



October 2026

CHAPTER 236 SOUTH PUGET SOUND

2026/2027 CHAPTER MEETINGS at 12 NOON

20 October
16 February 2027
18 May 2027
20 July 2027

Location: Super Buffet Chinese Restaurant 1390 Galaxy Dr NE, Lacey, exit 111 I5
Chapter website located on Federation Website: www.narfe.org/wa

President's Message – Tony Merola

Dear Chapter, 236 Members and National Only Members,

As you may know, Chapter 236 elections will be coming up at the October 2026 meeting. I am inviting all of you to consider running for an elected chapter office to infuse new blood and ideas into the organization. There is a virtual untapped reservoir of talent and skills out there that could certainly be put to wonderful use. I realize that we all have a life outside NARFE, with a myriad of responsibilities and obligations. I got that 100%. I cannot say with certainty how much time you would need to carve out of your daily routines to undertake an elected responsibility, but that time is literally what you make it. From maybe a few hours per month, to whatever your situation allows.

But in any case, volunteers for all elected positions would be welcome, but specifically a critical need exists for a chapter secretary. Our incumbent wishes to step down at the end of this year for personal reasons. She will still be an active member and will readily be available as a mentor to guide the new electee along. The need for your help is real.

NARFE continues to advocate for you and your hard-earned benefits, but the organization is under a great challenge to do so.

Our Members of Congress are constantly reminded of their obligations to ensure that we as active employees and retirees are treated fairly and ensure our access to rightfully earned benefits and the protections afforded us under federal law. With your help, we can continue to be active force multipliers in continuing to make our voices heard. Please think about stepping up to help your NARFE chapter to continue to succeed. Thank you all in advance for your kind assistance. We would love to see you at the next meeting. We put out a quarterly newsletter, and invitation postcards are also sent out as meeting reminders. We challenge you to get involved and stay involved!

Sincerely,

Tony Anthony K. Merola

President NARFE Washington State Federation

President and Service Officer, South-Sound Chapter 236

MEMBERSHIP – Rosemary Igrec

Our chapter membership is 143. For the period from April 27 to September 30 there were 4 new members.

Welcome to our chapter Floyd [REDACTED], Carol [REDACTED], Stephanie [REDACTED] and Dennis [REDACTED].

Sixteen members were dropped for nonrenewal, no members canceled membership, and 6 members renewed membership. Thank you to our renewing members.

One member passed away, Ken [REDACTED]. Our sympathy to the family and friends of Mr. [REDACTED].

Treasurers' Report – Gordon Craig

The August 31st, 2026 balance is \$13,255.67. Expenses for the month totaled \$0.00 and income for the month was \$69.80.

WESTERN WASHINGTON DISTRICT VP – BEA BULL

Greetings Olympia/South Puget Sound members!

By the time you're reading this, NARFE National and federation elections will be over; thank you for voting!

For the federation, treasurer was the only contested position with two candidates: Gordon Craig (Olympia/South Puget Sound Chapter 0236) and Vic Rohret (Tri-Cities Chapter 1192). Since I'm writing this before the Region IX Symposium, I don't yet know who the winner is.

The other federation officers (all uncontested) will be: Tony Merola (Olympia/South Puget Sound Chapter 0236) reelected as president; Kathy Brooks (Spokane Chapter 0032) reelected as Vice President; me (Bremerton Chapter 0181) elected as secretary; Arlene Patton (Spokane Chapter 0032) elected as Eastern Washington District Vice President; and me reelected as Western Washington District Vice President.

Chapters are gearing up to participate in Alzheimer's Walks. I hope many of you can either attend one or make a donation. As of July, NARFE members had donated nearly \$17.3 million toward the goal of \$18 million by December 2028. Thank you to all who donate to this important cause!

FEHB/PSHB plan health fairs are soon coming to a location near you! I know Mary plans to be at the USDA health fair in Olympia. Time to review your health, dental and vision plans to be sure they still provide the coverage you need.

Then it will be time for the holidays and a new year. Time flies by so quickly!

Happy October!

COLA UPDATE JULY 2026 CPI-W index value is 327.104, a monthly increase of 0.01%. The percent towards the 2027 cola is 3.10%

VOTING November 3rd 2026



6 Steps to Protect our 2026 Ballots

1. **Check your own registration now.**

Log into voter.votewa.gov to verify your details. Errors are extremely rare, but it's better to fix them early.

2. **Vote early.**

General Election: *November 3.*

If you've made your decisions, why wait? Early ballots reduce Election Day pressures on poll workers.

3. **Include your phone number or email on your ballot.**

If your ballot is damaged, needs signature verification, or has unintended marks, elections staff want to reach you to fix any issues. Help them find you.

4. **Use a ballot drop box, not the post office.**

Post Office holdups could delay your postmark. Find a drop box (a printed list comes with your ballot) and use it! If you must use the mail, allow two weeks for processing.

A [new report](#) shows that late-postmark rejection rates more than doubled in 19 Washington counties between the 2024 and 2026 primary elections. Rural counties saw some of the largest increases. The five counties with the largest increases were:

- Mason County at 329.7%
- Stevens County at 303.7%
- Yakima County at 268.5%
- Okanogan County at 263.5%
- Franklin County at 206%

5.. **See something? Say something!**

If you see a damaged ballot drop box or witness voter harassment, report it to your county elections office. (An example occurred in a recent election when someone was observed stuffing large cardboard in the drop box blocking anyone from using that box.)

6. **Track your ballot after it's in.**

Voter.votewa.gov allows you to follow your ballot. You can even sign up for text alerts.

Chapter Officers

President – Tony Merola – 253-564-0086 PAC – Tony Merola
TIGER7565@aol.com

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

Secretary – Mary Traxler – [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Treasurer – Gordon R Craig – [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Newsletter and Membership Chair – Rosemary Igrec – [REDACTED]
narfe.s.puget.sound@gmail.com

Service Officer – Tony Merola

Mailing Address: NARFE Chapter 236
PO Box 8554
Lacey, WA 98509-8554

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
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Emily Randall

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Tel: 253-272-3515

Kim Schrier

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