

NARFE Chapter 1192
November 4, 2020 Chapter Meeting Minutes

ZOOM LOGISTICS/PROTOCOL *VP Nancy Crosby.* Nancy welcomed 14 chapter members and 2 guests to the chapter's virtual meeting and thanked them for signing up. [Guests: Erica Grissmerson, local area manager, Walk to End Alzheimer's; WSF President Steve Roy.] Nancy provided general instructions for the meeting and reminded members to silence other devices, e.g., mobile phones. Non-board members received an agenda outline when Nancy emailed the reminder about the meeting and log-on information.

CALL TO ORDER *President Pat Turner.* Pat called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m. She, too, welcomed members and guests to the chapter's third virtual monthly meeting.

- Pat asked everyone to stand, led the Pledge of Allegiance, and then asked all to remain standing.
- She called for a moment of silence for: calm and acceptance despite political differences; our scientists and everyone else working on a COVID-19 vaccine; our veterans, and all our military and civilians defending our country; and, for a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving for everyone.
- Next, Pat introduced the meeting's guests – the program speaker, Erica Grissmerson, local area manager, Walk to End Alzheimer's; and, WSF President Steve Roy, who had also attended the October meeting and who, Pat added, had provided very helpful and interesting information.

PROGRAM Chapter Alzheimer's Chairman Larry Williams introduced Erica. She has been with the Alzheimer's Association for 2 years and is the Walk manager for 4 area walks – Tri-Cities, Walla Walla, Wenatchee and Yakima. Before her current position, Erica ran a pet rescue here in the Tri-Cities. She said the local Walk offices are closed due to COVID-19 and staff are working from home, but they are still supporting the Alzheimer's programs. Erica's slide presentation included information about what Alzheimer's is, and what the Alzheimer's Association is and is doing. She provided information about an Alzheimer's advocacy group, the Alzheimer's Impact Movement, which "works at the federal and state level ... to advance the public policy priorities of the Alzheimer's and dementia community." Annually, the state group meets in Olympia with legislators. The 2021 event will be virtual and is scheduled for January 14.

Erica also provided an update on this year's "virtual" local Walk, October 11. The virtual event is ongoing through December 31 so individuals can still register and walk, including for the NARFE Tri-Cities Chapter 1192 team. For more information, go to: www.act.alz.org/Tri-Cities. Further, NARFE is an Alzheimer's Association "national team" member, that is, a company or organization that: has a presence in at least 5 states; assigns a company contact person to coordinate the national team experience; ensures executive support; and, reaches specific fundraising and team activation benchmarks." Erica noted that: NARFE has provided grants for 81 research projects; is involved in the Alzheimer's Association "trial match" program; and, has a current goal of having raised \$14M by the end of the year.

Erica shared that volunteer opportunities are available, including helping with the 2021 Walk. Interested volunteers can contact her, 509.552.7026. She said she is looking forward to next year and, hopefully, having an actual Walk vs. a virtual event. She thanked members for their support.

Answering a member question about the Alzheimer's Association and dementia, Erica said the Association's vision statement has been updated to include "all dementia" and not just Alzheimer's. Another member asked about a solicitation he had received that appeared to be

from the Alzheimer's Association but at a closer look, wasn't. Erica reminded members to look for the Alzheimer's Association logo or NARFE logo in solicitations along with checking return addresses, e.g., the Alzheimer's Association is headquartered in Chicago.

Larry thanked Erica for including a couple of pictures of the chapter's team in her presentation. He said that, to date, the chapter had raised \$480 for the Walk. He reminded members about sending their donation checks to Lorie Bennett, the WSF Alzheimer's chairman. Her mailing address is in the November/December chapter newsletter. WSF President Steve Roy added that the federation had 4 chapters with teams this year – Bremerton, Everett, Tri-Cities and Vancouver. The Vancouver chapter raised more than \$1K. One of its members, Charlie Caughlan, used social media to garner most of the money raised for that chapter. Erica said using social media is often a good way to get donations.

OFFICER/FEDERATION/DISTRICT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

President *Pat Turner.*

- The NARFE Annual Membership Meeting was virtual, October 28. [As there was not a national conference due to COVID-19, this NARFE bylaws requirement was met with a virtual meeting.] Pat noted that NARFE had technical difficulties with the meeting. However, a video of the meeting and the transcript are now available on the NARFE website.
- The FEHB Program Open Season begins Monday, November 9, and ends Monday, December 14.
 - There will be no local, in-person health fairs this year [due to COVID-19 restrictions] but providers are planning virtual events.
 - The 2021 rate schedules are available on line, e.g., www.opm.gov; www.myfederalretirement.com.
 - Pat reminded members about the Open Season articles in the October *narfe* magazine beginning on page 46, and in the November magazine, starting on page 40. She noted that on page 41 there was also information about the upcoming webinars, and how to contact NARFE for personalized assistance.
 - Monday, November 9, 11:30 a.m. – the Spokane chapter has invited chapter members to attend a Zoom meeting with Ann Ozuna, a retired HR specialist. She will discuss changes in FEHB Plans. Details, including the link, are in the Spokane chapter's newsletter at www.narfespokane.org. Members can also contact Mary Binder, 509.378.2494, for details and the link.
 - Member Terese Pratt reminded members with Blue Cross/Blue Shield "basic" coverage about the \$800 credit they can receive but they must apply for it. There are additional benefits for members enrolled in the Blue Cross Wellness Program.
- Pat concluded with several reminders:
 - The December chapter meeting will be virtual.
 - Check the chapter website for meeting minutes, chapter newsletters, meeting programs, updates, etc.
 - Check the federation website for other updates, and current and historical information.

Acting Service Officer *Nancy Crosby.* No report.

Treasurer's Report *Liz Bowers.* Liz reported that [as of November 4], the chapter had \$17,017.01 in its combined Gesa accounts, of which only about \$90 was in checking. Although interest is minimal, e.g., recently, 57 cents, Liz said keeping most of the funds in the savings account helps. [Note: Liz emailed a written treasurer's report to Secretary Mary after the meeting.]

Secretary *Mary Binder*. No report.

Newsletter/Public Relations *Mary Binder*.

- Chapter Newsletter:
 - The November/December newsletter has been finalized and distributed. All members indicated they had received their copy.
 - Mary reminded members to check for their hidden number. Member David Widener from Wisconsin found his and notified Johanna.
- Senior Times Expo, Tuesday, October 20. Mary asked if members at the meeting took advantage of the drive-thru opportunity to get an event “goody bag.” Both Pat Turner and Jim Partridge said they had. Pat also gave a bag to an elderly individual who could not get to the drive-thru and that she was thrilled. Mary said that between the drive-thru event and bags distributed at care facilities, 1,000 bags were distributed, which potentially gave the chapter/NARFE more visibility than an in-person event. Nancy asked if there was a contact name/number on the NARFE flyer the chapter provided. Mary said that there was not, but the chapter’s website was provided for local contact. She also said having a local name and number was something to consider for the spring event. She’d discuss this further at a chapter board meeting.
- Applications are being accepted for the 2021 NARFE-FEEA Scholarship Awards Program. Details are on the NARFE website home page at the “Special Programs” tab. The program is open to graduating high school seniors who are related to NARFE members. Applications are due by March 25.
- Annual Combined Federal Campaign, September 21 through January 15. Retirees can again contribute this year, either through their monthly annuity or a credit card. To note, in 2019 federal/military retirees pledged more than \$1.5M.

Washington State Federation (WSF) *President Steve Roy; VP/District VP Mary Binder; Alzheimer’s Chairwoman Lorie Bennett*.

- President Steve provided several updates:
 - The next WSF Executive Board Meeting is Wednesday, December 9. It will be a GoToMeeting. All members are welcome. Details, including registering, are on the WSF website, www.narfewa.org.
 - He shared that member Quentin Gates, former WSF Executive Board member, and an officer in the Northwest Cascades Chapter 196, submitted a paper to the board regarding the federation’s future and some ideas to think about. As a result, Steve said he has set up a special committee to look at our federation so we can be successful and relevant in the future. Current committee members are: Steve; Quentin; Rich Wilson, past federation president and outgoing Region IX VP; Bea Bull, District IV VP and Bremerton chapter member; Brady Green, president, Northwest Cascades chapter. Additional volunteers are welcome.
 - There still are several vacant chairman positions, e.g., membership, PAC and national legislative, which Steve is currently filling besides serving as the federation president. Steve asked members to contact him if they are interested in one of the positions.
 - Steve encouraged members to use the NARFE Legislative Action Center. Besides a wealth of information, including about current legislation, members can easily contact their elected officials, e.g., Congressman Dan Newhouse, Senator Maria Cantwell, Senator Patty Murray, requesting their support for specific legislation. He recommended personalizing the NARFE letter templates to elected officials, especially with stories regarding how a specific bill has or will affect them.

- VP/District VP Mary:
 - Mary recapped the WSF redistricting that will be effective January 1. She will continue to serve as a district VP until the next WSF conference. For Eastern Washington starting in January, there will be just one district [combines the current Districts I and V]. Mary said she is working to get to know the different chapters. The redistricting initiative also recommends an assistant VP who would be from a different chapter than the VP.
 - As the WSF VP, Mary said she is continuing to work with Bea Bull from the Bremerton chapter on rewriting and combining current WSF documents, e.g., job descriptions and overall guidance. The goal is to have a simpler, more user-friendly reference document vs. multiple documents.
- Alzheimer's Chairman Lorie Bennett: For Lorie, Mary asked members to send their Alzheimer's donations to Lorie and include the chapter number on their checks. Lorie will forward them to the Alzheimer's Association. Lorie's mailing information is in the current chapter newsletter.

Legislative *Mary Binder.*

- Federal: Mary asked WSF President Steve, as WSF legislative chair, to provide updates:
 - The 2021 COLA is 1.3%, per an October 13 announcement. [However, Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.) and John Larson (D-Conn.) introduced a bill that "seeks to increase the Social Security cost-of-living adjustment to 3%." This would also apply to pension benefits federal retirees receive. The Social Security Expansion Act would use a different index – the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E) – to make the adjustments for seniors. NARFE backs the CPI-E.]
 - Steve also provided an update on the co-sponsors for H.R. 141, GPO/WEF repeal. Currently, 5 of the state's 10 representatives are co-sponsors. Steve said he recently was successful in getting Rep. Kim Schrier (D-08) to co-sponsor. He encouraged members to contact Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-04) about co-sponsoring. Steve pointed out that Rep. Newhouse only has a 46% voting record on the NARFE "scorecard" as reported in the *narfe* magazine. Rep. Newhouse's Richland office number is: 509.713.7374.
- State:
 - The Washington Policy Center has scheduled a virtual post-election recap for Friday, November 6, 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. Contact Mary Binder if you want to attend.
 - The state legislative session is scheduled to start January 11.
 - Jason Mercier, director, government reform, Washington Policy Center, is scheduled to be the program speaker at the chapter's February meeting.

NARFE-PAC *John Wetterling.*

- In addition to the information he provided in the November/December chapter newsletter, John encouraged members to become NARFE-PAC sustainers. He said, "We need more sustainers." Even though the overall number of NARFE sustainers is small, the numbers for both the Washington federation and our chapter reflect support for being a sustainer.
- John also reported that is he working on getting individuals he knows to become NARFE members, but that it hasn't been easy.

Alzheimer's *Larry Williams.* See report in meeting program recap, above.

Webmaster *Larry Williams.* No report.

Membership *Johanna Caylor.*

- Johanna said she missed her October 31 deadline for completing mailing recognition material to the remainder of the chapter's 2020 distinguished members due to a delay in receiving the material from NARFE. She said she should have that by the end of the week.
- Johanna also said she is trying to contact members who have dropped their membership and talk to them about renewing; and, she is trying to contact members she recruited at last year's health fairs about renewing and contacting her for their \$10 membership renewal refund from the chapter.

Sunshine *Faye Vlieger.*

- Faye recapped "Sunshine" information in the November/December chapter newsletter.
- Since the newsletter, member Ted Boyce passed away. He had been living in Idaho.
- Johanna reported:
 - Sig Preston fell again – no breaks but she is sore. Faye will send a card.
 - Carl Gallion is continuing with his kidney dialysis treatments. Faye will send a card.
- If you know someone who needs a "sunshine" card, please contact Faye.

Caller Coordinator *Darleen Wall.* For Darleen who could not attend the meeting, Nancy reported that Darleen still needs a caller to replace Ruby Ulseth who resigned. Anyone interested in volunteering, please contact Darleen.

OLD BUSINESS None.

NEW BUSINESS None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS None.

November Birthdays Liz Bowers.

November Anniversaries None for any of the meeting attendees.

Next Chapter Board Meeting: Date and time to be determined.

December Chapter Meeting: Wednesday, December 2, noon. This will be a virtual meeting. Let Nancy Crosby know if you want to attend.

December Chapter Meeting Program: Jeff Peterson is scheduled to again provide a holiday music program of soft jazz with muted trumpet and voice. Pat shared that this is one of her favorite chapter meetings of the year! This year Jeff's performance will be virtual. Chapter point of contact, Liz Bowers, is waiting for a callback from Jeff regarding the logistics for the program. She will keep Nancy in the loop. **(POC: Liz Bowers)**

Closing Remarks *President Pat.*

- Veteran's Day is November 11. Pat asked members to use every opportunity they can to thank veterans for their service.
- Pat wished everyone, and their families, a Happy Thanksgiving.
- And, she again reminded members to stay safe, to mask up, and above all else, to remember "family first."

MEETING ADJOURNED 1:30 p.m.

*Prepared by:
Mary Alice Binder
Secretary*