



PERSPECTIVES – DECEMBER 2023

President's Letter – Pierre Payette

As I sit here, writing my final President's Letter, I am reflecting on what has transpired over the last couple of years. It has mostly been good, with a couple of disappointments.

As you know, I only decided to run for President two years ago, so that the Chapter would not go by the wayside after the Herculean effort by Carolyn Durphy. That seems to have worked out well. Paid membership has increased by about 100, and we still are picking up 1 or 2 each month. Our meetings are well attended, in part because we continue to have informative and interesting speakers each month. We continue to have a great core of people that volunteer to keep things going, although **we could use some new blood** to help out. We have a full complement of new officers who will be installed at our December meeting. Thank you to all of you who will be Officers this coming year.

Our charitable donations went from \$0 in 2021, to \$1500 in 2022, to \$4500 for 2023. The trip to Bethlehem, PA this month will give us a profit of approximately \$1200, which will be the start for our 2024 donations.

There were a couple of disappointments this year. One was not being successful in re-implementing the Defensive Driver Program, and another was the washout of the VIN Etching Day. There was a lot of effort put into this one, only to have it rained out by Mother Nature.

I am proud of what we have done these last 2 years, and I am looking forward to the Chapter's continued success and growth. I will still be on the Board of Directors, as the Immediate Past President, and I will continue to offer trips for as long as I am able.

Thank you all for your support. Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year to all of you. I look forward to seeing most of you at the Christmas Luncheon.

Christmas Luncheon – Ann Wood & Rani Manhard

We want to welcome all our AARP members and guests to the luncheon on **Monday, December 18th**. We are asking that those with last names beginning **A - O bring a main or side dish**. Those with last names beginning **P - Z bring dessert**. Please bring your dish by **11 AM** and we will begin eating between **11:30 and Noon**.



Membership – Pam Archer

I am pleased to say that we will end the year with 136 paid memberships in our chapter. As Pierre mentioned, this is a vast improvement from two years ago. Let's shoot for 150 in 2024!

Dues will remain at **\$10 per person** for chapter membership for 2024. We will gladly accept payment now for next year's dues.

If you are not able to attend a meeting or just want to write the check and be done with it you may mail your check to: AARP Chapter 5239, PO Box 945, Locust Grove, VA 22508.



December Birthdays – Pam Archer

Festive December Birthday Wishes to Garry Archer, Virginia Ball, Karen Cakouros, Marion Doherty, Timothy Edwards, Robert Haring, Jackie Hill, Christopher Rapin, Diane Sibley, and Elaine Witcher.

Sunshine Report – Carolyn Durphy

A sympathy card was sent to the family of Margaret Thode.



Flu Shots Protect Against Heart Attack and Stroke – Sandie Frame



COVID-19 has taken center stage, but there is another virus that deserves the spotlight: influenza. The flu can be serious – even deadly – for people with heart disease, because it increases their risk of having a heart attack or stroke. That is why doctors urge patients to get vaccinated against the flu every year. Getting vaccinated lessens the likelihood you will get the flu. If you come down with the flu anyway, your illness may be less severe.

With the threat of COVID-19, ever present, getting a flu shot is more important than ever. Although the flu vaccine won't protect you from COVID-19, it will lower the chance you will fall victim to both diseases.

Flu activity begins to rise in October and typically lasts well into the spring. During the 2019 – 2020 flu season, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates 39 – 56 million people in the U.S. came down with the flu. Of those, 740,000 were hospitalized and 62,000 died.

The CDC recommends getting vaccinated against the flu by the end of October to make sure you are adequately protected for the entire season. It is not too late to get vaccinated if you have not done so by now.

The vaccine does not offer 100% protection against the flu, because experts can't accurately predict which strains of influenza A and B will occur several years in the future. The long lead time is needed to produce enough vaccine to meet demand.

In the past, vaccines have offered protection against three strains of influenza. For the first time this year the vaccine will protect against four strains. This should mean fewer people will contract the virus.

The flu is not going away, even though COVID-19 is here. Get vaccinated.

Source: Cleveland Clinic **Heart Advisor** Volume 21A 2023

Driving at Night – Carolyn Durphy & Pam Archer

With it becoming dark so early this time of year, we found this article to share with you that was in the Oct/Nov Issue of the AARP Magazine:

“Are headlights today brighter than they used to be? Surprisingly, no, but if you are an older driver, it can sure feel that way. Between the normal vision changes that come with age and some new developments in the way cars are being made and maintained, nighttime driving can be a blinding – and a terrifying – experience. To investigate the situation and help our readers minimize the risk of night driving, we called on journalist Tom Vanderbilt, the man who literally wrote the book on traffic (It’s called *Traffic*).”

If you are a national AARP member you can find this “illuminating” report on page 68 of the Oct/Nov issue.

