

ECHOES

Vol. LVIII No. 3

The Prince George's Public School Retirees Association Newsletter

January 2025

PGPSRA Founded and Established June 18, 1964

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Welcome to the New Year, 2025!

As we move into the new year, I hope you are off to a great start. PGPSRA is beginning this year with a great deal of enthusiasm, new program opportunities, and an ongoing commitment to serve our retired educators and our community. Our organization will continue to advocate for our pension and healthcare benefits as well as staying connected with our members.

Our last general meeting featured State Delegate Kym Taylor, 23rd Legislative District and State Delegate Nicole Williams, 22nd Legislative District and Chair of

Prince George's County Delegation. Each Delegate discussed the State Budget and various bills which have been filed. Their presentations helped us to understand the budget and how it will affect Prince George's County. The information shared was relevant for all of us.

Please mark your calendar and begin your new year with PGPSRA's General Meeting on January 22nd, 11:00 a.m. at PGCEA Center, 8008 Marlboro Pike, District Heights. We will have a representative from the Benefits Office who will share relevant information regarding changes and things to know about our benefits. Please bring your questions with you.

May this new year fill your heart with joy, your home with love, and your soul with peace.

Have a safe, blessed and Happy New Year.

With Appreciation!

Oretha Bridgwaters-Simms, President

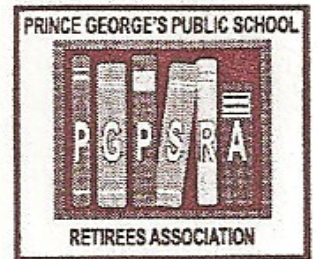


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Legislative Committee

At our November General Membership Meeting we were pleased to be joined by Nicole Williams and Kym Taylor of the Maryland House of Delegates. Ms. Williams represents the 22nd District and serves as the Chair of the Prince George's Delegation. Ms. Taylor represents the 23rd District and also serves as the Vice Chair for the Prince George's County Delegation Education Committee.

Nicole Williams discussed some of the challenges facing the legislature this session. The state is facing a significant budget deficit in part because of the costs to implement the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, the higher costs for Medicaid, and the cost of the childcare subsidy. The challenge will be to increase revenue while identifying areas to save. They will look at programs across the board that are not being utilized or that offer duplication of service.

Kym Taylor informed us of several bills that will be considered this year. One she will put forward extends the time students have to comply with immunization requirements. Many students new to the United States struggle to get all immunizations within the current 25-day window. As a result, the students cannot be included in school enrollment counts. The revenue lost is close to 66 million dollars. The proposed bill will extend the window to 60 days from date of enrollment.

Other bills being introduced by our Prince George's delegation include:

PG 410-25 Delegate Long's bill will provide Maryland State tax incentives to volunteers in certain schools.

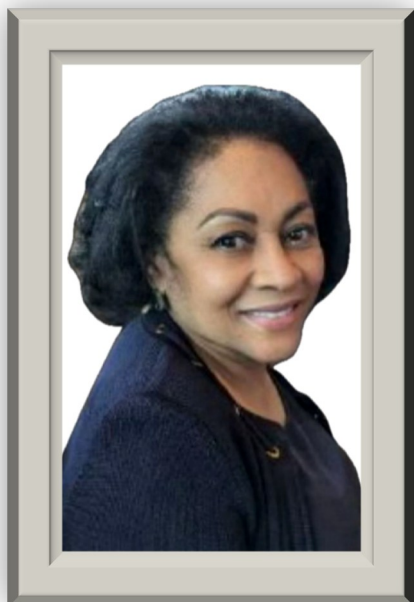
PG 502-25 Delegate Taveras will introduce a bill to require Prince George's County Public Schools to establish child care centers in certain public high schools in the county with financial support from the State Department of Education.

PG 504-25 Delegate Woods has drafted a bill related to the existing Office of Integrity and Compliance in the Prince George's County Public Schools. The bill would require the County Executive rather than the Prince George's County Council, to select and appoint the Integrity and Compliance Officer. The bill would also require the Officer to serve as an independent employee within the county government, rather than PGCPs.

PG 506-25 Delegate Long's bill will alter how the Superintendent of Prince George's County Public Schools is selected.

For more information on local legislation to come before the Delegation - <https://princegeorghousedelegation.com/legislation-2025/>

J Davis and Laura Downey: Co-Chairs



TREASURER'S

REPORT

November 2024

Account Balances:

Checking \$35,318.27

Savings \$125.86



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

It was a pleasure to welcome so many members in attendance at the November meeting. Your attendance and continuing interest in our organization is important for the community work that we do to enhance the lives of children, educators, and others in need in our county. Your contributions of involvement of your time and financial donations are most appreciated.

What a surprise at the November meeting, when President Oretta Bridgewater-Simms singled out Addie Martin and Jannette Wundrow for recognition of their 26 years of membership in PGPSRA/MRSPA, noting the offices of President and Committee Chairmanships they have both held over the years.

The November winner of the Community Service Committee door prize winners were: Dr. Carolyn Cuff and Charlotte Faison.

Please invite other retirees, whom you may know to join PGPSRA and MRSPA. New members and those who continue to pay their yearly dues by an annual check, are encouraged to use the dues-deduction method of payment. The dues will be taken from your July check, which always includes a COLA (cost of living allowance) increase in July, so you will barely miss this yearly dues amount. Also, you never have to write a renewal check again, and you will get a one-time \$10 discount for paying by the dues-deduction method.

Wishing you a HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Jannette Wundrow—Chair

Officers and Committee Chairs

President and Past President/Nominating: Oretta Bridgwaters-Simms (obridge@verizon.net)

President-Elect: Susie Proctor (proctorsrs@gmail.com)

Recording Sec.: Alonia C. Sharps (asharps@icloud.com)

Treasurer: Dr. Barbara J. Atwater (barbaraatwater703@yahoo.com)

Corresponding Secretary: Sharon Collins (Sjcollins1908@yahoo.com)

Auditing: Susan Fortgang (sfort@msn.com) & Leah Fowble (pepper3495@aol.com)

BOE Liaison and Trips: Addie Martin (amartin668@aol.com)

Bylaws and Nominating: George Denny (George.dilden@yahoo.com)

Community Service: Lillie B. James (Ljam210@aol.com) and Dr. Wanda Robinson (wanda63robinson@gmail.com)

Consumer Ed. and Scholarships: Brenda L. Barnes (blbarnes128@aol.com)

Historian: Vacant

Inspirations: Gretel James (gret2349@gmail.com)

Legislation: Judith Davis (jfintakdavis@aol.com) and Laura Downey (laura.downey@verizon.com)

Membership: Jannette Wundrow (jannetewundrow@comcast.net)

Newsletter and Programs: Bonnie Curry Brose (bcbrose@comcast.net)

Webmaster/Parliamentarian: Dr. William Brose (wmbrose@comcast.net)

Remembrance: Linda Butler (lindab1217@verizon.net)

Awards and Recognition:

Scholarships: Brenda Barnes (blbarnes128@aol.com) and Vera Davis (davisvera5080@gmail.com)



Bits and Pieces

Happy **JANUARY** birthday greetings to some of our Emeritus members: Hilda Rubin Of Silver Spring will be celebrating her 96th birthday on the 2nd; Lannie Morehead of Fort Washington will be having her 96th birthday on the 7th; Betty Bailey of Greensboro, N.C. will be marking her 99th birthday on the 11th; Helen Brewer of Waldorf will be reaching her 95th birthday on the 22nd; two members will be celebrating their birthdays on the 23rd, when, Delores Smith of Huntington will be turning 95 years-old, and Michael Tronzo of Stafford, VA. will be turning 94 years of age; Patrica Moon of Easton will be celebrating her 91st birthday on the 26th; Kenneth Turner of Marietta. GA. will be observing his 93rd birthday on the 28th; Beverly West of Annapolis will be having her 97th birthday on the 30th.

Happy **February** birthday wishes to other Emeritus members: two ladies will be having birthdays on the 7th: when Ina Lou White of Burke, VA. will be turning 98 years-old and Mary Brinton of Palm Coast, FL. will be turning 91 years of age; Mildred Mitchell of Washington, D. C. will be reaching her 95th birthday on the 10th; **James Ruckert of Chesapeake Beach will be marking 100 years of age on the 11th**, while Barbara Taylor of Frederick be observing her 92nd birthday; Rowena Jackson of Forestville will be celebrating her 91st birthday on the 17th; two ladies will be sharing a birthdate on the 25th, when Ann Rakow of Rockville will be reaching 94 years of age and Cora Marshall of Fort Washington will be reaching her 98th birthday; **Audrey Moore of Forestville will be celebrating her 101st birthday on the 29th!**

Daisy Flowers Glover retired at the end of 1999 as a Library Media Specialist at Melwood Elementary School. After retirement, Daisy spent the next eleven years in North Carolina caring for her mother and an aunt. Later she returned to live in District Heights. She has enjoyed visiting most of the 50 United States, and she spent some time in Barbados. Daisy loves to read, watch comedy shows on TV, and talk with friends on the phone. Sadly, her husband passed away in 2018.

Sharon Hilty retired as a swim teacher from Wheatley Special Center in 2004. She then moved to Ocean City, MD. to reside in the house her mother had owned for a number of years before her passing. She has since been an active volunteer in the Ocean City community. She especially enjoys volunteering at the Fenwick Island Baptist Church and with the Juniors at the American Legion Post 166, where they select a project each month to honor our military. Sadly, Sharon lost her son, J.D. during his fourth tour of Army duty in Iraq in March 2020. J.D. had two daughters, one who lives in New Mexico and one in Texas, with whom Sharon enjoys texting and using Face Time. She also treasures a friend, Dottie, age 96 years, with whom she spends time. This past September Sharon attended her 60th DuVal High School reunion and found it a pleasure to see many school friends whom she has known since 6th grade. In March 2022 Sharon traveled to visit her granddaughters: Jordan in Las Cruces, N.M. and Isabella in Copperas Cove, TX. In 2023, she went to beautiful Puerto Penasco, Mexico to spend time with her sister-in-law and her daughters, enjoying two weeks of experiences and opportunities.

Rufus Adams of Jessup, retired from DuVal High School in 2009. He volunteers at Greater Mount Nebo AME Church, where he sings in the Men's Choir. Rufus has enjoyed vacations in Cocoa Beach, FL., Portland, ME., and Cardiff, South Whales, UR.

Anne Giordano retired in 1997 as principal of C.T. Reed Elementary. Afterward she moved to Raleigh, N.C., where she volunteered in the local elementary school to assist students with reading. She also taught demonstration lessons. Anne participated in a "Habitat For Humanities" musical fundraiser. She has enjoyed playing golf, participating with several card-playing groups and a musical group, along with exercising in tai chi and yoga classes. Over the years, she has taken ski trips every winter to either CO., WY., NV., VT., MT., ID., and CA. Anne has sailed on several cruises across the Atlantic and to Alaska. She has also traveled to Sicily four times. Anne has been married for 65 years. She has four adult children, seven grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and one more expected in late February. Amazingly, during Anne's very active retirement years, she has found time to write three children's books: "Spenser, The Magic Rabbit", "Scotty, The Hero Dog", and "Frosty The Yellow Frog" – and she is currently working on an adult novel!

PGPSRA Community Service Committee

October/November 2024

The Community Service Committee has been focused and busy! We are excited to share the projects we have conducted with Shepherds Cove Shelter for Women and Children as well as an update on one of the new projects that we have begun in this edition of the newsletter.

On October 24th the Community Service Committee engaged the children in a reading and activities focused on the folk legend “Johnny Appleseed”. The children listened to a reading of the story and then created “pot hats”. Each child received a copy of the book along with apple tasting, and other goodies. They also engaged in math activity sheets themed around the character *Johnny Appleseed*. Nine children participated in this program. The women residents were engaged with Dr. Sonia L. King, who led the women in self-esteem, goal setting, and inspiration. Nine women of various ages participated in this workshop and asked if the session could be continued at a future session. It was an amazing evening!



Our 2nd session at the shelter was on November 20, 2024. This session was focused on Thanksgiving for the children and a Seated Yoga/Mindfulness session with Dr. Nicole E. Ford, founder of *Yoga with Soul* for the women. 12 children (two not pictured) engaged in activities that supported their learning of directionality, listening skills, and math skills. The women residents at the shelter were led in seated yoga moves and breathing exercises to eliminate stress and anxiety. Each of the eleven women participated fully in the session and received scented soaps as a gift.



Lastly, the committee met with Dr. Ramos, director of the Bowie State University Nutrition Lounge on November 18, 2024. Dr. Ramos shared valuable information and accepted our application to be a donor to their nutrition lounge. We will be collecting non-perishable items to take to the BSU student nutrition lounge at our January, March, and May association meetings. Remember to bring some non-perishable items for the BSU Nutrition Lounge to the January 2025 general membership meeting!

Continued on Page 5

Community Service cont'd

The Community Service Committee is very appreciative to all PGPSRA members who participated in our raffle. The raffle generated \$139.00 to support the Shepherds Cove Shelter Program. Congratulations to McKinley Hayes, winner of the Foodi Ninja 14 in 1 Cooker!

Congratulations!



Your Community Service Committee!



Everyone Can Be Involved!

The Maryland website (MRSPA.org) has information for us. There are two projects to check:

- Food Drive: Go to the box for the Annual Day of Giving and click to go to the donation information. You will find a list of places that are taking donations. Click there to find out what information is needed. This drive is completely separate from our drive in PGPSRA.
- The box for Community Service will take you to the application that needs to be filled out by our Community Service Committee. If you read this and have information on an individual that we may want to nominate, please contact Wanda or Lillie. The nominations must be sent in by the Committee. The due date has not been set but be ready for early spring.....March. Specific information will be on the website or in the March Echoes.

Speakers

We had two of our Maryland Legislators to speak at the November meeting.. Delegates Kym Taylor and Nicole Williams brought us the latest from Annapolis. It looks like we will have a busy time at the statehouse this year!



Thank You!



PGPSRA General Meeting

January 22, 2025 at 11:00 a.m.

PGCEA Center

Forestville, Maryland

(We need the count by the January 15th mail delivery! Mail it now!!)

PLEASE MAIL THIS FORM TO THE ADDRESS BELOW:

Dr. Barbara J. Atwater, 2101 Willow Switch Lane, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774-4216

Name(s) _____

Email Address _____

Amount enclosed - \$18 for each lunch reservation \$ _____

Please make checks payable to PGPSRA.

(Remember! We need the count by the 15th date!)

All members are welcome for the meetings. However, if you do not want a lunch, you are free to bring your own. We only order the requests received. Late orders make it difficult for the caterer.....be kind, order as soon as you are able.

We will be having our box lunches. Please let the treasurer know if you need a vegetarian meal.

PGPSRA

Dr. Barbara J. Atwater
2101 Willow Switch Lane
Upper Marlboro, MD 20774

Editor:

Bonnie Curry Brose

bcbrose@comcast.net

We're on the web!

www.pgpsra.org



VISIT THESE WEBSITES

WWW.MRSPA.org and PGPSRA. Org

**If you have not already done so, send
your email address to**

Bonnie Brose

