

July 2026

Reflections

What's Your Ideal Fourth of July Celebration?

As America celebrates its 250th birthday this year, we asked your Retirement Benefits team what their ideal Fourth of July would look like if money was no object. Here's what they said:

“Tradition is getting together with family and friends for a cookout and pool party and then having great fireworks with patriotic music playing. If money is no object, I would host it somewhere, maybe Tennessee, and invite and pay for family and friends to come. I would also have stars like Dolly Parton, Shania Twain, Amy Grant and Carrie Underwood do performances followed by a spectacular fireworks display afterward.”

SHIRLEY JONES, *Benefits Assistant*



PAYROLL BULLETIN BOARD

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THIS MONTH:
July 27

NEXT MONTH:
August 27



*Benefits team
(back row, left to
right): Audrey
Watson-Payne,
Christy Rasmussen,
Gifty Bediako,
Zoila Hall, Kevin
Walker, Tara Mead,
Shirley Jones,
Melodi-Laurel Belle,
Vernon Rogers;
(front row, left
to right): Sharon
Scheuneman,
Rochelle Rubin,
Lisa Turpen*

“Our Fourth of July weekend celebration will begin by flying in close friends and family from, Canada, Oregon, Colorado, and Texas to join us aboard an Omay 50 power catamaran. Upon arrival, guests would be welcomed with a charcuterie spread featuring mini sandwiches, fresh fruit, crackers, and cheeses. As we sail, we would enjoy music, great food, and meaningful fellowship while touring the historical port, culminating in a spectacular fireworks display.”

AUDREY WATSON-PAYNE, *Benefits Assistant*

“If I were a multi-billionaire it wouldn’t matter. I’d still like to be at my son Trevor’s house with Maisie Blue (Trevor’s dog) and family, on the screened-in back porch (no mosquitoes) and tons of yummy food. Did I mention it would be a laid-back, quiet, cool, breezy day—mid-70’s with low humidity? Later we might watch some fireworks. Now, that’s my kind of Fourth of July celebration!”

SHARON SCHEUNEMAN,
Quality Assurance Specialist

“I find it a blessing and a privilege to be able to travel. So, ideally, the best way to spend Independence Day is outside our country. Visit another culture and land. It is a great way to exercise our freedom.”

KEVIN WALKER, *Benefits Assistant*

“One of my favorite Fourth of July parties was a celebration on the Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling (home of Air Force One) during the time my brother-in-law was stationed there. The whole community brings their lawn chairs and blankets and sets them up along the Potomac River facing north towards the Washington Monument. The unrestricted view of our capital city and the beauty of the fireworks that night have stayed with me to this day.”

LISA TURPEN, *Associate Administrator,
Defined Benefit & Healthcare Plans*



*Defined Benefits management team (left to right):
Monica Johnson, specialist; Lisa Turpen, Associate
Administrator; Tara Mead, Assistant Administrator.*

“I would rent a place with a seating capacity of at least 1,000 people and feed as many homeless veterans and non-veterans for the week of July Fourth. Touching the lives of the less fortunate, especially those who fought for our freedom, would be my ultimate enjoyment on this 250th anniversary.”

VERNON ROGERS, *Benefits Assistant*

“Just the very thought of July Fourth—the celebration of the independence of the United States of America—fills me with deep excitement and anticipation. If money were no object, I would bring to life a long-held dream: gathering my favorite gospel musicians from around the world at the world headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for an unforgettable, day-long experience of praise. The air would be filled with powerful, soul-stirring music lifted in honor of God, uniting voices across cultures and nations. To crown the occasion, the celebration would be enriched with a vibrant array of cultural foods from around the globe, creating not just an event, but a joyful expression of faith, unity, and gratitude.”

GIFTY BEDIAKO, *Benefits Assistant*

“Since money is no object, I’d fly my family to Jamaica for the holiday. Not coach. Not first class. We’d have our own plane. The large vacation home would have our own personal chef and, of course, a pool with a waterfall. We’d spend Fourth of July eating, swimming, shopping (remember, unlimited funds), and enjoying a family game night.”

MONICA JOHNSON, *Specialist*

“My favorite Fourths of July have been spent watching fireworks over the water of a bay with my feet in the sand. If I could, I would fly in all my extended family to celebrate together.”

TARA MEAD, *Assistant Administrator*

“If money was no object, I’d fly my entire extended family to a private estate to recreate the Antiguan picnics of my youth. We’d spend the day eating traditional food, playing soccer, and engaging in ‘serious’ games of dominoes to the sound of live Caribbean music. It’s the perfect way to celebrate 250 years of the American dream by honoring the culture that raised us!”

ROCHELLE RUBIN, *Benefits Assistant*

“My perfect Fourth of July celebration would start with private flights for my husband’s and my family to a Caribbean beachfront vacation home. We would hire a masseuse that would give us all massages and a private chef to make us a custom Fourth of July meal. The perfect day would end with a Grammy-winning artist providing us with a live music concert on the beach which would be followed by a professionally created fireworks show.”

ZOILA HALL, *Benefits Assistant*

SHARP Corner

(Supplemental Healthcare Adventist Retirement Plan)

Want to receive your HRA reimbursements faster?

Setting up direct deposit will get your HRA reimbursements to you faster than receiving a check in the mail. It’s quick and easy!

Online:

- 1 | Log into your Alight Retiree Health Exchange portal at retiree.alight.com/adventistretirement.
- 2 | Navigate to the “Profile” section.
- 3 | Within the profile area, you will have the option to add or adjust your direct deposit instructions.
- 4 | To complete the update, you must provide your account number, routing number, and banking institution.

By phone: Contact YSA at 844-360-4714. Once your call has been securely validated, you can ask about any aspect of your HRA account, including updating direct deposit instructions.

REMINDERS

- To be eligible for the HRA benefit, you must maintain an enrollment through Alight in a medical supplement and/or a prescription drug plan without a gap in enrollment.
- Have you recently talked with a local agent or called an insurance company rather than Alight? You may want to check your eligibility status by calling Alight at 844-360-4714.
- To have your HRA funding process seamlessly each month, you can set up reimbursement for your Medicare Part B premium. You’ll need a statement from Social Security showing what your premium is and a claim form.

SHARP is here to serve you! Let us know if we can help in any way: SHARP@NADAdventist.org, or 443-391-7338.



Adventist Retirement

Seventh-day Adventist Church
NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

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You may have noticed that you received two issues of *Reflections* in May, one of which was a reprint of May 2025. Our printer wishes to apologize for the inconvenience and thank you for your understanding.

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Submit DVH claims to:

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