

"Association News" (from page 1)

spring *Messenger*, Cigna representatives said that they will carry Medicare Surround, but not Medicare Advantage. We were told by both BCPS and RetireeFirst that they have nothing to share at this point. However, we did receive this note from RetireeFirst

“As of right now, we have not been provided any Open Enrollment dates from any of the Baltimore entities. Renewal season is underway but no information has been provided. We normally don’t have it until sometime in September. My only suggestion may be that if a retiree is turning 65, to make sure they have enrolled in Medicare Part A and Part B prior to their effective date.”

This note about Medicare enrollment needs to be taken very seriously. BCPS is strict and will cancel coverage if the deadlines are not observed.

“BCPS requires that as soon as a retiree, spouse, or dependent of a retiree is eligible for Medicare, that they accept Medicare as their primary health carrier, enroll in Medicare parts A&B, and choose a BCPS Medicare Supplement plan to continue BCPS medical benefits. Prescription plans are bundled

"Colonial Williamsburg" (from page 3)

chase lunch or just sit back, relax, and soak up the old town charm. To experience even more old town charm, visit the historic taverns that serve authentic dishes.

To learn more about American history, you may visit nearby Jamestown, the first English settlement, a Native American village, and historic Yorktown, which are just a short drive from Williamsburg.

Williamsburg is a treasure trove of historical and cultural experiences. Consider taking a trip there for your next vacation. It is about a four-hour drive from Baltimore (but worth a trip from anywhere). We like

with plan options, so retirees do NOT need to enroll in a Part D prescription plan.” (https://www.bcps.org/hr/compliance/benefits_and_retirement/retiree_benefits)

CONTACT INFO

To reach BCPS Customer Service: Call 443-809-1000 or email cschelp@bcps.org The Employee and Retiree Customer Service Center provides BCPS employees and retirees with assistance and solutions to questions regarding benefits, retirement, leaves, certification, and payroll.

To reach RetireeFirst: Call 443-290-3114 or 1-856-780-6218 to speak to an advocate via a personalized phone consultation to evaluate your individual needs and discuss plan options.

Your TABCO-Retired MEMBERSHIP

Membership renewals: It is time to renew! The membership year runs from September to September. Annual dues remain at \$75. To avoid the trouble of sending a check each year, have your dues deducted from your pension once each year. You can authorize this by contacting Erin at MSEA: esakalas@mseane.org



staying at the Williamsburg Lodge, Marriott Autograph collection, which is reasonably priced and is a short one block walk to the historic area.



TABCO-R MESSENGER RETIRED~NOT EXPIRED SUMMER 2025 volume 10 number 2

THE ONLY RETIREE ORGANIZATION AFFILIATED WITH TABCO

Association News

By Angela Leitzer

RETIREES IN ACTION

If you have been keeping up with local news, you know that BCPS reneged on the agreement negotiated with TABCO last year, which would have equaled a 5% raise for this school year (value computed by a combination of a COLA, step, and compression of the salary scale).

After the county executive failed to fully fund the school system’s budget, BCPS withdrew its support for the agreement, and offered 1.5%. TABCO leadership and the majority of the membership rejected the offer and instituted a series of actions—letter-writing, roadside sign waving, door to door canvassing, press conferences, “working to rule,” and a massive rally at BCPS headquarters, culminating in the finding that impasse existed, so a mediator was engaged. Ultimately, we accepted a package that results in 3.5% for most members. I say “we” because with a retired member on the TABCO Board of Directors, we had a voice in these decisions.

We are proud to report that many retired members helped with the actions, including showing up at BCPS on June 10 to support our active colleagues. Among them were former TABCO presidents Cheryl Bost, Abby Beytin and Mark Beytin, as well as John R. Wilkins, Dottie Towsley, and Roxann Russo. The crowd was so large that you may not be identified here—please let us know if you were among the throng that day, or if you participated in other actions!

What is “Oracle?”

If you haven’t received information about this, we aren’t surprised. Only a few of the steering committee members have been notified thus far. We asked

for clarification and this is the message that was received:

“The purpose of the new system (for retirees and former employees) is to provide access to non-active employees to view their benefits, retrieve paystubs, and W2s, as well as submit a service request to the Customer Service Center (CSC). We are working with the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) to establish written directions and once those are tested and finalized, will be sending those out to the retirees for whom BCPS currently has a personal email account on file. I do not have a timeline for completion of this process...If a retiree doesn’t receive the instructions after the instructions have been emailed, they can contact the Customer Service Center at 443-809-1000 or cschelp@bcps.org. We will verify that there is a personal email address on their record. If there is not, we will defer to DoIT to add the email address and set up the non-active employee account. We will work with DoIT to ensure instructions have been sent for new accounts.”

NEW ERA BEGINS

As we say farewell to a TABCO president, Cindy Sexton, who has served for six challenging years and been a major supporter of retiree members, we welcome President Kelly Olds, former vice president (left) and Vice President Lloyd Allen, both seasoned and well-informed leaders.



BENEFITS...what’s on the horizon?

We continue to reach out to both BCPS and RetireeFirst to seek information about the benefits enrollment dates for this fall and about which providers will be offered. As we mentioned in the

See page 4, “Association News”



TABCO-Retired is a class of membership that is affiliated with MSEA-Retired and NEA-Retired
TABCO-R Steering Committee Members:
Chairperson: Angela Leitzer
Elizabeth Ceanfaglione, Stephanie Foy
Julia Hinton-VanHook, Edward Kitlowski, Cindy North
Roxann Russo, Barbara Tyler,
Mary Ellen Vecchioni, Cheryl Vourvoulas
Messenger Editors: Stephanie Foy, Angela Leitzer
To reach the TABCO-Retired Steering Committee,
email: bookends68@comcast.net

Teachers Association of Baltimore County
President Kelly Olds, Vice President Lloyd Allen
Treasurer Frank Soda, Secretary Seth Rich
and the TABCO Board of Directors
Executive Director Ben Forstenzer

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Meet President Kelly Olds

TABCO-Retired is intertwined with active TABCO and operates within its structure and budget. Our relationship with TABCO leadership is vitally important, and so we want to introduce you to our new president and leader, Kelly Olds.

Question: Where are you from originally and where did you obtain your degree(s)?

I am originally from Lorain, Ohio; Education: BA in AYA Education and Comprehensive Social Studies from Heidelberg College, in Tiffin, Ohio; MA in School Improvement Leadership from Goucher College; Work-Based Learning Endorsement from University of Maryland Eastern Shore

Q: How did you end up in Baltimore County and where/what did you teach?

I interviewed with Baltimore County at a job fair in Ohio. I was a substitute teacher in Ohio for a year and then accepted a position in Baltimore County at Lansdowne High School the weekend before teachers reported back to school. I have spent the past 22 years at Lansdowne High; 16 years teaching social studies, 5 years as the Work-Based Learning Coordinator, and 1 year as the Career Navigator.

Q: Family? Spouse? Child/children?

My husband, Dave and I have been married for 17 years and we have a daughter who is entering her sophomore year of high school this fall.

Q: How did you become so involved with TABCO?

When starting at Lansdowne we had active building reps who convinced me to attend the MSEA RA in my second year. I then started learning more about how TABCO works. We had an issue at the school that impacted several faculty members, not myself, and the educator council filed a grievance, I was an alternate building rep at the time. The grievance went to arbitration and I was asked by the TABCO President at the time to attend the hearing. After that I continued to become more involved in TABCO eventually serving as a building rep, on the negotiations team, the negotiations chair, and vice president.

Q: What are your thoughts about retiree membership?

Retiree membership is very important for members and to our organization. Keeping retired members involved and informed is important so they can be aware as changes occur that may directly impact them, and to help advocate for things that affect our students and active members.

"Every kid is one caring adult away from being a success story."

They are retired, but they are definitely not expired! The members of the retiree KidCare Committee, have put together an ambitious program to raise the funds necessary to support the needy students of Baltimore County. There are four major events planned for the 2025-2026 school year. They are: "Buck for Basics;" Mystery Event at the Legislative Breakfast;* the return of the KidCare Walk*—March 21 at Perry Hall Middle School; and the Dee Bundy Basket Raffle* at the annual retirement and recognition dinner in May. Retired members may participate in these events*, or can contribute online at tabco.org under the Advocacy tab. Retirees have created many creative baskets for the raffle over the years, emulating the example of Danitra "Dee" Bundy, now deceased, for whom the raffle is named. (Sadly, Dee's mother passed away this June as well.) We are grateful to the members of the KidCare Committee: Sonja Floyd, Tammy Mills, Nicole Caple, Phyllis Zaremba, and Roxann Russo for their energetic work on behalf of our kids!



NOVEMBER 12

Last November, we celebrated our tenth anniversary with a luncheon and program, but this year we are returning to our annual **FALL FORUM** event! We are working on securing interesting topics and presenters along with our usual book exchange and free lunch for TABCO-R members. This is an opportunity to reconnect with friends and colleagues, and to learn together, so **please put November 12 on your calendar now.**

**WATCH FOR MORE DETAILS
COMING THIS FALL!**

Colonial Williamsburg ~ a destination for all seasons

By Roxann and John Russo

Looking for a great trip no matter what the season? Williamsburg, Virginia is our favorite! It is a historic city in the state of Virginia that was the capital of the Virginia Colony from 1699 to 1780. The entire city was flawlessly restored by the Rockefeller foundation beginning in the 1930s, including buildings, gardens, and ongoing archeological research.

Whether you are traveling as a family, a couple, or solo, this town has a lot to offer. Any local will tell you what makes Williamsburg special are the historical sites, amazing museums, restaurants, and other attractions, and walking the beautiful campus of William and Mary College. You can learn about the city's historic past at the living museum in Colonial Williamsburg and then watch the events of the past be reenacted on the streets and in the historic buildings.

You can wander around without a ticket but for access to many of the buildings or exhibits you'll need to purchase a pass. Take time to visit the



blacksmiths, wig makers, furniture makers, weavers, printers, bookbinders, or livestock exhibits, the apothecary, take a carriage ride—and so much more. You will see people dressed in authentic clothing as they share their knowledge and skills in the various buildings and exhibits.

There is not a time of year when Williamsburg isn't beautiful. In spring, the neatly manicured gardens are full of flowering trees, herbs, and vegetables and many colorful flowers. In summer, you will see the beautiful crape myrtles throughout the city and can enjoy the local farmers' market every Saturday morning near the market square with an array of fresh produce from local farms as well as baked goods and fresh-cut flowers. Fall brings fall flowers and the harvesting of herbs and vegetables. In winter, the landscape changes for the holiday season as the holly trees with their glossy leaves and red berries come to life.

For shoppers, there are plenty of places in and around Market Square, which is where you can pur-

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A Murderously Good Read

By Barbara Tyler

I am assuming that since you are reading this review you are retired. What are you doing to capitalize on the extra hours? Some of us are caring for family members, some of us may be traveling to places we always wanted to visit, and some of us volunteer for organizations such as TABCO-Retired.

If you were living in "Kent," at the "Coopers Chase Retirement Community," you might join the group of residents who meet weekly to solve cold cases. The members of the club have varied backgrounds. Elizabeth, who is the leader of the group, is a former intelligence officer, Joyce a retired nurse, Ibrahim, a retired psychiatrist and Ron, a former union boss. They each bring their own expertise to the solving of the cases.

The first case involves murders within their community and their hobby becomes serious. The four club members team up with two professional detectives to investigate the murder of Ian Ventham, the

shady owner of the community who wants to develop the area that would disrupt the local cemetery. This case takes many twists and turns as the truth is revealed.

This book is for those readers who enjoy the dry wit of British humor as well as relatable characters. It was a bit confusing at the beginning with too many added characters and sub plots but that did not take away from the entire story. This is the first of the series of *The Murder Club Mysteries*. I have not read them all, but I am looking forward to watching the Netflix version starring Helen Mirren and Pierce Bronson as two of the members which premieres on August 28.

"After a certain age, you can pretty much do whatever takes your fancy. No one tells you off, except for your doctors and your children."
— **Richard Osman, The Thursday Murder Club**

