

NARFE Chapter 1192
September 6, 2017 Chapter Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER President Lorie Bennett called the meeting to order just after noon, Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick, Wash. Lorie asked members to silence all electronic devices; called for a moment of silence to remember our deceased and ill chapter members, and our military – both those serving and those who have given their lives for us; and, led the Pledge of Allegiance. She welcomed 19 chapter members and 3 guests – Steve and Julie Wiley, today’s speakers; and, Margaret Stubbs, wife of member Chuck Stubbs.

REMINDER: 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 and/or publications are also at meetings.

NOTE: To accommodate the speaker’s schedules, the meeting program was prior to the chapter business meeting. The meeting resumed at about 12:25 p.m.

OFFICER/FEDERATION/DISTRICT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

- Lorie encouraged members to check both the NARFE and our chapter websites for calls to action and to send letters to our elected officials.
- Lorie encouraged members to view the NARFE Federal Benefits Institute webinars. The schedule is on the NARFE website [including past webinars].
- Chapter officer elections will be in November and officers sworn in at the December chapter meeting. A slate of candidates will be presented at the October chapter meeting. Incumbents in 3 positions are term-limited – 2nd vice president; secretary; and, treasurer. Lorie stressed the importance of having members willing to serve. There are NARFE chapters closing due to a lack of members willing to serve, per WSFC President Nancy Crosby, including 2 she is working with in the Washington federation. Without the chapters, Nancy said, “members lose the one on one connection. We are a grassroots organization so we need people to step up.”
- Annual FEHBP Tri-Cities health fairs, October 10-11:
 - Membership Chairman Johanna Caylor is working on details.
 - Lorie reminded members to look for information on the OPM and NARFE websites. [A reminder to log into the OPM website at least every 15 months to keep account information current. Per OPM, “For security reasons, you cannot use the online password request system to request a temporary password if your account has not been accessed within a 15-month period or if your account has been deactivated. You must contact our Retirement Operations Center at 1-888-767-6738 and speak to a customer service agent to request a new password.”]
 - Open season dates are November 13 through December 11. The 2018 rates are scheduled to be available in early October.
- Hospitality:
 - Lorie and Pat Turner will be meeting with the Red Lion catering point of contact on Friday, September 8, to discuss the 2018 contract, including menu and costs.
 - 2017 lunch menu options were in a handout for each member. Lorie asked members to select their top 3 choices. These will be compiled and used to help select menu options for 2018.

- Service Officer:
 - Those on Medicare will start receiving new cards, with randomly selected numbers vs SSNs, in 2018 [with all recipients having new cards by sometime in 2019]. Using randomly selected numbers will hopefully reduce identity theft.
 - F-100, *Be Prepared for Life's Events* – Lorie reminded members of the importance of completing this information. Copies of the booklet were at the meeting; it is also available on the NARFE website for NARFE members. Nancy said there were 2 recent instances at the Service Office where families needed assistance after the passing of a member and “did not even now where to begin.” She stressed the importance of having “pass-on” information for family members.

1st Vice President *Pat Turner*. Pat is coordinating the volunteer schedule for staffing the coatroom at the 39th Annual Tri-Cities Wine Festival, Saturday, November 11. There are 2 shifts, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. and 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. [**Note: This reflects a change from the 5:00 to 7:00 p.m and 7:00 to 9:300 p.m. announced at the meeting.**] Donations received go to the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund. Pat said the festival is a great event and a great opportunity to see a lot of people. Those interested in working a shift can contact Pat; she'll also have a signup sheet at the October chapter meeting.

2nd Vice President/Webmaster *Larry Williams*. No report.

Director at Large *Liz Bowers*. No report.

Director at Large *Bob Stewart*. No report.

Treasurer's Report *Nancy Crosby*.

- Balance on hand as of August 31, \$10,697.78. August receipts were \$147.44 and disbursements, \$98.00, leaving a balance of \$10,747.22. Projected obligations are \$1,086.00, leaving an unobligated balance of \$9,661.22.
- Nancy is putting together the 2018 chapter budget. She will present it at the November chapter meeting for a review and vote.
- Scams continue, including regarding the Thrift Savings Plan. For example, scammers are calling and recommending members move their investments to their annuities. Nancy recommended hanging up when such calls are received.
- **Monies collected at the September Meeting** Luncheon, \$270; Alzheimer's Research Fund, \$25, including \$9 donated from the 50/50; NARFE-PAC, \$21; Newsletter, \$12; 50/50 Drawing, \$19/\$9 awarded.

WSFC President *Nancy Crosby*.

- June 9-10 – Region IX Training Conference, Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick. Nancy reported that more than 90 attended the conference and that it was “quite successful.” The WSFC paid for all federation members who attended. The region's members want to again return to the convention center for the 2019 conference; Nancy said she'll be working with the center point of contact.
- Nancy attended the July NARFE federation presidents' meeting in Jacksonville, Fla. Besides being hot and humid, Nancy said the meeting was very interesting. She met Barb Sido, the new NARFE executive director, who is already “rattling some cages.” A major concern was the NARFE member and renewal forms. Many individuals are not signing up or renewing as chapter members as the forms are not clear. Nancy said in the Washington federation alone, 190 members have not renewed chapter dues so are now “national only” members. Another concern was the proposal to allow the NARFE president to serve for 3 vs. 2 consecutive terms. At one point, this was going to be an item in the *narfe* magazine for member vote. After discussion at the July meeting, the executive board turned down the proposal; it could, however, be a resolution at the 2018 NARFE national conference.

- September 13, Wenatchee chapter picnic, Rocky Reach Dam Park, pending smoky conditions improving. The chapter has been invited to attend. Nancy invited members to go with her; she'll be driving. Lorie said she wanted to go. **[Note: Due to smoky weather conditions, Nancy subsequently announced she would not be attending.]**
- 2018 WSFC conference, May 15-16, Mirabeau Park Hotel, Spokane Valley. Government room rates are \$99 plus taxes. More details in the months ahead.
- The next WSFC Executive Board meeting will be Tuesday, October 24, in Tacoma. All members are invited to attend.

WSFC Alzheimer's *Lorie Bennett*. No report.

WSFC District V VP *Mary Binder*. Mary will be visiting the district's other two chapters this fall, Walla Walla Chapter 237 and Yakima Chapter 238. The Yakima chapter needs to find a new meeting location.

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

- September/October newsletter:
 - Hidden numbers – still no winners! Mary said one person at the meeting today had his/her number in the newsletter. The numbers are in bold, italicized and underlined!
 - All members indicated they had received the newsletter either electronically or mailed.
- Copies of the federation's August/September/October *Federation Reporter* newsletter were available at the meetings. Mary shared that it contains a lot of good information.
- September 21, annual Tri-Cities All Senior Picnic, Howard Amon Park, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tickets are \$7/advance and \$10/day of, and are available at the area's senior centers.
- Sunshine report (since the June chapter meeting) – cards sent to:
 - Malin Babcock, Alaska federation president, on the passing of her husband.
 - John Slaughter, member, on the passing of his wife, Mary.
 - The family of charter member Helen Speer on her passing.
 - Cora Baldwin, member, on the passing of her husband, LaMar. Cora is member Sig Preston's sister; a card was also sent to Sig.
 - Jim Cassens on the passing of his wife and chapter member, Patricia.
 - Sandra Chandler on the passing of her husband and chapter member, Charles.
 - **Continue to let Mary know of those members needing "a little sunshine."**

Legislative *Mary Binder*.

- Members were provided copies of the August 2017 NARFE Issue Brief with NARFE's top 3 legislative priorities: prevent harmful budget proposals; modify postal reform legislation (H.R. 756); and, support the TSP Modernization Act (S. 873/H.R. 3031). There is other proposed legislation NARFE is monitoring; but again, the handout reflects the top 3 priorities.
- Mary encouraged members to continue monitoring legislation through the monthly *narfe* magazine and on the NARFE website for those who also use electronic access.
- Writing and/or talking with our elected officials remains a NARFE focus. The current chapter newsletter has some suggestions for when writing and/or meeting with our elected officials, e.g., providing specific examples of how legislation would personally affect you.
- Senator Patty Murray (D-Wash.) and Senator Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) are beginning to hold bipartisan Senate health committee meetings with state insurance commissioners and governors on stabilizing premiums in the individual insurance market.
- At the state level – the budget remains an issue. While the legislature reached an agreement on a capital budget in June, it failed to pass the budget before the third special session ended July 20. The major issue was the failure to reach an agreement on the state supreme court's Hirst decision, which impacts individual water rights in rural communities. The legislature will again be working this issue when it reconvenes in January. Further, the

current *Federation Reporter* newsletter has an explanation of the state's key budget terms in the article by John Thurber, the federation's state legislative chairman.

Alzheimer's *Larry Williams.*

- Larry updated members on the change in chairman from Bill Darke to Larry. Bill has served as the chapter's Alzheimer's chairman for many years. Larry said he became interested in the program a couple of years ago.
- As of this morning, the signatory authority for the chapter's Alzheimer's account at HAPO Credit Union had been changed from Bill to Larry with Liz Bowers as the alternate. Bill has also turned over all records to Larry. Further, Larry also learned this morning that as of January our HAPO account would become a "commercial" account and therefore subject to certain banking fees. Larry said he will be exploring other banking options. Suggestions from members were Yakima Federal Credit Union and GESA Credit Union.
- Larry reminded members that Alzheimer's contributions cannot be co-mingled with other chapter funds; therefore, a separate account is needed.

NARFE-PAC *Bob Stewart.*

- Bob reported that through June 30, the end of the second quarter, chapter contributions totaled \$352, other contributions, e.g., sustainers, were \$488, for a total of \$840. At the federation level for the same period, about \$13,000 had been contributed. And, in looking at the federation's chapters, the Vancouver chapter had contributed the most; Chapter 1192 was 7th. Bob also pointed out that the difference between some chapters and their ranking was only \$20! So, "every little bit helps," Bob said. Additional information is in the current chapter newsletter [and in the NARFE-PAC reports on the NARFE website].
- Also as of June 30, \$1,000/each in NARFE-PAC funds had been given to Washington representatives Susan DelBene, Pramila Jayapal and Dave Reichert. Since then Denny Heck and Dan Newhouse have also received \$1,000 each.

Membership Chairman *Johanna Caylor.* No additional report.

Caller Coordinator *Pam Griffin.* No report.

OLD BUSINESS None.

NEW BUSINESS None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS None.

Drawings Free lunch: DeLayne Kuschke; 50/50 drawing, Mary Goldie, \$19 collected/\$9 awarded, and donated to NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund.

September Birthdays No one at the meeting

September Anniversaries DeLayne Kruschke

Next Exec Board Meeting Tuesday, September 26, 12:30 p.m., Tri-City Country Club, Kennewick. All members welcome to attend.

Next Chapter Meeting Wednesday, October 4, noon, Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick; doors open at 11:30 a.m. Lunch and business meeting begin at noon; program follows.

October Chapter Meeting Program: NARFE-focused program – learn more about NARFE from chapter board members, including about NARFE programs, such as the webinars, and NARFE services. A laptop will be available to access the NARFE website. Q&A session included.

Closing Remarks President Lorie:

- School is back in session. Drive safely and watch out for the little tikes ... and the bigger ones, too.
- Continue to stay engaged with our elected officials through NARFE.
- Another reminder: If you've not seen one, try viewing a NARFE webinar.

MEETING CLOSED 1:25 p.m.

Prepared by:
Mary Alice Binder,
Secretary

Meeting Program Steve Wiley, Arts Center Task Force chairman, and Julie Wiley, fundraising chairman, provided members background information on the task force and the current initiative – the Vista Arts Center at Vista Field. The task force has existed since 1994, including working on an arts center to support the community.

Steve is a PNNL scientist and large-scale project manager. One of the reasons he got involved with the task force years ago is because in trying to recruit younger employees for PNNL he often heard there is “nothing to do” in the Tri-Cities. Julie said she has been in the Tri-Cities since 1969 and recognized the need for a cultural center. Having such a center is a driver for many communities. Julie said she is “personally very excited about this development.”

A preliminary design has been completed. Steve provided details both through poster boards and in a PowerPoint presentation. Fundraising is in progress. Best case it'll be 4 years before the center is built. To note, the arts center project is different from but complementary to The Link project to expand the Three Rivers Convention Center and link it to the Toyota Center.

The task force is supported only by private donations, no taxpayer dollars, and is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. While donations are most welcome, so also are endorsements and support, including from those wanting to volunteer and/or serve on a committee. Members were able to sign up to receive updates from the task force. **(POC: Mary Binder)**