

Montgomery County Public Schools Retirees Association, Inc.



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

www.mcpsra.org

Volume 2024-25, Issue #5

June, 2025



PRESIDENT'S

MESSAGE

Dr. Debra Munk
President - MCPSRA

Dear friends:

I can't believe that this is my last newsletter article as MCPSRA President. At the

Business Meeting on April 24, 2025, members elected new officers. Congratulations to:

Bill Gregory – President
Marla Caplan – Vice President
Ronnie Heller – Secretary

It has been such a pleasure and honor to serve as your President, but mainly because I have been privileged to work with such a dedicated Board of Directors. When Carol Dahlberg (MCPSRA past president) prepped me to take this position, she assured me, "It's really not that bad. Everyone does their job."

I must say I was skeptical at first, but she was so right! I have never worried for a minute whether the newsletter would get published on time (thank you, Russ Wright), the website and social media would be up to date (thank you, Chris Sutter), the luncheons would be well-organized and food, delicious (thank you, LeeAnn Kay), or that our finances would be in anything but in meticulous order (thank you Steve Raucher and Bill Gregory). Agendas, committee reports, minutes, and snacks showed up at every board meeting (thank you, Marla Caplan), and membership recruitment, including the Retiree Homecoming, happy hours, and Zoom lectures, dramatically increased our outreach to non-

member retirees (thank you, Becky Hubbard and Galit Zolkower). Our membership records were kept in impeccable order (thank you Marti Gray, and now, Kay Katz). Consumer information was regularly shared with members, and MCPSRA was represented on the MRSPA Consumer Education Committee (thank you, Deb Berner).

Luncheon programs took on a new life (thank you, Marcie Leibowitz and Judy Reiff),

and community service expanded to include clothing-sorting at Interfaith Works and underwear donations to Title 1 Elementary Schools (thank you, Judy Mills). Our toolkit project continued its 21-year tradition, providing essential instructional materials to Title 1 students (thank you, Trish Bender, Joan Donovan, Pam Grant, and Diane Wells). Our Scholarship program, offering awards to MCPS staff wishing to pursue further education, continued (thank you, Bill Stief), and we recruited a real professional for Public Relations – just in time for us to develop a promotional video (thank you Dick Lipsky). We were regularly informed of state and county legislative actions (thank you, Fred Evans) and Montgomery County Recreation Department's trip opportunities for seniors (thank you, Bernadette Rager).

As you can see... this organization requires a lot of committed workers – and they do this all as volunteers. Not only did they make my job easy... but we had a lot of fun.



October Luncheon Speaker

(Continued on page 4.)

MCPSRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BOD)

Officers:

President	Dr. Debra Munk	240-426-8407
Vice President	Reginald J. Ott	301-452-5449
Immediate Past President	Dr. Carol M. Dahlberg	301-253-2212
Parliamentarian	Fred S. Evans	301-706-3993
Recording Secretary	Marla Caplon	240-793-8288
Treasurer	Dr. Stephen M. Raucher	301-318-4969

Committee Chairs:

Archives	Marti Gray	301-641-8896
Budget Development	Dr. Stephen M. Raucher	301-318-4969
Community Service	Judy Mills	240-223-7271
Consumer Education	Deb Berner	301-455-8608
Financial Review	Bill Gregory	410-241-8731
Hospitality/Luncheons	LeeAnn Kaye	301-598-5480
--- Co-Chair	Trish Bendler	301-540-5160
Insurance and Benefits	J. Thomas Hickman	301-929-9660
Legislative	Fred S. Evans	301-706-3993
MCPSRA Projects	Joan Donovan	301-253-6099
--- Co-Chair	Trish Bendler	301-540-5160
Membership	Marti Gray	301-641-8896
--- Co-Chair	Becky Hubbard	240-643-8610
--- Co-Chair	Galit Zolkower	301-570-6424
Newsletter - Editor	Dr. Russell G. Wright	301-806-7252
Nominating	Dr. Carol M. Dahlberg	301-253-2212
Political Action	VACANT	
Public Relations	Dr. Dick Lipsky	301-318-0613
Recognition	Joan Donovan	301-253-6099
Scholarships (MCPSRA)	Bill Stief	301-956-5891
Social Media	Christina Sutter	301-471-3637
Trips	Bernadette Rager	301-774-0345

FINAL LUNCHEON/BUSINESS MEETING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR is June 12. COME JOIN YOUR FELLOW RETIREES!!!

The April 24 luncheon/business meeting was great. Well over 110 people attended. New officers were elected: Bill Gregory, President; Marla Caplon, Vice President; and Ranona Heller, Secretary. Additionally, the proposed 2026 budget was accepted. Three Board of Education members attended: Grace Rivera-Oven, Vice President; Rita Montoya, and Laura Stewart. The keynote speaker was MCPS Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Thomas Taylor.

The final luncheon/business meeting of the year is Thursday, June 12. See the menu on page 11. Reserve early as seating is limited.

As MCPS retirees we have had interactions with many students. It's so interesting and fun to find out what they are doing as they move on through their lives. We have been fortunate to have heard from two former MCPS graduates this year, Dana Hedgpeth and Dr. Thomas Taylor. For the June 12 luncheon we will have an opportunity to hear from another former MCPS student, Cole Breeding. He is a 1995 graduate of Sherwood High School. Cole attended the MCPS Visual Art Center located in Albert Einstein High School. Hear about his experiences and how the program led to his achievements and career path.

Hope to see you at the June 12 meeting at Argyle Country Club. It really is fun and interesting, and you might be surprised by whom you might see.

Dates are set for 2025-2026:

October 30, 2025

February 26, 2026

April 30, 2026

June 11, 2026

Mark your calendar.

LeeAnn Kaye



BEST EXERCISE FOR THE HEART



Each of us, if asked to name individuals in our lives who have left a lasting impression on us or have inspired us to become the person we are today, would give it much thought and could come up with a list that would warm the heart. The most difficult part of that task would be narrowing it down to a tidy little list. Would your list consist of your parents, a teacher, a close friend, a stranger even? No such list should ever be definitive, tidy, or short for that matter, but one that continues to grow.

Here are a few from my list, all connected by a common thread, who have inspired me as well as many others all over the world. Danny Kaye and Audrey Hepburn, after highly successful careers in the motion picture industry, dedicated many years to the service of impoverished children worldwide as official ambassadors of UNICEF. Ms. Hepburn once said, "Remember, if you ever need a helping hand, you'll find one at the end of your arm. As you grow older you will discover that you have two hands: one for helping yourself, the other for helping others. Somewhere out there is a unique place for you to help others – a unique life for you to fill." Danny Kaye, through his creative genius with words, stated it slightly differently: "Life is a great big canvas and you should throw all the paint on it you can." Arthur Ashe is another one on my list. Following a remarkable career as a professional tennis player, Arthur built a sports complex and program to benefit needy children in the hopes of inspiring and developing talents in boys and girls that otherwise would have gone untapped. His words, "From what we get we can make a living. What we give, however, makes a life," should inspire us all. And then there is Mother Teresa whose mere image helping the poorest of the poor warms our hearts and moves so many others to service. She had a very special way of putting everything into perspective when she said, "We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop." There are also these words from Pope Francis: "Rivers do not drink their own water; trees do not eat their own fruit; the sun does not shine on itself and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves. Living for others is a rule of nature. We are all born to help each other. No matter how difficult it is. . . Life is good when you are happy; but much better when others are happy because of you." By now it is quite evident that the common thread that ties all of these remarkable individuals together is their commitment to serve others, especially children. All of you as former public school personnel, who dedicated your career to the benefit of children, can be added to this list. And now that you are retired, your help is needed to serve the neediest of our youth in another way, through our association's **Toolkits Project**.

(Continued on page 7)

SUPPORT FOR THE MCPSRA TOOLKITS PROJECT

Please provide 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: _____

Donation enclosed: \$ _____

Optional: In memory of _____ In honor of _____

Send acknowledgement to _____

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

(*preferred)

_____ no receipt is necessary _____ mail me a receipt (if necessary)

Welcome New Members

Joined in March 2025

Carol E. Andre	2904 Shamrock Terrace, Olney, MD 20832	301-774-4445
Susan Brice	2730 Terrapin Run, West Friendship, MD 21794	410-382-7028
Laurie Checco	508 Scott Dr., Silver Spring, MD 20904	301-502-9572
Ellen A. Jimerson	1605 Pinder St. Unit 122, Frederick, MD 21701	301-642-2300
Francis "Frank" M. Mackey Jr.	8428 Towne Crest Ct., Gaithersburg, MD 20877	240-397-3076
Sheila Mills	PO Box 7566, Silver Spring, MD 20907	240-855-2745
Clark Montgomery	7903 Orion Circle G262, Laurel, MD 20724	240-470-0510
Pamela Olumoya	7606 Bentree Rd., Fort Washington, MD 20744	301-257-7548
Chrisandra A. Richardson	7109 Black Rock Ct., Columbia, MD 21046	410-852-4331
Kelsey Roos	8608 Burnt Hickory Circle, Frederick, MD 21704	301-514-6118
Susan Silversmith	7 Surry Ct., Rockville, MD 20850	240-426-4974
Paulette I. Smith	2423 Michigan Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20910-1908	301-526-9040

Joined in April 2025

Arla Bowers	825 Aster Blvd., Rockville, MD 20850	301-340-2649
Leona Marie Cooney	4912 Melinda Ct., Rockville, MD 20853 3	301-461-9163
Kimberly Macedo	18419 Snowberry Way, Olney, MD 20832	301-537-5503
Jane N. Muchoki	10614 Drumm Ave., Kensington, MD 20895	240-472-7959

(President’s Message continued from page 1)

Over the past four years MCPSRA focused on its role as an advocacy organization for retiree benefits. Through our efforts, members now can use their dental allowance for implants and pre-Medicare retirees will be able to access hearing aids January 2026. Additionally, through regular meetings with MCPS finance staff, we now ensure that retirees are paying their fair share of premium costs. There will be some significant changes in health care coverage for both retirees and active employees in the coming year...so stay tuned.

While I will no longer be president, this is not “good-bye”. I will continue on the board as both Past President and Chair of the Political Action Committee. I look forward to vetting candidates in the next election and expanding our political outreach with elected officials.

Thank you for your support and have a wonderful summer.

Debra



Get Your Future Newsletters by Email Only!

Do you prefer reading our newsletter by email? If so, you can help us save on printing and postage!

Let us know if you'd like to switch to the digital version only.

Just send an email to mcpsra.org@mail.com . Include your first and last name and write the words “**EMAIL ONLY**” on the Subject line.

The change will take effect with the first issue of next school year (October 2025).

Consumer Education for June-September 2025 by Deb Berner

Summer Smarts for Seniors: Staying Safe, Social, and Strong

Summer brings longer days and warmer weather—a perfect time to enjoy the outdoors, connect with friends, and take care of your health. But it also comes with a few seasonal challenges that are especially important for seniors to keep in mind. So, stay safe, stay social, and enjoy the season!

*Beat the Heat:

Older adults can be more sensitive to heat. Stay cool by wearing light clothing, staying hydrated, and avoiding the outdoors during the hottest part of the day (usually 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.). Keep fans or air conditioning running, and if you don't have AC, consider visiting a local library, mall, or senior center during the afternoon.



*Stay Connected:

Summer is full of opportunities for socializing. Whether it's a family picnic, a community concert, or a card game with friends, staying socially active can boost your mood and memory. Don't be shy—make plans or accept invitations, even if it's just for an hour or two.



*Get Moving Safely:

Nice weather makes it easier to stay active. Gentle walks in the early morning or evening, water aerobics at a community pool, or simple stretching at home can help you maintain strength and flexibility. Just remember to wear proper shoes, use a cane or walker if needed, and listen to your body.

*Plan Ahead for Fall:

Use the slower pace of summer to think ahead. Do you need a flu shot in the fall? Is your home ready for colder weather? Summer is a good time to schedule checkups, update your medications, or tackle minor home repairs before autumn sets in.

Savvy Shopping Tips for July, August & September

July, August, and September are great months for strategic shopping, especially for seniors who want to stretch their dollars. Here are some smart tips for each month:

*July: Mid-Summer Bargains

- Fourth of July Sales: Great time to shop for summer clothing, outdoor furniture, and kitchen appliances.

- Summer Clearance: As stores start to make room for fall inventory, summer items like sandals, lightweight clothing, gardening tools, and outdoor gear often go on clearance.



- Amazon Prime Day: Usually held in July—watch for deals on electronics, household items, and health devices like blood pressure monitors or fitness trackers.

***August: Back-to-School Savings (Even if You're Not Going!)**

- Office & Craft Supplies: Stock up on pens, paper, notebooks, and art supplies—handy for home use, grandkids' visits, or hobbies.
- Laptops & Tech: Retailers often discount computers, tablets, and printers during back-to-school sales. Great for those who want to stay connected or start exploring new tech.
- Clothing Basics: Undergarments, socks, and shoes are often marked down for school shoppers—senior shoppers can benefit too.



- *September: Think Ahead
- Labor Day Sales: One of the biggest retail weekends—look for markdowns on mattresses, appliances, and summer clearance items.
- End-of-Season Deals: September is ideal for buying patio furniture, grills, fans, and gardening tools at deep discounts.
- Early Holiday Shopping: Start checking for small gifts, stocking stuffers, or cards before prices go up in October and November.

***Bonus Tip:**

Many stores offer senior discounts one day a week—don't hesitate to ask! Combine those savings with coupons or sale days for the best deals.

*Please check out the recent Consumer Connection newsletters on the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association site at <https://mrspa.org> for additional updates and information.

(**Best Exercise for the Heart...** Continued from page 3)

My parents taught me that I could do anything I wanted and I have always believed it to be true. They often said, "Add a clear idea of what inspires you, dedicate your energies to its pursuit, and there is no knowing what you can achieve, particularly if others are inspired by your dream and offer their help." When I first learned of this project 20 years ago, I was truly inspired and knew that it was here that I wanted to dedicate my energies. My dream has been and continues to be that this remarkable project, that has benefited thousands of needy Title I children here in Montgomery County, will not only survive but will thrive and grow for many years to come. Many of you share this same dream and have generously donated your time, talents, and money over the years. There would be no limit to the good we could do for the neediest of Montgomery County's youth if each member of our association would offer to help by sending in a donation. PLEASE fill out the form on page 3 and mail it as directed with your **tax-deductible** contribution. Remember, there is no exercise better for the heart than reaching down and lifting people up, especially needy children.

Joan Donovan

Community Service Update by Judy Mills

Once again, Members stepped forward during April's Members' luncheon with generous donations of Elementary School children's new underwear, socks, bike shorts and jogging shorts, in what continues to round out our conclusion of MCPSRA Service Project! Items received from February's luncheon were delivered to Glen Haven Elementary and gleefully accepted by the school's principal!

June 12th is our final Members' luncheon, and we hope that Members will continue contributing to our Service Project to provide an elementary hosting a summer school program. If you haven't already, please mark your calendars now and if you attend, please consider bringing an item to help us. Or, mail a check to MCPSRA, PO Box 4367, Rockville, MD 20849. Please note "Service Project" on the memo line and we will do the shopping for you! Please note, MCPSRA is a not-for-profit organization, therefore your contributions are not tax deductible for this service project.

Thanks to many of our MCPSRA Members who provided cash/check donations to help round out our garment needs during each of our luncheons and also at other times!! We're so grateful for your participation!! Our 2025-2026 school

year Service Project planning is in its beginning stages, so hang onto your hats and we'll share details in an upcoming newsletter!

MCPSRA members visited Interfaith Works in Rockville, MD in April and May to sort and hang donated clothing or work in the food pantry. The volunteers will often email me the best feedback of conversations, photo ops and newly formed friendships. Interfaith Works will value a few hours a week of your time, anytime, sorting and hanging clothing or shelving canned and non-perishable foods. All are welcome, please join us at a future event. [Interfaith Works - https://www.iworksmc.org/](https://www.iworksmc.org/). Interfaith Works (IW) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that provides emergency shelter, supportive housing, essential needs, and employment programs to over 35,000 residents of Montgomery County, MD, every year.



Also, if you're interested in being the on-site team leader on a future date, please contact me judy.mills549@gmail.com, so we can set the date and I will notify our members. Our new goal is to visit Interfaith Works (representing MCPSRA) at least once per month, twice as many visits as last year's goal. Over the summer, Email blasts will be sent out as new dates are established.

Update for the MCPSRA Toolkits Project – this lively and friendly group of Member volunteers meet weekly at the MCPS Warehouse on South Stonestreet, Rockville, and they're always seeking volunteers to help with toolkits assembly. The volunteers recently finished sorting and bagging thousands of donated plastic bottle caps of all shapes and sizes, and now the exciting task of assembling about 2000 toolkits begins! Over a dozen items, including a specialized curriculum prepared by the MCPS Early Childhood Office, along with the most exciting school supplies ever will be assembled into sealed plastic bins for distribution to incoming kindergartners who participate in the [Title I Extended Learning Summer Adventures In Learning \(SAIL\) Program](#) at select MCPS elementary summer school sites. These supplies are made possible through generous contributions to our Toolkits Project ...look for more information on page 3 of this Newsletter!

Want to help with toolkits assembly? Send your name, phone number and email address to Pam at pame2k1@aim.com.

The Truancy Prevention Program (TPP) is actively recruiting volunteers! As a part of the crime prevention initiatives established by the MD State's Attorney's Office, TPP works to improve attendance in MCPS by discovering the root causes of truancy and assisting students with issues that impact attendance. The program serves 26 MCPS schools and additional Volunteers are needed to expand our Program! Serving as a volunteer Mentor or Facilitator is a rewarding way to utilize your expertise. The program recommends a ten-week



commitment of 2-3 hours a week. Volunteers meet with students who are chronically absent, helping students set goals to improve their attendance. Students who complete the program successfully are invited to a graduation ceremony at the end of each semester. You can see the impact to students and their proud families as they gather to celebrate their

successes. For more information, please contact Rebecca Marcolini at 240-777-7370 or email Rebecca.Marcolini@MontgomeryCountyMD.gov

The King Barn Dairy MOOseum, located in South Germantown (Maryland) Recreational Park & SoccerPlex, is looking for



adult volunteers who enjoy working with children and adults. Become a docent and lead school groups come to tour in the spring, and/or work open weekends when the MOOseum is open for the public. Other volunteer opportunities include doing office paperwork, research on local history and creating exhibits and crafts. If you enjoy working with people and learning local history—it is not necessary to have background in farming and cows—the MOO is the place for you. Please contact Peg Donnellon at email margaretdonnellon@yahoo.com or call/text 301-254-6575.

It's Grand to be 55+ in Montgomery County, MD! Be sure to check out classes, offerings and multiple volunteer opportunities across Montgomery County, but specifically please check out the numerous opportunities at the Holiday Park Senior Center, 3950 Ferrara Drive, Wheaton, MD 20906. At Holiday Park, Seniors 60 or over can register to sign up for lunch! Please call for more information, (240) 777-4999, or visit the web at www.mocorec.com for information and more.

Other Ways to Serve your community:

Montgomery County, MD: (<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteercenter/>) Discover opportunities to serve in MoCo. Out of County opportunities appear on this site, too.

Montgomery County Public Schools: (<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/student-leadership/volunteer/>) Volunteering isn't just for parents and caregivers of MCPS students.

Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission MNCPPC: (<https://www.mncppc.org/volunteer/>) Help out at local parks across the DMV.

With warm weather approaching, please contact the Historical Society or Parks Department in your State or Community! Volunteers are always needed for special on-site programs or projects, and sometimes virtual opportunities exist. Check it out!

MCPSRA encourages members to participate in community service and ensures appropriate recognition for your community service work. Please tell us what you're doing! If you'd like to highlight your own volunteer experience, or the experience as shared by another, please provide me the details and we can find a spot to highlight your service to others! The continual need for volunteers has never been greater and your service does not go unnoticed. We appreciate all you do for the greater good.

In Memoriam

We are unable to include our usual list of MCPSRA members who recently passed away. The MCPS Employee and Retiree Service Center failed to provide that information by our publication deadline.

Election of Officers on a Beautiful Spring Day



At the April 24, 2025, luncheon/business meeting, the following MCPSRA officers for 2025-27 were unanimously elected: President Bill Gregory, Vice-President Marla Caplon and Secretary Ranona (Ronnie) Heller. Over 100 MCPSRA members participated in this election. Treasurer Steve Raucher has one more year left in his term as treasurer. Congratulations to our newly elected officers whose office begins on July 1, 2025.

Marla Caplon, Bill Gregory, Ronnie Heller



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MCPSRA LUNCHEON AND BUSINESS MEETING

Thursday, June 12, 2025
Argyle Country Club
14600 Argyle Club Road
Silver Spring, MD 20906

If MCPS is closed, luncheon is cancelled. Delayed opening, luncheon is held.

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

Menu Choices

Chicken Parmesan with Pasta and Vegetables \$40.00

OR

Pot Roast in Red Wine Sauce with Vegetables and Pasta \$40.00

OR

Baby Arugula Salad, Roasted Beets, Goat Cheese, With Raspberry Vinaigrette \$40.00

Entrees include: Appetizer, Rolls and Butter, Coffee, Hot and Iced Tea, Lemonade
Appetizer is Chilled Tomato Gazpacho, Mini Croutons, w/Avocado Cream Sauce

-----Cut here-----

Thursday, June 12, 2025

Circle Entrée Choice

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Chicken Beef

Email address: _____ Vegetarian

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Chicken Beef

Email address: _____ Vegetarian

Total amount enclosed: _____

Reservation form and check must be received by Wednesday, June 4, 2025. Make check 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

ANY FOOD ALLERGIES? PLEASE LET ME KNOW!!!

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

NON-PROFIT
ORG.
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Permit No. 201
Suburban, MD

DATED MATERIAL



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

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

Next Luncheon Date June 12, 2025

The MCPSRA Newsletter is published in October, December, February, April, and June.
This is the June 2025 issue.