

## June 2019 eNews

### Cup of Joe to Go



Sorry for any delay in the e-news this month, it's entirely on me. I had drafted my last column for Molly that reflected on my year of President. But once Friday around 4PM occurred to our brothers and sisters in Virginia Beach I discarded that draft and hadn't started to write again until Tuesday night. I hope that all of you were able to get e-mails from VLGMA and myself that showed both our emotions, care for fellow employees and pathways to further assist Virginia Beach.

I crafted similar messages to the entire Chesterfield workforce over the past weekend as I wanted all employees to know how important they are and how much we try to ensure a safe workplace. More importantly, how they all need to know how important that they take care of themselves and offer the comforting and supportive role to fellow employees.

Those actions can help create a great and safe workplace, but as evidenced on May 31, there is no guarantee that even doing all the right things is 100% in preventing tragedy from arising. It's the world we live in and it's our faith that we must rely upon as the ultimate source of strength to watch over us.

I've given many speeches to many groups over my tenure as County Administrator, but perhaps the most poignant and real speech I've given is where I describe all the times I've had tears in my eyes. Sometimes it has been tears of joy, as it was when a 90 year-old mother of a disabled son told me she could die in peace knowing that the county would look after her son. Other times tears from sorrow (with some of those emotions containing anger). May 31 was the sorrow (mixed with anger).

We all mourn and grieve differently, but we all need to recognize that peer support is universal. Sometimes that support can be a friend to friend in our profession as we've comforted each other from afar. For others in our workforce, it can range from employee-employee, employees in small groups, employees with in-house or EAP contracted resources in person or via phone call.

Regardless, employees look to us as leaders to set the tone and our care and attention to our employees and the citizens that visit us is a honest conversation yesterday, today and tomorrow. I have greatly enjoyed my tenure and getting to know many of you better over the past year.

Please join me in welcoming our newest VLGMA members: Patrick Cannon, Vice President, Community Outreach, Polco; Kimberly Alexander, Town Manager, Town of Elkton; Mark Lauzier, Member-in-Transition and Danny Wilson, Executive Director, Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facility Authority

[Contact Joe Casey](#)

**ICMA Response to Virginia Beach Tragedy**

From ICMA Executive Director Mark Ott:  
It is difficult to put into words the conflicting emotions that are coursing through me as I try to process the horrific scenes from Friday's massacre.

As stewards of public trust, we work daily to strengthen and secure communities; which made news of the malicious attack in Virginia Beach particularly painful to watch, and difficult to comprehend. I am frustrated and angry by the frequency of these episodes, and heartbroken that such an inhumane act occurred in a municipal building. More than anything, I am grief stricken over the loss of your dedicated colleagues. I understand some were with the city for many years. Undoubtedly, you are grappling with your own emotions and unanswered questions, and while the road ahead will be challenging, it is one you are equipped to navigate.

As a former city manager, I know that once this tragedy disappears from the headlines, it will continue to have a deep and lasting impact on you, your friends, neighbors, and colleagues, and I want to offer my support. Please contact me at [executivedirector@icma.org](mailto:executivedirector@icma.org) if I can be of any assistance, or if I can connect you with managers and administrators who have experienced similar ordeals yet somehow have emerged with even greater resilience and resolve.

My heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of the victims and all those impacted by this incident. I pray for healing and restoration in your community.

Read more [here](#).

## Tedd's Take



### A TIME TO REFLECT

I have decided to postpone my normal "Take" and the more trivial matters usually addressed given the enormous tragedy in Virginia Beach.

This is a time for all of us to pay our respects and provide support to those who were killed or injured, and those who will try to live with the trauma of having endured such a horrible act.

Local government employees share a common bond of service beyond self. To pay the ultimate price when simply trying to do that job in service to the community strikes at our very core. It is beyond reason why any individual would do something like this, and we may never know what truly drove him to this end.

As many have already posted on social media, and spoken in public and private conversations, this must stop. How to make serious inroads into this societal sickness is still a very open question.

While we consider the longer-term issues, we must all be aware of those in our midst who are troubled, exhibit signs of depression, or seem withdrawn or disconnected. Interceding may be helpful at a minimum, and may ultimately prevent more serious consequences.

[Contact Tedd Povar](#)

## Civic Engagement

**You too can work with the Federal government!**

*Prince George County IGSA with Fort Lee – how to engage a military base.*



It is not often that the Federal government appropriates funding to a local government. But, that is exactly what happens when local government leaders actively engage their military counterparts and keep the lines of (emergency) communication open, literally. A sidebar discussion eventually led to an Intergovernmental Support Agreement (IGSA) signing ceremony on February 8, 2019 between Prince George County and Fort Lee.

[Read More](#)

## A DAO in the Life - Wanda Cornwell



### “Tuning In”

Listening. We all do it every day. We listen to our children, significant others, friends, co-workers, citizens, our Boards and Councils, the list goes on! But, are we really listening? In our positions as Public Servants I think we get so busy with the day to day business that we forget to “really” listen.

I was in line at a store recently and the person in front of me was charged twice for an item. The cashier appeared to be listening as the customer explained, very explicitly, what was wrong on her receipt, but when the customer finished speaking the cashier’s response was, “What’s wrong with it?” Needless to say, the situation escalated quickly.

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## Innovation Edge



In 2014 the Alliance Board of Directors appointed a group of young local government professionals to be the eyes and ears for what they deem to be vital trends to the future of local government. This group is called nextERA (Engage, Research, and Advise). Over the course of the past five years, they have reported to the Board, worked collectively on projects, developed Conference in a Box, presented at TLG, and even were given a seat on the Alliance Board. There are currently 18 members, and they are recruiting new members. If you have a young professional in your organization that is keen on innovation and interested in being a part of this dynamic group, they can read more and apply [here](#) by June 14. FYI, Virginia’s own, Chris Lawrence, Deputy Town Manager of Blacksburg, is not only a member, but a charter member. Chris has been a great asset to the group as well as the Alliance.

**Mark your calendars:** BIG Ideas, September 13-15 in Clearwater, FL.

**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. We are accessible and valuable to all levels of an organization. You can learn more about the Alliance at [www.transformgov.org](http://www.transformgov.org)

## Sallie Ann Burnett

All Good Things.....



Must come to and end, and my time with the Alliance for Innovation has come to an end. The combined 21 years I spent with ICMA and the Alliance blessed me with getting to know so many of you over the years. Relationships have built and nurtured that I treasure, and I will continue to watch for good things happening in your organization as well as personally.

Thank you for taking me in when Toni Shope transitioned into her new role with the Alliance six years ago. You made me feel so welcomed and appreciative of my participation. I learned so much from you. You made my job easier, and I looked forward to every conference, every DAO meeting, every opportunity to work with VLGMA members.

I'd love to hear from you, so stay in touch: [sallie.ann.burnett@gmail.com](mailto:sallie.ann.burnett@gmail.com), and 864-266-8877. I'll also be at the beach at the summer conference.

In the words of Carol Burnett,  
"I'm so glad we had this time together....."  
Sallie Ann

## Local Gov't Legal Items of Note



The *Journal of Local Government Law* is a quarterly publication of the Local Government Section of the Virginia State Bar. This edition is dedicated to a discussion of the often counterintuitive legal principles that apply to local governments. Principles that normally apply in non-governmental cases may not apply at all, or very differently, when local government is a party. Following an introduction by Justice McCullough, the article addresses sovereign immunity, the Dillon Rule, public finance, tax assessments, and other topics of local government law. .... We hope you find it useful. You may open the ... document [if you] click on the following link: [Journal of Local Government Law -Winter 2019](#).

Jan Proctor  
Opinions Counsel, Office of the Attorney General  
Chair, Local Government Section of the Virginia State Bar

## VRSA



**Risk assessments are key in preparing for a communications crisis**  
*By Hollie S. Cammarasana, MPA, APR*  
*Director of Communications, Virginia Risk Sharing Association*

I'm sure we've all heard the phrase, *Failing to plan is planning to fail*. However, the Institute for Crisis Management (ICM) estimates that *only 50 percent* of all organizations have a crisis communications plan in place to guide them *when*, not *if*, a communications crisis emerges.

Public entities face a variety of exposures that could lead to a communications and reputational crisis. From land use issues, data breaches or cyber attacks, personnel or management issues, legal actions, safety violations, natural disasters – and more – it is vital for entities to prepare and plan now for a crisis that could happen tomorrow.

## Zelos



### Learning on your terms

Stacia C. Aylward, Chief Executive Officer at Zelos, LLC. Alexandria, Virginia.

You've heard of powerful questions. They're the questions people ask you that cause you to pause. They might make you say: "hm. I'll have to reflect and get back to you." They help you look internally and notice what's happening there. If you're stuck, they'll help you get un-stuck. If you're being too narrowly focused, they'll broaden your view. If you're making excuses, they'll pinpoint real issues. If you're obstinate (like I am at times!), they'll open your mind.

Now, what if you start asking *yourself* powerful questions? And, what if you could do a structured activity to explore that powerful question and your responses to it? What if you did that *every day*? Here's what will happen: you will have "a-ha" moments; you will want to share them with your colleagues and friends; you will practice new behaviors and thought patterns; you will—over time—become a better colleague or supervisor or leader. You will, in short, learn. And by learning through these powerful questions and activities and practicing every day, you will excel.

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## Mel's Poetry Corner



### Off to See the Wizard

Somewhere over the rainbow, way up high.  
The dreams that you dare to, why can't I?

Dorothy ventured over the rainbow, not so far away.  
Perhaps simply the dawning of a new day.

The yellow brick road might take you there too.  
A munchkin will be happy to point it out to you.

You must step outside the boundaries of space and time  
without the comfort of knowing what you might find.

Dorothy allowed her consciousness to expand  
to the colorful virtual reality of Munchkin land.

She made friends along the way with gifts to bestow  
like the wisdom of a Scarecrow.

And the courage to persevere  
with a Lion's determination to overcome fear.

A Tin Woodsman left an indelible mark  
with the awareness that true guidance comes from the heart.  
But be aware of the negative self-talk of flying monkeys who  
use discouragement to undermine you.

A Wicked Witch of the West appeared as a formidable foe.  
Fear, doubt, guilt, and all the mesmerizing thoughts of the ego.  
The illusionary power of evil melted when

with the living water of Truth, defend.

The Good Witch of the North will never let you stray too far.  
Life's lessons are never impossibly hard.  
The Light within cannot be extinguished.  
Everyone has an irreplaceable, eternal, cosmic purpose.

Deep inside you already know.  
Just ask Toto.

When wizardry, Uber, marijuana, hot air balloons can't make the trip,  
your ruby slippers, three times click.  
Instead of the old, put on the new  
and lift to a higher, spiritual altitude.

Our divine being is never apart  
from the one Mind, one Spirit, one Presence, one Heart.  
Awaken as Dorothy to the reality of  
the goodness and infinite power of Love.

No matter if to far distant lands or cyberspace or Oz, you roam,  
there is no place like Home.

[Contact Mel Gillies](#)



## Position Changes And Other Events

### May 2019

- Vivian Seay Giles, administrator and attorney for Cumberland County since 2012, has announced that she is joining the Sands Anderson law firm.
- Mandy R. Belyea, deputy manager for the town of Woodstock since 2016, has been appointed assistant administrator for Shenandoah County effective July 1st.
- Brandie Schaeffer, interim manager, and community development director since 2016 for the town of Warrenton, has been appointed town manager there.
- Sallie Ann Burnett, long-time representative for The Alliance, had her position eliminated effective May 21st.
- Steve Truitt, Carroll County administrator since 2016, and Nikki Cannon, Carroll County assistant administrator, resigned.

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