



Real Possibilities with Blacksburg VA Chapter #2613

Blacksburg Chapter NEWS

January 2016 • Vol. 33 • No. 1
www.blacksburgaarp3org

Serving the greater New River Valley, Virginia

January 19 Chapter Meeting

How Safe are Senior Drivers? Answers from Naturalistic Research

Dr. Jon Antin from the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute will join us to share some of the ground-breaking research currently being conducted by the



Center for Vulnerable Road Users Safety at VTTI. Jon is Director of the center, which focuses its research and outreach not just on seniors, but also teens, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Jon also serves as program coordinator for a unique transportation safety graduate program administered by VTTI in conjunction with four other departments at Virginia Tech. Given the nature of his work with seniors he serves as a faculty affiliate in the Center for Gerontology.

In terms of education Jon received his B. S. degree in psychology from LSU, then going on to achieve his master's and Ph.D from Virginia Tech in the area of human factors engineering. His work has included stints at AT&T, the NASA Johnson Space Center, the Naval Air Station at Patuxent River, and N.C. State University. Delving deeper into his resume and background one would find a large number of publications, grants, and outreach activities.

During this presentation Dr. Antin will share a bit more of his background and the extensive work going on at VTTI, but focusing mostly on the unique methods currently being utilized to gather naturalistic data on seniors' fitness to drive.

President's Column

by Don Creamer

"The flower symbol of January is snowdrop & carnation."

"January is named after Janus (Januarius), the god of the doorway."

With these compelling tidbits in mind, we begin a new year for our chapter with many new initiatives to embrace. Foremost among these initiatives is to acknowledge that 2016 marks the 40th anniversary of AARP Blacksburg. The original charter for our chapter



was issued on June 29, 1976. Planning for events to honor this milestone is underway.

The venue for the 2016 Health and Wellness Fair has changed. The event will be held at the Christiansburg

Recreational Center since VCOM is unable to make their usual space available to us as it is needed for classes. Jennie Reilly, Angela Little, and Wendy Baldwin compose the planning committee and they have been at work for a couple of months already. We are hopeful for an even larger event than in the past and, possibly, an extension of the variety of events. More will be reported when known by the planning committee.

You may know by now of the new partnership between the chapter and the Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) at Virginia Tech. Our chapter will work to help provide courses, lectures, and events to be showcased as a LivingWell@50+ event. This

Upcoming Events

January 6: Registration for spring LLI courses opens

January 27: "Great Decisions" preview event (p. 7)

February 1: Tax-Aide program begins (see p. 3)

Dues are Due!

If you haven't yet paid your dues for 2016, please use the form on the back of this newsletter.

If you have paid, consider an additional contribution to the local chapter for its projects and expenses. Thanks!



Blacksburg Chapter #2613
Chapter meetings are the third Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center, Patrick Henry Drive at 11:30 am. There are no meetings in July or August. Board meetings are the first Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community

Please bring a food donation (a can or box of non-perishable food) to the AARP chapter meeting. We collect food at each monthly chapter meeting for the food banks in Blacksburg and Christiansburg.

please turn to page 3

LLI Spring Courses Begin Early February, registration opens January 6

Participants in courses and events for the fall term of the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech gave enthusiastic reviews of the courses and faculty.

A new term begins February 8, with registration opening January 6. See more details about these courses or request a catalog at www.cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning. Also see details of six special events.

MONDAY

Digital Storytelling

Marc Zaldivar and Daniel Yaffe, instructors. 9:00-10:30

Introduction to iPad / iPhone (3 weeks each)

Carolyn Shockley, instructor. 1:00-2:30

Living Life Mindfully

Alan Forrest, instructor. 3:00-4:30

TUESDAY

VT CLASS Sampler at Warm Hearth

9:00-10:15

Living Well to the End

Tina Smusz, Anne Judkins Campbell, and Jerry Niles, instructors. 10:30-12:00

Shenandoah National Park: The Untold Story

Katrina Powell, instructor. 1:00-2:30

WEDNESDAY

Modern Africa: Challenges of Nation Building

Josiah Tlou and Joseph Mukuni, instructors. 9:00-10:30

Tracing Your Family Genealogy

Linda Phillips, instructor. 9:00-10:30

Intermediate Printmaking

Rebecca Ghezzi, instructor. 9:00-12:00

Great Decisions

Offered in partnership with the League of Women Voters
11:00-12:30

Turning Your Experience into Art: Writing Life Stories and Personal Essays

Richard Gilbert, instructor. 3:00-4:30

THURSDAY

Making Sense of the Latest Health Research: Nutrition and Exercise. Various faculty. 9:00-10:30

Pathways to a Fulfilling Life in Retirement

Janelle Anderson, instructor. 12:00-1:30

The Supreme Court: Presidents, Justices, and Cases

Jack Call, instructor. 2:30-4:00

FRIDAY

Intermediate Watercolor

Jessica Pace-Berkeley, instructor. 10:00-12:00

AARP Establishes Permanent Partnership with LLI

by Don Creamer

Following a successful *Living Well@50+* conference on September 8, the Board of Directors has endorsed a plan for additional programming under this theme for chapter meetings and in conjunction with the Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) at Virginia Tech. The chapter will develop and propose content for courses, workshops, lectures, or events that would fit the theme and be designated under the *LivingWell@50+* banner in the LLI catalog. The chapter will form a new committee, an LLI Partnership Committee, to propose appropriate content/programming to the LLI Program Committee each term. The chapter committee will draw on the resources and expertise of other partners who participated in the *LivingWell@50+* conference (Center for Gerontology, NRV Agency on Aging, VCOM, and others) as it develops proposed courses or events for LLI, building on the successful collaboration over the last year. The LLI program and steering committees have welcomed the proposed ongoing partnership with the AARP Blacksburg Chapter.

The evolving LLI partnership and continued collaboration with organizations and agencies in the area are part of an emerging vision for the chapter. Among the tentative goals for this emerging vision are:

- Strengthening partnerships with other community agencies and organizations
- Expanding chapter membership and increasing diversity among chapter members
- Identifying more member-leaders for chapter activities
- Invigorating volunteerism among chapter members
- Involving more community leaders directly in the work of the chapter
- Widening the impact of our AARP chapter in Blacksburg and all surrounding communities.

Two commitments remain at the core of this new vision: To serve, not to be served; and *LivingWell@50+*.

(President's Column *continued*)

partnership holds great promise for the chapter and may lead to other activities for us.

For the last two years, we have recruited new members to the chapter to serve in important roles on the Board of Directors. This recruitment results in six new members of the chapter and an endless variety of ideas for our chapter coming from these community leaders. Please welcome them and join hands with them to make our chapter even stronger.

To carry out the planning for the LivingWell@50+ conference held on September 8, 2015, a new partnership was formed composed of nine community-oriented organizations. This partnership proved invaluable for the conference planning and the launching of the LLI at Virginia Tech. The good news is that this partnership still is active and will be used continuously as we plan chapter events and activities. Not surprisingly, the program focus for the chapter monthly public meetings for the foreseeable future will be LivingWell@50+.

We face many new challenges as we move into a new year. Among those challenges are a need to recruit new members and new leaders from the membership. We also intend to give priority to establishing working relationships with organizations representing minority populations of the NRV.

It is evident that we have a full plate of work to be accomplished this year. Please lend your support and your talents to these efforts.

The AARP Tax-Aide program

The 2016 tax-aide program begins February 1 and ends April 15. The location is the Christiansburg Recreation Center (Senior Activity Room). If you need help with your taxes, please call to schedule an appointment: 382-2349.

Counselors will be available for preparing taxes according to this schedule:

1:00 – 4:00 pm, Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday

9:00 am – noon, Saturday

If you are interested in volunteering with this program, please contact Pat Ballard: pballard@vt.edu • 382-1189

Remembering Leslye Bloom

Leslye Bloom was president of the Blacksburg Chapter of AARP in 2014 and active as well with state and federal AARP initiatives. With a PhD from Penn State, she taught art education, specializing in digital based art. Her death on November 27, 2015, stunned and saddened her friends and colleagues. Ben Crawford and John Hillison remember her here.



Ben Crawford. Leslye loved driving her red car around Blacksburg with the top down. She also loved her dogs. Leslye was full of ideas, always positive and fun to be around. You were never bored around her.

Leslye and I both volunteered for AARP making numerous trips together. We visited Virginia congressmen and our state legislators in Washington, Roanoke, and Christiansburg to advocate for seniors. We traveled to AARP chapters in Pembroke, Radford, and other places, speaking at their meetings and promoting AARP's **Create the Good** program.

When he learned of her passing in October, 2015, here is what AARP Associate State Director Peter Goldin said in an email to volunteer leaders in Virginia.

Very sad news to report. Leslye Bloom passed away.... Last I spoke with her she was in her usual high spirits and anxious to return to work with AARP. Leslye was one of my most outgoing and enthusiastic volunteers and her presence will be deeply missed on the team...

John Hillison. I first met Leslye Bloom in 2010. She was just starting to participate in volunteer activities after the loss of her husband, Al. We worked together on the AARP program called You've Earned A Say. Leslye was a great partner, despite our different talents and backgrounds. She was right-brain dominant as an artist and I was left-brain dominant as an agriculturalist. The differences came together in what we called synergy energy. We also served as fellow officers for the Blacksburg AARP Chapter and the Virginia Tech Retirees Association.

Few have ever been as dedicated to AARP as Leslye Bloom. She worked tirelessly on both the chapter and state levels. Her dedicated hard work and creativity will be missed a great deal.

Scenes from the December Luncheon: Leaders and Award Winners



Peter Goldin, Associate Director, Virginia AARP, installs officers and new board members December 1.
L-R: Pat Ballard, Ray Van Dyke, Wendy Baldwin, Don Creamer, Sally Anna Stapleton, Ryan Martin, and Ben Crawford



Above:
Sharen and John Hillison, winners of last year's Chapter Service Award, present this year's awards to Pat Hyer and Don Creamer for their work in organizing the Living Well @ 50+ conference, held in September after a year of planning. Don organized a set of 9 key partners to support the conference. Pat co-chaired the Program Committee. The conference had 235 participants. The evaluations were uniformly positive.

Right: Jim Wightman presents Pat Ballard with the Chapter Spirit Award. Pat serves as treasurer of the local chapter and also heads the Tax-Aide program, which served 1,188 clients in 2015.





Virgil Cook holds the flag that flew over the state capitol recognizing his Andrus Award. His wife, Elaine, stands by him. Del. Joseph Yost read a tribute (excerpts follow) at the holiday luncheon.

Virgil Cook Wins Andrus Award

AARP's commitment to volunteer service can be traced to its founder, Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, whose motto "to serve, not to be served" has shaped our community service efforts at the national, state, and local levels. Each year, AARP honors the legacy of Dr. Andrus with the AARP Virginia Andrus Award for Community Service.

The annual Andrus Award for Community Service is AARP's most prestigious and visible volunteer award. It recognizes individuals who are sharing their experience, talent, and skills to enrich their communities in ways that are consistent with AARP's mission, vision, and commitment to volunteer service, and that inspire others to volunteer. Only one Virginia volunteer can receive the Award.

Virgil Cook served as Secretary of the AARP Blacksburg Chapter for seven years (2007–2014) and as a chapter officer before that. He has been an advocate for AARP with legislators, participating in AARP Day at the General Assembly in Richmond. Cook has also worked closely with state and national AARP leadership and programs. On the Divided We Fail campaign, he helped plan and conduct a variety of activities leading up to and including the presidential debate.

He served on the Town of Blacksburg as Secretary of their Para-Transit Subcommittee 1988–1992. As a member of the Board of Directors of the Blacksburg Master Chorale, and as Vice President, he coordinated publicity for all concerts and chaired the Search Committee for Music Director.

He has served as a Sunday school teacher, member of the Board of Deacons, choir, and Music Committee of the Blacksburg Baptist Church; as President (2002–2004) of the Blacksburg Host Lions Club and is currently their Program Chair and Chair for the Bland Music Contest; as Secretary (1991–92 & 1995–97) and member, Board of Visitors of the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind, appointed by Governors Tim Kaine and Bob McDonnell through 2015; and as President (1987–1989 & 1991–1994) of Voice of the Blue Ridge and has served on their Board since 1986.

He retired from Virginia Tech in 2002 as Associate Professor of English. During his 40-year tenure there, he authored several publications and chaired/served in many volunteer groups including the Faculty Senate, University Council, University Building Committee, Commission on Undergraduate Studies, Graduate Studies and Research, Upward Bound, Academic Policy Group, Accessibility Advisory Panel and the Search Committee for Director of the University Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, as well as the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act). He received numerous awards including the Lifetime Achievement Award.



At the December 1 luncheon, the Blacksburg AARP chapter presented checks to eight NRV agencies that serve seniors. The chapter gets this money from meeting raffles and proceeds from the Health Fair. Ben Crawford (center) presented the awards. L-R: Sally Anna Stapleton, MCEAP; Roz Nelson, Community Health Center of the NRV; Pam Teaster, VT Center for Gerontology; Mandy Hayes, RSVP; Ben Crawford; Theresa McNeil, NRV Agency on Aging; Diane Krallman, Soup for Seniors (St. Michael Lutheran Church); Jack Lahey, Town of Blacksburg; and Jessica Wirgau, Community Foundation of the NRV.

Chapter Activities and Leadership 2015, 2016

Highlights of Chapter Achievements 2015

by Terry Wildman, 2015 president

Virgil Cook wins the coveted **Andrus Award**—one given in Virginia each year

Hosted the **LivingWell@50+ conference** in September with the help of 8 community partners. 210 participants enjoyed keynote talks and luncheon, 14 workshops, and an Opportunity Fair.

Continued and developed robust **partnerships**: AARP Virginia, VCOM, NRV Agency on Aging, Lifelong Learning Institute at VT, Warm Hearth Village Retirement Community, Center for Gerontology at VT, VT Retirees Association

Conducted **8 public meetings** featuring a variety of programs plus June picnic and December Holiday Luncheon

Published 10 **Chapter newsletters** (thanks to editor Carolyn Rude)

Tax-Aide program: served 400+ clients (thanks to Pat Ballard)

September 13 annual food drive: collected 2,460 lbs. of food for Blacksburg and Christiansburg pantries (thanks to Sally Anna Stapleton)

Participated in **Supplies for Seniors Walk-A-Thon**

Participated in **state AARP Advocacy, Legislative, and Volunteer meetings**, including Rally Day event in Richmond

Summer Solstice 5K race participation yielded medals once again

2016 Health Fair: recruited and formed a new committee

Maintained **website** with up-to-date information about the Chapter and Chapter activities (thanks to Don Creamer)

Served as **sponsor for Warm Hearth Foundation fundraiser**— Cheeseburger in Parrot-ise event

Exhibited at **Hokie Wellness Health & Benefits Fair**

Tracked **Virginia and National Legislative initiatives** of interest to AARP objectives (thanks to Alison Galway and Val Coluni)

Initiated **Senior Chronicles** (see www.blacksburgaarp.org for details)

15 active **Chapter committees**, reporting at monthly board meetings

Chapter Officers 2016

President • Don Creamer, dgc2@vt.edu

Vice President • Ben Crawford, ben.crawford@vt.edu

Secretary • Sally Anna Stapleton, sanna418@gmail.com

Treasurer • Pat Ballard, pballard@vt.edu

Board of Directors

- 2016—Tom Alston, Tina King, Sally Anna Stapleton
- 2017—Pat Hyer, Jerry Niles, Shirley Peterson
- 2018—Wendy Baldwin, Ryan Martin, Ray Van Dyke

2016 Committee Chairs

AARP of Virginia Liaison—Ben Crawford

AARP Tax Preparation—Pat Ballard

Virginia Tech Retirees Liaison—June Schmidt

Town of Blacksburg/Community Center Liaison—Joy Herbert

Awards—Shirley Peterson

Caring—Violet Drake

Chaplain—Sandy Birch

LLI Partnership—Pat Hyer, Don Creamer

Community Service—Sally Anna Stapleton

Financial Planning and Audit—June Schmidt

Health Fair—Jennie Reilly, Angela Little, Wendy Baldwin

History—Sally Anna Stapleton

Hospitality—Thais Beams

Membership—Tom Alston

Newsletter—Carolyn Rude

Program—Terry Wildman

Website—Don Creamer

Membership Report 2015

Category	Individuals	Households
AARP 2015 Members	230	136
LifeTime Members	35	22
Life Members	17	15
Comp Members	22	22
Honorary Members	2	1
Total Membership	306	196

Membership Committee: Tom Alston, Chair; Jim Wightman

State AARP Announces Legislative Priorities for 2016

by Val Coluni and Alison Galway

A. Nurses' authority to heal. Currently Advanced Practice Registered Nurses cannot practice to the full extent of their education and training. This has a significant adverse impact on those who need care. AARP will support appropriate and effective efforts to break down these artificial barriers.

B. Financial exploitation. Our elderly citizens are very vulnerable to this type of exploitation. And it is increasing in number and dollar loss. In Virginia in 2014 the number of substantiated cases increased to 1079 from 1013 in 2013. AARP supports legislation requiring the state agency to report suspected financial exploitation to law enforcement when it exceeds \$50,000 in assets. The aim here is to increase the prosecution of the perpetrators.

C. Long-term care ombudsmen. Currently this state program is underfunded. It is designed to help vulnerable and frail persons in nursing homes and other adult care facilities to seek outside help when their problems cannot be resolved internally. In Virginia overall the current staffing ratios do not meet the standards in the Virginia State Code. AARP seeks to correct the deficiency via a budget amendment.

D. Respite care. The current program is for caregivers who care for special needs persons when they reside full time in the same household as the person receiving care. Now the program is funded by both federal and state grants. Vouchers are provided to the caregivers (limit \$400.00 per family) to reimburse caregivers for uncompensated costs associated with their caregiving duties. This program helps those in need get proper care, reduces costs to the state, and helps individuals remain in their homes. The federal grants will end soon. AARP supports a budget amendment to expand the state program and offset the loss of federal funds.

State budget hearings were held on January 7, 2016, in four locations, including one at Wytheville Community College. Val Coluni and Alison Galway attended.

Great Decisions Program Begins Feb 10

The Montgomery County League of Women Voters and the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech invite the public to participate in **Great Decisions**, an annual eight-week nonpartisan community discussion on international affairs. This award-winning program, prepared by the Foreign Policy Association, is in its 62nd year and is presented in many locations nationwide.

Great Decisions begins Wednesday, February 10, 2016, from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm and will continue for eight consecutive Wednesdays. Sessions will be held at the German Club Manor on Southgate Drive in Blacksburg.

Discussion topics for the 2016 program include: Middle East Alliances; Islamic State; The Kurds; Migration; The Koreans; United Nations; Climate Change; and Cuba and the U.S.

Great Decisions helps you make sense of these complex topics and rapidly changing events. Read a short essay from a briefing book and view a video prepared by the Foreign Policy Association, then join a discussion with community members facilitated by a local expert, usually a faculty member.

Great Decisions is one of 16 courses offered by the Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) in Spring 2016. Course participants will be required to become LLI members (\$20), but there is no course fee for Great Decisions, in recognition of the partnership with the League of Women Voters. The Great Decisions briefing book may be purchased for \$25. A copy will also be on reserve in the Blacksburg library for in-library use.

Register for Great Decisions and all other LLI programs at the LLI website: www.cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning. If you need registration assistance, please email or call Tammy Stevers, LLI Registrar, tames@vt.edu, 540-231-5182 or 540-231-1779.

Great Decisions Preview

Wednesday, January 27, 3 – 4:30 pm

German Club Manor, 711 Southgate Drive, Blacksburg

- check out the new venue for 2016
- partake of light refreshments
- pick up a briefing book (if you have ordered one)

Short program:

Dr. Deborah Milly

Associate Professor, Political Science, Virginia Tech

"Immigration in Japan"

You are welcome at this event even if you haven't registered and just want to know more.

Visit Your AARP Chapter Website at www.blacksburgaarp.org



Blacksburg Chapter #2613
 Don Creamer, President
 P.O. Box 10082
 Blacksburg, VA 24062

**Nonprofit
 Organization
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Blacksburg, VA
 Permit No. 32**

AARP Member Application for 2016

Name: _____

Spouse/Partner: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

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

New ___ Renewal ___ 90+ years old (free) ___

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 the check and this form to: .

Tom Alston - P.O. Box 10082 • Blacksburg, VA 24062



Serving the greater New River Valley, Virginia

February 15 Chapter Meeting

Inside the Blacksburg Rescue Squad

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Mode Johnson from the Blacksburg Volunteer Rescue Squad (BVRs) will be giving an informative talk about the rescue squad at our February meeting. He will discuss what the rescue squad does for community members and, in turn, what community members can do to help the rescue squad. Besides responding to 911 calls to assist local residents, the rescue squad is trained and equipped to perform many other services that will be explained.

Membership of the 90-member, *all volunteer* rescue squad will be reviewed and—surprise—this is not just a young person’s endeavor. Members of the squad are constantly training and have special equipment for, not only the usual, but also the unusual situations and/or obstacles the rescue squad may confront on any call.

Mode became an EMT and joined the rescue squad at age 62 after retiring from Virginia Tech in 2006. At Virginia Tech he held positions in Student Affairs, the College of Veterinary Medicine, and Central Administration. At BVRs,



Mode Johnson

he has served as President and Vice President, and currently serves on various committees. Mode’s work with BVRs has been recognized by several awards: 2007 Rookie of the Year; 2013 Member of the Year; and American Legion Post 182 Emergency Medical Technician Outstanding Public Service Award of the Year in 2013.

President’s Column

According to the Georgian calendar, February is the second month of the year, and also the shortest month. February had 28 days until Julius Caesar gave it 29, and 30 days every four years. According to tradition, Augustus, the Roman emperor, took one day off to add one day to August, the month named after him. We now have February with 28 days, and 29 on leap years.

Februa is the Roman festival of purification, held on February fifteenth.

Whether we consider the month of February a bow to the Roman Emperor Augustus or as a time of purification (from what, I am not sure), it is for us the third month of winter and should at least offer a glance of hope that Spring is coming soon.

At the member public meeting in January, I took advantage of the unfortunate absence of our planned speaker (his father passed away) to speak to the assembled audience about “the state of the chapter.” There was much good to be described and our recent accomplishments, especially during this past year, were highlighted and served as examples of the anticipated future pathway for the chapter.

I also highlighted several possible new goals or things both big and small that can and should be changed to make our chapter even more relevant to the world in which we now live. We had a very good first 40 years of service to our communities, but if we are to remain relevant we must reach out to our constituencies in new and welcoming ways. We need to strengthen our relationships with other organizations, diversify our membership and expand it, identify more member-leaders for new projects, encourage volunteerism among members, open our doors to allow community leaders to help us shape our future, and we need to

Upcoming Events

February 1–April 15, Tax-Aide program (p. 5)

February 17, “Seniors Decide” Presidential Candidates Forum Viewing Party (p. 5)

February 25, Blacksburg library chili crawl, noon: www.nextthreedays.com/FeaturedEventDetails.cfm?E=370415

September 14, Health Fair (p. 4)

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Please bring a food donation (a can or box of non-perishable food) to the AARP chapter meeting. We collect food at each monthly chapter meeting for the food banks in Blacksburg and Christiansburg.

This newsletter is published nine months each year, except for July, August, and December. Send suggestions for content to Carolyn Rude, carolyn.rude@comcast.net

Remembrance of friends who died in 2015

Today I will be assisted by Clarence Obody. In the movie *It's a Wonderful Life*, Clarence is the angel who helps a compassionate but despairingly frustrated businessman named George Bailey. Clarence shows George all the lives he has touched and how different life in his community of Bedford Falls would be had he never been born.

Quoting Clarence, "Strange isn't it. Each man's life touches so many other lives. When he isn't around he leaves an awful hole, doesn't he?" Today we remember many friends who have touched our lives and left a hole in our hearts.

In a touching ending, while holding his daughter Zuzu in his arms, George glances down on a pile of money and his eye catches what is buried on the pile—Clarence's copy of *Tom Sawyer* left for him as a gift. Zuzu opens it and they find an inscription written in it: "Dear George, remember no man is a failure who has friends. Thanks for the wings, Love, Clarence." Then a bell rings on the tree.

Zuzu says, "Look Daddy. Teacher says every time a bell rings, an angel gets his wings." "That's right, that's right," says George, "Attaboy, Clarence." Only George realized the full significance of the bell ringing. It rings for Clarence who has earned his wings by succeeding with a tough assignment—and also rings for George's awakening...freedom from stress and pressures. He has recovered joy and happiness.

Today we remember nine of our departed members who brought great joy to their families, colleagues and friends. Without any theological reasoning or research, I can believe there are angels like Clarence—and our good friends—who are watching over us, and we will ring a bell for each.

James Moore died April 23. He was an associate professor emeritus of Agricultural Economics at Virginia Tech, specializing in Farm Management. Known as the department innovator, Jim was always the first to try new technology, including the very first Radio Shack TSR-80 model. His colleagues remember fondly the annual September departmental parties hosted by Jim and his wife Mary Ellen. Jim was 91.

Joyce Lewis died July 20. A leader and community activist, Joyce served as President of the Blacksburg Regional Art Association and President of the Montgomery County Mental Health Association. She also served as Chairman of the Montgomery County Republican party and was elected to and served 20 years on the Blacksburg Town Council. Other than being a wife and mother, one of her most rewarding activities was serving as a tutor to help adults learn to read.

Clark Webb passed away July 25. Clark came to town in 1978 as a leader of Project Home Repair, a group that helped low-income residents fix their residences. In 1982, he opened Annie Kay's, a health food store that became one of the town's

countercultural landmarks. Clark always wanted to be involved and to help those in need...from raising money for refugees in the Balkans to building Blacksburg's ties to the Nicaraguan town of San Jose de Bocay. For a quarter century, Clark and his wife Phyllis Albritton, were a power couple among those on the left-leaning side of Blacksburg political circles. Clark was 65.

Kenneth Dawson died September 10. After receiving a PhD from the University of Maryland, Ken returned to his undergraduate alma mater as an assistant professor at Virginia Tech. Having traveled to 60 countries and all of the United States, Ken helped develop liaison relationships between Virginia Tech and many nations including China, Japan, Brazil and Egypt. Ken shared his faith by teaching Sunday School for over 50 years and serving as the longtime chaplain of the Blacksburg Chapter of AARP. Ken was 88.

Wendell Hensley passed away September 20. He was employed at Poly-Scientific, Inland Motors and Force. Wendell was in the Jaycees, served on the Board of Supervisors, New River Community College Board, Commission on Local Government, Masonic Lodge, and was a Boy Scout Leader. He had a passion for antique cars and sports vehicles and was an avid Virginia Tech football and basketball fan. Wendell was 75.

Janet Blum died on October 29. Throughout her husband Joe's career in the Air Force and then 10 years as a VT faculty member, Jan's major emphasis was on the care and nurturing of their children. She still found time to volunteer with the Reach-to-Recovery Program of the American Cancer Society and also worked in the Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry for many years. She began recreational running while living in Hawaii in the 70s and continued running and walking until just a short time before her death, documenting a total of just under 20,000 miles. Jan was 80.

Margaret Genter Cain died November 14. She was an active member of Blacksburg Presbyterian Church, serving as a deacon and both president and treasurer of Presbyterian Women. Peggy was instrumental in the founding of the Easter Seal speech and hearing clinic for children in Christiansburg during the 50s and was also an active volunteer with the blood mobile. She was an avid reader and had a keen interest in keeping her mind active and current. In her 90's, Peggy continued to do daily crossword puzzles and use her personal computer for email and internet research. Peggy was 95.

Robert Comparin passed away November 16. Bob served in the Air Force, and upon leaving the service in 1949, took advantage of the GI Bill to earn his BS, MS and PhD in Mechanical Engineering at Purdue. In 1964, Bob began his long career with Virginia Tech as a professor of Mechanical Engineering, becoming head of the department in 1983. He sup-

Remembrance of friends who died, continued

ported hands-on student based programs and was especially passionate about cars, creating the original “Car Factory” at Virginia Tech. A lifelong hunter and fisherman, Bob was also a founding member of the Shawnee Hunt Club and a gun safety instructor. Bob was 87.

Leslye Bloom died November 17. A talented artist, Leslye held Bachelor’s, Master’s, and doctoral degrees in art education from Pennsylvania State University, and she used that education to work with Virginia Tech’s art education program. She was pioneer in the field of combining traditional and digital media, and called it “computage.” Leslye had a passion for rescuing dachshunds and is survived by two of the loving pups she rescued, Orion and Elmo. She will be remembered for her leadership in the VT Retirees Association and AARP, serving as our president and making numerous visits to Virginia congressmen and our state legislators to advocate for seniors. Leslye was 70.



Welcome, Abbey O’Farrell

Abbey O’Farrell is serving as a Field Study Intern with AARP Blacksburg chapter for the Spring 2016 term. From Richmond, she is a senior student in Human Development, *cum laude*, at Virginia Tech and is interested in employment in non-profit organizations. She has already proven her worth to the chapter by attending some planning sessions of the Executive Committee of the Board and has undertaken other assignments. She is evaluating our website, studying an inexpensive method of sending mass emails to chapter members, and helping with chapter programming activities.



Abbey has a “can do” attitude that will make her a valuable member of any organization with mutual interests.

We are lucky to have Abbey working with us for a few months. Please welcome her to our team.

President’s Column, continued

reach more individuals and groups in all of our surrounding communities in meaningful ways.

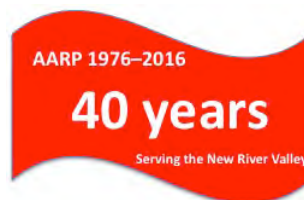
I received many positive comments about being brought up to date about our history and about our current challenges. Unfortunately, we need more money to accomplish some of our goals and we have modified our membership form to encourage extra donations to the chapter beyond regular dues. Many already have accepted this invitation and our bank account is looking better every day. I pledge to you that we will not waste these additional resources and that we stand ready to be accountable for all actions taken by the Board of Directors.

I have received some thoughtful feedback from the speech. Some have even suggested that an annual account of the state of the chapter might be a good topic for one of our public meetings. I encourage each of you to offer your suggestions for how we can achieve the stated new goals and how we need to change make our chapter even more relevant to our community constituencies.

I am excited about the extensive planning now underway for the 2016 Health and Wellness Fair offered in partnership with VCOM. Jennie Reilly, Angela Little, and Wendy Baldwin are giving careful and professional leadership to planning and we all owe them a debt of gratitude. This is not an easy assignment, as I’m sure John and Sharon Hillison who have conducted the event for several years would testify. Look for frequent reports on the website and in the newsletter about this coming event.

Those of you with email addresses should look for a message soon from me inquiring whether you would be willing to receive your monthly newsletter as an attachment to an email message. There might be several advantages to choosing this option and I will articulate them in the email message that I send.

Finally, I want you to know that we have a student intern working with us this academic term. She is Abbey O’Farrell, a senior student in Human Development at Virginia Tech. She is interested in future work with non-profit organizations and already has proven her worth to us. Her daytimes are mostly taken up by classes and other responsibilities on campus, but I am hopeful that she can make some of our public meetings so that I can introduce her to you personally.



Meet New Board Member, Wendy Baldwin

Wendy Baldwin and her husband, Del Futrell, came to Blacksburg for one major reason—grandchildren. Their older daughter and her husband had graduated from Tech, and they really liked Blacksburg. So did Wendy and Del after so many visits here. When it looked like it might be a good time to retire, this was a logical choice. There are now four grandchildren, aged 2–12, which makes it irresistible! Wendy has lived in Blacksburg for two years.

Most of their lives Wendy and Del lived in the DC area. Wendy worked at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and Del worked at the Food and Drug Administration. When she retired from NIH, Wendy decided to “treat” herself to the careers she had missed because she started at NIH right after graduate school. That meant five years as VP for research at the University of Kentucky and then five years leading the poverty, gender, and youth program at the Population Council in New York. That work was all international and involved using research to make lives better for young people in developing countries. That background is important to her interest in AARP because she has long been interested in how communities function to improve lives.

After this 10-year interlude, Wendy went back to DC for 3 1/2 years. Because Del stayed in Kentucky when she moved to New York, they experienced 8 1/2 years of “extreme commuting.” First she flew to Kentucky each weekend and then, after they moved to Blacksburg, she drove from DC. Wendy says, “That is altogether too much time on Interstate 81 and 66...so retirement was starting to look like a good idea.”

Wendy loves to travel. In her job with the Population Council she visited 14 countries in Africa, several in Asia, and the usual European hubs. She also treated her husband and herself to a safari at one point and it was “a most amazing experience.” However, she has traveled so much that now she is quite happy to stay still for a bit!

When she was visiting Blacksburg before moving here, she went to the Ruritan fish fry. The Panjammers were the live music that day. Wendy says, “Now, if you had asked me to name the 500 things I might do in retirement, I wouldn’t have put “play a steel drum” on that list, but, once I heard them I knew I had to do it! I’ve been playing with the band for almost two years now and it is a great group with terrific leadership and absolutely the most fun.”

Wendy learned about the local AARP chapter from Nola Elliot, a former AARP board member. Both of them are in Mt. Tabor Ruritan. AARP appeals to Wendy’s interest in community involvement and political awareness and action. The Lifelong Learning Institute is just the kind of activity she was hoping to find in retirement—and the course she took in the fall was great. Now she is helping to plan the September 14 AARP Health Fair—another activity that brings the community together and helps everyone, members or not. Health

and health care are critically important for all, and especially as we age. AARP can be an important voice in the debate about access to health care as well as for the support of a healthy lifestyle.

Wendy is trained in demography, the study of populations. Her specialization in demographics has been in fertility or, more broadly, reproductive health.

In her work in the US and abroad, it became clear that when women can control their fertility they are able to invest in their own education and skills as well as the health and wellbeing of their families. She has seen the good that voluntary family planning does for so many women. However, the issues are not simple, and research is needed on contraceptive methods as well as on how individuals and families make decisions and get access to services to help them achieve their goals. In the international sphere, family planning programs but also programs that help reduce child marriage and support girls’ education not only improve the lives of women, but also pay tremendous benefits for the children.

Welcome, Wendy, and thanks for getting involved!



Health Fair Scheduled for September 14 in Christiansburg

The AARP Health and Wellness Fair is getting geared up for the fourth event. The Fair is held every other year, so mark your calendar for September 14, 2016.

This year we will continue our relationship with VCOM but hold the event at the Christiansburg Recreation Center. “We are so pleased at the positive response we have had from previous exhibitors and we expect even more visitors than last year,” says Jennie Reilly one of the three organizers (others are Angela Little and Wendy Baldwin).

This is a great place to come get free screenings, flu shots, blood pressure and glucose tests, and learn about services that make life better for seniors. For example, ever wonder about those bright, large keyboards that make computer use easier? An exhibitor may demonstrate it. Other exhibitors will talk about tools and programs to make fitness easier.

Mark your calendars and come join us 12–4 pm for the AARP Health and Wellness Fair, September 14, 2016. If you haven’t exhibited in the past but are interested for the 2016 Fair, send an email to Wendybburg@gmail.com.

Seniors Decide: Feb. 17, 2016

The nation's only forum where all of the presidential candidates are invited to address issues that are important to America's older adults

Presidential candidates from both parties have been invited to participate in the Seniors Decide 2016 forum. This forum has been developed by the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations to provide a fair and unbiased platform for sharing the views of candidates for President of the United States on policies and programs affecting older Americans. The 72 member organizations that make up the LCAO represent a diverse membership of older Americans and their caregivers, and professionals engaged in the public policy arena.

On Wednesday, February 17, at 1:00 pm, you'll be able to watch Seniors Decide 2016 forum from wherever you are, as long as you have access to the internet. You can watch from your office or home to hear what the candidates for President are saying about policies and programs for older Americans. There is no charge for the viewing and anyone interested in this important conversation is invited to attend.

Our chapter president Don Creamer will host a **Viewing Party of the forum** on Wednesday, February 17, at 1:00 pm.

Please let Don know as soon as possible if you are interested in attending so that he will be able to judge whether his home is large enough or whether he should move the Viewing Party to a larger space. Email him at dgc2@vt.edu.

Older Americans and others interested in this important conversation are invited to participate prior to the Forum by encouraging the candidates to participate via Social Media—Facebook & Twitter—including #SeniorsDecide in social media messages. Candidates' social media contact information can be found online at www.seniorsdecide.org.

In addition, questions for the Forum may be submitted online at www.seniorsdecide.org.

HD Broadcasts in Blacksburg: Opera, Ballet

Frank Theaters in Blacksburg (First and Main) is shows HD broadcasts of the Royal Opera and Royal Ballet performances (from London). The August-September issue of the AARP newsletter included the schedule for Metropolitan Opera broadcasts and ballets at the Regal Cinema in Christiansburg. Tickets, Christiansburg: www.fathomevents.com

Tickets, Blacksburg: www.rohcinema.com (note that show dates in Blacksburg differ from those at this site)

In Blacksburg, the performances are on Sundays with encores on Wednesdays. Times will be announced at the website the week of the performance but are usually 6:30 pm or 6:50 pm.

The Royal Opera, 2016

3/6 *La Traviata*
3/9 Encore
4/17 *Boris Godunova*
4/20 Encore
5/22 *Lucia Di Lammermoor*
5/25 Encore
7/24 *Werther*
7/27 Encore

The Royal Ballet, 2016

senior tickets \$15
2/14 *rhapsody*
The Two Pigeons
2/17 Encore
5/1 *Giselle*
5/4 Encore
6/12 *The Sleeping Beauty*
6/15 Encore

The AARP Tax-Aide program

The 2016 tax-aide program begins February 1 and ends April 15. The location is the Christiansburg Recreation Center (Senior Activity Room). If you need help with your taxes, please call to schedule an appointment: 382-2349.

Counselors will be available he schedule for preparing taxes according to this schedule:

1:00 – 4:00 pm, Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday

9:00 am – noon, Saturday

If you are interested in volunteering with this program, please contact Pat Ballard: pballard@vt.edu • 382-1189

Chapter Officers 2016

President • Don Creamer, dgc2@vt.edu

Vice President • Ben Crawford, ben.crawford@vt.edu

Secretary • Sally Anna Stapleton, sanna418@gmail.com

Treasurer • Pat Ballard, pballard@vt.edu

Board of Directors

2016—Tom Alston, Tina King, Sally Anna Stapleton

2017—Pat Hyer, Jerry Niles, Shirley Peterson

2018—Wendy Baldwin, Ryan Martin, Ray Van Dyke

Visit Your AARP Chapter Website at www.blacksburgaarp.org



Blacksburg Chapter #2613
 Don Creamer, President
 P.O. Box 10082
 Blacksburg, VA 24062

**Nonprofit
 Organization
 U.S. Postage
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 Blacksburg, VA
 Permit No. 32**



Member Application for 2016

Name: _____

Spouse/Partner: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

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

New ___ Renewal ___ 90+ years old (free) ___

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 the check and this form to: .

Tom Alston - P.O. Box 10082 • Blacksburg, VA 24062



Serving the greater New River Valley, Virginia

March 15 Chapter Meeting

Animal-Human Relationships

At the Virginia Tech Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine (VMCVM), Dr. Bess Pierce leads the Center for Animal Human Relationships, an academic center conducting instructional, research, and outreach programs to foster a greater understanding of the mutual benefits and the challenges associated with human-animal interactions. At our March meeting, she will share some of her experiences with dogs in a variety of work settings.

She served more than 22 years on active and reserve duty in the US Army Veterinary Corps. Early in her military career, she developed a passion for working dogs and their handlers, which continues to this day. Dr. Pierce has experienced a variety of assignments worldwide including California, Japan, and the Military Working Dog Center in San Antonio, Texas. She is currently a colonel in the US Army Reserve, assigned to the Public Health Command Region-Europe.



She joined the VMCVM faculty in 2007.

All members of the chapter with active email addresses now are receiving occasional messages from AARP Blacksburg Chapter. Be sure that this address is in your contacts lists or your address book. If you have not gotten one or more of these messages, check your Junk Mail file where they may reside, then add aarp-blacksburg@gmail.com to your addresses.

President's Column by Don Creamer



"The word March does not have to do from the homonym, which means to walk deliberately. Instead, the name of the month dates back the Roman calendar. March was named for Mars, the Roman god of war."

"March was the first month of the year until the Gregorian calendar began to be used in 1752."

"March was called Hlyda or Lide in Old English, which is a reference to the loud winds."

For some, the best meaning of the month of March is that it no longer is February. The weather in February this year did not treat us kindly, but Spring is on the way.

Intense planning for AARP was the hallmark of February for me. We have arranged for Dr. Bill Thomas, a world-renowned geriatrician, to come to Blacksburg on April 23. The event is sponsored by AARP Blacksburg and the Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) at Virginia Tech with the collaboration and support of our organization partners. You can learn more about Dr. Thomas by visiting his website: <https://drbillthomas.org/>. You can register for the Blacksburg event at <https://drbillthomas.org/event/dr-bill-thomas-virginia-tech/>. The event is free to the public. My thanks to Pat Hyer for her invaluable help all along the way to making this event happen. She is a logistical and visionary genius.

I continue to work with the LLI Program Committee that now is focused on the curriculum for Fall 2016. Brian Jacks,

Upcoming Events

- March 21: AARP dinner (p. 3)
- April 1: Easybridge classes (p. 2)
- April 9: The Big Event (p. 5)
- April 23: Dr. Bill Thomas, aging expert (p. 2)
- May 12: Sharyn McCrumb (p. 2)

Renew Membership

If you enjoy receiving this newsletter and other communications from the Blacksburg AARP chapter and appreciate the chapter's programs and activities, please pay your local dues by the end of March. The mailing list thereafter will include only paid members. Use the form on the last page. If you are unsure whether you wrote that check for \$15, ask Tom Alston, membership chair: tpalston@gmail.com



Blacksburg Chapter #2613

Chapter meetings are the third Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center, Patrick Henry Drive at 11:30 am. 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 am.

Please bring a **food donation** (a can or box of non-perishable food) to the AARP chapter meeting. We collect food at each monthly chapter meeting for the food banks in Blacksburg and Christiansburg.



The Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech and AARP Blacksburg invite you to an exclusive matinee performance of Dr. Bill Thomas' Age of Disruption Tour. One of the nation's leading crusaders in the fight against ageism, Thomas' performance debunks the myths of aging, explores the "super powers" of older age, and invites audiences to join the effort to eliminate stigma and discrimination based on age and ability.

Blending myth and science, live music and storytelling, Dr. Thomas asks the question "what if?" What if we all lived in a world that saw aging not as a process of decline but as a vivid and enlivening process that presents us with extraordinary risks, and rewards?

Date & Time: Saturday, April 23, 10:00–11:30 a.m.

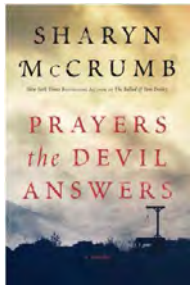
Location: Goodwin Hall, Virginia Tech campus, corner of Prices Fork Road and Stanger Street
Parking available adjacent to the building, no pass required

Fee: The event is free and open to the public.

Please register at

<https://drbillthomas.org/event/dr-bill-thomas-virginia-tech/>

Sharyn McCrumb to Visit Blacksburg Public Library



Are you a fan of Sharyn McCrumb? If so, please save the date: **Thursday, May 12 at 6:30 PM at the Blacksburg Library.** Sharyn McCrumb, *New York Times* Bestselling Author of *The Ballad of Tom Dooley*, *The Rosewood Casket*, and many other acclaimed novels, is coming to talk about her newest book titled *Prayers the Devil Answers!*

Prayers the Devil Answers is a Depression-era novel about a female sheriff of a rural Tennessee mountain town. *Atria Book* describes this newest release as "atmospheric and suspenseful" and with "rich prose, captivating folklore and masterful historical detail." Set to be released in early May, *Prayers* and other titles will be available for purchase at the library.

For more information about Sharyn McCrumb, please visit www.sharynmccrumb.com/. Please contact Elizabeth Sensabaugh at the Blacksburg Library with questions at (540) 552-8246.

Seniors Learn to Read eBooks in LLI–Library Class by Elizabeth Sensabaugh

In February of this year, Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library partnered with Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) at Virginia Tech to offer a course titled *Enjoying eBooks and audio books on your Mobile Device with OverDrive and the Blacksburg Library*. Four library staff members worked with a group of eleven seniors and their varied devices to help them become more comfortable with technology and OverDrive, a resource that the library offers at no charge to patrons.

OverDrive provides digital access to audio and ebooks, and the goal of the course was for participants to each leave with an OverDrive book on her device. Participants brought a variety of devices including iPads, Kindle, Kindle Fire, Nook Color, android devices, and smartphones. A brief power point presentation was delivered by library staff to demonstrate some of the OverDrive features and then the students worked together in groups (determined by similar devices) to select and place books on their devices.

Following the course a survey was given to all participants. The feedback that the group provided was favorable and there was interest in further teachings about other library resources including Hoopla, Genealogy & History, OneClick Digital, Freading and more. We look forward to partnering with LLI in the near future! However, please know that you don't have to wait for another LLI course offering to learn more about your device or library resources. Book-a-Librarian appointments at the Blacksburg Library can be scheduled by calling (540) 552-8246. A designated library staff member will work with you one-on-one to assist you!



(President's Column *continued*)

Volunteer Coordinator with the Virginia AARP, has proposed to conduct a one-session event on Life Reimagined. I continue to seek your input for LLI programs that can be sponsored as a LivingWell@50+ event.

Members of your Board are very busy with plans for the Health and Wellness Fair scheduled for September 14, 2016. Jennie Reilly, Angela Little, and Wendy Baldwin are fully engaged in this planning and inform me that planning is yielding real progress. See elsewhere in this newsletter for their update on the event.

Thais Beams and Nola Elliott are spearheading plans for the June picnic that will constitute our main celebratory event for the 40th anniversary of the Blacksburg chapter. The event this year will be held at the home of Terry and Sue Wildman. Their address will be published later when the final details of the event are complete. We plan that the event will be partly catered with Jimmy John's sandwiches. Attendees will be invited to bring side dishes and desserts. We anticipate inviting attendees to bring whatever they prefer to drink, but this decision has not yet been made.

Members of your Board of Directors have been very busy lately, all in the name of AARP Blacksburg. We owe a special debt of gratitude to Val Coluni and Alison Galway for their work on the Legislative Committee. With the General Assembly in session, they have been very busy keeping up with legislative initiatives with support of AARP Virginia. See their report on our website at www.blacksburgaarp.org/legislative-report0316.pdf and on page 5. Nola Elliott and Ben Crawford continue to represent us well as they carry out Federal advocacy liaisons.

Other members, on the Board and not, are contributing significantly to AARP programs and activities. Thank you.

I applied recently for a position on the AARP Chapter Advisory Team (CAT) to serve the Southern region that includes Virginia and several surrounding states. I interviewed during the last week of February with the chairperson of CAT and believe that involvement in this role would enhance our chapter standing with the state and national offices of AARP. However, I learned during the first week of March that I was not selected for this position.

Think Spring!

AARP Hosts Dinner in Shawsville March 21, 5–7 pm, Hale's

In 2016 we will host quarterly social dinners with the AARP Virginia office. AARP members throughout the New River Valley are invited to attend and meet others in the area. Learn what AARP is doing in our region and meet new people in a fun setting. The Monday, March 21, dinner

Health Fair Committee Announces New Sponsors *by Angela Little*

The AARP Health and Wellness Fair Committee is working hard to enlist exhibitors for this year's Fair. We are excited to have our first two Gold Sponsors registered, The Hearing Clinic and Radford Health and Rehab Center. Dr. Richard Harrell of The Hearing Clinic in Blacksburg will be providing hearing screenings to attendees. We appreciate his faithful support of this event since 2010. The Radford Health and Rehab Center has but raised their level of engagement to Gold! Look for more sponsors to be highlighted in the next issue of the newsletter. To learn more about the event, email anglitttle33@gmail.com.

As we continue our planning, we would like to recognize our 2016 Fair partners. A major attraction of the Fair is the participation of our partner—VCOM—who brings faculty and students to provide free medical services and screenings such as blood pressure, sugar, body mass and nutrition advice, bone density, stress management information, and musculoskeletal exams. They also assist exhibitors in setting up, serving refreshments, giving directions and help in other ways to make the Fair a success.

Since VCOM no longer has space to host the event, Christiansburg Parks and Recreation Center has stepped in as our new partner to provide the space. The staff, especially Tammy Caldwell and Brad Epperley, have been working with our committee to make space to accommodate all of our needs, including screenings and demonstrations. We think the facility is an ideal location to hold our Fair.

Several Virginia Tech students have enhanced our committee. AARP Field Study Intern, Abbey O'Farrell, has tutored us on how to use Google Docs and Google Sheets. Her guidance has been phenomenal. Five Service Learning students are working with us in various capacities based on their skills and interests. We welcome and thank Madelyn Newcomb, Jacob Daugherty, Ian Linkous, Max Swomley, and Jared Lett.

We are using other health fairs in the area to promote AARP and to advertise our upcoming fair. We will participate next in the Carilion New River Valley Medical Center Women's Lifestyle Expo at the NRV Mall on April 9 from 10–2.

is at Hale's Restaurant, 7643 Roanoke Street, in Shawsville. Come and go as you have time.

See the our website (www.blacksburgaarp.org) for details—and register today if possible! Please also share this invitation with friends, contacts, and family. Thank you.

Register here: <https://aarp.cvent.com/Shawsville3212016VA> or call 1-877-926-8300

Have Fun and Improve Your Memory: Learn To Play Bridge—free lessons begin April 1

article and photos by Susan Bricken

Where are my car keys? What is my brother's phone number? What was I supposed to get at the grocery store? This sort of thing may not have been happening to you, but I noticed it was happening to me with increasing—and disturbing—frequency. Many of us fear that our memory is slipping or eroding. We can either live with that fear every day or fight it at every opportunity. I chose to fight, so I looked into what, if anything, I could do to maintain my memory function as long as possible.

I learned that—no surprise here—the speed with which the brain processes information slows down with age. I also learned, however, that the brain can continue to develop at any age—contrary to the conventional wisdom, you can teach an old dog new tricks. Indeed, superstar brain researcher Professor Marian Diamond, former Director of Lawrence Hall of Science at the University of California, Berkeley, believes that the major discovery that, with proper stimulation, the brain can continue to develop at any age has revolutionized our thinking about aging by emphasizing the importance of growth and learning throughout life.

Asked whether she thought that learning to play bridge would constitute stimulation, Professor Diamond replied, “Absolutely. Learning any new hobby and continuing the education process will stimulate the brain, and the game of bridge would be a fun way to do it.” For many years, Diamond has been enthusiastically promoting her “use it or lose it” theory, encouraging her students to remain active, mentally as well as physically, for the rest of their lives.

In short, assuming that your doctor has ruled out the likelihood that any slowing of your memory has a medical cause, the key to maintaining, or even improving, your memory is to take up an activity that requires you to learn and to think. The activity that I chose is the game of bridge. I began playing nearly two years ago at the Blacksburg Bridge Club.

I found bridge to be an astonishing game. Learning to play it is much like learning to speak English—it is quite easy to learn enough to get by and have fun, but there is a lot to learn to get really good at it. Since bridge entails constant learning, use of memory, concentration, and judgment, it is a perfect mental exercise. In fact, bridge has been proven to increase memory and concentration skills and to help develop improved judgment and logic.

There is a lot to recommend bridge in addition to the game. Playing is low in cost. Regular games get me out of the house and fill a lot of otherwise slow afternoons. And, the social interaction with the other players provides the chance to meet people, to travel, to make new friends with whom to attend social functions, and more.

Best of all, though, is the game of bridge itself. It is endlessly challenging, infuriating, and fascinating. Ask any of the Blacksburg players who are already hopelessly addicted, some of whom regularly drive 1½ hours to get to the games. One way or another, you will have so much fun you won't even remember that it's actually good for you.

Now is a great time to get started. The Blacksburg Bridge Club is offering Easybridge!™ lessons to introduce you to this fabulous pastime. The first four lessons are FREE. The lessons are for complete beginners, for people returning to bridge after some years, and for social players who want to learn modern bridge. It will be held on **Fridays from 12:30 to 3:00, starting on Friday, April 1, 2016.** *Easybridge!* books (winner of the American Bridge Teacher's Association 1998 Book of the Year Award) will be available. You'll be playing bridge your very first day and meeting other new players in the community. These lessons are open to everyone and every age, so bring your friends and family with you and learn together. If you need a partner, someone will be there to play with you, and fun is guaranteed every week. Free parking and free refreshments. The Blacksburg Bridge Club is located in the Blacksburg Recreation Center, 725 Patrick Henry Drive, Blacksburg. To register or for more information, contact Susan Bricken, sbricken@yahoo.com, 540-998-9751.

This story also appeared in *The Roanoke Times* March 5, 2016.

Easybridge Classes Begin Friday, April 1

4 free lessons

12:30–3:00, Blacksburg Recreation Center

No partner necessary

Contact Susan Bricken:
sbricken@yahoo.com, 540-998-9751

Members of the Blacksburg Bridge Club





The Big Event is Virginia Tech's largest service event with 8,050 student volunteers completing 1,043 community service projects in 2015. The Big Event gives students a way to simply say "thank you" to our community and show appreciation to ALL residents and non-profits in Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and the New River Valley completely free of charge.

Examples of previous projects include general yard work, painting fences, washing windows, cleaning, and mulching at homes, churches, and other community locations. Projects cannot last longer than 4 hours and may not involve power tools. If needed, tools can be provided by The Big Event

No project is too big or too small for The Big Event, and there are no socioeconomic requirements to qualify! Simply complete the form online, and we will be in touch with you before the event to confirm the project details.

Request your project online January 1-March 15, 2016.
bigevent@vt.edu www.vtbigevent.org 540-440-1244

1. Financial Exploitation. Bills are still being discussed in the House and Senate. Passage looks extremely favorable. Bills require the State Division of Social Services to report to law enforcement any financial exploitation beyond a specified dollar amount. AARP has a 2016 Legislative Priority to support legislation that strengthens laws to increase prosecution of abuse perpetrators. These bills would accomplish that.

2. Catawba Hospital. The General Assembly has rejected the Governor's request for budget funds, which could lead to the closing of the hospital. Instead they requested funds to develop a statewide plan to identify the services needed to properly care for the elderly who have special needs.

3. State Pipeline Surveying Law. This law allows natural gas pipeline companies to send crews onto private property without the owner's consent so long as they give advance notice about their intent. Our two representatives (Senator Edwards and Delegate Yost) submitted bills to repeal this 2014 law. Their bills were not approved. This situation is very contentious. Further efforts are underway by a number of community organizations to deal with this situation.

4. Registered Nurses. AARP had a 2016 Legislative Priority to give advanced practice registered nurses full authority to practice to the full extent of their training and skills in order to more effectively serve those in underserved areas and/or in their homes. A number of bills were submitted to accomplish this, but the General Assembly rejected all of these. Some minor actions were approved but far short of satisfying the increasing needs within many of our communities.

5. State Ombudsman Program (to provide help to those in nursing homes/adult care homes) and **Respite Care Program for Caregivers** (to provide a small financial grant to those care givers who are taking care of the needy in their homes). AARP had 2016 Legislative Priorities to seek funds through budget amendments to continue and/or expand these programs. The General Assembly did not approve either one of these requests.

6. Low-Income Housing. Blacksburg Town Council unanimously voted final blessing on development of low-income housing, completing a package of \$1.4 million of Town and Montgomery County tax incentives. In addition, the Federal government provided \$5.5 million in incentives. Planned for 11 acres in north Blacksburg, Fieldstone (Pinnacle Construction and Development of Charlottesville) is a 144-apartment complex that will be restricted to households whose income is less than 40% of the area's median, or to people older than 55 whose income is less than 60% of the area's median.

The AARP Tax-Aide program

The 2016 tax-aid program begins February 1 and ends April 15. The location is the Christiansburg Recreation Center (Senior Activity Room). If you need help with your taxes, please call to schedule an appointment: 382-2349.

Counselors will be available for preparing taxes according to this schedule:

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9:00 am – noon, Saturday

If you are interested in volunteering with this program, please contact Pat Ballard: pballard@vt.edu • 382-1189

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Vice President • Ben Crawford, ben.crawford@vt.edu

Secretary • Sally Anna Stapleton, sanna418@gmail.com

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Board of Directors

• 2016—Tom Alston, Tina King, Sally Anna Stapleton

• 2017—Pat Hyer, Jerry Niles, Shirley Peterson

• 2018—Wendy Baldwin, Ryan Martin, Ray Van Dyke

Visit Your AARP Chapter Website at www.blacksburgaarp.org



Blacksburg Chapter #2613
 Don Creamer, President
 P.O. Box 10082
 Blacksburg, VA 24062

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AARP Member Application for 2016

Name: _____

Spouse/Partner: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

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

New _____ Renewal _____ 90+ years old (free) _____

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 the check and this form to: .

Tom Alston - P.O. Box 10082 • Blacksburg, VA 24062



Serving the greater New River Valley, Virginia

April 19 Chapter Meeting

Inside the Blacksburg Rescue Squad
Neighbors Helping Neighbors

[rescheduled from the February meeting]

Mode Johnson from the Blacksburg Volunteer Rescue Squad (BVRs) will give an informative talk about the rescue squad at our April meeting. He will explain what the rescue squad does for community members and, in turn, what community members can do to help the rescue squad. Besides responding to 911 calls to assist local residents, the rescue squad is trained and equipped to perform many other services.



Membership of the 90-member, *all volunteer* rescue squad will be reviewed, and surprise, this is not just a young person's endeavor. Members of the squad are constantly training and have special equipment for, not only the usual, but also the unusual situations and/or obstacles the rescue squad may confront on any call.

Mode became an EMT and joined the rescue squad at age 62 after retiring from Virginia Tech in 2006. At Virginia Tech he held positions in Student Affairs, the College of Veterinary Medicine, and Central Administration. At BVRs, he has served as President and Vice President, and currently serves on various committees. Mode's work with BVRs has been recognized by several awards: 2007 Rookie of the Year; 2013 Member of the Year; and American Legion Post 182 Emergency Medical Technician Outstanding Public Service Award of the Year in 2013.

President's Column by Don Creamer

New Times, New Challenges

Anglo-Saxons called the month of April Eostre monath or Eastremonath. The name of the Christian Festival of Easter comes from this word.

April 1 was used to celebrate the Birth of Christ up until 350 when Pope Julius 1 declared that Christ's birth would be celebrated on December 25.

April starts on the same day of the week as July in all years.

Spring is well under way, flowers are opening up, days are getting warmer, and your chapter is busy conducting events and opening up new opportunities for service.



The big news for April is twofold: First, Dr. Bill Thomas will visit Blacksburg on April 23 for a presentation embodying much of the content in his "Age of Disruption Tour." The Dr. Bill Thomas event is addressed on page 3 of this newsletter, and our website at www.blacksburgaarp.org contains information about this event. Second, we are expecting to launch the chapter's first foray into social media in the coming weeks.

Let me speak to our social media project in terms of expected outcomes our AARP Blacksburg chapter. Our goals can be stated in simple terms:

- Enlarge awareness in the larger community of AARP Blacksburg chapter
- Create active communities among chapter members
- Strengthen linkages with other community organizations

please turn to page 3

Upcoming Events

- April 19: Shred-A-Thon (p. 2)
- April 23: Dr. Bill Thomas, aging expert (p. 3)
- May 12: Sharyn McCrumb, Blacksburg Public Library, 6:30 pm
- June 17: AARP picnic, 5-8 pm

All members of the chapter with active email addresses now are receiving occasional messages from AARP Blacksburg Chapter. Be sure that this address is in your contacts lists or your address book. If you have not gotten one or more of these messages, check your Junk Mail file where they may reside, then add aarpblacksburg@gmail.com to your addresses.



Blacksburg Chapter #2613

Chapter meetings are the third Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center, Patrick Henry Drive at 11:30 am. 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 am.

Please bring a food donation (a can or box of non-perishable food) to the AARP chapter meeting. We collect food at each monthly chapter meeting for the food banks in Blacksburg and Christiansburg.

Spring Cleaning:

Where to Take Stuff

Spring cleaning time is here. To declutter, you can take reusable items to one of the various thrift stores in the NRV or call them to pick up big items—YMCA (1000 North Main Street, Blacksburg, 552-2633), Goodwill (255 Peppers Ferry Road NE Christiansburg, 381-1544), Montgomery County Emergency Assistance Program (308 West Main Street, Christiansburg, 260-3173), or the Salvation Army (760 Roanoke Street, Christiansburg, 264-4713).

Habitat For Humanity's ReStore (1675 North Franklin, Christiansburg, 381-1155) welcomes tools and building materials, such as doors and windows, lumber, and hardware. The Bike Kitchen (nrvbikekitchen.com), located inside the Habitat ReStore, accepts bicycles and parts.

All of these organizations need monetary donations as well.

Recycling Batteries and Other Hazardous Waste

What about items that are toxic in landfills and that cannot be reused or recycled? Such items include batteries, cleaning and other chemicals, paint, and poisons.

Good news: you can now recycle these materials by taking them to Montgomery County's household hazardous waste (HHW) facility at 555 Authority Drive, Christiansburg.

The HHW facility accepts residential hazardous waste every month on the third Saturday from 9 am to 2 pm. **To take hazardous waste to this facility, you need to preregister at least 24 hours in advance** by calling 381-2820 ext. 300. There is no charge for drop-off for county residents—and because of appointments, no waiting in line.

Some examples of materials that you should take to HHW and not include in trash or recycling include these. (See a more complete list at www.mrswa.com/household_hazardous_waste.shtml.)

- Mercury thermometers
- Fluorescent lightbulbs and tubes
- Paint, paint thinner and stripper, stains, varnishes
- Yard poisons: insecticides, fungicides, weed killer
- Clearing materials: oven cleaner, rug cleaner, drain cleaner
- Batteries: Prepare lithium batteries, such as those used in power tools, and rechargeable batteries by taping the terminals or by sealing them in plastic bags.

Some in-town organizations, such as the YMCA, will accept your household batteries (AAA, AA, 9-volt etc.). See more about in-town options for disposing of household batteries at the Sustainable Blacksburg website, sustainableblacksburgva.org/general/batteries/

Lithium batteries should go to HHW.

Single-Stream Recycling: Caution about Shredded Paper

Shredded paper can clog the recycling sorting machines. Please bag your shredded paper, perhaps in a paper grocery bag, and staple or tape the bag shut. Mark it "shredded paper" with a felt-tip marker. Then include it with your other recyclables.

Recycling Electronics

The YMCA and Goodwill Industries welcome your used electronics in working condition for resale (computers, tablets, printers, cellphones—anything that uses an electric cord or battery).

You may take your nonworking electronics to the Solid Waste Authority at 555 Authority Drive, Christiansburg, Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. You do not need an appointment. If you are a resident of the county, there is no fee.

More Information

For more information on how to dispose of different types of waste, please consult the guide at

www.mrswa.com/disposal-guide.html.

Enjoy the feeling of lightness that comes from decluttered spaces!



Photo by Jen Collins, Flickr, Creative Commons License

Shred-A-Thon Tuesday, April 19

Help prevent identity theft and shred unwanted documents. Protect your important information and clean out the clutter. The semi-annual Shred-A-Thon will be held on Tuesday, April 19 from 3:00–6:00 pm in the Christiansburg Recreation Center parking lot. This will be a drive-through event, and documents to be shredded will need to be in a box or plastic tote. Bagged items will not be accepted. For more information contact Tammy Caldwell, 540-382-2349, ext. 2003 or email: tcaldwell@christiansburg.org.

(President's Column *continued*)

- Promote chapter activities and events
- Build chapter credibility throughout the community
- Accelerate targeted recruitment of new chapter members
- Engage membership to increase chapter loyalty

This new initiative will be presented to the Board of Directors at the April meeting and, if approved, we will appoint a new Standing Committee on the Board to direct and maintain our social media campaigns.

Social media can provide a shot of adrenaline to a non-profit organization if properly conducted. It also can fizzle for lack of interest if not managed well. Our intention, of course, is to achieve the former and avoid the latter. You can help us by becoming actively engaged personally. Take the plunge. Let's learn together.

I am fully aware of some of the reasons individuals, especially persons of our age, resist social media. Takes too much time. Requires technical knowledge that I don't have. My equipment is old and unreliable. I am not interested in chit-chat on electronic devices. I have shared some of these concerns, but have decided that the problem is me, not social media, and I am taking the step of saying, "Okay. Count me in." I sincerely hope that you will join me while we learn together.

Who doesn't enjoy seeing pictures of their grandchildren on Facebook? Now is the time to use that medium of communication to increase our enthusiasm for the organization to which we have pledged our commitment through membership. In the May issue of our newsletter, we will provide step-by-step instructions for joining us on Facebook and LinkedIn.

- ✓ So, the Dr. Bill Thomas event is set: 10:00–11:30 am, Saturday, April 23, in the Quillen Auditorium in Goodwin Hall on the Virginia Tech campus. It is free, but you need to register at <https://drbillthomas.org/event/dr-bill-thomas-virginia-tech/>. Only a few seats remain. Act quickly to reserve your seat.
- ✓ AND, your chapter will seek to enter the social media age this month. Let's see how this works! Join me and your chapter leaders as we take this next step in our evolution.



The Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech and AARP Blacksburg invite you to a matinee performance of Dr. Bill Thomas' Age of Disruption Tour. One of the nation's leading crusaders in the fight against ageism, Thomas debunks the myths of aging, explores the "super powers" of older age, and invites audiences to join the effort to eliminate stigma and discrimination based on age and ability.

Date & Time: Saturday, April 23, 10:00–11:30 a.m.

Location: Goodwin Hall, Virginia Tech campus, corner of Prices Fork Road and Stanger Street
Parking available adjacent to the building, no pass required

Fee: The event is free and open to the public.

Please register at

<https://drbillthomas.org/event/dr-bill-thomas-virginia-tech/>

AARP Joins Downtown Blacksburg, Inc.— Opportunities for Seniors

AARP is a new member of Downtown Blacksburg, Inc. (DBI). DBI is an association of downtown businesses, non-profits, and citizens with a special focus on the AARP population. More than 40 downtown merchants have been offering discounts to seniors on Tuesdays, but they have switched to "Senior Mondays." A full list of discounts appears at www.downtownblacksburg.com/senior_discounts.aspx

Senior Monday includes discounts at restaurants and merchants. In addition, The Lyric shows a 10 am matinee with free popcorn. The Lyric has introduced open captioning for the matinee, which can make a big difference for seniors, especially when the movie includes dialogue with accented speech. Open captioning—which is like subtitling—will be included most weeks, but confirm with the Lyric (www.thelyric.com, 951-4771) to be sure. All the movies on the upcoming schedule include open captioning:

4/18 Son of Saul

4/25 Where to Invade Next

5/2 Hello, My Name is Doris

DBI is working with its constituent groups to make downtown Blacksburg more appealing and accessible to seniors, making them an ideal partner for AARP. Blacksburg gets high marks for being an excellent location for retirement, and working with DBI, we can ensure that it gets better and better.



Meet New Board Member, Ray Van Dyke by Abbey O'Farrell, Student Intern

In 1975, Ray Van Dyke came to Blacksburg the same way thousands of others have—as a student. He fell so in love with the town that he never left. After receiving his undergraduate degree in English from Virginia Tech, he worked as a teacher at Blacksburg High School. Throughout the years, he continued his Virginia Tech education, earning his master's and doctoral degrees. He later became a curriculum coordinator for Montgomery County Public Schools, and eventually a school principal for 21 years.



He left his career in the public school system to become the Executive Director of the Office of Assessment and Evaluation at Virginia Tech, where he worked for 8 years. Throughout his several positions, he says that his favorite part was always the wonderful students, teachers, and administrators that he has worked with. He is proud to be able to provide inclusive education for students with disabilities.

Though he is now retired, he works virtually for Centrieva, an educational software company based in Phoenix, Arizona. That means he gets to stay in Blacksburg!

Outside of his busy career, Ray and his wife, Debbie, have raised two children in Blacksburg. They appreciate the many opportunities Blacksburg offers, including wonderful experiences in the arts, big time sports, and the international interactions they are able to have on a daily basis.

Ray collects antiques in his free time. He enjoys going to estate auctions and yard sales, searching for that perfect deal on an item that he will someday take to Antiques Roadshow and discover is worth millions of dollars!

Ray is a valuable new Board member for AARP Blacksburg. He enjoys the many new and old acquaintances he has met since becoming a part of the organization. In the future, he is interested in seeing AARP provide the community with an array of programs that both inform and challenge our 50+ community members.

We are so excited to have Ray Van Dyke on our Board. Please extend him a very warm welcome.

Samples of Ray's Collectibles



An early 20th century “refrigerator”

Book collections

A 1920s Victrola that still works well



Health Fair Update

The 2016 AARP/VCOM Health and Wellness Fair is moving right along! Mark your calendar for September 14, 2016.

We have added new Gold level exhibitors and many others as well. New Gold levels include The Vein Institute and English Meadows Senior Living Community. The Vein Institute will be providing free screenings at the Health Fair. They join The Hearing Clinic and Radford Health and Rehab. We are pleased that a number of our exhibitors will be doing screenings for vein health, glucose, blood pressure, hearing, and likely providing flu shots.

But, it is not all medical. We have an array of exhibitors who will be focusing on healthy, active lifestyle from shoes to wear to places to go and things to do. Also, since we know that social engagement can be a key to happy, healthy aging, we will be highlighting exhibitors who provide volunteering opportunities.

Let us know if you have questions, or if you know of a potential exhibitor. Just email wendyb@gmail.com.

Remember: 2016 AARP/VCOM Health and Wellness Fair at the Christiansburg Rec Center, September 14, 2016.

Legislative Report *by Val Coluni and Alison Galway*

1. Income Tax Fraud. Criminals are now using email to trick EMPLOYERS to give out personal information in order to file bogus tax returns, thereby claiming fraudulent refunds. This is one of the few times EMPLOYERS have been the victims of such crimes. Carefully monitor your returns and if you suspect fraud, contact the IRS ([1-800-908-4490](tel:1-800-908-4490)) or your tax preparer immediately.

2. Internet Tax. Some states have laws that tax internet access. Currently, Virginia does not have such a tax, but some decision makers have suggested it. Our U.S. Congress and President Obama recently signed legislation that forbids such a tax from becoming effective quickly. Those states that now have such a tax will be given a short time period to eliminate the tax.

3. Hospital Deregulation Bill fails. Our Senate did not approve a bill that would have loosened government oversight of new/expanded health care facilities. Some doctors, lawmakers, and others supported the bill because they believe the current system results in higher health care costs. This matter will continue to be an issue in future legislative meetings.

4. Protecting Religious Liberty. The General Assembly approved legislation protecting clergy, religious organizations, religious charities, and schools from government discrimination for a belief that marriage is a union of one man and one woman. Opponents consider this legislation a “license to discriminate.” Governor McAuliffe vetoed the legislation, noting that it would stigmatize a group of citizens and be bad for business.

5. Additional budget funds. The General Assembly approved more funds for education, a pay increase for state employees and teachers, and a separate bond issue for infrastructure improvements and road construction. These actions will greatly improve conditions in our state.

In the next several weeks the Governor will review the Assembly recommendations and either approve, veto, and / or modify them and return to the Assembly for appropriate actions. This session the strife between the Assembly and the Governor (judicial appointment, coal tax credit, gun laws, health insurance for the uninsured, etc.) has been managed in a more cooperative way, but there will continue to be issues in the days ahead.

Blacksburg Public Library Hosts a Nonfiction Book Club *by Elizabeth Sensabaugh*

Did you know that all branches of Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library host a variety of book clubs for various ages and interests? The Blacksburg Library recently began hosting a book club for readers of nonfiction—Talking About Books: the Nonfiction Edition!

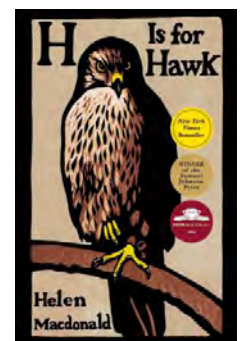
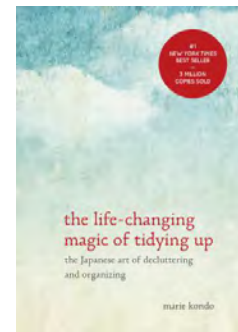
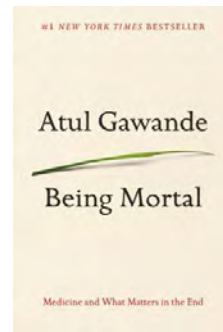
Join us on the last Tuesday of each month at 11:00 am to discuss the selected book.

April 26 *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End*, by Atul Gawande

May 31 *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: the Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing*, by Marie Kondo

June 28 *H is for Hawk*, by Helen Macdonald

No official commitment is required—please drop in when it suits you! For a full listing of book club meetings, please visit the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library at mfrl.org and find the Events tab. Click *Ongoing Programs* and select *Book Clubs* for a complete listing of meeting times and places. We hope you’ll drop in and participate!



Chapter Officers 2016

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Vice President • Ben Crawford, ben.crawford@vt.edu
Secretary • Sally Anna Stapleton, sanna418@gmail.com
Treasurer • Pat Ballard, pballard@vt.edu

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

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Tom Alston - P.O. Box 10082 • Blacksburg, VA 24062

Serving the greater New River Valley, Virginia

May 17 Chapter Meeting

How Safe are Senior Drivers? Answers from Naturalistic Research

[rescheduled from January]

Dr. Jon Antin from the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute will join us to share some of the groundbreaking research currently being conducted by the Center for Vulnerable Road Users Safety at VTTI. Jon is Director of the center, which focuses its research and outreach not just on seniors, but also teens, bicyclists, and pedestrians.



Jon also serves as program coordinator for a unique transportation safety graduate program administered by VTTI in conjunction with four other departments at Virginia Tech. Given the nature of his work with seniors he serves as a faculty affiliate in the Center for Gerontology.

In terms of education Jon received his B.S. degree in psychology from LSU, then going on to achieve his master's and Ph.D. from Virginia Tech in human factors engineering. His work has included stints at AT&T, the NASA Johnson Space Center, the Naval Air Station at Patuxent River, and N.C. State University. Delving deeper into his resume and background, one would find a large number of publications, grants, and outreach activities.

During this presentation Dr. Antin will share a bit more of his background and the extensive work going on at VTTI, but will focus mostly on the unique methods currently being utilized to gather naturalistic data on seniors' fitness to drive.

President's Column by Don Creamer

After 40 years, have we matured yet?

May is named after the Greek goddess, Maia, who is identified with the Roman goddess Bona Deam, goddess of fertility.

May is International Respect for Chickens month. :)

Mother's Day occurs in May in the U.S. and in 1870 Julia Howe wrote the first Mother's Day proclamation asking women everywhere to join for world peace.

The month of May also contains the day of my birth. I will reach a milestone of sorts: 80 years old. I am pleased about having lived this long and look forward to 90 and beyond, having lived well, productively, and joyfully.

What can our chapter do to encourage and facilitate all in our community to live life fully?

Is our chapter doing all that it can do to make our community vibrant? We certainly have made some inroads on this pathway toward vibrancy through community events such as the Health and Wellness Fair, the LivingWell@50+ conference, our involvement in the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech, and the Dr. Bill Thomas performance last month. These are very good examples of actions our chapter can take. Should we do more?

Here is a possibility. Just prior to the writing of this column, I was contacted by our colleague, Tina King with the NRV Agency on Aging, to determine if I might help with the spread of the **New River Valley Time-bank network**. My initial reaction was positive; that is, I would like to help, but my time is limited by previous commitments. Then, it occurred to me that this may be

Upcoming Events

June 17: annual picnic

Sept. 14: Health/Wellness Fair

40th Anniversary Picnic

The AARP Blacksburg Chapter will celebrate 40 years of continuous leadership and service to the NRV community on June 17.

Date and time: Friday, June 17, 5:00–8:00 pm.

Social time 5:00–6:00; Panjammers provide music at 6:00.

Location: Farm home of Terry Wildman and Sue Magliaro, 3335 Elk Creek Drive, Christiansburg (6 miles outside of Christiansburg); phone: 540.320.5599

Food: chicken BBQ + sandwiches from Jimmy John's. Bring an appetizer, side dish, or dessert to share.

RSVP: on paper at the May 17 meeting; or at <http://tinyurl.com/j4uexdd>; or 540.951.4968

Directions and more information in the June newsletter.



Blacksburg Chapter #2613

Chapter meetings are the third Tuesday of each month, except July and August, at the Blacksburg Community Center, Patrick Henry Drive at 11:30 am. Board meetings are the first Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center at 10:00 am.

Please bring a food donation (a can or box of non-perishable food) to the AARP chapter meeting. We collect food at each monthly chapter meeting for the food banks in Blacksburg and Christiansburg.

Ben Crawford: NRV "Leading Light"



Ben Crawford has been recognized as a New River Valley "Leading Light" for his extensive volunteer work. The honor celebrates strong community involvement, proven leadership, demonstrated lifestyle of dedicated, continuous longterm involvement in the community, and creativity in initiating and implementing projects that lead to a better quality of life.

Ben embodies the spirit of volunteerism, contributing generously and widely to a variety of organizations. In the NRV, Ben is one of the founders of the Community Foundation of New River Valley and the co-founder of Kiwanis Blacksburg. He has served in numerous leadership roles, including Executive Director of Ruritan National, President of the Association of Virginia Ruritans, and President of the Ruritan Club. He has volunteered with the American Red Cross, Appalachian Regional Commission, Blacksburg Housing Board, National 4-H, RSVP, Soup for Seniors, and the YMCA at Virginia Tech.

In the AARP Blacksburg Chapter, Ben has been president, is currently vice-president, and will be president again in 2017. At the state level, he has served on the policy board and the Executive Council. He received the AARP Blacksburg Chapter Award for Community Spirit in 2005 and for Community Service in 2007. He received the statewide AARP Ethel Andrus Award for Community Service in 2007.

His entire life has been one of service. Ben served in the Korean War. After graduation from Concord College, he became District Executive of the Blue Ridge Council of the Boy Scouts of America and worked for Concord College in their Center for Economic Action. Later, he worked for the Governor of West Virginia as Director of State Planning and Resource Development. Ben earned a Master of Science degree from Virginia Tech in 1964 and was employed by West Virginia University as an assistant professor of management. In the early 1970s, he became the Director of the National 4-H Center in Washington DC. He assumed the Chief Executive Officer position of Ruritan National in 1983. Ben joined Virginia Tech in 1993 in the role of faculty member in the Institute for Leadership and Volunteer Development. He retired in 1995.

This review of his volunteer work represents highlights of a lifetime of service and achievement. As Don Creamer says, "All of us are able to live richer lives because Ben cared enough, invested enough of himself, and exercised sufficient leadership through his volunteer activities to make the world more responsive to human needs."

Dr. Bill Thomas Wants to "Disrupt Aging"

by Don Creamer and Pat Hyer

Childhood and adulthood are well-known labels for stages of life. Dr. Bill Thomas—author, entrepreneur, musician, teacher, farmer and physician—believes that elderhood is a third life phase that gets little or no attention or respect in American culture. While adulthood is all about "doing" (caring for family, endless to-do lists, intense focus on work), elderhood puts more weight on "being"—nurturing relationships, savoring moments of beauty, joy, and connection, learning something new to satisfy a curiosity or for sheer enjoyment, and sharing wisdom. Not all older adults "graduate" to elderhood since the culture sends a powerful message that those who "still" perform like adults ("still" running marathons at 76, "still" driving at 92, "still" working at 80, and so on) are the ideal model of aging.



Dr. Bill Thomas presents his vision for elderhood in Blacksburg

Dr. Thomas addressed an audience of more than 250 on Saturday, April 23, at a lecture hosted by AARP Blacksburg Chapter and the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech, with additional support from other community partners. Best known for his health care system innovations, Thomas is the founder of a global non-profit, The Eden Alternative, which works to improve the care provided to older people. Through books, talks, and performance, he pursues a passionate mission to transform the treatment of vulnerable elders and increase the options for all to live an enriched rather than diminished elderhood. Thomas challenged the audience to question their own stereotypes about aging as a period of loss and decline and to become part of a counterculture to change society's views on the subject.

A luncheon following the main event allowed leaders in the community, university, and state organizations to engage in lively discussion about what is currently underway in the New River Valley consistent with Dr. Thomas's vision for elderhood. There is much to build on: The Aging in Place Action Plan, a co-housing model for seniors in Abingdon, an about-to-be launched Timebank for sharing services, project funding for home improvements so Giles County seniors can stay in their homes and community as they age, and the renovation and repurposing of Prices' Fork Elementary School, to name just a few.



Scenes from the Bill Thomas event

Left: Tom Sellinger, Sally Anna Stapleton, and Shirley Peterson work the AARP table

Right: table displays

Below right: Pat Hyer enjoys a light moment

Photos on these pages by Peter Magolda



(President's Column *continued*)

an opportunity for the entire chapter to become engaged in helping with the widespread use of the new Timebank and, consequently, to enrich our lives.

Timebank is a neighbor-to-neighbor network to share skills and services. It is based on reciprocity: those who give also receive, those who receive also give--all depending on needs and talents. For more information, see <http://52.32.67.219>, email nrvtimebank@gmail.com, or phone 540.251.4345.

Representatives from the Timebank initiative—including Ellen Stewart, Elisabeth Willis, and Shelley Fortier—visited our May Board meeting to help us learn more about possibilities for chapter involvement. Members of the Board reacted positively; however, we will wait until the June Board meeting to consider official action.

Dr. Bill Thomas' presentation on April 23 was a smashing hit! You can read more about the event on page 2, but I want say that it was a great privilege to meet him in person. He was charming and engaging with every person he contacted. But it is not just charm that attracts one to him. He also is an author, farmer, entrepreneur, performer, musician, and an international authority on geriatric medicine and eldercare. And, by the way, he is a fantastic presenter. He held an audience of 200+ in rapt attention for 90 minutes on April 23 during an event sponsored by your chapter and the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech. Following his presentation, he met for for lunch for more than an hour with representatives of many exciting initiatives in the New River Valley. He learned a lot about us, but he inspired us to do more. (This spark within me to do more in concert with our organization partners in the NRV is a direct result of being with Dr. Thomas for about three hours.)



Don Creamer, President of the AARP Blacksburg Chapter, shows a new book by Jo Ann Jenkins, CEO of AARP

As a part of our concern for chapter impact on its members and its community, we are in very early stages of launching a **social media campaign**. Details of exactly what the nature of this campaign will be are vague at the moment since a new Standing Committee of the Board has just been created and they are carefully crafting the shape and scope of the service. This committee is composed of Peter Magolda, Wendy Baldwin, and Wanda Smith. I only can say at this point that we hope to strengthen our own communities within the chapter, promote community interest in our chapter, and inform social network members of sources of knowledge associated with our chapter goals.

Make preparations for the **June picnic** to be held on June 17 from 5:00–8:00 pm at the home of Terry and Sue Wildman. **We will celebrate our 40th anniversary as a chapter** and will enjoy food, drink, conversation, and music by the Pan-jammers.

Be sure to be there. Bring a friend or two. Look for more information in the June newsletter.

Meet Board Member, Ryan Martin

Ryan Martin still has a decade or so before he can qualify by age for membership in AARP, but he is already contributing to the organization as an engaged member of the board. He brings to AARP his leadership experience and community connections from serving as Executive Director of the YMCA at Virginia Tech as well as in local and regional nonprofit organizations.



Ryan grew up in Roanoke and went to Virginia Tech. His professional background is in higher education, alumni affairs, marketing, and fundraising. After graduation, he worked in the Office of Annual Giving at Virginia Tech. He was recruited by Old Dominion to become their Director of Annual Giving and then by Eastern Virginia Medical School to rebuild their development program. He returned to Blacksburg

and was hired as Executive Director of the YMCA in 2013.

Through the YMCA, Ryan likes having an impact on the community every day. The VT YMCA runs a Thrift Shop and Community Gardens, offers numerous community classes and international programs, and provides volunteer and leadership opportunities for Virginia Tech students and others. Ryan likes to engage Virginia Tech students in the community as volunteers. As they learn how to give back to the community, they experience the New River Valley as a home away from home.

In addition to serving on the AARP board, Ryan is on the Program Committee of the Lifelong Learning Institute. He works with Downtown Blacksburg Incorporated, the Blacksburg Partnership, and NRV Leading Lights. He has also served on the boards of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Virginia and the Hampton Roads March of Dimes.

Volunteer service and his YMCA position require more than a full-time commitment of time, but when he can, Ryan likes outdoor activities including high ropes courses and ziplining.

Ryan admires AARP for leveraging the rights of seniors, helping the world listen to the voices of older citizens, and meeting needs of this population. He would like to help educate the people of his own generation, now advancing to their retirement futures, to understand what AARP does and how important it is to continue to have a voice in the world.

For now, our chapter is benefiting from Ryan's strategic planning ability and his understanding of how organizations work in partnership with one another to make their communities responsive to needs and opportunities. Thank you, Ryan, and welcome to this chapter.



Tax-Aide Program Serves 1,235 Clients with 25 Volunteers

The 2015 tax filing season has come to an end, and your AARP Tax-Aide site was very busy completing tax returns and offering assistance to seniors and low-income residents in the New River Valley. The volunteers meet with clients in the Senior Room of the Christiansburg Rec Center.

Here are some of the stats for this year:

25—total volunteers doing tax counseling and greeting clients

1,235—total clients

977—federal and state returns prepared

25—amended returns

316—question and answer

29% of our clients were new this year.

62.3 was the average age (range was 17 to 112 years of age).

54% were single

40% were joint returns

2% were married filing separately

5% were Head of Household



Pat Ballard
AARP Tax-Aide Program
Coordinator

Thanks to Pat Ballard, Tax-Aide Program Coordinator, and the volunteers who contributed hundreds of hours to the program. This service is a meaningful gift to the community.

The AARP Tax-Aide Program is always in need of volunteers to help prepare tax returns. If you (or someone you know) would be interested in learning more about this program, please contact Pat Ballard, pballard@vt.edu, or 382.1189.

40th anniversary 2016



1. General Assembly Scorecard: Bills introduced—2352; bills passed—889; remaining bills were either deferred until next year (242) or rejected by either House or Senate or both (1221). A number of experts evaluating these results consider these outcomes acceptable performance as several major bills were approved with a great deal of give-and-take by representatives from different interest groups. Are you aware of the role your representatives played in this effort?

2. SW Virginia Legislator's Scorecard (includes our Representatives): Our Regional Chamber of Commerce believes this session showed a new degree of unity and political clout by the SW Virginia participants. Some examples of this: bond money for the expansion of the Virginia Tech Carilion Research Institute; rejecting the budget request to study closing the Catawba Hospital; a significant investment in public education at all levels without increasing taxes; and bringing a major new car parts manufacturer to Botetourt County.

3. Now some bad news! Lack of transparency in some of the General Assembly decisions. This year 834 bills “died” with no one recorded as being for or against. This was an increase over last year. Faith in our democratic institutions is based on truth and openness. One Virginia organization—Transparency Virginia—is closely monitoring this and urging the Assembly to make major changes in their procedures. You can help by asking your representatives to explain this.

4. Elderly Financial Abuse. It's happening as well to professionals, managers, executives, and their families—primarily in unauthorized trading in stocks, high fees, inappropriate investment advice, and breach of fiduciary duties. The Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) has an extensive library to help us do “due diligence” on such matters (www.sec.gov/investor). In addition, they have a financial ombudsman who takes complaints on suspected financial fraud (202.551.3330). Their current caseload is high so they are not always able to offer an immediate response. In such cases contact a local attorney.



Alison Galway and Val Coluni report on legislation and advocacy for the Blacksburg AARP chapter.

Alison's photo by Rick Griffiths, VT photo library
Val's picture by Peter Magolda



Mark your calendar *now* for the **AARP Blacksburg-VCOM Health and Wellness Fair**, Wednesday September 14, 2016! We are having a great time organizing this very special event for all of us to learn about new services, fun facts, and a myriad of ways to stay connected in our community.

The Christiansburg Recreation Center is offering a great space for all the health happenings. We'll continue all the great medical services from the VCOM students and faculty, and we'll also have everything from hearing, vision, vein, to skin screenings. One of our Gold Sponsors, Lewis Gale Hospital Montgomery, will provide blood sugar screenings, PT/OT screenings and education, and along with several other sponsors, free flu shots.

We also welcome Warm Hearth Village as another Gold Sponsor. Come and learn all about the multiple housing options available in the beautiful woodland setting. But, not only housing—come to hear about their **Warm Hearth at Home** program and many educational and community events held on their campus. We love attending Lifelong Learning Institute classes at the new Village Center at Warm Hearth.

Not only will we learn about physical health care and housing at the Fair, there will be a fun center for mindfulness. Try out the Brain Games and adult coloring books (very therapeutic), and stay connected to the community by visiting the Volunteer Booth. Learn about the numerous organizations that have volunteer opportunities for every interest and talent. Enjoy a healthy smoothie served by RU Nursing students, and sign up on the spot for your new volunteer adventure. Then work off those smoothie calories at the different exercise demos—have you ever done Qi Gong or Zumba???

Watch the newsletter for more highlights of the Health Fair! Questions or suggestions? Contact Wendy Baldwin, wendybburg@gmail.com, 646.352.3936; Angela Little, anglitt33@gmail.com, 540.808.8007; or Jennie Reilly, jenmik@vt.edu, 650.230.5565.

Chapter Officers 2016

President • Don Creamer, dgc2@vt.edu
Vice President • Ben Crawford, ben.crawford@vt.edu
Secretary • Sally Anna Stapleton, sanna418@gmail.com
Treasurer • Pat Ballard, pballard@vt.edu

Board of Directors

• 2016—Tom Alston, Tina King, Sally Anna Stapleton
• 2017—Pat Hyer, Jerry Niles, Shirley Peterson
• 2018—Wendy Baldwin, Ryan Martin, Ray Van Dyke

Visit Your AARP Chapter Website at www.blacksburgaarp.org



Blacksburg Chapter #2613
 Don Creamer, President
 P.O. Box 10082
 Blacksburg, VA 24062

**Nonprofit
 Organization
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Blacksburg, VA
 Permit No. 32**

AARP Member Application for 2016

Name: _____

Spouse/Partner: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

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

New ___ Renewal ___ 90+ years old (free) ___

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 the check and this form to: .

Tom Alston • P.O. Box 10082 • Blacksburg, VA 24062



Serving the greater New River Valley, Virginia

June 17: Picnic

Celebrate the chapter's 40th anniversary 5-8 pm

We will gather at the farm home of Terry Wildman and Sue Magliaro for a picnic and music by the Panjammers. The chapter will provide chicken BBQ, and Jimmy John's will provide sandwiches (thanks, Tom Alston). Please bring an appetizer, side dish, or dessert to share. If you want a beverage other than lemonade or tea, please bring that, too.

Date / time Friday, June 17, 5:00-8:00 pm

Social time 5:00-6:00; Panjammers provide music at 6:00.

Location 3335 Elk Creek Drive, Christiansburg; phone: 540.320.5599 or 540.382.5577

Food chicken BBQ + sandwiches from Jimmy John's. Bring an appetizer, side dish, or dessert to share + your beverage.

Ride sharing Call Pat Hyer at 540.951.4968 if you need a ride or will provide a ride for someone.

Directions From exit 114 on I-81 south, turn south on Route 8 toward Floyd. Go 2.7 miles south on Rt. 8. Turn right on Childress Road (Rt. 693). Aly's restaurant is located on your left at the intersection. Drive 3.3 miles on Childress Road. Turn left onto Elk Creek Drive, the entrance to Childress Estates. *Look for colorful balloons here.* Follow Elk Creek Drive to the cul de sac, about a third of a mile. Turn right on the first gravel driveway at the cul de sac (more balloons!) and at this point you will see the parking area.

From Radford, the best route is south on Tyler Road (passing the Radford hospital), which dead ends at Childress Road. Turn left on Childress Road, go uphill about a quarter mile and turn right onto Elk Creek Drive.

President's Column by Don Creamer

Reflecting on our Chapter History

June in the Northern Hemisphere is similar to the month of December in the Southern Hemisphere.

The month of June comes from the Roman, or Julian, calendar and originally had only 29 days until Julius Caesar added the additional day, giving June 30 days.

The birthstone of June is Pearl.

June also is the birth month of AARP Blacksburg. The original charter of the chapter was signed on June 29, 1976. The chapter officially is 40 years old!

The original charter was issued by the American Association of Retired Persons, the organization founded in 1958 by Ethel Percy Andrus, Ph.D., a retired educator from California. Andrus also founded the National Retired Teachers Association in 1947 that is today a division of AARP, Inc. The organization name officially was changed from the American Association of Retired Persons to AARP, Inc. in 1999, with the "RP" now signifying "Real Possibilities."

The charter President of AARP Blacksburg was Denver Bragg who served about 70 members in 1976. Jim Gaines served as chair of the History Committee and wrote the manuscript now linked to our chapter website at www.blacksburgaarp.org/chapter-history.pdf. The Gaines manuscript was put into its present form by Carol Crawford, who was serving as newsletter co-editor at the time, and the final editing of the document was done by Connie Anderson, who also served the chapter as webmaster at the time of publication in 2006.

The AARP Blacksburg chapter emerged from The Leisures, a small group of seniors

please turn to page 3

Upcoming Events

June 28: Salem Redsox game
Sept. 14: Health & Wellness Fair
no meetings in July and August

free hotdogs, hamburgers

Come on out to the ballgame, June 28

Join AARP members on Tuesday, June 28, at Lewis Gale Field in Salem when the Salem Red Sox face the Myrtle Beach Pelicans as we focus on reducing fraud perpetrated against older adults in our region. AARP members and their families who attend the game are invited to stop by the pavilion any time after the gates open at 6:05 pm for free hot dogs and hamburgers while supplies last! The first pitch is at 7:05 pm and will be thrown by our very own AARP Virginia State Director, Jim Dau. We will be there the whole game!

You can buy a ticket to the game at www.salemsox.com.



Blacksburg Chapter #2613

Chapter meetings are the third Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center, Patrick Henry Drive at 11:30 am. 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 am.

LLI Courses and Events Fall 2016

The Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) at Virginia Tech will mail its catalog of fall 2016 courses and events in mid-August. Registration opens September 7. If you were a member of LLI in fall 2015 or spring 2016, you will automatically receive a catalog. If you were not a member and would like to get on the mailing list, please complete the form at www.cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning/

Most courses will begin the week of October 3 and end the week of November 7 (exceptions below). Courses last 6 weeks unless a variation is noted below. The catalog will include descriptions of the courses, but here is a list to help with your planning now. In addition to these courses, LLI will offer 24 one-time events in the fall of 2016.

Monday courses

Living Well to the End: Creating a Better End-of-Life Path, 9–11 am
Drawing from Observation, 10–11:30 am (4 weeks)
The New River Valley Livability Initiative, 10–11:30 am (4 weeks)
Appreciating John McPhee, 10–11:30 am (4 weeks)
iPad for Beginners, 10–11:30 am (begins Oct 31, 3 weeks)
Presidential Selection: Theory and Development, 1–2:30 pm (4 weeks)
How to Collect Everything, 3–4:30 pm (4 weeks)
Wine Appreciation, 3–4:30 pm

Tuesday courses

The Arab Spring: Causes, Developments, and Consequences, 10–11:30 am
Sounds of the South, 1–2:30 pm
Virginia Woolf, 1–2:30 pm
Relief Printmaking, 1–4 pm
Backpacking for Age 50+ Hikers, 3:30–5 pm (begins Sept 27, 2 weeks; backpacking Oct 7–8)

Wednesday courses

VT CLASS Sampler, 9–10:15 am
Tracing Your Family Genealogy, 9–10:30 am
Portrait Painting, 9 am–12 pm
The Rise and Fall of American Vaudeville, 10:45 am–12:15 pm (4 weeks)
Simple Ways to Improve Your Financial Well Being, 1–2:30 pm (4 weeks)

Thursday courses (no classes Oct 20; classes end week of Nov 14)

Global Change: The Science of Physical and Biological Global Changes, 9–10:30 am
The Rich History of Montgomery County, Virginia, 10–11:30 am
Editorial Cartoons and the Presidential Election 2016, 1–2:30 pm
Capital Punishment in America, 3–4:30 pm

Friday courses

Oil Painting Basics, 9:30–11:30 am
Ethical Dilemmas in Medicine: Why America's Diverse Cultural Heritage Makes It So Difficult to Make Life and Death Decisions, 10 am–12 pm (4 weeks)

Legislative Report by Val Coluni

- Medicare Plan Change.** Payments to providers will be partly based on whether they keep patients healthy rather than solely on the number of procedures and/or services.
- Atlantic Coast and Mountain Valley Pipelines.** There are still concerns about the routes (erosion and sediment control). The Virginia State Department of Environmental Quality has notified both pipeline staffs they may have to pay for hiring additional people to monitor these conditions. Also, suggestions have been made to use existing pipeline paths rather than digging new ones. This alternative plan has a number of supporters.
- Felon Voting Rights Restoration.** Did the governor exceed his executive authority by issuing a mass restoration of voting rights for those who have served their time and completed parole and probation? Republicans think so. They have hired an attorney to challenge the governor's order. One unintended consequence of the order is to make it easier for those felons to obtain guns. The governor indicated that was not his intention.
- State Legal Costs.** Are we effectively using taxpayer's money? Our Attorney General used \$14.8 million for outside counsel in 2015. We have spent \$3.7 million on four cases alone (redistricting, voter identification). Are we using the courts to solve our issues rather than making some concessions to the other party? Now there is a concern about meeting our forecasts for tax collections, which may affect the budget. This looms in the background as a major crisis.



Jim Dau, AARP Virginia State Director, addresses the Blacksburg Chapter at its May meeting. He complimented the chapter's programs, achievements, and leadership.

Photo by Ben Crawford

Dr. Jon Antin, of the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, presents results of research on senior drivers at the May meeting.

Photo by Ben Crawford



(President's Column continued)

who met at the time to talk about "... a possible organization to enhance the social life and community activities for persons in this age group" (*The Thirty Year History of AARP Chapter #2613, Blacksburg, Virginia*). Clarence Jencks served as chairman of this group.

Early chapter activities centered around trips to area points of interest, playing Bridge, periodic information programs, the tax-aide service, and health fairs. The first woman president of the chapter was Jean Davis, who assumed the office in 1984. This was the year of the first chapter newsletter, edited by John Palmer. In 1986, the monthly newsletter cost was \$113.18 for printing and \$114.80 for postage.

A representative sample of programs offered by the chapter can be understood by offerings in 1993: "A humorous one by Dr. Steven Anderson of Tech, Production of Pharmaceuticals from Transgenic Livestock, National Health Care, a bike ride through Germany, scams and scam artists by the Sheriff's Department, President Clinton's First One Hundred Days, a humor and music program by the Rev. Dwane Steele (who was blind), and Warm Hearth" (*The Thirty Year History of AARP Chapter #2613, Blacksburg, Virginia*).

The turn of the century started with the sixth woman president of the chapter, June Schmidt, who was assisted by new newsletter editors, Amy and Don Elson. Topics for programs during this period resembled some of recent years: "... saving/preserving Social Security; how the Museum of Natural History serves the community; saving our streams and protecting water quality; the Explore Park in Roanoke; creating neighborhood groups for security and community services; a slide show and talk about Shadowlake Village; a 'Consumer University' program dealing with internet fraud, Medicare Fraud, End of Life Issues, and Protection; and, finally, a Lewis Gale Hospital representative presenting the topic 'Love Your Heart—Strategies for Keeping It Healthy'" (*The Thirty Year History of AARP Chapter #2613, Blacksburg, Virginia*).

The thirty-year history of the chapter ended in the year 2006. Since then, the history of the chapter is recorded on the chapter website at www.blacksburgaarp.org. This site serves as a permanent repository for documents, events, and chapter activities.

So, we are 40 years old as a chartered chapter of AARP. Our history reflects solid and continuous actions "To Serve, not to be Served" (Motto of Ethel Percy Andrus for the American Association of Retired Persons, 1958). Recent presidents have led the chapter to new visions for the future represented by such events as LivingWell@50+ conference,

involvement with the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech, the Health and Wellness Fairs, and major forums like the Dr. Bill Thomas event on April 23 of this year. The emphasis of these events is living well in the age of Elderhood. The AARP Blacksburg chapter aims to be not just a strong organization that serves its members well but also to have an impact on the quality of life and opportunities for people throughout the New River Valley. Recent activities have shown vigor in establishing new working partnerships with other organizations engaged in similar work as ours. These organizations include AARP Virginia, The Community Foundation of the New River Valley, the New River Valley Agency on Aging, the Center for Gerontology at Virginia Tech, the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech, The Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine, the Warm Hearth Retirement Village, Virginia Tech Retirees Association, and the YMCA at Virginia Tech.

Our future as a chapter of AARP is bright. I hope that you are fully participating in building this future.

Heath Fair Update

September 14 keeps getting closer and closer. We are so pleased to see exhibitors signing on—old friends and new ones. This will be a great time to queue up for a flu shot, check your BP or glucose, get a screening for skin issues. But wait, this is not just about medical conditions! The Fair will be a time to hear about activities that can make you happy, like yoga or Qi Gong. Have you ever seen them being demonstrated? Come to the Fair! You could even pick up some new cooking ideas. Between stir fries from the Virginia Cooperative Extension service and tasty egg dishes from the Virginia Egg Council, you can watch how it is done. Do you have to stand and watch? No, there will be convenient seating throughout the Fair, so you can rest, visit with friends or just watch what is on display.

Researchers keep reporting on the beneficial effects of social engagement, and we will be highlighting all the exhibitors who offer volunteering activities. And, keeping healthy is also about finding fun things to do: Going for a walk? Learning some new games? Finding people who can help you figure out what physical therapy is really about? Let us know what you would like to learn about and we will work to ensure that it is represented. Just send an email with your ideas to wendybburg@gmail.com or call at 646-352-3936.

We are reaching out to churches and other religious organizations since they often know who among their members would benefit from having some help in getting to the Fair. Hopefully, those with buses or vans would be able to bring some folks to the Fair. It would be wonderful if you could spread the word about the Fair within your own church.

The Fair will be a great place to learn some new ways to stay healthy and engaged; bring your friends and register for the AARP drawing for a \$100 gift card by visiting each of the Gold exhibitors.



What to do this summer

Summer Concerts on Henderson Lawn—AARP seating! 6:00–7:30 pm Fridays June 3–July 29, free

Blacksburg has terrific live music concerts on Henderson Lawn each Friday evening during the summer thanks to the VT School of Performing Arts. The concerts are free and attract a diverse audience of all ages who sit on the lawn and enjoy the summer, friends, food, and music.

AARP and Downtown Blacksburg Inc. (DBI) are trying out a new treat for seniors who may have trouble toting their chairs onto the lawn. Starting with June 3 there will be chairs in front of the Lyric theatre as reserved “AARP Seating.” Well, we won’t be checking IDs, but the idea is to appeal to seniors and just help people enjoy the concerts.

We will also need some volunteers—the Mt. Tabor Ruritan club is helping with this—to just help people find their seats and get the chairs back across the street for pick up by the city after the concert. I hope that Blacksburg AARP will be a source of volunteers as well as a source of seniors who can more easily enjoy the concerts that Blacksburg has to offer.

If you want to volunteer, please email me at wendybburg@gmail.com. Or, if you know you (and friends?) would like to make use of the seating, just show up. Check out the link to DBI at www.downtownblacksburg.com for parking info and www.performingarts.vt.edu/summer-arts-festival for details of the Friday concerts.

contributed by Wendy Baldwin

Special Events: Blacksburg

see www.performingarts.vt.edu/summer-arts-festival for details

Summer Solstice Festival Saturday, June 18 1–8 pm

Independence Day Celebration Monday, July 4

Art at the Market Saturday, July 16 9 am–2 pm

Steppin’ Out Street Festival Friday, Saturday August 5, 6

Market Square Jam Wednesdays through Sept. 28, 8-10:00 pm

Active Adult Programs (trips, events)

www.blacksburg.gov/home/showdocument?id=5771

Special Events: Christiansburg

see va-christiansburg2.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=595

Independence Day Celebration Monday, July 4

Montgomery Museum Heritage Day Saturday, August 27

Senior Trips (Barter Theater, Wohlfahrt Theater, baseball, more): va-christiansburg2.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=797

Warm Hearth Lecture Series: Winston Churchill

On Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning July 12, at 3:30 pm at the Karr Activity Center, Dr. J. Rufus Fears will lecture on Winston Churchill. For residents and their guests. The lectures will last 3–4 weeks.

HD Broadcasts: Opera, Ballet, Art

The **Regal Cinema in Christiansburg** will show HD broadcasts of operas and art & architecture this summer.

All events are at 7 pm. The AARP admission price is \$12.50. For more information and events, see www.fathomevents.com.

Metropolitan Opera (Wednesdays, 7 pm, \$12.50)

Jun 22 *Tosca*

Jun 29 *L’Elisir d’Amore*

Jul 13 *La Bohème*

Jul 20 *Così fan Tutte*

Art & Architecture in Cinema (Thursdays, 7 pm, \$12.50)

Jun 16 *Teatro Alla Scala: The Temple of Wonders*

Jul 14 *St. Peter’s and the Papal Basilicas of Rome*

Frank Theatres, Blacksburg will show HD broadcasts of an opera and a ballet from London. www.rohcinema.com

Jun 12, 15 *The Sleeping Beauty*, Royal Ballet

Jul 24, 27 *Werther*, Royal Opera House

Movies: The Lyric Theatre, Blacksburg thelyric.com

Classic Movies Saturdays and Wednesdays, 3 pm, free

Jun 4, 8 *Oliver!*

Jul 9, 13 *Breakfast at Tiffany’s*

Aug 13, 17 *The Candidate*

June Film Schedule

Jun 3–9 *The Man Who Knew Infinity*

Jun 10–16 *Sing Street*

Jun 17–23 *The Meddler*

Jun 24–30 *A Bigger Splash*

Monday matinees with open captioning: 10 am

Live Theatre, free

Studio Theatre, Squires Student Center, Virginia Tech
Reservations: www.performingarts.vt.edu/summer-arts-festival

Jun 17, 18, 19 *Rapunzel: The Musical* 2 and 4 pm, free
performed by the Blacksburg Children’s Theatre

Aug 11, 12 *Babes in Arms* 7:30 pm, free

Moss Arts Center Performances

www.artscenter.vt.edu/

June 16 *Summer Nights and Melodies* 7:30 pm, free

June 23 *Quintet Fervor* 7:30 pm, free

June 25 *Folk Inspirations and Echoes* 7:30 pm, free

June 28 *Elegance and Emotion* 7:30 pm, free

June 29 *Summer Intensive Closing Concert* 7:30 pm, free

June 30 *Così fan Tutte* Ash Lawn Opera 7:30 pm, \$30

Aug 5–7 *Cube Fest: Massively Multichannel Music*
5 events: 3 free, 2 \$10



New River Valley Garden Tour 2016

Saturday July 9, 2016 9:00 am–5:00 pm

mfrlfriends.org/gardentour.html

See seven wonderful summer gardens in Blacksburg

The Annual New River Valley Garden Tour showcases innovative, specialty and simply beautiful private gardens in the New River Valley each July. The event is sponsored by the Friends of the Library with the cooperation of the New River Valley Master Gardeners' Association. Tickets are available at public libraries in Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Floyd, Radford, Salem, and Shawsville.

The day of the tour: Visit the **Master Gardener Plant Clinic** at Glade Road Growing. Ask questions about lawns, landscaping, and pest control; pick up a soil test kit with instructions; or choose from a large selection of free flower and vegetable seeds.



Garden of Steve and Rosemary Cole

Exhibitions

Perspective Gallery, 2nd Floor, Squires Student Center, Virginia Tech, Tuesday–Saturday 12–9 pm; Sunday 1–5 pm

Jun 3–Aug 6 *Emotive: Marino Colmano's 50 Years in Pictures*

Moss Arts Center

May 19–Jul 3 Young Artists: *Home*

Jun 2–Aug 7 P. Buckley Moss: *Sowing Seeds*

Jun 30–Aug 24 Steven White: *100 Portraits*

Jul 14–Aug 24 Joe Kelley

more information (receptions, artist talks; hours):

www.artscenter.vt.edu/

Summit Place Opens in Giles County

Summit Place, a residential community for low-income adults 55 and older, opened in October 2015 in Rich Creek, a small town on the New River in Giles County. The one-story building can house 23 residents living in furnished and accessible single rooms with private baths. Summit Place offers 24/7 assistance with daily living, 3+ meals a day, and activities and programs for residents. The assistance helps residents maintain their independence, with the freedom to come and go.

Because of special federal funding and nonprofit status, charges are significantly lower than those for comparable facilities. Charges are on a sliding scale based on residents' income and assets.

Daily recreational activities are available. A courtyard allows residents to have vegetable or flower gardens. Local choirs and musicians offer entertainment.



The vision of Summit Place is to provide an affordable home for people who may not otherwise be able to afford a market-rate assisted living home, without any compromise on comfort and quality of care. If you would like to learn more or to schedule a tour, please contact the Administrator, Pam Runyon, at 540-358-0220, or visit Summitplace.org.

contributed by Zoe Belyavsky, Aging in Place Coordinator, Americorps VISTA

Please send stories, photos, and ideas for this newsletter to Carolyn Rude, carolyn.rude@comcast.net.

Chapter Officers 2016

President • Don Creamer, dgc2@vt.edu

Vice President • Ben Crawford, ben.crawford@vt.edu

Secretary • Sally Anna Stapleton, sanna418@gmail.com

Treasurer • Pat Ballard, pballard@vt.edu

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Visit Your AARP Chapter Website at www.blacksburgaarp.org



Blacksburg Chapter #2613
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 P.O. Box 10082
 Blacksburg, VA 24062

**Nonprofit
 Organization
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 PAID
 Blacksburg, VA
 Permit No. 32**

 **Member Application for 2016**

Name: _____

Spouse/Partner: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

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

New _____ Renewal _____ 90+ years old (free) _____

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 the check and this form to: .

Tom Alston - P.O. Box 10082 • Blacksburg, VA 24062



Real Possibilities with
Blacksburg
 VA Chapter #2613

Blacksburg Chapter

NEWS

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 www.blacksburgaarp.org

Serving the greater New River Valley, Virginia

Health and Wellness Fair

September 14, noon–4 pm

Christiansburg Recreation Center

(substitute for our September meeting)

Get ready for the AARP/VCOM Health and Wellness Fair! Come to the Christiansburg Rec Center September 14, Noon to 4 pm—and tell your friends and neighbors about it!

There will be over 125 exhibitors, live demonstrations, and interactive displays. Tables and chairs are spotted around to give you an opportunity to sit and chat, or just rest after wandering around the Fair. Local pharmacies are donating time for free flu shots, other immunizations, and health screenings. The Fair can be a place to get one of those screenings you might have been putting off whether it is for blood pressure, blood sugar, hearing, skin damage, vein health, or musculoskeletal screenings. If you have wondered whether seeing a chiropractor or acupuncturist would help you, come talk with one and get an idea of what they do. How about a massage to relax you?

The theme of the Fair is this: *Successful aging is not just about medical conditions and their management, but about living a full and engaged life and how our community makes that possible.* Some exhibitors will focus on the fun side of life. Have you heard about adult coloring books? Come try one out or see what you might do in painting. Where could you go to hike a trail? And maybe have a glass of red wine afterwards?

We all need someplace to live, and aging can present some challenges. Exhibitors can help you see what's possible in renovating your current home or providing some in-home care. Also, exhibitors can show you options for assisted living that are available

please turn to page 2

President's Column by Don Creamer

40 Years and Counting

Did you know that ...

- ✓ *In America, the first Sunday after the first Monday in September is celebrated as National Grandparents' Day?*
- ✓ *Shakespeare did not mention September in any of his plays?*
- ✓ *September has three birth flowers: the forget-me-not, the morning glory and the aster? Forget-me-nots represent love and memories, asters represent love as well, and the morning glory represents unrequited love. These are all very passionate flowers.*

So, happy Grandparents' Day to all as we launch the second half of 2016!

Good Beginnings for 2016: We have had a busy and fruitful first half of the year with excellent programs at our monthly member meetings, the Bill Thomas event, and the 40th Anniversary Picnic for the chapter.

Leadership Opportunities: Our own Ben Crawford was selected as recipient of the Montgomery County Leading Lights Award for 2016. Ben is an exemplary example of volunteer leader. With his example in mind, let me remind you that we have launched the Nominating Committee for chapter officers and Board members for terms beginning 2017. *Who among you will be the next Ben Crawford?* If you seek fun, challenge, and reward for your actions, step up to the call for leaders in our chapter. Contact Tina King, Chair of the Nominating Committee, at (540) 980-7720 or tinaking@nrvaooa.org and let her know how you wish to help. Tina and her committee will make their preliminary report to the Board at the September meeting but nominations from members will be accepted until the final

Upcoming Events

- September 7: Registration for fall LLI courses opens (p. 2)
- September 14: Health and Wellness Fair, noon–4 pm
- September 24: Christiansburg library celebration 1 pm (p. 4)
- September 25: AARP food drive, Kroger South Main, 11–3 pm
- October 4: LLI-LWV panel on the presidential election 7 pm (p. 2)

AARP Food Drive

Kroger–South Main Blacksburg

The AARP Food Drive will be held **September 25, 2016**, from 11 am to 3 pm, Main Street Kroger, Blacksburg. Please come out and help supply the local food bank. If you can volunteer to help, please contact Sally Anna Stapleton, sanna418@gmail.com.



Blacksburg Chapter #2613

Chapter meetings are the third Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center, Patrick Henry Drive at 11:30 am. 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.

Please bring a **food donation** (a can or box of non-perishable food) to the AARP chapter meeting. We collect food at each monthly chapter meeting for the food banks in Blacksburg and Christiansburg.

please turn to page 3

Health and Wellness Fair Offers 125 exhibitors, screenings, cooking and exercise demonstrations

in the area. Exhibitors can provide information about veteran benefits, financial services, adult day care, and services for the disabled.

We have introduced live cooking demonstrations and exercise exhibits to the Fair—see the schedule below. All other exhibits are available from noon to 4 pm.

AARP members are no strangers to the benefits of volunteering, and the Fair will highlight each exhibitor who has a volunteering opportunity. There are so many great ways that we can support our community and enhance our own lives.

We simply cannot tell you about all the exciting things you will find at the Fair, we can just encourage you to come and see for yourself. The Fair is free, the parking is ample, and plenty of folks in the Fair can help you find what you are looking for once you get there.

Schedule of Demonstrations, Health and Wellness Fair

Exercise

- 12:15 Tai Chi for Arthritis
- 1:00 Chair Yoga
- 1:30 Qi Gong
- 2:15 Zumba
- 3:00 Senior Motions

Cooking

- 12:15 Quesadillas—Extension Service
- 1:00 The Egg Lady
- 2:30 Quesadillas—Extension Service

Panel on the Presidential Election 2016 October 4, 7–8:30, German Club

We've all heard plenty of "spin" about the 2016 presidential election, but on October 4, we have an opportunity to hear from four political science professors who will have nonpartisan insights on what makes this election different from others and how it represents current cultural forces. Why are voters behaving so differently in this election cycle? What changes and events have caused these responses?

The panel, "Anger, Frustration, and the 2016 Presidential Election," will take place at the German Club (Southgate Drive) on Tuesday, October 4, from 7–8:30 pm. The League of Women Voters of Montgomery County and the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech have partnered to sponsor this event. There is no charge, and the public is welcome.

Karen Hult (Virginia Tech) will be the moderator.

Panelists are Caitlin Jewitt (Virginia Tech), Daniel Reed (Radford), and Charles Walcott (Emeritus, Virginia Tech).

Professors Hult and Walcott have co-authored two prize-winning books on White House governance, and they have written numerous articles focusing on the US Presidency.

Professor Jewitt studies political campaigns and presidential primaries and caucuses.

Professor Reed studies voter mobilization and political campaigns.



Lifelong Learning Institute Opens Fall 2016 Registration

The fall term for the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech promises rich learning opportunities for curious adults 50 and older in the New River Valley. Courses and special events cover current issues, local history and culture, science, health, living well/personal growth, music, art, and literature, technology and much more. The LLI at Virginia Tech is also chartering a small group educational tour to Cuba, January 6-15, 2017, through Road Scholar.

"No tests, no papers, no grades. Just great opportunities to connect with others in a shared learning experience and good discussion. It doesn't get any better than this for the instructor or the student," according to Jerry Niles, an LLI founding member who spent his career observing classrooms.

Most courses begin the week of October 3. Twenty-four courses and fifteen special events and tours will be offered. Registration opens September 7. Course and event descriptions are available online at www.cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning. You can also request a printed catalog on the LLI homepage.

Over 400 members enrolled in one or more of the courses and special events offered during the spring 2016 program. Members were treated to stellar active and retired faculty from Virginia Tech, Radford, and the New River Valley community. "Gifted teachers who are passionate about their subjects and truly engaged students create a special magic in LLI classrooms," said Pat Hyer, a volunteer leader of the institute. "We hope to create memorable learning experiences for LLI members each and every term!"

Information about registration, fees, locations, and other details is available at www.cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning. Join LLI and register for courses online or contact Leah Coffman at 540-231-4364 for registration assistance. If you are an individual with a disability and desire an accommodation, please contact the LLI office at 540-231-5685 or contact us by email at lifelonglearning@vt.edu at least 14 in advance of the start of classes or the event.

vote in November.

Let me bring you up to date on some important initiatives of our chapter that have occurred during the summer months.

TimeBank: First, we have appointed Val Coluni to serve as liaison with the TimeBank initiative in our community. Ellen Stewart is leading this project and she needs our member involvement to make TimeBank relevant and effective. Val is expected to show us the way for personal engagement in this important community initiative. We already have offered some assistance to them by writing a letter of support of their efforts to secure a sizeable grant from the Community Foundation of the New River Valley.

Health and Wellness Fair: Jennie Reilly, Angela Little, and Wendy Baldwin have been very hard at work planning the biennial Health and Wellness Fair. More information about this event can be seen elsewhere in this newsletter. I want to emphasize, however, that this event will be larger than in previous years and will include activities not available until now. You definitely want to make plans to attend.

LLI: The Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech is gearing up for an exciting fall term. Pat Hyer, Jerry Niles, and Carolyn Rude especially have been engaged in developing the program and catalog and preparing to launch the fall term. You can keep up with their work and prepare yourself for membership and enrollment by visiting www.cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning.

Social Contacts Among Members: Your chapter also is exploring some ideas for more social contacts among members. How about an occasional wine tasting at one of the local wineries, for example? We possibly can turn such events into fundraising activities in collaboration with other organization partners. We are only in the beginning stages of such thinking. If you have ideas, let me hear from you.

Aging Well in our Communities: Here are a couple of books that may interest members interested in thinking of aging as opportunity: *Disrupt Aging: A Bold New Path to Living Your Best Life at Every Age* by Jo Ann Jenkins (CEO of AARP) is a discussion of health, wealth, and self while seeing opportunities for looking at aging differently. *Where We Live: Communities for All Ages* by Nancy Leamond highlights more than 100 initiatives that mayors nationwide have launched to improve their communities, respond to pressing issues, and build partnerships. Further, you can subscribe free to a Livable Communities e-newsletter at <https://secure.aarp.org/livable-communities/livable-community-newsletter-subscribe/>. Lots of ideas for living well in these three sources.

So, stay tuned. There is much to come from AARP Blacksburg chapter.

Your Generosity Paid Dividends

You were invited at the beginning of this fiscal year to donate to the chapter budget beyond the \$15 annual dues. Thanks to your generosity, the chapter has been able to expand its reach to more fully realize our goals. Your Board of Directors wishes to say THANK YOU!

A simple version of our budget is that we receive and spend approximately \$4,000 annually. Dues, earnings from the biennial Health and Wellness Fair, and earnings from the 50/50 drawings make up the bulk of our income. Expenditures typically include printing and mailing of the newsletters and contributions to charity awarded at our annual holiday luncheon.

This simplistic version of our budget shows that we have limited financial resources to expand our operations and our reach into other community activities. Thanks to your extra donations this year's budget was strengthened by \$2,061, allowing us to support financially the following activities and events:

- The Bill Thomas event in April
- Sponsorship of Leading Lights Awards
- Assistance to the AARP Tax-aid program
- Sponsorship of Warm Hearth Village Cheeseburger in Paradise event
- Membership in Downtown Blacksburg Incorporated
- Chapter 40th anniversary picnic

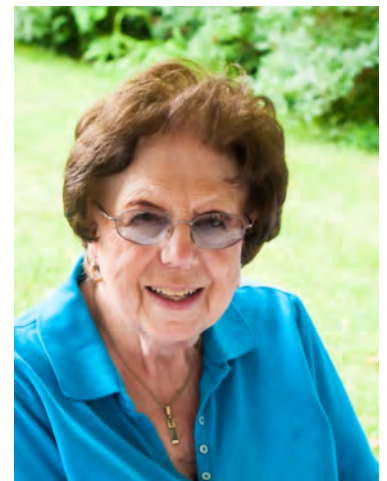
What a difference you have made ...

Clearly your money helped improve our chapter and an invitation for you to make donations to the chapter beyond annual dues will be continued next year. Let's see what else we can accomplish together!

Don Creamer



Terry Wildman and Sue Magliaro hosted the AARP 40th anniversary picnic in June



June Schmidt, chapter chair of Financial Planning and Audit, enjoys the anniversary picnic.

photos by Peter Magolda

Christiansburg Library Celebrates 30th Anniversary September 24, 1 pm by Monena Hall

Libraries have a long and storied history in Montgomery County. It all began in 1941, when the county joined a regional library system that was established with WPA funds and also included Radford and Pulaski. From 1941 to 1943, the area's libraries struggled with local funding, resulting in a discontinuation of bookmobile services to most areas, which prompted a campaign to get library funding on the ballot. On December 21, 1943 a resolution was passed, establishing the Montgomery County Public Library, which remained part of the regional system with Pulaski County and the City of Radford until 1970. In 1975 the Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library was created.

The Christiansburg Library has had a number of homes since opening in 1943—the mezzanine of a Main Street clothing store, a single room in the Phlegar Building on South Franklin (where it did eventually expand to two rooms), and even a church. It wasn't until 1986 that it finally found its current home on Sheltman Street.

Ultimately, the Christiansburg Library was built to serve the educational and entertainment needs of the public with respect, accountability, and a collection that represents the diverse interests of our patrons. And while it has undergone many changes since opening in 1986, its heart and connection to the community has remained the same.

Please help us celebrate 30 wonderful years in our community, on Saturday, September 24, at 1 pm. We will have crafts, refreshments, and fun activities for all ages! Guest speakers include Mayor Mike Barber, and local author Tiffany Trent.

AARP Hosts Booth at Steppin' Out

Flooding rain and high winds could not deter the volunteers who staffed the Steppin' Out street fair on August 5 in Blacksburg. Twice they had to fold up the booth, but in the meantime they distributed hundreds of useful pamphlets and invited visitors to sign a petition to support Social Security with the national AARP "Take A Stand" campaign. The volunteers also gave out information on the **Health and Wellness Fair**, **Lifelong Learning Institute** at VT (LLI), and the **TimeBank** currently being organized. They collectively contributed 77 hours of volunteer time!

About a hundred people signed the "Take A Stand" board. Dozens expressed interest in the AARP Safe Driving program, LLI, and the upcoming Health and Wellness Fair. Many wanted to know which presidential candidate AARP is supporting and were surprised to learn AARP is strictly nonpartisan.

HD Broadcasts in Christiansburg: Opera, Ballet

The Regal Cinema in Christiansburg (110 New River Road) shows HD broadcasts of Metropolitan Opera and Bolshoi Ballet performances. See www.fathomevents.com.

Metropolitan Opera (tickets \$22 senior)

- The Met's 2016-17 *Live in HD* and Radio Program Guide is available at metopera.org/HDguide or by calling 1-800-638-6737.
- Opera synopses and cast listings are available before each performance: metopera.org/liveinhd.

	Saturdays	Wednesdays; 6:30 pm
<i>Tristan und Isolde</i>	Oct 8, 12:00 pm	Oct 12 (5 hr 15 min)
<i>Don Giovanni</i>	Oct 22, 12:55 pm	Oct 26
<i>L'Amour de Loin</i>	Dec 10, 12:55 pm	Dec 21
<i>Nabucco</i>	Jan 7, 12:55 pm	Jan 11
<i>Roméo and Juliette</i>	Jan 21, 12:55 pm	Jan 25
<i>Rusalka</i>	Feb 25, 12:55 pm	Mar 1
<i>La Traviata</i>	Mar 11, 12:55 pm	Mar 15
<i>Idomeneo</i>	Mar 25, 12:55 pm	Mar 29
<i>Eugene Onegin</i>	Apr 22, 12:55 pm	Apr 26 (4 hrs)
<i>Der Rosenkavalier</i>	May 13, 12:30 pm	May 17 (4 hr 50 min)

Bolshoi Ballet (\$15 senior); Sundays at 12:55 pm

<i>The Golden Age</i>	Oct 16
<i>The Bright Stream</i>	Nov 6
<i>The Nutcracker</i>	Dec 18
<i>The Sleeping Beauty</i>	Jan 22
<i>Swan Lake</i>	Feb 5
<i>A Contemporary Evening</i>	Mar 19
<i>A Hero of our Time</i>	Apr 9

Frank Theatres in Blacksburg plans to show Royal Opera and Royal Ballet performances from London, but the schedule was not available at the time this newsletter was prepared.

Heaps of THANKS to the following volunteers: **Don Creamer, Lorraine Bratton** (Roanoke), **Shirley Peterson, Sally Anna Stapleton, Nola Elliott, Jerry Niles, Ruth Anne Niles, Mac McCloud, Judy Rogers, and Violet Drake**. Associate State AARP VA Director **Brian Jacks** worked the booth much of Friday. **Ben and Carol Crawford** and their daughter, Virginia, helped set up and take down the exhibit. **Laura Oganowski**, of Richmond, who was recently employed to promote the "Take A Stand" campaign, worked Friday and Saturday afternoons. She also held a public meeting at the Blacksburg Library on Social Security that Friday morning.

Ben Crawford

Photo on the facing page (p. 5): Shirley Peterson and Sally Anna Stapleton worked the Blacksburg Chapter booth at Steppin' Out. They were soaked in a hard rain later that afternoon.

Legislative Report *by Ben Crawford*

The Blacksburg AARP Chapter Advocacy Committee has visited this summer with staff of Senator **Mark Warner** and Congressman **Morgan Griffith** about several issues:

1. Seniors Tax Hike Prevention Act (SB 3111): In January 2017, the income threshold over which taxpayers can deduct medical expenses will increase from 7.5% of income to 10%. Between 8 and 10 million Americans use the medical expense deduction. If less of their expenses are deductible, their taxes will increase and incomes will decrease. Senate Bill 3111 would delay the tax increase for two years.

AARP supports this bill because 56% of those claiming the medical expense deduction were 65 years old and older. Over half reported income of \$50,000 per year or less.

Ryan Martin and **Ben Crawford**, pictured below, together with two AARP volunteers from Roanoke, met with staff of Senator Mark Warner and by video in August. We asked Senator Warner to co-sponsor the bipartisan SB 3111.

What can AARP members do? Contact your representatives and ask that they support and consider co-sponsoring Senate Bill 3111 as tax relief for middle-class seniors.



Ryan Martin, Ben Crawford, and 2 volunteers from Roanoke



Steppin' Out Booth
Shirley Petersen and
Sally Anna Stapleton

2. Family Caregivers Act: Family caregivers help older adults and people with disabilities live independently in their homes and communities, but they take on physical, emotional, and financial challenges.

The **Family Caregivers Act** or the **Raise Act** (Recognize, Assist, Include, Support, and Engage) requires the development of a national strategy to support family caregivers. The U.S. Senate passed it unanimously, and the House of Representatives, with bipartisan support, is considering it.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates the cost at \$1 million over 5 years. The money is mostly for new staff to support an advisory council and develop/coordinate a national strategy.

Chapter President **Don Creamer**, along with **Ryan Martin** and **Ben Crawford**, visited with staff of Congressman Griffith in his Christiansburg office to ask that he support passage of this act and that he urge House leaders to take up and act on this bill upon their return in September.

What can you do? Urge Congressman Griffith to support action on this bill. This bill, as of August 1, 2016, had more than 90 bipartisan House cosponsors and the support of more than 50 national groups.

3. Social Security: In both congressional visits, we talked about the vital importance of Social Security and the urgent need to update the program. We encouraged our representatives to endorse AARP's Take A Stand campaign. Further, we asked that they use their influence to include questions about SS in the Presidential debates coming later this year.

AARP Driver Safety Course October 27–28

The Giles County Chapter has scheduled an AARP Driver Safety program in the Senior Center, Pearisburg, starting Thursday afternoon October 27, from 1 to 5 pm, and continuing the next morning (October 28) from 9 am to 1 pm. Lunch will be provided the second day. The Center will also provide snacks and drinks each day. Look for more details in the October newsletter, but save the date.

Chapter Officers 2016

President • Don Creamer, dgc2@vt.edu

Vice President • Ben Crawford, ben.crawford@vt.edu

Secretary • Sally Anna Stapleton, sanna418@gmail.com

Treasurer • Pat Ballard, pballard@vt.edu

Board of Directors

- 2016—Tom Alston, Tina King, Sally Anna Stapleton
- 2017—Pat Hyer, Jerry Niles, Shirley Peterson
- 2018—Wendy Baldwin, Ryan Martin, Ray Van Dyke

Website: www.blacksburgaarp.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AARPBlacksburg/>



Blacksburg Chapter #2613
 Don Creamer, President
 P.O. Box 10082
 Blacksburg, VA 24062

**Nonprofit
 Organization
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Blacksburg, VA
 Permit No. 32**

AARP Member Application for 2016

Name: _____

Spouse/Partner: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

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

New _____ Renewal _____ 90+ years old (free) _____

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 the check and this form to:

Tom Alston - P.O. Box 10082 • Blacksburg, VA 24062



Serving the greater New River Valley, Virginia

October 18 Chapter Meeting Introducing the NRV TimeBank

Everyone knows that neighbors will occasionally help neighbors when clear needs arise, such as in emergencies. But on a routine basis you may have needs that are unnoticed and unmet, and you may at the same time have skills to share that very few know about. So, a good question is this? *What would communities look like if there were a better way of connecting people who need help with those who have the capability and willingness to provide it?*

Elisabeth Willis has an answer to this question. She is the Executive Director of NRV HOME, a new non-profit organization that is sponsoring the NRV TimeBank. Elisabeth will be with us on the 18th to explain how the TimeBank works to connect people in a mutual support network. After her conversation with us we will all know exactly how to get involved and become a member of this new network.



Elisabeth Willis

So, what is a timebank? In a nutshell, an hour of service that you provide to another member earns a like amount of credit that you can spend for a service you may need

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President's Column by Don Creamer October's Celebrations

- More U.S. presidents have been born in October than any other month.
- October is the month in which the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, the first artificial satellite.
- On October 1, 1896, free rural delivery of mail started in the United States.
- The holiday of Halloween originates from the ancient Celtic holiday of Samhain and has evolved since. The ancient Celtic people used to mark the day to celebrate the end of harvest season and winter's beginning. Halloween also was viewed as the transitional period, a bridge to the world of the dead.

Whether you cherish the month of October for the MLB World Series or the holiday of Halloween (or any number of other celebrations during the month), October generally is welcomed each year. The leaves change colors and the feel of autumn refreshes us following the hot days of summer. Likewise, our AARP chapter is rejuvenating from an extremely productive year thus far toward yet more events and opportunities. We have two more strong member meeting programs, one this month and one the next, and a big social/fundraising event in October followed by our traditional Holiday Luncheon and celebration in December.

We can begin the celebrations by recalling the blockbuster Health and Wellness Fair conducted on September 14 at the Christiansburg Recreational Center. Our member planners for this event—Jennie Reilly, Angela Little, and Wendy Baldwin—did a fantastic job. It was daunting to equal and to exceed the previous Fairs planned by John and Sharen Hillison, but this year's team did it. They broke all previous records by attracting 130 exhibitors and approximately 450 visitors. Accolades were tossed around all day by those

please turn to page 3

Upcoming Events

- October 18: Shred-a-thon (p. 4)
- October 22: Rotary blood screening (p. 4)
- October 27: AARP/LLI event at the White Barrel Winery (p. 4)
- October 27, 28: Driver Safety Class (p. 3)
- November 4: MFRL *Bountiful Baskets Auction*, 6–9 pm (p. 4)
- November 7: "Case Studies in Terrorism," 1–2:30 (p. 4)
- December 14: AARP annual holiday and celebration lunch, 11:30 am–1:30 pm

The AARP September 25

Food Drive was a great success. Approximately 550 lbs of food were collected and delivered to Interfaith Food Pantry in Blacksburg and MCCAP Food Bank in Christiansburg. Thank you to Shirley Peterson, Ruth Anne and Jerry Niles of AARP and Sandy Johnson of RSVP for helping.

*Sally Anna Stapleton
AARP Community Service*



Blacksburg Chapter #2613

Chapter meetings are the third Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center, Patrick Henry Drive, at 11:30 am. Board meetings are the first Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center at 10:00 am.

*Please bring a **food donation** (a can or box of non-perishable food) to the AARP chapter meeting. We collect food at each monthly chapter meeting for the food banks in Blacksburg and Christiansburg.*

The True Impact of Distracted Driving on Seniors

By Jon Antin, PhD, CHFP; Director, Center for Vulnerable Road User Safety, Virginia Tech Transportation Institute

This article is a follow-up to Dr. Antin's well-received presentation on distracted driving and seniors at the May 2016 meeting.

“Don't text and drive!” You've probably heard that one before, and I certainly hope you adhere to this important admonition regarding the plague of distracted driving we're now seeing on our roads. What about this one: “Texting increases crash risk by a factor of 23!”? You may recall having heard something like this, but you may not be aware that this particular statistic is one of the key findings from a naturalistic driving study (NDS) conducted by researchers who work right here in Blacksburg at the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI). That particular study was focused on truck and bus drivers and they looked at a variety of “safety-critical events”, such as near crashes, in addition to actual crashes (Olson et al., 2009). Still, this finding became a well-known and powerful part of the national discussion on distracted driving, providing data to strengthen this important social movement.

The NDS approach entails unobtrusively installing cameras and other sensors in volunteers' vehicles for extended periods of time. In this way, we can see how people really drive in the real world—that's the real value and power of the NDS approach. VTTI researchers recently led the largest full-scale NDS ever undertaken, called the SHRP 2 NDS. During this study, the team collected over 35 million miles of data from 3,400+ regular drivers aged 16–99 who were living near one of six data collection sites.



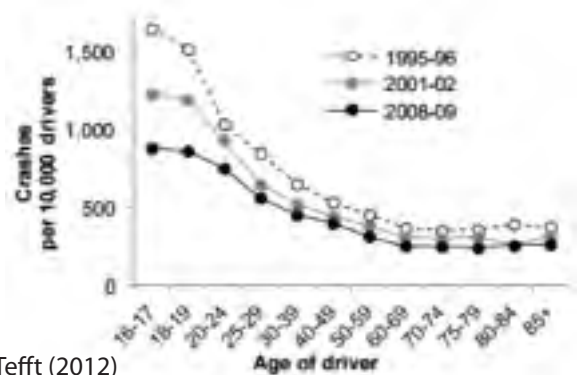
Sensors/cameras installed in vehicles



ple engaging in every day while driving (Dingus, Guo, Lee, Antin, et al., 2016). Some of the statistically significant highlights from that study, where the risks associated with the distracting behaviors were compared with model, attentive driving, are discussed below. Risk levels noted are the risk of having a property damage level or higher severity crash. Even just manipulating the stereo or climate controls approximately doubles the risk of a crash. All secondary activities involving a *hand-held* cell phone significantly increased risk—from the least distracting, just talking on a hand-held cell phone (2.2x increase in risk) to the worst found in this study, dialing a hand-held cell phone (12.2x increase in risk).

But here's some good news for all the older drivers out there: in a subsequent analysis of the SHRP 2 database where age was factored in, Guo, Klauer, Fang, Hankey, Antin et al. (in press) found that the oldest age group (65+) consistently demonstrated a *far* lower prevalence of engaging in a secondary task compared with all younger age groups (16–20, 21–29, and 30–64). About the only secondary task where senior drivers engaged on a par with younger drivers was “Interacting with Passenger,” and while this may be a risky distraction for inexperienced drivers, it often has a *protective* effect when the senior driver's passenger is serving in the role of a driving helper or “co-pilot.”

This may be why, perhaps contrary to popular opinion, national crash statistics consistently demonstrate that **on a per-driver basis, crash rates for seniors are the lowest of all driving age groups** (Tefft, 2012).



From Tefft (2012)

With the enormous SHRP 2 dataset, we can now evaluate many aspects of driver behavior and safety previously inaccessible to researchers.

In a recent study, VTTI analysts used the SHRP 2 dataset to evaluate both the prevalence and real impact on risk of a wide variety of distracting behaviors or secondary tasks we see peo-

In general, the SHRP 2 data showed that the broad array of drivers is distracted in some fashion more than 50% of the time by performing some task unrelated to the main task of operating the vehicle, and the overall average effect of all these distractions is a more than twofold increase in crash risk.

continued on p. 3

President's Column, *continued from p. 1*

attending including volunteers, exhibitors, and visitors. Well done Jennie, Angela, and Wendy!!!

I hope that everyone has registered for their choices of courses and events for the Fall term 2016 with the **Lifelong Learning Institute** at Virginia Tech (LLI). The schedule is rich in opportunities and one or more of them will fit your interests perfectly. See you in class!

I think that you will love our **big event for October**. We have arranged with our partner LLI to conduct a social/fundraising event at the **White Barrel Winery** on October 27, 4:00–7:00 pm. Our chapter has agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding with the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech pertaining to activities such as this. It will be signed early in October and will be posted on the Governance page of our website soon thereafter for your viewing. See page 4 in this newsletter for more details of the event. Just be sure that you attend. It will be fun. Guaranteed.

Finally, plans for the **December Holiday Luncheon** are well in hand thanks to the initiative of Thais Beams, chair of our Hospitality Committee. She has arranged for us to return to the Warm Heart Village. Mark your calendars for December 14, 11:30 am–1:30 pm. We hope to attract most of our members to this celebratory event.

Distracted Driving, *continued from p. 2*

So, what can we do to improve our own driving safety and minimize the risks of distracted driving? Choose optimum times to engage in only the most important secondary tasks (like adjusting the climate controls or changing radio stations), preferably while stopped or during lower demand driving scenarios. Always remember to frequently and meaningfully re-engage with the driving task if the secondary task takes more than a couple of seconds. And, especially if you're using a hand-held phone, put it down until you're safely stopped—it's just not worth the risk.

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October meeting, *continued from p. 1*

yourself. Ok, so the system to manage this kind of sharing is a bit more involved than can be explained in a paragraph or two. This will be Elisabeth's job at our meeting on the 18th. The good news is that our local TimeBank has already launched—the official event was held on September 22. And, AARP Blacksburg is already involved with our own Val Coluni serving as Chapter liaison to the TimeBank.

If you want to take a look at the TimeBank before October 18, see the website (nrvertimebank.org) or Facebook page (New River Valley TimeBank). It is also useful to know that TimeBank is international in scope, with TimeBanks in operation throughout the US and in 30 other countries.

Our presenter, Elisabeth Willis, wears a few other hats in addition to her work with the TimeBank. She is Project Manager for Housing and Community Development for the Town of Blacksburg and for the NRV HOME Consortium. She also serves on the leadership teams of the NRV Aging in Place initiative and the NRV Livability Initiative.

We hope to see you all for this informative discussion on October 18.

AARP DRIVER SAFETY CLASS

When: Thursday, October 27, 1–5 pm
Friday, October 28, 9 am–1 pm
Snacks and Friday lunch will be provided.

Where: Giles Senior Center
1320 Wenonah Ave, Pearisburg, VA 24134

To register: Call Gail Vaught at 540 921-3924 or email her at GVaught@gilescounty.org

Participant number is limited to 16.

Participants in Virginia are entitled to a discount on their auto insurance over and above any other discounts.

The instructor, Kathryn Debnar of Roanoke, does an outstanding job.

The AARP Driver Safety Program is the nation's first and largest refresher course for drivers age 50 and older. The program has helped millions of drivers protect their safety on today's roads.

The training is designed to help you:

- Tune up your driving skills and update your knowledge of the rules of the road.
- Learn about normal, age-related physical changes.
- Find out how to adjust your driving to allow for these changes.
- Reduce your traffic violations, crashes, and chances for injuries.
- Drive more safely.

October Opportunities

Social/Fundraising Event at White Barrel Winery

Here is another first for AARP Blacksburg. We are teaming with the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech (LLI) to conduct an event at the White Barrel Winery meant to help us get to know one another better and to raise a little money for special projects and to support LLI. Here is what you need to put on your calendar:

AARP Blacksburg/LLI Social

White Barrel Winery

4025 Childress Road Christiansburg, VA 24073

October 27, 4:00–7:00 pm

\$25 per person (one glass of wine paired with appetizers)

Go to www.facebook.com/events/155809058207489/ to see the announcement.

To purchase tickets, go to <http://tinyurl.com/jrgpkfy>



White Barrel Winery is about 18 miles south of the First and Main shopping center in Blacksburg via 460, I-81, Route 8 (turn south from I-81), and Route 693 (turn right from Route 8).

October Shred-a-Thon

Christiansburg Rec Center, Tuesday, October 18, 3–6 pm
Protect your important information and clean out the clutter. For more information contact Tammy Caldwell, 540-382-2349 ext. 2003 or email: tcaldwell@christiansburg.org. *This is a drive thru event, no walk-ups will be allowed. No businesses please. Papers to be shredded must be in a plastic tote or box, no plastic bags.*

Rotary Club Blood Screening

The Rotary Club of Christiansburg-Blacksburg is offering blood screening October 22, 6:30–10 am, in the lobby of the LewisGale Hospital-Montgomery. The screening covers cholesterol, blood sugar, and many other blood components. Please register at www.rotary7570.org/blood or call 540-951-8988. \$40.

"Case Studies in Terrorism": Invitation from LLI

Monday, November 7, 1–2:30 pm, German Club

The Lifelong Learning Institute invites members and guests to attend the event, "Case Studies in Terrorism," presented by Virginia Tech Police Chief Kevin Foust. Before coming to VT, Chief Foust worked in the FBI for 24 years, including as unit chief of the Osama Bin Laden Unit. He investigated terrorism in Tanzania, Kenya, and Yemen, among other places.

On November 7, he will discuss how the nature of terrorism has changed and will share his experiences with investigations. He will also discuss the impacts of technology on the recruitment and radicalization of terrorists and how partnerships with local regional, national, and international law enforcement personnel are used to keep our communities safe.

Come even if you have not registered for the event, and bring a friend. No charge, free parking.

Blacksburg Library News

Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library Foundation to Hold 4th Annual Bountiful Baskets Auction

This event will be held at the Blacksburg Library, 200 Miller Avenue, Friday, November 4, 6–9 pm.

This event offers an excellent evening out for adults. Both silent and live auction bidding will take place, and more than 150 themed baskets will be available. Items for the live auction include large art pieces as well as experiential events, such as a weekend getaway to a cabin!



Tickets are available for purchase at any of the MFRL branches for \$20. A ticket provides you with two adult beverages, catered refreshments from Our Daily Bread, and live music from the Ridge-liners—not to mention the opportunity to support the library while you mingle and shop! The baskets are eclectic and make for great gifts for friends and family, or to keep for yourself. Baskets range from \$30 and increase based on competitive bids. At the center of each whimsical basket is a book to bring you back to the library. And even if you don't come away with a basket, you'll enjoy your evening!



The Montgomery-Floyd Regional Library Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, sponsors the *Bountiful Baskets Auction*. Funding generated from this event helps the library create new programs, expand services, enhance the collection, and improve our buildings.

Health and Wellness Fair Draws ~500

by Wendy Baldwin and Lisa Leichner

Now that the 2016 AARP/VCOM Health and Wellness Fair is in the rear view mirror, what happened? Did we meet community needs and help our exhibitors reach new audiences? We hope the almost 500 visitors to the 130 exhibitors had as good a time as we did putting this on for the community. The Blacksburg AARP website (www.blacksburgaarp.org) has terrific pictures of the Fair (thank you Gavin Faulkner).

AARP volunteer Mike Reilly helped coordinate the parking needs of vendors and participants alike. Sandy Birch and her team were at the Rec Center at 9 am to prepare healthy snacks: more than 400 cups of trail mix and 18 loaves of gluten-free banana bread, in addition to cut fruit and veggies. The refreshments were such a hit that we ran out by 3 pm! VCOM provided dozens of volunteers to make the logistics move smoothly, and we thank them.

A lot of visitors came for the free health screenings. Hundreds of flu shots were given, and Main Street Pharmacy did a blood pressure or glucose test every two minutes of the entire Fair! Forty people signed up for hearing tests with half following up with appointments at The Hearing Clinic.

Over 40 non-profits were represented, with solutions for health issues, legal aid, emergency preparedness, etc.; information about health services; ideas for recreation in the NRV; and opportunities to volunteer in the community. The proceeds of the exhibitor registration fees will be split between AARP and VCOM to support community activities and scholarships.

Congratulations to S. Armbrister from Dublin who won the \$100 gift card from the Gold Sponsor drawing.



Those of us who organized the Fair were pleased with the coordinated effort of the AARP, VCOM, the Christiansburg Rec Center, and the exhibitors. We are spending some time relaxing and appreciating the fact that the next Health Fair will be two years away, in 2018.

Legislative Report by Val Coluni

1. Domestic Violence. State lawmakers strengthened the laws by ordering that persons subject to domestic violence orders (there are three levels of such orders) can no longer possess a firearm. However, most experts in the field agree that these orders must be supplemented by the involvement of abuse prevention and local law enforcement staffs. Let's act as "first responders" when we know about potential/actual victims and make them aware of the "need of three (laws, abuse prevention and law enforcement staffs)".

2. Constitutional Amendment—Right to Work. Virginia has had a Right to Work Law since 1947. (Union membership may not be a condition of employment.) Supporters of this amendment say having this law in the State Constitution would make it harder for future legislators to change it. Others ask, Is this an appropriate reason for inclusion in our State Constitution?

3. Legislative Privileges. Virginia Supreme Court firmed up a privilege for legislators that allows General Assembly members and some people who work with them to keep certain documents secret. Is this consistent with our efforts for more transparency in government? And should there be some reporting system that lets us know how frequently this privilege is being used?

4. State Advocacy Legislative Objectives for 2017. These will not be finalized until either December and/or January. In 2016 a work and save plan for employees at small employers without effective ways to save for retirement was given much attention as well as the State Ombudsmen Plan (providing extra help to those working in nursing/adult care homes). We may see these objectives again in 2017.



Thais Beams, Wendy Baldwin, and Wanda Smith consider an issue at an AARP Board Meeting. Photo by Peter Magolda.

Chapter Officers 2016

President • Don Creamer, dgc2@vt.edu

Vice President • Ben Crawford, ben.crawford@vt.edu

Secretary • Sally Anna Stapleton, sanna418@gmail.com

Treasurer • Pat Ballard, pballard@vt.edu

Board of Directors

• 2016—Tom Alston, Tina King, Sally Anna Stapleton

• 2017—Pat Hyer, Jerry Niles, Shirley Peterson

• 2018—Wendy Baldwin, Ryan Martin, Ray Van Dyke

Website: www.blacksburgaarp.org Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AARPBlacksburg/>



Blacksburg Chapter #2613
 Don Creamer, President
 P.O. Box 10082
 Blacksburg, VA 24062

**Nonprofit
 Organization
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 PAID
 Blacksburg, VA
 Permit No. 32**

AARP Member Application for 2016

Name: _____

Spouse/Partner: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

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

New ___ Renewal ___ 90+ years old (free) ___

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 the check and this form to:

Tom Alston - P.O. Box 10082 • Blacksburg, VA 24062



November 15 Chapter Meeting

Let's Talk about Nutrition!

This month AARP Blacksburg welcomes Susan Meacham as our featured speaker for the public meeting. Susan is a Professor and Registered Dietitian at the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine in the discipline of preventive medicine and public health. Susan will come prepared to share information about some of the current "hot topics" in nutrition as well as answer some of the questions our own membership has posed.



As you know we have focused this year on the general theme of "Living Well @50 plus," and of course it almost goes without saying that good nutrition plays a key role in keeping us vital and healthy as the years roll by. Yet, knowing how to negotiate the often-confusing information about nutrition can be a bit tricky. Here are some examples from members of our chapter:

- What to do about supplements? How do they help? Why aren't they better regulated? Are they really worth the expense?
- What are the key nutritional challenges for Diabetics?
- What are the best breakfast foods?
- Other than avocados, what are sources of "good fats?"
- What nutritional differences exist between organic and non-organic foods? Are organic foods worth the price?
- What kinds of snack foods are best to avoid "sugar highs?"

please turn to page 3

President's Column by Don Creamer



Perhaps you knew already that

... the birthstone for November is the Topaz

and that

... Thanksgiving Day is the fourth Thursday of November

but did you know that

... November is Peanut Butter Lovers Month

and that...

... the first intercollegiate football game, between Rutgers and Princeton, was played on November 6, 1869?

Well, now you do.

The social/fundraising event at the White Barrel Winery held October 27 was successful and great fun! Forty-four (44) members of AARP Blacksburg and LLI at Virginia Tech and their friends attended to get better acquainted while sharing the fruits of the local vineyard and farms. **The event raised \$550.00 for our AARP/LLI budget** and all we had to do was show up and enjoy it.

This event mainly was a social occasion, and for more than two hours there was excited conversation among participants. The earned funds will be used to support LLI activities and to reinforce our commitment to the partnership we forged following the LivingWell@50+ conference. Some of us already are discussing how we can repeat this type of event either at the White Barrel Winery or some other suitable venue.

The **Holiday Luncheon** is fast approaching and details appear on p. 5. Mark your

please turn to page 3

Upcoming Events

- November 15: Election of AARP officers at the chapter meeting.
- December 14: Holiday Luncheon; see a registration form on p. 5.
- January 9: Registration for spring LLI courses begins.

Annual Holiday Luncheon December 14

The annual holiday luncheon will be held on December 14, 2016, at the Warm Hearth Village Center. Having a delicious lunch with friends is a great way to celebrate the season. Details and the reservation form are on page 5.

This will be the last notice you will receive before the registration deadline of December 1, 2016.



Blacksburg Chapter #2613

Chapter meetings are the third Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center, Patrick Henry Drive at 11:30 am. 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.

Please bring a food donation (a can or box of non-perishable food) to the AARP chapter meeting. We collect food at each monthly chapter meeting for the food banks in Blacksburg and Christiansburg.

Aging in Place in the NRV

by Kim Thurlow, Community Foundation of the New River Valley

Did you know that by 2030, the number of New River Valley (NRV) residents aged 65+ is expected to double from the number living in our region in 2010? In fact, nearly 1 in 4 residents in Giles and Pulaski counties in 2030 will be above age 65. Also, 50% of the region's housing stock is at least 40 years old and not well-suited for those with declining mobility. That 1970s split level house or that house with all that land which once worked as a young family, doesn't work as well for older adults.

So given these trends, how can we maintain and increase quality of life for older adults living in the New River Valley?

Well, that has become the driving question of the NRV Aging in Place Leadership Team, a group of 12 not-for-profit and governmental organizations, who are taking a collaborative and cross-sectoral approach to addressing the needs of older adults in our region. This group was originally formed as part of the NRV Livability Initiative, a 3-year regional planning process, which provided an opportunity for New River Valley residents to develop a vision for the future and develop strategies that businesses, community organizations, local governments, and individuals can use to make this future vision a reality.

In 2013 and 2014, the AIP leadership team held two well attended community workshops to explore the financial, policy, and decision making obstacles that that interfere with NRV residents' ability to age at home and communities. From these sessions emerged the following 6 priority action items:

- 1. Develop a Lifespan Friendly Homes Program** that supports home modifications to improve mobility and energy efficiency for at risk seniors.
- 2. Establish a TimeBank** to provide a community-based network of mutual support in which members exchange services using time rather than dollars.
- 3. Conduct a Regional Housing Survey** to better understand the housing status of older residents and structural needs of their homes.
- 4. Create an Aging in Place Services Connector**, which enables older residents, family caregivers, and service providers to locate and access comprehensive information regarding local services that support older adults' ability to live safely and independently in their homes and communities.
- 5. Revise Land Use and Development Policies** so that they support neighborhood and home design and construction to support successful aging.
- 6. Support Local Communities Interested in Attaining an Age-Friendly Community Certification.** The certification process helps communities adapt structures, housing, and services to support residents regardless of age, disability, or need.

Since the Leadership Team's formation, it has helped to encourage three new affordable housing options for area seniors. **Grissom Lane Apartments** in Blacksburg, now provides eight new energy efficient and award winning apartments for low income people age 55 and older.



Grissom Lane Apartments

Summit Place, a residential supportive living community in the Town of Rich Creek in Giles County, opened in 2015 and now serves people aged 62 and older in need of housing with support services including meals. **The Old Prices Fork elementary school revitalization project** in Montgomery County is also currently converting the old classrooms into 16 two-bedroom units, as part of a larger community development effort. The facility includes a Food Center, which will include a commercial incubator kitchen, farm-to-table restaurant, retail market, craft brewery and business support services.

In addition to developing new housing options, Habitat for Humanity, The Town of Blacksburg and the Community Foundation of the New River Valley (CFNRV), together with several other regional partners, were awarded an \$84,000 grant from Partners for Places, a project of the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities. This funding is being used to develop the **Lifespan Friendly Homes program**, a pilot home modifications program focused on improving energy efficiency and mobility within homes of lower income older adults.

And most recently the leadership team is helping to launch the NRV TimeBank, which is helping to connect people to exchange skills and services, using *time* rather than *dollars*. The possibilities for exchange are endless and may include home repair, animal care, yard work, cooking lessons, computer instruction, etc. The program recently received a 2016 Community Impact grant from the CFNRV to support its launch.

For more information on the work of the Aging in Place Leadership Team, see <https://cfnrv.org/giving/fund-for-the-nrv/aging-in-place-encouraging-lifespan-friendly-communities/> or download the Aging in Place Action plan: <http://www.nrvlivability.org/124>.

If you have an interest in getting involved in this work, please contact: kimthurlow@cfnrv.org. We would love for you to join us!

calendar: **Wednesday, December 14, 11:30 am–1:30 pm, Warm Hearth Village Center.**

You will be asked for **vote for new officers and Board members** during our regular member meeting on November 15. The slate appears in the next column. I am excited that several new members are nominated to join the Board and share in its work. Keep this in mind: there is place for you and your talents on our Board should you choose to serve with us.

We are pleased to announce the formation of a new organization partnership for our chapter. This time, it's the **TimeBank**, and chapter member Val Coluni is now serving as liaison to this organization to help guide the partnership in its inaugural year. Several members have signed up for an orientation session that should lead to active participation in this important new community service. You can join here: <http://nrvertimebank.org/index.php/how-to-join/>

The **Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech** is in the midst of another successful term. Three hundred thirty-eight (338) LLI members are participating in 22 classes and 15 special events during this fall term. Further, planning is almost complete for the Spring term. Remember that the very popular Great Decisions program now is part of LLI and will have unlimited enrollment. Plan to join LLI if you have not done so already and participate in these exciting classes and events specifically designed for seniors just like you and me.

When you see the invitation to attend the Holiday Luncheon, you also will see an opportunity to **renew your membership dues for 2017**. Paying for the luncheon and the dues at the same time is a convenient way to remember this routine task. Remember as well that your generosity last year with donations beyond required dues was a BIG help to our budget. You will be given a similar opportunity this year. The chapter budget will be spent in ways to benefit you.

November program, continued from page 1



- What are some nutritional considerations when taking prescription drugs?
- What are some special nutrition considerations for seniors? Are there certain foods that should always be avoided?
- What do we need to know about the new nutritional labels we're now seeing in grocery stores?

No doubt some of you will have other questions or concerns about nutrition, so bring those with you and be prepared for a lively discussion with Susan Meacham.

Members to Elect New Officers, Board Members, November 15

At the November 15 meeting, the nominating committee will present its nominations for officers and board members to the members, who will then vote on these nominations.

The nominating committee consists of the outgoing board members (Tom Alston, Tina King, Sally Anna Stapleton). They present this slate of nominees:

Officers

President: Terry Wildman
Vice President: Wendy Baldwin
Secretary: Pat Hyer
Treasurer: Pat Ballard

Class of 2019 Board Members

Tamara Hodsdon
Peter Magolda
Jim Montgomery
Wanda Smith

Legislative Report by Val Coluni

1. Virginia Voter ID Law. A Federal Judge upheld the law on the basis that it included a variety of ways to accommodate all people in their right to vote (free photo IDs, etc.). This decision has been appealed. **For a free photo ID** go to the Dept. of Motor Vehicles or to the Voter Registration Office at the County Government Center at 755 Roanoke Street, Christiansburg. For more information call their office at 382-5741.

2. State Budget. The Virginia economy did not grow as expected resulting in a projected budget shortfall of \$1.48 billion. As a result Governor McAuliffe has proposed a number of actions: 1) eliminating pay raises for many state employees; 2) eliminating funds for new positions; 3) selected layoffs. There is hope that some positive actions can be taken when the General Assembly convenes in January 2017 to lessen the impact on people and programs.

3. Caregivers Overtime Pay. A recent State Law will affect caregivers hired directly by individuals to help those with disabilities by putting a cap on overtime pay for these individuals. Opponents say this will reduce the supply of such individuals as well as violate a 2012 state agreement with the federal government. Proponents say there are alternate ways to handle any serious problems resulting from this law (e.g., live-in care, additional part-time caregivers, exceptions from the state law on a case-by-case basis).

4. New Law Creating a State Agency. The General Assembly has created an International Trade Corporation to help Virginia become more competitive in international markets. Industry experts predict that in 2017 about 80% of economic growth will take place outside of the United States. Our future budget needs and required economic development will require us to capture much more of this growth.

LLI Spring Registration Begins January 9

Catalogs for the spring 2017 term of Lifelong Learning Institute courses and special events will be mailed early in January, and registration will begin January 9.

Courses include choices in many categories:

History and political philosophy: Central African Federation:

From British Imperialism to Independent African Countries;
The Supreme Court and the Fourth Amendment;
American Political Philosophy: Founders v. Progressives;
The Roaring Twenties and Dirty Thirties;
Great Decisions community discussion group

Literature and language: Introducing Toni Morrison; Once Upon a Time—And Always: The Persistence of the Fairy Tale; What Language do you Speak? The Richness and Variety of English Dialects; The Novels of Anne Tyler

Art, music, and creativity: Exploring Creativity; Memoir Writing; Japanese Flower Arranging; “Seeing the Real You at Last”: The Many Faces of Bob Dylan

Science and the environment: Global Change: Damage Prevention, Conservation, Remediation and Sustainability; Calling All Weather Geeks

Living well / personal growth: Five Reasons to Refuel Your Friendships; Getting Your Ducks in a Row

Social issues: Gender Issues in the Workplace; Race, Gender, and Success

The VT CLASS Sampler will continue on Tuesdays.

The spring term as a whole is rich and varied with something to appeal to many interests.

Getting Your Ducks in a Row: Spring 2017 LLI Course

One of the courses in the LLI catalog for spring 2017 treats end-of-life choices that can make things easier for survivors. “Getting Your Ducks in a Row,” a three-session course, will help participants understand documents to prepare for survivors, including a “Dear Family” letter and an ethical will. It will also cover types of services and help lead participants to good choices based on affordability and the comfort of survivors. Participants will draft their obituaries.

Working with others and with the structure of a group can help people take care of tasks they may have been avoiding. The result will be a gift to survivors of a smooth transition.

This LLI course will be led by Isabel Berney and Sandy Schlaudecker. Isabel Berney is an active member and the volunteer administrator of the Funeral Consumers Alliance. The Funeral Consumers Alliance has been cited by AARP and *Consumer Reports* as the go-to organization for accurate information about the death care industry. Sandy Schlaudecker is the president of the local Funeral Consumers Alliance.

Great Decisions Program Begins February 8

Great Decisions, the community discussion group on world affairs, will begin the spring 2017 term of 8 sessions on February 8. The group will meet at the German Club Manor (Southgate Drive) from 11 am to 12:30 pm.

Topics for the spring term

European Union
Trade Policy
South China Sea
Saudi Arabia
Geopolitics of Energy
Latin America
Afghanistan/Pakistan
Nuclear Security



A Briefing Book provides a 10-page overview for each topic. Meetings begin with a 30-minute video with information on the issues. A local resource person who is expert on the week's topic provides additional information and guides discussion. The Great Decisions program materials are prepared by the Foreign Policy Association. The Lifelong Learning Institute and the League of Women Voters organize the program in the NRV.

Joining the group is free, but participants must be members of the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech (\$35/term). Registration for LLI's classes and events, including Great Decisions, begins January 9. If you have participated in LLI this fall, you will receive a catalog with registration information. If you need to request a catalog, please call 540-231-4364.

George Allen Receives Lions Club Award

George Allen was recently honored by the Blacksburg Host Lions Club as a Melvin Jones Fellow. This is the highest service award given by Lions International, said to be the largest volunteer civic service organization in the world. AARP Blacksburg Chapter member Elaine Cook said of Allen: “His diligence, his willingness to step up and serve, his unfailing good humor and integrity are all notable...we are delighted to honor him in this way.” Congratulations to a fellow chapter member!

Chapter Officers 2016

President • Don Creamer, dgc2@vt.edu

Vice President • Ben Crawford, ben.crawford@vt.edu

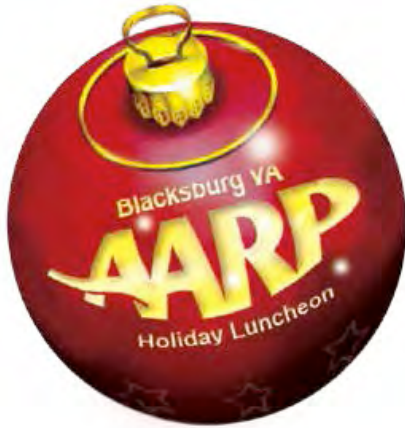
Secretary • Sally Anna Stapleton, sanna418@gmail.com

Treasurer • Pat Ballard, pballard@vt.edu

Board of Directors

- 2016—Tom Alston, Tina King, Sally Anna Stapleton
- 2017—Pat Hyer, Jerry Niles, Shirley Peterson
- 2018—Wendy Baldwin, Ryan Martin, Ray Van Dyke

AARP Holiday Luncheon



Chicken piccata with lemon and white wine sauce
Roasted vegetable lasagna
Rosemary roasted potatoes
Broccoli, cauliflower, and carrots
Rolls and butter
Cherry cobbler
Coffee and iced tea

Location

Warm Hearth
The Village Center
2387 Warm Hearth Drive
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Date: Wednesday, December 14, 2016

Time: 11:30 am–1:30 pm

Program

Announcement and Introduction of AARP Community Award Recipients

Price: \$19 per person

Guests welcome!

Reservation deadline: December 1

Luncheon Reservation, Membership Dues

You can write one check

Total the Luncheon and 2017 membership fees and make your check out to **Blacksburg AARP Chapter # 2613**.

Send with these forms to

Pat Ballard, Treasurer
Blacksburg AARP Chapter # 2613
P.O. Box 10082
Blacksburg, VA 24062

Holiday Luncheon Registration Form

Deadline: December 1, 2016

Name _____ \$19.00

Guest _____ \$19.00

Guest _____ \$19.00

Luncheon Total _____

Reservations cannot be accepted after December 1, 2016.

For more information, contact Thais Beams (540) 552-9177;
thaisbeams@yahoo.com

AARP Member Application for 2017 Blacksburg Chapter #2613

Name: _____

Spouse/Partner: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

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

New ___ Renewal ___ 90+ years old (free) ___

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 low. However, donations to the chapter are not tax deductible.

Luncheon Total _____

Dues _____ 15

Donation _____

Total _____

Please make your check payable to "Blacksburg AARP Chapter #2613."

Website: www.blacksburgaarp.org Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AARPBlacksburg/>



Blacksburg Chapter #2613
Don Creamer, President
P.O. Box 10082
Blacksburg, VA 24062

**Nonprofit
Organization
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Blacksburg, VA
Permit No. 32**

 **Member Application for 2017**

Name: _____

Spouse/Partner: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

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

New _____ Renewal _____ 90+ years old (free) _____

Please consider an additional donation to support our AARP chapter and its projects. \$10____ \$25____ \$50____ \$100____ Other \$____

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