



THE CHRONICLE

RALEIGH-WAKE COUNTY CHAPTER #3689

<http://AARPchapter3689.weebly.com>

aarpnc3689@gmail.com

Kelly Vick – Editor

October 19, 2023

Waltonwood at Lake Boone

MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-PRESIDENTS

James Nelson & Claude Lee

Unlocking New Horizons: A Promising Partnership with Raleigh

We share some exciting news about our recent meeting with the Raleigh representatives on September 14th. It was a meeting filled with promise and potential, much like the towering rocks, majestic mountains and sturdy bridges symbolizing strength and endurance. Sponsored by our Executive Committee and with the gracious participation of crucial individuals like **Ms. Allie Crawford**, *Active Adult Program Director*; **Ms. Carmen Rayfield**, *Golden Years Club Manager* and **Mr. Brian Philpot**, *Anne Gordon Senior Center Manager*; this meeting was a resounding success. Their words of encouragement have left us inspired.

One of our seasoned Executive Committee members, **Allan Younger**, said, "The potential collaboration with the Raleigh representatives sounds very promising and I think we represented ourselves well. Thanks to our co-presidents for providing the lead." Allan's words echo the optimism we all share about this potential partnership.

Ms. Allie Crawford, whose insights are invaluable, wrote "Thank you for allowing us to sit in on this meeting; we all were very impressed by both the organization of your group and the commitment that each of your executive board members has to your cause. We look forward to the partnership potential and are here to assist in any way possible." Her enthusiasm reflects the shared dedication to our mission. Now, let's take a moment to consider the numerous benefits this collaboration brings:

- We can host open houses to recruit new members, extending our reach within the community.
- Our members will enjoy exclusive discounts for Raleigh events, enriching their experiences and strengthening our ties with the city.
- Meetings at the Golden Years Club will be more accessible, with no facility charges, allowing us to convene and plan more effectively.
- We'll receive valuable marketing and advertising support, boosting our visibility and impact.
- Access to the City's prestigious Golden Years Clubs celebration will allow us to celebrate our achievements in style.
- City trips will be more accessible, with costs covered, offering exciting opportunities for our members to explore and enjoy.

As we embark on this journey, we're reminded of the timeless lyrics from Gershwin's song, "in time the Rockies may crumble, Gibraltar may tumble." These words remind us that change is constant, but our love and commitment to our AARP chapter will endure, just like the rocks and mountains.

Cordelia Blackwell has agreed to be our dedicated liaison who can bridge the gap between our Chapter and the City of Raleigh. Together, we will shape a brighter and more promising future for our community. Thank you for your ongoing support. Your dedication to improving the welfare of others is an inspiration to us all.

Speaker for Today

Greg Flynn

**Raleigh Board of Elections
Changes for Voting in the
Upcoming Elections**

Chapter Officers

Co-Presidents

James Nelson
Claude Lee

Vice President

Cordelia Blackwell

Co-Secretaries

Hannah Gathings
Tom Gill

Treasurer

Willi Webb

Committees

Community Service (Oweida Cole)
Fundraising (Lorrie Berlenbach)
Legislative (Brenda Bennett)
Membership (Karen Youmans)
Nominating (Allan Younger)
Program (Allan Younger)
Sunshine (Claude Lee)
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Chapter Coordinators

Ambassador (James Hines)
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Newsletter (Kelly Vick)
Reflections (Grace Krishnamurthy)
Webmaster (Claudia Harris)

MESSAGE FROM OUR VICE PRESIDENT (Cordelia Blackwell)

♪♪♪ Getting to know you – getting to know all about you... ♪♪♪



Karen Clark

Since I have been a member of our AARP Chapter #3689, there are so many attention-grabbing people I wanted to know more about. So when I was asked to write an article for the Chronicle, I thought this is an excellent opportunity to learn about members with an interview - which it should be an interesting topic. So here is my interview with **Karen Clark**:

Cordelia: Where did you grow up and how did you get to the Raleigh area?

Karen: I was born in Chicago and moved to North Carolina when I was seven. I have lived here most of my life.

Cordelia: Did you come from a small or large family and tell us about your family now.

Karen: My father came here from Denmark so I don't know any of my family members on my father's side. My mother's family is of Danish origin also and she was not in my life because she had mental illness. My brother and I grew up mostly in North Carolina. Of course, since I was blind, I had to go to an institutional school and did not spend much time in a community.

Cordelia: You are such an intelligent person, tell us about your educational background.

Karen: I graduated from the Governor Morehead School and then went to East Carolina University. My degree was in music therapy. I only used that degree when I taught preschool music at a local church. Mostly I worked in consumer protection and for an insurance company typing up claims documents.

Cordelia: You are so knowledgeable regarding politics, has that always been an interest of yours?

Karen: I became interested in disability rights in the mid-nineties and participated in a local consumer group to advocate for disability concerns and then I became involved in the American's with Disabilities legislation. I also worked for an agency that advocated for disability rights. During that time, I became active in AARP and got involved in AARP issues. I got involved in politics so I could learn more about how the legislative process worked. So I started with disability rights issues and then got involved in issues for seniors. Many of the same issues are included in both these areas. James Hines of our Chapter was my mentor for AARP politics. I truly believe that we have to get involved in politics as if our lives depend on it, because it does.

Cordelia: What is your favorite, food, book, and type of music?

Karen: I don't have a favorite book or music. I have authors that I like such as Jodi Picoult, Barbara Kingsolver, and most recently Bonnie Garmus. For fun, I have been reading Jana de Leon. Her books are delightful and funny and I find myself laughing out loud when I read them. I like most types of music but my favorite music is music that I can sing along with.

Cordelia: Tell us something you would like for us to know about you.

Karen: I want to be involved in my community. I want to find a way to be involved in cohousing. I want my life to be one of sharing and giving. I will always be involved and speak out wherever I can. I believe that Martin Nieomuller spoke truth when he said his famous quote about speaking out.

“They came for the Catholics and I didn't speak up.

Then they came for the trade unionists and I didn't speak out.

Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak out.

Then they came for me, and there was no one left to speak out.”

That may not be exactly right but the gist is that I believe I am called to speak up if there is an injustice.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

SUNSHINE

Birthday cards were mailed to members listed below who have birthdays in October. If you know of anyone who is ill, a bereaved family or you are having your "90th Milestone Birthday", please call Claude Lee (919-971-3317) or e-mail him at claudealeejr@gmail.com.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Cleotis Johnson (11)

Nancy Uphoff (17)

Brenda Bennett (18)

Kathy Auxer (20)

Karen Clark (21)

NOMINATING

We have a vacancy for a Co-Secretary. This person will be working in partnership with another Co-Secretary and this position is responsible for recording minutes of our chapter and board meetings. We also have four openings for board of director members. Nominations will come from chapter members.

TELEPHONE

In October Natalie Ray will be joining the Calling Committee. A special thanks to Natalie. At the present time, the callers are Pat Toothman, Cheryl Gill and Helena Nabors. We will continue with monthly calling with meeting information and other pertinent events. This is also a way to keep in touch with members who have questions or concerns. Some members have volunteered to call members on their birthdays, as well as Claude Lee sending out cards. Donations of cards or stamps are appreciated. Let us remember previous members or those who are isolated or lonely by phoning or sending a card. A special thanks to all members who responded to the telephone callers with their lunch orders for this meeting.

MEMBERSHIP

We are available for membership renewals or if someone would like to join our chapter. Our chapter membership dues are \$10.00 per year. You must be a member of the National AARP and you will need your national membership card to complete the renewal form and the membership form. These forms are on our website with instructions on where to mail it.

FUNDRAISING

Super Jackpot 50/50 tickets are on sale today and the drawing will also be today. One ticket for \$3.00 and two tickets for \$5.00.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

"Autumn is the season that shows us that change can be beautiful". So, it is with our AARP chapter #3689, as we changed our meeting location. As results, our fall inaugural meeting which was held at Waltonwood Lake Boone was not only interesting and exciting, but also enjoyable. We met at an attractive new location, welcomed new members, had other visiting AARP guests, as well as an interesting guest speaker. Please be aware that the school supplies that you contributed last month were delivered to Fox Road Magnet School. Needless to say, the school staff was more than elated to have received these supplies. If you by chance missed this last deadline, please be aware that Oweida is always a call away to receive any other supplies or articles. This is also true of any personal hygiene items that you may have to contribute. As October is upon us, we are beginning to again collect mittens, gloves and hats for the Mittens Tree, which is another one of our annual projects. Our last interesting subject is called, "Matthew 25". Anyone who is on medication can participate at no cost or expense to you. Matthew 25 Ministries is an interactive humanitarian and disaster relief organization that collects empty pill bottles to send to places where medical supplies are needed. They accept clean prescription and over the counter pill bottles of varying sizes. Again, bring them to Oweida Cole or Gayle Gayton at any time or give us a call. That's an easy inexpensive task.....right???! Keep in mind the AARP motto, "Living to serve, not to be served". Imagine the happiness, pleasure and gratification these recipients experience upon the receipt of these gifts. In October, any wonderful, unexpected thing might be positive – "Elizabeth G. Spear"

COMMUNITY SERVICES (continued)

A special thanks to our Chapter #3689 members and to Dr. Bava and his staff at Gentle Smiles of Raleigh:

Aside from donations of school supplies to Fox Road Magnet Elementary School, the school counselor expressed a need for hygiene kits for 4th and 5th grade boys and girls. The kits consist of deodorant, soap, lotion and a gift bag from Dr. Bava consisting of a toothbrush, toothpaste and floss. He kindly donated 50 pieces of each.

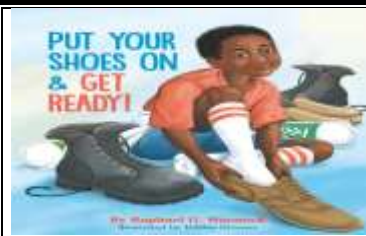
Wake County School District has a large population of homeless students. Consequently the students may sleep in cars, may live in multi-generational housing situations or live with friends. Bathing and hygiene becomes a challenge; many times leaving them to use public facilities to wash up before going to school. The hygiene kits will help the students with basic care.

Thank you Chapter #3689 members for your generous donations of personal items for the hygiene kits. See the pictures below:



Thank you Willi Webb and members of your sewing club for making the hygiene kits. It does take a village!



	<p>A Great Book to Read and Share With A Young Child <i>(Submitted by Gayle Gayton)</i></p> <p>This inspirational story, with bold, brilliant art by TeMika Grooms, follows Raphael Warnock’s journey from Savannah, Georgia to the United States Senate and shows young readers that they too can find the power to be themselves and make a difference when they have the shoes that fit their feet.</p>
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Kelly Vick – Editor

November 16, 2023



**Felex Gathings, George Gross, James Hines, Cleotis & Brenda Johnson,
Natalie Ray & John Speights**

Speaker for Today

**Ms. Essense Heel
Organizing
Items in the Home**

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MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-PRESIDENTS

James Nelson & Claude Lee

December's Delights & A New Year's Resolution

As we eagerly approach December, a season that brings joy and togetherness, our AARP chapter #3689 is poised to create unforgettable moments. We wholeheartedly dedicate ourselves to celebrating this festive season and we extend a warm invitation for you to partake in two remarkable occasions:

Golden Years Annual Celebration on December 12th: This splendid morning event is a heartfelt tribute to the senior citizens in the Triangle area. With **Cordelia Blackwell** at the helm and unwavering sponsorship from WRAL and Capitol Broadcasting Company since 1958, this tradition unites seniors for a morning filled with breakfast, gifts, giveaways, and live performances. It's not merely an event; it's an opportunity to forge new friendships, establish meaningful connections, and revel in the season's joy.

Chapter Holiday Celebration on December 19th: Under the spirited leadership of **Natalie Dorssett Ray**, our Holiday Committee has meticulously crafted an array of delightful activities, singing, gift exchanges, and intense contests. As a result, our chapter members will come together and enthusiastically embrace the holiday spirit.

As we anticipate the arrival of 2024, let us collectively commit to implementing our **AARP Grant** effectively. Our mission is clear; to amplify awareness of AARP Raleigh-Wake Chapter #3689 in our community, retain our cherished members, attract new ones, and engage them wholeheartedly in chapter activities. Your unwavering support is not just appreciated; it's crucial. We encourage you to distribute AARP Chapter #3689 flyers at senior events and religious institutions you attend and to volunteer in our endeavor to set up information booths at community events like health fairs and senior expos.

May these splendid festivities and our shared resolutions infuse your December with joy and warmth. We extend our heartfelt wishes for a season to be etched in your memory. And to those embarking on holiday journeys, may your travels be filled with merriment and safety! **★ HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**

MESSAGE FROM OUR VICE PRESIDENT (Cordelia Blackwell)

♪♪♪ Getting to know you – getting to know all about you... ♪♪♪



Edmond Gayton

Where has the time gone? It's almost the end of another year. But we have done well – bounced back from Covid – and our future is looking bright! So let's get to know one of our past presidents, Edmond Gayton.

Cordelia: Did you come from a small or large family and tell us about your family now.

Edmond: I was the youngest of three children in our family. We grew up in Olean, NY which is about 70 miles south of Buffalo, NY. Gayle and I have 2 adult sons and 5 adult grandchildren. We were foster parents to several pre adoptive infants when we lived in Syracuse. They were generally with us for 4-5 months before they were adopted. Our last foster infant who is now an adult continues to be a part of our family. We have lived in Syracuse NY, Rochester NY and we moved to Raleigh, NC after I retired.

Cordelia: You are such an intelligent person, tell us about your educational background.

Edmond: graduated from Olean HS and worked at JC Penny part time while a senior. I worked full time for over a year after graduating high school before attending Delhi Tech which is now known as SUNY Delhi. I was fortunate to receive a grant from Delhi and enrolled in the Civil Tech program. At Delhi, I was on the Dean's list, worked for one of the engineering professors and was corresponding secretary of my fraternity.

Cordelia: I know you have had an extensive career, what are some of the positions you have had?

Edmond: After receiving my Civil Technology degree, I worked as a draftsman for several engineering firms and an architectural firm in Syracuse, NY. I started doing structural design work in the firms. My supervisors encouraged me to get my NY State Professional Engineering license. I had to list and document the structural design work that I did in the last 8 years to apply to take the PE Exam. I passed the first part of the PE exam. Then, I had an opportunity to work at Eastman Kodak in Rochester, NY. I worked in Kodak's Engineering Department as a designer. I took and passed part 2 of the PE exam and became a licensed NY State Professional Engineer. My dream came true. I was then promoted to the Structural Engineering Department of Kodak. I retired after over 26 great years at Kodak as a senior Structural Engineer.

Cordelia: Do you enjoy traveling and are there places you found interesting?

Edmond: Yes, I enjoy traveling. I've enjoyed canoeing in the Adirondacks with my family, camping with my family in New York state and parts of New England. I enjoyed the vacation when we stayed at the Grand Canyon. It was beautiful. We met a Native American at an overlook of the Grand Canyon. We told him how beautiful it is. He told us 'it is only a hole in the ground'. He told us that his dream was to see Niagara Falls. We have been there numerous times and talked to him about it. During our stay at the Grand Canyon, we walked 'The Narrows' at Zion National Park and loved it.

Cordelia: What is your favorite color, food, book and movie?

Edmond: My favorite color is blue. One of my favorite foods is Eggplant Parmesan. Some of my favorite books are about fly fishing and I enjoyed the book 'Girl With a Pearl Earring' by Tracy Chevalier. My favorite movie is Lion King. I watched it numerous times with my oldest granddaughter who was at the time in elementary school.

Cordelia: Tell us something you would like us to know about you.

Edmond: I loved fly fishing when I lived in New York State. I practiced 'catch and release'. I use to go fly fishing in the southern tier of New York, Rochester area, Catskill Mountains and Adirondack Mountains. I made a fly rod from a kit and I tied my own flies. I came up with a pattern for a fly which I named 'Angel Hackle'. It was named for Gayle (Angel). Yes, I did catch trout with that dry fly. I enjoy doing yard work and helping Gayle with the flowers.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

SUNSHINE

If you know of anyone who is ill or a bereaved family, please call Claude Lee (919-971-3317) or e-mail him at claudealeejr@gmail.com. **We have two Milestone November Birthdays (Teresa Nutter was 90 on the 4th and Helena Nabors was 80 on the 8th).**

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS	
Theresa Nutter (4)	Marilyn Pearson (12)
Pat Toothman (4)	Patricia Cooke (17)
Wade Hallman (5)	Cordelia Blackwell (22)
Helena Nabors (8)	Cheryl Gill (28)
Rosa DeVega (9)	

LEGISLATIVE

According to North Carolina Minority Leader, Representative Robert Reives, the 2023 Legislative Session has come to a close, except for committee meetings. In the 2023 session, two major pieces of Legislation were passed and enacted into law, the 2023-24 Budget and Redistricting. The Governor did sign the budget bill into law. The Redistricting bill did not require his signature.

The General Assembly 2023-24 Budget was less than favorable for Wake County Seniors. The current budget did not provide a COLA-Cost of Living Allowance to retirees. Retirees were given to a one-time bonus of four percent (4%) of their annuity and a portion of that money was returned back to the treasury in the form of personal income tax payment. Another portion of the budget that may help seniors comes through a personal income tax reduction to 2.49% if revenue is triggered each year for five years.

The other major piece of legislation that could have a negative impact on Wake County seniors is the Redistricting Maps. The Maps have been drawn to include changes to the legislative and the congressional districts. The new Maps give the Republican Party a majority of the districts which will increase their seats from seven to ten seats. The four other districts are drawn to give the Democrats three seats. The one other district gives the Republicans an advantage to win that seat too and that means the Republican Party will control eleven seats out of fourteen and the Democrats will only control three seats; however, the new maps have been challenged in the court by the NAACP.

In conclusion, Wake County senior economic growth is not looking positive under the current GOP majority leadership and may require seniors to make some changes in personal budgets.

NOMINATING

We will have an election at our November meeting to fill one co-secretary position and four board of director positions.

TELEPHONE

Pat Toothman has done a wonderful job organizing the Telephone Committee and we are glad she has remained as one of the callers. This committee is made up of the following members: Cheryl Gill, Chair; Patricia Toothman; Cleotis Johnson and Natalie Ray. Please contact Cheryl (919-961-0894) if you have any questions. We will continue calling chapter members monthly with updated information and pertinent events.

MEMBERSHIP

The Membership Committee will be collecting dues for the 2024 renewals at our November and December meetings. Our chapter membership dues are \$10.00 per year. You must be a member of the National AARP and you will need your national membership card to complete your membership renewal. Correct change or a check made out to Wake County Chapter #3689 would be helpful.

FUNDRAISING

Super Jackpot 50/50 tickets are on sale today and the drawing will also be today. One ticket for \$3.00 and two tickets for \$5.00.

COMMITTEE REPORTS (continued)

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Earlier this month, specifically November 7th, it seems that we just couldn't stop smiling or contain ourselves for some reason. When we stopped to think, we asked ourselves "why" then we realized that we had spent the last several days giving to rather serving others:

- 1) Gayle Gayton and Oweida Cole packed and delivered 19 handmade cloth bags (made by Willi Webb) with hygiene products. These are the toiletries that you, the members, donated to the students at Fox Road Magnet School as per their request. The toothpaste and toothbrushes were donated by Dr. Bava at Gentle Smiles of Raleigh. As you may recall, we had delivered the school supplies at an earlier time.
- 2) Simultaneously, we also distributed numerous brand new workbooks, math and English textbooks to the Judy D. Salman - Center of Hope at The Salvation Army on Capital Blvd. The ladies at the Center were elated to receive the books for the students who reside there. In addition, please note, the receptionist there informed me that every Friday there is a container outside by the parking lot just for collecting any coat donations.

Please note that at the same time Oweida Cole was delivering the textbooks, Gayle Gayton was collecting letters written by Fox Road School students. The letters were mailed the same day to the Veterans that reside at the military facility in Fayetteville, NC and they should arrive by Veterans Day.

We look forward to decorating our Mittens Tree with mittens, socks, hats, etc. that you make available at our next meeting. Hopefully, we will be able to accomplish this feat at our Christmas celebration.

In the meantime, we still have numerous other books that can be distributed to other schools, daycares and agencies that you are aware of and tutors that could use them. They are brand new math and reading books for grades two through four. Remember, we serve, not to be served!

Statement from Natalie Dorssett Ray Holiday Extravaganza - December 19, 2023

Here's to our festive holiday event: The annual AARP Chapter #3689 "Holiday Extravaganza". This year's holiday general meeting will be Tuesday, December 19, 2023. Why Tuesday, you ask? In consideration of those traveling and planning to participate in other celebrations, it was suggested the meeting be held earlier in the week, as Christmas day is the following Monday. During this last meeting of 2023, we will celebrate Christmas and New Year's seasons together. The Waltonwood Senior Community has so graciously welcomed us back to meet in their beautiful facility. In preparation for our holiday event, I would like to ask you to bring...

1. Your holiday cheer as we end the year strong and look forward to a new year, 2024.
2. COURAGE to participate in the planned activity to show off your singing and acting skills. Another opportunity to dust off those talents you have put away. WE STILL GOT IT!!
3. And, one gift (\$10.00 - \$15.00) for our gift exchange activity.
4. Looking ahead, think about something new you would like to pursue or do in the New Year!

Lastly, I hope you are getting excited as I am and looking forward to our "HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA"!!

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