

**NARFE Chapter 1192**  
**October 5, 2016 Chapter Meeting Minutes**

**CALL TO ORDER** President Lorie Bennett called the meeting to order at noon, Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick, Wash. She reminded members to silence electronic devices, called for a moment of silence to remember those who have passed and our service members, and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Lorie then welcomed 23 members and 3 guests – Margaret Walker, Mary Ellen Amundsen, and today's program speaker, Heidi Newsome.

**BOARD/CHAPTER MINUTES/TREASURER REPORTS/HANDOUTS, ETC.** Chapter minutes and treasurer reports are on the chapter's website; copies are also at meetings. Event sign-up sheets, the latest chapter newsletter, and miscellaneous handouts and NARFE forms/publications are also at meetings.

**OFFICER/DISTRICT/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**President/Service Officer/Special Programs** *President Lorie Bennett.*

- Lorie announced that effective November 1, Nancy Crosby would transition from being the Washington State Federation of Chapters (WSFC) vice president to president as current president, Rich Wilson, will assume the duties of Region IX vice president. Mary Binder has agreed to assume the position of District V vice president, which includes the Tri-Cities, Walla Walla and Yakima chapters; and, Lorie has been appointed as the new WSFC Alzheimer's chairman.
- At the recent NARFE national convention, the chapter's membership chairman, Johanna Caylor, was recognized as one of NARFE's top 10 recruiters! Congratulations, Johanna!
- October 19, FEHBP healthcare providers will be in the area. Johanna and Sig Preston will staff a NARFE table at both the Federal Building and Stevens Center. Other locations where there will be healthcare providers include Social Security Administration and TSA. The healthcare providers' schedule is posted on the chapter's website. Handouts with information on the new premium rates were on the back table.
- Lorie said there also was a NARFE-generated handout on the back table that summarized members of Congress voting records.
- Hospitality – Lorie said she is working issues with the hotel catering manager regarding the quality of food, service, etc. A menu for the coming year is being reviewed; and, a 6-month vs. 1-year contract is also being explored. In a meeting that included the hotel chef, the chef apologized for the quality of the food at the September meeting.
- Reminder: the Service Office is still open each Tuesday morning, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., Richland Federal Building, Room 137.

**Secretary/Sunshine/Newsletter/PR** *Mary Binder.*

- November/December chapter newsletter – articles are due to Mary by October 7. Ideas and suggestions welcome! Targeting publication before November 1.
- November 2 – annual *Visit TRI-CITIES* business meeting and tourism showcase. Business meeting guest speaker will be Erik Wold, executive director, World Food Travel Association. Mary asked for names of any chapter member wanting to attend. She needs to provide the names to the *Visit TRI-CITIES* point of contact for name tags.
- November 12 – 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Tri-Cities Wine Festival, Three Rivers Convention Center. Again this year, the chapter will staff the coat check at the wine festival. Donations received are targeted for the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund. Nancy Crosby is coordinating the volunteers and the schedule. She had a signup sheet for anyone wanting to volunteer.

- April 1 through April 15 – NARFE 2017 calendar contest; handout with instructions was on the back table.
- Chapter meeting program ideas – Mary said the board is always looking for member input. White index cards and pens were at each table for members to submit suggestions.
- Sunshine report:
  - Condolences to: Jeanie Polehn on the passing of her husband, Richard; Jack Rhoades on his sister's death, Sara Lou Rhoades Roelen, also a former member; Sandra Kilthau on the passing of her niece.
  - Thinking of you to: Steve Howes; Mr. & Mr. Eberhart Reimers; Howard House; Nancy Carr (Carl Gallion's friend).
  - **Continue to let Mary know of those members needing "a little sunshine."**

**Treasurer's Report** *Nancy Crosby.*

- Balance on hand as of August 31, \$10,073.50. September receipts were \$2,691.13 and disbursements, \$3,618.13, leaving a balance of \$9,146.50. Projected obligations are \$1,672.00, leaving an unobligated balance of \$7,474.50.
- Nancy said she found a \$5.00 error on the June report; the correction/adjustment is reflected in the September report.
- 2016 chapter budget – Nancy reported that the budget "is in pretty good shape."
- 2017 chapter budget – Nancy said she is working on a draft and will present it to the membership at the November chapter meeting.
- **Monies collected at the October meeting** Luncheon, \$360; Alzheimer's Research Fund, \$19; NARFE-PAC, \$34; Newsletter, \$25; 50/50 Raffle, \$32/\$16 awarded.

**WSFC V Vice President** *Nancy Crosby.*

- 2016 WSFC May convention – Convention Chairman Nancy said the final accounting is in progress. She provided Liz Bowers, the convention treasurer, with instructions for making the final payments and closing the convention bank account. For their assistance, the Yakima chapter will receive \$300 and the Walla Walla chapter, \$500. One registration will be refunded – for Paul Shell who was hospitalized shortly before the convention and passed away shortly afterward. The chapter's profit will be about \$1,000.00
- The federation executive board meeting was September 21 and 22, Tri-City Country Club.
  - Nancy provided the board a WSFC convention financial report.
  - Several vacant positions were filled, including for vice president as effective November 1, Nancy will become the federation president when current president, Rich Wilson, assumes the position of Region IX vice president. He will be replacing Lanny Ross who opted not to run again after 16 years as the region's vice president. Karol Kusunose, Tacoma chapter, will be the new federation vice president and Sam Cagle, Olympia/Timberland chapter, the new NARFE-PAC coordinator. And as Lorie announced at the beginning of the meeting, she is the new Alzheimer's chairman and Mary Binder, the new District V vice president.
  - The board voted to recognize Lanny's years of service through NARFE's Silver Circle program. Raising \$1,000 will allow his name to be added to the NARFE Silver Circle wall at NARFE headquarters. Deadline for raising the money is January 31, 2017. Karol Kusunose is coordinating receiving the money. Nancy said she would have a bowl at chapter meetings for anyone wanting to make a donation.
  - June 9-10, 2017, Region IX Training Conference – the board discussed having a regional training conference in 2017, and again using the Three Rivers Convention Center as they liked the facility and its location for the 5 states in the region – Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. The convention

center has been reserved; Alaska and Idaho will have the leads for the conference.

- Chapter and federation bylaws – Nancy said these will need to be revised as a result of changes made at the national convention, e.g., one member, one vote; optional chapter membership. However, NARFE recommends waiting to make changes until after its revised bylaws are published, most likely, sometime in early 2017.

**WSFC District V** *Nancy Crosby/Mary Binder*. No report.

**Directors at Large** *Steve Howes and Liz Bowers*. Steve shared with members that he would like to explore ways to increase attendance at chapter meetings. For example, do we need to make the meetings more attractive to members, both current employees and retirees? With the changes NARFE is making to membership, retaining chapter members may become more challenging. Steve said he would provide some thoughts and ideas in his next DAL chapter newsletter article.

**NARFE-PAC** *Chairman Steve Howes*.

- September – Steve received \$51 at the chapter meeting, bringing to \$321 the amount collected at chapter meetings in 2016.
- Steve reminded members that contributing to NARFE-PAC “is one of the best investments you can make, especially if you are concerned about your future.”

**Alzheimer’s** *Chairman Bill Darke*.

- September – Bill received \$40 in donations at the chapter meeting, bringing the chapter’s Alzheimer’s account balance to \$101. **[Note: A balance is kept in the account to keep it open.]** Since May, the beginning of the chapter’s Alzheimer’s year, Bill has sent \$20 to the federation Alzheimer’s chairman.
- November chapter meeting – the chapter’s annual NARFE Alzheimer’s Research Fund fundraiser. Again this year, it will be a “white elephant” type fundraiser, following the same format as last year. That is, there will be a bag with each donated item. Members purchase tickets and place them in the bags; the more tickets a member puts in a bag, the more chances for winning. **Bill reminded members to bring an item, or items, for the auction.**

**Legislative** *Mary Binder*.

- IRS email scam – Mary highlighted a recent *The Wall Street Journal* article on a new scam that “has started involving fake tax bills tied to the Affordable Care Act.” Many notices are arriving by email – “one sure sign the notices are fake.” The article reminds individuals that the IRS doesn’t, “initiate contact by phone, email, text or social media asking for personal or financial information; call about taxes owed without first mailing a bill; call to demand immediate payment; require payment in a certain way – for example, with a prepaid debit card or an iTunes gift card; threaten to bring in local police or other law-enforcement groups to arrest a taxpayer.” Member Bill Darke said he’d already been contacted as part of the scam.
- March 12-15, the biennial NARFE Legislative Training Workshop, Alexandria, Va. Registration opened October 1. The WSFC is offering a \$250 “scholarship” to each federation chapter member attending, hopefully as a way to encourage members to attend. Mary, Nancy Crosby and Pat Turner are planning to attend from the chapter.

**Membership** *Chairman Johanna Caylor*. No report.

**Caller Coordinator** *Pam Griffin*. No report.

**OLD BUSINESS** No old business.

**NEW BUSINESS** No new business.

**Announcements** No announcements.

**Drawings** Free lunch, Dennis Maupin; 50/50, June Ollero, \$16.

**October Birthdays** Johanna Caylor.

**October Anniversaries** Lorie/Leon Bennett; Scotty/Patty Kruschke.

**Next Exec Board Meeting** Tuesday, October 25, noon, Tri-City Country Club, Kennewick. All members welcome to attend.

**Next Chapter Meeting** Wednesday, November 2, noon, Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick; doors open at 11:30 a.m. Lunch and business meeting begin at noon; program follows.

**November Chapter Meeting Program**: Annual chapter white elephant fundraiser for the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund (**REMINDER! Bring item for the auction!**)

**Closing Remarks** President Lorie reminded members that fall is here and winter is coming, and to ensure their vehicles, RVs, and homes and yards are ready and prepped for the colder month. She also reminded members to continue to stay informed – to watch for emails with updates, whether from NARFE and/or the chapter if something comes up, and to continue to read the monthly *narfe* magazine.

**MEETING ADJOURNED** 12:42 p.m.

**Program** Heidi Newsome, a supervisory biologist, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, provided a presentation on management activities in the Hanford area, including this summer's fire. Heidi has responsibilities that cover 2 states and more than 250,000 acres. She said the USFWS is a "big agency with a diverse mission," including 516 refuges, many with water fowl as a focus. The program in our area is broad and with many issues. The Hanford Reach National Monument is one of its newer responsibilities. The overall focus in this area includes: habitat restoration; invasive species management; advice on operations, public use and planning; inventorying, monitoring and research. Heidi noted that the Northwest's sagebrush habitat is unique to the world. It is found in 11 states and 3 provinces, covering 150 million acres; however, only a small percentage is protected. Washington State alone has 11 types of sagebrush. Also to note are: 85 species of grass; 725 vascular plants at Hanford; more than 100 species of birds; 70 of mammals; and, 23 of reptiles. Heidi also emphasized that there are many threats to the area's ecosystem. Roughly 20 percent of the flora and fauna is imperiled and the sage grouse is a candidate for the federal endangered species list. Threats to the area's sagebrush habitat include urbanization, vineyards/orchards and invasive species. Regarding the latter, Heidi explained the challenges with species such as cheat grass, knap weed, juniper and pinyon encroachment, etc. There is a 15-year plan for the area that includes a vision, goals and strategies.

While cheat grass is a contributor to fires as it becomes an ignition source, Heidi said humans cause most of the fires in our area. In recapping this past summer's fires, Heidi said the area has a "Burned Area Emergency Response" (BAER) interagency plan. Within 7 days after the fire was out, there was a rehab plan for the burned area. The general approach is stabilization and rehabilitation, and includes working to limit soil erosion, and treating for cheat grass and other weeds. However, there are many rehabilitation challenges such as: the large scale of the area; low precipitation; rocky, shallow soils; and wind erosion. There is some aerial herbicide spraying for cheat grass and native species seeding. Rehabilitation also includes hand-planting sagebrush seedlings within the burned area. In conclusion, Heidi said the focus is to improve the overall condition in the area.

Steve Howes shared that he managed the BAER program in the Pacific Northwest for the Forest Service at the end of his working career. He said the Forest Service has “different marching orders” and “funding and timing are very challenging.” Per Steve, “The primary objective of the Forest Service’s BAER program is protecting life and property. Following initial analysis by an interdisciplinary team and submission of a funding request, the Forest Service has one year from the fire containment date to implement prescribed treatments. Also, since the fire season in the Northwest occurs primarily in late summer and early fall, this leaves little time between approval of funding and the first major winter storm event.” **(POC: Steve Howes)**

Prepared by:  
*Mary Alice Binder*  
Secretary