

Montgomery County Public Schools Retirees Association, Inc.



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

www.mcpsra.org

Volume 2023-24, Issue #5

June, 2024



PRESIDENT'S

MESSAGE

Dr. Debra Munk
President - MCPSRA

Dear Members:

As the school year ends, we want to congratulate new retirees. On June 6, 2024, MCPS recognized this year's retirees

at a Retirement Reception at Richard Montgomery High School. This long-standing tradition was suspended during COVID. Last year MCPSRA worked closely with ERSC (Employee and Retiree Service Center) to reinstate the event. This event is a well-deserved tribute to our retirees and their years of service to the children of Montgomery County. We hope that every new retiree becomes an active member of MCPSRA!

Our Board of Directors continue to add new members. We recently welcomed **Dick Lipsky** as **Public Relations Chair** and are thrilled to have his experience and skills to help us gain more public recognition. We have only one board vacancy left: **Membership Chair**. If you have interest in becoming a part of our dynamic group of "seniors," please let me know. We not only get a lot done, but we have fun in the process.

Every year the Board of Directors of MCPSRA sets goals to guide the work and priorities of our organization. At the May Board Meeting, the directors voted to continue the focus on the 2023-24 goals in the coming year. Although, in every category, MCPSRA saw gains and improvement, there is still room for growth.

Here are some of the highlights of the Board's work this year related to each goal:

Raise MCPSRA visibility with MCPS personnel

Because the retirement process is complicated and confusing, MCPSRA Board members attended each Pre-Retirement Workshop, sharing information about MCPSRA and explaining the importance of membership. I passionately appealed to retirees at the Retirement Reception, urging them to join MCPSRA. Additionally, we sponsor a Facebook page and website to better communicate information and to create an on-line retiree community.

Participate in and influence the decision-making process related to retiree's insurance and benefits

In 2022, a sub-committee took a careful look at retiree health and dental benefits, comparing them to those of active employees. Their inquiry resulted in the identification of several areas where a significant discrepancy exists – particularly hearing aids and dental implants. Essentially, although retirees pay a higher percentage for health benefits, they are receiving less for their money. Additionally, we discovered that in spite of an influx of federal money for retiree benefits and rebates from drug companies over the past three years, our premiums remained the same. We also learned that active employees received a benefits "holiday" in 2021, meaning no deduction for health benefits was made for one month. Retirees received no such consideration. In October 2023, we presented these issues to the Board of Education. In February, Steve Raucher, Treasurer, and I met with Board President Carla Silvestre and Board Member Lynne Harris to further press our issues. They referred us to the auditor, with whom we have met twice. Our next step is to meet with the budget office, and then follow-up again with the Board of Education. We hope to resolve these matters in the near future and will share results with members as soon as possible.

(Continued on page 7.)

MCPSRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BOD)

bg.rager@verizon.net

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President	Dr. Debra Munk Debra.munk@yahoo.com	240-426-8407
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---Louise S. Walker	Margaret Brown margdell@gmail.com	301-910-2305
Trips	Bernadette Rager	301-774-0345

BUSINESS MEETING/LUNCHEON

Business meetings/luncheons are held four times a year currently at Montgomery Country Club, 20908 Golf View Dr., Laytonsville, MD 20882.



Introducing a new member at our April Luncheon.

June 13, 2024 MCPSRA Business Meeting and Lunch

Thursday, June 13, is the last luncheon and business meeting of the school year. Join your friends and colleagues for a delightful day.

The program will be led by Sandi Williams and Natalie Thomas discussing such topics as the Underground Railroad in Montgomery County, segregated schools in Montgomery County and African American genealogy.

Mark your calendars for the 2024-2025 luncheon/business meetings:

October 31, 2024
February 27, 2025
April 24, 2025
June 12, 2025.

Have a delightful summer. Enjoy and take care.
See you soon.

Sincerely,
LeeAnn Kaye

Community Service Update by Judy Mills

Progress report on the Toolkits Project: Many thanks to Pam Grant and Diane Wells for recruiting and organizing volunteers who have been working at the MCPS warehouse every Wednesday over the last several weeks. The volunteers are sorting and bagging thousands of donated plastic bottle caps of all shapes and sizes to be included in the kits (a bag of 30 small clear caps and a bag of 20 colorful caps are included per kit). That's 100,000 bottle caps! This task is enormous and the volunteers have diligently filled about 4000 self-close bags with bottle caps for when we begin assembling kits in June. Our team of volunteers will assemble about 2000 kits for distribution to incoming kindergartners who are participating in the Title I Extended Learning Summer Adventures In Learning (SAIL) Program at about 32 elementary summer school sites. **Want to help with kits assembly this summer?** Send your name, phone number and email address to Pam at pame2k1@aim.com or leave a message at 301-806-6960.



As we approach the Summer Vacation Season, and as you plan your summer travels and activities, consider your volunteer service, too. Many Organizations see a reduction in volunteer service because of summer activities. Many students who would ordinarily work towards their required SSL or Scouting projects may be working at summer jobs or earning SSL as camp counselors. So, if you find you have a break in your busy summer schedules, please consider volunteering!

(Community Service Update continues on page xxx)

MCPSRA TOOLKITS SPONSORSHIP FORM

Please provide (print clearly) 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: _____

I would like to sponsor # _____ toolkits at \$10 per kit. Donation enclosed: \$ _____

Optional: In memory of _____ In honor of _____

Send acknowledgement to _____

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

_____ mail me a receipt _____ no receipt is necessary

_____ Do **NOT** include my name on the toolkits labels

Welcome New Members

Joined in March 2024

Joyce K. Amatucci	4012 Shallow Brook Ln., Olney, MD 20832	240-651-9202
Dori L. Bailin	6797 Wood Duck Ct., Frederick, MD 21703	301-696-1956
Sandra (Sandy) L. Garner	9603 Watts Branch Dr., Rockville, MD 20850	301-802-9545
Robin Mesnard	16505 Keats Ter., Derwood, MD 20855	301-655-0807

Joined in April 2024

Yolanda M. Alston	10620 Hockberry Way, Beltsville, MD 20705	240-391-6286
Stephanie B. Curry	641 Raven Ave., Gaithersburg, MD 20877	240-252-3332
Sharon Glasgow	4911 Dorsey Chapel Ln., Bowie, MD 20702	240-388-1812
Cynthia L. Hollies	1 Bel Pre CT., Rockville, MD 20853	301-460-1792
Joan D. Ishimoto	7704 Beech Tree Rd., Bethesda, MD 20817	301-320-7210
Carol J. Schwindaman	705 Fordham St., Rockville, MD 20850	240-444-6094
Margaret A. Sealander	9302 Grazing Terrace, Gaithersburg, MD 20886	240-683-0788
April C. Strumpf	17324 Buehler Rd., Olney, MD 20832	301-924-2428

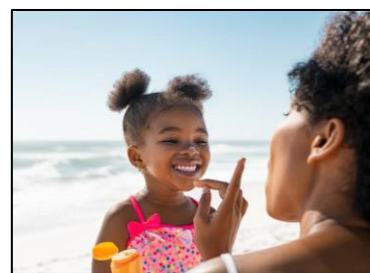
MCPSRA Consumer Education by Deb Berner June/July 2024

****Summertime, summertime...** It is that time of year, where UV rays are strongest due to the daily direct sunlight and where we see temperatures soar outside. After a recent trip to the Virgin Islands, I realized how necessary using sunscreen was to me, even when not on the beach. I came home with some minor sunburn, but it could've been worse if I had not used anything.

So, I've done a little research on how we can protect our skin, especially in the summertime when we tend to be more active outdoors. According to the CDC, "at least **one in five** Americans will develop skin cancer by the age of 70. Anyone, no matter their skin tone, can get skin cancer."

Here are some safety tips, not just for older adults, but for everyone.

- **Lotion up!** It's important to use lotions with at least SPF 30 no matter what your age is. The older we are, the more sun exposure we've had. Seniors also have more sensitive skin, so gentle lotions are less likely to cause irritation. And don't forget to reapply every two hours and/or after sweating or swimming it off.
- **Wear protective clothing.** While applying a SPF lotion is a great way to protect your skin, wearing long sleeves/pants, wide-brimmed hats or just a T-shirt or a beach cover-up will offer more protection. Clothes made from tightly woven dark fabric offer the best protection. You can also look for clothing that is certified under international standards as offering UV protection.
- **Read medication labels.** I happen to take a medication that limits how much time I should be in the sun. Some medications make not only our skin but our entire bodies more sensitive to the heat and sun. Make sure you read labels and/or consult with your medical professional if you are planning to be in the sun for longer periods of time.



- **Limit time in the midday sun.** The sun is the strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. If you plan on being outside during these times, you can reduce your risk of sun damage and skin cancer by staying in the shade under an umbrella, tree, or other shelter.
- **Expiration date.** Check the sunscreen’s expiration date. Sunscreen without an expiration date has a shelf life of no more than 3 years. Its shelf life is shorter if it has been exposed to high temperatures.
- **Sunglasses! My eye doctor was instrumental in getting me to wear sunglasses that block both UVA and UVB rays and to wear mine regularly. Sunglasses not only protect your eyes from UV rays and can reduce the risk of cataracts, but they also protect the tender skin around your eyes from sun exposure.**

Source: [Division of Cancer Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

****Entry to National Parks**

Since I can no longer take long runs, I have begun walking or hiking daily. I love to navigate new trails, especially in the many parks that our area offers. I recently saw an article from AARP about planning for a visit to some of the more popular and larger National parks. And because of that article, I ordered a lifetime senior pass. Not only am I saving money for entrance and other fees, but I am supporting the federal agency that maintains the parks.

“The National Park Service (NPS) manages 423 parks across the United States. Presently, more than 100 of these parks charge entrance fees; however, the NPS offers free admission for military [veterans](#) and a seriously [discounted lifetime senior pass](#) for those age 62 and older. If you enjoy spending time in the great outdoors, this is an excellent, financially friendly way to see all that the nation has to offer. Additionally, many state parks offer free admission, so if a cross-country road trip isn’t your speed, consider going on an adventure closer to home.”

Free Entrance Days

For six days in 2024, all National Park Service sites that charge an entrance fee will offer free admission to everyone. Mark your calendar for these entrance fee–free dates in 2024:

- **January 15:** [Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)
- **April 20:** First day of [National Park Week](#)
- **June 19:** [Juneteenth National Independence Day](#)
- **August 4:** Anniversary of the [Great American Outdoors Act](#)
- **September 28:** [National Public Lands Day](#)
- **November 11:** [Veterans Day](#)

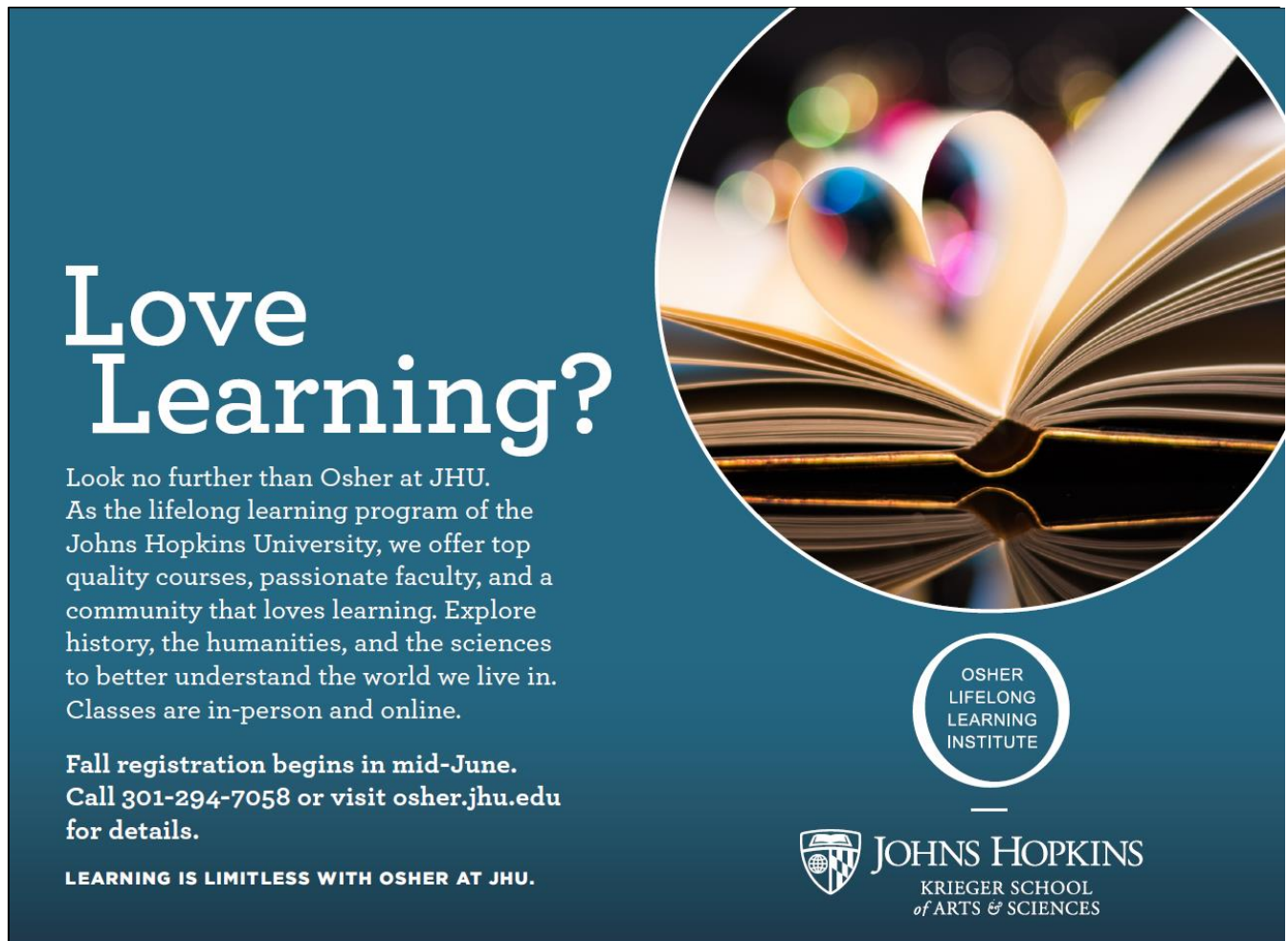
Sources:

National Park Service, nps.gov

AARP. (2022, Apr 29). [Want to Visit a National Park This Summer? Start Planning Now.](#)

*The **Consumer Connection** newsletter on the Maryland Retired School Personnel Association site at <https://mrspa.org> has additional updates and information.

Paid advertisement:




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Fall registration begins in mid-June. Call 301-294-7058 or visit osher.jhu.edu for details.

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Check out MCPSRA Online

Our website

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/mcpsretirees/>

Our Web Pages on the MCPS Website share information about the organization such as our membership information, the MCPSRA bylaws, contact info for the board of directors, past newsletters, and information about events and projects

On Facebook

MCPSRA Private Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/672901020970305/>

A Private Facebook Group limited to members of MCPSRA where we can share important information, ask questions, or just share what we have been doing in our retirements. It's a great way to connect with others.

Maryland MCPS Retirees Association <https://www.facebook.com/people/Maryland-MCPSRetirees-Association/100088256853359/>

IMPORTANT NOTE: There is an inactive Facebook page named Montgomery County Public Schools Retirees Association. Unfortunately, we have been unable to identify the owner of the page so that we can deactivate it. The Maryland MCPS Retirees Association Page is the active page.

In Memoriam

The following MCPSRA Members have passed away:

FEBRUARY

**Harold D. Carrier
Richard D. Davis
Roy R. Lambert, Jr.
Lois N. Purdum**

MARCH

**Elizabeth Boone
Patricia S. Rider
Elizabeth N. Thornby
Bernice Jean Wastler**

APRIL

**Harry E. Diehl
Doris A. Glover
Roberta P. Parker**

(President's Message continued from page 1.)

Increase MCPSRA membership

Although membership has remained stable, at around 2200 members, we hope that our recruitment campaign at the Retirement Reception and other efforts will result in many new memberships. We need members to recruit their friends. With approximately 12,000 retirees, our membership represents less than 20% of the total. Our strength is in our numbers. To resolve issues and promote favorable policies, it is important that we represent as many retirees as possible. If you are paying for your membership year by year, consider an annual payroll deduction instead. You will save \$10 on your next year's dues.

Increase MCPSRA member participation in service projects, luncheons, trips, etc.

Our wonderful luncheons have resumed and participation continues to increase. Each luncheon includes an engaging program. For example, Sara Goodman Confino discussed her latest novel at the April Luncheon. At the June luncheon, representatives from the Sandy Spring Museum will discuss the rich history that took place in this small town. Also, members participated in a service project at Interfaith Works (IW) Essential Services Center, sorting donated clothes and household items. We continue to encourage members to participate in the

Montgomery County Recreation Department's SOAR (Senior Outdoor Adventures in Recreation). The Board of Directors together will attend a performance of "Beautiful" at the Olney Theater in July.

Continue to support MCPS with Special Projects (Toolkits)

Our Toolkit project is underway again, after a hiatus during COVID. Because of the cost of materials, we are soliciting donations to ensure that future elementary children will have toolkits to support their summer program. Please help if you can.

Continue to grant scholarships to MCPS active staff

We received over 100 scholarship applications from MCPS staff. We expect to award eight to ten, \$1500 or less scholarships to staff to further their educations this summer or fall.

As you can see, the MCPS Board of Directors has been extremely busy this year. Each Board member donates their time and talents to support the organization and YOU. I am grateful to serve with such committed professionals. And, we thank you for being a member. We wish that all retirees realize how critical this organization is to their financial security. Please share the message.

Have a wonderful summer.

Debra

(Community Service Update continued from page 3.)

Local Outdoor Volunteer Opportunities:



Brookside Gardens

(<https://montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/brookside-gardens/>),

Wheaton, MD - daily and long-term volunteer opportunities available. Plus, it's a great place to spend time walking or sitting among the tranquil gardens. "Brookside Gardens is Montgomery County's incomparable, award-winning 50-acre public display garden within Wheaton Regional Park. Included in the gardens are several distinct and well-maintained garden areas with

ample seating throughout. Brookside Gardens also features two conservatories for year-round enjoyment. Admission to the gardens is free." Check it out!

London Towns & Gardens

(<https://www.historiclondontown.org/>), Edgewater, MD - click on the Support drop-down, then click on Volunteer. "The programs offered by Historic London Towns and Gardens could not occur without our volunteers. They give their time and talent freely to explore, preserve, and interpret the history of one of Maryland's earliest seaports and roughly 10 acres of woodland and ornamental gardens." This location is worth a visit just to take in the beauty and tranquility of the gardens along the South River.



Local Volunteer Opportunities:

League of Women Voters (<https://www.lwv.org/>) - The League's success depends on the good work and financial support of its volunteers. All volunteer opportunities are time limited and project oriented so you can let us know what works for you. Check out Volunteering (https://www.lwvmocomd.org/content.aspx?page_id=2664&club_id=513039) or contact Ralph Watkins, Chair of the Making Democracy Committee, mdw@lwvmocomd.org .

Interfaith Works (<https://www.iworksmc.org/>) - Interfaith Works (IW) provides emergency shelter, supportive housing, essential needs, and employment programs to over 35,000 residents of

Montgomery County, MD, every year. Currently accepting donations and volunteers are always appreciated.



[A Wider Circle \(https://awidercircle.org/\)](https://awidercircle.org/) is dedicated to “fostering the exchange of goods, skills, and connections from neighbor to neighbor, and by engaging in advocacy to address the root causes of poverty.” [Short-Term Volunteer Opportunities for Adults \(https://awidercircle.org/get-involved/#volunteer\)](https://awidercircle.org/get-involved/#volunteer) available. Currently accepting donations and volunteers are always appreciated.

[Manna Food Center \(https://www.mannafood.org/\)](https://www.mannafood.org/) - “By increasing access to nutritious food for all those experiencing hunger and food insecurity...Ending hunger in Montgomery County is within our reach. Every day, our staff, volunteers, fellow providers and community members move us closer to this reality.” Currently accepting donations and volunteers are always appreciated.

[Montgomery County, MD Public Libraries \(https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/library/\)](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/library/) - scroll to the bottom of the homepage to the Support Us section and click on Volunteer Opportunities. Also visit the Resources by Age drop-down for an Older Adults Resources section to read about services and opportunities just for you.

[Montgomery County, MD: \(https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteercenter/Discover\)](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteercenter/Discover) opportunities to serve in MoCo. Out of County opportunities appear on this site, too. Maryland: Help out at local parks across the DMV.

Nationwide Volunteer Opportunities:

[Just Serve \(https://www.justserve.org/\)](https://www.justserve.org/): Volunteer with organizations across the US.

[The Smithsonian Institution \(https://www.si.edu/volunteer\)](https://www.si.edu/volunteer) Discover *countless volunteer opportunities in nearly every one of the Smithsonian's museums, gardens, research centers, and the National Zoo.*

[Digital opportunities \(https://transcription.si.edu/\)](https://transcription.si.edu/) are also available.

[National Park Service \(https://www.nps.gov/subjects/volunteer/index.htm\)](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/volunteer/index.htm) and [DC Area National Parks \(https://www.nps.gov/locations/dc/volunteer.htm\)](https://www.nps.gov/locations/dc/volunteer.htm) Discover the great outdoors in a new way by volunteering while taking in the beauty of our National Parks!

The Truancy Prevention Program (TPP) is currently recruiting volunteers for the Fall Semester!

As a part of the crime prevention initiatives established by the State's Attorney's Office, TPP works to improve attendance in Montgomery County by discovering the root causes of truancy and assisting students and their families with issues that impact attendance. The program currently serves in 26 MCPS schools and is looking to expand to every middle school in Montgomery County. Volunteers are needed to make it happen!

Serving as a volunteer Mentor or Facilitator is a rewarding way to utilize your expertise in education. The program entails a ten-week commitment of 2-3 hours a week. Volunteers meet with students who are chronically absent as a Mentor or a Facilitator helping students set goals to improve their attendance. Students who complete the program successfully are invited to a graduation ceremony at the end of the semester. You can see the difference it makes to students and their proud families as they gather to celebrate their success.

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

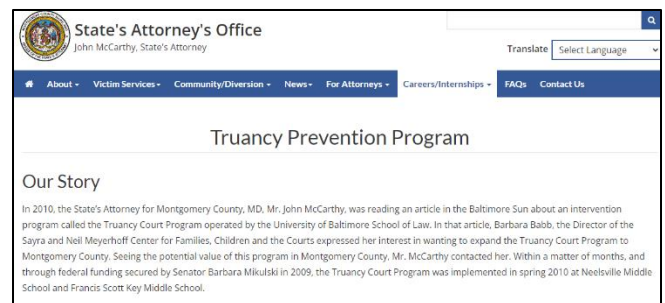
More information can also be found at the links below:

TPP Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gcXgmFrKha8&t=1s>

[TPP website](#)

[Fox 5 News Coverage](#)



A Bit of Humor...

I hired a handyman and I gave him a list of six jobs to do.

When I came back in the evening, he had completed just the 1, 3, and 5 jobs from the list.

Turns out he only does odd jobs.



MCPSRA Luncheon and Business Meeting

Thursday, June 13, 2024
Montgomery Country Club
20908 Golf View Drive
Gaithersburg, MD 20882
240-912-9515

If MCPS is closed, luncheon is cancelled. Delayed opening, luncheon is held.
Gathering: 11:00 a.m. Business Meeting: 11:30 a.m. Luncheon: 12:00 Noon Program

Buffet Menu

Pulled BBQ Pork w/ Brioche Bun
Roasted Chicken Quarters
Creamy Coleslaw
Scalloped Potatoes
Buttered Sweet Corn
Caesar Salad
Cornbread
Dessert
Iced Tea, Coffee, Lemonade
\$35.00

Cut Here

Thursday, June 13, 2024

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email address: _____ Total amount enclosed: _____

Reservation form and check must be received by Friday, June 7, 2024.

Make checks 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 or patriciabendler0@gmail.com

ANY FOOD ALLERGIES? SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS? PLEASE LET ME KNOW.

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MCPS Retirees Association, Inc.
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Rockville, MD 20849

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DATED MATERIAL



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

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

Next Luncheon Date June 13, 2024

The MCPSRA Newsletter is published in October, December, February, April, and June.
This is the June 2024 issue.