

Chapter Picnic Tuesday, June 16

The Annual AARP Blacksburg Picnic & White Elephant Auction will be Tuesday June 16 from Noon to 1:30 p.m. at the Nellies Cave Park Shelter in Blacksburg.

Beverages, plates, knives & forks will be provided. Bring a covered dish or two of the following to share with other Chapter members: meat, salad, vegetables, or desert. Also bring all of those attic/basement treasures which you think will sell to buyers who will be bringing cash to purchase gift for family & friends.

Come early by 11:30 a.m. for fun & fellowship with our usual display of classic cars with the cooperation of the New River Valley Model A Club.



Do you experience chronic or intermitten pain?

The Center for Research in Health Behavior at Virginia Tech is seeking woment who experience chronic or intermitten pain to participate in a study about exercise. Participants must currently engage in ANY type of water-based exercise.

Participation will involve two visits to the Virginia Tech campus to provide information about your experiences with pain and exercise and daily telephone reporting to the project coordinator over a 2-month period about exercise involvement. Participants will be compensated at the end of the study with a \$20 gift card.

For more information, contact Elizabeth Johnson at the Center for Research in Health Behavior at Virginia Tech at 540-231-8746 or by email at VTCRHB@vt.edu.

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/>

**Directory of
Officers, Board of Directors, and Committee Chairs**

Report of the AARP Tax-aide program for 2008

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Email</u>	<u>Telephone</u>
Officers			
President	Paul Smeal	psmeal@vt.edu	552-4085
1st Vice Pres.	Jim Wightman	wightman@vt.edu	552-2207
Treasurer	Brian Allen	mballen@prodigy.net	552-4422
Secretary	Virgil Cook	vcook@vt.edu	382-5205
Board of Directors			
Class of 2009	Dan Fleming	dbfleming@vt.edu	951-1525
Class of 2009	Nancy Eiss	nsjeiss@verizon.net	951-4015
Class of 2010	Harriett Cooper	chayabrona@verizon.net	552-3446
Class of 2010	Ken Dawson	kedawson@verizon.net	552-1476
Class of 2010	Joe Fontenot	cajunjoe@vt.edu	552-3726
Class of 2011	Don Creamer	dgc2@vt.edu	951-2505
Class of 2011	John Hillison	hillison@vt.edu	552-8941
Class of 2011	Sue Farrar	suefarrar@verizon.net	381-1830
Committee Chairs and Appointees			
AARP of Virginia			
Liason	Ben Crawford	ben.crawford@vt.edu	961-5733
Assoc. Treasurer	June Schmidt	schmidtj@vt.edu	552-1590
Caring	Harriett Cooper	chayabrona@verizon.net	552-3446
Chaplain	Ken Dawson	kedawson@verizon.net	552-1476
Chapter Awards	Joe Fontenot	cajunjoe@vt.edu	552-3726
AARP Driver			
Safety	Curt Finch	crfinch@vt.edu	552-8179
Financial			
Planning	John Hillison	hillison@vt.edu	552-8941
Health Care	Larry Alexander	aalexand@radford.edu	951-8172
History	Doris Abraham	dsta118e@verizon.net	382-3392
Hospitality	Curtis Roane		552-2260
Legislative	Dan Fleming	dbfleming@vt.edu	951-1525
Membership	Jim Wightman	wightman@vt.edu	552-2207
News Editor	Edd Sewell	eddsowell@gmail.com	951-1746
Nominating	Class of 2009		
Program	Carl McDaniels	cmcd@vt.edu	552-5818
Public Relations	Norman & Nancy Eiss	nsjeiss@verizon.net	951-4015
VT Retirees Assoc.			
Liason	Margaret Kates		552-4107

The AARP Tax-aide program had another successful year in helping tax payers get their taxes completed and filed on time. The program is designed to assist middle to low income families with a preference given to seniors. However, we are allowed to file a tax return as long as it does not involve certain forms such as: Schedule C (business return), Schedule F (farm income) or Schedule E (rental property). These returns are technically out of our scope of training.

Here are some of the stats you may find interesting:

Federal Returns filed electronically	699
Total clients helped (some clients are information only)	825
Average Age	61
Age of clients	
10 and 20 years of age	14
90 and 100 years of age	9
Christiansburg residents served	446
Blacksburg residents served	78
Other Counties served – Pulaski, Giles, Roanoke, Floyd, Carroll	

This tax season we had 18 volunteers from Blacksburg, Christiansburg and Radford who made the program a success. If you would like to become involved with the Tax-Aide program, please feel free to call Pat Ballard at 382-1189.

Membership Report for April 2009

2009 Members dues paid	237
Lifetime members	46
Life members	7
Comp members	15
Honorary members	5
2008 members dropped for non-dues payment	58
Members to receive newsletter	310
New Members: Carroll B. Harvey	
Dick & Ann Saacke	

Membership committee: Jim Wightman (chair), Jim Gaines, Sue Farrar, Don Creamer

Caregivers also need time to unwind

by Cassie Mills

Director of Programs/Assistant to the Executive Director
New River Valley Agency on Aging

June is here. A month that boasts “National Great Outdoor Day,” “National Donut” and “Iced Tea Day,” as well as, “National Fly a Kite Day.” Apparently, June is the month when we are all supposed to kick back and relax. I began to think about the caregivers that I know and wondered how they would find time to unwind this summer. In researching possible ideas, I discovered that most articles emphasize the stress related to caregiving. But what about the tears of laughter and warm loving times of caregiving? Many caregivers have stories to tell about shared laughter and special moments with the person they’re caring for.

These caregivers are more likely to find these special times because they are able to balance their lives: they have joined support groups or asked for help. Overworked and exhausted caregivers who insist on doing everything themselves are less likely to experience these times. How sad. Stress robs us of our ability to be clear-headed and make smart choices.

The caregiver who feels committed to care for their loved one without any outside help, whether it be out of love, loyalty, or obligation, could often end up burned out and unable to enjoy special moments. They tend to the necessary tasks, but they deplete their energy by not

asking for help.

I have met many cognitively-impaired individuals who have a great sense of humor and interesting stories to share. Although a cognitive impairment robs the person of many of their abilities, their essence is still present. These individuals might respond inappropriately to situations, but a balanced caregiver is able to find a way to make the most of an awkward experience.

A friend told me that her mother now enjoys singing nursery rhymes with her and eating ice cream cones – experiences they haven’t shared in years. Yet shopping, which they used to love, has become a bore. A balanced caregiver is flexible enough to adapt to new experiences.

Someone with Alzheimer’s or Dementia may start singing or dancing in the middle of the grocery aisle while people stare. This is a joyful time for them. The question is whether you, as their caregiver, will join in or try to stop the behavior out of embarrassment. A good moment shared is a joyful time. Allow yourself to enter the moment.

**Remember the picnic
on Tuesday, June 16**



Summer Solstice 5K

By John Hillison

I hope all chapter members will enjoy the many activities the June 20th Blacksburg Summer Solstice has to offer. The chapter members who plan to walk or run in the Downtown Sundown 5K (3.1 miles) should know or do the following:

- Obtain a free red AARP t-shirt from President Smeal or a red AARP t-shirt can be purchased at EXPER-T’S next to Food Lion on main street (they have made one for me and you can use my name to get a compatible one for \$16.00)
- A group picture of AARP participants will be taken at 8:00pm thirty minutes before the 5K starts at the front entrance of the Blacksburg Library.
- Be sure to register by June 15th to get the reduced registration fee of \$17.00.
- Write “AARP participant” on the registration form.
- Pick up your registration packet by 7:15 pm on the 20th at the intersection of South Main and Washington Street.
- Send an e-mail note to Johnhillison@comcast.net or call 552-8941 to let me if you plan to participate in the 5K.

The following is a letter from Senator John Webb to our chapter after last month's meeting. It continues on page 5

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 19, 2009

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

Dear Members of the Blacksburg AARP Chapter:

Thank you for taking the time to host a town hall discussion regarding the current system of health care in the United States. I appreciate your taking the time to share your views.

I believe that everyone in this country should have access to health insurance that is affordable, that provides adequate coverage, and that is always available. There are 47 million Americans without health insurance and millions more that are underinsured. It is a matter of fundamental fairness that we address these inequities.

Health care costs are increasing rapidly, currently consuming \$2 trillion per year. We need to improve the quality, value, and availability of care associated with these costs. We can do this by producing better information regarding treatment, promoting health and preventing disease, and creating incentives so that Americans from all walks of life can receive quality health care.

I have made health care a priority during my time in the Senate. I have cosponsored numerous bills aimed at improving health care for hardworking Americans, including: the Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act of 2007 (S. 3), to give Medicare the authority to negotiate drug prices to ensure that senior citizens have access to the most affordable drugs; the Mental Health Parity Act (S. 558), to provide parity between health insurance coverage of mental health benefits and benefits for medical services; the Breast Cancer and Environmental Research Act (S. 579), to make grants for research regarding how environmental factors may cause breast cancer; the Health Centers Renewal Act (S. 901), to provide additional funding for community health centers; and the Conquer Childhood Cancer Act (S. 911), to advance medical research and treatment of pediatric cancers. I am pleased to inform you that the U.S. Senate, with my support, passed Senate bills 558, 579, 901, and 911 during 2008, and President Bush signed these bills into law.

In addition, I voted in favor of numerous bills that are critical for improving health care for all Americans. I voted several times to support the State Children's Health Insurance Program, which provides health insurance to children from low-income families, and I will continue to work for the expansion of this needed program. I also supported passage of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008 (H.R. 2764), which provides the National Institutes of Health with \$29 billion in funding. Lastly, I voted to support the safe importation of prescription drugs and to improve the Food and Drug Administration so that our country has a strong, vigilant public health watchdog.

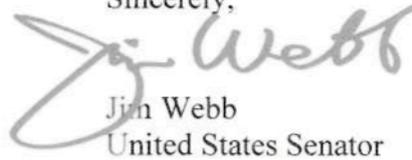
While these measures are helpful, there remains a critical need for comprehensive change that will advance the type of systemic health care reform that is essential to our nation and its people. I will continue to work with members from both sides of the aisle to achieve this objective.

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

As the Senate continues to address health care issues, please be assured that your views will be very helpful to me and my staff. I hope that you will continue to share your views with us in the years ahead.

I would also invite you to visit my website at www.webb.senate.gov for regular updates about my activities and positions on matters that are important to Virginia and our nation.

Sincerely,

Jim Webb
United States Senator

JW:mm

Mayor Rordam responds to Blacksburg AARP Questions

It was a pleasure being with the local AARP chapter recently and I particularly enjoyed answering questions about Blacksburg's government and the future of our Town. While we discussed many important issues, I would like to focus on two questions that were raised.

The first deals with the Town's meals tax and how it applies to the Virginia Tech Campus. This is a complicated issue that has dogged University-Town relations for years. At a recent Town Council meeting, the Town Attorney and the Town Manager gave a very good overview of the meals tax issue and the history of considering meals tax collection on campus. The information provided to Council was a signal that the Town is very interested in engaging in a serious dialog with Virginia Tech on the tax issue. Town staff researched Virginia's state university communities to learn how they handle meals

tax collection on campuses. Information collected from that research will help guide future discussions with Virginia Tech administrators.

Virginia Tech has expressed concern that collecting a meals tax on campus will set a precedent for Town interference in the University's planning and operations. Questions have also been raised regarding the Town's interest in collecting meals taxes on student meal plans. So, let's be clear on the topic of student meal plans. The Town of Blacksburg has never sought to tax student meal plans and does not plan to do so in the future. Student meal plans make up the bulk of Virginia Tech's food budget and should not be taxed. In addition, because Virginia Tech is a state entity, the Town will never be able to exert its influence in areas such as zoning and planning. Our goal is to simply work with the University

and identify areas where cash transactions are used to pay for a meal or lodging. A good example of this is the Inn at Virginia Tech and we look forward to a cooperative discussion with the University addressing the tax issue. Fortunately, our history is one of working together and it is in that spirit that we open these discussions.

The other issue raised deals with the Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine and senior health care. While the Town has no direct influence on the College, I have found the administrators of VCOM to be community oriented and focused on our area. After all, that is one of the missions of the school. I would be pleased to attend future meetings between VCOM and AARP to discuss ways for the College to assist AARP in promoting senior health in the New River Valley.

Thank you for inviting me to be with you all this year. I hope to be invited back next year to participate in more discussions about our community.

Treasurer Report

Balance April 30, 2009	\$3,741.58
CREDITS	
05/22 Membership	12.50
05/22 Interest	0.45
<hr/> TOTAL	12.95
DEBITS	
05/15 Kopy Korner	125.48
05/19 Doris Abraham (History supplies)	43.63
05/19 Town of Blacksburg (coffee etc. for 5/19 meeting)	50.00
<hr/> TOTAL	\$219.11
BALANCE at end of May 2009	\$3,535.42

AARP Chapter 2613
Board of Directors

Minutes June 2, 2009

Call to Order—President Paul Smeal called the meeting to order at 10:00.

Those in Attendance

Officers: President Paul Smeal, Treasurer Brian Allen, Secretary Virgil Cook.

Board Members: Don Creamer, Ken Dawson, Sue Farrar, Joe Fontenot, John Hillison.

Non-board-member committee chairs and appointees: R. B. "Ben" Crawford, Nancy Eiss, Dan Fleming, Margaret Kates, Carl McDaniels, Edd Sewell.

Guest: Karen Day, Town of Blacksburg.

Approval of Minutes—The minutes of the April 7 meeting were approved as published.

Treasurer's Report—After observing that the balance was just about where he thought it should be, Brian Allen presented the following report for May, 2009:

Balance April 30, 2009	\$3,741.58
CREDITS	
05/22 Membership	12.50
05/22 Interest	0.45
<hr/> TOTAL	12.95

DEBITS

05/15 Kopy Korner	125.48
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05/19 Town of Blacksburg (coffee etc. for 5/19 meeting)	50.00
<hr/> TOTAL	\$219.11
BALANCE at end of May 2009	\$3,535.42

Membership—Don Creamer distributed the membership report to the board. The report is summarized here. Membership in all categories is 323. We lost one member in May with the death of Connie Anderson.

Programs—Karen Day from the Rec Center spoke to the board. She said that they were trying to organize a shred-a-thon in the fall. The company that would shred documents can come only on a Friday or Saturday. The service would be free to the public. The company charges \$125 per hour. Thus, a three-hour session would cost \$375. The Rec Center wants help from AARP and other groups to help defray the cost of the service. The shredding company travels around to businesses on Monday through Thursday, precluding sessions on one of those days. Brian Allen told the group that no one used his shredder when he brought it to chapter meetings. The question is, then, whether our members need the service. Someone suggested that we might donate \$25 in support of the program. Dan Fleming indicated that he would rather put the money into one of the charities that we already support. The board took no action.

Carl McDaniels reported that the committee is planning a program for September on healthcare, covering CPR, fitness, and strength training.

A member suggested a Town-Council-candidate forum for October in anticipation of the November election.

Picnic—Carl McDaniels indicated that we can take items that do not sell at the auction to the YMCA Thrift Shop. We do not yet have music. Consequently, we will play CD's for background music. The chapter will furnish eating utensils and drinks.

Carl asked whether we should have a booth at Steppin' Out. The group agreed that the benefits of a booth were minimal, especially in light of the \$100 fee for a booth. Paul suggested that we ask some of the groups that we support to allow us to place AARP brochures at their stations.

Legislation—Dan Fleming. The board commended Dan for the April program with our legislators.

Dan then turned to Federal legislation. Both the illegal immigrants bill and the tort-reform bills are dead. The primary issue is paying for programs. There is some talk of taxing beer and sugared soft drinks.

Driver's Ed—Carl McDaniels reported that there is room for six more in the course scheduled for later this week.

Awards—Joe Fontenot. There are two chapter awards. What other awards should we consider?

Newsletter—Edd Sewell. The board agreed that we should put out a newsletter in late August. There was concern about what to do about the Website. Connie was the only one who had the password for making changes in the Webpage, but Edd Sewell indicated that she had given him a disk with all of the material that is on the Website. Frank Lau has agreed to maintain the BEV Seniors list.

Health—Larry Alexander. Larry again told the board about the Website Senior Navigator, Seniornavigator.org, which is a free service. It is a very valuable site for seniors, making some 20,000 free sources of data available.

Connie Anderson—What should we do to honor her? President Paul suggested that one option would be for the chapter to make a contribution to the Community Foundation in Connie's name. Connie wanted to start a

fund to benefit the Town of Blacksburg's senior programs, so she started a fund at the community Foundation in the chapter's name. The interest is to go to the Rec Center. Another option might be a bench in the hall outside the office. Carl McDaniels raised the possibility of funding a scholarship for a student at New River Community College who agrees to go into geriatric nursing.

Paul did not call for action; he wants people to consider the possibilities so that we can decide in the fall.

State Liaison—Ben Crawford. Ben has nominated Carl McDaniels for the Andrews award, the highest recognition that the state office gives. Ben then read from his cover letter to the state AARP. The letter highlighted the chapter offices where Carl has served and the numerous areas where he has worked for the chapter. Ken Dawson moved that the board support the nomination. The motion passed.

Adjournment—The meeting was adjourned at 11:09.

Respectfully submitted: Virgil A. Cook, Secretary

Did someone say picnic?

Nellies Cave Park Shelter (at the end of Grissom Lane) Tuesday, June 16 from noon to 1:30. Bring a dish to share.



Paul Smeal, President
AARP Chapter #2613
P.O. Box 10082
Blacksburg, VA 24062

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

Membership Renewal or New Member Application

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]

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