



ACREA News

Celebrating 50 Years of Service Since 1973

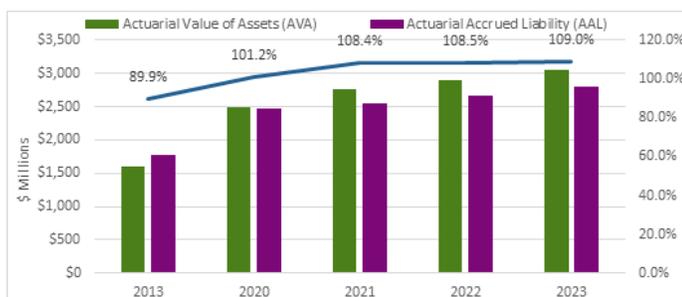
ACERS Remains Strong

ACERS is a **strongly funded pension plan**. The County's consistent contributions, reasonable assumptions, and long-term investment performance contribute to this success.

Over the past decade, assets have almost doubled from \$1.6 billion to \$2.8 billion, growing faster than liabilities (\$1.8 billion 2013 to \$2.8 billion 2023), with the actuarial funding ratio (assets versus obligations) increasing above 100%, and most recently at 109%.

The pension was formed in 1953. The County Code establishes the Retirement Board, which manages and oversees investment assets in a single trust. Benefits are determined and administered by the County. ACERS is well-positioned to meet current and future obligations, given consistent funding, realistic assumptions, and solid long-term investment performance.

As of June 30, 2023, ACERS includes 4,392 Retirees (including DROP), which has increased from 3,000 members 20 years ago and continues to grow, while the active workforce has remained relatively steady (currently 3,649). ❖



Culpepper Garden Honors Arlington First Responders

Arlington's only retirement community offering both independent and assisted living apartments for limited-income seniors, **Culpepper Garden** is an award-winning, nonprofit retirement community that is home to 450 persons.

Providing a safe and healthy environment became more challenging during the pandemic, which coincided with a major renovation. Extra measures were required because the rehab occurred with tenants in place.

Arlington County's emergency professionals provide critical support to residents and were honored at Culpepper Garden's June event. Representing Arlington: **Darrin Cassady**, Deputy Chief of Police; **Will Flagler**, Director of Dept. of Public Safety Communications and Emergency Management; **David Powlitz**, Fire Chief and **Jose Quiroz, Jr.**, Sheriff.

In April 2023, **Rep. Don Beyer** joined a ceremony to dedicate Culpepper Garden's gardens as the **First Responders Garden** to mark the contributions of first responders to the Arlington community. "There is no better group to honor than these outstanding individuals who bring their professionalism and compassion with them every time they step into our buildings," said Culpepper Garden Executive Director **Marta Hill Gray**.

Rep. Beyer echoed the sentiment in his remarks, "I share the gratitude for our first responders. My dad was an Army MP so I know the sacrifice and dedication it takes to be in this line of work. Whether it's a Capitol Police officer protecting me and my colleagues, a 9-1-1 operator, or a driver engineer, your work is truly valued. Thank you for having me here today for this special dedication."

**Arlington County Retired
Employees Association, Inc.**
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2023 Board of Directors

- **Carl Newby**, Chair and Retirement Board Representative/Trustee
- **Lisa Grandle**, Vice Chair
- **Susan Lane**, Secretary
- **Gail Rosner**, Treasurer
- **Melodee Melin**, Membership
- **Jane Eboch**, Newsletter Editor
- **Richard Alt**, Retirement Board Representative/Trustee
- **Karen Albert**
- **Gregg Kurasz**
- **Bob Tilman**

ACREA announcements, newsletters, and forms are available on our website and our FaceBook page – look for “Arlington County Retired Employees Association.”

If you have a computer and received a hard copy of this newsletter, please consider letting ACREA communicate with you by email. You will help us save postage.

Save the Date

Our next luncheon is planned for **Tuesday, May 7, 2024**. Mark your calendar! ❖

Chair's Corner

By Carl Newby

Good news and a rising challenge. The good news is we have an active ACREA Board and a renewed energy level to get things done. Our newsletters and spring and fall luncheons receive high marks. The challenge is **our slowly decreasing membership**, including new enrollments, over the last several years. While finances are sound due to a legacy

treasury balance -- and luncheons are mostly a break-even proposition -- newsletter and administrative expenses are slowly eroding the balance.

At the October luncheon, the membership voted to **reduce the lifetime fees from \$100 to \$50 and to eliminate annual dues**. The goal for the upcoming year is to increase membership and improve the services we provide.

You may have noticed a renewed effort to work with the County's HR department. Retirees' pay statements dated August 13, 2023 contained a message about ACREA and how to contact us. The winter newsletter from the County's Benefits Office features information about ACREA. We hope this outreach effort to current retirees will encourage nonmembers to join.

Look for more Board actions in the coming year to increase membership and services. We need your help, either by supporting the Membership Committee or in other ways. And you are welcome to join the Board at our meeting in January, when we will plan our work for the coming year. - Carl ❖

Our Newest Board Member

Bob Tilman

Bob Tilman was elected as ACREA's newest Board Member at the association's fall luncheon Oct. 3, 2023. Bob has been regularly attending the meetings of the Board as a volunteer in the past year and has brought new ideas and energy to the group.

Bob grew up in Arlington and attended Arlington public primary and secondary school, and then graduated from George Mason University in 1976. He worked for Arlington County a total of 43 years (including time as a temporary employee). Four of those years were in the Public Works Equipment Division, with the remaining years in the Human Resources



Department, including payroll manager and data systems support, including the County's ACERS Access Retirement System. He lives in Fairfax County, just a few blocks away from Arlington, and enjoys helping his three grown kids and his six grandchildren and attending a variety of music events with his wife Donna. ❖

ACREA Luncheons

Spring Luncheon

Nearly 50 retirees attended our **May 2 luncheon** in person and nine took advantage of attending virtually. Members heard remarks from **County Board Chair Christian Dorsey**. He told the audience that after several years of dealing with COVID, the Board is more aware of the need to be resilient. The County continues to experience lingering effects of neediness, especially in housing. The adopted FY 2024 County Budget reflects priorities in leisure, safety, transportation, and climate, as well as continuing investment in the workforce. He highlighted the upcoming visioning process for Arlington Public Libraries.

Mark Schwartz, Arlington County Manager, described several changes the County has made since the onset of COVID in 2020. One area is the increased interest by restaurants to make outdoor dining

options permanent. This may require consideration of zoning modifications. Another change expands the type of business that can be operated in certain commercial space. Regarding the workforce, the DROP program was raised from 3 to 4 years in order to increase employee retention.

Guest speaker **Michelle Thomas with the Arlington Area Agency on Aging** described services and resources

available for older adults, persons with disabilities and caregivers. Our second speaker was **Maureen Markham, President of Arlington Neighborhood Village (ANV)**. ANV enables Arlington's older adults to continue living safely, independently, and with an enhanced quality of life in their own homes and communities as they age by providing access to support services and social programs. ANV has about 215 volunteers and serves more than 300 members. ❖

Fall Luncheon

The fall luncheon offered a new feature, a table where representatives from **Human Resources, VOYA**, and the **Retirement Office** sat and spoke with ACREA members who stopped by. It was also the third consecutive luncheon

offering a virtual option for those unable to attend in person.



Attendees enjoyed a thorough presentation by **Corporal Juan Pablo Montoya** of the Arlington County Police Department on avoiding scams and fraud. Corporal Montoya emphasized the importance of **never giving personal information**, such as name and address, as well as Social Security number, credit card, or bank account numbers, to strangers who call, and also stressed that this information should never be posted online. To view the entire presentation, go to the ACREA website, www.acreainc.org.

Lynn Porfiri, Chief of Staff to County Manager Mark Schwartz, highlighted several important projects from County departments. She noted that the **Police Department** recently won three awards, including a prestigious one from the Department of Justice. She reported that many departments are short-staffed and recruitment is a major activity. Also of note, the Manager's Office has hired a **Racial Equity Officer** and is examining issues in the County through a racial lens to see how race impacts many areas of community life.

Board Treasurer Gail Rosner informed the membership that the balance of funds in the ACREA treasury as of Sept. 30, 2023, is \$14,032.42. The funds are adequate for our current needs. ❖

County News

Lady Liberty Arrives in Arlington

The 25' long, 2,500-lb. *Reclining Liberty* arrived in August on the front lawn of the **Museum of Contemporary Art Arlington**.
ACREA News Fall 2023



Reclining Liberty takes inspiration from the giant reclining Buddha statues of Asia, which represent the Buddha in one stage on the path to enlightenment and are a theme throughout Buddhist art. By merging the traditional Buddhist reclining pose and the quintessential American figurative symbol, *Reclining Liberty* asks the viewer to contemplate the status of the ideals the Statue of Liberty represents. Welcoming public engagement and interactivity, the work's playfulness and accessibility suggest that these ideals of liberty and freedom are active, tangible, and evolving and need to be directly engaged with, debated, and defended.

Originally displayed in New York City and New Jersey, *Reclining Liberty* will be on display in Arlington through July 28, 2024.

Want County News?

Read the latest news on the County's online Newsroom, and sign up for a variety of informative updates.

<https://bit.ly/ArlVANews>

The Museum of Contemporary Art Arlington is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that enriches community life by connecting the public with contemporary art and artists through exhibitions, education programs, and an artists-in-residence program.

Located at 3550 Wilson Blvd, Arlington, VA, the museum is open Wed.-Sun. 12-5pm. There is **no admission fee to visit**. For more information about exhibitions and programming, visit www.mocaarlington.org. ❖

Help with Elections

It's almost busy season for the Arlington County Elections Office! If you live in Virginia, we'll be having three elections next year: Presidential Primary on March 5, 2024, Regular Primary on June 18, 2024, and the General Election on Nov. 5, 2024. No matter where you live, please consider volunteering to **serve as a poll worker**. All jurisdictions need workers as we

head into 2024. You can apply to **volunteer to work at the polls**:

- VA: <https://bit.ly/3s79i4g>
- MD: <https://bit.ly/3tzYfkv>
- DC: <https://dcboe.org/>

Let the jurisdiction that you're applying to know that you are a

former County employee and if you have any skill sets that might be particularly useful (e.g., data entry, HR, IT, multilingual, etc.). Additionally, your local jurisdiction may be hiring seasonal temps for more regular work

throughout 2024. Work might range from Early Voting Officer, processing mail ballots, entering voter registration data, and answering phone calls from voters. Hours might be flexible, and **the work is extremely rewarding**. Remember – it takes all of us together to vote!

Continuous Learning

What do 900 people know that you don't? They are enriching their brains and lives with **Encore Learning**. Encore Learning is a nonprofit organization with a focus on offering a wide variety of **college-level noncredit courses**, clubs, special events and activities to help meet the continuing education and social interests of **people over 50**.

You can take courses in a wide variety of subjects, including Fine Arts, Theater & Music; Health & Wellness; History; Law, Politics & Public Affairs; Literature & Writing; Science & Technology; and Social Sciences.

Courses take place in the daytime and are offered virtually and in-person. There is an annual \$65 membership cost plus course costs, although some learning opportunities are free.

The program has been in existence since 2002 and currently has over 900 active members. Encore Learning partners with George Mason University, Arlington Public Library, Arlington County 55+, and Arlington Public Schools. Visit www.encorelearning.net. ❖



Beyond Books

While many libraries and their mission have been a target of conflict around the nation, ours continues to be a source of community vitality, creativity and sharing. It is a challenge to sum all the services and activities our **Arlington**

Public Library offers to persons of all age groups and interests.

Beyond books, these are a just few of the resources available:

- Technology tools such as computers, printing, copying and scanning, and one on one tech help - by appointment.
- Open Lab Equipment such as 3D printers and 3D scanner.
- Arts and crafts such as button makers, vinyl cutters, jewelry making and repair supplies.

The Auditorium at Central Library is the venue for author talks and presentations often in partnership with other community groups. And you can reserve a space, meeting rooms and tele-connect space.

Entertain your grandchildren with the array of collections to borrow, including:

- American Girl dolls
- Storytime kits
- Games or puzzles

Need some hand tools for a do-it-yourself project?

- You can borrow hand tools or
- Borrow garden tools from The Shed

Congratulations

Claude (Bucky – Fire Dept. and ACREA member) and **Ruth Jenkins** celebrated their 70th anniversary on June 13, 2023

Research local history – check the Center for Local History.

In addition to these resources found at Central Library, the branch libraries offer others. Shirlington features tabletop gaming, voter registration, a parenting book club, and in-person English Conversation classes. Cherrydale offers seated yoga, and a knitting club. Check out your nearest branch for its monthly schedule. ❖

Looking for Aging or Disability Services?

Whether you are an older adult looking for local aging services, a caregiver trying to help a loved one, or a friend providing out-of-town care coordination, the first place to stop for information is your local Area Agency on Aging (AAA).

Each community has an AAA - there are 622 AAAs around the country. The primary goal is to offer services and supports that **help older adults remain independent in the home** and community of their choice. Trained options counselors can listen to your needs and connect you to appropriate programs to meet your needs ... ranging from affordable housing to Real Estate Tax Relief to home aides to legal services to questions about Medicare.

It's easy to find your local AAA by contacting the Eldercare Locator at www.eldercare.acl.gov or by calling 1.800.677.1116. from 9:00 am to 8:00 pm ET, Monday-Friday.

Arlington has many programs to help our older adults remain a vital part of our community. To get started, call 703-228-1700 or send an email to arlaaa@arlingtonva.us. ❖

Arlington's Deer Management Project A Gardener's Perspective

By Carl Newby

I am a vegetable gardener; I freely admit it. I am very sympathetic to Mr. MacGregor's perspective in the Peter Rabbit stories. My garden and flowerbeds have been raided by birds, chipmunks, squirrels, rabbits, and deer. Only the neighborhood fox seems to be my friend as he is the enemy of some of my enemies -- the rabbits, squirrels, and chipmunks. But my greatest nemesis are the deer; the most extensive damage is done by them.

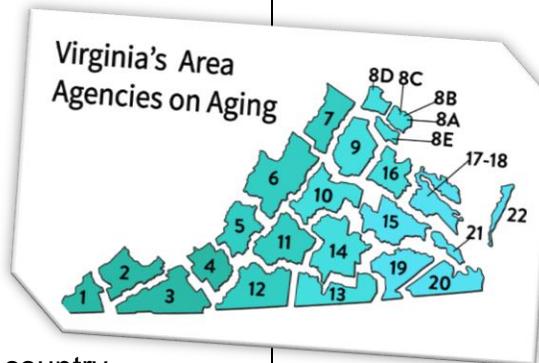
As such, I have been closely following the County's "[Deer Management Project](#)." The project summary states:

"...there are too many deer, they can harm the environment by eating certain plants faster than

they can grow back and will compete for food which can lead to malnourishment, disease, and increased mortality rates. ...

This project aims to identify ways to protect Arlington's County-owned natural land parks so that all the plants and animals that are a part of the County's ecosystem can live and thrive here."

I agree. For me, this County project offers hope. The County is now in the information sharing and public input gathering process stage for what to do, with a draft report and draft recommendations being vetted in the community this fall. Under consideration are non-lethal and lethal methods of management. I won't take a written position on which methods to use to limit the deer population, other than to say it should have begun yesterday. The good work of the many Mr. MacGregors needs to be protected. ❖





In Memoriam

Remembering ACREA members who died this year

Name	Hometown	Department	Date of Death
Martin W. Ames	Hertford, NC	Fire	Mar. 9, 2023
David P. Bell	Round Hill, VA	Fire	Feb. 8, 2023
Warren L. Birkhead	Warrenton, VA	Fire	Nov. 26, 2022
Gregory P. Brewer	Arlington, VA	Police	Mar. 12, 2023
Alan Christensen	Aptos, CA	HRD	Aug. 18, 2023
David Dantzler	Vienna, VA	ED	Aug. 16, 2023
Edna Eagle	Falls Church, VA	ACREA Volunteer & Spouse to Roscoe Eagle	Apr. 18, 2023
Bert Fary	Staunton, VA	PRCR	Aug. 6, 2023
Charles G. Flinn	Arlington, VA	County Atty	Dec. 21, 2022
Al Fuchsman	Annandale, VA	Police	Sept. 30, 2023
Donald D. Goins	New Smyrna Beach, FL	Fire	Mar. 3, 2023
Daniel T. Hartle	Alexandria, VA	Police	Aug. 17, 2023
Melvin T. Hudgins	Falls Church, VA	Police	Mar. 10, 2023
Ken Hurt	Union Hall, VA	PRCR	Sept. 30, 2023
John H. Jordan	Alexandria, VA	DES	Nov. 28, 2022
Russell H. Kidwell	Reedville, VA	Fire	Oct. 6, 2022
Otto A. Koch	Arlington, VA	Police	Nov. 19, 2022
Lois Gilroy	Arlington, VA	Courts	Sept. 12, 2023
Arthur F. Marcey	Edinburg, VA	Police	Sept. 12, 2023
Stanley P. Mayers	State College, PA	HRD	Jan. 3, 2023
Patricia McGrady	Springfield, VA	CPHD	Oct. 22, 2022
Alice D. Morris	Arlington, VA	Fire/Police	Oct. 24, 2022
Marianne O'Connell	Arlington, VA	DHS	Jan. 24, 2023
Dewey Rice	Cotuit, MA	DPW	Apr. 24, 2023
Elfride Smith	Falls Church, VA	CBO	Apr. 15, 2023
Otis L. Terry	Waldorf, MD	DPW	Jan. 28, 2023
Joseph S. Wholey	Falls Church, VA	County Board Member	Aug. 24, 2023



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