



April 17 Chapter Meeting

What's Happening at AARP?

AARP Virginia State Director, Jim Dau, will address AARP Blacksburg members and guests. Jim will describe AARP national and state goals and objectives to enable the chapter leadership to maximize its effectiveness by working as a partner with overlapping interests.



Jim Dau

Bring food or supplies for children in honor of Mother's Day

AARP-LLI Socials

Spring LLI/AARP Social

Bluegrass & BBQ

April 25, 5:30–8:30 pm

German Club Manor, Southgate Drive

Tickets (\$20 each) available three ways:

- www.blacksburgaarp.org
- at the *Ballads and Ballad Books: Word and Music Performance* by Sharyn McCrumb, Appalachian novelist, and Jack Hinshelwood, musician and executive director of the Crooked Road, April 7, 2-4 pm Lyric Theater, Admission: \$5, Open to the public
- at the door of the Bluegrass & BBQ event

Fall AARP/LLI Social

Wine & Appetizers

November 1, 5:00–7:30 pm

Whitebarrel Winery, 4025 Childress Road, Christiansburg

Tickets (\$25 each) available two ways:

- www.blacksburgaarp.org
- whitebarrel.com/product/aarp-lli-1-nov-2018/

President's Column by Wendy Baldwin

Aging in Place—Why think about it now? And what is it anyway?

What do we mean by “aging in place”? I will tell you my definition, but you may have another. For me, aging in place implies that you can stay in your own home and enjoy your community. This may not be as simple as it sounds. As we age, we may lose certain capabilities or develop specific needs that our home cannot accommodate. Aspects of our home that were once charming are now challenges. But if we would like to remain in our homes, we can think about ways to overcome those challenges.



A big challenge is stairs. Whether it is specific joint problems, like aching knees, or general lack of stamina, climbing stairs may become a huge barrier to enjoying one's home. There are, however, chair rail elevators that can whisk a single person from one level to another. An elevator that can accommodate more than one person and a wheelchair may be hard to fit into a house's footprint, but that depends on the structure of the house. And a flexible floor plan may support the conversion of a room on the main level into a bedroom. Sometimes a study or family room can be converted, and sometimes a half bath can be refitted to become a full bath. And don't overlook a garage that can be renovated into a new master bedroom and bath. The second floor can still be used for guests or a study or craft space, but it might not be used on a daily basis.

Introducing a wheelchair into your home requires looking into structural barriers in your home. Door frames may need to be widened, and door sills may need to be flattened to floor level. That one step between kitchen and the new bedroom suite in the garage would need to be replaced with a ramp. As our communities age, building contractors will have more experience in making renovations to homes to support aging in place and could become valued partners in identifying and changing structural barriers.

Upcoming Events

April 15: Arts Across Generations submissions due (see March issue)

April 18: GiveBigNRV (p. 5)

April 25: Spring LLI/AARP Social (p. 1)

June 19: AARP picnic

September 19: Health and Wellness Fair

November 1: Fall AARP/LLI Social (p. 1)

Mother's Day Food Drive Challenge: \$20 incentive

AARP's social committee challenges you to bring food and supplies for children to the April 17 chapter meeting, as a community service in honor of Mother's Day. We especially wish to support mothers with babies and small children.

Possible donations include

- diapers, pull-ups, baby wipes
- infant formula, baby food and oatmeal, toddler treats
- packs of peanut butter and cheese crackers; Quaker Chewy granola bars
- individual servings of apple sauce, chips, cookies, cereal, soup, and fruit cups; cereal bars

Nonperishable foods suitable for the Micah's Backpack program—such as cereal, canned meats and vegetables, and applesauce—are also welcome.

Consider putting some of these items in your car now so that you don't forget on April 17.

Wendy Baldwin has offered a prize of \$20 to the person who contributes the most items.

Lyric Theatre offers “Reel Talk”

Mondays after 10 am show by Sandra Griffith

Back in January, the Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) partnered with the Lyric Theatre to offer Reel Talk: Mondays at the Lyric for eight weeks. Each Monday after the 10:00 am matinee, Susan Mattingly, Executive Director, led an informal after-the-movie conversation for those who wanted to stick around and enhance their viewing experience. Because it was Oscar season, many of the nominated films were featured, including, *The Darkest Hour*; *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*; *The Shape of Water*; *Phantom Thread*; *The Post*; *I, Tanya*; and *Call Me by Your Name*.

The conversations are as varied as those who join the discussion and the movies they talk about. *The Shape of Water* aroused strong reactions to the fantastical and beautiful imagery while *The Post* was followed by a lively conversation by those who lived through the history (which was most of us!) and our personal memories and reactions.

While the talks scheduled through the LLI are over, the Lyric has decided to continue the gatherings. Come to the Monday morning matinee and join the conversation after, beginning around 12:15 or 12:30, depending on the length of the movie. It's a great way to meet fellow film lovers and share interpretations and opinions.

The gatherings are open to anyone who wishes to participate.

Find out which movies are coming up at www.thelyric.com/calendar/

When looking at the calendar, check out other events taking place at the Lyric as well, including live music, events sponsored by various departments at Virginia Tech, and more.



Welcome new board member Jeananne Dixon Bame

My family moved to Blacksburg in 1970. My husband at that time was the first Urban Planner for Blacksburg and was teaching at VT. We found a great neighborhood, and everyone became a big family. Forty years later we are still family.



My experiences have included:

- President—Blacksburg New Comers and Jr. Women's Club
- President—The Association of Higher Education and Disabilities in Virginia (an organization of higher education faculty and directors of programs in universities and colleges in Virginia)

I worked with early childhood programs in the NRV and ended up teaching at New River Community College for 33 years. I taught education classes and, when a new opportunity came calling, I developed its program for students with disabilities. Developing the program was no small task, requiring me to work with federal grants, developing advisory committees of special educators from throughout the New River Valley and building fledgling programs. The nationally recognized, award-winning programs continue today at the Center for Disability Services at NRCC.

After retiring in 2012, I married Allen Bame and together we enjoy traveling, our 13 grandchildren, and being members of AARP and Mt. Tabor Ruritan Club. As chair of the Mt. Tabor Ruritan Scholarship Committee, I have been amazed to learn the number of outstanding students in the NRV schools.

I am fortunate to have the opportunity to do home visitations for our church. I always come home with a smile on my face for spending time with the shut-ins.

Though retired, I still care deeply about giving equal opportunity to all people despite whatever challenges they may face.

Welcome, Jeananne, and thanks for serving!

While we may think we know our house like the back of our hand, we should probably look again closely to identify factors that can prevent a fall. Good lighting near the floor can give a bit of confidence when walking around after dusk. Night lights to guide the path from bed to bathroom would be helpful. Strips of LED lights can be inexpensive and easy to install. Small, loose throw rugs can be slippery patches waiting to send us off to the orthopedist! And it is easy to catch your toe on a raised door sill.

Perhaps not all of us are familiar with the latest technologies, but these can provide important tools for aging in place. Voice activated technologies will make "Alexa" and "Google" sound like family members. Lighting that is voice activated can make it easy to light up a room before entering. Anything that is remote controlled with a phone app or clicker, such as your thermostat or garage door closer, means that you don't have to get up and walk to a control switch to alter your environment. Voice commanded tools are pretty easy to install and can give you control over lights, heat, garage doors, music, television, and more. The idea that you can just call out what you want to activate a service may seem foreign, but it is commonplace to our children and grandchildren. Younger family members can be valuable technology partners, but commercial technical assistance is also available to set up new tools and help you understand how to use them.

Just as we are unique individuals, so are our houses. Every house has its own challenges for us as we age. When my husband and I moved to Blacksburg, I was determined to give my bad knees a break by living on one level. Fortunately, the house we found had originally been built for accessibility. Wider doorways make the house feel spatially generous. We had always had a walk-in shower so that was just a continuation of good design we had enjoyed in previous houses. We chose the neighborhood to be close to grandchildren, but the house design turned out to be a big bonus.

Going back to the concept of aging in place, it might be more useful to think of aging in a continuum of places, from independent living, to assisted living, and to nursing care. Of course, we may all experience these changes at different ages or not at all. For me, the most important part of the continuum is independent living and how to prolong this time in my own home. But this could change if staying in my own home means never getting out to enjoy the community. A good institutional setting that brings in the community in the form of lectures, art, music, and crafts, facilitates social connections, and offers transportation to allow residents to get out into the community might make assisted living a more like "aging in place." But this comes at a cost. Good institutions can be expensive. Making some affordable changes in your house can pay for themselves if they defer the move to a more expensive option. And these changes may be beneficial to a future sale of your property.

It is never too soon to start thinking about what would make your home more appropriate for aging in place. The goal is to open up the possibility of staying at home longer, enjoying the community, and being safe and happy.

Warm Hearth Village is known for retirement living in the New River Valley, providing seniors with a variety of housing options in independent living, assisted living, skilled care, long-term care, memory care and in-home care. What you may not be aware of, however, is that Warm Hearth offers options for low-income seniors in all areas of the Village.

Our founders, Wybe and Marietje Kroontje, envisioned a retirement community unlike any other: a community where seniors of all socioeconomic backgrounds would be welcome. Founded on this principle, some of the first buildings to rise from the ground at Warm Hearth Village were the Trolinger and New River House Apartments. These apartments are subsidized by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Trolinger and New River House provide subsidized housing to approximately 150 seniors residing in 144 apartments. Residents in the apartments share in all the amenities available on the campus of Warm Hearth Village. The average income for these residents is \$800 per month.

As seniors in the apartments are faced with changes in their health, Warm Hearth Village and the Warm Hearth Foundation work to provide access to subsidized care in healthcare services at Showalter Center and the Kroontje Healthcare Center. Each year 30–40 seniors receive assistance in the form of housing, meals, and nursing care that they would otherwise be unable to afford. Throughout most of our history, charitable assistance has been limited to healthcare needs at Showalter Center and the Kroontje Healthcare Center. While the healthcare needs of residents continue to be the greatest need on our campus, in recent years we have expanded our charitable focus to include the daily needs of seniors in the Trolinger and New River House Apartments.

In 2012, the Warm Hearth Foundation entered into a partnership with St. Michael Lutheran Church to address hunger among seniors in our community. Pastor John Wertz approached us to partner on a new program that would help with food insecurity. This new program, Micah's Soup for Seniors, was launched in the fall of 2012 and served 60 seniors initially each month. Micah's Soup for Seniors has continued to grow and now serves 100 seniors each month, providing a monthly grocery distribution of shelf-stable items. The program not only provides nutritional assistance, but an opportunity for social interaction with program volunteers. Last year the program provided more than \$19,000 in assistance to low-income seniors at Warm Hearth Village.

Since 2012 the Warm Hearth Foundation has built upon the Micah's Soup for Seniors program expanding the services we provide for those in need. We look forward to sharing more information with you next month on our efforts to serve more seniors in need with fresh produce and pet supplies.

Protecting Yourself from Cyber Threats

At our March meeting, an active FBI agent shared some resources about Internet security. He also recommended that we install VPNs on our mobile devices (see the next column for more information on VPNs). Here are details from the presentation with additional information about VPNs and social media.

From the agent's slides

Social Media: Advice

- Use the privacy and security settings on social networks to control who sees what you post
- Disable location services in privacy settings so photos you post do not give away your GPS location
- Manage your friends: On social networks, not all “friends” are created equal
- Know what action to take: If someone is harassing or threatening you, remove them from your friend list, block them, and report them to the site administrator.

Resources for learning how to stay safe online

<http://www.staysafeonline.org/>—an information website from the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) with lots of tips and resources about spam and phishing, online shopping, and passwords. The site recommends that you disable WiFi and Bluetooth on your smart phone when you shop so that you can't be tracked in stores. You can do this by turning the phone to airplane mode. It also recommends keeping the software on all your devices, including the operating system software, up to date.

www.stopthinkconnect.org—a global online safety awareness campaign to help all digital citizens stay safer and more secure online

<http://www.connectsafely.org/seniors>—resource for online safety. Easy to understand user guides for applications

Identity theft and other Internet crimes: Contacts for victims

Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3)

File a complaint online at www.ic3.gov. IC3 will review your complaint and may share information with the appropriate federal, state, local, or international law enforcement or regulatory agencies for criminal, civil, or administrative action.

Federal Trade Commission

The FTC operates the Consumer Sentinel, a secure online database used by law enforcement authorities worldwide to detect patterns of wrongdoing, leading to investigations and prosecutions

- File your complaint at ftcomplaintassistant.gov
- The FTC also maintains identitytheft.gov, the federal government's one-stop resource for identity theft victims

Additional notes on Social Media

- You do not have to accept all friend requests. The recent use of Facebook data by Cambridge Analytica was alarming in part because the group captured data of friends of the people whose information they harvested directly. More friends may make you more vulnerable.
- You can also protect your friends. If an app asks to use your contacts, decline.
- App developers and advertisers can get personal information if you play games on Facebook or even if you “like” something.
- The more of your personal information that is available, the more vulnerable you are to identity theft and other Internet crimes.

How to adjust privacy and security settings on Facebook

Log on to Facebook. In the blue ribbon at the top of the page, find the tiny black down arrow on the far right side and click. From the drop-down menu, click on “settings.”

Left menu

Security and Login: change your password, more

Privacy / Your activity: Show who can see your posts, Edit to restrict to friends.

General / Manage Account: You can deactivate your account here. You can also identify your Legacy contact (the person who can control your account after your death).

Learning about VPNs and choosing one

A virtual private network (VPN) enables users to send and receive data while remaining anonymous and secure online. It creates an encrypted connection so that no one can see and track your online actions. A VPN is an app that you can buy from the Apple App store (click on the blue and white Apps icon on your or screen or dock) or from Google Play (play.google.com/Apps). Some VPNs are free.

A VPN is especially important for travelers and people who use WiFi in public places, such as airports, hotels, and coffee shops. Without a VPN, your information is easily exposed to hackers. Even if you have a VPN, be cautious about using credit card numbers and banking information on WiFi in public places.

Reviews of VPNs

PC Magazine www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2403388,00.asp (or go to www.pcmag.com and search for VPN service)

Besides reviewing 10 different VPNs, this article explains what VPNs can do to protect your privacy and security. It also points out some limitations, including slower connections.

CNET.com <https://www.cnet.com/best-vpn-services-directory/>
Like *PCMagazine*, CNET is a trusted source of reviews on technology. Their reviews are in paragraph form rather than in a checklist of features. This site also explains VPNs.

Legislative Report *by Val Coluni*

1. 2018 General Assembly Summary. More than 3722 bills and other recommendations were submitted to committees in the House and Senate of which 1833 were passed at that level and submitted for further review within the General Assembly review process. It was frequently noted by many that there was less partisanship, more transparency, and a greater willingness to find alternate ways to solve State problems, issues, and concerns during many of these discussions. The biggest disappointment was failure to approve a State budget for the next fiscal period. This will require the Assembly to meet again in Richmond in April to come up with an acceptable solution.

2. Medicaid expansion. For several years efforts have been made to provide affordable health care to our needy citizens under the Affordable Care Act and/or through other programs. This year Governor Northam made this one of his most important legislative objectives. Unfortunately, again there was not enough support in the Assembly to do so. Opponents continue to explain that the cost of doing so would be harmful to other State programs (education, safety, roadways) and possibly require increasing State income taxes. Proponents respond the need is so severe that in some cases it could increase the harm to individuals to unacceptable levels. They also refer to our recent State elections to support their requests which show many of our State voters support doing this. This impasse was one of the major reasons why the Governor and the Assembly could not reach agreement on a State budget. Be hopeful that the impasse can be solved soon as we MUST have an approved budget by July.

3. Consumer protection: Big financial institution vs. small rural/community banks (Dodd-Frank Bill). Important revisions are being discussed in Washington about some changes to this bill, which was in response to the financial collapse in 2008 of a number of banks and other institutions in the financial industry. It was frequently stated by and believed by many that risky and bad practices of many were the primary causes of the collapse and we needed very “tough” regulations at the Federal level to stop this. So the tough regulations were approved. Ever since the major firms along with a number of small rural banks have voiced the same complaints: that the regulations are so “heavy” it is hurting their business. It appears to be a well accepted condition that small community banks are an important factor for economic development in rural areas. Virginia’s two U.S. Senators (M. Warner and T. Kaine) support selective revisions so long as they help the small rural banks and at the same time retain adequate controls over the large/Wall Street financial institutions. The two of them remind us that few small banks have opened in Virginia in the past several years even though we have reduced the number of these banks through mergers and closings.



4.18.18

GiveBigNRV is an initiative of the Community Foundation of the New River Valley. On Give Big day, April 18, 2018, it hopes to raise \$250,000 for local charities.

But you don’t have to wait until April 18. You can support your favorite charity now and help that charity win an additional grant from the Community Foundation by pre-scheduling your gift.

Simply find the charity you want to support at this site: cfnrv.givebig.org/c/NRV/p/organizations. Select the charity’s link, click *donate*, fill in your payment information, and enter 4.18.18 as the “Charge Date” at the bottom of the page. This ensures that you gift will count toward the April 18 giving day total for that organization.

At the list of organizations, you will find details on the services provided and on administration of the program.

AARP is a sponsor of GiveBigNRV and has supported several of the participating organizations with its annual charitable donations.

GiveBigNRV offers an opportunity for you to make the community a better place by giving to nonprofit organizations of your choice.



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.

Chapter Officers 2018

President • Wendy Baldwin, wendybburg@gmail.com
Vice President • Jerry Niles, niles@vt.edu
Secretary • Pat Hyer, hyerp@vt.edu
Treasurer • Pat Ballard, pballard@vt.edu
Assistant Treasurer • Ruth Anne Niles, rniles2@icloud.com

Board of Directors

- 2018—Wendy Baldwin, Ryan Martin, Lisa Moose
- 2019—Tamara Hodsdon, Peter Magolda, Jim Montgomery, Wanda Smith
- 2020—Isabel Berney, Jeananne Dixon, Hal VanLandingham


This issue of the newsletter was compiled and edited by Carolyn Rude and Sandra Griffith.

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



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Blacksburg Chapter  Member Application for 2018

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: .

Ryan Martin • P.O. Box 10082 • Blacksburg, VA 24062