

# Hot Flashes

May 2021

*Fairfax County Retired Employees Association*

---

## ***Chairman's Message***

*Have you gotten your vaccination yet?* Thousands of people in the “DMV” (District-Maryland-Virginia) have, and more are getting their shots every day. Hopefully, the end of the pandemic is in sight! Some scientists say COVID is here to stay and we may need a “booster shot” periodically, just like we get our annual flu shot. I can handle that. Just let us see our family and friends again without feeling like we are putting ourselves (and them) at risk!



**Vaccines  
Protect Us All**

For our newer members, I want you to know that May is usually a busy month for us retirees. Our Annual Meeting would have been on the first Wednesday in May, when we would get together in the meeting room at the credit union's main branch on Members Way in Fairfax. We'd have several invited speakers from the County and the much-anticipated “Big Reveal” of what our July cost-of-living increase will be. This year, Jeff Weiler, the Executive Director of Fairfax County Retirement Systems, is sharing the news with us in this issue of Hot Flashes instead.

After our Annual Meeting, we'd normally host the Senior Information Fair on the third Wednesday in May. Representatives of County agencies and local vendors would share information about organizations/programs of interest to seniors with our members and their family, friends and neighbors. Often, we would have a variety of free health screenings for County retirees, as well. But our health care providers are engaged elsewhere this year! We are very grateful for the fine care that all of the nation's dedicated health care providers and their support staff have been giving us for the past 12+ months. They have carried out their duties at great risk to themselves and with great sacrifice by their families, especially in those terrifying and heartbreaking early months.

to keep everyone well, both the Annual Meeting and the Senior Information Fair are cancelled again this year.

Pre-COVID, we would meet monthly at Glory Days Grill in the Pan Am

Shopping Center in Fairfax for our Keep-in-Touch (KIT) luncheon. The KIT luncheons are still “on hold,” too.

BUT – we are hopeful that we will be able to have the picnic this fall, since it would be held outdoors in a County park. We are starting to plan for a holiday party in December, also. The worst is behind us; it is time to adjust to a “new normal” and move forward!

Pam Martin, Chairman  
Fairfax County Retired Employees Association

---

### ***Retiree enjoying retirement***



In this section, we ask you to share something that 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 Joe Blackwell for the following:

#### **Cruising the Danube River:**

Prior to the coronavirus, I made two trips cruising the Danube River. I will focus on the second trip as it covered a more diverse territory. So, let's start in Bucharest, the former capital of Wallachia and Romania since 1862. It is a beautiful city with broad tree-lined boulevards, well-kept parks and a mixture of architectural styles with Neo-Classical 19th century structures.

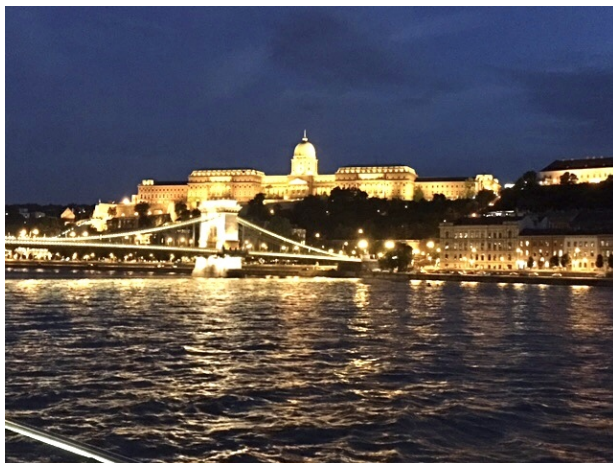
On a side-trip to Transylvania, we visited Bran Castle, built in 1377 and often referred to as Dracula's Castle. After the fall of the Soviet Union and years of legal proceedings, it is now back in the hands of its heirs and has become a big tourist attraction.

After three nights in a resort in Sinai located in the Carpathian Mountains, we were off to the Black Sea. The weather was beautiful as we arrived at Constanta, a Romanian seaport that is the oldest inhabited city in the country. There we saw Roman ruins dating back some 2500 years to when it was a Roman colony. Then I had another exciting experience, wading in the waters of the Black Sea on a beautiful, sunny day with a calm beach. What an experience for a kid who grew up in the arid Texas panhandle

After boarding our river cruise ship, we transited the canal from the sea to the Danube river. (I have to digress: At this very moment as I sit at my computer writing, the “Blue Danube” by Johann Strauss II just began playing on my radio. What timing! Now back to my narrative). Our first stop was Vidin, Bulgaria where we visited Baba Vida, a medieval fortress that was the city’s main defense in the Middle Ages. This led to our next stop in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia (and former capital of Yugoslavia). An interesting site we visited there was the Tito Memorial and tomb with exhibits honoring Marshal Josip Broz Tito, the former ruler of Yugoslavia.



*Joe wading in the Black Sea*



*City Scene at Night in Budapest*

Continuing up river, we left the ship at Vukovar, Croatia, the site of the worst artillery shelling of the Croatian-Serbian war. There one could see the pockmarked buildings showing the scars of that war.

Late on our last evening we reached Budapest, Hungary. The views of the Parliament Building dominating Pest on the east bank of the river and

the Castle high on the hill in Buda overlooking the river from the west bank were beautifully lit-up at night.

The next morning, we toured of the twin cities, Buda and Pest and visited Heroes’ Square with equestrian statues of the ninth-century Magyar leaders who conquered the region. Then we crossed the Danube and visited Castle Hill, where the Royal Palace has been wonderfully restored after being destroyed during World War II.

Unfortunately, our trip had to come to an end. Early the next morning we were transported to the airport for the return home.

---

For Joe's full trip write-up, click [here](#).

*Joe retired from DTA in 2005 and is the Immediate Past Chairman of the FCREA*

---

## **Fairfax County LiveWell Updates**



### **Wellbeing events & programs for employees, retirees, and household members**

[Add your name](#) to the LiveWell email listserv to get the latest updates and monthly newsletter.

### **Omada – Now available for Cigna & Kaiser members covered by a Fairfax County health plan:**

Omada is a FREE, online, personalized program, focused on the prevention of type 2 diabetes and heart disease, that empowers you to achieve your health goals. Combining data-powered human coaching, connected devices, and curriculum tailored to your specific needs, the program is designed to help you build healthy habits that last.

Cigna and Kaiser members can visit [omada health](#) to take a quick eligibility assessment to see if you qualify to participate. For more information, contact [LiveWell@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:LiveWell@fairfaxcounty.gov).

### **MotivateMe Incentive Reward Program:**

\* Rewards earned in 2020 were distributed mid-March 2021 into retiree pension checks. Any concerns about 2020 rewards must be communicated in writing to [LiveWell@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:LiveWell@fairfaxcounty.gov) or 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 270, Fairfax, VA 22035, by **5/15/2021**.

\* It's never too early to start working on your 2021 rewards—begin earning now! An annual physical and health assessment are required. All activities must be posted to [mycigna.com](https://mycigna.com) or received by Kaiser passport by December 31. Don't wait until the last minute. We suggest completing as many activities as possible by October to ensure they are processed by the end of the year deadline.

Join the next MotivateMe webinar on July 15 at 2 pm to learn more! Join from PC, Mac, Linux, iOS or Android: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86162222680>  
Password: 109239. Or Telephone: 866 590 5055 (US Toll Free), Conference

code: 866288

**Virtual Fitness Classes:**

- \* May: [Balance Class](#): Tuesdays at 11 am
- \* May: [Body Weight](#): Bootcamp: Mondays at 1 pm

**Virtual Events & Webinars: Open to all employees, retirees, and household members.**

- \* [Meditation](#): May 3 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM
- \* [Healthy Ways to Boost Flavor in Dishes](#): May 4 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM
- \* [Women's Health Through Decades](#): May 6 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
- \* [All About Shoulders- Airrosti](#): May 18 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
- \* [Qi Gong](#): May 20 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM
- \* [Financial Setbacks](#): May 24 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

**Secure the future for your loved ones.** Did you know you can now add or update your Life Insurance beneficiaries online? Visit the Ready Enroll online portal at <https://standard.benselect.com/fairfax> or access the Ready Enroll Guide on Fairfax Net.

---

For more information and to view the May 2021 LiveWell letter in its entirety, click [here](#). Email: [LiveWell@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:LiveWell@fairfaxcounty.gov).

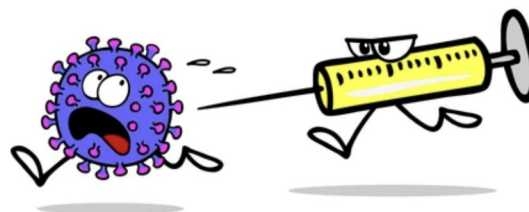
---

***Fairfax County COVID-19 Vaccine information***

**Fairfax County COVID-19 Vaccine Website**

Starting April 18, all individuals in the Fairfax Health District who are 16 or older will be eligible to directly schedule a vaccine appointment through [VaccineFinder.org](https://vaccinefinder.org) as Fairfax County moves into Phase 2 with the rest of Virginia. This is a significant change in how to make a vaccine appointment. With this new system, Fairfax County will no longer be the primary registration point for the COVID-19 vaccine.

VaccineFinder displays available appointments from approved vaccine providers across the County, including the Health Department, pharmacies, hospitals, and some private practices.



---

## ***Fairfax County Retirement Systems***

To our Retirees:

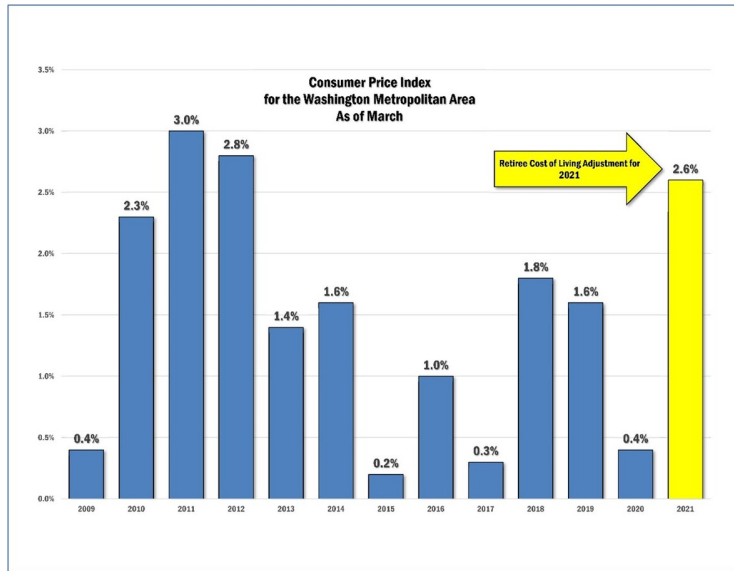
It has been a very unusual year indeed, with a lot of challenges and hardships. All of us here on the Fairfax County Retirement Systems team hope that you and yours are doing well, or at least as well as possible during these trying times. Regarding your annual cost-of-living increase (COLA), I am pleased to say that we have a bit of good news. Your COLA increase will be **2.6%** this year.

As you may or may not know, per County Code, your annual COLA increase is based on the annual increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) for the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria metropolitan areas. Specifically, it is equal to the increase in the CPI-U from March of the previous year (March 2020) to March of the current year (2021). The CPI-U is prepared and published by the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). You can read all about it on their website at: [BLS](#)

In simple terms, the Consumer Price Index is meant to reflect increases in the prices of things 'typical' people purchase. The BLS calculates these increases by analyzing actual increases in a range of goods and services typically purchased by typical people.

This year's COLA, at 2.6%, is the largest since 2012. You can see this in the chart below. And, most importantly, we will calculate and apply this increase for inclusion in your July benefit payment. It will be noted on that month's pay advice as well.

If you have questions or need more information, please reach out to a member of our Retiree Services team. They will be happy to help. We are still working remotely for the most part, but are monitoring our phones, emails, and physical mail every day. Hopefully, before too long, we can all be back in the office ready to serve you in person. If you cannot make contact with the team, you can call (703-279-8255) or email ([Jeffrey.weiler@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.weiler@fairfaxcounty.gov)) directly.



Be safe and healthy!

Jeff Weiler  
Executive Director  
Fairfax County Retirement Systems

---

## ***Fairfax County Proposed FY 2022 Budget and Retirees Pensions***

Fairfax County Government has committed to strengthening the financial position of its retirement systems and has established a goal to reach a 90 percent funded status for all plans by FY 2025. To view the relevant pages in the proposed 2022 budget, go to: [Employee Retirement Systems Overview](#).

---

## ***Fairfax County Health Department***

### **Safe Disposal of Medicines**

Do you have unused or expired over-the-counter or prescription medicine in your cabinet? Dispose of them properly to help prevent misuse and accidental poisonings and to protect the environment. Wastewater Treatment Plants and Onsite Sewage Disposal Systems are not designed to remove these chemicals. As a result, these medications can end up in the environment and eventually in our drinking water.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, as well as local organizations, host

"take-back" days when residents can bring medicines to a designated site for proper disposal. Learn more about the National [Prescription Drug Take-Back Initiative](#).

Fairfax County Police stations and area pharmacies now provide permanent drug disposal drop boxes where residents can safely dispose of their unused or expired medications any time of the year. For more information, go to [MedReturns](#)

---

## ***Fairfax County Office of Elections***

### **Vietnamese and Korean Speakers Needed as Election Officers for the June Primary Election.**

The Fairfax County Office of Elections needs additional bilingual election officers to assist voters for the Primary Election to be held on **Tuesday June 8, 2021** and in future elections.

Specifically, individuals who speak Vietnamese and English fluently or Korean and English fluently are needed to serve in Annandale, Centreville, Chantilly, and Falls Church.

Bilingual election officers will perform all regular election officer duties, including assisting most voters in English. But will be assigned to precincts with a significant number of voters who may primarily speak Vietnamese or Korean. Persons desiring to serve as a designated bilingual election officer must also complete a short oral language skills assessment.

Fairfax County is the largest voting jurisdiction in Virginia, with 243 precincts countywide. It takes thousands of enthusiastic and trained election officers to ensure that we have efficient and well-run elections. Compensation begins at \$175 and training is provided online for new officers.

To apply: <https://www.vote4fairfax.com/apply/> (be sure to indicate if you speak Vietnamese or Korean)

Please apply as soon as possible, but no later than **Wednesday, May 7, 2021**.

More information: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/officers/new-officers>

---





## *Let's get to what's next ...*

As we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, NextMark will prioritize the health and safety of our members, our employees, and the community we serve.

**For Branches, hours and ATMs, click [here](#)**

**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 branches and drive-thrus.

### **Online and Mobile Banking 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](http://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 Banking 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](mailto:membersolutions@NextMarkCU.org).

Check out our latest newsletter [here](#)

---

## ***FCREA Events***

The FCREA monthly luncheons are cancelled until further notice.

### **Dates for your 2021 Calendar**

FCREA Annual Meeting – May 5, 2021 **CANCELLED**

FCREA Senior Information Fair – May 19, 2021 **CANCELLED**

FCREA Picnic - September 2021 (Date TBD)

FCREA Holiday Luncheon - December 15, 2021

---

## ***FCREA Membership***

### **New Members**

- \* Patricia J. "Patty" Paczan, Retired from Park Authority on 4/3/2015
- \* Ivory Pilgrim, Retired from DPWES-Solid Waste Management Program on 4/27/2021

---

### **To Join FCREA .. .**

Any retired Fairfax County employee or surviving spouse is eligible to become a member of the Association. Our Hot Flashes newsletter provides 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 during the year.

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

---

## ***FCREA Members Information.***

For a list of FCREA Board Members: [Board](#)

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

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

### **[FCREA Website](#)**

#### **[Fairfax County Retirement](#)**

12015 Lee Jackson Memorial Hwy, Suite 350, Fairfax, VA 22033-3300  
1-800-333-1633 or 703-279-8200

Fairfax County Retirement Web Member Services: [website](#)

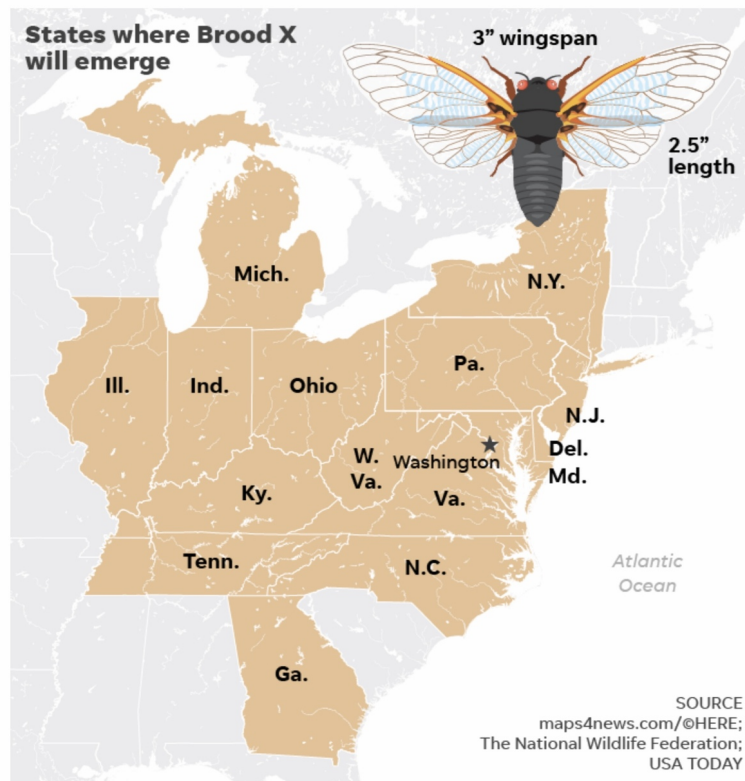
Fairfax County Benefits Summary - [Retirees](#)

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

## ***Finally... They're big. They're incredibly loud. And they're coming by the billions.***

Once every 17 years, an incredible natural phenomenon of billions of cicadas arrives in the mid-Atlantic and Midwest, filling the air with a deafening mating hum that can reach up to 100 decibels.

This phenomenon is named Brood X, or the Great Eastern Brood. It's set to return in May 2021. For the five to six weeks that they're above ground, the live cicadas — and their crunchy, discarded exoskeletons — will be impossible to miss.



©2021 Fairfax County Retired Employees Association | Fairfax, Virginia

[Web Version](#)

[Preferences](#)

[Forward](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)

Powered by [Mad Mimi®](#)  
A GoDaddy® company