



Serving the Greater New River Valley, Virginia

Blacksburg Chapter News

Oct. 2014 • Vol. 31 • No. 8
www.blacksburgaarp.org

October 21st

Angela Little, Director of The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Montgomery County and Radford (RSVP)

Don't miss this presentation by Angela Little at the October 21st chapter meeting. Ms Little is Director of The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Montgomery County and Radford (RSVP)

Before joining the RSVP as Director in 2000, Angela worked for the Department of Social Services in Montgomery County for eight years. She's been contributing to the people



of our area for many years!

Ms Little graduated from Anderson University with a BS in Social Work and Psychology in 1974.

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Montgomery County and Radford (RSVP)

invites adults aged 55 and over to use their skills and life experiences to answer the call of their neighbors in need.

Over 300 RSVP volunteers serve part-time, helping through a variety of local non-profit organizations, agencies, and institutions that are designated as volunteer work stations. RSVP is funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Montgomery County Government.

October: Jam Packed

President's Message from Leslye Bloom



We have a jam-packed schedule! It makes a body proud to see all the good work we are doing. I hope to see you at an AARP event soon, weather permitting: Last week I found a totally black woolly bear caterpillar

(you might call it a woolly worm). There were no rust colored bands at all. That's either very good or very bad...

Chapter Visit:



On October 3 Ben Crawford, Terry Wildman and I traveled to Pearisburg's AARP Chapter # 000445. Ben and Terry thanked the chapter on behalf of AARP VA and presented a brief update about current AARP VA activities. I finished the program with a live #WW2K example of "Ask the Candidates". Members cooperated enthusiastically! The first thing the Giles Chapter President said to me was "I like your newsletter."

Upcoming Events: Here's my list of upcoming events:

- Announcement of Slate of Officers at October 21 Meeting

Upcoming Events

October 7 • 10:00
board meeting

October 21 • 11:30
Chapter meeting with RSVP
Director Angela Little

November 4 • 10:00
board meeting

Nov. 18: 11:30
Funeral Alliance of the Blue
Ridge on *What To Do When
Death Occurs and Before.*
FAQ

Dec. 9: Holiday Luncheon at
Warm Hearth

Don't forget to bring your food donation (a can or box of non-perishable food) to the AARP chapter meeting. We will collect food at each monthly chapter meeting

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.

President's Message

continued from page 1

- November 12 & 13 VA AARP AWARDS, Stonewall Jackson, Staunton.
- November 18 Elections at Chapter Meeting
- December 9: Holiday Luncheon, Warm Hearth. Details and the reservation form will be in the November News.
- December 9 to Dec 10, 2014: The AARP VA Federal Advocacy Team Winter Meeting, Doubletree Hotel, Charlottesville, VA. Ben, Nola and I will be leaving our holiday lunch and heading directly to Charlottesville.

By The Way... Did you know that **aarp** hosts games to keep your brain active? See <http://games.aarp.org>, You can teach an old dog new tricks.

Yours in service,
Leslye

Financial Statement

September 1, 2014 through September 30, 2014

Balance thru September 1, 2014 \$12,594.34

Credits

Membership	45.00
Health Fair	500.00
Interest	.00
TOTAL	\$545.00

Debits

Kopy Korner	163.22
Health Fair Expenses Sandy Birch	334.38
Admin- Don Creamer web hosting	119.40
TOTAL	\$617.00

Balance Sept. 30, 2014 incl. Health Fair dollars \$12,522.34

Balance in Reserve Account (Health Fair) \$2,682.76

Pat Ballard, *Treasurer*

AARP Tax-Aide: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The AARP-Tax-Aide program provides free federal and Virginia tax preparation to low and middle income taxpayers of ALL ages. This program offers you yet another opportunity to serve your community as a certified Tax-Aide counselor or in an administrative role. You do not have to be a tax expert—we provide training and certification. For more information, please call Pat Ballard at 540-382-1189.

I've enjoyed editing the newsletter, but because of travel plans, this will be my last issue. Look for news in the November issue of all the great things our local chapter continues to do. Also check the website www.blacksburgaarp.org for updates and the minutes of the monthly board meetings. Jennifer Spoon, *Newsletter*

And the Nominees are!

The Nomination Committee, composed of John Hillison, Cecil McBride, and Don Creamer submits the following slate of officers and Board members for 2015. Notice that we identified persons beyond current needs to help us look to future needs for these and other positions of service.

President: Terry Wildman

Vice President: Don Creamer

Secretary: Sally Anna Stapleton

Treasurer: Pat Ballard

Board Members Class of 2017:

1. Pat Hyer (VT retiree; also will serve on Living Well Conference Committee)
2. Jerry Niles (VT retiree; also will serve on Advisory Council)
3. Shirley Peterson (active volunteer with RSVP and food drives)

Please Volunteer

The Montgomery County Christmas Store will begin this year's operation on Saturday, November 1 and will be open each Tuesday and Saturday from 9 am to 4 pm for volunteers to assist with setting up the store and for accepting donations. Contact Marilyn Armstrong 381-0585 or marmstro@radford.edu to schedule your volunteer time. If you would like to assist during the Store's shopping dates of December 9-13, contact Mae Hoover at 381-0585.

The annual Tote Bag Holiday Project is well under way at RSVP, with volunteers cutting, sewing and decorating the bags to be filled for 150 Heritage Hall patients. Call RSVP office for more information 382-5775.

The food banks need donations for the up-coming Holidays & United Way is taking cash donations to purchase turkeys.

Sally Anna Stapleton, *Community Service Chair*

Membership Report Oct. 2014

2014 Members	208 individuals	128 households
Lifetime Members	35 individuals	22 households
Life Members	13 individuals	12 households
Comp Members	22 individuals	22 households
Honorary Members	2 individuals	1 households
Total Membership	280 individuals	185 households

Jim Wightman, *Chair*, Tom Alston, *Membership*

Time to Nominate Members for Chapter Awards

The Chapter Service Award and the Community Spirit Award are given at the holiday luncheon in December. All members of the chapter are invited to submit nominations of members to be considered for this recognition. Please contact Doris Abraham for further information (dsta118e@verizon.net).

Alternatives Futures Survey

Results prepared by the Center for Gerontology at Virginia Tech • September 2014

The Alternatives Futures Survey was a single-item survey offered to attendees of the 2014 VCOM/AARP Health and Wellness Fair. Eight research assistants and staff members from the Center for Gerontology at Virginia Tech collected 146 surveys at the event entrance between 11:30am and 3:15pm. The survey question was:

The Blacksburg AARP chapter is considering conducting some additional community-oriented activities, similar to the Health and Wellness Fair. Which of the following might interest you? (Check all that apply)

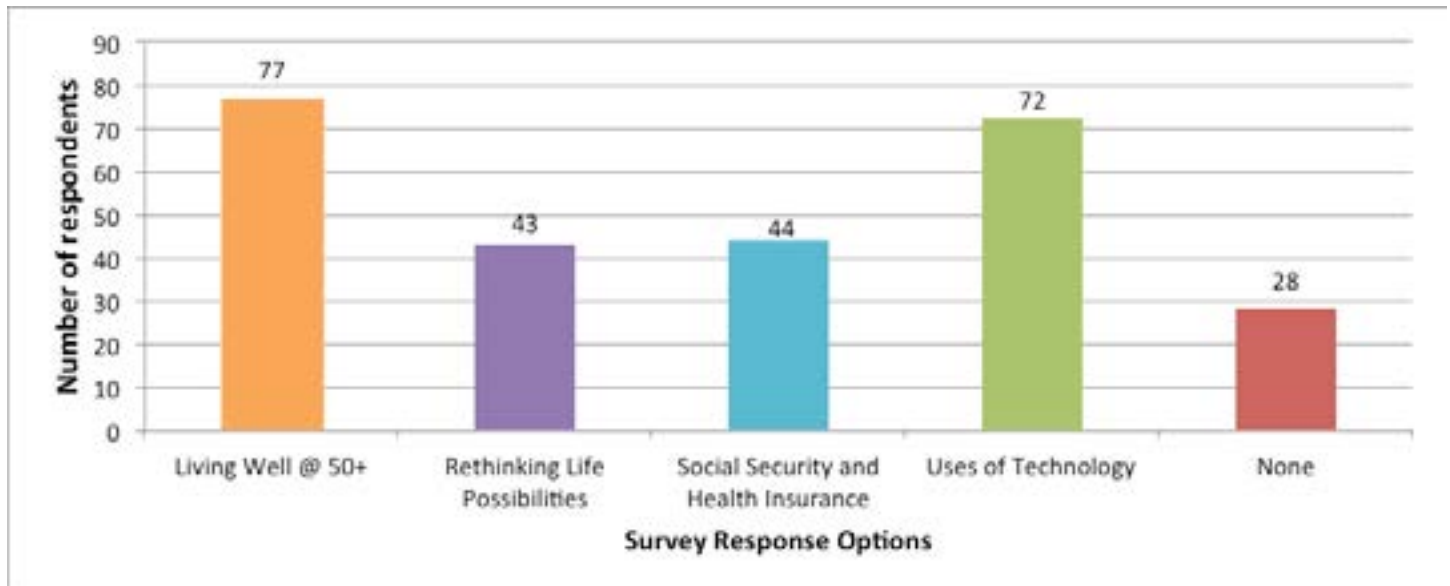
- A 1-day conference called LivingWell@50+ to take place in years alternating with the Health and Wellness Fair. Topics would likely include health and wellness, money and work, technology and innovation, and travel and lifestyle.
- A periodic 2-hour workshop conducted by Virginia AARP to help seniors rethink their life possibilities
- A 1-day seminar on Social Security and health insurance to take place in years alternating with the Health and Wellness Fair
- A 1-day seminar on uses of technology for seniors to take place in years alternating with the Health and Wellness Fair
- None of the above

As shown in the figure below, 28 (19%) respondents indicated no interest in any of the proposed topics. Among the remaining 118 respondents, 65% (n=77) indicated an interest in the Living Well @ 55 program and 61% (n=72) selected the technology seminar option. Fewer respondents were interested in the 2-hour workshop on rethinking life possibilities (36%; n=43) and the 1-day workshop on Social Security and health insurance (37%; n=44). Sixty of the 118 (51%) respondents selected multiple response options including 14 persons (12%) who selected all four event options offered.

Surveyors reported that some of the people surveyed were hesitant to choose day-long events even if they were interested because of the time commitment, saying things like “I’m too old to do anything all day.” Other people indicated interest in the 2-hour event because of the time rather than interest, saying that they would be more likely to attend an event that last 2 hours compared to a full day.

Additional comments written on the surveys included

- Any of above topics—chronic disease, palliative disease, Medicare benefits of hospice
- Need that! (referring to Uses of Technology option)
- One half-day seminar on Social Security and Uses of Technology would be better
- Beer fest for over 50 crowd—discuss health benefits of beer ☺



Treating Hearing Loss

From Tina King, *Executive Director, NRV Agency on Aging*

How many times have we heard... "hearing loss is just a part of aging" and then the subject is dismissed. The incidence of hearing loss does increase with age. However, the seriousness should not be overlooked. The prevalence and the consequences of hearing loss are astounding!

Hearing loss is the third most prevalent chronic health condition facing older adults. Approximately one third of Americans between ages 65 and 74 and nearly half of those over age 75 have hearing loss. And only an estimated 20% of those individuals who might benefit from treatment actually seek help.

Hearing loss impacts individuals in various ways, depending on several factors, including early versus late onset, the progressive nature of the loss, the severity of the loss, communication demands, and personality. Several clinical studies have linked untreated hearing loss with impairment in cognitive and psychological functioning. For example, a Johns Hopkins study indicates that older adults with hearing loss are more likely to develop problems thinking and remembering than older adults whose hearing is normal. According to the study, possible explanations for this include the ties between hearing loss and social isolation, with loneliness being an established risk factor for cognitive decline. A National Council on Aging survey indicates that untreated hearing loss significantly increases the incidences of depression, anxiety, and other psychosocial disorders.

What are some of the reasons and barriers that prevent individuals from seeking treatment for their hearing loss? The

insidious nature of hearing loss, the denial of the problem, the concern that hearing devices might be more bothersome than helpful and the cost seem to be the most common causes of not seeking treatment.

There is a great need to address the reasons and barriers to seeking treatment for hearing loss. Because the cost to individuals, families, the health care system and the state is significant and will continue to grow with the rapid increase in our "Baby Boomer" population in Virginia if hearing loss is untreated.

Currently, in Virginia, the cost of hearing aids are borne by the individual with no insurance coverage provided to assist with the expense. While 19 states require that health benefit plans pay for hearing aids, only 3 of these states (Arkansas, New Hampshire and Rhode Island) require coverage for both children and adults. In order for health insurance to cover the cost of hearing aids and the professional services necessary for medical evaluation and diagnosis, assessments, fitting and follow-up care, state legislation would need to be passed.

Don't delay seeking treatment for hearing loss. Treating hearing loss can improve an individual's quality of life tremendously and just might prevent early cognitive and memory deficits.

There are various resources available to assist if needed. **For information on current resources and programs that assist individuals with hearing impairment and other aging related concerns and needs, contact the New River Valley Agency on Aging at (540)-980-7720 or 1-866-260-4417 or by e-mail at [nrvaooa@nrvaooa.org](mailto:nrvaoa@nrvaooa.org).**

October Project:

Supplies for Seniors

September was a busy month for the Blacksburg Chapter, Community Service Committee held the annual State wide Food Drive. Thanks to all the AARP members and the RSVP members who helped out and made the drive a success. The food was distributed to Interfaith Food Pantry in Blacksburg and MCEAP Food Pantry in Christiansburg. I was lucky enough to go to Interfaith and the shelves were almost empty; did my heart good to be able to fill them up with our collected cans. We collected a total of 3377 lbs. of food and \$80.00 in cash. **Way to go!**

Our next big project is the RSVP "Supplies For Seniors." The AARP State office has agreed to co-sponsor this event for 2014 and are supplying the bags to fill for distribution to

seniors. To kick off this project the 'Supplies For Seniors Walk-A-Thon' will be held on October 16 from 10am - 1pm at the Christiansburg Recreation Center. Please come out and support this very worthwhile event. Bring supplies to donate, sponsor a walker or walk yourself. Old and young alike are encouraged to participate. For more information and for a list of supplies, contact RSVP at 382-5775. Sally Anna Stapleton, *Community Service Committee*

The chapter website at www.blacksburgaarp.org

Please check out the website for details and updates of all AARP Blacksburg activities. If you wish to suggest content for the site, simply contact the editor at dgc2@vt.edu. Don Creamer, *Website Editor*

Health & Wellness

FAIR: The Best Ever

During the afternoon of September 17 the collaboration between Blacksburg AARP and VCOM was once again on display in an impressive display of commercial and nonprofit exhibits and services at the 2014 Health and Wellness Fair. The Fair is an every-other-year event designed and implemented to give area citizens access to a broad array of health related organizations and services that are available to us all but perhaps not that well known in many cases.

Want to experiment with acupuncture, try a massage, check your blood pressure, get a flu shot, test your grip strength, explore what a chiropractic doctor might be able to do for you, or have a qualified dermatologist check that area of skin you may be concerned about? Imagine doing all this and more in just an hour or two spent at the health fair! Well, its possible, and data collected at the event showed that approximately 450 visitors had these opportunities.

It was enlightening to see just how many services are available to us here in Southwest Virginia. For example, some things we need to know but perhaps avoid exploring until too late are funeral costs and some of the options that may surprise. The Funeral Alliance was there to dispel many of the myths associated with funeral planning.

Are you or a family member a veteran? Volunteers were available to share the wonderful news of Virginia's Veterans Cemeteries, one located right here in Southwest Virginia that provides gravesites and a range of burial related benefits for eligible service members and even their spouses and children.

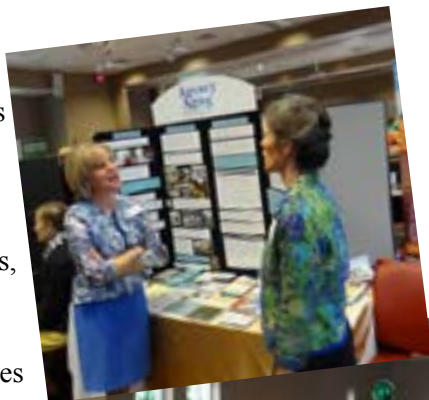
With approximately 100 exhibits available it was good to see the many

conversations among Fair visitors and representatives of free health clinics, community recreation centers, builders of retirement communities, fitness gyms, home and residential nursing services, and even banks and insurance providers. In short, there was a lot to do, and it appears from observation that visitors not only showed up, but also stayed to see and experience as much as possible. In fact, the exhibit tables reported at least 100 visits each.

It goes without saying that putting on such an event is a massive undertaking. There are many folks to acknowledge, but special thanks should go to John and Sharen Hillison for their tireless work on behalf of Blacksburg AARP to bring together so many resources under one roof, and to the VCOM community, led by Diane Sutphin, Lisa Leichner, and their small army of VCOM student volunteers who did everything from parking support to blood cholesterol testing. These young folks are the future and based on their energy, commitment, expertise, and obvious good will, we will surely be in good hands going forward.

Thanks to all who participated in the Fair and we hope to see you back in two years!

Submitted by Terry Wildman, *Vice President, Blacksburg AARP*





Chapter #2613
Leslye Bloom, President
P.O. Box 10082
Blacksburg, VA 24062

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

Join your local chapter!

AARP Blacksburg Chapter Member Application for 2015

Name

Annual (Calendar Year) Dues: \$15.00 (includes spouse)*

Spouse/Partner

New Renewal 90+ years old (no dues)

Address

Make checks to AARP Blacksburg Chapter #2613

City

And mail to

State Zip

P.O. Box 10082

Blacksburg, VA 24062

Phone

**Local Chapter membership requires membership in National*

Email

AARP. For more information, call 1-888-687-2277 or mail national dues to AARP • 601 E Street, NW • Washington, DC 20049.

Prefer to receive newsletters: (check one) Mail Email