

Hot Flashes

Fairfax County Retired Employees Association

March 2025

Chairman's Message

After a couple of mild winters, we locals had some snow this year. Thank you, Polar Vortex! But we've made it through February, and warmer days are coming. Spring is our area's prettiest time of year, and I know we all are ready for the daffodils and tulips to bloom!

We have someone to celebrate, too! Fellow retiree Dolores Testerman turned 95 on February 14th! After retiring from Circuit Court in 1988, she joined the Fairfax County Retired Employees Association and served on our Board of Directors for many years. Happy Birthday, Dolores! We are so grateful for all you've done for your fellow FCREA members over the years!

Next Mark Credit Union is now fully merged with Apple Credit Union. Thank you, Next Mark Credit Union volunteers and staff, for all your efforts in getting us to this point. Since Fairfax County Employees Credit Union received its original charter in 1958, our assets have grown from a cash box in a desk drawer to more than \$330 million. It was a huge undertaking to merge all those membership and financial records from NextMark's IT systems into Apple's systems. There were a few blips, but the staff did a great job resolving them. Now, we are all part of a \$2 billion credit union! Thank you, Apple staff, for making NextMark members (including FCREA) feel so welcome.

Our annual meeting will be via **Zoom** on Wednesday, **May 7th at 10 am**. The July cost-of-living increase will be announced then, so tune in! Details will be shared in the next Hot Flash issue.

Editor Chuck Higdon is always happy to receive contributions to Hot Flashes.
Email yours to Chuck at FCREA99@gmail.com.

I hope to see you soon!

Sincerely,
Pam Martin, Chairman
Fairfax County Retired Employees Association

Department of Human Resources, Benefits Division Update



Have benefit questions?

The Benefits Division in the Department of Human Resources administers medical/vision, dental, life insurance, and Deferred Compensation plan benefits for Fairfax County government employees and retirees. Our team can help you verify and update benefit enrollments and premium and benefit deduction questions. We are also available to address escalated service and claims concerns after connecting with vendor customer service.

Remember, for plan-specific questions regarding coverage and/or provider assistance, you should contact the carrier directly before contacting the Benefits team. Contact information for our vendor partners can be found on the *updated* [Retiree Benefits Contact List](#) available on the Department of Human Resources Retiree Benefits [webpage](#).

Reminders

To better meet your needs, we can ensure in-person visits to the Department of Human Resources and the Benefits Division are discouraged because of the increase in our remote workforce. If you need to speak with a team member in person, we strongly suggest you call ahead and make an appointment to ensure the team member is on-site to see you. Walk-ins may be required to wait or reschedule for a later date if they arrive without an appointment.

Retirees who have questions regarding retiree health plans and life insurance

benefits, or need to make an appointment for an in-person consultation should email our team directly at DHRBenefitsDivision@fairfaxcounty.gov.

The best way to access retiree benefit resources and to keep up with the latest is to visit the Department of Human Resources [Retiree Benefits Page](#).

The Retiree Benefits Page includes general information on retiree programs, including health and life insurance, becoming Medicare Eligible, and details on the Retiree Benefits Academy.

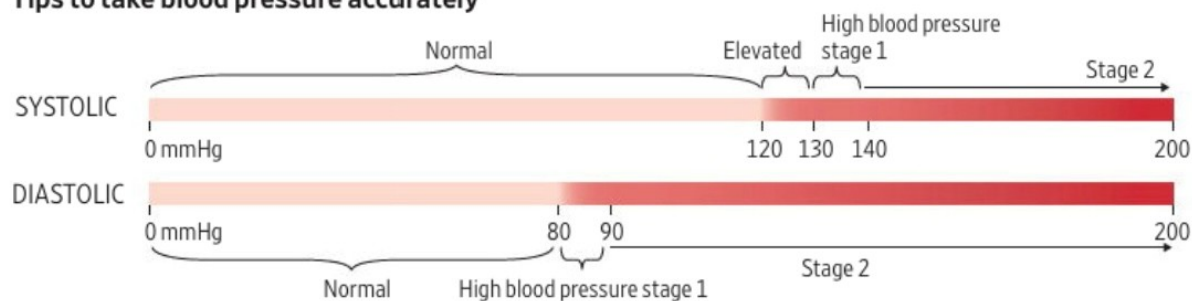
In 2025, the Retiree Benefits Academy will continue to provide education on retiree benefit options, special financial sessions, and well-being workshops with LiveWell. Find out more about the Retiree Academy on the Resources and Video Library section of the Retiree Benefits Page on the public website: [Resource Videos](#)

Blood Pressure inaccuracies

Blood pressure inaccuracies can be a source of confusion and concern for many retirees, but understanding them doesn't have to be daunting! Readings can fluctuate due to various factors, such as time of day, stress levels, or even how the cuff is positioned on your arm.

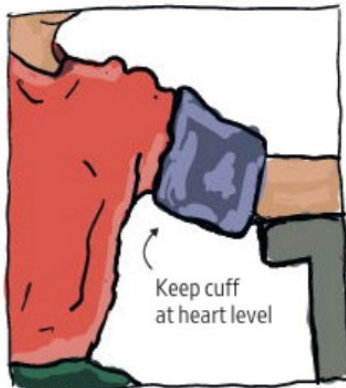
By becoming aware of these nuances, you can empower yourself to make your own health decisions and engage in meaningful discussions with your healthcare providers.

Tips to take blood pressure accurately



Use correct-sized cuff

Using cuff too small: **+5-20 mmHg**



Sit upright, support back

Not doing so: **+5 mmHg**



Keep legs uncrossed

Not doing so: **+3-15 mmHg**



Keep feet flat on the floor

Not doing so: **+5 mmHg**



Don't talk

Talking: **+4-19 mmHg**



Don't drink caffeine*

Caffeine: **+3-15 mmHg**



*Within 30 minutes of measurement

This information was published in the Wall Street Journal, December 18, 2024.

Credit Union Merger: NextMark to Apple

FAIRFAX COUNTY
Retirement SYSTEMS
EMPLOYEES' POLICE OFFICERS UNIFORMED

Did you have all or part of your retirement benefit being direct deposited to NextMark Credit Union? If so, your February payment was automatically deposited to your new Apple FCU account. ***It's important, however, that you complete a direct deposit form to provide us with your new account information.*** Please use the forms linked below. You can mail, fax, or email your form to your payroll specialist. See below for the NEW division of last names.

[Direct Deposit Form](#)

[Secondary Direct Deposit Form](#)

This link will provide additional information about the merger: [Apple FCU & NextMark CU Merger | Apple FCU](#)

Tax Documents: Form 1099-R

Have you received your Form 1099-R with information on filing your taxes? If you need a copy, you can print the form from your online account which is accessed from our website and at this link: [Web Member Services](#). You can also verify your mailing address, and if changes are necessary, please submit a [Change of Address Form](#).

Please contact your payroll specialist if you have any questions or need help with forms. Please note the new division of last names.

If you have questions, contact your payroll specialist:

Retiree Last Name Starts with	Specialist	Email Address	Phone Number
A-K	Dayle Bartholow	dayle.bartholow@fairfaxcounty.gov	703-324-2338
L-Z	Yvonne Ta	yvonne.ta@fairfaxcounty.gov	703-324-8230

Opportunities to Help

Volunteer Solutions



Form new connections and help reduce social isolation! Volunteer drivers, social visitors, and grocery shoppers are especially needed in the southern and central regions of Fairfax County. Do you live near Alexandria or Falls Church?

Skilled volunteers in fitness, arts and crafts, ceramics, Spanish, ESL, and music are also needed in senior centers throughout the county. Schedules are flexible.

Learn more about Volunteer Solutions at bit.ly/FXVSVOL or email VolunteerSolutions@FairfaxCounty.gov if you have questions.



Exciting News for NextMark CU Retirees!

Hi there, fellow retirees!

You might have heard that NextMark Credit Union has joined forces with Apple Federal Credit Union. Don't worry, it's not as scary as it sounds! This merger is great news for all of us. Think of it like joining a bigger club with more perks. Apple Federal Credit Union has been around for almost 70 years, and they know a thing or two about taking care of their members. They're all about making banking easy and rewarding, and we're excited to welcome you to the Apple family.

What does this mean for you?

- **More to love:** Access 25 branches and ATMs throughout NoVA – Fairfax, Frederick, Loudoun, Prince William, and Stafford.
- **Early Pay:** Enjoy getting your VRS direct deposit up to two days early.
- **Easy-to-use online and mobile banking:** Access to your accounts 24/7 makes managing your money easy, including Mobile Check Deposit, Bill Pay, and Zelle.
- **Community focus:** Apple is deeply rooted in our communities, just like NextMark CU. They're always looking for ways to give back and support local organizations.

We know change can be a little unsettling, but the Apple team is here to make the transition as smooth as possible. You'll get more information in the coming months as we

onboard NextMark members, but in the meantime, feel free to contact us with any questions you might have.

We're thrilled to have you join the Apple family!

Warmly,
The Apple Federal Credit Union Team

Sad News

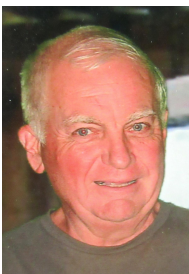


Dr. James Patrick McDonald, beloved husband, father, and grandfather, passed away on November 7, 2024, in Alexandria, Virginia. Dr. McDonald retired from the County in 1997.

[Obituary](#)

Patricia Deane Gore, lovingly known as Pat, 81, of Concord, North Carolina, died on Sunday, January 19, 2025. Pat retired from Fairfax County in 2001.

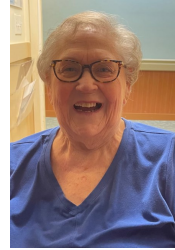
[Obituary](#)



Ronald Lee Corbett, age 76, of Hedgesville, WV, passed away peacefully on January 8, 2025, with his wife, Eileen, by his side. Both Ron and Eileen retired from the County in 1999.

[Obituary](#)

Kay S. Brown, 83, of Fairfax, Virginia, passed away on November 30, 2024. Her husband, James "Jim" C. Brown, retired from the County in 1999.



FCREA

Membership

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

New Members



- Cynthia Bailey, Retired from the County Attorney's Office on 1/14/25
- Michelle Diggs, Retired from Neighborhood & Community Services/iSACC on 10/22/24
- Gloria A. Ephraim, Retired from the Sheriff's Office on 12/4/24
- Assi A. Lyytinen, Retired from the Community Services Board/UM on 2/11/25
- Brenda Robertson Mason, Retired from Housing and Community Development on 10/29/21
- Marlene Olarte, Retired from Information Technology on 6/30/15
- Kim F. Scarborough-Sykes, Retired from Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court on 6/4/24
- Matthew Vaughan, Retired from Family Services on 1/10/25
- Esther T. Cheryan, Retired from Neighborhood and Community Services on 12/17/24
- Patricia R. Cole, Retired from the Health Dept. on 11/5/24
- Patricia S. Ferguson, Retired from Elections on 9/6/24
- Michael H. Fillius, Retired from Public Works & Environmental Services/Solid Waste on 10/22/24
- Michel Finkle Retired from Housing & Community Development on July 1, 2005
- Karen E. Mazzoli, Retired from Budget & Development in July 2023
- Jose Palomo, Retired from Health Dept. on 1/28/25
- Wendy Peters, Retired from Neighborhood & Community Services on

12/17/24

- Shahla Zahirieh, Retired from Transportation on 1/28/25

Members we have lost track of...

If anyone knows any of these members, please remind them to update their address by contacting FCREA99@gmail.com or Bobbie Deegan at [301-937-7070](tel:301-937-7070) or BobbieDeegan@aol.com.

- Luz Rivera retired from OFC in 2013
- Michele Leber retired in 2004
- Paulette Whiteside retired from the Neighborhood & Community Service Board in 2023
- Rokhsoueh S. Shoaee retired from CSB-ACS in 2011

2025 FCREA Events

FCREA Annual Meeting via Zoom, May 7 at 10 am.

FCREA Picnic mid-September DTBD

FCREA Holiday Luncheon, December 17 at 11:30

Members Information

FCREA Board Members

FCREA retirees are asked to forward any 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)

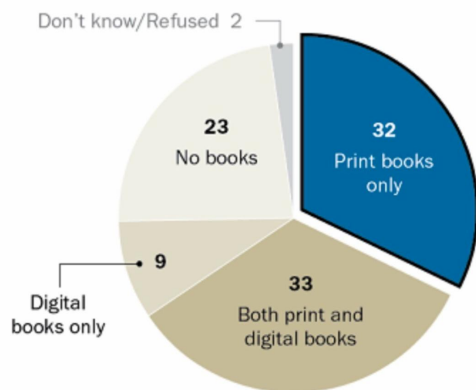
FCREA Website

Fairfax County Websites with Retirees Information:

Finally... Pew Research on book consumption

A third of Americans say they read both print and digital books in the past year

% of U.S. adults who say they have read in the previous 12 months



According to the most recent survey by the Pew Research Center on book consumption and book formats, traditional print is still the most popular reading format for adults and children.

Survey says:

75% of adults in the United States read a book in some format over the last year
32% claim they only read print books
33% say they read both print books and e-books
9% say they only read e-books
23% of the respondents said that they don't read books

[View as Webpage](#)

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