

Kennith H. Martin, President
AARP Chapter #2613
516 College View Drive
Blacksburg, VA 24060

AARP Chapter Meeting
Tuesday, April 15, 1997
at Blacksburg Community Center
11:30 AM (Bring your own lunch)

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A.A.R.P.

NEWSLETTER

April 4, 1997

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Chapter 2613

Spotlight on Ways and Means Committee Chair, Dale Oliver

The Ways and Means Committee consider ways to provide financial means to promote and conduct AARP activities that require funding beyond revenue available from dues. The members of AARP have been most generous in contributing needed funds to purchase an excellent speaker system for the Senior Center, an overhead projector and screen, and matching funds to purchase exercise mats used at the center.

An addition to the Senior Center will be constructed this spring and summer. The Ways and Means Committee is planning to conduct a yard sale in August to raise funds which will be used to provide desirable items for the new building that otherwise would not be provided.

Each member of AARP is encouraged to begin now to identify items to be donated for the yard sale. Items that usually are in demand at yard sales include furniture (most any kind), kitchen items, potted plants, electric fans, radios, small appliances, sports items and fishing gear.

Please volunteer to help conduct the yard sale. A consultant has already been chosen. Individuals are needed to display, price, and receive money for the items. Call Dale Oliver at 552-1951 and let him know you appreciate what he is doing and will help him and the committee with this event.

VIRGINIA AARP DISTRICT TWO LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Dr. Dan Fleming has done a fantastic job in summarizing the activities of the Virginia General Assembly. His report is included with this newsletter. You will be much better informed about the issues affecting senior citizens if you will take time to carefully read Dan's report.

MEMBERSHIP LIST TO BE MAILED WITH MAY, 1997 NEWSLETTER

Bob Blanton, our membership chair, reported to the Board that we have 193 members who have paid their 1997 dues. The Telephone Committee and the Blantons will be calling individuals who were members in 1996 that have not paid the dues for 1997 to determine if they wish to continue their membership. Once this task is completed, Dr. George Gray will prepare our 1997 membership roster which we plan to mail to you with the May 1997 newsletter.

AARP PICNIC AND AUCTION JUNE 17, 1997

One of our more enjoyable events each year is the annual picnic which is held at the Nellie's Cave Park. Details will be described in the June newsletter, but the Ways and Means Committee would like for the membership to be thinking about donating saleable goods (except books and clothing) that can be auctioned to raise money for our projects and provide a fun activity at the picnic. Take time to go through the kitchen cabinets, closets, attic and garage and sort out the things you no longer use, then call Dale Oliver at 552-1951. His committee will arrange for someone to pick up your items if you can't bring them to the picnic.

APRIL 15, 1997

The April meeting will be held at the Blacksburg Community Center at 11:30 AM. Dr. Jody Hersey, Director of the New River Valley District Health Department will present an overview of the services available from this agency. He will be introduced by Mrs. Ann Frame.

disabled populations in Virginia are one of the most important public policy issues facing the Commonwealth.

TAX BENEFITS:

HB 1961 permits localities to increase the maximum amount of net combined financial worth that a locality may allow an owner of property to have in order to qualify for a property tax exemption for the elderly and handicapped from \$75,000 to \$100,000. The net combined financial worth exclude the value of the dwelling and one acre of land.

HB 1900 allows an individual taxpayer receiving an income tax refund to designate any part of the refund to a special fund to be used by the Department for the Aging for the enhancement of transportation services for the elderly and disabled.

HB 1519 was supported by AARP and did not pass. It was to give a \$500 tax credit to taxpayers with an adjusted gross income between \$5,000 and \$50,000 who provide unreimbursed care to a physically or mentally impaired relative who required assistance with two or more activities of daily living during more than half the year.

CONSUMER PROTECTION:

HB 2188 delays the effective date for any change in the consumer utility tax provided in this section from 60 days to 120 days.

HB 2335 requires any nonprofit entity (tax-exempt hospitals, HMOs, or health service plans) to provide the Attorney General with written notice of an intent to dispose of assets at least 60 days before such action so that the Attorney General may exercise his common law and statutory authority over the transaction.

SJ 359 continues the study by the Joint subcommittee examining the restructuring of the electric utility industry.

GUARDIANSHIP:

SB 1038 made substantial revisions in the state code to protect the rights of individuals that are controlled by guardianships and conservatorships.

SUPPORT ITEMS:

A number of other bills were passed concerning the environment, pension security, campaign fund raising activities, crime protection, and education.

HOT NEW ISSUE OF THE YEAR! The March meeting of the State Legislative Committee found considerable attention devoted to the topic of restructuring the electric utility industry. Several states including California, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island have already passed laws opening markets to competition and some forty other states including Virginia are considering similar measures. Congress is also considering national legislation in this area. AARP leaders are following these developments quite closely as deregulation may result in substantial consequences for the public and the vote is still out as to whether these changes will be beneficial or harmful to the individual consumer. Legislative chairs should be on the outlook for news coverage on this important subject affecting us all..

NEW ASSIGNMENT: Senator John Warner recently was assigned to the Senate Labor Subcommittee on the Aging.

VIRGINIA AARP DISTRICT TWO LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Volume 1 Issue 2

April, 1997

A BUSY TIME FOR THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY!

The 1997 General Assembly was a busy place as lawmakers had to consider 2,470 bills and resolutions in this year's short session. The bulk of the work in reviewing and following this large amount of legislation fell to the Capital City Task Force (CCTF) composed of AARP members living in the Richmond area. The CCTF works with and at the direction of the State Legislative Committee. The CCTF members had to screen all legislation for those items of particular interest to AARP and then members were assigned specific areas to cover. One or more members were at the General Assembly each day and they also covered night and weekend committees and sub-committees as appropriate. Shown below are some key items of particular interest to older Virginians that passed the General Assembly and were approved by Governor Allen.

HEALTH CARE:

HB 2062 requires members of health maintenance organizations (HMOs) to provide members with access to a system of 24-hour emergency services.

HB 2736 prohibits the substitution or interchange of any narrow therapeutic index drug without the written and signed informed consent of the patient's physician.

HB 2870 prohibits the referral of a HMO enrollee who is a resident of a continuing care facility and whose agreement with such facility provides for health care services to any nursing home other than that within the continuing care facility assuming several conditions are met.

HB 2785 requires the State Health Commissioner to examine the quality of health care services provided by HMOs; to consult with HMOs in the establishment of their complaint systems and to review complaint reports; and requires that insurance policies contain a statement referencing grievance procedures.

HB 2786 requires that essential and standard health benefit plans include coverage for 365 days of inpatient hospitalization.

SJ 298 directs the Joint Commission on Health Care, in cooperation with the Department of Health, the Department of Medical Assistance Services, and other public and private entities, to study various issues regarding the provision of health care to Virginia's indigent and uninsured populations.

SJ 355 establishes a subcommittee to study the health status and conditions of African-Americans in Virginia and identify the diseases and health conditions prevalent among such persons and to determine the extent to which health promotion activities are directed to this population.

LONG-TERM CARE:

SJ 316 establishes a task force within the Joint Commission on Health Care to address outstanding long-term care and aging issues. The Joint Resolution calls for this very important study because over the next decade the Commonwealth's elderly population is expected to increase four times as rapidly as the general population. As a result, the provision and financing of long-term care services for the elderly and chronically