

Hot Flashes

Fairfax County Retired Employees Association

May 2020

Chairmans Message

We've made it through April and now into May! Things should be getting better soon. We retirees are thankful for the assistance of everyone who brought us groceries and our prescriptions, and for those who slowed the spread of coronavirus by staying home! As our neighborhoods start to come back to life, we will gradually be able to be more active, too. It feels like we've just come through a very long, hard winter, but Spring has finally arrived. Welcome, Spring!



Our cost-of-living adjustment, effective July 1, 2020 is **0.4%** (more information below.) It has been a blessing that, as Fairfax County retirees, we haven't had to worry that our monthly payments would stop during the pandemic. Thank you, Members of the Board of Supervisors, past and present. Your longstanding support of the County's retirement systems is much appreciated.

We still are hoping that our fall picnic will be able to go on as planned. In the meantime, don't forget to Wash Your Hands; Don't Touch Your Face; and Stay Well!

Sincerely,

Pam Martin, Chairman
Fairfax County Retired Employees Association

Retirees Share

In this section, we ask you to share a story, anecdote, recipe, anniversary, travel tip, photo, health issue, 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.



Our thanks to Jane Copeland and Lana Tran for the following:

Box turtles are one of the most recognizable reptiles in our area, and also one of the few creatures that hasn't changed much since dinosaur days.



ET didn't have proper UV lighting when she was kept by a family, so her shell is not smooth.

I am a long-time member of the Wildlife Rescue League, an all-volunteer organization here in Fairfax County. One of our missions is to assist State licensed wildlife rehabilitators; about three years ago I decided to become a hands-on rehabber myself. Turtles have always intrigued me, so I got my apprentice license and began keeping injured or ill box turtles until their health is restored and they can be returned to the wild. If they do not recover before fall hibernation, I keep them over the winter. Turtles heal slowly (as they do everything) and shouldn't be released to bury themselves in the woods to hibernate if they are not in peak condition.

I have space for three; they live in big plastic bins in a spare bedroom. Their care isn't complicated; they are omnivores that basically need protein, vegetables, and leafy greens every other day. They require frequent changes of water as they sometimes soak or relieve themselves in their bowls. And they must have broad spectrum UVB lights for their bone and shell health.



This turtle's scar from a lawnmower has healed but her shell is solid, so she was released last year.

Most turtles I have cared for have been hit by cars, resulting in cracked shells, which can heal over time if fixed by a good veterinarian. Fortunately, there are several vets in the area who can patch up a shell crack, amputate a mangled leg, or treat an eye or ear infection. Currently I have one whose seriously infected back leg was successfully amputated. She walks with a limp but should be ready to be released soon.

Sometimes, they can't ever be released (as determined by a vet); ET is one of those. She was kept by a family for an unknown period of time. They may have loved her but they didn't know

about the UVB lights. She also has a health issue that would keep her from surviving on her own.

She is now a permanent resident of my home, and is an "Education Turtle" visiting scout troops, senior centers, and elementary schools. She has a lot of personality and likes to cruise my kitchen. But she should be out there laying eggs.

Unfortunately, native turtles are in some jeopardy, especially from us! In the spring they come out of hibernation and look for a mate, or a place for a female to lay eggs. Their amazing built-in GPS system makes them head for the area where they grew up, even if there is a freeway or shopping center there now. Although they live for 30 or more years, they reproduce very slowly; of 100 eggs a female might lay in her lifetime, only 2 or 3 hatchlings may survive to adulthood.



ET sometimes has the run of the kitchen, and has found the cat food.

-- Jane Copeland retired from DHR in 2001

You, too, can save a box turtle's life: if you see one starting across a street, and IF IT IS SAFE FOR YOU, pick up the turtle and take it across the street IN THE DIRECTION IT IS HEADING! If you put it back where it started, it will head back across as soon as you leave – that's GPS in action.

In this grim picture of Covid-19, the uncertainty of the situation, the unimaginable disruption, and the fear that we all are facing reminded me of the fear and anxiety that my family and I lived through towards the end of the Vietnam war in the 70's. Many of my co-workers, family members and friends have often heard me say that in a negative situation, challenge yourself to turn it into something positive. Find the strength to manage the unknown and, together, we can overcome any situation.





The last few weeks, my family and I have been doing just that, staying at home and balancing between keeping ourselves occupied with learning new skills and family bonding time. In fact, I am busier now than when I was working full time. I am using this opportunity to teach my children new skills such as learning to cook Vietnamese food together, learning to paint as we renovate my daughter's room with a new coat of paint, learning to assemble new furniture for her room, and learning to make face masks to help hospitals that have reached out for hand-made face masks. (While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention does not suggest cloth material as a first-line defense against the coronavirus causing COVID-19, cloth masks work well for other conditions and can help conserve precious reserves of N-95 respirator masks). We also made face masks to help boost people's spirits by making them in their favorite team logo.

Stay safe, stay connected, and stay healthy. I hope to see brighter days soon.

Lana Tran, P.E.

Retired in 2019 from Department of Public Works & Environmental Services

Fairfax County Retirement Systems

To Active and Retired Members of Fairfax County's Three Retirement Systems:

With all that is going on in the world right now, you may be concerned about your retirement benefits. The financial markets have experienced some significant losses during the COVID-19 crisis, but there are a number of reasons why your retirement benefits are still safe.



You Have a Defined Benefit Retirement Plan

Each of the County's three retirement systems, unlike many private sector defined CONTRIBUTION 401/IRA retirement plans, is a defined BENEFIT retirement system. This means that your benefit is guaranteed.

Your Retirement Plan is Pre-Funded

Unlike the Social Security system, Fairfax County's three retirement systems are PRE-funded. This means that money has been set aside and investment earnings have accrued over many years to ensure that money is on hand to pay benefits to retirees.

The County Has Demonstrated a Commitment to Funding Retirement Benefits

The County has significantly increased its contributions to all three systems since the Great Recession and has made changes in its funding policy to ensure that the systems are funded as required each year.

The Systems' Investments are Well Diversified

By design, all three retirement systems' investment portfolios are constructed specifically to limit losses when the markets are down. This is done by spreading investments across a diverse set of investments, not just in stocks and bonds.

While no one can predict what the future might hold, please keep these four points in mind when thinking about your Fairfax County retirement benefits.

Sincerely,

Jeff Weiler

Executive Director – Fairfax County Retirement Systems

Retiree Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA)

Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs) for retirees and DROP participants in the Employees', Police Officers and Uniformed Retirement Systems, in the amount of 0.4%, will be effective July 1, 2020.

COLAs for the last 23 years: 2019-1.6%; 2018-1.8%; 2017-1.3%; 2016-1.0%; 2015-0.2%; 2014-1.6%; 2013-1.4%; 2012-2.8%; 2011-3.0%; 2010-2.3%; 2009-0.4%; 2008-4.0%; 2007-4.0%; 2006-3.3%; 2005-3.9%; 2004-1.9%; 2003-3.6%; 2002-

3.0%; 2001-3.4%; 2000-3.8%; 1999-2.6%; 1998-1.8%; and 1997-2.2%.

For more information go to [COLA](#).

Fairfax County Department of Human Resources

Coping with COVID-19 Anxiety

Disease outbreaks, social distancing, and economic uncertainty can be stressful for people of all ages, and certainly for retirees. Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations, but it is important that you take care of yourself through healthy coping strategies. By taking care of yourself, you also will be taking care of community.

Here are some tips from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help you reduce your stress:

1. Take breaks from watching, reading, and listening to news stories, including social media.
2. Take care of your body while you are at home - exercise, try to eat healthy, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol.
3. Make time to unwind- meditate, stretch, cook healthy meals, take a warm bath, and do other relaxing activities that you may not typically have time to enjoy.
4. Know the facts - educate yourself on COVID-19 using accurate sources such as the CDC.
5. Connect with others - talk to friends, family, and/or professionals to express your concerns and feelings. Talking about your feelings helps relieve some of the stress. Pick up a phone, write a letter, find a mental health practitioner through your health plan, or reach out to free community resources, such as the [Spiritual Support Line](#) for Older Adults through Fairfax County at 703-324-5185 or call the 24-hour Cigna community support line (open to all) at 1-866-912-1687.

LiveWell

LiveWell and Virginia Hospital Center will host free, virtual fitness classes specifically for Fairfax County retirees. The hour-long classes will take place online through Zoom. Registration is required at least 48 hours before each class. The log-in information and class details will be emailed to participants prior to the session. Select from one or more of the following classes. Questions? Email LiveWell@fairfaxcounty.gov.

- [Seated Yoga](#): May 11 from 10-11 am
- [Build Your Balance](#): May 1 from 10-11 am
- [Stretch & Strengthen](#): May 15 from 10-11 am



NextMark Credit Union



We're in this together.

Annual Membership Meeting

NextMark's Annual Membership meeting will take place virtually at 11am on May 26th. If you are interested in attending online, please RSVP by sending an email to Marketing@NextMarkCU.org, or by calling 703-218-9900 ext. 1219. Interested members will receive online access instructions.

COVID-19 Branch Closures Information

As we navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, NextMark continues to prioritize the health and safety of our members, our employees, and the community we serve. NextMark is ONLY serving members through Drive-Thru and ATMs (see below).

The Night Drop will remain open at our Fairfax location.

The Government Center and Herry Branches are CLOSED until further notice.

DRIVE-THRU LOCATIONS

Fairfax Branch: 4201 Members Way, Fairfax, VA 22030

Hours: M,T,W,F: 9am – 5pm, TH: 9:30am-5pm, Sat. 9am-1pm

Springfield Branch: 6506 Loisdale Rd., #100, Springfield, VA 22150

Hours: M,T,W,F: 9am – 5pm, TH: 10:00am-5pm, Sat. 9am-1pm

For faster service: Print and complete your Deposit Slip ahead of time. No worries if you don't, we have slips available for you at our Drive-Thrus.

In-Person Appointments: If you have a problem through the Drive-Thru, please call Member Services at 703-218-9900 to make an appointment.

Online Banking and Mobile are the way to go

Our Online and Mobile Banking options are available 24/7. If you have not done so already, we encourage you to enroll today by clicking on the “Log in” button on our website (NextMarkCU.org). To access mobile banking, we invite you to download our NextMark Mobile Banking app from your App store.

Deposit a check from the comfort & safety of your home

Get started by downloading the NextMark Mobile App from your App Store, then go to Transactions>Deposit Check and follow the instructions to take a picture and deposit your check right into your account. It's that easy.

Financial Relief Products

If you or someone in your economic household is experiencing a financial hardship, we are here to help. Please visit our COVID-19 resource page for a detailed list of financial relief products, or email us at membersolutions@NextMarkCU.org.

Stay healthy and safe.

Check out the [NextMark News Newsletter](#) for current promotions, news and events.

Not a credit union member yet? You are eligible to join! Open an account today and start reaping the NextMark Credit Union benefits!

Visit our website or call us for details! NextMarkCU.org - 703.218.9900 opt.3.
Federally Insured by NCUA. Equal Housing Lender.

FCREA Events

Keep In Touch Luncheons are cancelled until further notice.

FCREA Board Meetings

The FCREA Board of Directors meets at 9:30am at the NextMark Credit Union ([Fairfax Branch](#)) on the third Wednesday, starting in January and then every other month except May. All FCREA members are invited to attend when Board meeting resume after the pandemic restrictions.

Dates for your 2020 Calendar

FCREA Annual Meeting -May 6, 2020 CANCELLED

FCREA Senior Information Fair -May 20, 2020 CANCELLED

FCREA Holiday Luncheon -December 16, 2020

FCREA Membership



New Members

- Maxine J. Erler, Retired from the Health Dept. on 9/30/19
 - Mark M. Leonard, Retired from DPW&ES/Wastewater Planning & Monitoring on 4/3/20
 - Edward S. Nies, Retiring from Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court on 7/21/20
 - Joan C. Schnitzer, Retiring from Board of Supervisors on 5/26/20
 - Howard Springsteen, Retiring from Vehicle Services in November 2020
 - Lucinda Blasco, Retired from Neighborhood and Community Services on 3/6/20
-

To Join FCREA ...

Any retired Fairfax County employee or surviving spouse is eligible to become a member of the Association. 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 association has an Annual Membership Meeting in May and sponsors several events all year, to include monthly luncheons, a Senior Information Fair in May, an annual picnic in September, and a holiday luncheon in December.

Prospective members should contact [Bobbie Deegan](#). The cost of a lifetime membership is just \$50. For a membership application [click here](#)

Sad News



June Attmanspacher's husband, Charles (Jack) Attmanspacher, passed away on March 1. June retired from Circuit Court in 1986. For more information go to [Obituary](#)

FCREA Officers

Chairman: Pam Martin
703-323-4929

Past Chairman: Joe Blackwell

Vice Chairman & Sunshine Committee Chair: Joyce Gerhart
703-560-4785 or email: ggerhart2@verizon.net

FCREA retirees are asked to forward any news concerning retirees or their family members who are ill and/or have passed away to Joyce.

Secretary & Hot Flashes Editor: Chuck Higdon
FCREA99@gmail.com

Treasurer & Membership: Bobbie Deegan
4316 Knott Street
Beltsville, MD 20705

301-937-7070 or email: BobbieDeegan@aol.com

Please send membership forms & checks, and/or address changes to Bobbie.

FCREA Board Member: Randy Creller

Retirement Board: John Yeatman

Travel Coordinator: Betty Powell

703-273-3216 or email: bpowe1@aol.com

FCREA Website

Fairfax County Websites of Interest

Fairfax County Retirement

12015 Lee Jackson Memorial Hwy, Suite 350, Fairfax, VA 22033-3300

1-800-333-1633 or 703-279-8200

Fairfax County Benefits Summary - Active Employees and Retirees

Department of Human Resources Retiree Benefits list of [Who to Call Contacts](#)

Finally

**I'M DEEPLY DISTURBED
BY HOW MANY PEOPLE
SEEM TO SEE**



**WASHING THEIR
HANDS AS A NEW
THING.**

**Next
Mark**

CREDIT UNION

©2020 Fairfax County Retired Employees Association | Fairfax, Virginia

[Web Version](#)

[Preferences](#)

[Forward](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)

Powered by **Mad Mimi**®
A GoDaddy® company