



BLACKSBURG NEWS

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February 2001

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Darrell Clowes

It is Tuesday, February 6. The sun is bright, the sky is clear and the temperature is in the fifty's. Incredible! And yet the Weather Channel has declared New England a disaster. Cold temperatures, three feet of snow on the ground and another foot to come. My sister has called from Maine claiming her life is in danger because the Polar Ice Cap has slid into her back yard. And I am leaving tomorrow to drive to Maine to visit! Truly I am a monument to wise planning and the wisdom age brings us.

Today your Executive Committee and I met to continue managing the enterprise and to continuing planning on your behalf. Isn't that reassuring! However, I do believe our age and the accumulated wisdom of the group helped us overcome any individual's "senior moment" and produced a useful exchange of ideas. In last month's Blacksburg News I reported on the two foci we had identified for the Chapter's activities this year: an internal focus on activities to enhance our own collegiality and identity and an external focus on assistance to the needy -especially the elderly needy - within our own community. Shortly after that meeting June Schmidt represented us at a regional planning activity and identified an initiative of the state and national AARP that could fit our interests. Today the Executive Committee voted to commit the chapter to participate in two projects within that initiative.

AARP is promoting Independent Living during May. In support of that we have agreed to work with the local Agency on Aging to identify an elderly person in our area whose home is in critical need of modification. The national AARP will contribute up to \$1,000 to the cost and we would provide assistance in planning, in securing workers (or a contractor), in gathering local support through gifts and labor, and in providing publicity for the

2001 BLACKSBURG AARP CHAPTER DUES \$6.00

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.

project. The second project will be done jointly with the local Agency on Aging and with the Christiansburg AARP chapter. AARP will provide gift baskets to support independent living for 20-25 families in Blacksburg and another group in Christiansburg. We will be involved in identifying the recipients (with the help of the Agency on Aging), in augmenting the materials supplied by AARP, in delivering the baskets and helping families understand how to use them, and in publicizing the activity. Both activities will require planning and work through the spring and will be completed before we break for the summer.

It is our hope that our normal programming and activities will allow us to enhance our own collegiality while these outreach activities ill serve to let us make good on the AARP motto "To serve, not to be served" while also giving us another opportunity to work together to help there. I am grateful to June Schmidt for her initiative and to the Executive Committee for accepting the responsibility for translating our words into plans and actions. We look forward to your participation with us in these and the activities to come.



Together we can make a difference and demonstrate the wise use of the skills we have acquired with age - and make our "senior moments" only minor blips on an otherwise sunny and beautiful landscape.

PROGRAMS FOR FEBRUARY AND MARCH

February 20: "Back Pain: A 21st Century Epidemic" - Dr. Glen Augustine

March 20: "Colonial Medicine" - Kitty Brennan

The membership meetings are held in the Blacksburg Community Center at **11:30 a.m.** Remember to bring a friend and your bag lunch. Drinks are provided.

FOOD PANTRY CONTRIBUTIONS

Our Blacksburg AARP Chapter is supporting the Food Pantry by providing canned goods and staples. **Please bring several items with you to the February 20 meeting. Set them aside now so you will remember to bring them.** Over 230 families depend on your generosity each month.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

The Board of Directors, at its January 1998 meeting, adopted the following policy relative to Board and/or chapter meetings during inclement weather:

AARP Board and/or chapter meetings will be canceled if Montgomery County Schools are closed due to inclement weather on days AARP Board and/or chapter meetings are scheduled."

INVITATION TO HONOR KOREAN VETERANS

You are invited to attend a short public ceremony to honor Korean War Veterans, Sunday, February 25, afternoon at 3:00 p.m. The POW/KIA/MIA Remembrance Ceremony will be held at the Christiansburg Armory, 15 College Street, Christiansburg. Included in the ceremony will be the VT Color Guard, bagpiper, soloist and invocation by the Reverend Al Payne. A reception with snacks will follow the ceremony. For additional information, call Ben Crawford at 961-5733.

TAX HELP

Here we are in Tax Season! AARP in Virginia has put its volunteer preparers through the IRS certification program again. They are now ready, willing, and very able to help our Seniors in the TCE program. In fact, we have three at the Blacksburg Center, and one at Warm Hearth. Even though complicated returns are not handled, very few need to be referred to professionals. This sponsored service is FREE. All they ask is that you get an appointment for Tuesdays at the Center, and Wednesdays at Warm Hearth. Call Frank Lau, **961-0516** or franklau@earthlink.net for further information.

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. The AARP website also features information on this year's election cycle, including materials on selected issues and a Candidate Database and Voter Registration Information.

FRAUD WEB SITES

As a result of the Consumer University held last spring we were provided with a web site that gives a listing of questionable web sites that have been investigated for fraud. Bill Kallio writes that there is a web site with a searchable database where this information can be found:

start at www.dhhs.gov/oig
click on Electronic Reading Room
click on Office of Investigations
click on OIG Exclusions
click on Online Searchable Database

Check out this web site if you suspect a web site may be fraudulent.

FREE CLINIC OF NEW RIVER VALLEY

The Free Clinic of New River Valley needs and welcomes volunteers to join in meeting the needs of residents without health insurance in the New River Valley. A full range of volunteer opportunities

is offered including office and clerical, marketing, and all health care professions. For more information, contact Amy Vaughan at 381-0820.

OPT OUT

Tired of getting unwanted sales pitches by mail, over the phone, and through email? If you want to reduce those solicitations, you can “opt out” by letting marketers know you are not interested.

- To stop receiving unsolicited credit card offers, call 1-888-567-8688, the opt-out number for the three major credit reporting bureaus.
- To cut down on telemarketers, write Telephone Preference Service, PO Box 9014, Farmingdale, NY 11735-9014. Ask that your telephone number be removed from calling lists.
- To cut down on junk mail, write to Mail Preference Service, P. O. Box 9008, Farmingdale, NY 11735-9008. Ask that your address be removed from marketing lists.
- Tell each unwanted caller to put your name on the company’s “do-not-call” list.
- Tell you department of motor vehicles that you do not want your drivers license information sold to marketers.
- To reduce “spam” or unsolicited email, use an online alias, a filter program, and contact www.e-mps.org.

2001 OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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New Dimensions Liaison Jim Moore

Darrel Clowes, President
AARP Chapter #2613
495 Mt. Pleasant Rd
Christiansburg, VA 224073-4669

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