

Hot Flashes

November 2023

Fairfax County Retired Employees Association

Chairman's Message

The weather is getting a little cooler and it's getting dark earlier in the evening. Autumn is here! I am so glad we could kick off the new season with our annual picnic again this year.

The weather was perfect and we had a great turnout. Several new members joined us there, which was AWESOME!



Now I can't wait for our Holiday Luncheon. It will be on December 20th at 11:30 a.m. at the International Country Club in Fairfax. See the FCREA Events section later in the newsletter for the details. Guests are very welcome! This is always a highlight of our year, so plan to come!

In the meantime, I have a few reminders –

Benefits Open Enrollment began October 30th and will end November 17th. Check the Retiree Benefits webpage for details.

Don't forget to vote! Election Day is November 7th. See the County website for more information: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections.

Remember to let **Joyce Gerhart, our Sunshine Chairman**, know if you learn of a retiree who is ill or has passed away, she can send a card on our behalf and spread the word. Joyce's phone number is 703-560-4785, or you can email her at GGerhart2@verizon.net.

See you on December 20th at the Holiday Luncheon!

Sincerely,

Pam Martin, Chairman
Fairfax County Retired Employees Association

Why Seniors Should Vote

In a democratic society, every citizen's voice matters. With their wealth of experience and wisdom, seniors should exercise their right to vote. Their votes can shape policies directly impacting their lives and those of future generations. Moreover, seniors have witnessed the evolution of society and possess valuable insights that can guide decision-making processes. By voting, seniors ensure that elected officials hear and address their concerns. Their participation in the electoral process is crucial for a vibrant democracy that values all its citizens' perspectives.

Department of Human Resources

MotivateMe Reminder

'Tis the season to ensure your MotivateMe activities are completed and posted by the December 31 deadline. Visit the [Retiree Benefits page](#).

A few reminders

- MotivateMe rewards are available to subscribers in the Fairfax County Government Cigna 80%, 90%, MyChoice, and Kaiser plans.
- Eligible subscribers can earn up to \$250 in rewards.
- Retirees who elect the Cigna True Choice Core Medicare Advantage Plan or the United Healthcare Group Medicare Advantage Plan have access to their own wellness and incentive programs and are unable to participate in MotivateMe.
- Cigna Participants: All activities must be posted to the MotivateMe page on [MyCigna](#) by 11:59 pm EST on December 31.
- Kaiser Participants: Kaiser passports must be received by LiveWell by December 31. Passports can be submitted via email to [LiveWell](#) or mailed/dropped off at 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 270, Fairfax, VA 22035, c/o LiveWell.
- The annual physical and health assessment must be completed annually to earn any rewards
- It can take up to 8 weeks for claims-based activities to be posted and up to 72 hours for self-entered or online activities, such as the health assessment, to post to mycigna.com's MotivateMe system. Please do not wait until the last minute to complete your activities.
- If you are a retiree currently participating in MotivateMe who had a Medicare wellness exam or other preventive service fully covered by Medicare, please send documentation, such as an explanation of benefits (EOB) to [LiveWell](#) that includes the following, by December 31. These activities will be manually entered into the Cigna system
 - o Your Name
 - o Physician Name
 - o Service Provided (i.e. Mammogram, Physical, Cervical Cancer Screening, etc.)
 - o Date of Service

Rewards earned in 2023 will be available in pension checks in March 2024. Questions? Email [LiveWell](#) or call 703-324-3311 and ask for a member of the LiveWell team.

2024 Open Enrollment for Retirees is here!

Each year during Fairfax County Government's annual [Retirees Open Enrollment](#) period, retirees can evaluate current enrollments and make adjustments for the new plan year. Retirees may not add or increase benefits elections but they can add or remove a spouse, change medical plans, or reduce life insurance.

A few quick reminders:

- Retiree Open Enrollment began **October 30, 2023** and will end **November 17, 2023**. Changes made during Retiree Open Enrollment will be effective January 1, 2024.
- Fairfax County Government will continue to offer the existing health plans to retirees into 2024. Plan information can be found in your Retiree Open Enrollment packet or in our [Retirement Health Plans Guide](#).
- Retirees who **want to make a change** in their plan elections must return a completed 2024 Retiree Open Enrollment form to the Benefits Division in the Department of Human Resources by November 17, 2023.
- Remember to maintain your enrollment in a county retiree medical plan even when you become eligible for Medicare. . The Benefits Division must receive proof of your enrollment in Medicare Parts A & B before the first of the month you turn 65 or your earliest Medicare eligibility. This also applies to Medicare-eligible dependents.
- The Retiree Open Enrollment Form can be found in your Retiree Open Enrollment packet or [Here](#).
- Retirees who **do not want to change** plan enrollments for 2024 do not need to take any action. No form is needed.

How to Learn More

- Attend our in-person Retiree Open Enrollment Meeting - Thursday, November 9 at 10:00 am. The meeting will be held at the Fairfax County Government Center, Board Auditorium
- [Retiree Benefits Fair](#) - Thursday, November 9, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Fairfax County Government Center - South Atrium
- The Benefits Division also hosts several virtual Open Enrollment meetings for retirees using Zoom. To view the full meeting schedule and how to access meetings, please visit our [Virtual Retiree Meetings](#).
- Visit the Retiree Benefits Page on our public site to access the resources such as the 2024 [Retiree Benefits Guide](#), the Retiree Open Enrollment Form, plan information, and to learn who to contact for answers to your questions.

Have coverage questions or concerns during Open Enrollment?

Due to high demand, anyone seeking in-person assistance from a member of the Benefits Team should call or email in advance to schedule an appointment. There will be **no walk-in consultations available**.

[Contact the Fairfax County Government Benefits Division through HR Central](#)

By Phone at (703) 324-3311

By Email at HRCentral@fairfaxcounty.gov

For plan-specific questions regarding coverage and/or provider search, contact the carrier directly at:

Cigna OAP Coinsurance Plans (90% & 80% Co-Insurance and MyChoice CDHP)	(888) 244-6224
Cigna True Choice Core Medicare Advantage PPO	(888) 281-7867
Cigna RX PDP Plan	(800) 558-9562
Kaiser Permanente HMO Plan	(800) 777-7902
Kaiser Medicare Advantage Plan	(888) 777-5536
UnitedHealthcare Group Medicare Advantage PPO	(866) 859-5402



2024 Social Security Cost-of-Living Adjustment

In January, the monthly Social Security check for retired workers will rise **3.2%**. SS will mail cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) notices throughout the month of December to retirees, survivor, disability beneficiaries, SSI recipients, and representative payees.

Visit [SS Cola](#) for more information.

Opportunities to Help Others

Volunteer Solutions offers meaningful volunteer opportunities to improve the quality of life for older adults, adults



with disabilities, and family caregivers. It's a partnership between Fairfax County's Department of Family Services and Neighborhood & Community Services. Volunteers assist in one-on-one or group settings. Drivers, social visitors, grocery shoppers, and household organizers are needed. Do you have a skill to share? Fairfax County Senior Centers are looking for activity leaders, entertainers, and instructors in fitness, dance, art, music, languages, and more.

Visit bit.ly/FXVSVOL, email VolunteerSolutions@FairfaxCounty.gov or call 703-324-5406.

Volunteers Needed for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program - 2024

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) provides free tax preparation to qualified individuals and families in Northern Virginia. The Fairfax County Department of Family Services is recruiting volunteers to act as greeters, interpreters (including ASL), screeners, tax preparers, online tax coaches, social media outreach, and IT support. No tax training is needed for greeters and interpreters. No experience is necessary. Free training (classroom and online) is available for screeners and tax preparers. Opportunities are available throughout Fairfax County. Hours are flexible, including evenings and weekends.

Please note that the Department of Family Services will continue to consult with the IRS Stakeholder Partnerships, Education, and Communication (SPEC) Officers and monitor state, local, and national guidelines when administering the VITA and TCE programs for Tax Year 2023. Volunteer training begins in late November, and volunteers are needed through mid-April. More information will be available in the upcoming months regarding the Tax Year 2023 specific training schedule and VITA site operations.

Please visit: <https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov>. to sign up.

Confirm Your Address for Tax Documents:

Last reminder before year-end: Do you have a new address? Please let the Retirement Office know so they can mail your tax document to the correct

address. Your Form 1099-R will be mailed 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 8 to ensure your address is updated for year-end tax reporting.



What's happening at NextMark?

Protect yourself from Elderly Fraud

As we transition into fall and the holiday season, we must be vigilant as fraudsters seek ways to strike. Fraud targeting the elderly has become an alarming issue in recent years. Scammers often prey on seniors' trust, vulnerability, and lack of familiarity with modern technology to exploit them financially. Here are some strategies and tips to help protect you from becoming a victim of fraud.

1. Be aware of phishing emails that present attractive and time-sensitive offers enticing you to act. Do not reply, click on links, or open attachments in emails from those you don't know.
2. Set up strong passwords and enable 2-factor authentication whenever possible.
3. Monitor your financial statements regularly – look for unusual or unauthorized transactions and report them immediately to NextMark or your other financial institution.
4. DO NOT share your personal information with anyone, especially unsolicited.
5. Verify a caller's identity, and if unsure of the call's legitimacy, call back using the official number found on their organization's website or official documents.
6. Retrieve your mail and packages promptly – your mail can have personal information that fraudsters can steal to impersonate you.
7. Report fraud to the Federal Trade Commission: [Scam](#)

Explore more information about fraud prevention [Here](#)

Early Pay is here.

Get your retirement pay up to 3 days early with NextMark's Early Pay! Early Pay allows NextMark checking account holders to receive incoming ACH payments, including direct deposits, pension payments, etc., up to 3 days earlier. If you already have a NextMark checking account, no action is required as you are automatically enrolled. If you would like to learn more about Early Pay and open a NextMark checking account, click here:

[Account](#)

Plan for holiday gifts.

NextMark will sell the official White House ornaments at all branch locations beginning mid-November for \$20. They're a great collectible!

Maximize your retirement earnings with a NextMark Savings Certificate.

If you haven't checked out our savings certificates, you may miss out on some earning potential. Check out our recently increased rates at [Rates](#) and open your certificate online today!

Sad News

Elizabeth C. "Betty" Meehan, age 90, entered into eternal rest on May 5, 2019, surrounded by her loving family. Betty retired from Fairfax County Public Library in 2000. [Obituary](#)

FCREA

Events 2023

FCREA's annual holiday luncheon will be on **Wednesday, December 20 at 11:30** at the International Country Club, 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 check and full names of attendees to

Joyce Gerhart
3358 Taleen Ct
Annandale, Va. 22003

For more information, phone Joyce at 703 560 4785 or email her at ggerhart2@verizon.net.

Reservation Deadline: December 13

Help those in need! This year, we will collect donations for the [Lamb Center](#). They have requested individually wrapped snack items that can be put in backpacks. Some suggestions are: Mac/Cheese cups (individual cups that they can microwave at 7-11), Beef Jerky, Fruit cups, Granola bars, Raisins, Peanut butter or cheese crackers, Cookies, and nuts. (*No potato chips*).

FCREA Picnic

On September 20, the FCREA held its annual picnic. The FCREA supplied hot dogs, paper products, flatware, and drinks. Members brought sides: salads, cookies, cake, potato chips, and other "goodies!" We thank NextMark for providing handouts and Visa gift cards for a raffle.



Membership

New Members



- Craig A. Carinci, Retiring from Public Works & Environmental Services on 12/29/2023
- Mary F. Christian, Retired from Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board on 4/24/2023
- Andrea Curry, Retiring from Vehicle Services on 11/10/2023
- Theresa T. Hamidzada, Retired from Information Technology on 9/06/2017
- Dianne Minggia, Retired from Information Technology on 7/15/2022
- Andrew L. Pendergrass, Retiring from Fairfax County Public Library on 12/15/2023
- Sandra Souleles, Retiring from Fairfax County Public Library on 12/15/2023
- Yvonne T. Sullivan, Retired from DPW&ES/Wastewater Management/Wastewater Planning & Monitoring Div. on 10/20/2023
- Lynn M. Tran, Retiring from Family Services on 1/01/2024
- Brenda Ann Washington, Retiring from Children, Youth and Family Services on 12/18/2023

Membership [Fact Sheet](#)

[Membership Application](#)

Members we have lost track of

Keeping our email database current is an ongoing issue. If anyone knows any of these members, please remind them to update their email addresses by contacting FCREA99@gmail.com or Bobbie Deegan: 301-937-7070 or BobbieDeegan@aol.com

- Kathryn Lee Sottile, Retired from Tax Admin in 2017
- Julie Smith Retired from Juvenile Court/Intake in 2016
- Terry Carroll, Retired from FCPS HR in 2014
- Linda Farby, Retired from FCPS in 2014
- Catherine McGuire, Retired from Police in 2014
- Wayne Elton Payne, Jr., Retired from Solid Waste & Disposal in 2013

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 or ggerhart2@verizon.net

Please send address changes to Bobbie Deegan: 301-937-7070 or BobbieDeegan@aol.com

[FCREA Website](#)

Fairfax County Websites with Retirees Information:

[Retirement Systems](#)

[Retirement Web Member Services](#)

[Retirees Benefits](#)

[HR- Who to Call Contacts](#)

[Retirees Resource and Video Library](#)

Finally ... 120 years ago



The Wright Flyer made the first sustained flight by a manned heavier-than-air powered and controlled aircraft—an airplane—on December 17, 1903, at 10:35 a.m. Orville - a coin flip decided it - was at the controls, as Wilber assisted in the take off and then watched. Thomas Daniels, a member of the U.S. Life-Saving Station at Kitty Hawk, took this photograph, of arguably the most iconic moment in aviation history.



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