

NARFE Chapter 1192
May 4, 2022, Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER President Pat Turner called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m., Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick. She welcomed 23 chapter members, 1 national-only member and 3 guests – Malin Bergstrom, the program speaker; Dot Stewart, wife of member Bob Stewart; and, Beki Van Buren, the wife of national-only member J Van Buren.

Pat welcomed everyone and then said when she saw the beautiful decorations as she entered the room, she wondered if someone had gotten married! The decorations made her smile, and she thanked Mary for them. Pat reminded members to silence their mobile phones and then asked those who could, to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Afterward, Pat asked for a moment of silence for:

- Continued thoughts and support for Ukraine, the Ukrainian people, and all who are trying to help them.
- All troubled youth in the Tri-Cities – may they receive the support and assistance they need.
- As always, our military, law enforcement, healthcare providers, and the firefighters next door at a meeting, who help and protect us so we can live our lives each day – may they remain healthy and safe.

Introductions – Pat recognized:

- Malin Bergstrom, today's program speaker who Mary would introduce later in the meeting.
- J and Beki Van Buren – their first time at a chapter meeting. J is a NARFE national-only member who recently retired from the Bonneville Power Administration. He and his wife Beki stopped by the chapter's NARFE table at the recent Senior Times Expo. Mary invited them to attend a chapter meeting. (Pat shared that the Expo was a great event – one of the best she's been to, like going to the fair where you see many people you know. She thanked Ellen and Mary for their support [with the chapter's table]).
- Dot Stewart – Pat said it is always great to see her and with her busy schedule, she thanked her for bringing her husband, Bob.

CHAPTER/FEDERATION/DISTRICT OFFICER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

President *Pat Turner.*

- Pat announced that May 1-7 is Public Service Recognition Week (PSRW) 2022.
 - Working with Mary, she submitted a letter-to-the-editor. Pat said she learned that it is scheduled to be published in the Thursday, May 5, *Tri-City Herald*. She thanked Mary for her assistance with the letter. **[Note: The letter did appear in the paper.]** Pat said she had a call from the editorial page writer. Although the paper was "full" for letters, the writer was going to run Pat's letter due to previous connections with her, e.g., at the recent Chamber of Commerce luncheon [and also, the Badger Club].
 - Pat thanked members for their service.
- Pat also reminded members to check both the chapter, www.narfe1192.org, and WSF, www.narfewa.org, websites for much good information.

Vice President *Nancy Crosby.* Nancy reported that she sent a copy of the May/June chapter newsletter to the Red Lion Hotel Kennewick Columbia Center catering manager, Alexandra Wagner, and to Jillian Stricklin, the previous catering manager and now the hotel chain's area director of sales. The newsletter has an article from Nancy recognizing the hotel's support to the chapter for more than 30 years. Nancy received a thank-you email from Alexandra. She wrote, "I guess I hadn't realized how long your history with the Red Lion is! That is awesome! I have shared it with the staff and want to thank you for continuing to let us serve you and we thank you for your continued business!" Nancy also received a positive note from Jillian.

Caller Coordinator *Nancy Crosby for Darleen Wall.* Nancy reported that Darleen recently had emergency surgery for a ruptured appendix. She was in the hospital for a week but is home and recovering. (Darleen and her husband now live in Arizona, but Darleen has maintained her chapter membership and continues as the chapter's caller coordinator.) On behalf of Darleen, Nancy thanked and recognized the callers for their efforts to contact local members each month.

Treasurer's Report *Liz Bowers.*

- Pat thanked Liz for the handout on tables summarizing the chapter's 2022 budget, to date.
- Liz reported that currently, the chapter had a combined checking and savings accounts balance of \$17,040.00. In highlighting budget details, Liz said that in past years some of the chapter's outreach activities were eligible for 50-percent federation matching funds but did not know if that would continue. Mary replied that this issue is being worked at the federation level. Members wanting more chapter budget information can contact Liz and she will send them an email with details. Recent expenses included printing for the chapter newsletter, renewing the chapter's liability insurance policy, and the April meeting lunches. One member said Liz was "doing a great job!"
- **Monies collected at the May meeting** Lunch, \$480; Alzheimer's Research Fund, \$24; NARFE-PAC, \$14; 50/50, \$36 collected/\$18 awarded/donated equally to the Alzheimer's Research Fund and to NARFE-PAC; general donations, \$0; other income, \$0.

Secretary *Mary Binder.* No report.

Newsletter/Public Relations Coordinator *Mary Binder.*

- May/June chapter newsletter completed and distributed – mailed, sent via email, and posted on both the chapter and federation websites.
- Senior Times Expo, April 19, Southridge Sports Complex – Referencing President Pat's comments, above, Mary said the event was a great opportunity to meet prospective members such as the Van Burens, for networking with other businesses and organizations, including the local Alzheimer's Association's contacts, etc.
- Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce monthly meetings/lunches:
 - April 27 meeting – "4 Corners Legislative Luncheon" with the highest-ranking state house and senate Democrat and Republican leaders. The event was moderated by Cecilia Rexus, editorial writer, *Tri-City Herald*. Mary said it was informative to get perspectives from both political parties on this year's legislative session, and encouraging to have discussions in a polite and civil manner. It was also insightful to hear from the speakers that they sometimes get surprised by the governor's vetoes, including parts of legislation, as he has done this without letting legislators know in advance what he is doing and/or discussing issues with them. They also commented that he is a singular-issue focused individual, e.g., primarily, one issue at a time.
 - May 25 meeting – the Chamber's annual meeting and awards luncheon, 3 Rivers Convention Center, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Member cost is \$40. Mary said several hundred members typically attend. It is a good networking opportunity.
- Veterans Service Fair, May 21, 12:00 to 4:00 p.m., 3 Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick. Mary said Congressman Dan Newhouse is sponsoring the event and that she is working on having a NARFE chapter table at the event. There is no cost for the event. Mary shared that it is another good outreach opportunity – to meet veterans and spouses who may be eligible for membership and to network with other businesses and organizations. For example, the VA is often present and VA employees are eligible for NARFE membership.
- Master Gardeners annual local plant sale/fundraiser is May 6-7. An informational flyer was at each table. To note, the chapter's June 1 meeting program is scheduled to be an overview of the Master Gardener program. **[Note: Last known Master Gardener presentation to the chapter was April 4, 2007.]**

- Washington State Rural Letter Carriers Association's annual convention, May 22-24, Red Lion Hotel Kennewick Columbia Center. Mary said the association's Washington State president has asked for a NARFE presentation. Mary will provide that, and the chapter has an opportunity for a NARFE table. This is a good outreach opportunity. Prior to the convention, there will be a pre-retirement seminar presented by a federal retirement expert from New York state, who is also a NARFE chapter member in that state. To note, the association's state secretary is a NARFE member in the Spokane chapter.

WSF VP/DVP I/Editor, *The Federation Reporter*, *Mary Binder*;
Alzheimer's Coordinator Lorie Bennett.

- VP Mary:
 - Recommended members read WSF President Steve Roy's article in the May/June chapter newsletter that highlights the federation's virtual board meeting, April 8.
 - Reminded members about the NARFE national conference, **FEDcon22**, August 21-23, Westin Kierland, Scottsdale, Ariz. Early registration ends May 13. The federation is offering "scholarships" to reimburse the \$190 early registration fee, up to that amount for later registrations, and up to \$750 for other expenses for those who attend and file the required reimbursement paperwork, including receipts. The chapter board will be meeting May 18 to discuss additional "scholarships" from the chapter for those members who attend.
 - Reminder! The WSF virtual conference will be during the week starting October 9, most likely on October 10-14. Mary shared that the conference committee is still working on the agenda but that sessions would not be all day but rather on parts of different days.
 - The next WSF virtual board meeting is Tuesday, July 12, 10 a.m. All chapter and national-only members are welcome to attend. Details are on the WSF website, www.narfewa.org.
- DVP I Mary – **[Note: Columbia Basin-Ephrata Chapter 0856 will be holding a special membership meeting June 2 to discuss the chapter's future, including having to close. Mary will be attending the meeting. President Steve Roy and DVP III Bea Bull will attend virtually.]**
- Editor Mary, *The Federation Reporter*. No report.
- Alzheimer's Coordinator Lorie. No report.

Legislative Coordinator *Mary Binder*.

- Federal:
 - Mary shared that election season is upon us, whether we want it or not. She asked for a show of hands from members who receive the electronic NARFE "Daily News Clips." A few members raised their hands. Mary highlighted a recent clip from the Congressional Quarterly's Roll Call titled "House ratings for the '22 midterms." The author [Nathan L. Gonzales, an elections analyst with CQ Roll Call] highlighted elections in each state. Mary said she found the information for Washington State very interesting and informative.
 - For members who use the VA, the VA has started launching its new electronic health records system, including at the Walla Walla hospital. The Seattle VA is targeted for August. The system is expected to make it easier for VA healthcare workers to track patient information and coordinate care.
- State: Mary highlighted a recent article in the *Tri-City Herald* regarding the initiative to repeal the capital gains tax passed in May 2021 and that became effective January 1. This is, in fact, an income tax so unconstitutional and being fought in the court system. Mary reminded members this is an issue Jason Mercier has updated the chapter on each year during his annual update. Jason is the director, government reform, Washington Policy Center.

NARFE-PAC Coordinator *John Wetterling*. John provided highlights from the 2021/2022 congressional cycle's 5th quarter NARFE-PAC reports for the period ending March 31.

- While overall contributions and the number of contributors are down from the same quarter, 2019/2020 cycle, our chapter and region are still strong PAC supporters. Some of the decrease can be attributed to having fewer NARFE members. Within the state, the chapter remains first in the number of sustainers. It was third in the amount contributed and 6th in the number of contributors.
- Mary added that the NARFE “mean” contribution for the quarter was \$59.12, but for our Region IX, it was \$87.62 – the highest of any of NARFE’s 10 regions, and it has been that way for a long time. Further, the state is the 8th highest in mean contributions of the 50 states and territories, and including Washington, 4 of the top 8 states in mean contributions are from Region IX (Oregon, Alaska and Idaho). Mary said this reflects positively on our state and region, that is, members strongly support NARFE-PAC. She added that for those who knew her husband, Don, NARFE-PAC was very important to him, so he is smiling! [Don passed away May 31, 2015.]

Alzheimer’s Coordinator *Larry Williams*. Larry reported on 2 events:

- The 2022 local Walk to End Alzheimer’s, Kennewick, is Sunday, October 9.
 - Larry has registered a Chapter 1192 team again this year. Members can donate to the team and not walk, but those who donate and walk receive a T-shirt. How-to-register information is in the May/June chapter newsletter.
 - Larry reminded members that donations stay local but DO COUNT toward the NARFE Alzheimer’s Research Fund goal.
 - Larry recently learned through work Mary had done that the chapter will be able to have a FREE table at the event. [Note: NARFE is an Alzheimer’s Walk “National Team,” but only at the \$50,000 level. Free tables are offered for commitments at the \$250,000 and higher. However, in the Alzheimer’s Association’s guidance to its Walk coordinators, it states, “Because of NARFE’s extraordinary efforts, please accommodate any requests for an exhibit booth at your walk if there is a NARFE team, that is actively fundraising, and you have space available.”]
- Looking to November, which is Alzheimer’s month, Larry said he is planning for the chapter’s annual “white elephant” fundraiser auction for the NARFE Alzheimer’s Research Fund. He said that it is not too early to start thinking about an item or items to bring for the auction.

Webmaster *Larry Williams*. Larry reported that member Randy Grekowicz has volunteered to be his backup. They recently had their first training session and were going to meet again after the chapter meeting.

Service Officer *Ellen LeVee*. Ellen provided several updates:

- Reminder – Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) upgrades have started. Ellen verified that members at the meeting with TSP accounts were receiving emails about the changes. She reminded these members that between May 26 and the end of the first week in June, transactions would be unavailable.
- Reminder – there will be NARFE webinars in May, June and July. Although primarily targeting current employees, retirees may know people who could benefit from these webinars. Ellen provided the dates and titles, which are listed in the May/June chapter newsletter and are on the NARFE website, www.narfe.org. Ellen also reminded members that all webinars are archived on the NARFE website. Non-NARFE members can watch the webinars for \$48, which then gives them a one-year NARFE membership.
- Announcement – Ellen shared the new NARFE white paper titled “Affairs in Order: Benefits Guidance for Survivors of Federal Annuitants.” She and Mary had copies they circulated. There is information in the May/June chapter newsletter regarding how to get a copy. Ellen

said this is a “must-have document.” It contains much need-to-know information, including phone numbers.

Membership Coordinator *Johanna Caylor*. Johanna said she is preparing packets for upcoming outreach events.

Sunshine Coordinator *Mary Binder for Coordinator Faye Vlieger*. Updates since the May/June chapter newsletter:

- Member Julie Goeckner’s mother, Edie Wattenburger, recently passed away.
- Jerry Kirk recently lost his wife. She was a past chapter member.
- Johanna provided an update on long-time member, and one of our oldest chapter members, Sig Preston, who has health issues. Best wishes were extended to Sig from chapter members who know her. **[Note: After the meeting, Johanna learned that Sig’s son Mark had passed away while the chapter was meeting.]**

Caller Coordinator *Nancy Crosby for Darleen Wall*. (See Nancy’s VP report above.)

Old Business No old business.

New Business No new business.

Announcements – Layna Kinsman announced that Treasury I Bonds had a current interest rate of 9.62%. There was a brief discussion/questions between several members on the interest rate, length of time to maturity, minimum time the bonds had to be held, etc.

Open Discussion No open discussion.

Free Lunch Drawing Larry Williams.

50/50 Drawing Nancy Crosby, \$18 – \$9 to Alzheimer’s; \$9 to NARFE-PAC.

May Birthdays Chuck Clayton; DeLayne Kruschke; Larry Williams. Johanna also said [long-time member, and past chapter officer and district VP] Carl Gallion has a May birthday.

May Anniversaries No one at the meeting.

Next Chapter Virtual Board Meeting Wednesday, May 18, 10:00 a.m.

- Non-board members, contact Nancy Crosby to attend; she will then send the Zoom link.
- All chapter members are welcome.

Next Chapter Meeting Wednesday, June 1, Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. for social time; meeting/program begin at noon. If the meeting is changed to virtual:

- Meeting changes are announced in emails, posted on the chapter website, or provided by the callers for local members who are on the meeting call list. Members with email addresses listed with the chapter will be notified a week in advance.
- For those new to virtual meetings, contact Nancy for assistance and/or questions.

June Chapter Meeting Program Master Gardener Susan Inlow-Romine, and 2 others are scheduled to give a presentation on this Washington State University Extension Service program, including volunteering opportunities and gardening tips. **(POC: Mary Binder)**

Closing Remarks *President Pat*. Pat:

- Wished a Happy Mother’s Day to all moms, including those no longer with us.
- Reminded members that the early registration deadline is May 13 for the NARFE conference.
- Recognized all the effort the board and members do to keep the chapter together, and then said that Mary was the “national volunteer of the week” for all her work for the chapter.
- Finally, Pat said above all else, family first – something she continually emphasizes at work.

MEETING PROGRAM Mary introduced Malin Bergstrom, president, Bergstrom Aircraft, Inc., and a founder of the Save the Old Naval Air Station Pasco Control Tower. She said she has newsclips dating back to 2016 so has been wanting to have Malin provide a presentation for a long time. Malin provided a PowerPoint presentation with historical photos showing the history of aviation in the Tri-Cities, which dates to 1910. She traced aviation history in this area through WWII, during which time there was strong Navy air presence here training Navy pilots. Several

chapter members recognized photos and could relate to the information Malin provided. Several commented that Malin provided “a great presentation.”

Malin also highlighted the Pasco Aviation Museum, which has recently re-opened after being closed during COVID. It is open on Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. She encouraged members to visit the museum! (**POC: Mary Binder**)

MEETING ADJOURNED 1:40 p.m.

Prepared by:
Mary Alice Binder,
Secretary