

ECHOES

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S PUBLIC SCHOOL RETIREES ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

XXXXVI No. 1

September 2012

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings,

It is with joy and honor that I greet you as I begin my tenure as President of this organization for the 2012 -2013 year. As I look back over the past year, I see that there were many challenges to the future well being of retirees. Although, in the end, we learned that a portion of pension funding has been shifted to local jurisdictions, we feel our constant presence in Annapolis had some impact on the process of the shifting. A **“let me down easy approach”** was taken and the process will take place over a period of five years rather than all at once. Be reminded that there is the potential for changes to health care benefits, therefore, we must remain vigilant.

I am grateful for the outstanding leadership of the various committees of this organization and with their continued work, along with MRSPA, I, as President, plan to continue to fulfill our purpose of serving the members and the community by providing information and services pertaining to legislation, consumerism, education and compassionate care.

All work and no play can make for dull living; therefore, as part of our yearly calendar, we will continue our efforts to provide entertainment at some of our bi-monthly meetings and local travel to sights and events during the year.

Share The Load, for there is much work to be done. We urge the newly retired and the not so newly retired to join your state and local retirees' associations. Check out the schedule of meetings and events on our website.

Gretel T. James

FROM THE MRSPA IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Many thanks to all of the Prince George's Public School Employees Association who supported me and my programs during the last two years when I served as president of the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association. I could not have asked for more from my local, and I am proud of the members who have served and are still serving on the state level of our association. As I have often said, PGPSRA and MRSPA are only as strong as the members make it by giving of their time and knowledge. We, in Prince George's County, have much to contribute, and our influence can be seen in all areas of the state association. I look forward to continue working with you to strengthen PGPSRA and provide a great association for our retirees.

Bonnie Curry Brose

TREASURER'S REPORT – JUNE 30, 2012

OPENING BALANCE:

CHECKING ACCOUNT: \$22024.03

SAVINGS ACCOUNT: 3021.97

RECEIPTS:

CHECKING ACCOUNT: 1360.93

SAVINGS ACCOUNT: NO ACTIVITY

EXPENDITURES:

CHECKING ACCOUNT: 6844.62

TOTAL ASSETS:

CHECKING ACCOUNT: 16540.34

SAVINGS ACCOUNT: 3021.97

TOTAL ASSETS 19562.31

PGPSRA acknowledges the following gifts during the 2011 – 2012 fiscal year:

Community Service Committee:

Jannie Goldston Alice Konze
John Sisson Joan Sloan
Jannette Wundrow

Scholarship Fund

Elizabeth L. Clarke-Rich
Dallas Dean Charlotte Faison
Donald Kauffman Crystal Morris
Shirley Toye

E. Vest, Treasurer

CARRIBBEAN CRUISE

Join fellow Prince George's County retirees on an exciting 7-day cruise in March 2013. For more details, contact Ferd Cardano: phone – 386.668.6017; e-mail- fandcc@bellsouth.net; or by mail at 25 Seminole Dr., Debary FL 32713.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

Governor O'Malley called a special session of the General Assembly that convened on May 14, 2012. The state budget reconciliation bill passed, resulting in a vote to shift almost half of the cost of the teacher pension system to the local jurisdictions in the coming year, and increasing the amount to 100% of the pension cost over the next four years. As a result of this funding shift, \$19 million will need to be included in the 2013 Prince George's County budget to begin to pay for the teacher pension costs.

There will be an increase of a quarter percent in the state taxes for individuals whose income is more than \$100,000 and one-half percent for joint filers with incomes above \$150,000. Without this added revenue, education budgets would have been cut drastically, libraries would have had their budgets slashed, college tuitions would have risen dramatically, and state employees would have been greatly affected.

Maryland will continue to extend collective bargaining rights to state employees, increase tax breaks for solar, geothermal, and other green energy projects, and become the first state to ban arsenic in chicken feed! There will be a tax increase on smokeless tobacco products and little cigars.

After the President signed into law the Affordable Health Care Act in 2010, Maryland was the first state to begin drawing up plans to implement the law. Each state will receive federal money to help with the law's implementation. This Affordable Health Care Act has already benefited MANY previously uninsured Marylanders. With all Americans required to obtain health care coverage, or pay a penalty, this will insure that people without insurance can no longer wait until they are

ill, go to the emergency room, and know that their medical costs are being paid for by SOMEBODY. (They must participate in paying for their medical care, unless they receive a special hardship waiver.) Benefits for everyone include: your plan cannot cancel your insurance coverage after you get sick or refuse to accept you because of a pre-existing condition, you will be entitled to most routine preventive services without a co-payment, the co-payment cost of prescription drugs for Medicare participants will gradually decrease through 2020 (when the “doughnut hole” is eliminated, and your insurer cannot set a lifetime limit on benefit payouts.

We are sorry to learn that Dr. Hite has accepted the position of Superintendent of Philadelphia Schools. He was a very competent, personable, and accessible Prince George’s County Superintendent, who put in place several new academic programs for high school students in our county. He was seen frequently in Annapolis, requesting additional funding for students and staff. Dr. Hite will be missed. We wish him continued success in his new job.

Maryland Granted No Child Waiver! Maryland will no longer have to show that 100% of students tested proficient in math and reading by 2014. Instead, schools will have until 2017 to cut in half the number of students who are not proficient. (*The Washington Post*, May 30, 2012)

Jannette Wundrow and Sue Finan
Legislative Chairs

COMMUNITY SERVICE

PGPSRA, with your help, we did it! The Community Service Committee has had another successful year. Commitments to

Oxon Hill and Glassmanor Elementary Schools, Oxon Hill Middle School, and Oxon Hill High School were completed successfully.

Share baskets, donations of coats and school supplies, and a shoe drive were projects at our chosen elementary and middle schools. The high school project was different but went off without a hitch. Four needy students were able to meet their financial obligations for graduation and smile all the way to the prom, thanks to the \$500.00 each child received from PGPSRA.

Community Service Committee members say thanks to each of you for your participation and support. We look forward to the 2012 – 2013 school year, at which time our focus will be on serving children in the northern area of Prince George’s County.

Courtney Pringle, Newsletter Writer

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

New members bring new ideas and energy to our organization. We are happy to welcome three new members at this time – Jo Ann Bates, Barbara A. Leroux, and Georgianna Carr-Cameron. We look forward to their active participation during the coming year.

The prize winners at our May meeting at the Fontaine Bleu were Kitty Walker, Charlene Jacob, Eleanor Ford, and Ruth Asbury. Our grand prize winner was Jannette Bell. Kelly Randolph was welcomed as a special guest. Please continue to encourage your former colleagues and new retirees to join us in our endeavors. NUMBERS DO COUNT!

Lorraine Johnson, Membership Chair

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The 2012-13 budget has a line item for scholarship of \$10,000.00 to benefit five persons in receiving \$2000.00 if they enter college in the fall of 2013 planning to major in teacher education or if they are already enrolled in an institution of higher learning and are majoring in teacher education. In fact, there will be additional money for the recipient because you have generously made donations to the Scholarship Committee through personal gifts and/or supporting the raffles. Thanks, for all you contribute!

Alexis Robinson of Douglass High School was awarded a \$4000.00 scholarship in May. She has stated that she will be attending Clark College in Atlanta, Georgia, majoring in Dance Education. The treasurer of the Prince George's Scholarship Fund, Inc., of which we are a member, will be forwarding the money to her as soon as he receives proof that she is enrolled at the university. Our congratulations to her!

All members are encouraged to tell their friends and neighbors that our organization offers at least five \$2000.00 scholarships a year for persons entering teacher education. It takes all of us to get the word out!

Alveta S. Jones, Scholarship Chairperson

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

According to Lois G. Williams, Director of Volunteers for Melwood, there is an immediate need for volunteers to assist instructors in teaching reading and writing skills to adult students in the Employee Support Services Program at the Dower House Campus in Upper Marlboro.

Interested persons may contact Ms. Williams at volunteer@melwood.org or Monday & Wednesday at 301.559.2724

TRAVEL UPDATE

The first outing planned for 2012 -2013 is a trip to Toby's Dinner Theater in Columbia, MD, to see *The Color Purple*. The event is scheduled for Wednesday, October 17, 2012. The cost is \$70.00. That price covers round-trip bus transportation, bus driver tip, buffet lunch, show ticket, and gratuity. The price is based on a minimum of thirty-five persons. We will go with twenty-five, but the cost will be \$5.00 more per person.

All theaters today will give **NO REFUNDS**, and they require full payment forty-five days before the show date. I have paid a \$200.00 deposit which PGPSRA will forfeit if we have to cancel because we do not get enough people to go. I must receive your check no later than September 10, 2012. The trip is open to family members and friends on a first-paid, first-to-go basis. Checks should be made payable to PGPSRA—Tours. Checks should be mailed to Charles L. Hudson, Hunter Glen Apt 319, 3154 Gracefield Road, Silver Spring, MD 20904.

Bus Schedule: Meet the bus at the Forest Memorial Church parking lot. Get there by 9:00 a.m. The bus will leave at 9:15 a.m. The next pick-up will be at Riderwood Village at 9:45 a.m. Doors open at Toby's at 10:30 a.m. and the buffet starts at 10:45 a.m. The show starts at 12:30 p.m.

If you have any questions, call me at 301.572.9778.

Charles Hudson, Trip Leader

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

BITS AND PIECES

Happy **September** birthday wishes to Ms. Jane Hand of Catonsville, who will be celebrating her 90th birthday on the 15th.

Happy **October** birthday greetings to Mrs. Eleanor Murray of Phoenix, AZ, who will be celebrating her 94th birthday on the 12th.

Jane Hand, who resides at the Charlestown Retirement Community in Catonsville, MD, retired from Calverton Elementary in 1979. Her work after retirement continued to evolve around education at the University of Maryland. There she joined the "Terp Service", and worked in the Admissions and the Bursar's Offices, and twice a year handled pre-registration for the Electrical Engineering Department. Ms. Hand traveled with the University Alumni Association, along with her friend and trip organizer, Mrs. Faith Loveless, (also a Prince George's retired teacher) to several places in Nova Scotia. She has flown twice to tour countries in Europe, visiting the Scandinavian countries, and sailing on a cruise from Oslo to Helsinki. Ms. Hand has also sailed on the *Princess Royal* to Alaska on the Inside Passage, making five interesting stops on the way. She has taken two Caribbean cruises with stops in St. Thomas, St. Kitts, Barbados, and Grenada.

Stanley Tweedy of District Heights retired from Andrew Jackson Middle School in 2004. Her hobby is gardening, with emphasis on cultivating colorful dinner plate dahlias. Stanley exercises regularly at the Camp Springs Senior Center, and continues to travel with the Harmony Hallers from Fort Washington. Her most recent and delightful trip, though, was with several MRSPA members when they went to the Italian cities of Venice, Florence, Rome, and Sorrento – during the same time that an

earthquake hit the northern part of Italy. (A photo of the group is on the MRSPA website.) Stanley is a valued member of our PGPSRA Community Service Committee. She keeps their financial records in order.

Frank (Francis) Tracy retired in 1992 after serving as principal of High Point High School and as Associate Superintendent for Supporting Services. He is a resident of College Park, MD. On June 8, 2012, at the University of Scranton (PA), Frank received the Frank J. O'Hara Award for distinguished alumni who have exhibited sustained achievement in a particular field of endeavor - his being education. This is the highest award bestowed jointly by the University of Scranton and their Alumni Society. Frank was honored to receive this award at a dinner reception, where he thanked his former colleagues, parents, teachers, and fellow administrators for their nomination noting his successes. Sadly, Frank lost his wife two years ago. He enjoys the company of his three adult children and nine grandchildren.

Ms. Jean Hairston of Upper Marlboro retired just two years ago from John Bayne Elementary. She enjoys yoga, reading, working crossword puzzles, and playing Solitaire. She hopes to be able to travel soon. Jean has one son, who works for the Department of Transportation in the International Division.

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

DID YOU KNOW?

If Prince George's County were a state, it would be more populated than Vermont, South Dakota, Wyoming, or Alaska.

PGPSRA CALENDAR: 2012 – 2013

- September 5: Executive Mtg. – 10:00 a.m.
(Wed.) PGCEA Center
- September 26: General Mtg. – 11:00 a.m.
(Wed.) PGCEA Center
- October 18: MD Senior Citizens Hall of
(Thu.) Fame Induction
Michael's 8th Avenue
- PGCPS Pre-Retirement
Seminar
Henry Wise HS
- November 7: Executive Mtg. – 10:00 a.m.
(Wed.) PGCEA Center
- November 28: General Mtg. – 11:00 a.m.
(Wed.) PGCEA Center
- January 9: Executive Mtg. – 10:00 a.m.
(Wed.) PGCEA Center
- January 23: General Mtg. – 11:00 a.m.
(Wed.) PGCEA Center
- March 6: Executive Mtg. – 10:00 a.m.
(Wed.) PGCEA Center
- March 27: General Mtg. – 11:00 a.m.
(Wed.) PGCEA Center
- May 1: Executive Mtg. – 10:00 a.m.
(Wed.) PGCEA Center
- May 7: MRSPA Annual Mtg.
(Tu.) 10:00 a.m.
Michael's 8th Avenue
- May 22: General Mtg. – 11:00 a.m.
(Wed.) Collington Center (Bowie)
- June 5: Executive Mtg. – 10:00 a.m.
(Wed.) PGCEA Center

NECROLOGY / REMEMBRANCE



Frances Wells 03 – 28 – 12
Dr. Allan Chotiner 04 – 18 – 12
James R. Matthews 02 – 12 – 12

Correction: James R. Matthews should have been listed in the May *Echoes* instead of Mary Ann Matthews. We apologize for the error.

Jannie Goldston, Chairperson

HEALTH TIPS

If you give up high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) which is found in most non-diet sodas, don't switch to diet soda. Diet sodas actually can cause weight gain by boosting insulin production. A study in *Diabetic Care* found that drinking diet soda every day increased the risk of type 2 diabetes by as much as 67%. If you crave sweet bubbly drinks, pour one inch of pure fruit juice in a glass and then fill it with carbonated water.
(from MRSPA Consumer Connection)

The foods that are said to contain the lowest levels of pesticides are called the "clean 15." The 2012 "clean 15" include onions, sweet corn, pineapples, avocado, cabbage, sweet peas, asparagus, mangoes, eggplant, kiwi, local cantaloupe, sweet potatoes, grapefruit, watermelon, and mushrooms. What should I do? I should take this list with me when I shop so that I can choose wisely. For fruits and vegetables not on the list, it is best to buy organic. For more information, go to www.ewg.org/foodnews/.

Believe it or not! Purple, violet, and lavender enhance your brain power. These colors have a surprisingly strong effect on your ability to think and therefore achieve.
(from MRSPA Consumer Connection)

YOU ARE INVITED TO COME AND SEE!

PGPSRA meetings run the gamut. We discuss pertinent issues and take care of normal procedural tasks. On the other hand, however, we schedule a wonderful array of guest speakers and performers whose areas of expertise are both informative and relevant to our interests. Last year's speakers ranged from our own County Executive Rushern Baker to the dynamic Joy Hatchette of the Maryland Insurance Administration. We ended the year at La Fontaine Bleu in Lanham with lively performance by the Iverson Mall Senior Dance Troupe who amazed us with their energy, enthusiasm, and agility.

This year, under the leadership of our new president, Gretel James, The trend continues. The first general meeting will be held on September 26, 2012, at 11:00 a.m. at the PGCEA Center. The guest speaker will be the newly-installed president of MRSPA, E. Tucker Stuart. He will share with us ideas about a new program to strengthen responses to the MRSPA objective to promote involvement and participation of retirees in their communities.

All members are invited and are asked to bring a guest with you. Perhaps an idea will be presented that will inspire you to help make PGPSRA's great community service component even better.

After the meeting there is time to reunite and socialize with each other. A box lunch will be served. The cost is 10.00 per person.

Reservation procedures are posted in the next column.

PGPSRA MEETING/LUNCHEON

Date: September 26, 2012
Time: 11:00 a.m.
Place: PGCEA Center
Cost: \$10.00

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 September, 2012.

LUNCHEON RESERVATION FORM

Name: _____

Lunches Ordered: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Names of Guests: _____

JOIN OUR LISTSERVE

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

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ECHOES

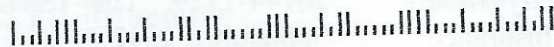
October 1, 2012

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

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

PRESORTED STANDARD
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JANNETTE WUNDROW
1007 PACKTON LN
BOWIE MD 20716-1761

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING &
LUNCHEON**

September 26, 2012
PGCEA Center
11:00 a.m.
Reservations Due – September 19

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ECHOES

October 1, 2012