

Yes, They Can See Us Now!

Almost 65 state and local leaders from across Maryland met at the Comfort Inn and Conference Center in Bowie on Wednesday, September 18, to continue our work on building membership, ensuring that our local and state associations are “visible” to our potential, current, and former members.

The event began with “Highlighting MRSPA” where activities and discussion centered on how the locals and MRSPA are recognized in the communities and across the state. Then, Burkey Belser, a managing partner at Widmeyer Finn, a Washington, DC based communications firm, led the group through the basics of branding, marketing, and name and logo recognition. Later, local presidents Barbara Short (Caroline), Liz Brown (Charles), and Linda Chamberlin (Harford) shared how they work with their local school systems to hold Pre-Retirement seminars or meetings for future retirees. At these meetings, the state and local associations are showcased to potential members, while they access the information they will need to retire from their positions in the public school system.

Additionally, Sue Crooks and Nancy Harrington (Kent), Mary Holden and Bobbie Leaverton (Queen Anne’s), and Terry Callahan and Dr. Debbie Chance

(Talbot) shared progress they are making on instituting their plans of action for recruiting, retaining, and regaining members.

Al Campos, Director of the National Retired Teachers Association (NRTA), presented information on the newly revised REA Leadership Manual which will be available to state and local associations soon.

Ensuring that our local and state associations are clearly visible to our potential, current, and former members is essential to our success as an advocacy organization. We will continue to push forward in our efforts to ensure that when asked, we can respond that, yes, our future members can indeed see us now!



Russell Wright (Montgomery) and Susan Miller (Carroll) don MRSPA branded sunglasses.

Karen Bundy (Allegany) and Dr. Debbie Chance (Talbot) add ideas on visibility.



Barbara Short (Caroline), Liz Brown (Charles), and Linda Chamberlin (Harford) led a panel discussion on Pre-Retirement events.



Cathy Grantham and Sheila Metzel (Washington) and Rick Wiles (Anne Arundel) compare notes with other attendees.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Ann Marie Downey



Lifestyles of the Retired and Secure

“Change” is an often-despised phenomenon, but many times it is a welcomed transformation of circumstances. I suppose how “change” is viewed is determined by whether the change was self-initiated or not. For example, most of us embrace the change that retirement brings to our lives, as it gives us the opportunity to spend more time with family and friends, to explore new hobbies, to volunteer with an organization that is meaningful to us, to travel, or even to work at a part-time job. Unfortunately, an *unwanted change*, such as to our health, may curtail some of our plans.

However, it is reassuring that **MRSPA** continues to advocate for retired school employees enabling us to pursue the interests and activities that a secure defined benefit pension allows and to help retain retiree health benefits that are determined by local jurisdictions. Because secure retirement benefits affect our retirement lifestyle, I again ask *every member* to invite a friend or colleague to join **MRSPA** and your local!

The thought that *change is the only constant* is true in the sense that we have each had to adjust to many changes in our lifetimes. As we celebrate 75 years of **MRSPA** though, we can be confident that even though times have changed, and will continue to change, the **Maryland Retired School Personnel Association** will remain steadfast in its commitment to the retired school personnel of Maryland!

MRSPA News

is published five times each year by the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association.

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Carla J. Duls

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MRSPA

**75 Years of Connecting,
Protecting, and Making a
Difference!**

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.



In May of 1945, were you sleeping in your bassinet, attending or teaching school, working in a factory to support the war effort, or were you not yet a twinkle in your parent's eye?

It was on May 16, 1945 that a group of 23 retired teachers met at the YMCA in Baltimore to discuss issues faced by retired Maryland public-school employees. The group of 23 teachers hailed from Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Dorchester, Frederick, Harford, Howard, St. Mary's and Wicomico Counties. This group became known as the Retired Teachers of the State of Maryland.

The primary concern of those 23 teachers was financial. Many retired educators were receiving a monthly pension of \$50 or less. Others received between \$50 and \$100. It wasn't long before the group was advocating to Governor O'Connor for significant increases to the teacher pension.

It was mid-May of 1945. V-E Day had just occurred, the first atomic bomb had not yet been dropped, and victory in Japan was a few months away. The first Baby Boomers were soon to be born and the American economy was roaring.

Perhaps it was the strength of the American worker (think Rosie the Riveter) that fueled the victory in WWII that moved these early leaders to band together as the war was winding down. Maybe it was understanding how much stronger we are when we work with our allies to achieve a common goal that led them to start the journey of advocacy for retired educators. Perhaps it was the optimism derived from victory and the hope derived from pending world peace.

Whatever their motivations, those of us who have benefitted from their advocacy are sincerely grateful for the work and vision of these early leaders of our association almost 75 years ago.

2020 MRSPA Scholarship Applications

Applications for MRSPA Scholarships will be available from January 1, 2020, to January 31, 2020, online at the Community Foundation of Frederick County website.

(<https://www.frederickcountygives.org>)

Airport Parking
Enroll Now for
\$815 Daily Rate*
at BWI Fast Park!

Fast Shuttle Service 24/7
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No Walking, No Waiting.
*Excluding Taxes. Rate subject to change without notice.

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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.**



Scholarship Road Trip!

Since two of the three MRSPA Scholarship winners were unable to attend the Annual Business Meeting in May to receive recognition from the delegates, MRSPA went on a road trip! The 2019 MRSPA Scholarship winners were visited at their home schools or work locations by representatives of MRSPA, the local affiliate, and school system leaders. Each winner was applauded by her peers and/or students, while receiving flowers, balloons and cupcakes from MRSPA. The big hit of each presentation was the large symbolic check for \$2,000 that was presented to each winner.

The winners were pleased to be recognized on their home turf and MRSPA leaders and staff were proud to be a part of this reaffirming road trip! Helping to grow our own teachers is a big priority for MRSPA. Will the prize patrol be coming to your county next year?



Ann Marie Downey (MRSPA President), Gary Willow (Principal, Smithsburg High School), Jane Yoder (scholarship recipient), and Dr. April Bishop (Deputy Superintendent Washington County Public Schools)



Mamie Saunders, April Powell (scholarship recipient), Helen Schoffstall, Ann Marie Downey (MRSPA President) and Beverly Young

Calling ALL Cash Dues Payers

The second and **FINAL** billing notices for cash dues paying members were sent the last week in August. You should have received it the first week of September at your home via US Mail. Any person who has not remitted their cash dues by November 1, 2019, will be dropped from our rolls. If you have already paid your cash dues, you did not receive a second billing notice.

If your cash dues payment and our FINAL billing notice crossed in the mail, you have received an email or phone call from the MRSPA office informing you that your dues are paid and to disregard the FINAL notice.

If you are unsure if you have paid your cash dues, please contact the MRSPA office at mrspa@mrspa.org or at 410-551-1517.

Please continue your membership in MRSPA, so we can show our strength in Annapolis! Support MRSPA and send your dues today!



Ann Marie Downey (MRSPA President), Kassie Blakelock (scholarship recipient), Tom Zimmer (Principal, Worcester Technical High School), and Mamie Saunders (WCRSPA President)

MRSPA Winners!

During the May 8, 2019, Annual Business Meeting, Ruth Clendaniel, MRSPA Membership Committee Chair, presented awards to local winners.

While there was a brief article in the Summer MRSPA News, we want to recognize the efforts of the winning locals visually, too.

Local Associations who reached the goal of a 6% increase in membership were **Howard** (6.59%) and **St. Mary's** (6.73%) Counties.

Locals with the Highest Percentage Increase in membership were small local, **Kent** County (4.3%) and medium sized local, **St. Mary's** County (6.73%).

The winner of the Largest Numerical Increase award in the small local category was **Dorchester** County with 16 new members. **Howard** County won the medium sized category with 64 new members, while **Montgomery** County won the large local category with 96 new members.

MRSPA is only successful when our locals are successful. It takes all of us working together to recruit, retain, and regain members. Members are our lifeblood! Please help us build and strengthen our membership today. Ask your local president or membership chair how you can help! Or email mrspa@mrspa.org for more information.

Connecting, Protecting, Making a Difference



Alice Mitchell, Membership Chair, Dorchester County, and Ruth Clendaniel, President and MRSPA Membership Chair



Dr. Robert Abell and Karol Wolgemuth, co-presidents, St. Mary's County



Addie Kaufman and Sue Mascaro, co-presidents, Howard County



MRSPA Membership Chair Ruth Clendaniel and Nancy Harrington and Sue Crooks, co-membership chairs, Kent County

From the Public Relations Committee...

Deadline for Local Web Masters

Deadline to update information on local association websites is December 1. Websites not posting current information at that time will no longer have a link on the MRSPA website.

Revised Public Relations Section in MRSPA Resource Manual

The Public Relations section in the MRSPA Resource Manual has been updated and expanded to include material on using print media and electronic media, personal contact and merchandising to increase membership. The manual is available on the MRSPA website.

MRSPA Alaska Cruise Tour

JULY 31-AUGUST 12, 2020

12 night **Great National Parks of Alaska** on **Celebrity Cruise Lines Millennium** (7 nights northbound cruise beginning in Vancouver British, Columbia, followed by a 5 night land tour)

Highlights: Denali & Kenai Fjords National Parks, Hubbard Glacier, Inside Passage and stops at 5 ports: Ketchikan, Icy Strait Point, Juneau, Skagway & Seward Alaska

Preview Presentation

When: October 24, 2019 at 1:00 p.m.

Where: Cruises Plus, 100 West Joppa Rd. Ste. 300 Towson, MD

RSVP: With number attending - Carl Love 410-530-1842 or CarlCruisesPlus1@gmail.com

Back to School, Just Not for You!

What were you doing on the day the staff “officially” returned for the beginning of this school year? How about on the first day of school for students?

We know what some retired school personnel from Anne Arundel, Queen Anne’s, Talbot, and Washington counties (and possibly others) were doing - they were celebrating NOT going back to school!

Former school employees gathered at local restaurants for a meal, good conversation, reminiscing, laughter and even a raffle for retirement-themed prizes! Newly retired staff were invited and encouraged to become members of their locals and MRSPA, and we gained several new members from the events!

It was a great time to celebrate and say:
“ Good-bye Tension, Hello Pension!”



Anne Arundel County met at Romilo’s in Severna Park.



Talbot County celebrated at Panera Bread.



Queen Anne’s County enjoyed breakfast at Denny’s.

In Washington County, Linda Wetzel (l) greeted recent retiree Linda Shank (r) at Western Sizzler. They had worked together at Emma K. Daub Elementary in Hagerstown.





New Member Recruitment Incentive!

Earn a \$10 gift card for each **NEW MEMBER** you sign up as a **DUES DEDUCTION** member.




This allows automatic renewal, so no membership interruption while **saving trees** , **time** , and **postage**  !

Write your name on the membership application, as recruiter.
Return the completed application to:

MRSPA
8379 Piney Orchard Parkway, Suite A
Odenton, MD 21113

Questions: Email MRSPA at mrspa@mrspa.org or call MRSPA at 410-551-1517





Connecting, Protecting, Making a Difference

Bratten Garners Andrus

On Tuesday, September 10, 2019, Lynne Bratten of Wicomico Retired Educational Personnel Association was honored with a 2019 Andrus Award for Community Volunteerism from AARP Maryland. The luncheon awards program was held at the Dunes Manor Hotel in Ocean City on a gorgeous sunny day at the beach. Attending the event from MRSPA to honor Lynne were President Ann Marie Downey, Area III South Director Bev Yurek, and Executive Director Wanda Twigg.

Lynne was honored in May as the MRSPA Community Service Individual Award winner after volunteering over 300 hours per month with her local association, the community theater, and various other volunteer groups in Salisbury.

Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus founded the National Retired Teachers Association (NRTA) in 1958, which

grew to become AARP. MRSPA is an affiliate of NRTA, AARP's educator community. Lynne exemplifies the words of Dr. Andrus, "It is only in giving of oneself to others that we truly live."



Area Director Bev Yurek, President Ann Marie Downey and Andrus Award Winner, Lynne Bratten of Wicomico County.

MRSPA Board of Directors 2019 - 2020

On Wednesday, August 7, 2019, the MRSPA Board of Directors met at the MRSPA office in Odenton for the first meeting of the new fiscal and membership year.

Immediately following the Board meeting, the Executive Committee met to approve the recommendation of the president that Sharyn Doyle, Anne Arundel, be appointed to complete the term of office vacated by Carla Duls, who was installed as Secretary at the Annual Business Meeting. Over the summer, our long-time, much-appreciated MRSPA Newsletter Editor, Bonnie Troxell, stepped away from the position. Since Carla had subbed for Bonnie in 2018, she was the logical choice to take on the editor position. The Nominating Committee, under the leadership of Vice President Charlie Gable, jumped into action to locate a secretarial candidate. Luckily for MRSPA and our members, Sharyn Doyle agreed to accept the position if appointed and the rest is history.

MRSPA is grateful to Carla, Sharyn, Charlie and the nominating committee for their work and flexibility in stepping up to resolve situations as they arose. A big thank you and welcome is extended to Sharyn Doyle, our MRSPA secretary for 2019-2020.



Sharyn Doyle
MRSPA Secretary





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MRSPA CALENDAR

- October 3**MABE Conference
Westin Hotel, Annapolis
- October 7** Grand Circle Travel Preview
MRSPA Office, Odenton
- October 21 – 24**NRTA National Advocacy Conference
Key Bridge Marriott, Arlington
- October 24**Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame
Awards Luncheon
Michael's Eighth Avenue, Glen Burnie
- November 13**MRSPA Legislative Workshop
Miller Senate Office Building, Annapolis
- November 28-29**Thanksgiving Holiday
MRSPA Office Closed
- December 4**MRSPA Board of Directors Meeting
MRSPA Office, Odenton

MRSPA 2019/2020 TRIPS



- New York, New York** – When and Where Travel, Margie Orlando, November 5 – 7, 2019,
 301-466-6825 or margie@whenandwheretravel.com
- Charleston, Savannah, & Jekyll Island** – Mayflower Tour, Liz Unger, April 17 – 23, 2020,
 443-904-4540 or poppy4100@aol.com or Debbie Martinez 810-797-5710 or
debbie@mayflowercruisesandtours.com
- Southwest National Parks** – Grand Circle Travel, Amanda Turrell, May 23 – June 2, 2020,
 1-800-955-1925 or aturrell@oattravel.com **CODE: GO-28192**
- Newfoundland & Labrador** – Globus Tour with Palms and Peaks Travel, Karen Allanach, June 12 –
 24, 2020, 301-442-6658 karen@palmsandpeaks.com
- Alaska Cruise Tour** – Cruises Plus, Carl Love, July 31 – August 12, 2020
 410-530-1842 or carlcruisesplus1@gmail.com
- Imperial Cities with Oberammergau Passion Play** – Collette Travel, Jerard Welch, August 5 – 15,
 2020 1-410-296-8330 or jwelch@collette.com
- Ireland in Depth** – Grand Circle Tour, Amanda Turrell, August 26 – September 15, 2020,
 1-800-955-1925 or aturrell@oattravel.com **CODE: GO-28192**
- Texas Cowboy Country** – Mayflower Tour, Liz Unger, October 17 – 25, 2020, 443-904-4540 or
poppy4100@aol.com or Debbie Martinez 810-797-5710 or debbie@mayflowercruisesandtours.com
- Rhine River Boat Cruise/Christmas Markets** – Avalon Tour with Palms and Peaks Travel, Karen
 Allanach, December 12 – 19, 2020 301-442-6658 karen@palmsandpeaks.com

Remember to say you are a MRSPA member, family member or friend when calling or emailing