

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
except July & August

**NATIONAL ACTIVE AND RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES
ASSOCIATION, BREMERTON CHAPTER 181**
P.O. Box 4514, Bremerton, WA 98312-0392

April 2024

NUMBER 04-24

General Meeting Date & Time: April 8, 2024 1:00PM

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

**Program: Local author, Jonathan Evison will discuss his most recent books:
"Again and Again" and "Small World"**

**Plan to arrive early to peruse and purchase Jonathan's books – credit cards accepted
All proceeds go to support the Kitsap Regional Library Foundation**

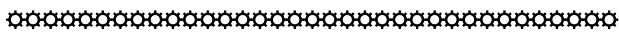
NARFE is recognized as the association devoted exclusively to serving and protecting the earned entitlements, rights and benefits of all federal retirees, employees and survivors.

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 May.....Membership Meeting

10 June.....Membership Meeting



PRESIDENT

Bill Powers

Congress has finally passed all 12 individual spending bills to fund our government through 2024. All these appropriation bills were initially due on 30 September 2023. The funding process has taken so long that it is now past time to start negotiations for the 2025 budget. The Executive Branch (President's) issued its 2025 budget wish list request in mid-March; there is zero chance of that being implemented unless there is a tsunami change in congressional representation due to November's elections. The 2025 budget is supposed to be implemented by 30 September 2024, which is before the November elections and before convening of the new 119th Congress in January 2025.

I bring all this up because our NARFE National organization has formed an advisory committee

for proposed changes to NARFE's advocacy positions for adoption by the National Executive Board. This is in preparation for addressing the 119th Congress. See the April 2024 issue of *NARFE Magazine*, page 12. NARFE mailed out a multiple-choice questionnaire during our recent "Winter Campaign" that I hope most of you read and some of you replied to concerning this advocacy issue. I sent in two separate replies, choosing the importance of various topics. If you didn't reply, you can still submit an advocacy position using the instructions in the above magazine article. They must be submitted by 1 June.

I maintain that our focus should be on items that are bipartisan and doable but still part of NARFE's Mission Statement on the President's page of our *NARFE Magazine*. The items we should be focusing on are items like protecting our cost-of-living adjustments for both working and retired federal employees, upholding the civil service merit-based employment system,

MOVING? SNOWBIRDS?

Even if it's from one apartment to another in the same building or complex, please contact Ralph Sanders at 360-535-4334 to update your mailing address!!! USPS charges a fee for returned newsletters. **THANK YOU!!**
Two newsletters were returned costing \$0.68 each.

President cont. and modernizing the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) processes and information technology. This will improve OPM's customer service concerns.

A former Washington State Representative, Tip O'Neill, once held the Speaker of the House position during Ronald Reagan's presidency. His mantra was, "All Politics Is Local". That is no longer true. What's happening in Washington, D.C. is driving the narrative.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

President Bill Powers

We have published several articles in our newsletter over the last two years concerning our national debt. The debt is now at \$34 trillion and debt-to-gross domestic product (GDP) is at 120 percent. The fastest growing part of our fiscal budget is interest payments on our national debt.

The debt deniers, whose mantra is "tax and spend" said we wouldn't pass 100 percent debt to GDP ratio. We are now well past the denial zone and into the danger zone. Our annual deficit spending in previous years was approximately \$1 trillion each year; now it's approximately \$2 trillion.

On the other side of the fence are the "no new taxes" oath legislators. Yet, the first items to be passed in the George W. Bush and Trump administrations were tax cuts.

Congress now has three separate commission proposals in hand to achieve a sound future for our country. They are the "Fiscal Commission Act of 2023", "Fiscal Stability Act of 2023", and the "Sustainable Budget Act of 2023". They all set up a commission with an equal number of Republicans and Democrats. One of them has private sector experts as part of the commission, but they are not voting members. Each of the commissions' plans needs a simple majority approval of members to advance to Congress. Congress must then vote up or down on the bill without any amendments.

Sounds simple but the devil is in the details. All three want to bring the debt-to-GDP ratio back down below 100 percent in ten years. This is entirely possible with equal cooperation on both sides of the aisle. However, various internet sources that figure the probability of legislation passing, has passage of any one of these bills at only 2 percent.

I would like to turn the clock back to 2010. The "Simpson-Bowles Act" to reduce the debt never got out of commission to be voted upon. The reason

being they had all these high ideas to reduce discretionary spending, reduce federal retirement benefits, reduce federal health care spending, raise Social Security age to 69, lower the federal income tax rate and, worst of all, they wanted to invoke the chained CPI.

My point is both sides must give, just not the working class. If the Simpson-Bowles Act had been enacted, it would have been like a giant Monopoly game. Whoever owns Park Place and Boardwalk with hotels wins. Game Over!

MEMBERSHIP & MUSINGS

V.P. Ralph Sanders

The legislative news is sparse. The good news is that we should have a 2024 budget in place by the end of this week. Hopefully that will prompt action on some of the other legislation that has been languishing in committee for some time. Now is the time to sharpen that pencil and ask the question of your member of Congress, "Where is Bill number H.R. 1002/S.399 and what action do you intend to take on this legislation?" We need your help on these two Bills to get cosponsored and moved on through the process.

Now here is the membership report. This report will cover the dates from 21 February to 21 March. The Bremerton Chapter now has 383 members in good standing. We had two members dropped for nonrenewal: Frank S and Herbert W. If you know either of these members, please ask them to renew their membership. Two members passed away this last month: Clara B and Carolyn P. Our condolences to their families.

We have one new member this month: Jack S. Welcome to Chapter 0181; we are so happy to have you on board. One member was reinstated, during this period: Donald F. Thank you so much for coming back. Twelve members renewed their membership this month. Thank you for your continued support.

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

PROGRAMS

Secretary Bea Bull

8 APRIL – Local author, Jonathan Evison, in partnership with the Kitsap Regional Library Foundation.



Jonathan Evison is the New York Times Bestselling author of nine novels including West of Here, Lawn Boy, The Revised Fundamentals of Caregiving, Small World, and most recently, Again and Again. He lives with his family in Kitsap County, where he credits libraries for saving him as a youngster.

13 MAY – Melanie Magnenat from KidVantage will share what this local charitable organization does. We will participate in their “Diaper Derby” by collecting diapers as a donation to KidVantage. The most needed sizes are 5 and 6.

10 JUNE – Phil Cook, Kitsap County Assessor, will discuss changes to the Senior/Disabled persons exemption program for property taxes.

9 SEPTEMBER – Jennifer Calvin-Myer will present “Healthy Aging: Brain Health & Safe Use of Medication”.

14 OCTOBER – To be announced.
The League of Women Voters, due to their organization's priorities, cannot partner with NARFE to hold a 6th Congressional District candidate forum. This is because NARFE disburses PAC money to candidates and congressional representatives who support NARFE’s legislative priorities.

SECRETARY
Bea Bull

Reminder! Washington State Federation Bylaws Revisions – The Washington State Federation will hold a special Zoom meeting on 23 April to vote to approve the updated bylaws. Information on how to attend the meeting, including the Zoom link, will be available on the federation website (www.narfe.org/WA) at least two weeks before the meeting.

Candidates Needed! – Candidates are needed for the Region IX VP position (replaces Steve Roy) and for all federation officer positions (president, vice president, secretary and treasurer).

Region IX VP position contact Steve Roy at: stevenroy1@yahoo.com or 425-344-3926.

Federation positions contact Cray Henry at: wsf.cray.henry@gmail.com or 571-512-0476.

TREASURER
Rex Tauscher

Our account balance for February was \$17,157.72 and, for January, \$17,050.39, for an increase of \$107.33. The Life Membership Trust account value 4th quarter to 30 December 2023 has increased \$0.41 per share for a value change of positive \$737.79; the total trust value is \$16,213.31. The balance in the bulk mail account was \$189.95, and in the return mail account, \$145.17 for a chapter net worth as of 29 February of \$33,706.15. A Treasurer’s report for March 2024 will be available at our April 2024 meetings.

ALZHEIMER’S CHAIR
Secretary Bea Bull

Good news! NARFE has already reached its goal of \$16 million by 2025. But don’t let up – let’s keep those donations rolling in! Thank you everyone!!



Alzheimer’s donations were received from Loraine B , John B , DeAnna G , George P and Rex T . We thank everyone for your donations.

**To make a tax-deductible donation to the NARFE Alzheimer’s Research fund please make your check payable to “NARFE Alzheimer’s Research”, write “Bremerton Chapter 181” on the notation line, and mail it to: Alzheimer’s Association
225 N Michigan Ave, 17th Floor
Chicago, IL 60601-7633**

SUNSHINE CHAIR
Lois Barber

“Thinking of you” cards were sent to Steve F , Carolyn M and D and L Zeth.

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

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-NATIONAL
Vacant

LEGISLATIVE CHAIR-STATE
Lyn Damschen

NARFE-PAC CHAIR
Lanny Ross

SERGEANT AT ARMS
William Fuhrmeister

SUNSHINE CHAIR
Lois Barber

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS
UNTIL DECEMBER 2024**
Ralph Petersen
Lanny Ross

UNTIL DECEMBER 2025
Stan Barber
John Burch

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**SENIOR INFORMATION &
ASSISTANCE**
360-337-5700 OR 1-800-562-6418

**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

CHAPTER FACEBOOK PAGE
<https://www.facebook.com/narfechap181>

NARFE DISTRICT IV WEBSITE

Webmaster – Bea Bull
www.narfewadistiv.org

NARFE STATE WEBSITE
www.narfe.org/wa/

NARFE NATIONAL WEBSITE
www.narfe.org

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877-217-8234

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800-456-8410

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D.C. Phone Number 202-224-2621
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Senator Maria Cantwell
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