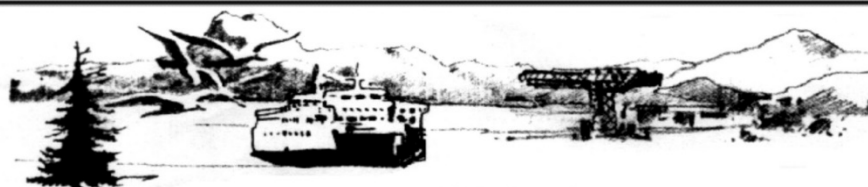


**NARFE**  
FEDERAL BENEFITS EXPERTS



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
*except July & August*

**NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES  
ASSOCIATION, BREMERTON CHAPTER 181**

P.O. Box 4514, Bremerton, WA 98312-0392

**February 2023**

**NUMBER 02-23**

**General Meeting Date: February 13, 2023 Time: 1:00PM**

**Meeting Place: Westside Improvement Club, 4109 West "E" Street, Bremerton, WA**

**Program: Rafael Saucedo Will Tell Us About the History, and Community Impact Goals and Initiatives, of GESA Credit Union**

*NARFE is recognized as the association devoted exclusively to serving and protecting the earned entitlements, rights and benefits of all federal retirees, employees and survivors.*

**Executive Board meetings are held from noon to 2:00PM at the Westside Improvement Club the Wednesday prior to general meetings. Members are welcome to join us.**

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**13 March..... Membership Meeting**  
**10 April..... Membership Meeting**  
**8 May..... Membership Meeting**  
**12 June..... Membership Meeting**

## **PRESIDENT**

Bill Powers

The 118<sup>th</sup> Congress has been sworn into office and now divided government is upon us. The debt ceiling of approximately \$32 trillion has been reached. The Treasury is busy making a series of accounting maneuvers that puts a hold on investment redemptions of our government retirement and health care funds. This will give the government enough time to handle day-to-day expenses until roughly June. Taxes need to go up and spending needs to go down, but that isn't happening. The United States is presently inflating its way out of this trouble. Inflation hurts the low- and middle-income groups but helps the government's bottom line. The United States has the reserve currency of the world so we aren't going to let the Treasury default.

The United States is living beyond its means and the Federal Reserve is putting the brakes on the economy. We are going to have a recession; hopefully a short one. Unemployment will be more than 5 percent which, historically, is not bad. Inflation will continue to be historically high.

Like I said last month, I think the government is fudging the inflation numbers, especially rent, which is the biggest part of the inflation package. They are utilizing selected long-term lease renewals rather than monthly rental payments. Look around in almost any city and what do you see? Homelessness. For older Americans, rent is not supposed to be more than 30 percent of household income, but over half of older renters pay more than 30 percent and, for some, 50 percent of their income goes to rent. For homeowners, a mortgage payment of 28 percent of total before-taxes household income is recommended. The Federal Reserve will keep raising the federal funds rate slowly until it gets to 5.1 percent. This will further slow the housing resale market, and mortgage payments will become too high for young couples enter the housing market.

Now for the good news. NARFE's new National President, Bill Shackelford, wrote a letter to President Biden requesting administrative support for specific policies in Biden's budget request to Congress. Over the next few months, President Biden and Congress will be working behind the scene to develop a budget that will reflect the positions of the administration, Congress, and promises previously made to taxpayers. This won't be easy.

Specific items Bill Shackelford asked for are:

1. Protection of federal retirement and health benefits;

## President cont.

2. Adequate funding for the Office of Personnel Management's Retirement Services;
3. Support for a market rate federal pay increase for 2024;
4. Support for reform bills as alternatives to GPO/WEP (see my previous months newsletter articles and “Membership & Musings” articles for further information); and
5. Support full COLAs for FERS retirees.

A copy of this letter is available on FEDHub, the chapter Facebook page, and probably will appear in our March *NARFE Magazine*.

### **State Politics**

President Bill Powers

With our state emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, the average citizen struggles to put food on the table. Meanwhile, our state's billionaires doubled their wealth. This led our lawmakers in Olympia to pass a new wealth tax. According to the numbers, households in 2020 that made \$30,000 a year, paid 8.2 percent of their income toward state taxes. A household earning more than \$208,000 only paid 1.8 percent of their income toward state taxes. The federal tax system is based on progressive taxation as you climb up the wealth ladder; the state tax system is not structured that way. This state law was immediately challenged as being unconstitutional (our state constitution) by our super rich citizens with \$250 million or more. This new law would assess a 1 percent tax on financial assets like stocks, cash savings, and bonds. It would not apply to earned income. It was estimated the tax would affect about 700 individuals and raise \$3 billion per year.

The reason I included this subject in our newsletter is the state Supreme Court is presently hearing arguments on this subject. If found constitutional, it would solve our affordable housing problem. But I think the law will be found unconstitutional and any taxes the state has collected will have to be returned.

So, keep eye on our state Senate Ways and Means Committee that deals with tax policy. Our own Christine Rolfes from Bainbridge Island is the committee chair.

## **COLA UPDATE**

Steve Ferguson

The December CPI-W value is 287.984 as compared to November's 291.051 value. That equates to a one-month 1.05 percent decrease in the CPI-W. I suspect we are seeing the lull before the storm. The US currently enjoys the petrodollar advantage; but will it last?

## **MEMBERSHIP & MUSINGS**

V. P. Ralph Sanders

Here we are wrapping up the first month of our new year, 2023. This is also the first month of our new Congress. The Republicans now control the House, and the Democrats control the Senate. If you are not aware, all the existing legislation died with the old Congress including our WEP and GPO repeal legislation, known as House Resolution 82.

On 9 January, "H.R. 82 – Social Security Fairness Act of 2023" was reintroduced by Representative Garret Graves (R-LA-6) and was referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means. As of this writing the legislation has 104 co-sponsors, three of whom are Rep. Rick Larsen (D-WA-2), Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-WA-4) and Rep. Derek Kilmer (D-WA-6). The House rules will force either committee action or a floor vote if the bill receives 290 or more cosponsors and retains that number for 25 legislative days. This is where you come in. Contact your Representative and urge them to co-sponsor this legislation or, if they have already co-sponsored it, thank them for doing so. To see the list of co-sponsors, go to [congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) and search "H.R. 82".

This membership report will cover 24 December through 25 January. We have a total of 426 members in our chapter currently. There was one member, Dianne Hendrickson, dropped for nonrenewal this month. If you know Dianne, please urge her to renew her membership. We had two members, Robert Burritt and Sidney Duplex, pass away. Our condolences to their families.

We have two new members, Gregory Aylward and John Alagna, in our chapter this month. We are excited to have you and look forward to meeting you. There is one prospective member, Harold Whitehead, coming on board. We hope that you will become a full member soon.

If anyone has questions regarding NARFE or Bremerton Chapter 181, please contact any one of our board members listed on the back page of this newsletter.

## **PROGRAMS**

Secretary Bea Bull

Good news! We have completed our slate of speakers through June!

13 MARCH – John Vavrinec III from Pacific Northwest National Laboratory has agreed to speak about energy concerns in general and some of the things they are doing that could impact the region.

10 APRIL – Our newly elected WSF President Cray Henry will introduce himself and discuss federation issues.

8 MAY – Congressman Kilmer will give us an update on the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress and local issues in the 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District

12 JUNE – Sheila Taylor from Clutter Controllers will help us declutter our homes.

## **SECRETARY**

Bea Bull

**AARP Tax-Aide Sites** – To locate a site near you:

[https://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp\\_taxaide/locations.html](https://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp_taxaide/locations.html)

### **Sheridan Park Center**

680 Lebo Blvd, Bremerton

Wed 9:00am - 2:00pm & Thu 9:00am - 1:00 pm

### **Saint Gabriel Catholic Church**

1150 Mitchell Ave, Port Orchard

Tue 9:30am - 3:00pm & Thu 9:30am - 3:00pm

### **Jenne-Wright Administration Center**

9210 Silverdale Way NW, Silverdale

Tue 10:00am - 2:00pm & Thu 10:00am - 2:00pm

**Bainbridge Island Main Library**

1270 Madison Ave N, Bainbridge Island

Tue 1:00pm - 4:00pm; Thu 10:30am - 1:30 pm;

Fri 1:00pm - 4:00pm; Sat 10:30am - 1:30pm

**Belfair Timberland Library**

23081 NE State Route 3, Belfair

Tue 9:45am - 5:00pm

**Poulsbo Library**

700 NE Lincoln Rd, Poulsbo

Tue 12:30pm - 5:30pm & Thu 12:30pm - 5:00pm

**Vashon Lutheran Church**

18623 Vashon Hwy SW, Vashon

Thu 10:00am - 3:00pm

**OTP Scam** – OTP stands for “One Time Password”. For example, when I log into Amazon on my computer, I receive an OTP via text message on my cell phone.

In this latest scam, a bot will try to log into one of your accounts then call or text asking you to enter the OTP you just received. **HANG UP! OR DELETE!** If you didn't initiate the process, it's a scam! And never **EVER** share an OTP you received.

**March is NARFE PAC Month** – Bremerton Chapter 181 contributed \$6,255.00 during the period of 1/1/2021 – 12/31/2022. There were 73 contributors and 5 sustainers. Good job and thank you!! Now let's meet or beat those numbers for the next two-year cycle.

**TREASURER**

Rex Tauscher

Our income for December was \$1,315.87 with expenditures of \$1,545.17, for a decrease of \$229.30. Our net worth as of 31 December was \$34,609.40. A Treasurer's report for January 2023 will be available at our February meetings.

## **ALZHEIMER'S CHAIR**

Secretary Bea Bull

The balance in the Alzheimer's account as of 28 January 2023 is zero; a check in the amount of \$236.00 was forwarded to Lorie Bennett. Thank you to Lois Barber, John Burch, Al Holl, Carolyn Minder and Rex Tauscher for their donations at the January membership meeting.

**To make a tax deductible donation to the NARFE Alzheimer's Research fund please make your check payable to "NARFE Alzheimer's Research", write Chapter 181 on the notation line, and mail it to:**

**Lorie Bennett, WSF Alzheimer's Coordinator  
4310 S. Kingwood Street  
Kennewick, WA 99337-5706**

## **SUNSHINE CHAIR**

Lois Barber

A sympathy card was sent to the family of Robert Burritt.

If you know of a chapter member in need of a little sunshine, please contact Lois at 360-297-2671 so she can get a card out to them.

If you have questions or need assistance with this newsletter, please feel free to contact me at [tbkbull@gmail.com](mailto:tbkbull@gmail.com). Thanks!! Bea Bull

**PRESIDENT**

Bill Powers 360-377-7917  
powersw@silverlink.net

**VICE PRESIDENT  
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR**

Ralph Sanders

**SECRETARY  
NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

Bea Bull

**TREASURER**

Rex Tauscher

**LEGISLATIVE CHAIR**

Vacant

**NARFE-PAC CHAIR**

Lanny Ross

**SERGEANT AT ARMS**

William Fuhrmeister

**CHAPLAIN**

Lyn Damshen

**SUNSHINE CHAIR**

Lois Barber

**WSF SERVICE OFFICER**

Charles Caughlan  
360-693-0435  
csquare@pacifier.com

**EX BD MEMBERS****UNTIL DECEMBER 2023**

Stan Barber

John Burch

**UNTIL DECEMBER 2024**

Ralph Petersen

Lanny Ross

**District III VP**

Bea Bull 360-286-7798  
tbkbull@gmail.com

**Region IX VP**

Steven Roy 425-344-3926  
stevenroy1@comcast.net

**NARFE DIST IV WEBSITE**

Webmaster – Bea Bull  
www.narfewadistiv.org

**CHAPTER FACEBOOK PAGE**

<https://www.facebook.com/narfechap181>

**NARFE STATE WEBSITE**

www.narfewa.org

**NARFE NATIONAL WEBSITE**

www.narfe.org

**LEGISLATIVE HOTLINE**

877-217-8234

**ADD YOUR E-MAIL  
ADDRESS**

800-456-8410



**OFFICE OF PERSONNEL  
MANAGEMENT(OPM)**

Phone: 1-888-767-6738

Hours of operation:

7:30AM – 7:45PM ET with best  
time to reach someone being  
6:30PM – 7:30PM or at 7:30AM.

Mailing Address:

Office of Personnel Management  
Retirement Operations Center  
P.O. Box 45  
Boyers, PA 16017

**OUR ELECTED  
SENATORS**

**Senator Patty Murray**

950 Pacific Avenue #650  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
Tacoma Phone Number  
253-572-3636  
D.C. Phone Number  
202-224-2621  
[www.murray.senate.gov](http://www.murray.senate.gov)

**Senator Maria Cantwell**

915 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Ste 3206  
Seattle, WA 98174  
Seattle Phone Number  
206-220-6400  
D.C. Phone Number  
202-224-3441  
[www.cantwell.senate.gov](http://www.cantwell.senate.gov)

**SENIOR INFORMATION &  
ASSISTANCE**

360-337-5700 OR  
1-800-562-6418

**OUR ELECTED  
REPRESENTATIVES**

Congressional District 6

**Derek Kilmer**

345 – 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 500  
Bremerton, WA 98337  
Bremerton phone number 360-  
373-9725  
D.C. phone number  
202-225-5916  
<http://kilmer.house.gov>

Congressional District 10

**Marilyn Strickland**

6000 Main Street SW, Suite 3B  
Lakewood, WA 98499  
No phone number listed  
<https://strickland.house.gov>

Lacey City Hall - 3rd Floor

420 College St SE, Suite 3000  
Lacey, WA 98503  
Lacey phone number  
360-459-8514  
D.C. phone number  
202-225-9740