



# ECHOES

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

Volume XXXXII No. 4

March 2009

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I write this article, the United States of America is embarking on a political change. Barack Obama will be sworn in as our 44<sup>th</sup> President. He will be the first African American to be elected President. The process of the election of an African American began many years ago by the civil rights leaders of their era. America and the world are better places because of the sacrifices made many years ago. Needless to say, these sacrifices left us with hope for the future.

There were two recent reports that Maryland public schools ranked best in the United States, but no one can afford to become complacent. Let us, as retired teachers, find ways to be part of the "change". We can begin by pledging to continue making a difference in the education of our youth.

Again, I plead for your help in increasing our membership. Being a member of your state and local organization is extremely important and necessary to keep, enhance, and improve our hard-earned benefits in these tough economic times. Not only must we maintain our numbers, we must strive to increase them on both the state and local levels. Remember: There is strength in numbers.

Preparations are being made for the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association Convention in Ocean City. The dates are September 8, 9, and 10, 2009. We need your commitment early so that proper planning can be done to ensure a rich, rewarding experience.

It is time to recognize some deserving person for the work he or she performs as a volunteer. You are encouraged to nominate a fellow retiree to the Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame, Inc. If you have someone in mind, please call Parker Koons at 410.828.5952 for nomination forms.

Jennie Jones

### LEGISLATIVE REPORT

The Maryland General Assembly convened on January 14, 2009, and is in session until April 13<sup>th</sup>. The MRSPA Legislative Committee's priority this session is to object strongly and vocally against any shifting of the funding of the retirement / pension system from the state to the counties. (If the local jurisdictions must pay this funding for our retirements, they are going to have to cut costs somewhere else. This could mean that our health benefits would be reduced.) It is important that you as individuals speak out against these issues now, before they come to debate in the General Assembly. It will be especially helpful if you can speak directly to a legislator whom you know personally.

Maryland is facing a \$2 billion deficit in next year's proposed budget that begins on July 1<sup>st</sup>; therefore, deep cuts must be made. (Unlike the federal government, states must balance their budgets.) Governor O'Malley and the legislators must revise originally planned expenditures, and consequently, so must counties, since they will not be receiving the previously designated



money from the state.

Our organization is planning to go to Annapolis by coach bus for a PGPSRA Legislative Day on **March 18<sup>th</sup>**. We will sit in on short sessions of both the House and the Senate, tour the State House, 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. We are most appreciative, once again, of the sponsorship of Delegate James Proctor, Jr., District 27, in making this event possible. There is no charge for the trip. We will leave the PGCEA office at 8:45 a.m. and return at 2:30 p.m. You will find it a very interesting day. For reservations, please contact me (Jannette Wundrow) at 301.390.7324.

For up to date information about the Maryland Legislature, and to locate your local legislators, go to the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association's website: [www.mrspa.org](http://www.mrspa.org).

Jannette Wundrow, Legislative Chair

### NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The Nominations Committee submits the following slate of officers for 2009 – 2010:

**President Elect:** Carl Lancaster \*\*  
**Recording Secretary:** Joan Sloan  
**Corresponding Secretary:** Courtney Pringle  
**Treasurer:** Dr. Edward Vest

\*\* The term of the President Elect is now to be a two-year term and will be 2009 - 2011.

Bonnie Brose, Chair

### TREASURER'S REPORT

The treasurer's report as of January 20, 2009 is as follows:

**Balance Forward** – January 1, 2009

Checking Account: \$220119.22

Savings Account: 3009.51

#### Receipts:

Checking Account: 232.96

Savings Account: 3.79

#### Expenditures:

Checking Account 94.08

**Balance as of January 20, 2009:**

Checking Account 22258.10

Savings Account 3013.30

**TOTAL ASSETS: \$25271.40**

E. Vest, Treasurer

#### 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.



**STATE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM  
RANKED BEST IN U. S. BY TWO  
REPORTS**

Of the fifty states, Maryland has been ranked number one in education as a result of two recent studies. One was a three year study of the Bridge to Excellence Act through Editorial Projects in Education which publishes the trade newspaper *Education Week*. The other study was done by MGT of America.

The Education Week study evaluated school systems on several criteria: accountability standards, college readiness of high school graduates, spending, and equality.

Last year Maryland ranked third in the nation. However, the report by MGT of America found proficiency levels statewide improved dramatically for all students, particularly in elementary and middle schools.

A six year Maryland State effort to spend billions of dollars more on public education and highly qualified teaching staffs led to this major performance gain.

Hats off to the highly qualified staffs of Maryland Public Schools!

Courtney Pringle, Corresponding Secretary

**LIAISON / PROFESSIONAL**

The February 2009 issue of the *MRSPA News* is now available online at the MRSPA website. Please go to the main page at [www.mrspa.org](http://www.mrspa.org) and in the "Publications" section on the right side of the page, click on the link for the February 2009 newsletter.

The [www.msrspa.org](http://www.msrspa.org) will give you access to the entire newsletter, but for some information that is for members only, you

will have to know your user username which is your MRSPA membership number located on your MRSPA new address label. Your password is the first letter of your first name and your last name.

Addie Martin, Chair

**TRAVELING WITH CHARLIE**

**Trip Announcement**

At the March meeting, a survey will be presented of three proposed overnight trips. We are hopeful that one of them will generate enough interest for a late summer or early fall trip.

In the meanwhile, we are planning an early June outing for your traveling pleasure. It is a trip to the Allenberry Playhouse in Boiling Springs, PA, on June 3, 2009. The total cost of the trip is \$100.00. The price includes round-trip coach bus transportation, an afternoon matinee (a comedy entitled *Ladies Night in a Turkish Bath*), a buffet lunch, taxes, gratuity, and even the bus driver's tip.

The trip requires a minimum of thirty (30) people, and you are asked to sign up early. You may contact Charles Hudson at 301.572.9778 for further information. Checks are to be sent to him at the following address: Charles Hudson, 3154 Gracefield Road, Hunter Glen, #319, Silver Spring, MD 20904. Make checks payable to PGPSRA – Tours. The deadline for payment is March 25, the date of our March meeting.

Charles Hudson, Trip Coordinator

*The World is a book, and those who  
do not travel read only one page.  
St. Augustine*



## SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

### Awards Ceremony Set

The Scholarship Fund, Inc. has set its awards ceremony for Wednesday, May 6, 2009, at 1:00 p.m. in the auditorium at the Prince George's County Educators Center in Forestville, Maryland. Members of our association are invited since we are one of the agencies that sponsor the Scholarship Fund.

Our PGPSRA is hopeful that we will be presenting six (6) \$2000.00 scholarships to persons entering teaching /education and /or continuing in that field. In our 2008-09 association budget, money was appropriated for five (5) \$2,000.00 scholarships. However, with our scholarship drive and the raffles at our meetings, we are near \$1,000.00. We are hopeful that by the end of March we will have reached our goal.

Remember, any donation is accepted. Your check donations can be made payable to PGPSRA, earmarked Scholarship Drive, and mailed or given to the Scholarship Committee Chairperson, Alveta S. Jones, 3113 Amador Drive, Landover, Maryland 20785.

Thanks for your support.

Alveta Jones, Chairperson

January 20, 2009  
Icy wind, bitter cold  
Warmth and joy infuse my soul –  
A song and a prayer within my heart -  
As democracy unfolds its art.

AJH

## COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMITTEE

Even though we, the members of this committee, believe that we are self-assured people of good will, it is also a good thing to sometimes have your actions and beliefs affirmed by others. The other in this particular reference is none other than **President Barack Obama** who, in his inaugural speech, emphasized **service** as a vital means of strengthening our communities, our cities, our nation, and our world.

In response to our belief in the call to feed the hungry, Share Baskets were distributed at Thanksgiving to three families of Robert Goddard Middle School, and at Christmas three baskets were distributed to families of Overlook Elementary School. This project is handled very capably by Jennie Thomas and Doris Porsche. Additional baskets will be issued at Easter to families in a different area of the county.

We delivered school supplies, personal items, and small articles of clothing to the Family Crisis Center in Brentwood and Shepherd's Cove in Capitol Heights. Both of these centers serve homeless families. It is our hope and desire to schedule a time to interact directly with children in one of these centers as a way to let them know that others do care.

Again, we thank each of you for your very generous donations which help make this possible.

Gretel T. James, Committee Member



**PROPOSED BUDGET: 2009 - 2010**

CATEGORY	CURRENT BUDGET	PROPOSED BUDGET
	2008 - 2009	2009 - 2010
Archives	100.00	100.00
Awards & Recognition	100.00	100.00
Operational	500.00	500.00
President	100.00	100.00
Secretarial	200.00	50.00
MRSPA Meetings	1500.00	2000.00
Treasurer	50.00	50.00
Newsletter/Publications	8000.00	7000.00
Edu/Protective Services	500.00	500.00
Hospitality	600.00	1000.00
Legislative	1100.00	1350.00
Membership	400.00	400.00
Program	1000.00	1000.00
Remembrance	100.00	100.00
Community Service	4000.00	4000.00
Convention Gift	50.00	50.00
Scholarship	10000.00	10000.00
Contingency Fund	500.00	500.00
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>28800.00</b>	<b>28800.00</b>

**ESTIMATED INCOME**

Dues from members @ \$15.00 per member --- (Estimated membership of 1600)	24000.00
From Checking Account	4800.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28800.00</b>

Please call or e-mail if you have any questions

E. Vest, Treasurer



## BITS AND PIECES

Belated February birthday wishes to Catherine Mitchell of Silver Spring, who turned 91! Happy March birthday wishes to Pauline Banks of Alexandria, who will be 95 years old, and Ellen Schafer of Waldorf, who is turning 93! Happy April birthday wishes to Gordon Wilson of F. Myers, FL, who will celebrate his 92<sup>nd</sup> year!

Donald Kiah retired from Lanham Vocational School in 1986, after which, he and his wife Delores promptly moved to Punta Gorda, FL. Donald immediately became involved in his new community and subsequently served as the first Executive Director of the Charlotte County School System Administrators Association for ten years. He was an adjunct professor at Edison State College for eighteen years and served as an Elder in his Presbyterian Church for twenty-two years. He is currently President and Co-Chairman of the Board of New Operation Cooper Street, which provides an after school program for 200 students. Donald and Delores have been married for fifty-six years. They have one son, who works at Bowie State University as Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management, one granddaughter, one grandson and his wife (who are both serving in the US Air Force), and one great grandchild. The Kiahs have enjoyed touring the country each summer in their RV, until a year ago when they bought a summer home in the mountains of Flat Rock, NC. Donald and Delores have taken nineteen fun cruises to interesting places, including one to Southeast Asia, where they toured seven countries in celebration of their 55<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary,

Chuck Brown and Donna Roberts are both Prince George's County retirees. Chuck retired from the Office of Interscholastic

Athletics in 1997, and directed the Maryland Boys State Basketball Tournament until 2003. Donna retired from Gwynn Park High School and the Board of Education Office in 2008. Chuck and Donna live in White Plains, where they enjoy gardening and yard work. Donna has one son, while Chuck has three daughters and seven grandchildren, one of whom is now teaching at a local high school.

Joan Ahrens retired from H. W. Wheatley Special Center in 2004, as a speech-language pathologist; however, she continues to be engaged with children. She has worked as a long and short term substitute, tutored fourth graders for the Maryland State Assessments, and is currently working part time as a contract employee for the county's Infants and Toddlers' Program. Joan and her husband live in Berwyn Heights; they have eight grandchildren and one great grandchild. Joan is involved with community and church activities. She and her husband have enjoyed travels within the U.S., visiting relatives and friends from Florida to California, and to beautiful Hawaii. Their most exciting adventure since retirement was a family reunion trip to northern Germany, near Hameln (famous town of the Pied Piper), where they explored the area of the Ahrens ancestors. The following year the family held another reunion in Wisconsin to relive the memories of the German trip.

Anne Davis retired in 2000 from Adelphi Elementary, and later that year, relocated to Sun City Anthem in Henderson, Nevada. She is enjoying life in a bustling retirement community near Las Vegas, along with substitute teaching and working at the MGM Hotel. Anne makes frequent trips east, during which she meets with the "Lunch Bunch" from Langley Park-McCormick



Elementary. She also experienced distant travel recently when she spent three weeks touring Vietnam, Thailand, and Cambodia.

Ellen Brennan retired as librarian from Thomas Stone Elementary in 1992, and has since moved to South Bend, Indiana. Ellen is currently working as a teacher's aide in a 2/3 time classroom of at risk students in one of South Bend's School Corporation Schools. She also volunteers each week at the office of Lourdes Water Confraternity (where holy water imported from the grotto in Lourdes, France is kept) on the grounds of the University of Notre Dame. Ellen enjoys traveling back to Maryland for a few weeks each summer, but she took an additional trip to Nova Scotia last summer.

Dr. William (Bill) and Bonnie Brose are both very active county school retirees. Bill retired from Pointer Ridge Elementary in 2007, and Bonnie retired from Kenmore Middle School in 1997. Both Bill and Bonnie are involved in our PGPSRA organization – Bonnie as Past-President and currently serving as President-Elect; Bill as Parliamentarian. Bonnie is the MRSPA Member Benefits Chair as well. Both are participating members of the National Symphony Orchestra Women's Committee – Instrument Petting Zoo, and Bill is an usher for the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Bonnie is the immediate Past President of the NSO Women's Committee. Both Broses are also Adjunct Professors at Prince George's Community College. Bonnie is a local contact for the Alumni Association of Indiana University of Pennsylvania. She is an active member of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), serving on the state, local and national levels, as well as senior leader for the Children of the American Revolution. When he has free time, Bill enjoys woodworking (currently building

autoharps), golf, and studying Dutch – in anticipation of a visit to the Netherlands. He is also a licensed airplane pilot. When Bonnie has free time, she likes to do crafts, needlework, knitting, scrapbooking, card making, beadwork, and reading. The Broses will celebrate their 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in October. They have one daughter, Amelia. Bill has three children, and they are proud to share five grandchildren.

Community Service Chair, Delores Brown, is also President of her Bowie State University Class of 1958. On May 10 – 16, the class of 1958, under her direction, departed from Baltimore Harbor on the Royal Caribbean Cruise Line's *Grandeur of the Seas* for a six night Bermuda cruise. The trip was in celebration of their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as graduates of Bowie State University - in 1958 it was Bowie State Teachers College. All of the participants, including Bowie's Alumni President, Addie Martin (class of '61), had a fantastic time. The Class of 1958, because of their love for their Alma Mater, gave a very generous donation to the university.

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

## REMEMBRANCE / NECROLOGY

### IN MEMORAM

Barbara Cairns Boycan	10/25/08
William (Buddy) Cameron	10/04/08
Mary Heinze	1/06/09
John E. Myles	12/21/08
John T. (Jack) Smyth	1/17/09
Lindsey Thomas	
Phyllis L. Thomas	1/12/09
Jennie Thomson	12/20/08

Jannie Goldson, Chair



Maryland Retired School Personnel Association  
8379 Piney Orchard Parkway, Suite A  
Odenton, MD 21113



## **TAKE ACTION**

**AT**

**[www.mrspa.org](http://www.mrspa.org)**

Sign in to the **Members Only Section** using your **member number**: (found on your newsletter mailing label) \_\_\_\_\_

And your **password**: (*First letter of your first name and complete last name - GWashington*)

Look up your legislators and contact them to ask that they maintain the part of the budget bill (HB 101) that provides for:

***“100% of the State payments for retirement contributions for employees of a local school system in accordance with the provisions of Division II of the State Personnel and Pensions Article”***

Then visit **[www.mrspa.org](http://www.mrspa.org)** regularly for legislative updates.

Legislators may be contacted by calling the Maryland General Assembly at: 1-800-492-7122.



## CANCELED JANUARY LUNCHEON

### Message from the Treasurer:

Since the January luncheon was canceled due to inclement weather, the treasurer will carry over all names to the March 25 luncheon since the fee (\$10.00) is the same.

However, if you are unable to attend the March 25 luncheon, the treasurer will, unless you request a refund, add those monies as a donation to the Scholarship Fund.

Please call the treasurer on 301.248.2807 or e-mail [DRVEST@PRODIGY.NET](mailto:DRVEST@PRODIGY.NET), if you desire a refund.

## COMMUNITY SERVICE REMINDER

The Community Service Committee will be collecting supplies for children in homeless shelters at the March 25, 2009, luncheon. Please remember to bring your donations. A list of needed supplies was included in the January issue of *Echoes*.

## DATES TO REMEMBER

March 11, 2009

- PGPSRA Executive Committee/  
Board Meeting
- PGCEA Building

March 18, 2009

- PGPSRA Legislative Day
- Annapolis

March 25, 2009

- General Meeting & Program
- PGCEA Building

April 1, 2009

- Deadline for *Echoes*

## PGPSRA MEETING / LUNCHEON

DATE: March 25, 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 Dan Williams.

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 March 17, 2009.

## RESERVATION FORM

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

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_



Maryland Retired School Personnel Association  
8379 Piney Orchard Parkway, Suite A  
Odenton, MD 21113



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