

ECHOES

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S PUBLIC SCHOOL RETIREES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

VOL. XXXVII No. 4

March 2005

President's Message

Please take a moment and think about why you joined PGPSRA. Chances are you wanted to keep in touch with what's going on in Annapolis and on the Hill that was of interest to you. Perhaps this would be a great opportunity to see former colleagues and meet new friends. As for me, I was impressed with how active our association and MRTA are in protecting our pension and our benefits in the area of healthcare. I am also ecstatic about the bi-monthly newsletter, ECHOES; our excellent resource "All About Me", our scholarship donations and the community service provided by our members. All this makes me extremely proud to belong to an organization that gives back to the community and charges only \$10 a year for local dues!

But it wasn't until I joined the Executive Committee in 2002 that I fully appreciated our organization's efforts to make sure our voices are heard. I was also awed by the hard work displayed by the committee members of our organization and MRTA, and the many devoted PGPSRA members who are still providing service to the profession of education.

One of these devoted members, Mrs. Ellen B. Smith of Upper Marlboro, MD probably was retiring when most of us had just begun teaching!! This long time member of our organization has been a resident of Prince George's County for 100 years (her whole life) and became a centenarian on March 5, 2005!! A special celebration was held in her honor on the Saturday of her birthday. She was presented a certificate from PGPSRA for her many years of service in education.

If you know of someone who is thinking about joining, but can't seem to make up his/her mind, please let them know of the benefits and how easy it is to join. Just have them give our Membership Chair, Jane Jones a call (301-559-8533).

Our latest service for PGPSRA members is a list-serve established by our treasurer, Dr. Edward Vest. Any member can be added by sending his/her e-mail to drvest@prodigy.net. The listserve will only be used for

official PGPSRA business and it will never be shared with any persons or organizations.

At our last General Meeting on January 26, 2005 at the Board of Education, Superintendent Dr. Andre Hornsby gave us a warm welcome and shared with us the challenges facing the school system. He also shared with us ways we can be of assistance and positions that will be available in the fall that may be of interest to retirees.

To learn more about these positions and what's going on in our organization, please come out and join us at our next Membership Meeting at Forestville United Methodist Church on March 23, 2005 at 11:00 a.m. A form is enclosed to complete for this particular luncheon meeting. I look forward to seeing you.

Addie L. Martin
President

INCORPORATION UPDATE

Things are progressing, albeit slowly. As papers were being prepared by our lawyer, our purposes and goals alerted him to the fact that the category of 501(c)(4) would be more appropriate than the category originally planned. This was brought to the attention of the membership at our meeting on January 26th. After some discussion and explanation, the group voted in favor of the 501(c)(4) category.

For the former category that we were considering, it was noted by our lawyer that the IRS disfavors any substantial lobbying activities. Although we do not do any substantial lobbying activities, we do like the privilege of being able to do so if it was felt necessary. With the 501(c)(4) category, the organization has a little more latitude and can promote the social wellbeing of its members. It permits the organization to perform civic functions considered charitable in nature, such as our scholarship program. Since the IRS is more inclined to grant a 501(c)(4) status, and since this category permits us to undertake some lobbying activities, it was felt to be a wise change. The new category, 501(c)(4), includes that the Association will be incorporated as a not-for-profit entity.

Ginger Stuff
Committee Member

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

The Maryland General Assembly convened January 12th, for a 90 day session, that ends April 11, 2005. However, it began on a contentious note. Governor Ehrlich called a special session of the Legislators two days after Christmas to pass a measure to take funds from the state budget to offset the extremely high increase in this year's malpractice insurance of 33% for doctors. Because he was not pleased with the General Assembly's bill, written instead, to tax HMO's by 2%, in order to limit the cost increase of doctors' malpractice insurance to 5%, the Governor vetoed the bill. However, the General Assembly over-rode that veto. The legislators also over-rode four other bills that Governor Ehrlich had vetoed, including a pilot program in two areas of the state to try new ways to deliver quality health care to dully eligible seniors (those receiving both Medicaid and Medicare).

Now, we must watch and speak out on President Bush's plan to privatize a portion of our individual social security accounts - - - a very risky idea.

The United Seniors of Maryland state-wide Legislative Rally was held in Annapolis at St. John's College on January 26th; attending from PGPSRA were Addie Martin, Louise Henson, Kitty Walker, Pat McKee, and myself. Governor Ehrlich addressed the assembly to tell us that his main focus this session will be on children. Several senior programs that have been in place in the state will be cut by 12%, and some may be eliminated in the coming year. Issues of concern to seniors, including prescription drugs and long term care (in your home, or a facility) were discussed with our legislators. Budget cuts were a concerned focus of all of our county delegation. Each stressed that as a group, we seniors have power, so we must let our representatives know how we feel on issues of importance to us with phone calls, e-mails, and letters. (*to reach any Delegate in Annapolis by e-mail, type in the person's first and last name in small case letters with a base-line in between (ie:joanne_benson) and add @house.state.md.us *to reach a Senator, after the first and last names in small case letters, with a base line in between(ie: Ulysses_currie) add @senate.state.md.us

The Maryland Retired Teachers Association has submitted two bills this session. The House Bill will be sponsored by Delegate Mary Conroy (Prince George's District 23, and the Senate Bill by Senator Stone (Baltimore's District 6). The first bill would prevent local boards of education from eliminating retiree health benefits, which could happen with the increasing costs of retiree benefits. The second bill would require total service in MD. to be counted toward retiree health

benefits, as it is counted toward retirement - - - not as some counties do now, counting only the last years before your retirement that you spend in their county.

Delegate Anthony Brown, of District 25, is currently serving in Iraq with his National Guard Unit.

Our PGPSRA Legislative trip to Annapolis is planned for Wednesday, March 16, 2005. This is an opportunity for you to observe and speak with our county legislators.

Jannette Wundrow, Legislative Chair

TELEPHONE SCAM SECURITY ALERT

The following information was received by Fred Novak concerning a telephone scam. He is sharing this information with all Echoes readers.

We hope you will pass this on to everyone you know.

"I received a telephone call last evening from an individual identifying himself as an AT&T Service Technician who was conducting a test on telephone lines. He stated that to complete the test, I should touch nine (9), zero (0), the pound sign (#), and then hang up.

Luckily, I was suspicious and refused to follow his instruction.

Upon contacting the telephone company, I was informed that by pushing 90#, you give the requesting individual full access to your telephone line, which enables them to place long distance calls billed to your home phone number.

I was further informed that this scam has been originating from many local jails/prisons. I have also verified this information with UCB Telecom, Pacific Bell, MCI, Bell Atlantic and GTE.

**PLEASE BEWARE – DO NOT PRESS
90# for ANYONE.**

We thank Fred for sharing this very important information with us



BITS AND PIECES - March 2005

Bernice Holley Crisp retired from William Wirt Junior High School in 1973. She is one of our 95 year-old retirees! Bernice has one child, Charles, with whom she lives at his house in Baltimore, and sometimes on a boat in the Inner Harbor, and sometimes at a lake-house in Littleton, N.C.! She has two grandchildren. After retirement, Bernice worked for several years at a passive-exercise figure improvement salon. She also spent an interesting week in Paris, chaperoning her two teenaged grandchildren. Each summer she visits her nephew in Hampton, VA. Presently, Bernice spends her time fishing, watching TV, doing crafts, and "running the highway"! We wish her continued longevity!

Gail Matthews retired in 1989, as librarian from both John Carroll and Oakcrest Elementary Schools. Shortly afterward, she began a new job with ERIC (Educational Research Information Center) the database of the Department of Education, as Acquisitions Librarian. Six years later, Gail really retired, and in 1997, she and her husband moved to Big Valley, PA, to live near their youngest daughter. Once there, Gail has been trying to catch up on 30 years of reading and keep up with the 13 grandchildren. She and her husband have also enjoyed travels to Australia, New Zealand, England, Scotland, and the Canadian Rockies.

Janelle Dietrich, of Bowie, retired from Frederick Douglas High School in 2001. She had worked in several schools for 30 years as a business teacher, and served as a work-study coordinator her last year of teaching. Janelle has always enjoyed traveling, and by the end of 2004, she had visited all seven continents, culminating with a three-week long trip to Antarctica. Janelle reported that this was such an awe-inspiring, beautiful, uncharted territory, of which less than 1 percent of the world's population has seen. The BOWIE BLADE, January 13th edition, documented Janelle's trip in story and pictures. What a memorable experience!

Harry Banks, of Columbia, MD, retired in 2004 from the Robert Goddard French Immersion Program. However, Harry continues his work as an educator, teaching evening classes in Russian at Howard Community College in Columbia, and at Rehoboth Beach, DE. In between, he is taking a language class himself, in Italian. Harry also loves playing softball in the Senior Leagues. He is planning to visit Italy, where he has a navy nephew, in Naples. Harry and his wife, Maud, are enjoying his first year of retirement, and find special pleasure when the Grandtwins come to visit them at the beach.

Ron and Pat Robeson are both county retirees, living in Odenton, MD. Ron retired in 1993 from Bowie High School, and Pat in 1998 from Beltsville Academic Center. Since retirement, though, they have both continued to work in the academic field. Ron has been the technology coordinator and computer teacher at St. Pius X Regional School in Bowie for the past 12 years, while Pat has been the teacher-in-residence with the Maryland Geographic Alliance, based at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. Both of the Robesons are very involved in the National Council for the Social Studies. They served as Local Arrangements Co-chairs at the 2004 Convention, held in Baltimore, and have accepted this position for the 2006 meeting to be held at the Washington Convention Center. (You also may volunteer for this conference by contacting Ron or Pat at ronnpatr@aol.com) The Robesons have been married for 40 years, and have two children and three grandchildren, all of whom live within walking distance of them.

Rick and Sue Conway, of Bowie, Bill Haworth, also of Bowie, Bill Jarmon, of Cambridge, MD, Georgia Woodruff, of Mitchellville, and Don Zimmerman, of Brandywine, were also volunteers at the National Council for the Social Studies 2004 Convention in Baltimore last November.

Pat Tompkins retired in 2004 from Parkdale High School. She and her husband, Charles, a Howard County retired teacher, live in Greenbelt. They took time last summer to enjoy events with family, which includes two young granddaughters in Bowie and a grandson at Penn State, and have now begun some much-needed household clean-up/fix-up projects. Pat has graciously assumed the position of Membership Co-chair with PGPSRA. The Tompkins are excitedly planning a trip to Japan in April, where they are looking forward to visiting with former students, old friends, and Pat's penpal of 50+ years.

Judith "J" Davis was elected Chair of the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments in January. This is a regional organization (COG) representing 19 jurisdictions (11 municipalities, 7 counties, and the District of Columbia). It is quite an honor for the Mayor of Greenbelt to be chosen for this position. (Congratulations, J!)

Dixie Quinn retired from DuVal High School in 1989. She has since moved to Ellicott City, where she enjoys volunteer work at the Christian Thrift Shop.

Alice Hutchinson, of Lanham, retired from Hyattsville Middle School in 1998. In January, she traveled with a group from Prince George's Community College to

Synopsis of Minutes for the January 26, 2005 Meeting

Cancun, Mexico, where they toured the ancient Mayan Ruins at Chichen Itza and Mexico's beautiful ecological park at Xcaret. The Active Seniors also enjoyed the pool, beach, and shopping during their trip.

Charlie Hudson, of District Heights, organized and hosted a memorable two-day trip to New York City for 37 people, including his wife Ann, in early December. The group experienced a nostalgic stop in Dover, DE, at the Johnson Victrola Museum on the way north. In New York City everyone observed the numerous landmarks, including "ground zero", pointed out by a step-on tour guide, but the highlight of the trip was the Radio City Music Hall Christmas Show performance with the famed Rocketts. After Christmas, Charlie and Ann embarked on an enjoyable cruise to Cancun.

*A correction in the November ECHOES:

The word ALUMNI was omitted in the following sentence; it should have read:

Doris Edwards was named Ms. Alumni North Carolina Central University.

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 Wundrow 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 motorcoach at 8:45 AM and returning about 2:45 PM. While in Annapolis, we will sit in on a legislative session, tour the Governor's Mansion, have lunch in the Calvert Room of the State House (thanks to Senator Mike Miller), where we will be joined by several of our county representatives, and afterward 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 PM.

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

Prince George's County Superintendent brought greetings to the Association. During his message, he spoke extensively on the Bridge to Excellent Act. He encouraged the membership to work with their neighborhood schools in the extended learning program to help students to improve their math and science skills. Dr. Hornsby also gave a brief overview on how the lost funding, approximately 34 million dollars, which was not funded by the governor, has impacted the County's school systems ability to deliver quality educational services. The 17 million dollars projected to be given to the county from the state, is to be stretched out until 2010. The lost of funds not only affects the school system, but it also impacts the retired teachers' benefits as well.

Following Dr. Hornsby's message there was a question and answer period. Questions related to substitute pay, rehire/retiree reinstatement, and the renewal of one's teaching certificate were answered.

The reports given on Community Service, Constitution & Bylaws, Legislation, Nominating and Membership are included in this ECHOES newsletter.

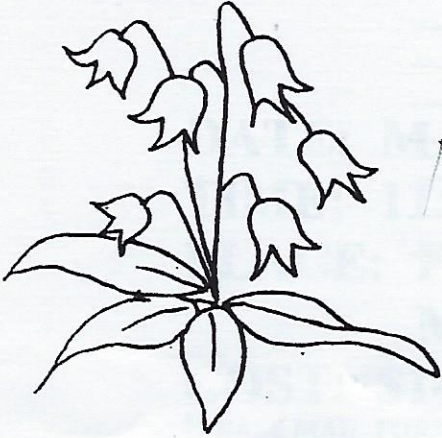
Dan Williams reported that the pre-retirement workshop will take place at Roosevelt Senior High School on March 12, 2005. He asked for 10-12 people to volunteer to help with the preparation of the retirement packages of materials. Volunteers will meet, to prepare, on March 7th at 8:30 a.m. at the Board of Education.



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

We welcome 55 members to our January meeting at the Board of education, Upper Marlboro, Maryland. We greeted two new members, Calpurnia Arrington and Courtney Pringle. The winner of our door prize was Carol Shepherd. Hope to see you at our March meeting in Forestville.

Deceased Members



• Delores L. Burton-Proctor	11-27-04
• Rose E. Finnegan	12-24-04
• Nell M. Meyers	?
• Marlene M. Murray	11-30-04
• Michael E. O'Leary	07-25-04
• Cordelia P. Seldon	12-22-04
• Nellie Sheen	12-26-04
• Robert E. Spriggs	12-12-04
• James J. St.Ledger	12-07-04
• Fred Weiland	?
• Helen R. Wenger	12-10-04
• C. Marshall Whitley	12-26-04

Non-Members

Silco L. Alvarez	01-20-05
Anne E. Carr	12-17-04
Sally Cleveland	01-13-05
Beatrice Chaney	12-08-04
Effie D. Conway	12-06-04
Louise Cope	11-29-04
Charles M. Hodges	11-11-04
David M. Johnson	12-05-04
Esther Y. Kundert	12-08-04
Frances Margolis	01-13-05
Bertha McDuffie	10-10-04
Nancy L. McCambridge	01-12-05
Lawrence Miles	11-29-04
Shirley A. Patterson	12-14-04
James J. Queen	12-12-04
Catherine Rosch	11-23-04
Anthony F. Sobleskie	12-23-04
Jullia Summer	12-03-04
Patricia L. Toles	12-09-04
Gary Weems, Jr.	01-20-05
Josephine West	01-07-05
Millie Winckler	11-08-04
Mary E. Wynkoop	01-04-05

Membership Co-Chairs
Jane Jones and
Pat Tompkins

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
PGPSRA (Unit #17)**

July 1, _____ to June 20 _____

(Dr., Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms) _____
Social Security # _____
Street Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone Number _____
Date of Retirement _____
Birth date (optional) _____

Dues per year: Prince George's Retired Teachers Association -	\$10.00
Maryland Retired Teachers Association	25.00
Membership and benefits of both organizations	\$35.00

Check enclosed for \$ _____ (Make check payable to PGPSRA)

OR Sign the **DUES DEDUCTION FORM** below

Return to: PGPSRA Membership
J. G. Jones
5912 - 36th Avenue
Hyattsville, MD 20782

DUES DEDUCTION FORM

I hereby authorize the **TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND** to deduct annual membership dues of \$ _____ for the State and Local retired Teachers Association from one of my retirement checks each year.

This authorization is to remain in effect until revoked by me.

Signature _____

Date _____

PGPSRA

RESERVATION FORMS

2005 EVENTS

DATE: MARCH 23, 2005

TIME: 11:00 A.M.

**PLACE: FORESTVILLE UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH**

COST: \$14.00 PER PERSON

PLEASE MAIL FORM TO ADDRESS BELOW NO LATER THAN MARCH 17, 2005.

TO: DR. EDWARD N. VEST
7908 KLOVSTAD DRIVE
FORT WASHINGTON, MD 20744-1729

ENCLOSED IS MY CHECK (PAYABLE TO PGPSRA) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ _____
FOR _____ RESERVATIONS FOR THE MARCH 23, 2005 LUNCHEON.

NAMES(S)

DATE: MAY 25, 2005

TIME: 11:00 A.M.

PLACE: COLONY SOUTH

COST: \$21.00 PER PERSON

PLEASE MAIL FORM TO ADDRESS BELOW NO LATER THAN MAY 19, 2005.

TO: DR. EDWARD N. VEST
7908 KLOVSTAD DRIVE
FORT WASHINGTON, MD 20744-1729

ENCLOSED IS MY CHECK (PAYABLE TO PGPSRA) IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ _____
FOR _____ RESERVATIONS FOR THE MAY 25, 2005 LUNCHEON.

NAMES (S)

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
PGPSRA (Unit #17)**

July 1, _____ to June 20 _____

(Dr., Mr., Mrs., Miss, Ms) _____
Social Security # _____
Street Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Telephone Number _____
Date of Retirement _____
Birth date (optional) _____

Dues per year: Prince George's Retired Teachers Association - \$10.00
Maryland Retired Teachers Association 25.00
Membership and benefits of both organizations \$35.00

Check enclosed for \$ _____ (Make check payable to PGPSRA)

OR Sign the **DUES DEDUCTION FORM** below

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5912 - 36th Avenue
Hyattsville, MD 20782

DUES DEDUCTION FORM

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Date _____

PRINCE GEORGE'S PUBLIC SCHOOL
RETIREES ASSOCIATION

Editor: Jessie Frazier
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Capitol Heights MD 20743

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DATED MATERIAL

SPRING LUNCHEON

March 23, 2005

*Forest Memorial United Methodist Church
3111 Forestville Road
Forestville, MD*

11:00 a.m. – Business Meeting

12:15 p.m. – Lunch- Reservations required

Program – Senior Exercise

Cost - \$14.00

Deadline for reservations – March 17, 2005

(No refunds after March 17, 2005)

Send reservations with your check payable to:

PGPSRA

Mail to: Dr. E. Vest

7908 Klovstad Drive

Fort Washington, MD 20744

Include names of all attending.

*Remember: Please bring your donation of canned
FOOD*

ANNAPOLIS TRIP

(LEGISLATIVE DAY)

March 16, 2005

Leave PGCEA Office – 8:45 a.m.

Return – 2:45 p.m.

NO CHARGE

Call – Jannette Wundrow

301-390-7324

REMINDER:

*Our meetings follow the school
System policy for cancellation
Due to inclement weather.
Listen to your radio and/or TV
For announcements. Delayed
Opening will mean our meeting
will go on as scheduled.*