

AARP North Carolina Mountain Region

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

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SPECIAL EDITION

AARP Introduces *Interactive, Real-Time* Regional Leadership Meetings

Our Mountain Region is spread out, largely rural, yet full of opportunities for AARP volunteers to make a difference. There's no question it's hard to get us together for leadership, planning and sharing!

Our fearless leader, Rebecca Chaplin, was determined to do something about that, so she researched meeting venues in Asheville that had teleconferencing capabilities to make use of online platforms like GotoMeeting and Zoom.

Thanks to her ingenuity, the January 8th Regional Leadership Meeting was held in just such a place, Focal Point Co-Working on Lexington Avenue in Asheville. As a result, **Sara Knapp** in Transylvania County and **Michael Wackerly** in Biltmore Lake of Candler were able to actively participate in the meeting and contribute their ideas from their homes without driving the 10 to 35 miles it would normally have required.

Going forward, this revolutionary change makes it possible for any of our volunteers to join these monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of every month (unless rescheduled). Just let Rebecca know in advance (rchaplin@aarp.org) that you're interested in attending remotely. See and hear for yourself the depth and breadth of talent among your fellow volunteers, and chime in with your own innovative ideas. <>

Have something you'd like to share with your fellow volunteers? Send it in to AARPinWNC@yahoo.com.

Our next issue will be coming out **March 1**.

Co-editors: Margie Sigman and Sandy Westin



Volunteer **Deb Wagner** resolved to do more walking and hiking in 2019, which her dog, **Gunny**, endorsed.

Time for Resolutions!

Many of us make resolutions this time of the year, and we AARP volunteers are no different. At 2019's first leadership meeting for our region, people mentioned goals they wanted to accomplish as volunteers and/or in their personal lives.

Rebecca Chaplin challenged those attending to venture out of their comfort zone in 2019 in working on at least one of the target areas listed below.

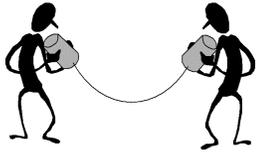
Ideally, each area will have two volunteer leaders to plan strategies, coordinate and publicize events. The spring issue of this newsletter will provide names and contact information so that any of our AARP volunteers can choose an area of interest and join up. <>

2019 Target Areas

- Develop and implement strategies for communication.
- Increase number of age-friendly communities.
- Network with collaborative partners.
- Advocate for age-friendly transportation.
- Strengthen our team of volunteers.
- Develop our non-partisan advocacy efforts.

Our Region by the Numbers in 2018

- ◇ **AARP hosted or partnered on 84 events.**
- ◇ **Our events touched nearly 1700 people directly or indirectly.**
- ◇ **50% of 2018's events were led by volunteers.**
- ◇ **17% of events were multicultural.**



Can We Talk?

by Buz Buzogany

In reviewing the communication accomplishments of 2018 and the foreseeable needs of the Mountain Region of AARP in 2019, the region's leadership team members were favorably struck by the growth curve experienced over the past 18 months in our **communication achievements**.

We also felt challenged by what needs to happen to successfully move forward.

The good news: First and foremost, we have established a "living document" (capable of being continuously updated) which identifies most of the **major media contacts in our region**, including print, electronic and some of the myriad online outlets. This directory includes information on the preferred formats, contact names and numbers of each one.

All of this critical data will need to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis, though not necessarily all at once. **(Volunteer opportunity!)**

Second, **this very newsletter** you are reading came to fruition in the third quarter of last year and has already become an integral part of our outreach to volunteers, partners and that same list of media.

Our regional outreach is intended for the general public as well, through public relations, on-air appearances, events, partnerships and so much more.

In both cases, we need more volunteers who have an interest or specific expertise they can bring to the communications team. Many hands make light work, and together we can make a tangible difference for AARP in our region.

If you have an interest in helping out, contact buzbuzogany@gmail.com or call 847-727-1506 (cell) today! <>



Volunteer **Margie Sigman** (on the left) and Associate Director **Rebecca Chaplin** met with **Michelle Carello** (center), Director of the North Carolina Stage Company, a performing arts theater in Asheville, to brainstorm intergenerational theater events for summer 2019.

Watch for future announcements on this exciting prospect! <>



Deb's Advocacy Corner

By Deb Wagner
248-895-7452

In 2018, AARP advocating in the Mountain Region continued to support legislation on Full Practice Authority for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses, and also for Telehealth. Both of these initiatives will provide more access to health care, especially in our rural counties.

We also met with a number of federal and state legislators from our region to ensure that they keep our members' needs front and center.

Our biggest impact in 2018 was on voter engagement. I'm very proud to say that we held more than 14 events focused on voter engagement, and had 220 people who pledged to vote in the Mid-Terms as a result. We also assisted people who lacked transportation to early voting sites.

Look for an update on our 2019 advocacy goals in the spring issue of this newsletter. There's more advocating for seniors yet to be done! <>



AARP volunteers find all kinds of ways to benefit their communities. Volunteer **Buz Buzogany**, shown in front of a small local theater in Marion, explored bringing AARP's movie series "Movies for Grownups" to his town. Way to go, Buz! <>

What would you like to see our AARP region achieve in the coming year? How might we improve this newsletter in content or format? This is your invitation to toss those thoughts, ideas and visions into the hat.

Send them in to AARPinWNC@yahoo.com.