



Blacksburg
Chapter
Newsletter

September 2011
Vol. 28, No. 7

<http://civic.bev.net/aarp>

September 20 Chapter Meeting Candidate Forum: Candidates for Montgomery County Board of Supervisors and School Board

The First AARP Chapter Meeting for Fall 2011 will feature comments & questions for candidates for the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors & the School Board from Districts E, F & G--those districts that include many Blacksburg citizens. The Forum will include opening statements by the candidates followed by written questions from those present at the meeting, and will end with closing statements by each candidate. All candidates have been invited to arrive early to enjoy our Brown Bag Lunch starting at 11:30 a.m., and they have been invited to stay after the meeting for any further questions. Our meeting will be at the Blacksburg Community Center on Patrick Henry Drive. All meetings are free and open to the public.

Mark Your Calendar for Future Fall Chapter Meetings

The October 18 Chapter meeting will feature a **Forum of Candidates for Blacksburg Town Council**.

The November 15 meeting will feature the **Montgomery County Christmas Store**.

In December, of course, we have our annual **Holiday Dinner**. This year it will be held at Custom Catering.

Have you ever seen a sculpture made of canned food from a food drive?

On September 24, one of our community partners, Virginia Tech Center for Student Engagement and Community Partnerships, will be holding a Can Sculpture Contest at Squires Hall on the Virginia Tech campus. The event takes place between 1:30 and 5:30 p.m.

Come and watch the sculptures grow, and bring can goods to help with the sculpture as you support the Virginia Tech Students in this part of the food drive. It will be amazingly fun to watch the sculptures!

Together we can impact the lives of many in our communities.

Be sure to check out our website for the latest volunteer opportunities, and please take time to volunteer (www.createthegood.org).

Sally Anna Stapleton
Create The Good Organizer

AARP Blacksburg Chapter #2613

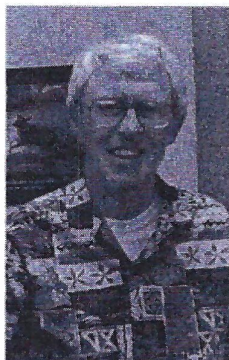
Chapter meetings are the third Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center, Patrick Henry Drive at 11:30 a.m. There are no meetings in July or August. Board meetings are the first Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center at 10:00 a.m.

PO Box 10082

Blacksburg, VA 24062

<http://civic.bev.net/aarp/>

President's Column



Why We Need AARP

As I listened to the speakers' presentations and answers to questions at the chapter forum on Social Security August 30th, it struck me what a complex issue Social Security is. It caused me

to reflect on how difficult it would be for each of us, individually, to understand and talk in an intelligent manner to our elected representatives on this important topic. Fortunately, we have experts employed by AARP that can help us with the issues. National AARP has the collective resources of 40 million members that can be used to hire true experts on Social Security or any other significant issue important to those of us 50 years old or older. For example, Medicare is even more complex than Social Security.

After accurate information has been shared about Social Security, the next step is to determine what stand to take on the issue. National AARP will be surveying its membership to determine this direction. The step after determination of the position on the topic will be to inform and work with the real decision makers on Social Security – the members of Congress. At the right time AARP will ask the membership to express our opinions to both U. S. Senators and our Congressman. Let's make certain we do just that and use the information AARP shares with us to make an intelligent choice on a complex subject and share that choice in a timely manner.

The official website to which you can go for additional information on Social Security is www.socialsecurity.gov.

A second area where it is an advantage to have AARP is community service. The current example (co-sponsored with Ruritan)

is the *Drive to End Hunger*. As the Drive notes "Millions of people have the same thing for dinner every night: nothing." Food collections were held at the Blacksburg Sports Club September 7 and at Kroger, Wal-Mart, and the Ruritan Fish Fry September 9 and 10. In addition, if you missed any of those opportunities to contribute non-perishable food, you will have another opportunity on September 20th for the next chapter meeting at the Blacksburg Community Center. Contributions in the quantity needed cannot be accomplished by an individual, but can be accomplished by a group the size of AARP. In addition, it fits the motto of AARP "to serve and not be served."

John Hillison

AARP Driver Safety Course to be offered October 13 & 14 Blacksburg Community Center

IF YOU ARE OVER 50 AND DRIVE A CAR it's now time to pre-register for the AARP Driver Safety Course being offered at Blacksburg Community Center, 725 Patrick Henry Drive. Enrollment is limited so sign up soon.

THE COURSE will be held on Thursday, October 13 and Friday, July 14 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. both days. To pre-register for the course, call Curt Finch at 552-8179.

COURSE FEE is \$12.00 for AARP members and \$14.00 for non-members, payable by cash or check to "AARP" on the first day of the course.

SPONSORED BY the Blacksburg Community Center and the Blacksburg AARP Chapter, this 8 hour classroom course assists drivers age 50 and over in refining current driver skills and developing defensive driving techniques. The course does not include any tests. Course attendees may qualify for multiyear discounts to their auto insurance premiums.

Fall Reminders for Seniors

Tina King, Executive Director
New River Valley Agency on Aging

As summer flees away we start to see classic reminders that fall is coming....crisp air, beautiful leaf colors, and football!

Speaking of "reminders"...this month's article focuses on a few other reminders. The first is the Annual Enrollment Period for Part D Medicare Prescription Drug Plans running from October 15, 2011 through December 7, 2011. This comes a month earlier than previous years. It is important to remember as this is the only time of year that Medicare beneficiaries can make changes unless certain other criteria are met. All plan changes made during the Annual Enrollment period become effective January 1, 2012.

During the Annual Enrollment Period, the Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program Coordinator, and volunteers with the Agency on Aging work with Medicare beneficiaries to research plans, schedule appointments, and enroll as requested. Medicare beneficiaries choose from the best suited plan for them based on their personal prescription profile and other considerations. Previous participants will receive mailers beginning in September to start the enrollment process and anyone can call the Agency on Aging (980-7720) to schedule a counseling appointment. Sessions will be held throughout the New River Valley. All VICAP staff and volunteers are trained and certified to provide insurance counseling and this is a free service to all Medicare beneficiaries regardless of income.

Another reminder....the Agency on Aging's annual "Caring Connections" caregiver conference will be held on Saturday, October 15, 2011 at Edwards Hall located on the New River Community College campus. The conference features Teepa Snow, a highly engaging and nationally recognized presenter specializing in dementia care. This full day conference includes presentations and exhibitors that will cover many aspects of

caregiving. In addition to being informative, the conference is enjoyable and fun, as refreshments, lunch, door prizes and giveaways are included! Plan to join us. There is no cost to attend, but registration is required. For more information or to register, contact the Agency at 980-7720. Call soon, as the registration deadline is September 30, 2011.

For additional information on services, programs, and presentations that are geared to serve older adults and caregivers, call the New River Valley Agency on Aging at (540) 980-7720 or 1-866-260-4417. As an Aging and Disability Resource Connection, we have information and assistance specialist available to answer questions and provide assistance as needed.

AARP United Runners at Summer Stoltice



Blacksburg Chapter Recognized for Anniversary

The Blacksburg Chapter of AARP has received a letter of congratulations on the occasion of its 35th anniversary. The letter was signed by W. Lee Hammond, president, and Addison Barry Rand, chief executive officer for National AARP. This is a rare achievement among AARP chapters and one to be proud of. Our chapter (#26130 was chartered on June 29, 1967.

Free Clinic Tours Available

Tours are available to see the facilities and hear an overview of services of the Free Clinic of the New River Valley. Located at 215 Roanoke Street in Christiansburg and 219 Buchanan Street in Pearisburg, this agency performs a valuable service to uninsured citizens of the area. Michele Brauns, Executive Director, has announced the following dates and times for the 1-hour tour:

Thursday, 9/22 at 4-5 pm;
Wednesday, 10/5 at 8-9 am;
Thursday 10/6 at 5-6 pm (Pearisburg);
Thursday, 10/13 at 4-5 pm (Pearisburg);
Tuesday, 10/18 at 12-1 pm;
Thursday, 10/27 at 4-5 pm;
Wednesday, 11/2 at 8-9 am;
Wednesday, 11/9 at 4-5 pm.

For a reservation, call 381-0820. For more information, contact Don Creamer at dgc2@vt.edu or 230-8010.

Blacksburg AARP Chapter Hosts Social Security Forum

A crowd of 175 concerned senior citizens attended a public forum on Social Security hosted by the Blacksburg AARP Chapter at Warm Hearth Village. Two Social Security experts, Allen Barrow Public Affairs Specialist for the Social Security Administration-Roanoke Office and Bill Kallio AARP Virginia State Director, shared insights on the current Social Security program and its future. Their presentations were followed by a question and answer period.



Among points emphasized by the speakers concerning Social Security (SS) were:

- SS is not in crisis
- SS is an earned benefit
- SS does not contribute to the Federal deficit
- 67% of SS beneficiaries are retired, others are disabled and survivors
- 93% of workers are covered under SS
- Average monthly benefit for a retired worker is \$1,175
- For 23% of older Americans SS makes up 90% of income
- SS Trust Fund must be invested in U. S. Treasury Bonds
- Trust Funds are backed by the full faith and credit of the U. S. Government
- Without changes by 2025 benefit expenditures will exceed income
- Without changes by 2037 Trust Fund assets will be exhausted and only tax revenue will be used for benefits

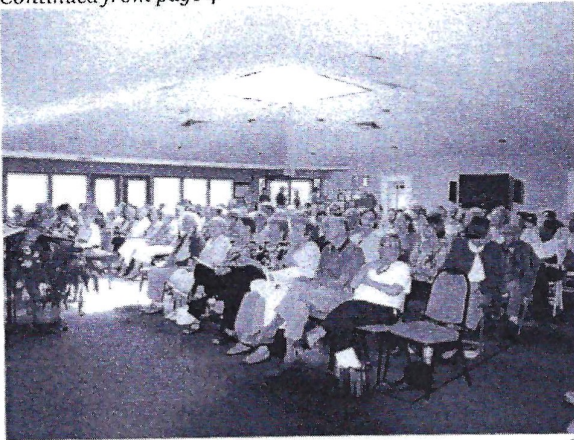
Future Solvency Options

- Increase level of earnings subject to payroll tax
- Increase payroll tax
- Include newly hired state and local government workers
- Diversify investments of assets in Trust Fund
- Increase retirement age
- Decrease benefits for higher earners
- Increase number of years in benefit calculation formula
- Change how past earnings are adjusted in benefit calculation
- Change basis for annual cost of living allowance (COLA)

It was stated that National AARP has not taken on specific ways to modify Social Security, but will soon be surveying membership to determine actions to recommend to Congress, which will have to approve of any future changes.

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4



The successful forum was co-sponsored by the Blacksburg Chapter AARP, AARP Virginia, Warm Hearth Village, and Ruritan.

The photos from the Social Security Forum were taken by Robert Abraham. If you want to see more, he took over thirty photos! Thanks for your great work!

Blacksburg AARP Chapter Membership Report September 2011*

Member Profile:

Category	Count
AARP 2012 Members	14
AARP 2011 Members	262
LifeTime Members	44
Life Members	9
Comp Members	17
Honorary Members	4
Total Membership	350

New Members: Pete & Christine Bain

Newsletters for June 2011: N=237

Membership Committee:

Jim Wightman (Chair), Sue Farrar, Tom Alston

*Report prepared September 3, 2011

“We do not quit playing because we grow old; we grow old because we quit playing.”

Oliver Wendell Holmes (modified)

Blacksburg AARP Chapter # 2613 June through August 2011 Financial Report

Balance at end of May 2011 \$2,095.77

Credits

06/20 Membership Dues	\$ 25.00
06/21 Picnic Auction	285.00
06/23 Interest	.05
06/27 Membership Dues	12.50
07/20 Membership Dues	12.50
07/22 Interest	.05
08/29 Interest	.06
08/29 Membership Dues	62.50
TOTAL	\$ 150.20

Debits

06/20 Kopy Korner (newsletter)	\$ 125.48
06/22 Brian Allen (picnic supplies)	36.29
06/29 Brian Allen (picnic supplies)	10.85
07/20 Warm Hearth (donation)	100.00
08/05 Funeral Alliance (50% PO Box)	48.00
08/22 John Hillison (postage)	35.20
TOTAL	\$ 355.82

Balance end of August 2011 \$2,137.61

Balance in reserve account \$2,677.91

AARP Chapter 2613

September 6, 2011

Board Minutes

Call to order--President John Hillison called the meeting to order at 10:05.

Officers Present: President John Hillison, Vice President Don Creamer, Secretary Virgil Cook, Treasurer Brian Allen

Board Members: Tom Alston, Sue Farrar, Jim Montgomery

Non-board-member committee chairs and appointees: Sandy Burch, R. B. "Ben" Crawford, Curtis Finch, Margaret Kates, Carl McDaniels, Edd Sewell, Sally Anna Stapleton, Jim Wightman, Juanita Wightman

Approval of Minutes--Don Creamer moved that the minutes for the June meeting be approved. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report--Brian Allen. The report covered June through August. Balance at the end of May, \$2,095.77; balance at the end of August, \$2,137.61; balance in the reserve account, \$2,677.91. We made a \$100 donation to Warm Hearth for Founder's Day. We made more money from the auction than in past years, \$285. Sue

Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5

Farrar move that the report be received. The motion passed.

Officer's Report—John Hillison. The forum on Social Security at Warm Hearth was quite successful. Estimates of the number of attendees ranged from 172 to 175. Seventy-one of the attendees were national AARP members but not members of our chapter. John suggested sending copies of the September newsletter to these people.

Membership—Tom Alston. We have had two new members since the last report. Our total membership is 350.

Legislation—Ben Crawford. The message at the Social Security forum at Warm Hearth was that Social Security and Medicare must be protected. Blaming SOCIAL SECURITY for financial problems is unfounded. If nothing is done, the fund should be solvent until the 2030s. Attendees were invited to sign a petition urging that Social Security be protected. More than 50 people signed the petition.

Senator Warner sent a key person on his staff to the program. Neither of our state delegates were there. There were no newspaper reporters at the forum. Warner's aide also had a booth.

Ben distributed a list of questions that AARP would like to ask General Assembly members. The list gives AARP positions on each item.

Programs—Carl McDaniels. September 20—Candidates Forum for Montgomery County Board of Supervisors— District E-F-& G Invited. Mary Biggs is running unopposed. We may have only three candidates. Town Council members will be present for the October forum. The board agreed that we should invite School Board candidates to the September 20, chapter meeting. The Montgomery County Christmas Store will present the program in November.

Newsletter—Edd Sewell. In the last newsletter, Edd tried to emphasize the SOCIAL SECURITY forum and the food drive.

Chapter Awards—Nita Wightman. Awards will be presented at the Christmas luncheon.

Caring—Margaret Kates. Margaret thanked members for notifying her of people who need cards.

Driver's ED—Curt Finch. Thirteen people participated in a course in New Castle. There will be a course on October 12-13. Five people have already signed up, which is very good for so early

in the sign-up period. State law mandates a discount on insurance for three years.

History—Doris Abraham. There was an article about Joanne Underwood in the June Senior News as well as an article on Jim Wightman's participation in a triathlon.

Hospitality—John Hillison observed that we need help with coffee at chapter meetings and with the Christmas lunch.

Community Service and Create the Good—Sally Anna Stapleton. There will be food drives on Friday and Saturday at both Blacksburg Kroger stores and at the Ruritan fish fry. We need volunteers for the Kroger stations to work in two-hour slots. Some of the canned foods will go to VT Engage. No glass containers are permitted for the food pantry. They break too easily.

Nominating Committee—Sue Farrar. The committee will put forth nominations for the three officers and three board members. The formal nominations are made at the October meeting and voted on at the November meeting.

Liaison—Ben Crawford. Ben emphasized the collection of food donations at the Ruritan Fish Fry. The truck from the Food Pantry will be there beginning around 2:00.

Ben reiterated AARP's policy on elections. AARP does not endorse candidate of either party, and it does not contribute to campaigns. It does, however, encourage people to vote, it does take stands on particular issues such as Social Security, and it publishes voter-education materials. Chapters can invite candidates to speak, but they must treat all candidates equally and fairly. Members should not help candidates if such help might be construed as working for AARP.

New Business

John Hillison said that he would like to donate to each organization that gives programs for us. He recommended \$100 to each partner and \$600 to the Community Center for a total of \$1300. Don Creamer move that the chapter donate \$1300 to the seven partners and the Community Center. The motion passed.

The picnic went well. We made \$285 on auction.

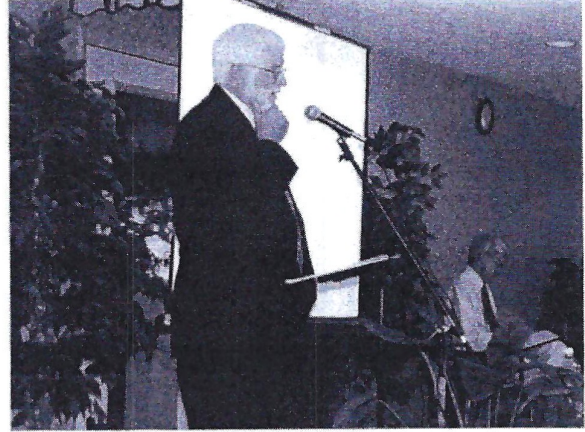
Free Clinic Tours—Don Creamer reported that the Free Clinic is offering tours as a means of calling attention to its work. He recommended promoting the tours.

Adjournment—The meeting was adjourned at 11:35.

Respectfully submitted
Virgil A. Cook, Secretary



Another shot of the audience at the Social Security Forum.



Allen Barrow Public Affairs Specialist for the Social Security Administration-Roanoke Office.

2011 Officers, Board Members, and Committee Chairs

Officers

President	John Hillison	johnhillison@comcast.net
Vice President	Don Creamer	dgc2@vt.edu
Secretary	Virgil Cook	vcook@vt.edu
Treasurer	Brian Allen	mballen@prodigy.net

Board of Directors

Class of 2011 -- Don Creamer, dgc2@vt.edu; John Hillison, johnhillison@comcast.net; Sue Farrar, suefarrar@verizon.net

Class of 2012 -- Mary Ann Hinshelwood, mah@mahinshelwood.com, June Schmidt, schmidtj@vt.edu

Class of 2013 -- Tom Alston, tpalston@gmail.com; Jim Montgomery, jhmontgome@verizon.net; Juanita Wightman, Wightman@vt.edu

Committee Chairs and Appointees

AARP of Virginia	Ben Crawford	ben.crawford@vt.edu
AARP Driver Safety Course	Curt Finch	crfinch@vt.edu
Assoc. Treasurer	Judy Sewell	judysewell@verizon.net
Caring	Margaret Kates	
Chaplain	Sandy Birch	birch@vt.edu
Chapter Awards	Juanita Wightman	wightman@vt.edu
Financial Planning	Dale Oliver	jdoliver@vt.edu
Health Care	Larry Alexander	aalexand@radford.edu
History	Doris Abraham	dsta118e@verizon.net
Hospitality	JoAnn Underwood	
Legislative	Ben Crawford,	ben.crawford@vt.edu
Membership	Jim Wightman,	wightman@vt.edu
News Editor	Edd Sewell,	eddsewell@gmail.com
Nominating Committee	Class of 2011	
Program	Carl McDaniels	cmcd@vt.edu
Public Relations	Nancy Eiss	nsjeiss@verizon.net
Create the Good	Sally Anna Stapleton	zulla1947@verizon.net
Community Service	Sally Anna Stapleton	zulla1947@verizon.net
VT Retirees Association	Margaret Kate	

"I cannot endure to waste anything as precious as autumn sunshine by staying in the house. So I spend almost all the daylight hours in the open air. Nathaniel Hawthorne

John Hillison, President
AARP Chapter #2613
P.O. Box 10082
Blacksburg, VA 24062

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

AARP Chapter #2613 Member Application

Name: _____

Annual (Calendar Year) Dues: \$12.50

Spouse/Partner _____

(includes spouse)*

Address _____

New ___ Renewal ___

City _____

90+ years old (no dues) ___

State _____ Zip _____

Today's Date: _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Make checks to AARP Blacksburg Chapter #2613

And mail to

P.O.Box 10082,

Blacksburg, VA 24062

Prefer to receive newsletters: (check one)

Mail ___ Email ___

***Local Chapter membership requires membership in National AARP. For more information, call 1-888-287-2277 or mail national dues to AARP, 601 E Street, NW, Washington DC 20049.**