

**NARFE Chapter 1192**  
**November 2, 2016 Chapter Meeting Minutes**

**CALL TO ORDER** President Lorie Bennett called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m., Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick, Wash. She reminded members to silence electronic devices, led the Pledge of Allegiance and called for a moment of silence to remember those who have passed and our service members. Lorie then welcomed 25 members and 1 guest – Margaret Walker – and the chapter's newest member, Mary Ellen Amundsen!

**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.

**OFFICER/DISTRICT/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

- 2017 COLA – Lorie said there would be .3% increase. With a small COLA, members falling in the “hold harmless” category have the potential to see a significant increase in their Part B Medicare premiums. NARFE's legislative department is working with Congress to solve this issue and has a letter on its website that members can send to their elected officials. Lorie encouraged members to send the letter. This is an issue that hopefully Congress will address and fix.
- FEHBP Open Season starts November 14 and goes through December 12.
  - The November *narfe* magazine has information, including rate charts and questions/answers starting on page 34. More information will be in the December *narfe*. Copies of rate charts were also at the meeting.
  - Lorie encouraged members to pay particular attention to changes in prescription drug coverage. She gave a personal example of a significant increase.
- On the NARFE website is a white paper titled *The 10 Things a Spouse Should Know About Federal Benefits*. Lorie shared with members that it has good and important information for both members and spouses.
- Director-at-Large Steve Howes has an article in the current chapter newsletter that Lorie encouraged members to ensure they read. He is asking members to provide him feedback on thought and questions he has in the article. Answers can help the chapter's executive board as it looks at how to best move the chapter forward. Lorie encouraged members to provide Steve feedback.
- Hospitality – Lorie said that the October lunch/service seemed OK. She is going to ask for mashed potatoes vs. wild rice again for the December meeting.
- Service Office – will be remaining in the Richland Federal Building, Room 137. The office is open each Tuesday morning, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Lorie encouraged members to stop by. She also asked for another volunteer and for anyone interested, to please contact her.

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

- Silver Circle donations for former Region IX VP Lanny Ross – Mary reminded members about this initiative to recognize Lanny Ross who served as the region's VP for 16 years. Mary explained NARFE's Silver Circle program. Donations will be accepted through January 31. Karol Kusonose, the new Washington State Federation of Chapters (WSFC) vice president is the point of contact. Members wanting to donate can send a check, payable to Karol Kusonose, to: 31825 150<sup>th</sup> Place SE, Auburn, WA 98092-9244. Her email address is: [lochcarron@msn.com](mailto:lochcarron@msn.com); phone is: 253.931.1100.

- For those who contact OPM via their computers, Mary reminded members to ensure they have a system for checking their accounts/using their passwords so they remain current.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, *NARFE Questions & Answers Book* – Mary shared with members that this is a good resource. Members can order the book directly from NARFE. There is an order form on page 22 in the November *narfe* magazine. Nancy said 2 copies will be ordered for the chapter – one for the service office and one for Lorie Bennett. Mary and Johanna are also ordering copies.
- November/December chapter newsletter – finalized and distributed. When Mary asked if all members had received their newsletters, either electronically and/or printed, they indicated they had. Regarding the hidden numbers in each newsletter, Mary reminded members about this and said that one member at the chapter meeting had his/her number in the newsletter. She challenged members to help her meet her 2016 goal of increasing by 100 percent the number of members who found the last 4 digits of their membership number. That means 2 people have to find their numbers in 2016!
- November 2 – the annual *Visit TRI-CITIES* business meeting and tourism showcase. Mary said there is always an interesting speaker at the meeting and the showcase is a good opportunity to interface with area businesses, network and have some great food. This year's guest speaker, Erik Wolf, is the executive director, World Food Travel Association. From the chapter, Mary, Lorie Bennett, Johanna Caylor, Nancy Crosby, Sig Preston and Pat Turner are planning to attend.
- November 12 – Nancy has coordinated chapter volunteers to staff the coat check for the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Tri-Cities Wine Festival. Donations received will go to the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund. Nancy will be providing volunteers further instructions.
- August 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 the families of Howard House and Wes/Evie Norman. Howard House/his wife and Wes/Evie Norman passed away within the past few weeks.
  - Thinking-of-you cards were sent to member Susan Johnson and her husband, and to member Pat Slape's husband, Troy.
  - **Continue to let Mary know of those members needing "a little sunshine."**

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

- Balance on hand as of September 30, \$9146.50. October receipts were \$1,077.35 and disbursements, \$747.65, leaving a balance of \$9,476.20. Projected obligations are \$1,722.00, leaving an unobligated balance of \$7,754.20.
- 2016 chapter budget – Nancy reported that even though there have been some changes to the original projections, the chapter budget is in good shape.
- 2017 chapter budget – Nancy provided members copies of the proposed 2017 budget and highlighted the process she used for developing the budget. There was a motion and second to approve the budget. Members approved the budget. Nancy said she would have copies of the approved budget at the December meeting.
- **Monies collected at the November meeting** Luncheon, \$375; Alzheimer's Research Fund, \$1,892 (including \$1,860 from the white elephant auction and \$32 from donations in the Alzheimer's donation bowl and the 50/50 drawing donation); NARFE-PAC, \$0; Newsletter, \$10; 50/50 Drawing, \$34/\$17 awarded (and donated to Alzheimer's).

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

- 2016 WSFC May convention – Nancy said there are still some outstanding checks that need to be cashed before the financial books can be closed.

- November 1 – Nancy became the Washington State Federation of Chapters (WSFC) president. Congratulations, Nancy. Also, Mary Binder is now the WSFC District V vice president (and remains the editor for the WSFC *Federation Reporter*), and Lorie is the new WSFC Alzheimer's chairman.
- December 8 – the next WSFC executive board meeting, La Quinta hotel, Tacoma. All members welcome to attend. Nancy, Mary and Lorie will be attending in their WSFC roles.
- June 9-10, Region IX Leadership Training Conference, Three Rivers Convention Center, Kennewick. More details will be forthcoming. [Region IX includes the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington.] Mark your calendars and save the date!

**WSFC District V** *Mary Binder*. No report.

**Directors at Large** *Steve Howes and Liz Bowers*. No report.

**Alzheimer's** *Chairman Bill Darke*.

- October – Bill received \$19 in donations at the chapter meeting, bringing the chapter's Alzheimer's account balance to \$125. **[Note: A balance is kept in the account to keep it open.]**
- Today's meeting programs – the chapter's annual Alzheimer's Research Fund "white elephant" fundraiser. Bill said 3 items have bid sheets for a silent auction. In looking at the tables with donations, Bill said there were "a lot of interesting items."
- **NARFE-PAC** *Chairman Steve Howes*. For Steve, Mary Binder provided a PAC report in her legislative report.

**Legislative** *Mary Binder*.

- NARFE-PAC – Mary summarized the NARFE-PAC distributions made to Washington State U.S. senators and representatives during the 2015/2016 Congress. She reminded members that NARFE is a political but nonpartisan organization. The focus is on members who support and vote for NARFE's initiatives. Further, elected officials MUST request PAC funds; it is NOT appropriate for NARFE members to discuss obtaining PAC funds with members of Congress. Mary also briefly highlighted the steps involved for officials to receive PAC funds and told members where they can find information on the NARFE website about PAC disbursements to members of Congress. The site also has quarterly PAC summaries by chapters, states and regions. The steps for accessing this information is in the current chapter newsletter.
- November 8 – Mary reminded members to ensure their ballots are postmarked or dropped off by that date. She encouraged all members to ensure they vote. One member had not yet received either his ballot or voter's pamphlet. He should have received both by now.
- November 14 – Congress is scheduled to be back in session. The government is operating under a continuing resolution that expires in early December. Congress will need to extend the resolution or have a budget in place. Further, what work actually gets done, if any, will most likely depend on the results of the November 8 elections.
- March 12-15 – Legislative Training Conference, Alexandria, Va. Mary shared with members that this conference is an excellent opportunity to learn more about NARFE's legislative process and PAC. Speakers are excellent, and typically include nationally known individuals. The conference culminates in a trip to Capitol Hill to meet with the state's elected officials. Mary said that for those who have not walked the halls of Congress, it is an awesome opportunity to do so. The WSFC is offering a \$250 scholarship to each federation chapter member who attends the conference. The chapter will also be providing scholarships. As of now, Nancy, Pat and Mary are planning to attend.

- At the state level, an initiative for the November 8 election in Olympia that has caught NARFE's attention – an income tax for Olympia residents making more than \$200,000. If it passes, the projection is that it will end up in the state supreme court. This, then, could lead to a review of a 1933 state supreme court decision that "struck down a graduated income tax and a 1936 case that reinforced that decision. While not of immediate concern, Mary shared that this is something to watch as a vote in Olympia to impose an income tax on individuals making over a certain threshold could open Pandora's box for a statewide tax, which up to now, has been defeated. She said that many people choose to live/retire in Washington State because there is not an income tax.

**Membership** *Chairman Johanna Caylor.*

- Sig Preston and Johanna handed out about 45 NARFE information packets to both NARFE members and nonmembers at the October 19 health fairs at both the Richland Federal Building and Stevens Center. Two individuals completed NARFE membership applications and joined NARFE.
- Johanna prepared 65 packets to have for attendees at a recent DOE pre-retirement seminar. About 20 were picked up. The instructor has offered to take a few to Pullman for a seminar there.
- The board discussed and approved paying the second year renewal membership for new members vs. paying the first year's membership as a way to encourage retaining members.

**Caller Coordinator** *Pam Griffin.* No report but Lorie asked members to give Pam a round of applause for all her work in coordinating the callers and ensuring they have the information they need to make their monthly calls to members.

**OLD BUSINESS** 1<sup>st</sup> VP Pat Turner said that much work and effort goes into the chapter newsletter and that it has much excellent information. She encouraged all members to read the newsletter.

**NEW BUSINESS** No new business.

**Announcements** No announcements.

**Drawings** Free lunch, Bill Hoyt; 50/50, Bill Darke, \$17 (donated to Alzheimer's).

**November Birthdays** Liz Bowers; Bill Hoyt.

**November Anniversaries** No one at the meeting.

**Next Exec Board Meeting** Wednesday, November 30, noon, Tri-City Country Club, Kennewick. All members welcome to attend.

**Next Chapter Meeting** Wednesday, December 7, noon, Red Lion Hotel, Kennewick; doors open at 11:30 a.m. Lunch and business meeting begin at noon; program follows.

**December Chapter Meeting Program:** By popular demand after last year's holiday program, the Bells of the Desert return!

**Closing Remarks** President Lorie provided members several reminders:

- Daylight Saving Time ends Sunday, November 6. Turn clocks back Saturday night. (Fall back; spring forward)
  - Winter is quickly approaching – watch prepared for ice; watch your step.
  - Much is happening that we need to know, so continue to stay informed through the NARFE website, *narfe* magazine, electronics news, etc. And, don't hesitate to ask any board member if you have questions.
- **MEETING ADJOURNED** 1:00 p.m.

**Program** Annual chapter white elephant fundraiser for the NARFE Alzheimer's Research Fund! The auction raised \$1,860! Members participating in the auction bought tickets, \$1/each, 6/\$5. They placed a ticket or tickets in bags for each item. At the conclusion of the ticket sales, a winning ticket was drawn from each bag. This year's auction had a wide array of donated items, everything from artwork to wine. **(POC: Bill Darke)**

Prepared by:  
*Mary Alice Binder*  
Secretary