



ECHOES

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S PUBLIC SCHOOL RETIREES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

XXXXVI No. 2

November 2012

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings, Fellow Retirees: Wherever you may be, locally or afar, I hope you are enjoying the beauty of the season.

Our first meeting of the 2012-2013 year was held on September 26 and was packed full of good information. The two speakers were Dr. Duane Arborgast, Acting Deputy Superintendent of Prince George's County Public Schools and Stuart Tucker, president of MRSPA.

Dr. Arborgast gave us a thorough update of the state of the schools and his vision for the continued growth and improvement of the educational experience of the students. Prince George's, the 18th largest system in the nation has among its current enrollment, 123 thousand students. Represented in that number are 144 countries.

The system now offers two innovative programs for which we can all feel proud. The Academy of Health and Science for ninth graders at Prince George's Community College prepares them for entrance into the work force upon graduation from high school. Four engineering classes are taught at Oxon Hill High School by a professor from the University of Maryland. One half of the class is made up of Afro-American females, all looking to attend the University after graduation to continue their studies in engineering. Many good things are happening in our schools and there is continued

improvement, according to data. We must tell the good news!

Other innovative ideas he wishes to implement include the reorganization of the central office to make it more responsive to the community and more supportive of the schools, student based budgets to address the specific needs of the students, compensation for employees to help retain the best talent, and continued creative educational approaches to attract students.

His philosophy, "Theory of Change" maintains that school is the engine of change and there must be collaboration among teachers and also a strategic plan for engaging the community.

Among the challenges facing the school system are small schools which are costly, decreasing property values, and the high rate of foreclosure. These factors have a negative influence on the monies budgeted for education. Dr. Arborgast was very candid in acknowledging that the lack of opportunity, lack of exposure, and lack of access to the mainstream are major factors contributing to the disparity in the achievement among various ethnic groups.

A super search is on for a superintendent to replace Dr. Hite, who after making great strides, left the system to take up the reins in Philadelphia Public Schools. Thus far, the transition in our school system seems to be progressing smoothly.

Stu Tucker also got us very excited about "Moving Forward: Exploring Change" with MRSPA. We live an age when nothing is constant but change and must be ready to embrace it. One major change taken up by the state association is that of replacing the Convention with "The Every Member Event" which promises to educate and entertain. The first one will take place in May, 2014.

Contrary to what was published in the September issue of Echoes, the November general meeting will be held at Comfort Inn, 4500 Crain Highway, Bowie, MD at 11:00 AM. Come hear updates on changes occurring within the healthcare marketplace and highlights of the United Legal Benefits Plan offered by MRSPA. We promise to provide performances by student groups at some of our meetings this year rather than all speakers.

We are still in need of someone to fill the position of President-elect. TAKE THE PLUNGE!!

Gretel James

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Your Help Is Needed! For the last few years, the membership has adopted a budget that includes \$10,000.00 for five \$2000.00 scholarships to be awarded to persons planning to enter the teaching profession or to higher education students majoring in education. In 2012, only one student applied for the scholarship and, by consensus of the Executive Committee, this person was awarded \$4000.00.

The Scholarship Committee needs your help. Most of us were engaged in teaching for a number of years. We need your help

in advocating for the teaching profession and to let family, friends, and neighbors know that these scholarships are available. We need to award more scholarships. The committee is continuing to look at other criteria for receiving scholarships. However, most of us were teachers and are proud of the profession. Your help is needed to spread the word that our scholarships are available for those interested in pursuing a career in education.

Alveta Jones & Delores Brown,
Co-Chairpersons

**TREASURER'S REPORT
September 2012**

Opening Balance:

Checking Account \$31113.35

Savings Account 3022.35

Activity – Checking Account

Receipts 691.13

Expenditures 950.32

Savings Account – No activity

Balance as of September 30:

Checking account 30854.16

Savings Account 3022.35

Total Assets: 33876.51

E. Vest, Treasurer

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

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

November 6th is voting day in the U.S.A.! October 27th is the first day of early voting in Prince George's County. Besides electing a President, Vice President, and other legislative representatives, there will be seven specific Maryland items on which to voice your opinion.

The November ballot will have **four Referendum issues** for Marylanders to vote on: **(1) Gaming Expansion:** to determine if another Maryland casino should open, specifically, in Prince George's County, **(2) Public Institutions of Higher Education:** to decide whether undocumented students who have graduated from a Maryland high school and acquired 60 credits from a community college, and whose parents have paid state taxes for the past three years, will be granted in-state college tuition, **(3) Civil Marriage Protection Act:** to recognize marriage between same sex couples, **(4) Congressional Redistricting Plan;** to approve the redistricting plan drawn by a state legislative committee.

There will also be **three Constitutional Amendments** on the November ballot: **(1) Qualifications for Prince George's County Orphans' Court (also called Probate Court) Judges,** **(2) Qualifications for Baltimore County Orphans' Court (also called Probate Court) Judges,** **(3) Suspension and Removal of Elected Officials:** specifically, when county officials have been charged with illegal acts.

Maryland ended its fiscal year with over a half-billion budget surplus! This comes from a tax increase of people with incomes over \$100,000 and some better than expected tax-based revenue.

Prince George's County has a new interim

School Superintendent in place as of August 4th, Dr. Alvin Crawley, formerly with the Office of Special Education in Washington, D.C. The hours for some middle schools this year will be extended by 40 minutes. This will allow students to take a language course, or participate in music or sports activities.

The breakdown of the shifting of the pension costs from the Maryland State Retirement Pension System (MSRPS) to the local school boards is as follows: 50 percent in FY13, 65 percent in FY14, 85 percent in FY15, and the full 100 percent in FY 16.

MRSPA continues to work closely with AARP Maryland, National Retired Teachers Association (NRTA), and United Seniors of Maryland (USM) on retiree and senior issues.

Jannette Wundrow and Sue Finan.
Co-Chairpersons

COMMUNITY SERVICE

"BACK IN STRIDE AGAIN" This school year 2012-2013, the Community Service Committee will be involved in the following projects: a mid-year school supplies drive in January, a shoe drive, share baskets at Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter, a coat drive, and assistance with high school graduation for selected students.

Specific schools in the northern area of the county have been notified and have accepted the assistance from PGPSRA. The schools are Bladensburg, Mount Ranier, and Riverdale Elementary Schools, Hyattsville Middle, and DuVal High School.

The Community Service Committee welcomes new members. Our next meeting is scheduled for December 5th at PGCEA Center.

Courtney Pringle, Newsletter Writer

MARYLAND SENIOR CITIZENS HALL OF FAME HONOREE

It is with pleasure and pride that we announce the recent induction of **Calvin McMillion**, a member of PGPSRA, into the Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame. This gentleman was selected as an outstanding senior volunteer from many nominees throughout the state.

Calvin McMillion retired from Prince George's Public Schools as a business teacher at Largo High School in 1987. He is an active member of PGPSRA and MRSPA.

Calvin has been involved in the Lions Club International since joining as a young man in Ronceverte, West Virginia, in 1952. After moving to Maryland, he transferred his membership to the Forestville Gateway Lions Club, where he has served on numerous committees and held all designated offices, including, president and treasurer --- more than once! He is currently Club Director and Liaison for District 24-A. Because of his dedicated work with Forestville Gateway Lions Club, Calvin has received many awards --- even being named "Lion of the Year" four times! He has 60 years of perfect meeting attendance!

Calvin holds a life membership with the Camp Springs Elks Lodge, where he has contributed hundreds of volunteer hours over the years that have benefited an infinite number of special education students. He has sought out projects that have enhanced the lives of children throughout Prince George's County. Calvin is a charter member of the South East Shrine Club and continues as a driver for children with special needs.

He is a life member of both the American Legion Post #259 in Clinton and the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #9619 in Morningside. He also holds a life membership in the Centennial Lodge #174 of Masons in Upper Marlboro.

Calvin is a caring, friendly fellow, always willing to lend a hand in any situation. He and his wife Barbara are residents of Waldorf, MD. They belong to Calvary Methodist Church, where he has served on the finance committee, the administration board and with the United Methodist Men.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

We were pleased to welcome three new members at our September meeting - Lauvinia Alston, Mary Boyd, and Gloria Douglas. We invite them to assist us with their time and talent to make PGPSRA an even stronger advocate for our public school system and for our retirees.

There were a number of prize winners at our last meeting. Janette Bell, Delores Brown, Bill Brose, and Gayle Jenkins won door prizes. Sue Finan, Stanley Tweedy, L. Fowble, and Lillie James won lunches. Dan Williams was the Grand Prize winner.

Join us in November for our holiday meeting. Bring a friend, better yet, a prospective member. It'll be informative, and fun.

Lorraine Johnson, Chairperson

Interesting Fact

Prince George's County originally extended from the Charles County line to the Pennsylvania border.

BITS AND PIECES

Happy **November** birthday wishes to Mrs. Julia Derry of Charlottesville, VA, who will be celebrating her **100th birthday** on the 28th; to Ms. Huguette Audin of Mt. Pleasant, SC, who will be turning 90 years old on the 19th; and Mrs. Helen Stevens of Ormondo Beach, FL, who will be having her 94th birthday on the 21st.

Happy December birthday greetings to Mrs. Nana Bush of Marysville, TN, who will be celebrating her 93rd birthday on the 16th; Mr. Dale Woodburn of College Park, MD; who will be marking his 93rd birthday on the 17th; Mrs. Betty Moore of Port Orange, FL, who is turning 92 years old on the 19th; Mrs. Josephine Marzetti of Catonsville, who will be having her 94th birthday on the 24th; and Mrs. Annie Barbour who will be celebrating her 97th birthday on the 28th.

Frances (Fran) Koontz of Davidsonville and Susan Livera of Bowie both retired from Rockledge Elementary in Bowie. Fran retired in 2008 as a classroom teacher and science coordinator, and Susan retired in 2010 as a guidance counselor. Since their retirement the two ladies have combined their interests and efforts to have Rockledge officially recognized this past May as a Certified Maryland Green School. Fran and Susan spent many hours on their "labor of love" project to expand the school science curriculum with more information about the environment, particularly about the water and wildlife in the Chesapeake Bay. A program to recycle cans, bottles, plastic, and paper, which the children have been encouraged to separate and deposit in appropriate bins, is now in place. Susan and Fran involved the city of Bowie to

supply recycling bins and frequent pickups. Trees were planted using money donated by Baltimore Gas and Electric. Congratulations to Fran and Susan for their dedication and extensive documentation to make this environmental project at Rockledge Elementary a success!

Yvonne Felton of Upper Marlboro retired in 2003 as a Regional Special Education Specialist in the Bowie area. In 2005 she became a licensed minister, and in 2007, earned her Master of Divinity degree from Howard University. This past May she received a Doctorate of Ministry degree from the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia University. Now that she has completed all of her schooling, Yvonne intends to do seminars, workshops, and retreats with a concentration on gender justice in the church. She also has plans to begin water aerobics classes at the Sports and Learning Center in Landover this fall. Yvonne's husband also holds a Doctor of Ministry degree, and together they serve as associate ministers at First Baptist Church of Highland Park. They enjoy cruising together and have taken three Caribbean cruises. The Feltons have six grandchildren.

Sonya Hamilton retired in 2004 from the Comer School Development Office. A new job in education followed, from 2004 - 2010, as CAO and Principal of Greater Mt. Nebo Christian Academy. For three years during the same period, Sonya was a member of the faculty at the Yale University Comer School Development Program Office serving as a consultant to the Laurel, Delaware School System. Sonya and her husband, of Upper Marlboro, have enjoyed RV camping trips to several states in the Mid Atlantic and

the South. They also like cruising and have sailed to Bermuda, the East Indies, and West Indies. Sonya enjoys cooking when she is at home. The Hamiltons have three daughters (two of whom teach in DC charter schools) two-sons-in law, seven grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Johanna Guccione of Alexandria, VA, retired from Owens Road Elementary in 2002. Beginning immediately afterwards, and for the next five years. She taught English for Speakers of Other languages (ESOL) in Fairfax County. The following year Johanna volunteered at Rose Hill Elementary in Fairfax as an ESOL tutor. She has since taken classes with the Smithsonian Resident Associates in history, art, and culture and participated in art classes at the Torpedo Factory and Workhouse Art Center. Johanna is a member of the Basket Bunch of Prince George's County, the Springfield Acres Garden Club, and a wine group called The Great Courses. Her hobbies include painting miniatures, hand-making paper, needle felting, basketry, and gardening. Despite her schedule of involvement, she has found time to travel to China, Italy, Canada, has taken a National Parks tour, and has traveled to the John Campbell Folk School of Basketry in North Carolina and to several other states in the USA.

Lois Anne Williams retired in 2011 as a medial specialist at Friendly High School. She and her husband live in Accokeek, MD, but enjoy spending time at their vacation home in Deep Creek Lake. The Williams have three adult children and four grandchildren. Lois Anne now fills her days with reading, participating in book discussion groups, volunteering at her local library, scrapbooking, stamping, learning to quilt, and attending her

grandchildren's activities. She looks forward to visiting family in Florida and South Carolina as often as possible. The Williams have vacationed in New Orleans and Fairhope, Alabama. They are planning a trip to Asheville, NC, this fall.

Dr. Robert Shockley of Fayetteville, PA, a former Assistant Superintendent, spent his 91st birthday on the Royal Caribbean's Freedom of the Seas, as a gift from his son and daughter-in-law, Jim and Karen. This cruise marked his 35th one, so he is now a "diamond-plus cruiser" on RCL. In addition to cruising, Dr. Shockley has visited almost 100 countries. He has also authored several books on educational topics, with the most recent one being *School Administrator's Factomatic* (Prentice Hall), co-authored with Frank Tracy and Robert Tocha. In 1985 Dr. Shockley's wife Thelma (Tommy) and Dorothy Carpenter started an annual Prince George's County Luncheon for retirees of the county who lived full or part-time in Florida. These luncheons became very popular, and in 1998 the Cardanos teamed up with the Shockleys and added an annual cruise. The luncheons have been dropped, but the cruise is still an annual on-going event. Come join the Prince George's retiree group for the next scheduled cruise in March 2013 out of Port Canaveral. Email : fandec@bellsouth.net or phone 386.668.6017.

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

CORRECTION

The phone contact number for the PGPSRA newsletter was incorrectly listed in the September issue. It should be 301.577.6938.

NECROLOGY/REMEMBRANCE



Teleford Anderson	09/01/12
Eleanor Buck	07/31/12
Nicholas Bush	01/06/12
Phyllis A. Dunan	07/12/12
Mary Priscilla Moore	04/30/12
James Gordon Neilson, Jr.	06/10/12
Glenda Faith Skolaski	05/10/12

Jannie Goldston, Chairperson

From: CONSUMER CONNECTION

You think you erased everything from your smartphone or computer before getting rid of it. Many bought used were found to still have sensitive data, even information about your banking or social security information. Some devices are hard to completely erase.

The IPod, Iphone, and Blackberry don't usually carry the same risk: a suggestion instead of trying to sell - smash it to bits.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Laurel Museum is in need of volunteers. It is a great fit for retired teachers. There is an opportunity to learn an interesting part of history and to work with children of all ages. Training is provided. If interested, call Monica at the Laurel Museum (301.725.7975) or email assist@laurelhistoricalsociety.org

PGPSRA MEETING/LUNCHEON

Date:	November 28, 2012
Time:	11:00 a.m.
Place:	Comfort Inn Bowie 4500 Crain Highway Bowie, MD 20716
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 November 21, 2012.

LUNCHEON RESERVATION FORM

Name: _____

Lunches Ordered: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Names of Guests: _____

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Give Dr. Vest your e-mail address and get
the latest news quickly and efficiently.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ECHOES
December 1, 2012

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

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

DATED MATERIAL

**PRESORTED STANDARD
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**MEMBERSHIP MEETING &
LUNCHEON**

November 26, 2012
Comfort Inn Bowie
11:00 a.m.
Reservations Due – November 21

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!