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President's Message

Chapter Meetings:

April 19: Wil Orndorff
Caves and Karst of Virginia

May 17: Wornie Reed
Critical Race Theory and

Systemic Racism
June 21: David Ayares

Xenotransplantation: The
Solution for Overcoming the
Organ Shortage Crisis

*Chapter meetings will be held
virtually by Zoom unless new
protocols are announced. Any
changes to meeting plans will be
communicated via Mailchimp
before each program.*

Summer Picnic

The annual AARP summer picnic will be held on June 17, 2022, starting at 5 p.m. at the Wildmans' at 3335 Elk Creek Dr. in Christiansburg.

AARP will arrange for catering for the picnic, including non-alcoholic beverages. Please bring any alcoholic beverages of your choice, if desired.

Directions: take I-81 to exit 114. Travel south on Rt. 8 for 2.7 miles and turn right on Childress Rd (Rt 693). Travel 3.3 miles and turn left on Elk Creek Dr. (Childress Estates Sign). Drive to the cul-de-sac at the end of the road. Take the driveway next to a long stone wall and follow the signs for parking.

Who's Afraid of a Nursing Home Stay?



Leslie Pendleton, President

During the height of the pandemic, a registered nurse, "Jane," accepts a new job at a nursing home facility located in the New River Valley and begins training. On any given workday, Jane alternates between one of four different wings, each with at least 30 patients. Her responsibilities, including the "med pass" to administer medications, require her to be on her feet for the minimum 8-hour shift. From the start, Jane's supervisor reprimands her for taking too long with each patient. Jane would like to get to know the patients, and if she can't take time to review charts, she fears she could make mistakes with dire consequences. Soon after starting her job, Jane decides to quit. The job is much too physically, mentally, and emotionally demanding.

A friend, "Pat," lives outside the town of Floyd off Route 221. When she can, Pat visits a friend, "Sue," who resides in a nursing home an hour away in the New River Valley. Pat and Sue have been friends since high school. Sue doesn't have immediate family, and the nursing home staff can't provide the needed care and support. For these reasons, Pat would prefer to visit Sue more often, but she feels torn. She and her husband care for two adult middle-aged men with intellectual disabilities within their home on a 24/7 basis, and Pat's 90+ year-old father lives across the state and also needs care on a regular basis. *Continued on p. 5.*

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Community Events

Spring at Moss Art Center

- April 8-9 Burgerz by Travis Alabanza
April 14 Kristin Chenoweth
April 19 Sarah Chang
April 23 Choir! Choir! Choir!
April 28 The Tallis Scholars

*More information available
at artscenter.vt.edu*

Other

- April 5 Old Time, Blues, and Bluegrass Music Concert
(sponsored by Montgomery Museum at Moss Arts Center)
May 20-21 Arts NRV Market at the Geman Club
See details at <http://artsnrv.org>
June 22 GiveLocalNRV
See details at www.givelocalnrv.org
Sept 21 Health and Wellness Fair, at the Christiansburg Rec. Center

More information in fall newsletter

Meet the New Board Members

Tom Hohenshil and Val Coluni have resigned from the Board to focus on other priorities. We thank Tom and Val for their contributions to our Chapter and wish them all the best. We appreciate Fred and Nola for their willingness to replace Tom and Val on the Board.

Fred Piercy (Board member): I am a professor emeritus of human development since retiring from Virginia Tech in 2017. I also served as department head and associate dean. Prior to coming to VT, I spent 18 years teaching family therapy at Purdue University and seven years as a family therapy educator at Texas A&M Commerce. I received degrees from Wake Forest University, University of South Carolina, and University of Florida. My scholarship has focused on family therapy education, family therapy for substance abuse, HIV social science research and prevention, and international family therapy. I have two adult sons and five grandchildren, and a stepdaughter along with her husband and their 10-month-old son. I enjoy traveling, reading, hiking, cooking, exercising, socializing with friends and family, and playing with my dog, Gracie.

Nola Elliott (Board member): Originally from SW Pennsylvania, I moved to Blacksburg in 1971 after previously working in the No. Va. area. I have two sons, Nick and Darrell; a granddaughter, Marissa; and a great-grandson, Grayson. After moving to Blacksburg, I started work at the Va. Tech Accounting Office, but most of my 40 years of service was with Communication Network Services working with the many aspects of the university telephone system. I retired in 2012 and now enjoy traveling and volunteering with various clubs and organizations. I enjoy lunches with friends, day trips with the Blacksburg Parks and Rec active adults, and the Montgomery Co. adult programs. I volunteer with the AARP Virginia State Office on the Congressional District Advocacy Team.

Susan Terwilliger (Co-editor of newsletter): My family moved from Central Texas to Blacksburg in 2000, and I worked for Virginia Tech Pesticide Programs as publications manager until retirement in December 2017. My three grown children live in Chicago and Texas. After growing up as a flatlander in Kansas, I love Southwest Virginia's picturesque mountains. My favorite outdoor activities are running and hiking, and I volunteer with the Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club, the Montgomery County League of Women Voters, and MCEAP's Blacksburg Clothing Bank. My favorite travel destinations are U.S. national parks – most recently, Glacier National Park.

Cyndy Graham (Membership committee): Cyndy Graham retired from Virginia Tech in 2015 after serving for 28 years. She is currently the office manager for Brown, Edwards & Company, CPAs in Christiansburg. Cyndy received her BA in English from Virginia Tech in 1994. Cyndy volunteers at the Lyric Theatre in Blacksburg and is a former Board member. Cyndy enjoys reading, yoga, and travel, and loves to sing! She performs with Julia Fallon, harpist, as Harpin' Singin'.

Sue Hossack (Board member): I grew up outside London. I have a degree in Pure Mathematics from the University of Wales. I came to the U.S. in 1984 and became a citizen in 1990. I worked for 30 years as a software engineer, then changed careers in 2001 to become an occupational therapist. I have developed software to help children with disabilities learn to use the computer keyboard. I retired in 2013 and took up painting and stained glass. My husband (Mike Crawley) and I moved to the NRV in 2004 so he could fish in the New River. We love to travel, we have two cats, and we volunteer with the local hospital. I am on the board of the Friends of the Library, and work with MCEAP (Montgomery County Emergency Assistance Program) on their website and the Pet Mural in downtown Christiansburg.

John Burton (Board member): John Burton was raised in Philadelphia and educated at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ('67), Illinois State University ('72), and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln ('77). He served three years in the U.S. Army ('68 to '70), including a tour in Vietnam. He joined the faculty at Virginia Tech in 1977, where he taught and researched in educational psychology (learning and technology) until he retired in 2017. John has four daughters and five grandchildren. After living 40-plus years in Blacksburg, he and his wife moved to Riner. They try to do three or four cruises a year and visit with grandchildren whenever possible.

Beth Grabau (Board member and co-editor of newsletter): I retired from Virginia Tech in 2018 after a career in plant biotechnology in the College of Ag and Life Sciences. My husband (Eric Wong) and I moved to Blacksburg in 1990 and raised our two children here. I am originally from Indiana, where I graduated from Purdue University. I received my Ph.D. from the University of California in San Diego, where I also met my husband. Our hobbies are traveling, skiing and hiking, and visiting our two grandchildren in Pittsburgh. My activities include teaching and taking courses in the Lifelong Learning Institute and volunteering for the Literacy Volunteers of the New River Valley.

Judith Jones (Board member): Judith received her B.S. from Radford University, M.A. from Virginia Tech, and Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She retired from Virginia Tech in 2009 after 30 years as director of EO/AA, then as assistant vice provost and associate director of Virginia Cooperative Extension. Judith has served as president of the VT Retirees Association, as district director of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and on other community boards, including the Montgomery Co. School Board, the VT Lifelong Learning Institute, Historic Smithfield, and Virginia Master Gardeners. Judith is the recipient of the NAACP Fight for Freedom Award and the Women in Virginia History Award. Judith and her husband, Roy, live in Blacksburg and have five grown daughters and six grandchildren. Judith loves gardening, traveling, reading, and camping.

Topics and Speakers for Chapter Meetings

April 19, 2022: Caves and Karst of Virginia

Description: Presentation on the geology, hydrology, and biology in the context of karst landscapes, which are very common in western Virginia. Wil's current projects include the hydrology of ebb and flow karst systems, dynamics of a Shenandoah Valley aquifer, use of the landscape by Gray bats, revision and development of natural community definitions for karst systems, landscape evolution in the central Appalachians, and the biological inventory of Virginia's designated significant caves.

Speaker: Wil Orndorff is a karst protection coordinator for the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation Natural Heritage Program. He is a native of the Shenandoah Valley. Introduced to the formal caving world at 18, his interest in caves, karst waters, and geology grew into both a career and a lifelong passion. With an undergraduate degree from Johns Hopkins and a master's in geology from Virginia Tech, Wil started his professional career as a karst systems consultant. His current work has resulted in the establishment of two natural area preserves protecting significant caves, and additions of several tracts containing caves to existing preserves.

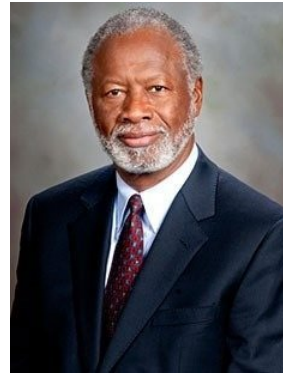


May 17, 2022: Critical Race Theory and Systemic Racism

Description: Presentation on critical race theory and systemic racism, a particularly timely topic. Dr. Reed is an expert on racial profiling and African American health issues. He previously worked with the U.S. Census Bureau as a computer programmer and with IBM as a systems engineer.

Speaker: Wornie Reed is a professor emeritus of sociology and Africana Studies, and director of the Race and Social Policy Research Center at Virginia Tech.

He teaches courses in health and medical care, criminal justice, and Africana Studies. He has also held positions at Morgan State, Washington University, University of Massachusetts-Boston, and Cleveland



State. Trained as a medical sociologist, Dr. Reed has published many articles and eight books on medical care, health and illness, urban communities, and criminal justice. He directed the project "Assessment of the Status of African Americans," which involved 61 scholars from across the country. His awards and honors include two regional Emmys for his work on the Urban Cancer Project, which produced programs on cancer prevention aimed at African Americans.

June 21, 2022: Xenotransplantation: The Solution for Overcoming the Organ Shortage Crisis

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

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



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

Montgomery Museum to Move Operations, Location to Downtown Christiansburg

by Casey Jenkins

The Montgomery Museum of Art and History will relocate and move its operations to downtown Christiansburg this spring. The museum is currently engaged in a \$1.6 million capital campaign to purchase and renovate the new building.

This building acquisition will greatly contribute to the revitalization and economic vitality of the region, offering a premier cultural destination in the New River Valley where we can provide thematic programming and facilitate community conversations. Through the generosity of many individuals, we have raised roughly half of the funds needed in just four months, and we are very grateful for this progress.

The museum, which serves all of Montgomery County, has outgrown its space at 300 South Pepper Street. The new space will allow the museum to meet the needs of the rapidly growing and diverse regional community of the New River Valley. Education, community engagement, and preservation are among the leading priorities for the Montgomery Museum, and each of these will be enhanced by the new space.

The building is a keystone of the Downtown Historic District in Christiansburg and will provide a vastly expanded space for the museum to serve as a community cultural center. This 15,000-square-foot building enhances the museum's organizational capacity and accommodates greater public programming, community arts and history exhibitions, greater exhibit space, library and archives, a café, a gift shop, and meeting space. Artifacts, including many currently held in offsite storage, will soon be stored and cared for properly onsite.

The goal of this building acquisition is to position the museum as a lasting cornerstone of the community and make the visitor experience participatory, exciting, and inclusive. The museum will reach out to new audiences, cultivating community development and growth.

Since 1983, the museum has operated out of the historic manse on Pepper Street. Plans are underway to retain the property, renting the space out to interested parties. The educational and recreational opportunities of the museum garden and outdoor art installations will continue.

For more information or questions on how to donate, visit <https://montgomerymuseum.org/capital-campaign/> or reach out to Casey Jenkins at director@montgomerymuseum.org or (540) 382-5644.



Remembrance of Friends Who Died in 2021

At the January Chapter Meeting, Chaplain Sandy Birch presented a memorial to members who passed away in 2021. The memorial can be viewed on the Blacksburg AARP Chapter website at: blacksburgaarp.org

Members lost:

January	Ronald Eugene Gaysunas Judy Carol Pinson Sewell
February	Easley Stone Smith Charles Webster Coale Jr. James Dale Oliver
March	Julia Louise Lewis Frances Pauline Boliek Edge
April	Mary Katherine Korslund
August	Paul Lester Smeal
September	Coreen Mett Sandra Griffith
October	Peggy Hamblin Brown Patsy Dillon-Long
November	Isabel Berney Frances Hutcheson Russell

President's Message, continued

Similar stories, and even tragic events, explain efforts over the last 18 years to raise workforce standards in long-term care facilities across Virginia, one of only 16 states across the nation without minimum nursing home staffing requirements. Specifically, House Bill 646, introduced by Delegate Betsy B. Carr, proposed several minimum staffing requirements for each resident per 24-hour time period: (1) a minimum of 2.8 direct care hours by a nurse aide; (2) a minimum of 1.3 direct care hours by an LPN or RN; and (3) of the total 4.1 direct care hours, a minimum of 0.75 provided by an RN. Indeed, if these minimum standards were in place, I think most of us might be less fearful of stays in long-term care facilities.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, many long-term care facilities were struggling to meet minimum standards of quality care. Now factor in the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on an already strained system. We're all aware of the toll that the COVID-19 pandemic has taken on residents, their families, and the already-stressed and understaffed workforce. According to the Virginia Department of Health, approximately 4,800 deaths have occurred in Virginia nursing homes during the pandemic. Under normal circumstances, the job of a healthcare worker can be very taxing and stressful; tragically, during the pandemic, thousands of Virginia skilled nurses have left their jobs in long-term care facilities.

Perhaps you, a family member, or friend has received good or not-so-good care in a long-term care facility. Let's be honest, none of us wants to end up in a nursing home, but a percentage of us inevitably will. Fortunately, many of us have long-term care insurance that will enable us to receive skilled care in our own homes. Sadly, but not surprisingly, this is not the case for lower income families and racial minorities who can neither afford skilled care at home nor afford top-rated facilities.

Now is the time to investigate the options for long-term care. AARP offers "Tips for Finding a Nursing Home" information online at www.aarp.org. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (www.medicare.gov/care-compare) rate nursing homes on a scale of 1-5 based on health inspections, adequacy of staffing, and quality measures. The Nursing Homes Abuse Advocates (NHAA) has a "Watchlist search" (<https://nursinghomesabuseadvocate.com>) to investigate the reputations of facilities within a specific geographic region. My search for nursing homes within a 50-mile radius of Blacksburg resulted in many facilities on a watchlist, and, beware, I did discover some discrepancies when comparing ratings from one site with ratings from the other.

Despite stories and expressions of concern by citizens across Virginia to our representatives and persistent advocacy work on the part of AARP Virginia, the House Health, Welfare, and Institutions Subcommittee postponed action on House Bill 646 to 2023. If action isn't taken to implement minimum staffing requirements for long-term care facilities, the situation will undoubtedly worsen over time as a large percentage of the population continues to age. One-third of the U.S. population will be seniors by the year 2040.

If you have stories or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact your legislators. If you aren't sure who they are, you can use the website "Who's My Legislator" (<https://whosmy.virginiageneralassembly.gov>). You also have access to an ombudsperson (Janet Brennend) through the local NRV Agency on Aging. The phone number is 540-980-7720. Finally, let me or another Board member know how we can help advocate on your behalf. None of us should be fearful of the care we receive, or may eventually receive, in a long-term facility.

Tax Aide Update

by Pat Ballard

The AARP Tax Aide program has been busy preparing returns for over 400 clients. The program operates at the Christiansburg Recreation Center with 23 volunteers doing tax preparation, interview/intake, scanning, and client facilitating. There are counselors who work from the center and five who work from home. Staff from the center handle our appointments. Covid was a serious disruption to the Tax Aide program, and for two years we have not been able to serve as many residents as needed. Last year we scanned all clients' documents, and counselors worked from home. This year we have a hybrid model, which has allowed us to prepare returns while clients wait, or we can scan and have clients return on another date to pick them up. The program will conclude the tax season on April 15. We work by appointments, and you may call 540-382-2349 if you or anyone you know still needs taxes prepared. Hours of operation are 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, and 9:00 am to noon Saturday.

Counselors are required to pass an IRS test before they can prepare taxes. The program is limited in scope by the forms we are training to prepare. If your return is out of scope, we will recommend you see a paid preparer. The Tax Aide program is always looking for new volunteers. There are administrative positions with this program that do not require someone to pass the test to be a tax preparer. Examples would be public relations, marketing, and local coordinator. If you or anyone you know is interested in working with the Tax-Aide program, please have them contact Pat Ballard at 540-449-1804 or by email at pb Ballard@vt.edu.

Trail Notes: Shenandoah Bike Trail

by Beth Grabau, Pat Hipkins, and Susan Terwilliger

Looking for a relatively short, paved trail in the Town of Blacksburg? The Shenandoah Bike Trail is a 1.6-mile paved loop trail with several easy access points, including the nearby Food Lion parking lot on North Main St. It's a pleasant neighborhood walk with open and shaded sections. There is a small playground adjacent to the trail on Seneca Dr. and a small creek that runs beside the trail on the northern side. We hiked it shortly after the January snowstorms, which is not recommended because it is not maintained by the town and was still snowy and icy in the shaded areas. The trail is mostly flat except for about 150 ft of elevation change on the section that runs parallel to Givens. For a map of the trail visit the Hiking Project at <https://www.hikingproject.com/directory/8018848/shenandoah-park>.



Section of Shenandoah Bike Trail

GiveLocalNRV event on June 22

GiveLocalNRV encourages charitable giving in the New River Valley to over 100 nonprofit organizations serving our region. Donors are encouraged to give to all their favorite organizations, with one convenient website that allows them to make a big impact, with just a few clicks of the mouse. Early giving starts on June 1. To give to your favorite organization visit www.givelocalnr.org.



AARP Smart Driver Course

by Ben Crawford

I can highly recommend the AARP Smart Driver course. I found the eight hours of on-line training interesting and worthwhile – even fun. The course can be easily accomplished over several days. The format is easy to follow, incorporating adult-learning principles with short lectures, interesting videos, and multiple-choice questions after every section.

The Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles recognizes the AARP Smart Driver course as an approved mature driver accident prevention course for drivers 55 and older. In many states, drivers may receive a discount on their auto insurance premium upon completing the course. This is true in Virginia, plus you will learn something new along the way. In fact, an evaluation of the course found that 97% of participants changed at least one driving habit as a result of what they learned.

The Safe Driver course covers:

- Research-based safe driving strategies.
- Information on the effects of medication on driving.
- Preventive measures to reduce driver distractions.
- Proper use of safety belts, airbags, antilock brakes, and new technology found in cars today.
- Techniques for handling left turns, right-of-way, and roundabouts.
- State-specific rules and regulations in 19 key areas, including construction zones, child safety seats, school buses, and cellphone use.

By taking the Smart Driver course you will:

- Receive a multiyear discount on your auto insurance (mandatory in Virginia over and above any other discounts).
- Refresh your driving skills and your knowledge of the rules – and hazards – of the road.
- Reduce your chances of committing a traffic violation or getting into an accident.
- Learn at your own pace – you'll have 60 days to complete the course

Cost for the course is nominal, and AARP members get a discount. For more information, you can Google AARP Smart Driver course.

Index Funds and Exchange Traded Funds

by Paul French

Index funds and exchange traded funds (ETFs) have become popular investment vehicles. While they have similarities, there are significant differences between the two. Index funds generally track a financial index. The earliest funds tracked major indices such as the S&P 500, which is, currently, a list of the 505 largest public companies in the US, weighted for their value within that list. For example, Apple currently represents about 6.9% of the total value of the largest 505 US companies, so about 6.9% of the S&P 500 index is Apple stock.

Today there are index funds for a wide range of investments, including stocks, bonds, and real estate, both foreign and domestic. They are a way to invest in a broadly diversified portfolio for low cost, as less management is required within them than with typical mutual funds, which require research and investment selection by management. With an index fund much of this is not needed and, mostly, it can be automated. Many, as well, are “no load” funds, so there is no up-front fee to invest in them.

Additionally, over time, few managed mutual funds consistently outperform their index, so index funds represent a way, potentially, to obtain the market return without an attempt to beat it, simply and at low cost. Also, as they just follow their indices, they tend to spin off lower taxes from internal capital gains than managed funds, which may tend to trade their investments more frequently. The early popularity of index funds was driven by Vanguard Investments, but today many mutual fund companies also offer them.

Exchange traded funds (ETFs) are similar in many respects. They usually represent an index as well and are available for a wide range of investment types. They have low internal fees and generally low capital gains taxes generated internally. The biggest difference is that they are created as a basket of investments, which is then bought and sold as a single investment on the stock market. When you buy and sell an index fund, you do that through the investment company that provides it. With an ETF, you will generally need some form of brokerage account, either online or through a broker or financial advisor, or perhaps through a 401(k) through your employer. You then trade ETFs through that account, directly on the stock market. This has the advantage that you buy or sell the ETF at the time you place the trade; with an index fund any trade will take place only after the markets close at 4:00 PM. This can be an advantage with an ETF if the market is moving rapidly up or down.

You can also place more advanced trades with ETFs, which you cannot place with an index fund, but this is beyond the scope of this article.

ETFs, while generally liquid, can be less so than index funds under some market conditions. This is unlikely with those based on widely traded indices like the S&P 500, but it is more likely with thinly traded securities that may take time to sell on the markets. You should also note that, while ETFs can be used in IRAs and 401(k) accounts, they may not be used in 403(b) retirement accounts at non-profit organizations.

Mutual Funds & ETFs are sold by prospectus. Investors should carefully consider the investment objectives, risks, charges, and expenses of mutual funds & ETFs. This and other important information are contained in the fund prospectus which can be obtained from your financial advisor or directly from the fund company, and should be read carefully before investing. This information is for general purposes and is not intended to provide specific investment advice or recommendations. Investing involves risks including the potential loss of principal. Past performance is not a guarantee of future results. Investors should seek individual financial advice before acting on this information.

Paul French is a co-founder of Plott & French Financial Advisors and is approaching his 25th year as a financial advisor. He specializes in retirement and estate planning issues.

Blacksburg Chapter #2613

Chapter Officers 2022

President – Leslie Pendleton, lkpendleton@gmail.com

Vice President – Chuck Burress,
cgburress@comcast.net

Secretary – Terry Wildman, wiley@vt.edu

Treasurer – Pat Ballard, pb Ballard@vt.edu

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

Board of Directors

2022: Chuck Burress, Linda Correll, Kai Duncan

2023: Todd Solberg

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

Newsletter Editors: Beth Grabau and Susan Terwilliger

AARP Chapter Website: blacksburgaarp.org



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

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Spouse/Partner: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

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

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

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

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

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

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