

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



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

www.mcpsra.org

Volume 2022-23, Issue #5

June 2023



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dr. Debra Munk
President - MCPSRA

As the school year ends, we want to congratulate our new retirees. On

June 8, 2023, MCPS recognized all retirees from the past three years at the Retirement Reception at Richard Montgomery High School. This long-standing tradition was suspended during COVID, and MCPSRA worked closely with ERSC to ensure that this year's celebration was a worthy tribute to our retirees and their years of service to the children of Montgomery County. We hope that every one of them becomes an active member of MCPSRA!

Every year the Board of Directors of MCPSRA sets goals to guide their work and priorities. At the May Board Meeting, the directors voted to continue their focus on the 2022-23 goals in the coming year. Although, in every category, MCPSRA saw gains and improvement, there is still room for growth.

Here are some of the highlights of the Board's work this year related to each goal:

- **Raise MCPSRA visibility with MCPS personnel.** I met with Superintendent McKnight to discuss retiree concerns, particularly the absence of a retiree recognition ceremony and the lack of clarity on health benefits. Additionally, Donna Hollingshead, Reggie Ott and I presented before the Board of Education. Board members attended each Retirement Workshop, sharing information about MCPSRA. Donna Hollingshead, Recording Secretary, passionately appealed to retirees at the Retirement Reception, urging them to join MCPSRA. We instituted a Facebook page and re-developed the website to better communicate information and to create an on-line retiree community.

- **Participate in and influence the decision-making process related to retiree's insurance and benefits.**

A sub-committee took a careful look at retiree health and dental benefits, comparing them to those of active employees. Their inquiry resulted in the identification of several areas where a significant discrepancy exists – particularly hearing aids and dental implants. Essentially, although retirees pay a higher percentage for health benefits, they are receiving less for their money. MCPSRA plans to address this inequity with the superintendent, Board of Education and ERSC in the coming months. We will keep you apprised of developments and will need your support when we present to the BOE.

- **Increase MCPSRA membership.** Although membership has remained stable, at over 2200 members, we hope that our recruitment campaign at the Retirement Reception and other efforts will result in many new memberships. Unfortunately, during COVID we lost a number of our older members.

- **Increase MCPSRA member participation in service projects, luncheons, trips, etc.** Our wonderful luncheons have resumed, and participation continues to increase. Members participated in a service project at InterFaith Works (IW) Essential Services Center, sorting clothes and household items. Another service project at IW is planned for June 22, 2023. We continue to encourage members to participate in the Montgomery County Recreation Department's SOAR program (Senior Outdoor Adventures in Recreation). The Board of Directors has registered for a Chesapeake Bay Lighthouse cruise on July 25.

- **Continue to support MCPS with Special Projects (Toolkits)** The Toolkits Project is underway for its 19th year, assembling and distributing kits to needy kindergartners participating in Title I's ELO SAIL summer program. Because of the cost of materials, we are soliciting donations to ensure that future Title I kindergartners will have the supplies they need to be successful. Please help if you can.

Continued on page 2.

MCPSRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BOD)

Officers:

President	Dr. Debra Munk debramunk@yahoo.com	240-426-8407
Vice President	Reginald J. Ott Regjott1@verizon.net	301-452-5449
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---Louise S. Walker	Margaret Brown margdell@gmail.com	301-910-2305
Trips	Bernadette Rager bg.rager@verizon.net	301-774-0345

BUSINESS MEETING/LUNCHEON

Business meetings/luncheons are held four times a year at Montgomery Country Club, 20908 Golf View Dr., Laytonsville, MD 20882.



June 15 MCPSRA Business Meeting and Lunch

Thursday, June 15, is the last luncheon and business meeting of the school year. Attending one of our luncheons is a wonderful way to meet up with friends and former colleagues—renew, refresh and make new friends.

As of now, our first luncheon for the 2023-2024 year will be held Thursday, October 26. Mark your calendar. Have a delightful summer. Enjoy and take care. See you soon.

LeeAnn Kaye

Presidents Message Continued from page 1.

- **Continue to grant scholarships to MCPS active staff.** We received over 100 scholarship applications from MCPS staff. We expect to award eight to ten (\$1500 or less) scholarships to staff.

As you can see, the MCPS Board of Directors has been extremely busy this year. Each Board member donates their time and talents to support the organization and YOU. I am grateful to serve with such committed professionals. And we thank you for being a member. Our strength in addressing issues is in our numbers. We wish that all retirees realized how critical this organization is to their financial security. Please share the message.

Have a wonderful summer.

Debra

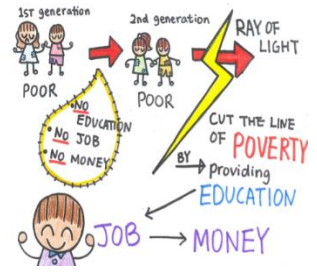
I WISH SOMEONE HAD TOLD ME!



How many times have you heard or even uttered those very words? And how about these? *I didn't have any idea this was happening! I wish I had known! I feel really bad, I would definitely have been there to help if someone had let me know!* But when do these thoughts and words surface? – Usually, it's after everything is over and done and we are just hearing about it. We feel guilty realizing that we could have done something to help. When our family members, friends, and neighbors are thrust into a crisis we want to know so we can immediately jump into action to do all that we can to

provide them with help and support.

That being said... I want you to focus right now on a crisis that exists in our country that needs the help of every caring citizen willing and able to offer assistance. That crisis is **poverty**. Did you know that the number of homeless people is more than 582,462 across our nation, of which 98,244 are children under the age of 18? The estimated poverty rate for children in all US school districts in 2021 was 14.5% according to data from the US Census Bureau. In Montgomery County an estimated 8.6% of its 1,045,600 population, a total of 90,377 people live in poverty. Sadly, 12.8% of those are children under 18 years of age. I'm sure most of you find this disturbing, especially in what is considered one of Maryland's wealthiest counties. How do we define *poverty*? One dictionary describes it as *...the state of privation and lack of necessities; ... (it) denotes the lack of the means for proper existence.* It continues with *...'need' emphasizes the fact that help or relief is necessary.* **So, now you know, and you can help do something about it!**



For 18 years our association has been very aware of the needs of our county's impoverished children and has been committed to addressing their needs as best we could by raising funds each year to assemble and distribute *toolkits* of school supplies to Title I kindergartners who have attended the ELO SAIL summer school program. We were delighted with how many of you responded to our plea in our last newsletter article and mailed in donations. We are very grateful. We have received 150 donations for a total of \$12,955. It's not enough! We need more than double that amount to cover the cost of the 2,100 kits that have been requested by Title I for this summer. PLEASE complete the form below and mail it along with your check made payable to: **MCPS Educational Foundation** to the address provided. We desperately need your help. We whole-heartedly thank you for helping to alleviate the pain of poverty for the youngest of our county's school children.

Joan Donovan

-----detach here-----

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 March 2023

Sue M. Bomzer-Altman	9 Climbing Rose Ct., Rockville, MD 20850	301-424-4057
Arthur Benica	8508 Fountain Valley, Dr., Gaithersburg, MD 20886	301-990-0363
Nancy Nortrup	3413 Forest Wood Dr, Brookville, MD 20833	301-774-5336

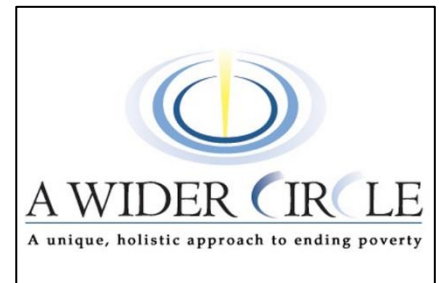
Joined in April 2023

Judith C. Falls.	9300 Corporate Blvd. Apt. 1524, Rockville, MD 20850	301-938-8393
Melissa B. Hurley	10603 Amherst Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20902	301-807-0799
Julie E. Johnson	17640 Kohlhoss Rd Poolesville, MD 20837-2193	301-972-8314

MCPSSRA Consumer Education by Deb Berner

** Time for Fun and to Get Organized!

Summer is just around the corner! Longer days, more sunlight, more time to travel or meet up with family/friends, or even to just sit around the pool. Since I retired almost a year ago, I finally found the time to do all of that but also to begin deep cleaning my house. I have purged, uncluttered, made several trips to the waste management facility as well as my fave donation place, *A Wider Circle*, and even completed a long-awaited garage clean up. I am also getting ready to remodel my outdated kitchen, so I have recently added that to my to do list.



When I began with these huge jobs in front of me, I didn't really know where to start or how to tackle everything I wanted to do without a lot of hassle and frustration. So, I did an online search to see if there were any suggestions I could use to make my job(s) seem less overwhelming and thought I would share them with you.

The following is a summary of the most pertinent points to consider:

1. Begin with one area to start. Determine what part of the home or section you want to tackle first and celebrate when you have finished. Many attempts at organization fail when the task we want to complete becomes so overwhelming that we end up quitting before we are done.
2. Allow plenty of time. Don't expect organization to happen overnight. Depending on the area to be organized, schedule a couple of hours each day to work on getting the area organized. Cleaning out my garage took a few days compared to the basement closet that only took a half day to finish.
3. Take inventory of what you have and sort the items into piles...Keep, trash, donate.



can be hard but if you have not worn clothing/shoes or used an item in over a year, it is probably time to give it away or throw it out. You can also reuse items. For example, I found a lamp that had been used in one room until I changed colors. The lamp found a new home in another room that needed an update.

Finally, success in organizing your life and daily activities is a result of planning and daily action. Retirement is supposed to be a time for the stress-free activities we like to enjoy. So, focus on what is important; revise (where necessary) your short and long-term goals; make lists; reduce clutter; and enjoy the freedom you have created for yourself by checking things off your to-do list!

****July Deals:**

According to Nerdwallet.com, July is the time to buy because “prices drop like it’s hot.” They list several items for you to purchase or stock up on:

1. **Summer apparel**—Even though the weather is still hot and humid, demand for summer clothing begins to diminish. Sales of shorts, tanks and flip-flops are in full force.
2. **Fourth of July items**— “Retailers like a reason to celebrate. In the days leading up to Independence Day, there’s usually an abundance of sales on red, white and blue products, as well as on barbecue and backyard items, sporting goods, jewelry and furniture.”
3. **Personal electronics on Prime Day**—Amazon’s Prime Day was July 12-13, 2022, and at this time, the 2023 date has not been released yet. Amazon Prime Day, *aka Black Friday in July*, is a great time to buy electronics and gadgets, among other items.
4. **School supplies**—School staff and students definitely won’t be thinking about the end of summer yet, but merchants will be pushing out TV and internet sale ads regarding school supplies in late July. Avoid the August rush and shop early if school supply lists have been released to the school community.



****Safety on the Roads:** Give trucks & Busses space for wide turns.

Next time you encounter a truck or bus at an intersection, remember: Trucks and buses have large blind spots and need extra room to swing-wide for a turn.

Be ready with these tips:

- Never try to squeeze-by between the curb and a truck or bus with its turn-signal on;
- To avoid a dangerous and costly collision with a truck or bus, don’t ‘block the box’ in an intersection by remaining past the stop-line as traffic is moving;
- Remain fully behind or fully in-front of a truck or bus for 1 lane on its left or 2 lanes on its right;
- Don’t closely cut into a truck or a bus’s lane: trucks and buses need 40% more time than a car to stop and, moving about 65 mph, require up to 2 football fields of distance.

Source: Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

*The **Consumer Connection** newsletter on the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association site at <https://mrspa.org> has additional updates and information. The May-June 2023 issue lists 10 days’ worth of additional organizational items for you to consider doing...check it out!]

We Heard you

Several of our members have contacted MCPSRA to inquire about a problem they incurred by overpaying their health insurance at the end of their active service. It appears that some 10-month employees, who elected to pay their annual health benefits over the ten-month school year, also began paying for their Retiree Health Insurance benefits in July of the year they retired. This meant that they paid twice for their coverage during July and August of that year.

We have shared your concerns with MCPS executive staff. We have been told that MCPS is aware of the problem, corrected it for those who retired at the end of the 2022 school year, and have retroactively resolved this issue for retirees in 2020 and 2021. They are also aware that this discrepancy goes back prior to 2020.

While MCPSRA is continuing to monitor this issue, any future resolution lies with MCPS.

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MCPSRA WEBSITE UPDATE by Sandra Filippi (MCPSRA Webmaster)

MCPS RETIREES ASSOCIATION (MCPSRA)

If you are an MCPS Retiree, you should be a member of MCPSRA! The MCPS Retirees Association (MCPSRA) is a non-profit organization created by and comprised of retirees from the Montgomery County Public Schools. It advocates for retiree benefits and provides valuable services to its members, including a timely newsletter, luncheons, travel and volunteer opportunities within the association and in the community. MCPSRA is dedicated to pursuing excellence in education for young people through its Toolkits Project and providing scholarships to current MCPS employees who wish to further their educations.

You can also visit the MCPSRA website at this link <https://www.mcpsra.org/>

CONTACT US

MCPS is seeking interested retirees to return to work. Please take a moment to complete this interest survey.

RETIREE SURVEY



The MCPSRA website as seen on the editor's iPhone.

“The original idea of the web was that it should be a collaborative space where you can communicate through sharing information.” Tim Berners-Lee

The Montgomery County Public Schools Retirement Association (MCPSRA) is listed as a department of the Maryland Montgomery County Public Schools website (<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/>). Due to unforeseen circumstances, the MCPSRA departmental information was unable to be updated. As a workaround the MCPSRA purchased the domain name www.mcpsra.org from GoDaddy, an Internet domain registrar. Then MCPSRA established an account to build a new website. This resulted in two separate and distinct websites for the MCPSRA. The original one was dormant. The new one was managed until recently. The information on the two websites was asynchronous which led to confusion among the membership and prospective members.

MCPSRA President Dr. Debra Munk recognized the issue and provided guidance. The Board decided to decommission the second website which saved the association more than \$300 per year. Then they redirected the domain [mcpsra.org](https://www.mcpsra.org) to [montgomeryschoolsmd.org](https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org). Dr. Munk appointed a webmaster who is currently learning the new content management system (CMS) recently adopted by MCPS. There will be a collection of web pages dedicated to such topics as Bylaws, newsletters, meeting minutes, committee reports, etc. The new webmaster will be co-chairperson of the Public Relations committee with Christina Sutter, the Facebook master. Together they will develop a strategic plan to promote the MCPSRA.

In Memoriam

The following MCPSRA members have passed away:

FEBRUARY

Anna M. Mayberry

MARCH

Regina E. Brown

Gloria J. Dunne

Bernard Michels

Elmer G. Muth

Sandra J. Sedam

Frederick C. Snyder

APRIL

Brenda D. Adcock

Norma C. Day

Ronald M. Feffer



Follow us on Facebook @
Maryland MCPS Retirees
Association



Join our Private Members only Facebook Group @ MCPSRA

Please note: There is an older Facebook page called Montgomery County Public Schools Retirees Association that is no longer active. Unfortunately we do not know who owns this account and have been unable to deactivate it. If you happen to know who started this account please contact christina.p.sutter@gmail.com.

Entertainment at the April Luncheon

Photos by Bill Mills



John Gamage, "Johnny G," topped off the afternoon strumming his guitar and singing.



Debra Munk (MCPSRA President) joins other members enjoying the music of Johnny G.

Congratulations!

MCPSRA officers were elected at the April Business Meeting/Luncheon. Thank you to everyone who attended the April meeting and voted. Beginning July 1, 2023, our officers will be Debra Munk (President), Reginald Ott (Vice-President), Marla Caplon (Recording Secretary), and Stephen Raucher (Treasurer).

Gift Card Incentive for Members:

The \$10 Gift Card incentive continues! Recruit a NEW member and have them pay by DUES DEDUCTION and **you** will receive a \$10 Walmart gift card. Please make sure that you (the member recruiter) write your name on the new member application form before it is returned to the MRSPA Office. If you need new membership applications, please contact the MRSPA Office or print them from the MRSPA website or cut and paste this link into your browser:

mrspa.org/files/ugd/640edf_33eedcfce7846bca9632aff1c6c9d51.pdf

MRSPA can be reached at 410-551-1517, toll-free 877-625-6782, or mrspa@mrspa.org.

Let's help grow our membership!!



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Interesting Answers to GED Questions from Skip Rideout

These are real GED Questions with real answers from "creative" 16-year-olds.

Q. Name the four seasons

A. Salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar

Q. How is dew formed?

A. The sun shines down on the leaves and makes them perspire.

Q. What guarantees may a mortgage company insist on?

A. If you are buying a house, they will insist that you are well endowed.

Q. What are steroids?

A. Things for keeping carpets still on the stairs.

Q. What happens to your body as you age?

A. When you get old, so do your bowels and you get intercontinental.

Q. Name a major disease associated with cigarettes?

A. Premature death.

Q. How can you delay milk turning sour?

A. Keep it in the cow (Simple, but brilliant)

Q. How are the main 20 parts of the body categorized? (e.g., The abdomen)

A. The body is consisted into 3 parts - the brainium, the borax and the abdominal cavity. The brainium contains the brain, the borax contains the heart and lungs and the abdominal cavity contains the
five bowels: A, E, I, O, and U.

Q. What is the fibula?

A. A small lie.

Q. What does 'varicose' mean?

A. Nearby

Q. Give the meaning of the term 'Caesarean section'.

A. The caesarean section is a district in Rome.

Q. What is a seizure?

A. A Roman Emperor.

Q. What is a terminal illness

A. When you are sick at the airport.

Q. What does the word 'benign' mean?

A. Benign is what you will be after you be eight.

MCPSRA Luncheon and Business Meeting

Thursday, June 15, 2023
Montgomery Country Club
20908 Golf View Drive
Gaithersburg, MD 20882
240-912-9515

If MCPS is closed, luncheon is cancelled. Delayed opening, luncheon is held.
Gathering: 11:00 a.m. Business Meeting: 11:30 a.m. Luncheon: 12:00 Noon Program

Buffet Menu

Pulled BBQ Pork w/ Brioche Bun
Roasted Chicken Quarters
Creamy Coleslaw
Scalloped Potatoes
Buttered Sweet Corn
Caesar Salad
Cornbread
Dessert

Iced Tea, Coffee, Lemonade
\$35.00

Cut Here

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email address: _____ Total amount enclosed: _____

Reservation form and check must be received by Friday, June 9, 2023.

Make checks payable to MCPSRA. Mail to:

LeeAnn Kaye
3210 N. Leisure World Blvd. #306
Silver Spring, MD 20906

For information: LeeAnn Kaye 301-598-5480 or Trish Bendler 301-540-5160
geolakaye@gmail.com or patriciabendler0@gmail.com

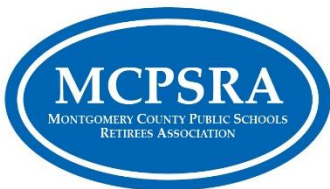
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**MCPSRA Luncheon/Business Meeting
MONTGOMERY COUNTRY CLUB**

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

Next Luncheon Date June 15, 2023

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

This is the June 2023 issue.