



October 2013
Vol. 30, No. 8

<http://www.blacksburgaarp.org>

October 15 Meeting is a forum with Virginia General Assembly candidates

As the election draws near, this month's program lets us hear from most of the candidates from Districts 7 and 12 that include Blacksburg. Join us for a brown bag lunch (bring your own, but drinks will be provided) at 11:30 a.m. with the program starting at noon.

Candidates for the seat in the 7th District are Michael Abraham(D) and Nick Rush (R). Rush will not be in attendance. Candidates for the seat in the 12th District are James D. Harder (D) and Joseph Yost (R). Each candidate will make a brief statement and then answer written questions from the audience before making a closing statement.

Candidates have been invited to bring literature that will be available, and they will be available for individual questions before and after the program.

Assistant Registrar Gary Talkington will be available at the meeting to register voters and answer questions about registration. October 15 is the last day to register to vote in the November election.



Food Pantry Donations Needed

Don't forget to bring a food donation (a can or box of non-perishable food) to the monthly AARP meeting. Share your abundance with those who are in need of food.

President's Column

As we roll into election season, we have an important meeting on October 15th where we get to hear from our local political candidates, and we get to ask them questions. Candidates James Harder and Joseph Yost are seeking the post in the 12th district and Michael Abraham and Nick Rush in the 7th district. Nick Rush has responded that he will be absent. Candidates will make statements and written questions will be taken from the floor.



And speaking of politics, Val Coluni has regularly reported his involvement with the AARP Virginia Advocacy Committee, updates on health care issues, state budget issues, and utility industry rate issues, and he has done an extraordinary job of providing information. Val recently reported on the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare). "It's still a political football. Yes, there are some glitches (due to drafting errors) that need to be fixed (i.e., leaving up to 500,000 children without coverage; additional costs to some families). Congress can easily fix these, but it seems unlikely unless much compromise takes place. Another significant problem is the some people are now, or will soon be, eligible, but are not signing up. We need to get the word out. Some AARP helpful tools: HealthLawAnswers.aarp.org; and HealthFacts.org."

I tried out the HealthLawAnswers.aarp.org, and after answering a few easy questions, I had an answer on how my health care will change under the new law. I highly recommend it if you are unsure about your healthcare coverage under Obamacare. Val also reported on Medicaid Expansion. "The State Legislature Committee set up to evaluate the program has only met once. It

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is highly unlikely they will be motivated to do their work until after the election. One [Virginia] candidate for governor supports it; the other does not."

If you haven't been to our website, www.blacksburgaarp.org, you should check it out. I have found it a great resource for getting information on chapter news, upcoming events, past newsletters, links to other websites, etc. Don Creamer has put a lot of effort into the website and it is greatly appreciated.

At our November meeting we will vote on new officers and board members for 2014. The board has put forth the following slate:

- President—Leslye Bloom;
- Vice President— Terry Wildman;
- Secretary—Virgil Cook;
- Treasurer—Pat Ballard;
- Board Members—Sally Anna Stapleton,
Tina King,
Tom Alston.

Tom Alston

Blacksburg AARP Chapter # 2613 Financial Statement May 2013

Balance at end of September 2013	\$4,685.85
Credits	
Dues	15.00
50/50 drawing proceeds	21.00
Coffee money	11.91
Interest	.12
Total	\$ 48.03
Debits	
Kopy Korner	125.21
Leslye Bloom (snacks for meeting)	16.84
Total	\$ 142.05
Balance end of September 2013	\$4,591.83
Balance in reserve account	\$2,682.23

Blacksburg AARP Chapter # 2613 Membership Report October 2013

Member Profile:

Category	Individual Count	Household Count
AARP 2013 Members	243	148
LifeTime Members	36	22
Life Members	15	14
Comp Members	19	19
Honorary Members	2	1
Total Membership	315	204

Newsletters: 215

Committee: Jim Wightman (chair), Tom Alston

Community Service News

September was our **state-wide food drive**. Our chapter collected over 2500 lbs. of food. The food collected was distributed to Interfaith Food Pantry in Blacksburg and MCEAP Food Bank in Christiansburg. Thank you to all who donated and thank you to all who helped with collection and distribution.

We also held our **fall coat drive** and collected 22 coats that will be cleaned and donated locally to those in need.

Reminder:

The annual "**Supplies for Seniors**" drive is in it's sixth year. Sponsored by RSVP and supported by AARP, this collection provides basic household and personal care items to over 220 homebound seniors. Look for collection sites in the community centers, libraries and at RSVP. A Walk-A-Thon is being held at the Christiansburg Community Center on October 24 from 10 a.m.–1 p.m. to raise funds for this worthwhile project. Come out and get some exercise, sponsor sheets can be obtained from RSVP.

Sally Anna Stapleton
Community Service Committee

Flu season is coming so get your flu shot and be ready

New River Valley Agency on Aging
Tina King, Executive Director

Colorful and cooler days are here as fall floats in! While we are enjoying these glorious blue-sky days, it is wise to think of what we can do to prepare for a healthy fall and winter season.

What is one preventative measure that we can take immediately? We can get a flu shot. It is widely known that people 65 years and older are
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AARP Blacksburg Chapter #2613

Chapter meetings are the third Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center, Patrick Henry Drive at 11:30 a.m. There are no meetings in July or August. Board meetings are the first Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center at 10:00 a.m.

PO Box 10082

Blacksburg, VA 24062

www.blacksburgaarp.org

at a greater risk of serious complications from the flu as compared with young, healthy adults. This is because human immune defenses become weaker with age. Fortunately, people with Medicare can get one flu shot per season under Medicare Part B at no charge provided it is administered by a health care provider that accepts assignment. If it is administered by a health care provider that does not accept assignment a fee may be assessed. However, there should be no charge for the vaccination itself.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), it is estimated that 90 percent of seasonal flu-related deaths and more than 60 percent of seasonal flu-related hospitalizations in the United States each year occur in people 65 years and older. While not always effective, evidence shows that flu vaccines are highly efficacious in preventing flu and the serious complications that can accompany it.

The vaccine has been updated for this season and immunity wanes over a year, so it is important to get vaccinated again. Immunity sets in about two weeks after vaccination.

People 65 years and older have two flu shots available to choose from – a regular dose flu vaccine and a newer flu vaccine designed for people 65 and older. The CDC and its Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices have not expressed a preference on either vaccine. If in doubt as to which one to take, a discussion with a trusted health care provider is recommended.

In addition to getting a flu vaccination, practicing good health habits will lessen our chances of getting the flu. Simple measures such as covering coughs, washing hands and avoiding, when possible, people who are sick can make a difference.

On another note . . . mark your calendar for Saturday, November 16th (10 a.m. to 3 p.m.) and bring the children in your life (and the child in you) for a day of fun and holiday shopping at the Christiansburg Recreation Center. The Agency on Aging is holding its second annual event to raise funds that will go directly to support vital services to older adults and adults with disabilities residing in the New River Valley. The event is free, however donations are accepted at the door. There will be bounce houses and face painting for children; games, raffles and vendors for everyone in the family.

Adults in our communities need services such as affordable transportation to dialysis and cancer treatments, nutritious meals, and advocacy

services that help ensure their safety and quality of care. The needs are increasing while government funding is decreasing.

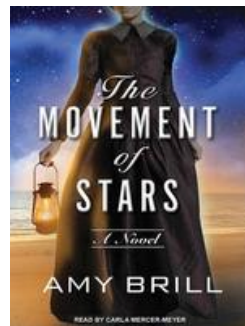
For information on this event or on services, programs, and presentations geared to serve older adults, adults with disabilities and caregivers, call the New River Valley Agency on Aging at 540-980-7720 or e-mail at nrvaoa@nrvaoa.org.

Library News and Events



October is the perfect time to fall into a good book, and we have many Large Print books in all branches of the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library system. Just a few of the new large print books that are hot off the press in early October are listed below.

With the rollout of the Affordable Care Act, October also potentially brings questions about your insurance coverage. The Blacksburg Library has scheduled a couple of presentations to help. Rebecca C. Brown, Esq. is one of the local Certified Navigators for Enroll Virginia. She will be in the Blacksburg Library community room on Tuesday, October 15 at 6:30 p.m. and again on Tuesday, November 12 at 6:30 p.m. to present information and answer your questions. Enroll Virginia is a non-political program funded by a grant from the federal government and designed to educate and assist in enrolling eligible participants in the new Health Insurance Exchange known as Marketplace. Come learn from Rebecca and leave with some insurance clarity – and perhaps also a good book or two!

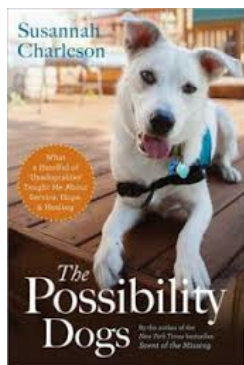


The Movement of Stars: A Novel by Amy Brill

Kirkus reviews Brill's book as "probing yet accessible, beautifully written and richly characterized" and labels Brill as "a writer to watch." A young Quaker woman in Nantucket is fascinated with astronomy

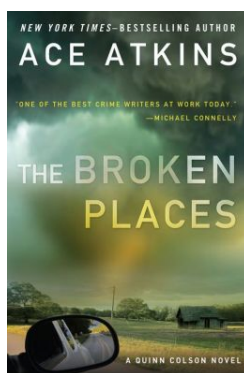
but finds there are many limitations imposed upon her interests within the small Quaker community.

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The Possibility of Dogs: What a Handful of 'Unadoptables' Taught Me About Service, Hope, & Healing by Susannah Charleson

Charleson is a search-and-rescue worker and the author of the *New York Times* bestselling book *Scent of the Missing*. Her newest real-life account of finding service potential in abandoned dogs is one that will pull at your canine heartstrings. Have your hankies handy when you read about these truly touching animal-human bonds.



The Broken Places by Ace Atkins

Atkins is back with the third book of the Quinn Colson series (after *The Ranger* and *The Lost Ones*). Readers of suspense will appreciate this high-tension thriller set in Mississippi. Hold on to your hats – amidst murder, manhunts and mayhem, a tornado also puts in an unwelcome appearance.



Transatlantic: A Novel by Colum McCann

Winner of the National Book Award, McCann follows *Let the Great World Spin* with another intricate story spanning multiple places and time periods. *Kirkus* reviews his newest work as “a masterful and profoundly moving novel that employs exquisite language to explore the limits of language and the tricks of memory.”

AARP Chapter 2613 Board of Directors October 1, 2013 Board Minutes

Call to Order--President Tom Alston called the meeting to order.

Officers Present: President Tom Alston, Vice President Leslye Bloom, Secretary Virgil Cook

Board Members: Don Creamer, Nola Elliott, John Hillison, Jim Montgomery, June Schmidt, Terry Wildman

Non-Board-Members, Committee Chairs and Appointees: Doris Abraham, Val Coluni, R. B. “Ben” Crawford, Margaret Kates, Carl McDaniels, Jewell Ritchey, Edd Sewell, Jim Wightman, Juanita Wightman

Guest: Brian Jacks

Approval of Minutes--John Hillison moved that the minutes for September 3 be approved. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report--As usual, the largest expense is for copying the newsletter, \$125.21. Don Creamer moved that the report be received. The motion passed

Web Site--Don Creamer. We encountered difficulty with the size of the newsletter file. We had to change to the unlimited-storage plan. The fee is \$10 per month. John Hillison moved that the Board approve changing to the unlimited-storage plan and that the fee be added as a recurring expense in the budget. The motion passed.

Guest Presentation--Brian Jacks, Western Virginia Representative for the state AARP office. He invited members to attend an event on Campus for a program on how social media influence elections. The program is entitled, "Hokies Want to Know." By using social media, candidates can get out information without spending a lot of money. The program will be presented from seven to eight p.m. at the Bioinformatics Institute at Washington Street and Duck Pond Drive.

In response to a question, Brian explained that a 501(C)4 designation denotes a group working for the betterment of the community but is not for profit. Is the organization engaged in encouraging the membership to promote specific legislation? Because we do promote specific legislation but do not endorse specific candidates, our only option is 501(C)3. A 501(C)3 organization cannot promote legislation. The AARP Foundation is 501(C)3. A donation to a 501C4 organization cannot be claimed as a tax deduction.

In response to a second question, Brian indicated that the national office will not form new chapters, but it will still encourage local chapters. John Hillison stated his concern that there will be no more chapter awards. Brian

emphatically asserted that AARP does not want to take the approach that chapters are a burden. Ben Crawford expressed concern that the state and national offices are not sufficiently involving volunteers. The group's concerns are in three areas: No links to our Web site on the state and national Web sites, no new chapters and no more chapter awards.

Nominations—Tom Alston. The Nominations Committee presented the following slate for 2013: for board members, Sally Anna Stapleton, Tom Alston, and Tina King; for officers, Leslye Bloom for president, Terry Wildman for vice president, and Virgil Cook for secretary.

Annual Chapter Awards--Juanita Wightman. Juanita reported that there were no suggestions from anyone other than board members. The awards committee will meet after this meeting.

Membership—Tom Alston. The total membership is 315. Jim Wightman said that many paid dues late, so he must put badges back into the file box. The committee needs more help.

Programs--Carl McDaniels. Delegate Joseph Yost, James Harder, and Michael Abraham will participate in a candidate forum at the October 15 chapter meeting. Delegate Nick Rush had a conflict.

Gary Talkington, Assistant Registrar for Montgomery County, will be available at the October 15 chapter meeting to register voters.

The November program will focus on home modifications to enable seniors to stay in their homes longer. Tim Lawrence, President of Blue Ridge Home Improvement and a certified home-improvement specialist will be featured.

Legislation--There are design flaws in the Affordable Care Act law. Now some children will be left out. The Medicaid Committee for the state has appointed a committee to study financial abuse of the elderly. The committee was appointed in March, but it will probably have to wait until after the election to make any recommendations. The state has appointed a committee to investigate financial abuse of the elderly. We need for more banks to get involved. A group of AARP members is being trained to go out to banks and let them know what the signposts for elderly abuse are. We must get more people involved in legislation. Val cited an article in *USA Today* that shows that government shutdowns costs money. People must educate themselves.

Liaison—Ben Crawford. We should try to determine whether people can attend the October

9 meeting on social media at the Bioinformatics Institute. Ben Golden in the state office is looking for volunteers to help deliver copies of a petition, presumably to Congressman Griffith's office in Christiansburg. The petitions ask Congress to protect Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. Contact Nola Elliott if you can help. Ben distributed bags for the Sports Club food drive. We can return the bags at the October 15 chapter meeting.

Public Relations—Terry Wildman. Terry is distributing flyers on the October 15 meeting.

Health Fair--John Hillison. John is working with VCOM on next year's health fair. VCOM has not made up its academic calendar for next year.

Caring—Margaret Kates. She sent out one sympathy card. The Tech Retirees Luncheon will take place on October 10 at the Inn.

Adjournment--The meeting was adjourned at 11:35.

Virgil A. Cook, Secretary

The outdoor club at Virginia Tech is looking for volunteers who want to help with maintaining and building Appalachian Trail around southwest VA. They have a large project that involves relocating a section of the Appalachian Trail off private land to protected federal land and have a tough schedule to try and meet. They are hoping to create volunteer crews who are willing to go out and give trail building a shot. They provide all safety equipment, procedures, and training for all volunteers. If you are interested, you can contact Nimal Lobo, 540-998-9781, nlobo@vt.edu

Five Reasons Why YOU Should Vote

The voting right afforded to all United States adults is one that should not by any means be taken lightly As election day rapidly approaches, let's take a moment to consider just the top five reasons, among hundreds, that each and every one of us should be voting.

1. Voting is a right that was hard-won through the blood, sweat, and tears of those who came before us.
2. We are a democracy and your voice is what makes it so.
3. Earn your right to complain! We all have

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something to say about the government. There will always be things that frustrate us and other things that excite us. If you don't vote, you sincerely are in no place to complain about any actions of the governmental administration.

4. The government is counting on you! Again and again, year after year, the government sees certain demographics voting over and above others. For instance, the elderly are much more likely to vote than the younger population and those in the upper class tend to have higher voting rates than those in lower income brackets.

5. TO WIN! Let's be honest. We love winning! Furthermore, we all have certain things we want from the government. Well, you cannot expect to have anything of those things if you're not willing to cast your vote to help your side, your interests win. T

The above is taken from an essay written by Sarah Guy, a high school sophomore. Words from the young should speak loudly to those of us who are older!

Adapted from honorslounge.com/2012/11/05/top-5-reasons-why-you-should-vote/.

Gubernatorial Candidates: Where They Stand By Tamara Lytle



Terry McAuliffe

Ken Cuccinelli

Virginia voters get a choice this year between gubernatorial candidates with strongly divergent views on issues important to older Americans.

Republican Ken Cuccinelli and Democrat Terry McAuliffe are competing in the Nov. 5 election, one of only two gubernatorial races in the country this year.

The victor will influence how the state implements the new national health care reform law. The two candidates could scarcely have more different approaches.

Under the federal Affordable Care Act, states can choose whether to expand Medicaid to people younger than 65 if their incomes are less than about \$15,900 for a one-person household or about \$21,400 for a two-person household. In Virginia, about 62,000 people ages 50 to 64 would qualify.

Washington has promised to pay the full fare of new enrollees for the first three years; states would then begin paying a share of the coverage, to a maximum of 10 percent.

Medicaid expansion

"I will not sign a budget in Virginia unless it includes the Medicaid expansion," McAuliffe said.

He said the expansion, in addition to providing access to health care, makes economic sense because the federal government's coverage for the first three years would bring billions into the state's economy and create 30,000 jobs.

Cuccinelli said he's "not supportive of Medicaid expansion. It's not a 'no never.' It's a 'no, not now.' I want to see a lot more flexibility in our ability in Virginia to conduct our own reforms" within Medicaid.

He said he's worried the federal government would renege and leave Virginia to pay the costs.

Both candidates said they'd like to help older Virginians stay in their homes instead of having to move to nursing facilities.

An AARP survey found 84 percent of those 50 and older would rather age in their homes. But 55 percent of the Medicaid money Virginia spends on long-term care is spent on institutional care, with 45 percent devoted to community-based care.

Cuccinelli vowed to audit all Medicaid home-care providers to drive shady operators out of business.

Too many are "fly by night" and leave older people without the care they need, he said. "We can provide more, better care with this money if we are policing it more carefully."

McAuliffe said he would work with Area Agencies on Aging to ensure they have sufficient resources to help people remain in their homes and delay a move to a nursing facility. "We've got to do it in a manner seniors are taken care of."

Economic, tax policies

The two also differ on how to spur the economy and make sure there are jobs for older workers hard hit by the recent recession.

Cuccinelli said he wants to tailor job training for older people to align with the types of industries that have job openings.

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His plan to spur the economy includes dropping the state's top income tax rate from 5.75 percent to 5 percent and cutting business income tax rates from 6 percent to 4 percent. Getting rid of exemptions (except health and education exemptions) and loopholes in the tax code would help pay for the cuts, he said.

McAuliffe said Virginia's tax rates already are low. What the state needs, he said, is better transportation infrastructure so companies can transport goods quickly and workers don't waste time in traffic gridlock.

He said he would like to make Virginia the Silicon Valley of the growing cybersecurity field.

"Somebody is going to be the leader in the world. I want Virginia to be the leader," McAuliffe said.

Cuccinelli, 45, was a business law attorney before becoming a state senator. He was elected state attorney general in 2009.

McAuliffe, 56, has a law degree and is an entrepreneur. He is a former chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

Tamara Lytle is a writer living in Falls Church, Va.

- See more at: <http://states.aarp.org/va-gubernatorial-candidates-where-they-stand/#sthash.DITxk9qF.dpuf>

2013 Officers & Board Members

Officers

President Tom Alston [tpalston@gmail.com]

Vice President Leslye Bloom
[leslye@leslyebloom.com]

Secretary Virgil Cook [vcook@vt.edu]

Treasurer Brian Allen [brian.allen@prodigy.net]

Board of Directors

Class of 2013 –

Tom Alston, [tpalston@gmail.com];
Jim Montgomery, [jhmontgome@verizon.net];
Juanita Wightman, [wightman@vt.edu]

Class of 2014 –

Leslye Bloom, [leslye@leslyebloom.com];
Don Creamer, [dgc2@vt.edu];
Mary Ann Hinshelwood, [mah@mahhinshelwood.com]

Class of 2015 –

John Hillison, [johnhillison@comcast.net];
Nola Elliott, [ne_elliott@peoplepc.com];
Terry Wildman, [wiley@vt.edu]

2013 Committees

Caring –

Margaret Kates 552-4107

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Ben Crawford [961-5733 ben.crawford.vt.edu]

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Margaret Kates [552-4107]

Chaplain –

Sandy Birch [951-3455 birch@vt.edu]

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***Put October 15 on your calendar – Forum of candidates for
Virginia Legislature in Districts #7 and #12***

Tuesday, October 15 will be a time to hear and question candidates for the Virginia Legislature who will represent Blacksburg. Bag lunch begins at 11:30 a.m. followed by the program at noon. Candidates attending include Joseph Yost (R), James Harder (D), and Michael Abraham (D) – Nick Rush (R) is not attending. We meet at the Blacksburg Community Center on Patrick Henry Drive.

Visit the new Blacksburg AARP website at www.blacksburgaarp.org and let Don Creamer know what you think of it!