

# Kenderdine Offers Positive Pension/Retirement System Report



It's undeniable that the COVID-19 pandemic has turned our world on its head, creating uncertainty as to how we will move forward. However, there is one thing of which you can be certain: no matter what, our highest and first priority is to pay you your monthly pension benefit without fail. That's a promise.

The Maryland State Retirement and Pension System has weathered economic downturns in the past, most notably the Great Recession just a decade ago, and not once was a pension payment ever missed. Your System is resilient and solvent.

Certainly, the pandemic has impacted the financial markets, including the System's assets, but the impact to our System has been mitigated by the design of its portfolio structure, which is expected to earn the required return (7.40%) over time but offers some protection in poor market environments. The System's Board of Trustees works to create an optimal, risk-adjusted asset allocation that considers both the plans' assets and liabilities, in the context of multiple risks and economic scenarios.

To be sure, the System is not solely invested to protect against a steep market decline in the short term. The Board instead takes a

longer-term approach to setting asset allocation and recognizes that investment performance can experience short-term losses in certain economic scenarios. However, these short-term negative outcomes should be viewed in the context of a much longer-term investment program and broader set of scenarios where the losses are more than offset by investment gains.

Finally, I would like to address a misconception that rears its head at times like these: the fear that the State is going to "raid" the pension fund. Be assured that the System's assets are not the State's piggybank. The assets of your System are held in trust for the exclusive purpose of providing benefits to the members and their beneficiaries. As a result, the State is not permitted to use System trust assets for other purposes. The trust is secure, and the assets are there to provide benefits to those who have earned them.

The Maryland State Retirement and Pension System is here to pay benefits on time and in the correct amount, and to continue serving you, our participants, as it has done unfailingly for nearly a century.



R. Dean Kenderdine  
Executive Director  
MSRPS



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by George Denny, Jr.

*MRSPA "C's" You...*

We all have experienced historic changes in recent months in the way we conduct our business, shop in our stores, interact with our family and friends, engage in organizational and social activities, and perform all of the actions that govern every aspect of our lives. There is no doubt that times "they are a-changing." We must adapt to those changes if we intend to grow our organization, better serve our members, and protect the pensions and benefits we all have earned.

When I first became active in MRSPA a few years ago, then-President Fay Miller promoted the theme *Membership Matters, Especially Yours*. Past President Ann Marie Downey expanded that theme to *Connecting, Protecting and Making a Difference*. In both cases the goal was to make members aware that MRSPA is more than an acronym - it is a mission to protect our defined benefit retirement pension and to inspire the dedication, commitment, skills and abilities of our members in service to fellow retirees and the entire community in an ever-changing world.

Going forward, that same mission will be advanced through the theme ***MRSPA "C's" You...through Communication, Commitment, Community***. The highly-committed members of the Board of Directors, the dedicated leaders and members in each of our locals, and the MRSPA Executive Director and office staff will continue to work to communicate our purpose as an organization. And through our commitment to achieving that purpose, we will strengthen our MRSPA community.

Education personnel have always had to be flexible and adaptable to unexpected or unusual situations. MRSPA members

## MRSPA News

is published five times each year by the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association.

*Editor*

Carla J. Duls

*Officers*

President.....George Denny, Jr.

Immediate Past President .....

Ann Marie Downey

Vice-President.....Dr. Debbie Chance

Treasurer.....Alicia Hardisky

Secretary.....Janet Williams

MRSPA Business Office

8379 Piney Orchard Parkway

Suite A

Odenton, MD 21113-1508

Phone: 410-551-1517

Toll Free: 877-625-6782

Fax: 410-305-8657

Website: [www.mrspa.org](http://www.mrspa.org)

Email: [mrspa@mrspa.org](mailto:mrspa@mrspa.org)

[www.facebook.com/mrspa1945](https://www.facebook.com/mrspa1945)

certainly exhibit these qualities. One has only to read the newsletters of the various locals to realize that despite obstacles, their members are still actively engaged in meeting the needs of their communities.

It is my sincere hope that each of you will be open to adapting to the new norm in the weeks and months ahead. Your membership matters greatly to the success of our organization. It is important that you take an active role in helping to make a difference, both in your local and in your community. It is equally important that some of you take the extra step to become involved more actively at the state level.

(Continued on page 4)

## 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 retirees 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.*

From the

## Executive Director Wanda Ruffo Twigg



*We Can Do It!* Four little words that led American women into the factories to produce the munitions, aircraft and ships which enabled our manufacturing superiority that helped the Allies win WWII. The iconic cover created by Norman Rockwell of Rosie the Riveter, showing her strength and symbolizing so much more, means as much today as it did in 1943.

A generation of Americans stood together to support the war effort in any way they could, whether at home or abroad. Today, Americans are once again doing what they can to fight our invisible enemy, coronavirus. Whether it's saving lives in a hospital, making sure grocery store shelves are filled or staying home to protect themselves and their family, we are proving once again, that *We Can Do It!*

During this pandemic, as the MRSPA office has been closed, your MRSPA staff and leaders have continued to work for you from our homes. Deadlines are being met, meetings are being held via Zoom or conference call, the MRSPA *News* and *Consumer Connection* have been written and published, and new members are being recruited. The work continues because *We Can Do It!* and because it is our mission to support our members, to continue to keep you informed, to protect your defined benefit pension, and to continue to serve our communities.

We remain proud of our founders who 75 years ago, on May 16, 1945, joined together for the good of Maryland public school retirees. We celebrate their can-do spirit and foresight. In the face of this new unforeseen adversity, we will persevere as an organization with your continued membership and support because we are stronger together and because *We Can Do It!*



### AARP Friendly Voice Call



Feeling isolated or lonely during the quarantine? If you'd like to have a friendly chat with an AARP volunteer, request a *Friendly Voice* call at 888-281-0145 or online at [www.aarpcommunityconnections.org](http://www.aarpcommunityconnections.org), click Request a Call.

## Why wait for the mail?

Receive MRSPA News up to two weeks earlier with email delivery!

If you'd like to receive MRSPA News via email, just let us know, and we'll add you to our electronic distribution list. You'll receive the publication faster AND help us reduce printing costs. **Email your request to: [mrspa@mrspa.org](mailto:mrspa@mrspa.org) and put "Newsletter by Email" in the subject line of the email and please include your full name and your email address.**





# A Different Kind of Annual Business Meeting 2020

Our Annual Business Meeting took place on May 13, 2020. An overwhelming majority of MRSPA members approved holding the meeting via teleconference with only the MRSPA Board of Directors on the call. This was new territory for MRSPA, and the Board came through with flying colors!

During the meeting, the Minutes of the 2019 Annual Business Meeting and the 2021 Proposed Budget were approved as presented. The March 31, 2020 Treasurer's Report was reviewed and filed for audit.

New MRSPA Officers, Dr. Debbie Chance, Talbot County and Janet Williams, Baltimore City were elected by acclamation. Dr. Chance will serve a two-year term as Vice President, and Ms. Williams will serve a one-year term as Secretary.



Dr. Debbie Chance  
Vice President



Janet Williams  
Secretary

Your other 2020-2021 officers are George Denny, Jr., President (Prince George's County); Alicia Hardisky, Treasurer (Anne Arundel County); and Ann Marie Downey, Immediate Past President (Washington County). Officers will be installed at a future in-person



George Denny, Jr.  
President



Alicia Hardisky  
Treasurer



Ann Marie Downey  
Immediate  
Past President

meeting. While the 2020 Annual Business Meeting was to have celebrated our 75th Anniversary, that celebration will take place at the 2021 Annual Business Meeting on May 12, 2021, at Camelot by Martin's in Upper Marlboro, should large gatherings be allowed by that time.

Following the Annual Business Meeting, the MRSPA Raffle drawing occurred, so Board members could hear it taking place on the teleconference. Photos and videos were taken with member observers and participants present with staff at the MRSPA office for the drawing. Names of winners and participants can be found on page 5 of this newsletter.



*(President, page 2)*

Our leadership team welcomes fresh ideas and new methods of reaching out, both to our membership and to potential members.

Thanks to Immediate Past President Ann Marie Downey for the dedication and enthusiasm she has lent to MRSPA members over the past two years. She has guided us through some difficult times, for which we are all appreciative, and we look forward to her continued participation and good counsel.

Together we will get through these uncertain times, and together we will come out on the other side bigger and stronger.

Meanwhile, I look forward to "C"-ing you throughout the year. Thank you for your dedication and hard work. Stay safe.

# 2020 MRSPA Fund Raffle Winners

Following the 2020 Annual Business Meeting which was held via teleconference, the MRSPA Fund raffle drawing was held at the MRSPA office while Board members were present on the call. The drawing was overseen by Tillie Barckley, MRSPA Scholarship Committee Chair, and conducted by Russell Wright, MRSPA member from Montgomery County. Frankie McDonnell, MRSPA Office Secretary, assisted with the drawing and delivered the prize baskets to the winners, while Shirl Scanlon, MRSPA Office Manager, took photos and video of the event.

The 2020 MRSPA Fund Raffle Winners are:

- First Prize - \$300 – Linda Shank, Washington County
- Second Prize – Maryland Basket – Janet Williams, Baltimore City
- Third Prize – Spa Basket – Pat Nottingham, Worcester County
- Third Prize – Sports Lovers Basket – Lynne Bratten, Wicomico County
- Third Prize – Wine Lovers Basket – Beverly Dunham, Worcester County
- Third Prize – Movie Night Basket – Nancy Gordon, Frederick County
- Third Prize – Cooking Basket – Barbara Short, Caroline County

Congratulations to all the winners! The MRSPA Scholarship and Community Service Committees thank everyone who sold and/or purchased raffle tickets. The raffle would not be a success without your participation and support. Because of your generosity, the Fund raised over \$3,400. Thank you!



Lynne Bratten likes her Sports Raffle Basket. Art work in window behind Lynne was done by her granddaughter, Mary.



Janet Williams accepts the second prize, the Maryland Raffle Basket.



## 2021 Tour Offerings

Tours are open to MRSPA members, their families and friends. Link for tours is on our website, [www.mrspa.org](http://www.mrspa.org). Need contact information for tour company? Call Toll-free: 1.877.625.6782



### Colorado Historic Trains

July 16-24, 2021 • Mayflower • 9 days • 14 Meals

### New England Rails & Sails

October 1-9, 2021 • Mayflower • 9 Days/14 meals

### Greece: A Land of Gods & Heroes

March 20, 2021 • Adventura World • 9 Days/7 Nights

### Santa Fe Holiday

December 2021 (Dates TBD)  
Collette - 6 days - 8 meals

### Scandinavia & Russia

June 28-July 11, 2021 - Cruises Plus  
13 Night Sailing on Celebrity Reflection  
Roundtrip from Amsterdam • Excursions are add'l.

### Canadian Maritimes

August 2021 (Dates TBD)  
Grand Circle • 13 nights • 25 meals  
(Optional Quebec City/Montreal pre-trip and an optional Ottawa post trip)

### Backroads of Iberia: Spain & Portugal

October 2021 (Dates TBD)

### Discover Scotland

September 2021 (Dates TBD)  
Collette • 10 days • 14 meals

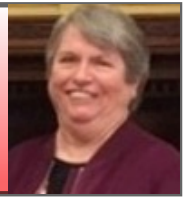
Edinburgh Castle



**Come Travel With Us!**

# 2020 Legislative Wrap

- Virginia Crespo, MRSPA Legislative Aide



In this unprecedented time, that sometimes seems like an alternate reality, the Maryland General Assembly ended the 2020 session early for the first time since the Civil War. Much significant legislation was passed before adjournment including the 2021 budget, increased funding for school construction, and the Blueprint for Maryland's Future (Kirwan Commission).

In response to the Covid-19 crisis and declining tax revenues, Governor Hogan announced that he would not sign any bills that carried a price tag. The Governor could sign or veto bills or allow them to become law without his signature.

The following bills were supported by MRSPA and vetoed by the Governor.

- **HB498 Department of Aging - Grants for Aging-in-Place Programs - Funding**
- **HB1095/SB669 Public Health - Prescription Drug Affordability Board and Fund**
- **HVB1300/SB1000 - Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Implementation**
- **SBV407 Office of the Attorney General - Senior And Vulnerable Adult Asset Recovery Unit**

HB1/SB1 Built to Learn Act of 2020 was enacted. However, this bill was written in such a way that if HB1300/SB1000 Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Implementation was not enacted, then the Built to Learn money could not be spent. This is a huge loss for the many aging schools in desperate need of repair and/or replacement.

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future is the result of an extensive three-year study by the Kirwan Commission. It is a ten-year plan to reduce disparities in education so that success in school does not depend on where you live. It would expand pre-kindergarten programs; increase funding for support for the poor, limited English, and special education students; raise teacher pay and standards; and it would add programs to ensure that Maryland students are career and college ready.

The General Assembly recognized the importance of this legislation and, even in the midst of the growing pandemic, passed it by veto-proof majorities. As passed, the bill includes provisions that should the state revenues fall below a specified amount, the funding would be reduced for that year. The next step could be the convening of a special session of the Legislature in the fall, or an override vote could be taken at the beginning of the regular session in January 2021.

Our pensions are secure. There are no budget cuts in this area. Even if there were, they would not affect current retirees. The primary concern is that budget cuts on the local level could affect funding for health care for retirees. We must remain ever vigilant in this area.

Further information on Legislative actions is available on the MRSPA website [mrspa.org](http://mrspa.org).

## Thinking of Moving? Moved in the Last 12 Months?

Please call or email MRSPA when you move, so we can ensure you continue to receive your MRSPA News and other important information. Call us at 410-551-1517, toll free at 877- 625 - 6782 or email us at [mrspa@mrspa.org](mailto:mrspa@mrspa.org). It will help us keep our database accurate, while keeping you informed. We'd love to hear from you!



## Automatic Annual Dues Deduction



Annual dues will be deducted from the July 31 retirement/pension check for members who have authorized automatic dues deduction.

**MRSPA dues are \$45, plus the local dues amount.**

Members paying by check should have received your annual notice in mid-June.

A final notice will be mailed to those who remain unpaid in August.

The Maryland State Retirement and Pension System Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) effective July 1 is 1.812% for retirees from the Employees or Teachers Retirement System OR persons who retired on or before July 1, 2011.



# Members and Locals Awarded for Making a Difference

Every May during the Annual Business Meeting, MRSPA recognizes locals for increasing their membership and for their service projects in the community. Individual members are also recognized for their contributions to the community. This year, the MRSPA Membership and Community Service Committees, under the leadership of Ruth Clendaniel and Trish Bendler respectively, made the following awards which will be presented when groups are once again allowed to meet. Congratulations!

**Membership Awards** are given based on the number of members in a local in three categories. Small locals have up to 199 members, medium locals have between 200 and 899 members and large locals have 900 or more members. This year's winners are as follows.

- Largest Numerical Increase  
Small: Calvert County – 15
- Largest Percentage Increase  
Small: Queen Anne's County – 5.13%
- Largest Numerical Increase  
Medium: Howard County – 47
- Largest Percentage Increase  
Medium: Howard County – 3.00%
- Largest Numerical Increase –  
Large: Montgomery County – 118

**Community Service Local Association Project Awards** are also made using the small, medium, and large categories as described previously. The 2020 winners are as follows.

Small Local: Dorchester County  
*Book Buggy,  
Books on Wheels*



Medium Local: Cecil County  
*Agape*  
(Charlene Metzger pictured)



Large Local: Anne Arundel  
*Books for Teachers*

The **Outstanding Individual Community Service Award** winner is Dr. Linda Lymas of St. Mary's County. A member of St. Mary's County Public Schools Retirees Association, Dr. Linda Lymas serves her community at least 160 hours a month. She is recognized for establishing the first ever food bank in the county, *Feed St. Mary's Food Bank*. With over 10,000 food insecure people in the county, Linda oversees the distribution of food from the bank to local pantries. Hundreds of volunteers stay motivated to help with her encouragement. Linda secured a 5-year rent free lease on a 3,000 square - foot building and accessed grant funding to purchase a commercial walk-in freezer and refrigerator.



Elizabeth A. Stonesifer of Montgomery County won **Honorable Mention** (picture unavailable). E.A. Stonesifer is a member of Montgomery County Public Schools Retirees Association. She is recognized for creating a literacy program for 12 Title I elementary school first grades called *Reading is Terrific*. E.A. schedules, coordinates, recruits and trains 70 volunteer readers each year, while also facilitating fund raising and book selection. Each student in these first-grade classes receives 9 books over the course of the year to take home to begin or add to their personal library.



NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
JOPPA, MD  
PERMIT NO. 100

**Maryland Retired School Personnel Association**  
8379 Piney Orchard Parkway, Suite A  
Odenton, MD 21113-1508

### MRSPA CALENDAR

July 3 .....	Independence Day Observation <i>MRSPA Office Closed</i>
July 29 .....	Local Presidents' Meeting <i>Via Zoom</i>
August 12 .....	Board of Directors Meeting <i>Via Zoom or In Person</i>
September 7 .....	Labor Day <i>MRSPA Office Closed</i>
September 16 .....	MRSPA Leadership Conference <i>TBD</i>
September 16 .....	Mayflower Tours Preview <i>MRSPA Office, Odenton</i>
September 22 .....	Cruises Plus Preview <i>MRSPA Office, Odenton</i>



### MRSPA TRIPS AND TRAVEL 2020-2021



**Greece: A Land of Gods & Heroes**, Aventura World, March 20 - 29, 2021, Contact Dora Ferreira at (201) 228 - 5266 or [reservations@aventuraworld.com](mailto:reservations@aventuraworld.com).

**Scandinavia & Russia**, Cruises Plus, June 28 - July 11, 2021, Contact Carl Love at (410) 530 - 1842, or [CarlCruisesPlus1@gmail.com](mailto:CarlCruisesPlus1@gmail.com).

**Colorado Historic Trains**, Mayflower, July 16 - 24, 2021 departure options, Contact Debbie Martinez at (810) 797 - 5710 or (630) 673 - 0773 or [Debbie@mayflowercruisesandtours.com](mailto:Debbie@mayflowercruisesandtours.com).

**Canadian Maritimes**, Grand Circle Travel, August 2021 (Dates TBD), Contact Amanda Turrell at (386) 597 - 1380 or (386) 290 - 2997 or [ATurrell@oattravel.com](mailto:ATurrell@oattravel.com). **Code: GO- 28192.**

**Discover Scotland**, Collette, September 2021 (Dates TBD), Contact Todd Bridges at (513) 289 - 1445 or (888) 637 - 5699 or [tbridges@collette.com](mailto:tbridges@collette.com).

**New England Rails and Sails**, Mayflower Tours, October 1-9, 2021, Contact Debbie Martinez at (810) 797 - 5710 or (630) 673 - 0773 or [Debbie@mayflowercruisesandtours.com](mailto:Debbie@mayflowercruisesandtours.com).

**Backroads of Iberia: Spain and Portugal**, Overseas Adventure Travel (Grand Circle Travel Small Group), October 2021 (Dates TBD), Contact Amanda Turrell at (386) 597 - 1380 or (386) 290 - 2997 or [ATurrell@oattravel.com](mailto:ATurrell@oattravel.com). **Code: GO- 28192.**

**Santa Fe Holiday**, Collette, November/December 2021 (Dates TBD), Contact Todd Bridges at (513) 289 - 1445 or (888) 637 - 5699 or [tbridges@collette.com](mailto:tbridges@collette.com).

Many of the cancelled 2020 MRSPA trips have been rescheduled and are available. Please contact the agents about those trips.

All MRSPA trips are open to MRSPA members, their family and friends. Please use **Code: GO- 28192** anytime you travel with Grand Circle Tours to access a special deal for you and MRSPA, even if it's not a MRSPA sponsored trip.

Check the MRSPA Website at [www.mrspa.org](http://www.mrspa.org) for Travel Information.

