
Blacksburg News



February 2007, Volume 24, Issue 2

Mark your calendar to attend the annual **Volunteer Recognition Celebration**

Blacksburg Community Center

Saturday, March 31

10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

No charge

—Plenty of good finger food

—Entertainment by the **Sweet Adalines**

—Nominate your outstanding volunteer for recognition

Pick up nomination forms at YMCA

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION CELEBRATION

Mark your calendar now for the upcoming Volunteer Recognition Celebration. This outstanding event will be Saturday, March 31, 2007, 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, the RSVP Programs of the New River Valley, and the Blacksburg Senior Center.

From our Chapter, Dale Oliver, 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 the YMCA by calling 961-9622 or by E-mail to ymca@vtymca.org. Nominations are due Friday, March 2.

The planning committee has sent information about the event to organizations throughout the New River Valley requesting them to nominate outstanding volunteers. A

See Volunteer, page 4

“Home Sweet Home” Is topic for AARP’s February meeting

February 20: Come and hear the co-editors of "Home Sweet Home," a free newsletter for seniors, give an overview of the status of "Home Sweet Home," and get a preview of its next issue. Dr. Larry Alexander will bring us up-to-date on the progress made by the newsletter. His wife, Dr. Anne Alexander, a Radford University professor and nutrition expert, will discuss nutritional supplements for seniors, the subject of the newsletter's next issue.

March 20: For our March program, Franklyn Moreno will talk about the Master Gardener program. I think

See March, page 5

If 'AARP 2006' is on this Newsletter label, you owe chapter dues for 2007.

2007 Blacksburg AARP Chapter Board

Officers

President: *Jim Gaines* gaines@vt.edu
1st Vice President: *Jim Wightman* jpdad@bev.net
2nd Vice President: *Angela Little* anglittl@naxs.net
Secretary: *Virgil Cook* vcCook@vt.edu
Treasurer: *Brian Allen* mballen@prodigy.net
Associate Treasurer: *June Schmidt* schmidtj@vt.edu

Board of Directors

Class of 2007:

Don Elson elsond@vt.edu
Tom Jeffers kats7772000@yahoo.com
Harriet Damant hdamant@verizon.net

Class of 2008:

Curt Finch crfinch@vt.edu
Margaret Kates connie@vt.edu
Frank Lau franklau1@msn.com

Class of 2009:

Dan Fleming dbfleming@vt.edu
Nancy Eiss neiss@vt.edu
Jo Ann Underwood joa@vt.edu

Committee Chairs

Caring:

Lula Roberts lula.roberts1@verizon.net
Kathy Jeffers kats7772000@yahoo.com

Chaplains:

Ken Dawson kdawson@vt.edu
Norman Grover ngrover@vt.edu

Chapter Awards:

Don Elson elsond@vt.edu
Jim Owens jowen@vt.edu

Community Service:

Mike Sporakowski eagle1@vt.edu

Financial Planning:

Dale Oliver jdoliver@vt.edu

Health Care:

Jo Ann Underwood joa@vt.edu
Harriet Damant hdamant@verizon.net

History:

Jim Gaines gaines@vt.edu

Hospitality:

Cerrie Coil cerrie@verizon.net
Mary Ellen Moore mem@vt.edu

Blacksburg AARP Chapter “Virginia Large Chapter of the Year, 2006”

Chapter meetings are the *third* Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center, Patrick Henry Drive, at 11:30 a.m. Bring a bag lunch; the club provides napkins, coffee, and tea; the program starts at noon.

Board meetings are the *first* Tuesday of each month at the Blacksburg Community Center, Patrick Henry Drive, at 9:30 a.m.

The newsletter is distributed each month except July, August, and December.

AARP Blacksburg Chapter #2613
P.O. Box 10082, Blacksburg, VA 24062
Web: <http://civic.bev.net/aarp/>

Legislative:

Dan Fleming dbfleming@vt.edu

Membership:

Jim Wightman jpdad@bev.net

Nominating:

Class of 2007

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.com

Virginia Tech Retirees Association Liaison:

Jim Wightman jpdad@bev.net

Ways And Means:

Margaret Kates connie@vt.edu
Jim Moore mem@vt.edu

Webmaster:

Connie Anderson connie@vt.edu

Editors: Mary Holliman, Ryan Donnelly, Bryan Griffith, Laura V. Cook — email: mchollim@vt.edu

Habitat for Humanity
of the New River Valley

ReStore

Home Improvement Warehouse

Other volunteer opportunities at The Habitat ReStore:

Sales Floor Assistant: The sales floor assistant is responsible for helping customers with purchases and donations. In addition, the sales floor assistant may assist staff with arranging and displaying merchandise.

Donations Assistant: The donations assistant will travel with the Donations Coordinator and is responsible for carrying, loading, and unloading donated merchandise.

Deconstruction Team Member: A deconstruction team member will travel to the site of a donated home and remove items from the home that can be sold at The Habitat ReStore. Power tools are provided for the team members to complete this task. We are currently forming a Deconstruction Team, and will call upon the members as needed.

Warehouse Assistant: A warehouse assistant is responsible for putting together shelf units and organizing our donations on the shelves so they can easily be found by our staff and volunteers when assisting a customer. We are planning to complete this task in the evenings after our store closes. Please contact the volunteer coordinator for specific dates and times.

We accept donations of new and gently used building materials and home furnishings.

If you are interested in volunteering at The Habitat ReStore, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator at (540) 552-5114 or email at shellfort@mindspring.com

— Tim Gardner, General Manager
Habitat ReStore, 1550 Roanoke Street, Christiansburg, VA



Dan Fleming, chair, and one of our newest members, Nancy McCord, member, of the chapter legislative committee. Nancy is especially knowledgeable about eminent domain in Virginia.

Habitat's ReStore Seeks Volunteers

The Habitat ReStore recycles overstocked, discontinued, new, and used building materials and home furnishings donated by manufacturers, stores, contractors, and individuals. These donated items are sold to the public or used in the construction of Habitat homes. The profit generated from the store goes toward expanding the building program in the New River Valley.

You can become a volunteer and use your talents and time in a number of ways. Volunteers are needed in the following positions at The Habitat ReStore: Sales Associate, Donations Receipt, Stock Management, and Cashier.

The Habitat ReStore is open Monday through Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Our volunteer shifts are flexible, and we have many volunteer shifts we are trying to fill. These volunteer opportunities are great for individuals, couples, or small groups. If you are interested in volunteering at The Habitat ReStore, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator at (540) 552-5114 or email at shellfort@mindspring.com

— Shelley Fortier

Once, when I was working as a clerk at a sporting-goods store, a woman came up to my register with a package of white athletic socks.

"Will you open this up so I can see how the socks feel?" she asked.

Reluctantly I tore open the package, and she scrutinized the merchandise. She handed me the package, saying, "I'll take them."

Relieved, I started to to ring her up, until she interrupted me.

"Can I have another pack? This one's been opened."

Motorcycles come to Blacksburg

It was not with that raucous, deafening B-r-r-r-r bang-bang that scares the liver-lites out of an ordinary mortal, but a sedate put-put-put, as Professor Holdaway proceeded down Faculty Row on his ancient model motorcycle. He had recently arrived from New Zealand, with his Canadian bride, to take charge of the VPI dairy herd, serve as an elder in the Presbyterian Church, and serve as treasurer and Sunday School teacher. And there he was, with apologies to no one, riding in public view on one of those new-fangled motor-propelled cycles.

Then, with a louder sound, Russel Minter dashed down Faculty Row on his four-cylinder job, and mothers frantically called to their kids to "get out of the road! Here comes Minter!" He was in charge of the electric distribution system. Captain John Smith ran the power plant with its two Corliss steam engines, belted to generators, that supplied the campus and town with enough electricity to light the homes, and arc lights at several street intersections — until eleven p.m. when anyone with any sense was supposed to be tucked in bed. Minter was a good friend of ours; he let Brother Randolph and me string a single wire, no higher than we could reach, on the light poles down through the back yards of Faculty Row for our private telegraph line.

When Dr. Holden arrived to teach geology in 1903, he had a Harley Davidson but ran down Faculty Row in a very sober, deliberate way. He was showing some attention to a visiting cousin of ours, and I was the little kid who was always in the way. He devised a very effective "kid-eliminator." He invited me to go for a ride on the

handlebars of his motorcycle. We went out on the old Christiansburg rutted clay road as far as Midway, where he had to stop and cut a peg to drive into a place on his machine. Then we returned at High Speed — hitting all the bumps and ruts. I held on for dear life. I had to tie a pillow on my bottom and ate standing up for several days. But I left them strictly alone after that. Later, in my engineering courses at VPI I avoided having anything to do with geology.

From Retrospect, or Growing Up in Blacksburg and Other Tales through a Long Life by Ellison Smyth, 1993

Volunteer Celebration

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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 Celebration features entertainment, awards recognitions, and light refreshments. There is no cost for nominating a volunteer or for attending the event. Dale, Angela, Don, and June look forward to your volunteering to help and having you join with us on March 31.

— B. June Schmidt

Membership Notes

Our membership now stands at 396, which includes: 11 – Complimentary; 24 – LifeTime; 7 – Life; and, 5 – Honorary members. We are pleased to note that three Past Presidents of our chapter have been designated 'Honorary Members'. We thank Denver Bragg (1976), our first president; Mary Tom Long (1991), and Jim Owen (1996) for the leadership they provided our chapter.

Good news — 189 members have already renewed their membership for 2007. 129 members paid their 2006 dues but now owe for 2007. A convenient membership renewal form is found on the last page of this newsletter. Won't you take a moment now and fill out the form, attach a check, and mail it to the address noted on the form? You may want to consider becoming a LifeTime member at the bargain basement price of \$100 per single / couple and never have to worry again about whether you owe the present-year dues.

Those 2006 members not paying their 2007 dues by March 1st will have a yellow dot on their March Newsletter; a red dot on their April Newsletter. Those members not paying their 2007 dues by April 25th will be dropped from the membership list and will not receive a May Newsletter.

A post card welcoming new members to our chapter is now in use. New Members joining since our January Newsletter include Jeff & Sandra Birch; Elaine & Virgil Cook; Bill & Peggy Lavery; Nancy McCord; and John & Pat White. Be sure to welcome them to our chapter.

A surprising number of AARP national members do not know there is a local chapter. If you know of such persons, encourage them to become members of this local chapter. In fact, why don't you recruit a new member into your chapter and receive \$1 off next year's dues? Any questions about membership can be directed to Jim Wightman at 552.2007 or jpdad@bev.net.

— Jim Wightman

A Prayer for Today

In January 1991, during the Gulf War, Al Payne gave this invocation at a Blacksburg AARP Chapter luncheon:

It's difficult for one person to put in words the varied thoughts and concerns of a lot of individuals like you
– particularly today.

So before we talk to God this morning, it may be appropriate first for us to talk to each other.

Yesterday, we read that the Secretary General of the U.N. gave his pessimistic report on Saddam Hussein;
the headlines reported his saying, "Only God Knows."

Ironically, this tragic and serious situation centers around the location of the Biblical Garden of Eden.

But the real tragedy is that it's taken us five months to realize that what's going to happen is in God's hands.
And it's too typical of man's pride and self-sufficiency that we're about to ask him on the very last day
for Him to help us out.

Some of you sensitive souls are aware it's a very thin line between asking for God's help
and telling him what we'd like Him to do.

So what does one do or say in a prayer right now?

We must try to be both honest and faithful;

We can at least acknowledge that God is God,

Reaffirm our faith in His wisdom and compassion,

Confess our own limitations, frequent self-centeredness, and occasional stupidity.

We can pour out our hopes and fears,

And we can try very hard to fit our minds and even our national policies into His holy will.

Let us pray:

O Thou who is called Father, we would like to be deserving of being called thy children.

We are thankful for many things – life, health, freedom –

For the responsible leadership of people like our President and Secretary of State,

For the reported high morale of our troops,

And for the unusual opportunity made possible by the rare unity of the United Nations.

But we also confess some of our errors and possible sins:

For our short-sightedness in the lack of an energy policy;

For our insensitivity and prejudices toward other cultures and religions;

For our easy exploitation of the poor, the jobless, and the undesirable;

For our unwillingness to pay for what we need or want;

For our mood of invincibility;

And our pride in technology that sometimes creates more problems than it solves.

We ask for the patience, courage, and wisdom to do what is right in Thy eyes;

For the use of reason as well as emotion;

For the strength to withstand injustices wherever they appear;

For a spirit of compassion for all those who may suffer;

For a sense of responsibility to act on our best knowledge of thy will;

And for the faith that everything is truly in thy Hands.

Amen.

Tired of a mailbox full of catalogs?
Did you know that, among his many
other "firsts", Benjamin Franklin in
1774 published the first trade catalog
in America, a list of books for sale?

Nirvana
Of all the lovely sounds on earth —
The song of birds, rain's anodyne —
The sweetest is a human voice:
Bewitching, undulating, mine.
— Les Mellichamp, 1987

March Program

continued from page 1
it's a good fit for the beginning of
Spring. — Harriett Cooper

Blacksburg AARP Board Minutes, Chapter 2613

February 6, 2007

1. Call to order: Jim Gaines —

President Gaines called the meeting to order at 9:30. Members present: Brian Allen, Connie Anderson, Virgil Cook, R. B. "Ben" Crawford, Nancy Eiss, Donald Elson, Curt Finch, Dan Fleming, Jim Gaines, Tom Jeffers, Margaret Kates, Angela Little, Carl McDaniels, Mary Ellen Moore, Dale Oliver, June Schmidt, Jo Ann Underwood, Jim Wightman.

2. Approval of the Agenda: Additional items —

President Gaines asked that discussion of the budget be added. Brian Allen moved approval with the addition. The motion passed.

3. Approval of previous minutes—

President Gaines called for the vote. The motion passed.

4. Treasurer's report: Brian Allen —

Brian distributed the November-December report. Except for the \$100 that we paid the band, we broke even on the Christmas luncheon. We donated \$1,000 to the Christmas Store, \$839.41 of which came from a donation by Barnes and Noble. Brian then turned to the January report, noting that we have \$4,000 in the checking account. Copying charges are up a bit from last year, \$173 as opposed to \$100 the year before. The increase is due partly to a large mailing in December. The report was accepted.

5. Newsletter editor; deadline for copy; appointments and goals —

Mary Holliman has agreed to edit the newsletter. Ben Crawford then went over Mary Holliman's qualifications, including her editing experience at Virginia Tech as well as her owning and operating Pocahontas Press. Ben then shared a commu-

nication that he has received from Creative Technologies in Sarasota, Florida. The company presented prices for duplicating; duplicating and labeling; and duplicating, labeling and mailing. Prices are lower than we presently pay. Ben moved that we approve Mary Holliman as newsletter editor and that we turn over the information from Creative Technologies for her opinion on the offer. Considerable discussion followed on the merits of going with the Florida Company vs. our present arrangement with Kopy Korner. The motion passed.

6. Website: Connie Anderson —

Connie reported that she has added two useful links on the chapter website, [http://www.civic.bev.net/aarp/...](http://www.civic.bev.net/aarp/) (1) The Virginia Attorney General's Resources for consumers and (2) The Virginia Triad Resources for Seniors. We might want to consider the Triad option for our chapter. She suggested that members check out the Virginia Triad link and see exactly what the Triad is all about. Angela Little reported that there is a Triad in Christiansburg and that she has been attending the meetings. The Triad will host a crime-prevention fair in Christiansburg at the Recreation Center on Thursday, April 19, sponsored by the Attorney General's office. Anyone wishing to attend the fair should register through the Office of the Attorney General in Roanoke. Forms will be available at the February 20 chapter meeting.

7. Membership committee: Jim

Wightman — Jim gave the following report:

Our membership now stands at

396, which includes 11 - Complimentary; 24 - Lifetime; 7 - Life; and, 5 - Honorary members.

4 members have paid their 2008 dues; 189 members have renewed their membership for 2007; 129 members owe for 2007. Note that 27 members did not pay their 2006 dues.

Those 2006 members not paying their 2007 dues by March 1st will have a yellow dot on the address label of their March Newsletter; a red dot on their April Newsletter. All persons not paying their 2007 dues by April 25th will be dropped from the membership list and will not receive a May Newsletter.

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New Members since our January Newsletter include Jeff & Sandra Birch, Elaine & Virgil Cook, Bill & Peggy Lavery, Nancy McCord, and John & Pat White. Be sure to welcome them to our chapter.

8. Program committee: Harriett Cooper — No report.

9. Legislative and History: Dan and Carl — The General Assembly has passed the beginnings of a long-term-care policy. The goal is to use funds more efficiently by allowing more home-care services.

The senate passed a very weak payday-lending bill, which Senator Edwards voted for. The house passed a stronger bill, which Jim Shuler voted

Board Minutes

February 6, 2007

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against and Dave Nutter voted for.

There is legislation to raise the threshold so that citizens with lower incomes will not have to pay state income tax. The senate bill would raise the threshold higher.

Our chapter requested that the state AARP take a position on electric-utility regulation. They had a lawyer in the Washington office write up a statement, and state officials testified yesterday. Other consumer groups testified against the bill. Then a bill was passed exactly opposite to what the consumer groups had argued for.

10. Awards and Caring and any other committees — Tom Jeffers asked members to notify him of any sick or bereaved members. Brian Allen noted that Penny Thomas has a tumor in her abdomen. She will undergo surgery on February 13. Her husband Bill will have to stay in a nursing home while Penny recovers from her surgery.

Don Elson suggested that we follow the practice of past years and nominate the recipient of the Chapter Service Award for the Voluntary Action Award.

11. Budget: Dale Oliver — The \$2,850 for dues does not include the \$100 onetime, lifetime membership dues. Miscellaneous income brings the total to \$4,300. Projected expenses equal income. Dale moved approval of the budget. The motion passed.

12. Items and/or ideas — Jo Ann Underwood suggested that there be a shredder available for the membership to use at the next chapter meeting. Brian said that he would bring one.

13. Adjourn — next board meeting 9:30am, Tuesday, March 6, 2007.
Respectfully Submitted, Virgil A. Cook, Secretary

More on AARP Movies for Grownups

The Sixth Annual AARP Review of Movies for Grownups is out. You can see it on line at: <http://www.aarpmagazine.org/> — just click on 6th annual awards for complete information. A full report is slated to appear in the March/April 2007 AARP THE MAGAZINE. Locally, Movie Gallery at 708 N. Main St. (at Prices Fork Road) has a display of some of the AARP Review films. In Feb 2007 AARP members can get Two for One rental on Monday – Thursday. Pick up coupons for the free rental offer at the February 20 chapter membership meeting.

Jim's Jots:

The President's Message for February 2007

Curt Finch has accumulated a file an inch thick pertaining to Driver Safety. I have the necessary forms, and I am filling them out almost as I am typing this. Each Newsletter we will bring you up to date.

The day before yesterday I received notice of an AARP Day of Service on May 10th. I will contact Habitat for Humanity and see if we can combine with them on a Renovation project similar to the one we

did year before last. That job was lots of fun, very rewarding to us, and extremely helpful to the home owner.

There are some really exciting things going on in the area of Identity Theft, where several organizations combine their efforts into local, regularly scheduled programs, and this includes the Police. We will enter in, and keep you posted. Now enjoy the rest of the Newsletter.

— Jim Gaines

After the defeat of Cornwallis at Yorktown in 1781, a friend said to Benjamin Franklin: "It looks as if the battle for independence is finally over."

Replied Franklin, "Sir, you are mistaken. The Revolutionary War may be over, but the battle for independence has just begun."

— from *The Wit and Wisdom of Benjamin Franklin*

Nameless

by Gordon King

I must keep the blinds in my window half closed. Otherwise I am on view to the passing world, which here means the occasional neighbor walking absent-mindedly down to the mail box. I sip my coffee slowly in my own slow universe, the cereal boxes my Praetorian Guard. Earth stays still for me. No monsters, ogres, dragons to roar reality, breathe fire, spray dementia. Sanity is the sum of it, defined by others as they move past in the half light of another cycle, hurrying by for the thousandth time in a slow parade of humans walking, motoring to human fates, While the barren trees boast crows with cruel energy, I sit here and thumb an ink spot on my paper, indentured to the day.

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Blacksburg, VA
Permit No. 32

10:00-11:30 a.m. at the Blacksburg Community Center