



Feb. 19 Chapter Meeting

Dancing bees bioindicate habitats' ability to feed pollinators

by Maggie Couvillon

The recent pollinator crisis exemplifies how public interest in scientific issues can be a mixed blessing, raising awareness of pollinator decline, while generating rallying cries for untested solutions.



Lack of forage contributes to bee declines. Everyone wants to feed hungry bees. We offer help with best intentions, but we do not know when and where bees lack forage.

Here we explore how waggle dance, a behavior in which a honey bee forager communicates to her nestmates the vector from the hive to an important resource, usually food, may also be a powerful tool for ecology. Because honey bees perform dances only for the most profitable resources, these data provide spatial information about the availability of good quality forage. Thus, one species and methodology gives a novel measure of a landscape's profitability that may be relevant not just for honey bees, but also for other flower-visiting insects.

You will learn the background on the honeybee waggle dance; how we know what we know with the waggle dance and using waggle dances in research; and what we can still find out, the current state of the field, and future directions.

You may view two videos here that will provide context and some details of this presentation:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AMU1KOF_Tck

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tcXkQBY0i0k&t=1s>

President's Column by Jerry Niles

The Blacksburg Chapter of AARP ushered in the New Year with a lively January chapter meeting. At one of our largest monthly meetings ever, 50+ members gathered to hear Dr. Rebecca Hester take us to the frontier of new technologies with an inside look at how new understandings in biology will affect us in the future and the challenges that this new biologically driven technology presents to society. Dr. Hester's impressive knowledge and understanding of the intersection of science, technology, and its potential impact on society left us with lots of questions and an admiration for her extensive knowledge and passionate approach to this exciting and sometimes unsettling area of research and public policy.



In addition, during the meeting we were invited to participate in a cutting edge research study on balance by Dr. Karen Roberto, a University distinguished professor from Virginia Tech. Dr. Roberto's invitation is an opportunity for some of our members to learn about and incorporate new strategies for developing better balance in their daily lives to avoid that one misstep that can lead to the fall that we all dread. If you have any interest in finding out more about the study contact Leigh Allin at lallin@vt.edu and explore whether or not participation in the study is right for you.

New Membership Processes

As January is the beginning of our annual membership, I wanted you to know that we are working on validating and streamlining our membership process. Often, I am asked, Did I join this past year? In fact, I know I have asked myself that question more than once. As with most administrative matters, the membership process has multiple layers. Now that we have two paths for membership application forms, online and hard copy mail-in, we think it is the perfect time to tweak our membership processes. For example, we realize we need to incorporate a step in our membership process in which we send you noti-

please turn to p. 4

Upcoming Events

Feb. 2-Apr. 15, Tax-Aide program

Mar. 19, AARP program, Dr. Michael Friedlander, Executive Director, Fralin Biomedical Research Institute at Virginia Tech Carillion School of Medicine

Inside this issue

* Remembering Peter Magolda (p. 2)

* Meet new board member Leslie Pendleton (p. 4)



2019 Food Drive: February

The Community Service Committee, with support of the Board, will be conducting four food drives in 2019. The food drives will be held at the monthly AARP chapter meetings. The first will be in February.

We will collect non-perishable food items needed most by families. The items collected will be donated to local food banks. Please consider donating the following (no glass containers, please):

Peanut Butter	Jelly
Canned Meats/Fish	Soups
Hot/Cold Cereals	Crackers
Canned Vegetables	Canned Fruit
Macaroni & Cheese	Pasta/Rice

Remember to bring your plastic bags to the Community Center for recycling

In Memory of Peter Magolda

By Terry Wildman and Don Creamer

We were close friends with Peter Magolda and his wife Marcia Baxter-Magolda and wish to share some thoughts about Peter and our relationship with him with our friends in the AARP Blacksburg Chapter.



Peter Magolda was a very easy man to like. We have spent time with Peter on many occasions and always profited from the experience. The conversation with him was easy and congenial, we learned useful and interesting things, and there was always a generosity

of spirit. We tended to leave these encounters looking forward to the next opportunity to visit. And over time we continued to learn new things to appreciate about our friend.

Peter was a very good photographer, perhaps a great one. Everyone in our chapter who interacted with Peter certainly knew that much about him. However, looking at all the very cool photos he did of us doesn't reveal all that much about why he was so good at photography. He did have a big sophisticated looking camera that often accompanied him, and he obviously knew how to use it. What we may not know is that picture taking is just the beginning for a good photographer. Peter also employed a very sophisticated editing system that fixed typical problems and allowed for a strong element of artistry. In many cases the subject or object we thought we knew could be transformed in some new and revealing way. That is why we often react with surprise and pleasure when we see what Peter has done.

Of course, photography is simply one element of Peter's life. He, like most of us, had a long and productive career, enjoyed his family and friends, developed special interests, and generally dealt with all the things that life tends to throw our way. Perhaps one of the reasons we have begun with Peter-the-photographer is that it serves as a useful metaphor to reveal a so much more about him. For example, let's begin with the idea that Peter really loved people. As revealed by his photographic and academic work he was interested in and cared about people—all kinds of people. In New Orleans, for example, he would literally stalk the French Quarter with his camera looking for people, artifacts, and scenes that could bring the culture of the place alive. He was so curious to find the essence of things. He found and documented the invisible people that we casually pass by with little notice, and saw what they were doing.

Peter was, well, crazy about music. He amassed over time a huge library of music both in digital and vinyl form. He loved

music events and made it part of his life each year to be at the New Orleans Jazz Festival, which is a massive event celebrating every type of music. One year Terry and Sue, with Jerry and Ruth Niles and another couple close to us were hanging out in front of the Cajun music venue, when here comes this familiar looking guy, walking fast, sweating in the heat, carrying a big camera with long range lens, charging to a venue next to us where some famous musical group was playing. This was before Peter and Marcia had moved to Virginia and we didn't know Peter all that well, but Terry moved quickly to intercept the big guy and managed a brief conversation. He was on his way to see and photograph The Mavericks, a group we were planning to see also, so we got a chance to see Peter in action. It was good to see a passionate music lover and photographer doing what he loved to do. And, by the way, after this event he didn't stay long to visit, but charged off to another venue.

So, combining passion and curiosity, it might not be surprising that Peter could find even the most mundane of things hiding some artistic element—old farm tools, a small intersection in a roof line, a steaming stew pot, a sleeping dog, whatever it might be. He was also very generous when someone might want some particular event documented and he could always be counted on to find elements of people's lives to highlight that would be treasured well beyond the event. He loved to find new experiences where a camera might offer some useful insight. Such was an occasion where he showed up to document the lighting of a massive burn pile on Terry and Sue's property—actually an annual event. Apparently, Peter had never been very close to a raging inferno and aside from being amazed that Terry would actually light off such a thing he set about revealing with his camera some of the scary but actually beautiful colors a fire can produce.

A camera was not the only research instrument that enabled Peter to document important aspects of life and the world we live in. He liked to call himself a participant-observer. His well-received book documenting the vital role that campus janitors play in college life showed his keen interest in people, including those who ordinarily receive scant attention, by using this research skill. When Peter joined our chapter he quickly became an important contributor because of his experience, range of skills, and willingness to take on projects that required, for example, technology expertise. He was generous with his time and congenial in his manner. He was a very easy person to like.



We will go on with our work with AARP, and our personal lives, knowing that we had much more to learn from Peter, but happy for the time that he came our way.

The Humanity that Peter Magolda Saw and Shared

Peter took hundreds of pictures of AARP Blacksburg members and events over the past several years, creating an astonishing archive of people and community. Here is a small sample of recent ones. Find more at adlogam.smugmug.com/Organizations/AARP/n-49pk5B/

To download: click on the photo of your choice, then find the download icon. ↓

The photo should appear in your downloads folder.



fication of the receipt of your renewal or a letter of welcome to new members. We also need to revalidate our process to get Jim Wightman, our keeper of the chapter nametags, current information on new members so he can make the new tags. Finally, we need to make sure that Don Creamer, master of our Mail Chimp contact system, is notified to add a new member to his list.

Building Social Connectedness

I took this time to talk about the membership process because it reflects something bigger than good administrative practice. Having a good handle on our membership roll helps fulfill one of the important beliefs of our chapter and AARP in general, that the creation of social connectedness is foundational to living well. There is ample research evidence and good common sense that tells us that to age successfully, one needs a rich web of social connections. There are multiple ways the chapter goes about providing that social connectedness. As I mentioned last month, I find the monthly meetings, the participation in chapter supported service opportunities, the newsletters, and the socials as ways to connect socially and constructively with others. We are certain there are more ways to create opportunities for connection among members in support of their efforts to living well. Having a good grasp of who are members will help us continue to build a more member-centered chapter.

Care Committee: New Directions

Consistent with the effort to strengthen our communication network with members, one of the chapter's new Board members, Leslie Pendleton, has proposed a reconceptualization of the chapter's Care Committee. Leslie, licensed counselor and leader of the chapter health and wellness fair, will help lead the chapter in considering new ways that it can reach out to support the members in their effort to live well from social, emotional, physical, and cognitive perspectives. You will be hearing more about the Care Committee's directions in the future and will be receiving an invitation to participate in a broader conversation about what the concept of Care might be for our chapter.

Successful Aging—and an Assignment

One final thought I would like to share in this column is about the concept of successful aging. You don't have to look too closely in society to find the negative representations of aging that permeate public conversation. In fact, using the term successful aging sometimes confuses people as they see the aging process so negatively. The bottom line is that others see those of us who are on the aging "fast track" becoming less able. AARP and specifically the Blacksburg Chapter are working at changing that negative perspective. To that end, I am giving you an assignment this month: think about ways that you are better right now than you were 10, 15, 25 years ago. Identify at least three. Then think about some ways over the next year that you will be even better yet! Sure, there are things we are not as good at as we used to be, but I'll bet you surprised yourself with the new understandings, skills, and attitudes that you have developed since you noticed you were aging. That's what successful aging is all about—not going old. As Sir Frances Bacon, the English philosopher and scientist told us many years ago, "I will never be an old man. To me, old age is always someone who is 15 years older than I am."

Meet New Board Member Leslie Pendleton

I grew up in East Tennessee and Gate City (Scott County), thus explaining what lingers of my original "hick" accent. I arrived in Blacksburg in fall 1976 to pursue my undergraduate degree at what was then called VPI. Like many other VPI/VT graduates, rather than leave town after completing my B.S. degree, I stayed. I had decided to take a year off before pursuing graduate study in Social Work at Virginia Commonwealth University. In the meantime, I took a full-time job with my Work Study supervisor, Dr. Irving John ("Jack") Good, a University Distinguished Professor of Statistics who had been a cryptanalyst under Alan Turing at Bletchley Park in the United Kingdom during World War II. In that year, I also met many special friends and a guy from Delaware who had settled in Giles County. So I never left.

Virginia Tech and Blacksburg soon became my permanent home. My then husband and I had two children, eventually moved to Dublin, and later divorced. While I raised my children and worked at Virginia Tech (first in the Department of Statistics and later in various student services capacities within the College of Engineering), I earned two more degrees (M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Counselor Education). In 2002, my children and I moved from Dublin to Blacksburg. For a long time, I felt trapped and dreamed of moving elsewhere, but I couldn't move my children away from their father, and I had become Jack's primary caregiver in his later years. Eventually I felt peace in the realization there was really no other place I would rather be. I remarried in 2015; my husband, Dave Edwards, works in engineering at Appalachian Power and likes the area, too.

My children, Andrew and Caitlin Miller, and their significant others also graduated from Virginia Tech. Andrew is CEO of OLIO Financial Planning (formerly JSW Financial) with offices in Blacksburg and Falls Church. Caitlin lives in Charlottesville and works for the Virginia Department of Agriculture. I have placed my order for grandchildren; in the meantime, I very much enjoy my granddogs Finn, Izzy, and Judy.

After 36 years of service, and feeling like I needed change, I retired from Virginia Tech in 2016. I stayed busy that first summer. My husband and I moved into our new house in Indian Run Subdivision just outside Blacksburg, and I prepared my other house to rent to three incoming Veterinary Medicine students. We brought home our golden retriever puppy Henry. In August 2016, I took a part-time job at Fringe Benefit in downtown Blacksburg where I met many nice customers. These activities allowed me to unwind from what had become a too demanding, stressful, and thankless job. Fast-forward two years, and I realized that I wasn't ready to forego my counseling profession. My work on the health fair planning committee was opportune. I made a connection with "Living Well Counseling and Support Services" at the AARP/VCOM Health and Wellness Fair in September 2018. Now I am working there as a private practice counselor. The practice name is so appropriate to my role with AARP Blacksburg.

I do devote time and commitment to those activities I planned for retirement. Henry and I are training to be a pet therapy team. I take bluegrass banjo lessons on my grandfather's 1940s Kay banjo at the Handmade Music School at the Floyd Country

Store. Last August I took classes on natural indigo dyeing at the Marshfield School of Weaving in Vermont, and I'll go back again this coming August for advanced classes. I enjoy live music, lifelong learning, mid-century modern architecture and design, gardening, nature, knitting, reading, and traveling. Last summer, I marked travel to Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island off my bucket list. This summer we'll travel back to Maine for a second time to explore further up the coastline to Acadia National Park. Finally, I am enjoying volunteerism. I'm Treasurer of our Indian Run Homeowners Association, member of the local chapter of the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI), member of the AARP/VCOM Health Fair Planning Committee, and Board member with the AARP Blacksburg chapter.

For many years prior to my retirement, I pondered existential questions: What can I do to make a contribution? What will be my legacy? I think those questions have finally been answered. Whew! Having been a caregiver in some context since early childhood, it seems only fitting to connect counseling and caregiving to my work with AARP Blacksburg. As a start, I was excited to bring the broad theme of "wellness" to our health fair in September 2018. Wellness, a multi-dimensional concept, includes physical, emotional, social/cultural, environmental, intellectual/occupational, spiritual, and financial wellness. How can we better care for the needs of our membership? What does it mean to live well? What will help you live well? Please email your ideas (lkpendleton@gmail.com) for how we can better care for our membership through caring and ongoing wellness-focused activities.



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 2019

President • Jerry Niles, niles@vt.edu
Vice President • Don Creamer, dgc2@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

- 2019—Tamara Hodsdon, Peter Magolda, Jim Montgomery, Wanda Smith
- 2020—Isabel Berney, Jeananne Dixon Bame, Hugh VanLandingham
- 2021—Doug Feuerbach, Judith Jones, Lisa Moose, Leslie Pendleton

Newsletter editors: Carolyn Rude, Sandra Griffith

Weather Policy

The Blacksburg chapter follows the weather policy of Montgomery County schools. If schools are closed, the chapter will not meet. If the school opening is delayed, the chapter will meet.

AARP Website www.blacksburgaarp.org

Blacksburg Chapter #2613

Legislative Report by Val Coluni



1. Legislation: Prescription Drugs.

There have now been several proposals in the General Assembly to reduce drug prices, some by our legislators and some others by federal administration members. These proposals cover a number of different options: let Medicare negotiate prices directly with the drug companies; let Americans import cheaper drugs from Canada; others favor letting the free market do their usual job; others favor federal rules and regulations. These proposals will require SINCERE bipartisanship efforts to resolve the significant differences in order to select one best solution and/or combining two or more alternatives. The drug companies have responded to some of the recommendations by stating "they have specific flaws which would "wreak havoc on our health care system as well as possibly limit access to some medicines and/or compromise safety standards." While these talks are going on some drug companies have recently raised prices. The average price bump for all has been estimated at 6.3% (percent) well above the pace of inflation. The Federal Administration claims drug prices declined in 2018. Looking at the whole of America's prescription drug market many of the experts in the field state their numbers are not accurate. AARP wants results now and to help get there they have instituted an advocacy campaign to protect seniors and remind all that all parties to this issue have made past promises to do just that. Again we need your support to get behind this effort by calling your representatives now! The General Assembly is in a short session this year so don't delay.


2. Legislation: Schools (Repairs, modernizing, new construction)

The General Assembly and the Governor now appear to agree that the condition of schools is a crisis and requires significant action. The urgent needs are in some of the larger cities and in rural areas. Prior estimates were that \$18 billion was required to adequately fix the problems. That estimate was made in 2008 and in prior years when this subject was on the to do list of some of our government officials. Now one additional problem has come out and is resulting in a political battle between the Attorney General (Herring) and Senator Bill Stanley): WHO is responsible for paying these expenses? The Attorney General says regional and local communities are responsible. He points to a state account (Priority Account) that was set up to do this. Senator Stanley responds that this account was never funded adequately to handle such large expenses. Today many of these communities are in former coal-producing areas which are now "sick, broke and have been left behind" by their government. In addition, the senator believes that these conditions hinder efforts to attract new employers to our state and to motivate our current employers to stay here and expand their operations. A final note in his argument is that these conditions could be used to charge us with violating federal laws and regulations which require states to ensure that the conditions of the school's physical plants must not deny students an equal opportunity for a quality education.



Blacksburg Chapter #2613
 Jerry Niles, President
 P.O. Box 10082
 Blacksburg, VA 24062

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Blacksburg Chapter  Member Application for 2019

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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: .

AARP Blacksburg Chapter • P.O. Box 10082 • Blacksburg, VA 24062