

From the President . . .

As your newly elected President, I hope that your holidays were merry and that 2024 will be a happy one for all of us. As a chapter, we are starting the year facing a struggle for survival. In-person and online attendance at meetings has shrunk severely. This will be a year where our chapter and NARFE will be challenged to increase our membership.

With that said, I wish to thank Jim Carr for all the years he served as President and will continue in the role of Vice-President. Thanks, also, to Linda Cline for continuing as Treasurer. And thanks, as well, to all the other officers and chairs who will continue in their roles.

Marvin Weiss, President

From the exiting President...

Motivation. Being mentally stimulated to actually perform some tasks somehow between Thanksgiving and Dec. 25th, all of my motivation has evaporated.

Everything I needed to do has been done. All I needed to accomplish has been met! Now today, I have no yen to get back into the trenches and go at it again. I want to rest, relax, breathe easy, just a bit longer. Please, just a bit? Perhaps I'll feel more inspired next month.

Oh, my wife, Linda Cline, treasurer reported she sent \$300.00 to Alzheimer's research from our holiday auction!

Jim Carr, Vice President

From our Treasurer . . .

Happy New Year 2024! Another trip around the sun. What will be in store for us this year? A new epidemic, war, election upsets, cures for diseases? But what about our individual happiness?

Happiness has been called the most elusive commodity in the world. All of us are searching for it in all aspects of our lives. Is it money, love, travel, drugs, alcohol, health, material possessions?

In a recent article I read it said the key is, so simple. As we give so do we receive. Service to others is the rent we pay for living on this earth. It is universal throughout the world.

Maybe we should all look a little harder this year.

Linda Cline, Treasurer

SAVE THE DATE: **Everett Chapter 193 Meeting** **Wednesday, January 17, 2024**

Evergreen Bowling Lanes
5111 Claremont Way
Everett, WA 98203
425-259-7206

Use this link to join virtually:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84885646379?pwd=YW1XbHdDR0NsV2VMY2hCenhvM1NyZz09>

or

Join by phone at (253) 215-8782

Use the meeting ID and passcode, if requested:

Meeting ID: 848 8564 6379

Passcode: 545185

This Zoom link, Meeting ID, and Passcode are good for all 2023-24 virtual attendees.

Our meeting will be in-person and via Zoom for those that can't make it in-person..

Meeting/Program begins at 12:30 PM

Join your friends and colleagues for lunch beginning at 11:30 AM.



Greetings Everett chapter members!

I hope you enjoyed the holidays and are ready to start a new year. I sincerely thank your chapter officers for continuing their work keeping your chapter open and moving forward. I'd especially like to recognize all the effort Merry Byrum put into setting up the open season health fairs and advertising them. The advertising efforts brought 21 non-NARFE members to the health fairs and exposed them to the value of being a NARFE member. Her recruiting efforts are greatly appreciated.

I plan to attend the January chapter meeting and look forward to meeting some new people along with those I already know either in person or via Zoom.

Wishing you the best in 2024!

Bea Bull, Acting District II VP

Secretary's Report

At our annual Holiday meeting, auction fundraiser for Alzheimer's Research and social time, we had a great turnout both in person and zoom connections. The turnout was the highest headcount we have had since Covid. Thank you to all that attended: Greg J., Chad S., Barb S., Marvin W., Steven R., Merry B., Tiger B., Bonnie M., Bea B., Quentin G., Pat R., Linda C., and Jim C.

The slate of officers for 2024 was filled with loyal volunteers which means we will continue to be an active chapter #0193 of NARFE. President was filled with Marvin Weiss, Vice President was filled with Jim Carr, Treasurer will continue to be filled with Linda Cline and Secretary will continue to be filled with Pat Rudd. Our Chair positions will be discussed and decided on at our January 17th meeting. We will need to be looking at filling at least two chair positions. Kate has served for many years as Membership chair and will no longer be continuing in the position. Steve has served for many years as Legislative and PAC chair. Steve will be stepping down from these positions due to limits on his time since he will continue to serve as NARFE Region IX Vice President. A big thank you to Kate and Steve for their service.

Mark your 2024 calendar to save the third Wednesday of the month, with the business meeting starting at 12:30 PM at Evergreen Bowling Lanes. Better yet come for no host lunch. The bowling lanes provide us with the use of a separate meeting room AT NO CHARGE as long as some of us enjoy lunch with a social hour starting at 11:30 AM. If you cannot make it in person, please join us via Zoom. Zoom link is located on the first page of the newsletter and on the Calendar located on our new WA State Federation website, <https://www.narfe.org/wa/about-us/calendar/>

Pat Rudd, Secretary



Membership Report

Since our last membership report at the end of October we have had the following activity with our members in November-December.

- 1 New Member
- 3 Members Dropped for Non-Renewal
- 2 Members Sent Second Renewal Notice
- 3 New Prospective Member
- 7 Members Renewed Their Membership
- 1 Member Passed Away

At the first of the year our chapter had 111 members and at the end of December we had 106 members.

Welcome to our new member, Penny H.

Also, our 3 new prospective members, Sylvia B., Jorge C., and Rob C. Our member that passed away was Grace D. of Everett, she was 4 months short of being 100 years old.

Please check your contact information with NARFE National to verify that it is up to date. <https://www.narfe.org/> or call (800) 456-8410

Wishing all members, the best throughout the coming year.

Katherine Williams, Membership Chair And Merry Byrum, Editor

Service Officer Report

Here are the numbers of our attendees at our hosted Health Fairs. Numbers include me in attendance. We were successful in having 21 non-members in attendance to share with them "Who NARFE Is" and "What We Do". I would also like to thank our members that helped me set up and host these Health Fairs. Thank you sooo much: Barb R., Linda C., Jim C., Tiger B., Lu S. and my cousins in Bellingham, non-members, Russ & Bekki W.

- Nov. 14, 2023 – Bellingham Attendance = 11
Chapter 193 = 4, other Chapter = 1, Nat. Only = 3, Not Member = 3, and 2 included New Members
- Nov. 15, 2023 – Everett Attendance = 16 -
Disconnect Zoom = 5 -
Chapter 193 = 12, other Chapter = 2, Nat. Only = 0, Not Member = 7, and 2 included New Members
- Nov. 16, 2023 – Sedro-Woolley Attendance = 10 -
Chapter 193 = 4, other Chapter = 0, Nat. Only = 0, Not Member = 6, and 0 New Members
- Nov. 29, 2023 – Mount Vernon Attendance = 12 -

Chapter 193 = 3, other Chapter = 2, Nat. Only = 2,
Not Member = 5, and 0 New Members

New members & Transfers into #193 this year:

- James H.
- Cindy W.
- Thomas L.
- Joseph (Tiger) B.
- Bonnie M.
- Penny H.



If you need help with any of your federal benefits or just have questions or concerns, please reach out to one of your local chapter officers.

Merry Byrum, Service Officer

Outreach and Concern about NARFE being partisan (Democratic)

NARFE's Mission Statement:

"To support legislation and regulations beneficial to federal civilian employees and annuitants and potential annuitants under any federal civilian retirement system and to oppose those detrimental to their interests.

To promote the general welfare of federal civilian employees and annuitants and potential annuitants, to advise and assist them with respect to their rights under retirement, health, and other employee and retiree benefits laws and regulations, and to represent their interests before appropriate authorities.

To cooperate with other organizations and associations in furtherance of these general objectives."

Steven Roy gathered data from NARFE's PAC Disbursements, and this is what he found: He counted 15 Republicans that NARFE Disburses PAC funds to throughout the Country. These House Reps. are in Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, plus Republican Main Street Partnership and Republican Main Street PAC. Also, the Republican Tuesday Group PAC and Republican Building Bridges PAC. Also, Senator Lisa Murkowski Denali PAC, Senator Susan Collins Dirigo PAC, and Senator James Lankford LANK PAC.



Merry Byrum, WSF Outreach Retention Chair

Our continued fight to fund Alzheimer's Research

We collected \$300 in donations for Alzheimer's Research through our auction during our December 20th holiday meeting. Our auctioneer, Chad is one of the best even with the challenge of performing the auction in-person and via Zoom.

To make a tax-deductible donation to the NARFE Alzheimer's Research fund please make your check payable to "NARFE Alzheimer's Research," write "Everett Chapter 193" on the notation line and mail it to: Alzheimer's Association 225 N Michigan Ave, 17th Floor Chicago, IL 60601-7633.

Marvin Weiss, Alzheimer's Chair

Legislative Round Up

H.R. 82, Social Security Fairness act now has 301 cosponsors which repeals the WEP/GPO and was reintroduced in the 118th Congress. Eight of our 10 Congressional representatives in Washington have cosponsored the bill. Senator Murray and Senator Cantwell have cosponsored the Senate companion bill, S. 597. Please thank Representatives Suzan DelBene and Rick Larsen for cosponsoring this bill via the Legislative Action Center (LAC).

Please ask via the NARFE Legislative Action Center for Rick Larsen and Suzan DelBene to cosponsor H.R. 866, Equal COLA Act. This bill would treat Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) retirees the same as Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) retirees on the way the Cost of Living Adjustment is calculated. Now as the law exists, FERS retirees receive up to 1% less than CSRS retirees. You can also call or write Representatives DelBene and Larsen and ask them to cosponsor H.R. 866, Equal COLA Act.

Representatives Derek Kilmer, D-WA, Gerry Connolly, D-VA, Don Bacon, R-NE, and David Valadao, R-CA, have reintroduced the Federal Retirement Fairness Act (FRFA), to allow federal workers with "temporary" service who transitioned to permanent work to obtain credit towards retirement for their temporary work.

The FRFA (H.R. 5995) is designed to bridge a retirement gap that affects individuals who commenced their federal careers as temporary workers after 1988, rendering them unable to contribute to retirement

plans during that period. This legislation presents a solution by enabling these workers to make catch-up contributions, ensuring they can retire with credit for their “temporary” work. The absence of this provision has left many federal employees with a challenging dilemma: either retire without complete retirement benefits or postpone retirement until they can achieve full benefits.

Please call, write or use NARFE’s Legislative Action Center to ask Representatives DelBene and Larsen to cosponsor H.R. 5995.

While in the LAC, send a message to your Representatives DelBene urging her to cosponsor the Saving the Civil Service Act, H.R. 1002. You can also thank Representative Larsen for being the sole cosponsor of this bill in Washington state. This bill would prevent the return of Schedule F, a statutory loophole created by the previous administration that would have bypassed the system of rules ensuring civil servants are hired and fired based on merit.

The bill would also block any position in the federal competitive service, created after September 30, 2020, from being reclassified outside of merit system principles without the express consent of Congress and install a cap on the number of conversions to the frozen excepted service schedule (Schedule C), with the cap not to exceed more than one percent of the total number of employees, whichever is greater.

And to ensure transparency, the bill would require the consent of the employee and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) before transfer to an excepted service can occur, requires OPM annual reporting, and gives Congress additional oversight.

While in the Legislative Action Center, please send a note to both Representatives DelBene and Larsen regarding the pending shutdown of the government on January 19 and February 2, if Congress fails to act to stop the shutdown. Also, you can send a note to Representative DelBene to cosponsor H.R. 856, Comprehensive Paid Leave for Federal Employees, which would allow for 12 weeks of paid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act.

Steve Roy, Legislative Chair

NARFE Political Action Committee (PAC)

NARFE-PAC is an important tool in our advocacy toolbox. Contributions go to support fed friendly candidates for the House of Representatives and Senate. PAC disbursements are made to both parties.

You can contribute by going to NARFE’s website at <https://www.narfe.org/advocacy/narfe-pac/> and make a contribution. You can also call NARFE on 800.456.8410. Thank you in advance for your generous PAC contribution.

So far this year, Representatives Suzan DelBene has received \$3,500 and Rick Larsen has received \$1000 from NARFE PAC.

Steve Roy, NARFE-PAC Chair

CSRS vs. FERS, FEDHub December 2023

I've been asked to research why NARFE supports H.R. 866 when, at the time the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) was implemented, there was an agreement that the lower cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for FERS retirees would be offset by gaining Social Security and employer-match contributions to their Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) accounts. H.R. 866, the Equal COLA Act, revises the formula calculating the COLA for annuities paid under FERS. It proposes "parity between the cost-of-living adjustment with respect to an annuity under the Federal Employees Retirement System and an annuity under the Civil Service Retirement System, and for other purposes." The bill was sponsored by Representative Gerald E. Connolly (D-VA) and has, as of 7 December 2023, 44 cosponsors, with Representative Derek Kilmer (D-WA) being the only cosponsor from Washington. It was referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability on 8 February 2023. As of 4 December 2023, no related bill information has been received for H.R. 866. The bill, if passed, would provide FERS retirees with the same annual COLA as CSRS retirees.

The Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), a long-established pension plan that went into effect on 1 August 1920, has a single component – the annuity, whereas FERS, which became effective on 1 January 1987, has three components – 1) Reduced annuity (reduced from the level of CSRS), 2) Social Security, and 3) the Thrift Savings Plan. The annuity and reduced COLAs are a result of negotiations since FERS recipients would be eligible for Social Security (which CSRS retirees are not), as well as benefiting from yields from their TSP accounts. A person's individual savings and investments could supplement both a CSRS and FERS annuity. John Hatton, NARFE Staff Vice President, Policy and Programs, accurately points out many chose CSRS and prefer it. Without archival research, John is sure NARFE commented on and was involved with the development of FERS in the 1980s.

So, how did we get here – where FERS retirees are losing ground? When FERS was negotiated, there was a balancing of pros and cons – trying to make the best of an imperfect situation. FERS was supposed to create a similar *total benefit* to CSRS through the TSP, a smaller annuity and Social Security. Again, the underlying premise was to have FERS at parity with cost of living. NARFE did not wholly support the approach but had to take the whole package and, as we have seen, high inflation has diminished the FERS benefit. It appears the assumptions about the rate of inflation were too low.

It is for this reason that NARFE supports H.R. 866 and asks members to urge their congressional representatives to cosponsor this legislation.

As a FERS retiree myself, every time there is a COLA, the FERS COLA is less than the CSRS COLA, but the logic was (and is) that TSP yields and Social Security benefits would cover that difference.

Doug Rushton, WSF National Legislative Chair

Stay Warm, Dry and Cozy in the Winter Months to come!!!!

FEDHub, NARFE's newest communication tool

There was quite a bit of ongoing discussion on FEDHub with Doug Rushton's posting. Don't miss out on some especially important information by checking out <https://fedhub.narfe.org/home>.

Use the same log-in as you use for <https://www.narfe.org/>

Look at the Quick Start Guide

Create your Profile!

Join a few Communities....

Update your Account Settings: Preferences, Notifications, etc.

Join in the Conversation, Post a Message

We look forward to your input and thoughts!!!

Chapter 0193 Officers

HELP WANTED! URGENT!

Your Chapter Needs
Your Help
Please Volunteer to Serve
as

**MEMBERSHIP CHAIR,
LEGISLATIVE CHAIR &/or
POLITICAL ACTION
COMMITTEE CHAIR**

We will accept any time you can
contribute to support the chapter.



Chapter Resource Page

CHAPTER 193 OFFICERS

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maw1941X@gmail.com

VICE PRESIDENT:

Jim Carr

SECRETARY:

Pat Rudd

TREASURER:

Linda Cline

ADVISORY VOLUNTEERS

LEGISLATIVE CHAIR

NARFE-PAC CHAIR

Vacant, Please consider.

SERVICE OFFICER

Merry Byrum

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Vacant, Please consider.

MEMBERSHIP

Vacant, Please consider.

Sunshine Chair:

Pat Rudd

ALZHEIMER'S:

Marvin Weiss

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DISTRICT II VP

(acting)

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



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REGION IX VP

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stevenroy1@yahoo.com

Region IX CAB Representative

Arthur F. Ellison
360-638-0738

NARFE STATE WEBSITE

<https://www.narfe.org/wa> **NEW**

<https://fedhub.narfe.org/home>

Washington State Federation
Community

NARFE NATIONAL WEBSITE

www.narfe.org

LEGISLATIVE HOTLINE

877-217-8234

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

Northwest Regional Council
Whatcom Co. 360-738-2500 &
Skagit Co. 360-428-1309

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT (OPM)

Phone: 1-888-767-6738

Hours of operation (M-F):
4:40 am – 2:00 pm PT with best time
to reach someone is before 7:30 am
and after 10:30 am PT.

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

Capitol Switchboard

1-202-224-3121

YOUR US SENATE AND HOUSE

Senator Patty Murray

2930 Wetmore Ave Suite 9D
Everett, WA 98201
425-259-6515

<https://www.murray.senate.gov/>

Senator Maria Cantwell

2930 Wetmore Ave Suite 9B
Everett, WA 98201
425-303-0114

<https://www.cantwell.senate.gov/>

US Representative

Suzan Del Bene (WA-1)

450 Central Way, Suite 3100
Kirkland, WA 98033
Phone: 425-485-0085

<https://delbene.house.gov/>

Rick Larsen (WA-2)

Wall Street Building
2930 Wetmore Ave, Suite 9F
Everett, WA 98201

Phone: 425-252-3188

<https://larsen.house.gov/>

Rep. Kim Schrier (WA-08)

1445 NW Mall Street Suite 4
Issaquah, WA 98027
425-657-1001

<https://schrier.house.gov/>

*Chapter 193 meets on the third
Wednesday of the month from
September through May. There are
no meetings from June through
August.*

*The annual picnic is usually
scheduled in August where
Representatives or their local
Congressional staff provide
legislative updates to the members.*



Save the 2024 Chapter Meeting Dates

2024

February 21

March 20

April 17

May 15

August 21 (picnic)

*Select the blue ZOOM link in the meeting
announcement box on page 1 to attend. The
link is good for all the 2024 meetings.*

