



Nov. 20 Chapter Meeting

Unorthodox News: Political Cartoons in Election Campaigns

Edd Sewell will explore the power of political cartoons in election campaigns. As background, he will discuss research about the roles played by political cartoons in elections and then move to a focus on political cartoons in the 2018 mid-term election campaigns. Everything you ever wanted to know about visual communications in politics!



Edd is Professor Emeritus of Communication at Virginia Tech. He has taught several LLI courses on political cartoons.

Chapter meeting drive Nov. 20

November Food Drive: Pet Food (dogs and cats)

For the November Food Drive, we will collect pet food for homebound seniors. This program is being sponsored by the Agency On Aging. The pet food will be distributed by the drivers for Meals on Wheels.

Shannon Hammons, Marketing Rep for the Agency On Aging, will attend our November 20 meeting to kick off this drive. The meeting falls during the week of Thanksgiving. If you are unable to attend but would like to participate, please contact Sally Anna Stapleton, Chairperson, Community Service Committee (sanna418@gmail.com), or Wendy Baldwin, Chapter President (wendybburg@gmail.com).

Items Needed

Bags of dry dog or cat food

Most Seniors have small dogs so buy accordingly.

President's Column *by Wendy Baldwin*

Pets—why bother?

There are 86 million cats and 78 million dogs that people claim as pets... and untold numbers of birds, rodents, fish and reptiles. I myself once kept a 7-foot boa constrictor—named Fluffy. But, for me, nothing takes the place of cats. All you dog owners, keep reading, I've had two cats that I've termed "dogs in a cat suit."



What do these millions of cats and dogs do for us? Well, they cost us a bundle in dog food, cat food, and cat litter, trinkets and toys, and fees when we leave them so we can vacation. But, what do they give us? Untold companionship, unquestioning love, and the humbling experience of realizing we are *not* in control of our universe. I told you I was a cat person.

Health—we all want it, and it has repeatedly been shown that having pets is good for us. No source I know of recommends that you get a pet solely for health benefits, but walking your dog is clearly good for you, and the mere presence of a cat/dog in your life has been linked to lower blood pressure, cholesterol, triglycerides, and stress. How could it not be when you look into that loving face and stroke that silky fur? Having been through a diagnosis of aggressive breast cancer, I can attest that my cats provided a wonderfully calming and entertaining force in my life. I've said that anyone with my diagnosis should be issued a basket of kittens, no questions asked!

Kept inside, regular trips to the vet, and good care has meant that I've enjoyed watching kittens turn into 18-year-old cats! By the time you have had a loving pet for 18 years, they are truly part of the family and of your life. When our beloved cat of 18 years died, it took months to recover and be ready for another cat. But wait, we had always been respon-

Upcoming Events

Dec. 4, AARP Holiday Luncheon, 11:30 am, Warm Hearth Village

Jan. 8, LLI registration begins

Volunteer Appreciation

For the past three years, Judith and Roy Jones have been preparing the AARP newsletter for mailing. That means picking up the copies from KopyKorner as soon as they are ready, placing the address labels and edge tapes, completing the post office form, sorting the newsletters by zip code, and delivering them to the post office. The newsletters always arrive on time because Judith and Roy are so prompt and reliable. They donate about four hours for each issue.

Thanks to Judith and Roy for their generous service that has benefitted us all.

Jeananne Dixon-Bame will assume these responsibilities in 2019.



Roy and Judith Jones



Sue Magliaro and Elizabeth Creamer



Ruth Anne and Jerry Niles



Mike Kelly, Terry Wildman, and Jerry Niles



Pat Hyer talking to Terry Wildman



Molly McClintock



Barbara and Larry Harris



Isabel Berney and Don Creamer

President's Message, continued

sible cat owners and had our animals neutered. We had never had a litter of kittens, so we set out to adopt a litter. My husband blanched when I said I wanted a litter, but when we put real numbers to that, we could both agree that three would be nice. The only litters we seemed to find in the DC area where we lived were basically feral cats, not my idea of adoptable kittens. Our daughter, however, found kittens in her vet's office. She reported that they appeared calm, even with lots of other cats and dogs around and so we said great, we'll take them all. She went above and beyond the call of duty by keeping them for their first two weeks, isolated from her pets and being dosed with amoxicillin, turning her guest room pink.

When we lost the last of these, it took months to be ready for new cats in our lives. However, we were not cat "free" since we had adopted one of our son's cats when he was shipping off to Germany.

This cat came into our home, took one look at the other cats and bolted for the basement where he figured out how to get into the rafters. Hmmm, not ideal. We figured he'd get over it so at night we took food and a litter box to the basement, checked the water supply, and kept the door closed so the other cats would not roam down there until he was ready to be part of the family. I wish I could engage each and every one of you in a contest to guess how long he stayed in that situation. I would win. He did that for six months. No apparent neuroses; it just took him time to adjust.

After months of mourning the loss of our two "old ladies," I was in conversation with the adoption societies here in Blacksburg. The key person in this process would be at the PetSmart the following Saturday, and I decided to go see what she was like. Yes, I did take a cat carrier *just in case*.

WebMD reports on a study that found Alzheimer's patients have fewer anxious outbursts if there is an animal in the home.

A Japanese study of more than 5,200 adults found dog owners were 54% more likely to get the recommended physical activity than non-owners. Midland Life Insurance company gives preferential treatment to potential

clients over age 75 when they have a pet (dog or cat). Medical research has shifted from fearing that pets might exacerbate allergies to observing that infants growing up in households with "furry" animals, or on a farm, have greater resistance to allergies. This doesn't mean that hygiene should fly out the window, but some exposures appear to build a healthy immune system.

Studies find stronger effects for dogs than cats because of the effect of exercise, and few of us try walking cats. Dogs increase the possibility of social interaction—platonic or romantic—while you walk them. I described two of my cats as "dogs in cat suits" because when the doorbell rings, they run to see who it is and welcome them to our house. Also, playing fetch can be done with a cat and a toy mouse.

Whether you currently enjoy the companionship of a pet or not, please join us in the November food drive for pets. Let's help our older neighbors keep their pets—bring bags of dry cat or dog food. Seniors who may be facing health challenges need the calming effect of their pets; they do not need the trauma of having to give them up because they cannot feed them. Food will be distributed through the Soup for Seniors program.

Learn more?

Center for Disease Control, Selecting a pet: https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/power-of-the-pet-pets-enrich-our-lives_us_5908a7abe4b084f59b49fcf4

WebMD, 5 ways pets can improve your health, <https://www.webmd.com/hypertension-high-blood-pressure/features/health-benefits-of-pets#1>

Harvard Health Publishing, Why having a pet is good for your health <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/why-having-a-pet-is-good-for-your-health>

The Atlantic.com, "Dogs (and cats) can Love." They release the "love hormone," oxytocin, in intimate interactions with humans. <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2014/04/does-your-dog-or-cat-actually-love-you/360784/>



Wendy
Baldwin

1. General Assembly (GA). Each year prior to the opening of the GA, I meet with the people who represent the most people in Montgomery County—Senator Edwards and Delegate Hurst—in order to get their views on current state issues and their priorities for the 2019 General Assembly.

Since there are many issues and we have limited time, I ask them to respond to specific questions. I questioned them about 1. arming teachers in the classrooms; 2. gerrymandering; and 3. economic development. Here are their responses:

Senator Edwards

- We should not arm teachers in the classrooms as this may interfere with their primary mission.
- We should appoint a group of technical experts with GA guidance to establish our voting districts.
- Economic development is dependent on several important conditions such as an up-to-date work force with the technical skills in demand by employers and improved infrastructure (roads, bridges) and supportive regulations and government assistance that make our area a desirable place to do business and to live.

Delegate Hurst

- We should not arm teachers in the classroom but improve school resources in companion areas to set up appropriate warning signals to address early the most likely trouble spots and have effective means to correct them.
- We should remove gerrymandering from political control and establish an independent State appointed commission to take over this function; this will be difficult as both political parties over the years have enjoyed their power to perform the tasks to their particular advantage.
- We must provide much more broadband capability in SW Virginia to respond to the current needs of the more aggressive employers and their customers who deal in highly competitive industries.

Next question: What are some of the issues you plan to concentrate on in the 2019 General Assembly?

Senator Edwards: reducing health care costs; reducing the significant income disparity among various citizen groups; major improvements on Interstate 81.

Delegate Hurst: improving health care for the needy; improving conditions for our teaching staffs; more cost-effective economic development and targeted programs in SW Virginia.

2. Interstate 81. Both Senator Edwards and Delegate Hurst passionately stated that Interstate 81 must be improved. It has been overloaded for years. Some key statistics are that it is 50 percent over the traffic capacity for its design and its traffic load has more than doubled in the past 20 years. The Virginia portion sees 2,000 accidents a year. What always appears to be a roadblock in taking action by the GA is: *How are we go-*

ing to pay for it? The two most frequently mentioned responses are to increase the gas tax and make certain portions of the road a toll road for certain classes of vehicles. But the GA has appeared reluctant to take either action. Could it be that they are waiting for a BIG roar from us to fix the problem along with a vote to approve their solution with no strings attached? With the conditions of the roadway as described above, I will be extra careful using this roadway!

Virginia ranks high in the “cost of voting”

An article in the September 2018 issue of *Election Law Journal* ranks Virginia as having the second highest “cost of voting” among the 50 states. Only Mississippi exceeds Virginia in the “cost” factors of time and effort that it takes to register and cast a vote. A high cost correlates to lower voter turnout.

Some of the cost factors that account for Virginia’s ranking relate to registration to vote: the number of days prior to election that registration must occur (22 days before a general election), same day registration not allowed, no automatic voter registration, felons not allowed to register.

Voting inconvenience is another factor. In Virginia, a state-sanctioned excuse is required for absentee voting, no time off from work for voting, no early voting. A photo ID is required and strictly enforced.

The cost of voting in Virginia has increased since 1996. The perceived benefit of voting increases when there is greater electoral competition. Socioeconomic factors also affect turnout.



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, wendyburg@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, Jeanne Dixon Bame, Hugh VanLandingham

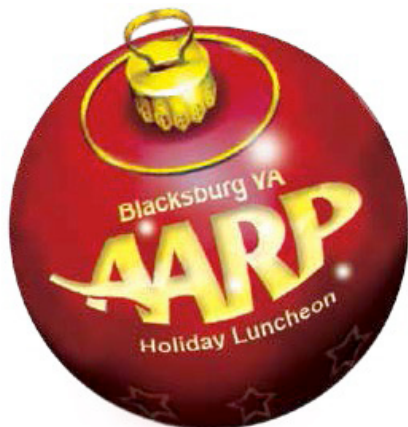
Newsletter editors: Carolyn Rude, Sandra Griffith

Photographer: Peter Magolda

AARP Website: www.blacksburgaarp.org

AARP Holiday Luncheon

Tuesday, Dec. 4, 11:30 am



Menu

Plated garden house salad
Chicken breast in sun-dried tomato cream sauce
Roasted vegetable lasagna
Savory mashed sweet potatoes
Roasted root veggies
Rolls and butter
Fruit pies sliced
Coffee, iced tea, and water

Location

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

Date: Tuesday, December 4, 2018

Time: 11:30 am–1:30 pm

Program

Announcement and Introduction of
AARP Community Award Recipients

Price: \$20 per person

Guests welcome!

Reservation deadline: November 26, 4 pm

Luncheon Reservation, Membership Dues

You can write one check

Total the Luncheon, 2019 dues, and optional donation and make your check out to **Blacksburg AARP Chapter # 2613**.

Send with these forms to

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

Holiday Luncheon Reservation Form

Reservation deadline: November 26, 2018, 4 pm

Name _____ \$20.00

Spouse/Partner/Guest _____ \$20.00

Guest _____ \$20.00

Luncheon Total _____

Reservations cannot be accepted after November 26, 2018, 4 pm.
For more information, contact Terry Wildman, wiley@vt.edu

Name _____

Spouse/Partner _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone: _____ Email _____

Email Spouse/Partner _____

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

New____ Renewal ____ 90+ years old (free) ____

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

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

Luncheon Total _____

Dues _____ 15 _____


Donation _____

Total _____



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

**Nonprofit
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Blacksburg Chapter  Member Application for 2019

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