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Greetings from Greg



Greg Kelly

Greetings from Greg *"You Can't Make This Stuff Up"*

It's funny how things always find a crazy path around our lives but yet they somehow eventually and often surprisingly come full circle. With that said, it was ten years ago that I first began my journey into VLGMA. I must admit, that at that time, I was new to the local government administration profession, and despite being a local government attorney for many years already, I felt a bit timid about mingling with folks who had already made successful careers out of this business. It was closely akin to meeting the local Bar Association for the first time fresh out of law school. Despite my apprehension, I joined VLGMA in early 2007 and decided to make the long trek to the summer conference at Virginia Beach to search for the "ins" and "outs" of this business.

I remember the journey quite well, as I had two young children and a seven plus hour drive ahead of me, if kids and traffic cooperated. By then, I was well seasoned for the journey with kids.....leave early while they are still asleep or at least still sleepy and bring your favorite CDs along to carry your mind away. Funny thing about CDs is that it takes an entire box set of them for me to get to Virginia

Beach. My music of choice for this particular trip, and a few others as well, was Jimmy Buffett's box set, "Beaches, Bars, Boats and Ballads", that my kids had given me for father's day a few years earlier. I figured that if I was going to the beach to meet strangers, what better philosopher of the beach and fun times with people, than Jimmy Buffett as my guide. The seven hours flew by that day and check-in at the Hilton was with ease. So far, so good.

After getting checked in, the kids were churning with excitement to hit the beach. Before doing that though, I wanted to get the dreaded registration over with. When I arrived at the registration desk, it was as if I was expected to be there. My family and I were greeted by none other than Peter Stephenson, the Town Manager of Smithfield, who was a hoot to say the least, and who genuinely made us feel welcome and part of a new professional family. Wow, my fears were immediately put at bay before I even received my registration packet. I will always remember my first entrance in to the VLGMA fold very fondly, thanks to Peter and of course the hospitality of all of the VLGMA staff that make it happen behind the scenes. Now Peter was a nice guy and an officer in the organization, but what happen next was nothing short of pure Karma, I suppose.

The President of VLGMA that year was James City County's veteran administrator, Sandy Wanner. I remember he made the announcement at the opening reception that there was a reception and dinner at the Virginia Aquarium, and my kids were extremely excited about that, as was I. On opening day there was a kite flying contest after the opening dinner and both of my kids won prizes. I think that contest must be sort of like practicing law. That is to say, when you first pass the bar and begin practicing law there is often an unwritten rule among some judges that they often try to find a way to let a new attorney win or at least feel like they won their first case. In VLGMA, I think there may be a similar unwritten rule that somehow the newcomers win or at least feel like they won the kite flying contest...at least that's how it worked out for me and my kids.

So, here I am a rookie to local government management and what happens next, sets things in motion that I never expected but I am so thankful and glad that they did. While I was attending the second day of the conference sessions, my youngest daughter, Rebecca, was meeting a new friend. Her name was Megan and she was the granddaughter of Sandy Wanner, VLGMA President. Megan boasted to Rebecca of her grandfather and how he was the President of this great organization. I'm not exactly sure what happened next, but I'm pretty sure that two new friends may have pulled some strings behind the scenes to send me on my way down this path that I find myself in at this moment. I'm not sure it really happened that way, but it makes for a good story anyway. Regardless of how things played out, the next thing I knew, I was placed on the Executive Committee of VLGMA the following year and now here I am almost ten years later as your Acting President/President Elect. Some call it being in the right place at the right time, others call it fate or Karma, but for me it's just coming full circle in a family of friends and colleagues that graciously accepted me into an organization that has openly shared its wealth of collective knowledge and has helped me grow professionally to the point that I now feel comfortable in my own "local government shoes". And speaking of coming full circle, this is the first time since my first year in VLGMA that we have held an event at the Virginia Aquarium. Perhaps just another day to some, but full circle to me.

Since it's about time to head back to the beach in another week, I will leave you with some lyrics from a great Jimmy Buffett song entitled "Trip Around The Sun" that sums up, at least for me, what coming full circle really is.

*No you never see it comin'
Always wind up wonderin' where it went
Only time will tell if it was time well spent
It's another revelation
Celebrating what I should have done
With these souvenirs of my trip around the sun*

I can assure you that my time in VLGMA for me has been "well spent" and all of your words of wisdom, advice and friendship are my "souvenirs" of my professional "trip around the sun".

Until next time, please join me in welcoming Cristol Klevinsky, Management Specialist for Henrico County; Michael C. Murphy, Assistant City Manager of Charlottesville; Barry Thompson, Interim Town Manager of Vinton and Richard Douglas, City Manager of Covington as our newest members to VLGMA. I look forward to meeting them all soon.

I hope to see many of you at the beach. And of course, I hope your trip is less than seven hours.

[Contact Greg Kelly](#)

Position Changes

May 2016



- Brenda Reamy, town manager for Montross the past 22 years, has announced she is retirement. Patricia "Trish" Lewis has been appointed as her successor.
- Bonnie Svrcek, deputy city manager for Lynchburg since 1999, has been appointed manager there, effective July 1st. She succeeds Kim Payne, who is retiring on June 30th.
- Jon Lansford, interim county administrator for Alleghany County, and assistant administrator since 2007, has been appointed administrator there.
- Steve Biggs, town manager for Clayton, NC, has been selected to succeed the retiring Barry Helms as town manager for Christiansburg, effective July 1st.
- Tom Leahy, director of public utilities and interim deputy city manager for the city of Virginia Beach, has been appointed deputy city manager there.
- Ken Chandler, associate director for administrative services administration in the Department of Transportation for Washington, DC, has been appointed

deputy city manager for Virginia Beach.

- Joseph P. "Joe" Casey, deputy manager for Henrico County since 2013, has been appointed administrator for Chesterfield County.

Member Spotlight - Bonnie Svrcek

Lynchburg City Council, after a months-long nationwide search, last week tapped Deputy City Manager Bonnie Svrcek to succeed Kimball Payne as the next city manager.

It was a good choice, a wise choice and a historic choice, as Svrcek will be the first woman to lead government operations for the city. She starts her job July 1, the day after Payne officially retires after a decade and a half in the post.

Read more [here](#)

August DAO Meeting and VT Professional Development

We are excited to announce, for the third year, the partnership opportunity between VLGMA DAO and VT Professional Development. This year the DAOs are invited to attend either one or both days of the now full two day conference. The agenda topics and speakers are very relevant to our DAO's professional development as well as responsive to the requested topics we have received from past meeting evaluations.



John
Nalbandian

In addition, there will be two great DAO only events; one on each day in case you can only attend one of the days. The first is a networking opportunity at the Monday evening reception and the second is a breakfast "Idea Exchange" on Tuesday morning. So come prepared with new programs, policies, initiatives to share with fellow DAOs over a continental breakfast. No idea is too big or too small.

Please pass this information to other DAOs in your locality.

Here is the how's for registering for this great conference (no separate DAO registration fee):

Registration is now open for the 3rd Annual Professional Development Conference in Local Government in Roanoke, VA on August 8th and 9th, 2016. After a successful two years, we are extending the conference to two full days!

Dr. John Nalbandian, University of Kansas, Mr. Bob O'Neill, ICMA, and Kim Payne, Lynchburg City Manager highlight the conference agenda speakers!

Over 100 participants representing over 40 localities have attended the conference and recommend this conference to anyone working in local government in Virginia.

Register NOW!!! <http://www.cpe.vt.edu/lgm/>

Questions? Please contact Stephanie Davis sddavis@vt.edu

Tedd's Take



Tedd Povar

Being Grateful

As we celebrate Memorial Day, and anticipate other major national celebrations like the 4th of July, it gives one pause to reflect on our unbelievable fortune of living in the United States, and wonder why there is such a divergence of opinions on how good we have it here.

Many have come to believe that the U.S. is a "second class" nation compared to the rest of the world. Frankly, nothing could be farther from the truth. Sure, we have plenty of serious warts like income inequality, racism, deficient infrastructure, political gridlock, and the list goes on. But any summary of ills can be countered by an even longer list of positives, including economic and higher educational opportunities, per capita income, consumer product availability, a revered legal system, and an envied standard of living.

So why do many believe we are so much less than we truly are? Here are two contributing causes: 1) the 24 hour news cycle, and 2) declining travel abroad.

It is no secret that good news does not attract an audience on radio, tv, or newspapers, and that it is difficult for tv networks, in particular, to gain audience without being more sensational and outrageous than the others. (Is everything really "breaking news"??) We need to remember that all our news outlets, save NPR and PBS, are profit-based businesses, not public servants. If negativism sells, that's what we get and, unfortunately, it does.

It is also painfully obvious that foreign travel has become less attractive to the general public given the high cost and perceived greater personal risk. Only 3.5% of the population travels abroad, according to the Huffington Post. Very few Americans are, therefore, exposed to what it's like to live in foreign countries. It is an irreplaceable learning experience, and mostly confirms how truly fortunate we are to live in this country. As a result, we just don't know!

It's time to take a break from the media drumbeat, and also experience the rest of the world. It will change perspectives.

[Contact Tedd Povar](#)

Certificate News

The Certificate program would like to offer a few highlights during this time of transition in the year.

Jerry Cox Scholarship

Mr. Jerry Cox, Alumnus of Virginia Tech, provided a generous financial donation for the establishment of a scholarship for a student with an interest in local government. The scholarship guidelines stipulate that the selected student secure an internship in a local government in Virginia or North Carolina. Katie Vugladic, an MPA student in Blacksburg, was the selected recipient and will be interning

**THE Graduate Certificate
in Local Government
Management**



*"Preparing the Next Generation of
Local Government Leaders"*

with Roanoke County's Parks and Recreation Department this summer. The Certificate program would like to express its thanks and recognize Thomas Gates, County Administrator for Roanoke County for supporting this scholarship program and hosting our scholarship recipient.

Graduates

The Certificate is proud to recognize our Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 Graduates of the Certificate in Local

Government Management.

- | | |
|--|--|
| Julie Kang, Fairfax County | Emily Pelliccia, City of Charlottesville |
| William Garrett, Fairfax County | Adina Pogue, Department of Corrections |
| Jeff Martin, City of Lynchburg | Kim Taylor-Davis, City of Alexandria |
| Adelina Fuente, Fairfax County | Paul Davis, Jr., Fairfax County |
| Jennifer Privette,
City of Newport News | Aka Jones |
| Matthew Scott, Fairfax County | Alex Showalter, MPA |
| Mallory Stribling, Fauquier County | Teena Dutt, Fairfax County |
| Catherine Henry,
City of Lynchburg | Sonam Dua, Fairfax County |
| Stephanie Cooperstein, MPA | Phil Andes, Town of Blacksburg |
| Valerie Tweedie, Town of
Christiansburg | Benjamin Blankenship, Henrico County |

Faculty Additions

The Certificate has added three additional adjunct faculty members; Steve Owen, City of Staunton, Becky Dickson, Former Administrator of Goochland County and Neil Morgan, York County. We are very excited about the new faculty and know they will do a great job.

Spring Workshops

The Certificate sponsored two Spring Workshops: in April in Abingdon, VA and Stafford, VA. We extend special thanks to Greg Kelly and Anthony Romanello for hosting the program. Over 70 professionals in local government learned from Dr. John Nalbandian and the team from the Alliance for Innovation. In addition, we were able to generate almost \$4,000 towards the scholarship fund. Fauquier County will be hosting a similar session in October and more information will be sent to VLGMA members.

Professional Development Conference

The Third Annual Professional Development Conference in Local Government will be held at the Hotel Roanoke on August 8th and 9th, 2016. We have a unique mixture of offerings that will appeal to managers, deputies/assistants, and employees at all levels of your organization. Key speakers include Dr. John Nalbandian, Mr. Bob O'Neill, and Kim Payne. For our managers, please consider

sponsoring one of your employees to attend the conference. The Alliance for Innovation will present the Next Big Things report.

Manager attendance is important at this conference. Many of the attendees are "up and coming managers and leaders" and your connection with the next generation is very important. I encourage our managers to attend the conference to demonstrate support for the next generation of local government leaders and managers.

As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at sddavis@vt.edu or 804-980-5549. Thank you.

A DAO in the Life - Jerri Wilson

I have had the opportunity to serve as the Legislative Liaison for my City through eight sessions of the General Assembly. One of the things that I enjoy most about this role is the variety of issues that present themselves: budgets, land use, education, transportation, stormwater, recurrent coastal flooding, plastic bags, Freedom of Information, ethics, red light cameras, body cameras, cutting grass and weeds, tax preferences for veterans The list really could go on and on.

Increasingly though, public policies to regulate emerging technologies are taking center stage: transportation network companies, such as Uber and Lyft, short-term residential lodging (Air BnB), and unmanned aerial systems (aka drones) just to name a few. Why is this important you may ask? Well, in many recent cases policy proposals have emerged that give local government increasingly narrow authority to regulate the use of these technologies within their boundaries and in some cases, expressly prohibit localities from any regulation. Even in a Dillon Rule state where limited local authority is nothing new, this erosion of local authority from an already lean base is alarming. Take for example, Transportation Network Companies that offer a ride-sharing service very similar to taxi services. Taxis are regulated by localities but thanks to effective advocacy by the companies, TNCs are regulated by the State. Local regulation was given little to no consideration.

Another example is this session's Short-term Residential Lodging Act. The Lodging Act preempts localities from prohibiting companies such as Air BnB from operating in their localities. The legislation was passed by large majorities in both Chambers despite almost unanimous objection from localities Statewide. Only superb strategic maneuvering on the part of a few senior legislators friendly to local government kept the Lodging Act from being fully enacted without further study. Last but not least, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (aka Drones) are another promising technology, the application of which has unknowable unintended consequences. However, drones will be off-limits to local regulation as of July 1, "No locality may regulate the use of privately owned, unmanned aircraft system ... within its boundaries. "

Of course, I think we should foster innovation and welcome technologies that add value to our daily lives. Still, many of the challenges these technologies create



Jerri Wilson

will be left for local government to overcome. For example, consider a few of the likely impacts on local government of driverless cars. Drastic reductions in traffic violations equate to decreased revenue from fines and fees. Manpower needed to patrol roadways is most likely reduced, perhaps necessitating police and sheriffs restructure departments. Residents who previously earned a living as taxi drivers (or in a similar profession) will need to learn new skills and may at some point rely on local social services or education or training programs to aide in the transition. Forecast... localities doing more with less, a tale as old as time!

Ideally, localities should have the level of authority that is most practicable for managing emerging technology and the benefits and/or challenges it creates. So, in localities where the Council or Board has made preserving local authority a legislative priority, we can take proactive steps to do so. Keep in mind that a great deal of legislation is crafted well in advance of the actual General Assembly session. As stakeholders in this issue, one usually effective way to protect local interests is to inform the policy making process as it happens - have a seat at the table! Communicate regularly with policy makers, share information, and present alternatives. Whenever possible, try to leverage resources such as professional associations, regional commissions, and VML or VACo; being engaged with other stakeholders and building a community of support can make a difference and result in policies that are much more favorable to local government!

[Contact Jerri Wilson](#)

Civic Engagement Best Practices - Frederick County



Jay Tibbs

WHEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION WEEK AND THE STANDARDS OF LEARNING COLLIDE

By: Jay Tibbs, Deputy County Administrator for Human Services, Frederick County, VA

"How old do you have to be to speak at a board of supervisors' meeting?"

"Do you have to go to college or have any special training to be a member of the board of supervisors?"

"How much do you get paid?"

"Do you like your job?"

"If I get arrested in Winchester will I be sent to the Winchester jail?"

These are just a few of the questions I and members of the Frederick County Board of Supervisors and School Board fielded as part of our Local Government Education Week 2.0 program. For the second year in a row, Frederick County Government partnered with Frederick County Public Schools to present a Local Government Education Week program to the eighth grade Civics classes at each of our four middle schools.

Our program was developed with two goals in mind. First, we wanted to educate the students about Frederick County government and the services we provide. Secondly, and what the schools deemed as most important, we wanted to provide a review of the local government portion of the Civics and Economics Standards of Learning (SOL). Working with high school Government Service

Learning students from two of our high schools we began revising last year's program, based upon student and teacher feedback, to create a more interactive learning experience for the students. We knew that we needed to engage the younger generation, build a more knowledgeable community, and to improve the Civics SOL scores.

Similar to last year, we utilized a program called Kahoot, which allowed us to create an online quiz game. The Kahoot quiz was administered before we presented our program and immediately after our program and the pre and post test results were captured so we could measure any student improvement.

In addition to Kahoot, this year we introduced a program called Quizlet, which allowed us to create an interactive study guide so the students could review their local government SOL Civics material. This program enabled the students to review the pertinent Civics SOL materials through a virtual flash card review, matching games, and/or a quiz format to include matching, fill in the blank, and true-false questions.

One of the neat things about working with the high school Service Learning students is while we teach them about local government they introduce us to new technologies and applications that we might not otherwise use. So there is learning taking place on both sides (i.e. supervisor to student and student to supervisor).

We developed an online scavenger hunt utilizing Frederick County's website. Using real life scenarios where the students would interact with their local government and, using our website, they would have to find the correct department that was responsible for addressing their issue.

Finally, we had a station where students could interact with members of the board of supervisors and school board. This was a six to seven minute question and answer session with the board members. To help facilitate dialogue, we prepared some seed questions to get things started and provided candy to those students who asked questions. The elected officials really enjoyed interacting with the eighth grade students and the students appreciated the opportunity to see and interact with their board member. The students also appreciated the candy!

At the end of our program, we found that the average pre-quiz score was 44.34%. The average post-quiz score was 82.34%, which was an improvement of 38 points. Surprisingly, our largest score improvement was 49 points, as we had one class score 42% on the pre-quiz and 91% on the post-quiz. In the weeks following our program, we were pleased to hear from Frederick County schools that the eighth grade students scored much higher this year on their Civics SOL exam, so we hope our program and review was part of the reason for this improvement.

An added bonus for the Service Learning students was that we discovered a possible error in the Standards of Learning Standard CE.8a. This standard speaks to the Constitutional Officers but listed only four as the Commonwealth's Attorney was omitted. We contacted the Virginia Department of Education raised this issue and provided evidence of this perceived error. We are curious to hear the outcome of our possible discovery.

As we close the book on another Local Government Education Week in Frederick County, we are excited about the positive feedback we received from teachers and students regarding this year's program and we are looking forward to next year

and Local Government Education Week 3.0.

[Contact Jay Tibbs](#)

Mel's Poetry Corner



Mel Gillies

Diving Beneath the SURFace

We are intuitively, innately drawn
to the rhythm of the ocean's song,
a pulsing music from the deep,
the cadence of our heart beat.

The surf faces us and breathes
with waves rising as it conceives.

Ideas emerging, will they be expressed?

Waves form and sometimes crest.

Reaching shore, then to re-seed
within the realm of infinite possibility.

The rhythm of the rise and fall,
thoughts surfacing from the Source of All.

Dive into the depths of where we come from.

Infinite Life, the ocean of One.

[Contact Mel Gillies](#)

Innovation Edge

Blueprint Chesterfield: Building a Better Community

At the TLG Conference coming up this month in St. Paul, Minnesota, Chesterfield County will do a follow-up case study presentation to the study they presented last year.

Presenter, Natalie Spillman, Budget and Management Analyst for the county, says, "Blueprint Chesterfield is the framework that organizes longstanding county practices related to budget and strategic planning into a more coordinated and understandable system. To that end, Blueprint also serves as a communications tool to facilitate more meaningful dialogue concerning the County's strategic mission, both internally and with the community. Blueprint Chesterfield allows us to easily define why we do what we do." Read more about the case study in this month's Transformations [here](#). AND, I hope to see you at TLG!!



About the Alliance for Innovation: The Alliance for Innovation is inspiring innovation to advance communities. As the premier resource for emerging practices in local government, we are building cultures of innovation and connecting thought leaders in the profession with the help of our partners

International City/County Management Association and Arizona State University. We are accessible and valuable to all levels of an organization. You can learn more about the Alliance at www.transformgov.org or contact me at saburnett@transformgov.org

VT P3 Leadership Workshop



CREATING VALUE THROUGH EFFECTIVE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP(P3) LEADERSHIP UPDATE

Workshop participants will also be given the opportunity of an overview to a potential P3 mixed-use development on Route 1 in Fairfax County. Staff will be available to discuss the process of determining area needs and plan to solicit proposals for a master development plan, including the repurposing of a historic 150,000 square foot former high school. The Virginia Tech workshop will engage area leaders to better understand the issues they face during the implementation of P3s. Participants will be able to share their own experiences and learn how to apply all of these lessons to future P3s

Friday, June 17, 2016

9 AM to 1 PM

Virginia Tech Research Center

900 N. Glebe Road, Arlington, VA

Join the leaders and stakeholders of the Liberty Crest at Laurel Hill, an Adaptive Reuse Project and Wiehle-Reston East Garage and Reston Station developments in Northern Virginia, and learn how to successfully navigate a Public-Private Partnership (P3) venture. The following key representatives will be on hand to lead these dynamic panel discussions:

- Liberty Crest at Laurel Hill
 - James L. Perry, Regional Partner/Vice President, Elm Street Development, Inc.
 - Dave Vos, Development Project Manager, The Alexander Company
 - Chris Caperton, Project Coordinator, Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning
- Wiehle-Reston East Garage and Reston Station
 - Chris Clemente, CEO, Comstock
 - Maggie Parker, Vice President, Communications, Comstock
 - Rob Stalzer, Deputy County Executive, Fairfax County

[Early Registration](#) - \$250 includes light breakfast and lunch
(After May 31, 2016, registration costs \$275)

Group Discount - 10% off for organizations with four (4) or more participants

** If you have a disability or require special accommodations, please contact Rosa Krewson at rosac@vt.edu at least ten (10) business days prior to the event to ensure your needs are met.**

Calendar

Upcoming Events

[Summer Conference](#) - June 8-10, 2016 at the Virginia Beach Oceanfront Sheraton Hotel.

[More Dates](#)

Future Newsletter Articles



A goal of this e-newsletter is to keep you informed on activities relative to our profession. As with any membership-based organization, contributions by members are welcome and encouraged. Topics can range from a recent achievement in your locality to an upcoming event with networking potential to human interest stories about current or retired members. To contribute simply send your brief e-newsletter content (~5 sentences or less) via email to [Molly Harlow](#).

Future Newsletter Articles

[VLGMA Website](#)

[ICMA Website](#)

[Alliance for Innovation](#)

[Virginia Municipal League](#)

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