



BLACKSBURG NEWS

Volume 18, Issue 6

Chapter # 2613

June 2001

Have you paid your 2001 dues???

2001 BLACKSBURG AARP CHAPTER DUES \$6.00

Please renew your membership.

The \$6 membership dues is for an individual, not for a couple.

ANNUAL SUMMER COVERED DISH PICNIC

June 19, Noon to 3:00 p.m.

NELLIES CAVE PARK, BLACKSBURG

Members: Please bring a guest, food to share, and wrapped white elephant gift.

Drinks, napkins, plates, & silverware (plastic) will be furnished.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Darrel Clowes

Summer is upon us – in all its' soggy glory this year. June brings our last board meeting and final regular meeting before our summer break. The summer stretches before us – for most a time of gardening and family gatherings and greetings. And for most it is a time of continued volunteer work, paid work, and other commitments to family, church and community. It is also the time the university schedule returns our town to us. We enjoy a special Blacksburg of quiet streets and sidewalks, limited or no lines, and a truly bucolic atmosphere. Let us cherish this until we have to again surrender the town to the university schedule and to football in late August.

This annual rhythm of life around the academic calendar is a pervasive but little noted aspect of our lives here – so regular and repeated that we have come to accept it as natural and normal. In reality we live in a special place and to a special rhythm. Summer brings us closer to the more normal pattern lived by those in communities around us and in the Commonwealth and nation at

large, but even in summer when I return from travels outside Blacksburg I sense a shift in rhythm and a return to the mood and feel of this special place.

Perhaps it was the rhythm of the end of the academic year that let me to read a somewhat somber note into our last board meeting. We had much to be pleased with; our projects had gone well and we had contributed positively to many of our neighbors; the board consists of bright, active and pleasant people who are a pleasure to be with, and we had lively and interesting discussions on our agenda items and on other more whimsical matters. But there was an underlying cynicism that emerged often, especially as matters of a political or societal nature arose. Perhaps the recent death of friends colored my perceptions, but I approached the next day with a somber cast.

The next day brought the trip to the D-Day Memorial organized by Frank Lau. It could have been a downer – there was a longish bus trip followed by long lines leading to a hot day in the sun followed by speeches and then rain and long wait for the return bus ride. But it was a special day

and a moving and positive experience. You have read about the day and seen and heard media coverage so I would not add to that. I can add a bit for those of us who went. It is a beautiful memorial and many remarked they planned to return when the crowns were gone and they could see and enjoy the memorial itself. I recommend that; it is special. The service itself was special. The politicians did what politicians do, and the media covered that. But what I heard from those around me focused elsewhere. The French Ambassador giving talk about what that sacrifice meant to his people and his nation; It was perhaps the most effective of the day. I was touched when he ended it with "God bless America" but was too overwhelmed himself to complete his final line, "Viva La'France" – we heard only the first syllable – he choked, stopped and walked away. The readings by D-Day vets of the works of their comrades was overwhelming – not individually for many faltered and the words were often very ordinary – but in the accumulation of images and feelings. There were many special moments. The missing man formation flown, taps, a woman veteran reading, and the voices of Canadian and British service men come to mind.

But the most special moment occurred when so many elderly men stood during the "Ode to the common man." They were the men who had been there at Normandy, survived to live a long life, and who stood for all those at Normandy. There were so common, so ordinary, so special.

We returned to Blacksburg. We were wet and quiet. I drove home striped of my cynicism. Sure I react negatively to politicians and posturing, but that is so insignificant a part of life. Ordinary people are so special. Our place and our special rhythms are what we return to; we are blessed. So I look forward very much to summer and family and unions and reunions with friends and hope you do to. Join us at our June picnic meeting; rejoin us in September as we resume our Blacksburg experiences together.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Dues are coming in slowly with just over 167 paid as of June 5. There are 58 who were members in 2000 that have not paid their 2001 dues.

Ben Crawford is our Membership Chair. If you have friends who should be members, please bring them to the next meeting and encourage them to join. Dues can be paid at the meeting or sent to Ben. His address follows:

**Ben Crawford
200 Cork Street
Blacksburg, VA 24060**

Have I paid my dues for 2001? Check the mail label on your Newsletter. If "2001" appears on the label, you have paid.

Those of you who are 90 years old and older do not pay dues. Your label should read "Life Member." The current membership list has the following members that are 90 years of age or older:

Alice Dewitt	Elizabeth Hoffman
Fay Hoy	James McCann
Beverly Printz	Nelle Trent
Lottie Trimm	

Please tell Ben or Don Elson if you have any correction to make to this list.

ANNUAL SUMMER COVERED DISH PICNIC

June 19 - Picnic - Nellies Cave Park, Blacksburg. Noon to 3:00 p.m.

For extra fun we will have a "White Elephant Exchange". Here is how it works. Each person (or couple) brings an inexpensive, wrapped gift, which can be either new or used but in good condition. As people arrive and deposit their gifts, they will receive a number. For the exchange, the person or couple with number 1 makes the first pick; number 2, the second pick, and so on. Once you have picked, you can not go back and choose again, but you are free to exchange gifts with anyone else who is willing. Who knows, one person's "white elephant" may be another person's prize.

FUTURE PROGRAMS

September 18 - Poet and Raconteur Clyde Kessler will read his own poetry as well as that of other poets. As a native of Franklin County, he also has many fascinating tales to tell.

October 16 - (still being planned)

November 20 - Holistic Medicine, Dr. Linda Cheek.

December 4 - AARP Christmas Luncheon

HOME IMPROVEMENT PROJECT --

Joe Maxwell

The Home Improvement Project has been completed except for a few final details. An important aspect of this project was the participation of chapter members as volunteers.

INDEPENDENT LIVING BASKETS

Bob Blanton

Part of the May 15 membership meeting was devoted to assembling baskets for the Independent Living Baskets Project. The project was a cooperative effort between Blacksburg and Christiansburg AARP chapters and the State AARP. This project provided simple changes for safer homes for 20 elderly in Blacksburg and 20 elderly in Christiansburg. Thank you to the members that helped with this project.

SOME COMMENTS ON D-DAY MEMORIAL TRIP

Frank Lau

First off, let me say that I am glad that I went, to be part of this history-making event. We were all there to honor our Veterans through those who participated in the D-Day Invasion. For better or worse, the President, for whom we all had to jump through hoops caused by the Secret Service, was totally unheard in the area I wound up in. He spoke in a soft-spoken manner that went nowhere on the PA system.

Our two buses arrived at the Memorial at 8:50 a.m. After very explicit instructions by our welcoming volunteer, our group of 97 walked up toward the Overlord Arch in good spirits. In the many line

splits, we pretty much all went our own way, and after one and a half HOURS, I got in through the security checkpoint.

During that time, I observed three things that greatly bothered me, and as I am finding out, others as well:

Rev. Jerry Falwell and his entourage being whisked past us while we waited 90 minutes in the hot sun to get through Security.

Several large groups of children also being allowed to move through without waiting. You may say they are our future, but they can take guided non-nightmarish field trips at another time without adding to the burdens of this special day.

Preferential treatment given to the shuttle buses, which were allowed to discharge in front of the Security area, and thus get to the head of the line.

After the ceremony, rules were totally tossed out when the Facilities Director, James Baldwin, opened the assembly area to the shuttle buses again. Folks, you could not imagine the gridlock I observed as I searched for someone in charge to call my buses, according to the Director's explicit rules! We were assembled for over two hours, in the heat and then in a brief but blinding thunderstorm. It was only after many polite demands, did I find out that our buses had left the bus area and were on the way. Even delivery trucks and the Army Reserve, whose canons we used as our area were taken away, before our two buses made it through.

If my sense of History, Patriotism, and Gratitude can ever find each other again, I might try another trip, but right now----- REST!

DON'T DO SOMETHING THAT WILL MAKE YOU NEED BLOOD!!

Call 552-4369 or 552-2959 for an appointment.

The AARP, New Dimensions and the Blacksburg Senior Center are sponsoring another bloodmobile on **June 15 between 10:00 a.m. and 6 p.m.** Last year we got 35 pints of blood. That's not much from over 700 people in these three organizations. Yes some of you can't give blood and we understand that. But many of you can but don't. **We need your help!** This year lets go to 70 pints. We can make it if you help. Just come and try. The nurses will excuse you if your medical history says you can't donate. Please mark your calendar for June 15 between 10:00 and 6:00 to come to the Community Center and donate blood to the Red Cross!!

Now is not a good time to need blood. In this Red Cross Appalachian Blood Region of 45 hospitals, there is an average two-day supply.

Blood donations have been down dangerously for the last few years. People have quit donating and there is no such thing as artificial blood. One in 10 patients entering a hospital needs blood and the minimum need is around 3 pints. A case of bleeding ulcers can use 3-10 pints. The Red Cross estimates that 97% of us will need a blood transfusion by age 72, but only 5% of us donate. That's a hard ratio to live with.

The Red Cross provides the country with about 55% of its total needs. Commercial blood collection agencies and companies collect the rest. Both of the local hospitals and the Radford hospital use Red Cross blood and except for a very serious shortage, all of it comes from this blood region. The Region needs about 300 pints a day, which means each of the 45 hospitals needs about 7 pints a day. Fifty-six thousand pints were used in the blood region last year.

Last year there were 240 Red Cross bloodmobiles in this county and they collected about 7200 pints

of blood. The AARP, New Dimension and Senior Center bloodmobile collected 35 of those pints. There is a 56-day (8 week) wait between donations. Even those of us who would like to donate more often can't. So the community has to depend upon you. There is no age limit to blood donating. **OLD TIRED BLOOD IS A WELCOME AS YOUNG BLOOD IN AN EMERGENCY.** In fact old tired blood is good as young blood any time. We have been the generation that has kept bloodmobiles going. When we were younger, we donated much more blood per person that the young and middle-aged persons do now.

You have between 10 and 12 pints of blood depending upon your size. One pint is seldom missed. Yes, some feel uncomfortable while donating or after it is over but at the same time you should feel wonderful. The whole blood that you donate frequently is broken down into three components, which means your pint of blood may contribute to saving 3 lives.

50th ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION OF KOREAN WAR

Frank Lau

A trip sponsored by the Montgomery County Red Cross will be closing reservations on Sunday, for an overnight trip to Washington DC, on July 26th & 27th.

The group will be attending the Memorial Service at the Korean War Memorial, plus visits to Arlington National Cemetery, FDR & Viet Nam Memorials.

Eileen Hadbavny, of the Red Cross and organizer of various Veteran events will be the leader of the group. Costs are very reasonable at \$90/person/double and \$125/person/single.

Contact John Robinson at Warm Hearth 552-1849 or Eileen Hadbavny at 951-0363.

Lodging needs to be locked up early, so don't wait. Call either of them NOW!

AARP WEBSITE

AARP has its own website, called AARP Webplace, which features information about the Organization's activities and issues of interest to older persons. To access information on a host of topics please visit the site at <http://www.aarp.org>. Some of the information featured includes membership benefits, legislative issues, and health and wellness concerns.

CONSUMER TIP -- HOME SECURITY

To make sure your home or apartment is secure, you sometimes have to think like a thief. If you know what they are thinking or looking for, you will be better able to stop them. Criminals don't like to get caught, so they look for easy targets. Make your home as uninviting to a burglar as possible.

- Keep that burglar from getting in and out easily. Use good quality doors, windows, and locks.
- Make a loud sound. Install an alarm system to warn you or the police of any intruders.
- Find out about special risks in your neighborhood. Get information about home security from your local police or sheriff's department.
- Look around outside and keep your property in order. Burglars don't like neat appearances, tidy bushes, or outdoor lights because they can't hide.
- Pretend you are home. Be sure your home appears occupied, even when you are not there. Don't allow trash or newspapers to accumulate; have your grass mowed regularly; use timers to turn on lights and a radio periodically.

For more information from the web go to the AARP site: www.aarp.org/confacts/money/homesecond

COMSUMER TIP -- SAFE EQUIPMENT FOR GRANDKIDS

Secondhand stores can be a great place to buy the items you need before a grandchild comes to visit. But be sure the equipment you buy meets current national safety standards, is in good condition, and has not been recalled because of safety hazards. It is important also, that you check the equipment you already have on hand.

- Cribs: Crib mattresses should fit snugly so that infants cannot slip between crib slats, or the mattress and its sides, and become entrapped and strangle. Slats must be no more than 2 3/8 inches apart.
- Playpens and Play Yards: Watch out for equipment that has been recalled because of protruding hardware or rotating top rails that don't properly lock into place. Children can be entrapped by folding play yards that collapse or be strangled if clothing becomes entangled on protruding hardware.
- Car Seat Carriers: Check to see if the model has been recalled. The handle locks on some models can unexpectedly release when used outside of a car, pitching an infant onto the ground.
- Bunk Beds: Make sure all spaces between the guardrail and bed frame, and the headboard and footboards are less than 3 1/2 inches. Children can become entrapped or wedged in the bed's structure and suffocate.
- Bean Bag Chairs: Don't buy beanbag chairs with zippers that can be opened. More than 12 million chairs have been recalled because young children can unzip them and choke or suffocate on the small pellets of filling.

For information on recalled products go to the web at: www.cpse.gov or call CPSC at 1-800-638-2772

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