



## January 16 Chapter Meeting

### Roadway Lighting and Driver Safety

by Dr. Ronald Gibbons

Roadway lighting has long been used as a tool for provide a safe driving environment at night. But how effective is it? How effective is it for an older driver? Research at the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute has provide some insight into this question and is shaping the lighting design approaches for the future. Dr. Ronald Gibbons, Director of the Center for Infrastructure Based Safety Systems at The Virginia Tech



Dr. Ronald Gibbons

Transportation Institute, will provide insight into the current trends in roadway lighting, the visibility needs for drivers, the changes in vision as the eye ages, and how our roadway lighting can be changed in the future to meet these needs.



### 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.

### 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.

### Dues are Due!

If you haven't yet paid your dues for 2017, please use the form on the back of this newsletter. If you have paid, consider an additional contribution to the local chapter for its projects and expenses.

## President's Column *by Wendy Baldwin*

### Three things that draw me to AARP

I am so pleased to have this opportunity to contribute to AARP-Blacksburg. Let me share with you AARP activities that draw me to it.



#### Focus on Policy Issues

First, AARP does not shy away from big issues that affect seniors. AARP takes on issues that require a voice in the policy sphere, a voice that individuals may find hard to project. What issues? Protecting Social Security, Medicare, other health care, and nonpartisan legislative districts for political empowerment. Tax reform isn't an "aging" issue, but in the 2017 tax overhaul, AARP advocated hard to preserve the deduction for medical expenses and the extra standard deduction for those age 65 and older. AARP provides a broad view and a voice at the table when policies regarding age discrimination and medical research are debated. I want AARP to continue to analyze complex issues, provide balanced overviews of the options, highlight how these options might affect seniors, and show us how we can express our individual voices.

#### Provide Resources for Aging People

Second, AARP recognizes that with aging come some new needs. Let's call these the adjustments to aging. The natural process of aging can cause any of us to need help getting around in our houses, driving—or not, hearing, seeing, remembering. With creative planning, many needs of natural aging can be met. AARP has great resources to help us think about what might make life easier. See <https://www.aarp.org/home-garden/housing/info-03-2010/i38-strategies.html> for one.

The concept of aging in place is that "place" can adjust to "aging," and we can continue to enjoy the lifestyle that we are accustomed to. For some it means retrofitting a house to

*please turn to page 2*

## Upcoming Events

January 8: Registration for spring LLI courses opens

February 1: Tax-Aide program begins (p. 2)

## AARP-Virginia Gives LLI its "Community Partner of the Year" Award

AARP's "Community Partner of the Year" Award recognizes an organization that has made outstanding contributions to the work of AARP Virginia by collaborating with AARP volunteers and staff to enhance the quality of life for members of the community. At the All-Volunteer Assembly in Richmond, Brian Jacks, Associate Director of AARP-VA, presented the award to the Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech. Jerry and Ruth Anne Niles accepted the award on behalf of LLI.

LLI offers classes and special events for the people 55 and older in the New River Valley. AARP volunteers were instrumental in launching LLI in the fall of 2015. Together, the organizations enrich the quality of life for seniors.

Don Creamer prepared the nomination materials.



Jerry and Ruth Anne Niles accept the "Community Partner" award for LLI from Brian Jacks, Associate Director of AARP-VA

**(President's Column (continued))**

accommodate new needs, such as lower kitchen counters and wider door frames for people in wheelchairs. For others it means moving to an apartment that is on one level and wheelchair accessible. For many it means staying in the community, near family and friends, who can be key to happy aging.

There can be a tension between staying in the community and needing transportation vs. being within walking distance of restaurants and shops. But creative use of services can ease such tensions. Can I tell you how much I love Amazon and all its related providers? The modern equivalent of the Sears catalog is online shopping and a FedEx or UPS truck. (Did I just hear trombones in the background?) These tools make shopping feasible at any age. Click on what you want, and a couple of days later it appears at your doorstep. Has any modern invention been better aimed at making life easier for seniors who don't want to carry loads of kitty litter from a grocery store? Are you having trouble shopping for the grandchildren? If there is a wish list, you can do one-click shopping, and zoom! The gift is sent to them. Anyone with the energy to prowl stores, shop, pack, and mail may have at it, but shopping and delivery services provide other options.

What does AARP have to do with this? AARP publicizes programs to help keep us safe while shopping online. They advertise reputable vendors, including those offering discounts to members. AARP provides advice on ways to make computer use easier and to avoid fraud. Overall, AARP helps seniors feel comfortable taking advantage of new tools that can help them age in place.

**Celebration of Retirement**

The third aspect of AARP that draws me to it is its celebration of retirement as a stage when you get to do more of the things you love and take up new interests. When I retired I realized that my time was really my own, and I could spend it any way I wanted to. Hang out with grandchildren? Why yes, that would be great. Read more? Wow, I can finally read those books I bought when I was working and didn't have time to read. Take up something totally new? Bring on a steel drum. Now, if you asked me before I retired to list the 200 things I thought I might do in retirement, playing in a steel drum orchestra was not on the list. But, the first time I heard the PanJammers play, I knew I loved the music. And the performers all seemed to be having a great time. So, now I play with them. I look forward to our gigs, playing for street fairs, church picnics, and business events.

Research suggests that learning something new is good for your brain health. When I was working and raising a family, I had little time for community activities. Now I do. There is both fun and a sense of purpose in giving back to the community. The communities of the New River Valley are super places to do service with so many ways to engage. RSVP can help locate volunteer activities, and The Time Bank offers a great way to use your skills to help someone else as well as to get services you need.

The New River Valley offers many ways to enjoy oneself, continue lifelong interests, or develop new ones. Programs at the

Moss Art Center and the Lyric Theatre, street fairs, and art walks invite residents to experience new things. The Lifelong Learning Institute provides classes and events for learning more about our world, our history, and our opportunities to grow. Retirement is a time to celebrate the skills we have and the new ones we acquire now that our time is our own to spend as we wish.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to lead AARP Blacksburg for the coming year. In my time on the Board, I have come to appreciate the great talent and resources of our organization. The people are terrific, both hard working and creative. I could not ask for better. But, this is not just any organization. For me, AARP has three critical areas that are essential to the well-being of our community. I will continue to: (1) focus on policy issues and helping the membership know how to engage (whether they agree with the AARP position or not); (2) provide resources to help all of us deal with the inevitable challenges of aging; and (3) celebrate the ability of retirees to keep doing the amazing things they always did and take on new ones to make retirement years even better.

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**The AARP Tax-Aide program**

The 2018 tax-aid program begins February 1 and ends April 15. The location is the Christiansburg Recreation Center (Senior Activity Room). If you need help with your taxes, please call to schedule an appointment: 382-2349.

Counselors will be available for preparing taxes according to this schedule:

1:00 – 4:00 pm, Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday

9:00 am – noon, Saturday

If you are interested in volunteering with this program, please contact Pat Ballard: pballard@vt.edu • 382-1189

**AARP Charitable Gifts 2017**



At the holiday luncheon, our chapter presented donations to New River Valley organizations that serve seniors. Representing the groups are

*back row L-R* Jeannie Ayers, Agency on Aging; Pastor John Wertz, Soup for Seniors (St. Michael Lutheran Church); Jack Leahy, Blacksburg Community Center Senior Programs; Jessica Wirgau, Community Foundation of the NRV, Blacksburg Senior Center Endowment Fund

*front row L-R* Ellen Stewart, TimeBank; Jade Fillingner, Community Living Center at the VA Medical Center; Coreen Mett, Christiansburg Rec Center Senior Programs and the Christmas Store Senior Department

## Holiday Party 2018



Julia Lewis and Pat Carnrite



Don Creamer and Hugh VanLandingham



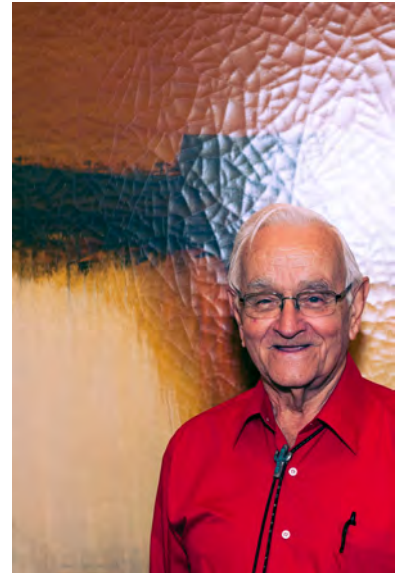
Doug Sewall and Sharen Hillison



Sandy and Jeff Birch



Pat Ballard and Coreen Mett



Jim Wightman



Elizabeth Reisinger, Elaine and Virgil Cook

PHOTOS BY PETER MAGOLDA

<https://adlogam.smugmug.com/Organizations/AARP/n-49pk5B/>



Jerry Niles (R) presents the Chapter Spirit Award to Val Coluni for his exceptional service in preparing the monthly legislative reports.

## CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS 2017

### Recognition

Lifelong Learning Institute at VT wins the new AARP Virginia Chapter Partnership Award; Jerry and Ruth Ann Niles accepted the award at the Annual All-Volunteer Banquet in Richmond

### Member Services and Communication

Conducted 8 public meetings featuring a variety of programs plus June picnic and December Holiday Luncheon  
Published 9 chapter newsletters (thanks to Carolyn Rude for editing and Judith Jones for preparing the newsletter for mailing)  
Maintained 13 active committees, reporting at monthly board meetings  
Maintained a chapter website with up-to-date information about the chapter and chapter activities (thanks to Don Creamer and Peter Magolda)  
Created and published a new chapter brochure (thanks to Don Creamer and Peter Magolda)  
Co-hosted with the Lifelong Learning Institute a social/fundraising event at Whitebarrel Winery yielding \$700 for the chapter budget  
Provided hospitality at each public event (thanks to Thais Beams)

### Community Partnerships and Support

Maintained and developed robust partnerships:  
AARP Virginia, VCOM, NRV Agency on Aging, Lifelong Learning Institute at VT, Center for Gerontology at VT, Warm Hearth Village Retirement Community, Community Foundation of the NRV, Blacksburg TimeBank, Downtown Blacksburg Inc., VT Retirees Association, YMCA at VT  
Partnered with the Lifelong Learning Institute to present a workshop on Aging in Place and an orientation to the TimeBank initiative  
Initiated planning for the 2018 Health and Wellness Fair (thanks to Jennie Reilly, Wendy Baldwin, and others)  
Participated in state AARP Advocacy, Legislative, and Volunteer meetings  
Supported OneVirginia 2021 (nonpartisan redistricting effort)  
Tracked Virginia and National Legislative initiatives of interest to AARP objectives; reported findings at chapter board meetings and published in chapter newsletters and website (thanks to Val Coluni)  
Met with Congressman Morgan Griffin, Delegate Joseph Yost, and staff members of Senators Mark Warner and Tim Kaine  
Served 1,175 clients through the Tax-Aide program (thanks to Pat Ballard, Dianne Rencsok, and volunteers)  
Collected 700+ pounds of food for the Blacksburg and Christiansburg pantries at the October 1 annual food drive (thanks to Sally Anna Stapleton)  
Exhibited at Blacksburg's annual Steppin' Out festival  
Exhibited at an event for nonprofits at the Moss Arts Center  
Supported the Warm Hearth Foundation fundraiser—Cheeseburger in Parrot-dise  
Contributed support to *Leading Lights*  
Contributed \$2,600 to charitable organizations that serve seniors in the NRV

## LEADERSHIP 2017, 2018

### Officers

	2017	2018
President	Terry Wildman	Wendy Baldwin
Vice President	Wendy Baldwin	Jerry Niles
Secretary	Pat Hyer	Pat Hyer
Treasurer	Pat Ballard	Pat Ballard
Assistant Treasurer		Ruth Anne Niles

### Board Members

Class of 2017	Pat Hyer, Jerry Niles, Shirley Peterson
Class of 2018	Wendy Baldwin, Ryan Martin, Lisa Moose
Class of 2019	Tamara Hodsdon, Peter Magolda, Jim Montgomery, Wanda Smith
Class of 2020	Isabel Berney, Hugh VanLandingham

### 2017 Committee Chairs

Awards—Tamara Hodsdon  
Chaplain—Sandy Birch  
Community Service—Sally Anna Stapleton  
Financial Planning and Audit—June Schmidt  
Health Fair—Jennie Reilly, Wendy Baldwin  
History—Sally Anna Stapleton  
Hospitality—Thais Beams  
Legislative—Val Coluni  
LLI Partnership—Pat Hyer, Don Creamer  
Membership—Ryan Martin, Tom Alston, Jim Wightman  
Newsletter—Carolyn Rude  
Program—Don Creamer and Lisa Moose  
Website—Don Creamer, Peter Magolda

### 2017 Liaisons

AARP of Virginia—Ben Crawford  
AARP Tax Preparation—Pat Ballard  
Virginia Tech Retirees Association—Cecil McBride  
Town of Blacksburg/Community Center—Joy Herbert  
Community Foundation of the NRV—Pat Hyer  
TimeBank—Lisa Moose

Real Possibilities with 

## CHAPTER AWARDS

At the Holiday Luncheon, the Blacksburg AARP chapter presented awards reflecting outstanding contributions to our chapter and the community::

**Chapter Service Awards:** **Val Coluni**, for carefully watching legislation that affects seniors and reporting it each month; and **Terry Wildman**, for serving as chapter president for two terms and for representing the chapter in many community activities

**Chapter Spirit Award:** **Molly McClintock**, for her work with the Blacksburg Refugee Partnership and for serving on the LLI Program Committee

Congratulations to all, and thank you for your contributions that enrich the lives of individuals and the community.

## Learn to Play Bridge

Bridge classes for beginners and those who have not played in a while will begin Wednesday, January 17, at the Blacksburg Community Center. The classes will meet once a week for 90 minutes (9:30–11:15 am). The classes will last for 14 weeks. An additional 10 workshops will either be conducted concurrently with the classes or after the 14 sessions. Everything is presented in duplicate bridge format.

After the lessons end, the participants may move into the novice game held at the Blacksburg Recreation Center every Friday morning sponsored by the American Contract Bridge Association.

No experience or partner needed.

The first two classes are suitable for players new to the game. Subsequent classes will be appropriate for all players, especially those who have not played in a while.

Your first two classes are free; the cost is \$5 per class thereafter. All proceeds go to the P.E.O. scholarship fund for women's education.

Call Susan at 540-998-9751 to register.



## Study seeks participants interested in fitness trackers

Have you considered using a fitness tracker? If so, you might be interested in being a participant in our study on the use of fitness trackers.

Drs. France Belanger and Tabitha James are looking for people who are willing to use one of our fitness trackers and the related app on a smartphone for two to three months, and to share their usage, perceptions and feelings about this usage.

Eligible participants must be at least 18 years of age, agree to wear our fitness tracker and use the associated app on their smartphone (iPhone or Android), and answer questions before, during, and after the use of the fitness trackers. The research involves an initial meeting with the researchers, a mid-study online survey, and a final meeting. Meetings are held at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg.

The study is strictly confidential and approved the VT Institutional Review Board (17-221).

Participants receive:

- \$15 for the initial session
- \$5 for the mid-study survey
- \$20 for the final session
- Those completing all study requirements are entered into a drawing for one of four fitness trackers (one in 10 chances approximately).

If you are interested, please contact us at [belanger@vt.edu](mailto:belanger@vt.edu).

## Legislative Report by Val Coluni

**1. Personal Finances:** A significant federal regulation has partially changed: no longer can you join with others in a lawsuit (a class action) against your financial providers to resolve your differences. The history of this change is that a federal agency (Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, CFPB) recently passed a regulation to ensure that Americans were treated fairly by banks, credit card firms, and other providers of financial services when trying to resolve financial disputes. One of the key provisions was that "...consumers could join together with others in a lawsuit (class action) to resolve their differences." This regulation was to become effective in the future.

Recently elected/appointed federal officials just repealed this part of the regulation and substituted this language: "...any disputes with banks, lenders and other financial entities must be settled by arbitration without resort to class action lawsuits..." Their rationale was that arbitration is generally faster and less expensive to all parties, and the financial payback to consumers is more favorable. There are a few recent surveys with limited data to support this.

The previous director of the CFPB stated, "...you have signed away consumers' rights to their day in court..." The Center for Responsible Lending said that the repeal removes an indispensable check on corporate misconduct.

This new provision places an important responsibility on you. In your financial dealings with those who have arbitration policies, make sure those policies do not put you in a weak position. It might be desirable to have someone with legal training review such policies. Be vigilant!

**2. The Safety Net (Social Security and Medicare).** Will the political landscape in the future affect the safety/vulnerability of these traditional safety net programs? A number of political writers are concerned that recent actions taken by the current federal government will increase our debt level to such unmanageable levels that some current safety net programs (Social Security/Medicare) may have to be modified to keep our finances in balance. This could be a very contentious action, and citizens of all political parties should engage in these discussions if these actions become a reality.

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## Chapter Officers 2018

President • Wendy Baldwin, [wendybburg@gmail.com](mailto:wendybburg@gmail.com)

Vice President • Jerry Niles, [niles@vt.edu](mailto:niles@vt.edu)

Secretary • Pat Hyer, [hyerp@vt.edu](mailto:hyerp@vt.edu)

Treasurer • Pat Ballard, [pballard@vt.edu](mailto:pballard@vt.edu)

Assistant Treasurer • Ruth Anne Niles, [rniles2@icloud.com](mailto: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, Hal VanLandingham



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

**Nonprofit  
 Organization  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Blacksburg, VA  
 Permit No. 32**

**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



## February 20 Chapter Meeting

### Weather Preparedness and Weather Readiness *by Phil Hysell*

Phil Hysell, Warning Coordination Specialist at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, will provide insight to how meteorologists at the National Weather Service in Blacksburg create and disseminate forecasts and warnings. He will also present information about how to be ready, responsive, and resilient to significant weather events that impact the New River Valley.



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### Weather Policy

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### 2018 Dues are Due

If you haven't yet paid your dues for 2018, please use the form on the back of this newsletter. Check the date beneath your name on your mailing label to determine whether you are up to date. Thanks!

## President's Column *by Wendy Baldwin*

### Give up my car keys? Never...or at least not yet

Many seniors reach the point where they are not sure they should still be driving. This is possibly several years after their friends and family have come to that conclusion. Giving up driving can be a difficult step because it is so tied up to feelings of autonomy and control and convenience. But, even a minor traffic accident can deflate that good feeling pretty quickly. So, how to think about this? Here's one idea.



**The Finances.** The American Automobile Association estimates that it costs \$6,354 per year to own and operate a small sedan (depreciation, insurance, fuel, maintenance and repair), \$8,171 for a medium sedan ([newsroom.aaa.com/auto/your-driving-costs](http://newsroom.aaa.com/auto/your-driving-costs)). That amount would provide a substantial fund for alternative kinds of transportation that could support travel independence.

Let's think about ways to use that fund! First, let me applaud all those friends, neighbors and relatives who help out with driving and run errands and are so helpful. But, there are going to be times you just want to take control and go do errands, go the Moss Arts Center, catch a movie or go shopping. When that urge hits what are some of the ways to accomplish it?

**Taxi.** The first option to come to mind might be to call a taxi. A taxi lets you personalize the trip. You can have the driver wait while you finish your task, or have him/her come back to pick you up at a set time. Uber and Lyft services give you the flexibility of a taxi and a wider array of drivers. Most taxis have a meter that calculates the cost of the trip by time and distance and sometimes by waiting times. You pay for Uber and Lyft through a smartphone app so that you do not even need to have cash with you for the trip, tip included! You can go online before a trip to find out what the cost would be. Hooptie Ride has cars and colorful vans for local transportation. You can call them,

*please turn to page 3*

## Upcoming Events

February 6, registration begins for the AARP Safe Driving Course

April 12-13, AARP Safe Driving Course, Blacksburg Community Center (p. 3)

April 15, Arts Across Generations submissions due (p. 4)

*September 19*

### Health and Wellness Fair

The AARP Health and Wellness Fair is getting geared up for our next exciting event. The Fair is held every other year, so mark your calendar for September 19, 2018.

This year we will continue our relationship with VCOM and again hold the event at the Christiansburg Recreation Center. We are so pleased at the positive response we had from 2016 exhibitors, and we expect even more visitors than last time.

This is a great place to come get free screenings, flu shots, blood pressure and glucose tests, and learn about services that make life better for seniors. We plan to highlight transportation services, technology, and volunteerism. Other exhibitors will talk about tools and programs to make fitness easier, and hopefully we'll have those free massages again.

Mark your calendars and come join us 12-4 pm for the Health and Wellness Fair, September 19, 2018. If you know of a business/service/non-profit you would like for us to contact to be an exhibitor, send an email to [jenmik@gmail.com](mailto:jenmik@gmail.com).

## Meet New AARP Board Members: Isabel Berney and Hugh VanLandingham

In 1973, **Isabel Berney** followed a husband to Radford. Moving from the west—Utah, Washington, and Wyoming, she suffered some cultural shock, but found Radford was a nice place to raise two daughters. She lived there for 16 years before moving to Blacksburg. The climate with four definite seasons makes living here so appealing to her. After experiencing winters in Laramie, Wyoming, the three months of much milder winters here are enjoyable harbingers of beautiful springs, followed by a lovely summers and falls.



Isabel Berney

Another appeal of Blacksburg is that it is a liberal island in the conservative sea of southwest Virginia. Working for Pulaski County Schools for almost 30 years, she found it to be very different from liberal Seattle, where she felt very much at home. As a proud liberal (politically, socially, and religiously), she had to be careful in her work as an administrator in the school system. Knowing she would lose her effectiveness unless she was respectful of a very different way of viewing the world, she was glad to rest her soul among like minds on Sunday at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Blacksburg.

Her job as director of technology for Pulaski County Schools was very fast-moving and challenging. She bought the first computer for the school system in 1975 and by the time she left, there were thousands of computers and a sophisticated network that reached even the most rural area of Snowville-Hiwassee.

An unusual factoid about her NRV history is that she was the first nude art model hired by Radford University for its art department. Until 1973 when she took the job, life drawing models were dressed in leotards.

As an active citizen, she served on the Radford School Board, Library Board, and Blue Ridge Public TV. In Blacksburg she continued her service on the Board of Zoning Appeals and the Housing and Community Development Board. She donates a lot of time to the Funeral Consumers Alliance and her congregation.

Isabel believes that groups can accomplish more than individuals and she appreciates AARP for its lobbying efforts supporting seniors. She would like to see Blacksburg's AARP continue its support for affordable housing and increased public transportation. On the national level she supports AARP's protection of Social Security and Medicare (wishing it were available for all).

After outliving two husbands, she enjoys life and the interesting activities that Blacksburg offers. She lives alone with her cat, Hansel, and is grateful for fairly good health, her three daughters, and six grandchildren.

**H**ugh VanLandingham has lived in Blacksburg since 1966. He was raised in Greensboro, North Carolina, and graduated from North Carolina State University. He worked for the Bell Telephone Labs in New Jersey after getting his PhD at Cornell University, where he met his wife, Patricia. Hugh taught Electrical Engineering at VT for 35 years.

Hobbies include reading. He is an eclectic reader who enjoys mysteries for fun but also history and science. He previously played tennis (now Pickle Ball), and he enjoys swimming and singing. He sang previously with the Virginia Gentlemen Barbershop Chorus and currently with the Warm Hearth Singers and the AdHocTet, a spin-off of the Master Chorus.



Hugh VanLandingham

He and Pat moved to Warm Hearth in May, 2015 where they enjoy their neighbors and the many opportunities. In addition to serving with the Board of Directors for AARP, he is a member of the Blacksburg Host Lions Club.

**Welcome, Isabel and Hugh! Thanks for your service to the AARP Blacksburg chapter.**

### Virginia Tech Lectures open to the Public

Friday, February 16 4:00–5:00 pm, The Lyric Theatre

#### “Natural History in the Age of Humans”

Dr. Kirk Johnson, National Museum of Natural History

Johnson is a paleontologist who has led expeditions that have resulted in the discovery of more than 1,400 fossil sites. His research focuses on fossil plants and the extinction of the dinosaurs. In 2010-11, he led the excavation of an ice age site near Snowmass Village, Colorado, that recovered more than 5,400 bones of mammoths, mastodons and other ice age animals.

Friday, February 22 5–6 pm Surge Building 118C, VT campus

#### “What You are Getting Wrong about Appalachia”

Dr. Elizabeth Catte

Catte, author of a new book with the title of the lecture, writes: I assume the amount of attention that's been put on Appalachia during the 2016 election and its aftermath has been frustrating, since much of it is in the form of diagnosing “what's wrong with Appalachia” when knowledge of the region's history is not as robust as it could be. Salon magazine advises, “Put down *Hillbilly Elegy* and read this book instead.”



## President's Column (continued)

talk to a real person, and get a quote. You may associate Hooptie with college students, but what better way for you—or a group of friends—to be taken to lunch or a party. [hooptieride.com/](http://hooptieride.com/)

**GoGoGrandparent.** No smartphone? A service called GoGoGrandparent lets you phone from any kind of phone and set up a ride like Uber or Lyft. The service does the smartphone-required steps; you just deal with a person on the phone. This costs a little more than doing it yourself, but the cost is modest and cuts out the need for a smartphone. [gogograndparent.com](http://gogograndparent.com)

The cost of a trip in the Blacksburg area can range from \$10 to \$25, so it is a good idea to compare different providers. That driving fund can take you a lot of places! If a neighbor can drive you one direction, maybe a paid service can drive you home, making the cost even more affordable.

**Blacksburg Transit (BT).** Taking the bus can be a great option. A bus is the cheapest alternative for a ride. The usual BT bus service costs only 25¢ for a senior (\$4 for a monthly pass). BT operates routes in Blacksburg and Christiansburg. Getting to the bus stop might be a challenge. I lived in New York City for five years and was endlessly impressed with how people with walkers and in wheelchairs used buses. Buses are equipped to “kneel” to make it easier to get on. There are lifts for wheelchairs and locks for them once the chairs are on the bus.

**BT Access** is an on-demand service to serve those with physical limitations. Reservations need to be made a day in advance and require that you fill in a form (available online) to establish your disability. Then the service is door to door, from your home to the theater or to a doctor's appointment or wherever you want to go. Once you are certified regarding disability, this is an amazingly flexible and inexpensive option. See [www.btransit.org](http://www.btransit.org) for information on bus schedules and BT Access. Call 540-961-1803 or email [btaccess@blacksburg.gov](mailto:btaccess@blacksburg.gov) for a ride from BT Access. 25¢ for seniors, same fare as for the regularly scheduled busses.

**Radford Transit** operates busses in Radford. Its Route 40 NRV Connector travels to Christiansburg and Blacksburg. [www.radfordtransit.com/](http://www.radfordtransit.com/)

**Time Bank.** The Time Bank is a membership program that allows people to donate their time and skills into the “bank” and then withdraw services that others have contributed. Offering to drive people is one of the contributions and hence a resource for the community. But what would you contribute to the Time Bank? People have more skills than they sometimes realize; for example, sewing or home repair. <https://nrv.timebanks.org/>

**Kroger “Click List.”** The benefit of having a way to maintain transportation options has to be linked with things you can do with that independence. At Kroger you can order your groceries online and then pick them up with virtually no waiting. “Click list” incurs a modest charge and does require that you have a computer, laptop, or tablet, but is a great way to get groceries without the effort of walking through the store and loading them into the car.

I hope that our members are attentive to their driving whether it is minding a decrease in ability to drive at night, or just figuring it is time to move on to a car-free life. The Safe Driving course is a way to build your skills, test your abilities, and save money on car insurance. But, the time will come when driving yourself is not a good option. Being car-free does not mean that you cannot go places when you want to. Other options are quite affordable. Not to mention that they give you—and friends and family—a measure of confidence that you are not putting yourself or anyone else in danger.

AARP offers a free online seminar called We Need to Talk that will help you determine how to assess your loved ones' driving skills and provide tools to help you have this important conversation. <https://www.aarp.org/auto/driver-safety/we-need-to-talk/?intcmp=AE-ATO-ADS-ROW2-SPOT4>

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*Monday and Tuesday, April 12–13, 9 am–1 pm*

## Safe Driving Course to be Offered in Blacksburg

by Gene Cielinski, instructor [genec1215@gmail.com](mailto:genec1215@gmail.com)

**T**he AARP Safe Driving Course will be offered at the Blacksburg Community Center on Monday and Tuesday, April 12–13, from 9 am to 1 pm. Registration begins February 6. Call Joy Herbert at 540-443-1142 to enroll.

The eight-hour course is divided in two days, Monday and Tuesday 9:00 am to 1:00 pm (students attend both days). The fee is \$15.00 for AARP members and \$20.00 for nonmembers. By completing the safe driving class, you can receive up to a 10% discount on your auto insurance. All students who complete the course receive a certificate, which they present to their insurer.

Students will use the “Smart Driver Guidebook” for the two days of class and then be able to take it home. The book features the latest driver safety and transportation innovations bundled with fresh information based on new research and expert recommendations. It is very colorful and informative.

The course is intended for seniors, and focuses on issues specific to aging drivers, including age-related physical changes, how medication can affect driving, and changes in roads and cars. We discuss practices to make us safer drivers. I talk a lot about being a “defensive driver” and emphasize that driving is a “full time job.” The class will cover driving strategies to practice for safe driving and how to react safely in dangerous driving situations. We review warning signs of unsafe driving and when it is “time to hang up your keys”—and discuss how to tell family members it is their time! There are videos to watch and class quizzes.

I include items that are not in the book, such as the Interstate system, why odd number roads are North and South, exit numbers, and advice about how to merge onto an Interstate. You will learn about the three-second rule at a traffic-controlled intersection and why three right turns may be safer than one left turn.

If you cannot take the course in person, you can take it online at <https://www.aarpdriversafety.org/>

## ARTS ACROSS GENERATIONS

**A**rts Across Generations is a new art contest sponsored by Blacksburg AARP. The program's aim is to solicit, jury, display, and celebrate artworks created by multi-generational artists (e.g., a high school student and a grandparent). The program will take place June 1, 2018 in conjunction with Blacksburg's Art Walk. The top three entries will earn cash prizes, starting with \$150 for first place.

The theme for this inaugural program is "The Joy of Life." Each collaborative project should reflect what "The joy of life" means to them. The project can be a single product co-created by multi-generational artists or multiple creations that share a common theme. Artists will have maximum degrees of freedom to create works that reflect their values and align with the theme. Many things can express the joy of life—such as abstracts, animals, people, and landscapes. Contest organizers anticipate sketches, watercolors, oils, collages—any format that could be hung on a wall.

This initiative enacts two core values of the AARP-Blacksburg chapter: to view retirement as a time to continue to embrace current passions and learn new ones as well as to provide opportunities for community members across generations to interact in meaningful ways. AARP recognizes that retirement offers time to do more of the things one loves or to take up new activities. Art classes—drawing, watercolor, oil painting—in the Lifelong Learning Institute fill up quickly.

The call for art submission targets two audiences: [1] student artists enrolled in local schools and [2] artists affiliated with organizations/programs that serve older adults (e.g., Lifelong Learning Institute, Warm Hearth). However, any intergenerational pair can submit. At least one artist must be a resident of the New River Valley.

Submissions are due April 15. Please contact Peter Magolda ([magoldpm@me.com](mailto:magoldpm@me.com)) for a submission form and instructions about where to submit your entries.

In addition to their display at the June 1 Art Walk, all artworks will be showcased at various community venues (e.g., Lyric Theatre, restaurants, art galleries, shops). Original artwork will be returned to artists in July 2018.

Please direct comments, questions, feedback to Peter Magolda ([magoldpm@me.com](mailto:magoldpm@me.com)) or Wendy Baldwin ([wendybburg@gmail.com](mailto:wendybburg@gmail.com)).



## Technology Tips

### Computer help at the Blacksburg Community Center

Computer Science Community Service from Virginia Tech will once again provide free help with your computer, smart-phone, and tablet. Join them on Fridays from 2:30–4:30 pm at the Blacksburg Community Center Computer Lab, 725 Patrick Henry Dr. No appointment is necessary.

For more information, contact Joy Herbert at [540-443-1142](tel:540-443-1142) or [jherbert@blacksburg.gov](mailto:jherbert@blacksburg.gov).

### Blocking Robo Calls

If you still have a landline, you might be tempted to give it up if only to avoid annoying robo calls.

Good news: if your landline service is with Comcast or another Internet-based provider, such as Vonage, you can install Nomorobo, a free service that screens calls from a huge database. If Nomorobo detects a robo call, your phone will ring once. The phone ID will say "incoming call." If you wait to pick up the phone until a second ring, you will answer few or no robo calls.

To set up Nomorobo, go to <https://www.nomorobo.com> and click "get started now." You will enter the name of your landline carrier and an email address. If your carrier supports Nomorobo, you will get a link in your email to complete the signup process.

Nomorobo does not work on landline service from Verizon and AT&T. If you have those services and are getting unwanted calls from the same number, you can block up to 25 calls by going to the website of the carrier. You can also purchase a blocker such as Digitone Call Blocker Plus (\$110). The cost might be worth it if someone in the home has impaired judgment and can easily be a victim of scams. See brief reviews of blockers at <https://www.consumerreports.org/cro/magazine/2015/07/robocall-blocker-review/index.htm>

Several robo call blockers are available for mobile phones through the Apple store or Google Play, including Nomorobo.

**Real Possibilities**  
with **AARP**

## Legislative Report *by Val Coluni*

**1. Our new governor.** Governor Northam is urging his executive staff and all members of the General Assembly to enter into a relationship of aggressive bipartisanship. His belief is all progress is driven by a respectful give and take throughout the decision-making process. This same point of view has been expressed by some new and previous members of the General Assembly. Major obstacles they face are a number of conditions beyond their control: budget sequestration at the federal level still affects our fortunes; we are closely affected by the “up and downs” of the US budget, which can create boom and bust conditions; and our own economic growth has trailed the nation for a number of years. In today’s political and economic environment, it is more crucial than ever that our bipartisanship efforts at the state level work effectively and with great passion!

**2. Our legislative journey in 2018.** Will our previous and new representatives have a more cooperative or a continued controversial relationship than those bodies have had in the past? Remember that the State House lost at least 15 seats in the past election. Will this generate good will and/or more hostility? To date over 4000 bills have been submitted for actions some of which have been rejected in the past. (Medicaid expansion, gun control, excuse free absentee voting, restoring the authority of the state agency to review and adjust electricity rates, etc). We already had a shoot-out over Medicaid expansion, which required some apologies and regrets. And some of the other proposals are as emotional and partisan. The only way this legislative session can be effective is if the parties are really serious about making bipartisanship work.

### 3. Legislative updates

*A. Transparency in Government.* A victory for the people of Virginia and for responsible government! After many years of unsuccessful requests our state General Assembly has finally adopted a rule that requires a recorded vote on all measures acted upon by the members.

*B. Gerrymandering.* Two U.S. District Federal Courts have now ruled in two different states (North Carolina and Pennsylvania) that the state’s district map is illegal and must be redone. Both states are appealing their decisions. In addition, the U.S. Supreme Court has two cases scheduled for hearings to evaluate the district maps for their respective states. While other lawsuits have challenged racial gerrymandering, Gill v. Whitford specifically challenges partisan gerrymandering in Wisconsin. Many have waited for years to see our federal courts address these most serious issues.

*C. Health Insurance (Affordable Care Act).* Through regulatory and legislative actions, the current administration has made some significant changes to parts of the law, the most recent being allowing groups to offer plans that do not comply with all the ACA requirements.

## Upcoming Chapter Programs

**March 20: The Role of the FBI in Cyber Threats.** An active FBI agent will inform us what the FBI will and will not do in investigating cyber related crimes. The presentation will include advice to individuals about how protect themselves from cyber threats.

**April 17: 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.

**May 15: Combining Socialization and Fitness Technologies to Increase Exercise and Improve Well-Being** France Belanger, the R. B. Pamplin Professor and the Tom & Daisy Byrd Senior Faculty Fellow in the department of Accounting & Information Systems, and James Tabitha, Associate Professor in the department of Business Information Technology of the Pamplin College of Business at Virginia Tech will share their recent research findings regarding fitness technologies effects on exercise and well-being.

**June 19: Picnic** at the farm of Terry Wildman and Sue Magliaro

**September 19: Health and Wellness Fair**, 12–4 pm,  
Christiansburg Recreation Center

## AARP Chapter Officer Summit

**M**arch 1, the Blacksburg AARP president and vice president will be in Bedford to spend the day with officers of ten other chapters and Brian Jacks, AARP Virginia representative for SW Virginia. This is a new program where our representatives will learn about current VA and national AARP priorities and the opportunities they present for local chapters. The new AARP speakers’ bureau will be available for chapter meetings. The summit serves a leadership development goal, and the chapters will all be available to share best practices. Finally, the group will share ideas about building and engaging chapter membership. This will be an opportunity to learn from each other and come home with more “tricks of the trade.” Blacksburg AARP has much to share and much to learn.

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## Chapter Officers 2018

President • Wendy Baldwin, wendybburg@gmail.com

Vice President • Jerry Niles, nils@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, Hal VanLandingham

**Website:** [www.blacksburgaarp.org](http://www.blacksburgaarp.org)    **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/AARPBlacksburg/>



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

**Nonprofit  
 Organization  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Blacksburg, VA  
 Permit No. 32**

**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



## March 20 Chapter Meeting

### The Role of the FBI in Cyber Threats

An active FBI agent will inform us what the FBI will and will not do in investigating cyber related crimes. The presentation will include advice to individuals about how protect themselves from cyber threats.



## Upcoming Chapter Meetings

April 17: What's Happening at AARP? Jim Dau, AARP Virginia State Director

May 15: Combining Socialization and Fitness Technologies to Increase Exercise and Improve Well-Being, France Belanger and James Tabitha, Pamplin College of Business

June 19: picnic

September 19: Health & Wellness Fair

### AARP Safe Driving Course

April 12-13, 9 am-1 pm

Blacksburg Community Center

Call Joy Herbert at 540-443-1142 to enroll.

\$15 for AARP members; \$20 for non-members

The course focuses on issues specific to seniors.



## 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.

## President's Column by Wendy Baldwin

### Arts across the Generations

April 15 is coming! Not taxes, I am sure you have already filed those and spent your refund. Instead, April 15 is also the deadline for submitting to AARP your "Arts Across the Generations" submission. There is a monetary prize for the best expression of the joy of life from an intergenerational pair of artists. As you may recall from my first column, one of the staples of AARP is the view that retirement means you have more time to do things you've enjoyed over your life or take up new activities, such as expressing yourself through art. Our first venture will be accepting submissions through April 15 and the winners will be included in the June 1 Blacksburg Art walk. Blacksburg gets high marks as a retirement location because it offers many opportunities to enjoy such activities. The arts are certainly one such arena.



*The New York Times* (A lifetime of making art, but new to selling it online. 2/11/18) had an excellent article about older artists who found a new outlet for their work by selling their work online. This was breathing new life into the careers of artists. Older artists are supplementing their ties with galleries to links to sites like [www.ugallery.com](http://www.ugallery.com). The technological aspects were sometimes daunting, but the fact of new sales and exposure via the web seemed worth it.

Upon retirement people can decide they want to spend more time doing what they've always enjoyed. Now knitting or woodworking might take up larger parts of the day than they did when they were employed. For others, retirement is a time to go back to some endeavor—like playing the piano—that fell by the wayside as life became filled with work and family demands. Retirement can be a time to start something totally new. This describes how I now spend time.

Before I retired I was at a Mt. Tabor Ruritan club fish fry—which I strongly recommend—

## Upcoming Events

April 7: The "Big Event," Virginia Tech (p. 5)

April 7: Word and Music Performance, Sharen McCrumb and Jack Hinselwood (p. 5)

April 12-13: AARP Safe Driving Course (p. 1)

April 15: Arts Across Generations submissions due

## AARP invites submissions for "Arts Across Generations"

Arts Across Generations (AAG), an AARP Blacksburg initiative, will take place June 1, 2018 in conjunction with Blacksburg's Art Walk. The theme for this inaugural program is *The Joy of Life*. The program's aim is to solicit, jury, display, and celebrate artworks created by multi-generational artists (e.g., a high school student and a grandparent).

At least one artist must be a resident of the New River Valley. Submissions are due April 15 and will be juried prior to the June 1 Art Walk. All art will be showcased at various community venues (e.g., Lyric Theater, restaurants, art galleries, shops). Original artwork will be returned to artists in July 2018.

Please direct comments, questions, feedback to Peter Magolda ([magoldpm@me.com](mailto:magoldpm@me.com)) or Wendy Baldwin ([wendybburg@gmail.com](mailto:wendybburg@gmail.com)).

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

## Remembrance of friends who died in 2017

Like many or most of you, I love to read...and even though I have a Kindle, I prefer real printed books...the kind you can hold on to, stick a bookmark in and come back to, save on a bookshelf and read a second time if it's a favorite. I like to go to the library....sometimes with a book in mind, and sometimes just to wander the shelves until I spot a favorite author. It's like meeting up with a friend.

Some famous, and some not-so-famous quotes, describe my feelings...and perhaps yours toward books.

"You can't buy happiness but you can buy books...and that's kind of the same thing"

Ernest Hemingway said, "There is no friend as loyal as a book."

Another, "A book is a dream that you hold in your hands".

Mark Twain adds, "Good friends, good books, and a sleepy conscience. This is the ideal life."

Today we remember nine of our good friends. And like good books, we will keep them in a special place in a library of sorts...in our hearts.

**Robert Sybolt** departed this life on January 18 in the care of Heritage Hall in Blacksburg. Born in Cranesville, West Virginia, he was a veteran of the US Army with over 20 years of service. Robert was active in the VFW and spent many of his last years enjoying the activities and camaraderie of the Virginia Tech Adult Daycare. Robert was 89. In remembrance, we start our library with a good book about soldiering, *Black Hawk Down*.

**Michael Hyer** died unexpectedly on February 15. At the University of Michigan, he completed his Ph.D. in Aerospace Engineering and met and married the love of his life, Pat. In 1978, he started his long career at Virginia Tech as a professor of Engineering Science and Mechanics, retiring in 2010. Mike had many passions, and first among them was high performance cars, especially his 1963 Cobra. He ordered a Tesla 3 on the first day possible. In retirement, he developed an interest in jazz and live music and devoted significant time to the newly established Lifelong Learning Institute at Virginia Tech. Mike was 74. In remembrance, we'll add a book about hot rods to our library.

**Robert Abraham** died on May 28 at his home in Christiansburg. He was a resident of Southwest Virginia for more than 60 years, a graduate of Virginia Tech, and worked for the United States Forest Service prior to founding Christiansburg Printing, which was family owned for 50 years. Bob was a 25-year member and past president of the Christiansburg Kiwanis Club. He loved nature and in retirement, Bob enthusiastically resumed his boyhood passion of birding and became quite talented at bird photography. Bob was 89. In remembrance, we add *Birds of the Mid-Atlantic*.

**Kenneth Wolfe** died on July 8 at his home in Warm Hearth Village. Ken joined the US Navy while still in high school after persuading his parents to lie about his age. He was a World War II veteran, after which he finished high school and continued his formal education. He was vice president of three NY Stock Exchange companies and served as an arbitrator and as a mediator with the American Arbitration Association Labor Panel. An avid golfer, hunter, and fisherman, Ken passed away at 90. His addition to our library will be a good WWII story, *Unbroken*.

**Eleanor Lau** died September 3. She was a longtime member and deacon at Blacksburg Presbyterian Church. Eleanor retired from Radford University as a professor in the School of Education and was an active member of the DAR. She was 83. We will add a book on the American Revolution to our library.

**Bruce Anderson** passed away on October 29. After earning his PhD in Biochemistry at the Johns Hopkins University in 1958, Bruce began his academic career at the University of Louisville School of Medicine and retired from the Department of Biochemistry at Virginia Tech in 1999. In the course of his career, Bruce published over 150 research articles in major biochemistry journals, many co-authored with his wife Connie. Throughout his life, he loved music and played the guitar. He and Connie were avid supporters of the Virginia Tech football team. Bruce was 88. In his honor, we add *Tales from the Virginia Tech Sidelines* to our library.

**Donna Lou Stalcup** passed away on November 26. She was active in PEO for several decades, was an Elder in the Presbyterian Church in four different cities, and served on the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Roanoke Symphony Orchestra. After earning her doctoral degree in Student Personnel Services in Higher Education at Auburn University, Donna taught English and music in grades seven through twelve and English and drama at the college level. She coached the high school debate team which won the Nebraska state championship in their competition class. Donna was 86. In her memory, we add a book about jazz to our library.

**Rhoda Myers** died on December 7. She attended Virginia Tech, where she earned her Master's degree in Accounting and worked in the university's Controller's Office and the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine until her retirement in 2014. Rhoda was an active member of Luther Memorial Lutheran Church and involved in administration of the To Our House, a shelter program for homeless men in Montgomery County as well as the Valley Interfaith Child Care Center, a not-for-profit providing child care for lower income families. Rhoda was 77. To remember Rhoda, we'll add a book by the Dalai Lama, *How to be Compassionate* to our library.

**Judy Dowdy** passed away on December 18. She retired from the Town of Blacksburg in 2003 and is survived by her husband Duke, son and daughter-in-law, Lance and Alison, and three grandchildren. Judy spent her early years in Tennessee and New York and was a member of Blacksburg Christian Church.

She was 76 when she died. In remembrance, we add to our library *A Special Place for 200 Years, A History of Blacksburg*.

Thomas Jefferson had a famous quote about books that perhaps you've heard, "I cannot live without books." In a lesser known quote on the benefits of reading, he said "...read good books because they will encourage as well as direct your feelings."

Today we remember nine good friends who, like good books, encouraged and directed us.



## President's Column (continued)

where there is always live music. The day I was there the PanJammers, a steel drum band, were performing. I had never actually seen the steel drum played, much less heard the effect of 30 drums at once. I was impressed with the music, a mix of island music, jazz, and classic rock. I was also taken with how much fun the players seemed to be having and the wide range of ages represented in the band. That was it, I knew then I needed to play steel drum. I couldn't do it while I was working and commuting between DC and Blacksburg, but the minute I retired and moved permanently to Blacksburg, I knocked at the door of the PanJammers and began to learn the instrument and the music. I cannot swear that playing the drum delays aging, but I can assure you that creating the music and listening to the music is totally uplifting. The members of the band are among the best I've ever met.

Since I was new to steel drumming it seemed like a good idea to improve my skills, so I signed up to go to "music camp" the summer of 2016. Held in Morgantown, West Virginia, camp is a rigorous week of playing 6 hours a day! If you are thinking how improbable it is that Blacksburg has a steel drum orchestra, why would Morgantown have a steel drum music camp? Morgantown is home to the heart and soul of modern steel drumming—Ellie Mannette.

Ellie Mannette was a young teen in Trinidad when he got in a spot of trouble, appropriating used, empty steel drums, but everyone appreciated his talent. The instruments are made by cutting down an oil drum and beating into it the indentations that allow different notes to be played. A steel drum band includes multiple types of drums. Some are a single, fairly small drum (a lead drum), or two such drums if the player is playing tenor drums. Double seconds are two drums, but larger and playing lower notes. Then come the guitars, which are three larger drums, and finally the imposing bass drums which is a set of five drums, the size of an oil drum. Many of these were invented by Ellie Nanette and gradually became accepted as legitimate tools of the profession.

When I ordered my own drum—which is custom-made—I made a joke about whether they offered a "geezer discount" given my age. The young man from Ellie Mannette's workshop laughed

and said, "No, Ellie plays and works every day and he'll be 90 in a few months!" Also, my drum would not be sent to me until Ellie played it and found it up to his standards. I think Ellie Manette is an ideal poster child for the value of continuing to do things that motivate your life regardless of age.

During the summer workshop, I bought drumsticks that he autographed for me, and we heard bands that ranged from the amazing school band from the Norfolk area, many of whom had been playing for years, as well a band made up of elementary school teachers, and our own bands which included young teenagers accompanied by a parent up to those of us who were retired. Some of the players in the PanJammers joined the predecessor band along with their school-age children. Children grow up and move away, but the love of Pan music remained, as did the players!

How are we continuing to honor the idea of lifelong immersion in the arts? Our first Arts Across the Generations is our current call for intergenerational art projects. This first call is for pictures that are painted (or sketched) and is open to virtually any pairing that crosses the generations in celebrating the "Joy of Life." We have no idea what kind of art we will receive. Will it be faces expressing joy? Or will it be pictures that inspire the viewer, such as the joy of a baby exploring its new world. It is hard to look at kittens playing and not be impressed with the joy they can wring out of a cat toy (okay, a cat toy is anything they can steal off your bureau, but you get the point). Plants that push up through the snow, apparently months before others, certainly seem to be the plant-world expression of joy.

We do not know how many pairs will rise to the occasion and submit artwork by April 15. The submissions will be judged and the winners and runners up will be displayed as part of the June 1 Art Walk in Blacksburg. There is also a \$150 prize for first place. We expect that there will be students who have talented parents or grandparents and who want to paint to pictures showing how each interprets some aspect of the joy of life. The June 1 Art Walk is also the date of the first concert on the lawn so we expect families to come downtown and enjoy many expressions of art.

## Pastor John Wertz, St. Michael Lutheran Church

by Wendy Baldwin

Most of us have heard of Micah's Backpack or Micah's Soup for Seniors. Both projects are part of a large program called Micah's Caring Initiative, one of the local partners for whom AARP Blacksburg provides some support. If you have met Pastor John, who oversees these projects, you are unlikely to forget him, and you might find yourself volunteering to help! How did Micah's Caring Initiative start?

Pastor John came to the Blacksburg in 2004 as pastor at St. Michael Lutheran Church, the heart of these programs. While 2008 saw the launch of Micah's Backpack, there was more need in the community. Awareness of that need led to the expansion to include Micah's Soup for Seniors—also part of Micah's Caring Initiative. Together they reach about 420 youth and seniors a month. It takes a lot of volunteers to pull that off, but 900 people volunteer in one way or another over the course of a typical year.

I asked him what you actually do when you volunteer. He said volunteers are needed to pack and deliver gifts of food. Perhaps the best time to volunteer is over the summer or during breaks when few VT students are around. This is a great activity to do with a friend or a group of friends who can socialize while offering a real benefit to the recipients of Micah's Soup for Seniors.

Pastor John is a great fundraiser, communicator and coordinator of these programs. He says, "Volunteering with Micah's Caring Initiative provides the opportunity to help those who are in need to receive assistance and to help the volunteers share their gifts. Both aspects of volunteering are extremely rewarding."

You can be a part of that process and help those in the community who are in need. If you want to be one of those volunteers for Micah's Soup for Seniors ([www.micahs-soupforseniors.org](http://www.micahs-soupforseniors.org)), just show up on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 5 pm at St. Michael Lutheran Church, 2308 Merimac Road, Blacksburg.

[www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org/worshiping-at-st-michaels/contact/](http://www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org/worshiping-at-st-michaels/contact/)



Pastor John Wertz

## Legislative Report by Val Coluni

- **Utility Costs.** Good news on the way? Intense discussions are now going on in our General Assembly between our representatives and staffs from our state monopolies (Dominion Energy and Appalachian Power) The issues are: 1) were our citizens overcharged for the past few years? 2) How do you reasonably decide what constitutes reasonable profits for these monopolies in the future? One answer will determine whether we are going to get a refund for past overcharges and the other answer will be will whether our current rates be reduced for future billing periods. The negotiations are intense as there are different points of view on the answers to these questions. A side "friction" point is there are some different points of view between our General Assembly and our State Corporate Commission on their relationships and decision-making powers of each of them in regulating the utility industry. Most are predicting the outcomes will be favorable for "we" the consumer.
- **Gerrymandering.** Some state courts now are issuing their own voter district maps, a controversial move as some state politicians (including in Virginia) insist only they have the constitutional authority to draw maps. Some of these states have appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court for relief. Presently the U.S. Supreme Court has only ruled on one emergency appeal; the request from state politicians was denied by Justice Alito. There are presently six to seven cases in either the state or federal courts still pending on this issue. These matters will be taken up by the full U.S. Supreme Court in the fall.
- **Serious people and legislative problems in SW Virginia** (economics, population loss, education, and health - insurance and the opioid crisis). And let's remember these types of problems do not recognize artificial political boundaries. We can easily see how conditions in the coal industry have affected our neighbors in W. Virginia as well as here in Virginia. A recent story was told about a small family owned newspaper in West Virginia that has filed for bankruptcy. The newspaper is The Charleston Gazette-Mail, started in 1873, managed for generations by family members and known by many as an aggressive consumer crusader in environmental issues, strip-mining, safety, and mountain top removal. The potential new owners have operations from New York to Hawaii and will probably not be able to replace that special touch of the Gazette. Let's make sure we express to our representatives not only our concerns about our local issues but our concerns for our friends and neighbors nearby!

### Mark Your Calendar

Join us for a free Health and Wellness Fair  
Wednesday, September 19, 2018, Noon - 4:00 pm  
Christiansburg Recreation Center  
1600 North Franklin Street

*One-stop shopping for 100 health and wellness services.  
All ages are invited.*



## A Word and Music Performance by Sharyn McCrumb and Jack Hinshelwood

Presented in Partnership with the Lyric Theatre and LLI

Saturday, April 7 2:00 –4:00 pm

The Lyric Theatre, 135 College Avenue, Blacksburg

Cost: \$5 payable at the door; membership in LLI not required

Take the writing of Sharyn McCrumb and the music of Jack Hinshelwood and combine them for an entertaining program highlighting the Ballad Novels of Appalachian novelist Sharyn McCrumb.

This internationally acclaimed program brings together the ballads that are woven throughout Sharyn's novels with Jack performing the ballads as Sharyn reads and discusses her work.

This program has been presented at various venues in the United States, Canada, and across Europe.

Novels that are featured include *If Ever I Return*, *Pretty Peggy-O*, *The Hangman's Beautiful Daughter*, *She Walks These Hills*, *The Rosewood Casket*, *The Ballad of Frankie Silver*, *The Songcatcher*, *Ghost Riders*, and *St. Dale*. Sharyn will also discuss and do a book-signing for her new novel, *The Unquiet Grave*.

## The "Big Event": Virginia Tech

Saturday, April 7

Submit a job request here:

<https://registration.vtbigevent.org/jobrequest>



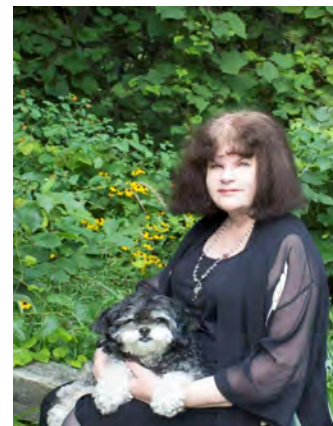
The Big Event at Virginia Tech is a student-run community service effort that has grown into the 2nd largest event of its kind in the nation. Every spring, thousands of students, faculty, and staff come together to complete hundreds of community service projects throughout Blacksburg, Christiansburg and the New River Valley.

Projects are completed regardless of need or socioeconomic status; instead, it is The Big Event's goal to simply say, "Thank you." Seeded in our university's motto of *Ut Prosim* (*That I may serve*) students and community members come together for a truly unparalleled experience. The Big Event: "One Big Day. One Big Thanks."

Homeowners might like help with painting, garden preparation, moving outdoor furniture, and the like.

## PRESENTERS

Prolific novelist **Sharyn McCrumb** is a graduate of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with an M.A. from Virginia Tech. She lives and works in the Virginia Blue Ridge. Her novels have been translated into eleven languages and she has lectured at Oxford University, the University of Bonn, and the Smithsonian Institution, and taught a writers' workshop in Paris. Sharyn is the recipient of more than a dozen state, regional, and national awards.



**Jack Hinshelwood** is Executive Director of the Crooked Road, Virginia's Music Heritage Trail, based in Abingdon, Virginia. Under Jack's leadership, the Crooked Road generates over \$9 million annually for Virginia's economy.



Jack is an accomplished musician who began playing Appalachian and Bluegrass music in 1972. In 1982, he won the guitar championship at the World's Fair in Knoxville. Since 1994, Jack has been playing guitar and fiddle with the Celtibillies, a four-member group that has released three recordings. The group performed at the 2003 Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington.

Spaces remain for the LLI special event, *Barn Quilt Talks*, April 17, *Warm Hearth Village Center*, 10–11 am. Artist Martha Dillard will provide history on the Barn Quilts for Books project in Craig County featured in *The Roanoke Times*. She'll show images of colorful barn quilts she has painted, and share stories of their design. Contact Leah Coffman, [lcoff@vt.edu](mailto:lcoff@vt.edu), if you would like to attend.

## Chapter Officers 2018

President • Wendy Baldwin, [wendybburg@gmail.com](mailto:wendybburg@gmail.com)  
Vice President • Jerry Niles, [niles@vt.edu](mailto:niles@vt.edu)  
Secretary • Pat Hyer, [hyerp@vt.edu](mailto:hyerp@vt.edu)  
Treasurer • Pat Ballard, [pballard@vt.edu](mailto:pballard@vt.edu)  
Assistant Treasurer • Ruth Anne Niles, [rniles2@icloud.com](mailto: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, Hal VanLandingham

Website: [www.blacksburgaarp.org](http://www.blacksburgaarp.org) Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AARPBlacksburg/>



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

**Nonprofit  
 Organization  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Blacksburg, VA  
 Permit No. 32**

**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



## 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](http://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](http://www.blacksburgaarp.org)
- [whitebarrel.com/product/aarp-lli-1-nov-2018/](http://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/](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://ftcomplaintassistant.gov)
- The FTC also maintains [identitytheft.gov](http://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](http://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](http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2403388,00.asp) (or go to [www.pcmag.com](http://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](http://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](mailto:wendybburg@gmail.com)  
Vice President • Jerry Niles, [niles@vt.edu](mailto:niles@vt.edu)  
Secretary • Pat Hyer, [hyerp@vt.edu](mailto:hyerp@vt.edu)  
Treasurer • Pat Ballard, [pballard@vt.edu](mailto:pballard@vt.edu)  
Assistant Treasurer • Ruth Anne Niles, [rniles2@icloud.com](mailto: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](http://www.blacksburgaarp.org) Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AARPBlacksburg/>



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

**Nonprofit  
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 Permit No. 32**

**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





## May 15 Chapter Meeting

### Combining Socialization and Fitness Technologies to Increase Exercise and Improve Well-Being

France Bélanger, the R. B. Pamplin Professor and the Tom & Daisy Byrd Senior Faculty Fellow in the department of Accounting & Information Systems, and James Tabitha, Associate Professor in the department of Business Information Technology of the Pamplin College of Business at Virginia Tech, will share their recent research findings regarding the effects of fitness technologies and mobile devices on exercise and well-being.



Dr. France Bélanger



Tabitha James

## COMING SOON!

### MEMORY MASTERCLASS

offered by VT Adult Day Services

This course will teach strategies for a healthy lifestyle that maximizes brain health as you age.

**For more information or get on the mailing list:**

Ila Schepisi, Director

540-231-3161

vtadulldayservices@gmail.com

Look for more information in the next AARP newsletter.

## President's Column *by Wendy Baldwin*

### Getting and Using Reliable Medical Information

Medical issues are central for many of us, and AARP is a reliable friend as we deal with the physical challenges life throws at us. But the medical system is complex. How do we navigate a complicated system when we may not feel our best?



### Working with your Physician

The first step is to have a good primary care physician, one whom you trust. He or she will know your history as well as the medical resources in your area.

What if you cannot remember all that your doctor told you? How can you comply with instructions if you don't recall what was said? Here are two strategies to consider: (1) take someone with you whose role is to take notes, or (2) record the session. If you have a smart phone you already have a recording device. And since Virginia is a one-consent state, you can record without getting your provider's consent. I always ask if I may record the encounter because I am interested in the reaction of my provider. I can happily report that for every request to record, the response has been positive. I also prepare a list of questions prior to each visit, and I check off each question answered to ensure all are addressed. Sometimes I email my list to the provider prior to our visit to let them know what I have been thinking. Most doctors want informed patients and patients who can remember what was said during an exam. There is great peace of mind being able to review what was said, what your options are for further treatment, or what to expect with different courses of action.

I hope some of these tips can help you have a great interaction with your own doctor.

### Using Internet Resources

Many of us turn to the web for medical information. The web is a great resource, but using its information can be risky. Not all information comes from credible sources.

*please turn to page 3*

## Upcoming Events

May 22: Tickets go on sale for Moss Arts Center 2018-19 season

June 1: Art Walk in downtown Blacksburg; see the winners from the AARP inaugural "Arts Across Generations" competition

June 12: Primary election in Virginia (US Congress); information at [elections.virginia.gov](http://elections.virginia.gov)

June 19: AARP picnic 5-7:30 pm (p. 2)

### Mother's Day Drive Yields 245 Pounds

Thank you to everyone who donated food and supplies to support the Blacksburg AARP Chapter Mother's Day Food Drive at our April 17 meeting.

We donated 245.5 lbs of food and supplies to the Interfaith Food Pantry along with \$55.00 in cash. This chapter project proved to be a great success thanks to each and everyone of you!

Wendy Baldwin, chapter president, said "I am so proud of our chapter stepping up and helping make Mother's Day memorable for women in need."

Jerry Niles, vice president, suggested that we hold a Mother's Day drive for food and supplies every year.

Thank you for your support and effort.

*AARP Blacksburg Chapter  
Community Service Committee,  
Sally Anna Stapleton, Chair*

## June picnic: Tuesday, June 19

We will gather at the farm home of Terry Wildman and Sue Magliario for a picnic and live music. The chapter will provide chicken BBQ. Please bring an appetizer, side dish, or dessert to share. If you want a beverage other than lemonade or tea, please bring that, too.

**Date / time** Tuesday, June 19, 5:00–7:30 pm

**Location** 3335 Elk Creek Drive, Christiansburg; phone: 540.320.5599 or 540.382.5577

**Food** chicken BBQ from Due South + homemade chili. Lemonade, ice tea, and water will be provided. Bring an appetizer, side dish, or dessert to share + your beverage.

**Sign up** Go to [tinyurl.com/aarp-picnic2018](http://tinyurl.com/aarp-picnic2018) to tell us how many people will come, which food you will bring, and whether you need a ride.

**Directions** From exit 114 on I-81 south, turn south on Route 8 toward Floyd.

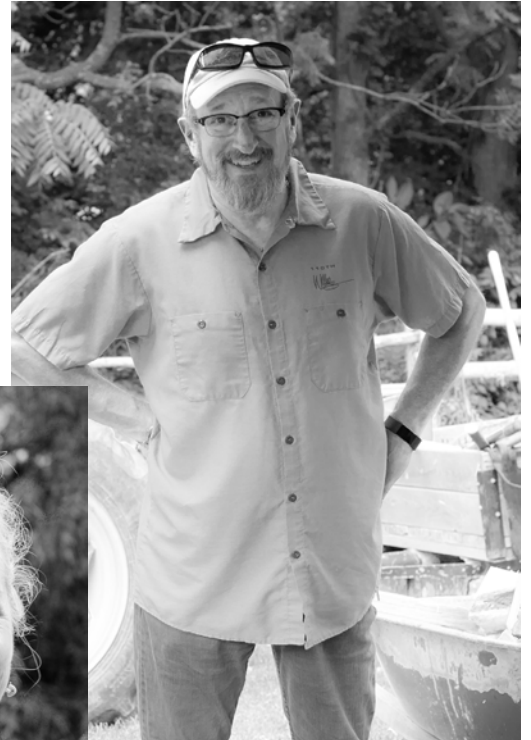
Go 2.7 miles south on Rt. 8. Turn right on Childress Road (Rt. 693). Aly's restaurant is located on your left at the intersection.

Drive 3.3 miles on Childress Road.

Turn left onto Elk Creek Drive, the entrance to Childress Estates. *Look for colorful balloons here.* Follow Elk Creek Drive to the cul de sac, about a third of a mile. Turn right on the first driveway at the cul de sac (more balloons!) and at this point you will see the parking area.

**From Radford**, the best route is south on Tyler Road (passing the Radford hospital), which dead ends at Childress Road. Turn left on Childress Road, go uphill about a quarter mile and turn right onto Elk Creek

**Faces from the 2017 picnic** photos by Peter Magolda



## President's Column *(continued)*

**Identifying Reliable Sites.** A first step is to look at the URL. A URL that ends in .gov comes from a government source. Two good government sources for medical information are [www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov) (Center for Disease Control) and [www.NIH.gov](http://www.NIH.gov) (National Institutes of Health). Information on these government websites is carefully vetted, undergoes scientific review, and contains references to document the sources. Thus, these are reputable sources. Wikipedia increasingly provides references for material posted on their site.

Established medical organizations, such as Memorial Sloan Kettering and the Mayo Clinic, also provide reliable information because they have the reputation of the organization to maintain. Associations dedicated to specific diseases, such as the Alzheimer's Association ([www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org)), also have a commitment to the accuracy and reliability of the information they publish.

While this list is not exhaustive, it provides a starting place to get sound medical information on the web.

**Travel Health information.** The State Department travel site [travel.state.gov/](http://travel.state.gov/) will inform you about health risks, required vaccinations, and precautions in the international regions you plan to visit. (Click on the "International Travel" tab.) Also check the World Health Organization site [www.who.int/ith/en/](http://www.who.int/ith/en/). Be sure to read the details since a travel advisory may be for one specific area and may not apply to the region you are visiting.

**Drugs and Supplements.** You may be able to find the package insert for a prescription at the site of the drug company that makes it. This drug-specific information is comprehensive, reviewed by experts, and approved by the FDA. When you read online, you can control the font size on your computer, whereas the insert may be in tiny print that I, for one, cannot read! However, because drug companies benefit from your appropriate use of their product, they may be less likely to encourage you to look at alternative approaches, drugs, or devices.

Federal regulations for drugs are different from and more stringent than the regulations for dietary supplements. Thus, the information provided by dietary supplement or natural product companies may be less balanced and may not be based on solid scientific facts that drug companies are required to adhere to. This makes it difficult for you to determine the safety and efficacy of these products.

Two good, science-based sources of information on dietary supplements are the NIH Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) at [nccih.nih.gov/](http://nccih.nih.gov/) and the NIH Office of Dietary Supplements at [ods.od.nih.gov/](http://ods.od.nih.gov/). The NCCIH site also provides helpful synopses of existing scientific information on alternative medicine's approaches to a range of medical problems. Regardless of the amount of information you review, be sure to tell your doctor what dietary supplements you are taking because they can interact with other medications prescribed for you.

**Personal Testimonies.** Less useful (but sometimes more entertaining) are sites based on personal experiences rather than on research and science. Some of these can be links into support groups, but others are really just individual experiences with a

disease, symptoms, or side effects. These can be very idiosyncratic. A medicine that has a one in ten thousand chance of a bad side effect is a really safe drug, but that one person who experienced a bad effect can write a blog and make the drug sound very scary. Readers need to know how common or rare that experience is. Similarly, a person who has experienced a favorable outcome from an over-the-counter product may feel better, but the outcome was not necessarily related to the product. As we all know, colds run their course even if we take nothing for them. Some "testimonies" are actually scams, produced by a seller of a product to motivate purchase.

We have options for becoming informed about our medical issues and treatments. Working responsibly with a physician and other sources of information should yield good results.

## Health Fair Scheduled for September 19 in Christiansburg

Mark your calendar for Wednesday, September 19, 2018 to attend the Health and Wellness Fair. The event is sponsored by the Blacksburg AARP in cooperation with the Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM) and Christiansburg Recreation Center.

We would like to welcome our first gold sponsors, our very own AARP Virginia and Radford Health and Rehab. LewisGale Hospital Montgomery is a silver sponsor. Bronze sponsors include Bathfitter #76, Body Mind Arts, Pulaski Adult Day Services and Fall Prevention Center, and Velocity Care (Carilion Clinic). Watch for more highlights of sponsors and services in future newsletters.

Visit the health fair for free flu shots as well as pneumonia and shingles vaccinations. Learn about the Trager approach of movement education and mind/body integration.

The health fair will take place in the Christiansburg Recreation Center, 1600 North Franklin Street, 12:00–4:00 pm. Visitors are encouraged to explore ways to stay healthy, feel healthy, and age well. The fair is open to the public at no charge.

Please join us on September 19. If you have not exhibited in the past but are interested for the 2018 fair, send an email to Jennie Reilly [jenmik@vt.edu](mailto:jenmik@vt.edu), Leslie Pendleton [lkpendleton@vt.edu](mailto:lkpendleton@vt.edu), or Sandra Griffith [sandrag@vt.edu](mailto:sandrag@vt.edu).



## The Micah's Program at Warm Hearth Village *by Karen Nelson*



The Warm Hearth Foundation is very fortunate to partner with many individuals and businesses throughout our community to provide for the needs of low-income seniors on our campus. We believe that aging with dignity should not be a question of ability to pay. This principle guides our work daily and led to the creation of our Neighbors in Need and Micah's Programs.

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

As we began to address food insecurity on our campus, we soon realized that our neighbors needed access to fresh produce in addition to the shelf-stable food items. In 2015, Micah's Garden began to grow at Warm Hearth Village thanks to a grant from the Community Foundation of the New River Valley. Our apartment neighbors have been growing their own vegetables in raised garden beds located behind the Karr Activity Center for the past three years. In addition, we partner with the NRV Glean Team to provide fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the summer growing season. In 2017 alone, we provided over 6,000 pounds of fresh produce to our neighbors.

By 2016, food insecurity was not resolved on our campus, but the impact had been lessened. However, we uncovered that our neighbors in many cases were isolated and withdrawn due to another need. Our Service Coordinator noticed that many residents were seen less frequently toward the end of the month. As we investigated, we learned that many of them were choosing to isolate themselves due to a lack of laundry detergent, soap, shampoo, and incontinence products. Through partnerships in the local community, we added our Micah's Personal Care Items program to help address these needs.

The Micah's Personal Care Items Program continues to grow and presently serves 50–60 seniors each month. Products are distributed on an as-needed basis through our Service Coordinator. Our most requested items are toilet paper, laundry detergent, paper towels, liquid dish detergent, and incontinence products. Thanks to

the program, our residents are no longer isolating themselves for lack of access to these basic necessities.

Each year we evaluate the programs serving our neighbors for their effectiveness and to determine if there is a need for additional programs. Next month I will share with you information about our newest program, Micah's Pets, and tell you how we also assist neighbors with emergency needs across our campus. If you would like to learn more about our programs please call 540-443-3406 or email [knelson@warmhearth.org](mailto:knelson@warmhearth.org).



Blacksburg Newcomers' Group



Micah's Garden

**1. Legislation: Family Caregivers Act.** President Trump recently signed this Act which is designed to provide relief to those millions of people who directly support those who have health conditions and/or functional limitations/developmental disabilities. At last report about 40 million care givers provided unpaid care valued at about \$470 billion. Their efforts save taxpayers millions of dollars by transferring costs (healthcare and services) to them and not to the government. In so doing they take on not only physical and financial responsibilities but emotional experiences as well.

The Act directs the federal government to develop a national strategy with a first step appointing an advisory council to recommend a number of actions (workplace respite relief, financial) to address these needs. AARP has for a number of years suggested such actions both at the Federal and State level. Most recently your local AARP chapter suggested that an AARP representative be included in the membership of the Federal Advisory Council along with reducing the timeline for submitting their report from 18 months to 12 months. One action which has already taken place and might be a time saver for the above advisory council is the work done for those with Alzheimer's.

**2. Nurse Practitioners (NPs).** The Virginia General Assembly approved giving NPs more authority/autonomy to treat us provided they have the required clinical experiences as well as the necessary certifications and licenses. This will greatly expand their availability throughout the state as many of these NPs already meet these requirements.

**3. Legislation: The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB).** This is a federal agency with multiple purposes, one of which is enforcing federal consumer financial laws. This agency was extremely active during the economic problems in our country in the years 2007 through 2010. The current director (Mick Mulvaney) believes that the Bureau was far "too powerful" in their decisions in the past and may have created some conditions which were actually harmful to consumers. Others feel strongly that that was not the case. During the recent management transitions at the Bureau, the conflicts became so great that the judiciary had to step in to rule on "who had the authority to appoint a new Director of the Bureau." With that issue decided, the current acting director has proposed four recommendations to Congress to hopefully "to bring this battleship into calmer waters."

A side bar for me to share with you is that this agency has a terrific library on many subjects useful to the consumer. Visit them—it should be fun. Website: [consumerfinance.gov](http://consumerfinance.gov).

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## AARP Legislative Priorities 2018

### Expand Medicaid—Close the Coverage Gap

AARP Virginia urges the General Assembly to draw down available federal funds to close the health insurance gap. Closing the coverage gap with federal dollars will free up money in the general fund that can be used to improve the delivery of state services, such as mental health and substance abuse assistance, as

well as helping the thousands of Virginia veterans who also fall into the coverage gap. Closing the coverage gap would bring in an average \$1.7 billion in new federal funding per year, helping to create an estimated 15,000 jobs in health care and generating \$74 million per year in new state and local tax revenue.

### Increase Retirement Security

AARP Virginia is fighting to help people who work hard and plan for their future build a secure retirement. Many Virginians do not have retirement savings accounts or an employer-sponsored retirement plan. AARP advocates for enactment of a Work and Save plan that would provide a convenient way for people to save for retirement through payroll deduction IRAs, helping workers and their employers.

### Increase Long-Term Care Ombudsman Funding

Many long-term care recipients are medically or emotionally too frail to speak up for themselves. The state Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, which acts as the voice for these individuals to resolve care problems, prevents suffering and unnecessary hospitalization and saves taxpayer dollars. The minimum staffing ratio set by the General Assembly is one Ombudsman to every 2,000 nursing home and assisted living beds. AARP Virginia advocates for a modest increase of \$235,204 (10 percent of full funding) to be appropriated to fund an additional three to four full-time positions.

### Ensure that Decisions are Fair to All Generations

We will continue to monitor budget proposals and other legislation to be sure that decisions are fair to all generations and do not place an unnecessary hardship on vulnerable Virginians.

*For more information, contact Barry Butler, [bbutler@aarp.org](mailto:bbutler@aarp.org)*

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## 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](mailto:wendybburg@gmail.com)  
Vice President • Jerry Niles, [niles@vt.edu](mailto:niles@vt.edu)  
Secretary • Pat Hyer, [hyerp@vt.edu](mailto:hyerp@vt.edu)  
Treasurer • Pat Ballard, [pballard@vt.edu](mailto:pballard@vt.edu)  
Assistant Treasurer • Ruth Anne Niles, [rniles2@icloud.com](mailto: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 Bame, Hugh VanLandingham


Newsletter editors: Carolyn Rude, Sandra Griffith

Website: [www.blacksburgaarp.org](http://www.blacksburgaarp.org)



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

**Nonprofit  
 Organization  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Blacksburg, VA  
 Permit No. 32**

**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



## AARP Picnic

### Tuesday, June 19

We will gather at the farm home of Terry Wildman and Sue Magliaro for a picnic and live music. The chapter will provide chicken BBQ and chili. Please bring an appetizer, side dish, or dessert to share. If you want a beverage other than lemonade or tea, please bring that, too.

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**Location** 3335 Elk Creek Drive, Christiansburg; phone: 540.320.5599 or 540.382.5577

**Food** chicken BBQ from Due South + homemade chili. Lemonade, ice tea, and water will be provided. Bring an appetizer, side dish, or dessert to share + your beverage.

**Sign up** Go to [tinyurl.com/aarp-picnic2018](http://tinyurl.com/aarp-picnic2018) to tell us how many people will come, which food you will bring, and whether you need a ride.

**Directions** From exit 114 on I-81 south, turn south on Route 8 toward Floyd. Go 2.7 miles south on Rt. 8. Turn right on Childress Road (Rt. 693). Aly's restaurant is located on your left at the intersection.

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**From Radford**, the best route is south on Tyler Road (passing the Radford hospital), which dead ends at Childress Road. Turn left on Childress Road, go uphill about a quarter mile and turn right onto Elk Creek Drive.

## President's Column by Wendy Baldwin

### AARP and Health

Last month my column addressed things you can do to maximize your interaction with your doctor or other medical professional and offered some guidance about using the Internet for medical information. But, where does AARP fit into this?



The monthly AARP magazine always has some articles on health issues and guidance about where to get further information. The AARP website is a repository of links to information about health and disease, new medical breakthroughs, ideas about where state of the art care can be found. The AARP speaker's bureau includes speakers on health topics that chapters can use as part of their own programs. Since I have been touting the benefits of and access to NIH (National Institutes of Health) research, you may be wondering if there is an AARP/NIH connection. The answer is "yes, there is."

Of the many Institutes comprising NIH, a key one for AARP is the National Institute on Aging (NIA). AARP leaders have served as valued NIA board members for a long time. Most recently AARP executive vice president and chief policy officer, Dr. Debra Whitman, served in that capacity. This relationship helps ensure that AARP views are made known at the highest level of the Institute that deals with issues central to the AARP's members and mission. It is a sign of the respect NIH has for the skills and interests of AARP. NIA staff provide material relevant for AARP's educational activities.

This relationship goes two ways. AARP helped support the HHS (Department of Health and Human Services, the parent organization for NIH) Dementia Care and Services Summit. AARP has specifically reached out to its members about aging and health and physical activity by featuring the NIA's Go4Life physical activity and exercise campaign for people over 50. NIA staff have served as a federal liaison to the AARP's Global Council on Brain Health.

*continued in the next column*

## Upcoming Events

June 12: Primary election in Virginia (US Congress) (p. 7)

June 19: AARP picnic 5–7:30 pm

Aug. 27: registration opens for fall LLI courses (p. 5)

Sept. 19: Health and Wellness Fair (p. 2)

## In this issue...

AARP and health 1

Health Fair 2

Vaccines for seniors 2

Memory class 3

"Forgetfulness," Billy Collins 3

Summer activities 4

LLI fall courses 5

Tax-Aide program 2018 5

Med-Ride transportation 5

AARP partners: Micah's Pets, Blacksburg Senior Programs 6

Legislative report 7

Primary election 7

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NIA is not the only institute that conducts research of interest to AARP members. As Richard Hodes, the director of the NIA says,

There is increased recognition of aging as the key underlying factor for many of the diseases and conditions that occur more frequently with advancing years, including cancer, diabetes, and heart disease, and new thinking about how to approach disease and disability. This has sparked a number of collaborations across NIH, most particularly in the area now known as geroscience.

## Health Fair Scheduled for September 19 in Christiansburg *by Sandra Griffith*

September 19 is getting closer and closer. We are so pleased to have exhibitors registering—old friends and new ones. Joining the gold exhibitors are The Hearing Clinic, Inc., Anderson Audiology, and ClearCaptions. We welcome Warm Hearth Village and MedExpress Urgent Care who have joined as a silver exhibitors. HCA Lewis Gale Hospital Pulaski is a bronze sponsor.

This will be a great time to queue up for a flu shot, check your blood pressure or glucose, or learn about new immunizations. But wait, this is not just about medical conditions! Learn about aging at home. Gather information on not only physical and mental health but also intellectual, environmental, and cultural health. The Health and Wellness Fair will be a great place to learn new ways to stay healthy and engaged

Learn about InStill Mindfulness SWVA's real-world, inter-relational mindfulness classes. Visit the League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization of women and men that encourages informed and active participation in government. Check out the Mount Tabor Ruritan Club, a civic service organization. A number of non-profit organizations will be attending to provide information about what is going on around us in the New River Valley.



Researchers report on the beneficial effects of social engagement, and all the exhibitors who offer volunteer activities will be highlighted.

The health fair will take place in the Christiansburg Recreation Center, 1600 North Franklin Street, 12:00–4:00 pm. Visitors are encouraged to explore ways to stay healthy, feel healthy, and age well. The fair is open to the public at no charge.

Please join us on September 19. If you have not exhibited in the past but are interested for the 2018 fair, send an email to Jen-nie Reilly [jenmik@vt.edu](mailto:jenmik@vt.edu), Leslie Pendleton [lpendleton@vt.edu](mailto:lpendleton@vt.edu), or Sandra Griffith [sandrag@vt.edu](mailto:sandrag@vt.edu).

## Vaccines

### Not just for children.... *by Wendy Baldwin*

We are all used to hearing the calls for children to be vaccinated since modern medicine has been able to hold many dreaded childhood diseases at bay. But what about those of us who are no longer children? Turns out it is just as important to keep up on our immunizations as well. With age—and sometimes from other diseases we may have picked up—our immune system is not always able to fight as well as we'd like. So, let's help it along with immunizations that can reduce the risk of getting minimize it if we do get infected.

Two new vaccines are especially important. First is the new **shingles** vaccine. Now, there has been a shingles vaccine, but if you had it you know they warn you that it is only about 50% effective. That's something, but the new one is 97% effective at keeping you from getting shingles. Having had shingles myself, I was quick to get the new vaccine. It is two shots and has to be ordered by your doctor, but then your pharmacist can administer it. I just have to go back in 2–6 months for the second shot and I'll be set.

My brush with shingles came while I was in transit to South Africa where I was able to get treatment to minimize the effects. If you have had chicken pox—and many from our generations have—you already have the virus that causes shingles. A lowered immune system that comes with age or specific diseases/medications can just open the door to a rousing case of shingles. Even though I had a pretty mild case, trust me, you do not want to get shingles!

Another improved vaccine is the new **pneumonia** vaccine. Pneumovax protects against 23 forms of pneumonia and is recommended for anyone 65 and older...that would be us! If you do remember having a pneumonia vaccine a few years ago, you are still a candidate for the newer one and if it has been at least 12 months since you had the older version, Medicare Part B will cover the cost.

A much more remote risk is from **yellow fever**. This disease is not a scourge here in the US like it used to be, but it's frequently a viral concomitant of travel to tropical locations. I do know how our members love to travel! One good thing about this immunization is that its effectiveness lasts a lifetime, but your doctor may recommend a booster after ten years.

Finally, that old favorite **tetanus**. It is always possible to pick up tetanus spores when gardening or working outdoors, and the immunization is very effective. Therapy for an established case of tetanus does not exist. Just in case you are remembering that you had shot some years ago, bear in mind that the immunization is good for about ten years. So, if it has been more than ten years since your last shot, it is a good time to see your doctor about getting one.

Talk with your primary care physician, who will be able to tell if you have a contraindication to any of these vaccines. There are enough health challenges out there; let's do what we can to minimize the avoidable ones.



## Arts Across Generations

Entries from the AARP-sponsored "Arts Across Generations" are currently on exhibit at the Lyric Theatre, through the end of June.

The Blacksburg Chapter of the AARP invited cross-generation partners, at least one of whom lives in the New River Valley, to create a piece of art together for this contest.

## VT Adult Day Services to Offer Memory Classes Summer 2018

Experiencing changes in your memory health? Has your doctor said you have Mild Cognitive Impairment? Eager to maintain your brain health?

In this 6-week Memory Masterclass you can learn to take charge of your memory health. Based on leading research, together we will learn strategies to keep our brains healthy and protect our memories.

Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning July 10, 2018.

Course orientation will be on June 28, 2018.

Register now! First 32 registrants are free!

For more information or to register, call 540-231-3161 or email [vtadulldayservices@gmail.com](mailto:vtadulldayservices@gmail.com)

### MEMORY MASTERCLASS @VT Adult Day Services



REGISTRATION NOW OPEN  
CALL 540-231-3161  
EMAIL [vtadulldayservices@gmail.com](mailto:vtadulldayservices@gmail.com)

**Protect your memories! 6 week class begins July 10<sup>th</sup> First 32 enroll for free!**  
This masterclass is designed to teach strategies for a healthy lifestyle that maximizes brain health.

## Forgetfulness

by Billy Collins

The name of the author is the first to go  
followed obediently by the title, the plot,  
the heartbreaking conclusion, the entire novel  
which suddenly becomes one you have never read, never even heard of,

as if, one by one, the memories you used to harbor  
decided to retire to the southern hemisphere of the brain,  
to a little fishing village where there are no phones.

Long ago you kissed the names of the nine Muses goodbye  
and watched the quadratic equation pack its bag,  
and even now as you memorize the order of the planets,

something else is slipping away, a state flower perhaps,  
the address of an uncle, the capital of Paraguay.

Whatever it is you are struggling to remember  
it is not poised on the tip of your tongue,  
not even lurking in some obscure corner of your spleen.

It has floated away down a dark mythological river  
whose name begins with an *L* as far as you can recall,  
well on your own way to oblivion where you will join those  
who have even forgotten how to swim and how to ride a bicycle.

No wonder you rise in the middle of the night  
to look up the date of a famous battle in a book on war.  
No wonder the moon in the window seems to have drifted  
out of a love poem that you used to know by heart.

"Forgetfulness," from *Questions About Angels*, by Billy Collins, © 1991. Reprinted by permission of the University of Pittsburgh Press.

*Questions About Angels* is available at your local bookstore or directly from the publisher University of Pittsburgh Press at <http://upress.pitt.edu/BookDetails.aspx?bookId=-34917>.

Billy Collins was Poet Laureate of the United States from 2001 to 2003.

## So much to do this summer!

### Music Performances

#### Summer Concerts on Henderson Lawn, Blacksburg

VT campus 6–7:30 pm Fridays, June 1–July 27, free

[www.performingarts.vt.edu/saf](http://www.performingarts.vt.edu/saf)

#### Music on the Lawn, Christiansburg Library 7–8:30 pm

Saturdays May 12, June 16, July 7, August 18, free

#### Moss Arts Center, [www.artscenter.vt.edu](http://www.artscenter.vt.edu)

Ben Folds and a Piano, Friday, June 8, 8:30 pm

The Crooked Road's Mountains of Music Homecoming: Sierra Hull, Friday, June 15, 7:30 pm

Cube Fest 2018, Thursday, August 9–Sunday, August 12

#### Chamber Music Series [artscenter.vt.edu/performances/chamber-series-special-gems.html](http://artscenter.vt.edu/performances/chamber-series-special-gems.html) free

Wednesday, June 20, 7:30 pm

Friday, June 22, 7:30 pm

Saturday, June 23, 3 pm

#### Market Square Jam, Downtown Blacksburg Wednesdays, 8–10 pm

### Theatre Performances

**Studio Theatre**, Squires Student Center, Virginia Tech, free, but please make reservations:

[www.performingarts.vt.edu/summer-arts-festival](http://www.performingarts.vt.edu/summer-arts-festival)

*Charlotte's Web*, June 16, 17, 18, 2018, 2 pm and 4 pm; tickets available beginning June 1

*Fiorello*, August 10 and 11, 2018, 7 pm; tickets available beginning July 23

*Walk to Freedom: The Mary Draper Ingles Story*

Outdoor drama, June 22–24, July 13–15, July 27–29,

Nesselrod B&B, Radford, [www.nesselrod.com](http://www.nesselrod.com)

### Movies **The Lyric Theatre**, Blacksburg, [thelyric.com](http://thelyric.com)

#### Summer Classic Matinee Series

Saturdays and Wednesdays 3 pm, free

June 9, 13 *The Manchurian Candidate*

July 7, 11 *Raiders of the Lost Ark*

August 11, 15 *Double Indemnity*

Saturday, July 14 *Grease* 40th Anniversary Screening, 7 pm  
regular admission charges followed by a *Grease* dance fest

#### June Film Schedule

June 8–14 *Tully*

June 15–21 *RBG*

June 22–28 *Disobedience*

June 29–July 5 *The Seagull*

### Special Events: Blacksburg

[www.performingarts.vt.edu/saf](http://www.performingarts.vt.edu/saf)

**Summer Solstice Festival** Saturday, June 16 1–11 pm

**Independence Day Celebration** Monday, July 4

Parade 2–3 pm and fireworks 9:30 pm

**Art at the Market** Saturday, July 21 9 am–2 pm

**Steppin' Out Street Festival** Friday and Saturday August 3 and 4, 10 am–10 pm

**Market Square Jam** Wednesdays through Sept. 26, 8–10 pm

**Senior Programs** (trips, classes, events)

[www.blacksburg.gov/recreation](http://www.blacksburg.gov/recreation)

### Special Events: Christiansburg

[va-christiansburg2.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=595](http://va-christiansburg2.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=595)

**Independence Day Celebration**, Monday, July 4

**Montgomery Museum Heritage Day**, Saturday, August 26

**Senior Trips** (Barter Theater, Wohlfahrt Haus Theater, baseball, more) [va-christiansburg2.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=797](http://va-christiansburg2.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=797)

**Kiwanis Wilderness Trail Festival**, Saturday, September 15, 9 am–4 pm Crafters, live bands, food trucks, antique and classic cars, craft demonstrations, open jam, community stage, children's area

### Farmer's Markets

**Blacksburg**, Corner of Roanoke Street and Draper Road, April–October, Wednesdays 12–6 pm; Saturdays, 8 am–2 pm

**Christiansburg**, Hickok Street, May–October, Thursdays 3–7 pm

### New River Valley Garden Tour 2018

Saturday, July 7, 9 am–5 pm

See seven wonderful summer gardens. Tickets available beginning June 1 at public libraries

[mfrlfriends.org/gardentour.html](http://mfrlfriends.org/gardentour.html)

### HD Broadcasts: Ballet, Theater, Movies

**Regal New River Valley**, 110 New River Road, Christiansburg

**Bolshoi Ballet:** June 10 *Coppelia* 12L55 pm \$18

**National Theatre Live:** June 12 *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* 7 pm \$18

**Classic Movies** 2 pm, 7 pm \$12.50

June 24, 27 *West Side Story* (1961)

Jul 15, 18 *Big*, 30th anniversary

Aug 5, 8 *The Big Lebowski* 20th anniversary

Aug 26, 29 *South Pacific* 60th anniversary

## LLI Courses and Events Fall 2018

The Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI) at Virginia Tech will mail its catalog of fall 2018 courses and events in mid August. Registration opens August 27. If you have been a member of LLI, you will automatically receive a catalog. If you were not a member and would like to get on the mailing list, please complete the form at [www.cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning/](http://www.cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning/) Course information will soon be available at this website.

Most courses will begin the week of October 1 and end the week of November 5, but some start earlier or end later. Courses last 3–6 weeks. The catalog will include descriptions of the courses and instructors, but here is a list to help with your planning now.

In addition to these courses, LLI will offer 23 one-time events in the fall of 2018, beginning in September.

### Monday courses

Finding Hidden Treasures in the Archives, 9–10:30 am  
Perspective Drawing Salvador Dali Style, 10:30 am–12 pm  
Investigating the Kennedy Assassination 11 am–12:30 pm  
Conversational Spanish, 11 am–12:30 pm  
Reconsidering the Beatles, 1–2:30 pm  
You Can Cook Chinese, Too 1–3:30 pm  
Wine Appreciation, 3–4:30 pm

### Tuesday courses

Sampler, 9–10:15 am  
TED Talks, 10:45 am–12:15 pm  
Scenes from the History of Virginia Tech, Part Two, 1–2:30 pm  
Organizing Photographs and Creating Scrapbookss, 1–2:30 pm  
George Eliot's *Middlemarch*, 1:30–3 pm

### Wednesday courses

*Moby Dick*—An Unconventional Classic, 9–10:30 am  
Learn Duplicate Bridge, 9–10:30 am  
Modern Turkey: Experiment in Democracy, 11 am–12:30 pm  
Poetry—Words that Sing and Dance, 1–2:30 pm  
Basics of Digital Photography, 3–4:30 pm

### Thursday courses

Global Changes IV, 9:30–11 am  
FUNdamentals of Plant Propagation, 11 am–12:30 pm  
Founding Principles of the American Regime, 1–2:30 pm  
The Supreme Court and the Criminal Process, 3–4:30 pm

### Friday courses

Water Color with Jesi, 9 am–12 pm  
Facebook for Beginners, 9–10:30 am  
Novels of Marilynne Robinson, Part Two, 11 am–12:30 pm

## 2018 Tax-Aide Program Serves 1,326 Clients

The AARP Tax-Aide Program and its 25 volunteers provide tax counseling to many local clients. In 2018, the program served:

- 1,326—total clients (151 more than in 2017)
- 1,038—electronically filed returns
- 19—amended returns
- 9—paper (4) and prior year (5) returns
- 292—question-and-answer clients (80 more than in 2017)

The clients were diverse:

- 63 was the average age (range was 17 to 104 years of age)
- 54% were single
- 39% filed joint returns
- 1% were married filing separately
- 6% were Head of Household

Thanks to Pat Ballard, the program coordinator, and Dianne Rencsok, coordinator of volunteer training, and all the volunteers for this service.

**Volunteers** are always welcome to serve as greeters or tax counselors. Training is available. If you can contribute, please contact Pat Ballard at [pballard@vt.edu](mailto:pballard@vt.edu), or 382-1189.

## Med-Ride Transportation Services

by Wendy Baldwin

In the April 2018 AARP newsletter, I wrote about transportation options that help seniors live in place. Since then I've received information about an Agency on Aging program called Med-Ride that serves the New River Valley.

Med-Ride is funded by the United Way and other local charities. Volunteers help get people to health-related services. Wheelchair accessible vehicles are available. A partner program—Mobility Coordination—helps keep eligible individuals from missing non-emergency health services. Services are available to residents of the NRV including Montgomery, Pulaski, Giles, and Floyd counties and the city of Radford.

If you do not drive, do not have access to a ride, or cannot afford public means of transportation and do not have Medicaid transportation coverage, you may qualify. Eligibility is determined by a phone assessment. A modest fee is charged, depending on ability to pay (minimum of \$5 per trip). Transportation is provided to non-emergency health visits in the NRV and beyond. This might be a good option for you or for a friend or neighbor.

Med-Ride is also a volunteer opportunity. You can make donations or offer to drive for the program.

To inquire about volunteering or to set up service, call Mobility Coordination and Med-Ride at 540-980-0754 or 540-994-2632, or visit online at [nrvss.org/pages/Medride.htm](http://nrvss.org/pages/Medride.htm). If you could benefit from this service or know someone who could, please reach out with these numbers.

## Micah's Pets—Helping Low-Income Seniors at Warm Hearth Village



by Karen Nelson

Over the past two months I have shared information with you regarding the Neighbors in Need and Micah's Programs at Warm Hearth Village. Each year we evaluate the programs serving our neighbors for their effectiveness and to determine if there is a need for additional programs. This past year as we evaluated our programs we learned that 40 households who own a pet and currently receive food and toiletry assistance each month, struggle to supply adequate food for the health and care of their pet. This includes cat food, dog food and kitty litter.

While owning a pet can increase the financial struggles for low income seniors, the benefits of pet ownership can far outweigh those struggles. According to AgingCare.com, for senior pet owners who often live alone, pets can help reduce stress, lower blood pressure, increase social interaction, increase physical activity levels and help them learn. In addition, pets can reduce depression and lessen loneliness. In fact, pets directly benefit too, particularly when older folks adopt older pets. "These lucky pets go from the pound to paradise. Since most of the adopters are retired, they have lots of time to devote to a previously unwanted pet," says Chicago veterinarian Tony Kremer, who with his wife Meg, operates Help Save Pets—Humane Society.

Over the past year our Service Coordinator has learned that our residents were taking food from the Micah's Soup for Seniors program distribution to feed their pets. To ease the financial burden for our neighbors and ensure that the food from our Micah's program is being used for the residents' nutritional needs, we began working to implement a new program that would help provide dog and cat food as well as kitty litter for neighbors in need on our campus.

Thanks to the generous support of a donor in the community, the Micah's Pets program was launched in March 2018 and is now serving 40 households in our Trolinger and New River House apartments. Our efforts include education for neighbors



on the importance of feeding their pets a consistent diet to avoid digestive issues. Based on this effort and with recommendations from local veterinarians, our program provides Purina Beneful products for dogs and Purina Cat Chow brands for cats.

In addition to the support provided for seniors needing health-care services on our campus and the Micah's Programs serving low

## Blacksburg Community Center, Senior Programs

by Wendy Baldwin

How often have you heard that someone came to Blacksburg to go to Tech and then stayed? That describes so many people I know, including Joy Herbert, Senior Programs Supervisor at the Blacksburg Community Center. Joy is well known to AARP and a fabulous partner for our board meetings, monthly membership meetings, and event planning. She has quite a range of responsibilities covering educational and health and fitness programs as well as trips and special events. Whew! Her time here speaks to the support she has received from those at the Recreation Center, which helps make it the terrific resource that it is. While many seniors in the area have taken these programs to heart, Joy says she always sees some new faces as the program of events unfolds.



Joy Herbert

So, did Joy just take over a thriving program and keep it going? No, not at all. When she came to the Center there was no program for older adults. She says she was lucky to get so much help from volunteers, but it did mean starting the program from scratch. "If it weren't for our volunteers, we wouldn't have a senior program and most likely would not have had the art and community rooms built onto the community center."

It is a tribute to her efforts that the center is at capacity now, but what a great problem to have! New ideas are always welcome, it is just the challenge of finding space for them. Over her nearly 24 years at the Center Joy said so many members stand out to her. One who is still traveling with Joy is now 95. Over those years she has seen friendships form and grow, individuals thrive and enjoy the opportunities that the Center offers. "It's great that many friendships have been formed because of our programs," says Joy. These programs enhance the quality of life, socially and emotionally for all who participate.

income seniors in independent living the Warm Hearth Foundation also provides assistance on a limited basis for individual needs that cannot be met through any other assistance program in the community. These needs may include emergency dental procedures, dentures, mattresses and bedding, lift chairs, and other needs as they arise. These needs are provided for through our application-based Resident Assistance Fund.

As you can see the Warm Hearth Foundation works to meet a variety of needs on our campus.

If you would like to learn more about how you can become personally involved with any of our programs, please contact Karen Nelson at 540-443-3406 for more information.

## Legislative Report *by Val Coluni*

**2018 General Assembly.** Inputs from recently elected Delegate Chris Hurst, who represents District 12 (significant parts of the New River Valley). I met with Del. Hurst Monday, May 21, at the Blacksburg Public Library.

### A. Major disappointments

- Failure to pass a state budget for the next fiscal years. Several special meetings have already been held in Richmond, most recently during the week of May 28.
- Failure to provide affordable health care for all citizens (Since the interview, the General Assembly passed Medicaid expansion.)
- Failure to agree on a strategic educational plan to increase/improve the skills levels of our work force. This is critical for economic development in our state.

### B. Major accomplishments

- 14 bills that Chris sponsored or co-sponsored were approved in committees; four were submitted and approved by all decision makers and soon will be effective in our state laws. These subjects covered vehicle taxes in one of our communities, revisions to two town charters, and a critical change to the state felony law. We continue to work in special sessions on the state budget and Medicaid expansion for thousands of our citizens.

### C. Concerns for the future

- An effort by some to develop “hybrid” health care plans with lower benefits that are now required in the Affordable Care Act. Yes, the costs will be somewhat lower but it will have an adverse effect on the Affordable Care Act
- Work force skills: the difficulty convincing all our stakeholders (students, citizens, government representatives, employers and others) we must be BOLD in solving the problems of the inadequate skills levels of our work forces. The quickest way to correct the problem is free tuition at our community colleges, technical/trade schools, and other educational institutions to be financed by all appropriate stakeholders. Our future depends on this bold effort.

**Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB).** This federal agency was created in 2010 following the financial crisis to protect consumers from predatory lending. It is going through significant organizational changes to cut costs and to now broaden its mandate to protect lenders, not only the consumers. Some suspect there are political motives for these changes, but the changes do have support of some members of both parties. The changes have an effect on their enforcement operations. In addition, the interim director (Mick Mulvaney) sees the agency's mission in a much different way than the previous director. If you have a critical need to use the agency, proceed with urgency.

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**AARP Website:** [www.blacksburgaarp.org](http://www.blacksburgaarp.org)

Newsletter editors: Carolyn Rude, Sandra Griffith

## Primary Election June 12

### Dual Primary in Congressional District 9

Both the Republican and Democratic parties will hold primaries for the US Congress on June 12. The 9th Congressional District (southwestern Virginia) will hold a Dual Primary, meaning that both primaries will be held in the same polling place. Voters will choose either the Republican or Democratic ballot when they go to vote.

### Republican ballot: US Senate

On the Republican ballot, voters will choose from three candidates for US Senate (to run against the Democratic nominee and incumbent Tim Kaine):

- Nick J. Freitas
- E. W. Jackson
- Corey Stewart

The Republican candidate for the US House of Representatives and incumbent, Morgan Griffith, is running unopposed for the Republican nomination.

### Democratic ballot: US House of Representatives

On the Democratic ballot, voters will choose from two candidates for US House of Representatives (to run against the Republican nominee and incumbent Morgan Griffith):

- Anthony Flaccavento
- Justin Santopietro

The Democratic candidate for US Senate and incumbent, Tim Kaine, is running unopposed for the Democratic nomination.

For nonpartisan information on all of these candidates, visit [vote411.org](http://vote411.org).

To check your voter registration status or your polling place, visit [elections.virginia.gov](http://elections.virginia.gov).



### 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](mailto:wendybburg@gmail.com)  
Vice President • Jerry Niles, [niles@vt.edu](mailto:niles@vt.edu)  
Secretary • Pat Hyer, [hyerp@vt.edu](mailto:hyerp@vt.edu)  
Treasurer • Pat Ballard, [pballard@vt.edu](mailto:pballard@vt.edu)  
Assistant Treasurer • Ruth Anne Niles, [rniles2@icloud.com](mailto: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 Bame, Hugh VanLandingham



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

**Nonprofit  
 Organization  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Blacksburg, VA  
 Permit No. 32**

**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



## Health and Wellness Fair

September 19 noon–4 pm

**Christiansburg Recreation Center**  
1600 North Franklin Street

**G**et ready for the AARP/VCOM Health and Wellness Fair! We are excited about the exhibitors who have registered—old friends and new ones. Over 100 exhibitors, live demonstrations, and interactive displays will be showcased.

### Screenings and flu shots

The Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine will provide services, including blood glucose screening, total cholesterol screening, blood pressure screening, body mass index/nutrition, Osteopathic Manipulation Medicine (OMM), and Ask the Pharmacist. Hearing and vision tests, cancer screening advice, and dermatology screenings will be available. Free flu shots will be available.

### Cultural opportunities

The Health and Wellness Fair is about more than medical conditions! Gather information on not only physical and mental health but also intellectual, environmental, and cultural health. The Health and Wellness Fair will be a great place to learn new ways to stay healthy and engaged.

### Alternative wellness practices

Sample light healthy snacks and explore alternative approaches to wellness with mind body integration, reflexology, chiropractic care, yoga, mindfulness, and the Center for Animal Human Relationships.

### Nonprofits

Visit the League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. Check out the Mount Tabor Ruritan Club, a civic service organization. A number of nonprofit organizations are attending to provide information about what is going on around us in the New

River Valley. Exhibitors who offer volunteer activities will be highlighted.

### Demonstrations

Demonstrations will also take place. Look for Qigong, cooking, aging in place, Dr. Harris' hip and joint replacement seminar, and "10 Signs of Alzheimer's: Love Your Brain."

### Time and place

The health fair will take place in the Christiansburg Recreation Center, [1600 North Franklin Street](#), 12:00–4:00 pm. Visitors are encouraged to explore ways to stay healthy, feel healthy, and age well. The fair is open to the public at no charge.

Please join us on Wednesday, September 19. To find directions, parking information, more highlights, and the list of exhibitors, please visit our web page: [www.blacksburgaarp.org/2018-health-and-wellness-fair-visitors-information](http://www.blacksburgaarp.org/2018-health-and-wellness-fair-visitors-information)

The Health and Wellness Fair takes the place of our monthly meeting.

## Award nominations requested

Due October 15

The AARP Blacksburg Chapter presents two local awards each year at the Holiday Luncheon in December. The awards committee requests nominations for these awards from members. Nominations should reflect contributions and achievements in the past year (2017–18).

### Chapter Service Award

Member who is giving and making an impact on our local AARP Chapter

- Recipients past 4 years: Val Coluni and Terry Wildman, Jerry Niles, Don Creamer and Pat Hyer, John and Sharen Hillison

### Community Spirit Award

Member who is impacting the community with constituents who are the focus of AARP efforts.

- Recipients past 4 years: Molly McClintock, Sally Anna Stapleton, Pat Ballard, Jim Wightman

Please send your nominations, including the name, which award, and the basis of the recommendation for the nomination, to Tamara Hodsden ([thodsden@gmail.com](mailto:thodsden@gmail.com)).

## Upcoming Events

Sept. 19, Health and Wellness Fair noon–4 pm

Sept. 29, Walk to End Alzheimer's (p. 5)

Oct. 15, Award nominations due

Nov. 1, Wine tasting, Whitebarrel Winery 5–7:30 pm

## Volunteer(s) needed

**Prepare the monthly newsletter for mailing:** Pick up at the copy shop, affix labels, complete an online form, and take to the post office—about 3–4 hours/month, September–June (no issue in December). Mailings take place during the first week of the month. The current volunteers, Judith and Roy Jones, will show you the procedures. If you have questions, contact Judith ([judith@vt.edu](mailto:judith@vt.edu)).

If you can help—perhaps with a friend—contact Wendy Baldwin ([wendybburg@gmail.com](mailto:wendybburg@gmail.com)).

## Wine tasting, Whitebarrel Winery

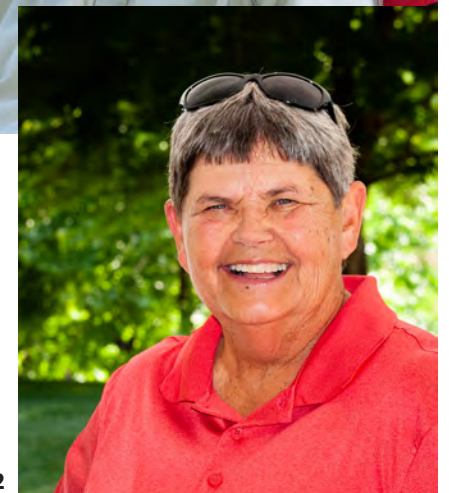
Co sponsored with LLI  
Thursday, Nov. 1, 5:00–7:30 pm  
4025 Childress Road, Christiansburg  
Cost: \$25 (payment to Whitebarrel Winery [whitebarrel.com/product/aarp-lli-1\\_nov\\_2018/](http://whitebarrel.com/product/aarp-lli-1_nov_2018/))

Join LLI and AARP members for a fun time at Whitebarrel Winery. The winery will provide either a wine tasting or a glass of wine plus three hot appetizers and a salad. Connect with LLI classmates and AARP members and get to know them better.

# Faces (and a back) from the June AARP picnic



Photos by Peter Magolda.  
See more at <https://adlogam.smugmug.com/Organizations/AARP/n-49pk5B>





## Why do we donate?

**H**uman beings are social and connected. In our various communities, we give and receive benefits from others. Many people of retirement age have committed to giving back for a lifetime of opportunity, even as we continue to receive the benefits of organized activities, a beautiful environment, health care, and more. Our donations may be our time and talents, our participation in organizations, or our treasure. We give because the feelings of connection help us feel valued.



AARP is a terrific organization that facilitates this exchange of benefits in multiple ways. For example, our Health and Wellness fair gives to the community by providing easy access to information about health and living well. The earnings from the Health and Wellness Fair and other fundraising activities support nonprofits in our community whose values are consistent with those of our organization. Each December we give to other organizations such as the Community Foundation, Agency on Aging, and Micah's Soup for Seniors. By participating as a volunteer for the Fair or just by attending, you support these goals.

A huge service to our community is our Tax Aide program.

As a part of AARP, you can see your own efforts turned into support for local organizations that make the NRV a great place to live. Members of the board and other engaged members help plan the June picnic, the Whitebarrel tastings, and the holiday dinner. There is always a need for members to come to monthly meetings and greet newcomers and help them get involved with our chapter. Getting involved is a way to promote something larger than oneself and enjoy the socializing benefits that chapter involvement provides.

There are also many social engagement opportunities through the networks of nonprofits in our area. RSVP—Retired and Senior Volunteer Program—is one way to help fit your interests with organizations that need your help. What are the activities that you enjoy? Meeting people? Working behind the scene? If the organization doesn't have opportunities that fit the activities you like, it probably isn't a good fit. What should you do? Move on and try another one. The recipients of your time should benefit, but so should you.

Other donations may follow personal experiences. When I lived in the DC area, neighbors experienced a tragedy. Their son had just finished medical school and in the break leading up to the graduation ceremony he was in the Middle East for well-earned R & R. Sadly, the bus he was traveling went off the road, and he died in the wreck. While they struggled with the pain of losing their son, his mother formed an organization call ASIRT, Association for Safe International Road Travel.

She discovered that travel books and web travel sites said plenty about avoiding food poisoning but ignored the greater threat that came from road travel. She studied and worked and networked so that ASIRT could offer practical advice about routes to avoid and safer alternatives to road travel. We know about ASIRT ([www.asirt.org](http://www.asirt.org)) because this was a neighbor, but we support ASIRT because travel is a good thing that should not contain unknown hazards that could be avoided.

Another way to support organizations is through financial contributions. Many nonprofits are highly dependent on such contributions. Donations are an opportunity to support activities that we can't do in a more personal way. Much as I care about the challenges of stopping child marriage in Ethiopia, I am not rushing off to the outskirts of Addis Ababa to work on the front lines. But, I can help those organizations (like the Population Council, [www.Popcouncil.org](http://www.Popcouncil.org)) that are.

Donations help keep nonprofits alive. Even when they can, and do, get grants from foundations or the government to continue their work, there are always expenses that do not fit a donor's guidelines. Nonprofits need flexible funds to work in difficult areas, to take chances in developing new initiatives and to just stay afloat. That's where you come in. Celebrate the organizations that reflect your values and help them have an impact in the world.

*So how about that Health and Wellness Fair?* While it is a means for AARP to raise money from the for-profit organizations that exhibit, it is also a way for nonprofits to gain visibility, share their work, and hopefully identify a couple of new volunteers to help them. If you support a local nonprofit financially, maybe they could use your physical support at their table at the Fair (see a complete list of exhibitors here: <http://www.blacksburgaarp.org/2018-health-and-wellness-fair-visitors-information>). And, just come to the Fair, September 19, noon to 4 pm at the Christiansburg Recreation Center. The flow of people is a great advertisement for the Fair and so it helps the next one, in 2020.

The Fair is for everyone. You can get a flu shot, some other health assessments, and a wide array of other organizations. Here is a way to get some ideas about making your home more "aging-appropriate," learn safety tips from policy and rescue crews, and find new ways to exercise and stay healthy. You are supporting the Fair when you come and see all the amazing tables that Jennie Reilly and her team have put together. If you read this before September 19 and want to volunteer to help out during the fair, give Jennie ([jenmik@vt.edu](mailto:jenmik@vt.edu)) a shout out and find out what is left to do.

Donating your time, your participation, your talent, your energy, and your dollars will benefit the organizations and people who receive your gifts, but your engagement will also benefit you. If you are taking first steps at donating by volunteering, showing up at the Health and Wellness Fair would be a good one. Or you might try the Walk to End Alzheimer's (see p. 5). Or, if you are really ready to commit, help AARP and its members by volunteering to get this newsletter ready for mailing (see p. 1).

If you are already engaged, AARP leaders appreciate you.

## Arts Across Generations Program Announces Award Winners

The inaugural Arts Across Generation program took place June 1 in conjunction with Blacksburg's Art Walk.

The 2018 theme was "The Joy of Life." During the month of June AARP celebrated artworks created by multi-generational artists with an exhibit at the Lyric Theater.

This initiative enacts two core values of the AARP-Blacksburg chapter: 1) viewing retirement as a time to embrace current passions and learn new ones, and 2) providing opportunities for community members across generations to interact in meaningful ways.

The award winners were:

- First Place: Suzanne Ross, Michele Walter, and Bethany Walter, Roanoke, VA
- Second Place: Len Diloia Sr., Len Diloia Jr., and Nicole Diloia, Christiansburg, VA
- Third Place: Lee Smith Musgrave and Nathaniel Andrew Salzberg, Blacksburg, VA
- Fourth Place: Joyce Crowder, Dublin, VA

AARP thanks all contributors and patrons for their involvement, especially Peter Magolda, who organized the program.

## LLI to offer duplicate bridge class

This fall, LLI will offer a 5-week course in duplicate bridge. It meets Wednesdays 9–10:30 am in the Blacksburg Community Center.

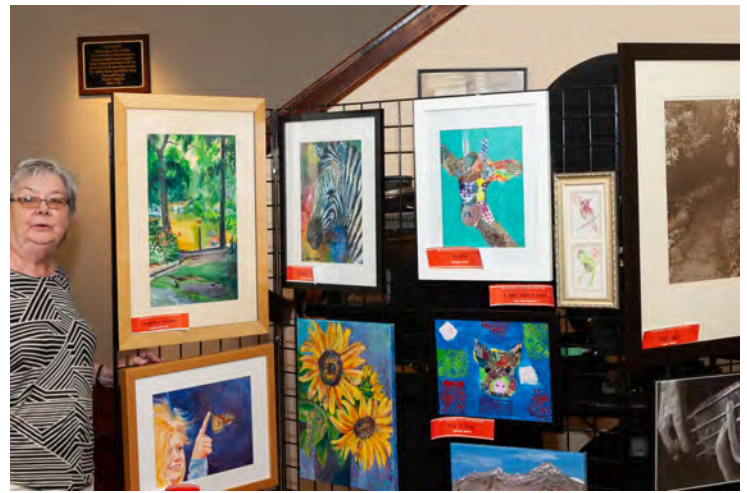
The course will start at the beginning. Topics include an introduction to bridge. You will be playing hands from the first lesson on. The course will build in complexity with bidding, play of the hand, and defense. Finally, you will learn bridge techniques to improve your game. This is a friendly, easy, no-nonsense way for you to learn this game.

These lessons are geared towards people of all skill levels. You do not need a partner to attend these classes.

Instructors are **Susan Bricken** and **Richard Rio**. Susan is a certified bridge instructor, member of the American Bridge Teachers' Association, and a member of the Blacksburg Duplicate Bridge Club. Richard is a certified bridge instructor and an American Contract Bridge League Life Master. He is the President of the Southwestern Virginia Bridge Unit.

Duplicate bridge is aerobic exercise for your brain and provides plenty of laughter for the heart. Many people would say that duplicate bridge is the greatest game ever devised. Others consider it to be more of an addiction. Over the last 20 years, the game has changed dramatically to provide more variety to the game and more competition on every hand.

You can enroll for the course by going to the LLI registration site: <http://www.cpe.vt.edu/lifelonglearning/registration.html> Or call the LLI Registrar: 540-231-5182 or 540-231-4364.



Wendy Baldwin stands beside entries for "Arts Across Generations"

## AARP goes Steppin' Out!

Steppin' Out is Blacksburg's largest street festival and AARP was well represented. With approximately 35,000 people wandering the exhibits and enjoying the food, music and crafts, it is a great time to share information about who we are and what we do. Lauren Blakemore, Director of Downtown Blacksburg Inc., led the overall effort of putting on the 38th annual Steppin' Out. "We cannot make this happen without the generous support of our many community minded sponsors and the multitude of tremendous volunteers who keep everything moving smoothly," she said.

AARP was one among more than 300 exhibitors, but with the leadership of Hugh VanLandingham, we stood out. A dozen chapter members held down the AARP table and gave away information on gerrymandering, aging in place, Medicare and the benefits of AARP membership. Jerry and Ruth Anne Niles and Ben Crawford were instrumental setting up. They were joined by Sally Anna Stapleton, Don Creamer, Terry Wildman, Peter Magolda, and Pat Hyer on Friday in the seemingly relentless rain. That didn't stop the crowds which swelled on Saturday in the glorious weather, and Isabel Berney, Steve Reisinger, Jennie and Mike Reilly and a new AARP member, Dick Skutt, plussed up the staffing and represented AARP. It took the whole team to pack and close up shop and load Jerry's SUV when it was all over. Until next year! Plan to join the fun!

Jennie had a great encounter with a woman who, after getting information on the Health and Wellness Fair, asked if AARP offered any English classes for adults so she could strengthen her English. Well, Jennie didn't know of any but she asked Pat Ballard who directed her to Molly McClintock who works with immigrant families. Molly was able to connect her with an interpreter close by. That ability to network in the community and provide real help to our neighbors makes AARP special and makes volunteering with AARP activities so rewarding.

**For Sale: Chair lift** for one flight of stairs. Excellent condition. Please contact [Karen@KarenSnyder.com](mailto:Karen@KarenSnyder.com) 301-233-6784

## Legislative Report *by Val Coluni*

**1. Another scam—"DEEP FAKE."** Its relatively new and creative. What is it? It is a video made with the help of artificial intelligence which appears genuine and usually depicts speech and/or behavior that never happened. It is a forgery easy to produce and it is being used for many devious uses (blackmail, extortion, swaying elections, exacerbate religious tensions, etc.). For us seeing should not autonomically result in believing. The line between real and fake is now being blurred. For your important decisions use multiple sources to verify the information. Today, our seniors are prime targets for such abuses, primarily financial.

**2. Gerrymandering—Virginia.** A federal court has ordered our General Assembly to revise our district maps by October 30. There are major implications for party control in the House.

## 2018 Walk to End Alzheimer's

**H**eather Gearhart wants to take a walk with you! Come September 29, there will be a great opportunity to help raise money for Alzheimer's Research. Since Heather is VP for Health and Wellness at Warm Hearth, she knows first-hand the toll that Alzheimer's Disease (AZ) takes on individuals and families.

The walk starts at Henderson Lawn (across from the Lyric Theatre). Although it is two miles, you can tailor it to suit your schedule and stamina. Teams form before the walk, but you can just join the Warm Hearth team if you like. Registration begins at 8 am; the walk begins at 9:30.

Warm Hearth has participated in every walk in the New River Valley, and Heather has been there since 1997. Warm Hearth, a partner to AARP, shares our concern for possible misfortunes of aging—and the power of volunteering. Some volunteers stay at the finish line to welcome those completing the walk.

Heather came to her interest in AZ and volunteering early. She watched her grandmother battle AZ. While a student at Radford she worked at an assisted living facility and bonded with a resident who had early onset AZ. This shaped her educational future. She completed a master's degree in long-term care administration from University of Southern California.

The memory walk began in 1989 and raised \$149,000 nationally. In 2011 the AZ Association renamed the event to the Walk to End AZ and now it is the world's largest event to raise awareness, funding and support of AZ research. But name changes did not end there; in 2011 the local walk was rebranded as the New River Valley Walk to end AZ, with a goal of raising \$81,000 for our little area. We compete well on a national level, but only because individuals get energized, make donations, and participate in high visibility events—like the walk.

In 2017 close to 500 people participated in the walk and of course, the hope is that more will walk this year. Want to be part of the Walk that beats that number? Raises more money? Elevates visibility of AZ? Come take a walk with Heather.

More information: [act.alz.org/site/TR?fr\\_id=11577&pg=entry](http://act.alz.org/site/TR?fr_id=11577&pg=entry)

Heather Gearhart: [HGearhart@warmhearth.org](mailto:HGearhart@warmhearth.org)

Governor Northam called a special legislative session to accomplish this, and meetings have begun. Our GA requested relief from the October deadline, but the courts have rejected this. So far these discussions have resulted in more party conflicts, and agreement appears to be far away. Many experts say that drawing of district maps should be taken away from politicians and done by an impartial governmental body.

**Gerrymandering—Wisconsin, North Carolina.** A recent U.S. Supreme Court review decided very little about partisan gerrymandering. Both cases have been returned to lower courts to re-review the matter and come-up with an acceptable solution.

**Gerrymandering—North Carolina.** The order to redraw districts is still being argued in the lower courts; the parties have argued with vigor that the changes cannot be made within the timelines of the November elections.

**3. New Medicare Card.** A new card is being issued to all beneficiaries to further protect your identity and reduce medical and financial fraud. Some in Virginia have already received their cards. Many care providers are already requiring the new card to be submitted. If you have not received your new card before April 2019 call 1-800-633-4227 for assistance.

**4. Senior citizen bankruptcy—surging.** It has more than tripled since 1991. The percentage of seniors in bankruptcy has never been higher. The causes are numerous, including the reductions in the social safety net and the shift away from defined pension benefits. If you know of any family/colleagues having financial difficulties, encourage them to obtain professional help immediately. The prospects for seniors who file for bankruptcy are bleak.



## 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](mailto:wendybburg@gmail.com)  
Vice President • Jerry Niles, [niles@vt.edu](mailto:niles@vt.edu)  
Secretary • Pat Hyer, [hyerp@vt.edu](mailto:hyerp@vt.edu)  
Treasurer • Pat Ballard, [pballard@vt.edu](mailto:pballard@vt.edu)  
Assistant Treasurer • Ruth Anne Niles, [rniles2@icloud.com](mailto:rniles2@icloud.com)

## Board of Directors

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


Newsletter editors: Carolyn Rude, Sandra Griffith

AARP Website: [www.blacksburgaarp.org](http://www.blacksburgaarp.org)



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

**Nonprofit  
 Organization  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Blacksburg, VA  
 Permit No. 32**

**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



## Oct. 16 Chapter Meeting

### Transportation Options in the New River Valley

Did you know that there's an award winning transit system right here in the New River Valley that not only provides bus service but also specialized transportation for elderly and people with disabilities? Did you know that our region has a Mobility Coordinator who can direct you to transportation resources for non-emergency medical transportation, personal shopping and other related trips? Did you know that the New River Valley has a service that partners with citizens and businesses to connect them with commuting options beyond the single-occupancy vehicle?

Join us on October 16 when we will have staff from Blacksburg Transit, New River Valley Agency on Aging, and the New River Valley Regional Commission to share information on the many transportation options available in the New River Valley and beyond.

**Chapter meeting drives Oct 16, Nov 20**

### Fall Food Drives

Since our Mother's Day Food Drive was such a success and our annual September Food Drive did not make it into the busy September schedule; the Community Service Committee would like to try for success again and have two Fall Food Drives. These will be held during the **October and November Monthly Chapter Meetings**.

The October Food Drive will be held October 16. We will be collecting for Micah's Backpack. Micah's Backpack is a Blacksburg sponsored program that provides healthy meals and snacks to children

*please turn to p. 3*

## President's Column *by Wendy Baldwin*

### From a golden fleece to a golden goose!

How often has this happened to you? Some silly-sounding project that the government is funding gets public attention, and the headline is that your tax dollars are being wasted. In past years, Senator Proxmire used to award "golden fleece" awards for projects that caught his eye. Well, now there is a "golden goose" award which celebrates federally funded research that initially was ridiculed, denied funding, or hard to publish ([goldengooseward.org](http://goldengooseward.org)). Why? Because these projects went on to reinvent a field, bring a lifesaving drug to market, or become an economic powerhouse. OK, full disclosure. I have been a member of the selection committee since 2011. Over those years I have read the nominations for weird-sounding projects that make you ask, "Why would anyone do that?" But, the wheels of science grind on and eventually the beauty of the work could be broadly appreciated.



Just recently, Walter Mischel died, best remembered for his marshmallow study. In that study very young children were left alone in a room, with a marshmallow on the table. They could have it, or they could wait until the researcher came back into the room (15 minutes) and then they could have two. As silly as it might seem to have researchers playing with marshmallows, it launched research on the origin of resilience and the importance of resilience that expressed itself in young children for their later accomplishments in school and work. This is not a case of how nature influences the behavior of young children; it is a story of how to identify children who are "low delayers" and help them build the skills to be "high delayers": a much more useful skill. Before the years

*please turn to p. 3*

## Upcoming Events

- Oct. 15, Award nominations due (see October issue)
- Oct. 16, Fall Food Drive (p. 1, 3)
- Oct. 20, Rotary Club Blood Screening (p. 4)
- Oct 23-24, sale of Jordi Calvera's oil paintings (p. 4)
- Nov. 1, Wine tasting, Whitebarrel Winery 5-7:30 pm (p. 1)
- Nov. 6, General Election (p. 5)
- Dec. 4, AARP Holiday Luncheon, 11:30 am, Warm Hearth Village

### Wine tasting, Whitebarrel Winery

Co sponsored with LLI  
**Thursday, Nov. 1, 5:00-7:30 pm**  
4025 Childress Road,  
Christiansburg  
Cost: \$25 (payment to Whitebarrel Winery [whitebarrel.com/product/aarp-lli-1\\_nov\\_2018/](http://whitebarrel.com/product/aarp-lli-1_nov_2018/))

Join LLI and AARP members for a fun time at Whitebarrel Winery. The winery will provide either a wine tasting or a glass of wine plus three hot appetizers and a salad. Connect with LLI classmates and AARP members and get to know them better.





Jennie Reilly led a group of about 100 volunteers to plan and implement the fair.

The 2018 Health and Wellness Fair took place at the Christiansburg Recreation Center on Wednesday, September 19. Approximately 130 exhibitors and 435 visitors participated. In addition to health information and screenings, the fair offered exhibits on community services and volunteer organizations. Visitors could learn a lot about the community as well as about their health.

Exhibitor evaluations included the following comments:

The best things about the fair: Delicious food, expansive definition of wellness, friendly helpful volunteers, well planned and organized.

Truly excellent, Best year ever, improves every year.

All exhibitors completing the evaluation want to exhibit in 2020.



Relaxing with a massage

Isabel Berney and Sandy Schlaudecker promote the Funeral Consumers Alliance



Ruth Anne Niles and Sally Anna Stapleton host the AARP table.



Peter Magolda lets Ben Crawford take his picture; with Carolyn Rude



VCOM medical students help with health screenings.

### *President's Message, continued*

when his work was heralded as important, creative, breakthrough work, he was ridiculed for studying kids and candy.

In 2002 researchers were struggling to find a way to describe and make use of an algorithm, or the set of rules, that could make sharing work across internet clients efficient and effective. Turns out that by talking with a colleague, Cray Tovey stumbled on a wildly different way to think about the problem. Why not look at a model in nature that might answer their questions? The model was right in front of them in some 1990s work on honey bees. Honey bees have an elaborate system to ensure that they are efficiently foraging for honey; the core of that work was ideally suited for the challenge of computers sharing hosting services.

Would you want your tax dollars to support studies of how rats respond to massage? Doesn't sound like a good investment, but it certainly was when Tiffany Field began her work. She overcame the reticence to provide support for it. Intensive study of the reactions of rats to stroking laid the groundwork to our understanding of how to treat premature babies. Early work on rats and their growth hit a wall when the researchers could not understand why some rats thrived. The difference was that mother rats licked their pups; if researchers mimicked that touch, the pups would thrive. The breakthrough was recognizing that analogous behaviors (no licking!) with premature humans had an amazing impact. With the massage intervention, premature babies grew faster; that saved \$10,000 per infant in neonatal care costs. Not enough details? I am compressing decades of work into a paragraph! Once research findings become mainstream it is sometimes hard to remember how that work started. Who was the researcher who first

asked questions about why rats thrived and laid the groundwork for an intervention that has impact on babies, families, and hospital costs? In this case, Saul Schanberg.

One more story? How about bone grafts. In the 1960s Jon Weber was a marine geologist at Penn State University studying the chemical composition of coral that he had collected in the South Pacific. He found a colleague (Eugene White) who was using a scanning electron microscope to study materials. He also was a scuba diver interested in coral reefs. With no particular purpose he made molds of the corals in different materials. These were pretty amazing pictures and molds since coral has pores that are uniform and interconnected. All this "curiosity driven" work seemed to just be waiting for a graduate student in 1971 to draw the connection between the coral structure and the needs in bone grafts. Well, you can't actually use coral in the body, but another researcher developed a substitute that retained the coral's microstructure. These coralline bone grafts are compatible with the body; since they do not provoke an immune response they are widely used.

There are so many of these stories, I can share just a few. But there is a unifying theme: research doesn't move in a straight line. When scientists can follow leads, engage their speculative side, and be curious, we all benefit. It is not unusual for scientists to face criticism that their work is not practical or, even worse, that it is silly. We should thank them for staying with their instincts so we can all benefit. This story wouldn't be complete without a shout out to the American Association for the Advancement of Science and Representative Jim Cooper of Tennessee who launched the Golden Goose awards and the other members of Congress who have joined in to celebrate game-changing research.

---

### **October food drive, Oct. 16**

in need of weekend nourishment. St. Michael Lutheran Church sponsors this program. Let's make this another great success for our Chapter!

#### **Food Items Needed in Individual Serving Sizes**

- 100% juice Boxes 8 oz
- Shelf Stable Milk Boxes 8 oz
- Small Fruit Cups
- Chicken or Vegetable Soup 10.75 oz
- Fruit Chews and Granola Bars
- Macaroni & Cheese Singles 2.05 oz
- Oatmeal (Boxes with individual envelopes)
- Canned Vegetables 8 oz
- Spaghettios or Ravioli 14.75 oz
- Tuna 5 oz

*The article on the food drives was contributed by Sally Anna Stapleton, [sanna418@gmail.com](mailto:sanna418@gmail.com).*

### **November food drive, Nov. 20**

For the November Food Drive on November 20, we will be collecting pet food (dog and cat) 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.

We are collecting pet food for the first time, but since the need has been identified as being so great, we thought it was time to step up to the plate. "Animal Lovers Unite." Shannon Hammons, Marking Rep for Agency On Aging will attend our November 20 meeting to kick off this drive. Let's show them how successful our Chapter can be. 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](mailto:sanna418@gmail.com)), or Wendy Baldwin, Chapter President.

#### **Items Needed**

- Bags of dry dog or cat food
- (Most Seniors have small dogs so buy accordingly)

last sale

## Jordi Calvera's Original Oil Paintings for Sale Oct. 23-24 10 am-6 pm, German Club Manor

Jordi Calvera was born in Barcelona, Spain, and emigrated to Venezuela where he met and married Elizabeth (Libby) Cure. In 1979, they moved to Blacksburg where Libby began teaching Spanish at VT and Jordi painted on a daily basis, inspired by the beautiful landscape of the area he had loved at first glance.

Jordi's subjects include barns, snow, ballet dancers, farms and fields, sunsets, nature, horses, streams, rivers, farming, flower still life, seasons, mountains, birds, bull fighters, still life, bison, berry picking, children, clown, landscapes, running, gold, guitar, sheep, cows, basket weavers, fishing, soccer, coffee break, baseball, lawn mowing, figures both stylish and surreal.

Framed or unframed, the paintings will be sold for 50 cents per square inch. Prices range from \$40 to \$600. All are signed, and the provenance of each painting was recorded in Jordi's own hand on the back of each canvas.

Jordi was a member of the Blacksburg Regional Art Association until his death in 2016. This sale is intended for AARP member Libby to honor Jordi and share his collection of over 200 pieces with those who loved him, and with art lovers in general. Libby, her friends, and members of the BRAA will be holding this event, the last sale of Jordi's paintings, in the beautiful German Club Manor in Blacksburg.



Jordi with some of his paintings

## HD Broadcasts in Christiansburg Opera, Ballet, Theatre, Classic Movies

The Regal Cinema in Christiansburg (110 New River Road) shows HD broadcasts of Metropolitan Opera, ballet, and theatre performances and classic movies.

### Metropolitan Opera (tickets \$22 senior)

Opera synopses and cast listings are available for each performance at [metopera.org/season/in-cinemas/](http://metopera.org/season/in-cinemas/) Scroll down, hover over the opera title, then click on "synopsis & cast sheets" in the upper right.

### 2018 Encore performance 6:30 pm the following Wednesday

Oct. 6	<i>Aida</i>	12:55 pm
Oct. 20	<i>Samson et Dalila</i>	12:55 pm
Oct. 27	<i>La Fanciulla del West</i>	12:55 pm
Nov. 10	<i>Marnie</i>	12:55 pm
Dec. 1	<i>The Magic Flute</i>	12:55 pm no encore
Dec. 15	<i>La Traviata</i>	12:55 pm

### 2019 Encore performance 6:30 pm the following Wednesday

Jan. 12	<i>Adriana Lecouvreur</i>	12:55 pm
Feb. 2	<i>Carmen</i>	12:55 pm
Mar. 2	<i>La Fille du Régiment</i>	12:55 pm
Mar. 30	<i>Die Walküre</i>	12:00 pm
May 11	<i>Dialogues des Carmélites</i>	12:00 pm

### Bolshoi Ballet (\$15 senior)

Nov. 11	<i>La Sylphide</i>	12:55 pm
Dec. 2	<i>Don Quixote</i>	12:55 pm
Dec. 23	<i>The Nutcracker</i>	12:55 pm
Jan. 20	<i>La Bayadere</i>	12:55 pm
Mar. 10	<i>The Sleeping Beauty</i>	12:55 pm
Apr. 7	<i>The Golden Age</i>	12:55 pm
May 19	<i>Carmen Suite/Petrushka</i>	12:55 pm

### National Theatre Live

Oct 22	<i>Frankenstein</i>	7 pm
Oct 29	<i>Frankenstein</i>	7 pm
Dec. 6	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	7 pm

### Classic Movies 2 pm, 7 pm

Oct. 14, 17	<i>Mr. Smith Goes to Washington</i>
Nov. 11, 14	<i>Die Hard</i>
Dec. 9, 12	<i>White Christmas</i>

For more information and titles, see [www.fathomevents.com](http://www.fathomevents.com).

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## Rotary Club Blood Screening

LewisGale Hospital-Montgomery Lobby

6:30-10:00 am Cost \$40

For an appointment, please pre-register online at

[www.rotary7570.org/blood](http://www.rotary7570.org/blood) or call 540-951-8988



## Legislative Report *by Val Coluni*

**1. School Safety: Armed Teachers?** The recent national tragedies in our schools have caused a few school boards/school districts to believe the only available solution to the problem is to arm a voluntary cadre of teachers and other school staff to carry their arms onto school property. One of our boards/counties (Lee) has recently made such a proposal and they had community support. Such a plan requires State approval. Our State Attorney General has already ruled that such a plan is unlawful. The District/School Board still wanted to proceed further even though many of our top law enforcement staff are also against it along with gun control advocates, the largest State Teacher's Union and others. This District has considered other actions such as more effective security building access systems, hiring more resource officers as well as hiring more health care staff. But they allege the budgets do not provide the necessary funds to do this. They also came up with another proposal that if they considered some of the armed teachers as "special conservators of the peace" that would eliminate the current objections of their plan. Some other states have done just that. But once again a state agency (Criminal Justice) rejected their application. This District/School Board is now considering other options. There is currently a committee in the Virginia House reviewing previous recommendations on this subject but none of those include arming teachers; they will make their recommendations when the Assembly resumes in January 2019.

**2. Redistricting (Gerrymandering)** The special session of the General Assembly (GA) failed to agree on a solution to the problem (racial gerrymandering) in 11 counties of eastern Virginia. The court has ruled that the GA must submit a plan to correct the deficiencies and submit it to the court no later than October 30. In the meantime, both GA parties submitted new plans, but again they could not come to an agreement. If the Governor feels that it is unlikely that the two parties will come to an agreement, he then could ask the court to come up with their suggested plan and then submit it to the GA for their approval. More than likely that plan would be approved by the GA and the Governor.

**3. Uranium Mining in Virginia?** The for and against arguments will now be heard in the U.S. Supreme Court as a result of several interested parties (Virginia Uranium, the Nuclear Energy Institute, U.S. Chamber of Commerce) charging that the mining moratorium against such mining passed by our General Assembly in 1982 is not proper. They state that it undermines the Federal Government's regulatory power, encroaches on the Atomic Energy Act, adversely affects the advancement of clean energy and threatens the U.S. nuclear industry. The economic consequences of this issue are enormous: our southern border is the nation's richest source of the mineral used in nuclear reactors (Pittsylvania County near the Town of Chatham) One estimate is that the deposits are worth \$10 billion dollars and the land is privately owned. Lower courts have not ruled against the moratorium and our current Governor supports it. We also have here the issue of states rights vs. federal rights--who should be in charge?

Environmentalists worry that mines and waste deposits are risky in land that is subject to earthquakes and floods. Uranium mining also threatens health.

## November 6 General Election

**US Senate** Tim Kaine, D (incumbent)  
Corey Stewart, R

**US House District 9** Anthony Flaccavento, D  
Morgan Griffith, R (incumbent)

**Virginia General Assembly District 8** (Greg Habeeb's seat)  
E. Carter Turner III, D  
Joseph McNamara, R

**Blacksburg Town Council** Jerry Ford (unopposed)

### Proposed constitutional amendments

1. Partial tax exemption for real property that is subject to recurrent flooding
2. Partial tax exemption for certain veterans and their surviving spouses

For the text of the amendments, see

<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/election-law/proposed-constitutional-amendment-2018/index.html>

If you need a **Voter ID**, you can get one for free at the Office of Voter Registration. In Montgomery County, go to 755 Roanoke Street, Suite 1F, Christiansburg.

### Flaccavento-Griffith Forum: Salem, Oct. 22

Salem Civic Center, 7 pm. Reserve tickets at [www.s-rcchamber.org](http://www.s-rcchamber.org). Go to Events, then Events Calendar. Tickets are free.

Morgan Griffith declined invitations by the Leagues of Women Voters in Montgomery and Washington Counties for forums in Blacksburg and Abingdon, preferring forums organized by Chambers of Commerce.



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Secretary • Pat Hyer, [hyerp@vt.edu](mailto:hyerp@vt.edu)  
Treasurer • Pat Ballard, [pballard@vt.edu](mailto:pballard@vt.edu)  
Assistant Treasurer • Ruth Anne Niles, [rniles2@icloud.com](mailto:rniles2@icloud.com)

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**Nonprofit  
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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



## 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](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!

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**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, Jeananne Dixon Bame, Hugh VanLandingham

Newsletter editors: Carolyn Rude, Sandra Griffith

Photographer: Peter Magolda

**AARP Website:** [www.blacksburgaarp.org](http://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, VA  
 Permit No. 32**

**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)

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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