

MRSPA

News

MARYLAND RETIRED SCHOOL PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION Affiliated with NRTA: AARP's Educator Community

Volume XXXVI, No. 4

February 2018

Contact Your Legislators

Your senator and delegates represent you in the **Maryland General Assembly**, which is now in session until April 9, 2018. They want to hear from their constituents so it is imperative that you **keep up-to-date on legislation** that just might affect you and especially your pension and health care.

MRSPA's Legislative Committee monitors all legislation that pertains to retirees: Long-Term Care Insurance, Property Tax Credit, Income Tax – Subtraction Modification – Retirement Income, Health Care Facilities – Nursing Homes, Income Tax – Credit for Long-Term Care Premiums, and the State Retirement and Pension System – State Employees and Teachers – Benefits.

Visit MRSPA's website www.mrspa.org and click on the legislative tab for the latest information on bills. **Then call, write, or email your senator or delegates to give them your opinion.**

MRSPA's Legislative Committee will suggest whether to **support or oppose** proposed laws in the General Assembly's Senate and House of Delegates.

Or you can contact members of our Legislative Committee if you have any questions or thoughts on issues impacting retired educators and personnel.

Virginia Crespo is our Legislative Aide, and Tish Raff is our Legislative Committee Chair. Call the MRSPA office at 410-551-1517 or 1-877-625-6782 (toll free) or email mrspa@mrspa.org for contact information or to leave a message.



*MRSPA's
Legislative
Leaders:
Left, Tish Raff,
Committee
Chair, and right,
Virginia Crespo,
Legislative Aide.*



Scholarship Fundraiser

Annually, MRSPA provides three scholarships to current school employees seeking teacher certification or a new certification in another education field.

With your assistance, we will be able to continue awarding these \$2,000 scholarships.

MRSPA's Executive Board, Executive Committee, Committee Chairs, and Local Presidents are helping to increase the Scholarship Fund by selling raffle tickets (**1 for \$2.00 and 3 for \$5.00**).

Winning tickets will be drawn at our Annual Business Meeting on Tuesday, May 8, 2018, at the Bowie Comfort Inn in Bowie, Maryland. You do not have to be present to win.

First prize is \$300, second prize is a Maryland-themed basket worth \$150, and six third-place prizes are various baskets valued at \$75 each.

All proceeds go to the MRSPA Scholarship Fund, which is managed by The Community Foundation of Frederick County.



Emeritus Membership? Do We Have Your Birthdate? Call Today! 410-551-1517 or Toll-Free: 1-877-625-6782. If you turn 90 on or before June 30, 2018, you are eligible for

Emeritus membership, beginning July 1, 2018. **CONGRATULATIONS! NO MORE DUES!**

MRSPA must know your birthdate in order to award your *Emeritus* designation. You would be surprised how many birthdates we do not have. Do we have yours? Please contact Barbara Catron in the MRSPA office to verify that we have your birthdate. If you are over 90 and are not yet *Emeritus*, contact her to get your status changed for the 2018-2019 year. Unfortunately, no refunds can be made after July 1, 2018. It's now or wait until July 1, 2019.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Frances W. Miller



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS ...ESPECIALLY YOURS!!

Happy New Year! As 2017 closes and 2018 arrives, we reflect on the year that has passed. MRSPA had some wonderful accomplishments in 2017: Successful workshops, successful committees, and successfully protecting your pension. But reflection on our membership

reflection on our membership numbers, on our "Membership Matters" initiative, raises some concerns.

Membership Matters...Especially Yours and **Each One Reach One** have been my mantras for the last 18 months. I fervently believe that each member is important to the organization, and I know that we work hard every day to protect the pension and health benefits that you worked hard to earn. But the truth is that MRSPA is losing members. We have studied the problem and know that we need your help to turn this around.

The MRSPA Membership Committee has worked diligently to support the recruitment and retention work of the locals.

Just last year, at the request of the locals, they researched and wrote a white paper which explained why a retiree should join MRSPA. They have updated all our recruitment materials and created a survey of former members to understand why they dropped their membership.

Sadly, very few former members opted to complete the survey. All the good work of the committee and the local associations to recruit new members is offset by the loss of members.

Some of the loss (about 400) is because of the inevitableness of death. There is not much we can do about those losses, but continue to work to ensure their quality of life and proper access to

Continued on Page 3

MRSPA News

is published five times each year by the
**MARYLAND RETIRED SCHOOL
PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION.**

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Wanda Ruffo Twigg

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President Elect...Ann Marie Downey

**Vice President.....Lorraine
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Secretary.....Nancy L. Gordon

Treasurer.....Alicia Hardisky

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SAVE THE DATE!

Tuesday, May 8, 2018

**Annual Business
Meeting**

**at the Bowie Comfort Inn
4500 Crain Highway
Bowie, MD 20716**

VISION STATEMENT

The Maryland Retired School Personnel Association inspires the dedication, commitment, skills and abilities of its members in service to fellow retirees and the entire community in an ever-changing world.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Maryland Retired School Personnel Association is a nonprofit organization comprised of retired school system personnel. It serves as an advocate for members and provides expanding services to members, empowering them to enrich the quality of their lives. The organization is dedicated to excellence in education and life-long learning. It promotes community service by its members through a myriad of volunteer activities.

President's Message

Continued from Page 2

health care. But we are losing other cash dues paying members (more than 400) who simply did not send in their dues, when they were asked three times to make the payment.

This is more than a \$20,000 hit to an already small budget. Not to mention the \$3,000 it cost the organization to send those three notices.

MRSPA cannot sustain its existence for very long with these losses. That amount of money is more than our part-time staff is paid for an entire year.

We also cannot afford to lose our part-time staff and still maintain the level of service our members have come to expect from MRSPA.

It would be tremendously helpful and save money and trees, if all our cash paying members responded in a more timely fashion.

As I have said in every local in the state, Membership Matters in participation at the local level, in contributions to support the local and their projects and programs, and at the state level with advocacy and committee work.

When we lose members, we lose their valuable contributions and their voice in Annapolis. We cannot be successful in our mission without a strong, active membership.

Our strength is in our numbers.

Will each one of you, reach out to a non-member and ask them to join MRSPA today? If you believe like I do that ***Membership Matters...Especially Yours***, I know you will.

Wise moves to prevent injuries this winter from Ancient China

SHOVELING SNOW: The “Gyro-scope” – keep your shovel close to you and dig using the big muscles of your legs and behind, not the puny ones in your arms and back. Breathe slowly and evenly as you squat, twist, rotate, toss, repeat.

From the

Executive Director

By Wanda Ruffo Twigg



If it's February, the Maryland Legislature must be in session! With 2018 being an election year, many believed that it might be a quiet session, with legislators not wanting to create any waves before Election Day. The opposite appears to be true for 2018.

The General Assembly's first action was to override the Governor's veto of paid sick leave for employees in companies with 15 or more employees.

The Governor is talking about legislation to set term limits for legislators, and there is already a bill to add a 401K-type plan to the pension system. This is Senate Bill 31 put in by Senator Bates of Carroll and Howard counties. The MRSPA Legislative Committee **opposed** this legislation with a letter and testimony to the Senate Budget and Tax Committee.

There are also bills related to studying nursing home quality, income tax relief for retirement income, and an annual long-term care insurance deduction, that we are following.

Please check the MRSPA website at www.mrspa.org and click on the legislative tab for more information. Check the legislative update every two weeks throughout the session to stay informed.

Dr. Vera Torrence was MRSPA's Legislative Aide in 2017. She had begun her work for 2018, but has been sidelined with an injury that caused her to resign her position. MRSPA's new Legislative Aide is Ms. Virginia Crespo, formerly the Legislative Committee Chair. Ms. Tish Raff has graciously accepted the position of Legislative Committee Chair for the 2018 session.

MRSPA thanks Dr. Torrence for her service and dedication to MRSPA and our members. We also thank Virginia and Tish for stepping up to accept new responsibilities on behalf of our members. They quickly moved into their new roles which created a seamless transition for the organization.

In this issue of the newsletter, you see a serious message from our president about membership. Do you have retired educator friends who are not members of MRSPA? We know that personal contact is the best way to recruit a new member, so don't be shy and ask them to become a member!

All the information needed to join is online at www.mrspa.org. Click **Join** to locate an application or call 410-551-1517.

As we work to represent you and your interests in Annapolis, it is imperative that we show our strength by growing our membership. Legislators will sit up and take notice when we remind them of the size of our membership, knowing that we also vote. Never assume that legislators will protect you or your pension. Activism and vigilance are always necessary. Stay engaged and stay tuned!

Annual Business Meeting features MRSPA Election

Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary positions will be filled during the Tuesday, May 8, Annual Business Meeting at the Bowie Comfort Inn, 4500 Crain Highway, Bowie, Md.

Running for the Vice President position is Charles Gable, Anne Arundel County. Alicia Hardisky, Anne Arundel County, and Nancy Gordon, Frederick County, are running for re-election as Treasurer and Secretary, respectively.

Nominee for Vice President *Charles Gable*



Charles worked for 38 and a half years for Anne Arundel County Schools as a classroom teacher and assistant principal.

He retired in 2009 and joined both the Anne Arundel Retired School Personnel Association and MRSPA.

Charles served AARSPA as President-Elect 2012-13, President 2013-2015, and Past President.

Following his term as president, he continued to chair the Program Committee and is an active member of its Community Service Committee.

Charles has been a member of the MRSPA Legislative Committee for the past three years.

He is respected and appreciated by the members of AARSPA for his involvement and service in so many aspects of the association's work.

He says, "Since my retirement, I have enjoyed being active and have a great deal of interest in protecting our well-deserved pensions, health care benefits, as well as other issues important to seniors. I hope to use my leadership abilities and influence, along with others, to support the stated mission of MRSPA."

Nominee for Treasurer *Alicia Hardisky*



With 30 years of experience Alicia Hardisky retired from Anne Arundel Co. Schools in 2000.

She taught math at the senior high school level prior to working in the central office as a member of the Information Technology Office.

Upon retirement, she joined the Anne Arundel Retired School Personnel Association and MRSPA.

She served AARSPA as a member of the Finance Committee, Treasurer, and President.

Alicia has also been an active member of the Maryland-DC Association of School Business Officials as well as the Association of Business Officials International. She was chair of the Exhibits Committee for ASBO before becoming President-Elect and President of MD-DC ASBO.

She was a member of MRSPA's Finance Committee prior to being Treasurer. She wants to continue as Treasurer because MRSPA is the professional organization that protects our retirement benefits.

"I hope to assist in that effort as an association officer. As Treasurer, I will keep the association informed of our most recent financial condition."

Nominee for Secretary *Nancy Gordon*



Upon her retirement in 2007 from Frederick County Public Schools, Nancy joined both MRSPA and

Frederick County Retired School Personnel Association.

She has served in key positions for FCRSPA as President-Elect, President, and Scholarship Committee Chair.

She is currently serving as secretary for MRSPA and for Delaware-Maryland Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Nancy has served as Area I East Director, Vice President, Member Benefits Committee Chair, member of several MRSPA committees, Board of Directors, and Executive Committee. She has dedicated her retirement years to volunteering for retired educators and community.

Nancy works with student teachers as a member of the Education Department at Mount Saint Mary's University.

"Continuing in the position of secretary will offer me opportunities to continue my work with the association. I have enjoyed being part of these dedicated leaders, both at the state and local levels. I appreciate their work and dedication that so benefits our members."

Scholarship Applications Due by February 28

Current school employees seeking teacher certification or a new certification in another education field may apply for one of three \$2,000 MRSPA scholarships.

Scholarship applications may be submitted from January 1 to February 28, 2018, online by setting up an online account and by securing a copy (official or unofficial) of your college transcript.

The name of the institution must be clearly visible and a minimum 2.5 GPA at the time of the application is required.

Additional information is provided by logging onto website: www.frederickcountygives.org.

MRSPA's Scholarship Fund is managed by The Community Foundation of Frederick County.

The MRSPA Scholarship Fund depends on the market value of its investments, annual raffle fundraiser, and the generosity of our members.

With the rising cost of tuition and the financial struggle that students face, it is becoming more and more difficult for a person to get the required certification even though they are employed, and some are working more than one job.

The MRSPA Scholarship Fund is designed to help those individuals.

It is imperative that we continue to keep qualified personnel in our schools.

Uncertified teachers, paraprofessionals and other current public school system employees pursuing Maryland teacher certification may apply for one of the three \$2000 scholarships.

In addition, certified Maryland teachers pursuing Maryland certification in a different education specialty field such as school counselor, speech pathologist, school social worker, school psychologist and physical or occupational therapist are eligible.

Three \$2,000 scholarships will be awarded at MRSPA's Annual Business Meeting on May 8.

A profound thank you goes to all of our regular raffle fundraising participants and past donors and to all who will be donating for the first time.

For a list of prizes for the fundraiser raffle, see article on Page 1 of this newsletter.

Matilda Barckley
Scholarship Committee Chair

2017 Recipients

The three 2017 MRSPA Scholarship recipients have responded with informational testimonials for future applicants:

Tracey Coleman – Baltimore County

As a hard - working mother of three, I would like to thank the members of the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association for granting me this scholarship toward my Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education w/dual major in Special Education.

I graduated on October 14, 2017, with the Summa Cum Laude honor. I want to be remembered as "that" teacher who understood that learning meant more than teaching the curriculum.

I believe education is the key for helping children to gain the skills needed to succeed so I want to awaken in them the inquiring mind with a thirst for knowledge. I also believe that my impact will be like dropping a stone in a calm pond.

It will not be a big flashy splash, but rather a calm consistent outward apex with the rings of what I have imparted reaching toward each child's next generation.

Jennifer Lyons – Montgomery County

I am honored to have received The MRSPA Scholarship, which has helped me hone my vision of my future. I am even more certain of my desire to be a bridge between our children, their families and the schools as I seek my degree in ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages).

I have ramped up my course schedule this fall and have made a commitment to myself to take no fewer than four classes per semester going forward, so it's with a lot of enthusiasm - not without at least a bit of trepidation - that I'm diving in this fall.

An increase in my course load also means that my scholarship has meant more than ever before. Thank you so much!

Pauline Baek – Howard County

I have found out that I need to put my graduate studies on hold until Fall 2018. In order for me to complete my coursework for the full-time school counselor internship, I will need to step out of my role as a classroom teacher, and because of tenure reasons, this won't occur until Fall 2018.

I am grateful that the scholarship will be available to begin my journey as a school counselor to further equip students for success.

Elizabeth Preston Doyle

October 22, 1929 – January 18, 2018

MRSPA lost one of its great supporters recently, according to President Fay Miller.

Elizabeth “Betsy” Preston Doyle passed on Thursday, January 18, of a heart attack.

“Betsy always stepped up to help as an MRSPA member. She will certainly be sorely missed. She may have been small in stature, but she leaves big shoes to fill,” reports President Miller.

When Judy Thompson, Membership Chair, heard the sad news, she commented, “Oh, no! Unbelievable. As a newer Board member, it was very evident to me that Betsy did always step up to do what was needed. Such a shock.”

John Sisson echoed Judy’s statement with “This is the most shocking news imaginable.”

Betsy was born on October 22, 1929, in

Johnstown, Pennsylvania. She made her home here in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

A retired teacher and long-time volunteer with Montgomery County Public Schools and MRSPA, Betsy served her local as chair of the Nominating Committee and Archives.

For MRSPA, she served as chair of the Consumer Education Committee, Membership Recruitment, and Member Benefits Committee.

She was a life-member of Woodstock, Virginia, Presbyterian Church. She enjoyed swimming, walking and gardening.

Betsy was the beloved wife of the late Joseph T. Doyle; loving mother of Joseph P. and Thomas E. Doyle; devoted grandmother of Alexis S. and Dominic T. Doyle.

Her service was private.



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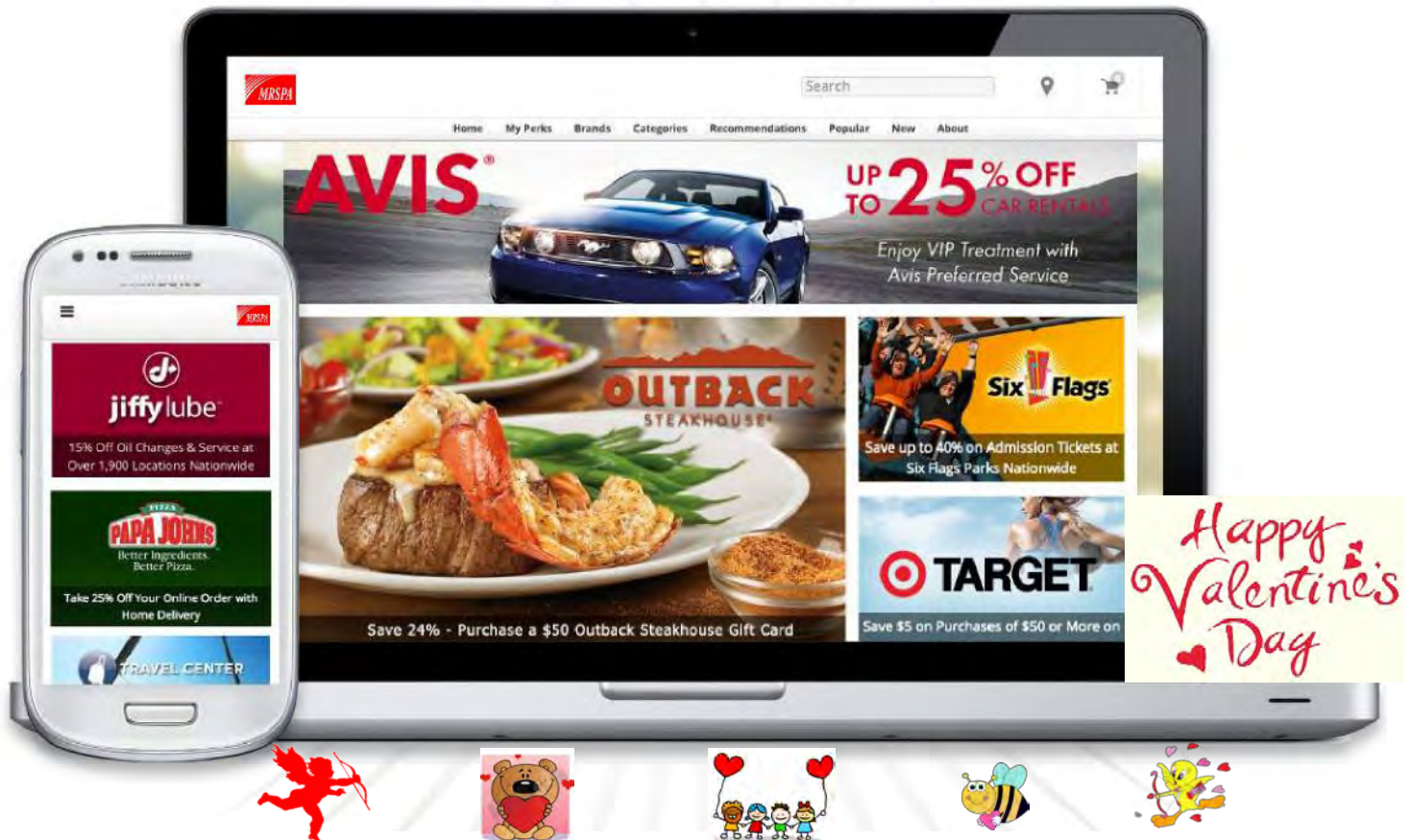
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Associate Perks Program

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MRSPA CALENDAR

February 19.....Presidents' Day
MRSPA Office Closed
February 27.....Legislative Committee Meeting
MRSPA Odenton Office
March 7.....Board of Directors Meeting
MRSPA Odenton Office
March 13..... Legislative Committee Meeting
MRSPA Odenton Office
March 14..... Local Presidents' Meeting
MRSPA Odenton Office
March 27.....Legislative Committee Meeting
MRSPA Odenton Office

MRSPA 2018 TRIPS AT A GLANCE

Yellowstone Winter Wonderland – February 21 – 27, 2018

Call Accent on Travel – 302-278-6100

British Landscapes featuring England, Scotland and Wales –

June 2018 for 10 days

Call Collette – 800-581-8942

Columbia & Snake Rivers Paddlewheel Cruise –

July 27 – August 4, 2018

Call Accent on Travel – 302-278-6100

Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta – October 3 – 8, 2018

Call Collette – 800-581-8942

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