

Retiree Report

July, 2005

A Quarterly Publication from the
Fairfax County Retirement Agency

COLA's Effective July 1, 2005

Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs) for members of each of the Fairfax County Retirement Systems listed below that are effective July 1, 2005 are as follows:

- Employees = 3.9%
- Police Officers = 4.9%
- Uniformed = 3.9%

The Base COLA amount of 3.9% reflects the percentage increase corresponding to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Washington area for the period ending March 31, 2005. The ordinances that govern the retirement systems set COLAs at the lesser of the CPI increase for the previous year or 4%. In addition, each retirement system Board may also grant up to a 1% "ad hoc" COLA depending on the actuarial surplus available in their respective retirement funds.

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Safeguard Your Vision

Please Take Note! 

Preventive eye care is important because eye conditions and diseases that can destroy you or your family's healthy vision can strike at any time in life, from newborn to old age. The American Academy of Ophthalmologists suggests the following intervals for regular eye examinations:

- ◆ Ages 0 to 2: screening during regular pediatric appointments
- ◆ Ages 3 to 5: screening every one to two years during regular primary care appointments
- ◆ Ages 6 to 19: schedule examinations as needed
- ◆ Ages 20 to 29: one examination
- ◆ Ages 30 to 39: two examinations
- ◆ Ages 40 to 65: examination every two to four years
- ◆ Ages 65 and over: examination every one to two years

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Medicare Watch!

Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Coverage is Coming effective Jan. 1, 2006

Retirees who are Medicare eligible are beginning to hear about the new Medicare Part D plans that will become available on January 1, 2006. Currently, many details of these plans are not yet known. Retirees should pay close attention to information that will be published later this year on Medicare Part D and how it may impact your health plan benefits or premiums. Both the Fairfax County Government benefits staff and the FCPS benefits staff are reviewing options to determine the best plan for retirees. Retirees will get information from many sources about Medicare Part D in the coming months -- please remember that retirees with County health plans should look for information from FCERS and FCPS before making any decisions about Medicare D.

Retirees participating in Medicare, but without County health insurance, will have different options from those who have continued their health insurance coverage through Fairfax County.

Please watch for additional information as it becomes available.

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Three Simple Questions: *Is It a Stroke?*

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the stroke victim may suffer brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke. Doctors are currently indicating that a bystander may be able to recognize a stroke by asking the affected individual three simple questions:

-  Ask the individual to smile.
-  Ask him or her to raise both arms.
-  Ask the person to speak a simple sentence.

If he or she has trouble with any of these tasks, call 9-1-1 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher. This test, which takes less than one minute, has helped healthcare professionals accurately identify stroke patients. If bystanders can relay results of these questions to an emergency dispatcher, it could speed treatment to stroke patients.



Time is crucial in treating a stroke. Treatment has been developed that is very effective but it must be administered within three hours of the stroke occurring. It has been determined that untrained adults can successfully detect stroke symptoms by asking the three questions above. The American Stroke Association believes that widespread use of this test could result in prompt diagnosis and treatment of a stroke and helping to prevent brain damage.

This information was provided by Steve Campbell, director, Pimmit Hills Senior Center in Falls Church, operated by the Department of Community and Recreation Services (CRS). CRS operates senior centers and programs located in Alexandria, Annandale, Centreville-Chantilly, Fairfax City, Falls Church, Franconia-Springfield, McLean, Lorton, Reston-Herndon, and South County (Alexandria). For more information about senior services, call 703-324-5544, TTY 703-222-9693. You can also visit online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rec. Click on "Senior Services."

What is **Emergency Medical Service Transport Billing?**

If You Live in Fairfax County *You Need to Know*

On April 1, 2005, the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department began charging for Emergency Medical Service transport. Fairfax County residents who have health insurance, Medicare, or Medicaid will not pay any costs for ambulance service—insurance payments will be accepted as payment in full. There will be no additional co-payment or deductible.

For county residents who are uninsured, the Department will work with residents to ensure no one suffers financial hardship as a result of ambulance transport. A hardship waiver form will be sent to those residents who do not have insurance.

Using a "service first" philosophy, firefighters and paramedics will deliver the same high quality medical care and service that residents and visitors expect and depend upon. There will be no change in the way medical care is provided, it will be transparent to the patient. Personal information will continue to be gathered by medical staff at the hospital. Additionally, personal privacy will be protected by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Charges for ambulance transport include: \$300 for Basic Life Support transport, \$400 for Advanced Life Support, level 1 transport, \$550 for Advanced Life Support, level 2 transport, and \$7.50 per mile, from pick-up point to the hospital for ground transport. There will be no charge if there is no transport. No one will ever be denied county ambulance service based on ability to pay or the lack of insurance. When residents need emergency help, they should call 9-1-1 without hesitation.

For more information, including materials in various languages, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fire and click on "EMS Billing". You may also e-mail any questions to EMSTransportBilling@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Fairfax County Announces Creation of a New Community Emergency Alert Network (CEAN)

The Fairfax County Office of Emergency Management and the Office of Public Affairs announce the creation of the Community Emergency Alert Network, or CEAN. The CEAN will be used by the county to deliver important emergency alerts, notifications and updates to county residents during a major crisis or emergency. Messages will be delivered to e-mail accounts, cell phones (text messaging costs may apply), text pagers, satellite phones and wireless PDAs registered on the system.

Alerts may include personal safety, weather, major accidents involving utilities or roadways, or disaster notification such as a terrorist attack. In addition, residents may also register for any or

all of the additional CEAN alert categories: county government closings/schedule changes, severe traffic disruptions, severe weather 24/7 and severe weather, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday - Friday.

To register, visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean>. For additional information, contact the Office of Emergency Management at 703-324-2362, TTY 711.

The CEAN is a public service that will be used in conjunction with other public notification methods, such as cable Channel 16, the Fairfax County Government Web site, the Fairfax County Government Emergency Information Line (703-817-7771, TTY 711), and area media, both radio and television.

Volunteers Needed for Medical Reserve Corps

The Fairfax County Health Department, in cooperation with the Fairfax County Citizen Corps Council, launched a spring recruitment drive to add 3,000 more volunteers to its Medical Reserve Corps by June 30.

The all-volunteer unit is designed to augment the capacity of the public health system to respond to large scale events related to bioterrorism or widespread epidemics. Volunteers are needed from medical and non-medical professions, but specific needs are for seasoned, experienced managers to fill Medical Reserve Corp leadership positions, including incident coordinator, branch director, volunteer coordinator and unit leader. All volunteers will receive the necessary training to fulfill their responsibilities.

For more information call 703-246-2433, TTY 703-591-6435, or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/service/hd/fxhdpress19.htm.

Library Offers Downloadable Audio Books

The Fairfax County Public Library now offers access to more than 700 downloadable audio books from best selling authors such as Stephen King and Nevada Barr to the popular Pimsleur Learning Language books. These digital versions of audio books are available via the Web through a partnership between NetLibrary, which provides e-books to library card holders, and Recorded Books, LLC. The audio books can be played on any desktop or portable device that supports Windows Media Player 9.0 and higher. They can also be transferred to a number of portable devices, such as portable music players, portable media centers, Pocket PCs and even some smart phone devices. At present the audio books cannot be played on Apple equipment or iPods. A complete list of compatible devices, such as Rio and Creative portable audio players, is available on the library's Web site at: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library>.

To access the downloadable audio book collection, library users need to register with NetLibrary. To register, visit the library's Web site, click on the link to digital books and enter your library card number and birth date.



Safeguard Your Vision *continued from page 1*

Check with your physician or ophthalmologist to see how often you should have a complete eye exam if any of the following risk factors apply to you:

- History of eye injury
- Diabetes
- Family history of eye problems
- African American over age 40

The chart below shows how your vision benefits are covered under each of the County's medical plans:

For Fairfax County Employees - (NOT School Employees)

FairChoice+Blue Choice POS Plan and Blue Preferred PPO Plan

Routine Eye Exams:

- Covered once per calendar year
- \$10 copayment when obtained through participating Davis Vision provider.
- No referral required.

Frames/lenses/contact lenses*:

- \$40 copayment for frames up to \$70 retail.
- \$35 copayment for single vision lenses
- 10% - 20% discount for contact lenses

Routine vision benefits are administered through Davis Vision. Go to www.carefirst.com, select "Find a Doctor", select "Vision", then select "Davis (Blue Vision and Blue Vision Plus)" for a list of participating Davis Vision providers, or call Davis vision at 1-800-783-5602.

Discounts for laser vision correction available – visit www.carefirst.com, for more details.

Note: Benefits for routine eye exams are covered only under Davis Vision. Routine eye exams provided by non-Davis Vision providers are not covered.

*See pages 23-24 and 51-52 of the FairChoice+/Blue Choice and Blue Preferred PPO Benefit Plan Handbook for additional discounts and more information. This booklet can be found on the Infoweb under Benefits/Health Insurance/FairChoice + Blue Choice

Kaiser Permanente

Routine Eye Exams:

- Covered once per calendar year
- \$10 copayment when obtained at Kaiser Permanente facilities.
- No referral required.

Frames/lenses/contact lenses:

- Covered once per calendar year.
- 25% discount on regular eyeglass lenses and frames when obtained at Kaiser Permanente facilities.
- 15% discount for contact lenses.

Routine vision benefits are available at most medical facilities. Call the appointment line at (703-359-7878) to schedule.

Lasik Surgery is available at a discount. Call the Vision Services Department at 301-421-5704 or 1-866-895-0890 for more information.

CIGNA

Routine Eye Exams:

- Covered once every 24 months
- \$10 office visit copayment when obtained through CIGNA participating provider.
- No referral required.

Frames/lenses/contact lenses:

- Covered once every 24 months
- Partial reimbursement toward purchase of eyeglasses or contact lenses every 24 months. Maximum reimbursement levels are:
 - Single lens: \$20
 - Bifocal lenses: \$30
 - Trifocal lenses: \$40
 - Frames: \$30
 - Contact lenses: \$75

For a list of participating providers, go to www.alliedeyecare.com, select "Provider Network", select "Listing of Network & Locations" then select "CIGNA Healthcare Mid-Atlantic HMO Routine Vision" or call 1-866-425-2323 or 410-418-4414.

For Fairfax County Public School Employees (FCPS)

CareFirst Blue Preferred PPO and CareFirst Blue Choice POS

Routine Eye Exams:

- One per calendar year - \$10 copay
- You must use either a Network ophthalmologist or a Davis Vision provider; there are no benefits for any other providers

By a Network Ophthalmologist

- Call 800-296-0724 or visit www.fcps.edu/DHR/benefits
- Referral needed for POS plan participants only

By Davis Vision Participating Optometrist

- No referral required
- Call 800-783-5602 or visit www.carefirst.com

Vision Supplies by Davis Vision providers only

- Discounts on lenses, frames, contact lenses
- Discounts on laser vision correction

TruVision

- Discounts on laser vision correction, call 866-339-2020

* See page 39 of the CareFirst 2005 Benefits Booklet or www.fcps.edu/DHR/benefits under Medical Plans

Kaiser Permanente

Routine Eye Exams:

- One per calendar year
- \$10 copay when obtained at Kaiser facilities
- No referral required
- Age 5 and older
- Call 703-359-7878 or visit www.fcps.edu/DHR/benefits

Vision Supplies

- Discounts on lenses, frames, contact lenses
- Discounts on laser vision correction, contact 301-421-5704

Aetna EPO

Routine Eye Exams:

- \$10 copay
- You must use a Network ophthalmologist or a Vision One provider; no benefits for any other providers

By a Network Ophthalmologist

- One every 24 months
- No referral required
- Call 888-592-3862 or visit www.fcps.edu/DHR/benefits

By Vision One Optometrist

- One per calendar year
- No referral required
- Call 800-793-8616 or visit www.aetna.com

Vision Supplies by Vision One providers only

- Discounts on lenses, frames, contact lenses

National Lasik Network

- Discounts on laser vision correction, call 800-422-6600

Get to Know Your Trustees

While many retirees are familiar with their System's Board of Trustees, others may not know anything at all about the people who are charged with the proper operation of the System to which they and other employees and retirees belong. This quarter's column features **Frank M. Alston**, of the Employees' Retirement System.

Trustee Tracking

Frank M. Alston, a long-standing member of the Employees' Retirement System Board of Trustees, was appointed by the Board of Supervisors as a citizen member.

Mr. Alston has almost 40 years of continuous, direct involvement in the federal procurement process: 19 years in increasingly responsible positions in the Department of Defense Contract Audit Agency providing financial advice and auditing services to procurement officials; 15 years directing and managing a consulting practice in a major public accounting firm focusing primarily on advising and training senior industry and government officials on pricing, costing, administering and settling publicly funded contracts; 2 years in senior management of a large corporation responsible for contract pricing and administration; and 3 years as a private consultant specializing primarily in the pricing and costing of public procurements.

Currently, Mr. Alston acts as a private consultant advising the management of organizations, profit and nonprofit, on matters involving the pricing and costing of publicly funded contracts. He provides litigation support and expert testimony in judicial and quasi-judicial proceedings.

In addition to Mr. Alston's career in the field of federal procurement, he has served the community in a variety of capacities over more than three decades. His community service has included membership in professional organizations, foundations aiding under served populations, educational institutions, and healthcare organizations. Mr. Alston coauthored one book and has written several articles on the subject of Government contracting.

Excluding 1978, when he and his family lived in Lexington, Massachusetts, Mr. Alston has resided in Fairfax County since 1968 with his wife. The Alston's have two daughters, one who is now a physician and mother of 3-year-old triplets in Pasadena, California, and the other daughter, a system engineer in Plano, Texas, is the mother of two. Both daughters attended Fairfax County schools and graduated from UVA.

Retiree COLA effective July 1, 2005

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For the fiscal year 2006, the Police Officers Retirement System Board was the only Board able to grant any amount of ad hoc COLA due to rules governing the financial status of the plans and the terms of the County Code regarding the granting of additional COLA's. The Employees' and Uniformed Retirement Systems did not meet the financial criteria for granting an ad hoc COLA amount.

Cost of living increases will be reflected in retiree payments on July 29, 2005.

As a reminder, COLAs apply only to base benefits and not any pre-social security benefit.

Please Note:

For members who retire with less than 12 months of service in the current fiscal year, COLAs are prorated as shown below according to the effective dates of retirement:

July 2, 2004 -- October 1, 200475% of the COLA amount
October 2, 2004 -- January 1, 200550%
January 2, 2005 -- April 1, 2005.....25%
After April 1, 20050% COLA

FIRST CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 45
FAIRFAX, VA

Fairfax County
Retirement Administration Agency
10680 Main Street, Suite 280
Fairfax, Virginia 22030

July, 2005

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Fairfax County Retirement Agency

10680 Main Street ♦ Suite 280 ♦ Fairfax, Virginia 22030 ♦ 800-333-1633 ♦ 703-279-8200
e-mail: retire@fairfaxcounty.gov ♦ internet: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/retbrd/

Retirement Associations

Keep your Retirement Association informed of address and phone number changes!
The Retirement Associations frequently request updated contact information for Fairfax County retirees. Due to privacy considerations, we are **unable** to provide them with that sort of requested information for their mailings. If you are already a member, or interested in becoming a member, please keep them informed of address and phone number updates. For information on membership or to change your address, contact:

Fairfax County Fire & Rescue
Retirement Association
Tom Simcoe cell: 703-408-8206
mouse260@msn.com
Annual Dues is \$24.00

Fairfax County Retired
Police Association
James Covell, 703-426-2781
COVELL648@erols.com
Annual Dues: \$15.00

Fairfax County
Retired Employees Association
Doris Medlin 703-256-6379
Annual Dues is \$5.00
Lifetime Membership is \$50.00