



www.blacksburgaarp.org



President's Message

Given the cooler temperatures, the beautiful shades of foliage, festivals, and celebrations (including Halloween), the fall season has always been my favorite time of year. When I think of the month of November, Veterans Day and Thanksgiving always come to mind. It seems fortuitous that both holidays fall within the same month. In my opinion, there is a logical connection between the two.

On Thanksgiving, we give thanks for the "harvest" and, among other blessings, good health, home, family, and friends. On Veterans Day, we honor and give thanks to military service members and veterans for their service to our country during times of both peace and war. Whether a veteran's initial decision to join the military was the result of a draft or motivated by opportunity, a legacy of service, or patriotism, service members and veterans deserve our utmost gratitude and respect.

Not only does a soldier, airman, marine, or sailor serve our country through a primary job within a specific branch of the armed forces, he or she will also serve as part of a global assistance force – for example, to help civilians in Third World countries and provide necessities to victims of disasters and catastrophes. Providing medical assistance, vaccinations, and health and hygiene can also be part of those responsibilities.

Genealogical research can reveal the names of and information about ancestors who served in early wars (for example, the American Revolution and Civil War) as well as 20th century wars (i.e., World War I, World War II, and the Korean, Vietnam, and Gulf Wars). Signed into legislation by President Eisenhower on June 1, 1954, Veterans Day, a relatively contemporary holiday, has special meaning for those who served and for those of us who have fathers, mothers, children, relatives, and friends who served.

When my friends and I get together, we often experience pride in retelling the stories of our relatives who are among the "Greatest Generation" that grew up during the Depression and later served during World War II. While men and women of that generation often refused to talk about their experiences, information acquired via the Internet can fill in some of the gaps. My father served in the Army Air Corps in Europe, North Africa and Italy as a navigator on a B-17 bomber. My husband's father served as a Navy boatswain in the Pacific theater. My best friend's father, a small artillery specialist in the Army, served in Normandy and was present on the infamous D-Day. Another friend's father was a medic during the Battle of the Bulge. I know that many of your fathers, mothers, and relatives also served during World War II.

Reminder: Chapter Dues are Due!!!

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Community Events

Fall at Moss Art Center

- Nov 4** Danish String Quartet
Nov 8 Broadway in Blacksburg, *Anastasia*
Nov 12 Nrityagram Dance Ensemble, *Āhuti*
Nov 17 Soweto Gospel Choir, *Hope: It's Been a Long Time Coming*
Dec 3 Roanoke Symphony Orchestra, *Holiday Pops Spectacular*

More information available at artscenter.vt.edu

Other

- Dec 18** Wreath-laying ceremony at the Southwest Virginia Veterans Ceremony

For more information see:

<https://www.dvs.virginia.gov/newsroom/holiday-wreath-laying-events-scheduled-at-virginia-veterans-cemeteries-on-saturday-december-18>

Topics and Speakers for Chapter Meetings

Submitted by Linda Correll

November 15: Xenotransplantation: The Solution for Overcoming the Organ Shortage Crisis

Description: The transplanting of living cells, tissues, or organs from one species to another. Dr. Ayares will describe the role that Revivacor, a Blacksburg company, is playing in overcoming the worldwide organ shortage crisis.

Speaker: David Ayares is president and chief scientific officer of Revivacor, a regenerative medicine company focused on providing a safe, human-compatible, alternative tissue source for human therapeutic use. The company has a diverse pipeline of genetically engineered pigs for transplant organs such as lungs, kidney, and heart. Dr. Ayares was previously vice president of research and chief operating officer for PPL Therapeutics and led the team that cloned the

world's first pigs. He also worked for seven years in the pharmaceutical industry at Abbott Laboratories and Baxter Healthcare, developing gene targeting systems and transgenic mouse models for pharmaceuticals testing.



David Ayares, Revivacor

Blacksburg Chapter #2613

Chapter Officers 2022

President – Leslie Pendleton, lkpendleton@gmail.com

Vice President – Chuck Burress, cgburress@comcast.net

Secretary – Terry Wildman, wiley@vt.edu

Treasurer – Pat Ballard, pballard@vt.edu

Assistant Treasurer – Ruth Ann Niles, rniles2@icloud.com

Board of Directors (term ending date)

2022: Chuck Burress, Linda Correll, Kai Duncan

2023: Todd Solberg

2024: John Burton, Beth Grabau, Judith Jones, Fred Piercy, Nola Elliott

Newsletter Editors: Beth Grabau and Susan Terwilliger

AARP Chapter Website: blacksburgaarp.org

President's Message, continued



All veterans' experiences are unique. As I did, I think you will enjoy seeing the photos and reading about the unique military experiences of our Board members – John Burton, Ben Crawford, and Fred Piercy – that are featured in this edition of the newsletter. If you are a veteran, we would like to feature your photo and experience in a future newsletter. We sincerely thank each of you and all our veterans for their service, not only on Veterans Day but every day.

AARP Community Challenge Grant Report

The Literacy Volunteers of the New River Valley recently hosted a series of Digital Literacy classes sponsored by the AARP Community Challenge Grant that provided funding for the new Mobile Literacy Lab. Classes have been offered at the Meadowbrook Branch of the Montgomery Floyd Regional library in Shawsville. LVNRV also partnered with the Blacksburg Branch to offer "Tech Bytes", focused on digital literacy and internet use. And they hosted a Digital Literacy class at the Dublin Library. These were specifically promoted to those 50 and older but are open to everyone.

See more about the Digital Literacy Program at:

<http://www.lvnrv.org/digital-learning-resources>



Brittany Williams, LVNRV Program Coordinator, conducts class at the Meadowbrook branch library.

Trail Notes: North End Trail

by Beth Grabau, Susan Terwilliger, and Pat Hipkins

The North Main Trail in Blacksburg is a paved and mostly flat trail that extends from approximately the Blacksburg Community Center on Patrick Henry Dr. to the trail's current endpoint at Wyatt Farms. The first segment of the trail begins across from the Community Center and follows Giles Rd. to the intersection with N. Main Street. Within the past several years Giles Rd. has been upgraded with sidewalks making it much safer for pedestrians. The route then follows along N. Main St. to Mt. Breeze where the path becomes a dedicated walking and biking trail that continues north to Wyatt



Farms. According to the Town of Blacksburg ARPA Report from June 2022, there are plans to continue the North Main Trail from Vineyard Ave. to Bishop Rd. at US 460. The report lists a commitment of \$776,000 to provide an outdoor recreational and alternative transportation route to connect residents

to amenities off Main Street. Parking is available at the Community Center. The complete report of all ARPA funded projects can be viewed at <https://letstalkblacksburg.org/arpa>.



Photos from Health and Wellness Fair,
Ben Crawford, photographer

Report on the AARP Blacksburg/VCOM Health & Wellness Fair 2022

by Leslie Pendleton, Planning Committee Chair

You may recall that our biennial Health & Wellness Fair has been a major event for our chapter over the last two decades. After a hiatus in 2020 due to COVID-19, the fair was held again on Wednesday, September 21st, from 12:00 to 4:00 PM at the Christiansburg Recreation Center. Compared to our fair in 2018, participation by both sponsors/exhibitors and attendees was down by about 50%; however, feedback from all who participated was very positive. We were very fortunate to be joined by Joyce Williams, president of AARP Virginia, and Brian Jacks, associate state director, AARP Virginia.

Sixty-six (66) sponsors/exhibitors provided a myriad of health and wellness resources across many areas of wellness: physical, social, mental/emotional, intellectual, financial, and environmental. VCOM faculty and students offered osteopathic manipulation treatments and a variety of screenings and recommendations: cancer; fall prevention; health, nutrition, and diet; osteoporosis; opioid overdose emergency response; and "ask a pharmacist." Covid, flu, pneumonia, and shingles vaccines were offered by Christiansburg Pharmacy. Hands-on, movement-oriented demos included tai chi, chair yoga, walking stick yoga, qigong, and laughter yoga. Pet therapy team Chris Walters and Chloe the labradoodle, a popular addition to the fair, joined the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) NRV booth.

It takes a village, as the saying goes, to implement such an event. In addition to our sponsors/exhibitors and demonstrators, a very special thanks goes to all the dedicated volunteers: members of the Planning Committee (Chuck Burress, Fred Piercy, Chuck Nelson, and Jennie Reilly); Diane Sutphin and VCOM faculty and students; Tammy Caldwell and Christiansburg Recreation Center staff; Mandy Hayes and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program; Katie Rabago, Town of Christiansburg; Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets; and AARP Blacksburg volunteers. Finally, we thank Matt Gentry of the *Roanoke Times* for providing coverage of our event.

As one sponsor/exhibitor commented, "We're getting back out there. We've got to start somewhere." Many thanks to our chapter members and all the visitors across the New River Valley who got out there to join us despite ongoing concerns about Covid. We'll be back and even better at our next fair on Wednesday, September 18, 2024.

Profiles of AARP Member Veterans in recognition of Veterans Day

Robert Bennett Crawford



Service dates: 1954 –1956
U. S. 3rd Army. 101st Airborne.
Light Weapons specialist
Security specialist

What motivated you to join the military? In my day, the draft was operational and I received a notice to register with the local draft board. Upon registering, I asked if I was going to be drafted and was told yes. I then asked when and was told in July (this was in March). Draftees had to commit for a period of 2 years. Volunteers had to serve four. The draft board representative told me if I volunteered to be drafted the commitment would only be two years and further, I could set the time to enter at any date prior to the end of July. Being innocent and naïve I believed everything he said so that was an easy decision at the time and then volunteered to become a glider pilot but was moved to the paratroopers because glider pilot training was discontinued. Even so, for the most part, I enjoyed the service and have said many times: “My service in the Army was 2 years. If it had been 2 years and one day, I would have reenlisted and made it a career.” When I tell younger people today I volunteered for the draft, most have no idea what I’m talking about.

What branch were you and what did your job entail?

For the first 6 months, I trained out of doors in the rain, in the snow, in the mud, when the temperature was 100 degrees all day and when the temperature was way below freezing. I trained with M-1 Rifles until I could easily take them apart and put them back together blind-folded. Likewise, with machine guns receiving an “Expert” rating. I jumped off 50 ft towers and from planes flying 600 feet and higher, in uniform with weapons. I threw dozens of live hand grenades, trained on flame-throwers, bazookas, gas masks, at full run charged manikin dummies with bayonets, crawled under barbed wire with bullets flying overhead, and more. In day and night I walked in formation, ran often and waited. Waited for breakfast. Waited for lunch. Waited for supper. Waited for the trucks or planes to pick us up. Hurry up and wait was the rule.

The result of all this training for me and others was a physically fit young man trained as a paratrooper and certified as a light weapon specialist. I was ready to defend the USA as a proud member of the 101st Airborne, The Screaming Eagles. Fortunately, I was spared from the battlefield as a truce held between our nation and North Korea. Later, my unit was transferred to Europe. Because I had less than a year to fulfill my commitment, I did not go with them and spent my last 12 months as a prison guard, first taking inmates on work details outside the compound (shotgun guard) and later guarding incorrigibles in the cell block (confinement specialist).

In retrospect, how have your military experiences influenced your life and/or career? My time in service reaffirmed the desire to obtain a college degree. Fortunately, with government aid via the GI Bill, I was able to accomplish this and earn a good living. Military experience also deepened my sense of patriotism and enhanced my values and beliefs largely based on the Lord’s Prayer, the Scout Oath and Law. Oh and also, I hate to wait in line for anything – service at stores & businesses, appointments, meetings to start, telephone information, doctors offices, whatever.

John K. Burton



Airborne Infantry Officer. US
Army. Second Lt

(at the time of this picture)

What motivated you to join the military? To be honest, my primary motivation was that I had just finished my bachelor’s degree (1967) and my draft status had been quickly changed to “1-A.” Rather than wait, I enlisted in the College Option program. I went through the usual training (Basic and Advanced Infantry) at Fort Dix, N.J. (very cold), and then Infantry OCS at Fort Benning GA. (very hot) After this, I owed a 2-year obligation so basically the draft obligation plus the time to train as an officer.

What branch were you and what did your job entail? I was commissioned as a 2nd Lt in the US Army in November ‘68. After attending Jump School at Fort

Benning, I was assigned as a platoon leader and also served as a battalion staff officer (S-2 Intelligence) in the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, N.C. I was deployed to MACV where I served as an advisor to the Regional and Popular Forces in the Thang Binh District of Quang Nam Province (I Corps). Upon returning to the US, I was assigned to the Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg. In the 82nd, my job was primarily to lead a 40-person light infantry unit. In the states, such units train (and train). In Vietnam, although I was an “Advisor,” my counterpart was a first sergeant almost twice my age who had been fighting the VC and NVA since Dien Bien Phu. He didn’t need advice. My role was to be in the field with him and his men to coordinate US artillery, air strikes, and medivacs. At the Special Warfare Center, I was an ops officer in Psy Ops (I had a psychology degree).

In retrospect, how have your military experiences influenced your life and/or career? In retrospect, the military taught me a few things. I learned patience (“hurry up and wait” is a real thing). I learned how to run and how to behave in meetings. I learned responsibility: I signed for equipment worth over a million dollars, I had men depending on me – some barely out of high school and some older than my father, and I had missions to complete – people counted on me. At one level, without the Army, I do not get to use the GI Bill to get my Ph.D. and therefore my whole career doesn’t happen. I learned how to deal with those I was responsible for and for those I was responsible to. I learned how far I could go physically and psychologically.

Any other details you want to include? I felt like I was good at what I did and in fact, there was considerable pressure for me to extend. If I extended, I would have been promoted to Captain, with higher pay, the first day after I signed but, I did not want to go back to Vietnam as a Company Commander which would have been certain. I did enjoy a lot about the job and the military, but not enough to go back. The late ’60s and early ’70s were different times. Combat vets were not particularly welcome everywhere. It would take me some time (if indeed I ever did) to work my way through the experience. While I was in Vietnam we walked on the moon. Woodstock happened. Kent State and Jackson State happened. Jimi Hendricks died. Janis Joplin died.

Fred Piercy



Fred Piercy receiving the Army Commendation Medal at Ft. Benning, Georgia, 1971

I was drafted into the Army in 1970, toward the end of the Vietnam war. At the induction center I was offered, based on a language aptitude test, to be sent to beautiful Monterey, California for a year to learn Vietnamese. I knew exactly where I would go the following year so I declined the offer and waited to see where the Army would send me. I had just finished a master’s degree in counseling, and ended up working in Army mental health facilities, first in Fort Benning, Georgia, then in Seoul, Korea. My military occupational specialty (MOS) was 91G20, psychology/social work specialist. At Fort Benning, I worked in a child and family therapy center within Martin Army Hospital which, little did I know then, set the trajectory of my professional career as a marriage and family therapist and educator. And in Korea I worked in the 121 Evacuation Hospital giving mental status exams and provided short-term therapy to a wide range of military personnel, including prisoners, addicted soldiers, and those with severe mental health disorders. That experience was full of surprises and challenges that helped me professionally, as well. I remember thinking that nothing I would experience in the field of mental health could throw me after the experiences I had in Korea. I also found Korea, the Korean people, and their culture, wonderfully engaging – other worldly, really. I fell in love with it all. I think that my experiences in Korea made me much more open to future international work. As it turned out, I eventually did a lot of professional work in Asia, particularly Indonesia and, in time, learned the Indonesian language. I made some lifelong friends in the Army and am proud to have served.

AARP December Holiday Luncheon & 2023 Officer Installation

Date: Tuesday, December 13, 2022

Time: 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Location: The Village Center
Warm Hearth Village
2387 Warm Hearth Drive

Program:

- Address by Jared Calfee, Associate State Director for Advocacy and Outreach, AARP Virginia
- Presentation of Chapter Service and Community Spirit Awards
- Announcement of charitable donations
- Chapter announcements, highlights, and recognition of volunteers

Cost: \$25 per person. Guests welcome!

RSVP Deadline:

Must be received by Monday, December 5th, by 5:00 PM.

Register online at:

<https://shop.blacksburgaarp.org/?product=5-holiday-luncheon-2022>

OR complete & mail the form to the right.



Luncheon RSVP, 2023 Membership Dues (You can write one check for both!)

Total amounts for number of lunches + 2023 dues + optional donation and make your check out to: AARP Blacksburg #2613. Mail your check and form to: Pat Ballard, Treasurer, AARP Blacksburg Chapter #2613, P.O. Box 10082, Blacksburg, VA 24062

Holiday Luncheon Reservation Form*

Name: _____ \$25.00
Spouse/Partner \$25.00 _____
Guest \$25.00 _____
Luncheon Total: _____

*Reservations cannot be accepted after Monday, December 5, 2022. For questions, contact Terry Wildman, Hospitality Committee Chair, wiley@vt.edu.

Membership Dues \$15/household

Name: _____
Spouse/Partner: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____
Zip: _____ Phone: _____
Email: _____
Spouse/Partner Email: _____

Annual (calendar year) dues \$15 (includes spouse or partner). Members age 90+ can join for free!

Check one: New _____ Renewal _____ 90+ _____

Please consider a donation to support our chapter and its mission, projects, and community service.
\$10 _____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$100 _____ Other \$ _____

(Donations to Chapter are not tax deductible.)

Luncheon total: _____
Membership dues: _____ \$15
Donations: _____
Total: _____

What a gut-wrenching year we've had in the markets!

by Michael Canestrari

We have gone from 2021, the year where no amount of bad news could keep the major indices down, to 2022 where words like “recession” and “plummeting” and the phrase “no end in sight” seem to be the catchwords of every investment show and newsfeed.

Market downturns are unpleasant but normal – we've been here before

At times like this, it's important to go back and revisit some of the basics of the equity markets. Franklin Templeton published an article¹ in March of this year analyzing stock market data over a 50-year period ending on December 31st of 2021. They detailed how, on average, every 8 years the market (as measured by the S&P 500 Index) had seen a decline of 25% or more. On average every 10 years the decline for that same index was 30% or more. The exact timing of these declines is impossible to predict but we know that they happen as a natural component of the market cycle. They are unpleasant, they are unwelcome, but these declines are not a new phenomenon.

That article later went on to examine the S&P 500 Index's average annual returns over rolling periods in the same 50 years with two notable conclusions:

The best 10-year period saw returns of 19.49% and the worst 10-year period saw returns of -3.43%.

The best 15-year period saw returns of 19.48% and there was **no 15-year period where the S&P 500 Index saw negative returns!**

Now as you know, the past is never a guarantee of the future and life never affords us absolute certainty in any area. Still, it's so important to remember that we have been here before.

Market Timing – A fool's endeavor

“Market timing” is the strategically unsound principal of attempting to move in and out of equity holdings in response to market indicators. There exists a

critical fact that experience has verified time and again: **no person or algorithm yet born or coded can consistently predict the short-term fluctuations of the market.** Yet for those who try, the cost of guessing wrong is measurably high.

Fidelity Investments published a paper² examining the hypothetical growth of \$10,000 invested in the S&P 500 Index from January 1, 1980, to March 31, 2020 excluding taxes and fees. The returns for an investor who stayed consistently invested for the duration led to a final amount of \$697,421. For an investor who missed just the five best days of the market, the final amount was \$432,411. **A mere five days out of the market cost that hypothetical investor \$265,010 in lost potential returns!** Staying the course and remaining invested, however difficult it felt, was the way to go.

So whenever the white noise gets a little too loud with its cries of “unprecedented times”, remember, We've Been Here Before.

¹ Franklin Templeton: Why should I invest in the stock market now? Navigating through market volatility IBS-SIDFL 03/2022

² Fidelity Investments: Stay invested: Don't risk missing the market's best days; https://www.fidelity.com/bin-public/060_www_fidelity_com/documents/dont-miss-best-days.pdf; viewed October 4th, 2022

Michael Canestrari is a financial advisor with Plott & French Financial Advisors. In his spare time, he likes hiking and visiting botanical gardens. Securities and investment advisory services offered through Geneos Wealth Management, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC

Chapter Newsletter is Changing!

Starting in 2023, the Blacksburg AARP Chapter Newsletter is going virtual! And with the new year, two new editors will come on board: Fred Piercy and Pam Knox.

Stay tuned for more information.



Blacksburg Chapter #2613
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Blacksburg Chapter Member Application for 2022 (or join online: blacksburgaarp.org)

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Spouse/Partner: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Annual (Calendar Year) Dues: \$15.00 (includes spouse or partner)

New ___ Renewal ___ Life Member (90+) (free) ___ Lifetime member ___

Please consider an additional donation to support our AARP chapter and its projects.

\$10 ___ \$25 ___ \$50 ___ \$100 ___ Other \$ ___

Donations to the Blacksburg chapter help us carry out our mission and community service activities while keeping member dues as low as possible. However, donations to the chapter are not tax deductible.

Please make your check payable to "Blacksburg AARP Chapter #2613." Mail check and this form to: P.O. Box 10082 Blacksburg, VA 24063