

NARFE Chapter 1192
December 1, 2021, Chapter Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER President Pat Turner called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m., Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick, Wash. She said she has been anxious all week for today's music program and said it was nice to have the partnership with the Red Lion that we have. There was applause for the waitstaff. Pat welcomed 16 members and recognized 4 guests: Marilyn Darke, member Bill Darke's wife; Luz Marshall, member Faye Vlieger's guest; and, Jeff Peterson, who provided the music program, and his wife, Adrienne. Pat also welcomed member Bob Stewart who has not been able to attend a meeting for a long time for health reasons.

Pat asked members to stand, led the Pledge of Allegiance, and then asked members to remain standing for a moment of silence for:

- All those less fortunate and who may not have meals to eat and/or a warm place to sleep.
- Our military and civilians defending and protecting our country, and for their families – may they be safe, especially during this holiday season.
- Our first responders, especially during the holiday season.

OFFICER/FEDERATION/DISTRICT/COMMITTEE REPORTS

President *Pat Turner.*

- Pat commented that this is such a special time of year – a time when we install officers and see friends. She thanked current board members for agreeing to stay on for another 2 years. She added that it is good to have a working board, with all working to the best of their abilities. She also reminded members that NARFE is fighting endlessly for our benefits.
- Reminders – Check the chapter website, www.narfe1192.org, for minutes, newsletters, meeting programs, updates, etc., and also the WSF website, www.narfewa.org, which also has updates, and current and historical information.
- Installation of officers:
 - District I VP Mary Binder recapped the results from the chapter's election of officers at its November meeting. She re-installed Pat Turner as president; Nancy Crosby as vice president; and, Liz Bowers as treasurer.
 - Then, Nancy Crosby, past WSF president, re-installed Mary Binder as secretary.
 - To note: Lorie Bennett is on the board as the chapter's immediate past president. Further, all current committee coordinators have agreed to remain in their positions, that is, Mary Binder, public relations/newsletter editor and legislative coordinator; Johanna Caylor, membership coordinator; Ellen Le Vee, service officer; Faye Vlieger, sunshine coordinator; Darleen Wall, caller coordinator; John Wetterling, NARFE-PAC coordinator; and, Larry Williams, NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund coordinator and webmaster. [Note: Randy Grekowicz is now the backup webmaster.]

Vice President *Nancy Crosby.*

- Nancy provided a "hospitality" update on the chapter's 2022 meeting/catering contract with the Red Lion. She met with the catering representative and has signed the contract. Lunch costs will increase from \$20 to \$21.02 for 2022. At its November 15 virtual meeting, the chapter board discussed and approved using chapter non-dues money to cover the \$1.02 increase for 2022. Members will continue to pay just \$20 for lunch. The meeting lunch menu is basically the same, with a few minor tweaks. Nancy said some members asked about again having rolls. Doing so would add an extra dollar per person, or deleting dessert for rolls. The board voted to have dessert and no rolls to keep the price increase to a minimum.
- Nancy shared that some members have commented on again having name tags. The board discussed this, including potential sanitation issues. So, rather than have the reusable tags,

the board approved having one-time-use tags and have members write their names on their tag. This will help reduce potential contamination.

Treasurer's Report *Liz Bowers.*

- Liz reported that as of November 30, the chapter's combined checking and savings accounts balance was \$16,975.29, [up slightly from the \$16,817.27 she reported in November].
- Regarding the 2022 chapter budget, Liz said it is basically patterned after this year's budget. A change, however, will be that she most likely will not have to buy stamps as she purchased a supply based on current usage prior to the latest postage increase.
- **Monies collected at the December meeting** Lunch, \$360; Alzheimer's Research Fund, \$20; NARFE-PAC, \$4; 50/50, \$30 collected/\$15 awarded and donated to the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund. General donations, \$0.

Secretary *Mary Binder.* No report.

Newsletter/Public Relations *Mary Binder.*

- January/February chapter newsletter:
 - Articles/input due to Mary by Friday, December 3 – earlier than normal to meet B&B Express Printing's holiday schedule.
 - The newsletter will be mailed/emailed/posted on the chapter website before the end of December. [It will also be posted on the WSF website, www.narfewa.org.]
- Reminder: The annual Combined Federal Campaign runs through January 15.
- Reminder: The 2022 NARFE Photo Contest entry deadline is February 28. The theme is "America in Focus." Contest details are in the November *NARFE Magazine*, page 68.
- Reminder: Information about the 2022 NARFE/FEEA Scholarship Program is in the November *NARFE Magazine*, page 70. [Note: Graduating high school seniors related to NARFE members – children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, step-children, etc. – who are planning to attend college in 2022 are eligible to apply. Applications must be submitted by Thursday, March 24, 3 p.m., Eastern Time.]

WSF *President/Legislative/NARFE-PAC Chair Steve Roy;*

VP/DVP I/Federation Reporter Editor Mary Binder; Alzheimer's Coordinator Lorie Bennett.

- For WSF President Steve, VP Mary reported:
 - President Steve has received more than \$1,600 in honor of Rich Wilson, [past Region IX and WSF president, who passed away September 7.] Steve has provided Rich's wife, Christine, with the list of contributors. Further, Congressman Adam Smith, D-WA, recognized Rich for his service on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, November 23. His remarks are now in the Congressional Record.
 - DVP II John Wells has moved to Oregon to be closer to family. His position is vacant.
 - A virtual federation board meeting is scheduled for tomorrow, December 2, noon. All members are invited. Contact Mary for more information.
- DVP I Mary. Of the 6 Eastern Washington chapters, only the Spokane and Tri-Cities chapters are regularly meeting. The Colville, Ephrata/Columbia Basin, Wenatchee and Yakima chapters are struggling to find places to meet, to get members to attend, to communicate with members, etc.
- Alzheimer's Chairman Lorie: Nothing new to report.

Legislative *Mary Binder.*

- Federal update: Mary emphasized the importance of continuing to contact our legislators. She again recapped her interface with Congressman Dan Newhouse and the difference that has made in his co-sponsoring legislation, e.g., H.R. 82, The Social Security Fairness Act, which would repeal GPO and WEP. Newhouse said he knew the repeal was important to her.

- State update – A “hot topic” is whether nonvaccinated state legislators will be able to meet in person or have to connect virtually when the legislature goes into session in January.

NARFE-PAC *Mary Binder for John Wetterling.* NARFE announced November 17 that sustainers can now using their annuity vs. a credit card to contribute. Doing so avoids a credit card charge so the full contribution goes to NARFE-PAC. Information with links to instructions was sent electronically from Ross Apter, NARFE political associate. Details are also on the NARFE website, www.narfe.org.

Alzheimer's *Larry Williams.* Larry provided a recap of the chapter's November annual fundraiser for the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund. He said there was a “good turnout” and “good participation” in the November white-elephant event, and he considered it a success. Between donations and the fundraiser, he received \$2440.

Webmaster *Larry Williams.* No report.

Service Officer *Ellen LeVee.*

- Ellen said this year's FEHB program open season is winding down. It ends December 13, including for the dental and vision programs.
 - She reminded members that for the dental and vision programs, members can enroll, make changes including dropping the coverage but then pick it up again at some point, [which is different than for the FEHB program].
 - She recommended members check the NARFE website for information, that there is a lot there, including plan comparative information.
 - The WSF statewide virtual health fair was November 22. Ellen asked if anyone at the meeting attended. No one had.
 - The local in-person health fair for current and retired federal employees was November 30, in the lobby of the Federal Building. About 10 people attended, [which is a lower number than for past fairs]. Representatives from Blue Cross, GEHA and Kaiser attended. Ellen said she learned that about 90 percent of doctors at Kadlec Regional Medical Center accept patients with Kaiser coverage, [even though this area is not listed for Kaiser coverage.] Johanna added that the Federal District Court employees who attended did not know they could join NARFE. She provided packets to them with NARFE information. Two “dropped/lapsed” members were at the fair. Johanna is working to get them reinstated. Johanna also commented that there should have been an announcement in the *Tri-City Herald* about the fair – that it may have helped with attendance. [To note: The *Tri-City Herald* typically no longer runs such public-service-type announcements.]
 - Also, basic Medicare Part B is increasing from \$148 to about \$170 per month.
- Ellen reported that some FEHB program plans do reimburse for the COVID vaccination.
- For those with Medicare Part B, Ellen said some FEHB program plans provide at least some Medicare reimbursement. Check your FEHB plan for details on requesting reimbursement.
- And, Ellen reminded members about the NARFE webinars, including those on health benefits. [These are free to members and are archived on the NARFE website.]

Membership *Johanna Caylor.*

- NARFE's 2021 Fall Membership Drive runs thru December 31. [Members receive \$10 for each new member they recruit during the drive and are entered into a drawing for prizes. Details are in the September *NARFE Magazine*, page 46, with an update in the November magazine, pages 68 and 72.]
- Johanna is assisting WSF President Steve with identifying WSF national-only members who are eligible for distinguished member recognition.

Sunshine *Faye Vlieger.* Nothing new to report since the November chapter meeting.

Caller Coordinator *Nancy Crosby for Darleen Wall.* Nancy said that Darleen wanted to thank the callers and say that she appreciates their efforts. She wishes she was back here but life is what it is. [Darleen and her husband relocated to Arizona earlier this year.]

Old Business No old business.

New Business No new business.

Announcements No announcements.

Open Discussion No open discussion.

Free Lunch Drawing Larry Williams.

50/50 Drawing Johanna Caylor, \$30/collected; \$15/awarded and donated to the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund.

December Birthdays No one at the meeting.

December Anniversaries Liz Bowers and Terese Pratt – both at 49 years!

Next Chapter Meeting Wednesday, January 5, Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. for social time; meeting begins at noon followed by the program. If the meeting is changed to virtual:

- Previous virtual meeting attendees will be automatically notified;
- For those new to virtual chapter meetings, they would need to notify Nancy to be added to her virtual meeting notification list;
- Meeting changes are announced in emails, posted on the chapter website, or made by the callers for local members who are on the meeting call list.

January Chapter Meeting Program Todd Kleppin, co-founder and executive director, FORGE Youth Mentoring, will provide a presentation on FORGE – its mission and programs.

(POC: Mary Binder)

Next Chapter Virtual Board Meeting Tuesday, January 18, 10:30 a.m. All chapter members welcome. Non-board members – contact Nancy Crosby to attend; she will send the Zoom link.

Closing Remarks *President Pat.*

- Reminder: For those wanting to make health benefits changes, including dental and vision, the FEHB program open season closes December 13.
- Reminder: Winter weather will be approaching; take extra care in walking and driving.
- However you celebrate the holiday season, stay healthy and be supportive of family.
- Finally, remember to mask up, remain vigilant, and always, family first.

MEETING CLOSED 12:54 p.m.

Prepared by:

*Mary Alice Binder,
Secretary*

CHAPTER MEETING PROGRAM Jeff Peterson and his mellow trumpet returned to the chapter, along with his wife, Adrienne. Jeff provided holiday music before and after the chapter meeting. This was his fifth year as the chapter's December program. His first performance was 2017; and, he even performed virtually in 2020 due to COVID restrictions.

To note: Jeff and Adrienne are retired DoD teachers. They taught in Japan and Okinawa, retired just over 5 years ago, and returned to the Tri-Cities where they had taught prior to working for DoD. Jeff plays locally at various venues. His website is: www.jeffpetersontrumpet.com.

Although eligible for NARFE membership, they are not members. However, they were given the November and December *NARFE Magazines*, met Ellen Le Vee, the chapter service officer, and were encouraged to contact Ellen, Mary, Nancy or Johanna if they had questions, especially about the FEHB Open Season. [Note: They have previously been given NARFE membership material, including the magazine.] Looking ahead, Jeff agreed to return for the chapter's December 7, 2022 meeting. **(POC: Liz Bowers)**