

**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

**December 2023**

**NUMBER 10-23**

**General Meeting Date: December 11, 2023 Time: 1:00PM**  
**This is the Holiday Luncheon – Note the Different Location**

**Meeting Place: Eagles Aerie 192 at 2122 Sheridan Road in  
East Bremerton**

**Program: Bremerton Mayor Wheeler Will Provide an Update  
on What is Happening in Bremerton**

*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**

**8 January.....Membership Meeting**  
**12 February.....Membership Meeting**  
**11 March.....Membership Meeting**  
**8 April.....Membership Meeting**  
**13 May..... Membership Meeting**

## **PRESIDENT**

Bill Powers

November is the Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) program month. We have 25 people signed up for our Holiday Luncheon on 11 December at the Eagles Aerie 192 new location, 2122 Sheridan Road in East Bremerton. Bremerton Mayor, Greg Wheeler, will be the guest speaker and will do a PowerPoint presentation using our newly acquired projector. We will also have a guest from Washington State Federation, federation VP, Mary Traxler.

We held our election for Chapter 0181 officers during our November chapter meeting. All officers were reelected by acclamation and Mary Traxler will install them for another two years at the December meeting.

We are still interested in appointing volunteers for membership chair and legislative-national chair. The membership chair keeps track of our new members, past-due and dropped members, and deceased members. This position has two people assisting with retention efforts. The legislative chair writes articles for our newsletter concerning legislation of interest to NARFE plus keeps track of the monthly consumer price index (CPI), either plus or minus. Both appointed positions receive help from our executive board.

Derek Kilmer, our Sixth Congressional District Representative, has decided not to run for reelection in 2024. He will have served six terms in office and has decided to take a break from politics to spend more time with his family. His two children are getting older and he doesn't want to miss their growth stage of life. So far, four candidates have either throw their hat into the ring or have appointed a study committee to consider running for his position. We have invited Congressman Kilmer to speak at our March 2024 meeting, which is NARFE-PAC month.

Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) 2023 Open Season runs through 11 December. If you are still thinking about changing medical, dental, or vision insurance, review the December *NARFE Magazine*. There are two articles: One on Open Season and Medicare Part D on page 24; and the other is an Open Season Report on page 44.

As for our NARFE “Bill Tracker,” Congress has kicked the can down the road to be resurrected in January 2024. However, the Social Security Fairness Act, H.R. 82, is getting constructive dialogue in the House Ways and Means Committee.

This is where Government Pension Offset/Windfall Elimination Provision died in the last Congress.

On a positive note, due to NARFE's partnership with the Alzheimer's Association and NARFE chapters across the United States, including our Chapter 0181 contributions, NARFE will close out 2023 very close to the 2024 goal of \$16 million. Thank you for your donations!

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

### **COLA UPDATE**

Secretary Bea Bull

The cost of living remained the same through mid-November. As a reminder, the COLA for 2024 will be 3.2 percent for CSRS retirees and Social Security. The FERS “diet” COLA will be 2.2 percent.

Washington State Federation Legislative-National Coordinator Doug Rushton will explain in the January newsletter why FERS retirees receive a lower COLA (spoiler alert: It has to do with a trade-off for receiving employer matching funds for TSP contributions) and why NARFE now supports legislation for equal COLAs for FERS retirees.

### **DECEMBER LEGISLATIVE REPORT**

Clifford D. (Doug) Rushton

[drushton21854@gmail.com](mailto:drushton21854@gmail.com)

Washington State Federation

Legislative-National Coordinator

Derek Kilmer has been our Sixth Congressional District representative (which includes Bremerton and environs) for over ten years. He has been a tremendous advocate for issues and concerns important to NARFE and its members. He has always been ready to listen and willing to assist his constituents.

### **Kilmer to NOT seek Re-election**

Derek Kilmer, our Sixth Congressional District Representative, announced in a newsletter dated 9 November 2023 that “**I will not seek re-election next year**”. He noted it was an honor representing his hometown of Port Angeles – and the entire Olympic Peninsula.

He mentions a few items in his newsletter:

- Led the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress (aka “The Fix Congress Committee”) where he enjoyed working with the cohort of nonprofits, think tanks and academics who dedicated time and energy to making government work better. He notes there is a lot more work to do.
- “There are other projects I’ve told my kids about, trying to show them we can do things better when we do things together” - working in coalitions to fix the traffic problems, manage our forests in a smarter way, get a new veterans clinic built, ensure the federal government fulfills its trust responsibilities to Tribes and protect Puget Sound.
- With more chapters for his life - “My plan is to ensure those chapters enable me to continue to make a positive difference. And I’d sure like to make a bit more time for those I love.”

On a related note, Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands, Hilary Franz, announced on 10 November she is dropping out of the 2024 governor’s race to run for the Sixth Congressional District slot. She has been endorsed by Congressman Kilmer.

### **Federal Retirement Fairness Act**

Reintroduced on 19 October 2023 by Congressman Kilmer, H.R. 5995 Federal Retirement Fairness Act would allow *temporary* federal workers to apply their time to their federal retirement. On 25 October 2023, it was referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

As of 25 November, there were 32 cosponsors including Third Congressional District Representative Marie Gluesenkamp Perez. If you live in one of the other congressional districts, please urge your representative to cosponsor this legislation.

### **MEMBERSHIP & MUSINGS**

V. P. Ralph Sanders

I am looking for more positive legislative news, which is hard to find these days. Looking at the “Bill Tracker” in the December *NARFE Magazine*, H.R. 1301/S. 640 Federal Employees Civil Relief Act only has three cosponsors in the House and 15 in the Senate.

This legislation “Protects federal workers and contractors from a variety of civil financial penalties during a lapse in appropriations or a breach of the debt ceiling.” H.R. 1301, sponsored by Congressman Kilmer, could use our help getting additional cosponsors. If you live outside the Washington State Sixth Congressional District, please urge your representative to cosponsor H.R. 1301. Neither of our Senators has cosponsored S. 640; please urge them to do so.

These pieces of legislation are important because Congress still does not have a 2024 budget in place. We should not become complacent about this issue. Yes, Government is running or limping along, but certainly not as it should be.

Now we will get on with our membership report. This report covers the dates from 25 October to 22 November. The Bremerton chapter now has 393 active members on its roster. We have two members dropped for nonrenewal: Bob Dill and Chester Hembree. If you know either of these members, please ask them to renew their membership. Three members passed away this month: Mitchell Aksamitowski, Clyde Carson and Peter Vanderwerff. Our condolences to their families.

We have three new members for this reporting period: Thomas Gillard, Carol Marchand and Michele Roberts. Welcome aboard. There are two new Prospective Members in our Chapter: Loren Jensen and James Oas. We hope to see you on our permanent roster. Eighteen members renewed their membership for another year or multiple years. Because of you we can help federal employees and retirees everywhere.

If anyone has any questions regarding NARFE, or Bremerton Chapter 0181, feel free to contact any of the board members listed on the back page of this newsletter.

## **PROGRAMS**

Secretary Bea Bull

8 JANUARY – A speaker from Abraham’s House.

12 FEBRUARY – A speaker from Western Washington University Poulsbo Campus cyber farm.

11 MARCH – Either Congressman Kilmer or his representative. And NARFE-PAC month activities.

## **SECRETARY**

Bea Bull

**2023 Fall Membership Drive** – NARFE kicked off this event on 1 September and it will end on 31 December. Current members can earn \$10.00 for each new member they recruit, as well as other prizes. See pg. 6 of the October *NARFE Magazine*.

**Large-print Newsletter** – Unless I hear otherwise, the large-print version of this newsletter will be discontinued after this issue.

**Biannual Login Reminder** – It's time again to access your OPM, TSP and Social Security online accounts to keep your logins active.

## **TREASURER**

Rex Tauscher

Our account balance for September was \$18,347.49, and for October, \$17,967.81, for a decrease of \$379.68. The third quarter Chapter Life Membership Trust account value year-to-date on 30 September had dropped \$0.17 per share for a value change of minus \$305.91.

Our net worth as of 31 October was \$33,895.18. A Treasurer's report for November 2023 will be available at our December 2023 meetings.

## **ALZHEIMER'S CHAIR**

Secretary Bea Bull

Alzheimer's donations were received from Stan Barber, Pete Miller and George Prichard (November meeting) and from Bea Bull and Gerald Jensen (Alzheimer's Walk). We thank everyone for your donations.

Please remember to mail all donations directly to the Alzheimer's Association at the address below.

**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:**

**Alzheimer's Association  
225 N Michigan Ave, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60601-7633**

## **SUNSHINE CHAIR**

Lois Barber

No cards were sent out this month.

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**

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powersw@silverlink.net

**VICE PRESIDENT  
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR**

Ralph Sanders

**SECRETARY  
NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

Bea Bull

**TREASURER**

Rex Tauscher

**LEGISLATIVE-NATIONAL**

Vacant

**LEGISLATIVE-STATE**

Lyn Damshen

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Lois Barber

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**UNTIL DECEMBER 2023**

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John Burch

**UNTIL DECEMBER 2024**

Ralph Petersen

Lanny Ross

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**NARFE DIST IV WEBSITE**

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**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  
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800-456-8410



**OFFICE OF PERSONNEL  
MANAGEMENT(OPM)**

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7:30AM – 7:45PM ET with best  
time to reach someone being  
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Mailing Address:

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

**OUR ELECTED  
SENATORS**

**Senator Patty Murray**

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**SENIOR INFORMATION &  
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**OUR ELECTED  
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