

# NARFE Chapter 131 General Membership Meeting

My 2, 2023 @ 12:45 PM PST

**Officers attending:** President Mike Teefy, Vice-president Charlie Caughlan, Treasurer Jim Ellis, and Secretary Linda Wallers.

**Members and guests attending** included Marvin Wells, Lowell Kenedy, Gordon Anderson, George and Gail Pollack, and Cheryl and Sam Haun.

**Featured speaker:** The Chapter's speaker from the Council for the Homeless came down with covid and could not make the meeting. Charlie will fill in, providing some instruction in bagpipes. Charlie is the oldest player in his bagpipe quartet.

Bagpipes consist of an air supply; a bag that historically was made from animal skins such as goats, dogs, sheep, or cows); a chanter; and at least one drone. The player blows into the blowpipe which inflates the bag. He gently squeezes the bag to maintain a steady and continuous flow of air through the chanter's reed while fingering the chanter to play the melody. The drone, usually hanging over the shoulder of the player, is one or more pipes that produce constant harmonizing notes throughout song.

Bagpipe maintenance is a must. They must be cleaned, dried, and oiled regularly. The air that players blow into the bagpipes, if unmaintained, can grow a fungus that causes pneumonia in players. Historically, piper's used honey to "season" the closed skin bags – honey has antimicrobial properties. Today's pipers have it a bit easier since the synthetic bags zip open to disinfect and air out. Piping is believed to increase lung capacity for those with emphysema and bronchitis patients.



## Announcements:

**Congressional speakers:** Mike is working to set up a meeting for the executive board with the staffs from Representative Perez, Senator Murray, and Senator Cantwell's staffs to talk about legislative actions.

**Audit Committee:** the audit was completed, and the report will be submitted to both Bea and Arlene Patton, the federation treasurer. Mike thanked George Pollack and Lowell Kenedy for participating in the audit.

**Covid Booster:** Seniors should begin hearing about getting a second booster for Covid. It was recently approved by the FDA. While the Covid emergency has ended, there are still 1000 people dying every week from Covid.

## Reports

**Secretary:** Linda handed out a copy of the previous months minutes during lunch, so everyone should have had time to review them. Are there any additions or corrections? If not, Linda asked Mike to call for a motion to approve the minutes as written. No additions or corrections were made. The motion was made by Lowell Kenedy and seconded by Gordon Anderson. The motion was unanimously approved.

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**Treasurer Report:** Jim handed out copies of the April Treasurer's Report and reviewed the disbursements and other obligations. Under disbursements, Jim paid out \$100 for the annual liability insurance and \$55.90 for the newsletter printing. Under Obligations for multi-year dues, we received \$240 for multi-year dues (\$210/2-yr and \$30/3-yr) for April. Jim mailed the Alzheimer's fund moneys to Lorie Bennett, the WSF federation Alzheimer's coordinator.

A motion was made by George Pollack and seconded by Lowell Kenedy to accept the Treasurer's Report. The motion was unanimously approved.

Jim also provided some details about the new CD at IQ CU. As agreed at the last two meetings, \$5000, as a disbursement – technically not expended but disbursed was moved from the money market account to the CD (April 18, 2023) to get a better return for the investment, plus a \$5 fee to join the CU. The CD will provide 4.25% interest over seven months.

**Audit:** George Pollack and Lowell Kenedy conducted the chapter audit in April. No issues were identified. Lowell said the audit went well. Linda made a motion and Marvin Wells seconded to accept the completed audit. NARFE HQ wants copies of audits, so Jim will send ours to Arlene Patton, the Federation treasurer, who compile all of the federation audits into a single mailing for HQ.

**President Report & Legislative Issues:** Mike said the debt ceiling is the big issue right now. The GOP has passed their "budget" by a 3 vote margin and claimed victory, but the details are where this falls apart. They want to cap spending at the \$1.47 trillion through the 2024 election, hoping they will gain control of both houses and the White house. They want to cap budget increases at 1% and cap increases at 1%, taking the increases out of discretionary spending (weapons for Ukraine); they have suspended military service (and fed) pay; cancelled grants for some schools with low income students; eliminate assistance for the poor; eliminate cancer research funding; claw back any unspent Covid fundings from state and local governments; rescind the IRS \$71B budget increase which ends any system modernization and customer service improvement such as that seen during the 2022 filing period, after some of funds had been applied to improving taxpayer access to help. On top of that, they want to block student loan relief repeal clean energy tax breaks; there is no value; added additional work requirements for the SNAP portion of the food stamp program (GAU/GAX and TANF assistance for needy families) Disable won't qualify, homeless won't qualify so millions will be kicked off Medicaid. Our members need to contact the Senate and House to get these items back in the budget. That 1% cap hampers every federal agency because their budgets don't include salaries, only programs and facilities. So, when employees get a pay raise, that money comes out of other parts of the budget.

**VP, Service Officer, NARFE PAC, Programs:** Charlie did not have much to report. He mentioned trying to find someone for the June program. Linda suggested contacting the Clark County police department about getting someone to speak on their drone program. Charlie will not be at the meeting; he will be in Hawaii. Charlie will be giving a talk, at the 2023 annual meeting on September 27th, on what the survivors need to know after an annuitant death. He, Linda, and Bea are on the 2024 Region IX Training Conference committee (Fall 2024).

**Membership, Web/Sunshine:** Linda reported one new member, five renewals for April. Jim said that he had not received any newsletter returns for April. The May Newsletter was posted on five sites (chapter website, federation website, two Facebook pages, and FEDHub).

Meeting adjourned at 2:16 PM.

The next meeting is June 6th with the doors opening at 11:30.

The next Executive board virtual meeting will be on June 5th at 11:00.

Linda Wallers

NARFE Chapter 131 (Vancouver) secretary