

Hot Flashes

Fairfax County Retired Employees Association

**November 2025
Special Edition**

Message From the Chair

Yes, you are getting the November issue of Hot Flashes a few weeks early! When Editor Chuck Higdon was putting together the September issue, the Benefits Office hadn't yet finalized their plans for open enrollment, and they asked if we could put out a special edition of Hot Flashes in mid-October for that purpose. Since the regular issue would come out on November 1, we opted to move this issue up a couple of weeks. Thank you, Chuck, for your flexibility!

Unfortunately, this year's picnic was called off due to rain. The Board didn't take this decision lightly, because we were among those looking forward to getting together. A significant rainstorm was predicted, though, so we opted to keep everyone dry and safely at home. There's always next year!

Our next event will take place on December 17 at 11:30, when we will return to the International Country Club in Fairfax for our Holiday Luncheon. Details are in the article below. We always have a big turnout, and it is great to catch up on the news with old friends!

One last reminder - the general election to elect Virginia's next Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, House of Delegates members, and local officials is on November 4. If you are registered to vote in Virginia, don't forget to vote!

That's my news for this month. See you at the holiday party!

Sincerely,
Pam Martin, Chairman
Fairfax County Retired Employees Association

Department of Human Resources, Benefits Division Update



Open Enrollment Special Edition

The 2026 Retiree Open Enrollment for Fairfax County Government will take place from Monday, November 3rd, to Friday, November 21st. The 2026 plan information and premiums will be included in Retiree Open Enrollment packets and posted to the Benefits Division in the Department of Human Resources' Retiree Benefits Page on the county's public website in late October. No information will be available before then.

Each year, during the annual Retiree Open Enrollment period, retirees can review their current enrollments and make adjustments for the upcoming plan year. While retirees may not add or increase benefits elections, they can add or remove dependents, change medical plans, or reduce life insurance.

Reminder of Retiree Responsibilities

- Know the dates and deadlines specific to Fairfax County Government's Retiree Open Enrollment period. Retirees may receive multiple mailings about various open enrollment periods throughout the year. Some of these may relate to non-county-sponsored plans, such as Medicare's Open Enrollment, which is separate and distinct from Fairfax County Government's Retiree Open Enrollment.
- Review all available materials and resources, including the Retiree Benefits guide, upcoming mailings, and the Benefits Division in the Department of Human Resources' Retiree Benefits Page on the county's public website. Take any necessary actions by the indicated deadlines to ensure continued access to your county benefits.

Webpage: [DHR retiree benefits](#)

- Be aware that Medicare does not allow individuals to be enrolled in more than one Medicare Part D plan at a time. Suppose a retiree—or their covered dependent—enrolls in a second Medicare Part D plan (in addition to the Part D coverage included with a county-sponsored medical plan). In that case, Medicare will automatically disenroll them from the county-sponsored plan.
- It is the retiree's responsibility to ensure that neither they nor their covered dependents enroll in a second Medicare Part D plan, or a non-county medical plan that includes Medicare Part D coverage. Disenrollment will result in permanent loss of both county-sponsored prescription drug and medical coverage.

End of the Cigna True Choice Core Medicare Advantage PPO Plan

In 2024, Cigna announced its intention to sell its Medicare products, including the Cigna True Choice Core Medicare Advantage Plan (PPO) and the Cigna Rx Part D Prescription Drug Plan. This sale was finalized with Health Care Service Corporation (HCSC) in early 2025. **As a result, the Cigna True Choice Core Medicare Advantage PPO Plan will not be offered as a plan option in 2026.**

Action Required: To maintain coverage in the county-sponsored medical plan, all participants currently enrolled in the Cigna True Choice Core Medicare Advantage PPO Plan must make a new plan election during Retiree Open Enrollment. Or county coverage will be permanently canceled.

The Benefits Division in the Department of Human Resources

Our office administers county-sponsored Health Plans, including medical, vision, and dental coverage, as well as Group Term Life Insurance and the Deferred Compensation (457b) plan, which T. Rowe Price manages.

If you have any questions about eligibility, you can contact us by email at DHRBenefitsDivision@fairfaxcounty.gov.

In-person assistance or individual consultations are by appointment only. This ensures that employees and retirees are connected to the appropriate team member or agency and provides a private space for confidential discussions as needed.

Be Health Savvy In An Era Of Misinformation



In an age of increasingly sophisticated technology and ever-changing media, it's essential to be able to distinguish between health facts and fiction. While the topic is complex and nuanced, consider the following key points as you evaluate health-related headlines and advertisements.

1) **Trust the source:** Ask yourself if the advice is supported by enduring non-profits and governmental agencies such as the [American Heart Association](#), [American Cancer Society](#), [American Diabetes Association](#), [World Health Organization](#), and similar organizations. If the information leads to a site or source that asks you to buy something or promotes a for-profit company, consider whether the information is biased.

2) **Practice makes (almost) perfect:** It can be challenging to detect AI-created videos and audio clips, and to know if an email is real or spam. Look for clues like improper grammar or capitalization, choppy videos, or awkward pauses. **Is it a**

Human Voice or AI? Try your ear at this quiz.

3) Is it too good to be true? The adage holds true—if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. If there were a miracle cure or decades-old shift in medical advice, it would be widely touted. It's always a good idea to discuss any questions or concerns with your healthcare provider.

Protect Yourself. Protect Your Loved Ones. Get a Flu Vaccine.

Fairfax County Government employees and retirees can receive a no-cost flu vaccine this fall, at sites across Fairfax County, including during the **Retiree Health and Benefits Fair** on November 6 **from 11 am to 2 pm** at the **Fairfax County Government Center** (12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA 22035), outside of Suite 170. A limited supply of high-dose flu vaccines will also be available at the Retiree Health & Benefits Fair for individuals 65 years and older with proof of age.

The Retiree Health and Benefits Fair will include flu vaccines, biometric screenings (including cholesterol, glucose, A1C, and blood pressure), vendor partners, and information on open enrollment.

Registration for flu vaccines is recommended. Screenings will be offered on a walk-in, first-come, first-served basis, while supplies last. Retirees should bring a driver's license or other government-issued identification to participate in the flu vaccine and screening programs.

The Retiree Health and Benefits Fair will be preceded by the Retiree Open Enrollment meeting beginning at 9:30 am in the Board Auditorium.

Stay Healthy, Earn Rewards!

Fairfax County Government employees and retirees who subscribe to a county health plan, Cigna, or Kaiser, can earn up to \$250 each year by taking preventive health steps.

The 2025 requirements include having an annual physical with your primary care physician and completing two additional categories in full to earn any rewards. It is recommended that all activities be completed and entered into the Cigna portal or submitted through the Kaiser Passport by October to make sure they are processed before the FIRM's December 31 deadline.

Does a Medicare physical count toward the MotivateMe annual physical exam requirement? Yes. Send your explanation of benefits (EOB) or written documentation for claims-based activities (i.e., yearly physical, colonoscopy, mammogram, etc.) showing your name, exam type, provider name, and date of exam to LiveWell@fairfaxcounty.gov or mail it to Fairfax County DHR c/o LiveWell at 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 270, Fairfax, VA 22035. **LiveWell must receive Medicare documentation by December 31.**

Would you like some help entering or checking the status of rewards? Contact us at LiveWell@fairfaxcounty.gov. Retirees can also visit the [Retiree Benefits page](#) on the public website for more information and to download the Kaiser passport.

YOUR ADDRESS FOR TAX DOCUMENTS

Last reminder before year-end: Do you have a new address? Please let us know so we can mail your tax document to the correct address. We mail your Form 1099-R in January, and the post office will not forward it - even if you leave a forwarding address. Address changes can be made by submitting a [Change of Address form](#) by mail or fax. You can also find the form on the [Retirement Systems website](#) under “Forms” in Department Resources and then in the section for Retirees. **Forms must be received by December 31 to ensure your address is updated for year-end tax reporting.**

CREDIT UNION MERGER

Remember that the merger between Apple FCU and NextMark was effective earlier this year. We MUST have documentation from you confirming the update to your ABA and new account. If you have not already completed a Direct Deposit Change form, please do so and return it to your payroll specialist.

[Direct Deposit – Primary account](#)

[A007_Secondary_Deposit_Agreement_1-29-2025 F.pdf](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Forms and questions can be addressed to your payroll specialist depending on the first letter of your last name:

Last Name Starts With	Name	Email
A-K	Christina Storr Barnes	christina.storrbarnes@fairfaxcounty.gov
L-Z	Yvonne Ta	yvonne.ta@fairfaxcounty.gov



November 4, 2025 - Fairfax County Elections



General election (and special election in the Town of Vienna) to elect the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, all of the Virginia House of Delegates, and in the Town of Vienna, Mayor and Town Council. All registered Fairfax County voters are eligible to vote in this election. Only Town of Vienna residents are eligible to vote in the Vienna Town races.

EARLY VOTING IS NOW OPEN.

For more information, go to [FC Vote](#)

Opportunities to Help

Help Spread Warmth and Cheer This Holiday Season

Join Fairfax County's Department of Family Services, Adult and Aging Division, in supporting the "Bundles of Comfort" Holiday Care Package Drive to help bring joy to over 300 older adults and adults with disabilities in our community. You can make a meaningful impact by donating care packages filled with new hats, scarves, mugs, and hygiene items—gifts that provide warmth, comfort, and a reminder that they are not alone this season.



It's an excellent way to give back and share the true spirit of the holidays. Visit bit.ly/VSholiday25 for more details and to sign up. Items must be *received by November 21, 2025*.

Fairfax Lions Club

Citrus Fruit Sales - All Proceeds to Charity

Selling: Fresh from FL Ruby Red Grapefruit & Mandarin Oranges;
Whitley's VA peanuts



Sign-up for email announcements with details!
Then order, pay on-line, pick-up Nov 20-22 and Dec 18-20, 2025

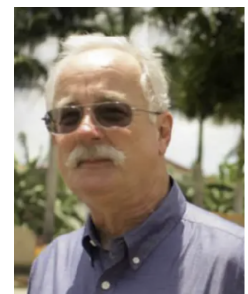
Scan code
to sign-up for emails:



Fairfax Lions Club is registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization
<https://www.fairfaxlions.org/>

Sad News

Quentin Maves passed away on August 28, 2025. He retired as a service manager from Fairfax County in 2015, where he maintained and repaired the county's police, educational, and administrative vehicles. [Obituary](#)



Membership

[Membership Application](#)
[Membership Facts](#)

New Members

- Joan Beacham, Retiring from Public Works & Environmental Services/Capital Facilities on 10/31/25
- Zolaykha (Zoly) Shahna, Retiring from the Library on 10/31/25



2025 FCREA Holiday Luncheon

FCREA's annual holiday luncheon will be on Wednesday, December 17, at 11:30 a.m. at the International Country Club in Fairfax.

International Country Club
13200 Lee Jackson Memorial Hwy,
Fairfax, VA 22033 ·

[Directions](#)

Retirees are encouraged to bring guests!

Cost: \$30 per person

Make checks payable to FCREA. Mail the check and the full names of attendees to

Joyce Gerhart
3358 Taleen Ct
Annandale, Va. 22003

For more information, please phone Joyce at [703-560-4785](tel:703-560-4785) or email her at ggerhart2@verizon.net.

Reservation Deadline: **December 8**



Help those in need! We will collect items for the Lamb Center, which need Rain Ponchos, small umbrellas, Men's socks, and backpack snacks.

Thank you in advance for your contributions.

Members Information

FCREA Board Members

FCREA retirees are asked to forward news concerning retirees or their family members who are ill or have passed away to Joyce Gerhart: [703-560-4785](tel:703-560-4785) or ggerhart2@verizon.net

Please send address changes to Bobbie Deegan: BobbieDeegan@aol.com, or [301-937-7070](tel:301-937-7070)

FCREA Website

Fairfax County Websites with Retirees Information:

[Retirement Systems](#)

[Retirement Web Member Services](#)

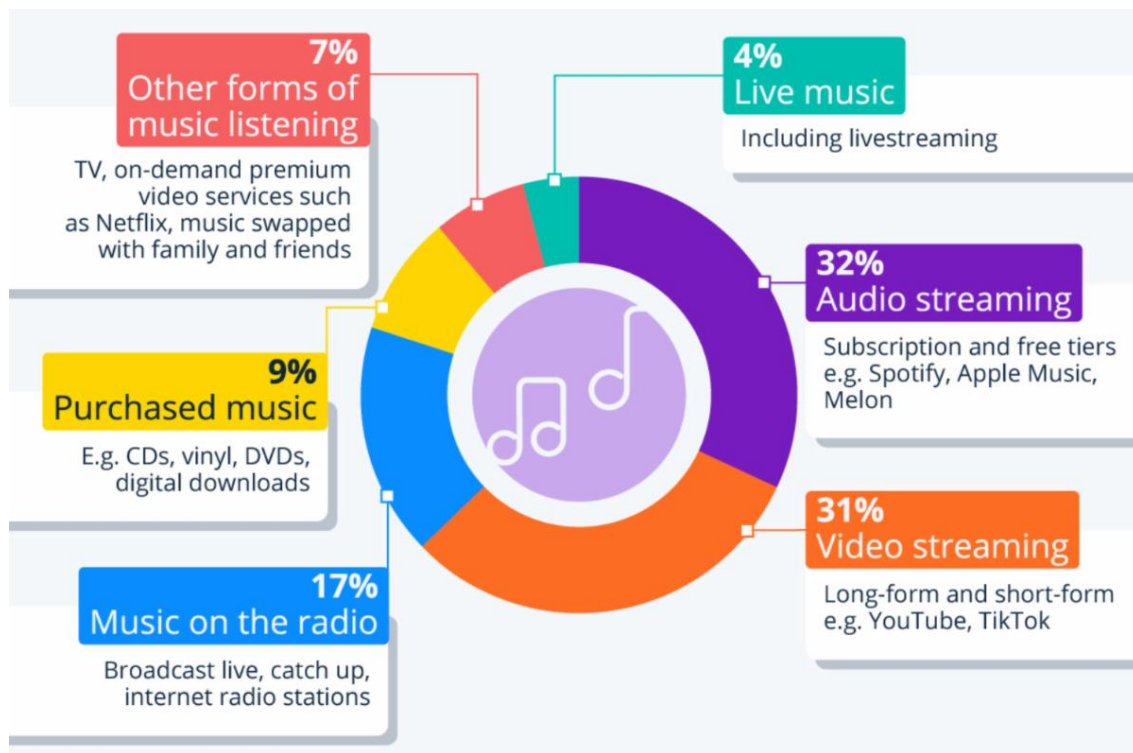
[Retirees Benefits](#)

[HR- Who to Call Contacts](#) (go to [Know Who to Call](#) link)

[Retirees Resource and Video Library](#)

Finally... How the World Listens to Music

Share of hours spent engaging with music, by platform.



Editor's Note: I know I am dating myself, but I've bought a few albums in five different formats: vinyl, cassette, CD, Apple iTunes download, and now access them via a paid streaming service. I hope there are no more changes!

[View as Webpage](#)

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