

**2008 Annual Report of the activities of the  
Republican Women of Anne Arundel County (RWAAC)  
As submitted to the  
Maryland Federation of Republican Women (MFRW)  
December 15, 2008**

The 2008 Presidential election year was a very busy year! RWAAC members donated many hundreds of volunteer hours working for Republican candidates. Because of Federal Election Law, RWAAC itself could not contribute money directly to any Federal campaign – but individual members most certainly did. RWAAC Members “womanned” and Associate Members “manned” phone banks at State Party Headquarters as well as at the McCain-Palin-Harris local headquarters, went door-to-door, sign-waved, made political calls from their homes, worked at the Republican booths at the State and County Fairs, attended candidate rallies and fundraisers and marched in various parades carrying the Republican banner. RWAAC Associate Member **Frank Smollon** personally supplied 3 computers with printers and a copying machine to our local McCain-Palin-Harris campaign headquarters. Some RWAAC members traveled out-of-state to Virginia and Pennsylvania to help our Republican Presidential ticket. In compliance with Federal Election Campaign Law, RWAAC contributed \$1,000.00 to the Anne Arundel County Republican State Central Committee which was allowed to make expenditures to benefit Federal candidates.

RWAAC members served as Poll Watchers and Election Judges during the 2008 elections and actively participated in Voter Registration drives.

**AN RWAAC INITIATIVE – THURSDAY ACTION BRIEFINGS (TABS):**

As a part of a Master’s Degree course requirement to conceptualize and implement a “working together for a common goal,” initiative for a diverse group of individuals, RWAAC member **Kathy Wagoner**, set the **Thursday Action Briefings (TABS)** into motion. Implementing this concept meant bringing together the synergies of the MDGOP, obtaining a commitment from the leadership of the Senate and House Republican Caucus’ to provide speakers for these once-a-week briefings, and obtaining a commitment from ALL the Republican Clubs in Anne Arundel County to support these once-a-week meetings by committing that two members from each club would attend.

The purpose of the TABS briefings was to give political activists up-to-the minute legislative updates from our Republican Senators and Delegates; provide “Action items” to help pass Republican initiatives and frame the debate regarding other legislative initiatives and provide opportunities to network with fellow Republicans. The first TABS briefing took place the week after the Legislature opened, January 24, 2008 with Senate Minority Whip Allan Kittleman and House Minority Leader Tony O’Donnell the lead-off briefers. All the TABS briefings were held at the MDGOP Headquarters beginning at 7:00 p.m. with RWAAC and other clubs furnishing snacks, soft drinks and coffee. Although intended to continue throughout the 90-day Legislative session, by mid-March it became apparent that due to the rush of legislative activities and Committee hearings that lasted to 9:00 p.m. and later, this was not feasible for our Republican legislators. The last TABS briefing took place on March 6, with State Senator Alex Mooney and Delegate Addie Eckardt the briefers. Participating briefers were: Senators Allan Kittleman, Bryan Simonaire, Janet Greenip and Alex Mooney. Delegates: Tony O’Donnell; Ron George, Steve Schuh, Gail Bates, Christopher Shanks and Addie Eckardt. The local Republican Clubs actively participating were: The Elephant Club; District 32 Republican Club; North County Republican Club; North County Republican Women’s Club; Republican Women of Anne Arundel County; Severna Park Republican Women’s Club; South County Republican Club;

Wednesday Republican Breakfast Club and the West County Republican Club. The Anne Arundel County Republican State Central Committee and the MDGOP also supported these efforts by publicizing TABS events on their web sites. As the TABS briefings became wider known, attendees came from Baltimore and Carroll County Republican Clubs. Although open to all Republicans, in order to insure a free exchange of information, the TABS briefings were closed to the press and thus no announcements were made in the local newspapers.

Recognized as a valuable vehicle for informing and motivating Republican activists, already commitments have been made to continue these TABS briefings in 2009.

**RWAAC SUPPORT OUR TROOPS EFFORTS.** At each monthly meeting RWAAC members make voluntary contributions to RWAAC's Support Our Troops effort. RWAAC Support Our Troops Chairman, **Irmgard Perrin**, sends a large box of "goodies" and needed items each month to our troops. Thanks to our member's generosity and to **Irmgard's** efforts, RWAAC recently received a beautiful Certificate of Appreciation from the International Security Assistance Task Force – Afghanistan. Earlier this year, RWAAC received a Certification of Appreciation from a U.S. Marine task force with boots on the ground in Iraq. Prized items are *insulated cups* – not to keep coffee hot, but rather to keep water COLD in the 130 degree temperatures of the desert. RWAAC members also attend many of the **Operation Welcome Home** events at BWI Airport and greet troops returning from Afghanistan, Iraq and other deployment areas.

#### **RWAAC ARDEN HOUSE - DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTER**

Arden House is a regular charity project of RWAAC and its financial support comes largely from the sale of RWAAC Jewelry Raffle tickets.\* Arden House operates under the auspices of the YWCA and provides shelter for battered women and their children. RWAAC Arden House Chairman, **Nancy Schoenburg**, visited Arden House at least once each month during 2008, taking donations of paper goods, cleaning supplies, clothing, linens, towels, household items, food, etc. These items are collected at RWAAC's monthly general membership meetings as well as at RWAAC's June Picnic and December Christmas Party.

In addition to RWAAC's regular monthly contributions, this year, at the request of Arden House, RWAAC paid to re-carpet the playroom and hallway with indoor-outdoor carpeting. Last year RWAAC donated and had installed a large flat-screen color T.V. On several occasions, RWAAC members individually donated furniture and recently donated a beautiful large stainless steel microwave oven for their kitchen.

This year Arden House Chairman, **Nancy Schoenburg** collected extra donations from several outside organizations so that RWAAC's monthly visits would be bringing Arden House a full carload or needed supplies.

Arden House Chairman, **Nancy Schoenburg** attended a special display in Annapolis of shirts designed and painted by victims of domestic violence. The exhibit was held during October, which is Domestic Violence Awareness month, to call attention to the problems the victims of domestic violence have to face. In 2007, RWAAC received a special award from the YWCA for its continuing support of Arden House.

2009 will mark RWAAC's 25<sup>th</sup> year of support for the Arden House shelter for battered women and their children.

### **RWAAC – NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND AND LITERACY PROGRAMS:**

A number of years ago, then RWAAC President **Marianne Pelura**, set RWAAC on its *No Child Left Behind* journey with Eastport Elementary School where a number of Title I children attend. The RWAAC Chairman for these special projects is **Harriet Burkhart**. Under **Harriet Burkhart**'s leadership the ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) program at Eastport Elementary School provides a wonderful opportunity for children to improve their language skills. The RWAAC volunteers implement the Language for Learning Program for many of the Spanish speaking children who attend Eastport Elementary school. RWAAC also purchases the needed program materials.

This year, RWAAC volunteers have given over 300 volunteer hours tutoring and mentoring at Eastport Elementary School. RWAAC contributed \$2,200.00 during the year to support these efforts. Each year, RWAAC gives \$25.00 gift certificates to every teacher so they can purchase books for their individual classrooms at the School Book Fair. This year, RWAAC donated an additional 132 books to Eastport Elementary School – all of which carry the RWAAC/NFRW bookplate.

Each year, former RWAAC regular member who now lives in South Carolina and continues her RWAAC Associate Membership, **Lauretta Breisch**, pays all the expenses on behalf of RWAAC to send three needy children from Eastport Elementary School to a “Summer School and Camp.”

To honor the many years of effort which **Harriet Burkhart** has given to RWAAC's No Child Left Behind program as well as to RWAAC's Literacy Efforts, RWAAC presented **Harriet Burkhart** with the RWAAC Distinguished Service Award – an engraved cut leaded crystal “biscuit barrel” filled with a Ronald Reagan favorite -- jelly beans. A part of the RWAAC award citation was written by Mrs. Pat McQuade, Volunteer Coordinator at Eastport Elementary School which said, “*Eastport Elementary School is forever grateful to Harriet Burkhart and her RWAAC volunteers.*” The RWAAC Distinguished Service Award was presented to **Harriet Burkhart** at the November 22<sup>nd</sup> Fashion Show. Present for the Award Presentation were: Lynne Evans, Principal, Eastport Elementary School and Pat McQuade, Volunteer Coordinator, Eastport Elementary School.

\*All the money for RWAAC's charitable efforts comes from the sale of the Jewelry Raffle Tickets. Each year, RWAAC Associate Member, **Ron George**, jeweler and Delegate from District 30, creates and donates an item of hand-crafted exquisite jewelry for this purpose. This year, the lucky winner of the diamond and gold bracelet valued at \$3,200.00 was RWAAC member **Jacqueline Spell**.

**2009 ANNAPOLIS CITY ELECTIONS:** Because RWAAC is an active Club in the Annapolis area, RWAAC is already gearing up to participate in the 2009 Annapolis City elections. The primary will be held September 15, 2009 and the General Election November 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Annapolis City elections will play an important part of RWAAC's 2010 efforts to sweep all the Democrats out of District 30. Speaker Mike Busch represents District 30 and draws a great deal of his vote from the Annapolis City area.

### **2008 FUNDRAISING EFFORTS:**

RWAAC put on two Fashion Shows in 2008.

**April 26, 2008** was RWAAC's first ever “trunk show” at the Chartwell Country Club with fashions by Colonel James Dismukes, Proprietor of The French Shoppe, Nashville, TN.

Spring Fashion Show Chairman, **Pat Root** did a fantastic job and this very different kind of show was well received. Also assisting her were: **Mary Alter, Marti Fridrich, Becky Groff, Edie Hustvedt, Carolyn Middleton, Barbara Reynolds, Joyce Thomann.**

Recognizing that our local Downtown Annapolis merchants – the shops that make Annapolis so appealing and help continue its quaintness -- are struggling because of the competition from a nearby large shopping mall and the opening of another mall in the area, RWAAC's November Fashion Show was intended to showcase our Annapolis Downtown Merchants. **Ron George Jewelers** among them as well as Honor our REPUBLICAN Leaders!

**November 22, 2008** was RWAAC's Salute to Our Town Annapolis and Honoring our Republican Leaders. Held at the Sheraton-Annapolis Hotel the event featured fashions and show-cased Downtown Annapolis merchants -- Alpaca International and Diva's. Guest fashion presenter was Marsha Nelms, also participating was Charlys in the Bag. MDGOP Chairman **Jim Pelura** was the Master of Ceremonies. Maryland's National Committeewoman, **Joyce Lyons Terhes**, read the congratulatory letter from **Michael Steele**. The Chairman of RWAAC's 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Fashion Show was **Carolyn Middleton**. Assisting her: **Carri Campbell, Mary Fink, Marti Fridrich, Gaye Galvin, Caral Grunwald, Susan Miller, Irmgard Perrin, Pat Root, Barbara Reynolds, Joyce Thomann** and **Kathy Wagoner**. RWAAC's wonderful Associate Member, **Rick Barnes** was the D.J. Maryland's Former First Lady, **Kendel Ehrlich** was one of the beautiful models.

#### **RWAAC – AMERICANISM PROJECTS:**

On May 17<sup>th</sup>, RWAAC was a co-sponsor of the annual Armed Forces Day Celebration. Other co-sponsors were: The North County Republican Women's Club and the Severna Park Republican Women's Club. This candlelight ceremony begins near sunset and is held at the World War II Memorial which overlooks the United States Naval Academy. Although the sponsors were all Republican Clubs, the event is open to the public and is a moving tribute to all who have served in the Armed Forces and to their families.

Each year, RWAAC sends a high school student (a rising Junior or a rising Senior) to a week long Leadership Workshop/Conference at St. John's College in Annapolis. This week long Conference is under the direction of the Military Order of the World Wars (MOWW). Opportunity for student participation is provided by RWAAC to all the schools in the Anne Arundel County/Annapolis area. Each school is contacted by RWAAC's **Americanism Chairman, Jan Holland**; and is asked to select a student for this training. This year, the Annapolis Area Christian School was the only school to provide a name of a student. Before a student receives the RWAAC Scholarship, **Americanism Chairman, Jan Holland**, meets with and interviews the student and the student's parents. Following is a letter from this year's RWAAC Americanism Scholarship recipient (a rising high school Junior from the Annapolis Area Christian School):

“Dear Republican Women of Anne Arundel County.

I wanted to take the time to thank you for supporting my attendance at the Military Order of the World Wars Leadership Conference. To receive the financial means for this event from your organization was such a blessing and also a wonderful opportunity for me. My experiences were both good and bad, but each was necessary for my growth as a leader. I enjoyed many of the speakers and activities provided. Every student gained knowledge and real world experience that is essential for every future leader. From editing the Bill of Rights, to exercising personal finance, we covered a great amount of information crucial to understanding the criteria for

becoming an influential leader. Everyone within the program, including students and faculty, were very friendly and helpful the entire duration of my stay.

I was placed in the Public Speaking Committee, where I learned the skills and techniques valuable when communicating to an audience. I spent much time with the people in my group, but felt overwhelmed with our difference of opinions. While holding some of the more conservative views and ideas in my group, I was often ignored or overpowered by popular vote. This experience, while frustrating, prepared me for the reality that my views may not always be respected or valued by others as they are to me. This leadership conference has truly been a memorable and significant experience for me this summer. Thank you again for this wonderful opportunity and for your support.

Sincerely, Kathryn Vassar

### **LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES/EFFORTS:**

Recognizing the impact of legislative activities on the lives of EVERYONE, and also believing that *An Informed Voter is the best friend and defender of Liberty and Freedom*, RWAAC places a high priority on keeping its members informed about legislation moving at the State, Local and Federal levels.

RWAAC members have testified in support of and opposition to many bills before the 2008 Session of the Maryland General Assembly. RWAAC testified **In support of:** H.B. 288 which would have required Maryland to comply with the Federal Real I.D. Act when issuing Driver's licenses; House Bill 1345 which put to the voters the choice of allowing the Maryland Constitution to be changed to provide for Gambling; Senate Bill 621 which would have required applicants for Maryland Driver's licenses to provide proof of legal presence in the United States. **In opposition to:** House Bills 1174, 848 and 631 which would have changed the definition of the word "marriage" throughout the Maryland Legal Codes to include same-sex couples; House Bill 1236 which would have granted in-state tuition rates to illegal aliens; House Bill 351 which would change the definition of marriage in the Maryland State Constitution.

In addition to testifying on various bills, RWAAC members have written letters and called their legislators regarding various matters. RWAAC encourages members to contact their representatives as well as to write Letters to the Editors on issues of importance.

To facilitate these contacts, RWAAC's Legislative Action Team Chairman, **Kathy Wagoner**, put together a very informative comprehensive Legislative Handbook – which RWAAC offers to members.

RWAAC members participated in MFRW's Red Scarf Day and RWAAC contributes to MFRW's Legacy Fund.

### **RWAAC MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS IN 2008:**

RWAAC held 10 General Membership meetings during the year. RWAAC does not meet in July, but rather participates with a float and the Republican banner in the Annapolis City 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade. RWAAC's December meeting is its Christmas Party and new member recruitment event. At its General Membership meetings, the speakers were: January 9, MDGOP Chairman, Jim Pelura, "Republicans have the Right Ideas"; February 13, Mr. Joseph Getty, Policy Advisor to the Senate Republican Caucus, "The View From the Perspective of the Republican Senate"; March 12, Mr. Mark Hyman, Vice President of Corporate Relations, Sinclair Broadcasting Company, "Working with and in the Media"; April 9, Senator Janet Greenip, "The 2008 Legislative Session Wrap-Up from the Senate View"; May 14, Delegate Ron George, "A View of the 2008 Legislative Session from the House of Delegates"; June 11 (the RWAAC Annual

Picnic) speaker, “Mr. Alan Heil, Acting Director, Voice of America, “International Broadcasting, the United States and Terrorism,” August 13, Mr. Collins Bailey, Republican Candidate 5th Congressional District; September 10, Mr. Carter Miner, Stop Slots Maryland, “Say NO to Gambling in the Maryland Constitution” and Senator Janet Greenip, “The Dangers of the Early Voting Constitutional Amendment –polling places and absentee ballots”; October 8, Herb McMillan, President of the Maryland Taxpayers Association “It’s Time for the Government to Tighten Its Belt! – Revenue is NOT the problem – Out of Control SPENDING IS”; November 12, Kenneth Timmerman, Columnist and Author, “The 2008 Election – What went wrong and What went right?”

### **RWAAC-PAC:**

RWAAC has a political action committee, the RWAAC-PAC. Because RWAAC’s PAC is only registered in the State of Maryland, it was prohibited by Federal Law from contributing funds to any Federal candidates. (To participate in Federal Elections, RWAAC would have to form another separate PAC for that specific purpose.) Believing that individuals would want to be contributing to Federal candidates of their choice and that funds may be limited, RWAAC-PAC did not want to run any competition for those funds and therefore did not seek donations to its PAC during 2008.

We are now moving into the 2009 and 2010 elections and RWAAC’s PAC Chairman **Mary Clare Holder** made a great “pitch” for PAC contributions at RWAAC’s November 12<sup>th</sup> meeting – a pitch that was well received and backed up by personal checks made payable to RWAAC-PAC.

### **OTHER RWAAC POLITICAL EFFORTS/INVOLVEMENT:**

**MDGOP and County Central Committee Support:** To support our Republican Party at our State and Local levels, RWAAC purchased a table at the Anne Arundel County Republican State Central Committee Lincoln Day Dinner and at the MDGOP Red, White and Blue Dinner. Like all MFRW Clubs, RWAAC supports and encourages its members to attend events and financially support the events of other Republican Clubs. **Working together for a common goal – we all win.**

**White House Volunteers:** RWAAC members **Susan Miller, Sylvia Pailthorp, Doreen Rexroad, Pat Root, Dorothy Snodgrass and Kathy Wagoner** have given many volunteer hours working at the White House.

**Michael Steele for Chairman of the Republican National Committee:** RWAAC strongly supports the election of Michael Steele as the Chairman of the Republican National Committee and has contributed \$100.00 to that campaign. Along with other MFRW Clubs, RWAAC members are actively engaged in contacting State Party Chairmen and National Committee Members urging them to support Michael Steele for Chairman of the RNC. More information on these efforts can be found at: <http://www.steeleforchairman.com>.

### **INTO GOD’S LOVING ARMS:**

RWAAC Member **Veronica (Ronnie) Megonnell** and RWAAC Associate Member **Howard (Howie) Buhl** went forward into the loving arms of God in 2008. We will miss them always, but were so blessed they shared a part of their lives with us.

RWAAC’s web site can be viewed at: <http://www.rwaac.com>.

Submitted by: Joyce E. Thomann, President, Republican Women of Anne Arundel County