



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER  
except July & August

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

**January 2025**

**NUMBER 01-25**

**General Meeting Date & Time: January 13, 2025 1:00PM**

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

**Program: Lauren Carroll, Program Manager – King & Kitsap Counties, Alzheimer's Association Washington State Chapter, Will Discuss Resources and Recent Treatment Developments**

*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 February .....Membership Meeting**

**10 March.....Membership Meeting**

**14 April.....Membership Meeting**



**PRESIDENT**

Bill Powers

We had a successful inaugural "Myra Clodius Holiday Luncheon" at the Bremerton Elks Lodge. With our treasury flush with non-dues money (thanks to Myra Clodius' generous donation), we are able to subsidize these holiday luncheons, making attendance affordable for many of our seniors.

Mayor Wheeler was our guest speaker once again. He focused his presentation on improvements in our city that are presently being worked plus those in the permit and planning stages. He is especially following progress on plans to resolve the Gorst Bottleneck. Bremerton, like most of Kitsap County, is seeing a building boom, especially apartments and the rejuvenation of the Wheaton Way corridor.

Mayor Wheeler, with one year left in his present term, announced that he submitted his papers to run for another term.

As published in our December newsletter, our Chapter 0181 Executive Board made changes for the new year. Rex Tauscher resigned as treasurer after twenty years. Bea Bull will become Secretary/Treasurer, adding another position to what she is already holding. Rex will assume Lanny Ross's executive board position, Lanny having resigned for health reasons. At the January membership meeting, we will present Rex with a very nice plaque, crafted by Evergreen Trophy, for his dedication and service to our chapter.

Also resigning for health reasons is our Vice President/Membership Chair, Ralph Sanders. He is 88 years old and remembers when our chapter was one of the largest voting chapters in the nation. This was before I became a Life Member in March 2000 so, he has seen many changes in our organization over the years. We thank him, and his wife, Linda, for their many

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**MOVING? SNOWBIRDS?**

Even if it's from one apartment to another in the same building or complex, please contact Bea at 360-286-7798 to update your mailing address!!! USPS charges a fee for returned newsletters. THANK YOU!!

President cont. years of service to our chapter, our federation and our country.

Bea will fill in as membership chair until we are able to acquire another person. This is an appointed position. Like all executive board members, attendance is highly desirable at each month's executive board and general membership meetings. If you are interested in taking the membership chair position, please contact me or Bea.

Speaking of membership, NARFE as a whole, has been declining in membership for years. With repeal of the Government Pension Offset/Windfall Elimination Provision (see accompanying legislative article in this newsletter), hopefully we will regain some of those lost members who were penalized by this legislation. It took 40 years of lobbying and phone calls to our legislators but it finally came to fruition.

As for the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress, as expected they were busy right up to their closing moments. They passed another continuing resolution and kicked this financial can down the road until March 2025. This will give the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress time to work out details with the incoming Trump administration. The national debt limit was not raised as requested by President-elect Donald Trump which means he will have to own up to any deficit spending while he pushes for cuts in government hierarchy. We will have to wait to see how the next administration's policies impact the economy.

Meanwhile, inflation continues to draw attention with the Federal Reserve anticipating only one interest rate cut in 2025. This has led to a stock market selloff, cancelling gains seen immediately after the presidential election.

Here's hoping you, NARFE and our country have a prosperous and Happy New Year.

## **LEGISLATION**

### **President Powers**

I thank those of you who contacted our senators and the senate leaders to bring the Government Pension Offset/Windfall Elimination Provision (GPO/WEP) legislation to a vote as requested in December's newsletter. This was Senate Bill S.597 Social Security Fairness Act. It's House version, H.R.82, was previously passed in November. This legislation has been kicked around for 40 years as reported in our October newsletter. It finally came to a Senate vote and passed in the waning moments of this 118<sup>th</sup> Congress just after midnight on Friday, 21 December, before the Christmas/New Year's recess.

I would like to thank both of our senators, Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, for voting "yes" to pass this legislation, plus Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer for keeping his promise to call the bill to the floor for a vote. It easily passed with a vote of 73-20 in favor of repealing GPO/WEP.

Presuming the Social Security Fairness Act is signed by President Biden, and presuming the Social Security Administration quickly works out how to implement the legislation, many public service retirees and survivors will see their fixed incomes increase in 2025 due to the passage of this legislation. This increase will be above the 2.5 percent COLA for Civil Service Retirement System and Social Security retirees already promised due to inflation in 2024. Together, GPO/WEP also affects non-federal government workers including police officers, firefighters, and public-school teachers.

NARFE championed repeal of GPO/WEP and agreed that repeal has been long overdue and noted that the bill had the largest number of co-sponsors of any measure in the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress. Those opposed to passage of the Social Security Fairness Act noted that the repeal would increase Social Security spending by almost \$200 billion over the next ten years. The Congressional Budget Office also estimated that the passage of GPO/WEP would exhaust the Social Security Trust Fund about six months in advance of previous projections.

This increase in spending leads to another topic discussed in December's newsletter: Project 2025. Project 2025 is a Heritage Foundation wish list of ways to cut government spending. There are many topics and an array of gimmicks in this proposal that affect federal employees and retirees. Also, there is the incoming administration's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), led by Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy, whose task is to cut government spending in the 2025/2026 biennium.

As always, we will keep you posted via our newsletter and the Bremerton FEDHub community. This community is accessed via an online email account. See our December 2024 newsletter for our FEDHub tutorial.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

### **Secretary Bull**

As of 27 December we have 360 chapter members. Welcome to our newest members, Roxanne [REDACTED], Christopher [REDACTED], Kelly [REDACTED] and Kenneth [REDACTED]! We hope to see you at a meeting.

Membership cont. Two members were dropped for non-payment of dues: Michael [REDACTED] and David [REDACTED]. Four members are deceased: Betty [REDACTED], Joyce [REDACTED], Edward [REDACTED] and Michael [REDACTED]. Our condolences to their families.

The NARFE National database upgrade is still ongoing. There is a problem with integrating data received from the lockbox service, which gathers members' dues payments, into the NARFE AMS database. National has hired a company to troubleshoot and solve the incompatibility. Meanwhile, National office staff are manually entering that data. They completed September and forwarded those dues monies to the chapters and federations in mid-December and are now working on manually entering October dues payments.

What that means to you: If you paid your dues between 1 October 2024 and now, you may see a delay in having your expiration date advanced (it's on your *NARFE Magazine* mailing label, second line). Since the National office is all-hands-on-deck now to manually enter data, if you have concerns about your expiration date, please reach out to me rather than the NARFE membership department. Thank you so much for your patience while National gets the bugs worked out of their upgraded system.

**BREMERTON FEDHub**  
Secretary Bea Bull

Our community report shows, of our chapter's 360 members, 215 have an email address in the NARFE database. Of those, 83 members responded to the test email sent out on 13 December meaning 132 members either didn't respond to the email or didn't receive it because they have an invalid email address in the NARFE database. I urge you to verify your email address so we can use this as a means to communicate between newsletters. If you didn't receive the 13 December test email, please email me at [tbkbull@gmail.com](mailto:tbkbull@gmail.com); that will allow me to verify that your email address in the NARFE database is correct.

**REMINDERS**

Remember to access your Office of Personnel Management, Thrift Savings Plan and Social Security online accounts to keep your login credentials active.

You'll see your annuity amount increase in January due to the 2025 COLA, then change again in February when your premiums for medical, dental and vision change. Medicare Part B premiums increase to \$185.00 in 2025.

**PROGRAMS**

- 13 January – Lauren Carroll, Washington Alzheimer's Association Program Manager
- 10 February - Jamie Sage, Envision Hospice Account Executive
- 10 March – Washington State Federation (WSF) President Tony Merola and WSF Legislative (National) and PAC Coordinator Doug Rushton
- 14 April – Kitsap Regional Library Foundation "Meet Your Local Author" event with D.D. Black

**TREASURER**  
Rex Tauscher

Our account balance for the end of October was \$65,066.16, and for the end of November was \$64,760.71, for a decrease of \$305.42. The Life Membership Trust account value will be reported as share value as of April 1, 2024 which was \$16,159.31, until the end of the 2024 tax year. Our operating account value is \$64,760.71 as of 30 November 2024. Balances in the bulk mail and return mail accounts were, respectively, \$90.28 and \$135.81, for a net worth as of 30 November of \$64,986.80. A Treasurer's report for December 2024 will be available at our January 2025 meetings.

**ALZHEIMER'S CHAIR**  
Secretary Bea Bull

No donations were collected at the "Myra Clodius Holiday Luncheon." A check in the amount of \$122.00 was mailed to the Alzheimer's Association representing cash donations receive from members at our meetings. Thank you!

**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, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60601-7633**

**SUNSHINE CHAIR**  
Lois Barber

Sympathy cards were sent to the families of Betty [REDACTED], Joyce [REDACTED] and Michael [REDACTED]. If you know of a chapter member in need of a little sunshine, please contact Lois at 360-297-2671.

<p><b>PRESIDENT</b>  <b>NARFE-PAC CHAIR</b>  Bill Powers 360-473-6301  powersw@silverlink.net</p> <p><b>VICE PRESIDENT</b>  Vacant</p> <p><b>SECRETARY/TREASURER</b>  <b>NEWSLETTER EDITOR</b>  <b>MEMBERSHIP CHAIR</b>  Bea Bull</p> <p><b>LEGISLATIVE CHAIR-NATIONAL</b>  Vacant</p> <p><b>LEGISLATIVE CHAIR-STATE</b>  Lyn Damschen</p> <p><b>SERGEANT AT ARMS</b>  William Fuhrmeister</p> <p><b>SUNSHINE CHAIR</b>  Lois Barber</p> <p><b>EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS</b>  <b>UNTIL DECEMBER 2025</b>  Stan Barber  John Burch</p> <p><b>UNTIL DECEMBER 2026</b>  Ralph Petersen  Rex Tauscher</p>	<p><b>WESTERN WASHINGTON</b>  <b>DISTRICT VP</b>  Bea Bull 360-286-7798  tbkbull@gmail.com</p> <p><b>REGION IX VP</b>  Steven Roy 425-344-3926  stevenroy1@yahoo.com</p> <p><b>WSF SERVICE OFFICER</b>  Charlie Caughlan  360-693-0435  csquare@pacifier.com</p> <p><b>NARFE NATIONAL WEBSITE</b>  www.narfe.org</p> <p><b>LEGISLATIVE HOTLINE</b>  877-217-8234</p> <p><b>ADD YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS</b>  800-456-8410</p> <p><b>NARFE STATE WEBSITE</b>  www.narfe.org/wa/</p> <p><b>NARFE DISTRICT WEBSITE</b>  Webmaster – Bea Bull  www.narfewadistiv.org</p> <p><b>CHAPTER FACEBOOK PAGE</b>  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/narfechap181">https://www.facebook.com/narfechap181</a></p> <p><b>OFFICE OF PERSONNEL</b>  <b>MANAGEMENT (OPM)</b>  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><b>SENIOR INFORMATION &amp; ASSISTANCE</b>  360-337-5700 OR 1-800-562-6418</p> <hr/> <p><b>OUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES</b></p> <p><b>Senator Patty Murray</b>  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><b>Senator Maria Cantwell</b>  915 – 2<sup>nd</sup> 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  <b>Emily Randall</b>  Waiting for contact information</p> <p>Congressional District 10  <b>Marilyn Strickland</b>  6000 Main Street SW, Suite 3B  Lakewood, WA 98499  No phone number listed</p> <p>Lacey City Hall - 3rd Floor  420 College St SE, Suite 3000  Lacey, WA 98503  360-459-8514</p> <p>D.C. phone number 202-225-9740  <a href="https://strickland.house.gov">https://strickland.house.gov</a></p>
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