

**HEART**

Gail Phillips, Editor  
2716 Mt. Olive Court  
Mt. Airy, MD 21771

FIRST CLASS MAIL



**NEXT MEETING**

**TUESDAY, December 10**  
**12 NOON**

**Turf Valley Resort**

**Rt. 40 at Turf Valley Road**

**Snow date: Tuesday, Dec. 17**

**FYI...**

- \* **Holiday luncheon/meeting at Turf Valley, Dec. 10**
- \* **New Directory is coming!**
- \* **HEART NEEDS YOU! We need candidates to run for the following offices: Vice President & Treasurer. The Vice President will become President after his/her 2 year term as Vice President. Interested persons may contact Corita Oduyoye by phone or email or the President ( Susan Mascaro )**
- \* **Bring \$\$\$\$ for the Scholarship Committee 50/50 raffle!**

# HEART NEWS

*A Publication for the members of the  
Association of Retired Howard County Public School Personnel*  
Volume XLXI Number 2                      Howard County, MD                      November, 2019

## A Message From Your Co-Presidents: Addie Kaufman and Sue Mascaro

We hope you are having a nice fall! HEART has been in full swing, and both your officers and executive team members have been quite busy. Addie, and Membership Chair Donna Brackins, attended the MRSPA Leadership meeting in September and left with new ideas. Most importantly, membership in HEART continues to increase, with our organization first in the state in percentage increase of new members. Thank you to everyone for encouraging friends and colleagues to join the Howard County Retired Educators Association!

The September general business meeting/luncheon was a huge success. With over 100 people in attendance, Sue thanked the St. James United Methodist Women's (UMW) group for their many years of dedication and service to HEART. Pastor Patricia Abell offered lovely comments about the opportunity to serve HEART for so many years, while recognizing that our growth is also a blessing. Not surprisingly, HEART members showed their appreciation to the ladies (and gentlemen) who have been cooking and serving lunch with a heartfelt, prolonged standing ovation. In closing and with much gratitude, Sue presented UMW's President Helen Dick with a monetary contribution to support the group's many community service efforts.

After lunch, guest speaker Mr. Rob Scheer, founder of Comfort Cases, shared his personal story as a foster child. Rob's years in foster care left a lasting impression and moved him to make a difference in the lives of other foster children. Rob stressed that Comfort Cases does not have corporate sponsors; everything is accomplished with local volunteers and local/national donations. HEART members will continue to do our part in two ways. First, we'll be collecting donations for the organization at our December meeting (specific details can be found in this newsletter). And JUST confirmed... join Addie for a "backpacking" event at the Comfort Cases headquarters on December 13<sup>th</sup>! If you are interested in volunteering with on the 13<sup>th</sup>, please e-mail Addie at [ahk1206@aol.com](mailto:ahk1206@aol.com).

In October, Addie and Vice President Ronnie Bohn attended the *Senior Citizen's Hall of Fame* luncheon, where our very own Gene Streagle was honored. It was a beautiful event that celebrated the amazing achievements of senior citizens in Maryland. Gene was recognized not only for his tireless work for HEART over the years, but also for the many "volunteer" responsibilities he handles at his retirement community. Congratulations to Gene and his family!

We look forward to seeing you all at our holiday luncheon at the Turf Valley Resort on Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. Until then, enjoy this beautiful fall weather and a Happy Thanksgiving with family and friends.

Warmest Regards,  
Addie & Sue

## Howard County Retired School Personnel (H.E.A.R.T.) October 8, 2019 General Meeting Minutes

**Addie Kaufman**, Co-President, called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm. Following the luncheon, **Ronnie Bohn**, Co-Vice President, led the Pledge of Allegiance and provided the invocation.

### **Business Meeting**

**Addie Kaufman & Sue Mascaro** presented the co-presidents' report:

**Making a difference:** 1) **Howard County Food Bank** - On June 5 a team went to the Howard County Food Bank and sorted donations. A group will return to the Food Bank on Nov. 15 to assemble Thanksgiving meals for people who come to the Food Bank.

Donations were accepted today for the Food Bank. If you would like to volunteer, contact Sue or Addie. **2) Comfort Cases** - Donations were accepted today for the Comfort Cases. In addition, Comfort Cases accepts cash donations. Rob Sheer, founder of Comfort Cases and today's guest speaker explained the program (see details below). **3) Community Food Drops** are organized by Salvation Army. The upcoming date will be posted on our website and Facebook page.

**Connecting:** **1) Our Not Back to School Happy Hour** was held on September 19 at Union Jack's. We hope to do this again next September to celebrate not going back to school and welcome new retirees. **2) H.E.A.R.T.** recently attended *The Bodyguard* at Toby's. *A Christmas Story* is Dec. 19 (note date change). Twelve tickets are available. *Kinky Boots* will be Feb. 19, 2020. **3) Membership - Addie** explained membership continues to increase. At the last MRSPA annual meeting, the organization announced an increase for H.E.A.R.T. Our latest figure was a 7.4% increase for Howard County. H.E.A.R.T. found the need to find a larger facility for our luncheons due to our increased membership. Today our members gave St. James Church members a well-deserved standing ovation for their 40 years of service for the H.E.A.R.T. luncheons. Pat, the pastor at St. James and a former teacher, said it was an honor to host our luncheons. She said it was difficult to send us off. She thanked us for our fellowship in serving one another. It's all about serving and what is in our hearts. **JoAnn Horan** thanked all of the members of the church for their kindness, warmth, and hospitality. Helen was recognized for her dedication. Helen thanked everyone for their support over the past 21 years that she has worked with the luncheons. **Chuck Ridgeway** also thanked Helen for all she has done over the years. **Sue** thanked the organization and presented a gift (donation of \$500.00 for the church) as a token of our gratitude. **4) Future H.E.A.R.T. luncheons** will be held at the Oakland Mills Interfaith Center. The parking is plentiful. It is a lovely facility and can accommodate our increased number of members.

**Protecting:** **1) Medical Benefits: Gene Streagle** discussed Care First and Aetna/Blue Cross Blue Shield, both with two levels. Members may maintain their current physician. Express Scripts will be the same. The legislature is looking at establishing rates for Maryland. This is taking on a national significance. We will continue to have dental and vision benefits. An option for hearing coverage at a reasonable cost is in the mix as a goal for **next year**. We are trying to get Aetna and Care First to merge all the packages. The companies want HCPSS as a customer. Retired employees on Medicare are a low expense for the system due to Medicare paying for health coverage. We should receive our health care benefits shortly. Nothing has changed. Gene said negotiations now are for next year. Kelly and Associates do the negotiations for us. Bolton Partners does the actuarial calculations. Gene is extraordinarily pleased with what is going on. **2) Shingles vaccine** - Aetna will cover it only at certain locations.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes (Janet Zimmerman, Secretary)**

Chuck Ridgeway made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 2019 general meeting. Sue Ann Tabler seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report: (Janet Zimmerman for Ellen Hill)**

*Checking=\$12,535.79; Savings=\$18,993.84; Scholarship=\$522.78*

**Guest Speaker Presentation: Making A True Difference for Children in Need (Rob Scheer, Founder, Comfort Cases)**

Addie explained that Comfort Cases tries to provide dignity to youth in the foster care system and show that someone cares what they are going through.

Rob presented information on Comfort Cases, one of the organizations sponsored by HEART. Rob thanked the teachers in this room as teachers saved his life. He is the youngest of 10 children and lived in shelters multiple times as a child. He remembered the black trash bag that he carried from place to place as an abused youth. His parents died when he was 12 and he went into the foster care system. Today 700 children will enter the foster care system and will arrive with a trash bag. Only 54% of students in foster care graduate from high school. Some states are as low as 11%. Only 3% graduate with a four-year degree.

Rob discussed his life in the foster care system on a daily basis. A teacher saved his life by her actions and caring.

Ten years ago, four children in the foster care system arrived in Rob's home, each with a trash bag holding their belongings. Rob worked with kids to create the first Comfort Cases. They decided to include new pajamas with a tag, new lotion, new shampoos, new conditioner, and a book. New items provide dignity. He suggested passing on the books to others. They also make sure every child gets an activity (coloring book and crayons for younger children and a journal for the older children). Every child also gets a blanket. The goal was that children know they are loved and they matter. They have provided over 85,000 Comfort Cases in all 50 states. They are 95% volunteer-run charity in Rockville. They are giving hope and dignity to our foster youth. Rob emphasized that we must make the change; we can't wait for the government to make the change. The cases are for kids birth through age 19. Every child also gets a duffel bag. Amy Kestinberg in NY designed a duffel bag for Comfort Cases with a cost of only \$9.00 each. Next year Rob will speak to members on Capital Hill. Rob suggested donating the toiletries from hotels. He also suggested we ask our dentist for small toothpastes, etc.

Website: [comfortcases.org](http://comfortcases.org) (to view items needed and how to contribute)

*Forever Family* is Rob's book.

**Kim Sullivan** from the Necrology Committee announced that Harold "Vic" Scharf passed away. Patti Neidig will send a card to the family. Patti also sends cards to members when they are ill. In such cases, please notify Patti.

50/50 Raffle: Nancy Weisner won the 50/50 raffle with a prize of \$153.00. Nancy asked to donate the money to Comfort Cases. Thank you, Nancy, for your generosity and caring.

The next luncheon is our annual Holiday Luncheon at Turf Valley Resort on December 10<sup>th</sup>.

Respectfully submitted, Janet Zimmerman, Secretary

### **PROGRAM NEWS: GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING on DECEMBER 10<sup>th</sup>**

HEART's next General Membership meeting, our *Annual Holiday Luncheon*, will be held on **Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at the Turf Valley Resort** in Ellicott City. At the meeting, Maryland Retired School Personnel Association (MRSPA) President Anne Marie Downey and Executive Director Wanda Twigg will share news from our state organization, including important initiatives sponsored by MRSPA. During the business portion of the meeting, the HEART Executive Team will update local members on current and new items of interest. And the highlight of the meeting? Howard County students, of course! Members will enjoy the sounds of the holiday with live performances from not one, but two of the school system's award-winning musical groups.

In keeping with our focus on community service, at the December meeting we'll collect donations for Comfort Cases, an organization that provides much-needed items to children transitioning into foster care. Suggested items include pajamas, books (for children and teens), stuffed animals, journals, and personal care items such as soap and shampoo. (For the full list, visit [www.comfortcases.org](http://www.comfortcases.org).) Members can drop their contributions in one of the donation baskets in the ballroom lobby.

Information on tickets for the holiday luncheon is located in this newsletter and on the HEART website. We hope to see each and every one of you on December 10<sup>th</sup>!

### **SERVING with HEART**

To meet our goal of "serving" during the past two years, HEART has been supporting three local service organizations. These organizations, Comfort Cases, the Howard County Food Bank, and the Salvation Army of Howard County, provide much-needed support to children and families in both our local community and throughout the state.

To support the Comfort Cases organization, we've collected items for children entering foster care. At our meeting last December, members donated twelve full bags of items to fill foster children's backpacks and duffel bags. This past spring, we sent a team of volunteers to the Comfort Cases office for a "packing party," where members filled backpacks and duffel bags for children. And as detailed in our Program News, we will again be collecting items for the charity at our December meeting.

To support the Food Bank and the Salvation Army, we've collected nonperishable food items at our general membership meetings. And for the last three years, HEART has sent teams of volunteers to the Food Bank to sort donations, stock shelves, and support customers shopping at the facility. This month, a group of HEART volunteers is scheduled to "package" Thanksgiving meal kits at the bank.

What's next? In Spring of 2020, we'll be adding yet another opportunity for members to serve with HEART. Specifically, we'll be inviting members to support the Salvation Army's "Community Food Drops." Open to Howard County residents, the events provide fresh fruit and vegetables to community members in need. The food drops begin in March; be sure to check the next newsletter and HEART's website for additional information.

## GET SOCIAL with HEART

### TOBY'S Dinner Theatre: Two Exciting Shows Reserved for HEART Members

On Thursday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 35 of your closest HEART friends enjoyed a spectacular showing of *The Bodyguard* at Toby's. But wait? It's not too late to get in on the fun...

Join us on **Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup>** for *A Christmas Story, The Musical* at Toby's. It's 1940 in Indiana and bespectacled Ralphie Parker is on a quest for the Holy Grail of Christmas gifts! With a terrific score by Pasek and Paul (*La La Land, The Greatest Showman*), *A Christmas Story, The Musical* brings this hilarious classic musical to life, live on stage!

And it's not too early to reserve seats for the area premiere of Broadway's smash hit, *Kinky Boots* on **Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup>**. Winner of six Tony Awards, including Best Musical and featuring a Grammy Award winning score by Cyndi Lauper, it's the exhilarating true story that will lift your spirits to high-heeled heights! Inheriting his father's bankrupt shoe factory, Charlie Price finds inspiration in Lola, a fabulous entertainer with wild ideas.

Seats for both shows are going fast, so be sure to contact Sue via email ([scmascaro@gmail.com](mailto:scmascaro@gmail.com)) or cell (443-878-6883) to reserve your seats today! Tickets for HEART members and their families are only \$40, a significant discount over the box office cost.

### "Not Back to School" Happy Hour a Resounding Success!

On Thursday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 34 members gathered for HEART's "Not Back to School" Happy Hour at Union Jack's in Columbia. If you were able to attend, you know that a fabulous time was had by all! Members enjoyed complimentary hors d'oeuvres, drinks, and social time with retired friends WITHOUT having to worry about setting up a classroom, a building, or an office for the start of a new school year.

It was truly a celebration of NOT going back to school, to the office... to work! The Executive Team was thrilled with the turnout for our first ever member happy hour, and hope to make it an annual event. So, if you couldn't join us this September, perhaps you'll be able to enjoy a similar event next year.

It's important to note that this event was the result of feedback from members, many of whom attended or heard about previous happy hours geared toward new member recruitment, and suggested a similar event for all members. If you have an idea, or two, or three for a HEART social event, whether it be an art class, a bus trip, a restaurant night... the possibilities are endless... be sure to let us know!

## SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

HEART was able to give five scholarships this year. One of the winners did come to meet our members at the May luncheon. The winners are: Samantha Clearfield, Victoria Green, Kelly Mackin, Niall Donaldson and Jessica Hinkle. Samantha, Victoria and Kelly are presently in college and have won multiple years. Niall graduated from Mt. Hebron and Jessica is a graduate of Marriotts Ridge. Your contributions have helped us to give these scholarships and we encourage you to continue giving. As retired school personnel, it is in our best interest to help prepare teachers for the future.

## HEART Scholarship Donation Form

Enclosed is my donation of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (Phone \_\_\_\_\_)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please designate:    \_\_\_ **Honor of**    \_\_\_ **Memory of:**

Name of honoree or deceased \_\_\_\_\_

Special Occasion for honoree \_\_\_\_\_

Send acknowledgement to: Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Donation for Retirement years/ Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Mail this completed form with your check to Scholarship Committee Chair:*

Fran Razmus  
9221 Maple Rock Drive  
Ellicott City, MD 21042

### **Publications News, Gail Phillips, Editor**

Thank you to Darlene Honaker, Linda Kreitlow, Jackie Lashinsky, and Sylvia Vinson for helping to assemble the over 600 newsletters that go by "snail mail". If you are willing to lower that number, and receive the newsletter by email, please let Editor, Gail Phillips, know (by email). You will then save HEART the cost of printing and postage. You will also receive the newsletter the day it is assembled and will see it in "living color"! If you are willing to take on the job of Editor, please speak with Gail. She will be "retiring" from this position, after 12 years, at the end of this school year. She will be more than happy to talk you through the process.

At the December meeting, the Annual Membership Directory will be distributed to HEART members. If your information has changed since last year's Directory, please let me know ASAP! **If your email address was not in the Directory last year, and you would like it included this year, please send me that request and that information, by email. I will not publish your information without your permission.** The new directory will be going to the printer in mid/late November.

If you will **not** be at the December meeting, and would like a copy of the new directory, please send a **\$2 check made out to HEART** (to cover the postage/envelope) to Gail M. Phillips at 2716 Mt. Olive Court, Mt. Airy, MD 21771 **before Nov. 25**. I need that information before **Nov. 15** so I know how many directories to have printed. If you will be at the December meeting, there is no charge since there will be no mailing of your copy.

**The following members had their newsletters returned.** If you have a correct "snail mail" address for any of these folks, please inform Gail Phillips as she is also the keeper of the membership database! Those members are: Ivonna Gensler, Richard Adelsberger, Norma Miller, Joseph Dick, Jeanne Shawhan, Hazel Mack, Frank Lupashunski, Eleanor Bangs, and Stanley Spurlock.



# Welcome, New Members!



The following have joined HEART since our last newsletter: Jacklyn Benner Andree Cates

## Application for HEART Membership

Name ((PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this form with a check for \$10.00 to:

HEART c/o Mrs. Donna Brackins  
904 Roller Coaster Court  
Mt. Airy, MD 21771

If you know anyone who is retiring, or has retired but not yet joined either HEART or MRSPA, please share this edition of the newsletter with them, or at least, give them a copy of this HEART membership application. [To join MRSPA, they need to contact MRSPA directly.](#) That can be done by going to their website: [www.mrspa.org](http://www.mrspa.org) and clicking on "Member Services" or by calling 1-877-625-6782. (Their address is 8379 Piney Orchard Parkway, Suite A, Odenton, MD, 21113 - 1508)

## In Memoriam

### Harold Victor "Vic" Scharf

Harold "Vic" Scharf was born on August 11, 1945, in Ellicott City, MD. He passed away on October 1, 2019, at the age of 74. He was a graduate of Howard High School. Vic retired in 2015 after working for 21 years as a painter for HCPSS. Prior to his service to HCPSS, he was a carpenter, floorman, and business & restaurant owner. In addition to membership in HEART and MRSPA, he was an active member of the Loyal Order of Moose Lodge #1456. Vic is survived by his wife (Darla –

also a HEART member), two daughters, and four grandchildren. His son predeceased him.

### John Anthony Aquila

On October 10, 2019, John Anthony Aquila passed away at the age of 71. In service to HCPSS, he taught physical education at several schools including Bryant Woods Elementary. John is survived by his wife (Connie), two daughters, one son, and a grandchild. His loving mother also survived him.

**A Message from Kim Sullivan, Necrology Chairperson**  
( H: 410-489-4886 or C: 443-280-1608 or [kimberliesullivan@verizon.net](mailto:kimberliesullivan@verizon.net) )

It is important to keep informed of changes in our membership. Should you become aware of the passing of any of our members, please let me know. Any information you could provide about that person would be very helpful in the preparation of the written bios that are included in our newsletters. Of course, our "Personal Data" forms are tremendous resources when needed. Please make sure you have a completed "Personal Data" form in our HEART files. For your convenience, a copy of the form will be available at the December luncheon/meeting. It is also available on our website!



## HEART Luncheon/Meeting Reservation Form

**DATE:** *Tuesday, December 10, 2019 at Turf Valley, Waterford Room*

*\*\*50/50 Raffle for the HEART Scholarship Fund and music by HS Madrigals \*\**

**PLACE:** Turf Valley Resort and Conference Center – Route 40, Ellicott City, MD

**TIME:** 12 Noon **COST:** **\$25.00 per person (non-refundable)**

**MENU:** Turf Valley's Luncheon Buffet

Please complete the following form and send it by **November 26, 2019**  
with a check payable to **H.E.A.R.T.** to:

**JoAnne Horan**  
**17494 Timberleigh Way**  
**Woodbine, MD 21797**

# \_\_\_\_\_ Reservations for Luncheon at **\$25.00** per person \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Enclosed

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Reservations are needed by **Tuesday, November 26, 2019**. Thank you for early reservations! Late reservations cannot be accepted, as a count must be given on this date. **Call 301-854-6268 if you think your reservation will not get to JoAnne in time! In case of bad weather**, we will follow the HCPSS decision for that day. **If schools are closed**, the luncheon is **canceled**. If school is **delayed**, we **will** have the luncheon!! If you don't have or use email, please put a phone number we can use. Email is preferred, since we can reach more people more quickly that way. **The "Snow Date" is Tuesday, December 17. The room is TBD.**