



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
except July & August

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

May 2024

NUMBER 05-24

General Meeting Date & Time: May 13, 2024 1:00PM

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

Program: Melanie Magnenat will tell us how KidVantage helps members of our community



Please bring a package of diapers for our "diaper derby"



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

10 June.....Membership Meeting

9 September.....Membership Meeting



PRESIDENT

Bill Powers

Speaker of the House Mike Johnson has realized that he needs bi-partisan support to get anything done in Congress these days. Long awaited legislation is progressing now that he is working across the aisle. The world is watching.

Our executive board will meet with State Senator Drew MacEwen at noon on 8 May. He is a candidate for Washington's 6th Congressional District Representative position in the November election. We will discuss NARFE concerns with him plus help him understand NARFE's structural organization. Three candidates are running for Congressman Kilmer's position; we met with Public Lands Commissioner Hillary Franz and State Senator Emily Randall in March and April respectively. Drew is the third and final candidate to meet with our executive board.

Regarding member concerns about OPM services and lack thereof, NARFE continues to push for modernization of processes, information technology, and adequate funding to support improved customer services at OPM. Kiran Abuja, the current OPM Director, will be stepping down from her role in the next few weeks. She was leading the way writing the next chapter in artificial intelligence and our workforce.

Another member concern is marketing at NARFE's National office. Membership is at a dangerously low level and many small chapters have closed in the previous year. Congress pays attention to associations with membership clout, which we have been lacking lately. NARFE needs to refocus on bringing in younger members, e.g., current federal workers and recent retirees, to replace older elected chapter, federation, and National office holders. To this end, NARFE has hired Social Media and Marketing Manager Destiny Harkless to grow NARFE's membership.

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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!!

President cont. I was questioned two or three months ago about requirements for the new Defense Biometric ID System (DBIDS) badge to enter Naval Base Kitsap. We turned that item over to Congressman Kilmer's office for an update and/or explanation for added requirements and longevity of issued badges to retirees. A response is pending.

Finally, two NARFE National executives attended a repeal of Government Pension Offset/Windfall Elimination Provision (GPO/WEP) hearing held by the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security. The hearing focused on longstanding effects this legislation has had on retirees. The discussion identified outdated formulas used to calculate the WEP and GPO to create undue hardships by reducing retirement benefits. Solutions were addressed at this hearing and advocated for modest reforms rather than full repeal. This is what I recommended in September and December of 2022. We will keep you informed.

Republican Study Committee FY 2025 Budget Proposal

President Bill Powers

Congress has abdicated its power over the purse over the last two decades and our National debt now exceeds \$34 trillion. To restore fiscal sanity, Congress' Republican Study Committee has submitted its FY2025 Budget Proposal. This proposal covers most of our government's expenditures, some implicitly with little follow through, but stating estimated savings in billions of dollars and percent of gross domestic product for various categories.

The budget defunds a lot of oversight committees and cuts the budget for many others, most of which have to do with government regulations. Their goal is to restore the appropriate balance of power our government had for most of the last two centuries.

There have been many unfunded mandates on the books which this budget attempts to stop. Any new mandates need transparency and information before funding. There are also categories that this budget is eager to push forward such as unleashing North American energy production, unleashing mineral resources, and deployment of small modular reactors.

There are two items that significantly affect the debt. Of the \$34 trillion in debt, nearly the entire projected 2019 to 2033 estimated increases in deficit, rising from \$984 billion to \$2.39 trillion, is being driven by Social Security and Medicare benefits shortfalls. The year 2033 is when Social

Security will see a 23 percent benefit cut and in 2031 Medicare will see an 11 percent benefit cut.

The Biden solution is to raise the current cap subject to Social Security tax, now at \$168,000.00. The Republican solution is to raise the retirement age, make modest increases in contributions for those making above the primary insurance amount, and phase out the wealthiest benefit factors.

Other items the Republican Study Committee would do is to eliminate the student loan bail-out; have higher learning institutions repay a percentage of graduate debt, if defaults are too high, to ensure schools have "skin in the game"; repeal Fannie Mae and Freddy Mac's federal charter and wind down their outsized role in the housing and securities market; remove the employment mandate from the federal reserve and retain their mandate for stable pricing. No more dual mandate for the federal reserve.

For federal retirees, reduce or eliminate FERS and CSRS cost of living allowances; reform the interest rate provided by the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) "G" fund to reflect yield on the short-term T-bill rate. For the Federal Employees Health Benefit (FEHB) plans, the government would offer a standard federal contribution toward all health insurance plans and employees would pay the rest. For retirees, they would eliminate the FEHB plan.

Last of all, and to me the most troubling item, is adopting the Chained CPI in lieu of the CPI-W for all government programs but not for Social Security. The reason for this is Trump's promise to not cut Social Security benefits if elected. Implementing the Chained CPI would have serious financial repercussions for federal retirees!

MEMBERSHIP & MUSINGS

V.P. Ralph Sanders

A new Senate bill has been introduced and we need your help getting Senators Cantwell and Murray to cosponsor it. S. 3974 Boosting Benefits and COLAs for Seniors Act was introduced on 21 March 2024 by Senator Bob Casey, D-PA, Chairman of the U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging. As the companion bill to H.R. 716, it "aims to aid seniors with rising living costs by proposing a significant adjustment in the calculation of COLAs to better reflect the expenses faced by older adults." Like H.R. 716, S. 3974 would have COLAs based on the CPI-E instead of the CPI-W. Recall that the "E" stands for "elderly."

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Musings cont. Please use the NARFE Legislative Action Center to encourage our Senators to cosponsor S. 3974. Go to the NARFE website at www.NARFE.org, mouse over ADVOCACY, click on “Take Action” and then the box for S.3974. There is no need to log into the website so everyone can easily do this. Click on “Review Your Message” in the red box, add your personal story in the “Message Body” box, then click “Send Message” in the red box. And you’re done. When you take action, it is recorded by the NARFE National office and our federation gets credit for our grassroots activity. We thank you for helping to move this legislation forward!

On to the membership report which covers 27 March to 25 April. Bremerton chapter now has 379 members in good standing. Two members were dropped for nonrenewal: Theodore S [redacted] and Joann S [redacted]. If you know either of these members, please ask them to renew their membership. One member, Donald Van Ostrand, passed away during this period. Our condolences to the family.

We have no new members to report this month but there are four prospective members on board: John A [redacted], Jennifer F [redacted], Trace G [redacted] and Allen L [redacted]. We hope you will join NARFE and, possibly, our chapter. Fourteen members renewed their membership this month. Thank you for your 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

13 MAY – Our horse, “Federal Family’s Advocate,” is officially entered in the KidVantage “Diaper Derby.” Please donate diapers to help our horse win. 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.”

SECRETARY

Bea Bull

18 May Armed Forces Day Parade – Ralph Sanders will drive and Bill Powers will ride in the parade again this year. If you attend, please look for them and give them a wave.

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 March was \$16,901.61 and, for January, \$17,157.72, for a decrease of \$256.11. The Life Membership Trust account value 1st quarter to 31 March 2024 has decreased \$0.03 per share for a value change of minus \$53.99; the total trust value is \$16,159.32. The balance in the bulk mail account was \$242.19, and in the return mail account, \$141.45, for a chapter net worth as of 31 March of \$33,448.56. A Treasurer’s report for April 2024 will be available at our May meetings.

ALZHEIMER’S CHAIR

Secretary Bea Bull

NARFE, having reached its goal of \$16 million by 2025, has set a new goal of \$17 million by 2026. Thank you everyone for your continued donations!!

Alzheimer’s donations were received from Lois and Stan B [redacted], Al H [redacted] and Don Z [redacted]. We thank everyone for their 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

A birthday card was sent to Burton B [redacted] in celebration of his 100th birthday.

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.

HAPPY MOTHER’S DAY TO OUR MOMS!

STATE LEGISLATION

Lyn Damschen

Olympia passed a couple new education courses for K-12. The subjects are LGBTQ and drug dangers including Fentanyl.

Money from the Climate Commitment Act investments has been added to the ferry system.

Funding was approved to help people afford college and apprenticeships.

Substantial funding was approved for affordable housing and behavioral health treatment and services.

Although it did not pass in this session, Olympia is still talking about rent control. It has been said that, without more housing available, rent control has negative effects on landlords.

You have heard that three of the six “Let’s Go Washington” initiatives will become law while the other three will be on the ballot this Fall. It is expected there will be an effort to defeat the initiatives that passed: To repeal the state’s capital gains tax, scrap the Climate Commitment Act and its carbon market, and make it easier for workers to opt out of Washington’s new long-term care insurance program.

<p>PRESIDENT Bill Powers 360-377-7917 powersw@silverlink.net</p> <p>VICE PRESIDENT MEMBERSHIP CHAIR Ralph Sanders</p> <p>SECRETARY NEWSLETTER EDITOR Bea Bull</p> <p>TREASURER Rex Tauscher</p> <p>LEGISLATIVE CHAIR-NATIONAL Vacant</p> <p>LEGISLATIVE CHAIR-STATE Lyn Damschen</p> <p>NARFE-PAC CHAIR Lanny Ross</p> <p>SERGEANT AT ARMS William Fuhrmeister</p> <p>SUNSHINE CHAIR Lois Barber</p> <p>EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS UNTIL DECEMBER 2024 Ralph Petersen Lanny Ross</p> <p>UNTIL DECEMBER 2025 Stan Barber John Burch</p>	<p>WESTERN WASHINGTON DISTRICT VP Bea Bull 360-286-7798 tbkbull@gmail.com</p> <p>REGION IX VP Steven Roy 425-344-3926 stevenroy1@yahoo.com</p> <p>WSF SERVICE OFFICER Charles Caughlan 360-693-0435 csquare@pacifier.com</p> <p>SENIOR INFORMATION & ASSISTANCE 360-337-5700 OR 1-800-562-6418</p> <p>OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT (OPM) Phone: 1-888-767-6738</p> <p>Hours of operation: 7:30AM – 7:45PM ET with best time to reach someone being 6:30PM – 7:30PM or at 7:30AM.</p> <p>Mailing Address: Office of Personnel Management Retirement Operations Center P.O. Box 45 Boyers, PA 16017</p> <p>NARFE NATIONAL WEBSITE www.narfe.org</p> <p>LEGISLATIVE HOTLINE 877-217-8234</p> <p>ADD YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS 800-456-8410</p>	<p>NARFE DISTRICT WEBSITE Webmaster – Bea Bull www.narfewadistiv.org</p> <p>CHAPTER FACEBOOK PAGE https://www.facebook.com/narfechap181</p> <p>NARFE STATE WEBSITE www.narfe.org/wa/</p> <hr/> <p>OUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES</p> <p>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</p> <p>Senator Maria Cantwell 915 – 2nd Avenue, Suite 3206 Seattle, WA 98174 Seattle Phone Number 206-220-6400 D.C. Phone Number 202-224-3441 www.cantwell.senate.gov</p> <p>Congressional District 6 Derek Kilmer 345 – 6th Street, Suite 500 Bremerton, WA 98337 Bremerton phone number 360-373-9725 D.C. phone number 202-225-5916 http://kilmer.house.gov</p> <p>Congressional District 10 Marilyn Strickland 6000 Main Street SW, Suite 3B Lakewood, WA 98499 No phone number listed https://strickland.house.gov</p> <p>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</p>
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