



BLACKSBURG NEWS

Volume 23, Issue 2

Chapter # 2613

February 2006

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

Newsletter Editors: Ben and Carol Crawford; ben.crawford@vt.edu

Membership Meeting –TUESDAY, February 21, 2006 MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Blacksburg Senior Center
11:30 a.m. - Bag lunch and fellowship
Program from 12 noon to 1:00 p.m.

Our program will be a discussion of Montgomery County's new Comprehensive Plan. Leading the discussion is **Meghan Dorsett**, who is with Montgomery County's Planning Department. Find out how the Comprehensive Plan was arrived at, what it holds for the future, and how it will be implemented.

Karen Drake, who is working on the Blacksburg Comprehensive Plan, will also be with us. Karen will tell us about the task force now updating and revising the Blacksburg Comprehensive Plan. Your participation is invited and welcomed. NOTE: The Blacksburg Comprehensive Plan Task Force is a part of the Blacksburg Planning Commission chaired by one of our members, **Dale Oliver**. The program starts at noon, but come early to eat your brown bag lunch and welcome members of the *League of Women Voters of Montgomery County*, which is co-sponsoring this program.

Have you paid your 2006 dues???

Please renew your membership if your mailing label shows 2005

2006 BLACKSBURG AARP CHAPTER DUES
\$10.00 Individual or \$15.00 for joint couple
If your label shows 2006, you are paid for this year

TEST YOUR DRIVING IQ Do your driving skills need a tune-up? Test your driving IQ online to find out if it's time for a refresher. Visit www.aarp.org/drive to take the quiz and check out other safe driving resources (See page 4, *AARP Driver Safety*).

CARL'S COMMENTS

TO SERVE--NOT TO BE SERVED is a long standing motto of national AARP. So, in celebration of 45 years of national AARP Chapters and 30 years of AARP Blacksburg Chapter 2613 we will try to implement that worthy goal--in some new ways for us.

At the February 7 Board of Directors meeting it was agreed to explore active partnerships with six locally based groups: *Montgomery County Christmas Store, Blacksburg Food Pantry, NRV Free Clinic, NRV Woman's Resource Center, NRV Habit for Humanity, and RSVP of Montgomery County and Radford*. As a group we will begin to seek ways AARP Blacksburg can provide both financial and volunteer contributions to each of these local organizations.

Further, the Board of Directors authorized developing some direct volunteer opportunities in several local service activities, such as: 1. Ramp Installation Projects for home accessibility of seniors, along with **AARP Virginia's National Day of Service (May 11, 2006)** and Home Depot, 2. Blacksburg Adopt-A-Park program for monthly clean up, 3. Renewed emphasis on caring for our own members through the existing Caring Committee, and 4. A Major Health and Wellness Fair for Tuesday September 19, 2006 in cooperation with the Blacksburg Community Center.

So, this year we will be opening up a number of volunteer opportunities for our members to serve others in our community. Take a look at what we

hope to do in 2006 and call me at **552-5818** or e-mail me at **cmcd@vt.edu** to let me know where you would like to serve. I look forward to hearing from you at our meeting Feb 21 or via e-mail or a phone call. Together we can make this a banner year of service to others.

Carl McDaniels, President 2006

FUTURE PROGRAMS

Harriett Cooper

March 21: This program should be both exciting and practical. Entitled "**Making your Home Safe and Comfortable as You Age**" by **Tim Lawrence** of Blue Ridge Home Improvement, Inc. Lawrence is a Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist, acknowledging his expertise in providing for the changes people's homes require to ensure their comfort and safety as they age.

April--Two programs: In addition to the regular 3rd Tuesday meeting (**April 18**) in the Blacksburg Community Center with an interesting program, our chapter is assisting AARP VA with a second program--**April 20**—at Custom Catering.

This second program will be four hours long and focus on **Smart Care in Health Choices**. Lunch will be provided at no charge. Up to date information and help will be provided on health care related issues, including Medicare benefits, Medicare rights, and use of the internet to find health care resources.

More information: www.aarp.org/va
Mark your calendar: 3/21, 4/18, 4/20.

PLEASE SUPPORT FELLOW MEMBERS BY “CARING”

Kathy Jeffers

The Caring Committee would like to remind members that get well, sympathy and thinking of you cards are available to be sent to our chapter members.

Contact **Kathy Jeffers** at **951-3946**, or **Kats7772000@yahoo.com** with type of card needed and frequency the card needs to be sent.

You may also fill out the Caring Sheet at the monthly meeting. AARP Chapter #2613 cares, and we want our members to be remembered.

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

Jim Wightman

Thanks to **Joyce Martin** and **Connie Anderson** for their help in getting the new membership chair off to a good start.

Our current chapter membership stands at 321 including 6 Life Members (90 years or older) . Our membership dues are based on a calendar year. 45% of our members have already paid their 2006 dues.

Check the mail label on this newsletter. If “2005” appears on the label, you have NOT paid for the current year.

Thanks to **Connie Anderson** for new name badges which make their debut at our next regular meeting on February 21st.

A new member recruitment portable display board has been made. If you are attending an event in the area where a number of seniors are expected

to come, please consider taking the board and recruit a few new members.

You may be unaware that *every chapter member is on the recruiting committee*. And, there is a **reward for recruiting new members - \$1 off next year’s dues for each new member you recruit**.

Please note we now offer **lifetime membership** in our local chapter for \$100 per person. I look forward to working with each chapter member.

AARP CONSUMER E-BRIEFS

Sign up on line for this monthly electronic newsletter. Get breaking consumer news along with tips to protect yourself from frauds and scams—all with links to helpful websites, product recalls and ways to get “free” stuff. Go to

www.aarp.org/emailnews

AARP TAX PREPARATION

For federal and state returns, Call 961-1149 (Recreation Center) to get started. This free service provides electronically filed returns (unless you have a unique situation) It is an **AARP/IRS approved, computer program (Tax Wise)--an UP-TO-DATE, SECURE, and PRIVATE Service open to all.**

Hours: Noon to 7 p.m. each Monday and Wednesday. Those needing service who have difficulty traveling from Warm Hearth should contact **Frank Lau** at 961-0516 for a Warm Hearth visit.

AARP DRIVER SAFETY

Our two programs are filling up fast: **Mar 29** and **31**, (Wed and Fri) from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Blacksburg Community Center, **OR Apr 19** and **21**, (Wed and Fri) from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Warm Hearth.

REGISTER by calling **Jim Gaines** at **552-6851** to sign up for an AARP Driver Safety Class. First come, first serve to a maximum of 20.

Sessions begin promptly at 1 p.m. and are held four hours each day. Students **must** attend both sessions to graduate and obtain a certificate. The certificate is evidence for your insurance discount. Cost is \$10 per person payable to AARP.

Attendance is limited to the first 20 persons who apply and you must be 50 years of age or older--only those over 55 can receive the insurance discount.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Dan Fleming

NATIONAL: AARP plans to ask Congress to change the new Medicare prescription drug program by changing the rule that counts assets such as a house, in determining Medicare patients being poor enough to qualify for special low-income subsidies. They also want to allow health officials to negotiate directly with drug makers over the prices they charge through the program.

The recently passed budget makes cuts in Medicaid and Medicare and will make it more difficult for people to transfer assets to enter nursing homes funded by Medicaid. The Congressional Budget Office projects by 2010 that 13

million low-income people will face higher co-payments for medical services. Savings are projected because large numbers of low income seniors and children are expected to cease seeking medical care because of the higher costs.

President Bush's proposed new budget for 2007 calls for additional cuts in Medicare and Medicaid over the next five years including payments to hospitals, a freeze on payments to using homes, home health agencies and oxygen providers. He also wants higher income seniors to pay higher Medicare premiums beyond the increased payments already scheduled for 2007. He also proposes controversial health savings accounts.

STATE: AARP supported bills are still in committee including the pay day lending bills. Efforts are being made at some compromise over these. Bills calling for dramatic changes in Medicaid appear to be heading for a one year study by the responsible agencies.

The *Caregiver Grant Program* bill has been amended to increase the grant available to a caregiver of a mentally or physically impaired relative from \$500 to \$1,500. It is a concern to Virginia AARP that the focus on transportation spending may come at the expense of urgent demands on core services, including the long term care needs of seniors.

A repeal of the *estate tax* would result in a substantial reduction in state revenue that will have to be made up somewhere else.

Blacksburg AARP Chapter #2613

Board of Directors Monthly Meeting
Blacksburg Community Center
Tuesday, February 7, 2006

Members Present:

R. B. "Ben" Crawford	Mike Sporakowski	Nancy Eiss	Jim Wightman
Connie Anderson	Margaret Kates	Mary Ellen Moore	Jim Moore
Jo Ann Underwood	Doris Abraham	Dale Oliver	Curt Finch
Donald Elson	Harriett Cooper	Jim Gaines	Brian Allen
Dan Fleming	June Schmidt	Glen Mitchell	Al Crawford
Carl McDaniels	Angela Little		

1. President McDaniel **called the meeting to order** at 9:03 a.m. and those in attendance viewed the video "AARP Chapters – A Community of Service Since 1960". Jim Moore made a motion to continue using the current room for AARP Board meetings. Allen seconded, and the Board voted to continue using the same space for meetings.
2. McDaniels asked to add the Town of Blacksburg Comprehensive Plan to the **agenda**.
3. The Board approved the January, 2006 **minutes** unanimously.
4. Allen, Treasurer, distributed a **financial report** for January 2006 showing an ending balance of \$2,974.94. McDaniels accepted the report for the record.
5. Oliver, Chair of the Financial Planning Committee, presented the **proposed 2006 budget** based on 315 members. He explained that the Health and Wellness Fair is not a regular part of the budget. A motion was made by Ben Crawford to approve the budget as presented with an expression of thanks to Oliver for his hard work. Elson seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
6. McDaniels introduced new chairpersons, **Nancy Eiss, Public Relations; Mike Sporakowski, Community Service; Harriet Damant, Health Care; and Al Crawford, Ways and Means**. A discussion was held on possible community partnerships and community service projects. All of the following organizations who were contacted by AARP members stated that they would like to become a community partner with AARP: *The Christmas Store, The Interfaith Food Pantry, Free Clinic of the NRV, The Women's Resource Center, Habitat for Humanity and RSVP*. Potential projects include: Help with Medicare Part D RX, Ramp Improvements, Clean-up Parks in Blacksburg, Increased Caring for Members, Medical and Meals Transportation, and Sponsoring a Health and Wellness Fair. Ben Crawford offered to have the Ruritan Club co-sponsor the Health and Wellness Fair because they have an automatic liability insurance policy. A motion was passed by the Board to have McDaniels and Little explore the insurance needs and issues for the Health and Wellness Fair and potential projects of the Chapter.
7. Wightman, **Membership Chair**, distributed a report stating that 45% of the membership has renewed their dues as of February 1, 2006. Anderson has made name badges for all members. One of the ideas to increase membership is to offer a lifetime membership for \$100. A motion was made, seconded and carried by acclamation to offer the lifetime membership of \$100 per person.
8. Cooper, **Program Chair**, reported that the February 21 meeting will be co-sponsored with the League of Women Voters and Meghan Dorsett will give a presentation on the Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan. It was decided to leave the April 18 meeting open for possible local election issues. The Health and Wellness Fair is scheduled for September 19, 2006. A White Elephant Sale will be arranged sometime during the year (probably as part of June 20 Picnic).
9. Ben Crawford, **Newsletter Chair Co-Chair**, stated newsletter deadline for articles is this Friday.
10. **AARP Virginia Events** are: February 13 – Day at the State Capitol; April 20 - "Smart Choices" Workshops – Blacksburg, Custom Catering; May 11 – Day of Service

11. Jim Gaines has 15 signed up in each “**Driver Safety**” class. Frank Lau has begun serving clients through the Town of Blacksburg Senior Center for **AARP Tax Aide**.

12. Fleming, **Legislative Co-chair**, presented information prepared by Finch, Mitchell and himself on the **Estate tax repeal**. He distributed copies of a letter sent to the VA Senators by the state AARP Director and President expressing the AARP position.

He also gave the national and state level issues adopted by AARP. He recommended that the Board endorse the state AARP position opposing the repeal of the estate tax. Cooper made the motion, Finch seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Gaines, **History Chair**, presented the final draft of the Chapter’s 30-year history to Ben Crawford for review.

13. Schmidt reported on the **Volunteer Recognition Celebration**, which is scheduled for Saturday, April 1 at the Blacksburg Community Center. Since Elson is serving on the planning committee, he relinquished his vote to McDaniels and Moore to nominate the candidate for the AARP Chapter. Mary Ellen Moore, the **Hospitality Committee Co-chair**, volunteered the committee to assist on the day of the event.

14. After discussion on a date that a representative from the Town of Blacksburg could give a presentation on the Comprehensive Plan, the Board decided to postpone a presentation until a later date. Ron Gaysunas has requested to act as an AARP Chapter spokesperson on the Medicare Part D issues. It was decided not to grant authorization to have a chapter spokesperson on this issue. The meeting was **adjourned** at 11:12 a.m.

Angela Little, Secretary

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION CELEBRATION
APRIL 1, 2006-----10:00-11:30 A.M., Blacksburg Community Center

Mark your calendar now for the upcoming Volunteer Recognition Celebration. This outstanding event will be Saturday, April 1, 2006 from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. at the Blacksburg Community Center. It is sponsored by our Blacksburg AARP Chapter, the American Red Cross, the YMCA at Virginia Tech, RSVP Programs of the New River Valley, and the Blacksburg Senior Center.

From our Chapter, **Dale Oliver, Joyce Martin, Angela Little, Don Elson, and June Schmidt** are serving on the planning committee for the event. They ask that you help in two ways:

First: They need volunteers to help with the event itself. Call **June at 552-1590** to let her know of your interest in serving. **Second:** Nominations for outstanding volunteers from community organizations are needed. A letter inviting community organizations to nominate volunteers and a two-page nomination form can be obtained from June. Call her at **552-1590** or **E-mail** her at schmidtj@vt.edu. **Nominations are due by Friday, March 3, 2005.**

The planning committee has sent information about the event to organizations throughout the New River Valley requesting them to nominate outstanding volunteers. A highlight of the event will be the awarding of the Jim and Lenna Moore Citizen and Community Service Award. Both Jim and Lenna were exemplary in their service to the community and to our AARP Chapter.

The Volunteer Recognition Celebration features entertainment, awards recognitions, and light refreshments. There is no cost for nominating a volunteer or for attending the event. Dale, Joyce, Angela, Don, and June look forward to your volunteering to help and having you join with us on Saturday morning, April 1.

2006 BLACKSBURG AARP CHAPTER OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, CHAIRS

PRESIDENT:

Carl McDaniels cmcd@vt.edu

1st VICE PRESIDENT:

Joyce Martin jomart23@vt.edu

2nd VICE PRESIDENT:

Jim Gaines gaines@vt.edu

SECRETARY:

Angela Little anglittle@naxs.net

TREASURER:

Brian Allen mballen@prodigy.net

ASSOCIATE TREASURER:

June Schmidt schmidtj@vt.edu

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CLASS OF 2006:

Doris Abraham dsta@earthlink.net

Jim Gaines gaines@vt.edu

Jim Moore mem@vt.edu

CLASS OF 2007:

Don Elson elsond@vt.edu

Tom Jeffers kats7772000@yahoo.com

Harriet Damant hdamant@bev.net

CLASS OF 2008:

Curt Finch crfinch@vt.edu

Margaret Kates connie@vt.edu

Frank Lau franklau1@msn.com

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Brian Allen mballen@prodigy.net

Ben Crawford ben.crawford@vt.edu

Carl McDaniels cmcd@vt.edu

NEWSLETTER EDITORS:

Ben and Carol Crawford

ben.crawford@vt.edu

WEBMASTER:

Connie Anderson connie@vt.edu

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

CARING: Kathy Jeffers

Kats7772000@yahoo.com

Lula Roberts lula.roberts1@verizon.net

CHAPLAINS:

Ken Dawson kdawson@vt.edu

Norman Grover ngrover@vt.edu

CHAPTER AWARDS:

Don Elson elsond@vt.edu

Jim Owen jowen@vt.edu

COMMUNITY SERVICE: Co-Chair

Mike Sporakowski eagle1@vt.edu

FINANCIAL PLANNING:

Dale Oliver jdoliver@vt.edu

HEALTH CARE: Co-Chairs

Harriet Damant hdamant@bev.net

Jo Ann Underwood joa@vt.edu

HISTORY:

Jim Gaines gaines@vt.edu

HOSPITALITY:

Cerrie Coil cerrie@verizon.net

Mary Ellen Moore mem@vt.edu

LEGISLATIVE:

Glen Mitchell glenhugh@adelphia.net

Dan Fleming dbflemin@vt.edu

MEMBERSHIP:

Jim Wightman jpdad@bev.net

PROGRAM:

Harriett Cooper chayabrona@verizon.net

PUBLIC RELATIONS:

Norman and Nancy Eiss neiss@vt.edu

TELEPHONE:

Harriett Cooper chayabrona@verizon.net

Margaret Kates connie@vt.edu

Rhoda Lau mommakit4@msn.net

VIRGINIA TECH RETIREES ASSOCIATION

LIAISON: Jim Wightman jpdad@bev.net

WAYS AND MEANS: Al Crawford

AARP—*The power to make it better.* AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization dedicated to making life better for all people as they age. AARP provides information and resources; engages in legislative, regulatory, and legal advocacy, assists members in serving their communities; and offers a wide range of unique benefits, special products, and services for members. AARP was founded in 1958 and was formerly called the American Association of Retired Persons. About half of the nearly 35 million members work, either full or part-time. There are approximately 930,000 Virginia members.

Carl McDaniels, President
AARP Chapter #2613
P. O. Box 10082
Blacksburg, VA 24062

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NEW MEMBER OR 2006 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL APPLICATION

Membership in the Blacksburg AARP Chapter requires membership in National AARP. Contact **Jim Wightman** at 552-2007 or jpdad@bev.net if you need a national AARP application.

Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Address: _____ City & Zip: _____

Phone: _____ - _____ - _____ E-Mail: _____

Membership: _____ New member of Blacksburg AARP Chapter
_____ Renewal of membership in Blacksburg AARP Chapter
_____ Single membership dues **\$10 for 2006**
_____ Joint couple dues **\$15.00 for 2006**
_____ **Life Time \$100 per person**

Recruited by (if appropriate) _____

Complete, attach check made out to Blacksburg AARP, and bring to the next Membership Meeting on the third Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Center, or board meeting; or mail to: **AARP Chapter #2613, POB 10082, Blacksburg, VA 24062.** If you are already a member of the Blacksburg Chapter, please pass this form onto a friend that may be interested in membership