

# ECHOES

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

Volume XXXXII No. 2

November 2008

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What a delight to see so many new faces at the September 24<sup>th</sup> General Membership Meeting! We were pleased to welcome Mr. Donald O'Neal, regional representative from MRSPA, who brought greetings and encouragement from the state. After the general business meeting and a delicious box lunch, Paul A. Hynes, a certified financial planner, shared some strategies we can use to protect our retirement funds. Such information is very useful and needed in these difficult economic times. Also attending the meeting was Ms. Ann Ramsey, a librarian from the Upper Marlboro Branch of the Prince George's County Memorial Library.

We congratulated Pat Tompkins for being selected the county winner of the Maryland Senior Citizens' Hall of Fame Award for her volunteer services. Pat will be honored and presented the award on October 23, 2008. The Executive Board also presented Charles Hudson with an autographed football signed by Ralph Friedgen, coach of the Maryland Terps. Charles, an avid Terps fan, has provided many years of unselfish service to our association by planning various trips and outings for our members.

Bonnie Brose has accepted the position of Member Benefits Chair on the MRSPA Board of Directors. Kudos to Bonnie for all she does above and beyond the call of duty.

I know you are well versed on all that is happening in the country. Let's suppose for a

moment that everyone believed that what he or she did could make a difference in the country, and strived to produce the best of what he or she was capable. What a country we would have! I believe that such a country is possible. Actually, if you don't get the hint, I am making a plea for more members and for your commitment to help us grow both in size and influence.

The next membership meeting / luncheon is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19, 2008, 11:00 a.m., at the Comfort Inn on Rt. 301 in Bowie. We look forward to seeing you there, and bring a friend.

Jennie Jones

### LEGISLATIVE REPORT

The financial crisis that has hit the United States is frightening for everyone. However, our Maryland State Retirement Pension System has assured us that our money is safe. The investments the system has made are widely varied. There is no chance that our checks will be cancelled. For more information directly from MSRPS, go to their website [www.SRA.state.md.us](http://www.SRA.state.md.us).

Governor O'Malley was meeting throughout October with the Public Works Board and heads of all agencies in Maryland government. There will be cuts in order to balance the budget. Shortages have occurred because of the downfall of the economy, creating lower than

expected sales and property taxes.

Jannette Wundrow, Legislative Chair

## **VOTE NOVEMBER 4TH**

### **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

We have several members who have not renewed their membership for the 2008 – 2009 year. I would encourage each person to do so as soon as possible. It has always been important for us to be part of an organization that keeps up with issues concerning teachers, especially retired teachers. Today such a membership is even more important with all the financial issues facing the government which can, and probably will, have a great impact on us as retirees and as taxpayers. We need to be vigilant in order to protect our interests in Annapolis and elsewhere. Members do make a difference. There is power in numbers!

Please feel free to contact me at 301.848.9296 or by e-mail at [bookwormy@yahoo.com](mailto:bookwormy@yahoo.com) . If you send an email, please write PGPSRA on the subject line so that I will not inadvertently miss it.

Martha Franklin, Membership Chair

#### **REMINDER:**

Our 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 our meeting will go on as scheduled.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

The sixteen members of the Community Service Committee, under the leadership of Delores Brown, are eager and ready to begin executing the five projects planned for the 2008 – 2009 year, all of which truly provide service and support to children and adults in the community.

The projects are as follows: 1.) Provide back to school supplies and toiletries for Shepherd's Cove homeless shelter and Prince George's Family Care Center in January; 2.) Provide funds for children to shop for shoes in April; 3.) Donate Share baskets for three families in the northern area at Thanksgiving, three in the central area at Christmas, and three in the southern area at Easter; 4.) assist homeless seniors at Fairmont Heights High School with graduation fees and prom attire. The members of the committee will also plan social events to allow for more direct interaction with the families at Shepherd's Cove.

We are asking for donations of the following items at the January meeting: tablets, notebooks, notebook paper, book bags, pens, pencils, and other items deemed as school supplies. Other requested items include personal hygiene products such as deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, socks, underwear for elementary age children, brushes, wash cloths, soap, lotion, and shampoo. Monetary donations are accepted as well. All are greatly appreciated.

Gretel James, Community Service Member

## TREASURER'S REPORT

The treasurer's report is as follows:

### Beginning Balance:

Checking Account - \$24000.86

Savings Account - 3005.72

Receipts - 444.86

Expenditures - 801.19

### Ending Balance:

Checking Account - 23644.53

Savings Account - 3005.72

Total Assets - 26650.25

E. Vest, Treasurer

## PGPSRA MEETING / LUNCHEON

DATE: November 19, 2008

TIME: 11:00 A.M.

PLACE: Comfort Inn  
Route 301 at Route 50  
4500 Crain Highway  
Bowie, Maryland

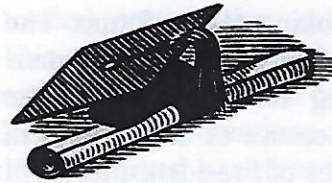
COST: \$26.00 per person

MENU: Quiche and Caesar salad,  
cheesecake, iced tea,  
coffee, or hot tea

Entertainment will be provided by a string quartet from Bowie High School.

Please send your check, payable to PGPSRA, for the appropriate amount to Dr. Edward Vest, Treasurer; 7908 Klovstad Drive, Fort Washington, MD 20744-1729. The deadline for reservations is November 12, 2008.

## SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE



All of our five scholarship winners for 2008, three high school students and two continuing college students, are enrolled in various institutions and have submitted official proof to the treasurer of the Prince George's Scholarship Fund, Inc. The treasurer has forwarded a check to the respective institutions. Our Scholarship Committee will attempt to stay in touch with them.

The 2008-2009 Scholarship Drive is now in progress - \$350.00 thus far, but there is time!! If 200 of our members become Silver Contributors with a minimum donation of \$25.00, we will reach our goal of \$5000.00. Levels of donation are:

- Silver Contributors \$25 - \$49.00
- Gold contributors \$50 - \$99.00
- Platinum Contributors \$100.00 +

Remember, all contributions will be accepted!! Our goal is to be able to award at least two additional \$2000.00 scholarships to persons entering teaching or already in education. Your contribution will be appreciated.

At our general meetings / luncheons, the committee will continue our 50/50 raffle. Pamela Gross was our September winner.

Please note that my phone number is 301.772.5594. I am sorry if you called the number listed in September *ECHOES* and discovered my phone had been disconnected. Call me at 301.772.5594 if you need more details.

Alveta Jones, Scholarship Chair

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

It is time to be looking to the future. The Chair of the Nominating Committee, Bonnie Brose, is accepting nominations for the 2009-2010 year. Because of the changes in our bylaws, the office of President-Elect will serve for two years and then assume the duties of President for the following two years. This rather long commitment is meant to allow the officer to learn all aspects of the job and be able to work more efficiently for the Association.

The other offices to consider are Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer. These are one year terms. A slate must be presented at the January meeting. Thus, nominations need to be presented to the Nominating Committee by the end of November and should be in writing.

Your Association needs you. Please consider taking a position.

Members of the Nominating Committee are as follows:

Bonnie Curry Brose, Chair  
14700 Willoughby Road  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-7754  
or email at [bcbrose@comcast.com](mailto:bcbrose@comcast.com))

Kitty Walker  
12140 Palisades Drive  
Dunkirk, MD 20754

Jane Jones 5912 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Hyattsville, MD 20782)

Bonnie Brose, Nominating Chair

## E & PS COMMITTEE

(From the *E & PS Communicator*)

You are always hearing ads suggesting that the reverse mortgage is just the thing for seniors. This can be an expensive way to tap home equity.

Before you take out a reverse mortgage:

\*\* Consider the alternatives. You can sell your home and move to cheaper quarters. Or perhaps a family member can provide in return for a portion of your home's equity to be paid back from your estate when you die.

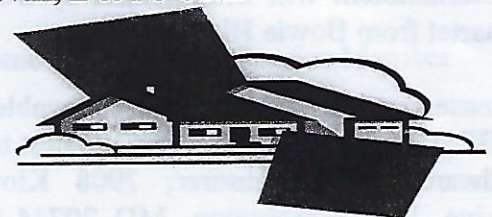
\*\* Educate yourself. Start with AARP's mortgage page [www.aaarp.org/money/revmort](http://www.aaarp.org/money/revmort). This has a calculator to help you determine how much money you can get.

\*\* Get good counseling. It's required if you take a federally backed reverse mortgage, but you should request it even if you're getting a private loan.

\*\* Find an honest lender. Look for lenders through the National Reverse Mortgage Lenders Association. Compare rates and terms from at least three.

There is an excellent article in the October, 2008 *Consumer Reports* about reverse mortgages if you are considering one.

Fred Novak, E & PS Chair



## **Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame Winner**

It is with pleasure that we announce **Gail Patricia Tompkins** of Greenbelt, Maryland, as our county winner of the Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame Award for 20028!

Patricia has served as the Prince George's Public School Retirees Association Membership Committee co-chair for the past three years and as a member of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee for two years. She also holds membership in the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association.

Patricia is an active participant of the IFCMD (Interfaith Fairness Coalition of Maryland, which exists to foster a welcoming embrace of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender people in both membership and all positions of leadership in religious life) as an Executive Board member, assisting with twice yearly interfaith worship services and representing IFCMD at community gatherings. She has developed lesson plans for a series on forgiveness and has volunteered with the Maryland Public TV Phone Bank.

Patricia is an involved member of Paint Branch Unitarian Universalist Church in College Park. There she helps as an office assistant one day each month, and she provides lunch for the homeless at the Community Ministries Café another day each month. Patricia is a member of the choir – even an occasional soloist. She is also a member of the Arts Council, the Chalice Dancers, and the Budget leadership Team. Patricia's other volunteer duty is as a Worship Associate, working with ministers and guest speakers to prepare Sunday services.

Patricia was the key organizer of the Maryland MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Drivers) organization, established in 1981. (This was inspired by the sad loss of her son.) Patricia has since co-chaired the State Coordinating Committee for MADD. She has also served a term as Chairperson of the Prince George's County Addiction Council.

An American University alum, Patricia sings in their chorus.

She is a very calm, caring individual who gives respite care once a week by sitting with a bedridden friend to allow her 24-hour care-giving son some free time.

Patricia is a friendly, energetic lady with a wealth of interesting experiences, having taught in Japan as well as in the U.S.A.

We are most pleased to recognize Patricia as a Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame Award winner, and an involved member of our PGPSRA!

### **THOMAS JEFFERSON'S 10 RULES FOR A GOOD LIFE**

1. Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.
2. Never trouble another for what you can do yourself.
3. Never spend your money before you have it.
4. Never buy what you do not want because it is cheap, it will never be dear to you.
5. Pride costs us more than hunger, thirst and cold.
6. Never repent for having eaten too little.
7. Nothing is troublesome that we do willingly.
8. Don't let the evils which never happened cost you pain.
9. Always take things by their smooth handle.
10. When angry, count to 10 before you speak; if very angry, count to 100.

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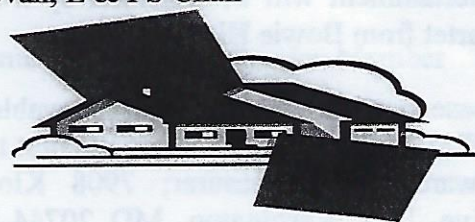
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## **BITS AND PIECES**

Congratulations to Grace Grant on the celebration of her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in June 2008! Grace is a very active senior, who still enjoys snow and water skiing, photography, Bridge games, book clubs, and tutoring math to high school students. She is also a traveler. She has been throughout the U.S.A., Canada, and Mexico, traveled by train through Europe, and toured Switzerland, Austria, Italy, and New Zealand. Grace has sailed on cruises to Hawaii, the Caribbean (including Cancun and Venezuela), the Mediterranean, and South America. Grace retired from Friendly High School in 1978. She and her husband built a retirement home in Denver, North Carolina, where she still lives, since the sad loss of her husband some years ago.

Patricia Tompkins, a Parkdale High School retiree, and her husband Charles of Greenbelt, sailed on their first ever cruise on the Baltic Sea. They thoroughly enjoyed themselves on board ship, as well as visiting walled villages in Karlskrona, Sweden, and Tallin, Estonia. The Tompkins rode bicycles along the Baltic Coast and toured palaces in St. Petersburg, Russia. They visited a home complete with a sauna in Finland and shopped at numerous street fairs, while walking on cobblestone streets. Each evening was a special wonder, as they enjoyed being in the land of the "white lights" where sunset is after 11p.m., and sunrise is at 3 a.m. Lost luggage and a cancelled flight home did not dampen the Tompkins' holiday spirit.

Adrienne Cannon, an Eleanor Roosevelt High School retiree who lives in Alexandria, VA, spent her summer at Interlochen Adult Band Camp. Adrienne went to enhance her musical skills on the clarinet, joining other musicians for camaraderie while playing 90

minute rehearsals each day, and culminating with a grand concert. Adrienne and her husband Bob spent their free time exploring the surrounding picturesque area of Lake Michigan. When at home, Adrienne is busy volunteering as a tour guide and serving as co-chair of the Kinder Konzerts and Instrument Petting Zoos at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, or performing with the Northern Virginia Community College Band of Alexandria.

Dorothy Campbell of Largo retired from Fairmont Heights High School in 1995. Her work in education continues, as she now works part time as an academic advisor for Prince George's Community at Andrews Air Force Base. She has enjoyed travels to England, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, the Ukraine, Russia, Israel, and Hawaii. Dorothy has one daughter and two grandsons.

Charley and Ann Hudson of Silver Spring took a two week cruise in July, after flying to Europe and boarding ship on the Black Sea. The Hudsons spent seven days and nights cruising on the Danube River, including sailing through Iron Gates (locks) as the ship navigated the most difficult part of the river. They experienced interesting port stops in Budapest, Hungary; Croatia (where they had dinner with a Croatian family), Belgrade, Serbia (where they rode on Marshall Tito's Blue Train), and three cities in Bulgaria, followed by a bus trip to Bucharest, Romania, where they spent two days before flying home.

Jenice Gordon retired in 1998 from New Carrollton Elementary School. She and her husband have relocated to Wilmington, NC, where they celebrated their 45<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in July. Jenice stays involved in her community while volunteering with Hospice of Children's Crafts for the Festival



of Trees. She takes water color courses, is a member of the Wilmington Art Association and the Red Hats Club, and serves as security person for her subdivision. She and her husband take advantage of day trips to historical sites, beaches, and art displays in southeastern North Carolina. The Gordons have one son, who is a mounted police officer in the city of Wilmington and treasurer of the Carolinas Mounted Patrol Association.

Gondelieve Bartley, an H. W. Wheatley retiree, and her husband James, of Upper Marlboro, spent part of their summer vacationing in Europe and visiting family and friends in Belgium and Holland. After a two-day visit to picturesque Kopenhagen, they boarded a cruise ship for a 10 day Baltic Sea journey. Port stops included Oslo, Norway; Stockholm, Sweden; Helsinki, Finland; Tallin, Estonia; and St. Petersburg, Russia --- definitely a highlight stop in the historic city with its many magnificent palaces, art, and ornate churches. Stormy weather prevented a stop in Gdynia, Poland, but entertaining activities aboard ship made the trip an enjoyable adventure for Gondelieve and James.

To contribute to BITS AND PIECES, contact Jannette Wundrow [jannetewundrow@comcast.net](mailto:jannetewundrow@comcast.net) or 10107 Packton Lane, Bowie, MD 20716.

### CONVENTION 2009

At our September 24<sup>th</sup> meeting, Don O'Neal, a MRSPA Regional Representative, mentioned the MRSPA Convention being planned for 2009. The convention will be held on September 8, 9, 10, 2009, in Ocean City. Mark these days in your yearly planner and plan to join your fellow Maryland retirees for a weekend of "entertainment that soothes your spirit ... activities to energize

your mind ... and challenges among members of local units." It sounds like a great weekend.

If you have suggestions, questions, or comments, you may call this toll free number - 877.625.6782 or send an email to [mrspa@mrspa.org](mailto:mrspa@mrspa.org).

### FROM THE INTERNET

#### Some People Never Retire

- Golfers never retire, they just lose their drive.
- Lumberjacks never retire, they just pine away.
- Accountants don't retire, they just lose their balance.
- Bank managers don't retire, they just lose interest.
- Vehicle managers? They re-tire every day.
- Teachers don't retire, they just mark time.
- Roofers don't retire, they just wipe the slate clean.
- Engineers never retire, they just lose their bearings.
- Beekeepers never retire, they just buzz off.
- Musicians never retire, they just decompose.
- Farmers never retire, they just go to seed.
- Watchmakers never retire, they just wind down.
- Academics never retire, they just lose their faculties.
- Painters never retire, they just put a gloss on it.
- Tree surgeons never retire, they just branch out.

DEADLINE FOR JANUARY *ECHOES*

December 1, 2008

[ahutchinson00@hotmail.com](mailto:ahutchinson00@hotmail.com)

**Prince George's Public School  
Retirees Association  
Dr. Edward N. Vest  
7908 Klovstad Drive  
Fort Washington, MD 20744**

**DATED MATERIAL**

**NON-PROFIT  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
SOUTHERN MD  
PERMIT #2151**

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING &  
LUNCHEON**

November 19, 2008  
Comfort Inn, Bowie, MD  
11:00 a.m. - Business Meeting  
12:00 - Luncheon

Reservations Due – Nov. 12

**2008 - 2009**

Do more than belong, participate.

Do more than care, help.