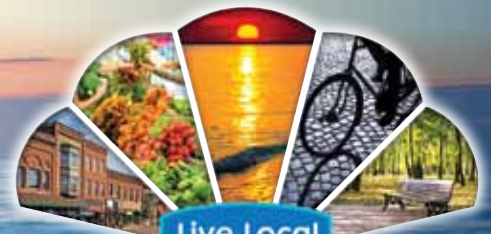


Virginia Beach

Progressive city
by the sea



Live Local

VML ANNUAL CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 9-11, 2016 • VIRGINIA BEACH

Inside:
2016 Innovation
Award Winners

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On the cover

The iconic King Neptune statue watches over the shore of Virginia Beach. Photo courtesy of Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Departments

Discovering Virginia 2

Professional Directory 40



VML ANNUAL CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 9-11, 2016 • VIRGINIA BEACH

Features

Welcome to Virginia Beach

Virginia's largest city welcomes VML Annual Conferees. Its 35 miles of beaches form the longest pleasure beach in the world, attracting 13 million visitors a year. More recently, it's becoming known for its dynamic business climate: over 30 international companies have chosen to locate their U.S. headquarters here.

Pages 5-11



Announcing the winners of the 2016 VML Innovation Awards

Formerly known as the Achievement Awards, VML's awards program got a major refresh this year including a new name and all new categories. From Bridgewater to Warrenton, five communities are honored for innovative problem-solving, excellence in management, increased citizen participation and improved services to citizens.

Pages 12-18

Virginia Municipal League 2016 Annual Report

A review of the League's key accomplishments for the 2015-2016 including new initiatives in federal advocacy and early childhood education.

Pages 22-36

A look back at the past year includes:

A message from the President22

VML Executive Committee.....23

The Executive Director's summary.....25

Reports from affiliate organizations

 VBCOA.....29

 VLGMA29

 MEPAV31

 VEPGA31

VML staff.....32

VML membership33

Municipal Business Associates33

Legislative and Policy Committee 34-36

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Even better than the movie

NOT TOO LONG AFTER we arrived in Virginia, the movie *Big Stone Gap* premiered. As you all know, there was a great deal of excitement surrounding this film which was written and directed by Big Stone Gap native Adriana Trigiani. Two years later, I have now seen the movie and I have been to the town.

First, the movie. *Big Stone Gap* is a sweet story about Ave Maria Mulligan (played by Ashley Judd) and her search to find her place in this life. Amidst the backdrop of the Appalachian Mountains, the town of Big Stone Gap really becomes a character in the tale. The cast includes Whoopi Goldberg, Patrick Wilson, Judith Ivey, Jenna Elfman, Anthony LaPaglia, and Jane Krakowski. It is a fun and poignant film that is a must-see for Virginians.

Headed into the town of Big Stone Gap, I knew that the film was shot in the area and it was interesting to see the locations that were familiar from the movie. Our regional supper was held at Carmine's, the former gas station that served as the diner in the movie. The soda fountain and some of the tables that were used remain on display.

The town of Big Stone Gap was a tremendous host for our regional supper and we would like to thank Director of Parks and Recreation Tammy Grimes and her staff for their help setting up the event. Visitor Center Coordinator Deana Stoddard really went above and beyond to set up a lovely banquet space (when we stopped by to check out the location, they were literally ironing the tablecloths!).

During the reception time, our guests were treated to singers from the play *Trail of the Lonesome Pine*. This group

was made up of performers of all ages from around the area and they were wonderful. For more information on the longest continually running outdoor drama in the Commonwealth of Virginia, go to www.thetrailofthelonesomepine.com.

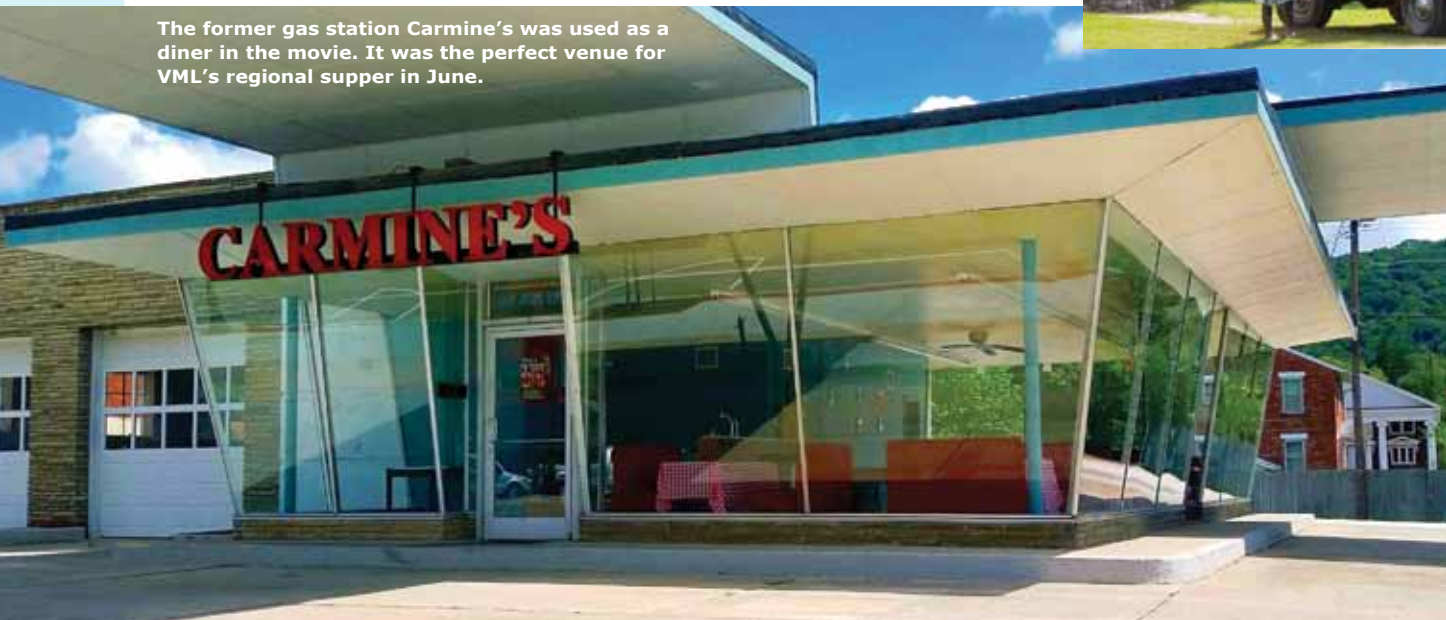
The food in Big Stone Gap was absolutely outstanding. The ladies from the Blue Fox Guild at the John Fox, Jr. House & Museum catered the meal and our attendees just couldn't stop talking about how good everything was. The ladies were dressed in the fashion of the famous Harvey Girls. They served each table with a grace and style that will not soon be forgotten. My favorite souvenir from the trip was their cookbook, *Dining 'Neath the Pine: A Taste of Virginia Mountain Hospitality*. For more information on the John Fox, Jr. House & Museum and other attractions in the area, go to www.bigstonegap.org.

I can't wait to get back to this area. Next time, I will bring my family so we can ride the chairlift at Natural Tunnel, view the Cumberland Gap, ride the off-highway vehicle trail in Pennington Gap, watch *Trail of the Lonesome Pine* in Big Stone Gap, and just enjoy the wonder and beauty that is this region of Virginia.

Ashely Judd in a scene from the movie *Big Stone Gap*.



The former gas station Carmine's was used as a diner in the movie. It was the perfect venue for VML's regional supper in June.





City of Virginia Beach

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October 9 – 11, 2016

Dear Virginia Municipal League Conference Attendee:

On behalf of the members of the Virginia Beach City Council and the community, it is an honor and a privilege to extend an enthusiastic welcome to the **Virginia Municipal League Annual Conference**.

We appreciate the importance of the **Virginia Municipal League** and make a commitment to strive to exceed our customers' expectations. You will delight in our City's rich natural beauty, history, culture, excitement and diversity.

Many industry-related investments, private and public, have been made, and are continually made, to add to Virginia Beach's overall appeal. In addition to the beautiful beach, nature trails and golf courses, enjoy the varied shopping experiences, excellent restaurants serving the finest seafood and regional cuisine. Discover and learn something new at the Virginia Aquarium – rated one of the top ten museum/aquariums in the United States.

It is group business like the **Virginia Municipal League Conference** that adds fuel to Virginia Beach's economic vitality and, without it, we would not be the same destination. Thank you for **Bringing it to the Beach!** I know that our Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau staff will work closely with you to ensure a most successful event.

We welcome, **Virginia Municipal League Conference**, in Virginia Beach!

Sincerely,

William D. Sessoms, Jr.
Mayor



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Park yourself in Virginia Beach

IN VIRGINIA BEACH, coastal recreation is a way of life. The mild weather encourages an active lifestyle, and the local culture thrives on finding experiences that satisfy the soul.

Virginia Beach Parks & Recreation is dedicated to giving residents natural outlets to live a healthy lifestyle and to protecting our coastal environment. Improving the physical and mental well-being of residents leads to a higher quality of life for all those who choose to live in and visit Virginia Beach. Regardless of physical, social and economic circumstances, the city ensures all residents can access parks programs and facilities.

The city has 4,000 acres of parks, including Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, First Landing State Park, Mount Trashmore Park, gorgeous natural areas and neighborhood and community parks.

Natural Areas: More than a scenic view

Virginia Beach's designated natural areas offer protected lands that preserve the indigenous vegetation and wildlife and provide a scenic environment for recreational use by locals and visitors alike.



Pleasure House Point

Pleasure House Point Natural Area is home to 118 acres of water, tidal marsh, sandy shores, and maritime forest that are perfect for any outdoor enthusiast. This high-profile property was once considered for a large waterfront development; however, with the help of The Trust for Public Land, The Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and the surrounding community, the city was able to preserve the land. It is one of the largest undeveloped pieces of property in the area.

Pleasure House Point is now a tidal wetland providing habitats for countless diverse species of wildlife. The iconic Chesapeake Bay blue crab, diamond back terrapin, and the Lynnhaven oyster are just a few of the species that reside in these wetlands. The land also provides food and habitat for many bird, reptile, and amphibian species. Visitors can boat and fish along the water trails, and discover breathtaking views while hiking the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail and other designated trails.

Lake Lawson/Lake Smith Natural Area is a 42-acre preserve with two miles of shoreline. The area is a popular

fishing destination, where Virginia Beach Parks & Recreation recently made renovations to deliver an even greater experience for guests. These improvements include a new boat ramp, several fishing platforms, and restroom facilities.

Improving the physical and mental well-being of residents leads to a higher quality of life for all those who choose to live in and visit Virginia Beach. Regardless of physical, social and economic circumstances, the city ensures all residents can access parks.

Stumpy Lake Natural Area, on the border of Chesapeake, is a 278-acre lake with more than 970 acres of undeveloped forest. It includes a 174-acre golf course, 1.65 miles of soft shared-use trails, and a raised ADA compliant overlook. Stumpy Lake is an idyllic spot for outdoor pastimes like kayaking, fishing, hiking, bird watching, nature observation, and photography.

West Neck Creek Natural Area is a wooded 217-acre site in the southern part of the city. It has been kept in its natural state with the exception of a series of trails that include a paved ADA compliant path along with a soft path. Guests can partake in hiking, horseback riding, bird watching, natural observations, and photography.

Mount Trashmore: From landfill to Virginia Beach's most beloved park

Driving on Interstate 264, glance out the window and see the largest hill in Virginia Beach. Mount Trashmore, 60 feet high and 800 feet long, is one of Virginia Beach's most recognizable landmarks. Ask any local and they will tell you of countless memories at Mount Trashmore, playing at Kids Cove, visiting the skate park, running the trail around the lake, or rolling down the grassy hill. Once a landfill, Mount Trashmore was created by compacting layers of solid waste and clean soil. The park features a water-wise garden that boasts xeriscaping, which requires minimal water. There is also a smaller man-made mountain, Encore Hill, and two lakes – Lake Windsor and Lake Trashmore, surrounded by a trail.





Williams Farm Skate Park

Fitness enthusiasts value the 10 outdoor fitness stations along the trail. Six are LifeTrail, designed for active, older adults to help improve posture, balance and strength. The other four are Engeri Prime stations, which offer a total body fitness system to help with stretching and strengthening muscles. The hill itself provides an athletic challenge. Run, lunge, or dash up the stairs – Mount Trashmore is the perfect alternative to the gym.

It's the ideal destination for family fun. The newly-renovated Kids Cove playground offers 26,000 square feet of slides, elevated walkways, climbers, and swings. If the kids aren't worn out after that, the hill itself is quite a playground. Children can race to the top and roll back down – and when a nice breeze comes through, fly a kite!

Mount Trashmore also offers an amazing skate park, featuring a 24,000-square-foot street course flowing from aboveground with a seven-foot deep bowl. Skatelite Pro skating surfaces line the park that all skateboarders, inline skaters, and BMX bikers can enjoy. The park has a competition-size vert ramp that's 13.5 feet tall and 40 feet wide. The skate park is perfect for any future X-Games athlete!

Virginia Beach parks: disc golf, dog parks and more skate parks

With more than 265 parks across Virginia Beach, the city has something for everyone. The first 18-hole disc golf course in Virginia Beach is at the scenic Bayville Farms Park. Munden Point Park also offers an 18-hole course. Baskets are located throughout the park and along the North Landing River. Both courses are free and open to the public.

Have a restless dog tearing up the house? Bring him to one of the city's three dog parks at Bayville Farms, Red Wing, and Woodstock parks. Bayville Farms Park has two fenced in dog parks – one for small dogs and another for larger pooches. Red Wing and Woodstock each have one-acre parks for both small and big dogs to play together. Pets must be registered and owners must get a low-fee annual pass.

Williams Farm Park and Woodstock Park also provide skate facilities. The Williams Farm Skate Park is 25,000 square feet of concrete featuring a tiered bowl, flow park, and urban skate plaza with LED lighting. Woodstock skate plaza consists of 10,400 square feet of concrete skateable area, and 3,200

square feet of interior green space. The skate plaza boasts several challenging components, a five-foot tall quarter pile, vert walls, rails, hubba ledges, radial ledges, stairs, and handrails to provide endless skating action. Skaters must purchase a skate pass before entry.

The Sandy Parks

Not all Virginia Beach parks have grass, trees, and lakes. Three are filled with sand, saltwater, and waves, just a few feet away from the Atlantic Ocean. Little Island Park is at Sandbridge beach, while JT's Grommet Island Beach Park and Hillier Ignite Fitness Park are at the resort area. Little Island Park is just north of Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge and boasts 144 acres of beachfront and a 400-foot fishing pier, which also sees lots of surfing action. The 2,000-foot beach makes for a fantastic day of swimming and sunbathing. Additional amenities include showers, picnic shelters, tennis and basketball courts, beach volleyball, and a playground.



Little Island Park

Wheelchair accessible JT's Grommet Island Beach Park and Playground is the first of its kind in America: a completely accessible oceanfront playground. The 15,000-square-foot beach park features wheelchair accessible entrances and an incredible playground that includes poured-in-place surfacing and raised sand tables for sandcastle building at an accessible height. A sensory board is available for children who are autistic and visually impaired, along with a sway boat. A hand-operated sand scoop is perfect for those in wheelchairs. The park is designed with sculptural features and wood polymer decking, and is truly a park for every body.

The newest addition to the oceanfront is the Hillier Ignite Fitness Park, right on the sand adjacent to the boardwalk at 36th Street. The park has a variety of strength-training apparatuses and body weight-based exercise equipment to combine fun in the sun for any fitness guru.

Parks & Recreation also manages six community recreation centers with indoor swimming pools, a marina and an athletic complex. A seventh rec center is under construction.

This article was contributed by the City of Virginia Beach Department of Parks and Recreation.

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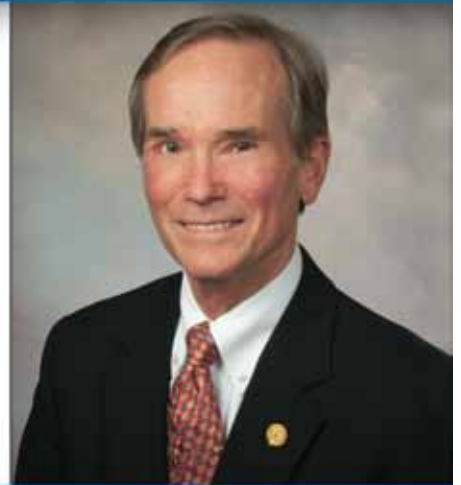
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David P. Bobzien, Esq. recently retired after twenty-three years of service as the County Attorney for Fairfax. Prior to his appointment as County Attorney, David served for thirteen years as an Assistant Counsel in the Office of Professional Responsibility of the U.S. Department of Justice. David is a Past President of the Virginia State Bar, the Local Government Attorneys of Virginia, the Virginia Law Foundation, and the Fairfax Law Foundation. He currently serves as a Virginia State Bar Delegate to the American Bar Association's House of Delegates and as Chairman of the Virginia CLE committee of the Virginia Law Foundation. David now brings this distinct record of service and accomplishment to The McCammon Group to serve the mediation, arbitration, judge pro tempore, and special master needs of lawyers and litigants throughout the Commonwealth and beyond.



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Baring it all Virginia Beach to launch open data portal

FOR DECADES, VIRGINIA BEACH has been dedicated to open government. The city began live broadcasting City Council meetings more than 30 years ago. In 2003, the city opened the first municipal Freedom of Information office in Virginia.

In 2015, it opened its budget at the line item level – online. And last year, the city created an online tool, Open Performance, that gives citizens data and measures on dozens of city government goals.

Now Virginia Beach is taking the next step in transparency. The city will soon launch an online open data portal, offering citizens as much information from the city’s databases as possible.

“We’re cracking open databases to help our citizens and to ferret out problem areas – and success stories.”

– Catheryn Whitesell, Director of the Office of Strategy, Transparency, Innovation and Resiliency

The effort began in February under new City Manager Dave Hansen. Leaders from more than a dozen departments began meeting to determine the best way to throw open the city’s information vaults.

Since then, every city department has been scouring its computers for databases to release. A governing board is establishing rules and making sure every database is as accurate as possible.

Leading the effort is Catheryn Whitesell, the city’s former Budget Director. To demonstrate the city’s commitment to the project, Hansen recently appointed Whitesell to a new position in City Hall – Director of the STIR Office, short for Strategy, Transparency, Innovation and Resiliency.

“We firmly believe that Virginia Beach is stronger when our citizens are well-informed and our leaders have access to the best data possible,” Whitesell said.

To help with this effort, Virginia Beach has been engaging with What Works Cities. The national initiative, launched by Bloomberg Philanthropies in April 2015, helps cities across the country enhance their use of data and evidence to improve services, inform local decision-making and engage residents.

City leaders will share the newly opened data among departments to improve services. The effort is modeled after the Police Department’s CompStat, which uses data to help determine where to deploy officers and deter crime.

The new website – the OpenVB Data Portal – will debut in October. Initially, it will include 16 downloadable databases, including some that should be extremely popular:

- Employee salaries
- Restaurant inspections
- Code enforcement cases
- New business licenses
- Police calls for service
- Police incidents
- Freedom of Information Act requests
- Park property inventory
- Open space properties
- EMS calls for service
- Citizen Satisfaction Survey results
- Agricultural Reserve Program properties
- Property assessments with details
- Property sales
- Workers compensation claims
- Emergency communications system interruptions

The city will add many more databases in the future.



“Virginia Beach has a tradition of open government and data-based decision-making,” Whitesell said. “Now we’re ready to take the next step. We’re cracking open databases to help our citizens and to ferret out problem areas – and success stories. Soon, we will form teams to break down department silos and tap the numbers. We’ll be looking for new ways to serve residents better.”

About the author: Marc Davis is the Media & Communications Manager for the City of Virginia Beach.

Port of Trade

Tide brings international businesses ashore in Virginia Beach

VIRGINIA BEACH HAS ALWAYS been famous for its beaches and lifestyle. Today, it's also known for its dynamic and diverse business climate: more than one-third of all business start-ups in the metro region happen in Virginia Beach; over 30 international companies have chosen to locate their U.S. or North American headquarters here; manufacturing activity continues to grow; its technology sectors are expanding; and new development is occurring throughout the city.

Between 2011 and 2015, Virginia Beach Economic Development recorded nearly 250 announcements resulting in nearly 7,000 new jobs; 65% were expansions of existing companies and 25% were by small companies founded by women or minorities. More than 62% of the region's representation on the INC 5000 list is located in Virginia Beach. The city's new bio-accelerator has been fully occupied even before its official opening and Council has turned over 155 acres of land to the Development Authority for development of a new bio/health science R&D park.

Barcelona-based SANJO Fineblanking announced plans this past July to invest more than \$17.5 million to establish their North American headquarters and manufacturing center in Virginia Beach.

To attract international investment, the city also opened its second overseas office, in Olongapo City, Philippines, which joins an existing office in Dusseldorf, Germany. A partner office will open in Waiblingen, Germany, later this year.

Trans-Atlantic cable epicenter

The city is becoming the mid-Atlantic landing site of choice for high speed transoceanic data cables, as two major projects were announced this summer: Telefonica will bring the new BRUSA line from Brazil, while a partnership between

The city is becoming the mid-Atlantic landing site of choice for high speed transoceanic data cables. Telefonica will bring a line from Brazil while Facebook and Microsoft will bring a cable from Spain. This cable will come online in 2017 with a capacity of almost half of all other existing trans-Atlantic cables combined.

Facebook and Microsoft will connect the city with Bilbao, Spain. This cable will come online in 2017 with a capacity of 160 terabits per second, almost half of all other existing trans-Atlantic cables combined.

Town Center of Virginia Beach has been a resounding success over its 15 years, attracting nearly \$4.50 of private investment for every \$1 of public funds, and the next \$31 million expansion will break ground in the third quarter of 2016.

The Economic Development Department received its second AEDO reaccreditation. The City's YesOceana program for protecting Naval Air Station Oceana has become a national model for partnerships between local government and the military.

This type of economic development success doesn't just happen by chance; it requires strong leadership, a clear strategy, and a willingness to be bold and decisive when opportunities arise.

Several years ago, in order to proactively assist the creation of new businesses (especially new small businesses), City Council adopted a program to limit the business license fee obligations of new companies opening in Virginia Beach. Qualifying new businesses applying for a business license for the first time, and with anticipated gross receipts in excess of \$100,000, receive a reduction of the business license tax to \$50 owed for each of the first two license years.

Around the same time, Council effectively eliminated the machinery and tool tax in recognition of the increased complexities and costs associated with equipment used in modern manufacturing processes.

Council has placed priority on establishing a legitimate bio and health science business center, attracting new international businesses, simplifying the processes for starting and operating small businesses, and creating the technology infrastructure to carry the city into the future. Each of these actions has been deliberate, strategic and successful.

Today, Virginia Beach is recognized around the world as a true business destination. Through bold, decisive leadership, sound strategy and creative partnerships, the city has positioned itself for sustained economic growth well into the future.

About the author: Steve Harrison is the Business Development and Research Manager for Virginia Beach Department of Economic Development. For more information, contact the Department of Economic Development at 757-385-6464, or visit www.yesvirginiabeach.com.



Town Center of Virginia Beach has been a resounding success over its 15 years, attracting nearly \$4.50 of private investment for every \$1 of public funds.

Good Investments

Four city government decisions that helped build Virginia Beach... and made money

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, Virginia Beach was a tiny resort town on the ocean. Princess Anne County was a sprawling farm community. Together, they had 13,000 residents.

Today, Virginia Beach – a melding of that little town and that farm county – is the biggest city in Virginia, with more than 450,000 residents. It has a resort that attracts 13 million visitors a year, a Town Center with Virginia’s tallest building, and miles of suburban neighborhoods, business parks and farms. Its 35 miles of beaches form the longest pleasure beach in the world.

It grew much like other exploding American suburbs-turned-cities in the 20th century. How it continues to thrive... That’s a story of good investments that keep the city going and earn money back to taxpayers, from drinking water to outdoor entertainment.

The Lake Gaston Pipeline

In 1992, Virginia Beach faced a crisis. It was about to run dry.

The irony was not lost on city leaders. Virginia Beach is known for its water. It borders the Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay. The Lynnhaven River dominates the north; Back Bay dominates the south.

But the city had no independent water supply. It depended entirely on surplus water from neighboring Norfolk. After two decades of explosive growth, Virginia Beach had simply outgrown its water supply.

And so in 1992, the City Council declared a moratorium on new connections to the water system. No new houses, no new businesses.

For most cities, that would have been the kiss of death. But Virginia Beach had planned ahead. Ten years earlier, in 1982, the City Council voted to find its own water – to build a 76-mile pipeline from Lake Gaston to reservoirs in Isle of Wight County.

It triggered a long, rather nasty and expensive legal fight. North Carolina sued. So did several municipalities along the pipeline route. The battle lasted 15 years and cost the city \$11 million.

And that was just a small part of the pipeline’s \$150 million price tag. To pay for it, Virginia Beach created the highest water rates in Hampton Roads. Residents were very unhappy. The legal fight dragged on and on. The moratorium on new connections lasted five years. The city was slowly strangling.

But Virginia Beach won the fight and built the pipeline. It opened in 1997. And today, the Lake Gaston pipeline supplies up to 60 million gallons of water a day to Virginia Beach, Chesapeake and Norfolk. The city’s water rates are now the lowest in Hampton Roads.

Former Planning Director Bob Scott said that without the pipeline, “it clearly would have been the end of Virginia Beach as a dynamic, vibrant community... No chance of prosperity like we enjoy today.”

Town Center

In the 1990s, Virginia Beach had no downtown. The tallest building, outside the resort, was an 11-story office tower surrounded by woods.



Gerald Divaris had other ideas. The property manager from South Africa envisioned an urban core in the middle of the suburbs. He saw office towers with stores and restaurants on the ground floor. He saw apartments and condos and hotels.

City leaders thought he was crazy. The area had been zoned for a central business district since 1973, but decades passed and nothing was built. “Nobody really took those plans seriously,” former City Manager Jim Spore recalled. “They said it probably will never happen.”

But Divaris persisted. He recruited developer Armada Hoffer from nearby Chesapeake. And in 2000, after years of debate, the City Council approved the construction of Town Center – with an innovative twist.

Town Center would be a TIF (tax increment financing) district. Real estate taxes on new development would pay for the city’s investment in parking garages, a public plaza and streetscapes. A special service district, with higher taxes on property owners, would pay for maintenance and operations.

It has been an enormous success. The city got a 5-to-1 return on its investment. Since 2000, Virginia Beach has spent \$100 million, mainly on five public parking garages. The developer spent nearly \$500 million on office towers, restaurants, shops, apartments, condos and hotels – including the tallest building in Virginia, the 38-story Westin hotel and condominium, which opened in 2008. Phase VI – a performing arts theater, more apartments, shops and restaurants – just broke ground.

Today, Town Center has more than 1 million square feet of office and retail space, 110 tenants, 19 restaurants, 804 apartments and condos, 412 hotel rooms and more than 3,000 free parking spaces.

And how have taxpayers made out? Spectacularly well. Town Center pays for itself – and then some. The TIF District fully covers the city's debt service. And every year, businesses generate \$7.5 million in business taxes, most of which goes to the General Fund for police, schools, libraries, roads and more.

"It turned out to be a tremendous investment," said city Finance Director Patricia Phillips.

Operation Big Beach

The worst disaster to hit modern Virginia Beach arrived on March 7, 1962: the infamous Ash Wednesday storm. It wrecked the resort. The nor'easter knocked houses off their foundations, destroyed the boardwalk, and sent cars floating down Atlantic Avenue.

For the next three decades, city leaders puzzled over how to protect the Oceanfront from future storms.

The solution? A hurricane protection project called Operation Big Beach:

- A massive seawall and new boardwalk
- A new resort beach that is 300 feet wide – triple the width of the old beach
- New sand dunes all the way up to Fort Story to protect homes on the North End
- A series of enormous water pumps behind the seawall

The six-year construction project was one of the biggest ever undertaken in Virginia Beach. Work was finished in 2002 – and it wasn't cheap. The city and Army Corps of Engineers spent \$150 million. But it was worth it.

So far, the hurricane protection project has prevented \$500 million in damages from storms like Hurricanes Isabel, Irene and Sandy, and many nor'easters. The wider, higher beach dissipates storm waves, preventing them from reaching hotels

and businesses. The seawall, which extends 59 blocks, is an emergency backstop.

After every storm, the Army Corps of Engineers tallies the savings. During Hurricane Isabel in 2003, for the example, the project prevented \$83 million in damage. During Hurricane Irene in 2011, storm waves barely touched the seawall and boardwalk. The Big Beach did its job.

Every few years, the city replenishes the beach, keeping it wide so it can continue to protect resort businesses and homes. "It worked out phenomenally," said Phill Roehrs, a city water resources engineer. "When you judge it against damages averted, the project has paid for itself several times over."

The Amphitheater

When the weather is hot, the biggest musical acts in America like to play outdoors. But 20 years ago, Hampton Roads had nowhere for them to play. We had indoor arenas, but no large outdoor venues.

So in 1995, Virginia Beach found a partner – Cellar Door Entertainment – and set out to build an amphitheater. It was the city's first public-private partnership. Virginia Beach found 100 acres and invested \$10.5 million. Cellar Door invested \$7 million.



The amphitheater took nine months to build. Much of it was miserable. The ground was mush, unable to support a massive building. Engineers designed a clever way to siphon water from underground. Then they built the place on deep pilings. And it rained – a lot. Builders were up to their knees in mud.

But opening night – May 15, 1996 – was magnificent. Bruce Hornsby, a Williamsburg native, played to an excited crowd of 8,000 fans. As light rain fell, Hornsby tickled the keyboard and sang: "So nice to be here with all you good people." More big acts followed that year: Rod Stewart, Steely Dan, Jimmy Buffett, Crosby, Stills & Nash.

It was the start of 20 good years. The amphitheater, with a capacity of 20,000, has hosted about 500 acts. More than 5.5 million people have sung along, cheered and danced. And it's still going strong. Last month, Bruce Springsteen played there for four hours.

It's a moneymaker, too. The amphitheater has returned \$25 million to the city in taxes – more than double the initial investment. The city gets more than \$1 million every year in rent and taxes.

"It's been a huge financial windfall for the city," said Mark Wawner with Virginia Beach Economic Development. "It has exceeded everyone's expectations."

About the author: Marc Davis is the Media & Communications Manager for the City of Virginia Beach.



Announcing the winners of the 2016 VML Innovation Awards

VML'S AWARDS PROGRAM got a major refresh this year including a new name and all new categories. Formerly known as the Achievement Awards, the VML awards are nearly 40 years old and have a distinguished history as the most prestigious local government awards in the state. More than 50 remarkable projects were entered into this year's competition. The statewide competition emphasizes innovative problem-solving, excellence in management, increased citizen participation and improved services to citizens.

Awards are made in five categories. One among the five winners is chosen for the top prize – the President's Award. This year's winners are:

Economic Development Award AND President's Award

The Town of Bridgewater for Generations Park



Infrastructure Award

The City of Norton for Safe Routes to School, Community Gateway and Walking Trail

Working with Youth Award

The Town of Warrenton for the Student Postcard Project

Public Safety Award

The City of Newport News for the Summer Training and Enrichment Program

Communications Award

The City of Harrisonburg for the Safety Sally Campaign

The stories behind these inspiring programs – the who, why and how they came to fruition – are told in the pages that follow. Each story offers something that other localities can learn from or even replicate.

The Judges

The judges panel is made up of four experts in local government, including several former elected officials.

Edythe Kelleher – Former Vice Mayor of Vienna. Kelleher is Executive Director of the Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation.

Kimball (Kim) Payne – Retired City Manager of Lynchburg.

David Parsons – Retired Director of Communications for VML.

Tim Taylor – Former Mayor of Strasburg. Taylor is the IT Supervisor at Shenandoah County Public Schools.

The awards are presented at a banquet at the VML Annual Conference, October 10 in Virginia Beach in Richmond.



Past VML Award Winners

2015

Shenandoah – under 5,000
Marion – 5,000-10,000
Fredericksburg – 10,000-35,000
Leesburg – 35,000-90,000
Portsmouth – over 90,000
Virginia Beach – Communications
Halifax – President's Award

2014

St. Paul – under 5,000
Pulaski – 5,000-10,000
Falls Church – 10,001-35,000
Danville – 35,001-90,000
Norfolk – over 90,000
Poquoson – Communications
Rocky Mount – President's Award

2013

Clifton Forge – under 5,000
Strasburg – 5,000-10,000
Martinsville – 10,001-35,000
Leesburg – 35,001-90,000
Arlington – over 90,000
City of Fairfax – Communications
Virginia Beach – President's Award

2012

Wise – under 5,000
Marion – 5,000-10,000
Falls Church – 10,001-35,000
Danville – 35,001-90,000
Portsmouth – over 90,000
Fredericksburg – Communications
Abingdon – President's Award

2011

Blackstone – under 5,000
Abingdon – 5,000-10,000
Winchester – 10,001-35,000
Leesburg – 35,001-90,000
Richmond – over 90,000
Blacksburg – Communications
Manassas – President's Award

Generations Park boosts business, tourism and community

President's Award & Economic Development Award

Town of Bridgewater



BRIDGEWATER'S GENERATIONS PARK is the story of a community with the courage to think beyond their small size and to find an innovative way to fund a first-class recreation destination. It's actually two adjoining projects designed to work together to build business, tourism and community. The Park itself contains the Shenandoah Valley's only public ice skating rink. Overlooking the rink is a restaurant operating on land owned by the town's Industrial Development Authority.

The core concept was to create an absolutely first class "destination" and a tax engine to pay for it. The rink is the destination, and it draws customers from all over the Valley. After working up an appetite on the ice, these customers often head next door to the restaurant. The meals taxes collected by the restaurant pay for the rink.



Farmer's market grand opening



Ice rink at Generations Park

creating a spark in the town's long underperforming business sector."

In warmer weather, the rink is used for farmers' markets, concerts, movies, and other public gatherings.

The Challenge

"Part of the problem was our proximity to Harrisonburg, a city roughly ten times our size. Opening a location in Harrisonburg probably seemed like a safer bet to most businesses," said Litten.

The town administration developed three disruptive principles and applied them to what had been an inert business district.

The first principle was that the town could offset its small size by creating a destination which would attract people from the surrounding area. "We wanted to have a thriving business community, but no one said that our citizens had to be the only customers," said Litten.

The next issue was to figure out how to pay for the project. "Because of the demand we were inducing," said Litten, "we were convinced that a restaurant would generate enough tax revenues to pay for the park."

The town solved the issue of parking by amending the zoning ordinance to allow for businesses to share parking. This pooled-parking concept allowed for efficient use of Bridgewater's ancient lots.

Building the park on a shoe-string budget

The town did not compromise on building a first-class facility, but it did find a way to build it on the cheap.

"A design-build contract allowed us to watch every expenditure," said Litten. "For example, a new chiller would have cost us over \$100,000. After a nationwide search, we found a six-year-old chiller, which had been sitting in a warehouse. We purchased this never-used chiller for \$38,000. We didn't build this as if we were using our own money – we built it as if we were using our grandmother's money!"

Since the grand opening in November 2015, Bridgewater's Generation's Park has drawn:

- 3,440 individual ice skating sessions last winter;
- 1 new restaurant, which has paid rent and generated meals taxes to help pay for the park
- 1 proposed restaurant, already under construction
- 1 marriage proposal on the ice. (She said "yes," by the way.)
- 50 farmers' markets and 10 concerts and movies



Jalepenos Restaurant

Litten says it would have been easy to give up after unsuccessfully pitching the idea to over 200 restaurants, but he knew that finding the right restaurant was the key. "Perhaps, then, we are most pleased that we chose the hard paths," said Litten, "– the ones that required creativity and sweat and persistence – when the easy paths would not have helped our citizens."



What the judges had to say

"The ice skating rink was a risk that really paid off. It took a lot of courage from the community to do this! Great quality-of-life-project."

Norton turns safety threat into opportunity to build safe, beautiful gateway

THROUGH THE SAFE ROUTES to School project, The city of Norton turned a serious threat to public safety into an opportunity to build a beautiful community gateway and gathering place.

In 2006, the city began plans to replace 2,200 feet of the city's worst sidewalk. However, after completion of a preliminary engineering report, it quickly became apparent that there was a much larger safety issue than previously thought. An old abandoned highwall – a remnant of mining activities in the 1930s – 1950s – was posing a significant danger, including rockslides, to pedestrians and vehicles that traveled the adjoining sidewalk and roadway each day. Worst of all, the sidewalk was a main thoroughfare between downtown and the city's elementary and middle schools.

In addition to the dangers it posed to public safety, the highwall was an eyesore at the very gateway to Norton's downtown area.

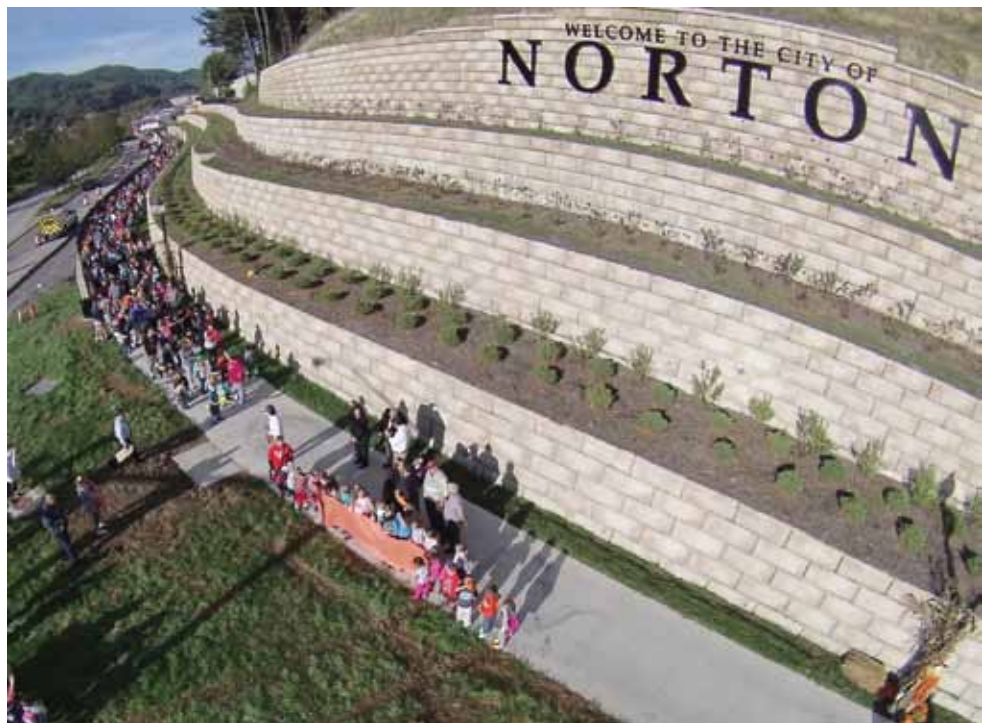
The community was in dire need of a safe route from downtown to school, but cost was clearly a challenge. By securing a grant from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and Abandoned Mine Land funding from the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME), the city was able to leverage local funds with these funding sources to complete the otherwise unaffordable project.



The nighttime view of the sidewalk is especially pretty, enhanced by decorative lighted lampposts, banners, fencing and landscaping.

Constructability of the project was another obstacle. Engineers executed a terraced design using Redi-Rock blocks that made the design fluid and the construction efficient. The five-tiered terraced wall allowed for the construction of a 10-foot wide handicapped accessible sidewalk and a very attractive entryway to the city.

On the completed wall, the city added lighted signage that reads, "Welcome to the City of Norton." The walking trail was enhanced with decorative lampposts with banners, attractive



The "welcome wall" creates a beautiful entrance into the city's downtown.

fencing, trees and other landscaping, and comfortable benches along the pathway. The visual impact of the "welcome wall" and trail at nighttime is stunning.

The \$4 million project, largely funded by state and federal grants, provided a safe multi-use trail that connects the city's central business district and Norton's only elementary/middle school and Little League facility.

More than a sidewalk, the walking trail has created a safe place for residents to enjoy the outdoors and get physical exercise, which contributes to long-term health and quality of life. Local clubs and organizations are using the trail to host community events such as 5K runs and walks for charitable causes, as well as a Get Fit after-school program.

The city was able to find an innovative solution to address a host of challenges: connectivity to downtown, public health and pedestrian safety, and curb appeal in a major gateway to downtown. This project became a true hometown success, helping make Norton an even better place to live, work, and go to school for its 4,000 residents.

Infrastructure Award

City of Norton



What the judges had to say

"The long-term commitment toward achieving this project is impressive. It truly transformed a gateway to the city and promoted community health and safety."

If you want a good plan for the future, ask a kid

Working with Youth Award

Town of Warrenton

IT BEGAN WITH A ROUTINE required task – gathering input for a comprehensive plan – but quickly took an innovative turn. In an effort to involve an often overlooked segment of the population, Warrenton created a fun and meaningful way for its youngest citizens to share their dreams for the town's future. The Student Postcard Project was conducted in six schools (public and private) located within the town. Over 1,000 students from kindergarten through high school participated in sharing their vision for the town.

As part of the public input process, students were asked to communicate their favorite place or activity in 2016, as well as their desire for the town in 2040. Town staff met with teachers and in the classrooms to explain



As compelling as the input gathered for the plan was the life lesson: the importance of citizens being active in planning for the future of their community. The project was based on the simple premise that the students

of today are the community leaders of tomorrow. Through Warrenton's postcard project, students learned that they have a right and a responsibility to voice their concerns for the community and to have a seat at the decision-making table.

So what did the kids say was important for the future of their town? Students asked for more parks, walkability, preservation of the Old Town,

more entertainment choices, and a dedication to remain a small town. Pretty insightful for a new generation.



the role of the comprehensive plan in a community and to underscore the importance of each citizen's voice in the visioning process. Teachers were provided with templates and speaking points to help students along.

Civic, art, and English teachers explained the historical context of souvenir picture postcards that feature the outstanding and unique features of a town. Then they asked their students consider what makes Warrenton unique; what are the town's special attributes?



Colorful selections from the Student Postcard Project.



What the judges had to say

"A creative way to engage community youth while teaching a valuable civics lesson."

"An innovative way to include the most important people when planning for the future of a community."

Students created postcards for 2016 depicting their personal favorite places, landmarks or activities with a statement about why they chose the subject matter. Likewise, for 2040, students created a postcard of how they envisioned the town in the future based on their desires for 25 years into the future.

SMALL TOWN, BIG IDEAS



Grammy winners Earls of Leicester at the Harvester Performance Center

2016 Southern Economic Development Council Community Economic Development Award • 2016 Virginia Economic Development Association Community Economic Development Award • 2016 Roanoke Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau Golden Star Award • 2016 Virginia Living Magazine Best Music Venue of Southwest Virginia • 2015 Virginia Local Government Managers Association Marcia Mashaw Assistant Manager of the Year Award • 2015 Virginia Living Magazine Best Music Venue of Southwest Virginia • 2015 Roanoker Magazine Silver Award • 2015 Small Mountain Lake Chambers of Commerce Tourism Development Award • 2014 Virginia Municipal League President's Award

WINNER

In Rocky Mount, we know the power of big ideas transforms communities. After we opened the Harvester Performance Center in 2014, it created a strong sense of place, transforming Rocky Mount into a major music tourism destination for fans throughout the nation, as recognized in 2016 by the Southern Economic Development Council, Virginia Living, the Virginia Economic Development Association and the Convention & Visitors Bureau of Roanoke. Come visit us and share in the power of big ideas.

Town of Rocky Mount
www.rockymountva.org
www.harvester-music.com



Rocky Mount Town Council

Summer jobs program for youth proves to reduce crime

Public Safety Award
City of Newport News

2016

VML INNOVATION AWARDS

DESPITE TARGETED EFFORTS to reduce youth and gang violence, the City of Newport News found that the number of young people involved in gangs or illegal activity was on the rise in 2014. A new approach was needed.



A STEP participant gains on-the-job training while working for Newport News Parks.

The Council responded by dedicating more than \$1 million to fund a Youth and Gang Violence Prevention Initiative, which includes the Summer Training and Enrichment Program (STEP). The goal of STEP is to improve kids' chances for a brighter future by providing them with employment during the summer – a time when youth traditionally find themselves at loose ends and at a greater risk of getting into trouble.

The program is targeted at youth ages 16 to 24 who have been involved in the criminal justice system or may be at risk. Many of them lack relevant work experience and find it hard to find employers who will hire them.

The voluntary 10-week program began in 2015 and provides participating youth with 30 hours per week of work or training at \$7.25 or \$8.00 an hour. All wages are covered by STEP and there are no direct costs to employers.

The city collaborated with the Peninsula Chamber of Commerce to recruit worksites for STEP participants. A total of 64 private sector businesses, city departments and non-profits have partnered with the city to provide work training opportunities. Businesses benefit by having a pool of applicants to fill needed vacancies without the expenses of traditional recruitment and training.

In 2015 – the program's first year – the number of participants was 163. That number nearly doubled this past summer to 316. Actual direct payments in excess of over \$736,000 were distributed to participants during a two-year period.

In FY16, participants averaged 22 hours a week at their work sites or \$170 per week. The money was the first "real" paycheck for many, and STEP assisted the participants with opening bank accounts. Participants reported that paychecks were used to support their family (19%), help offset educational costs (17%), pay for transportation (12%), and save for the future (12%). At the end of the second year, 30 participants were offered a permanent job, with 81% of them maintaining employment 45 days after program completion.

STEP transforms lives by exposing participants to mentors, enrichment activities, GED preparation, and career planning, in addition to the meaningful work readiness training and on-site paid experiences. Participants in the program have an improved work ethic and gain valuable skills they can use for future employment.

STEP participants were also referred to needed supportive services. In 2014, there were 40 connections made for food; five participants received assistance with utilities at home; eight were provided baby supplies; and there were two placements made for housing assistance/sheltering. Fourteen young adults registered for Adult Continuing Education Services and GED classes after completing the program.

STEP is making a difference in public safety. During FY15-16, the city saw a 17% decrease in the number of juvenile offenses during the summer in a year-to-year comparison. In FY16, only one out of the 30 participants referred by Court Services Unit re-offended during the 10-week program.

Based on the success of STEP, the City Manager's office recommended that the operating budget for FY17 increase funding for the Youth and Gang Violence Prevention Initiative from \$1.1 million to \$1.5 million in order to serve 600 participants next summer and hire additional program staff. The City Council approved the recommended increase.



What the judges had to say

"Very bold to spend money on youth workforce development in the hopes of reducing crime."

"A proactive approach to dealing with the challenges that some of our young people face."

Safety Sally's misadventures create teachable moments for kids

Communications Award
City of Harrisonburg

CREATIVE MINDS within the Harrisonburg Fire Department decided to take the popular “Elf on the Shelf” tradition to a new level and introduced Safety Sally during last year’s holiday season. Sally provided 24 days of not-so-safe mischief.



When I arrived in Harrisonburg, the local media wanted to speak with me about my adventures and learn of ways to keep kids in the community safe.

Each day, pictures were posted to social media showing the latest troubles Safety Sally had gotten herself into along with safety tips for how children can avoid these dangers. The campaign targeted children and their parents primarily through social media but also utilized the city’s website and local media outlets.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), an average of 9,000 kids (ages 0-19) die each year due to unintentional injuries such as

burns, drowning, falls, poisoning, and traffic incidents. Knowing these painful statistics, the Harrisonburg Fire Department (HFD) and Central Shenandoah Valley Safe Kids Coalition decided to take a new approach to show how unintentional injuries can be prevented, especially around the holidays.

Although HFD did not come up with the idea on their own, they cleverly capitalized on the brand recognition of the Elf and put their spin on a popular trend to create teachable moments.

For example, when Safety Sally visited the local mall to see Santa, she ended up getting lost. Sally set the stage for HPD to

teach children what steps to take if they get lost in a crowded place and, more importantly, not to get separated from their parent or guardian.

The campaign’s cost to the city was negligible. The posts to social media were free and all of the pictures were taken by staff members, most of whom enjoy photography in their spare time. City departments helped share, like, and re-post pictures which further expanded the reach of the campaign through social media.

Safety Sally was interviewed by all of the local news outlets and received coverage on television and radio and in the newspaper. The reporters also shared her story through their own social media sites. In reviewing the Facebook analytics after the campaign, 68,482 people were reached.

But the most important statistic of the campaign is one that can never be calculated. That is how many young residents made safer choices – maybe even life-saving decisions – because of the lessons they learned from Safety Sally.



Today I called 9-1-1 to see what would happen and hung up. Although I hung up, it is standard protocol for police, fire, and EMS providers to respond to the location. The first responders were very understanding but reminded me that I should only call 9-1-1 in an emergency.



An officer spotted me riding my bicycle on the street without wearing a helmet. I learned it’s important for children and adults to always wear a helmet when riding a bicycle or skateboard.

What the judges had to say

“Catchy, clever, imaginative and fun!”

“A creative and fun way to spread a safety message to young and old alike.”



Award-winning year for VML Insurance Programs

- Excellence in Performance Award
- Top Workplace
- Company of the Year
- Excellence in Financial Reporting

IT WAS AN AWARD-WINNING year for VML Insurance Programs (VMLIP). The pool, which provides auto, property, liability, and workers' compensation coverage to more than 480 local political subdivisions across Virginia, was recognized five times by various organizations.

In fact, VMLIP was the first organization to receive the Award for Excellence in Performance from the Association of Governmental Risk Pools (AGRiP) for two years in a row.

VMLIP was first recognized for the *Where the Rubber Meets the Road* campaign in 2015 – a defensive driving instruction program for member drivers that reduced automobile liability loss ratios from 86 to 48 percent among participants.

In 2016, VMLIP was again recognized by AGRiP, this time for the pool's Leadership Development Program.

"We created the Leadership Development Program in 2013 to provide growth and engagement opportunities for staff and to prepare participants to step into supervisory and managerial roles as part of our succession planning process," said VMLIP Managing Director Steve Craig. "We want to ensure our employees receive a comprehensive review of every aspect of our operations, so they can continue to provide the service and partnership our members expect."



Participants of VMLIP's award-winning Leadership Development Program (L to R): Nicole Jennings, Pamela Pitts, Jennifer Moore, Kari Soniat, Lisa Schenk, Marcus Hensel, Wendy Rice, Lisa Davis, Karen Nuckols, Pete Strickler and Shane Ziegler. Not pictured: Deborah Briggs, Tracey Dunlap, Mary Kay Marchetti and Harry McMillen.

Each class receives regular presentations from various VMLIP directors and other outside presenters on topics such as finance, human resources, underwriting, claims, technology, safety and more. The initial class consisted of six staff members and concluded at the end of 2013. A second class, consisting of nine students, began a two-year program in January 2015.

Offerings such as the Leadership Development Program are just one of the reasons VMLIP was named one of the Top Workplaces in Richmond by the annual Sterling Workplace Awards.

"The recognition we received as one of the top workplaces in Richmond is significant in terms of attracting and retaining the best employees to serve our members," said Craig.

VMLIP was recognized as one of the top workplaces due to

the pool's focus on leadership development and commitment to employee education. More than 54 percent of VMLIP staff hold at least one industry-relevant designation.

"We are Virginia's local government specialists," said Craig. "In addition to understanding the unique risks and exposures our members face, our staff are also active and engaged in continued learning not only in the insurance field, but also in specialties such as safety, human resources, underwriting and communications."

The Richmond Chapter of the Chartered Property and Casualty Underwriter Society (CPCU) also recognized VMLIP this year – naming VMLIP Company of the Year. VMLIP was recognized for continuous support and commitment to CPCU and to other insurance-related learning.

VMLIP's final recognition during this fund year was earned for the third year in a row. The Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting was awarded to VMLIP from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for the pool's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).

"This award is the highest form of recognition we can receive in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting," said Craig. "Preparing the CAFR encourages entities to provide more than the minimum generally accepted accounting principles. It involves the preparation of a comprehensive annual report that demonstrates a spirit of full disclosure."

As pools in Virginia are assessable, it is crucial for entities to purchase coverage with an organization that is financially secure. The accounting information provided in the CAFR shows a clear and transparent account of VMLIP's finances. With assets greater than \$270 million and members' equity of more than \$100 million, VMLIP is the most financially secure self-insurance pool in Virginia.

"The awards and recognitions VMLIP has received within the past year exemplify the quality and professionalism of our program," said Craig. "We are preparing for the future by ensuring we have the most talented staff in place; our programs are innovative and impactful; our financials are secure; and we are continuing to look ahead and prepare for emerging challenges faced by our members."

VMLIP is looking toward the future with an eye toward online applications and data analytics.

"We have decades' worth of data that we are analyzing to find trends, correlations and causations to help us work with our members to supplement risk management efforts," said Craig. "This detailed and targeted level of risk management is the future of our partnership with our members."

Award-winning programs. A focus on the future. Partners in risk management. For more information on VMLIP, visit www.vmlins.org or follow VMLIP on Facebook.

The award-winning **Where the Rubber Meets the Road (WTRMTR)** campaign continues to evolve; recently the campaign added the use of driving simulators to its defensive-driving curriculum.



VML Insurance Programs: Award-winning programs, service and strength

VML Insurance Programs (VMLIP) has been continually recognized for award-winning risk management programs; staff development and training; comprehensive financial reporting; and overall professionalism and quality.

Learn more about the programs and recognitions received by VMLIP in this edition of the Virginia Town & City magazine. We are *Virginia's local government specialists*.

Connect with us!



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Participants of VMLIP's award-winning Leadership Development Program, (L to R): Nicole Jennings, Pamela Pitts, Jennifer Moore, Kari Soniat, Lisa Schenk, Marcus Hensel, Wendy Rice, Lisa Davis, Karen Nuckols, Pete Strickler and Shane Ziegler. Not pictured: Deborah Briggs, Tracey Dunlap, Mary Kay Marchetti and Harry McMillen

VML INSURANCE AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS



Award for Excellence in Performance: 2016
Association of Governmental Risk Pools (AGRiP)



Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting
Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA)



Top Workplaces 2016
*Sterling Workplace Awards, Richmond Times-Dispatch,
Greater Richmond SHRM*



Company of the Year
*Richmond Chapter of the Chartered Property and
Casualty Underwriter Society (CPCU)*



Award for Excellence in Performance: 2015
Association of Governmental Risk Pools (AGRiP)

A message from President Ron Rordam

IT HAS INDEED BEEN MY HONOR to serve as the President of the Virginia Municipal League. This is an organization with a proud history of service to the localities of the Commonwealth. At the same time, we have planted seeds for the future and it looks as bright as it ever has.

Upon my election last year, I announced key initiatives to address specific concerns. First, I announced the creation and development of a program to promote early childhood education. Study after study has shown the importance of a solid pre-K foundation to the ultimate success of our students.

While it is primarily cities and counties that bear the responsibility for K-12 education, I firmly believe that cities and towns alike should work to ensure the availability and quality of pre-K education in Virginia.

Representatives from the Virginia Association of School Boards and a number of local officials came together to work on this initiative. Out of their efforts came the new Stairway to Success contest, modeled on VML's Go Green contest which honors communities that implement environmentally-friendly policies.

In similar fashion, the Stairway to Success program seeks to honor those localities that develop and support programs to promote early childhood education. By honoring these communities, we hope to shine a light on what is possible when we are committed to ensuring that our children are prepared to enter elementary school.

Honestly, when we launched the program in May, we weren't sure what to expect. But we were overwhelmed when 23 communities applied and became certified Stairway to Success communities – all at the Gold Level.

From New Market to Virginia Beach, these communities are collecting supplies and books for pre-schools, exhibiting pre-schoolers' art in town halls, honoring child care and pre-school educators, providing financial support for the Virginia Preschool Initiative Program or Head Start, developing nature programs through Parks and Rec, and sponsoring literacy programs with local libraries.

I cannot wait to present these 23 communities with their awards at the Annual Conference. They are an inspiration to

all of our members, reminding us what local governments can do for their youngest residents. It is my hope that this is a program that will honor communities for their efforts and promote best practices in the area of early childhood education for years to come.

Another aspect of VML's service to our members that is so important is our advocacy. VML staff works during the legislative session and throughout the entire year to make sure that our voice is heard in Richmond. With their efforts, along with the efforts of local officials from around the Commonwealth, we have been quite successful when it comes to state policy.

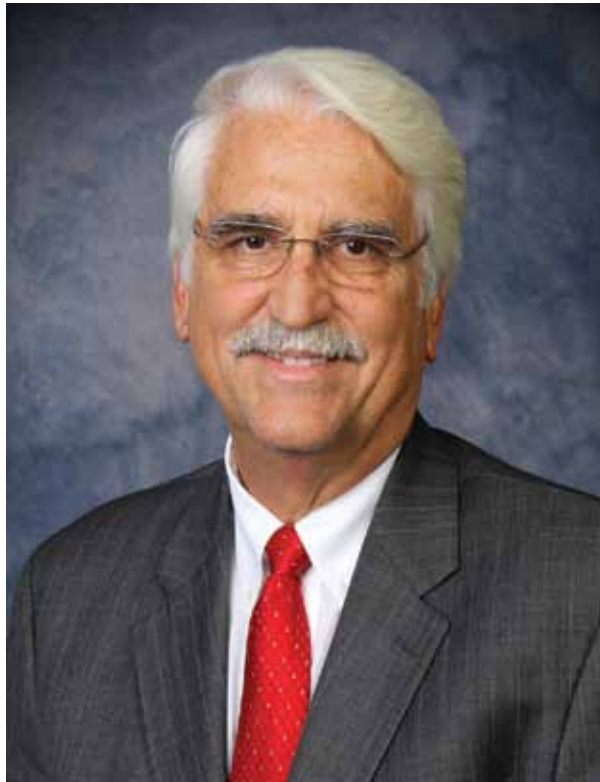
However, it has become apparent that there is room for us to enhance our advocacy efforts in Washington. Policies at the national level have a dramatic impact on our state, which relies heavily on the federal government, both in terms of domestic and military spending.

In order to elevate and promote engagement in this area, I announced the creation of the Federal Advisory Council. This group is made up of individuals from each of the 11 congressional districts and they have begun meeting in order to lay out a plan for increasing our participation in Washington. They will be presenting a federal policy statement at this year's conference and you will certainly be hearing more from this group in the future.

I want to thank the members of the VML Executive Committee for their continued support of our organization. It has been a privilege

to work with a group of committed local officials who are also amazing individuals. With this Executive Committee setting the course and the terrific League staff working hard to implement these policies, I can assure you that the future of our organization is indeed bright.

As I conclude my year as President, I want to thank you for all you do for the communities of the Virginia and for your support of VML. This organization is only as good as the participation of our members. So, I encourage each of you to get involved in our events, our trainings, and our advocacy as we work together to serve the citizens of the Commonwealth.



Ron Rordam

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron Rordam". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

VML Executive Committee



Robert K. Coiner
President-Elect
Mayor, Town of Gordonsville



Katie Sheldon Hammler
Vice President
Council Member, Town of Leesburg



Patricia P. Woodbury
At-large member
Council Member, City of Newport News



Mimi Elrod
At-large member
Mayor, City of Lexington



Anita James Price
At-large member
Vice Mayor, City of Roanoke



Christina Luman-Bailey
At-large member
Vice Mayor, City of Hopewell



Ophie Kier
At-large member
Vice Mayor, City of Staunton



Gene Teague
At-large member
Council Member, City of Martinsville



Timothy W. Darr
Town Section Chair
Mayor, Town of Front Royal



Willie Green
City Section Chair
Vice Mayor, City of Galax



Thomas R. Smigiel, Jr.
Urban Section Chair
Council Member, City of Norfolk



David P. Helms
Immediate Past President
Mayor, Town of Marion



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ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY

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LexingtonVirginia.com

2015 – 2016 Executive Director's Report

THE 2015 – 2016 YEAR saw a number of changes at VML. Each of those changes is designed to enhance our service to our members in some way. I am honored to work with an Executive Committee that consistently focuses on the good of the entire organization in setting goals. I have the utmost respect for each and every one of you and I thank you for your service to your communities and to VML.

I would especially like to highlight the efforts of our President, Mayor Ron Rordam of Blacksburg. President Rordam started the year with a clear vision and some specific goals regarding federal advocacy and early childhood education. Below you will see a summary of our work in these areas. I am proud of the work that was accomplished over the past year and I firmly believe that it has strengthened our foundation.

The following is a summary of VML's strategic goals along with specific key accomplishments of the last year.

Building Relationships

Relationships are the critical foundation upon which successful organizations must be built. VML is committed to forming and maintaining relationships in order to provide excellent service to the membership and to promote the principles of good government.

- **Federal Advisory Council.** In order to enhance our advocacy efforts in Washington, President Rordam established a Federal Advisory Council. Modeled on similar organizations in other states, this group includes a representative from each of the 11 congressional districts in the Commonwealth. The Federal Advisory Council held an organizational meeting and will continue to work on developing ways to enhance our presence at the federal level.
- **VML Day at the Capitol.** The new format for VML Day that was adopted in 2015 continues to provide an excellent opportunity for member localities to be briefed on key legislative issues and to meet with their delegates and senators. Plans are already underway for next year's VML Day which will be held on January 25, 2017.
- **General Assembly.** Throughout the 2016 legislative session, proposals were considered that would have undermined, and in some cases outright preempted, local authority. VML staff worked diligently with key partners in order to defeat some of these measures and to amend others to mitigate the impact. Of particular note was our success in defeating legislation that would have mandated partisan elections at the local level and/or mandated November elections for localities.
- **Finance Forum.** Each year since its inception, the participation in our annual Finance Forum has grown. In 2016, we partnered with VACo and saw the numbers increase

even more. With a focus on the overall economy as well as key budget items, local managers, finance directors, liaisons and others have found this event to be a critical part of kicking off the legislative session. The next Finance Forum will be held January 4, 2017.

Communications

Timely and substantive communication is critical to the overall mission of VML. As such, we are committed to establishing both print and electronic communications to achieve the research, training, and advocacy goals of the organization.

- **Communications Plan.** Over the course of the last year, we have worked to develop a comprehensive communications plan. This plan will guide our communications efforts, including *Virginia Town & City*, the League's *eNews*, and social media platforms.
- **Technology Assessment.** We recently conducted a technology assessment for our organization, including a review of our staffing, our vendors, and our overall abilities. This assessment has been completed and it will allow us to develop a three- to five-year strategy for moving forward with a variety of technological advancements in order to better serve our members.
- **Corporate Engagement.** We continue to look for new ways to engage with the business community and other entities that provide services to our members. For example, the new conference app includes listings and links for each of our Municipal Business Associates, exhibitors, and sponsors.

Engagement

Developing and maintaining an engaged membership is vital to both the short and long term success of VML. We will actively seek ways to engage our membership and to support citizen engagement in our local governments.

- **Civics and Early Childhood Education.** New this year, is the Stairway to Success program. Through a contest-type format, VML is encouraging communities to get involved in providing early childhood education services. Towns and cities alike share the responsibility for making sure that our students are ready to learn. At our Annual Conference, we will be honoring 23 communities for their outstanding service in this area. It is our hope that all communities can learn from the best practices recognized through this program.
- **Essay Contest.** VML continues to sponsor the "If I Were Mayor" essay contest with over 1,000 students submitting essays. Again, we celebrated the success of this

The Virginia Municipal League is a statewide, nonprofit, nonpartisan association of city, town and county governments established in 1905 to improve and assist local governments through legislative advocacy, research, education and other services.

Executive Director's Report

program when the Governor presented the regional and statewide awards to the students at VML Day.

- **Regional Supporters.** We continue to offer regional meetings around the state. Each fall, we focus on legislative issues and in the spring we discuss different topics depending upon the critical issues of each region. These sessions are an invaluable way to meet face to face with our members and for us to facilitate regional dialogue.
- **Trainings.** In addition to the VML Annual Conference, we have traditionally held a conference for newly elected officials in even numbered years. This year, we renamed this training the Institute for Local Officials, and encouraged veteran local officials to join us as well. In addition, we are developing the new Virginia Leadership Academy to provide a local government curriculum that includes three levels of certification. We expect to roll out this program in early 2017.
- **Conference Changes.** Beginning with this year's event, the VML Annual Conference schedule has changed significantly. In an effort to be a bit more efficient with everyone's time while providing the same high quality training, the programming for the event will begin on Sunday and conclude by Tuesday at noon. Attendees will also notice the new and improved conference app. Once downloaded, this app will be the only one that is needed for all VML events. This upgrade provides greater functionality, giving us the ability to provide more complete and timely information.

Finance

In order to evaluate existing programs and plan for the future of the organization, VML must maintain a strong financial position. VML is committed to maintaining and modernizing accurate and appropriate financial systems.

- **Stable Membership.** VML has a strong membership with 38 cities, 166 towns, and 8 counties as members of the association.
- **Strong Financial Position.** VML is a fiscally stable organization with adequate and appropriate reserves. Accounting processes were a part of our technology assessment and updating those will be a part of the three- to five-year plan.

Throughout our 111-year history, the Virginia Municipal League has served the localities of the Commonwealth. Our mission is strong and our commitment to excellence underlies our success. But, most importantly, VML brings together local officials from all across the state to work together to enhance the quality of life of our citizens. It is our honor to serve those who serve.

Sincerely,



Kimberly A. Winn
Executive Director



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VBCOA focuses on training students for careers in code enforcement

SUCCESSION PLANNING TO ENSURE a qualified workforce in building safety was a major focus for the Virginia Building and Code Officials this past year. VBCOA members, under the leadership of its High School Technical Training Program Committee (HSTTP), worked with local school officials, city and county government officials and community colleges to encourage the establishment of building trades and vocational training programs in high schools across the Commonwealth.

At least 10 schools have established an HSTTP, the highest number for any state in the country. Many students have already earned certificates of achievement from the International Code Council for their participation in the program, which gives those students a jump start on gaining the technical knowledge needed to work in building code enforcement or the construction trades.

Building officials from across the state also contributed time and talent to constructing a house, under the auspices of Habitat for Humanity's Habitat for Heroes program, for a disabled veteran and his family in Hampton. Habitat for Heroes is a program aimed at providing former military families with access to quality affordable homes.

This past May, numerous building officials' departments celebrated Building Safety Month by holding events aimed at

educating the public about the importance of building safety. Activities ranged from fairs and exhibits to the provision of free deck safety inspections.

Code officials fulfilled their long-standing commitment to continuing education hosting two popular VBCOA educational meetings and by the periodic training courses sponsored in regional meetings across the state.

In August, the International Code Council, which is the association that develops the building codes used in most of the United States and in many countries around the world, recognized VBCOA's leadership and professionalism by naming it the 2016 ICC Merit Chapter of the Year.

VBCOA includes in its membership approximately 1,000 professionals dedicated to ensuring safety in the built environment. John Walsh, Director of Property Code Enforcement in the City of Richmond, served as president from 2015-2016. VML Director of Research Mary Jo Fields serves as executive director.



VLGMA offers programs for current and aspiring management professionals

THIS YEAR, VLGMA BECAME a state partner and supporter of ICMA's coaching program. This program, intended to augment existing staff training, offers VLGMA members and their colleagues access to a series of free webinars and informational articles on all facets of local management.

VLGMA offered its own "speed coaching" sessions at both of its conferences this year. These sessions offered aspiring managers (both students and new professionals) an opportunity to chat with a number of current managers to gather information and advice about managing a community.

The Association continued its active support of the Local Government Certificate Program at Virginia Tech and its scholarship fund. VLGMA founded the program in conjunction with the University in 2008. A number of Association members serve

Who is VLGMA?

The Virginia Local Government Managers Association strengthens the quality of local government through professional development, training, networking, and member support. It is a state affiliate of ICMA. Members include managers and administrators in cities, towns, and counties, as well as their deputies, assistants and other local government employees.

as instructors, including VLGMA President Greg Kelly and Third Vice President Cindy Mester. Four members of the VLGMA Executive Board are among the graduates of the program.

Each year, VLGMA awards scholarships for the Senior Executive Institute (SEI) program in Charlottesville. This year, scholarships were awarded to Purcellville Assistant Town Manager Danny Davis, Winchester City Manager Eden Freeman, and Amherst County Administrator Dean Rodgers.

VLGMA also recognizes an outstanding assistant each year with the Marcia Mashaw Outstanding Assistant Award. This year's recipient was Frank W. Harksen, Jr., deputy county administrator in Hanover County.

In 2016-17, VLGMA's President is Greg Kelly, Abingdon Town Manager and President-Elect is Maurice Jones, Charlottesville City Manager. Janet Areson of the VML staff serves as the executive secretary to VLGMA.



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utilities that provide reliable and safe electricity at a reasonable price. Our commitment to the communities that we serve goes beyond keeping the lights on and appliances running. Our success is intertwined with that of each family and local business. MEPAV is part of a vital American tradition that makes communities better places to live and work. It's a tradition that works.



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Wakefield

MEPAV confronts renewable energy and eminent domain issues

THE 2016 GENERAL ASSEMBLY considered more than 60 significant energy and environmental-related measures of interest to the members of the Municipal Electric Power Association of Virginia.

A number of these bills dealt with solar power, net energy metering and energy efficiency and were assigned to a special Joint Subcommittee of the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee and the House Commerce and Labor Committee. They are being studied for consideration during the 2017 General Assembly Session.

The legislature considered and rejected legislation that would have required a mandatory renewable energy portfolio standard (RPS) for investor-owned electric utilities. Virginia's municipally-owned electric utilities recognize the importance of renewable energy but do not see a need for a mandatory RPS. Many MEPAV members have either invested in or continue to evaluate potential renewable energy projects. Unfortunately, renewable energy is often not cost competitive with other power supply options. Affordable electric energy continues to be essential to the quality of life of fixed-income citizens across the Commonwealth as well as for job-creating economic development efforts.

The legislature made changes to the state statute that created the Bristol Virginia Utilities Authority. The General Assembly kept intact important language regarding BVUA's ability to regulate attachments to its utility poles.

Legislation passed that would raise certain costs related to eminent domain. The bill was amended to treat government-owned utilities the same as private and cooperatively-owned utilities, minimizing the impact of the measure. The General Assembly continued to the 2017 Session legislation intended to promote the building out of wireless communications infrastructure.

At MEPAV's Annual Conference, members were briefed in several current trends and topics, including: federal issues affecting MEPAV members; the energy efficiency landscape in Virginia; and a presentation from Bristol, Virginia on lessons learned regarding their utility authority.

The Association and its legislative consultant, Thomas Dick, closely monitor the work of the General Assembly's legislative committees and subcommittees as they review proposed legislation. The Association works closely with the utility industry and interested groups to make sure that proposed legislation does not unfairly impact municipally-owned electric utilities.



Susan Hafeli, Senior Utilities Analyst for the Fairfax County Consumer Protection Commission, serves as chair of VEPGA

VEPGA rates average 3.6% lower than rates set by State Corporation Commission



COMPARING 2006 RATES to 2015 rates, the State Corporation Commission (SCC) found that, for a typical residential customer, Dominion's rates deteriorated from eighth place in 2006 to twelfth place out of the 20 peer utilities in the Southeast (with first place being the least costly).

Members of the Virginia Energy Purchasing Governmental Association (VEPGA) did not face an overall rate increase for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2016. The current four-year contract is estimated to save members \$57.4 million. And, through negotiations, annual fluctuations in costs tied to revenue recoveries are shifted for VEPGA members, resulting in greater stability for local budgets.

In addition to contract negotiating, VEPGA, through its Joint Action Committee, meets quarterly with Dominion to address street lighting (including LED streetlights), construction, relocation, and maintenance issues that cannot be worked out at the local level. VEPGA's Energy Efficiency Committee serves as an educational and technical resource to local governments on several issues including solar energy development.

Who is VEPGA?

VEPGA's membership includes more than 170 cities, towns, counties, school boards, and other public entities. Through membership in VEPGA, local governments in Virginia can negotiate their electricity rates directly with Dominion Virginia Power. Learn more at www.vepga.org.

VEPGA is in the process of developing a special committee to review innovative supply side initiatives proposed by power generators and/or commercial interests. This could lead to fewer carbon emissions and a more diversified energy portfolio in Virginia.

VEPGA also contracts with specialists to:

- Conduct reviews and audits of fuel and rider submissions to the State Corporation Commission;
- Develop cost projections for members; and
- Assist and advise VEPGA's Board of Directors on contract negotiations and legal issues.

Susan Hafeli, Senior Utilities Analyst for the Fairfax County Consumer Protection Commission, is the chair of VEPGA, a VML affiliate organization. VML Director of Fiscal Policy Neal Menkes serves as its executive secretary.



Virginia Municipal League staff

Kimberly A. Winn
Executive Director

Michelle Gowdy
General Counsel

Paulette Alexander
Accounting Assistant II

Neal Menkes
Director of Fiscal Policy

Janet Areson
Director of Policy Development

Kimberly Pollard
Director of Information Management

Nancy Chafin
Communications Specialist

Michael Polychrones
Director of Member Services

Sherall Dementi
Special Projects Coordinator

Joni Terry
Office Coordinator

Mary Jo Fields
Director of Research

Manuel Timbreza
Communications Specialist

Patrick Ford
Press Operator/Clerk

Anita Yearwood
Events & Corporate Relations Coordinator



Patrick Ford

Patrick Ford to receive NLC Stutz Award

THE LEAGUE IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE that Patrick Ford, Press Operator and Clerk, will receive the National League of Cities John G. Stutz Award in recognition of his 25 years of dedicated service to the League and its local government members.

Ford joined the League in 1991 shortly after returning from Kuwait where he served in the U.S. Army during Operation Desert Storm. During his eight years in the Army, he also served in Panama.

At VML, Ford is responsible for the production and distribution of the majority of the League's printed communications. He essentially runs an internal print shop for the League, which saves the organization and its members thousands of dollars in printing costs every year.

Ford also oversees the maintenance of the League's office building in Richmond, which was originally built as a private residence in 1847.

When asked about his long commitment to the League, Ford said that coach Vince Lombardi summed it up best when he said, "Individual commitment to a group effort is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."

Ford was born in Detroit. Because his father was also in the Army, his family moved frequently, and Ford lived in Texas, Alaska and Germany before settling in Virginia at age 12. In 1982, he enrolled in St. Paul's College in Lawrenceville. He left school in 1983 to care for his mother and brother following the death of his father.

A devoted family man, Ford and his wife Uvetta have four children and three grandchildren.

"The Virginia Municipal League has a tremendous staff that includes a number of Stutz Award winners, said Executive Director Kim Winn. "Patrick Ford joins this distinguished group and we are proud that he is being honored for his dedication to this organization."

The Stutz Award will be presented to Ford by NLC First Vice President Matt Zone at the VML Annual Conference in Virginia Beach, October 9-11.

The Stutz Award has been given each year since 1981 to recognize the contributions of long-time league staff members and is presented at the Congress of Cities during the annual conference. The award is named in honor of John G. Stutz, who, in 1924, convened the first meeting of what was to become the National League of Cities.

VML Member Local Governments

Cities

Alexandria
Bristol
Buena Vista
Charlottesville
Chesapeake
Colonial Heights
Covington
Danville
Emporia
Fairfax
Falls Church
Franklin
Fredericksburg
Galax
Hampton
Harrisonburg
Lexington
Lynchburg
Manassas
Manassas Park
Martinsville
Newport News
Norfolk
Norton
Petersburg
Poquoson
Portsmouth
Radford
Richmond
Roanoke
Salem
Staunton
Suffolk
Virginia Beach

Waynesboro
Williamsburg
Winchester

Towns

Abingdon
Accomac
Alberta
Altavista
Amherst
Appomattox
Ashland
Bedford
Berryville
Big Stone Gap
Blacksburg
Blackstone
Bluefield
Boones Mill
Bowling Green
Boydton
Boykins
Branchville
Bridgewater
Broadway
Brookneal
Buchanan
Burkeville
Cape Charles
Capron
Cedar Bluff
Charlotte Court
House
Chase City
Chatham

Cheriton
Chilhowie
Chincoteague
Christiansburg
Claremont
Clarksville
Clifton
Clifton Forge
Clintwood
Colonial Beach
Courtland
Craigs ville
Crewe
Culpeper
Damascus
Dayton
Dillwyn
Drakes Branch
Dublin
Dumfries
Eastville
Edinburg
Elkton
Exmore
Farmville
Fincastle
Floyd
Fries
Front Royal
Gate City
Glade Spring
Gordonsville
Gretna
Grottoes
Grundy
Halifax

Hamilton
Haymarket
Haysi
Herndon
Hillsville
Hurt
Independence
Iron Gate
Irvington
Ivor
Jarratt
Jonesville
Kenbridge
Keysville
Kilmarnock
La Crosse
Lawrenceville
Lebanon
Leesburg
Louisa
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Middleburg
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Mineral
Montross
Mount Crawford
Mount Jackson
Narrows
Nassawadox
New Market
Newsoms
Occoquan

Onancock
Onley
Orange
Painter
Pamplin
Parkley
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Saint Paul
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Shenandoah
Smithfield
South Boston
South Hill
Stanardsville
Stanley
Stephens City
Stony Creek
Strasburg
Stuart
Tangier
Tappahannock

Tazewell
The Plains
Timberville
Toms Brook
Troutville
Urbanna
Victoria
Vienna
Vinton
Wachapreague
Wakefield
Warrenton
Warsaw
Washington
Waverly
Weber City
West Point
White Stone
Windsor
Wise
Woodstock
Wytheville

Counties

Albemarle
Alleghany
Arlington
Loudoun
Prince George
Roanoke
York

Municipal Business Associates

These companies and organizations support the League as Municipal Business Associates. Through their membership, they stay connected with the issues that are important to Virginia local governments.



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Verizon
VHB
Virginia American Water
Virginia Rural Water Association
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VML Legislative and Policy Committees

Twenty-four local officials from diverse localities are appointed each year by the VML president to serve on VML's legislative committee. Committee members develop positions on legislation and urge the enactment, amendment or opposition to a variety of legislative initiatives. Another 163 local officials work on the VML policy committees. They help to shape the broader policies and make specific legislative recommendations to the Legislative Committee.

All localities are encouraged to participate on policy committees. Nomination forms are sent to each locality in the spring. If you're attending the VML conference, just let a VML staff member know of your interest and we'll follow up with you.

Legislative Committee

Chair: Ophie Kier, Vice Mayor, City of Staunton

Vice Chair: Don Harris, Mayor, Town of Bluefield

City Section

Mark Haley, City Manager, City of Hopewell

Ophie Kier, Vice Mayor, City of Staunton

Gene Teague, Council Member, City of Martinsville

Brian Thrower, City Manager, City of Emporia

Billy Withers, Council Member, City of Fredericksburg

Town Section

Susan Anderson, Council Member, Town of Blacksburg

Don Harris, Mayor, Town of Bluefield

James Hudson III, Mayor, Town of West Point

Phil Miskovic, Council Member, Town of Crewe

Sheila Olem, Council Member, Town of Herndon

Edward Owens, Mayor, Town of South Boston

Urban Section

Sheryl Bass, Council Member, City of Manassas

Ted Byrd, Council Member, City of

Harrisonburg

Lawrence G. Campbell Jr., Council Member, City of Danville

John Chapman, Council Member, City of Alexandria

Katie Cristol, Board Member, County of Arlington

Roger Fawcett, Council Member, City of Suffolk

Raphael "Ray" Ferris, Council Member, City of Roanoke

Robert Ike, Council Member, City of Chesapeake

Cynthia Newbille, Council Member, City of Richmond

Thomas R. Smigiel, Jr., Council Member, City of Norfolk

Christine Snead, Councilwoman, City of Hampton

Tina L. Vick, Council Member, City of Newport News

Community & Economic Development Policy Committee

Chair: Tina Vick, Council Member, City of Newport News

Vice Chair: Sally Thompson, Council Member, Town of Farmville

Richard Baugh, Vice Mayor, City of Harrisonburg

Wayne Bowers, Director of Economic

Development, City of Roanoke

Krishna Chachra, Vice Mayor, Town of Blacksburg

John Chapman, Council Member, City of

Alexandria

Paige Cherry, Vice Mayor, City of Portsmouth

M. Benjamin Davenport, Council Member, City of Virginia Beach

Michael DeMarco, Council Member, City of Fairfax

Bebhinn Egger, Councilman, Town of Front Royal

Karen Epps, Director of Economic Development, City of Colonial Heights

W. Joe Green, Council Member, City of Colonial Heights

Katie Sheldon Hammler, Council Member, Town of Leesburg



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 Sharon Hodge, Council Member, City of Martinsville
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 Shannon Kane, Council Member, City of Virginia Beach
 Ophie Kier, Vice Mayor, City of Staunton
 Keith Liles, Council Member, Town of Vinton
 Pasha Majdi, Vice Mayor, Town of Vienna
 Douglas McCollum, Council Member, Town of Purcellville
 Richard Peters, Assistant Town Manager/
 Economic Dev. Director, Town of Vinton
 Fred Ramey, City Manager, City of Norton
 Sunny Reynolds, Vice Mayor, Town of Warrenton
 Noah Simon, City Manager, City of Lexington
 David Trinkle, Vice Mayor, City of Roanoke
 Elizabeth Via-Gossman, Comm. Dev. Director,
 City of Manassas

Lue Ward, Council Member, City of Suffolk
 David Whitus, Mayor, Town of Farmville
 Melva Willis, Council Member, Town of Dumfries
 Mark Wolfe, Council Member, City of Manassas

Environmental Quality Policy Committee

Chair: Mark Haley, City Manager, City of Hopewell
Vice Chair: Dan Sze, Council Member, City of Falls Church
 James Barker, Council Member, Town of Marion
 Christopher Blakeman, Environmental Administrator, City of Roanoke
 Tom H. Brown, Wastewater Superintendent, Town of Luray

Steve Burke, Town Manager, Town of Front Royal
 David Butler, Mayor, Town of Leesburg
 Sandra Cherry, Council Member, City of Newport News
 Mike Collins, Public Utilities Director, City of Harrisonburg
 Erik Curren, Council Member, City of Staunton
 Tony Dawood, Director of Utilities, City of Manassas
 Kai Degner, Council Member, City of Harrisonburg
 Ken Elston, Council Member, City of Manassas
 Thomas L. Foster, Police Chief, Town of Vinton
 John Garland, Council Member, City of Roanoke
 Andrew Greear, Acting Water Plant Supt., City of Norton
 William Henley, Public Works Director, City of Colonial Heights
 Timothy Johnson, Council Member, City of Suffolk
 Nancy Loftus, Council Member, City of Fairfax
 Anita McMillan, Planning Director, Town of Vinton
 Timothy Mitchell, Public Utilities Director, City of Lynchburg
 Eric Monday, City Attorney, City of Martinsville
 Turner Perrow, Council Member, City of Lynchburg
 Janet Scheid, Council Member, Town of Vinton
 Teresa Schmidt, Council Member, City of Hampton
 Howard Springsteen, Council Member, Town of Vienna
 Michael Sutphin, Council Member, Town of Blacksburg
 Richard West, Dir. of Public Works, Town of Dumfries
 Theresa Whibley, Vice Mayor, City of Norfolk
 Doris White, Council Member, City of Emporia
 Alexander Wilmer, Paralegal, Town of Bridgewater

Finance Policy Committee

Chair: Christine Snead, Council Member, City of Hampton
Vice Chair: Laurie DiRocco, Mayor, Town of Vienna
 Marc Aveni, Council Member, City of Manassas
 John Connolly, Council Member, Town of Front Royal
 Barbara Dameron, Director of Finance, City of Roanoke
 John M. deTriquet, Vice Mayor, City of Chesapeake
 Laurie DiRocco, Mayor, Town of Vienna
 Thomas Dunn, II, Council Member, Town of Leesburg
 Raphael Ferris, Council Member, City of Roanoke
 Matthew Hare, Council Member, Town of Vinton
 Bill Hartley, Vice Mayor, City of Bristol
 Terry Holmes, Council Member, City of Staunton
 Gregory Kochuba, Mayor, City of Colonial Heights
 Curtis Milteer, Council Member, City of Suffolk
 William Murphy, Council Member, Town of Dumfries
 Larry Propst, Director of Finance, City of Harrisonburg

Continues on next page

Shop, Dine, Stay in Middleburg, VA
 Calendar of Events: www.middleburgva.gov

VML Committees

Finance Policy Committee *continued*

Cynthia Rohlf, Assistant Manager, City of Newport News
 Eleanor Schmidt, Council Member, City of Fairfax
 Abe Shearer, Council Member, City of Harrisonburg
 Jeffery Shupe, Director of Finance, City of Norton
 Barry Thompson, Town Manager, Town of Vinton
 Brian Thrower, City Manager, City of Emporia
 Leon Towarnicki, City Manager, City of Martinsville
 Laura Triggs, Deputy City Manager, City of Alexandria
 BJ Wilson, Interim Finance Director, Town of Front Royal
 Paul York, Finance and Administration Director, City of Manassas

General Laws Policy Committee

Chair: Phil Miskovic, Council Member, Town of Crewe
Vice Chair: Donald Hunter, Council Member, Town of Farmville

Sheryl Bass, Council Member, City of Manassas
 William Bradshaw, City Attorney, City of Norton
 Charles Brewer, Vice Mayor, Town of Dumfries
 Chris Brown, City Attorney, City of Harrisonburg
 Daniel Callaghan, City Attorney, City of Roanoke
 Linda Curtis, Vice Mayor, City of Hampton
 Donald Goldberg, Council Member, City of Suffolk
 James Harrington, Council Member, City of Staunton
 Christopher Jones, Mayor, City of Harrisonburg
 Robert Lohr, Town Manager, Town of Purcellville
 Deborah Lynch, Council Member, City of Emporia
 Fernando Martinez, Council Member, Town of Leesburg
 Jacob Meza, Council Member, Town of Front Royal
 D. Wayne Moore, City Attorney, City of Poquoson
 Doug Napier, Town Attorney, Town of Front Royal
 Mary Person, Mayor, City of Emporia
 Jon Russell, Council Member, Town of Culpeper
 Margaret Schmitt, Deputy City Manager (Interim), City of Lynchburg
 Sharon Scott, Council Member, City of Newport News
 Carey Sienicki, Council Member, Town of Vienna
 Gene Teague, Council Member, City of Martinsville
 Jerri Wilson, Legislative & Management Analyst, City of Newport News
 John Wood, Council Member, City of Colonial Heights

Human Development Policy Committee

Chair: Sheryl Bass, Council Member, City of Manassas
Vice Chair: Charles Frye, Council Member, City of Fredericksburg

Alan Archer, Assistant City Manager, City of Newport News
 Alexander Banks, Director of Special Projects, City of Harrisonburg

Leroy Bennett, Vice Mayor, City of Suffolk
 Christine Blair, Social Services Director I, City of Norton
 Jennifer Bowles, Vice Mayor, City of Martinsville
 John Bush, Council Member, Town of Blacksburg
 Carolyn Carey, Council Member, City of Emporia
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 Lisa Clark, Vice Mayor, City of Buena Vista
 Donna Collins, Human Resources Director, Town of Vinton
 Bradley Grose, Mayor, Town of Vinton
 Ronald King, Director of Family Services, City of Manassas
 Ian Lovejoy, Council Member, City of Manassas
 Janice Miller, Council Member, City of Fairfax
 Andrea Oakes, Council Member, City of Staunton
 Anita James Price, Vice Mayor, City of Roanoke
 Stephanie Moon Reynolds, City Clerk, City of Roanoke
 A. D. Reid, Vice Mayor, Town of Farmville
 L. Dale Temple, Council Member, City of Emporia
 Donnie R. Tuck, Mayor, City of Hampton
 Tina Wyatt-Younger, Council Member, Town of South Boston
 Derrick Wood, Council Member, Town of Dumfries
 Diane Yates, Vice Mayor, City of Colonial Heights

Transportation Policy Committee

Chair: Ted Byrd, Council Member, City of Harrisonburg
Vice Chair: James Murray, Council Member, Town of Ashland

Kelly Burk, Vice Mayor, Town of Leesburg
 Linda Jane Colbert, Council Member, Town of Vienna

Timothy Darr, Mayor, Town of Front Royal
 Michelle Dykstra, Council Member, City of Roanoke
 Roger Fawcett, Council Member, City of Suffolk
 Brian Fields, Council Member, Town of Dumfries
 Bryan Foster, Deputy City Manager, City of Manassas
 Kenneth Frenier, Council Member, City of Colonial Heights
 Jeffrey Greenfield, Council Member, City of Fairfax
 Leslie Hager-Smith, Council Member, Town of Blacksburg
 Joey Hiner, Acting Public Works Director, Town of Vinton
 Mark Jamison, Transportation Div. Mgr., City of Roanoke
 David Kirby, Council Member, Town of Herndon
 Yon Lambert, Dir. of DOT & Environmental Svs., City of Alexandria
 Sabrina McCarty, Council Member, Town of Vinton
 Steve McElroy, Public Works Director, City of Norton
 Will Moffett, Council Member, City of Hampton
 Douglas Noble, Council Member, Town of Vienna
 Walter Obenschain, Council Member, City of Staunton
 Carrie Sanders, Acting Deputy Director of Transportation, City of Alexandria
 Reggie Smith, Director of Transportation, City of Harrisonburg
 Mark Stroud, Council Member, City of Martinsville
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