

# ECHOES

Vol. LVIII No. 5

The Prince George's Public School Retirees Association Newsletter

May 2024

**PGPSRA Founded and Established June 18, 1964**

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Did you miss the March meeting? We had another awesome luncheon gathering with learning and laughter. There was so much to learn regarding scams and how to avoid them. Thanks to Orlene Grant, President and CEO of the Juanita C. Grant Foundation for providing information on concrete steps to avoid scams and how to recognize the “red flags” of elder abuse.

The Honorable Sam Dean, former County Council member and his wife, Donna presented information about Camp Inspiration, an 8-week summer enrichment camp for students. They informed retirees that summer camp positions are available. Position descriptions and how to apply can be found on their website at <https://thelafi.org/hiring/>.

We enjoyed the slide presentation given by Dr. Bill Brose regarding how to care for Shamrocks. At the end of the meeting, Dr. Brose gave each member a plant to take home to demonstrate the skills we learned.

The PGPSRA Chair of Trips/Benefits, Addie Martin asked members to sign up for a bus trip to the National Theatre in Washington, D.C. to see the popular musical entitled, “MJ”. It will be held on September 5<sup>th</sup>. Reservations must be made in advance and tickets are going fast. Guests are welcome. You can find the registration information within this newsletter.

We are proclaiming the month of May as the start of our annual membership campaign! The primary purpose of PGPSRA is to serve school retirees. Therefore, all membership dues go to that effort. The list below highlights a few benefits and supports our local dues provide:

Four newsletters per year with updates about legislation, benefits, and social activities.

Four business/lunch meetings per year that provide information and entertainment.

An up to date website, PGPSRA.org, with information on membership, trips, and volunteer opportunities.

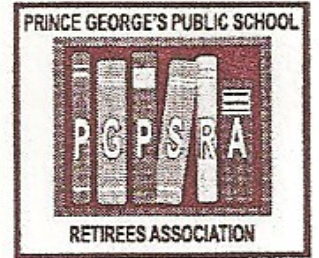
Scholarships awarded annually to seniors majoring in education.

Contributions of school supplies and clothing to support students in our schools.

Our next general meeting and luncheon will be held on May 22<sup>nd</sup> at 11:00 a.m., Comfort Inn in Bowie. Our invited guests are Carla Duls, President of MRSPA and Millard House, Superintendent of Prince George's County Public Schools. I hope to see you there.

If you have a question or want further information about PGPSRA, visit us at PGPSRA.org or don't hesitate to contact me.

Oretha Bridgwaters-Simms, PGPSRA President  
obridge@verizon.net



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#### TREASURER'S REPORT April 1, 2024

Checking Account Balance as of 3/31/24	\$34,666.52
Receipts	\$1,095.45
Total	\$35,761.97
Expenses	\$4,825.88
Ending Checking Account Balance	\$30,936.09
Ending Savings Account Balance	\$126.86

Dr. Barbara J. Atwater  
Treasurer

#### Officers and Committee Chairs of PGPSRA

President and Past President/Nominating: Oretha Bridgwaters-Simms (obridge@verizon.net) President-Elect: Susie Proctor (proctorsrs@gmail.com)

Recording Sec.: Alonia C. Sharps (asharps@icloud.com)

Treasurer: Dr. Barbara J. Atwater  
(barbaawatwater703@yahoo.com)

Corr. Secretary: Sharon Collins (sjcollins1908@yahoo.com)

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

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

Bylaws: George Denny George.dilden@yahoo.com)

Community Service: Betty J. Nicholson  
(sonyaquattlebaun@comcast.net) and Lillie B. James  
(Ljam210@aol.com)

Consumer Ed. and Scholarships: Brenda L. Barnes:  
(blbarnes128@aol.com)

Inspirations: Dan Williams (hapycmprs@mac.com)

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

Membership: Jannette Wundrow (jannettewundrow@comcast.net)

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

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

Remembrance: Linda Butler (lindab1217@verizon.net)

#### Membership Report

Thank you to our members who take time from their daily routines to attend our five-times a year General Meetings. While in attendance members may become aware of information that could benefit each as a retiree, and get to socialize and perhaps laugh a bit with former colleagues and friends.

The winners of our two March door prizes were Carolyn Williams and Don-Yvonne Harvey.

During the Maryland Legislative Session that began on January 10<sup>th</sup> and ended on April 8<sup>th</sup>, the MRSPA State Legislative Committee, that is composed of Legislative Chairs from several counties, reviewed hundreds of Bills on behalf of all of our state members. Three Bills that received MRSPA **SUPPORT** were: Long Term Care Insurance Study, Lowering of Prescription Drug Costs for All Marylanders, and Senior Income Tax Credit. A Bill that MRSPA **OPPOSED** was: Funding Scholarships for Non-Public School Students.

Jannette Wundrow, Membership Chair

## Scholarship Committee 2023-24

Thanks to the donations and the budget given to the Scholarship Committee we are able to award six \$1000.00 scholarships this year. Our awardees this year are from the following schools: College Park Academy, Dr. Henry Wise, The International High School of Langley Park, Eleanor Roosevelt, Academy of Health Sciences at Prince Georges Community College. We also had a return student from North Carolina A&T who finished her first semester studying Business with a 3.9 GPA.



We hope to hear from the deserving students and their parents who will be invited to our end of the year luncheon at the Comfort Inn.

This year we eliminated the qualification that students must be majoring in education. As you know the education field is in dire need of teachers. We opened the scholarship to any Prince Georges Public school senior planning to further their education.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to our emeritus member **ALVETA JONES** 99 YEARS YOUNG on April 25th. previous Past President, chair of scholarship committee and many other committees.

Submitted by Brenda Barnes

Scholarship Chair

Happy Birthday to Alveta Jones, for 99 years on April 25, 2024. "Mom", as Member Emeritus of the Prince Georges' Public School Retired Association, you have served for 40+ years. You have served as President and Treasurer of our beloved organization and was even Chairperson of the Scholarship Committee for many years. Happy Birthday, from your daughter-Vera Davis and Granddaughter Noni Jones.

Happy Birthday to Alveta Jones, for 99 years on April 25, 2024. "Mom", as Member Emeritus of the Prince Georges' Public School Retired Association, you have served for 40+ years. You have served as President and Treasurer of our beloved organization and was even Chairperson of the Scholarship Committee for many years. Happy Birthday, from your daughter-Vera





### **The Honorable Samuel and Donna Dean**

Posing with our President Oretha after their presentation of Camp Inspirations. This summer program offers support to children while on vacation from our schools. It is located in Mitchellville and can be reached by contacting them at:

<https://thelafi.org/camp-inspiration>.

There is still time, if you are interested. They are looking for swim instructors, and help with arts and crafts, chess, music, reading, tennis, math and science, STEM, and lastly, pool gate attendants.



### **Speaker**

S. Orlene Grant, President and CEO of the Juanita C. Grant Foundation. Spoke to us about elder abuse and fraud. This included the recognition of the “red flags” that should warn us. She also alerted us of new scams that are out there. Lastly, she came bearing gifts. We all left with a useful packet to help us remember and share out new information!



Bill brought shamrocks for everyone and taught us how to take care of them.

**HAPPY BELATED ST. PATIRICK'S DAY TO**

## BITS AND PIECES

Happy **MAY** birthday greetings to some of our Emeritus members: Jeannette Yates of Odenton will be celebrating her 93rd birthday on the 4<sup>th</sup>; Virginia Hobble of Princess Anne will be having her 99<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 6<sup>th</sup>; three ladies will be marking their birthdays on the 13<sup>th</sup> - Mary Martinez of Mount Rainier will be turning 99 years-old, Virginia Moore of Forestville will be reaching 92 years of age and Harriet Sunderhauf will be marking her 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday; Marie McCaskill of Laurel will be observing her 94<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 14<sup>th</sup>; and Joanne Rowe of Upper Marlboro will be celebrating her 91<sup>st</sup> birthday on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

Happy **JUNE** birthday wishes to other Emeritus members: Barbara Conley of Winston Salem, N.C. will be having her 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday on the 6<sup>st</sup>; Mattie Shafer of Easton will be celebrating her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 9<sup>th</sup>; Carolyn B. Davis of Rancho Palos Verdes, CA. will be observing her 98<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

Happy **JULY** birthday greetings to more Emeritus members: Robert Forrest of Broomfield, CO. will be celebrating his 98<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 5<sup>th</sup>; Alma Pinkney of Brandywine will be having her 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday on the 15<sup>th</sup>; two ladies will be celebrating their birthdays on the 21<sup>st</sup> - Gloria Curry of Washington, D. C. will be marking her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday, while Mary Grafton of Clinton will be reaching her 97<sup>th</sup> birthday; and Eva Williams of Harve de Grace will be turning 97 years of age on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

Happy **AUGUST** birthday wishes to other Emeritus members: Carolyn Dade of Suitland will be observing her 96<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 1<sup>st</sup>; Robert (Bob) Miller of Ft. Washington will be celebrating his 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday on the 19<sup>th</sup>; Kitty Walker of Dunkirk will be having her 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday on the 21<sup>st</sup>; Sarah Lent of Silver Spring will be marking her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 23<sup>rd</sup>; and Claudine Eastburn of Gainesville, GA. will be observing her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

Velleda Hilliard Blair of Waldorf retired from William Beans Elementary in 2009. However, she continued teaching as a substitute for 15 years, while she also conducted Bible Study at the county prison. She has served as a member of the FBCG committee of First Baptist Church of Glenarden, and even found time to participate in water aerobics, and Senior Citizen Exercise Classes. This busy lady has enjoyed MANY vacation trips to: Jamaica, Trinidad, Puerto Rico, Panama, Punta Cana, Free Port, Bahamas, Cancun, Spain, Florida, Nevada (Las Vegas), and traveled across country by train! Velleda had three children, including a son, whom she lost last August. She also has five grandchildren. Amazingly, Velleda claims to “be living my best life”!

Monica Weaver of Bowie retired in 2015 from the office of Human Resources - Coordinator of the Resident Teacher Program. Monica is a devoted volunteer! She volunteers as a driver for FISH (Friendly, Instant, Sympathetic Help) a nonprofit, all volunteer organization dedicated to providing transportation to ambulatory Bowie residents who need to get to the doctor, hospital, or other routine medical appointments. She also provides sandwiches for SOME (So Others May Eat) through St. Pius Church, assists an exercise teacher at a senior home, and serves as a member of the Bowie Senior Choral, as well as, St. Pius Church’s choir – and she is a Lector at St. Pius Church. Monica likes reading, particularly from an actual book, but is now also using a Tablet to enjoy books from the library. She has been fortunate to travel to many places, including the Blue Lagoon in Iceland, the Great Wall of China, The Holy Land, Uhuru/ Ayers Rock, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, U.S. National Park and Canyons, on a Safari in Kenya, – to list a few of the highlights. She left in late March for a cruise around Japan. She has also done skydiving, ziplining, and parasailing! Friends and family are important to Monica. She looks forward to meeting with some friends each year in Aruba, Florida, and Las Vegas. Monica has five children (all graduates of PGCPs), eleven grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren. A highlight for her family is their yearly gathering at Thanksgiving at Monica’s home in Bowie – 78 came last year from distances as far away as London!

Susan Fortgang of Accokeek retired in 2005 from Suitland, Friendly, and Gwyn Park High Schools. Since retiring, Susan has continued working for the past 18 years as a math teacher at Huntington Learning Center in Waldorf, and also puts her math skills to use as a yearly Co-Auditor of the PGPSRA Treasury. For 10 years she has volunteered at the Humane Society. Susan and her husband have taken a cruise with friends almost every year since retiring, mostly to the Caribbean. They have also traveled to Alaska and Hawaii and enjoyed a Rhine River Cruise. Susan and her husband have two grown children, a two-year old granddaughter and a 13 year-old step-grandson, two large dogs and two cats – plus other grand dogs and cats! The Fortgangs are thankful for their good health.

Anne Fotos of Riverdale retired from Bladensburg High School (the Original Building) in 1994. She spends most of her time now keeping up with family, including eight grandchildren, and especially thinking of one son-in law, who is deployed with the Naval Reserves in Guam. Anne’s husband has six antique cars, and he belongs to the Asphalt Angels Car Club. Anne and he continue to enjoy their retirement years.

**Continued on page 6**

**Cont'd from page 5**

Reeda Butler of Hyattsville retired as Assistant Principal from High Point High School in 2010. Since retiring she has pursued various interests and engaged in numerous volunteer activities. As a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc./Psi Epsilon Omega Chapter, she has participated in many community service projects; a few of which include making playground improvements at Deerfield Run Elementary, collecting coats and toys for Oaklands Elementary, collecting shoes for "Soles 4 Souls", registering citizens to vote, collecting school supplies and backpacks, and other worthy projects. Reeda is a member of Senator Malcolm Augustine's 47<sup>th</sup> District Leadership Team, which serves as a conduit to address constituents' concerns and to understand proposed Legislative Bills. She is also a member of the Citizens' Advisory Association, a member of the 8<sup>th</sup> Precinct Civic Association, the Greater Chillum Safety Coffee Club, and the College Park/District I Safety Coffee Club. Reeda intends to resume line dancing and water aerobics, which she enjoyed before the pandemic. She also likes reading and learning new aspects of technology. Reeda has vacationed in the Bahamas (Nassau), the Dominican Republic (Puerta Plata), Mexico (Cancun), and attended conferences in numerous U.S. cities. Her favorite short trip getaway is to the Royal Vista at Massanutten Resort, where she has enjoyed activities, reading, and relaxing. Reeda has one daughter, Renay Butler, who is a cybersecurity program manager with the Internal Revenue Service and a dimontologist. She has co-authored the book "Open Your G.I.F.T.S.". Not surprisingly, Renay has been a three-time recipient of the "Top 100 Women in Maryland" Award. Reeda's granddaughter, Raquel Shortt, a graduate of Eleanor Roosevelt H. S., is a Proteomics Specialist-Senior Scientist at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Reeda's greatest joy is spending time with family.

Bob Kovalchik of College Park retired from Parkdale H.S. and Hyattsville Jr. H. Since retirement he has served as a volunteer Docent at the National Air & Space Museum in Washington. On March 21, 2024, Bob was awarded the Sally Ride Education Prize, given by the American Astronautical Society for his service to the community as an outstanding educator.

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

## **PGPSRA MarchMeeting**

**May 22, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.**

### **Comfort Inn-Bowie, Maryland**

Our annual meeting will give you a chance to see what the Community Service and Scholarship Committees have been doing this year. You will also be able to meet some of the students who have benefitted by our association.

**(We need the count by the May 15th mail delivery! Mail it now!!)**

PLEASE MAIL THIS FORM TO THE ADDRESS BELOW:  
Dr. Barbara J. Atwater, 2101 Willow Switch Lane, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774-4216

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed - \$52 for each lunch reservation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to PGPSRA.

(Remember! We need the count by the March 15th mail delivery date!)

The buffet will be: Broiled Salmon in Lemon Broth/Grilled Chicken Breast with tropical Salsa, Vegetable Sauté, Island Rice, assorted Cookies, coffee and iced tea.

All members are welcome for the meetings. However, if you do not want a lunch, you are free to bring your own. We only order the requests received. Late orders make it difficult for the hotel to order the food we need .....be kind, order as soon as you are able.

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

**UPCOMING TRIP**

**MJ**

**September 5, 2024 (Thursday)**

**The National Theatre  
Washington, D.C.**



**Showtime: 2:00 p.m.** 31 Tickets @  
\$141.00 / 19 Tickets @ \$132.50

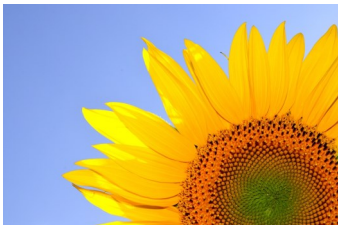
**\*\*No Refunds after August 14, 2024 (Make checks payable to PGPSRA Trips)**

**Addie Martin – Chair**

**9706 Frank Tippett Road  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772**

**Questions (301) 868-6081  
(Co-Chair: Sharon Collins)**

**12:30 p.m. – Departure from MD- Equestrian**



**Prince George's Public School Retirees Association, Inc.**

**Upcoming Trip**

**DANIEL**

**October 2, 2024 (Wednesday)**

**Sight and Sound Theatre  
Lancaster, PA**



**Showtime- 11:00 a.m.**

**Following Show: Lunch at Miller's Buffet Restaurant**

**Price: \$175 per person (includes trip, show and lunch)**

**\*\*No refunds after – September 18, 2024  
(Make checks payable to PGPSRA Trips)**

**Addie Martin (Trips)**

**9706 Frank Tippett Road  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772**

**Questions: (301) 868-6081 (Co-Chair: Sharon Collins)**

**7:00 a.m.-Departure from MD- Equestrian Center**

**10:15 a.m. – Arrival Time for 11:00 Show**

**2:00 p.m.-Lunch 4:00 p.m. -Depart for MD**

**7:30 p.m.- Approximate Arrival to Equestrian Center**

**Inspiration**

**If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.—Mother Teresa**

**Dan Williams, Chair**

## PGPSRA

Dr. Barbara J. Atwater, Treasurer  
2101 Willow Switch Lane  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20774

Editor:  
Bonnie Curry Brose  
bcbrose@comcast.net



**We're on the web!**  
**[www.pgpsra.org](http://www.pgpsra.org)**

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