



BLACKSBURG NEWS

Volume 18, Issue 5

Chapter # 2613

May 2001

Have you paid your 2001 dues???

2001 BLACKSBURG AARP CHAPTER DUES \$6.00

Please renew your membership.

The \$6 membership dues is for an individual, not for a couple.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Darrell Clowes

It's a gorgeous day outside, but I sit here inside at the computer longing to be outside. So much changes but so much remains the same. I lived most of my adult life to the rhythm of the academic year, and now I continue that pattern by spending a lovely spring day inside writing. But it really is different. I and we are older now and less driven by the daily demands of our job/work responsibilities. We have time to "smell the flowers". Spring has surrounded me with sights and smells that I savor now more than in my younger years. I find lines from our rich written tradition resonating in my mind as my senses engage the spring. I walk to the mailbox and Whitman's "when lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd" and its' "with every leaf a miracle..." comes to mind with its blend of spring's beauty and life's sadness. The daffodils wave as I pass and Wordsworth's lines reflect the wonder we share. I can still remember the first stanza-

I wondered lonely as a cloud
that floats on high over vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
a host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

I pass the birch tree by and Frost's wonderful images from his New England boyhood mingle with mine. I too look back on my life and can say "One could be worse than be a swinger of birches". You must have your own special associations and memories; I hope they are as pleasing and rewarding to you as mine are to me.

In this hope I take the liberty of sharing some of mine. This is a special time; we are fortunate to be alive and to share another spring.

Part of this sharing is our interacting with others. This time of nature's renewal suggests new opportunities; the rhythm of the academic year suggests to me an ending but also the coming of another beginning. Fittingly our organization's pulse reflects these rhythms also. We are approaching our last two meetings before the summer break, but we know the fall with its activities and possibilities lies before us. It is a natural rhythm, it is a nice feeling. Our activities for this spring are coming to (ugh) flower--I do love to beat a metaphor to death. Frank Lau has orchestrated a visit to the D-day Memorial this June and that is very fitting for people with our memories of that time. Ben Crawford is orchestrating an AARP presence at the Galax Fiddler's Convention this summer - another very fitting activity given the heritage of this region. Our two efforts to directly reach out to those less fortunate are also flourishing. Bob Blanton and his group will have baskets at our next meeting and will ask us all to participate in preparing them for distribution. He will be soliciting members to accompany the social services people on the distribution. That can be a rewarding experience. You can speak to Bob about joining that group. Joe Maxwell is working with a small committee of members and of service agencies in the area to do some needed home repairs for an elderly and infirm member of our community. We need people with basic carpentry skills and a group to paint and reorder a kitchen so this women can better function. I am grateful to these individuals for their efforts to engage and to

help others and proud of the chapter's continued attention to our motto - *to serve, not to be served*. June Schmidt and I attended a luncheon in Natural Bridge where the state AARP honored us with an award as the **Outstanding Large Chapter** in the state (see page 5). The award was nice, the rubber chicken tolerable, and speechifying mercifully short. June and I came away again reminded of how fortunate we are to work with such an interesting, active and concerned membership. We also were grateful that retirement has taken us away from the need to attend many meetings like these. It is much nicer to have more control over your time and activities. It is nice to be able to go outside and "smell the flowers". I'm going now. You go too.

Bob Blanton's telephone number is 552-1919
Ben Crawford's telephone number is 961-5733
Joe Maxwell's telephone number is 951-0057

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Dues are coming in slowly with just over 150 paid as of May 3. There are 75 who were members in 2000 that have not paid their 2001 dues.

Ben Crawford is our Membership Chair. If you have friends who should be members, please bring them to the next meeting and encourage them to join. Dues can be paid at the meeting or sent to Ben. His address follows:

**Ben Crawford
200 Cork Street
Blacksburg, VA 24060**

Have I paid my dues for 2001? Check the mail label on your Newsletter. If "2001" appears on the label, you have paid.

Those of you who are 90 years old and older do not pay dues. Your label should read "Life Member." The current membership list has the following members that are 90 years of age or older:

Alice Dewitt	Elizabeth Hoffman
Edward Mundie	Beverly Printz
Nelle Trent	Lottie Trimm

Please tell Ben or Don Elson if you have any correction to make to this list.

FUTURE PROGRAMS

May 15 - 4-H Programs

Ken Martin has arranged for representatives from the Montgomery County 4-H Youth Program to speak at our May 15 meeting.

June 19 - Picnic - Nellies Cave Park, Blacksburg.

For extra fun we will have a "White Elephant Exchange". Here is how it works. Each person (or couple) brings an inexpensive, wrapped gift, which can be either new or used but in good condition. As people arrive and deposit their gifts, they will receive a number. For the exchange, the person or couple with number 1 makes the first pick; number 2, the second pick, and so on. Once you have picked, you can not go back and choose again, but you are free to exchange gifts with anyone else who is willing. Who knows, one person's "white elephant" may be another person's prize.

September 18 - Poet and Raconteur Clyde Kessler will read his own poetry as well as that of other poets. As a native of Franklin County, he also has many fascinating tales to tell.

October 16 - (still being planned)

November 20 - Holistic Medicine, Dr. Linda Cheek.

December 4 - AARP Christmas Luncheon

AARP TAX-AIDE REPORT

Frank Lau

Volunteer tax preparers from Blacksburg and Christiansburg were honored a few weeks ago at the Christiansburg Recreation Center. Blacksburg's three preparers handled 46 returns, while the group at Christiansburg did 236 returns. In comparing our experiences, I feel we all had a very interesting year. Very unique situations arose, requiring research and level heads. We share experience and background knowledge to give our clients the best possible tax preparation.

New volunteers are always welcome. There is training and testing every year. We all have to pass a test to be certified. Would anyone like to join us next year? It is serious business, but the result is very satisfying.

HOME IMPROVEMENT PROJECT -- VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Joe Maxwell

Plans are being finalized for one of our chapter's spring activities: **Home Improvement Project**. An important aspect of this project is the participation of chapter members as volunteers. If you can help with home improvement type activities call **Joe Maxwell at 951-0057**.

INDEPENDENT LIVING BASKETS

Bob Blanton

Part of the May 15 membership meeting will be devoted to assembling baskets for the Independent Living Baskets Project. The project is a cooperative effort between Blacksburg and Christiansburg AARP chapters and the State AARP. This project is to provide simple changes for a safer home and to raise community awareness about independent living issues. We are working directly in cooperation with State AARP. Their goal and hopefully ours is to involve volunteers to work together to build local media coverage (newspaper, TV) that will encourage people in various communities to talk about simple changes for safer homes for the elderly people.

With the help of \$300 and several different items from the State AARP, our chapter will provide 20 baskets for families identified by the Agency on Aging and Social Services. (The Christiansburg chapter is following the same plan for homes in Christiansburg area.) The items to be included in the baskets are jar openers, rubber strips to make bathtubs non-slip, double-side tape to secure carpets and throw rugs, night lights, pill box, smoke detector donated by Lowes, and a flashlight. Additional items may be obtained before the baskets are assembled. Also, arrangements have been made for the Fire Department to make a free fire inspection in each of the homes.

D-DAY MEMORIAL TRIP

Frank Lau

At this writing, the 104 seats on the buses are filled. I have 6 on the waiting list. The response has been fantastic and heartwarming. I am very happy to see so many taking the opportunity to

honor our veterans and in so many cases, themselves. Thank you all.

I received confirmation from the property manager of Blacksburg Square that we may use the parking lot in front of the old Wade's store on South Main for staging and parking. Thanks again!

WANT TO GO CAVING?

Three Tech professors working through Tech's Center for Gerontology have received a grant from the AARP Andrus Foundation to use the CAVE (Cave Automated Virtual Environment) to assess older people's perceptions and functioning in private living quarters of assisted living. As with all housing types, the physical environment of assisted living facilities, which, while helpful for determining problems in existing environments, are not useful for determining problems in a proposed design.

The CAVE provides a high resolution, virtual reality environment created by using supercomputers that project computer images onto rear projection screens making it ideal for testing detailed designs. In the CAVE, older adults will simulate the experience of walking through and interacting with the assisted living environment.

The project directors need senior volunteers to give their ideas about what they would like in assisted living facilities. If you, or someone you know is 70 years of age or older, has 20/20 corrected vision, and no problems with balance, and would like to participate in this research project, please contact the Center for Gerontology at [231-7657](tel:231-7657) for further information. The project will take about one hour of time. You will find the new technology fun to experience while also contributing to research designed to better the lives of older Americans.

DON'T DO SOMETHING THAT WILL MAKE YOU NEED BLOOD!!

Now is not a good time to need blood. In this Red Cross Appalachian Blood Region of 45 hospitals, there is an average two-day supply. The winter months are the time of year when blood donations are very low.

Blood donations have been down dangerously for the last few years. People have quit donating and there is no such thing as artificial blood. One in 10 patients entering a hospital needs blood and the minimum need is around 3 pints. A case of bleeding ulcers can use 3-10 pints. The Red Cross estimates that 97% of us will need a blood transfusion by age 72, but only 5% of us donate. That's a hard ratio to live with.

The Red Cross provides the country with about 55% of its total needs. Commercial blood collection agencies and companies collect the rest. Both of the local hospitals and the Radford hospital use Red Cross blood and except for a very serious shortage, all of it comes from this blood region. The Region needs about 300 pints a day, which means each of the 45 hospitals needs about 7 pints a day. Fifty-six thousand pints were used in the blood region last year.

Last year there were 240 Red Cross bloodmobiles in this county and they collected about 7200 pints of blood. The AARP, New Dimension and Senior Center bloodmobile collected 35 of those pints.

There is a 56-day (8 week) wait between donations. Even those of us who would like to donate more often can't. So the community has to depend upon you. There is no age limit to blood donating. **OLD TIRED BLOOD IS A WELCOME AS YOUNG BLOOD IN AN EMERGENCY.** In fact old tired blood is good as young blood any time. We have been the generation that has kept bloodmobiles going. When we were younger, we donated much more blood per person that the young and middle-aged persons do now.

You have between 10 and 12 pints of blood depending upon your size. One pint is seldom missed. Yes, some feel uncomfortable while donating or after it is over but at the same time you should feel wonderful. The whole blood that you donate frequently is broken down into three components, which means your pint of blood may contribute to saving 3 lives.

The AARP, New Dimensions and the Blacksburg Senior Center are sponsoring another bloodmobile on **June 15 between 10:00 a.m. and 6 p.m.** Last year we got 35 pints of blood. That's not much from over 700 people in these three organizations. Yes some of you can't give blood and we understand that. But many of you can but don't. **We need your help!** This year lets go to 70 pints. We can make it if you help. Just come and try. The nurses will excuse you if you medical history says you can't donate. Please mark your calendar for June 15 between 10:00 and 6:00 to come to the Community Center and donate blood to the Red Cross!!

AARP WEBSITE

AARP has its own website, called AARP Webplace, which features information about the Organization's activities and issues of interest to older persons. To access information on a host of topics please visit the site at <http://www.aarp.org>. Some of the information featured includes membership benefits, legislative issues, and health and wellness concerns. The AARP website also features information on this year's election cycle, including materials on selected issues and a Candidate Database and Voter Registration Information.

FREE CLINIC OF NEW RIVER VALLEY

The Free Clinic of New River Valley needs and welcomes volunteers to join in meeting the needs of residents without health insurance in the New River Valley. A full range of volunteer opportunities is offered including office and clerical, marketing, and all health care professions. For more information, contact Amy Vaughan at 381-0820.



Presents the 2000 Award for

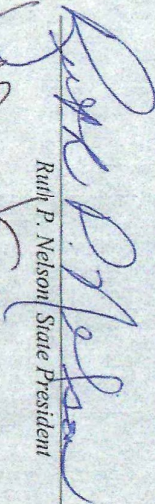
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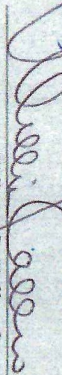
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BLACKSBURG CHAPTER #2613

in Recognition of Dedicated Service

April 25 2001
Date


Ruth P. Nelson
State President


William C. Kallio, State Director

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AARP Chapter #2613
495 Mt. Pleasant Rd
Christiansburg, VA 24073-4669

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