

# RETIREE Report

A Semi-Annual Publication from the  
Fairfax County Retirement Administration Agency  
Designed for County Government & County School Retirees

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/retirement/>

## Social Security Update

Effective January 1, 2008

According to the Social Security Administration, monthly Social Security Income benefits for more than 54 million Americans have increased 2.3% in January 2008. For more information on Social Security, please visit their website at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov>.

Social Security Income benefits increase automatically each year based on the rise in the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), from the third quarter of the prior year to the corresponding period of the current year. ★

## Medicare Update

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has determined Medicare Part B premium amounts for 2008. The standard Medicare Part B monthly premium will be increased to \$96.40 in 2008, an increase of \$2.90 from the 2007 premium. The deductible amount for Part A, Medicare in 2008 will increase to \$1,024 for each benefit period. The premiums paid by beneficiaries enrolled in Medicare Part B cover physician services, outpatient hospital services, certain home health services, durable medical equipment and other items.

Additional information about Medicare changes for 2008 can be found on the Medicare website at <http://www.medicare.gov> or <http://www.hhs.gov>. ★

## Pension Protection Act 2006

### Public Safety Retirees Please Take Note!

The Pension Protection Act of 2006 contains changes to the IRS Code that may reduce taxes on retirement income for specific categories of public safety retirees. Effective January 1, 2007, if you qualify by having retired as a "public safety officer", you can exclude from taxable income, distributions from an eligible retirement plan that are used to pay the premiums for certain benefit plans that the County sponsors. The premiums paid to the County sponsored health insurance plans are eligible.

The Act defines "public safety officer" to include police officers, corrections officers, probation officers, parole officers, judicial officers, professional firefighters, officially recognized or designated members of rescue squads or ambulances, officially recognized or designated members of volunteer fire departments, and officially recognized or designated chaplains for fire and police departments.

When filing your taxes for 2007, you may be eligible to take this income deduction, up to \$3,000.00 on your 1040 form, thereby reducing your taxable income for 2007. The amount of the total deductions for health insurance made in 2007 will appear on your December Pay Advice. If you have questions, **please consult your tax professional.**

Please note the following IRS rule. The income reported on the 1099-R form from the Retirement Agency will not reflect this deduction. It is your responsibility to claim the deduction on the 1040 form when you file your taxes.

You may wish to change your tax withholdings. New W-4P and VA-4P tax withholding forms can be requested by calling the Retirement Agency at 703-279-8200. Please return completed forms only if you wish to change your withholding allowance. ★

## What's Inside?

Volunteerism -- Fairfax CASA .....	2
Tax Help from AARP .....	3
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors .....	3
Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule .....	4

# Speak Up for a Child as a Court Appointed Special Advocate . . . . . . Become a **CASA** Volunteer

A new case of child abuse or neglect enters the Fairfax County Domestic & Juvenile Relations Court system once every 30 hours. These children need caring advocates to help ensure that they grow up in safe and permanent homes.

That's where Fairfax Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) comes in. An independent nonprofit organization, Fairfax CASA recruits and trains volunteers to investigate a child's situation and to advocate for the best interests of the child in court. All CASA volunteers are screened through a multi-step application process and then receive 30 hours of formal training to prepare them for their role. No prior experience in child welfare or the law is required.

"Retirees are often our best CASA volunteers," says Lynda Williams, Executive Director of Fairfax CASA. "They have the time to really get to know the families and build the trust needed to make decisions in the child's best interest."

One retiree worked with a grandmother who was reluctant to take custody of her grandchild. After a number of visits and conversations, the CASA volunteer was able to help the grandmother discuss her concerns and ultimately, persuade her to assume custody of her grandchild. "A social worker



would not have had the time to sit with this grandmother to work through the issues." says Ms. Williams. "Thanks to the diligence of the CASA volunteer, a child who might have languished in foster care now has a safe and permanent home."

Fairfax CASA has a critical need to match the children on its waiting list with trained advocates.

If you are interested in becoming a CASA volunteer, contact Elisa Kosarin, Recruitment and Training Manager, at 703-273-3526, x22 or [ekosarin@casafairfax.org](mailto:ekosarin@casafairfax.org). To learn more about Fairfax CASA, visit <http://www.casafairfax.org>. To learn about CASA organizations in other areas, visit the National CASA website at <http://www.nationalcasa.org>. ★

## VOLUNTEERISM

## Cold Weather Tips

While Fairfax County is currently experiencing an unseasonably warm snap, with 70-some degree weather, it IS January. Winter typically brings with it cold weather and we want to remind everyone, especially seniors, how important it is to take extra precautions when spending time out in the cold.

- Dress appropriately. Air temperature does not have to be below freezing for someone to experience cold emergencies such as hypothermia and frostbite.
- Dress in layers to adjust to changing conditions. Avoid overdressing or overexertion, which can lead to heat illness.
- Wear a hat, preferably one covering your ears, because most body heat is lost through your head.
- Wear mittens as they provide more warmth to your hands than gloves.
- Wear waterproof, insulated boots to help avoid hypothermia or frostbite by keeping your feet warm and dry, and to help maintain your footing in ice and snow.
- After coming inside, immediately get out of wet clothes and warm the core body temperature with a blanket or warm fluids such as hot cider or soup. Avoid caffeine or alcohol in cases of hypothermia or frostbite.

# Tax Help FROM AARP

The AARP (American Association of Retired Persons) AmericanTax-Aide program has volunteers willing to help low to middle-income taxpayers prepare and file their Federal income tax returns with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) at no cost. Each year, from February 1, through April 15, trained and certified personnel are available to help prepare your federal tax return. To locate an AARP site offering the Tax-Aide service, please visit their Internet site at <http://www.aarp.org/money/taxaide/taxpreparation/> and click on "Get Help With Your Tax Return". The Internet site also has information on Tax Aide schedules and additional contact information.

## Important Information About AARP Tax-Aide Services

- Many AARP Tax-Aide sites are operated on an appointment basis. During tax season, check the Tax-Aide site locator for contact information and hours of operation.
- Some sites are staffed by bilingual volunteers; please check the site locator to see if the AARP site nearest you offers bilingual assistance should you need this service.
- For most people, it will be necessary for them to visit an AARP Tax-Aide site in person to have their tax return prepared by an AARP Tax-Aide volunteer. However, when needed, arrangements may be made to assist shut-ins and homebound disabled persons to provide counseling at special sites, such as hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, etc. To request an AARP Tax-Aide volunteer

to serve a special group of persons at a specific location, send an e-mail to [taxaide@aarp.org](mailto:taxaide@aarp.org). If you do not have access to e-mail, you can contact AARP Tax-Aide by phone at 1-888-AARP-NOW. Please note however, answers to specific tax questions are not available by phone.

## Avoid Headaches; Prepare Your Taxes Early

- With the help of volunteers, the AARP Tax-Aide program is the nation's largest, free, volunteer-run tax preparation and assistance service. Tax-Aide provides free tax preparation and assistance services to millions of low to middle-income taxpayers, with special attention to those ages 60 and older. Please be aware however, if your tax return is relatively complex you may be advised to seek professional tax assistance.
- Electronic filing and online counseling is also offered by the program.
- If an AARP Tax-Aide site is not available in your local area, contact the IRS directly for information about other free tax preparation assistance at 1-800-829-1040

Even if you don't need assistance with your taxes, you may volunteer to help others with their tax returns. As the Tax-Aide program continues to grow, AARP is continually recruiting dedicated individuals to join their team. Many of their volunteers stay with the program year after year and some have been with the program for more than 15 years. Visit <http://www.aarp.org/money/taxaide/volunteertaxaide/> to learn more about volunteering with AARP Tax-Aide. ★

## Board of Supervisors Holds First Meeting in 2008

### Supervisor Bulova Selected as Vice Chair

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors held its first meeting of the year January 7 with three newly elected members participating for the first time. Terms of office for all current board members began Jan. 1.

Gerald E. Connolly was reelected chairman in the November 2007 election. Braddock District Supervisor Sharon Bulova was chosen by the board as vice chair for the four-year term. The complete list of board members and the districts they serve is below:

Gerald E. Connolly, chairman, at-large

Sharon Bulova, vice chair, Braddock District

John W. Foust, Dranesville District

Catherine M. Hudgins, Hunter Mill District

Jeffrey C. McKay, Lee District



Penelope A. Gross, Mason District

Gerald W. Hyland, Mount Vernon District

Linda Q. Smyth, Providence District

Pat Herrity, Springfield District

Michael R. Frey, Sully District

For more information, including this year's meeting schedule, links to board members' Web pages, podcasts and more, visit the newly redesigned Board of Supervisors Web page at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/board>. ★

# RETIREE Report

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

A Semi-Annual Publication from the  
Fairfax County Retirement Administration Agency  
*Designed for County Government & County School Retirees*

WINTER, 2008

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

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/retirement/>

## Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule 2008

### January

09	Police Officers Retirement Board	1:30 PM
17	Employees' Retirement Board	3:30 PM
23	Uniformed Retirement Board	8:30 AM

### February

13	Police Officers Retirement Board	1:30 PM
21	Employees' Retirement Board	3:30 PM
27	Uniformed Retirement Board	8:30 AM

### March

05	Employees' Investment Committee	3:30 PM
12	Police Officers Retirement Board	1:30 PM
20	Employees' Retirement Board	3:30 PM
26	Uniformed Retirement Board	8:30 AM

### April

09	Police Officers Retirement Board	1:30 PM
17	Employees' Retirement Board	3:30 PM
23	Uniformed Retirement Board	8:30 AM

### May

14	Police Officers Retirement Board	1:30 PM
22	Employees' Retirement Board	3:30 PM
28	Uniformed Retirement Board	8:30 AM

### June

04	Employees' Investment Committee	3:30 PM
11	Police Officers Retirement Board	1:30 PM
19	Employees' Retirement Board	3:30 PM
25	Uniformed Retirement Board	8:30 AM

### July

09	Police Officers Retirement Board	1:30 PM
17	Employees' Retirement Board	3:30 PM
23	Uniformed Retirement Board	8:30 AM

### August

No Board Meetings Scheduled

### September

03	Employees' Investment Committee	3:30 PM
10	Police Officers Retirement Board	1:30 PM
18	Employees' Retirement Board	3:30 PM
24	Uniformed Retirement Board	8:30 AM

### October

08	Police Officers Retirement Board	1:30 PM
16	Employees' Retirement Board	3:30 PM
22	Uniformed Retirement Board	8:30 AM

### November

12	Police Officers Retirement Board	1:30 PM
20	Employees' Retirement Board	3:30 PM
19	Uniformed Retirement Board	8:30 AM

### December

03	Employees' Investment Committee	3:30 PM
10	Police Officers Retirement Board	1:30 PM
18	Employees' Retirement Board	3:30 PM