



# CHAPTER 236 SOUTH PUGET SOUND

## 2026 CHAPTER MEETINGS at 12 NOON

19 May  
21 July  
20 October

**May Speaker: Walt Bowen from the Washington State Senior Citizens Lobby**

**Location: Super Buffet Chinese Restaurant 1390 Galaxy Dr NE, Lacey, exit 111 I5**

**Chapter website located on Federation Website: [www.narfe.org/wa](http://www.narfe.org/wa)**

### **President's Message – Tony Merola**

Chapter 236 Members,

For this particular message, I have excerpted various pieces from our latest NARFE Washington State Federation Reporter which I think are quite topical at this point in the year. With the continued economic and social turbulence we in the federal family are experiencing right now, the need for advocacy and NARFE is real. I wanted to share this information in an effort to give you some tools to use with not only your congresspeople but with your own lives as well. Please peruse these selections as you like and take advantage of the tools offered.

### **Services for Seniors – across the USA**

The U.S. has a nationwide network more than 600 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) established by federal law to serve older adults and caregivers in virtually every community, with each state divided into planning areas that are covered by a specific Agency on Aging, ensuring comprehensive support, though some states might have multi-county districts or the state manages the function if areas are sparse. You can find eldercare support by visiting [eldercare.acl.gov](http://eldercare.acl.gov).

*(Modified from South Jersey Shore Chapter 1664 Newsletter, Jan 2026)*

### **Advocacy Resources**

Our voice is strong together as NARFE members. Washington State is a leader Federation across NARFE in our grassroots advocacy (we attained “Gold” status in 2025 Q4 in NARFE’s Grassroots Benchmarks) and you are invited to join in. NARFE WA provides resources on our website to help you advocate for our NARFE priorities, including contact info for our Representatives and Senators, status of current bills, and where our Washington Delegation stands on NARFE supported bills in Congress.

**[www.narfe.org/wa/links#advocacy](http://www.narfe.org/wa/links#advocacy)**

NARFE Headquarters provides us with many tools to speak for our issues online:

**[www.narfe.org/advocacy](http://www.narfe.org/advocacy)**

### **NARFE Washington State Federation Elections**

We need you! National-only and Chapter members are invited to run for our Federation offices in 2026 to serve in 2027 and 2028. If you are interested in serving NARFE in this way, or know someone who is, feel

free to contact us now so you can fill out a nomination form when they become available.

[www.narfe.org/wa/contact-us](http://www.narfe.org/wa/contact-us)

**Thank you for being a NARFE member!**

Your membership supports the important work we do, supporting each other and advocating for our issues in Congress. Invite other Feds to join and enjoy the benefits of NARFE membership!

*Courtesy of Curtis Price, Secretary, WSF* – Contact: [www.narfe.org/wa/contact-us](http://www.narfe.org/wa/contact-us)

Please be safe and have a great upcoming summer.

Sincerely,

Tony

Anthony K. Merola

President

NARFE Washington State Federation

President and Service Officer, South-Sound Chapter 236

**NOTICE OF CHAPTER BYLAWS CHANGE – Mary Traxler Secretary**

At the October 21, 2025 membership meeting, members in attendance voted to grant National Life members Chapter Life membership at no additional cost. In other words, National Life members will no longer need to pay Olympia/South Puget Sound chapter dues. The members involved have been notified by first class mail. This decision requires a bylaws amendment to Article IV – Dues. The following wording has been proposed and will be voted on at the May 19<sup>th</sup> membership meeting. **“Chapter members who are NARFE national-level life members shall be exempt from paying chapter dues and granted chapter life membership status.”**

The current Bylaws can be found at [olympia/southpugetsoundchapter0236](http://olympia/southpugetsoundchapter0236).

Please email [maryt dot traxler at g mail dot com](mailto:maryt.traxler@gmail.com) if you have any questions. You may email your vote to Mary if you are unable to attend May 19 meeting.

**MEMBERSHIP – Rosemary Igrec**

Our chapter membership is 155. For the period from 1 March 26 to 30 April 26 there were no new members. Three members were dropped for nonrenewal, one member canceled membership, and 10 members renewed membership. Thank you to our renewing members. One member passed away Maureen [REDACTED] of Milton.

**Treasurers’ Report – Gordon Craig**

The March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026 balance is \$13,546.58. Expenses for the month totaled \$358.59 and income for the month was \$238.80.

**COLA UPDATE**

March 2026 CPI-W index value is 223.500, a monthly increase of 1.28%. The percent towards the 2027 cola is 1.97%

## **WESTERN WASHINGTON DISTRICT VPI – BEA BULL**

SPECIAL REFERENDUM – The NARFE National Special Referendum passed by about 85 percent of members voting. This means, beginning in 2028, all National Executive Board (NEB) members (President, Secretary/Treasurer and Regional Vice Presidents) may run for two consecutive three-year terms. In the interim, all NEB members may run for another two-year term, including President Shackelford, who would not have been eligible to run again without the passage of the Special Referendum. The cost of the Special Referendum was \$29,119.61 (\$3,960.37 to print postcards; \$6,377.43 to mail postcards; and \$18,781.81 for Election Services to conduct the voting).

REGION IX VP – Region IX VP Steve Roy is not running for re-election so Washington State Federation (WSF) Secretary Curtis Price declared his candidacy for that position. Since a Regional VP may not also hold a federation or chapter position, the federation, now more than ever, needs a candidate for secretary.

FEDERATION ELECTIONS – The federation continues to search for candidates for president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. Please consider stepping up. Contact me for more information.

FEDcon26 – Registration is now open for this event; go to <https://fedcon.narfe.org/>. The early-bird rate (now through 5/22/2026) is \$225.00; 5/23/2026 – 8/7/2026 is \$250.00; and after 8/7/2026 is \$300.00. All non-members pay \$300.00. If you wish to attend, the WSF will reimburse the first five members in good standing (dues are paid up) \$800.00 each toward registration and travel costs. Please contact WSF President Tony Merola at [TIGER7565@AOL.COM](mailto:TIGER7565@AOL.COM) and copy WSF Treasurer Arlene Patton at [apatton1202@outlook.com](mailto:apatton1202@outlook.com). Or you can call Tony at 253-820-2408.

REGION IX SYMPOSIUM – This event in Ellensburg, Washington, October 1 -3, 2026, will be held on the Central Washington University campus with accommodations at the Ellensburg Best Western Plus. Thirty hotel rooms are reserved so attendees may begin making reservations. For instruction on getting the group rate of \$110.00 per night and for up-to-date information, visit the Region IX website at <https://www.narfe.org/region09/meetings-events/meetings/symposium2026/>.

Again, the federation has funds available to help members attend this event. The first 30 members in good standing (dues are paid up) to contact WSF President Tony Merola and WSF Treasurer Arlene Patton (see above instructions) can apply for a reimbursement of their registration fee, which is anticipated to be around \$150.00.

Bea Bull  
Western Washington District VP  
360 286 7798  
[tbkbull@gmail.com](mailto:tbkbull@gmail.com)

## **OPM WANTS FEDERAL WORKERS MEDICAL RECORDS**

OPM has proposed a regulation which would require insurers to turn over detailed, identifiable health data on current federal workers, retired employees and their families. The regulation would require the 65 insurance companies in the federal and postal health benefits programs to provide monthly reports to OPM with identifiable health data on their members. OPM's notice requests insurers to furnish "service use and cost data" including "medical claims, pharmacy claims, encounter data, and provider data." It says the data will ensure they provide competitive, quality, and affordable plans." The notice sent to insurers in December does not instruct them to redact identifying information. Federal law requires the carriers "to furnish reasonable reports of OPM determines to be necessary. The Association of Federal Health Organizations, which represent the federal health plan carriers, opposes the notice saying Federal Law requires reasonable reports not to furnish the individual claims data of every individual. So far OPM has not provided any update as to what they finally plan to do. OPM will need to publish a final decision before anything officially changes.

## Chapter Officers

President – Tony Merola – 253-564-0086  
[TIGER7565@aol.com](mailto:TIGER7565@aol.com)

PAC – Tony Merola

Vice president – Timothy Leadingham – [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Secretary – Mary Traxler – [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Treasurer – Gorgon Craig – [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Newsletter – Milton Oster – [REDACTED]

[narfe236@gmail.com](mailto:narfe236@gmail.com)

Membership Chair – Rosemary Igrac – [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Service Officer – Tony Merola

Mailing Address: NARFE Chapter 236

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Lacey, WA 98509-8554

Chapter Email: [narfe236@gmail.com](mailto:narfe236@gmail.com)

## Elected Representatives

Senator Patty Murray  
1301 A St, Suite 213  
Tacoma, WA 98402-4216  
Tel: 253-572-3636

Senator Maria Cantwell  
950 Pacific Ave #615  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
Tel: 253-572 2281

Marilyn Strickland  
6000 Main St SW Suite 3B  
Lakewood, WA 98499  
No phone number listed

Marilyn Strickland  
420 College St SE, Suite 3000  
Lacey, WA 985033  
Tel: 360-459-8514

Emily Randall  
1102 A St Ste 326  
Tacoma, WA 98402  
Tel: 253-272-3515

Kim Schrier  
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Issaquah, WA 98027  
Tel: 425-657-1001