



# BLACKSBURG NEWS

Volume 19, Issue 2

Chapter # 2613

February 2002

**Have you paid your 2002 dues???**

**2002 BLACKSBURG AARP CHAPTER DUES**

**\$6.00 individual or \$10.00 for husband and wife**

***Please renew your membership.***

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

R. B. "Ben" Crawford

It's the 8th day of the shortest month of the year. Even though it is still early February, I am authorized to say that Spring is just around the corner. This comes from an official groundhog watcher-- even have a certificate to prove it. Last Saturday (Feb 2), four of us "officials" left Blacksburg at 6:45 in the morning to attend the annual Groundhog Watchers Association meeting at Concord College. We heard Concord President **Jerry Beasley** tell a great story about Punxsutawney Phil (who he vividly described as a carpet bag dandy) and his visit with Concord Charlie and Charlene. Phil's visit culminated with Phil running back to PA as fast as he could--in his birthday suit--leaving his carpet bag and clothes behind. After all we could eat-- country ham, red eye gravy, grits, biscuits, sausage gravy, eggs, and even some "healthy" foods, we heard the annual prediction from Concord Charlie. He did not see his shadow, so we will NOT have 6 more weeks of bad weather. Spring is nigh. This annual breakfast would be a fun activity for our chapter to consider next year.

Winter or Spring, no matter the season, your Board of Directors and Committee Chairs are planning and working on behalf of our AARP chapter and community. Thirteen (a lucky number) met earlier this month at our regular

board meeting. If you had been there--all members are welcome to attend --you would have been reminded that:

- this year marks the 100th anniversary of 4-H in the United States. For an overview of the 4-H Centennial celebration, log on to the 4-H Web site: <http://www.4hcentennial.org> Congress approved funding to help each state implement 4-H Centennial activities,
- February 8 marks the 92nd Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America, and
- National Volunteer Week is April 21-27 when we can apply the theme of "Celebrate the American Spirit." For more information on Volunteer Week or to order a free promotional kit visit the Points of Light Foundation Web site at <http://www.pointsoflight.org/nvw>

**Darrel Clowes** represented our AARP Chapter as a judge in the VFW District 6 Essay Contest January 22. The Youth Essay is an annual nationwide contest to promote patriotism. This year's theme: "Is Freedom Really Free". The national winner receives a \$10,000 U. S. Savings Bond. Locally, there were 15 entrants. I am told **Darrel** broke a tie in selecting the local winner who was **Sadie Shea**, age 12, in the 7th grade.

At our regular membership meetings from now through June your Program Committee has in place some fun, exciting and educational programs. Mark your calendar and join us all for lunch February 19, March 19, April 16, and May 21.

The importance of exercise--AT ANY AGE--cannot be overstated. The Board asks you to:

- be aware of the NRV Senior Olympic-Games, April 26 - May 1,
- tell others of the games and that they are for fun, recreation and social, and
- consider participating in one or more event--miniature golf, golf, bridge, bowling, walking, etc.

Under Dale Oliver's leadership, the Financial Planning Committee presented a proposed budget for the year. The Board wrestled with the proposed budget and tabled a decision until March so we might receive input on how to come up with additional dollars for a few worthy activities. Chapter dues are adequate to cover the cost of printing and mailing this newsletter, the purchase of awards, speaker gifts, and entertainment for our Christmas dinner. However, our chapter budget does not include money for special projects like the successful Volunteer Recognition Celebration, Home Repair Project, or Health Fair. Another example: It is recommended, with considerable justification, our chapter be a participating sponsor in the NRV Senior Olympic-Games, and this means a minimum expenditure of \$100. Such dollars are not available in our regular budget which implies a need to conduct a fund-raising activity and/or ask members to consider donating a few extra dollars to carry out some carefully selected and worthy community service activities. We would appreciate your thoughts and suggestions about how we might generate dollars to provide these types of enrichment activities to our members and community. I plan to seek your advice about this during our February meeting. Meanwhile, may only good things happen to you and yours.

## FUTURE MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMS

The February meeting will be held at the Blacksburg Community Center on **February 19**. Our own **Paul Smeal** will tell us how "Fitness Can Be Fun." Be sure to make a special effort to attend and remember to bring a friend and your lunch. **We begin eating lunch at 11:30 a.m. with the program following at noon.**

March 19: -- End of Life Issues

April 16 -- Delegate Jim Shuler, General Assembly Outcomes

## LEGISLATION PENDING BEFORE THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO OLDER VIRGINIANS

Dan Fleming

Over two thousand bills and resolutions were filed for the current session of the General Assembly and the bulk of these will never make it out of committee. There are several that may be of special interest to older citizens.

HB 162 would increase the age deduction from \$6,000 to \$7,500 for taxpayers 62 through 64 and from \$12,000 to \$15,000 for taxpayers 65 years of age and older.

HB 194 would increase the health insurance credit for retired teachers from \$2.50 to four dollars per month for teachers for each full year of creditable service, not to exceed a maximum monthly credit of \$120 for teachers with 30 or more years of creditable service.

HB 218 would increase the income threshold for eligible senior citizens to enroll tuition free in classes conducted in state institutions of higher education from \$10,000 to \$15,000.

**HB 904** would provide assistance in the purchase of prescription drugs for those dually eligible for Medicaid and Medicare but who do not qualify for prescription assistance. Payment assistance is limited to \$80.00 per month. Participants must pay a \$10.00 co-payment for each prescription and are required to use generic drugs unless they are willing to pay the difference between the generic and name-brand drug.

**SB 79** would increase from 1.7 to 2.0 the percent of average final compensation used in determining the retirement allowance of members of VRS, including members retiring under disability. This does not apply to current retirees.

**SB 139** would make three changes in the individual income tax structure: 1. Add a new income tax bracket of six percent on taxable income in excess of \$30,000; 2. Eliminate the additional \$800 personal exemption currently benefiting blind or aged taxpayers; and 3. Provide an individual income tax deduction for the amount of social security taxes paid in the taxable year, up to a maximum of \$6,000 in any taxable year. It also provides that any person claiming Virginia's deduction for the elderly may not also claim the deduction for social security taxes withheld.

**SB 192** would provide a program to assist eligible low income elderly and disabled Virginians in paying for prescription drugs. These are people above the Medicaid eligibility income level. A co-payment of not over \$5.00 would be required and funding for this program would come from the Tobacco Settlement Agreement.

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Pat Palmer is our Membership Chair. If you have friends who should be members, please bring them to the next meeting and encourage them to join. Dues can be paid at the meeting or sent to Pat. His address follows:

**Pat Palmer**  
**2003 Scott Drive**  
**Blacksburg, VA 24060**

Have I paid my dues for 2002? Check the mail label on your Newsletter. If "2002" appears on the label, you have paid.

Those of you who are 90 years old and older do not pay dues. Your label should read "Life Member." The current membership list has the following members that are 90 years of age or older:

Edna Amos	Alice Dewitt
Fay Hoy	James McCann
Edward Mundie	Beverly Printz
Nelle Trent	Lottie Trimm

If you know of corrections to this list, please tell Pat or Don Elson so that our membership records are correct.

## TAX-AIDE FOR SENIORS

Frank Lau

Our Tax-Aide group will be back again to help our members, as well as others in the Blacksburg community. Our times will be from February 12th to April 2nd, from 11:30 - 2:30 p.m. In order to give everyone appropriate time, we ask that you make appointments through Joy Herbert at the Center (961-1134). Gene, Jim, and myself ask you to collect, NOW, all your deduction papers. When 1099's come in, add them to the pile, as with any mortgage 1096's. And don't forget Social Security statements. We shall prepare your Tax returns by computer, but do not do electronic returns.

## TOURS AND TRIPS FOR SENIORS

Paul Smeal

The following tours and trips are sponsored by the Montgomery County Parks and Recreation.

**Woodrow Wilson Birthplace:** Explore the life and legacy of President Woodrow Wilson in a visit to his birthplace. Lunch on your own at Rose's Family Restaurant. Date: **Friday, February 22**. Fee: \$13, includes transportation and admission fees. Registration Deadline: February 15.

**Highland Maple Sugar Festival:** Motorcoach transportation provided by Terry's Tours and co-sponsored with Christiansburg Parks & Recreation and Pulaski Senior Center. Highland County's Maple Sugar Festival features "camps" that visitors can view the maple sugar making process, arts and crafts exhibitors and antique displays. Meals enroute. Date: **Saturday, March 9**, Fee: \$35, transportation only. Registration Deadline: February 15.

**Southern Spring Show:** A taste of spring, just when you need it most! Discover over two dozen gardens, designer rooms, craftspeople and your first chance to buy spring plants. Meals enroute. Date: **Tuesday, February 26**. Fee: \$10, transportation only. Participants to pay own \$8.50 admission fee. Registration Deadline: February 19.

**Eden Excursion:** Visit the Fieldcrest Outlet Stores, first and second quality goods, sheets, towels, bedroom ensembles, household goods. Take in the Grogan Center featuring collectibles, garden items and gourmet shop. Lunch on you own at Golden Corral Restaurant. Date: **Tuesday, March 5**. Fee: \$8, transportation only. Registration Deadline: February 26.

**Giles County Historical Tour:** A guided tour of the Andrew Johnston Museum and Research Center. Constructed in 1928, was

the residence of Andrew Johnston and currently houses an eclectic mix of Giles county artifacts. Lunch on your own at Friends and Family Restaurant. Date: **Wednesday, March 13**. Fee: \$10, includes transportation and admission fees. Registration Deadline: March 5.

Pick up point for Blacksburg participants is the Gables Shopping Center, South Main Street.

For additional information contact Kemvia Adams-Bush, 382-6975

Additional tours and trips are scheduled later in the Spring. These will be listed in the March Newsletter.

## NEW RIVER VALLEY SENIOR OLYMPIC GAMES

Paul Smeal

The Senior Olympic Games are open to all residents 50 years of age or older. Through a variety of athletic and social events, participants have the opportunity to display their athletic ability, exchange and share common ties and interests with other senior individuals. The emphasis is not so much competition as it is the fellowship and socialization characteristic of Senior Olympic Games. The events are held at various locations throughout the area and include, but not limited to softball, hit & throw, tennis, basketball, discus, shot put and frisbee, riflery, shuffleboard, cards (duplicate bridge, canasta, rook) golf, swimming, bowling, croquet, horseshoes, badminton, billiards and table tennis. The games are **Friday to Wednesday, April 26 to May 1, 2002**. Registration is now open with the deadline of April 5. Applications and information can be picked at the Blacksburg Community Center, 725 Patrick Henry Drive. For additional information contact Joy Herbert, Senior Programs Supervisor, 961-1134 or

[jherbert@blacksburg.gov](mailto:jherbert@blacksburg.gov) or Paul Smeal, 552-4985 or [psmeal@vt.edu](mailto:psmeal@vt.edu)

There were 199 participants last year, and with your participation, the 24<sup>th</sup> year of the Senior Olympic Games can be bigger and better. They are lots of fun.

A quote from the CBS Sunday Morning program of February 10, 2002:

“The only things certain in life are death, taxes and AARP.”

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

The Board of Directors, at its January 1998 meeting, adopted the following policy relative to Board and/or chapter meetings during inclement weather:

AARP Board and/or chapter meetings will be canceled if Montgomery County Schools are closed due to inclement weather on days AARP Board and/or chapter meetings are scheduled.”

## **AARP WEBSITES**

AARP has its own website, called AARP Webplace, which features information about the Organization's activities and issues of interest to older persons. To access information on a host of topics please visit the site at <http://www.aarp.org>. Some of the information featured includes membership benefits, legislative issues, and health and wellness concerns.

## **FREE CLINIC OF NEW RIVER VALLEY**

The Free Clinic of New River Valley needs and welcomes volunteers to join in meeting the needs of residents without health insurance in the New River Valley. A full range of volunteer opportunities is offered including office and clerical, marketing, and all health care professions. For more information, contact Amy Vaughan at 381-0820.

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Vincent Talley

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Chapter Awards  
Community Service  
Financial Planning  
Health Care  
Hospitality

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Bob Blanton  
Louis Barnett  
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Darrel Clowes  
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