As he is Medicare eligible, the hearing aids were first billed to Medicare. The claim was denied as Medicare does not cover hearing aids, and then forwarded to Dick's secondary insurance, Blue Cross/Blue Shield. As \$1,000 per ear is covered and his total bill was \$1200, BC/BS covered the hearing aids. Dick currently has an \$800 credit he can still use.

PROGRAM

WSFC Convention Highlights Chapter member Nancy Crosby, Carl Gallion, Mary Binder, Mary Goldie and Nancy Schreckhise provided summary information from this year's Federation convention, May 14-15, Wenatchee. Carl also provided a slide show with convention pictures. Following are convention highlights:

- Chapter members were involved – Clark Crouch, parliamentarian; Al Rizzo, benediction; Nancy Crosby, timekeeper; Nancy C and Carl, bylaws committee; Don Binder, resolutions committee; Nancy C, nominations committee for 2010; Mary/Don Binder, gift basket for a door prize.
- New Federation officers are: Sandy Cagle, president; Rich Wilson, vice president; Paul Shell, secretary; Rex Tauscher, treasurer.
- NARFE President Margaret Baptiste was the guest of honor and featured speaker. Important from her remarks – the economy has affected NARFE memberships. But despite the drop, NARFE continues to work key initiatives for federal employees/retirees. And, the single dues structure referendum is "the campaign issue."
- Johanna Caylor was recognized as Federation recruiter of the year, receiving a \$75 check and certificate of achievement.
- To date, NARFE is more than \$8M toward its \$9M goal in supporting Alzheimer's research. Chapter 1192 was 2nd in the Federation's chapters for contributions during the reporting period.
- NARFE is continuing to work health benefits issues for federal employees/retirees.
- Only 1 resolution this year. Approved – fighting all attempts to label earned benefits "entitlements" vs. "earned benefits" as they are part of our "contract" between employer and employee.
- No bylaws changes.
- Marion Wilson, the Federation's service officer, is a great resource for information. Some key points from a Convention workshop she conducted:
 - Defer, never cancel, your health insurance, if for some reason, you don't need it for a period of time.
 - Keep all correspondence to/from OPM forever.

- If members don't have an individualized "Your Federal Retirement Benefits" pamphlet, they can obtain one from OPM. Call 1-888-767-6738. (Note: Worst day to call is Mondays.)
- Complete NARFE pamphlet F 100, *Be Prepared for Life's Events*, and file it with your will and other important paperwork. It is a helpful tool for family members. (Note: Copies available at the Chapter's Service Center or on the NARFE Web site.)
- Have health/other pertinent information posted on your fridge, in case paramedics come to your home.
- For those handling the death of a family member/someone else, remember to notify the licensing offices such as for driver's license, business license, etc.
- Ensure will/other paperwork specifies who can make decisions for you if you become incapacitated – may not be your attorney and could end up being a court-appointed individual if not specified.
- Rich Wilson gave a workshop on "Click 2 Mail" – an electronic option for doing the Chapter newsletter/other mailings.
- Brian Moran, Washington State's deputy attorney general, was an informative and entertaining guest speaker.
- Wenatchee's Apollo Club Singers performed after the Convention's memorial service.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

June Birthday Nancy Schreckhise

Drawings Larry Musen won \$15.50, 50/50 raffle; Nancy Crosby won the free lunch; she said she will donate it to the Chapter.

Executive Board Meeting The meeting will follow the Chapter meeting; all members are invited to attend.

Next Chapter Meeting Wednesday, September 2, Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick.

September Meeting Program Cindy Henriksen from the Tri-Cities Visitor & Convention Bureau will provide information on the economic impact of tourism on the Tri-Cities community.

ADJOURNMENT

Deacon Al Rizzo In Deacon Rizzo's absence, President Nancy read the benediction he gave at this year's WSFC convention.

Meeting adjourned 1:27 p.m.

Mary Alice Binder
Secretary