

# ECHOES

## THE PRINCE GEORGE'S PUBLIC SCHOOL RETIREES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

VOL. XXXVI No.3

January 2005

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As a new year rolls onto our calendar, I wish for each of you a healthy, happy, successful, peaceful and safe 2005!

While reflecting on the past year and looking forward to the New Year, I am much aware of the many contributions that many of you make to our organization and to our community. Thank you for making a difference. I especially thank the PGPSRA Executive Committee for the enthusiasm and work they contribute so willingly.

At our November meeting, we were made aware of:

- The Community Service Committee's efforts to assist students at five of our Title 1 Elementary Schools.
- Our upcoming canned food drive at our March 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting at the Forestville UMC.
- This year's scholarship donation by our organization of \$7000.
- The unanimous passing of the updated edition of our Bylaws.
- The Legislative Report informing us of current issues. See detailed article inside this newsletter.
- The new "All About Me" to be published in 2005.
- The new members of PGPSRA in attendance; and
- The fact that the ECHOES Newsletter should be delivered to you, from now on, within ten days from the time they arrive at the Southern Maryland Facility. (Special thanks to Congressman

Albert Wynn's Office for their assistance.)

Our speaker, Julie Neal of the Senior Health Insurance and Assistance Program was most informative as she updated us on the future stages of the Medicare Prescription Plan.

In addition, the talented singers from Roosevelt High School were most enjoyable, especially with their rendition of popular songs from the 50's.

Please take advantage of the next great program planned by our Program Chair Kitty Walker for January 26, 2005 at 11:00 am. We will be in the Board Room at the Prince George's County Board of Education. County Superintendent Dr. Andre Hornsby will bring us greetings and update us on issues regarding the School System. Light refreshments will be served. (Parking is available in back of building- rear door will be open for your convenience.)

Help us increase our membership by bringing another retiree. Remember, we can't spell **SUCCESS** without **U!!!**

President  
Addie L. Martin

\* \* \* \* \*

### LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Carl Lancaster informs us that our State and pension System is doing quite well, having shown a 16% investment return for the year, as of October. As most of you are aware, the former investment fund manager, Nathan Chapman, was convicted in August, of 23 counts of mishandling our monies, and he was sentenced on November 1<sup>st</sup>, to serve seven years in prison. Governor Ehrlich has appointed four new, highly qualified people to the Board of Trustees, and we have hopes that the Retirement and Pension System



will now function properly and efficiently. On November 11<sup>th</sup>, Addie Martin and I attended an MRTA Legislative meeting in Annapolis at which, Chip DiPaula, Maryland's Secretary of Budget and Management, stated that Governor Ehrlich has no intention at this time of borrowing from the Md. Retirement and Pension System to help balance the budget.

On October 19<sup>th</sup>, the Maryland Department of Legislative Services released its budget forecast for the upcoming fiscal year (FY 2006). For the next fiscal year 2005, revenues from the prior year are expected to be \$388 million LESS than ongoing operating expenditures; however, this shortfall is well below earlier predicted estimates of a billion dollars. This means that the state will have surplus funds that can be applied to the 2006 budget. There will be a deficit, but the economy is looking up!

The new report on the long-term outlook for Social Security from the Congressional Budget Office, predicts a strong financial basis through 2019. However, they suggest that moderate changes need to be made soon, in order to insure the continued solvency of Social Security in the distant future. Now that president Bush has been re-elected, his administration is speaking about creating private social security accounts— a very scary idea, considering the fluctuation of the stock market and the average person's knowledge of investments.

In the November 2, 2004 election Prince George's voters, by a margin of nearly nine to one, approved almost \$100 million in county spending for roads, libraries, the community college, firehouses and other public facilities.

The Maryland General Assembly will convene on January 12, 2005 and end on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

Our annual PGPSRA legislative Day in Annapolis has been scheduled for Wednesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>. Again, we are fortunate to have Delegate James Proctor sponsor this event. Hope you will plan to join us.

Jannette Wandrow  
Legislative Chairperson

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**ANNAPOLIS TRIP**  
**March 16, 2005**

Interested in attending the Wednesday, March 16, 2005 trip to the PGPSRA legislative Day in Annapolis? You may still join the group by

calling Jannette Wandrow at 301-390-7324. The Executive Committee voted to set aside funds for this trip, so there will be **NO CHARGE**.

We are most pleased that Delegate James Proctor has very graciously sponsored our PGPSRA members on this legislative day trip for the past four years and will do so again this March.

We will be leaving the PGCEA Office by motor coach at 8:45 a.m. and returning about 2:45 p.m. While in Annapolis, we will sit in on a legislative session, have lunch at the Lowe Office building, where we will be joined by several of our county representatives followed by a tour of the Governor's mansion. In lieu of the tour, you may choose to observe some of the committee hearings in progress, look around the State House on your own, or wander down some of the cobble stone streets of our state capital. (A street map will be provided.) We will depart for home at 2:15 p.m.

Remember, we are all lobbyists for retired teachers and senior citizens across Maryland, so come along and voice your concerns, or approvals, to our state legislators.

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**Joyce A. Cowan Honored**

We are extremely proud to announce that our very own Joyce Cowan was selected to receive induction into the Maryland Senior Citizens' Hall of Fame. This honor was bestowed upon her at the Annual Awards' Luncheon at Michael's of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Glen Burnie on October 28, 2004. During the ceremony, she was also one of the very few inductees that also received the prestigious Geri Award, because of her devoted and unwavering commitment in rendering service to her church, the Prince George's County Public Schools, her community and to her alma mater, Bowie State University.

Joyce is actively involved as a member of the 7<sup>th</sup> Councilmatic District Constituent Fund Committee. This is a group of faithful volunteers who work to help the homeless, hopeless and helpless inside the Beltway. Joyce and her husband, Leroy Cowan have been in charge of the Shoe Program, which provides shoes for children. She has also served as the chair of the Scholarship



Program that makes annual contributions to the Bowie State University Foundation in order to provide a scholarship to a senior high school student from the 7<sup>th</sup> District who will attend Bowie State University. She also spearheads the committee that plans and serves Thanksgiving dinners to seniors, and the "Adopt-A-Family" program at Christmas, which provides clothing and toys to families in need.

Joyce has been active in the Prince George's Retired Teachers Association and the Maryland Retired Teachers Association throughout her retirement years. She has served the local association with distinction as its hospitality chair, historian and president.

She also provides leadership for the Junior/Senior Ministry at her church. Activities include Bible studies, arts and crafts, exercises, field trips and care-giving to patients at nearby nursing homes.

Joyce has a loving family who is very supportive of her many endeavors.

Our sincere congratulations to Joyce upon receiving this award!!

\* \* \* \* \*

### **BITS AND PIECES**

Fred and Fern Novak, of Adelphi, experienced a wonderful 12 day cruise to Hawaii in October. They sailed past impressive volcanoes and spectacular waterfalls. The Novaks visited seven islands, and were impressed by the Pearl Harbor Memorial and the Shriner Hospital for Children in Honolulu, along with the quaint villages and interesting history of Hawaii.

Dr. Alan Chotiner and Mr. Frank Tracy, both of College Park, were honorees at the 50<sup>th</sup> year celebration of High Point High School in Beltsville, last October. Dr. Chotiner was the first principal of the school from 1954 until 1973, leading High Point through integration and a population boom that saw the school grow to almost 3000 students. Mr. Tracy was the second principal from 1973 until 1988, as the school became culturally diverse and continued to remain strong academically. We congratulate both of these men on their lasting accomplishments!

James E. (Jim) Smith, who retired from Robert Goddard Middle School in 1983, and Nancy Parker Smith, who retired as Head Start Education Specialist in 1998, have relocated to Solomons Island, MD. The Smiths have built a new home on Back Creek, and are enjoying fishing, boating, gardening, and cooking "in the land of pleasant living". Jim serves on the Board of Directors of SMTCCAC, INC, while Nancy is involved as a part-time Program Director of a Youth Center in Lusby. The Smiths have a daughter living and working in Washington, D.C., and a son and daughter-in-law, whose wedding they attended in Sedona, AZ, and now frequently go to visit in South Orange, N.J. Jim and Nancy also enjoyed a trip to Las Vegas earlier last year.

Carol Shepherd, of District Heights, retired as a physical education teacher from Benjamin Stoddard Middle School in 2000. She has volunteered for the past four years at the Sports and Learning Complex in Landover, as well as, served as a Club Level Customer Service Representative for the Washington Redskins. Carol enjoyed a 14day Panama Cruise last year. She has two grown daughters and one grandson.

Ferdinand (Ferd) Cardano retired in 1980, as principal of Kenmore Elementary. Following his retirement, he moved to Debary, FL, where he enjoys playing golf and tennis, visiting friends around the country, and woodworking. He has traveled to all corners of the U.S.A., as well as, to Italy and France, and taken numerous cruises. Ferd not only looks forward to the Prince George's Retirees' Florida Reunions each year, he has a hand in planning them! Three FL hurricanes last fall caused extensive flooding, but no serious damage to Ferd's property. Fortunately, he had a generator, or he would have been without electricity for quite a period. Ferd has four children, two of whom are teachers in DE and NJ; another is a pastry chef in Baltimore, and one is a scout for the MN Vikings. He also has four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Yvonne Felton, of Upper Marlboro, retired in 2003, as a Regional Special Education Specialist at the Ager Road Office. She didn't remain away from the school atmosphere for long, though, as



she is currently enrolled as a student at the Howard University School of Divinity. Yvonne and her husband celebrated their 45<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in December. They enjoyed a cruise to Bermuda in October 2003, and another cruise to several Caribbean Islands in June 2004.

Betty Moore retired from Oakcrest Elementary in 1984, and has since moved to Port Orange, FL. There, she enjoys the theater, playing cards, and Bingo. Betty also maintains contact with several other Prince George's retirees, who have moved to FL. She recently cruised the Caribbean to attend a friend's wedding that was held on a lovely remote island. Betty has four grandchildren, and is fortunate to have all but one of her children living nearby.

Doris Edwards, of Upper Marlboro, was honored in the fall, when she was named "Ms. North Carolina Central University" for her extensive fund-raising work at the college. Doris was instrumental in raising \$15,000 in scholarship money from her N.C.C. U. Washington, D.C. Chapter. She received an Eagle Trophy in recognition of her contribution, during the halftime celebration of the fall Homecoming Weekend football game. (Congratulations!)

Koula Mechelis retired as a Head Start Speech Therapist in 2001. She continues to live in Kensington, MD, where she works as a substitute in the Montgomery County School system, helps her husband with his many businesses, and volunteers with youth at her church. Koula and her husband are also remodeling their house in Greece (their native country) where they plan to retire eventually. They have one daughter, Maria. The Mechelis' attended the Olympic Games in Greece last summer - - - a truly unforgettable experience. Koula was impressed by the wonderful job Greece did, showing the world its wonderful heritage that has inspired democracy around the globe. The Mechelis' continue to travel to Greece frequently, and are also, currently planning a trip to China.

James (Jim) Schrodts taught music for 40 years, and served as County Supervisor of Music before retiring and moving to Fl. There, he continued to teach music for 20 more years at Seminole Community College, and to do private tutoring until he was 80 years old. Jim has played in, and

directed, numerous bands over the years that have performed at the Maryland Center for the Arts (Annapolis), and in Washington, D.C. at the National Gallery, National Theater, area colleges, and three Presidential Inaugural Balls. At age 89, Jim still enjoys playing his grand piano every day at the Chambrel Retirement Home in Longwood, FL, where he resides. He also looks forward to the yearly Florida Luncheon of Prince George's Retirees. Sadly, Jim has lost two wives over the years, but he has a fine family and step-family that includes 14 great-grandchildren.

\*\*\*To contribute to this column,  
Contact: Jannette Wundrow  
1007 Packton Lane, Bowie, MD. 20716  
Or: [dwundrow@comcast.net](mailto:dwendrow@comcast.net)

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### *SPRING LUNCHEONS*

Please make your reservations on time for our Spring Luncheons:

1. Date: March 23, 2005  
Time: 11:00 am  
Place: Forestville United Methodist Church  
Cost: \$ 14.00
2. Date: May 25, 2005  
Time: 11:00 am  
Place: Colony South  
Cost: \$21.00

Mail all reservations and money to:  
Dr. Edward N. Vest  
7908 Klovstad Drive  
Fort Washington, Maryland 20744-1729

#### **REMINDER:**

Our meetings follow the policy for cancellation due to inclement weather. Listen to you radio and/or TV for announcements. Delayed opening will mean our meeting will go on as scheduled.



## Synopsis of General Membership Meeting Minutes for November 17, 2004

The following highlights of the November meeting were:

- Treasurer's Report showed a Checking Account Balance of \$23952.40; a Savings Account Balance of \$6863.25 and Total Assets were \$30815.65.
- Constitution & Bylaws now include Articles of Incorporation and the addition of the appropriate legal vernacular. The membership voted to accept the Bylaws with a unanimous show of hands.
- Community Service Committee has selected 5 Title 1 Schools to assist with special requests of uniforms, winter coats and school supplies for children.
- Education & Protective Services have completed the first draft of the new "All About Me". The completed version should be available to all members in 2005.
- Legislative Report – See detailed article inside this newsletter.
- MRTA Regional Coordinator Elizabeth Doyle encouraged the group to continue to recruit new members. She also announced upcoming MRTA events. (\*Note- the new date and site for the **MRTA Annual Business Meeting has been changed to Tuesday, May 17, 2005 at Michael's Eighth Avenue in Glen Burnie.**) The Convention will be held in September, the day after Labor Day, in Ocean City.
- Membership reported 86 new members since March 1, 2004. Many others, who have not renewed, will receive a 3rd reminder.
- President Addie Martin discussed the response she had received from Dr. Nancy Grasmick, the State Superintendent, regarding her letter of concern to the Maryland State Department of Education addressing the length of time and process retirees have to complete, in order to renew their teaching certificate. All retirees who were interested in this process were asked to please see her (Addie Martin) after the meeting.

- Scholarship Committee for our organization will be giving \$7000 in scholarships this year.
- Speaker Julie Neal from SHIP (The Senior Health Insurance and Assistance Program) discussed the (Medicare Act) first phase – the discount prescription card and upcoming second phase - benefit program, commonly referred to as Medicare, Part D. Her presentation raised many concerns and questions. She will be returning in 2005. (Hopefully, this spring.)
- Joyce Cowan was congratulated for being inducted into the Maryland Senior Citizens' Hall of Fame and for receiving the Geri Award.
- The cash door prize was won by Edward Clements and a skin care basket was won by Margaret Morgan.

\* \* \* \* \*

### *Hands of Friendship*

Phyllis Schaper

Beautiful hands of friendship  
Are a treasure to possess.  
Their magnificence and their splendor  
Brings charm that's limitless.

Willing are they to perform  
The task that need to be done;  
Dependable, trustworthy, and loyal  
From dawn till set of sun.

Giving a helping hand to all  
Whom they may assist each day,  
Thoughtful, courteous, and understanding  
As their glow drives tears away

Ready to work and pray for good,  
To have things at their best;  
Cheerful while going that second mile,  
Prepared to stand the test.

Quite busy but efficient are they  
As they meet what life demands,  
For accomplishment and satisfaction  
Are wrought by competent hands.



## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

We had 64 members present at our November meeting. This included three new members.

There are just over 70 members who did not renew their membership this year. They will be receiving letters encouraging them to rejoin.

Door prize winners were:

Ed Clements - Cash

Margaret Morgan - Basket of skin care products.

We hope to see you in January, 2005 in Upper Marlboro.

### Deceased Members

• Betty J. Davis	10-01-04
• Agnes B. Ellison	09-30-04
• Charlotte M. Gustafson	?
• Pauline L. Leedy	10-03-04
• Ava L. McKenney	09-19-04
• Nell Myers	10-30-04
• Dr. Victor Rice	10-21-04
• Conrad M. Seeboth	11-16-04

### Non-Members

Martha I. Bowie	10-02-04
Audrey V. Brady	11-08-04
Phyllis M. Cercone	10-04-04
Lois M. Clarke	10-14-04
Jean E. Fentress	10-23-04
Evleen Green	10-13-04
Beverly Harrison	10-30-04
Gladys A. Johnson	10-15-04
Marion E. McCaw	10-17-04
Milton McLeod	10-31-04
Robert J. Opachko	09-03-04
Escolastica R. Pimentil	09-28-04
Jeannette Poorbaugh	11-07-04
David E. Romines	10-27-04
Eunice S. Sandhaus	09-08-04
Hurbert L. Steward, Sr.	09-15-04
Catherine Thrift	08-27-04
Wilbert Turman	10-03-04

Membership Co-Chairs  
Jane Jones and Pat Tompkins

## THE OLD AND THE NEW

Let this New Year be the beginning of a new life in each of us wherein "old things are passed away." Not the old thoughts, of course, which are still true: but those that remain to nurse and encourage our prejudices. Not the old emotions that are filled with kindness: but all anger and bitter feeling and railing. Not the old reverence for the authority of God: but all fears born of our unworthy service apart from him.

Not the old gracious ministries that blessed mankind: but the harsh words, the suspicious looks, the clenched hands, and the unwilling feet. Not the old habits that keep us in the straight way: but the new fashions that make us unmindful of those things which hold life together in the unity of good manners. Not the old friends who grow more beloved each year because their worth is better appreciated: but the new associations made from mercenary motives.

Let all blessed old things stay, but let the clutter of our heads and hearts be removed, that new inspirations and new affections may come in to gladden our lives.

CHESTER BURGE EMERSON

*HAVE A SPECTACULAR AND A  
PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!!!!!!*





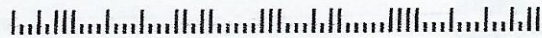
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RETIREES ASSOCIATION

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**MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

January 26, 2005  
11:00 a.m.

Board of Education Board Room  
Light Refreshments (No Charge)  
"Please Join Us"

If inclement weather, our meetings follow the school system policy of cancellation. Delayed opening will mean our meeting will go on as scheduled

**SPRING LUNCHEONS**

March 23, 2005  
11:00 a.m.

Forestville United Methodist  
Church  
Cost - \$14.00

May 25, 2005  
11:00 a.m.  
Colony South  
Cost - \$21.00