



The Beacon

Visit our website: www.hcrspa.org

Volume 47, Number 2

Harford County, MD

April 2026

The President's Message

After the winter we have had it is so nice to go outside and not have to put on a hat, gloves and heavy coat! Spring is here, there is more daylight each week and so many beautiful bulbs, trees and shrubs are blooming after being hidden under the snow and ice. A sure sign of spring is the racket you can hear in the woods from the spring peepers! How can such a little frog make such noise? Spring is a time of renewal and a chance to plant seeds in hope of a nice harvest of vegetables and flowers. In my case I'm fortifying my garden fence in hopes of keeping out the groundhog who last year had a banquet on my newly sprouted flowers.

Your HCRSPA board has been looking for new ways to engage our members and so many people have talked about wanting to help others in our communities. Our motto is "Advocating for Retirees/ Supporting Students." We do that with MRSPA as they advocate for us each year at the general assembly by monitoring bills that may affect retirees. We support students locally with our scholarships and donations to school nurses. We are excited to share information about another way HCRSPA members can directly support students. The Hope Center of Maryland works to feed children in Harford County. For the 2025-2026 school year they are supporting 650 students in 17 Harford County schools with weekly meal bags. This center is always looking for volunteers to pack bags, sponsor bags and donate food items. There are so many ways to support this group, and it can be done individually or with a group in a variety of ways. Their website is www.thehopecenterofmd.com.

We will have more information about this opportunity to help students in Harford County at our May 7th luncheon. Reservation forms and information are in this newsletter. We will also have as our guests the winners of our scholarships who will speak about their plans after graduating. I hope many of you can attend and bring a friend, they do not need to be a member to attend. We will also be having another of our popular Silent Auctions! You never know what interesting items and treats will be available to bid on as a fund raiser for our scholarships! We have two other fund raisers coming up and would love to have your support. On Thursday, April 2 come to MaGerk's Pub & Grill in Bel Air and enjoy a meal and on Tuesday, May 19 come for dessert or a light meal at the Jarrettsville Creamery. Both businesses have been very supportive of HCRSPA.

**Linda Chamberlin,
HCRSPA President**



NATIONAL MONTH OF VOLUNTEERING

National Volunteer Month is celebrated during the month of April in the United States. It honors volunteers and encourages community service. The third week of April is National Volunteer Week while April 20th is Volunteer Recognition Day.

The purpose of this month is to recognize the impact of volunteers, inspire new acts of service and thank them for their time. The origins can be traced back to WWII with what was happening on the home front. The late President George H W Bush began the "Points of Light" campaign in 1991. This championed volunteers and private community action as solutions to social problems. It celebrated everyday citizens who donated their time for such causes. It has now evolved into a global nonprofit Points of Light.

Getting involved in projects, donating and thanking volunteers is how we can celebrate those who devote many hours in the name of volunteerism.

With our new thrust of helping The Hope Center of Maryland, maybe this is a good time to step up and help. Could you provide food, money or donate time to our new community service project? This may be an opportunity to be a volunteer in the name of Harford County Retired School Personnel.





Our next Community Service Project will be with an organization in Harford County that serves the children in need of food. It is called The Hope Center of MD.

This is a not-for-profit, faith-based community service organization that operates a food distribution ministry in Harford County to ensure that people in our community are NOT food deprived. The Hope Center helps children, families, senior citizens, and others but we will concentrate specifically on their program for school kids.

"Beyond Blessings" provides weekend meal bags to help fill the hunger gap that many school children experience when they are not in school. These children get breakfast and lunch at school during the week. The Hope Center provides kid-friendly, nutritious food to sustain them on the weekends throughout the year and summertime when needed. The Hope Center is currently providing 650 weekend bags each week to food-insecure students attending 17 HCPS elementary to high schools.

In addition to monetary donations, the Hope Center depends on volunteers to pack the weekend meals. Members of the Executive Board will go to the center and get a feel for how long it takes to fill the bags and report on May 7, 2026, luncheon. We will work with the Executive Director, Robert Meza, on scheduling volunteers as to days and times when to volunteer.

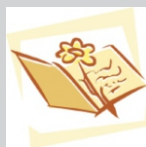
If you are as surprised as I am at the fact that there is so much need to keep our students from being hungry, please consider a monetary donation. If you have time and an interest in volunteering, I have included a website so you can learn more about The Hope Center and all it does: www.thehopecenterofmd.com

Thank you for supporting our community service projects in the past and I look forward to helping our students as much as possible. I appreciate all the support you all show! Monetary support can be sent to our treasurer:

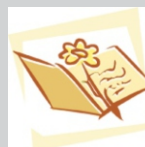
Bill Ekey
710 Long Bar Harbor Rd
Abingdon, MD 21009

Thank you,
Joan Marcus, Community Service Coordinator
443-243-6651

Important Websites:
www.hcrspa.net
www.mrspa.org



Greetings & Remembrances Your Help Is Needed and Appreciated



It is the intent of our organization to send appropriate greeting cards to members who are seriously ill, experiencing other hardships, great joys meriting congratulations, or loss. In order to make this possible we need input from you. Please call or send an email to Pat Carpenter if you know of members who are experiencing these situations.

Thanks for your help!
Pat Carpenter, Coordinator Email:
patcarpent@comcast.net
Phone: 443-7644790



Board Meeting

April 9, 2026

June 11, 2026

All Board meetings are held at Fallston Senior Center Beginning at 10:00 am.

Your Executive Board

Working for all members

President - Linda Chamberlin **Treasurer** - Bill Ekey
Vice President - Belinda Cole **Secretary** - OPEN

Committee Chairs

Community Service and Communications - Joan Marcus
Budget - Bill Ekey
Greetings and Remembrances - Pat Carpenter
Hall of Fame - Terry Wainwright
Legislation - OPEN
Member Benefits - Peg Goodson
Membership - Christine Douglass
Public Relations and Newsletter - Jackie Remige
Scholarships and Social events - Bonnie Dubel
Website - Jim Gyolia

ATTENTION:
SWITCH & SAVE
INCENTIVE



MRSPA has extended an invitation to cash members to switch to dues deduction for 2026-2027. If they make the change, they are eligible for a one-time \$10 reduction in state dues. They would pay \$40 for state dues for 2026-2027, plus their local dues amount. Members need to complete and return the 2026-2027 Dues Deduction Authorization Form, which is available on the MRSPA website under "Switch and Save" (<https://www.mrspa.org/switch-and-save>). Current Cash dues payers, who have not yet paid their dues, would be eligible for "Switch and Save".

Recruitment Incentive:

MRSPA is offering a \$10 Walmart gift card to ANY member who recruits a *NEW* member who signs up for *DUES DEDUCTION*. All you have to do is get the *NEW* member to complete an application form, signing up for *DUES DEDUCTION*, and then **WRITE YOUR NAME** on the application before sending it to MRSPA. MRSPA will send you a gift card. You can recruit as many *NEW DUES DEDUCTION* members as you like! Just remember to put your name on each application!

Thank You!



Now Accepting

**New Nominations
for the
Hall of Fame**

The requirements and forms can be found on our website, www.hcrspa.org. Click on the Hall of Fame link at the top of the home page. There you will find links to requirements, the nomination form and previous inductees.



We would like to hear from you. If you have any input about the newsletter or have suggestions for future issues, please contact the Editor, Jackie Remige at jremige@hotmail.com. Thank you!

let's get together...



**HCRSPA
2026**

Save the Dates!

MAY LUNCHEON

Thursday, May 7, 2026
11:00 AM
Maryland Golf &
Country Club
1335 E. McPhail Road
Bel Air, MD 21015

**SCHOLARSHIP
FUNDRAISER**

Tuesday, May 19, 2026
5:00 to 9:00 PM
Jarrettsville Creamery
1747 Jarrettsville Road
Jarrettsville, MD 21084

**Mark your calendars now. We
hope to see you there!**

HCRSPA Newsletter

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Linda Chamberlin, President
Jackie Remige, Editor
Wendy Ambler, Design & Layout

**For information or to submit an article, call
410-627-7330 or send e-mail to
jremige@hotmail.com**

FOLLOW US ON



Like HCRSPA's Facebook page. From your Facebook account, enter "Harford County Retired School Personnel Association" in the search box and click "Like" when the page appears.



May Luncheon and Business Meeting

Meet Our Scholarship Winners

Maryland Golf and Country Club

1335 East MacPhail Road

Bel Air, MD 21015

THURSDAY, May 7, 2026

Cost: \$27.00

Welcome and Meeting: 11:00 am

Menu

Deli Buffet Sandwich Selection, including:

Black Forest Ham, Lettuce & Tomato on Whole Grain OR
Turkey, Provolone, Lettuce & Tomato on White Bread OR
Roast Beef, Cheddar, Lettuce & Tomato on Marble Rye
Condiments, Kettle Chips, Pasta Salad

Chef's Choice Seasonal Cookie Assortment
Sodas, Bottled Juices, Coffee, Iced Tea

Luncheon Reservation **PAY AT THE DOOR** (Recommended)

Call, text, or email Bill Ekey at 410-937-0406 OR BillEkey@gmail.com

OR

Reserve online at www.hcrspa.net

HCRSPA pays for the number of reservations made. If you use a "Pay at the Door" option and cannot attend the luncheon, please send your payment to Bill Ekey.



Luncheon Reservation

Number of Reservations: _____ (\$27 each) Amount Enclosed: _____

Name(s): _____

Make checks payable to HCRSPA and mail payment and reservation form to:
Bill Ekey, 710 Long Bar Harbor Road, Abingdon, MD 21009

Deadline for reservations: WEDNESDAY, April 29

Donations to the Scholarship Fund and for our Community Service Projects are greatly appreciated and can be added to the reservation cost.

THANK YOU!

Member ID _____



Membership Application Form Special Promotion

New Rejoin

Special Dues Rates: March 1 - May 31, 2026 Only

MRSPA Annual State Dues: ~~\$50.00~~ **\$10 or \$0***

Personal Information

Name-(First MI Last): _____

Address (Street or PO Box): _____

Address 2: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Landline: _____

Email: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Local Associations & Dues—All \$0

~~\$8.00~~ **\$0** - Caroline

~~\$10.00~~ **\$0** - Calvert, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Dorchester, Frederick, Garrett, Queen Anne's, St. Mary's, Somerset, Wicomico, Worcester

~~\$12.00~~ **\$0** - Harford, Washington

~~\$15.00~~ **\$0** - Anne Arundel, Baltimore City, Baltimore, Kent, Montgomery, Talbot

~~\$20.00~~ **\$0** - Allegany, Howard, Prince George's

Select Local: _____

Referred By: _____

*The MRSPA Membership year is July 1 - June 30
You will be billed in late June for your 2026-2027 membership dues. If paying via dues deduction, no bills are sent.*

Membership

I am a MD public school system Retiree.

I am an active, public school employee.

Expected Month/Year of Retirement: _____/_____

I am the spouse of a MRSPA member.

_____ (spouse name)

Other _____

Retirement Information

Date of Retirement: _____

Retired from (school system/college/university): _____

Position at Retirement:

Teacher/Other Certified Administrator/Supervisor

Non-Cert/Support Staff Other: _____

Additional Information

Mailing Preferences:

Newsletter: Email US Mail

Benefit Providers: OK Do Not Share

Bill Notice (If pay by Check or Credit Card only):

Email US Mail

Payment Methods

Retired Public School Personnel — Choose 1 (one) method
(3 payment options: deduction from MD pension, credit card or check)

*Automatic Deduction from MD Pension

I hereby authorize the Maryland State Retirement and Pension System to deduct annual membership dues for the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association (MRSPA) and my local retired school personnel association from one of my retirement checks each membership year. I will receive a one-time \$10 reduction in my state dues. This authorization will remain in effect until cancelled by written notice to MRSPA. (Do NOT send check or use credit card with this payment method.)

SSN: (Dues Deduction requires your whole social security number)

Signature (required) _____ Date _____

I prefer to call 410-551-1517 to give my SSN over the phone AND will mail this form with my signature.

Active Public School Employees, Spouses of MRSPA members, Others
Choose 1 method. (2 payment options:— credit card or check)

Check - Make payable to "MRSPA"

\$10 State + \$ 0 Local = \$ 10 Total

Credit Card - go to: <https://www.mrspa.org/>

Please complete form and mail to: MRSPA; 8379 Piney Orchard Pkwy, Ste A; Odenton, MD 21113, or email to: mrspa@mrspa.org.



HCRSPA
P.O. Box 133
Churchville, MD 21028

Change Service Requested