

MRSPA

News

MARYLAND RETIRED SCHOOL PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION *Affiliated with NRTA: AARP's Educator Community*

Volume XLI, No. 2

Fall 2022

Election 2022-It's Time to Make Your Voice Heard! VOTE!

The July Primary Election offered options for all Maryland voters. The November 8, 2022, General Election is no different. The State Board of Elections website has all the information you need for voter registration, early voting, voting by mail or voting on Election Day. Their website is <https://www.elections.maryland.gov>. We encourage everyone to register and vote in this very important mid-term, gubernatorial election. Remember to ensure candidates support you as a retiree and that they will protect your defined benefit pension and other retirement benefits. There are 5 Constitutional Amendments on the ballot this year, too. Check them out on the website above!

Register to Vote

The last day to register to vote in the November election is October 18, 2022. See the website above or visit your local Board of Elections or their website to register.

Early Voting

October 27 through November 3, 2022

Every jurisdiction in Maryland has at least one early voting center that will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Many jurisdictions have multiple early voting centers. Centers are accessible for voters with disabilities. Staff at Centers will maintain a 6 foot distance between voters and will limit the number of people inside at one time. This could cause lines and waiting. The best time to vote early is on the weekend.

Mail-in Voting

Late September to November 8, 2022

Mail-in voting was previously called absentee voting. Mail-in ballots can be requested by any voter before November 1, 2022. Mail-in ballots should be completed in black ink and placed in the return, postage-paid envelope provided, and sealed. The envelope must be signed by the voter before either mailing through the US Mail or being placed in a ballot drop box at your local voting center by 8:00 p.m. on election day. Mail-in ballots sent via US Mail must be postmarked by November 8, 2022, at 8:00 p.m. Placing a ballot in a mailbox on November 8, 2022, does not guarantee that it will be postmarked that day. The Board of Elections recommends that mail-in ballots be mailed prior to November 8, 2022, to avoid postal system delays or use that drop box option.

Election Day In-Person Voting

November 8, 2022

Be sure to check the location of your local precinct before heading to the polls. It may have changed because of redistricting. You can check your precinct on the Board of Elections website. In-person voting will occur on November 8, 2022, from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.





PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Carla Duls

It's that time of year again...

Across the state, thousands of current Maryland School Personnel have begun a new school year. We wish them much success and personal fulfillment as they work with the youth of Maryland!

Across the state, newly retired Maryland School Personnel are experiencing the reality of their first "Back to School But Not for You" school year. Now is the time for you, as a membership committee member-at-large, to reach out to a recent retiree and invite them to become a member of the Association which advocates for their interests in Annapolis, offers consumer discounts, insurance benefits offerings, and legal and financial services to members and their spouses. In addition, MRSPA membership also benefits educators and communities throughout the state.

Across the state, Maryland Retired School Personnel locals are reconvening after summer break. Luncheons are being scheduled, with several locals meeting for the first time since the pandemic began. Community service projects are underway, trips are being taken, newsletters are being published, and other committees are planning events for the coming year.

In Odenton, the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association has already started work for 2022-2023. Two hybrid meetings were held over the summer. Local Presidents met in July and shared their triumphs as well as goals for the coming year. Each president was invited to join in an initiative called MRSPA and the Locals Care in 2022-2023, which will chart the various ways communities and educators benefit from the contributions of time, talent and treasures of MRSPA and local members. The Board of Directors met in August to conduct Association business in preparation for the coming year. The Membership Committee hosted a virtual Meet and Greet for new members on

MRSPA News

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Debbie J. Hance

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- Vice President.....Nancy Gordon
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September 8, sharing the many benefits of membership in MRSPA. Several MRSPA Board members attended the NRTA 75th Anniversary Celebration held in Washington, DC, September 14-16, and the MRSPA Leadership Workshop was held virtually on September 27, with a focus on Member Engagement and Succession Planning. Other standing committees have resumed meetings, and news of their activities will be included in future issues of the MRSPA News!

MRSPA has most definitely and enthusiastically begun another year of serving its members! I invite you to become a part of the MRSPA excitement by participating on a state committee! New faces and ideas are always welcome!



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 and put "Newsletter by Email" in the subject line of the email and please include your full name and your email address.



From the

Executive Director

Wanda Ruffo Twigg



It's Time to Do Our Homework

The general election of 2022 is now upon us, and it is time for all of us to do our homework. It's time to check the websites of the candidates, attend candidate forums, watch debates, read the literature and ask questions. We need to go beyond the flashy advertising, the sound bites and quips on TV or radio to learn about the policies and beliefs that the candidates espouse and to know not just what their party is but what they hope to accomplish during their term should they be elected.

By the time November 8th arrives, most of us will be tired of seeing and hearing the political ads. We will be glad that we won't have to see or listen to the advertising, and that our mailboxes will be free of the campaign materials for another 18 months. But we must remember that it is our responsibility to be well educated voters. While we can't know everything that a candidate will do or everything that they believe, we can learn where they stand on the issues that are important to us. We must do our homework before we vote.

Some of us will undoubtedly be unhappy with the results of the election. Some of the candidates we choose to support will win and some will not. But if we have done our homework, and if we voted, and encouraged other voters to do the same, then we will have done what millions across the world wish they could do. We will have participated in the democratic process that is so precious and important to us all. And we will do it all again in two years.

As we know, 155 million Americans voted in the 2020 general election, the largest voter turnout so far this century. Seventy-four percent of Maryland voters participated in the election with voters aged 45+ outpacing younger voters by just a few percentage points. There was clearly great interest in that election. Let's ensure that 2022 is no different. Vote early or on election day, but please do your homework and vote!



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.

2022 Community Service Winners Awarded

One of the long-standing traditions of MRSPA is to recognize and honor our members and local associations who go the extra mile providing service to their local community. 2021 – 2022 brought nominations from 6 local associations for individual recognition. The nominees were Kay DiStefano, Cecil; Deb Faller, St. Mary's; Jane Long, Wicomico; Nancy Phillips, Dorchester, Jackie Remige, Harford; and Vicki Wilson, Talbot. The MRSPA Community Service Committee and Board of Directors thank and congratulate the nominees for their many and varied accomplishments!



Kay DiStefano, hails from Cecil County Retired School Personnel Association. Kay won Honorable Mention for over 40 hours of volunteer work each month to a variety of community causes including

CCRSPA. Kay works with member Paula Sheldon to provide toiletries, first aid items, clothing, and snacks to the nurses of all 29 schools in Cecil County three times each year. Cash is donated by CCRSPA members to purchase the needed items. Kay also volunteers with the Food Delivery Connection providing meals to the Mary Randall Center in Elkton. Kay and her dog Abby volunteer with Paws for People visiting the Cecil County Children's Advocacy Center, CASA camp, and Amedisys Hospice so children, adults and seniors can pet, brush, and play with Abby. Kay volunteers with the Good as New Shop run by Union Hospital Ladies Auxiliary, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, the Circle of Love in Christ, all while holding many positions in her church.



Selected as the Outstanding Individual Winner by the Committee was Deb Faller from St. Mary's County Public Schools Retirees Association. Deb and her husband founded a chapter of Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SHP). This national organization provides beds for children ages 3 through 17 to ensure that In Our Town No

Kid Sleeps on the Floor. This is the motto of SHP. The local chapter works with the Department of Social Services and SMCPS to identify the families and children in need. In less than two years, SHP built, assembled and delivered 477 beds. This was possible because of the army of 600 volunteers that Deb recruited for the massive effort. Over 3,000 hours were dedicated to this project. Partnerships with Lowes and Walmart, and donations from over 300 corporate and individual donors helped SHP St. Mary's succeed. In addition to SHP, Deb volunteers with St. Mary's Caring Soup Kitchen, Hospice of St. Mary's, Senior Ride, and her local association.

Local Associations were also recognized by the Committee for their continued service efforts in 2021-2022. The locals recognized were Baltimore, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Frederick, Harford, Washington, and Wicomico Counties. Congratulations to these and all our local associations who carry on the tradition of service to our communities! If you would like to get involved with a local community service project, please contact your local association leadership!



2021-2022 Membership Awards Presented

The 2021-2022 MRSPA Membership Awards were presented during the hybrid local Presidents' Meeting on July 26, 2022. Local associations were recognized for increasing membership even as the pandemic continues.

The 2022 winners are as follows:

Largest Numerical Increase

Small: Queen Anne's County - 8

Medium: Howard County - 33

Large: Anne Arundel County - 3

Largest Percentage Increase

Small: Kent County – 5.43%

Medium: Howard County – 6.13%

Large: Anne Arundel County - .20%

Membership Awards are given based on the number of members in a local in three categories. Small locals have up to 200 members, medium locals have between 200 and 899 members, while large locals have over 900

members. The MRSPA Membership Committee and Board of Directors thank and congratulate all our local associations for their efforts to recruit, retain, and regain members! Membership totals are figured after subtracting losses of deceased and cancelled members from the total new members recruited. Overcoming the loss of members continues to be a difficult task for our association and makes the numbers even more incredible!



Leslie Heiderman Schell, AARSPA & MRSPA Membership Chair; Charlie Gable, Jr., AARSPA Co-President; and Carla Duls, MRSPA President



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MRSPA - Maryland Retired School Personnel Association

Scholarship Applications Due by January 31, 2023

Scholarship applications may be submitted online from January 3 to January 31, 2023, on the MRSPA website at www.mrspa.org. Additional information and Frequently Asked Questions can also be found at www.mrspa.org.

MRSPA's *Foundation Fund* is now being managed by Academy Financial through the American Endowment Foundation. This fund depends on the market value of its investments, the annual raffle fundraiser, and the generosity of our members.

With the rising cost of tuition and the financial struggle that many students face, it is becoming more and more financially difficult for school employees to get required certifications, and some find it necessary to work more than one job. The *MRSPA Foundation Fund* is designed to help those individuals. It is imperative that we continue to keep qualified personnel in our schools.

Uncertified teachers, paraprofessionals, and other current public school system employees pursuing Maryland teacher certification may apply for one of these three \$2000 scholarships.

In addition, certified Maryland teachers pursuing Maryland certification in a different education specialty field such as school counselor, speech pathologist, school social worker, school psychologist, and physical or occupational therapist are eligible.

Our raffle fundraiser will continue to be handled through purchasing tickets directly from the MRSPA office. More information on the raffle and how to purchase tickets will be shared in the next edition of the *MRSPA News*.

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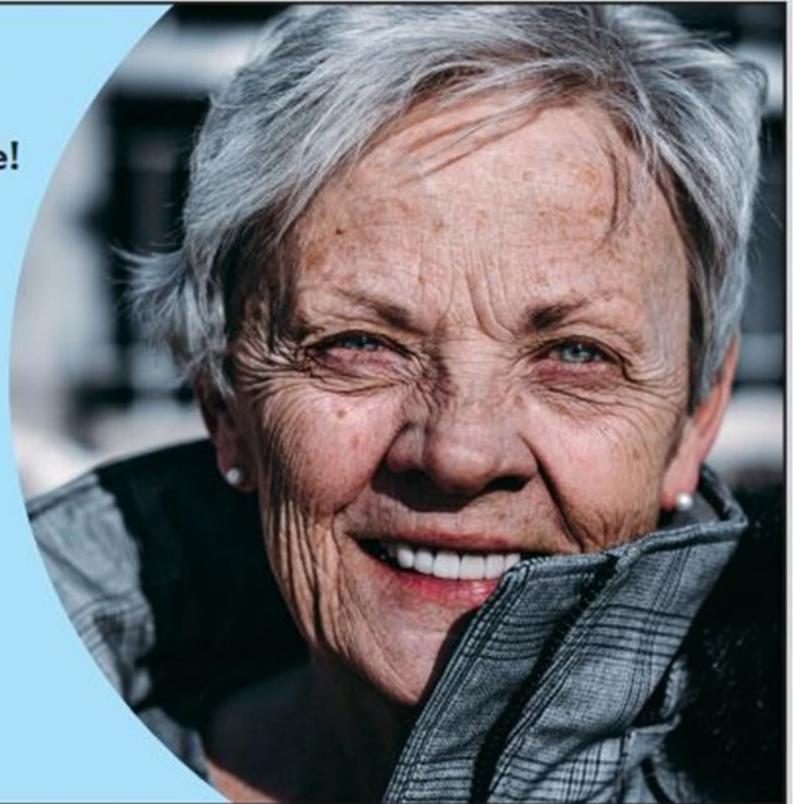
“...After retiring from MCPS, I discovered [Osher at JHU] and now I never want to leave! You have helped to create an organization for vital and curious retirees, where we can always continue to learn....”

*Nancy Schultz, 2010
Osher at JHU Member*

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MRSPA CALENDAR

- October 13.....75th Anniversary of NRTA
Washington, DC
- October 20.....Maryland Senior Citizen’s Hall of Fame
Induction
Ten Oaks Ballroom, Clarksville
- Oct. 27 - Nov.3.....Early Voting
*Early Voting Centers or Drop
Boxes*
- November 3.....Day Trip Honoring Harriet Tubman
Dorchester County
- November 8.....General Election Day
Your Local Precinct
- November 24 - 25.....Thanksgiving Break
MRSPA Office Closed
- December 6.....Board of Director’s Meeting
Hybrid



**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.