



# ECHOES

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

Volume XXXXII No. 3

January 2009

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are at a very special time of the year. In schools throughout the land, children grow excited at the prospect of what is to come. There are some among us, however, who are not so excited as they read or hear daily news about the country's worsening economic condition.

I know that it may be difficult, but let me suggest that we follow the lead of the children. Let's be excited about living in a country where we can dare to believe that we can accomplish whatever we set our minds to. What a great time to give the gift of a smile! This is indeed a special time when the holiday, regardless of how we celebrate it, engenders feelings that transcend any boundaries of religion, and unites us all in a common feeling of affection for each other.

Please allow me take this opportunity to thank all of the members who attended the November General Membership Luncheon. We were entertained by the Bowie High School String Quintet. They conducted themselves in a manner which reflects well on the students of our public schools.

Finally, the United Seniors of Maryland will hold its annual State Rally on January 27, 2009. Plan to attend and get first-hand information that impacts the lives of senior citizens. To register, call me at 301.262.3828.

Happy Holidays!

Jennie Jones

### LEGISLATIVE REPORT

The Maryland General Assembly convenes on January 14, 2009, and concludes on April 13<sup>th</sup>. The two priorities of the MRSPA Legislative Committee this coming General Assembly session are to promote the retirement/pension system change from corridor funding to the full funding method, and to object strongly and vocally against any shifting of the funding of the retirement/pension system from the state to the counties. It is important that you as individuals speak out against these issues when they come before the General Assembly. It will be especially helpful if you can speak directly to any legislator whom you know personally. When the issues arise, I can give you a call or send you a notice by the Listserve that Dr. Vest maintains to contact your legislators directly and to ask for a vote pro or con on the topic. Enclosed in this newsletter is an individual page telling how to contact your legislators? We thank you for your help this legislative session.

The annual MRSPA Legislative Workshop was held in Annapolis in November. Several representatives from the retirement/pension system, along with State Treasurer Nancy Kopp, Senator James Robey, and House speaker Michael Busch, spoke to the group about our state's financial situation. We were, again, reassured that our pensions are safe; however, the overall system funds have decreased. Governor O'Malley met throughout October with Public works Board and heads of all agencies in Maryland government to discuss where cuts can be made in the budget. The state budget funds continue to fall, due to declining



sales and property taxes.

The United Seniors of Maryland (USM) will be holding their annual Legislative Rally in Annapolis on January 27<sup>th</sup>. This is an all day meeting, during which Governor O'Malley, Senator Mike Miller, Delegate Michael Busch, Laura Feldman from the Social Security office, and Secretary Gloria Lawlah from the Department of Aging will speak. Box lunches are provided. MRSPA picks up the cost for members who attend. You may contact our PGPSRA President Jennie Jones for tickets. You will find it a very informative day.

We are planning to go to Annapolis by coach bus for PGPSRA Legislative Day on March 18<sup>th</sup>. We will sit in on short sessions of both the House and Senate and visit the Governor's Mansion. All of our Prince George's legislators will be invited to join us for an informal sandwich/cookie lunch and to speak briefly to our members in attendance. There is no charge for this trip. We will leave PGCEA office at 8:45 a.m. and return about 2:30 p.m. You will find it a very interesting day. For reservations, please contact me (Jannette Wundrow) at 301.390.7324.

Our numbers are growing! This is the first year that there are more senior citizens in Maryland than students in our public schools.

Jannette Wundrow, Legislative Chair

#### HELP WANTED

- Recruiters for newly retired teachers
- Chairperson for Education & Protective Services Committee
- New ideas for our Association

Contact President Jennie Jones 301.262.3828

## TREASURER'S REPORT

The treasurer's report for November is as follows:

### Balance as of November 1, 2008

Checking Account	\$23,608.72
Savings Account	3,009.51
Receipts	2,258.04
Expenditures	2,657.69

### Balance as of November 30, 2008

Checking Account	\$23,209.07
Savings Account	3,009.51
Total Assets	\$26,218.58

E. Vest, Treasurer

## TRAVELING WITH CHARLIE

The December trip to the Allenberry Theater in Boiling Springs, PA, was cancelled because not enough people signed up. I will bring to the January meeting proposals for a couple of trips during the spring. If you have trip destinations in which you are interested, call Charles Hudson at 301.572.9778.

Charles Hudson, Trip Coordinator

#### REMINDER

PGPSRA meetings follow the school system policy for cancellation due to inclement weather. Listen to your radio or TV for announcements. A delayed opening means that the meeting will go on as scheduled.



## COMMUNITY SERVICE

The members of the Community Service Committee believe that much has been given to them in so many ways throughout their lives and therefore feel an obligation to serve others who have a need.

Towards that end, during the month of January we will collect school supplies, toiletries, and small articles of clothing for Shepherd's Cove Homeless Shelter in District Heights and Prince George's Family Care Center in Hyattsville.

We are asking for **donations** of the following items at the **January** meeting: notebooks, tablets, notebook paper, book bags, pens, pencils and other items considered school supplies. We are also asking for deodorant, soap, soap holders, toothbrushes and holders, toothpaste, lotion, underwear for elementary age children, brushes, washcloths, pocket tissue, and shampoo. All items should be of individual size for more convenient handling and storing. Monetary contributions are accepted as well. We greatly appreciate your support of these projects, for teamwork divides the effort and multiplies the benefit.

Gretel James, Community Service Member

### *In Remembrance*

*Dorothy Pelling  
At the age of 103  
Teacher of Music  
Maryland Park and Suitland High  
Schools*

## SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Prince George's County Retirees Association Scholarship Committee is one of the ten members of the Prince George's Scholarship fund, Inc. As Scholarship Chair, I serve as a member of the Prince George's Scholarship Fund, Inc. The members of the Fund, Inc. distribute scholarship applications and receive the completed forms, interview applicants, determine the scholarship recipients, and plan the awards ceremony.

The Prince George's Scholarship Fund, Inc. has set dates related to awarding of scholarships in May 2009. Scholarship applications will be delivered to county high schools during the week of January 5-9, 2009, with February 27<sup>th</sup> being the deadline for returning applications. Our association members can encourage high school seniors to apply. We will award at least five \$2000 scholarships to persons entering the teaching profession or to persons completing degrees in education.

It is still the goal of our Scholarship Committee to award two additional \$2000 scholarships. We are getting there - \$666 from contributions and two raffles - but we have time. Remember the levels of donation are as follows:

- Silver Contributors \$25 - \$49
- Gold Contributors \$50 - \$99
- Platinum Contributors \$100 +

Remember that all contributions will be accepted, no matter what the size. Special thanks to all who have contributed.

Checks should be made payable to PGPSRA, with a notation **Scholarship**, and mailed to Alveta S. Jones, 3113 Amador Drive, Landover, MD 20785. Questions/concerns, call me at 301.772.5594.



Thanks for your contributions and interest.

Alveta S. Jones, Scholarship Chairperson

### **BITS AND PIECES**

Belated birthday wishes to Julia Derry of Riverdale, a very active, involved senior, on the November celebration of her 96<sup>th</sup> birthday!

Happy 90<sup>th</sup> birthday wishes to Anita Yates of Richmond, VA, this month (January)!

Happy February birthday wishes to Philip Robinson of Mitchellville, MD, who will be 94 years old!

Happy February birthday wishes to Minnie Cypert of Florence, Alabama, who will be turning 92!

Donald Smith, who retired as supervisor of Music for county schools, recently conducted his thirtieth production as music director of Bowie Whitmarsh Theater, with the presentation of "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum". Don has also been involved as musical director at Burn Brae Dinner Theater and Dutch Apple Limelight Dinner Theater. He has been a conductor at the Kennedy Center and in several other venues. When Don is here in Maryland, he serves as church organist for a church in York, PA. He and his wife, Loret, spend the winters in Arizona, where he plays for and conducts a vocal ensemble.

Dianne Braddock of Laurel, MD, retired in 2004 as principal of Hillcrest Heights Elementary. Since then she has served as a mentor for the Prince George's County Resident Teacher Program. Dianne has also enjoyed travel to Mexico and other places.

Pam Enger, who retired from Concord Elementary, now lives with her husband on a large cattle farm in Ellsworth, Wisconsin. She spent a few weeks in October visiting with her mother and friends in our area.

To contribute to BITS AND PIECES, contact Jannette Wundrow, 1007 Packton Lane, Bowie, MD 20716 or [jannetewundrow@comcast.com](mailto:jannetewundrow@comcast.com).

### **EDUCATION & PROTECTIVE SERVICES**

#### **Burglar Alert When Traveling by Car**

Tourists' cars are prime break-in targets. Thieves know they are likely to hold valuables such as luggage and cameras. Out-of-state license plates, driving a rental car, having visible boxes or bags that could contain valuables are items thieves watch for. Even a map left on the seat makes it look like a tourist.

Empty your car of valuables when you park it. If you have out-of-state license plates, park in a garage or other secure location. Leave local newspapers and store packaging in the car – in plain sight – to make it appear more "local". The thief knows that when you are traveling you often don't take the time to report a burglary.

Another tip: Don't leave a message on your answering machine saying you are away from home.

(From the *E & PS Communicator*)

**Wishing you safe, happy  
traveling during the holiday  
season!**



**MARYLAND RETIRED SCHOOL  
PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION  
Pertinent Information**

To access the MRSPA website and discover what's happening in the organization, click on the Internet Explorer, or Yahoo, then type in [www.mrspa.org](http://www.mrspa.org) . On the left side of the page will be many heading, from which you may choose to click on and find up to date information about all aspects of MRSPA.

**Finding Your Local Legislators**

Click on Internet Explorer, or Yahoo, then type in <http://mdelect.net/> . Look halfway down the page to find this language "Find Your Federal and State Officials". Fill in your address in the address blank. Click on "Find Elected Officials". The listing of your local legislators will appear on the left side of the page.

**Contacting Your Legislators**

1. When calling your legislator in Annapolis, dial toll free: 301.970.5400 or 410.946.5400, and ask to be connected to the office of your legislator.
2. When e-mailing your delegate, type in your delegate's name with a period separating the first and last name (Michael.busch) and add [@house.state.md.us](mailto:@house.state.md.us) (\*the final e-mail address would then read Michael.busch@house.state.md.us) OR when e-mailing your senator, type in your senator's name with a period separating the first and last name (george.edwards) and add [@senate.state.md.us](mailto:@senate.state.md.us) (\*The final e-mail address would read [george.edwards@senate.state.md.us](mailto:george.edwards@senate.state.md.us)).

3. When hand-writing your legislator, you would need to call the Annapolis toll-free number to ask for his/her specific building and room number, though the ending would be Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991.

Keep abreast of what's happening in your organization and in Annapolis!

**MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

The MRSPA Membership Committee has set a goal of 15,000 members by March 1, 2009. Each local association is asked to strive for a net increase of 7%. To assist in this effort, we are urging each PGPSRA member to encourage nonmembers, former colleagues, and prospective retirees to join our organization for their benefit as well as ours. New members bring new ideas, new talents, and new voices of advocacy for our interests in Annapolis and elsewhere. Members do make a difference.

If you have names for enrollment or comments or questions relating to membership, feel free to contact Martha Franklin at 301.849.9296 or at [bookwormy@yahoo.com](mailto:bookwormy@yahoo.com) .

**NECROLOGY**

Florence E. Christian	7-22-08
Helen K. Hall	9-05-08
Joseph McFadden	9-10-08
James F. Barrett	9-14-08
Robert Holloway	
Mary Agnes Law	
Lillian Holland	
Kathleen S. Martin	10-13-08
(Wife of John T. Martin)	



## THE HEALTH CORNER

### Global Warming Threatens Your Health

THE World Health Organization estimates that 150,000 deaths annually, mostly in Africa and Asia, are caused by climate change – primarily related to increases in the planet's surface temperature (commonly known as global warming).

Health implications are also starting in the U.S.:

- Lung Diseases. An increase in ground-level ozone, a gas that irritates the airways increases the risk for asthma and other lung diseases.
- Hay Fever and Mold. The increase in the atmospheric gas carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) can stimulate pollen-producing plants to produce more pollen, which exacerbates hay fever as well as asthma. It also increases the growth of molds which attach to pollutants in the atmosphere and more readily enters the lungs.
- Heatstroke. We are seeing more heat waves nationally. Older adults don't sweat as much, so they are less able to dissipate heat.
- Mosquito-borne Diseases. Malaria, dengue fever (a mosquito-borne infectious disease that causes severe joint pain, headache, fever and rash) and West Nile Virus are occurring around the world.
- Water-borne Infections. With global warming, extreme floods and storms are more likely to occur. While drowning and water damage are concerns, water quality is the bigger issue. Many metropolitan areas have sewage systems that can't handle severe downpours – water from

sewers can overflow into clean water supplies.

(From the *E & PS Communicator*, Oct. 2008)

### DATES TO REMEMBER

#### January 14, 2009

- PGPSRA Executive Committee / Board Meeting – PGCEA Bldg.
- Maryland General Assembly convenes – Annapolis

#### January 15, 2009

- Martin Luther King Day - MRSPA offices closed

#### January 20, 2009

- January lunch registrations due (to Dr. Vest)

#### January 27, 2009

- United Seniors of Maryland (USM) Rally – St. John's College, Annapolis

#### January 28, 2009

- PGPSRA General Meeting & Lunch – PGCEA Building

#### February 1, 2009

- Deadline for March issue of *Echoes* [ahutchinson00@hotmail.com](mailto:ahutchinson00@hotmail.com)

**Social Security Cola  
Effective January 2009  
5.8%**





## PGPSRA MEETING / LUNCHEON

DATE: January 28, 2009  
TIME: 11:00 a.m. - meeting  
12:00 - lunch  
1:00 - program  
PLACE: PGCEA Building  
COST: \$10.00 per person  
MENU: Boxed lunch

Entertainment will be provided by the Iverson Mall Walkers and Line Dancers.

Please send your check, payable to PGPSRA, for the appropriate amount to Dr. Edward Vest, Treasurer; 7908 Klovstad Drive, Fort Washington, Maryland 20744-1729.

The deadline for reservations is January 20, 2009.

### *Irish Retirement Blessing*

May you always have work for  
your hands to do.  
May your pockets hold always a  
coin or two.  
May your sun shine bright on  
your windowpane.  
May the rainbow be certain to  
follow the rain.  
May the hand of a friend always  
be near you.  
And may God fill your heart with  
gladness to cheer you.

*Happy New Year!*

### RESERVATION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Lunches Ordered: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Guests: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**Prince George's Public School  
Retirees Association**

Dr. Edward N. Vest  
7908 Klovstad Drive  
Fort Washington, MD 20744

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**MEMBERSHIP MEETING &  
LUNCHEON**

January 28, 2009  
PGCEA Building  
11:00 a.m. - Business Meeting  
12:00 - Luncheon

Reservations Due -- Jan. 20<sup>th</sup>

**2009**

Do more than belong, participate.

Do more than care, help.