

NARFE Chapter 1192
September 2, 2020 Chapter Meeting Minutes

Zoom Logistics/Protocol *VP Nancy Crosby.* Nancy welcomed 16 members to the chapter's first virtual meeting and thanked them for signing up. She 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 sent the meeting log-on information.

CALL TO ORDER *President Pat Turner.* Pat called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m. She, too, welcomed members to the first virtual chapter meeting, and thanked VP Nancy for hosting the meeting and coordinating logistics. She said the October 7 chapter meeting is also being planned as a virtual meeting.

- Pat asked members to stand and led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- She then called for a moment of silence for: all who have lost family or friends to COVID-19; all who have been on the front lines providing us what we need to stay safe; our military and civilians defending us and our country; calmer times to soon return to our country.
- Next, Pat introduced the guest speaker, Davin Diaz, executive director, Arts Center Task Force (ACTF). She stated that Mr. Diaz "has been an outstanding community leader for a long time." From his bio, members learned that Mr. Diaz "took the position after developing years of experience as a multi-media artist, filmmaker, fundraiser, supporter, and promoter of the arts, as well as an advocate for underrepresented communities." He commented that this was the third time he had been with the chapter for a presentation – the first was for the Reach Museum a number of years ago, and then more recently, with Tom Moak for an update on the Mid-Columbia Libraries. Mr. Diaz's ACTF update included a PowerPoint presentation, which is also available on the ACTF website. He explained the current work being done with the Richland Public Utilities District regarding property next to the Reach Museum. This includes creating a "STEAM Park," that is, a sculpture garden, theater, entertainment center, and a place for art and music. In answer to a question, he explained why the project is no longer targeted for Vista Field as initially planned. In conclusion, Mr. Diaz stated that people can help by volunteering, through donations and by advocating for the project.

OFFICER/FEDERATION/DISTRICT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

President *Pat Turner.*

- NARFE elections have closed. Results were not yet known. Nancy said NARFE's schedule showed they would be available by September 13. **[Note: Results were received after the meeting concluded. President Pat sent them to board members on September 3.]**
- Pat reminded members that there is still time to complete the 2020 U.S. Census and stressed the financial impact to the community of having accurate census numbers.
- The FEHB Program Open Season is November 9 to December 14. Details will be in the October and November *narfe* magazines, and in the November/December chapter newsletter and on the chapter website, www.narfe1192.org. Details regarding local health fairs were still not available.
- Pat concluded with several reminders:
 - NARFE Federal Benefits Institute webinars are ongoing, and at 2 p.m., Eastern Time. A webinar schedule is on the NARFE website, in the *narfe* magazines and in the chapter newsletter. Past webinars are also available on the NARFE website, www.narfe.org. These webinars are free to all NARFE members.
 - Check the chapter website for updates, announcements, chapter and board meeting minutes, newsletters and meeting program information.

Acting Service Officer *Nancy Crosby.*

- The chapter's service office in the Federal Building, Richland, is still closed. Nancy expressed concern that we might not have this space in the future. Currently, it is primarily being used to store NARFE chapter material.
- Nancy said she has received a few calls for assistance and tried to help members, including referring them to the NARFE Federal Benefits Institute. She encouraged members who have questions and/or need assistance to contact her.

Treasurer's Report *Liz Bowers.*

- Liz reported that all bills are paid. The chapter's savings and checking accounts combined balance is \$16,898.54 – checking, \$340.12; savings, \$16,563.42.
- For the 2021 chapter budget, Liz reported that the board has had preliminary discussions and she'll basically be following the 2020 justifications for projections, including for conferences. With the cancellation of events this year, Liz said the chapter is "ahead."
- Johanna asked Liz if she had completed the chapter reimbursement form or if she should use the federation form? She has a voucher she wants to submit. Liz said she had not yet completed the chapter form but will work on it.

Secretary *Mary Binder.* No report.

Newsletter/Public Relations *Mary Binder.*

- Newsletter:
 - Mary reminded members to check for their hidden numbers in the September/October chapter newsletter.
 - Input for the November/December newsletter is due to Mary by Friday, October 9.
- Senior Times Expo, Tuesday, October 20. The chapter will be participating for the first time – whether the event is in-person at the Southridge Sports & Events Complex or via a more virtual type event. More information should be available at the October chapter meeting.
- The chapter's membership has been renewed in both Visit Tri-Cities and the Tri-Cities Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Washington State Federation (WSF) *VP Mary Binder.*

- Mary reminded members about the annual *Federation Reporter* newsletter, which is posted on the WSF website, www.narfewa.org. It provides members an overview of the federation, including who is serving in elected and appointed positions, and what they do.
- The next federation executive board meeting will again be a virtual meeting. It is scheduled for Wednesday, September 30, 9:00 a.m. Log-on information will be on the WSF website.

Legislative *Mary Binder.*

- Federal – election season is in full swing, and with tensions increasing. Mary reminded members that when either representing or speaking for NARFE, or even appearing to do so, to remember that NARFE is a political organization but nonpartisan. NARFE's focus is on maintaining the pay and benefits of federal employees, retirees and annuitants.
- State:
 - The Washington Policy Center (WPC) will have a virtual annual dinner/fundraiser on Friday, September 25. In years past, WPC has held annual dinners on both the west and east sides of the state. Last year, for example, Mary said she and member Randy Grekowicz and his wife, Fia, attended the dinner in Spokane. This year there will be just one dinner and it will be virtual. While there is no cost to attend, a

- recommended minimum donation is \$25. To register and for additional information, go to: www.wpcdinner.com.
- The state legislative session is scheduled to start January 11, 2021.

NARFE-PAC *John Wetterling.*

- John recapped several NARFE-PAC statistics based on the June 30 NARFE-PAC reports. He said the state and chapter are doing good when compared with several larger states.
- He announced that Representative Kim Schrier (D-08) will host a virtual “Service Academy Information Night,” Wednesday, September 9, 5 p.m. Per her website, “This event will be an opportunity for interested students and their parents to speak directly with representatives and graduates from each of the U.S. military academies.” Her district includes Wenatchee. **[Note: Representative Dan Newhouse (R-04) has information on his website for district applicants. Go to: <https://newhouse.house.gov/services/military-academy-nominations>. Application period began September 1 and closes November 13.]**
- A COLA for 2021 is not looking good at this time.
- Members who have NARFE-PAC questions can contact him, or Mary or Nancy.

Alzheimer’s *Larry Williams.*

- Annual Walk to End Alzheimer’s, Sunday, October 11, Kennewick. Tri-Cities Chapter 1192 does have a team. Larry said the walk will happen but with COVID-19 restrictions on mass gatherings, not at the Columbia Park. Rather, teams will pick their own routes, or individuals will walk on their own. Additionally, there will be some virtual events. Larry will post updates on the chapter website, www.narfe1192.org.
- Larry encouraged members to continue to donate to the NARFE Alzheimer’s Research Fund. Donations are down without chapter meetings. Further, 2 November chapter fundraisers will not happen this year. The Tri-Cities Wine Festival has been cancelled so the chapter will not staff the coat check at that event; and, as the chapter will not be meeting in person in November, the traditional “white elephant auction” fundraiser is also cancelled.
- Larry said he hopes to have a guest speaker to talk about Alzheimer’s for the November virtual chapter meeting.

Webmaster *Larry Williams.* No report.

Membership *Johanna Caylor.*

- Johanna said she had just received an email from a Blue Cross/Blue Shield representative stating that most health fair events will be virtual.
- She has been updating phone lists to provide to Caller Coordinator Darleen Wall. She asked members to keep her updated of their contact changes.
- The annual fall NARFE membership drive started September 1 and goes through December 31. Recruiters earn \$10 for each new member they recruit. Details are on page 48 of the September *narfe* magazine. Other details are at: www.narfe.org/recruit.
- Member Terese Pratt said she’d received a couple of duplicate, confusing emails from NARFE that she questioned. Johanna said she also had received those emails and would check into it. Mary recommended that Johanna alert Linda Wallers, the Region IX Configuration Advisory Board member. Johanna said she would do that.

Sunshine *Faye Vlieger.* In addition to the information in the September/October chapter newsletter, Faye said she has sent a thinking-of-you card to member Fay Bowers. She also said she provides updated reports to both Mary and Johanna.

Caller Coordinator *Darleen Wall.*

- Darleen reported that the callers made their annual calls to local members prior to the September chapter meeting. She is working on the changes the callers reported to member contact information.
- Darleen also reported that she is changing the format of the reports.
- Ruby Ulseth, one of the callers, has resigned. Darleen is temporarily filling in for Ruby while looking for a replacement. Anyone interested in volunteering, please contact Darleen.

OLD BUSINESS None.

NEW BUSINESS None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Julie Erickson, a member and an “AFE” (Active Federal Employee), announced that the Combined Federal Campaign solicitation period started September 1. There will be information provided virtually; and, she will provide information for Mary to include in the November/December chapter newsletter.
- Terese Pratt said she lost both her parents in June. She said OPM has been helpful and the FEGLI payment from her dad’s policy came through quickly. However, her interface with health insurance representatives has been more challenging.

September Birthdays Terese Pratt; Mary Binder.

September Anniversaries none reported.

Next Chapter Board Meetings:

- Monday, September 14, noon, a short virtual meeting to recap using Zoom for the September meeting and then, looking ahead, for the October 7 chapter meeting.
- Full board meeting date to be determined, but probably early October – after the September 30 federation board meeting and prior to the chapter meeting.
- Board meetings are open to all members.

October Chapter Meeting: Wednesday, October 7, noon. This will be a virtual meeting.

October Chapter Meeting Program: Local author C. Mark Smith will provide a presentation on his latest book, *Something Extraordinary*, a behind-the-scenes narrative of the Manhattan Project. Pat said Mr. Smith has written “a lot about our area’s history.” (**POC: Nancy Crosby**)

Closing Remarks *President Pat.*

- Pat thanked members for joining today’s meeting.
- She reminded members that Nancy will email them about October’s virtual meeting.
- And, she reminded members to stay safe, to mask up, and above all else, to remember “family first.”

MEETING ADJOURNED 1:20 p.m.

*Prepared by:
Mary Alice Binder
Secretary*