

ECHOES

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S PUBLIC SCHOOL RETIREES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

VOL. XXXIX No. 2

November 2005

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

With the celebration of 60 years of working for retirees, visible throughout the convention area, delegates and members of the Maryland Retired Teachers Association (MRTA) convened at the Clarion Hotel in Ocean City on September 6 - 8. Sessions were devoted to educational matters of historical and contemporary nature. In fact, the entertainment mirrored the same trend with headlines like: Celebrating the 50's, 60's, 70's, 80's and the 90's.

A feeling of gratitude could be detected in the audience as we listened to State Retirement Pension System Trustee Carl Lancaster and Comptroller of Maryland William Donald Schaefer describe aspects of their work on our behalf.

The keynote speaker, Lt. Governor Michael Steele, endeared himself to the educators present by sharing memories of his childhood and early school days spent in Maryland and the District of Columbia. He made this more meaningful when he asked us to recall a memorable, dynamic teacher from our lives. A unique kind of compliment was given as he referred to our value as "retirees" especially when we become "rehirees". Lt. Gov. Steele referred to his report, Blueprint for Education, and suggested that we read it when it is released. It was released a week later.

The interest sessions were enjoyed by all as indicated by the evaluations. Of extreme interest to those present was the Brain Research

Forum. Experts in brain research discussed such things as brain changes with age, and distinguishing normal mental lapses from Alzheimer's Disease. Actually, we received tips for keeping our minds sharp. Those of us who enjoy word games, SUDOKU, puzzles, etc. were happy to get that news. Additional interest sessions were: Using 9-1-1, and Identity Theft.

Our association, PGPSRA, had more than twenty persons in attendance and we were happy to have Bob Miller, who set up our flag, join us. Thanks to Kitty Walker, President-Elect, for the beautiful display of our celebration of a devoted member, Ellen Smith's 100th birthday. Recently, our Executive Board helped Dr. Allan Chotiner celebrate his 90th birthday. He and Mrs. Smith have the distinction of having Emeritus Memberships which means having reached the 90th birthday and not having to pay any more dues.

Please note that any member desiring official PGPSRA business sent by computer need only to send your e-mail address to Dr. Edward Vest at drvest@prodigy.net. This information will never be shared with any individual or organization.

As you can see, many exciting things are happening with the involvement of our members in the lead. Come see for yourself at our November Membership Meeting to be held November 16th at LaFontaine Bleu. See reservation form in this newsletter.

Rose Miller, President



SUMMARY OF MINUTES MEMBERSHIP MEETING-September 28

Reports given:

Necrology - see list elsewhere in ECHOES

Treasurer's report - September - 2005

Checking account - \$21797.90

Savings account - 6900.10

Total assets- \$28698.00

E & P services - ALL ABOUT ME has been distributed to all members, and goes to new members as they join.

Legislation - See separate article titled "Legislative Alert"

Professional Liaison- Your new CareFirst ID cards should have been received; your social security number has been removed

IN MEMORIAM

MEMBERS:

John F. Davis	07-29-05
Marion Gaffney	07-21-05
Janett Johnson	07-09-05
Irma M. Lauster	?
Margaret A. Morgan	?
Catherine N. Readmond	?
Loretta Russell	?
Clifford A. Stevens	09-20-05
Thomas M. Toye	08-26-05
Sylvia Weitzman	?

NON-MEMBERS:

Catherine Douglas	09-23-05
Edward Maddox	08-08-05
Lloyd Price	08-10-05
Beverly Sharpe	09-17-05
Barbara Stroup	08-05-05
Alan Sweitzer	07-23-05

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Another New Year ! We welcome all of you and especially our new members.

We had over 70 people at our September meeting. Several were non-members but joined at the end of the meeting.

Please remember to let me know when you move. Call me - 301-559-8533.

Jane Jones - Membership Chair

Membership - Three/fourths of our members are on dues deduction. If you are not enrolled in this process, consider it. It saves time!

Scholarship - see separate article

Trips - A review of the last trip with it's successes and car problems upon return. Some day trips will be planned for the December/January period. Come prepared to join a trip list at the next meeting. If the trip dates are soon, be prepared to make a payment when you sign up.

Recognition of Dr. Chotiner and his 90th birthday . He is now an Emeritus member!

Program - Joe Barger and an associate from MRTA made a presentation about Long Term Insurance

Luncheon - prepared by June Readen

Door Prize - was won by Marguerite Simpson.

Ray Smith - Recording Secretary

BITS AND PIECES

Congratulations to Thelma Righter, of Cheverly, who celebrated her 91st birthday last February! Thelma retired in 1982, from Bladensburg Senior High School, having worked as secretary to the principal for a number of her 24 years there. Since before, and after retirement, she has traveled extensively around the world. Thelma belongs to an active woman's group, attends a "Current Issues" class, and is a member of a card club. She had two children, one of whom is deceased, as is her husband. She also has three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Ruth Claggett, of Upper Marlboro, traveled with her daughter and two granddaughters to Beijing, China, in September. It was an interesting and exciting trip, made possible because of the talents of her granddaughter, Taylor Faulkner. Taylor was selected by the C & C Dance Studio of Bowie, along with other dancers from the area, to perform in Beijing.

Anna Mae Queen Holmes, of Washington, DC, retired as Northern Area Supervisor of Reading in 1980. She has traveled extensively since, to six continents and 32 countries! Anna Mae is very interested in historical preservation and genealogy, and as such, works as a consultant historian. She is President of North Brentwood Historical Society and a board member of the Prince George's Historical Society. (She received write-ups about her work in both the "Washington Post" and the "Prince George's Journal".) Anna Mae has three children, 16 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Congratulations to June Readon and her husband, Fred, on the celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary in August! The Readon's celebrated first with friends in Myrtle Beach, SC, and then the next week in Waldorf, with their family. Oh, and June received a new Ford 500 as an anniversary gift! The Readon's have two children and six grandchildren. June retired in 1994, as area Cafeteria Supervisor. Her culinary talents have not been put aside, though, as she is the meal planner and preparer for many of our retiree luncheons. June's homemade cakes and

cookies are a special treat!

Phyllis LaBorwit retired in 1992, from Kenilworth Elementary, returned to teach for the 1999-2000 school year, and then substituted for the next three years. She and her husband, Lou, live in Bowie, where Phyllis serves on the Bowie Beautification and Tree Preservation Committee. Phyllis is considered a master gardener, and is a past president of the Bowie-Crofton Garden Club. The LaBorwit's have traveled to Montreal, Prague, the Orkney Islands and Wales. Both Phyllis and her husband hold a distinct record: They are the first Americans to have walked coast to coast (200 miles in 13 days, through varied terrain and weather conditions) across the Highlands of Scotland 10 times! They first prepared for this fete by walking the 185 mile C & O Canal Trail, while carrying 30 pound backpacks. Our Congratulations! The LaBorwit's celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 2004. They have six grandchildren.

Linda Butler retired in 2004, from James Ryder Randall Elementary. She keeps busy with church activities, the Bowie State University Alumni Association, the Sophisticated Ladies Book Club, and exercising with the Iverson Mall Walkers. Linda enjoyed attending her first MRTA Convention in Ocean City this past September. She has traveled across country by train, making several stops en route to Los Angeles, plus other trips to other areas of the US. Linda and her husband of 40 years live in Clinton, and their family includes one daughter and son-in-law.

Donald Conway, of Beltsville, is our "Resident Volksmarcher". As of October 2005, he has walked in all 50 United States, 46 state capitals, all counties of Maryland, and participated in 778 Volksmarch events—totaling over 9000 kilometers of walks! Don has also completed all course work to earn his college PHD in sports walking. His other interest is collecting and displaying African-American History Memorabilia in area schools, senior centers, recreation centers, and some baseball stadiums (including the Bowie Baysox).



Doris Hall, of Upper Marlboro, retired from Martin Luther King Academic Center (Middle School) in 1989. She continues to be active in her church and our PGPSRA organization. Doris has enjoyed various travels to several US cities, South Africa, and cruising in the Carribean. She has one daughter, a Methodist minister in Nashville, TN, and two grandsons. Doris was married to William Hall (deceased), and was most pleased this fall, when he was posthumously honored by having the new William W. Hall Elementary School in Capitol Heights, named for him. (We are pleased to note the new school honoring him.) Mr. Hall worked as an educator in Prince George's County for over 36 years. He began as a classroom teacher, moved on to become an Elementary Supervisor, and later taught at Bowie State College.

Donald and Susan Kauffman are both Prince George's County retirees. Don retired in 1989, as K-12 English Supervisor, and Susan retired in 1997 from Parkdale High School, where she taught English since 1969. After retirement Donald returned to college and later worked several years in a law office. In 1997, the Kauffman's relocated to Sun City in Hilton Head, SC, where they live November through April, and then move to their home in Wells, Maine to spend the summers. Both Kauffman's have served on the Editorial Board of their community magazine, with Donald having contributed several articles. He has also volunteered as an election poll manager. Susan edits a charity newsletter and tutors young children once a week in the winter. Donald and Susan have found time to travel to several areas of the world. Don says he still misses the Maryland crab cakes, especially those he used to eat at The Narrows Restaurant on the Eastern Shore.

Jan Wundrow

** A correction to an item in our last issue, George Denny, Jr. retired in 2000 from Gwynn Park High, not 2002.

November 16, 2005

LaFontaine Bleu
7963 Annapolis Road
Lanham, MD

11:00 AM

Business Meeting
Entertainment - High School Group

Cost - \$17.50

Send reservation(s) to:

Dr. Edward Vest
7908 Klovstad Drive
Ft. Washington, MD 20744-1729

Make check to : PGPSRA

Include name(s) of people attending

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

The Committee met to determine how to distribute the 2005-2006 monies budgeted, as well as develop strategies for more students to apply for the scholarships. The criteria for applying was revised, and is as follows: All applicants

1. must be a high school senior or graduate from a PG County public high school
2. can be a higher education student majoring in education
3. must have at least a 3.0 GPA
4. must submit two letters of recommendation, one of which must be from a faculty member
5. must submit a one page essay explaining the intended contribution to the teaching profession

Committee members plan to visit County High Schools in November and December to visit counselors, and encourage students to apply for scholarships.

Alveta Jones, Chairperson

NEW MEDICARE PROGRAM

Did you receive the bulletin of September 19th from Howard A. Burnett, Interim Chief Executive Office? Be sure to read and consider it carefully. It is addressing the new Medicare "Part D" prescription program. This bulletin suggests waiting until some of the confusion about the government program has been clarified. The U.S. government is still working to finalize many of the details. The Prince George's County Public School (PGCPS) Board is taking time to review the new proposal and asks our patience while they do so. It is anticipated that PGCPS will continue to offer prescription drug coverage to eligible retirees and their independents. As soon as there is more specific information about Medicare Part D and our PGCPS retiree prescription drug benefits, that information will be mailed to each retiree. In the meantime, we are asked to not make any decisions or enroll in any other coverage at this time. Information is promised in plenty of time to make any changes, if necessary.

More about Medicare Part D can be found on www.medicare.gov, the official Medicare website, or call 800-633-4227. The "Medicare & You 2006" handbook should be in the mail this month, and will contain more information on the different drug plans available.

*Life is a great big canvas,
and you should throw all the paint you can
on it.*

Danny Kaye

SEE CLEARLY WHILE DRIVING

It is important that you have good visibility when driving. AAA recommends the following to ensure that you have good visibility:

- Clear clean windows unobstructed by decals, dark window tinting or objects that interfere with your view of the road.
- Good windshield wipers. Change them when the rubber is no longer soft enough to remove water, snow, and road grit from the glass surface.
- Clean working vehicle lights. Dirt limits lights' brightness. Clean them regularly.
- Mirrors that are clean, large enough, correctly angled and unobstructed to provide a complete view behind and to the side of the vehicle. Remember to readjust them to suit your needs when you change drivers.
- A properly functioning air circulation system to quickly defrost or defog the windshield and other glass surfaces. If the windshield starts to fog on the inside, open a side window slightly and turn defroster to a higher speed. If your vehicle has an air conditioner, use it to reduce the humidity and moisture collecting on the windows.
- Sunglasses that are not too dark and that are clean, for driving in bright light conditions. Glare can cause blind spots and driving fatigue. A good pair of sunglasses will help prevent this.

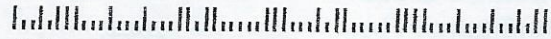
E&P Communicator - MRTA

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

12741 Holiday Lane
Bowie, MD 20716-1134

(Non-Profit Org.)
U.S. Postage
PAID
Riverdale, MD
Permit No. 2906

DATED MATERIAL



JANNETTE WUNDROW
1007 PACKTON LN
BOWIE MD 20716-1761



Luncheon
LaFontaine Bleu
November 16th
See inside for details

LEGISLATIVE ALERT !!!

Lt. Governor Steele's Commission on Education Report was publicized on September 14th. It contains 30 proposals for changing Maryland's School System. Among them are a tier system of pay (your pay would be ranked on what you teach, not seniority in the system), a portable pension system (which could take money away from our retirement/pension fund), and an increase of charter schools (instead of increasing funding for public schools). Please keep your eyes and ears open when the Commission on Education Report's ideas are proposed in the coming Maryland General Assembly session, and don't hesitate to voice your concerns to your local legislators - or the Lt. Governor's office: 410-974-2804.