

NARFE Chapter 1192
November 2, 2022, Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER President Pat Turner called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m., Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick. She welcomed 23 chapter members and 3 guests – Diane East and Nancy Pochert, prospective members from the October Senior Times Expo [They joined NARFE/the chapter at the end of the meeting.]; and, Dot Stewart, wife of member Bob Stewart.

Pat welcomed everyone to a “big house” today! She reminded attendees to silence electronic devices, then asked members who could stand to do so and remain standing. She led the Pledge of Allegiance and asked for a moment of silence for all in harm’s way – whether from conflicts, natural disasters or other causes – that they find support and strength in their struggles; and, for all veterans, especially on Veterans Day, November 11.

Introductions – Pat:

- Guests Diane East and Nancy Pochert, contacts from the October Senior Times Expo.
- Debbie Carlson, who attended last month’s meeting as a NARFE national-only member but who is now a chapter member.
- Susan Bechtol, a chapter member who we’ve not seen at a meeting for a while.

CHAPTER/FEDERATION/DISTRICT OFFICER AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

President *Pat Turner.*

- Pat again welcomed members and guests, and added that she hoped today’s “white elephant” annual Alzheimer’s Research Fund fundraiser would “make a big amount.”
- On display was the certificate from NARFE recognizing the chapter’s 51st anniversary. NARFE President Ken Thomas presented the certificate “virtually” to the chapter during the October 11-13 virtual Washington State Federation (WSF) conference. Pat shared President Thomas’ comments in an accompanying letter, which included that the chapter was “still viable and strong.” [Other WSF chapters receiving anniversary certificates were: Spokane Chapter 32, 72nd anniversary; Seattle Chapter 43, 70th anniversary; Vancouver Chapter 131, Bremerton Chapter 181, Everett Chapter 193, Yakima Valley Chapter 238 and Wenatchee Chapter 239, all for their 70th anniversary; Olympic Peninsula Chapter 1006, 55th anniversary; and, Colville Valley Chapter 1247, 50th anniversary.]
- At the October meeting, members were given a card and asked to provide comments on what was important/not important to them at chapter meetings with a goal, if possible, to shorten chapter meetings while still keeping them interesting and informative. Pat said there was an excellent response and thanked members who replied. The board discussed the input/feedback at its October meeting. A summary:
 - Some chapter coordinators will provide quarterly vs. monthly updates, unless there is something significant to report.
 - Coordinators will focus on shortening reports by providing less detail, when possible.
 - Members want social time. A focus is to move around the room to meet/talk with others, including those at the table where a member/guest is sitting.
 - Mary will work with presenters regarding having presentation handouts, when applicable, as it is often difficult for members to see information projected on a screen. Further, she’ll continue to emphasize with presenters a 20-minute maximum presentation to allow for at least 10 minutes for questions/answers. Nancy will work with the hotel to have a portable mic that can be passed around the room for questions/answers.
 - Pat asked members to contact her, or any board member, if they have additional comments. The board “loves and acts on input.”

- Pat reminded members to check both the chapter and WSF websites, www.narfe1192.org, and www.narfewa.org, respectively. Both have much good information.

Vice President and Hospitality Coordinator *Nancy Crosby.*

- VP – No report.
- Hospitality – Nancy reported that the chapter board recently approved the chapter’s 2023 contract with the Red Lion Hotel Kennewick Columbia Center. Treasurer Liz will discuss more details in her 2023 chapter budget report. Nancy asked members to provide her menu input, which is projected to be similar to the 2022 menu. She also said she is addressing the “hot food” issue several members mentioned after the October meeting.

Treasurer’s Report *Liz Bowers.* Liz provided a summary report with copies at each table:

- The chapter had about \$17,500, January 1, 2022 (combined checking/savings); current combined balance is about \$15,000.
- 2023 draft chapter budget – Liz provided members a copy:
 - She shared that in 2022 the chapter has spent more than it has brought in. This has been a trend for the past few years, and one that Liz said the chapter cannot keep doing as it will eventually lead to the chapter going broke.
 - Liz shared that there are fixed costs, and some costs she is estimating/projecting will increase 10 percent. She asked members to provide her comments and suggestions.
 - Liz also provided summary information on the costs for the monthly lunches. In 2021, the total cost, which includes tax and gratuity, was \$19.71. Members were charged \$20. In 2022, the cost increased to \$21.02 with the members still being charged only \$20 and the remaining \$1.02 being paid from the chapter’s treasury. In 2023 the cost is increasing to \$22.36. Liz provided a couple of options in the draft budget – increase the member cost to \$22 with the chapter paying the remaining \$.36; increase the member cost to \$23, which would give an extra \$.64 for each lunch [and would help offset the cost for the “free lunch” drawing]. She then asked for member input:
 - There was discussion and then a proposal to eliminate the free lunch. A majority of members voted to discontinue the drawing effective January 1, 2023 [meaning no December drawing as payout would be in 2023].
 - Larry shared that many members are getting the 8.7% cost-of-living increase, and “that’s what it’s for,” that is, to help cover these type increases.
 - Faye Vliieger made a motion to increase the lunch charge to \$25/per lunch; Johanna seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and then a unanimous vote to increase the lunch charge to \$25 effective January 2023.
- **Monies collected at the November meeting** Lunch, \$440; Alzheimer’s Research Fund, \$2,758; NARFE-PAC, \$10; 50/50, \$30 collected/\$15 (donated to the Alzheimer’s Research Fund); general donations, \$0; other income, \$0.

Secretary *Mary Binder.* No report.

Newsletter/Public Relations Coordinator *Mary Binder.*

- November/December chapter newsletter was finalized, posted to the chapter and WSF websites, and mailed.
- October was a busy chapter “PR” month. Activities included:
 - October 18, the fall Senior Times Expo. About 700 seniors attended and there were 80 vendors, with others being turned away. At the chapter’s booth, chapter volunteers talked with several prospective NARFE members and had numerous conversations with representatives from other businesses and services that also had booths at the event. The spring event is scheduled for Tuesday, April 18.
 - October 19, mayors from the 4 area cities provided an annual “State of the Cities” update at the monthly Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce lunch/meeting.

- October 25 and 26, Mary said she attended 2 Washington Policy Center events. Both events provided good information and contacts.
- November 1, Mary attended the Visit Tri-Cities annual meeting. Again, good information and contacts.
- Copies of the monthly “NARFE/Tri-Cities Chapter 1192 2022/2023 Upcoming Events/Activities/Programs” were on each table. The handout provides dates, website references, and other important information. Members/guests were encouraged to take the handout. [Note: The handout is a new initiative targeted to save time at meetings by providing members a document they can take with them vs. having information detailed at the meeting. Copy attached to these meeting minutes.]

Washington State Federation (WSF) DVP I/Editor, *The Federation Reporter*, Mary Binder; Alzheimer’s Coordinator Lorie Bennett.

- Mary provided several WSF updates and reminders:
 - The WSF virtual conference was October 11-13. Highlights are in the chapter’s November/December newsletter. As noted in VP Nancy’s newsletter article, attendance was low, despite publicity, and an interesting and informative agenda.
 - The number of WSF members voting for the state’s officers was also low – only 101 WSF members out of 5,400 opted to vote. Mary said about 20 percent of those votes came from Chapter 1192, which is a strong showing! She thanked members who took time to vote. New officers are: WSF President Cray Henry; VP Mary Traxler. Secretary Linda Wallers and Treasurer Arlene Patton were re-elected to their respective positions. During district caucus sessions: Mary Binder was re-elected District I VP; Verna Wright is the new District II VP, filling a vacancy; and, Bea Bull was re-elected as District III VP.
 - The next WSF Advisory Committee meeting will be virtual, Wednesday, November 30, starting at 9:30 a.m. A primary agenda item is the federation’s 2023 budget. All members are welcome.
- DVP I Mary – provided an update on the other 5 District I chapters:
 - Chapter 32, Spokane – is active and meeting.
 - Chapter 238, Yakima Valley – is scheduled to have a special member meeting December 8 to discuss the chapter’s future.
 - Chapter 239, Wenatchee – is in the process of closing.
 - Chapter 856, Columbia Basin-Ephrata – is officially closed. Also, long-time member Joan Jensen recently passed away. Many Chapter 1192 members knew her, and her husband Francis, from past WSF meetings, conventions and conferences.
 - Chapter 1247, Colville Valley – is meeting monthly with 3-6 members attending.
- Editor Mary, *The Federation Reporter*. The annual newsletter is scheduled for release sometime in December.
- Alzheimer’s Coordinator Lorie. No report.

Legislative Coordinator Mary Binder.

- Federal:
 - Mike Causey, “a well-read mainstay of *The Washington Post*, covering news affecting millions in the federal workforce,” died at his desk September 26. He was 82. Mary said Causey worked at *The Washington Post* for more than 30 years, retiring in 2000. He then “spent most of the last two decades as a host and columnist for the news outlet Federal News Network. Mary said she and her husband Don sat with him at a breakfast event during one of the NARFE legislative conferences. It was a memorable experience. Causey “popularized the term ‘Inside the Beltway.’ ” He and his reporting will be missed.

- The 2023 COLA announcement was October 13. Members indicated they had received the information – 8.7% increase/CSRS retirees; 7.7%/FERS retirees.
- Mary said there were many important articles pertaining to legislation in the November *NARFE Magazine*, starting on page 8.
- Mary reminded members about the importance of contacting our elected officials. She highlighted a conversation she had recently with Congressman Dan Newhouse (R-04), during which they discussed elected officials only hear from one group of people on an issue, and then concluding they represent an entire community/area.
- State:
 - January 9, the 2023 legislative session begins.
 - January 26, the Washington State Supreme Court will hear oral arguments on the capital gains tax legislation the legislature passed last year. Lawsuits filed against the tax claim it is, in fact, an income tax, which is against the state's constitution. Jason Mercier, the Washington Policy Center's government reform director, is scheduled to be the chapter's program speaker in February and will provide an update.
 - The Washington Policy Center has a new, free document on its website, *WPC Solutions On the Table for all Washingtonians*. Mary recommended this as a good read for members to stay up to date on state legislation and issues. The website is: www.solutionsonthetable.com.

NARFE-PAC Coordinator John Wetterling.

- The 7th quarter, 2021-2022 legislative cycle, ended September 30. John provided several highlights from the PAC quarterly reports, which are on the NARFE website, www.narfe.org. For example, in the WSF, the chapter is 5th in contributors, 4th in amount given and 1st in sustainers. The WSF and Region IX remain in the top 10 percent among the 50 states in all categories – contributors, contributions, mean contributions, sustainers. While overall NARFE-PAC donations are down, due primarily to declining membership and this year being a mid-term vs. presidential election, our chapter's and the WSF's contributions remain strong.
- For NARFE's 2021-2022 PAC goals, John had summary information at the PAC table:
 - Goal – raise \$1,850,000; as of September 30, raised \$1,650,721.
 - Goal – Disburse \$1,350,00; as of September 30, disbursed \$1,272,000.
 - Goal – Send NARFE members to 120 fundraisers; as of September 30, to 132.

Alzheimer's Coordinator Larry Williams.

- The area's annual Walk to End Alzheimer's, Kennewick, was Sunday, October 9. Larry said the chapter team had 6 walkers and 2 additional volunteers at the chapter's booth. Total raised was \$520, which remains local but counts toward NARFE's national Alzheimer's fundraising goals. Having a booth was new for the chapter this year, and it was free because of NARFE's long support to the Alzheimer's Association. [Pictures from the event are in the November/December chapter newsletter and on the chapter website.]
- Today's meeting program is the chapter's annual "white elephant" fundraiser for the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund. Larry commented that there were more items than he'd ever seen for the event! [Summary fundraiser information is below under Meeting Program.]
- Other updates:
 - Effective January 2023, the new Alzheimer's Association's CEO will be Dr. Joanne Pike, the Association's current president. Harry Johns is stepping down. He has been the CEO since 2005, and has spoken at many NARFE national conferences, including **FEDcon22**.
 - Effective January 2023, the new Region IX Alzheimer's coordinator will be Linda O'Donnell, an Oregon NARFE national-only member. Montana NARFE

member, Wally Walbruch, the current coordinator, is stepping down. [Region IX has 5 states – Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington.]

Webmaster *Larry Williams*. Larry said Randy Grekowicz has been studying the website. Larry and Randy will continue to work together so Randy can be Larry's webmaster backup.

Service Officer *Ellen LeVee*.

- Ellen provided members several updates on this year's Federal Employees Health Benefits Program Open Season, November 14 through December 12. This is the time members can make changes, including additions such as vision and dental coverage. She shared that there are many resources available to members who want information, including how to make changes. NARFE has a "one-stop shop" that includes a link to OPM and information on upcoming webinars. Changes can be made online, via an OPM express number, or via mail. Mailed changes MUST be postmarked by December 12. Members with questions can contact Ellen.
- Ellen reminded members with Medicare Part B, and a health plan that offers some level of reimbursement for Part B premiums, to file for the reimbursement before December 31.

Membership Coordinator *Johanna Caylor*. No report.

Sunshine Coordinator *Faye Vlieger*.

- Since the November/December chapter newsletter – member Francis Mithoug passed away. He was 95 and lived in Prosser.
- For members with spare cards, please contact Faye as she needs cards.

Caller Coordinator *Darleen Wall*. No report.

Old Business No old business.

New Business No new business.

Announcements No announcements.

Open Discussion No open discussion.

Free Lunch Drawing *Johanna Caylor*.

50/50 Drawing *Johanna Caylor*, \$15, donated to the Alzheimer's Research Fund.

November Birthdays *Liz Bowers*.

November Anniversaries No one at the meeting.

Next Chapter Virtual Board Meeting Monday, December 5, 10:00 a.m.

- Non-board members, contact Nancy Crosby to attend; she will then send the Zoom link.
- Pat encouraged members to attend to learn more about chapter operations. All welcome.

Next Chapter Meeting Wednesday, December 7, Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. for social time; meeting/program begin at noon.

December Chapter Meeting Program Jeff Peterson and his mellow trumpet return with a holiday music program of soft jazz, muted trumpet and voice.

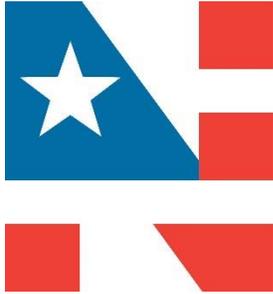
Closing Remarks *President Pat*. No closing remarks.

MEETING ADJOURNED 12:58 p.m.

Prepared by:

Mary Alice Binder,
Secretary

MEETING PROGRAM Chapter's annual "white elephant" fundraiser for the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund. Members brought a wide variety of items – several bottles of wine, puzzles, Coca Cola reproductions and much more. Red Lion hotel staff had set up 4 tables for items but needed to add an additional table! Most items received bids; very few had to be returned to the donor. Between cash/checks, the chapter raised \$2,758. **(POC: Larry Williams)**



NARFE/Tri-Cities Chapter 1192 2022/2023 Upcoming Events/Activities/Programs

November 8 – Election Day!

November 14 thru December 12 – Federal Employee Health Benefits Program Open Season. Questions? Contact Service Officer Ellen LeVee, 509.438.4284.

September 1 thru December 31 – NARFE Fall Membership Campaign. Questions? Contact Membership Coordinator Johanna Caylor, 509. 375.0739.

September 1 thru January 14 – Combined Federal Campaign. (www.opm.gov).

Now thru February 10 – photos accepted for NARFE Photo Contest; guidelines at: www.narfe.org/photocontest.

Available in November – FEEA/NARFE Scholarship Program application for 2023/2024. (Reminder: For high school seniors related to NARFE members and who plan to attend college in 2023. (www.feea.org/our-programs/scholarships))

December 5 – virtual chapter board meeting, 10:00 a.m., all welcome.

December 7 – December chapter meeting with holiday music program, Red Lion, Kennewick; 11:30 a.m., social time; noon – lunch, meeting, program.

January 9 – 2023 Washington State legislative session begins. (www.leg.wa.gov)

April 18 – Spring Senior Times Expo, Numerica Pavilion, Southridge Sports Complex.

June 2023 – LEGcon23; dates and other details coming soon.

August 18-20, 2024 – FEDcon24, Hyatt Regency St. Louis at the Arch, St. Louis, Missouri.

Reference: Washington Policy Center, *WPC Solutions On the Table for all Washingtonians*, available free at: solutionsonthetable.com.