

2022 Annual Business Meeting Returns In-Person

The 2022 Annual Business Meeting was held on Wednesday May 11, 2022, at Camelot by Martin's in Upper Marlboro. One hundred seventeen of the 127 registered delegates and guests attended. Tillie Barckley presented the Memorial Service, including a video and poem in honor of the members who passed away this year.

New officers Nancy Gordon, Frederick County, and Janet Williams, Baltimore City, were elected by acclamation. Ms. Gordon will serve a 2-year term as Vice President, while Ms. Williams will serve her third 1-year term as Secretary. Also elected by acclamation were Beverly Dunham, Worcester County, and Richard McNeal, Queen Anne's County, as non-board members on the Nominating Committee.

Our new and returning officers including Carla Duls, Anne Arundel County, President; George D. Denny, Jr., Prince George's County, Immediate Past President; and Dr. Stephen Raucher, Montgomery County, Treasurer, were installed by current Vice President and Nominating Committee Chair, Dr. Debbie Chance, Talbot County.

Individual Community Service awards were presented during the meeting. Information about these awards will be in a future edition of the *MRSPA News*.

National Retired Teachers Association (NRTA) Director, Al Campos, shared information about Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, the founder of NRTA (our national affiliate) and AARP. 2022 marks the 75th Anniversary of NRTA.



Al Campos, NRTA Director; George D. Denny Jr., MRSPA Immediate Past President; Wanda Twigg, MRSPA Executive Director



George D. Denny Jr., MRSPA Immediate Past President; Carla Duls, President; Dr. Debbie Chance, Nominating Committee Chair; Janet Williams, Secretary; Nancy Gordon, Vice President; and Dr. Stephen Raucher, Treasurer

Messages of gratitude were shared by one of the 2022 mini-grant winners, Deanna Burch, Harford County Public Schools, and two of the 2022 scholarship winners, Emily Mullins, Harford County Public Schools, and Carmen Zapata, Montgomery County Public Schools. Door and *MRSPA Fund* raffle prize winners were drawn. Additional information about the scholarship winners, *MRSPA Fund* raffle and door prize winners can be found on page 4 of this newsletter.

The 2023 Annual Business meeting is scheduled for Tuesday May 9, 2023. Save the date!



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Carla Duls

Spring is my favorite season! Nature's reawakening serves to renew my spirit after the hibernation of winter. I can't help thinking that we, like nature, emerged this past spring from a different type of hibernation, that of living with a pandemic that forced us to adapt the way we did things.

For two long years we were forced to "think outside the box" in carrying out the activities of our daily lives. MRSPA, too, explored new ways to continue to "C" you... through **C**ommunication, **C**ommitment, and **C**ommunity. Under the leadership of President George Denny, Jr., the *MRSPA News* and the bi-monthly *Consumer Connection Newsletter* were published on schedule. One staff member was always present in the office to respond to the needs of members, while remaining staff worked from home. Board and executive committee meetings were held via Zoom as were the 2020 Leadership Training and the 2021 Annual Business Meeting. Committees continued to meet virtually to carry out their charges, and the legislative committee advocated for us virtually in Annapolis. Mini-grants and scholarships were awarded. It was business as usual, only different!

And now, due to vaccines, boosters, and lower positivity rates, there is a slow return to a new normal which will include many of the coping strategies developed during the pandemic. Distance learning, tele-health appointments, working from home, take out and outdoor dining, grocery delivery, and Zoom meetings are here to stay. The question is: should MRSPA return to business pre-pandemic style, or should we continue to utilize some of the new methods of doing business employed over the past two years to help MRSPA's membership base AND membership participation grow?

A quick study of MRSPA membership reveals that although over 7,000 of our members live in the DC/Baltimore metropolitan area, the other 5,000+ members live around

MRSPA News

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Editor

Debbie J. Hance

Officers

- President.....Carla Duls
- Past President.....George D. Denny, Jr.
- Vice President.....Nancy Gordon
- Secretary.....Janet K. Williams
- Treasurer.....Dr. Stephen Raucher

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the state, from Mountain Maryland to the shore. In addition, many members live outside Maryland, scattered in 47 states. Virtual and/or hybrid meetings provide an opportunity for these members to participate in MRSPA activities. For example, the Membership Committee recently initiated two new events via Zoom. Statewide Zoom meetings were held where local membership chairs shared strategies for increasing membership at both the local and state level, and two virtual "Meet and Greet" events were held to introduce new members to the many benefits of MRSPA membership. Other committee chairs may find it beneficial to meet virtually with their counterparts around the state to share successes, problem solve, and explore new ideas.

(Continued on page 4)

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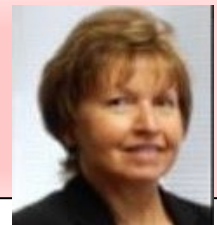
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From the

Executive Director

Wanda Ruffo Twigg



2022 marks the 75th Anniversary of the National Retired Teachers Association (NRTA). Many of us are unaware of the extraordinary efforts of NRTA's founder to advocate on behalf of retired teachers and eventually for all retired persons. Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, a retired California high school principal, founded NRTA in 1947.

Dr. Andrus retired unexpectedly in 1944 at the age of 60 to care for her ailing mother, eventually bringing her back to health. Dr. Andrus was also a member of the Committee for Retired Teacher's Welfare for the young California Retired Teachers Association. It was in this volunteer role, that Dr. Andrus found what would be her next life's calling. The story goes like this.

One day, Dr. Andrus was asked to check on a retired teacher who lived about 30 miles outside of Los Angeles. It was raining when she arrived at the well-kept home. She thought someone had played a joke on her as she had been told that the person, she was visiting needed much assistance. After speaking with a neighbor, Dr. Andrus learned of someone who lived "out back" of the nice home. When Dr. Andrus knocked on the door of the chicken coop, she was surprised at the woman who came to the door. She had been a well-respected Spanish teacher before she retired. Now she was living on a \$40 monthly pension.

The Depression and a flood had taken the property she had planned to build on years earlier. The chicken coop was the only home the retired teacher could afford.

Upon learning of this teacher's plight and knowing she was not the only retired teacher trying to live on such a small pension, Dr. Andrus knew she had to do more for retired persons. By October of 1947, with the help of some friends, lots of work and tireless persuasion, Dr. Andrus was able to convince the Retired Teacher Associations of California, Connecticut, New Jersey, Ohio, and Pennsylvania to join what would become NRTA. Other states joined over time, including Maryland. We joined NRTA in 1954.

NRTA and the state affiliates worked to preserve and improve retirement benefits for retired teachers. Eventually, that work expanded to include all school employees and to include health benefits. Travel/social opportunities and service in the community are also pillars of NRTA and of our state associations.

Two of NRTA's four primary purposes were to promote the professional, social, and economic status of retired teachers and to further the advancement of education in the United States. These continue to be the focus of the work of NRTA and of MRSPA 75 and 77 years later.

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.

Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

We, the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association, are evolving to reflect the goals and aspirations of a contemporary organization. Through our shared values, we create an environment where all members are included, respected, and appreciated.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS RECOGNIZED DURING THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING; RAFFLE PRIZES AWARDED

The *MRSPA Fund* Scholarship Program began in 1999 through the gift of \$50,000 from Irl and Ella Beall. To date, 59 scholarships have been awarded. This year, MRSPA was able to award four \$2000 scholarships, thanks to contributions to the *Fund* through the purchase of raffle tickets and other donations, which also support the Mini-Grants.

A special thanks to committee members Carla Duls and Tillie Barckley for their review of the 73 applications received this year. The four individuals chosen this year are: **Emily Mullins**, Harford County, currently a Contracted Substitute Teacher, pursuing a Master of Arts in Teaching; **lonie Martin**, Frederick County, Special Education Instructional Assistant, pursuing a degree in Elementary Education/Special Education with teacher certification; **Nathan Hooper**, Wicomico County, Collision Repair Teacher, working to obtain teacher certification; and **Carmen Zapata**, Montgomery County, ESOL Teacher, pursuing certification as a School Counselor.

The winners of the *MRSPA Fund* Raffle prizes are: Terrie Butt, St. Mary's County, \$300 first prize; Charlotte Booze, Dorchester County, Maryland Themed basket, second prize; and the five third prize basket winners were Spa basket, Ronnie Bohn, Howard County; Movie Night, Carol Leveillee,

MRSPA; Sports Lover, Ronald Stover, Charles County; Cooking, James Douglass, Montgomery County; and Wine Lover, Kathy Campagnoli, Frederick County. Congratulations to all the winners!

The committee extends their gratitude to the Office Staff, Board of Directors, Local Associations, and all others who supported this important effort.

Door prizes were awarded to Donald Conway and William Barnes, Prince George's County; Marjorie Smith and Sharyn Doyle, Anne Arundel County; Richard McNeal, Queen Anne's County; Velma Hicks, Baltimore City; and Fred Evans, Montgomery County.



Emily Mullins, scholarship winner; Deanna Burch, mini-grant winner; and Carmen Zapata, scholarship winner

(President, continued from page 2)

In addition to advocacy and consumer and insurance benefits, another benefit of membership in MRSPA is the opportunity to reach out to those in education and the local communities through scholarships, mini-grants, and community service projects. Virtual giving made it possible for members, near or far, to participate in the *MRSPA Fund* Raffle, supporting both the scholarships and mini-grants. Virtual donations to the Maryland Food Bank provided an opportunity for members everywhere to participate, rather than just those attending the Annual Business Meeting.

These are just a few examples of the way MRSPA responded to the challenge presented by the pandemic. It is my hope that during the next two

years, MRSPA will continue to “think outside the box” to appeal to many more retirees, near or far, and encourage them to choose to avail themselves of the many benefits MRSPA membership offers not only for them, but for education and the community as well.

I look forward to working with all of you to achieve this goal!



ABM Photo Gallery



Click here to view additional pictures: <https://www.mrspa.org/abm-2022>



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MRSPA - Montana Retired Educators Association



Automatic Annual Dues Deduction and COLA

Annual MRSPA dues of \$45, plus your local dues amount, will be deducted from your July 31 retirement/pension check for members with authorized automatic dues deduction.

Members paying dues by check or credit card should have received your annual notice in the US Mail or in your email in late June. If you sent a check, please allow 3 to 4 weeks for processing. A final notice will be sent to those who remain unpaid in August.

The Maryland State Employees and Teachers Retirement System Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) effective July 1 is 4.698% (except for bifurcated payees, who will receive 4.698% on the portion of creditable service earned before they elected to bifurcate and 3% on the portion earned after that election.)

The Maryland State Employees and Teachers Pension System Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) effective July 1 is 3% on the portion based on service earned before 7/1/2011 and 2.5% on the portion earned on or after that date.



Thank you to our generous members who donated \$4,068 to the Annual Business Meeting MD Food Bank Food Drive and to those who purchased and/or donated \$6,846 for raffle tickets to support our MRSPA Fund.

About the MRSPA Scholars... the need is great!

Emily Mullins

Harford County



With my deepest gratitude, I thank you for choosing me as a recipient for the MRSPA scholarship. The funding you have provided will help me to pursue my lifetime goal of becoming an Early Childhood Educator. This scholarship will help me improve my teaching skills so that I can give my students the best that I have to offer and more. Thank you with all my heart!

Carmen Zapata

Montgomery County



I am currently a high school Spanish and ESOL teacher. Receiving this scholarship will help me reach my goal to become a school counselor. As a school counselor I will be able to better support and help my students reach their educational, career, social and emotional goals.

Ionie Martin

Frederick County



This scholarship will help me achieve my personal goal as I pursue a degree in Elementary Education/Special Education. As a parent of a special needs child, I want to find a way to help others like my daughter. This scholarship will ensure a semester free of financial stress.

Nathan Hooper

Wicomico County



This scholarship is allowing me to pursue the advanced certification in teaching. Being a CTE teacher, I did not have a teaching background prior to this position. Obtaining my certification allows me to learn the principles of teaching as well as how to improve to be the best teacher I can be. Since starting my certification, I have adapted how I teach and it truly has made my students more successful. Again thank you for this opportunity; it is greatly appreciated.



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*Nancy Schultz, 2010
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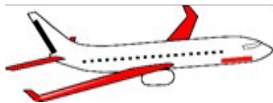


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MRSPA CALENDAR

- July 19.....Primary Election Day
MRSPA Office Open
- July 26.....Local Presidents' Meeting
Hybrid
- August 1 to 5.....ASRTE Conference
Chicago
- August 9.....Board of Directors Meeting
Hybrid
- September 5.....Labor Day
MRSPA Office Closed
- September 27.....Leadership Workshop
TBA
- October 6.....MABE Conference
Annapolis



**MRSPA TRIPS AND TRAVEL
 2022-2023**



- Southern Italy & Sicily**, April 28 - May 10, 2023 (Collette – Travel Leaders/Action Travel), Contact Leigh Ann Keller at 301-843-0087 or (630) 673-0773 or leigh_ann@actiontraveltours.com
- Iceland & Norway Cruise**, June 4 -15, 2023 (Grand American Tours), Contact Amy McMasters or Cherie' Shows at 800-423-0247 or amym@grandamericantours.com or cheries@grandamericantours.com
- Mount Rainier & Olympic National Parks**, September 14 - 22, 2023 (Mayflower Tours), Contact Debbie Martinez at 810-797-5710 or debbie@mayflowercruisesandtours.com
- Portugal & Spain: Treasurers Along the Golden Douro**, September 15 – 29, 2023 (Vantage Travel), Contact Cheryl Sheehan at 800-322-6677 or scheehan@vantage.com
- Iceland, Land of Fire**, October 11-17, 2023, (Mayflower Tours), Contact Debbie Martinez at 810-797-5710 or debbie@mayflowercruisesandtours.com

Check our website at www.mrspa.org, click *Travel* to locate more information on trips.

Stay tuned for information about upcoming short/regional 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.