

# Newsletter of the Blacksburg, Virginia

Chapter #2613



January 2011 Volume 28 Number 1

## January 18 Chapter Meeting at VCOM

Chapter members are urged to attend the first meeting of 2011 on Tuesday, January 18, at the Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM for short) starting with a pizza & salad lunch with beverages provided by VCOM starting at 11:30 a.m.

The main program starting at noon will be Dr James F. Wolfe, President of VCOM, who will talk about "The Past, Present & Future of VCOM" taking a look back at the first class in 2003, where VCOM is today, and what the future might look like.

There also will be discussion of some of the unique aspects of osteopathic medicine including what is osteopathic manipulation. Faculty members from VCOM will be taking part in the program.

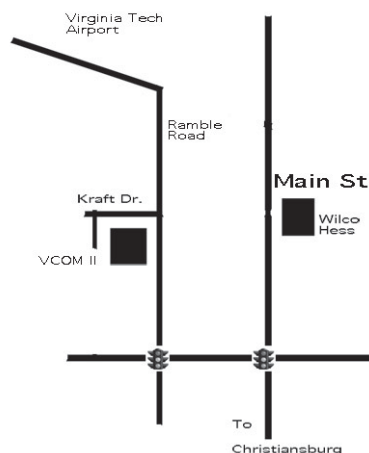
There is plenty of free parking at the VCOM II building so come early for lunch, and stay for the noon program ending about 1 p.m.

As is the usual custom of AARP Blacksburg, Chaplain Sandy Birch will lead a brief ceremony remembering chapter members who have died in the past year.

Directions to VCOM II are given below.

## Directions to VCOM II:

VCOM II is located on the corner of Ramble Road and Kraft Drive. It is in the building with StellarOne Bank. Going south on Main Street, take a right at the traffic light on Industrial Blvd. Then take a right turn at the traffic light onto Ramble Road. Finally, take a left onto Kraft Drive and at the first drive take a left into the parking lot.



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## 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/>

# Winter Weather Safety

Tina King, Executive Director  
New River Valley Agency on Aging



It would be an understatement to say that winter has arrived. If we haven't already, it is imperative that we become prepared for winter storms that bring heavy snow and ice. Who can forget the winter of 2009-2010 with multiple record breaking snowstorms and cold temperatures that affected almost every part of Virginia? Many of us suffered through power outages. Snowplow drivers worked around the clock to open up our roads. Multiple school systems were shut down for many days. With the cold and snowy December weather we have experienced, it seems probable that we will have more and possibly worse to contend with the next few months.

Ready Virginia, a statewide public education effort, encourages Virginians to do three things to prepare for emergencies, including those derived from winter storms. The first is to Make a Plan: Decide on a meeting place outside of your neighborhood if you become separated from other family members and cannot return home due to impassable roads. Choose an out-of-town relative or friend to be your fam-

ily's point of contact for emergency communications. With a family member or a friend, write down an emergency plan. A free worksheet can be obtained at [www.ReadyVirginia.gov](http://www.ReadyVirginia.gov). Then Get a kit: Some basic supplies for winter weather include a three day's supply of food and water, a battery powered radio with extra batteries. Add a first aid kit, medications if needed, blankets and warm clothing, and pet items if needed. An emergency supply checklist can also be obtained from the Ready Virginia website. The third suggestion from Ready Virginia is to Stay informed. Before, during and after a winter storm, listen to local media for information and instructions from emergency officials. Be aware of winter storm watches and warnings and road conditions. Road condition information can be obtained 24 hours a day, seven days per week by calling 511 or checking [www.511Virginia.org](http://www.511Virginia.org).

Below are some additional practical tips for cold weather safety:

- Dress in layers. Wear a warm winter coat, winter boots, mittens and a hat.

- Cover your face with a scarf but do not obstruct your vision.

- Avoid being outside for extended periods of time. If you do need to be outside for long periods, let someone know where you are going and when to expect you back.

- Stay dry.

- Avoid going outdoors if you are consuming alcohol.

- If you are taking medication for a heart or circulatory problem, check with your doctor before exercising outdoors.

- When travelling in cars, carry proper winter clothing, a shovel, candle, matches, and non-perishable food in case of an emergency.

The Agency on Aging staff is available to provide information and advocacy and to help find and access services for aging adults, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers. For more information call (540) 980-7720, or e-mail [nrvaoa@nrvaoa.org](mailto:nrvaoa@nrvaoa.org).

## New Board Member -- Jim Montgomery

Jim Montgomery is an attorney who primarily works in the area of wills, trusts, and estates. Before that, he served for 30 years as director of institutional research and planning at Virginia Tech and the University of

Tennessee. He studied history at the University of Tennessee and Columbia University. He also enjoyed a long tenure as an Officer in the Army Reserves from which activity he retired in 1986.

### Power Chair (Scooter) Available

Steven Strange, phone # 552-1632, has a power chair (Scooter) that he wishes to donate to someone. The unit is like new and runs 15 miles per charge (manual charger). The unit also is equipped with speed control.

## **Tougher Regulations for Car Title and Payday Lenders Called for by Virginia Legislators**

Two Tidewater area legislators, Senator Mamie Locke and Delegate Glenn Oder, are calling for tougher rules to keep payday and car title lenders from charging sky high interest rates on short term loans. Despite changes over the past two years to crack down on the loan industry, the legislators charge that rates are still too high and lenders have found loopholes around new regulations.

Both forms of lending offer a short term solution for financial need where a customer pays a fee to borrow a small amount of cash against a paycheck or uses a car as collateral for the loan.

Under new rules set up last year, car title lenders could add 22% monthly interest payments to loans under \$700. That means someone who took out a \$500 loan would pay \$110 in interest for the first month and a total of \$1,320 in interest if the loan is not paid off within the year.

Locke and Ober want to place both payday lending and car title lending under a 36 percent yearly interest cap. Lending industry spokespersons claim such a cap would shut down the entire industry and already their lobbyists are gearing up to stop such a cap. Virginia AARP has strongly supported tougher regulations on both forms of lending.

Dan Fleming, Legislative Chair

## **Free Income Tax Preparation Available**

Does just looking at the Federal 1040 Income Tax form give you a chill? Do you have more income sources than a single W-2 and worry about the right way to declare it? There is volunteer help available for no charge.

AARP provides free tax preparation starting February 1 of each year. Pensions, Social Security income, stock dividends, all have different reporting requirements from routine earned income. AARP recognized many years ago that just trying to determine if or how much of your Social Security income is taxable can be daunting. Thus began the Tax-Aide program. Volunteers are trained every year on the current tax requirements (and something always changes each year). Although the program was initially targeted for senior citizens, it is open to all for routine personal income tax preparation. Expertise includes the subjects listed above, as well as interest, capital gains, earned income credit, education, childcare, and energy credits. Only those with complex business or rental property would have to be referred to a paid preparer. There are other free tax preparation options, such as VITA and the IRS office, but those are specifically for low income tax payers. AARP does not have an income restriction.

Official AARP tax preparation sites are set up, usually with support from other non-profit organizations. In Christiansburg, tax preparation is done at the Christiansburg Recreation Center. Hours and days vary in order to accommodate people with different schedules. Other sites may be found by going to the AARP web site ([https://locator.aarp.org/vmis/sites/tax\\_aide\\_locator.jsp](https://locator.aarp.org/vmis/sites/tax_aide_locator.jsp)). Walk-in taxpayers can often be accommodated, but Christiansburg offers appointments.

For Christiansburg, call 540-382-2349. After the first of January, the AARP website above also offers help to those preparing their own tax forms. If you like to prepare your own taxes, please consider serving as a volunteer with AARP.

### **Great Decisions Program**

Sponsored by Montgomery County League of Women Voters

The Montgomery County League of Women Voters is again pleased to sponsor the Great Decisions Program-- produced by the Foreign Policy Association-- on eight consecutive Wednesdays, from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM in the Blacksburg Public Library, beginning January 19, 2011. The discussion is free and open to the public. A briefing book may be purchased for \$17.50 or would be available at the circulation desk at the Blacksburg or Christiansburg libraries for in-library use.

To register or for more information, please contact: Nancy Warren (951-1660) or Jane Sprague (961-1532)



## Library Notes

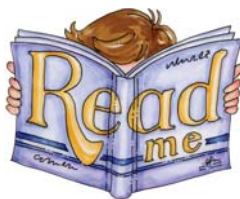
The Blacksburg Library receives new fiction and non-fiction large print books on a monthly basis!

Here are a few new titles for January:

**“Damaged” by Alex Kave:** Though she’s putting herself in the projected path of a hurricane, Special Agent Maggie O’Dell is sent to investigate a murder on Pensacola Beach.

**“Crescent Dawn” by Clive Cussler:** Dirk Pitt considers the link between explosions in Turkey and Egypt and explores the relationship between modern day events and newly discovered Roman artifacts.

**“Pepperoni Pizza Can Be Murder” by Chris Caverner:** The Slice of Delight pizzeria is the place of a murder. The pizzeria owner conducts her own



informal investigation and offers a few pizza recipes along the way.

**“The Last Talk With Lola Faye” by Thomas H. Cook:** Multi-award-winning author Cook delivers a fictional account of a mystery in a tiny southern town.

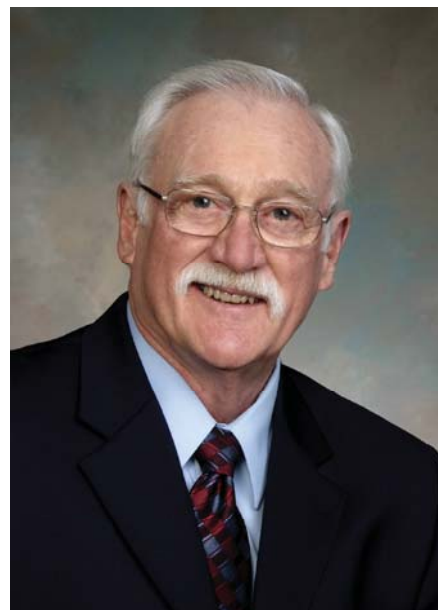
**“A Dog’s Purpose: A Novel for Humans” by W. Bruce Cameron:** Told from the perspective of the family dog, Bailey, this story demonstrates the valued bond between man and man’s best friend.

**“A Matter of Character” by Robin Lee Hatcher:** Book 3 of The Sisters of Bethlehem Springs series finds a 1918 heirless living in contentment and secrecy.

## Virginia Tech Creative Learning Academy, or VT CLASS to hold open house

The Virginia Tech Creative Learning Academy, or VT CLASS for short, will hold an open house on Thursday, January 27 from 2-4 p.m. at the Inn at Virginia Tech.

Chapter members are urged to attend and learn about this new effort to provide short courses on a variety of interesting topics starting March 22. For details or go to: [www.cpe.vt.edu/vtclass](http://www.cpe.vt.edu/vtclass).



### New Vice President -- Don Creamer

Don G. Creamer retired as professor of higher education administration in June 2005 from Virginia Tech, after serving 28 years of the total of 45 years he served various institutions of higher education. He was dean of students at the El Centro College of the Dallas Country Community College District when he came to Virginia Tech in 1977.

Creamer was active in professional associations throughout his career and served as president of the American College Personnel Association in 1978-1979 and president of the Council for the Advancement of Standards

in 2001-2004. He also served in positions of leadership in the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators.

During his active career, Creamer was author and co-author of 128 professional publications, including six books.

Retirement has afforded Creamer the opportunity to engage actively in his hobbies, including cooking, hiking, and furniture building.

### Membership Report

December 2010

| Member profile    | Count |
|-------------------|-------|
| AARP 2011.        | 78    |
| AARP 2012.        | 161   |
| LifeTime Members. | 46    |
| Life Members.     | 7     |
| Comp Members.     | 18    |
| Honorary Members. | 4     |
| Total Membership. | 314   |
| New Members       | 3     |
| Newsletters       | 210   |

Report prepared January 2, 2011.  
Tom Alston, chair

## **Create The Good -- What are you doing for others?**

Sally Anna Stapleton  
AARP Create the Good Organizer

Martin Luther King, Jr. said "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" January 17, 2011 is the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service. I urge you to find a great opportunity in your community and get involved; [www.createthegood.org](http://www.createthegood.org) has many opportunities in our local community where you can lend a hand.

The Christiansburg Aquatic Center is looking for volunteers, plus you can enjoy many amenities of the facility.

The Women's Resource Center of New River Valley is looking for Emergency Advocate volunteers.

The New River Community Action Homeless & Housing Program is looking for volunteers with financial background who can assist clients develop spending plans.

Plus, you can always work with RSVP (Retired Seniors Volunteer Program) to volunteer in the many daily opportunities they have needs for. Also, remember working through RSVP allows them to report your volunteer hours so that they can continue the program through funding from the Corporation for National & Community Service. How easy can it be! If you are already volunteering, urge the organization you volunteer for to post their volunteer needs on the AARP web site, [www.createthegood.org](http://www.createthegood.org), so more AARP members can get involved.

Create the Good is now an active committee through the AARP Blacksburg Chapter. If you'd like to be involved, contact Sally Anna Stapleton, Create The Good Organizer.

Start the year off right by making a difference in your community!

### **New Chapter President -- John Hillison**

Chapter president John Hillison was born in Northern Illinois. He was raised on a dairy farm and attended school in the Amboy School district with seven years in a one-room grade school. Bachelor's and master's degrees were earned from the University of Illinois. His first professional position was that of an agricultural education teacher and FFA advisor in Mount Carmel, Illinois. After teaching for three years, Hillison received a Ph.D. from Ohio State University.

John's higher education experience began at Western Kentucky University, and was followed by 30 years at Virginia Tech in the Department of Agricultural and Extension Education. He retired in 2006.

John became an active member of the Blacksburg AARP Chapter in 2007 and has enjoyed that experience. He has served as a board member and vice president of the chapter. His goals for Blacksburg AARP in 2011 include continuing the strong

## **Annual Holiday Lunch held at the Holiday Inn December 14, 2010**

Chapter members in attendance at the noon meeting enjoyed a nice holiday meal, music by members of the Blacksburg Community Band, and singing by those in attendance.

Chapter Awards were presented to long time Board Member Ken Dawson for Club Service, and to Board member Jim Wightman for Community Service.

There was a ceremonial signing of the historic agreement between AARP Blacksburg and VCOM establishing the "Blacksburg AARP Chapter Gerontology Scholarship Fund" for a student at VCOM who is committed to going into geriatric medical practice.

Before adjourning the new Officers and Board members were installed by AARP Virginia Executive Board Member Ben Crawford.

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*Hillison bio continued  
from previous column*

programs we have, involving more members in activities, and securing a strong financial basis for the treasury.

John's hobbies include walking and participating in an occasional 5K race, volunteering in the agricultural science department at Blacksburg High School, and serving as a Standard Patient at VCOM. He is married to the former Sharen Lefferson. They have two sons, Jeff and Jay; a daughter-in-law, Michelle, and a granddaughter, Hayley.

**Call to Order**—Vice President Don Creamer called the meeting to order at 10:00.

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

Board Members: Sue Farrar, Jim Montgomery, June Schmidt

Non-board-member committee chairs and appointees: Larry Alexander, R. B. “Ben” Crawford, Dan Fleming, Curtis Finch, Carl McDaniels, Sally Anna Stapleton, Jim Wightman

Jim Montgomery, a new member, introduced himself. Other new members are Juanita Wightman and Tom Alston.

**Additions to the agenda**—Vice President Creamer reminded members to send short resume to newsletter editor Edd Sewell.

**Approval of Minutes** Sue Farrar moved approval of the December 7, 2010 minutes. The motion passed.

**Treasurer’s Report**—Brian Allen. The current balance is unusually high because we have not split the proceeds from the health fair with VCOM, which will go to the scholarship sponsored by AARP and VCOM. We donated \$500 to the Town of Blacksburg for use of the Community Center. It cost \$433 to send out newsletters to retirees. Sue Farrar moved that the report be received. The motion passed.

**Health**—Larry Alexander. The *Home Sweet Home Newsletter* on avoiding falls is out.

*The Pill Book*, which you can buy at local pharmacies, is a valuable resource for seniors. People should keep records of doctor visits.

It is a good idea for people to keep their x-rays after doctor visits.

**Membership**—Jim Wightman. The current membership is 314.

**Legislation**—Dan Fleming. There is only a 45-day session of the General Assembly this year. Redistricting is very important. Southwest Virginia’s power will diminish, and more seats will be concentrated in Tidewater and Northern Virginia. Payday lending and car-title lending are still important issues. Lenders are finding ways to get around the law. Lenders can charge 22% a month on car-title loans. State-run liquor stores will probably remain open. The state owes money to VRS.

Federal Legislation. Democrats are trying to alter the filibuster rules. Senators can now institute a filibuster anonymously.

**Programs**—Carl McDaniels. The January 18 chapter meeting will take place at the VIA College of Osteopathic Medicine. VCOM will furnish pizza and beverages. There will be a tour of the college.

**Finance Committee**—Dale Oliver. The committee is working on the budget and is auditing the books. The budget includes a reserve fund. The committee advises carrying over health-fair

income as a reserve to prevent available cash from getting too low. Brian Allen moved that the report be accepted. Jim Montgomery moved to amend the motion to change “Community-Center donations” to “community donations.” The amendment passed. The amended motion to approve the budget passed.

**Caring**—Brian Allen has visited Nita Dawson.

**Driver’s ED**—Curt Finch. Material on the spring courses will appear in the newsletter.

**Hospitality**—Curt Roane. Curt suggested looking for another location for the Christmas dinner.

**Liaison**—Ben Crawford. Ben commended John Hillison and Dale Oliver for designing an attractive program for the year.

AARP figures on Social Security. Ben presented figures on Social Security payouts, some of which appear below. There are other payouts in addition to pensions such as aid to children of deceased parents and disability payments. In Virginia, 800,000 retirees receive payouts. These payouts pump \$1-1/3 billion into the state economy. Social Security payments keep 30% of Social Security recipients out of poverty. Many Virginians would have no income if it were not for Social Security. Social Security is not why we have all the debt problems. AARP’s primary goal is to keep Social Security viable for our children and grandchildren. Ben suggested



*Continued from page 6*

sponsoring a forum on Social Security this year. The Create the Good committee will help with this forum.

**Create the Good**--Sally Anna Stapleton. We should tell organization officials to post work opportunities on the Create the Good Website. Because of AARP's involvement, RSVP collected twice the supplies for seniors in 2010 than in the year before. Because of AARP RSVP had an extra \$2,000 that they did not have last year.

**Scholarship Matching Adjustment**--Don Creamer. VCOM wants to have students agree to pay money back at 7% interest if they do not go into Geriatrics. VCOM wants to make a contribution during the years that AARP does not donate. Jim Montgomery moved that John Hillison work with VCOM to modify the changes in the agreement. The motion passed.

**Big Read Program**--Carl McDaniels. The library's request is that the president send a letter of support to the library. June Schmidt moved that the president write a letter of support. The motion passed.

**Adjournment**--The meeting was adjourned at 11:41.

Respectfully submitted:  
Virgil A. Cook, Secretary

January is named after the Roman god Janus, who was always shown as having two heads. He looked back to the last year and forward to the new one. The Roman New Year festival was called the Calends, and people decorated their homes and gave each other gifts.

## **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 hillison@vt.edu

Sue Farrar suefarrar@verizon.net

#### *Class of 2012*

Mary Ann Hinshelwood mah@mahinshelwood.com

June Schmidt: schmidtj@vt.edu (new e-mail)

#### *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

\*Associate Treasurer: Judy Sewell judysewell@verizon.net

\*Caring: Margaret Kates

Chaplain: Sandy Birch

\*Chapter Awards: Juanita Wightman@vt.edu

AARP Driver Safety Course: Curt Finch crfinch@vt.edu

\*Financial Planning: Dale Oliver jdoliver@vt.edu

Health Care: Larry Alexander aalexand@radford.edu

History: (open)

Hospitality: Curtis Roane 552-2260

Legislative: Dan Fleming dhfleming@vt.edu

Membership: Jim Wightman wightman@vt.edu

News Editor: Edd Sewell eddsewell@gmail.com

Nominating Committee: Class of 2011

Program: Carl McDaniels cmed@vt.edu

Public Relations: (open)

VT Retirees Association Liason: Margaret Kates

**\* New officer, board member or committee chair**

## 2011 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 (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Membership (based on calendar year):

\_\_\_\_\_ 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 Chapter 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.*

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

Nonprofit  
Organization  
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