

**Anne Arundel Retired School Personnel Association
General Membership Meeting and Luncheon Minutes
November 9, 2023
Renditions Golf Club**

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:34 a.m. by Co-President Sharyn Doyle

Pledge to the Flag: Rick Wiles led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Veterans' Day Celebration: The "Voices in Melody" performed their Veterans' Day program. It was also their very first performance for the new season.

Greetings and Introductions: Co-President Doyle thanked the choir, welcomed members, and reviewed the guest speakers. Mary Kay Connerton, our Teacher of the Year, was introduced since she arrived early.

- Emeritus Attendees: None
- First Time Attendees: None
- Members of "Voices in Melody"

Guest Speakers: Dr. Mark Bedell, Superintendent

: Mary Kay Connerton, Maryland Teacher of the Year, Wellness Coordinator
at Annapolis High School

: Wanda Twigg, MRSPA Executive Director

Business Meeting

Secretary's Report

Sharyn Doyle summarized the minutes from the September 14th meeting. The minutes were accepted as published on the website for the past 2 weeks. Members were reminded that minutes are published 2 weeks prior to each meeting and modifications/corrections welcomed.

Treasurer's Report: Max Muller reported \$23,000 in our scholarship fund so we are able to award 4 scholarships of \$5000 each. He also reported that our new auditor is "super" and helped bring us up to date on our tax returns while being very reasonably priced.

Committee Reports: Co-President Anzalone led the committee reports.

Community Service:

Phyllis Cherry was introduced while Co-President Anzalone began to discuss the PIE (Partners in Education) nomination. Phyllis did not recognize what he was referring to and humorous dialogue ensued. Phyllis began her report by sharing a phrase "Don't count your blessings, share them." She thanked the members for their generosity. School supplies were delivered to both Park and Brooklyn Park Elementary of 1012 items and \$155 spent on ear buds. Each school received 250 ear buds. The canned foods donated today will be taken to the Anne Arundel County Food Bank. Again members were thanked for their generosity.

Consumer Education

Members were reminded that a Zoom meeting by MRSPA has been scheduled for November 21st at 10 a.m. with an FBI agent on Consumer Fraud. More details on the MRSPA website.

Past Co-President Debbie Ahalt reported on the success of the "Walk to End Alzheimer's" event with Carla, Tillie and Debbie as team members for the past 9 years. She personally raised \$815. and the team raised \$1515, with thanks expressed to the Co-Presidents and Debbie's friends for their donations and support.

Free School Museum:

Dr. Karlie Everett was introduced by Co-President Anzalone by the ringing of a hand held bell, similar to the type used at the Free School. He summarized the success of the 300th Celebration during both days. He also shared comments by County Executive Steuart Pittman, Dr. Tim Tooten and Dr. Bedell, emphasizing how Dr. Bedell related how the success of this 300 year old school led to what is happening now in education.

Karlie reported on the role of Bob Mosher and Dr. Bedell in successful assistance with marketing the event. AARSPA members were also thanked for their assistance and support, especially on Saturday for Family Day. She concluded by stating that this special celebration further exemplified that "We have always treasured education for all." Proclamations and citations from government officials were displayed on the table nearby.

Membership Committee

Leslie Heiderman Schell reported new directories were on the table ready for pick up. She shared the story of the missing 2 pages and how the Print Shop corrected the error. She also reminded members the directory was current as of 10/10/2023, and it was their responsibility to note deaths mentioned in the Informer so their directory is kept up to date.

Leslie also reported her joint efforts with the Public Relations committee to schedule the first ever "Greet and Meet" to be held at the Elks Club on Monday November 13th at 10:00 a.m. for brunch. It is a small turnout of newly retired personnel eligible to become AARSPA members, yet it is our first time, with expectation for a larger response next time. Members were also reminded that they are the Membership Committee and the ambassador for the organization. Application for membership is on our website, can be mailed, etc. and even Mary Kay Connerton can learn more about what we do for her future.

Co-President Anzalone explained the PIE event and our nomination for winning a special award. He and Phyllis will be attending the event and they now await tickets. Edie Pickens was thanked for initiating this nomination along with the Park Elementary Principal who appreciates the many donations of school supplies.

Remembrance Committee

Mille Gardner asked members if they know Dorothea Dennis who has turned 85 and her birthday card mailed was returned as undeliverable. Guests were reminded to enter the birthday drawing if they had a birthday in October, November or December. She ended with a joke *about a woman who had a heart procedure near death event and heard from God she will have 33 years, 4 months and 7 days yet to live. When she was about to be released from the hospital, she asked for plastic surgery since she had 33 more years to live. Plastic surgery was completed and when she left the hospital, she was run over by a car and died. At the pearly gates she spoke to God and questioned him about the long life she was yet to live...God responded...I didn't recognize you.*

Scholarship Committee

D-E-D-I-C-A-T-I-O-N was spelled out and members thanked for their continued support for scholarship program donations. She reminded us of 4 scholarships recently awarded, each of \$5000. She also summarized our successes at the 3 restaurants: Killarney House (\$370), Gary's Grill (\$344) and Brian Boru Pub (\$720) and to watch for future dates. Scholarship applications are on line now and please share this with others. She also shared the article about our scholarship program as explained by one of our awardees, Lorissa Honavar, and expressed her appreciation to Dixie Stack for making the connection to the journalist. Article will be in the Informer and on our Facebook page.

Members were also told about the envelopes on their table ready to be filled with their donations. If a check was to be written to 21st Century, there is a new name that should be used, Education Foundation of AACPS. The checks written to 21st Century will still be honored as of right now. Cash or checks made out to AARSPA are also still welcomed.

Trips and Travel

Gail Matthews reported on the upcoming trips such as “The First Noel” at the American Music Theater in PA with a tour of the Hershey Park Sweet Lights. In May, the Blue Angels trip is scheduled and it sold out quickly last year. In August, “Daniel” at the Sight and Sound Theater will be scheduled and perhaps a future visit to the Museum of the American Revolution will also be scheduled.

Guest Speaker:

Dixie Stack introduced our Teacher of the Year, Mary Kay Connerton. Mary Kay explained her wellness program and the “AWEs” she is experiencing by being a winner for the Teacher of the Year for AACPS, being one of 9 national finalists, working with Dr. Bedell, being here at our meeting with this room full of gifted people, and the success of her wellness program established at Annapolis High. She led us through a relaxation exercise as an example of simple techniques used in her program. She related her personal life story to students now in our schools experiencing similar issues. She shared her developmental background in becoming a yoga master at age 23 and the variety of teaching positions she held along with her mental health crises. She also became ill with bilateral pulmonary disease at age 28. During this hospitalization and recovery period, she wrote an 82 page curriculum for that now is being piloted at Annapolis High, stressing mental health and student success. She also shared various statistical information about student success collected with the assistance of Johns Hopkins researchers. She will continue to teach a variety of methods to help students and parents overcome mental health issues now recognized as critical, with more than 50% of students experiencing mental health issues before age 14.

LUNCH

Guest Speaker: Dr. Bedell

Dr. Bedell has been delayed and arrived in time to join us for lunch. Once most members enjoyed their main entrée, he was asked to speak while dessert was being served. He spoke about the efficiency and transparency of his work with the Board, and various needs still yet to be dealt with such as curriculum overhaul, social emotional development, bringing the joy back into teaching and learning. He spoke about his personal background being poor, homeless and never offered AP classes, yet here he is with his doctorate. He encourages “risk taking” since FAILure is just First Attempt in Learning (F.A.I.L.). Other successes shared included negotiations with all unions completed before July 1st, we are now #4 in the state for teacher salaries versus #19, our 300 vacancies are down to 97, his surprise visits to schools, providing more access to AP classes for all students in hopes of increasing our National Merit scholarship winners. He responded to several questions and explained his support of Blue Print for Education activities such as Asst. Principals teaching 20% of the time if we staff properly, releasing the 180 day requirements so we offer more internships for students and the desire for AACPS to become the MODEL for the state.

Guest Speaker: Wanda Twigg shared pens and legislative brochures were available on each table and reminded members about the many resources available on the MRSPA website.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Announcements:

Birthday Drawings: Mille Gardner conducted the birthday drawings and awarded the prizes.

Raffle Drawing: Chris conducted the drawing with the winner earning \$118.00

Scholarship Report: Tillie summarized our collections totaling \$2484. Thanks to \$323 in the envelopes, \$60. In checks to AARSPA, \$1975 to 21st Century and \$118 raffle with an extra \$8.

Co-President Doyle reminded everyone to leave name tags and food cards on the table and asked members to applaud the service staff for a job well done. Reminder was also given about next meeting in February at Olive Grove Restaurant with dates to remember on the back of the agenda.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Dates to Remember	
INFORMER Deadlines	Sept. 18, Dec. 29, Jan. 22
Fri. Dec, 8, 2023	American Music Theatre, "The First Noel", 10:00am – 9:00pm
Th. Jan. 11, 2024	Executive Board Meeting, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM, MRSPA Office
Tue. Jan. 30, 2024	MRSPA Legislative Workshop 10 a.m.
Fri. Feb. 8, 2024	General Membership Meeting/Luncheon – Olive Grove Restaurant. Registration 9:45 a.m. registration & meeting 10:30 a.m. (Snow Date: February 15 only if AACPS schools are closed)
Wed. Mar. 20, 2024	AARSPA in Florida event in St. Cloud, FL at the home of Arlene and Ron Derflinger
Th. Mar. 21,2024	FL luncheon/meeting LOCATION TBD
Th., Apr. 11,2024	Executive Board Meeting – 10:00 – 12:00PM Board of Education Parham Building, room 2A

Respectfully submitted:
Sharyn Doyle, Acting Secretary