

ECHOES

Vol. LVII No. 4

The Prince George's Public School Retirees Association Newsletter

May 2023

PGPSRA Founded and Established June 18, 1964

It's official..... Spring is here, the temperature is warming up which gives us the opportunity to move outside to become more active. We know that staying active is essential for good health at any age.

As I approach the end of my term as President, I have much to be thankful for. We, as Prince George's Public School Retirees can be thankful individually and collectively for all the good that is in the Maryland education system. I am thankful for the support of all the amazing PGPSRA past Presidents and Executive Committee Members for the hard work you have done and continue to do to support the organization.

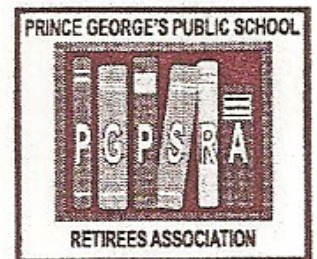
I am thankful for having enough legislators who agree with our legislative agenda which is specifically geared toward support of legislation that provides support for proper governance for Maryland's retired, current, and future educators.

I know that everything is not always good because it is not. I would be thankful if PGPSRA could report that all educators who retired in Prince George's County Public Schools are members of our organization. I would be thankful if our members were working tirelessly to persuade nonmembers to become members. We need to explain to nonmembers and future retirees the value of membership. The group number is important because legislators understand the power of large numbers.

As I conclude my term as President of PGPSRA, I thank you for this extraordinary privilege and honor. I am truly proud of what we have achieved together. We did what we organized to do and so much more. I leave you with this message:

“Be happy not because everything is good, but because you can see some good in everything.”

Oretha Bridgwaters-Simms, President



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BITS AND PIECES

Happy **May** birthday wishes to several of our Emeritus members: Jeanette Yates of Odenton will be celebrating her 92nd birthday on the 4th; Virginia Hobble of Princess Anne will be having her 98th birthday on the 6th; William Beaver of Silver Spring will be marking his 96th birthday on the 8th; THREE ladies will be marking their birthdays on the 13th: Mary Martinez of Mount Rainier will be 98 years-old; Virginia Moore of Forestville will be 91 years-old, and Harriet Sunderland of Annapolis will be 92 years-old; Marie McCaskill of Laurel will be having her 93rd birthday on the 14th; and Yvonne Koolhof of Naples, FL. will be turning 99 on the 21st.

Happy **JUNE** birthday greetings to other Emeritus members: Barbara Conley of Winston Salem, N.C. will be observing her 92nd birthday on the 6th; Mattie Shafer of Easton will be celebrating her 94th birthday on the 9th; and Carolyn Davis of Rancho Palos Verdes, CA. will be having her 97th birthday on the 11th.

Happy **July** birthday wishes to some more Emeritus members: Robert Forrest of Broomfield, CO. will be having his 97th birthday on the 5th; TWO ladies will be marking their birthdays on the 21st: Gloria Curry of Washington, D.C. will be 94 years-old and Mary Grafton of Clinton will be 96 years-old.

Happy **AUGUST** birthday greetings to other Emeritus members: Carolyn Dade of Suitland will be celebrating her 95th birthday on the 1st; Sarah Lent of Silver Spring will be turning 94 years-old on the 23rd; and Claudine Eastburn of Gainesville, GA. will be observing her 94th birthday on the 31st.

Carol Dickinson retired in 1999 after 31 years working as a Pupil Personnel Worker in the county. She began her teaching career in Pennsylvania. In 2012, she relocated to Hickory, N.C., near her son. There, she immediately began volunteer work at the History Museum, followed by serving with the Eastern Catawba County Christian Ministry, which meets the food, clothing, and financial needs of clients. Carol is an avid reader of at least five books weekly. She continues her membership with the Epsilon ADK and Questers in Maryland. Carol has especially found her travels to Italy, Turkey, and Greece to have been rewarding, for the fact that all of her history questions from teaching about these countries were clarified. She has also enjoyed trips to New Zealand and Australia, that were long, amazing, and filled with memorable highlights. Carol feels blessed with a wonderful family and many new friends in N.C., who have welcomed her, even though her dialect reminds them that she is a Yankee! She fondly remembers her years in Prince George's County, where it was an honor to work with many outstanding, caring educators and families. Carol has a lovely apartment with a view of Baher Mountain Twin Peaks – and she welcomes visitors, who are in the area.

Laura Brewer-Heilig of Hyattsville retired from Eleanor Roosevelt High School in 2018. She is now spending her time caring for her three-year-old granddaughter, and she has traveled to California to visit with her daughter. Also, she is doing some volunteer work with her church. Laura is especially enjoying visiting with friends, which of course, was rarely possible with the endless work of teaching.

Gwendolyn (Gwen) Cooley of Silver Spring retired from Mary Harris Mother Jones Elementary School in 2006. Her interests include quilting, knitting, reading, walking (in a walking club), and traveling. She volunteers with Meals on Wheels and as Executive secretary for DKG - Maryland International Society of Women Educators. Gwen and her husband have a passion for traveling. (**This is an understatement!). They have traveled to CO., WY., MT, ID., CA., NV.,OR., AK., and HA., as well as, the entire Eastern Seaboard. Since 2007 they have traveled to the Mediterranean countries, the Caribbean Island countries, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru, Ecuador, China, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, the European countries along the Rhine and Danube Rivers and around the Baltic Sea. Gwen and her husband, Bob, were married on Valentine's Day in 1976, and celebrated their 47th wedding anniversary this past February. They have two children: a son, Ryan, who has two children, and a daughter, Hayley, who has three children.all of whom live in the area.

*** To contribute to BITS & PIECES, contact JannetteWundrow@comcast.net

Officers and Committee Chairs of PGPSRA

President: Oretha Bridgwaters-Simms
(obridge@verizon.net)

President-Elect: William Barnes (billbarnes2011@gmail.com)

Past President/Nominating: George Denny
(george.dilden@yahoo.com)

Recording Sec.: Gretel James (gret2349@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Dr. Edward Vest (homevest552@comcast.net)

Corr. Secretary: Courtney Pringle (pringc@aol.com)

Auditing: Susan Fortgang (sfort@msn.com) & Leah Fowble
(pepper3495@aol.com)

BOE Liaison: Addie Martin (amartin668@aol.com)

Bylaws: Vacant

Comm. Service: Courtney Pringle (pringc@aol.com)

Consumer Ed.: Vacant

Historian: Don Conway (donconway5@icloud.com)

Inspirations: Dan Williams (hapycmprs@mac.com)

Legislation: Dr. Beatrice P. Tignor (beatignor@aol.com)

Membership: Jannette Wundrow
(jannetewundrow@comcast.net)

Newsletter and Programs: Bonnie Brose
(bcbrose@comcast.net)

Webmaster/Parliamentarian: Dr. William Brose
(wmbrose@comcast.net)

Recognition: Dr. Beatrice P. Tignor

Remembrance: Jayne Johns (jaynejohns@verizon.net) and
Linda Butler

Trips: Addie Martin (amartin668@aol.com)

Scholarship: Brenda L. Barnes (blbarnes128@aol.com)



SPEAKER FOR MAY

Dereck E. Davis is Maryland's 24th State Treasurer. He will be visiting with us at our May meeting to talk to us about our state retirement and be available for questions. In this era of changing interest rates and stock exchange numbers, there is a lot to think about. Be sure to be there to make sure you understand where we are in Maryland and how your money is being han-

Inspiration for May

WILLIAM PENN

"I expect to pass through life but once. If, therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, for I shall not pass this way again."

YOU CAN GET YOUR ECHOES BY EMAIL!

- It will come quicker
- You will help us save money
- You will get it in color!

Just let the editor know

COMMUNITY SERVICE

We are Getting Close to the End

Community Service Committee Members met April 5, 2023 to check their reports of assistance given to five schools in the Southern Region of Prince George's County. The schools assisted were Barnaby Manor Elementary, Allenwood Elementary, North Forestville Elementary, Hillcrest Heights Elementary and Crossland High School.

Assistance amounted to 1, 742 students, teachers and parents being served in some capacity in the Elementary and High Schools selected thus far.

The five Crossland High School Seniors will be joining us for our luncheon at the Comfort Inn in Bowie on May 24, 2023 by way of streaming. They will be introducing themselves and thanking the Association for their stipends received.

Thank you PGPSRA members for your contributions through out the year. We could not have served so many without your help.

Courtney Pringle
Chair person

Membership Report

MRSPA (Maryland Retired School Personnel Association) is extending an invitation to cash dues members to switch to dues deduction for 2023-24. If members make the change, they are eligible for a one-time \$10. reduction in dues. Interested members should complete the "Dues Deduction Form", which is available on the MRSPA.org website under "Switch & Save". If there are questions about this, you may call the MRSPA office in Odenton at 877-625-6782.

MRSPA is also offering a \$10 gift card to current members who recruit a new member. There is no limit to the number of new members you recruit, or gift cards you may earn!

Many thanks to eight more members volunteering to accept their newsletters by email since our March mailing. These ECHOES email members are greatly appreciated and noted by our Treasurer, Dr. Vest, when it comes time to write a check for the printing and mailing costs. Our Editor, Bonnie Brose, graciously keeps this email list.

THANK YOU each for being one of the 1148 current members of PGPSRA and MRSPA!

Jannette Wundrow, Membership Chair



Wanda Twigg, MRSPA Executive Director, brought greetings and news from headquarters.

TREASURER'S REPORT – March 2023

OPENING BALANCES:

Checking Account	\$34330.79
Savings Account	126.86

ACTIVITY – CHECKING ACCOUNT:

Receipts	912.95
Expenditures	2573.44

NO ACTIVITY IN SAVINGS ACCOUNT:

CLOSING BALANCES:

Checking Account	32670.30
Savings Account	126.86
TOTAL ASSETS	\$32797.16

Respectively Submitted,

Edward N. Vest
Treasurer



PGPSRA Seeks Nominees For Key Offices, Committees

The Prince George's Public School Retirees Association (PGPSRA) has a critical need for members to step up to be nominated for key offices, and to volunteer to serve as chairs of committees

Election of Officers is to take place at our May General meeting. We have one candidate for Treasurer but despite numerous calls for help, no one has offered to be nominated for the offices of President-Elect or Recording Secretary. Without candidates, these offices will become vacant.

We also have a need for volunteers to be chairs of some of our committees. At the present time we have two committees without chairs--Bylaws and Consumer Education. We have several other committees whose PGPSRA Wants YOU!! Chairs have served for quite some time, and who are anxious to have somebody relieve them of their duties.

PGPSRA has continued to work for school system retirees to protect our benefits and provide opportunities for retirees to serve the communities in which we live. Our Executive Board and committee members are active in a number of ways on your behalf. Please offer your services by volunteering to take an office or chair a committee.

For information or to offer your services, please call:

President Oretha Bridgwaters-Simms at 301-580-1062, or George Denny at 301-641-3147.



SCHOLARSHIPS

The Covid -19 has limited most of our in person Committee meetings and contacts to electronic interactions. Regardless the committee members were able to continue our mission to assist the Prince Georges High School Seniors financially to continue their higher education efforts. Our committee members did an outstanding job reaching out to the senior school counselors, principals and program directors at all high schools.

Each of our three recipients will receive \$2000.00 this year. Hopefully, you will hear from the winners at our May Luncheon.

In addition to the scholarships we will present four Mini-grants. These grants are given to any Prince Georges staff member who applies to support their special projects. The grants are for \$300.00 to assist where the schools or Parent Teachers Organizations are not supporting them. The schools who have winners are Barnaby Manor Elementary, Melwood Elementary, Hyattsville Elementary and Kenmore Middle School. We are still waiting for acceptance letters from the recipients. In the next Echoes we will have explanations of the projects.

The Committee members are Vera Davis, Lorraine Johnson and our newest member Dolores Tilghman. We want to thank our members who continue to contribute monetary donations to support the students of Prince Georges County.

Brenda Barnes, Chairperson



Carla Is Coming!

Our guest at the May meeting will be MRSPAA President, Carla Duls. She will bring greetings and update us with all the news of Maryland’s happenings. She will be fresh off the Annual Meeting with news of the election and plans for the coming year.

Carla hails from our neighboring county, Ann Arundel and will be starting her second year as president in June.



Councilman Edward Burroughs

Brought a gift for President Bridgewater-Simms

PGPSRA Annual Meeting

May 24, 2023

Comfort Inn, Bowie

(at Rt. 301 and Rt. 50)

PLEASE MAIL THIS FORM TO THE ADDRESS BELOW:

Dr. Ed Vest, 7908 Klovstad Drive, Fort Washington, MD 20744-1729

HELP US CELEBRATE ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR!

Name(s) _____

Amount Enclosed **\$48** (checks payable to PGPSRA) for each lunch reservation— \$_____ (We need the count by the **May 17** mail delivery!).

Lunch is: a buffet - Broiled Salmon in Lemon Broth/Grilled Chicken Breast with Tropical Salsa
Vegetable Saute, Italian Rice and Fruit Bowl for Dessert.....Coffee and Iced Tea

PGPSRA

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Bonnie Curry Brose
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We're on the web!
www.pgpsra.org

VISIT THESE WEBSITES www.MRSPA.org and www.PGPSRA.org

If you have not already done so,
send your email address to Dr. Vest

To get the latest, quickest news.

