



## May 21 Chapter Meeting

### Memory Masterclass

by Dr. Ila Schepisi, Director, Adult Day Services, Virginia Tech

**M**emory Masterclass is a program of Virginia Tech Adult Day Services. The program offers six-week courses on practical lifestyle strategies to support brain health. Students dive into topics of healthy diet, beneficial exercise, getting the brain engaged, managing stress, staying social, and using memory strategies. Research shows that it is never too late to invest in brain health, even if you are beginning to notice some changes.

Memory Masterclass is open to anyone over the age of 55 who is interested in taking charge of their brain health. Students have an opportunity to practically implement research-supported brain health strategies into everyday life and begin reaping the benefits of a brain healthy lifestyle.

In Brain Engage we explore strategies for living a cognitively engaging lifestyle. This six-week course will dive into the benefits of leisure activities, brain games, and mindfulness practices. Together we will try several new stimulating activities and develop a lifestyle that is brain engaging. This course is a launching pad to staying involved and keeping our brains fit.

**Register Now** call 540-231-3161 or email [vtadulthoodservices@vt.edu](mailto:vtadulthoodservices@vt.edu)

# MEMORY

## Masterclass

**Memory Masterclass**

When: Mon./Wed. 2-3:30pm  
May 20<sup>th</sup>-June 26<sup>th</sup>

Where: Wallace Hall, Virginia Tech  
Cost: Free

6-week course on practical lifestyle strategies you can implement to support brain health.

**Brain Engage**

When: Tues./Thurs. 2-3:30pm  
May 21<sup>st</sup>-June 27<sup>th</sup>

Where: Wallace Hall, Virginia Tech  
Cost: Free

6-week course exploring strategies for living a cognitively engaging lifestyle.

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

## President's Column by Jerry Niles

### How is your attitude?

**A**t our April chapter meeting, we asked those attending to rate how successfully they thought they were aging on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest score. Three people in the group chose 5 with the majority choosing 4, as they thought they were doing pretty well. (For those of you who weren't there, how would you rate yourself?) Members based their rating on such factors as participation in social networks, helping others, staying sharp by learning new things, staying fit and nourishing the spiritual side of their lives in a variety of ways. While generally happy about our status relative to these criteria, many of us believed we could do better in one or two areas.



Blacksburg Chapter AARP members, as a whole, reflect a positive attitude about successful aging and they work at it. They know that successful aging just doesn't happen and that it is not meant for spectators. One must be actively engaged. That engagement is typically founded on a positive attitude toward aging. Research supports the assertion that individuals with positive attitudes toward aging will age more successfully and tend to project longer, higher-quality lives for themselves. This might seem antithetical if you have had the opportunity to listen in on an informal group conversation of seniors. You wouldn't be surprised to hear descriptions of knee and hip replacements or treatments for other challenging maladies that aging places in our paths. However, if you listen long enough, the conversation will also include a description of exciting places a group member has visited, a heartwarming story or picture from a recent family visit, or something new they just learned. It is the latter experiences that contribute to creating a positive attitude toward successful aging.

## Upcoming Events

June 18, picnic, p. 3

### Inside this issue

Tax-Aide volunteers serve 1,294 clients in 2019, p. 2

Summer calendar, p. 4

### Volunteers needed

Interested in legislative issues that affect seniors? Please consider writing some legislative updates for this newsletter (example p. 5). Contact Jerry Niles ([niles@vt.edu](mailto:niles@vt.edu)) if you can contribute.

### Mother's Day Food Drive May 21

Last year our Mother's Day Spring Food Drive was such a success we have decided to again support mothers with babies and small children. Our local food banks tell me that these items are very rarely donated and desperately needed.

This Food Drive will take place during our May 21st chapter meeting. Please donate the following suggested items:

- Diapers—all sizes
- Pullups—all sizes
- Baby wipes
- Baby food (jars)
- Baby oatmeal
- Infant formula
- Toddler treats (Graduates)
- Individual servings of apple sauce
- Individual servings of cereal

Consider putting some of these items in your car now so that you don't forget on May 21.

Thank you for helping make our Spring Food Drive a success.

*Sally Anna Stapleton*

*please turn to p. 3*

# Tax-Aide volunteers serve 1,294 clients in 2019

by Pat Ballard, Coordinator, AARP Blacksburg Tax-Aide Program

The local AARP Tax-aide program had another good year in helping our friends and neighbors get their taxes prepared. I will give you the statistical information first and then talk about one of our outstanding volunteers. I normally do not write about a particular counselor but thought Dianne Rencsok was deserving to be recognized.

## First, the data

- 1,294 clients served
- 1,094 electronic filed tax returns
- 11 amended returns prepared
- 3 paper returns
- 210 questions and answer clients

## Diversity of our clients

- 64 average age (range from age 17 to 96)
- 54% single
- 39% married filing jointly
- 5% head of household
- 2% married filing separately

## The volunteers

Let's talk about the heart of the program, the people who volunteer. We had a total of 28 volunteers—23 counselors (3 new this year) and 5 client facilitators. Our basic positions with this program are counselors, local coordinator, site coordinator, instructor, training coordinator, technology coordinator and client facilitators.

For the past couple of years Dianne Rencsok has taken on the duties of Training Coordinator. We are required to provide training in preparation for the testing that is done to certify individuals at the appropriate level to prepare tax returns. All counselors must pass the test before they can prepare a return. The instruction and mentoring involve many, many hours of

preparation for training on Saturday mornings, beginning in the fall and continuing into January before tax season begins.

Dianne develops topics and get others to help with the instruction. She will have other counselors teach sessions and coordinates the topics with their strengths. Dianne also has Friday afternoon mentoring sessions where she is available to new counselors for tutoring and for returning counselors when help is needed on testing and workbook problems.

Dianne makes herself available to everyone and does so with a great enthusiasm and love for the Tax-Aide Program. When preparing tax returns, Dianne makes sure each client is comfortable with the process and what she will be doing for them. Volunteers like Dianne are rare and are so valuable to any all-volunteer service. We are truly fortunate to have Dianne be a member of AARP and so willing to work with this wonderful program.



Two facilitators greet clients.



Two counselors take a break.



Dianne Rencsok, Training Coordinator and Counselor, helps a client with his tax return.

*president's message, continued from p. 1*

Alan Castel, in his book, *Better with Age*, shares a survey that can help reveal your attitude toward aging. Several of the items are listed as follows as statements for you to react to. By rating each statement on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being "I don't agree at all" and 10 being "I strongly agree" you can get a sense of what your attitude is toward aging. A lower rating reflects a more positive attitude.

- The human body is like a car when it wears out.
- I expect as I get older, I will spend less time with family and friends.
- Being lonely is just something that happens when people get old.
- It is normal to be depressed when you get old.

My ratings were more toward the disagree side of the scale, 1s and 2s. However, if I had taken the same survey when I was in my 50s or early 60s I am certain I would have selected higher numbers, indicating a more negative attitude toward aging. The research is consistent in documenting younger people's negative attitudes toward aging as compared to seniors. Although, as I have experienced the unexpected joys of successful aging, I have found myself sharing the good news with younger friends and colleagues in their 50s and early 60s, who are still working diligently on their professions. I try to convey the expectations that reflect the rich life that is ahead for them. I am usually greeted with a look of uncertainty, that says, "Are you sure?" and "That sounds great, I think."

Perhaps the best way we find to communicate the joys of successful aging to our younger friends and family is through being a good model. The first time I remember thinking about someone as a model of successful aging was when I was 50. I was hiking Bald Mountain in the Adirondacks. I watched my brother-in-law navigate the path with little effort. Thinking that he was pretty old at 65, I thought, "wow, I hope I can do that when I am 65." (My wish now is I can do that hike when I am 80.) Since that time, I have observed countless individuals who I consider to be terrific models of successful aging. Our chapter is full of successful agers; thus, they are easy to find. Two of the three people who rated themselves the highest on the successful aging scale I mentioned in the opening of this column are over 80. Now that I know what I am looking for, I notice models of successful aging everywhere. We see remarkable stories on TV or read about them in books, and we see models in our everyday lives. Recently I saw someone I knew walking around the mall for exercise being escorted by his spouse. This person, well into his 90s, was a competitive runner for many years. I was impressed that he was making the effort to pursue his passion to keep moving, albeit slowly and assisted. At our last AARP Board meeting, I looked up to see a board member, Jim Montgomery, whose legs had been severely injured in an accident last year, walk into the room aided by his walker, a friend, and two new prosthetic devices. It was clear that there was no way that an unfortunate accident was going to derail Jim's successful aging process.

I have many more examples of good models of successful aging that I could share with you and I am sure that you have them too. These wonderful models of successful aging provide us with in-

spiration and defining guides that continue to help build a positive attitude about what successful aging can be. I invite you to participate in a homework assignment for May. Make a list of 5 of your favorite models of successful aging and think about why you selected each one. If possible, let them know that you see them as a model of successful aging for you and others and thank them. Finally, keep your eye out for new models of successful aging. I guarantee it will continue to enhance your positive attitude toward aging—and you have fun watching for examples.

## **AARP Picnic Tuesday, June 18 5–7:30 pm**

**sign up at [tinyurl.com/aarp-picnic-2019](http://tinyurl.com/aarp-picnic-2019)**

We will gather at the farm home of Terry Wildman and Sue Magliaro for a picnic and music provided by a local DJ. 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 18, 5:00–7:30 pm

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

**Food** chicken and pork BBQ from Due South + a special food item provided by Terry and collaborators.. 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-picnic-2019](http://tinyurl.com/aarp-picnic-2019) 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

# Summer Calendar 2019

## Music

### Summer Concerts on Henderson Lawn, Blacksburg

VT campus 6:00–7:30 pm Fridays, June 7–July 26, free

See the calendar of bands at [www.performingarts.vt.edu/saf](http://www.performingarts.vt.edu/saf)

### Music on the Lawn, Christiansburg Library 7:00–8:30 pm

Saturdays June 15, July 27, August 17, Sept. 28 free

flyers available at the Christiansburg branch

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

“Moss Pit”: Johanna Vaughan and Lo Key, Friday, May 31, The Cube, 9 pm, \$5 cover

Robert Randolph and the Family Band, Friday, June 7, 8:30 pm \$25

Remembering Doc Watson, Sunday, June 9, 7:30 pm, \$15

related events June 8 and 9: [artscenter.vt.edu/performances/remembering-doc.html](http://artscenter.vt.edu/performances/remembering-doc.html)

### Chamber Music [artscenter.vt.edu/performances/summer-2019-chamber1.html](http://artscenter.vt.edu/performances/summer-2019-chamber1.html) free

Thursday, June 20, 7:30 pm

### Market Square Jam, Downtown Blacksburg

Wednesdays June through September 8–10 pm

## Theatre

**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)

*Schoolhouse Rock Live!*, June 15, 16, 17, 2019, 2:00 pm and 4:00 pm

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

### Summer Classic Matinee Series

Saturdays and Wednesdays 3:00 pm, free

June 8, 12 *Harold and Maude*

July 6, 10 *Night at the Opera*

August 10, 14 *Guys & Dolls*

Saturday, July 13 *Footloose* 35 anniversary screening, 7:00 pm regular admission charge; followed by a *Footloose* dance fest

**Movies **Regal New River Valley****, 110 New River Road, Christiansburg [www.fathomevents.com](http://www.fathomevents.com) check times

### Classic Movies \$12.50

May 19, 21, 22 *Steel Magnolias* 4 pm Sunday, 7 pm Tues, Wed

June 16, 18 *Field of Dreams* 1 pm Sunday, 2, 4 pm Tues

June 23, 25 *Forrest Gump* 3 pm Sunday, 7 pm Tues

July 14, 17 *Easy Rider* 4 pm Sunday, 4, 7 pm Wed

July 21, 24 *Glory* 1 pm Sunday, 4, 7 pm Wed

Aug 11, 14 *Hello, Dolly!* 1 pm Sunday, 12, 7 pm Wed

Sept 1, 4 *Lawrence of Arabia* 1 pm Sunday, 12, 6 pm Wed

## Special Events: Blacksburg

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

**Summer Solstice Festival** Saturday, June 15 1–11 pm

**Independence Day Celebration** Monday, July 4 Parade 2–3 and fireworks 9:30

**Art at the Market** Saturday, July 20 9 am–2 pm

**Steppin' Out Street Festival** Friday and Saturday August 2 and 3, 10 am–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 24

**Senior Trips** (Wohlfahrt Haus Theater, more)

[va-christiansburg2.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=797](http://va-christiansburg2.civicplus.com/index.aspx?NID=797)

**Kiwanis Wilderness Trail Festival**, Saturday, September 21, 9 am–4 pm, Downtown Christiansburg. 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 12:00–6:00 pm; Saturdays, 8:00 am–2:00 pm

**Christiansburg**, Hickok Street, May–October, Thursdays 3:00–7:00 pm

## New River Valley Garden Tour 2019

Saturday, July 6, 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, Opera

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

**Bolshoi Ballet:** May 19 *Carmen Suite/Perushka* 12:55 pm \$18

**NT Live:** June 3 *The Audience* (Helen Mirren) 7 pm \$18

July 8 *Hamlet* (Benedict Cumberbatch) 7 pm \$18

**Opera:** June 4 *Pavarotti* screening 7 pm, \$12.50

June 19 *Roméo et Juliette* (encore)

## Legislative Report by Val Coluni



**1. Legislation, I-81: Success!** Funding for repairs, improvements, safety redesign, and adjustments for future budgets to handle the needs of our highways and transportation assets. These bills and reforms are *major* accomplishments due to the effective bipartisanship by the governor and the state legislators and their staffs. We should enthusiastically applaud their efforts. Here are a few of the provisions: An I-81 committee is established to monitor the conditions of these assets; a 2.1% gas tax will be levied on certain regional high volume sections of I-81 (all of this tax will be deposited in a new I-81 improvement fund); effective July 1, 2021, an additional 2.3% tax on diesel fuels. In some cases, some of these fees would not apply to farm vehicles. In my report last month, I listed

three states who were considering gas tax increases from 4 cents per gallon to 45 cents per gallon—here are a few more states who are also considering such tax increases: Arizona, Hawaii, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, Ohio, Vermont. If you need more information on these subjects, request VA House Bill #2718 and/or VA Senate Bill #1716 from your state official.

**2. Legislation, Lowering the high costs of drug prices.** A high degree of effort continues but some historical practices and some legislators are making the job much more difficult. For example a practice of “spread pricing” where benefit managers can charge one amount to health plans and then turn around and charge a higher price to others to increase profits; also some legislators are advising some not to share critical information with those conducting studies about business practices in their company. Some Federal bills on reduced prices has been approved at the sub-committee level with full review at the federal level scheduled for May 2019.

**3. Scams, Hoaxes, Disinformation.** To write this column, I always use multiple sources to cross check my reported information. One subject that upsets me greatly is the continued abuse of seniors. The methods seem to increase from year to year. Kiplinger Magazine recently published (April 2019, p. 9) a list of Red Flags of Fraud, which included some frauds I have not considered: withdrawals and/or closing accounts without regard to penalties and frequently appearing at the bank with new/unknown friends. Frequently question what you encounter!!

### Volunteers Needed

#### Steppin' Out AARP booth April 2, 3

AARP will host a booth at the Steppin' Out festival in Blacksburg. If you could help with a 2-hour shift, please contact Sally Anna Stapleton, sanna418@gmail.com.

At the booth, volunteers will share information about AARP but also about issues we support, such as nonpartisan redistricting.

## LLI plans a rich selection of courses and events for fall 2019

The program committee for the Lifelong Learning Institute is completing plans for the fall offerings of courses and events. Catalogs will be distributed in August.

Opportunities abound. Some familiar and popular courses will return—“Getting your ducks in a row,” memoir writing, watercolor painting, and wine appreciation.

But also look for courses on the Jamestown Colony as America's “big bang” experience; the U.S. and the Arab World; Columbine—background, the incident, media response, reactions and recovery; *The Great Gatsby* in print and film; music theory; Appalachian music; the literature of food; justice—what is the right thing to do?

For skills development, you might get certified in CPR, try a course on learning to be happy, get some tips in talking across political divides, or practice conversational Italian.

In the spring, LLI enrolled 500+ students, who typically raved about the quality of instruction. The fall promises to offer the same rich variety of experiences for eager lifelong learners.



### Blacksburg Chapter #2613

Chapter meetings are the third Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center, Patrick Henry Drive at 11:30 am. There are no meetings in July or August. Board meetings are the first Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center at 10:00 am.

#### Chapter Officers 2019

President • Jerry Niles, niles@vt.edu  
Vice President • Don Creamer, dgc2@vt.edu  
Secretary • Pat Hyer, hyerp@vt.edu  
Treasurer • Pat Ballard, pballard@vt.edu  
Assistant Treasurer • Ruth Anne Niles, rniles2@icloud.com

#### Board of Directors

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


Newsletter editors: Carolyn Rude, Sandra Griffith

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



Blacksburg Chapter #2613  
 Jerry Niles, President  
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**Nonprofit  
 Organization  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 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)

New \_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_ 90+ years old (free) \_\_\_

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

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

Please make your check payable to "Blacksburg AARP Chapter #2613."  
 Mail the check and this form to: .

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