

***HOT* FLASHES**

Fairfax County Retired Employees Association

March 2016



Sully Historical Site (click on photo for more information on Sully)

Chairman's Message

The temperature was around 70 degrees on Christmas, and Valentine's Day was 19 degrees; what's with this weather? Snow one day and a thunderstorm a few days later! Well, the groundhog was ready to pop out of his hole, and we are ready for spring, too!

Here's what your Board of Directors has in the works for 2017:

Wednesday, May 4th, 10 AM: Our annual meeting, to be held in the Government Center. Find out what our COLA will be and vote for new Board members.

Wednesday, May 18th, 10 AM – 2 PM: Our 5th annual Information for Seniors Fair, at American Legion Post 177. Last year's participants included Retirement, Benefits staff, the credit union, and Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. What other services would you like to see included? They don't have to be government agencies! We like to make each year's Info Fair better than the last, so email your suggestions to FCREA99@gmail.com. Note: There will be no KIT luncheon that day, but you can enjoy lunch with your friends downstairs in the Legion's café and support the Legion at the same time.

Have you received your 1099-R tax form from the Retirement Office? If not, contact the Retirement Office at 703-279-8200.

One final note – we would like this newsletter to be a two-way communication! Tell us what you are involved in so we can share it with your fellow retirees. Have you found a restaurant you love? A great book? Gone on a trip? Have a favorite recipe? Email it to FCREA99@gmail.com, or send it to Bobbie Deegan at 4316 Knott Street, Beltsville, MD 20705 and she will make sure it gets to Hot Flashes editor Chuck Higdon.

See you at our Keep-In-Touch lunch on March 16th!

Sincerely,

Pam Martin, Chairman
Fairfax County Retired Employees Association

FCREA Membership

As stated in the last newsletter, the FCREA in continuing its efforts to increase membership. The cost of a lifetime membership in minimal, only \$50.

An ongoing concern of the FC Department of Human Resources (HR) is how to reach retirees with information concerning benefits. To that end they have requested that the FCREA have an outreach program to expand membership. As you know we use Hot Flashes to provide retirees with County benefits information, news about other retirees and other information we believe may be of interest.

The FCREA Board is requesting that all members contact other retirees who are not members and request that they join. Prospective members should contact [Bobbie Deegan](#)



Please help expand our membership

Retirees Benefits Focus Group

As mentioned in the last Hot Flashes, the FC Department of Human Resources has created a retirees' focus group. It is chaired by John Clough, Fairfax County HR Division Director, Benefits. The purpose of this focus group is to "leverage the group's experiences to increase the effectiveness of communications between the County and retirees; to help the County keep a pulse on retirees' thinking and to be a sounding board for new ideas." The FCREA is well represented on this focus group with three FCREA members: John Yeatman, Martha Collier and Chuck Higdon.

The schedule for these focus groups has been established for 2016 and will meet on the second Wednesday of every other month starting in January.

A point of emphasis that was addressed at the last meeting was how to keep in touch with retirees as it relates to health care benefits. The County sends most information out via UPS. The County also has several retiree health care meetings in the fall during open enrollment, but only a few hundred retirees attend. The County did create an interactive video for County Employees to help them determine which health care plan works best for them. John asked if we thought a version for retirees would be helpful. We all said it would. The County did create an [Animated Video](#) for retirees in the Fall of 2015 which explains the new Cigna HealthSpring Drug Plan for Medicare eligible retirees, but it was viewed by only a few hundred retirees. This video is still available for viewing at the link above.

Another issue discussed was having the County create an internet "portal" for county retirees, separate from the County website with only retiree related information. The Focus Group retirees encouraged this idea. Feasibility for this project is still being discussed.

We continue to request input from FCREA members. If you have any ideas about what the County's HR Department can do to improve service or communications with retirees, please send them to [FCREA](#) or send them to Bobbie Deegan at 4316 Knott Street, Beltsville, MD 20705 and she will make sure it gets to Chuck Higdon. Your suggestions will be forwarded to the focus group.

Safety Tips for Senior Travelers

You don't have to stop traveling just because you're getting older. If anything, it's when you are older that travel means more; a lifetime of knowledge allows you to fully appreciate the new experiences you're having. But being older does often mean that you can't travel the way you used to. What we're referring to are physical limitations you might need to work around, as well as the fact that as an older individual you've suddenly become numero uno on a thief's hit list.

Fortunately, there are steps you can take to protect yourself and your belongings. Here is their advice:

Get Insurance

While travel insurance is important for people of any age, it truly is essential for older travelers who are more at risk of falling and hurting themselves, getting sick, or needing extra medication if their travel is interrupted or delayed.

Don't Advertise Your Absence

Though travelers assume hotels are safe places, the truth is that people with bad intentions can come and go quite easily in most hotels. But a few tactics can help older travelers, who are often seen as better targets, protect their belongings. One tip is this: don't put the "clean my room" sign on your hotel door.

Watch What You Eat

Like it or not, older folks tend to have more sensitive tummies and are frequently on restricted diets. It's understandable to want to forget those facts while away from home, but doing so could have undesirable side effects

Mind Your Meds

Don't pack them in checked luggage, and don't leave them lying in the open in your hotel room. And if you're on a trip that could get delayed, make sure you've got enough medicine to last you an extra day or two.

- From [Independent Traveler](#)



Keep In Touch Luncheon

Third Wednesday of each month 11:30 a.m.

Old Country Buffet, Fair City Mall 9650 Main Street, Fairfax.
Traveling east from Fairfax City on Main Street (Rt. 236), turn left at the light at Fair City Mall sign, which is across from Woodson H.S. The restaurant is on the left side next to Marshall's. Lunch at the Old Country Buffet will cost **\$9.50 per person**.

Map web Link: [Old Country Buffet map link](#).

Please call Dorris Medlin at 703-256-6379 if you plan to attend.

Save The Dates 2016

Annual Meeting Wednesday May 4th, at 10 A.M.



This is our annual meeting held at the Fairfax County Government Center. We will hold elections for FCREA Board officers, announce the 2016 COLA and hear presentations from County officials on the state of the County and how it effects retirees

Senior Fair Wednesday May 18th

Numerous organizations attend this event to share information that might be of interest to seniors in general, and to our retirees in particular. Participants have included County agencies (such as the Retirement Office and DHR's Benefits staff), private insurance providers, Fairfax County Credit Union, and Fairfax County Library System, among others. Inova generously provides free health screenings and general information about common health conditions, such as diabetes and hypertension. We even have some retiree entrepreneurs selling their wares! Our goal is to make each year's event even better than the year before. What organizations or services would you like to have represented?

This event is held at the [Fairfax American Legion Post 177](#), 3939 Oak St, Fairfax, Va.

Board Meetings:

The FCREA Board of Directors meets at the Fairfax County Credit Union ([Fairfax Branch](#)) on the third Wednesday of every other month starting in January, except May when we hold our annual meeting at the Government Center. All FCREA members are invited to attend.

Retirees Share A Moment

In this section we ask retirees to share any stories, anecdotes, anniversaries, travel tips, photos, health issues, etc., that you think may be of interest to other retirees. Please send them to [FCREA](#) and as space is available and relevant they will be published.



Also, if anyone has any ideas sections or issues you think would make this newsletter of more interest, please share them with us.



Laurie Eytel

Bonjour! I went to Montreal to spend Christmas with some family members who live there. The city has old European charm, great restaurants, and is charming just to walk around in - especially "old" Montreal. A fun aside: the city has some "adult" sized seesaws that light up when you are on them. Never totally grow up! lol

Due to a flight cancellation on my return flights back to Pittsburgh, I was "grounded" in Newark. Luckily, my family had friends in Jersey City nearby. I had a great view of the NY City skyline and Liberty Park nearby. I stayed overnight with them and got a mini tour and was graciously hosted overnight. A wonderful end result for a cancelled flight. (I did catch a flight home the next day.)

Here's hoping your 2016 is full of wonderful adventures!
-Laurie Eytel

County Health Benefits: Did you know?

Did you know that all of the medical plans with Fairfax County cover hearing aids? The benefits vary by plan but hearing aids are available every 36 months. The Cigna plans cover up to \$2,800 and the Kaiser benefit is \$1,000 – And, we hear from retirees, that Costco has the best quality, service and value.

Watching your weight isn't just for looks. Maintaining a healthy weight is proven to decrease your risk of chronic diseases and increase your energy and mobility. And if you are like most of us, keeping those extra pounds at bay can be a challenge. Don't struggle alone. Did you know as a retired Fairfax County employee you are eligible for a discounted rate at Weight Watchers?

Besides the discounted rate at Weight Watchers available to retired Fairfax County employees, another great way to stay fit, healthy, and active is by taking advantage of the subsidized pricing for Fairfax County RECenters. Retirees are eligible for a 6 or 12 month pass for 50% off standard pricing.

- Lea Anderson, Fairfax County Department of Human Resources

Welcome New Members

Patti M. Hicks
Elizabeth Huebner
John A. Koerner
Gudrun Maticko
Sue Woodruff



Get Well messages for:

Ray Birch
Florence Greer
Mary Williams

FCREA Officers

Chairman:

Pam Martin
703-323-4929

Past Chairman:

Joe Blackwell

Vice Chairman:

Joyce Gerhart

Secretary & Hot Flashes Editor:

Chuck Higdon
FCREA99@gmail.com

Treasurer & Membership Chair:

(& send dues payments/address changes to):

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4316 Knott Street
Beltsville, MD 20705
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Board Members:

Dorris Medlin
Kay Wintermoyer

Retirement Board:

John Yeatman

Travel Coordinator:

Betty Powell

Sunshine:

Dolores Testerman
703-273-1295

Fairfax County Retirement

10680 Main St., Suite 280, Fairfax, VA 22030
1-800-333-1633 or 703-279-8200

FCREA Website

And Finally..



"When you are dissatisfied and would like to go back to youth, think of Algebra."

- Will Rogers



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