

Minutes
Blacksburg Chapter - AARP
Sept. 5, 2017

Present: Terry Wildman, Don Creamer, Wendy Baldwin, Peter Magolda, Val Caluni, Ben Crawford, Thais Beams, Pat Ballard, Lisa Moose, Joy Herbert, Jerry Niles, Ryan Martin.

Report of the Treasurer: all accounts balance and \$5400 of the AARP funds are LLI funds.

Approval of the minutes: minutes were approved

The chapter received a note from Warm Hearth thanking us for our support. Also, Leading Lights sent a plaque expressing their gratitude.

The Center for Gerontology shared a notice about a presentation by Cory Bolkan entitled "Growing Old, At home: Strategies to Promote Health Aging in Place" that will be presented Sept. 15 at 1p.m. in the Auditorium 1015 Life Science Circle, Steger Hall. Terry reported that he had met with Pam Teaster, the new head of the Center for Gerontology to look at ways our organizations could work together. She has invited us to be named as "friend of the center for gerontology"...they have 88 affiliated faculty who do aging-related research. Attending their events is a good way to show our interest. According to Don, Pam is hoping to have Jim Dau at their board meeting.

TOB/BCC Joy reported that there is interest in courses in defensive driving. Ben noted that we have had requests, but doesn't think AARP has any instructors here. You have to be trained and certified to be an instructor. There are ways to take part of the course online, but then there is no insurance discount. Attempts to find instructors have not been successful, even when people initially express interest. This is an AARP national initiative, not a local chapter initiative. In Virginia, the law is that if you take a certified program you shall receive a discount over and above other discounts.

The **About Town** brochures are out and were distributed.

Nominations committee...The outgoing board members constitute the committee, but Shirley is not here anymore and Jerry has agreed to stand for VP which just leaves Pat Hyer for the committee. Terry will invite Don Creamer and Ben Crawford to participate, with Pat as the chair.

Steppin' Out. There was discussion of the traffic by the table (benefits brochure ran out on the first morning) and whether the correct metric for success is whether we get new members. This is more an opportunity to advertise what AARP Blacksburg does. It was noted that we do not have a concise brochure that highlights why we exist, what we do, and includes a membership form.

14 members of the chapter participated, plus spouses. We got 80 names on the sign up for gerrymandering organization. And a special thanks to Jennie and Mike Riley who rescued all the material from a thunderstorm Looking ahead. We need at least two people at a time and 2 hour shifts are doable. AARP Virginia has paid the registration costs and they like us to do it.

Motion to participate next year passed unanimously with the suggestion that we think about tools (like a brochure) to help us market AARP Blacksburg. Don will draft some text and circulate and Peter will contribute pictures. If we have a brochure the VA or national office might mail it for us.

Events: Food drive, oct. 1, 11-3....sally anna needs volunteers to do that in two hour shifts. So far, the volunteers are Terry, Ben, Thais, Jerry .

Circulated a flyer for a 10% discount, sept. 25th at Macadoos, Christiansburg, sponsored by RSVP.

Oct. 26, is the social at **WhiteBarrel** winery. Don will send out a notice by mailchimp and another in Oct. to attract LLI and AARP members to come and enjoy themselves. \$25 per person, horderves and one glass of wine or wine tasting. We divide the proceeds with the winery and we get half. It is preferable to pay in advance online.

Hospitality: Thais reported on the holiday lunch, Dec. 5, with a board meeting just before that. Thais will work with the chef on the menu, possibly reverting to the ham/turkey menu of yesteryear.

Community Foundation: Don reported that the Community Foundation big event will be at the Inn on Nov. 14. This is a new annual meeting format for them. There is an all volunteer state meeting which is on the same night. The state AARP volunteer event is the biggest, thing AARP does in virginia, Not clear who from Blacksburg got an invitation or who is going.

Art Project: Wendy and Peter reported on the evolving Art Project. The idea would be to have an art display that happened in conjunction with the June 1, art walk. The groundwork has been laid and there is considerable interest in the project. One goal would be to focus on intergenerational art and celebrate that art is something that one can continue doing in retirement or can begin as a retirement activity. Peter will lead this activity for AARP Blacksburg. Don raised this with the LLI program committee met which may be another opportunity to tie into an existing art-oriented activity/people. One issue might be whether AARP Virginia would provide some funds for prizes. Lisa reported that Pam Teaster seemed enthusiastic about timing something with their Center is doing. Ryan was interested in ways to grow this into perhaps an art installation or mural. That would be the kind of thing this first activity might grow into. The board recommended proceeding.

Awards committee: This needs to be reconstituted and there was enthusiasm for have Tamara Hodsden lead this. We could see who was interested at the next general meeting.

State report. Ben reported on a new state advocacy position. The person heading this has a strong and varied background..

State priorities:

1. Family caregivers, workforce flexibility, tax credits. Data show that there are \$7,000 out of pocket costs on average. Out of town caregivers average \$12,000. The AARP position is that there should be a tax break to acknowledge that outlay.
2. Work and save. AARP is looking for need more options to build secure nest eggs.
3. Long term care ombudsman program.

In terms of working with political candidates there was interest in generating a single question, like “what is your position on health care for seniors?” and put responses on facebook or something like that. That is the “We want to know” campaign. AARP VA has been trying to get the candidates for governor to debate, without success.

Activities for our **general meeting** include seeing who would want to sign up for food bank activity and perhaps finding potential trainers for safe driving.

Legislative: Val noted that his report is on the webpage and in the newsletter.

Gerrymandering..There are a lot of major efforts going on and a case is going to the supreme court for the first time. Of course, beating back gerrymandering won't help unless people get out and vote.

Social Security: there will be an adjustment in 2018, perhaps 2.2% or 2.3%

LLI partnership: . You can register now for LLI and for courses starting 9/6. Spring courses being planned now. Now there is a board of directors running it which was important to secure 501c3 status and incorporation. Discussions are still underway about securing funding for LLI from the the Osher foundation.

Email: Don reported that a mass emailing will be sent out in the next few days.

Membership Ryan shared a membership report. We added four people from two households.

Newsletter The newsletter has gone to the printer and should be going out Wednesday. Itis posted on the website now.

Program committee: Don reported that we are set for oct. and nov. and open for business for next year. Nov. program is Kevin Faust, chief of police VT who will present a case study re: the hijacking of an Egyptian plane. He has been featured on tv and a very good spokesperson. Don has invited Brian Jacks and Jim Dao. Ryan noted that AARP national that might be of interest, especially the one on the family act. There was discussion of the challenges of the long term insurance market/benefits. There was discussion of having the new mayor come to a

general meeting to share their vision, and also interest in thanking the outgoing major. The latter could be done at the annual winter luncheon.

Timebank: Val reported that he has resigned from this for personal reasons. The board thanked him for his service. It is a great organization with one meeting a month, some orientation sessions. While it doesn't require a lot of time the relationship is worthwhile for us. It was suggested that Lisa could take on this activity, and she accepted the new role. Terry will notify Ellen Stewart about the change.

Website, Don reported that the website was in good shape. There was discussion of the software that Carolyn uses and whether we need to be helping support it.

New Business: Discussion of ways that the chapter could contribute to the hurricane relief activities. There is a matching program that we might want to make use of and can announce it at the general meeting. Don is willing to send out an email note.

House Beautiful Magazine named us #1 in happiest city in the U.S.

