



September 2013
Vol. 30, No. 7

<http://www.blacksburgaarp.org>

September 18 Meeting on 'end of life' issues

The first program of the fall comes with our meeting on September 17. Join us for a brown bag lunch (bring your own, but drinks will be provided) at 11:30 a.m. with the program starting at noon.

The lead off program for this fall is a presentation on "End of Life Issues." Jim Montgomery is a attorney who concentrates his practice in the field of estate planning and elder law.

Joining him with a presentation of interest from the Funeral Alliance is Cosby Houston. Both Jim and Cosby are members of our Chapter.

Jim served 30 years in the role of director of institutional research and planning at the University of Tennessee and Virginia Tech. When he retired from Virginia Tech, he returned to law school to obtain his J.D. from the Dickinson School of Law, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. His Ph.D. is from Columbia University.

Why not invite some friends who may be interested in joining the Chapter or who you think might find the program of personal value.

President's Column

I hope everyone enjoyed their summer "break". That means that VT football season has begun (or for some of us, college soccer season has begun).



This month on September 17th, our meeting will focus on end of life issues as viewed by an attorney and a funeral alliance representative, continuing our "Advocacy" theme for 2013. In October, we are going to hold a political forum for the upcoming elections – we are inviting 12th District candidates James D. Harder and Joseph R. Yost, and 7th District candidates Michael S. Abraham and Larry N. Rush – it is our opportunity to find out which candidates support issues of importance to us. And mark your calendars for December 10th, our annual Holiday Party will be held at Warm Hearth at their new facility.

Sally Anna Stapleton is starting a Coat Drive, so if you have any coats that you would like to contribute, please bring them to our next meetings. Sally Anna continues to collect canned foods for the Interfaith Food Pantry and MCEAP (Montgomery County Emergency Assistance Program) – so far she has collected over 65 pounds of canned goods at our monthly meetings. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Once again, let me make a pitch for members to take an active role in our chapter – we are looking for new board members and volunteers to fill some key slots. Several of our dedicated members are "retiring" at the end of the year. If you are interested in helping out and taking an active role in our chapter, please contact me or Leslye Bloom.

Tom Alston



Food Pantry
Donations Needed

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

2013 Virginia Election: Blacksburg Chapter helping with AARP Virginia voter engagement project “WE WANT TO KNOW”

Send or ask a question about predatory loans, medicaid, financial exploitation of the elderly, or any reasonable question you want to ask, and we will make sure it is seen by the candidates for office in Virginia. We want questions that anyone running for public office in Virginia should answer.

Better yet, ask the “**FLAT PEOPLE**” to come to your meeting and explain the “**WE WANT TO KNOW**” project. We’ll take your photo and send it along with your question to AARP Virginia. They will place it on social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and ask the candidates for an answer, and you can follow this yourself on social media. Yes, “**WE WANT TO KNOW!**” The election is coming up quickly. Do this **NOW!**

The purpose of the “**WE WANT TO KNOW**” project is to let you have a voice in Richmond . . . in Washington.

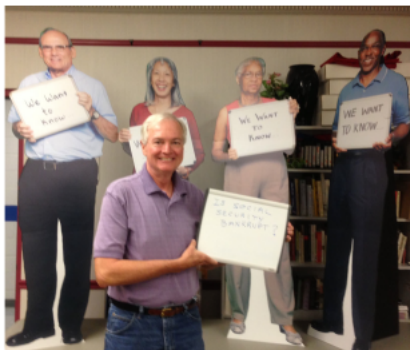
Note that AARP is nonpartisan and gives neither money nor endorsement to any candidate. We do, however, take strong positions on issues, particularly those issues that affect seniors.



*John Hillison
“wants to know”
what the
candidates think.
Do you?*

*Did you wonder
who the “flat
people” were in the
above story?*

*Tom Alston
“wants to
know” what the
candidates
think. Do you?*



Blacksburg AARP Chapter # 2613 Financial Statement May 2013

Balance at end of April 2013	\$4,293.83
Credits	
Dues	15.00
Interest	.11
Total	\$ 15.11
Debits	
Kopy Korner	125.48
Total	\$ 125.48
Balance end of April 2013	\$4,183.46
Balance in reserve account	\$2,681.83

Blacksburg AARP Chapter # 2613 Membership Report June 2013*

Member Profile:

Category	Individual Count	Household Count
AARP 2013 Members	239	146
LifeTime Members	37	22
Life Members	15	14
Comp Members	19	19
Honorary Members	2	1
Total Membership	312	202

New Members: John & Susan Brilliant

Newsletters: 213 (includes copies to 11 other AARP chapters)

Committee: Jim Wightman (chair), Sue Farrar,
Tom Alston

*Report prepared June 1, 2013

By all these lovely tokens
September days are here,
With summer’s best of weather
And autumn’s best of cheer.
Helen Hunt Jackson (1830-1885)
American poet and activist

AARP Blacksburg Chapter #2613

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

PO Box 10082

Blacksburg, VA 24062

www.blacksburgaarp.org

Falls are a major concern for seniors

New River Valley Agency on Aging
Tina King, Executive Director

Have you had a fall recently or have you been concerned about falling? Did you know that the three primary risk factors for falling are poor balance, muscle weakness, and taking more than four prescription drugs? According to the Center for Disease Control, senior adults without these risk factors have a 12% chance of falling in a year. Those with all three risk factors have almost a 100% chance of falling.

For demonstrations, education and information to help decrease your risk of falls, plan to attend the first annual Falls Prevention Awareness Day on Friday, September 20, 2013 at Edwards Hall, New River Community College from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Because the occurrence of falls are so frequent and because many falls can be prevented, a Southwest Virginia Falls Prevention Coalition has formed to work on making a positive impact. The Falls Prevention Awareness Day, "Standing Together to Prevent Falls" will be the first public event held by the coalition. There is no charge for the event, pre-registration is not required and drawings for door prizes will be held.

On another note...It is almost time to think about your Medicare Part D drug plans again. Every January, all Medicare drug plans change. Even if you are happy with your current plan, you need to determine if it will still be the best one for you in 2014. If you do not make a change during Open Enrollment, you may be stuck in a plan that doesn't work best for you next year. The NRV Agency on Aging VICAP Program will be assisting Medicare beneficiaries beginning October 15th through December 7th

If you would like assistance with your drug plan, call the Agency at 980-7720 and ask for a form to fill out so that the VICAP staff can research the Part D plans that are available to you. If they find a plan that will better suit your needs, they will schedule an appointment for you. During this appointment, you can choose to make a change based upon the information that the staff member presents to you. If they determine that your existing plan works for you in 2014, they will send you a "No Change" letter.

Remember, the Agency on Aging serves as an Aging and Disability Resource Connection,

answering questions and providing assistance with finding information, services and advocacy as needed. Personalized assistance from a trained specialist is available at no charge by phone (980-7720 or 1-866-260-4427) or in person if scheduled, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

Call for Blacksburg Chapter Award Nominations

All chapter members are invited to send nominations for several awards given each year by the Blacksburg AARP Chapter. These include the following awards: (1) Chapter service award, (2) Community service award, and (3) Leading Lights Award. Nominations should be mailed to:

Juanita Wightman
1300 Westover Dr,
Blacksburg VA 24060.



AARP United's multiple was a medal award winning team at the Summer Solstice 5K race on June 22. The team is to be congratulated for a very successful effort by winning five medals, the most ever won by the chapter team. The effort, once again, shows what excellent physical specimens compose our membership. In the photo from L to R are Bob Wheeler, Paul Smeal, Sally Paulson, John Hillison, Sharen Hillison, Angela Little, and Don Creamer.

Blacksburg AARP is planning a **Candidate Forum** on Tuesday, October 15, from noon to 1 p.m. in the Blacksburg Community Center with the candidates for General Assembly seats in the 7th District: Michael Abraham(D) and Nick Rush(R), and the 12th District: James Harder(D) & Joseph Yost(R). *All four candidates have been invited.*

Food, Coats and Supplies for Seniors are on the calendar for community service this month.

September 8 was our annual National Day of Service Food Drive. We collected at both Kroger stores in Blacksburg with much success. The Food Drive continues the week of September 8 to 14 at the same locations.

We will be collecting at the Ruritan Fish Fry on September 14 and as in the past you can bring food to the monthly AARP meeting on September 17. Food collected is being donated to the Interfaith Food Pantry in Blacksburg and the MCEAP Food Bank in Christiansburg. Please help in this worthwhile drive.

We are also collecting coats this fall. During the month of September the Community Service Committee will be collecting gently used coats, especially looking for children's coats. Contact Sally Anna Stapleton 540-250-3908 for pick-up and drop-off.

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

Sally Anna Stapleton
Community Service Committee

AARP Virginia 2014 policy priorities

1. EXPANSION OF MEDICAID

The 2013 General Assembly passed legislation that would expand Medicaid to approximately 400,000 additional individuals, including 62,000 50-64 year olds, once specific reforms are put into place. AARP Virginia will monitor the work of the Virginia Medicaid Innovation and Reform Commission to assure that expansion takes place without delay.

2. FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION OF THE ELDERLY

Thousands of older Virginians are exploited -- often by persons in a position of trust -- for their money and other financial assets. The victim may

be reluctant to pursue criminal charges, but should be able to recover financial losses through the civil legal system. AARP Virginia supports stronger civil remedies to enable more victimized Virginians to recover from their exploiter.

3. PREDATORY OPEN-ENDED LOANS

Open-ended consumer loans do not have to be paid back within a certain period of time. In Virginia, lenders of "open-ended" loans are allowed to charge interest rates as high as 300%. Frequently, these lenders target older and vulnerable people with financial issues that make it difficult for the borrower to pay back the loan and thus remain in a cycle of debt. AARP Virginia supports the Virginia Partnership to Encourage Responsible Lending efforts to stop open-ended loans.

4. HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

Currently, long-term care services and funding in Virginia are heavily focused on nursing homes and other institutional care facilities. By expanding access to home and community based services, Virginia would enable more people to be served in their setting of choice, such as their home, and potentially save money by paying for less institutional care. AARP Virginia supports reforms to the long-term care system that allow individuals to remain in their home or home-like settings.

5. HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

Virginia must support efforts by lower-income families to move into areas of opportunity. Landlords often block their moves by refusing to accept their payment, whether it is Social Security benefits, a Section 8 voucher or other funding intended to help struggling families. AARP Virginia supports legislation that will make it illegal to refuse housing applications from people who pay with non-traditional funds.

6. ELECTRIC UTILITIES

Electric companies are beginning to install a new type of meter called a "smart meter." A smart meter is a new technology that enables utility companies to offer pricing plans which typically charge higher rates for electricity used during peak usage times, which are often designated as 1-7 p.m. and during the summer. Time of use rate plans could make electricity less affordable for older people and others who do not have the flexibility to shift their energy usage to off-peak hours. AARP Virginia supports strong consumer protections for usage of smart meter technology.

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

7. MAKE SURE BUDGET CUTS DON'T HURT VULNERABLE VIRGINIANS

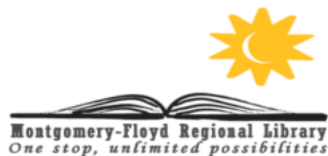
We will monitor budget proposals to be sure that decisions are fair to all generations and do not place an unnecessary hardship on our most vulnerable citizens.

For more information, you may contact R. B. Crawford at phone number 540-961-5733.

Members are needed for a planning retreat on October 1

Recognizing that it has been a long time since a thorough review of our chapter committees has been conducted, there will be a retreat for that purpose. Members are invited to provide input at a chapter retreat from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, October 1 at the Blacksburg Community Center. All chapter committees (listed on page 7 in this newsletter) will be reviewed. We are looking for creative ideas that can help our committees prepare for the future. Plan to attend and bring a friend. For more information contact John Hillison.

Library News and Events



We're planning many great programs for the fall season and hope you'll find one of interest to you! If you're a weather buff, you might be interested in our **Epic Storm Week** beginning the second day of Fall on Monday, September 23! Join us for our kick-off event at 6:30 p.m. when the Virginia Tech Hokie Storm Chasers will talk about forecasting methods used in predicting severe thunderstorms and tornadoes. On Thursday, September 26 at 6:30 p.m. we'll have forecaster Ken Kostura from the National Weather Service present information about our local weather!

In October we'll offer a variety of programs spanning the gamut of topics from home preparedness to poetry. Then we'll close October with a Halloween Dance Party! Please see dates and times below for upcoming programs that you won't want to miss! Also, please see our calendar or visit us online at www.mfrrl.org for a full viewing of events in all of our MFRL branches!

The following programs will be held at the Blacksburg Library:

- **Winterize Your Home** with Ed Kirkman, Store Manager of Heavener Hardware on Tuesday, October 1 at 6:30 p.m. Learn a wide range of winterization tips to carry you through the winter!
- **Depression Touches Us All** with Marya McPherson, Associate Director of the Mental Health Association of the New River Valley on Thursday, October 10 at 6:30 p.m. Explore depression causes, symptoms and prevalence.
- **Common Cents** with Rosa Kivett of Common Cents Tax Service on Thursday, October 24 at 6:30 p.m. Get informed about a variety of tax problems and get a handle on some solutions.
- **Friends of the Library presents Anne Goette** on Tuesday, October 29 at 7:00 p.m. Meet published playwright Ann Goette whose poems, essays and short stories have appeared in numerous journals and magazines. Refreshments provided by Friends of the Library.
- **Spooktacular Halloween Dance Party** with the Blacksburg Swing Dance Organization on Thursday, October 31 at 7:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Bring a date or come alone for a ghoulish good time. Participate in a FREE Beginner Swing lesson at 7:00 p.m. The dance party begins at 8:00 p.m. Singles and couples in Halloween costume (and not) and all levels of dancers from beginners to experienced are invited!

With the cooler temperatures and a pumpkin latte in hand, take some time for yourself and a good book. Did you know we carry books in a variety of formats? Of course we have the traditional paper version and large print versions too! In addition, we also have books on CD and books on MP3. You can listen to a good story while you rake the yard or accomplish another task. If you're just a little technologically savvy, you can access our digital collection from home and read an eBook on your computer, Nook, Kindle, iPad or other device. If it's all new to you, give us a call and Reserve a Librarian who can show you just how easy it is to get an eBook! Just ask us how by calling (540) 552-8246.

We really are your one stop for unlimited possibilities!

**AARP Chapter 2613
Board of Directors
September 3, 2013
Board Minutes**

Call to Order--President Tom Alston called the meeting to order at 10:00.

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

Board Members: Don Creamer, John Hillison, Jim Montgomery, June Schmidt, Sally Anna Stapleton

Non-Board-Members, Committee Chairs and Appointees: Doris Abraham, R. B. "Ben" Crawford, Margaret Kates, Carl McDaniels, Edd Sewell

Adoption of Agenda--The agenda was approved.

Approval of June Minutes--Don Creamer moved that the minutes for the June meeting be approved. The motion passed.

New business

October Meeting and Future Programs--Our custom has been to have a political forum at the October general meeting. The board agreed to invite candidates from both the twelfth and the seventh districts for the October 15 chapter meeting. Jim Montgomery moved to change the October 15 program to a political forum. The motion passed.

The September program will feature a speaker from the Funeral Alliance, and the November program will be devoted to home modification to enable people to stay in their homes longer. The holiday luncheon is scheduled for December 10 at the new facility at Warm hearth village. The cost will be \$17 per person.

Annual Chapter Awards--According to the Richmond office, there will be no more outstanding-chapter awards. Neither will there be any new chapters. There will be a Virginia Service Award, a Virginia Education Award, and a Virginia Advocacy Award. The Ethel Percy Andrus awards will continue. John Hillison and Jim Montgomery will prepare the nominations for the three chapter awards for advocacy, service and education; and Ben Crawford and Carl McDaniels will prepare the nomination for the Andrus award.

Membership--Tom Alston reported that there has been little change from the previous report. A couple of new members have been added, and several old members who still had not renewed their membership did so.

Legislation--Ben Crawford. On the national level, AARP is primarily interested in Social Security and Medicare. On the state level, AARP has seven priorities: (1) expanding Medicaid, (2) reducing financial exploitation of the elderly, (3) reducing predatory lending, (4) emphasizing home and community-based services as opposed to care in nursing homes, (5) reducing housing discrimination, (6) regulating electric utilities, and (7) making sure that budget cuts do not affect vulnerable Virginians. On the national level, We've Earned a Say has not died. The purpose of We've Earned a Say is to obtain grass-

root support for issues. One technique is to ask candidates how they would vote on particular issues. The popularity of the voter guide is waning. Some candidates refuse to be listed.

Community Service--Sally Anna Stapleton. Sally Anna reported that 55 pounds of food have been collected at chapter meetings so far this year. She is conducting a drive at Kroger stores in Blacksburg on Sunday, September 8 between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. A Tech sorority will supply personnel. Food will also be collected at the Ruritan fish fry on September 14. People can always bring donations to our regular chapter meetings on the third Tuesday of each month.

Sally Anna is also sponsoring a coat drive. She mainly wants children's coats, but other coats will be welcome. The drive will run through October.

Committee Reviews--John Hillison. John would like to meet before the next board meeting to review the functions of each committee. He would like for the chairs to attend as resource people. He encourages chapter members to attend. Board members should also attend this meeting. He will invite Brian Jacks, the AARP representative for western Virginia, to the retreat and the meeting.

The nominating committee, which consists of the outgoing board members, will present three nominees for the board as well as nominees for the four officers at the October, chapter meeting. The chapter will vote at the November meeting, and the new board will be installed at the Holiday luncheon.

Chapter Web site--Don Creamer reported that the Web site, blacksburgaarp.org, is fully functioning. There are several important links on the page, including a link to the Affordable Care Act. The site is especially good for people who do not know the chapter.

Caring and Tech Retiree Luncheon--Margaret Kates. Margaret has sent out two sympathy cards. The Virginia Tech Retiree fall luncheon will take place on October 10 at 11:30 at the Inn at Virginia Tech. Charles Steger will speak. There will be a tour of the new Blacksburg High School on October 24 at 10:00 a.m. On Thursday, November 21 at 10:00, there will be a tour of the Fine Arts Center at Virginia Tech. For reservations, call Sandy Birch at 230-8823 or birch@vt.edu.

Treasurer's Report--The highlight was the \$669 earned at the auction during the picnic. John Hillison moved that the report be received. The motion passed.

AARP Virginia--Ben Crawford. Proposed that we should at some point send a letter to the national president expressing our pleasure or displeasure over the resources available to chapters.

Adjournment--The meeting was adjourned at 11:52.

Virgil A. Cook, Secretary

2013 Officers & Board Members

Officers

President Tom Alston [tpalston@gmail.com]
Vice President Leslye Bloom [leslye@leslyebloom.com]
Secretary Virgil Cook [vcook@vt.edu]
Treasurer Brian Allen [brian.allen@prodigy.net]

Board of Directors

Class of 2013 – Tom Alston, [tpalston@gmail.com];
Jim Montgomery, [jhmontgome@verizon.net];
Juanita Wightman, [wightman@vt.edu]
Class of 2014 – Leslye Bloom, [leslye@leslyebloom.com];
John Hillison, [johnhillison@comcast.net];
Mary Ann Hinshelwood, [mah@mahhinshelwood.com]
Class of 2015 – Don Creamer, [dgc2@vt.edu];
Nola Elliott, [ne_elliott@peoplepc.com];
Terry Wildman, [wiley@vt.edu]



2013 Committees

Caring –

Margaret Kates 552-4107

Chapter Awards –

Juanita Wightman [552-2007 wightman@vt.edu] & Jim Montgomery [552-6735 jrmonste@verizon.net]

Community Service –

Sally Anna Stapleton [250-3908 sanna418@gmail.com]

Financial Planning and Audit –

June Schmidt [552-1590 schmidtj@vt.edu] & John Hillison [552-8941 johnhillison@comcast.net]
Dale Oliver [jdoliver@vt.edu]

History –

Doris Abraham [382-3392 dsta118e@verizon.net]

Hospitality –

Leslye Bloom [951-2025 leslye@leslyebloom.com] & Sue Farrar [381-1830 suefarrar@verizon.net]

Legislative –

Val Coluni [961-5014 vcoluni@aol.com] & Ben Crawford [961-5733 ben.crawford@vt.edu]

Membership –

Tom Alston [757-651-3065 tpalston@gmail.com] & Jim Wightman [552-2007 wightman@vt.edu]

Newsletter Editor –

Edd Sewell [951-1746 eddsewell@gmail.com]

Website Editor –

Don Creamer [dgc2@vt.edu]

Program –

Carl McDaniels [552-5818 cmcd@vt.edu] & Jewell Ritchey [sjr@vt.edu]

Public Relations –

Terry Wildman [wiley@vt.edu]

AARP Virginia Liaison –

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

VTRA Liaison –

Margaret Kates [552-4107]

Chaplain –

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

**Tom Alston, President
AARP Chapter #2613
P.O. Box 10082
Blacksburg, VA 24062**

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

Put September 17 on your calendar – First fall chapter meeting

Tuesday, September 17 will be the first meeting of this fall. Bag lunch begins at 11:30 a.m. followed by the program at noon. This month's program is on the topic of 'end of life' issues with Jim Montgomery, local attorney, and Cosby Houston, Funeral Alliance. We meet at the Blacksburg Community Center on Patrick Henry Drive.

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