

Montgomery County Public Schools **Retirees Association, Inc.**



P.O. Box 4367 Rockville, MD 20849-4367
www.mcpsra.org

Volume 2020-21, Issue #2

December, 2020



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dr. Carol Dahlberg
President - MCPSRA

We are proud to recognize **Inge Chichester** as the Montgomery County Public Schools **Teacher of the Year for 2020-2021**. She is the content specialist for World Studies and World Cultures at Sligo Middle School. As an exemplary teacher and leader, she is responsible for analyzing student achievement data, building a community of learners and working with teachers to support the implementation of the instructional program.

As Covid-19 keeps us apart, MCPSRA Board of Directors continues to work with the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association via Zoom to ensure that our retirement pensions are protected. The Board of Directors meets monthly via Zoom/teleconference to identify ways of keeping in touch with each other and representing all of our members.

On October 1, the MCPSRA Board of Directors voted to amend the "What We Do" section of our Mission and Vision Statement. It was agreed that the word "political" in the seventh bullet would be changed to "elected." And an eighth bullet would be added to reflect diversity as follows: "Promote and welcome participation of a diverse group of retirees as an essential component of a healthy and thriving organization." See page 10 to see our adopted Mission and Vision Statement.

To meet the needs of these challenging times, Steve Raucher has drafted an amendment to our **Articles of**

Incorporation and Bylaws: "Emergency Powers Referendum." Since this is only a proposed change to our Bylaws, members are encouraged to vote by mailing in the ballot found on page 7.

This month Donna Hollingshead (our new Public Relations chair) introduces a new feature in our newsletter: **"Profiles in Retirement"**. (See page 5.)

Last month Steve Raucher introduced **MCPSRA CARES CALLING**, an MCPSRA "Keep in Touch" Calling Group. One may still join and participate. (See page 8.)

We also congratulate Shebra Evans on her re-election to the MCPS Board of Education. She continues to be a strong support for retirees. We continue to support our community service projects including Toolkits (see page 3) and the Josiah Henson Park and Education Center (see p 9). In addition, the newsletters and updates are on our website, MCPSRA.org. If you would like to go back a little in time, newsletters are there from 2015. Once you grow tired of reading old MCPSRA newsletters, there are always lots of books to read like **The Splendid and the Vile** (Erik Larson), **Midnight in Chernobyl** (Adam Higginbotham), **The Pacific War Trilogy** (Ian W. Toll), **Hamnet** (Maggie O'Farrell), **All the Devils Are Here** (Louise Penny) the **Bolitho Series** (Alexander Kent) and on and on.

An opportunity to donate to the MRSPA Scholarship Fund by purchasing raffle tickets is found on page 6.

All of the members of the MCPSRA Board of Directors join me in wishing you a safe and rewarding holiday season with opportunities to celebrate with family and friends.

MCPSRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BOD)

Officers:

President	Dr. Carol M. Dahlberg john.dahlberg234@gmail.com	301-253-2212
Vice President	Dr. Debra Munk debramunk@yahoo.com	240-426-8407
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Recording Secretary	Mary D'Ovidio ldovidio01@comcast.net	240-246-7818
Treasurer	Dr. Stephen M. Raucher sraucher@comcast.net	301-460-9092

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Auditing	Harvey Strine strineah@verizon.net	301-251-0478
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Community Service	VACANT	
Consumer Education	Reginald J. Ott regjott@verizon.net	301-384-4901
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---Josiah Henson Project	Mary D'Ovidio ldovidio01@comcast.net	240-246-7818
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---Co-Chair	Juliette Trevino jgtrevino@comcast.net	301-460-9670
Scholarships (MCPSRA)	Elizabeth A. Stonesifer wonderfulnice@aol.com	301-460-5155
---Louise S. Walker	Kenneth E. Huff kenandmarylou@gmail.com	301-622-2161
Trips	Margaret Brown margdell@gmail.com	301-910-2305

BUSINESS MEETING/LUNCHEON

Business meeting/luncheons are held four times a year at the delightful Normandie Farm Restaurant, 10710 Falls Road, Potomac, MD 20854. Three dates remain:



Normandie Farm Restaurant has More than Popovers

February 18, 2021

April 15, 2021

June 17, 2021

MCPSRA Political Action Election Results 2020

It was about a year ago when we asked MCPSRA members to serve on our Political Action Committee (PAC). Early in 2020 the PAC with nine volunteers began the process of reviewing answers from candidates for the Montgomery County Board of Education and the House of Representatives, 8th Congressional District, to questions on education issues important to our members and the general public.

Next came personal interviews of all acceptable candidates. After review and debate we voted to endorse and recommend candidates to the MCPSRA Board of Directors.

We recommended Shebra Evans in BOE District 4 who was successful. Shebra won re-election with 64% of the vote.

For the at-large BOE seat we recommended Sunil Dasgupta. Sunil was not successful, but we hope he considers trying again in two years.

Jamie Raskin easily won re-election to the House of Representatives in Congressional District 8. Jamie earned 79% of the vote.

Lou D'Ovidio, Chair



THE JOY OF GIFT GIVING

As the Holiday Season approaches many of us must seriously rethink our plans for our traditional family festivities and get-togethers. We are adjusting to the new reality... for the sake of everyone's health during this devastating year of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is wiser to celebrate from afar. Many of us are asking our loved ones to adjust their Holidays Wish Lists to include mostly items that can be ordered and delivered rather than purchased in person at shops and malls. It is anticipated that the sale of gifts cards this Holiday Season will far surpass the totals sold during any previous year.

This may be the year that you forgo making a personal Wish List for gift items and instead request that a donation be made to a charity that you support. "Please don't get me anything! There isn't a thing I really need or want!" goes unheeded with so many who still insist on finding the perfect gift for each person on their gift-giving list. Many adults may welcome this suggestion from you. They may even ask you to make a donation in their names rather than shopping for gifts for them. *Charity begins at home* is something we need to keep in mind always. The past ten months have been truly devastating for all of mankind. Right here in Montgomery County there have been nearly 850 families that have lost a loved one to this virus with thousands of others hospitalized. Many families are suffering from the loss of income, the inability to afford rent and housing or even to put food on the table. What more meaningful gift could anyone give than to address a family's immediate needs and to restore their hope for the future? Seek out ways to provide immediate help to those in our local communities who are truly desperate - donate food and/or grocery gift cards to a food bank near you, drop off warm coats, gloves, hats, and scarves at collection points near you, sponsor a family during the Holidays by offering to pay for their utility or grocery bill for a month. Let the caring and compassion that resides in your heart burn as brightly as a star during this Holiday Season by making a truly meaningful donation to others in need.

There are hundreds and hundreds of national and local charities that request donations, especially at this time of year, which makes it very difficult to determine where you can be guaranteed that 100% of your donation will be used to support others who are truly in need. Please consider donating to our **Toolkits Project** since it will help children right here in Montgomery County. You can be assured that your entire donation will be used solely to provide a wide variety of school supplies to needy Title I in-coming kindergartners and Head Start students who enroll in next summer's Extended Learning Opportunities In Learning (ELO SAIL) Program in July. We are cautiously optimistic that by then it will be safe for such a program to be held in person and are anticipating that the enrollment will be considerably higher than in years past, with a projected request for approximately 2,500 kits. We acknowledge every donation with a receipt by e-mail or regular mail. If you designate your donation in honor or in memory of an individual, we are happy to send a letter to that person acknowledging your honorarium or memoriam contribution if you provide a name and address to whom it is to be sent. Make your donation now to assure that we have time to get those letters out in time before the Holidays. Remember, all donations are TAX-DEDUCTIBLE. Please complete the form below, make checks payable to: **MCPS Educational Foundation** with "Toolkits Project" on the memo line, and mail to the address provided. Thank you for your spirit of generosity during this Holiday Season as well as throughout the year in supporting our project. Stay safe and healthy!

MCPSRA TOOLKITS SPONSORSHIP FORM

Please provide (print clearly) the following information and mail it along with a check (payable to: **MCPS Educational Foundation**, with "Toolkits Project" on the memo line) to Mrs. Joan Donovan, 13 Hilton Court, Gaithersburg, MD 20882-3521

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

I would like to sponsor # _____ toolkits at \$10 per kit. Donation enclosed: \$ _____

Optional: In memory of _____ In honor of _____

Send acknowledgement to _____

Select one: _____ e-mail me a receipt at _____

_____ mail me a receipt _____ no receipt is necessary

_____ Do **NOT** include my name on the toolkits labels

Welcome New Members

Joined in September 2020

Ana I Colón	4 Strath Haven Court, Montgomery Village, MD 20886	301-417-0947
Amina Gyau	13621 Montmale Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20904	301-461-4404
Janisann Hay	434 Hortleberry Ct., Silver Spring, MD 20905	301-219-8600
Karen P. Johnson	10004 Ellard Drive, Lanham, MD 20706-2051	301-459-3976
Shyleen Mayer	3010 Paladin Terrace, Olney, MD 20832	301-570-1816

Joined in October 2020

Brian D Camp	14516 Pebblestone Dr., Silver Spring, MD 20905-5972	301-879-0283
Grata R.V. Garcia-Catipon	18579 Cape Jasmine Way, Gaithersburg, MD 20879	301-977-8132
Kateri Osburn	214 Finale Ter., Silver Spring, MD 20901	301-351-5613
Ivan H. Spencer	6662 17th Avenue Court West, Bradenton, FL 342019-7845	941-798-8037

MCPSRA Consumer Report by Reggie Ott

With the holidays quickly approaching during this pandemic, staying healthy and making sure the holidays are safe yet enjoyable is critical.

Below are a few tips to follow to assure safe and healthy holidays:

1. Keep potentially poisonous plants-mistletoe, holly berries, Jerusalem cherry and amaryllis-away from children.
2. Make sure artificial trees are labeled “fire resistant.”
3. Place your tree at least 3 feet away from fireplaces, radiators and other heat sources, making certain not to block doorways.
4. Turn off all lights and decorations when you go to bed or leave the house.
5. Place candles where they cannot be knocked down or blown over and out of the reach of children.
6. Do not burn trees, wreaths, or wrapping paper in the fireplace.
7. Check and clean the chimney and fireplace area at least once a year,
8. Be cautious with turkey fryers! The Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that there have been 672 turkey-fryer related burns or other injuries since 2002, with 15 million dollars in property damage losses. You might be better off considering getting a fried turkey from a professional establishment.

Finally, people are outside walking more. Take steps to avoid injury or death while walking. When possible, walk on the sidewalk; if no sidewalk is available, walk facing traffic. Cross streets at crosswalks. Wear bright and/or reflective clothing and use a flashlight at night.

Stay safe and relaxed as you enjoy the holiday season

PROFILES IN RETIREMENT by Donna Hollingshead

The MCPSRA Board seeks the input of members on what is important and relevant to you in your retirement years. We also want to stay in touch to hear how you are doing, as well as what you are doing these days. So many of our members remain actively engaged in new ventures and adventures. Many are exploring new occupations, hobbies, pastimes, travel, and community service; previously unimaginable given full work schedules. Others have “fun facts” or interesting stories to share. We ask that you share your stories/updates with the MCPSRA Membership. We would like to include such updates in a new section in the MCPSRA Newsletter titled, “Profiles in Retirement.” Your submission may be as short as a few lines or as long as one page. If possible, photos are requested to add information and interest. Note that submissions may be edited and shortened as space permits. Your email address in the article is optional and may be included if you wish to have other members contact you.

Please email your update and photos to dshollingshead@gmail.com or mail to D. Hollingshead, PO Box 4145, Frederick, MD 21705.

To kick-off this section, here are a couple of examples from our MCPSRA Board. We hope this inspires you to submit your update and/or Fun Fact!

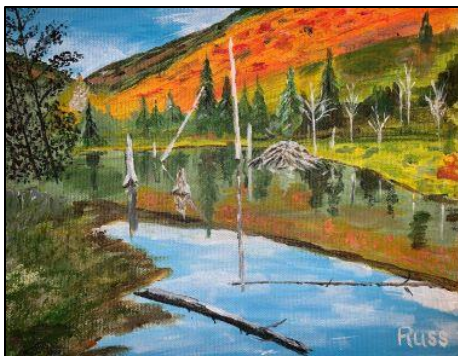
Stephen Raucher, Director of Transportation, Retired 2004;
sraucher@comcast.net

I restored and showed my 1936 Chevrolet.

Fun Fact: I took (former) Senator Barbara (Levy) Boxer [D- CA]. to the Senior Prom at Wingate HS, Brooklyn NY, in 1958! She was Miss Wingate, Class of 1958 and a “Booster.” I was a clarinet player.



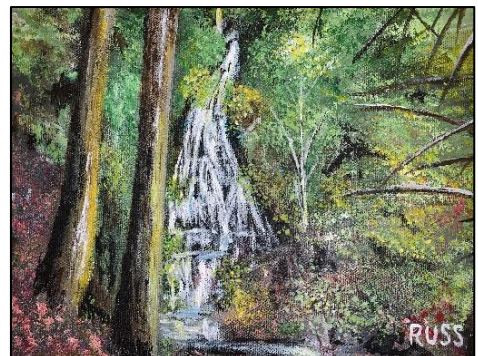
Russell Wright, Director of the Event Based Science Project, Retired 1998; russwright408@gmail.com



Since retiring, I've taken up painting scenes from my travels. My latest efforts are two 8 x 10 acrylic pictures I painted after my wife and I vacationed in Stowe, VT in early October.

I call my painting (left), **Beaver Pond at Smugglers Notch, VT** and (right) **Moss Glen Falls, Stowe, VT.**

I take photos with my iPhone



then I paint the best ones using acrylic paint on canvas.

Sales of my paintings are not yet funding my retirement life style. That's one of the many reasons I support MCPSRA and MRSPA as they fight to protect my pension.

MRSPA Fund Request for Donations – Raffle Drawing

The MRSPA Community Service and Scholarship Committees provide tremendous support to students and staff in our schools across Maryland. In the past, funds for these scholarships and mini-grants were partially obtained through in-person sale of raffle tickets statewide. This year, that option is not available to us due to the pandemic. Therefore, we are seeking **donations** to the *MRSPA Fund* so that we can continue our work. All donations are tax deductible and come with our thanks and appreciation!

To show our appreciation, your name will be entered into a drawing upon receipt of your donation based on this criterion: Donations of \$10 will earn 1 raffle ticket while donations of \$25 will earn 3 raffle tickets incrementally. MRSPA staff will write your name on the correct number of tickets when we receive your check. The drawing will take place at the May 2021 Annual Business Meeting whether held in person or virtually. You can win the \$300 cash first prize, a Maryland themed basket valued at \$150 second prize, or one of 5 third place themed baskets valued at \$75: Cooking, Spa, Wine Lover, Movie Night, and Sports Lover.

Entering the drawing is fun and easy!

1. Make your **check payable** to **The Community Foundation of Frederick County**.
2. Write **MRSPA Fund Donation** on the FOR line.
3. Date and **sign** your check.
4. **Mail** check and completed form to MRSPA at 8379 Piney Orchard Parkway, Suite A, Odenton, MD 21113 **before February 28, 2021**.

Will you send a donation today? Receipts will be sent via email or US Mail.

Please include the form below with your donation.



MRSPA Fund Donation

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Email

Address for Receipt: _____

Emergency Powers Referendum

Unprecedented events lead to unprecedented measures. But MCPSRA, like our great nation, finds ways to overcome situations beyond our control. Just as the pandemic caused millions of us to use mail in ballots instead of going to the polls in person, MCPSRA needs to do something similar in order to conduct its business.

What am I talking about? As we noted last May, the pandemic has created restrictions on “in person” meetings. We had to cancel our luncheons and had to rescind the suggested FY20-21 Budget because it contained a dues increase that required “membership approval”. The framers of our Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation never conceived of a time when in person meetings could not be held, and so wrote them to provide for general membership approval of dues increases, elections, and amendments. While a simple majority of those “present and voting” at an announced luncheon/meeting can enact or reject such items, our bylaws never provided an “override” if such meetings are impossible. So, now what can we do?

Using the model being discussed at our State Association (MRSPA) and already reviewed by their attorney, the MCPSRA Board of Directors has unanimously endorsed the following proposed Amendment to our Bylaws:

Article IX – Board of Directors

Section 3.

(f). Emergency Powers: During a national, state or local emergency, as declared by the appropriate federal, state, or local authorities, that prohibits or otherwise prevents in person meetings, all functions of the “Membership” as specified in these Bylaws shall be assumed by the Board of Directors.

In order to enact this amendment, the Board has authorized a mail in referendum/approval process. As with an “in person” vote on an amendment, a majority of those mailing back their ballots marked “APPROVE” will be required to enact the amendment. While we hope that we may return to having future luncheon meetings soon, this amendment will allow MCPSRA to elect new officers and adopt a budget for next year should the current pandemic restrictions continue to force cancelation of our luncheon meetings in April and June 2021.

Please fill in the ballot below and return it by December 31, 2020 via U.S. Mail to:

MCPSRA
P.O. Box 4367
Rockville, MD 20849-4367

[Please return by December 31, 2020]

I _____ APPROVE _____ DISAPPROVE _____
(name) (mark one)

the proposed Amendment to Article IX – Board of Directors - Section 3. (f). as stated above.

(signature) (date)

[Please note that names and signatures are required to validate voter eligibility. Voting on Amendments is a *public* vote.]

MCPSSRA CARES CALLING

An MCPSSRA “Keep-in-Touch” Calling Group is forming and would like you to join us.

COVID-19 is a terrible disease but so is loneliness. Many of us have been isolated in our homes, with limited access to another human voice. Yes, ZOOM and Netflix help fill out time, but we all need to talk with a real person, share our feelings and just communicate. Human beings were not created to be alone!

In addition to your Board of Directors, several of our members have already volunteered to periodically call various members of MCPSSRA who may be more isolated during the Coronavirus crisis because they are either living alone or may be ill. If you'd like to help us make these calls, or to be added to the list of members who would like to be called, please send an email to Steve Raucher (sraucher@comcast.net) or, better yet, give him a call (301)-318-4969. He's lonely too.

Missing the Tasty Normandie Farm Popovers?



You can satisfy that craving by visiting Normandie Farm. Normandie Farm is currently open for dining al fresco and

for inside dining, Tuesday-Sunday, from 11:00 am to 9:00 pm. Also, you can order for curbside pickup. Lunch specials are available until 3:30 pm and dinner specials throughout the dinner hour.

Normandie Farm is open on Thanksgiving Day for dining in as well as takeout. It will also be open Christmas Day. Check out the Normandie Farm website at popovers.com for all the details.

Happy Eating!!!

Did you make popovers at home? If so, please send a picture or a short blub about your experience. I'd like to include it in the next newsletter. Thanks. LeeAnn Kaye
geolakaye@gmail.com.

In Memoriam

We have no names to report. Reports of recently deceased retired MCPS employees have not been received from CESC since the closure of schools and other MCPS facilities last spring.

We will resume reporting names of deceased members as soon we start getting official reports.

Josiah Henson Museum & Park

Project Update by Lou D'Ovidio



The Josiah Henson Park Visitor Center/Museum nears completion.

Montgomery Parks Foundation reports that construction of the Museum building and rehabilitation of the plantation owner's house is almost finished. Thank you for your financial support. Your contributions to the Henson Project are matched by MCPSRA.

The grand opening /ribbon cutting, baring complications from local and state COVID restrictions, is planned for December 2020. The current order from Montgomery County directs all museums be closed, so we are still waiting for the exact date..

Meanwhile, there is a video of Mia Lewis, a descendant of Rev. Henson, touring the project site. Here is he link: <https://youtu.be/QESZGnq1qSU>

For more information visit: <https://www.montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/josiah-henson-park/>

Make a contribution using the form below. Programs at the Henson site have served Title 1 schools and will be expanded.

MCPSRA-Henson Project Donation Form

Please provide (print clearly) the following information and mail it along with a check (payable to: "Montgomery County Parks Foundation") to MCPSRA Treasurer, Dr. Stephen Raucher, 5515 Manorfield Rd., Rockville, MD 20853.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Mission and Vision Statement

Vision Statement

The Montgomery County Public Schools Retirees Association (MCPSRA) inspires the dedication, commitment and abilities of its members to serve fellow retirees and the entire community in our ever-changing society.

Mission Statement

MCPSRA is a non-profit organization created by and comprised of retirees from the Montgomery County Public Schools. It advocates for and provides services to its members, empowering them to enrich the quality of their lives. MCPSRA is dedicated to pursuing excellence in education for young people and for lifelong learning. It promotes service through volunteer opportunities within the Association and in the community.

What We Do

- Serve as a voice for school system retirees with local, state and national legislatures to assure continuing and improved retiree benefits;
- Serve as the local association in a network of school retiree organizations, including the National Retired Teachers Association (the educator community of AARP) and the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association;
- Work with the Montgomery County Public Schools and the Board of Education to assure an adequate program of retiree pension and health benefits;
- Provide annual scholarships to support staff development opportunities for outstanding MCPS personnel;
- Support MCPS students through activities such as the "gently used" books project, the educational toolkits project and alternative school programs;
- Provide continuing education, travel and other opportunities to help members and their families enjoy their lives and retirement;
- Recommend to members outstanding candidates for elected office;
- Communicate news and information regularly to members through newsletters, luncheons, business meetings and a website;
- Promote and welcome participation of a diverse group of retirees as an essential component of a healthy and thriving organization.

Revised and approved: October 1, 2020

A Few Humorous Signs to Tickle Your Funny Bone

from Arlene Gutwillig (Editor's neighbor.)

A sign in a Shoe Repair store in Vancouver:

"We will heel you
We will save your sole
We will even dye for you."

A sign on a Blinds and Curtains truck:

"Blind man driving."

Sign over a Gynecologist's office:

"Dr. Jones, at your cervix."

In a Podiatrist's office:

"Time wounds all heels."

On a Septic Tank truck:

"Yesterday's Meals on Wheels"

At an Optometrist's office:

"If you don't see what you're looking for,
You've come to the right place."

On a Plumber's truck:

"We repair what your husband fixed."

On another Plumber's truck:

"Don't sleep with a drip. Call your plumber."

At a Tire Shop in Milwaukee:

"Invite us to your next blowout."

On an Electrician's truck:

"Let us remove your shorts."

In a Non-smoking area:

"If we see smoke, we will assume you are on fire and
will take appropriate action."

On a Maternity Room door:

"Push. Push. Push."

At a Car dealership:

"The best way to get back on your feet - miss a car
payment."

Outside a Muffler shop:

"No appointment necessary. We hear you coming."

In a Veterinarian's waiting room:

"Be back in 5 minutes. Sit! Stay!"

At the Electric company:

"We would be delighted if you send in your payment
on time.

However, if you don't, YOU will be de-lighted."

In a Restaurant window:

"Don't stand there and be hungry; come on in and get
fed up."

In the front yard of a Funeral home:

"Drive carefully. We'll wait."

At a Propane Filling station:

"Thank Heaven for little grills."

In a Chicago Radiator shop:

"Best place in town to take a leak."

And the best one for last - Sign on the back of another
Septic Tank truck:

"Caution - This Truck is full of Political Promises"

Montgomery County Public Schools
MCPS Retirees Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 4367
Rockville, MD 20849

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Suburban, MD

DATED MATERIAL



**MCPSRA Luncheon/Business Meeting
NORMANDIE FARM**

**Gathering: 11:00 a.m.; Business Meeting: 11:30 a.m.;
Luncheon: 12:00 Noon; Program 1:00 p.m.**

**Next Luncheon is
scheduled for
??? February 18, 2021 ???**

**The MCPSRA Newsletter is published in
October, December, February, April, and June.**

This is the December, 2020 issue.