

Holiday Giving – Help-A-Child

This year more than most, difficult economic times are hitting families hard. If you are in a position to make a charitable contribution, we urge you to consider making a contribution that will make a difference here in our own community, the Help-A-Child Fund. The Fund is a joint charitable project of the HCPSS Pupil Personnel Workers and HCEA and is often the last resort for many students here in Howard County. With no administrative costs, 100% of all donations go directly to students in need.

To make a contribution, donate in the name of someone you wish to honor or as a memorial gift, send your tax deductible contribution payable to Help-A-Child to HCEA via the pony or mail to 5082 Dorsey Hall Drive, Suite 102, Ellicott City, MD 21042. For additional information call HCEA at 410-997-3440.



Holiday Shopping Discounts

Before you start your holiday shopping, check out the discounts available through the MST A ACCESS card and NEA Member Benefits. The ACCESS card provides discounts at dozens of hotels, retailers and more! Just go to the MST A website, www.mstanea.org and click on the ACCESS card icon. Have your membership card ready and you will be on your way to savings! Also check out the Member Benefits website at www.neamb.com and click on “Member Discounts” to save on magazine subscriptions, travel deals and more!



Councilman Calvin Ball discusses issues with HCEA Treasurer Brian Donoughe, and members James McVey and Kelly Rivers at the HCEA Legislative breakfast on November 15th at Linden Hall.

Inauguration Day Leave

Questions are arising about allowances for students and staff to attend the Presidential Inauguration. Staff absences that day are to be handled as usual. This is an appropriate use of personal leave. Please be aware that you may not use this as a “banked” day. We understand that there will possibly be a large number of staff absences and, therefore, we will assist schools in covering classes (a process will be forthcoming).

The schedule for ending the second quarter and for completing report cards prevents us from making major changes to accommodate families wanting to participate in the activities of the day. Likewise, we cannot eliminate the high school mid-term exam scheduled for the Presidential Inauguration Day.

However, for consistency across the county, I am recommending that principals allow parents to use one of the three discretionary days of

absence provided for each child if they wish their child to attend the inauguration. This applies to high school students as well, recognizing that Policy 9010, Attendance, says that parents are not to request the use of discretionary days on an exam day without the authorization of the principal. If the discretionary day is arranged with the principal in advance, participation in inaugural activities will be an excused absence for students at all levels.

As usual, all missed work must be made up, and high school students who miss a mid-year exam will be expected to make up the exam at the teacher’s convenience by the end of the mid-term exam week. When parents make the request for the absence, it will be appropriate to remind them of their child’s obligation to make up the missed work and tests.

This information has been provided by Linda Wise, Chief Academic Officer.

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The View from Here

by Ann De Lacy,
HCEA President

“This election shows that we can be successful if we all work together!!”

Thank you to each and every one of you who helped to make our Association victorious on election day! At the local level, HCEA was successful in helping to elect all three of our endorsed candidates to the Board of Education. Current school board members Janet Siddiqui and Ellen Flynn Giles were re-elected. Newcomer Allen Dyer won the third spot, narrowly defeating a candidate for the final seat that supported merit pay, vouchers, teaching of Creationism and who home-schools her child. At the State level, MSTA recommended Frank Kratovil for the vacant seat in the First Congressional District. He ran on a “Pro-Education” platform and in a major upset he was declared the winner after absentee ballots were counted. Also, the ballot initiative supporting the slots referendum won on election day! This will provide for an infusion of much needed revenue for education funding in Maryland. For NEA, and all of us, the election of Barack Obama and Joe Biden as President and Vice President of the United States was a victory we can all be proud of! Whether you served on our Government Relations Committee and interviewed candidates, worked at the polls on election day, shared Association recommendations with family and friends or stood in line to vote on election day, your actions were an important part of the process that benefited public education! And given the fact that two elections came down to the counting of absentee ballots, HCEA and MSTA members can be proud of our efforts in making the difference in these two elections!

But our political efforts do not end with the elections. Now we must hold these elected candidates accountable for following through on their campaign promises. Less than two weeks after the election, dozens of HCEA members gathered early on a Saturday morning to meet and talk with members of our General Assembly delegation and County Council to discuss funding issues, creation of a statewide neutral process to resolve contract and labor disputes, ways to improve



student achievement and other matters of educational interest. To those elected officials who took time to meet, we thank you. Your continued willingness to support public education and listen to our concerns is greatly appreciated. And thank you to all of the HCEA members who came in the rain, some who brought along family, and FEA students who shared their experiences in the school house. A future forum will also be scheduled for HCEA members to meet and discuss issues with our elected School Board members as well.

This election shows that we can be successful if we all work together!! Congratulations on all of your efforts that led to victory on November 4th. Now the really hard work begins!

Who is Marius Ambrose?

Marius Ambrose is a veteran Maryland State Teachers Association employee assigned to service association members employed by the Howard County Public School System. Marius has been working with HCEA since May, 1979. His current duties are to service the secondary school members in the areas of contract enforcement, griev-

ance representation and overall teacher concerns. In addition, Marius is the staff liaison for a number of HCEA committees including Member Benefits and the Special Education Task Force. He also negotiates the Master Agreement for all non-supervisory certificated professional employees in the employ of the Howard County Public Schools. This year the current three

year contract allows only for the opening of negotiations of Article 20 for the 2009-2010 school year. Article 20 contains all certificated personnel salaries, stipends and coaches pay. If you have any questions for Marius, please feel free to contact him at 410-997-3440 or mambrose@mstanea.org.



Retired teacher Janice Weed waits to greet voters at Swansfield Elementary.



Para Educator Susan Kirby braves the weather at Clarksville Middle.

Meet Mary Jo Neville

Mary Jo has been an employee of the Maryland State Teachers Association for 18 years. Her first 14 years were spent in Annapolis as a Lobbyist and Government Relations Specialist. Assigned to HCEA since May of 2007, Mary Jo works with certificated personnel at the elementary school level. In addition, Mary Jo is the staff liaison to the Professional Development Committee and the Public Relations Committee. She is also responsible for content for both the HCEA Newsletter "Works" and the Association Web Page, www.hceanea.org. Mary Jo may be contacted at 410-997-3440 or mjneville@mstanea.org.

NEA's Read Across America

NEA's Read Across America is an annual reading motivation and awareness program that calls for every child in every community to celebrate reading on March 2nd, the birthday of beloved children's author Dr. Seuss. NEA's Read Across America also provides NEA members, parents, caregivers, and children the resources and activities they need to keep reading on the calendar 365 days a year.

In cities and towns across the nation, teachers, teenagers, librarians, politicians, actors, athletes, parents, grandparents, and others develop NEA's Read Across America activities to bring reading excitement to children of all ages. Governors, mayors, and other elected officials recognize the role reading plays in their communities with

proclamations and floor statements. Athletes and actors issue reading challenges to young readers.



In 2009 Read Across America Day will be held on Monday, March 2nd at schools across Howard County. If you are interested in having a program at your school and don't know where to start, or if you have ideas to share with others, please come to HCEA on Wednesday, December 3rd from 4:30 – 6PM for a presentation and idea exchange. If you are not able to attend, information can be found at the Read Across web site, www.nea.org/readacross.

Education Budget Cuts Loom

Next year, State funding for public schools is supposed to increase from the current amount of \$5.418 billion to \$5.632 billion, an increase of \$214 million. The \$214 million increase is composed of \$130 million more for the state's contribution to fund educator

pensions, \$35 million for Thornton Formula direct aid to counties, and \$49 million more for GCEI, the Geographic Cost of Education Index. Already, county governments are demanding cuts to local school budgets, and many systems have imposed hiring freezes or cut programs, or are threatening furloughs.

While Howard County has so far been spared hiring freezes and cuts to crucial programs, cuts in the state budget could impact us. We need you to urge your state legislators to, at a minimum, maintain the FY09-

FY11 funding levels agreed on in last year's special session. Because of the national economic crisis, state and local revenues have dipped far below original projections, and as a result, achieving our goal of staying the course on education funding will not be easy.

The Governor and key legislators are already trying to figure out how to close the expected gap of more than \$1 billion in the FY10 state budget and have said that everything is on the table.

We need each and every member to contact your legislators through MSTA's site to urge them to protect education funding. You can do this by going to the GPS campaign website, www.GreatSchoolsMaryland.org and clicking on "Take Action" at the bottom of the page. The really hard work begins now!

You can help - Go to
www.GreatSchoolsMaryland.org
 and click on Take Action

HCEA Marketplace

Dates to Remember:

Call HCEA to register for events.

National Board Certification Informational Meeting

Thursday, December 18
4:30 PM– 5:30PM
Faulkner Ridge

Read Across America Presentation and Idea Exchange

Wednesday, December 3
4:30 – 6PM
HCEA

Winter Break

December 22 – January 2

“Your Credit Score and Financial Decisions”

Wednesday, January 14
4:15PM – 6PM
Homewood School

General Assembly Opens

MSTA Open House
Wednesday, January 14
4PM – 7PM
MSTA – Annapolis

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

January 19

Inauguration Day

January 20

NEA Mid-Atlantic Minority Leadership Training

January 22 -23
Charlotte, NC

NEA Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference

January 23 – 24
Charlotte, NC

SPARKS Workshop

January 31
8:30AM – 4PM
Faulkner Ridge

General Services

Tutorrific! Tutor in homes throughout Howard County. A great way to make extra money! Please send an email or your resume to Deborah Peled Markowitz at tutorrific@comcast.net.

Home Mortgages/Refinancing: Interest rates and home prices are the lowest in years. Presidential is a Maryland based bank with offices in Columbia. No application, commitment fees or appraisal fees for HCEA members. First time home buyer programs. Call to set up a personal meeting to discuss your mortgage options. Contact Mitch Lax @ 443-812-9319 or by e-mail at mitchlax@presidential.com.

Add extra income to your household. Go to www.thisbiznow.com for business information. I offer one-on-one assistance for new business owners who want to get started. E-mail Steve at sop1963@ltdkate.com.

Electrician: Licensed Master electrician specializing in new and old work. Recessed lighting, ceiling fans, service work and more. Call Larry 443-927-4052.

Handyman Services: Holidays coming and still have a lot on the “To Do” list. Don't have time to get it all done? Contact JM Frederick, LLC for handyman services. MHIC Licensed #97185, #125996. Insured, and workers comp. Residential and commercial services available. Office: 410-750-7473 or email jm.frederick.llc@gmail.com. Servicing Howard and nearby counties. Emergency services as available.

Employment

Spend Summer in the Sun: DRD Pool Management, Inc. is accepting resumes for summer job openings as swimming pool field supervisors and swimming pool managers (Full or part time.) No experience necessary. For more information, call David Watts @ 410-785-7665 or email at dwatts@drdpools.com

Summer Opportunity at Camp: Camp Airy (for boys) and Camp Louise (for girls) overnight camps in nearby Thurmont and Cascade, Maryland are looking for experienced educators to supervise one of a variety of departmental areas including athletics, arts & crafts, dance, drama, outdoor adventure (climbing, ropes, orienteering,

etc.), music, photo. Summer season June 16 thru August 17. Outstanding facilities and benefits. Contact Steve Goldklang (steve@airylouise.org) or Bobbie Miller (bobbie@airylouise.org) or call 410-466-9010.

Vacation Rentals

Deep Creek Lake: 5 BR. log cabin chalet; fully furnished; all amenities included; minutes from WISP Ski resort; 30% discount to HCEA members; weekend or weekly rental. Call Dan @ 410-465-5190.

Deep Creek Lake: Beautiful 4 BR, 3 BA chalet with hot tub and privacy! We have lake access with day-docking available. We offer a 20% discount for HCPSS employees. Please let me know if you have any questions, CLC Krista Feezel. <http://www.edatae.com/dcr/PropertyView.aspx?ID=767>

Deep Creek Lake: 3 BR rancher available for weekly or weekend rentals. Great Location near all activities. Dock slip included. 10% discount for Howard County Employees. See link below for pictures and availability. Call 410-379-6057 to get discount. Ask for Chuck or Candy <http://rentals.deepcreek.com/book/house.html?PMSUnitID=ALLKFT>

To advertise in HCEA Marketplace e-mail ad to editor_marketplace@hceanea.org or visit the Publications page on the HCEA website at www.hceanea.org. Deadline for next issue: Thursday, December 11.

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