



*First Fall Program:*

**GET HEALTHY & STAY HEALTHY**

Tuesday, September 15, 2009

“Brown bag” lunch at 11:30 a.m. with program at noon

The Fall 2009 “kick off” meeting will be Tuesday, September 15, on the important topic of GET HEALTHY & STAY HEALTHY. The program will be led by Jack Leahy and the staff of the Blacksburg Community Center & Aquatics Center. The program will emphasize Water Aerobics, Strength Training, Pilates and other programs available in our community.

There also will be an update on CPR procedures and some changes that have been made recently.

As usual, the gathering starts with a “brown bag lunch” at 11:30 a.m. with the program starting about noon and ending by 1 p.m.

***Invite someone you know why may be interested in joining our local chapter.***

All Chapter meetings are open to the public.

***Mark your calendar now for the October 20 meeting!***

Hear from the  
**Candidates for  
Blacksburg Town  
Council**  
in an AARP Forum

The October 20 chapter meeting will focus on the candidates for Blacksburg Town Council. The candidates will respond to questions in an informal forum setting.

The forum will be a little longer than usual, going from noon to about 1:30 p.m. As usual, it will begin with a “brown bag” lunch at 11:30 a.m.

Invite a friend to attend this important meeting!

**Call for**

**Nominations for the  
2009 Chapter Awards**

Please send nominations for the ***Chapter Service Award*** and the ***Community Spirit Award*** to Joe Fontenot, Chair of Chapter Awards. You may send your nominations by e-mail (cajunjoe@vt.edu) or by mail (824 McBryde Dr., Blacksburg, VA 24060).

Please submit all nominations by October 1, 2009.

For more information or if you have questions, please contact Joe by email at cajunjoe@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/>

## 2009 Officers and Board Members

### *Officers*

President: Paul Smeal psmeal@vt.edu  
1st Vice President: Jim Wightman wightman@vt.edu  
Secretary: Virgil Cook vcook@vt.edu  
Treasurer: Brian Allen mballen@prodigy.net

### *Board of Directors*

#### Class of 2009

Dan Fleming dbfleming@vt.edu  
Nancy Eiss nsjeiss@verizon.net

#### Class of 2010

Harriett Cooper chayabrona@verizon.net  
Ken Dawson kedawson@verizon.net  
Joe Fontenot cajunjoe@vt.edu

#### Class of 2011

Don Creamer dgc2@vt.edu  
John Hillison hillison@vt.edu  
Sue Farrar suefarrar@verizon.net

## 2009 Blacksburg AARP

### Committee Chairs and Appointees

AARP of Virginia Liason: Ben Crawford ben.crawford@vt.edu  
Associate Treasurer: June Schmidt schmidtj@vt.edu  
Caring: Harriett Cooper chayabrona@verizon.net  
Chaplain: Ken Dawson kedawson@verizon.net  
Chapter Awards: Joe Fontenot cajunjoe@vt.edu  
AARP Driver Safety Course: Curt Finch crfinch@vt.edu  
Financial Planning: John Hillison hillison@vt.edu  
Health Care: Larry Alexander aalexand@radford.edu  
History: Doris Abraham dsta118e@verizon.net  
Hospitality: Curtis Roane 552-2260  
Legislative: Dan Fleming dbfleming@vt.edu  
Membership: Jim Wightman wightman@vt.edu  
News Editor & Webmaster: Edd Sewell eddsewell@gmail.com  
Nominating: Class of 2009  
Program: Carl McDaniels cmcd@vt.edu  
Public Relations: Norman and Nancy Eiss nsjeiss@verizon.net  
VT Retirees Association Liason: Margaret Kates connie@vt.edu

## Myths about Medicare in the Current Debate

from the AARP Website (aarp.org)

Throughout the debate, people may try to scare you about health care reform and what it means for Medicare. They may say things like “health care reform is going to cut Medicare benefits.” Don’t be misled, and don’t let them frighten you.

None of the health care reform proposals being considered by Congress would cut your Medicare benefits or increase your out-of-pocket costs for Medicare services. In fact, savings found in Medicare will be used to fill in gaps in the program, such as closing the “doughnut hole.”

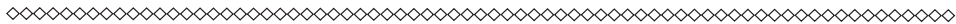
We’re committed to ensuring that health care reform improves the quality of your care, lowers the amount of money you pay out of your own pocket, and makes sure doctors are paid fairly so they continue to treat you and other people in Medicare. At the same time, we believe some of the savings can be invested in health care reforms that strengthen the system for everyone, including those in Medicare.

Less money out of your pocket, the doctor of your choice, and better care—that’s what AARP is fighting for and that’s what health care reform will mean to people in Medicare.

**“Home Sweet Home News”** is a monthly publication by Larry and Anne Alexander. Many of you may receive it or have seen it. It is now available online at <http://www.home-sweet-home-news.com> for those who may prefer to read it online. Also, past issues are available for downloading as pdf files beginning with the November 2006 issue. Each issue has a specific focus on a topic of interest to senior citizens.



AARP United was quite successful during the Blacksburg Summer Solstice Downtown Sundown 5K on June 20<sup>th</sup>. The team composed of President Paul Smeal, Norm Eiss, Sharen Hillison, and John Hillison had a 100% completion rate. Competition was strong as 300 participants were registered for the race. A gold medal was awarded to Sharon and a bronze medal was awarded to John. Norm and Paul were the oldest participants in the race.



## AARP Chapter Membership Report for August, 2009\*

**Member Profile:**

<i>Category</i>	<i>Count</i>
AARP 2009 Members	253
LifeTime Members	45
Life Members	7
Comp Members	15
Honorary Members	5

**New Members:**

Linda S. Davis  
Mike & Marilia Deisenroth

**Newsletters mailed August, 2009:** 220

**Membership Committee:**

Jim Wightman (Chair), Sue Farrar, Don Creamer

\*Report prepared August 3, 2009

# AARP Day of Service

**Friday, September 11**

National AARP will celebrate a Day of Service on Friday, September 11th by honoring 9/11 as a day of remembrance and service.

The Blacksburg Chapter will be helping Warm Hearth residents by renovating the wooden benches assembled by chapter members in March 2008. The frequently used benches, placed on walking trails, need some sanding and polyurethane applied to make sure they stay in good condition.

The work time will be 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with lunch provided. We will meet in the main gazebo. An alternative date will be established if the weather does not cooperate.

Helpers should wear old clothes. All tools and equipment will be provided.

We need an accurate count of helpers for the lunch.

***Let John Hillison know if you can help with a note to [Johnhillison@comcast.net](mailto:Johnhillison@comcast.net) or by calling 552-8941.***

None are so old  
as those who have  
outlived enthusi-  
asm.  
Henry David Thoreau

# Fall Events and Program News

From the New River Valley Agency on Aging

by **Tina King**

*Executive Director of the New River Valley Agency on Aging and New River Valley Senior Services, Inc.*

The New River Valley Agency on Aging staff has scheduled several informative workshops, presentations and conferences in September and October on a variety of topics including Medicare information, promoting and maintaining good mental health in observance of Older Virginians Mental Health Month, and caregiver support. The events are free, but some require a registration. Below is more detailed information for events scheduled in the Montgomery County area. For presentations outside of the Montgomery County area or for more information, please contact me at 540-980-7720 or e-mail at [tinaking@nrvaooa.org](mailto:tinaking@nrvaooa.org)

## **Medicare Workshops:**

Please call 980-7720 or e-mail [vicap@nrvaooa.org](mailto:vicap@nrvaooa.org) to register

•**New to Medicare?** Learn about Medicare, Medigap, Medicare Advantage and Prescription Drug Plans. This workshop is geared toward those becoming eligible for Medicare, regardless of age.

Christiansburg Recreation Center, Wednesday, September 9th at 5 pm in the Senior

## **AARP Driver Safety Courses Fall 2009**

*Coming to Community Center*

Fall is the best time to take one of the driver safety courses being offered at Blacksburg Community Center, 725 Patrick Henry Drive. Enrollment is limited so sign up early.

The **September course will be held on Thursday and Friday, September 17 and 18 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.** To pre-register for this course, call Curt Finch at 552-8179.

The **October course will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 6 and 7 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.** To pre-register for this course call Cecil McBride at 552-4396.

Course fee is \$12.00 for AARP members and \$14.00 for non-members, payable by cash or check to "AARP" on the first day of the course.

Sponsored by the Blacksburg Community Center and the Blacksburg AARP Chapter, this 8 hour classroom course assists drivers age 50 and over in refining current driver skills and developing defensive driving techniques. The course does not include any tests. Course graduates may qualify for multiyear discounts to their auto insurance premiums.

Activities Room. and Blacksburg Recreation Center, Thursday, September 17th at 6 pm

•**2010 Changes to Medicare:** What changes are coming to Medicare Part D? Are Medicare

Advantage Plans "good"? New rules and coverage we need to know.

Blacksburg AARP Chapter meeting: October 20, 2009.

*Continued on bottom page 5*

# Senior Discount Tuesdays in Downtown Blacksburg

## All Ages

Sharkey's- 20 % off

## 50 Plus

India Garden- 15% off food purchases

## 55 Plus

Gourmet Pantry- 10% off

Green's- 10% off

Mad Dog- 15% off

PK's- 20% off food purchases

## 60 Plus

Backstreets-10% off food purchases

Bollo's- 10% off

Bud Foster's Restaurant- 20% off food purchases

Capone's 10% off

Fringe Benefit- 15% off

Gentry Studios- 15% off Pet Portraits

Gillie's 10% off food purchases

Homebody- 10% off

Lyric Theater- Member Price for all Seniors

Matrix Gallery- 10% off one non- consumption item

Mish Mish- 10% off

Subway at Kent Square - 10% off

Tech Bookstore- 10% off except for textbooks

Xanadu- 10% off

## Everyday Savings for seniors

Eats Natural Foods- 15% off for 60 plus

Main Street Inn- For age 60 and up- 10% off any weekday stay- special events not included

New Tech Fitness- Senior Rates for 50 Plus Everyday!

North Main St. Taco Bell-For age 50 and up--a 16oz drink for only \$0.59 everyday

Laureen Blakemore

Special Events Director

Downtown Merchants of Blacksburg

149 College Avenue

Blacksburg, VA 24060

<http://www.downtownblacksburg.com>

540-951-0454

***buy local.eat local.be local.***

*Continued from page 4*

**•Mental Health Matters:** A presentation to promote healthy aging and recognize September as Older Virginians Mental Health Month as declared by the Virginia General Assembly. Patrick Halpern, Executive Director with the Mental Health Association of the New River Valley will present and have an open discussion on mental health issues

pertinent to aging adults.

Wednesday, September 11, 2009, 10:00 am, Christiansburg Recreation Center, Friendship Café room.

**•Caring Connections:** a day-long conference for family caregivers.

Mark your calendar for the 2nd annual caregiver's conference to be held Saturday, October 31, 2009 at Edwards Hall

on the New River Community College Campus. Don't miss this free, informative and fun event. For a conference brochure or to register, call the New River Valley Agency on Aging at 980-7720.

*For information on obtaining a speaker to present a variety of topics pertinent to aging adults, contact Cassie Mills, Director of Programs for the Agency on Aging, at 980-7720 or e-mail, [cmills@nrva.org](mailto:cmills@nrva.org)*

AARP Chapter 2613  
Board of Directors  
Minutes  
August 4, 2009

Call to Order—President Paul Smeal called the meeting to order at 10:05.

Officers Present: President Paul Smeal, Secretary Virgil Cook

Board Members: Don Creamer, Ken Dawson, Nancy Eiss, Sue Farrar, Dan Fleming, Joe Fontenot, John Hillison

Non-board-member committee chairs and appointees: Doris Abraham, Larry Alexander, R. B. “Ben” Crawford, Curtis Finch, Frank Lau, Carl McDaniels, Edd Sewell

Approval of Minutes—The minutes of the June 2 board meeting were approved.

Treasurer’s Report—Because treasurer Brian Allen was absent, President Smeal distributed copies of the treasurer’s report. Highlights follow.

Balance at end of May 2009 is \$3,535.42. Total credits including income from the auction is \$266.91. Total debits including expenses for the picnic and the newsletter is \$248.41. Balance at end of July, 2009, \$3,553.92

Membership Committee--Don Creamer distributed the Membership Committee report. The total chapter membership is 253. We have added three new members since the report at the June 2 meeting.

Announcements—President Paul Smeal thanked those who helped with the picnic and with the Summer Solstice event. Sue Farrar and Doris Abraham participated in the Walgreen health fair.

Healthcare--Larry Alexander. Larry reported that he is preparing a list of TV and radio programs that focus on health. The subject of the next issue of the Home Sweet Home News will be home safety. Larry is creating a Website for the newsletter, [www.home-sweet-home-news.com](http://www.home-sweet-home-news.com). President Smeal reported that the Tech retirees group will hold a healthcare program on October 13. There is also a health fair at New River Community College in late October.

Programs--Carl McDaniels distributed copies of the program schedule. The program for September 15 is Health Care for Seniors: Getting Fit & Staying

Fit.

Update on CPR, Water Aerobics, Fitness Training for Seniors, and other programs at the Blacksburg Community Center. Copies of the current Home Sweet Home News will be available at this meeting.

The program for October 20 will feature a forum of Blacksburg Town Council Candidates.

Legislation--Dan Fleming. Any healthcare reform will likely take at least four years to implement. Tax revenue is down severely, exacerbating the problem of the national debt. President Obama has offered his general principles on healthcare reform. There are several plans in the congressional pipeline. Banning denial of insurance for pre-existing conditions is an important feature of the plan. The Blue Dog Democrats are opposed to requiring small businesses to provide health insurance to their employees.

Senator Jim Webb favors a public option; Senator Warner is yet to indicate his preference; Representative Rick Boucher is opposed to a public option. Leaders are already looking at backup plans. AARP is working on closing the doughnut hole in the Medicare prescription drug plan.

Carl McDaniels reported that Congressman Boucher is holding a town meeting at New River Community College, probably on August 17 or 18. He will notify the board as soon as he learns the details.

Dan also reported that the League of Women Voters is sponsoring a debate between gubernatorial candidates Creigh Deeds and Bob McDonnell.

Driver Training--Curt Finch. Curt reported that he taught a course in early June. There will be courses at the center in September and October. Curt will teach a course in September, and Cecil McBride will teach one in October.

History--Doris Abraham thanked people for historical material given to her. She reported that many people showed up for the Walgreen health fair. Most were young families, but some took our information brochures. Carl reported that Adam Stevens, Walgreen manager,

would like an off-site flu vaccination clinic. November 17 would be a good time especially because the program will focus on geriatric issues. Walgreen has some 300 walk-in clinics to lighten loads for emergency rooms. We should encourage Walgreen to open such a clinic in this area.

Montgomery County History Museum--Sue Farrar informed the board about the museum's Heritage Day program on August 22.

Liaison--Ben Crawford met with state AARP officials in Richmond. One important topic was Connie's passing. Our Website, which Connie designed and maintained, is very popular. We need to maintain the quality of the site. He also met with national AARP board member Hubert H. Humphrey Jr and went out to eat with him. National AARP has a place at the table on healthcare talks, meaning that our voice will be heard during debates.

Ben met with the state agency on aging. The state health director talked a lot about swine flu. She felt that children in summer camps are spreading swine flu.

#### OLD BUSINESS

Tribute to Connie Anderson—President Smeal reported that \$3,000 came to the Rec Center in response to the family's wishes as stated in Connie's obituary. In an earlier board meeting, someone suggested that we might place a bench in the Rec center to honor Connie's memory. Paul has a catalog of benches. Do we want to wait, or do we want to take action now to honor Connie? She started the endowment at the Community Foundation of the New River Valley for supporting the Rec Center. Sue observed that the Community Foundation helps so many.

Ken Dawson moved that we pay \$300 to the Community Foundation of the New River Valley in Connie's honor. It was observed that AARP should encourage members to contribute. Doris Abraham suggested that we inform the membership via the newsletter that they might wish to make a contribution to the Community Foundation in Connie's honor. They should designate the funds for the Blacksburg Recreation Center fund.

She also suggested that we try to get an article on Connie's contributions to the community published in the newspaper. The motion to contribute to the foundation passed.

More Announcements--Paul reported that Karen Drake, who is on the Blacksburg Planning Commission, wants help from all organizations to encourage filling out the census form. She will attend the next board meeting.

National Day of Service--The AARP National Day of Service is set for September 11. John Hillison will be in charge. John reported that there will be no funding from the national office for the Day of Service. The new benches at Warm Hearth need maintenance. We could use our work day to refurbish these benches.

Nominations Committee—Paul Smeal. We need to form a three-member nominations committee. Paul suggested that the outgoing class might constitute the committee. John Hillison moved that Dan Fleming, Nancy Eiss, and Paul Smeal make up the nominating committee. The motion passed.

Adjournment—The meeting was adjourned at 10:28.

Respectfully submitted: Virgil A. Cook,  
Secretary

### Health Statistics from Canada and the USA

“Comparing the health of low income and less well educated groups in the United States and Canada” by Ken Eng (Canada) and David Feeny (USA) in *Population Health Metrics* 2007, 5:10

Here are some basic statistics from this study that compared Canada and the United States.

#### 2002 Life Expectancy Rates

	Canada	USA
Women	82.1	79.9
Men	77.2	74.5

#### Infant Mortality Rates

Canada	5.4 per 1000
USA	7.0 per 1000

The electronic version of this complete article can be found online at:

<http://www.pophealthmetrics.com>

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

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## Membership Renewal or New Member Application

If you are already a member of the Blacksburg Chapter,  
please pass this form on to a friend who should be a member.

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**

NOTE: You MUST be a member of National AARP before joining the local chapter. National dues should be paid directly to National AARP and NOT through the Blacksburg Chapter.

Those of you who are 90 years old and older do not pay dues. Your label should read "Life Member."