

March 16 Chapter Meeting Topic:

## Consumer Issues for Seniors

Dr Irene Leech, President of the Virginia Citizens Consumer Council will be the featured speaker at the Noon meeting of AARP Blacksburg at the Blacksburg Community Center, Tuesday March 16, 2010.

She also is an associate professor of Consumer Affairs at Virginia Tech. Leach is a frequent speaker before the Virginia General Assembly Committees on matters of Consumer Affairs.

Chapter members gather at 11:30AM for a brown bag lunch with coffee provided by AARP. As always, the meeting is open to the public.



Irene Leech, an associate professor of consumer affairs at Virginia Tech, is our March 16 speaker.

## Table Top Topic for March 16

John Wertz will have handouts and speak briefly about the two year old program called: MICAH'S BACKPACK. This effort was created by St. Michael's Lutheran Church to help elementary school children who are on the "daily free lunch" program have sufficient food for the weekend with a backpack of food to take home each Friday. MICAH'S BACKPACK currently serves a total of 48 children each week-end. For further information see the web site: <http://micahsbackpack.org>.

***AARP Chapter members & friends are asked to bring a grocery bag filled with jars of peanut butter & packages of 8 wrapped snack crackers to be placed in a Friday's Micah's Backpack.***

### ***We have a musical treat for the March 16 chapter meeting!***

Fiddler Jack Hinshelwood will be playing some favorites old time tunes starting at 11:30 am while we enjoy our bag lunches. Be sure to get to the meeting early to enjoy the entertainment.

There is a brief story about Jack on page 4 of the newsletter.

### 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, Patrick Henry Drive, at 10:00 a.m.

P.O. Box 10082  
Blacksburg, VA 24062  
<http://civic.bev.net/aarp/>

# 2010 Officers, Board Members and Committee Chairs

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1st Vice President: John Hillison hillison@vt.edu  
Secretary: Virgil Cook vcook@vt.edu  
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Harriett Damant

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Caring: Harriett Cooper chayabrona@verizon.net  
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AARP Driver Safety Course: Curt Finch crfinch@vt.edu  
Financial Planning: John Hillison hillison@vt.edu  
Health Care: Larry Alexander aalexand@radford.edu  
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Hospitality: Curtis Roane 552-2260  
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Public Relations:  
VT Retirees Association Liason: Margaret Kates

## *President's Corner*

by President Brian Allen

A great big thank you to everyone who brought groceries for the Blacksburg food pantry. We collected quite a lot, and I know they were very pleased to have our help.

Well, the last meeting once again was very informative and interesting. I don't think any of us realized the extent of Medicare fraud, or how difficult it is to catch. The amount of our tax dollars being lost to these crooks is staggering. We can help by being vigilant, keeping an eye on our own EOB's from Medicare, or getting involved with the New River Valley Agency on Aging and their Senior Medicare Patrol. Elyse Politi from the agency came and gave us some information on this opportunity. I know some of you have volunteered to help her with that. Good for you.

Our next meeting will help everyone learn how to protect their privacy, and avoid scams. Be sure to come and bring a friend. We are also having a violin player/guitar player to entertain us while we eat. GREAT FUN.

I do think we are going to say goodbye to the snow this weekend; it is supposed to feel like spring. We are ready! Stay well.

Best regards, Brian



Vern Simpson, Brian Allen, and Roy Kirkpatrick with some of the bags of food collected for the Interfaith Food Pantry.

***More than 75 grocery bags of canned fruits and vegetables were collected at the February 16 AARP Chapter meeting to support the Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry.***

***Thanks for being so generous!***

# **NRV Agency on Aging Begins Process to Develop an Area Plan for 2011**

**Tina King**, Executive Director  
New River Valley Agency on Aging

“There is no medicine like hope, no incentive so great, and no tonic so powerful as expectation of something better tomorrow.” Quote from Orison Marden

With Spring coming soon, we have hope and expectations of warmer weather, sunnier days, colorful landscapes, etc....The thought of “something better” in regard to weather conditions tends to spur us into a planning mode. On an individual level we will be planning activities, projects, trips, gardens....

This is the time of year that I find myself in a planning mode not only in my personal life, but also in my work at the Agency. Beginning this month, the New River Valley Agency on Aging will start a planning process in respect to service delivery and budgeting for the next fiscal and program year which begins in October. We call it our Area Plan for Aging Services. The Area Plan determines how resources are allocated for services provided under the Older Americans Act. While we wait for information on funds or “planning figures” from our state funding sources, after a state budget is adopted, we are seeking comments from the public for guidance on how they think the resources can best meet the needs of older adults. With shrinking resources due to state funding cuts, it is more important than ever, to ensure that funds are used for the services most needed by older adults. Comments are considered as the Area Plan draft is developed. Once the Area Plan draft is ready, there will be a public comment period before it becomes official and is submitted to the Virginia Department for the Aging for approval.

With a current operating budget of approximately \$1.5 million, NRV Agency on Aging provides many different services with federal, state and local support. The largest programs include Home Delivered Meals (also known as “meals on wheels”), Congregate Meals (Friendship Cafes), Information and Assistance, Transportation and

Homemaker services. Other services provided include Caregiver Support, Care Coordination, Ombudsman, Elder Abuse Prevention, Health Insurance Counseling and Medicare Fraud Prevention, Long Term Care Coordination, Home Repair and Legal Assistance. Client waiting list currently exists for Homemaker Services and Caregiver Respite Support.

A recently added service is the “Money Follows the Person” program, a Medicaid funded program designed to help people leaving a nursing home resume independent living. Additionally, the Agency is taking the first steps in the development of Aging and Disability Resource Centers which when functional will create a streamlined” experience for person’s seeking long term care information and services.

While funding prospects look gloomy for the next few years, we remain hopeful that it will improve before the cuts become so drastic that it will take years to get back to a funding level that can support the service needs of a fast growing older adult population. We will continue at the local level to stretch our resources as much as possible. We anticipate having to make some difficult decisions when devising an Area Plan for next year. Therefore public input will be more important than ever.

Individuals are invited to send comments now, before the draft Area Plan is developed, regarding the services listed above or other needed services to NRV Agency on Aging, 141, East Main Street, Suite 500, Pulaski, Virginia 24301 or e-mail at [nrvaoa@nrvaoa.org](mailto:nrvaoa@nrvaoa.org).

Planning for the future is also occurring at the federal level prior to the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act. The Administration on Aging is soliciting public input concerning congressional amendments and reauthorization in 2011 that will be effective in fiscal year 2012. Since 1965, the Older Americans Act has gained recognition as a highly regarded statute that has stimu-

*Continued on page 4 (see Tina King)*

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lated the development of a comprehensive and coordinate service system. This system has contributed greatly to enhancing the lives of older individuals, family caregivers, and persons with disabilities. Individuals can provide comments about the reauthorization via the AoA website, [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov), or by attending an OAA Reauthorization Comment Session. There will be a session on April 28th from 1 pm until 2 pm at the Virginia Department for the Aging, located at 1610 Forest Avenue in Richmond. For more information about this session, contact Bill Peterson at 804-662-9325 or [bill.peterson@vda.virginia.gov](mailto:bill.peterson@vda.virginia.gov).

On a local, state, and national level your help is needed to shape the future regarding statutes and services for older adults and have "expectations for something better tomorrow". Plan to get involved and provide your comments and suggestions.

New River Valley Agency on Aging exists to enhance lives through caring solutions. **For information on services and programs, contact Tina King by telephone: 980-7720, or e-mail: [tinaking@nrvaoo.org](mailto:tinaking@nrvaoo.org).**

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**Jack Hinshelwood to play music for March 16 chapter meeting**

Jack began playing traditional music, much of it fiddle tunes, on the guitar in 1972.

He won the Knoxville World's Fair Guitar Championship, the Galax Fiddler's Convention Guitar Contest, and in 1995, he won a handmade Henderson guitar for first place in the Wayne Henderson Guitar Championship.

His recording "Dark Run" featured a wide variety of folk and traditional music as well as original compositions.

Jack tours with New York

Times Best Selling author Sharyn McCrumb, performing a program of Sharyn's writings and ballads to promote her Ballad Series novels. Together they have produced "If Ever I Return, Pretty Peggy-O", a recording by Jack of Appalachian ballads from Sharyn's novel by the same name.

Jack plays guitar and fiddle with Celtibillies.

Jack is the son of AARP board member Mary Ann Hinshelwood.

## **AARP TAX AIDE NOW AVAILABLE IN CHRISTIANSBURG**

The 2010 AARP Tax-Aide program offers free tax service to taxpayers with low and middle income with special attention to those over 60.

The program is located at the Christiansburg Recreation Center at 1600 North Franklin Street in Christiansburg. Hours of operation are Mondays 9:00 a.m. to noon, Tuesdays from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Thursdays from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to noon. To make an appointment, call 382-2349. The service is open until April 15 for e-filing both federal and state tax returns.

There are 22 volunteers who run the program. A qualified volunteer must spend 30-40 hours studying and working through sample problems and then another 40-80 hours preparing taxes. Each preparer must pass a test before being certified to complete a tax return.

New for 2010 are the home buyer credit, energy credits, and sales tax credits on the purchase of a new car. Chapter member Pat Ballard heads up the program again this year.



## ***Pre-registration now open for April AARP Driver Safety Course***

People have begun to pre-register for the AARP Driver Safety Course being offered in April at Blacksburg Community Center, 725 Patrick Henry Drive. Enrollment is limited so sign up soon.

The April course will be held on Thursday and Friday, April 22 and 23 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. 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.

## **Financial Report for AARP Chapter 2613 February 2010**

**Balance at end of January 2010** \$2,790.99

### **Income**

Membership dues	\$313.00
Interest (Chapter NBB Account)	0.17
50/50 Drawing	18.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$331.17</b>

### **Expenses**

Printing Newsletters	\$125.48
Postage Newsletters	35.65
Printing Renewal Flyers	25.20
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$186.33</b>

**Balance February 28, 2010** \$2,935.83



Dr. Matt McMullen spoke healthcare fraud and abuse at their February chapter meeting. McMullen was a health care fraud abuse analyst for the Office of the Inspector General.

## **Membership Report**

March 1, 2010

<b>Member Profile</b>	
AARP 2010 Members	177
Lifetime Members	46
Life Members	8
Complimentary Members	21
Honorary Members	5
<b>Total Membership</b>	<b>257</b>
Newsletters Printed	172

New Members

**Fred C. & Jo Burroughs**

Membership Committee: Jim Wightman,  
Sue Farrar, Don Creamer

### **Do you need to contact AARP?**

Do you have questions or need to renew your national membership?

To contact the national office of AARP, the address and phone number are:

AARP  
601 E Street N.W.  
Washington, DC 20049

By Phone  
Toll-Free Nationwide: 1-888-OUR-AARP  
or (1-888-687-2277)

**Call to Order**-President Brian Allen called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

**Officers present**-President Brian Allen and Vice President John Hillison

**Board members present**-Ken Dawson, Don Creamer, Harriett Damant, June Schmidt, Joe Fotenot, Sue Farrar, and Mary Ann Hinshelwood

**Non-Board Member Committee Chairs present**-Larry Alexander, Dan Fleming, Jim Wightman, Curt Finch, Carl McDaniels, Edd Sewell, and Curt Roane

**Guest**-Pat Word

**Approval of minutes**-The minutes of the February 3 meeting were approved as published.

**Treasurer's Report**-Edd Sewell reported on behalf of Treasurer Judy Sewell that the end of January balance was \$2,790.99 with deposits of \$313.00 for membership, the 50/50 drawing of \$18.00, and interest of 17 cents. The expenses included copying of newsletter \$125.48, copying of renewal flyers \$25.20, and postage of \$35.65. The balance for the end of February was \$2,935.83.

### **Officer's Reports**

**Vice President**-John Hillison distributed copies of the Chapter Program of Activities for 2010. He emphasized the need to add more committee members and for the committee chairs to be ready by the December meeting to revise goals for 2011. Committee chairs will

also be asked to give an accomplishments summary as part of their December reports. The accomplishments will be used for the annual chapter report given to National AARP. Committee chairs were complimented for their good work and thanked for completing the forms for the program of activities.

It was noted that Harriett Damant will be moving and needs to be replaced as a board member. June Schmidt was approved by the board to be Harriett's replacement for the class of 2012

### **Committee Reports**

**Membership**- Jim Wightman and Don Creamer presented the report showing a total membership of 257 including all categories with two new members of Fred C. and Jo Burroughs. There were 93 members not renewing by the March 1st deadline. However, approximately 20 renewal forms were shared at the meeting. It was suggested that members not renewing receive a phone call. President Allen will share names and phone numbers with board members and others volunteering to make such calls. Only those who have renewed will receive a March newsletter. A recruitment opportunity was used at the February 19th Warm Hearth Health Fair. Another membership recruitment opportunity will occur at the Health Fair to be held at the New River Valley Mall on April 17th.

**Chaplain**-Ken Dawson noted that he might need a substitute for the next meeting. Jim Wightman volunteered to be the

substitute, if needed.

**Legislative**-Dan Fleming reported on several activities of the Virginia General Assembly, which should adjourn by March 13th. Among the issues reported were the purchase of health insurance not being mandated, liberalized gun laws, increasing the speed limit on certain parts of interstates to 70 miles per hour, rolling back for a short period of time the increase for AEP electric bills, a pro-rated form of a gasoline tax not passing, a tax on internet sales not passing, and not keeping a commitment to fund fully the Virginia Retirement System on an annual basis. It is doubtful that bipartisan re-districting will occur. Dan also announced that the U. S. Supreme Court was hearing a case concerning gun laws in Chicago.

**Program**-Carl McDaniels reported that as a result of the February meeting on Health Care Fraud and Abuse several members had volunteered to be in the Senior Medicare Patrol. Officials were pleased with the response and training will be held March 30th. The March program will consist of a presentation by Irene Leech, who is president of the Virginia Citizens' Consumer Council and an Associate Professor of Apparel, Housing, and Resource Management at Virginia Tech. The title of Dr. Leech's presentation is "Consumer Issues Vital to Seniors-Electrical Rates and Others." There will be a Table Top Talk by Pastor John Wertz of St. Michael's Lutheran

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Church on "Micah's Backpack-Healthy Meals for Healthy Families." The planned April meeting is "What Every Senior Should Know about Long-Term Care." The planned May meeting is a Town Hall meeting with Blacksburg Mayor Ron Rordam and Chair of the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors Annette Perkins. There is a possibility that Christiansburg Mayor Dick Ballange might also be invited. If health care reform legislation passes the Congress and is signed into law a program on its ramifications might be held in the future.

**Newsletter**-Edd Sewell noted the possibility of adding a one page summary of the Home Sweet Home newsletter to the chapter newsletter. This can be discussed more fully at the April board meeting. It is also possible to delete the membership form from some newsletter issues or shrink its size. Because of a planned trip, Edd may not be able to complete the June newsletter. More of the Home Sweet Home newsletter could be a substitute for the regular June newsletter.

**Driver Safety**-Curt Finch announced that one course is being held today and tomorrow. There was an announcement in the Roanoke Times about the current course. The next course will be held April 22-23 with five pre-registered.

**Hospitality**-Curt Roane reported that the summer picnic will be held June 15th and the Christmas luncheon will be held December 14th. The sites for

both activities have been reserved.

**Old Business**--There was none.

**New Business**-The Memorandum of Understanding between the Blacksburg AARP Chapter and the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM) was presented and discussed at length. The major advantage to the Chapter will be having a formal agreement with an important partner for the future. Details included assistance in identifying prospective students and placement of graduates; participating in research and training programs; providing information booths at appropriate AARP and VCOM events; assisting VCOM with scholarships, funding prevention and health care delivery, and general operating needs; conducting health fairs for adults; and assist with and/or participate in prevention programs for successful aging. It was emphasized that the financial aspect was the establishment of a fund where anyone could contribute; it was not a financial commitment on the part of the Chapter. AARP Virginia has reviewed and approved the Memorandum of Understanding. A motion was made by Don Creamer and seconded by June Schmidt to approve the Memorandum of Understanding. The motion passed. President Allen and a representative of VCOM will hold a signing ceremony for the Memorandum.

A decision was made to have Carl McDaniels request a \$500 grant from the Community

Foundation to start the fund for supporting VCOM activities.

It was announced that when the National AARP sends a notice to the Chapter president that someone in our area joins the national organization the president will call the new member, the membership chair will send a welcome letter, and a newsletter will be mailed to him or her.

**The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 am.**

**Minutes respectfully submitted by substitute secretary.** John Hillison

## **SENIOR MEDICARE PATROL (SMP) TRAINING MARCH 30**

Senior Medicare Patrol(SMP) training will be held on Tuesday March 30, 2010 at the Blacksburg Community Center from 10AM-3:30PM.

This is a one time program for people who want to learn in depth about Medicare fraud problems and techniques on how to spot possible problems, how to report them and get resolutions. It will cover how a trained SMP person can be an active part of the network of people working to educate all Medicare beneficiaries on what to look for.

There is still space for an additional 10 people in the training session. Those interested can call Elyse Politi at the NRVA Agency on Aging at (540) 980-7720 or e-mail: [elysepoliti@nrva.org](mailto:elysepoliti@nrva.org).

Brian Allen, President  
AARP Chapter #2613  
P.O. Box 10082  
Blacksburg, VA 24062

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## Membership Renewal for 2010 or New Member Application

If you are already a member of the Blacksburg Chapter,  
please pass this form on to a friend who should be a member.

Membership in the Blacksburg AARP Chapter requires membership in National AARP.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Membership (based on calendar year):

\_\_\_\_\_ New membership dues: \$12.50 [Spouse/Partner Free]

\_\_\_\_\_ Renewal membership dues: \$12.50 [Spouse/Partner Free]

Those of you who are 90 years old and older do not pay dues. Your label should read "Life Member."

Complete and attach check made out to Blacksburg AARP, and bring to the next Membership Meeting or mail to:

**AARP Chapter #2613, P. O. Box 10082, Blacksburg, VA 24062**

NOTE: You MUST be a member of National AARP before joining the local chapter. National dues should be paid directly to National AARP at **601 E Street N.W., Washington, DC 20049** or call toll free at **1-888-687-2277**.