

News & Views



September 2023



Association Officers

Henry "Skip" Gormley, President
Amblingman@aol.com

Brian Woodward, Past President
Wizank@verizon.net

Jim McMahan, Vice President
JmcMahon657@gmail.com

Deloris Kirby, Secretary
Kirby7524@verizon.net

Al Warfield, Treasurer
Afwarf@comcast.net

Margaret Kingsley, Membership Coordinator
Margaret.Kingsley96@gmail.com

To Be Determined, Communications Manager

Members at Large

Jacqueline Murray
david9726@msn.com

Mike Horrigan
MikeHorrigan2@gmail.com

We Are Celebrating...

By Alma Lynch (Bi-County)

Our fabulous Retirees Association began back in 1993 when a group of employees (pictured on page 2) got together and decided to start an Association that worked for M-NCPPC retirees. The Association was not to be just a social organization but rather an Association that communicated with retirees about their concerns and issues (e.g., Employee Retirement System changes, monitoring legislative meetings that might impact retiree members, etc.).

They had no money at the beginning and tapped group members to contribute some of their dollars and time to make our Association happen. Without their efforts back then, we would not exist today. Retirees Association members today are reaping the benefits of their efforts and are continuing to have a voice and connection to each other and the M-NCPPC because of the founding members' vision.

At our Holiday Celebration on December 6th, the Association will honor our founding members as well as former and current Association officers and

Inside this issue...

We Are Celebrating	1-2
2024 Retiree Benefits	2-3
Travels (Week 2)	4-5
Greetings	6
Remembering Our Friends	7
We Get Mail	8-10
My Commission Recollections	11
One Commission Party ..	12

Save the dates...

Retiree Picnic @ Fairland Regional Park (Flyer already sent) —September 27 (11 a.m. —2:00 p.m.)

Holiday Party @ Newton White Mansion —December 6

One Commission Employee Appreciation Holiday Open House—December 15 (see page 12)



We Are Celebrating... (Continued)

members because we are **CELEBRATING 30 YEARS** together. We hope you can come and help us celebrate and even if you can't, we know you will be with us in spirit!



**M-NCPPC Retirees
Association Founding
Members**

Your 2024 Retiree Benefits and More

By **Cynthia Henderson**, Health & Benefits

Benefit plan and premium rate changes will continue to be announced prior to the annual employee open enrollment period, each Fall. Notifications will be mailed to your home address. This year, retirees will have several opportunities to obtain information about their 2024 benefits:

2024 Retiree Benefits Overview (In-Person)

Date: Wednesday, November 1, 2023

Time: 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Location: Parks and Recreation Auditorium, 6600 Kenilworth Avenue, Riverdale,
MD 20722

Virtual Benefits Fair

Live Vendor Presentations:

Tuesday, October 24th: Medical and Prescription Drug Plans and
Wednesday, October 25th: Dental, Vision and Prepaid Legal Plans

On-Demand 24/7 Recordings of vendor presentations available throughout the Open Enrollment period

Additional information will be mailed to your home address.

If you have any questions about the information provided, contact your Health & Benefits Team (301-454-1694 or benefits@mncppc.org). We hope you (and your family members) will be able to join us at the 2024 Retiree Benefits Overview and Virtual Benefits Fair.

Your 2024 Retiree Benefits and More (Continued)

NEW- Enroll and Make Changes ALL YEAR LONG!

Eligible retirees may enroll in or make changes to their medical, prescription, dental and vision benefit plan selections at any time throughout the year. Retirees are no longer restricted to the annual Open Enrollment period/deadlines.

Reminders:

- If you (your dependent) are not currently enrolled in a medical, dental, vision or prescription drug plan, you can add coverage, only if you (your dependent) were eligible for retiree benefits on the date of your retirement with proof of continuous, comparable coverage in another plan.
- If you enroll in Legal Resources, you must remain in the plan for 12 months.
- **You and/or your eligible dependent must enroll in Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B when you first become eligible.** Medicare will be your primary insurer and the M-NCPPC medical plans will supplement.

RSV Vaccine for Adults Covered by Caremark and SilverScript

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that adults 60 and older receive an RSV vaccine. Respiratory syncytial (sin-SISH-uhl) virus, or RSV, is a **common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms, including** cough, runny nose, sore throat, fatigue and sometimes fever. In serious cases, adults may experience trouble breathing or dehydration, resulting in hospitalization.

When you present your M-NCPPC Caremark or SilverScript id card at a CVS Pharmacy or Partner Retail Pharmacy such as Safeway, Giant, Walgreens or Rite Aid, your copay for the RSV vaccine will be \$0*.

**Please be advised that not all SilverScript financial systems have been updated to reflect the \$0 copay. SilverScript is monitoring their system. In the interim, if you are charged a copay (up to \$16), SilverScript will automatically generate a refund check that will be mailed to your address of record.*

(Note: United Healthcare provides coverage of the RSV vaccine only for children; not adults.

Kaiser Permanente members should call Member Services, 800-777-7902 for RSV vaccine coverage updates.)

Always consult with your healthcare provider before you get any vaccines.

Travels to Northern Spain & Portugal 2022

*Spend eleven weeks on the road with **Sandy Tallant (MC Planning) & Drury Tallant***

WEEK 2—Tarragona and Valencia

We left Barcelona on the morning “regular” fast train - a little over an hour to **Tarragona**, a small UNESCO historic seaside town south of Barcelona. We spent two nights in the old part of the Roman/Gothic walled city in a charming small hotel. We visited Roman ruins - amphitheater, circus, forum, cathedral - and had lazy large late upmarket lunches and afternoon naps to sleep off too much food and wine, followed by early evening tourism - sites are open until 8 p.m.

Life is good and decadent. Salads come with tuna or other trappings from the sea - smoked fresh sardines. Flans are perfumed with coffee, and savory entrees come with small additions of red pepper or parmesan ice cream. Our 2 p.m. lunches are more than ample - we skipped dinner a couple of nights in a row - we could not possibly swallow another thing.

The coast is rocky here and dotted with bathers. There is a surprisingly busy commercial port in Tarragona with tankers and cargo ships waiting to enter the port. In the marina are several large boats and the enormous personal yachts, (the size of small ocean liners), of the Russian oligarchy. Their finishes are flawless, dustless, and void of fingerprints - buffed as if ready for a showroom. No one seems to be aboard ...perhaps seized by the Spanish government. We see one young crew member on the largest sailing vessel we have ever seen. Half of the back deck is open and we watch two people who look like the deckhand's parents, (not posh Soviets), looking down into the haul. Eventually the hydraulic hinges lower the deck flush. Perhaps crew who do not please at sea are tossed to the fishes.

We take the fast train to **Valencia** - a beautiful city of 18th and 19th Century grand historic civic buildings, mansions, and landscaped boulevards meant for strolling. Fanciful iron street lights hang from buildings and look like dangling filigree earrings. We are staying in the old part of the city. We walked the historic building tour until we could walk no more. A must-visit for Architects is the city of Arts and Science - a large modern sculpture-like development by the contemporary architect, Calatrava.

We walked through tunnels of fish at the aquarium, (the closest we will come to deep sea diving), roamed the science museum, and took in an IMAX movie on the Amazon. We continued to have dry temperate weather and breakfast alfresco. We see mostly Roman ruins in the morning. Valencia is the origin of the paella so we have a rather delicious one with cod and cauliflower for a late lunch. Our seafood-topped salad came with a cucumber ice cream/sorbet - unusual and delicious. Valencia was an important silk center starting in the 700's under Muslim rule and we visited the silk museum to learn all about it. Too full for dinner...we had peanuts and beer on one of the city's squares.

Today our travel adventures started in earnest ...a day of unexpected happenings. A lovely morning of coffee and an especially delicious croissant in a little outdoor cafe near our hotel. A walk to see the city gates and roam a small museum or two. Then the dreaded pigeon. Splat, spatter, disgust!!! Down the back of Dru's shirt, and his pants down to his ankle. In my hair and down the back of my white shirt and an appalling wet feeling on my back. Thankfully, a couple came to our rescue with a

Travels to Northern Spain & Portugal 2022 (Continued)

pack of handy wipes. No number of wipes would make this right. These birds really had a load to deposit! With stiff upper lips we carried on. I tried to rinse my stained shirt out and scrub my back in a museum bathroom. We worked our way back to our stored packs, lunch, and an errand. As Dru pays for a spool of thread, he found no cash in his wallet ...gee whiz, that was an amazing amount of bird deposit that managed to hit us both...and a lot of help from such nice people ...yes, even the seasoned traveler can be had. This was truly the slickest scam and pick-pocketing we have ever experienced. We managed to restore our cash, and take our lunch. The thick man-made slime, a shade of putrid green stained all of our clothing now tossed in the trash. It was one way to reduce the weight of our packs.

We headed to the train station in fresh clothing and boarded our afternoon train to Cuenca - a World Heritage Site - a "stage set" town of medieval architecture with hanging houses that cling above deep gorges that surround the town. We have an apartment for two nights with a washing machine!

To be continued...Week 3 - Cuenca, Toledo, & Madrid



Tarragona



City of Arts and Science by Architect Antonio Calatrava in Valencia

Greetings from Carl (MC Engineering) and Lynda Toland

Greetings from the Left Coast, portions of which are threatening to melt and run into the Gulf of Baja as I write this. At this late date in August, we are supposed to reach 118 degrees here in Palm Springs, California. A couple of weeks ago, Lynda and I planned a get-away to a supposedly cooler locale... that being Portland, Oregon... see some old friends and family and kick around the city that was our home for 30 years. Plus cool off a little.

However; the day we arrived it was over 100 degrees and smoky to boot. Fortunately, the next few days were much cooler, but wildfire smoke was still present. See photo below for a visit we made to the Swan Island Dahlia Farm in Canby, Oregon. The rich Willamette Valley soils are perfect for growing these hugely hybridized flowers -- and they had all the varieties, I think.

We were scheduled to fly home on Monday, August 21st, but Hurricane Hilary had other ideas. The storm passed right over the top of Palm Springs on its way to the north and shut down the airport for a couple of days. So we got to spend another day in Portland, getting home only a day late. Thankfully, there was no damage to our home or neighborhood from the flooding that did do lots of damage and closed roads in this otherwise dry and hot valley.

So plan your visit to Palm Springs this winter, when it's warm and sunny and you might need a change. They welcome visitors here with open arms.



Carl and Lynda Toland at the Swan Island Dahlia Farm in Canby, Oregon

Remembering Our Friends

Gene Giddens (PGC/Parks & Recreation and MC Parks) reports that earlier this summer, Patricia Colihan, Jim Vines, John Lazzari, and Gene Giddens, along with Doug Sherwood's wife, daughters, relatives, and guests attended Doug's Celebration of Life Event. The program was held at the Montgomery County Fair Grounds Agriculture Center. Doug was a strong supporter of both the Fair and Agriculture Center. He also enjoyed cars and as budget manager was into "numbers". Doug always had a smile on his face while working, never said a negative word about anyone, and assisted in creating the Commission into a fantastic agency. Doug will be missed, but never forgotten by his friends and co-workers.



Doug Sherwood



Joyce Beall

The Retirees Association received word that **Joyce Beall** passed away on September 2, 2023, after her 3-1/2 year journey with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease). She worked for Prince George's County Parks & Recreation for 28 years and was a long-term member of the Association.

Her obituary can be found at <https://www.beallfuneral.com/obituaries/joyce-beall>. Our condolences to Joyce's family and friends.

Welcome new members!

Marie Checkley
Whitney Chellis
Marybeth Dugan
John Kroll
Doug Ludwig, Jr.
Maria Martin
Stewart Seal
Michael Snyder
Cindy Weisman
Ercelle Yauger

Remembering members we lost...

Joyce Beall—9/2/2023
Rudy Gole—8/18/2023
Robert Huffman—2/14/2023
K. Rita Souweine—4/8/2023

We Get Mail!

Chris Izzo (PGC Planning) reports that he sold his house in Frederick and is moving to the Eastern Shore, Delaware. The new house will be ready in October, and we are living with my step daughter in MoCo until the new house is finished. We are located about ten minutes inland from Bethany Beach. We downsized to a smaller house with a first floor bedroom. That has consumed most of our free time this summer.



Sidewalk Art by Sam Dixon

The City of Redondo Beach and its Public Art Commission reached out to **Samuel Dixon (PGC Planning), Artist**, to provide artwork for their residents and visitors to experience original works of art on many of their sidewalks. "Sailing" and "Another Lounge Chair" are located at Avenue I & Esplanade, Redondo, California. Check out Sam Dixon's artwork the next time you're online (<https://www.samdixon.org/home>).

Nancy Weiman (PGC Parks/40 plus years) returned from Kagoshima Japan recently from the World Masters Swimming Championships where she won the 70-79 solo event. The competition was suspended for two days due to a typhoon!

Still swimming after all these years!



We Get Mail!

Thanks to **Charlie McGovern (MC Parks)** for the MRO photo history below.



8787 Georgia Avenue – MRO photo history.

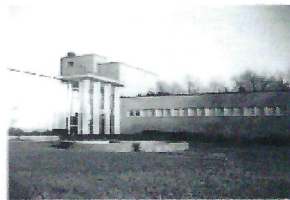
Charlie McGovern



The first time I heard about the Commission was seventy years ago. At that time, I was a summer employee working for a civil engineering firm located in Wheaton.

One afternoon I was sent to pick up some land records from the Commission's office, which at that time was in a two-story building located on the South side of Colesville Road and West of Georgia Avenue. The Commission's first office building was demolished to make way for the Discovery Channel's building that opened in 2003.

The Evening Star covered the dedication of the new MRO office on September 5th 1957.



I took several photos of the demolition of the water fountain that was located on the front lawn of 8787 and a photo of construction underway for the expansion of the HQ. One photo was dated 1976-1977. I believe that is when the Department of Parks was relocated to the old Parkside Elementary school.



Then came the shocker last May in the form of an email informing me that the demolition of MRO was underway to prepare the site for a proposed apartment complex with over 300 rental units and retail space including a MOM's organic market.



Rendering of the new office in Wheaton.

The civil engineer's office I mentioned in my opening remarks was located among several small buildings on Reddie Drive that were demolished to make way for the new County Office building and is now home of the MNCPPC.

Might you think that if Mike Riley, the Director of Parks read this issue of New & Views that he might feel prompted to schedule a tour of the new complex for the esteemed members of our association? Coffee and donuts would top it off. I'll keep you posted.



A rendering of the building and July 2023 photo showing the construction.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE RETIREES ASSOCIATION ON THEIR 30th ANNIVERSARY

We Get Mail!

Kudos to **John Lazzari**, who served as the M-NCPPC Federal Credit Union President, Board of Director for approximately 31 years. John recently retired his position for a more leisurely life. Many thanks for your faithful dedication and years of service.

Several members enjoyed a Baysox game on May 2nd. **Jim McMahon (MC Parks)** reports that participants had fun even though it was a little chilly.



A 7-year Navy veteran (diver and EOD), **Larry Hill (35 years with PGC Parks & Recreation)** is a resident of Frederick, Maryland with wife Donna. He serves on the City's Parks and Recreation Board; trains Service Dogs for Veterans with PTSD; and continues to build his network online business with consumer products. Call him and say Hi at 301-275-4042.

Greetings from Karen Marshall, PGC Parks & Recreation NHRD

Greetings, fellow retirees! I retired from my 21-year career as a part-time career admin on December 1, 2022. I worked for Prince George's County Natural and Historic Resources Division (NHRD) the entire time, at Clearwater Nature Center for 13 years and eight years at Patuxent River Park (PRP). My proudest accomplishment was creating and organizing the annual American Indian Festival, from 2009-2022. This year will be the 15th annual event - at PRP on October 21. I look forward to attending as a visitor this year (though I may actually volunteer). It was so hard to turn over my festival "baby" but I look forward to seeing the festival continue.

Overall, I had an enjoyable career. I had intended to work until age 70, but at 68, I felt the time was right due to the COVID pandemic and my health issues. My retirement party was on my last day of work so I went out feeling honored and with memories of a wonderful gathering that I will always remember.

Since retiring, I have been trying to catch up on all the doctor appointments I was putting on the back burner, and catching up on house repairs and decluttering. For example, I had no idea I had soooo many art supplies collected over the last 30 years... I won't live long enough to use them all...lol...so I will be making many more donations. I belong to two bands. I play drums and other various percussion instruments and sing some harmonies. It is fun and uplifting. I look forward to seeing you all at an upcoming retiree gathering.

My Commission Recollections

By Gene Giddens (PGC/Parks & Recreation and MC Parks)

At age 83 and a long-time Retiree, I often recall my start with the Commission (although I don't dwell on it) and all the memories regarding my beginning, association with staff members, volunteers, Commissioners, etc. and the fantastic growth. (Time does fly). I can't remember all the names, programs, and parks, but there were many. I worked for a total of 46 years - 40 with Prince George's County and six with Montgomery County.

I graduated from Fernandina Beach High School on Amelia Island, Florida in 1957 and then attended Florida State University on a partial Track Scholarship. I was classified for military duty as 1A, thus immediately before graduating, I registered to attend the Naval Officer's Candidate School in Newport, Rhode Island. I quickly rose in rank from an Ensign, LtJG, to Lt. After serving for five years, with my last duty assignment being at the Naval Propellant Plant in Indian Head, Maryland, I resigned my Commission and circulated job applications.

Ellen Linson, Director of Recreation for Prince George's County, offered me a position as a District Supervisor, providing I pass a written test in Upper Marlboro. All prospective employees from different agencies were crowded into a room for the exam, which included questions such as: The height of a table tennis net, train A leaves a station at a certain time and speed and train B leaves another station, thus what time do they pass each other, etc. Afterwards, I negotiated an annual salary of \$8,400.

We had limited facilities, so we programmed schools and their ballfields. In the late 1960's the Commission constructed its first Community Center, known as the Prince George's Plaza Community Center which was staffed by the Recreation Department. At that time, Prince George's had five County Commissioners who sought and got legislation passed in Annapolis merging the County Recreation Department into the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission effective July 1, 1970 (best move ever). Jack Hewitt was appointed Director of Parks and Recreation for both Counties and Frank Rubini was the Deputy. Reds Robey and Barry Mangum were Associates for Prince George's and Bob Young and Carl Schoening were Associates for Montgomery.

Soon afterwards, the Commission entered a growth spurt, constructing 13 Community Centers in one year and numerous neighborhood, community, and Regional Parks in both Counties. The growth of programs and facilities never ceased thereafter. Needless to say, we encountered many hurdles, obstacles, and challenges along the way, but with the aid of dedicated staff members, volunteers, outstanding Commissioners, and political influence, the Commission succeeded. The M-NCPPC is now known nationwide as a premiere agency for its management and excellence in Finance, Planning and Zoning, and Parks and Recreation.

Whenever I gather with high school classmates or old college buddies, I always hold my head high regarding my career and the benefits provided to our retirees - Health, Dental, Vision and a monthly Defined Benefit. Northern Trust is certainly a welcome visitor on a monthly basis. Unfortunately, many of my friends can't say the same. I am positive that the majority of Retirees will agree that the Commission was a fantastic place to work. Thanks a million for all the years of enjoyment, friendship, challenges, and opportunities.

One Commission Holiday Open House

All Retirees are invited to attend the One Commission Employee Appreciation Holiday Open House scheduled for December 15, 2023, at the Silver Spring Civic Center. The Holiday Party will be held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. More details on how to RSVP will be forthcoming. Hope to see everyone there!

**ONE COMMISSION
EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION
HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE**

**THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
Park and Planning Commission**

SAVE THE DATE

**DECEMBER
15** 11 AM -
2 PM

REUNITED

Silver Spring Civic Center
719 Ellsworth Dr, Silver Spring, MD 20910