

FCRE

FAIRFAX COUNTY RETIRED EDUCATORS



Happy
Thanksgiving

Advocate

VOL. XXXVII, No. 3

Fairfax County, Virginia

NOVEMBER 2015

A SEAT AT THE TABLE

by
John F. Dent, President

Fall is finally here, and I'm sure that we all enjoy the cooler weather without hurricanes, massive flooding, and other weather related events recent occurring in other parts of the country. If you were caught in any of those calamities, we hope that you and your families are recovering safely.

Another aspect of Fall occurs here in Fairfax County with the mail out of the annual Fairfax County Public Schools Human Resources Health Benefits package to each of us. I am sure that all of us look forward to this package arriving; but to be truthful, it feels very similar to the IRS Tax package we also get--painful but necessary.

This summer, FCRE was able to continue with an activity we had started several years ago in the contacting and face to face communication with all of our Fairfax County School Board members. We took on the job of letting our School Board members know who their educational retirees are, and what we have been doing to continue our close contacts with the school system.

To date, we have met with most of the FCPS School Board members and have spoken with each of them concerning our desire to offer communication on issues directly relating to retiree health care benefits, educational issues, full funding of the Virginia Retirement System, and improving working conditions for active employees and support personnel.

Our efforts to reestablish direct communication with the School Board have been successful with direct access to Dr. Karen Garza, FCPS Superintendent, and various personnel within the Department of Human Resources. Additional meetings held jointly with FEA-R allowed us to provide detailed objectives to the Human Resources Benefits Coordinator, Dee Hawley Brown.

During the months of August and September, FCRE and FEA-R Executive Committees sat down with Dee Hawley Brown, Director of Employee Benefits, and Susan Quinn, Chief Operating Officer of Fairfax County Schools, to discuss in detail the benefits plans coming out this month of October, and to plan for input concerning future years benefit offerings.

We voiced concerns that retiree groups and employee groups had little to no input into the 2016 year benefits package and cited cuts in health care benefits and increases in health care costs were disrespectful to all Fairfax County retirees and employees. We strongly suggested that retiree groups such as FCRE and FEA-R be actively involved in the development of the benefits packages coming out in the future so that input comes from all stake holders.

With that said, Health Care Benefits for all (retirees and those still employed) are facing significant increased costs this year because of many reasons, but it is important that retirees be able to make informed decisions even when we have limited options in health care plans.

We have asked for a place at the table in helping develop future Health Care Plan options, and Fairfax County Public Schools have offered us that opportunity. We will be meeting again with FCPS Human Resources after the close of the Open Season this year to start looking at **2017** and future year plan options. Fairfax County Schools Human Resources Department, like all other businesses, must calculate the costs of benefits to employees and that data is available for us
(continued in the next column this page)

to look at.

As you look at the 2016 Health Care Options package, please understand that we have sought to be involved with the development of future benefits; and we hope to be able to have an impact in keeping a quality benefits program in place for all of us.

We ask for your input and suggestions so that FCRE can speak to the needs of our retirees. There are limited options in the health care marketplace that offer quality plans at affordable prices, but we remain focused in making sure that Fairfax County Public Schools continues to scrutinize costs and offerings with retirees having input.

As you can imagine, the data, costs, and size of the Health Care plans for Fairfax County Schools

(continued on page 2, column 1)

(A Seat at the Table, continued from column 2 on page one.)

are immense and take a great deal of analysis which FCRE and FEA-R can give focused input on these matters to make sure that the best decisions are made for the benefit of all.

Be assured that the Executive Committees of FCRE and FEA-R will work cooperatively in this endeavor and will keep you informed of progress.♦



OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR FCPS RETIREE HEALTH BENEFITS: OCTOBER 19--NOVEMBER 13 FOR 2016

♦Remember: **NO ACTION IS REQUIRED IF YOU WISH TO KEEP YOUR SAME HEALTH PLAN INTO 2016.**

There are changes to the health plans which you should make yourself aware of. Please see the FCPS Health Benefits Package which you should have received in the mail. If you do not have such information, please call: **HR Client Services: 571-423-3000 or 800-831-4331.**

This year, important changes are occurring to the FCPS health care plans. It is important that you take the time to understand how these plan changes impact you and your family, so that you are prepared to select the plan that best meets your needs.

Like other employers nationwide, FCPS is experiencing rising expenses, as health care costs continue to outpace general inflation and claims increase. Most FCPS plans are self-insured – which means all claims and services incurred by plan participants are ultimately billed to FCPS.

In 2016, it will be necessary to make plan changes to address these increased costs while continuing to provide quality and comprehensive health benefits to employees and retirees.

Specifically,

- In-network deductibles will be introduced to the Aetna/Innovation Health and CareFirst plans.
- All plans will see increased copays for emergency room care. Telemedicine services will be introduced in the Aetna/Innovation Health plan starting in January; CareFirst and Kaiser Permanente will be adding or expanding these services in early 2016.
- The CareFirst plan will convert to a "copay" based plan. Both CareFirst and Kaiser Permanente will have higher copayments for specialist care.
- The maximum out-of-pocket amounts have been adjusted under the Aetna/Innovation Health and CareFirst plans. This protects individuals from catastrophic medical expenses.

Introducing these changes allows FCPS to keep the premiums as low as possible - thereby reducing the premium retirees pay.

Some of these terms - like deductible, copay, and coinsurance - may be new to you. We encourage you to read this Briefing thoroughly and ask questions if you need more information. Open Enrollment begins October 19; attend one of the upcoming Open Houses, see the list in column 2.

Mark your calendar!

Open Enrollment Begins 8 a.m., Mon., Oct. 19th
Open Enrollment Ends 4:30 p.m., Fri., Nov. 13th
Effective Date of Elections Jan. 1, 2016

OPEN HOUSES:

Thursday, Oct. 22nd 4 - 7 p.m.
Centreville High School Cafeteria

Wednesday, Oct. 28th 4 - 7 p.m.
Hayfield Secondary School Cafeteria

Extended Open House
Tuesday, Nov. 3rd 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Annandale High School Cafeteria

Extended evening hours
Wed. & Thurs., Nov. 11 & 12th 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Gatehouse Administration Center

TO SEE A BRIEFING OF HEALTH BENEFITS FOR 2016, PLEASE SEE THE WEBSITES BELOW.

http://www.fcps.edu/hr/benefits/openenrollment/resources/retiree_briefing.pdf

http://www.fcps.edu/hr/benefits/openenrollment/2015_retirees.shtml

REMEMBER, IF YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE CHANGES, CALL FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS HUMAN RESOURCES AT:

**HEALTH BENEFITS: 571-423-3000 or
800-831-4331**

FCRE TRAVEL REPORT FOR NOVEMBER

by
Doris Patteson, Director, Member Services Tours

FCRE is traveling this fall!

Eleven FCRE members just returned from Ireland, and we all agree that Ireland is a beautiful country filled with green pastures, friendly people, good food, lots of old castles and ruins, sheep and cattle farms, and lovely shore lines with cliffs rising as high as 700 feet above the Atlantic Ocean. Our group traveled to Northern Ireland and visited Belfast, Derry, and the Giant's Causeway. We stayed in two lovely castles on our journey and felt like royalty. We learned much about the history of Ireland especially about the Potato Famine beginning in 1845. Several members of the group had relatives they visited on our trip. Some of us could relate to some of the customs and traditions of Ireland that were passed down to us through our ancestors. If you have not been to Ireland, put this on your list of travels to take!

As this is being written, six members left for Sicily. And another group of eight are leaving for New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Natchez on November 8. And on December 29, eleven FCRE members will go to Southern California trip which will feature the New Year's Tournament of Roses Parade!

2016 FCRE TRIPS!



FEBRUARY 20-28, 2016--TROPICAL COSTA RICA. We are sorry, but this trip is **filled!** You can have your name placed on the waiting list since there are often cancellations. This is a very popular time to go to Costa Rica, and who would not want to see some sunny beaches in February. We can also arrange for you to go when you want to through our World Connect Program.



MARCH 9-22, 2016--EXPLORING SOUTH AFRICA, VICTORIA FALLS, and BOTSWANA. This is an "explorer trip" which limits the number of participants to 24 people. The smaller group allows more flexibility in scheduling opportunities that are not available to larger groups. This trip includes Victoria Falls and Botswana which are normally options on the regular trip. Some of the best safaris are in Botswana, very different from the Kruger experience. There will be an option to visit

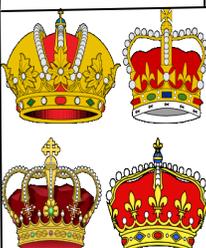
Dubai as an extension to this trip. Keep in mind that this trip includes **7 (seven!)** wildlife safaris. The season is reversed in South Africa, and it will be fall which is a great time to visit because the animals are most visible during this time. Our deposit date for this trip has passed, but if you are interested, please call; and we will check for available openings! A trip not to be missed!



JUNE 4-13, 2016--UK BY RAIL. This is a **new** trip. This is a venture by train to three of Britain's most lively cities--Edinburgh, York, and London. Some of the highlights include a tour of Edinburgh, a Scottish Evening, Edinburgh Castle, St. Andrews Whisky distillery, York, Castle Howard, the York-minster, London, Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, traditional English Pub Dinner. The deposit/insurance date for this trip is **November 27**. The cost of this trip is \$4339 per person, double occupancy. There is an early booking discount of \$250. All our trips include air.



JULY 23-31, 2016-- THE COLORADO ROCKIES. This trip was the former Colorado by Trains trip. It has been modified with a new itinerary. The highlights of this trip include Denver, Rocky Mountain National Park, Grand Junction, Arches National Park, Canyon Lands National Park, Colorado National Monument, Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, Mesa Verde National Park, Pike's Peak Cog Railway and Garden of the Gods. This trip takes you to some of the most beautiful National Parks and the train trips are so much fun. The cost of this trip is \$2804 per person, double occupancy. It includes airfare. The deposit/insurance date is **January 15**.



AUGUST 29-SEPTEMBER 8, 2016. IMPERIAL CITIES: Prague, Vienna, and Budapest. Highlights of this trip include Prague, Hradcany Castle, Folklore Dinner and Show, Cesky Krumlov; Vienna, Grinzing Evening, Schoenbrunn Palace, Danube River Cruise, Bratislava, Budapest, Matthias Church, Fisherman's Bastion, Szentendre, and a Renaissance Dinner. Some of us may plan a pre-extension to Berlin. The cost is \$3760 per person, double occupancy. The deposit date is **February 22**. **Book early, and take advantage of early booking discounts!**

continued on page 6, first column.



MEMBER ACTIVITIES

by
Barbara Marshall, Director



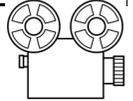
BOOK GROUPS

- Annandale Book Group--Dottie Addison, coordinator. Meets the 2nd Wednesday at 12 noon in various places. Call **703-971-8479** for more information.
- Fairfax City Group--Sue Williams, coordinator. Meets at 10:30 a.m. on the 2nd Friday in Barnes and Noble at Fairlakes.
- Vienna Tuesday Book Group--Joey Graves, coordinator. Meets the 2nd Tuesday at the Providence Community Center. The book for November is *Someone* by Alice McDermott.
- Vienna Retired Ladies Group--Marlene Gregory, coordinator. The next meeting will be the 2nd Wednesday at 12:30 p.m. at the Oakton Library. The book for October is *Never Home* by Laird Hunt.

BRIDGE GROUPS

- FCRE Group--Meets 2nd and 4th Monday mornings. Contact person is Barbara Marshall at 571-203-0375 or bmarshall12@verizon.net. This group will meet at the Vienna American Legion. The Legion is located at 303 Center St., Vienna, VA 22180.
- Tuesday Morning Group--Coordinator is Sandy Smith. Meets the 2nd Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. in homes.
- Third Monday Evening Group--Coordinators are Claudette Coffey and Joey Graves. Meets in homes at 7:00 p.m.
- 1st, 3rd, and 5th Monday Bridge Group--Coordinator is Nancy Smagala. Meets at David R. Pinn Community Center on Zion Road in Burke at 9:45-12:00. Players do not stay for lunch. Email nsmagala@aol.com for more information.
- The Review Bridge Group meets at 1:00 p.m. at The Vienna American Legion on the 2nd and 4th Mondays after the morning bridge there. The Review Bridge Group is led by Dave Meadows.

CINEMA ARTS GROUP!



Meet your friends at the Cinema Arts Group which meets at the Cinema Arts Theater on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at the Cinema Arts Theatre in Pickett Shopping Center across from Woodson High School. Join your friends for a good movie and lunch afterwards at the First Watch Café.

Contact person is **Alicia Clelland** at clellaap@cox.net **Email Alicia if you would like to be included on the email list for the next film.**

FCRE Request for Digital Version of Advocate Newsletter

If you are interested in receiving the FCRE newsletter in a digital format instead of the hard copy presently mailed to you, please fill out the form below and return it to the FCRE office. We are offering this option as we move towards digital communications with our members.

Name (please print): _____

Email address (please print): _____

Send this form to:

FCRE
P.O. Box 682
Springfield, VA 22150-0682





OLLI GOES TO LEGATO SCHOOL

by
Sue Langley, Director

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS TEAM

by
Barbara Allen, GRT Director



When you get this newsletter, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute of George Mason University will have taken a journey back in time and attended a class in the Legato School Museum. Legato School is one of the last one room school houses left in the area. FCRE maintains the Museum, and it is still a school in the FCPS system.

OLLI will be taught by FCRE member, Bob Coffin. The subject is the history of the museum. Emphasis will be placed on the books and materials used during its tenure as a school. Bob Coffin will wrap up his lesson with a quiz on current events as it might have been taught in 1877.

If any group is interested in touring the Legato School and hearing its history, please email Sue Langley at gramslang8589@verizon.net or fcree@fcree.org. FCRE will be happy to open the Legato School and provide docents/instructors to give you a history of the school and how it was saved by Fairfax County students and their teachers.

Just remember, the school does not have lights or heat. The best time for a visit would be in the spring, summer, and the fall when the weather is warmer, and the days are longer and brighter.

Mark your calendars for the Chocolate Lovers Festival of Fairfax City on February 6 and 7, 2016. Legato School Museum participates every year in the Festival and is open to the public.

Come see us, and go back in time to 1877!♦

VOTE ON NOVEMBER 3, 2015!

THE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS TEAM NEEDS YOU!

We will be meeting at the Fairfax Education Association Office on the following Thursdays at 10:00am:

- November 12, 2015
- December 17, 2015
- January 14, 2016

We will be addressing the following issues:

1. Development of the Position Statement that will address retiree issues for the General Assembly of 2016.
2. Develop new procedures to lobby our legislators (perhaps a luncheon and breakfast; stay tuned.) in November.
3. Early plans for Lobby Day in Richmond on Thursday, January 28, 2016.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2015!

HOLIDAY FUNDRAISER FOR OUR SCHOLARSHIPS!

LAST DAY TO DONATE YOUR TREASURES IS NOVEMBER 10, 2015.

REMEMBER, BRING SOMEONE TO THE FCRE LUNCHEON ON DECEMBER 10!

**BRING CASH AND CHECKBOOK!
(WE CANNOT PROCESS CREDIT CARDS)**

COME, SPEND YOUR MONEY FOR A GOOD CAUSE!





HISTORY AND REORDS

by
Linda Beuhring and Phyllis McDevitt,
Directors

SMILE! You are on camera!!! At least that is what we hope. Many of you are participating in our groups and activities such as bridge, books, movies. We would like to be sure that we capture in pictures the fun you are having and that you will take pictures of your activities.

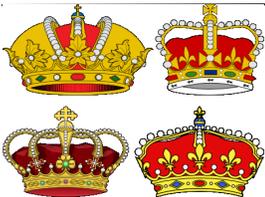
There is space in this year's first semester and second semester photo books to include pictures of your gatherings.

We would like to ask you to take your pictures with that little digital camera that you have! Digital phones do not give enough resolution to record your fabulous doings!

Just put that camera on flash and take several photos. Do several shots that are horizontal as well as vertical. Make sure you have not cut off anybody's head, that eyes are not closed, and guess what! You have pictures of what your special group or activity is doing!

We will try to drop in on some of your groups and activities, but we need your help to make sure we have recorded the events of this year.

And after you have taken your pictures, call the **FCRE OFFICE at 703-923-9877 or email FCRE at fcree@fcree.org** We will get back to you on what to do next! Thank you so much for helping us get your great pictures of your groups and activities!♦



2016 Trips, continued from page 3.

Collette has added several Spotlight Tours which are single hotel stays. You can immerse yourself in the fanfare of a grand city or unwind in the timeless countryside. Some of these include: Dublin, London, Paris, French Riviera, Florence, Rome, Venice, Barcelona, Madrid, Beijing, San Francisco, New York, San Antonio, and New Orleans. Most of these trips run from 5-9 days. If you are interested in booking any of these trips, call Doris. She can book these trips through our World Connect Program separate from our group trips, as well as any of the other Collette trips. Call Doris Patteson with any of your concerns at **703-534-3975**, or send an email to dpatteson@verizon.net♦



REMEMBRANCES

Fairfax County Retired Educators is saddened by the loss of several of its members:

Marlene Gregory
October 7, 2015

Ann Hech
September 15, 2015

Gertrude Moore
September 14, 2015

Christine Sleeper
February 15, 2015

Our thoughts and prayers are with their families and friends.

REMEMBER:

FCRE Recommendation: Do NOT under any circumstances withdraw from your Fairfax County Public Schools-sponsored health insurance plan. If you do, you cannot rejoin!

THANK YOU!

FCRE would like to take this opportunity to thank the Apple Federal Credit Union for their continued support in our activities. We really appreciate you!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

October 19, 2015--Open Enrollment FCPS Health Plans for 2016 BEGINS!

NOVEMBER 3, 2015--VOTE!

November 13, 2015--Open Enrollment of FCPS Health Plans for 2016 CLOSES

December 10, 2015--Holiday Luncheon and Holiday Sale. We need about 100 people; bring a friend! Help the Scholarship Fund!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

by
Phyllis Rittman, Director

The Board of Directors of the W. Harold Ford Scholarship Foundation would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who contributed to the Scholarship Foundation in 2014-2015. Because of your contributions, we were able to fund the W. Harold Ford Scholarship again this year.

Those who contributed are listed below with a note to recognize to whom they wished to honor with their contribution:

Larry Armentrout
Barbara Balint
Martha Blevins
Marguerite Bradley--Bobbi Vest Scholarship
Anita Cline
Barbara Dent--Harriet B. Mika Scholarship
John Dent--Harriet B. Mika Scholarship
Kathleen Donnelly--In memory of John Shugrew
Anita Francis
Murry Franklin
Linda Goldberg
Marie Griffin
Johanna Guiccione
Betsy A. Harris
Paula Johnson
Valerie Joseph
Charles King
Sue Langley
Jacqueline Lee

George Loveland--Bobbi Vest Scholarship
Barbara Marshall
Phyllis McDevitt
Kathryn Michelman
Walt Mika--Harriet B. Mika Scholarship
Doris Patteson
Christel Payne
Dennis Pfennig--Harriet B. Mika Scholarship
Phyllis Rittman--Harriet B. Mika Scholarship
Doris Ruggera
Charles Sane
Carolyn Soderberg--In memory of David Soderberg
Barney Strutton
Nancy Weisgerber
Ann Winstead--In memory of Sarah Layne

We also would like to thank the Apple Federal Credit Union, the Mary O. Ambler Trust, the Bobbi Vest Memorial Scholarship Fund, the Harriet B. Mika Memorial Scholarship for their continued support of our scholarship program.

If you would like to contribute to our scholarship foundation, please see the form below.

W. HAROLD FORD SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTION 501 C 3 TAX DEDUCTIBLE CHOOSE TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION OF: ___ \$5.00 ___ \$10.00 ___ \$15.00 ___ \$20.00 ___ whatever you can ___ Annual Or ___ Endowment NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____ IN MEMORY/HONOR OF: _____	MAKE CHECKS TO: W. HAROLD FORD SCHOLARSHIP FUND SEND TO: W. HAROLD FORD SCHOLARSHIP FUND FCRE P. O. BOX 682 SPRINGFIELD, VA 22150-0682
--	--



DETACH THIS FORM AND MAIL IT WITH YOUR CONTRIBUTION. YOU WILL RECEIVE A RECEIPT FOR YOUR TAX RECORDS.

FCRE *ADVOCATE*
FAIRFAX COUNTY RETIRED EDUCATORS
P.O. BOX 682
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NOVEMBER 2015

PRESORTED
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TIME SENSITIVE!

FCRE LUNCHEON DATES!

Make your reservation early!
Thursday, December 10, 2015
Thursday, February 11, 2016
(Thursday, March 10, 2016--
make up day if February
Luncheon is snowed out.)
Thursday, April 14, 2016
Thursday, June 9, 2016
CLIP AND SAVE!!!!

VOTE NOVEMBER 3, 2015!

NOVEMBER, 2015

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NOVEMBER 2015

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Editors: Billie Johnson and Walt Mika

Change of address, articles, letters, and comments should be sent by mail only to:

Fairfax County Retired Educators

FCRE *Advocate*

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Springfield, VA 11250-0682

Email: fcre@fcre.org

Website: www.fcre.org

OFFICERS FOR 2015—2016 (July 1, 2015—June 30, 2016)

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Vice President.....Eva Pappas

Secretary.....Anita Cline

Treasurer.....Barbara Dent

President ElectBillie Johnson

Parliamentarian.....Walt Mika

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Communications.....Ken McDaniel

Health Benefits.....Walt Mika

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Linda Beuhring

Information/Publications.....Billie Johnson

Legato School Museum.....Sue Langley

Government Relations/Legislative...Barbara Allen

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Membership.....To be filled

Member Activities.....Barbara Marshall

Member Services-Tours.....Doris Patteson

Parliamentarian.....Walt Mika

Program Director.....Eva Pappas

W. Harold Ford Scholarship.....Phyllis Rittman

Office Manager.....Anita Francis

Remembrances.....Kathleen Donnelly

Mary McKinley

Receipts Accounting.....FCRE Elf

Membership Records.....Dee Kirby

**TO REACH
FAIRFAX COUNTY RETIRED
EDUCATORS:**

CALL: 703-923-9877 OR

**EMAIL US AT: fcre@fcre.org and
luncheon@fcre.org**

WEBSITE: www.fcre.org