



ECHOES

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S PUBLIC SCHOOL RETIREES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Volume XXXXV No. 5

May 2012

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Another year of much activity is drawing to a close. What a year it has been!

Delores Brown, Chairwoman of our Community Services Committee, reported at the general membership meeting on March 28 that our Association has supported:

1. New shoe drives to assist children needing shoes in several schools.
2. New coat drives to assist children needing winter coats in several schools.
3. Has provided four students with financial assistance for their senior prom and graduation expenses.

The Scholarship Committee under Alveta Jones' leadership will award three scholarships worth \$4,000 each to seniors graduating from a Prince George's County Public Schools high school and intending to pursue a career in education. While I'm talking about our scholarship program, I want to thank each of you who sent in a personal donation to our scholarship fund. Your support is invaluable and much appreciated.

Donations such as these help PGPSRA provide much needed assistance to some of the graduating seniors in our county. For any of you who did not make a personal contribution during March, it is not too late. You still can make out a check payable to PGPSRA with a notation at the bottom that it is for the Scholarship Fund and send it to our Treasurer, Dr. Edward N. Vest, 7908 Klovstad Drive, Fort Washington, MD 20744-1729. You will receive a receipt for your charitable contribution and a personal note of appreciation.

OFFICERS FOR 2012-2013

Elected for another term of office at the March General Meeting of PGCSRA were:

Treasurer – Dr. Edward Vest; **Recording Secretary** – Joann Sloan; **Corresponding Secretary** – Courtney Pringle. Plan to be at the May meeting to see them inducted and to wish them well.

TREASURER'S REPORT March 2012

Beginning Balances	
Checking Account	\$23555.72
Savings Account	3021.59

Activity -- Checking Account	
Receipts	540.45
Expenditures	4078.94

No Activity in Savings Account

Total Assets as of March 31	
Checking Account	20017.23
Savings Account	3021.59
Total Assets	23038.82

E. Vest, Treasurer

Joy Hatchette from the Maryland Insurance Administration was the main speaker at our meeting on the 28th and as promised, she was wonderful. Her many tips and suggestions regarding insurance policies were eagerly received by those in attendance. A Thank You goes to John Sisson for his efforts in recruiting Ms. Hatchette as our guest speaker.

On the legislative front, Jannette Wundrow, our Legislation Committee Chairwoman, in addition to going to Annapolis every week of the legislative session, organized a very successful bus trip to Annapolis with nearly fifty participants on March 14. The buses left PGCEA headquarters at 8:30 and got back around 2:30. During the hours spent in the halls of the legislature, the participants got to speak with quite a number of Prince George's County's legislators, some of whom seem to oppose transferring a portion of the state's pension costs to the counties and some of whom seem to support such a move. As I'm writing this column on the last day of March, both chambers have adopted a transfer of some portion of the state's costs to the local subdivisions. Because there are differences in the bills adopted by the House and the Senate, the differences will be reconciled via a conference committee and the final details are not known at this time.

Our next general membership meeting is May 23rd at La Fontaine Bleu in Lanham. Ethel Brown has arranged for the Iverson Mall Senior Dance Troupe to provide the entertainment for this meeting. Additionally, votes will be taken on six amendments to the Bylaws and the adoption of the 2012-2013 Budget. Also, next year's new officers will be inducted. It promises to be an enjoyable event and I urge you to look elsewhere in this ECHOES for reservation information.

My term expires at the end of May and this column is my last as your President. It has been an honor to serve as your President for the last two years. I am eternally grateful for your patience as members and Board Members when I've wanted to "do it now." Without your helping out, nothing would have been accomplished. As I reach the end of my term, I know that PGPSRA's reputation and success is attributable to our dedicated members who give freely of themselves. To those of you, who helped out, THANK YOU! You made the difference!!!

I have enjoyed and benefited from Gretel James' wise counsel and friendship during her term as President-Elect. On June 1, Gretel will become our new PGPSRA president and I wish her and her new Board all the best!

For each of you, I wish much peace, health and happiness for you and your family in the months and years ahead.

Carl Lancaster, President

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

PGPSRA was pleased to welcome three new members at the March 28th meeting. They were Lauvinia M. Alston, Marlene Pickles, and Lois Anne Williams. We look forward to their continued presence at our meetings and for their participation in the various activities we sponsor. Door prize winners were Mary Isbell, Charlene Jacob, Marlene Pickles, and Lillie James. The Grand Prize winner was Mildred Mitchell. The 50/50 Scholarship Raffle was won by Eleanor Ford.

New members bring new energy and new ideas. Continue to encourage your former colleagues to join us.

Lorraine Johnson, Membership Chair

BENEFITS REPORT

At this time, no changes have been made regarding our medical, dental, vision and prescriptions benefits. The Prince George's County Board of Education has hired AON, a consulting firm, to review and compile the data from sixteen vendors who responded to the county's RFP (Request for Proposals) Forms.

The Respondents were:

Medical – Carefirst, Aetna, Cigna, Unitedcare
Dental – Dominion Dental, Aetna, Cigna,
Carefirst, United Concordia, United
Healthcare, DeltaDental, DentalQuest
Vision – Eyemed, Superior, Carefirst, United
Healthcare, VSP, Cigna
Prescription – Aetna, OptumRX, Carefirst,
CatalystRx, Medco, Caremark, Express
Scripts, Cigna

Once AON completes its review, the Coalition (of which I am a member), the Benefits Office and the Budget Department at the Board will review and rate the vendors. If any changes are made, they will be effective October 1, 2012, with the new contract.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 301.868.6081.

Addie Martin, Benefits Liaison

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LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Although we, MRSPA, along with all Maryland county school superintendents, county executives, MSEA, AARP advocates, and numerous other people across the state, made our concerns known to all of our Maryland legislators about **NOT shifting the pension funding to the counties**, unfortunately, this is exactly what is going to happen. The debate to be reconciled (as of this printing on April 4th) is that the Senate wants the counties to assume the cost of pensions at a rate of 25% for each of the next four years, while the House wants the rate set higher and to be completed in three years. This will mean that the counties will continue to pay 100% of the Social Security contributions for school employees and the teacher pension costs. It is interesting to note that the pension funding is only 4% of the state budget. It is also interesting that **ONLY** the teachers were mentioned by legislators in the pension shifting. It includes all Maryland county librarians and professors at all community colleges.

The Maryland State Retirement/Pension System is showing a recovery since the recession, having gained \$200 million in assets since January 1st. Our retirement checks will continue to arrive on time.

The Maintenance of Effort Bill requiring the counties to meet their obligations to fully fund education did pass. This builds on the Thornton Act. Counties will be held accountable, or face a state penalty. If a county should not put the required amount of money into their education budget, the state will withhold the required amount from the county's income tax and send it directly to the county Board of Education. Quality education in Maryland is a priority!

Special thanks to everyone who attended our annual PGPSRA Legislative Day Trip to Annapolis on March 14, 2012, sponsored by Delegate James Proctor. We were recognized from our gallery seats in both the House and Senate. During the last Prince George's Delegation Caucus meeting of the session (all of which President Carl Lancaster, Sue Finan, and I attended), we were thanked and applauded for the invitation extended to the Delegation to attend our PGPSRA Legislation Day luncheon.

For a complete explanation of how the proposed National Health Care Law will affect seniors beginning in 2014, go to your computer and type in AARP Health Care Guide. Some good news: We will receive a COLA of 3.157% with our July 2912 retirement checks! Also, county legislators decided against the five cent bag tax.

Jannette Wundrow , Legislative Co-Chair

PGPSRA TO AWARD THREE \$4000.00 SCHOLARSHIPS

From the seventy-five applications received by the Prince George's Scholarship Fund, Inc., (of which we are a member) three were designated to PGPSRA. The three applicants, Rachel Mitchell, Alexis Robinson, and Orvon White will be offered a \$4000.00 scholarship upon completing the interview in mid-April. They will also have the opportunity to re-apply for the PGPSRA scholarship in 2013.

Rachel Mitchell from Bowie High has been accepted at the University of Maryland, College Park and plans to major in education. Her goal is to become a professional educator in order to help under-privileged children in the state of Maryland. She ends her essay with, "Education is the gateway to success and freedom. If you know better, you will do better. It is up to the teacher to provide the 'know-how'; it is the student's responsibility to actually do. It is my desire to not only provide the 'know-how', but the support and encouragement to secure future success of all my students."

Alexis Robinson of Frederick Douglass High has as her goal to become a teacher and an instructor while attending North Carolina A and T University in Greensboro and majoring in education. "...It is my desire to share and expose my same passion with the youth of the future in dance education ... If you have no wants or desires for anything, surely, you will fail at your task, but as long as you have a goal and plan to reach it, you will be successful in whatever you plan on doing. This would be my contribution to the teaching profession and the dance department."

Orvon White from Charles Flowers High has been accepted at Delaware State University in Dover where he will major in English education.... "Henry Thoreau said it best when he said, "One is not born into the world to do everything but to do something." My something in life is to become a high school English teacher and to inspire at least one teenager's life; then, I would have accomplished my life-long dream of being the best and most influential teacher ever."

Alveta Jones, Scholarship Chair

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COMMUNITY SERVICE

Hello fellow PGPSRA members! Your Community Service Committee is nearing the finish line in completing its projects for 2011 – 2012. This has been a great year for the Community Service members. Due to diligence, effort, cooperation, and good weather, we have just about completed all projects for the year.

The Shoe Project was finalized March 27, 2012, when members met, at a designated Payless Shoe Store, thirty delightful, grateful students who were identified by counselors of Glassmanor and Oxon Hill Elementary Schools as needing shoes assistance. The committee members were thankful for the assistance of Store Manager Edward Codjoe and Sales Clerk Ra`Shawn Baily for their help in completing the project in such a positive way. We heartily thank the members of our association for funding the project.

Our final projects include distribution of food baskets to designated families at Glassmanor and Oxon Hill Elementary Schools and Oxon Hill Middle School. We also plan to provide prom and graduation expenses for selected homeless or indigent graduating seniors at Oxon Hill High School.

Community Service Committee members are excited to be of assistance to selected deserving students of Prince George's County. We are delighted to have the support of PGPSRA.

Courtney Pringle, Newsletter Writer

STAY CONNECTED THIS SUMMER: Visit our website at www.pgpsra.org

A LITTLE FLORIDA/PRINCE'S COUNTY HISTORY

The idea of having former George's County school employees getting together for a luncheon culminated in such a get-together in 1985 when Dorothy Carpenter and Richard Shockley hosted the affair in Coconut Creek, Florida. The "PG Luncheon" continued for a number of years, hosted by individuals you might remember: Dr. Lew Wheat, Dr. Donald Kiah, Dotty Harvey, Jeannette Yates, Dr. Monica Uhlhorn, Ferd Cardano, Dr. Jerry Keeney, and others. As many as 100 former "PG-ers" attended these luncheons on some of the years and the affairs were held in various locations in Florida.

In 1998 a Caribbean cruise was added for the group, hosted by Patria Shockley, and approximately 50 (including Dr. and Mrs. Ed Feeney and Dan and Dee Saltrick) enjoyed the Caribbean sunshine. That cruise has continued and a smaller group, hosted by Frank and Chris Parise, just returned from Holland America' Nieu Amsterdam. The next cruise, hosted by Ferd and Carol Cardano, is planned for March 2013 and will be a 7-day cruise out of Port Canaveral, Florida. If you are interested in attending, please contact the Cardanos: email – fandcc@bellsouth.net; Phone – 386.668.6017; or by mail at 25 Seminole Drive, DeBary, Florida 32713.



PROPOSED BUDGET 2012 – 2013

CATEGORY	CURRENT BUDGET 2011-2012	PROPOSED BUDGET 2012-2013
Archives	100.00	100.00
Awards & Recognition	150.00	150.00
Operational	500.00	500.00
President	100.00	100.00
Secretarial	50.00	50.00
MRSPA Meetings	500.00	500.00
Treasurer	100.00	100.00
Newsletter/Publications	8000.00	8000.00
Consumer Education	500.00	500.00
Hospitality	1000.00	500.00
Legislative	1500.00	1500.00
Membership	700.00	750.00
Program	1000.00	500.00
Remembrance	150.00	150.00
Community Service	4000.00	5000.00
Convention Gift	50.00	0.00
Scholarship	10000.00	10000.00
Contingency Fund	400.00	400.00
GRAND TOTALS	28800.00	28800.00

ESTIMATED INCOME

Dues from each member @\$15.00 per member Estimated membership of 1600	24000.00
From Checking Account	4800.00
TOTAL	28800.00

E. Vest, Treasurer

REMEMBRANCE / NECROLOGY

Anna Jane Jones	03-09-12
Mary Ann Matthews	02-22-12
Sandra Young	03-27-12

Jannie Goldston, Chairperson

PGPSRA MEETING/LUNCHEON

Date:	May 23, 2012
Time:	11:00 a.m.
Place:	LA Fontaine Bleu 7963 Annapolis Road Lanham, MD 20706
Cost:	\$25.00

To make your luncheon reservation, please send your check, payable to PGPSRA, for the appropriate amount to Dr. Edward Vest, 7908 Klovstad Drive, Fort Washington, MD 20744-1729. The reservation deadline is May 16, 2012.

LUNCHEON RESERVATION FORM

Name: _____

Lunches Ordered: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Names of Guests: _____

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BITS AND PIECES

Birthday Wishes

Happy **May** birthday wishes to Mrs. Eileen Henderson of Bowie, who will be celebrating her 98th birthday on the 23rd.

Happy **June** birthday greetings to **Mrs. Ellen Kendrick** of Waldorf, MD, who will be having her 93rd birthday on the 1st; to **Mrs. Esther Vogel** of Falls Church, VA, who will be marking her **101st** birthday on the 11th; **Mrs. Mary Mills** of Mechanicsville, MD, who will be celebrating her 91st birthday on the 20th; and to **Mrs. Grace Dent** of Denver, NC, who will be turning 94 years old on the 29th.

Happy **July** birthday wishes to two Maryland ladies: **Mrs. Sylvia Rothstein** of Silver Spring, who will be celebrating her **100th** birthday on the 2nd; and to Mrs. Alice Konze of Oxon Hill, who will be having her 92nd birthday on the 31st. Happy **August** birthday greetings to **Mrs. Ada Warrington** of Seaford, DE, who will be celebrating her 95th birthday on the 27th; and to **Dr. Allan Chotiner** of College Park, MD. Who will be turning 97 years old on the 26th.

Delores Cole Brown of Glenarden, retired from Shugart Middle School in 1993. Following her retirement, she used her knowledge and teaching skills to create and develop a GED program at Beulah Baptist Church, where students attend classes Monday through Friday evenings. She has served as her church Program Director and is now the Assistant Program Director, a Deaconess, and the Vacation Bible School Director. Delores also volunteers at the White House as a Correspondence Reader and Writer. She has served as chairperson of the very active Community Service Committee with our PGPSRA for the past eight years. Delores enjoys reading, Pinochle, Bid Whist, and travelling to the Caribbean Islands. She and her husband James celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in April. They have two adult children.

Claretta Wingo of Lothian, MD, retired in 1995 from Marlton Elementary. She now enjoys sewing, creating

Brenda Thomas retired as a Head Start teacher from Scotchtown Hills Elementary in 2004. She and her husband Bill live in Beltsville. After retiring, Brenda worked with the Prince George's County Pre-kindergarten Office, testing Pre-k children in the pilot program "Early Reading First". She also substituted for seven years and now volunteers at her grandchildren's school. Brenda often spends time helping her 90 year-old mother with chores. For two years Brenda worked as a chaperone with the Miss Black America USA program, traveling with the pageant contestant the first year to Gambia, West Africa, and the second year to Las Vegas. The Thomases have been married 48 years. They have four adult children and two grandchildren. One of their sons lived in South Korea for some years and is now in Cyprus; they have visited him in both countries. Brenda and her husband have also traveled to the West African countries of Ghana, Togo, and Benin. They celebrated last Thanksgiving with family on a cruise to San Juan, St. Thomas, Dominican Republic, and Haiti.

Henry (Hank) Gromada of Mitchellville retired from the Special Education Office in 1997. Continuing in education, he worked for over 14 years with the Foundation School as Director of Transition Services, and still does some consulting work for them. He has served on the Education Advisory Committee for Congresswoman Donna Edwards. He also volunteers as a bereavement counselor with Capital Hospice. One knee replacement and another to come shortly have barely slowed him down. In 2008 Hank and his wife celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary with a river cruise with Diane Rehm of (WAMU radio) on the Danube and Rhine Rivers that included a stop in Prague. They enjoy spending much time with family and friends at their second home in Rehoboth Beach, DE.

Ruth Wilson retired from Arrowhead Elementary in 1992, and eight years later she and her husband relocated to Venice, Florida. Immediately following retirement Ruth

greeting cards, working puzzles, and attending church and Bible study classes. She volunteers as a driver for elderly folks who need a ride to doctor's appointments, the grocery store or other places of business, and visiting nursing homes. Claretta has traveled to Europe, Japan, China, Singapore, and Vietnam, and driven across the southern part of the United States to Texas. She has enjoyed many Caribbean cruises, most recently to Freeport and the Bahamas. Claretta and her husband celebrated their 48th "meeting anniversary" in December. They are the parents of adult twins (a boy and a girl) and three granddaughters, with whom she enjoys reading children's books and playing games. Claretta reveals that she is slowing down a bit, but still doing fine - - and hoping for a decrease in appetite!

Edna Gore of Cheverly retired in 1980 from Mary Bethune School. She has served with the Prince George's Hospital Guild for 20 years and belongs to several fraternal groups whose main objective is philanthropy. Edna loves to play Bridge. She and her husband have visited all but one state in either their modern car or their Model T. The Model T Tours were yearly events, with the most memorable one being the adventurous drive from New York to Seattle in 1984 in their 1918 car. (They were one of 30 Model T's on this trip.) The Gores also have sailed on 32 cruises, with Hawaii being their favorite –ten times! Edna and her husband have four children, nine grandchildren, 19 great- grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren.

Reese Greene of Bladensburg retired as a sixth grade teacher from Bladensburg Elementary, then returned to teach math for a year at Kenmore Middle School before retiring again in 2005. He was honored to be listed in: "Who's who Among America's Teachers" **twice!** Reese was a star athlete in his younger days and now enjoys watching all sports on TV, along with listening to good music, especially oldies but goodies. Reese's favorite pastime is traveling to casinos. He has been to play in Las Vegas, New Orleans, Atlantic City, Delaware, and Canada, as well as on cruise ships. Sadly Reese's wife has passed away. He feels fortunate to have three daughters and seven grandchildren. In July his three daughters are taking him on a cruise to the Bahamas. Reese lives by the motto: Enjoy life and give thanks to God for blessings.

substituted in several Bowie schools. For over ten years she has volunteered once a week in a second grade class in Venice, where she works with small groups and individuals, and assists the teacher with paper work. She also serves with the Altar Guild at her church. Ruth's biggest volunteer commitment is working with an organization called Safe Place Rape Crises Center., which provides free services for women and children from abusive situations. She serves on the Auxiliary Board, writing articles and submitting photos to the media about fundraising events. She also serves on several committees, planning and organizing fundraising events. Since retirement, Ruth and her husband have sailed on cruises to the Baltic region, the Mediterranean area, South America, New Zealand, Australia, and Eastern Europe.

Patricia Griggs of College Park, MD, retired from Templeton Elementary in 1991. She still has much stamina, as she takes care of the yards at three homes in Missouri, Florida, and Maryland, and enjoys visits with family and friends in each place. Patricia's good friend, Hattie Nalewaja (also a retired county teacher), joins her in her travels. They also spend time in Minnesota with Hattie's family and friends. Patricia has had many memorable trips, including to the Greek isles, Alaska, Australia, the Holy Land, Poland (where she taught conversational English), Bavaria (as guests of a German family whom she had entertained in Maryland) Rome for the Beatification of Mother Theresa, and pilgrimages to Fatima, Garabandal, and Lourdes.

To contribute to BITS AND PIECES, contact Jannette Wundrow at jannetewundrow@comcast.net or at 1007 Packton Lane, Bowie, MD 20716



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Addie Martin, Benefits Liaison