

In This Issue

Randy's Ramblings

Tedd's Take

Innovation Edge

Mel's Poetry Corner

Host Region Discounts and Scholarships

Calendar of Upcoming Events

A DAO in the Life

Certificate News

Randy's Ramblings

Randy's Ramblings

The 24 Hour Manager - Well Not Really



Randy Wheeler

It is often said that you are really never off the clock when you are a local government manager. In my experience that is particularly true if you work in a small community. While every place and every person is different, I wanted to share some observations of things that have worked well for me in living in the fishbowl while maintaining a healthy work-life balance. For a new manager one of the most important steps is knowing what

you are getting yourself into before you decide to accept an offer of employment. As part of your interview process, make sure to ask questions regarding the community's expectations of the manager outside of traditional work hours. What role is the manager expected to play out in the community? Does the community have a long and established tradition of their managers working 90 hours a week, etc? There is no right or wrong answer to these questions, but the interview process is the best time to learn the expectations of your governing body, to negotiate parameters and to help each party determine if it is the right fit. Remember, if it feels wrong for you long-term, it probably is. The right fit promotes your effectiveness as a manager and increases the likelihood of a long and successful tenure. A poor fit can cause stress and dissatisfaction and ultimately transition.

In my current position I feel particularly blessed to have found a fit that seems to work well for all involved, including my family. Here's how the early conversations went with my City Council and even though we have had significant turnover on Council, this is our understanding to this day. The Council expects me to be highly visible in the community, but exactly how to do this was left up to

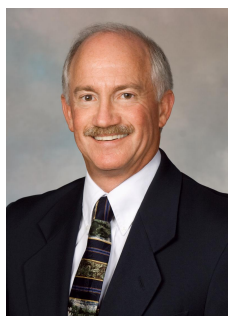
me. For me and my family at this time in our lives this involves coaching youth sports, being active in a local civic group and being a member of a local church. It involves being in local parades, attending community meetings and getting my feet wet on the local Clean the Bay Day. It involves helping at the local food drive and donating blood for the Red Cross. It involves attending a band concert, reading to elementary school children and judging Best in Show at the holiday boat parade. Here's the trick. Almost all of these things are the exact type of activities that any civic-minded, active community member would do; I just do more of them. They all provide me an opportunity to perform the Council's second expectation which is to be an unabashed cheerleader for our community which I am only too happy to do. If you know me, you know that I love to tell our story so I work my 60 plus hour work week, the same as many of you; however, I'm just fortunate that I get to do a portion of it with a whistle around my neck.

There are other positive benefits to this type of community involvement. I regularly get to interact with my staff and their families outside of work. I consider it a source of pride and inspiration that I am on a first name basis with almost all my employees. This type of relationship yields all sorts of benefits for our City. The same is true of a large number of folks within the community. We can identify problems and solve issues leaning against the fence at a Little League game before the molehill ever becomes a mountain or grab onto the next great idea at its formative stage. So in closing, let me challenge you to embrace your time outside the office as a useful and often fun part of your leadership responsibilities. I would also like to welcome our newest members John Wack, Goochland Deputy County Administrator; Nelsie Smith, Alexandria Director, Office of Management & Budget; Andrew McRoberts, County of Mathews & County of Richmond Attorney and Jay Dallin Kimble, Ashland Management Analyst. Welcome to the family!

--Randy

[Contact Randy Wheeler](#)

Tedd's Take



Tedd Povar

LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S EXCESSIVE SPENDING!!!

Sometimes I find the subject for a "Take" in the most unexpected places. This time, I was scanning a recent Richmond Times Dispatch and saw an article titled "The Nation's Housing" subtitled "On home tax breaks, change is in the air." Like any self-respecting homeowner whose pocketbook is potentially at risk, I was interested in seeing what dastardly deeds might be afoot concerning mortgage interest deductions on my federal taxes.

A DAO in the Life

I have been with the City of Charlottesville for two years and absolutely love the variety of opportunities to contribute, learn and positively impact the community and organization. I quickly learned that flexibility is an important attribute in the role of an ACM. I work with an incredible team that believes in making Charlottesville the best City for all of our residents.



David Ellis

When I was asked to contribute an article during the winter VLGMA conference, I began thinking about

The article went on to describe some of the many deductions that may be in play when Congress is in the mood to modify the tax code and try to get revenue and expenses more in line (good luck!). One of those deductions that will be under discussion is for local property taxes, which, in itself, is not that shocking.

The KEY (VaTech sports fans!) item I want to point out is the position of Michigan Congressman Dave Camp, who holds the powerful post of chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. He proposes that we should (quoting directly from the article) "end all deductions for local property taxes, which he considers subsidies for excessive spending at the local government level."

Wow!!!!!! First of all, how completely absurd it is for almost any member of Congress to talk about another level of government's "excessive spending," or any budgetary management issue, for that matter. Secondly, this statement highlights the contempt some at the federal level have for local government. While we are all concerned about state/local relations and its criticality to effective and efficient delivery of services, this type of long-range attack on local government was totally unexpected.

I'm still in shock, but maybe naive as well.

[Contact Tedd Povar](#)

Innovation Edge



Three of Virginia's jurisdictions will present at the TLG Conference this month. The town of Leesburg will present: Wolves at the Door: Repairing a Well-Deserved Bad Reputation. Just the title is intriguing and will give insight into their path of

topics that would be interesting and have not been discussed recently. As I looked back on previous articles, it appeared that everything had already been discussed. Finally, a ray of light went off and I decided to spend some time talking about something all of our communities share, but is rarely discussed; the role of local government in developing a strong middle class.

The United States has always been a community of "have and have-nots", but there was always a robust group in the middle that provided a beacon of hope for those on the lower end of the socio economic spectrum. The effects of the "great recession" and decline in manufacturing jobs have led to a small and still shrinking middle class. This in turn has led to the development of communities consisting of predominately of "have and have-nots". Additionally, jobs have become more technical, requiring increased training and/or education, while at the same time federal and state funds for job training continue to shrink.

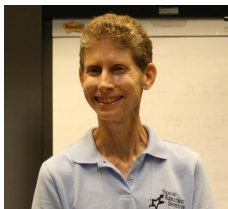
Many of our communities have economic development departments that recruit organizations and companies which is critical to ensure our communities continue to thrive, but I would argue we must make a greater investment in job training and workforce development for our residents. If you haven't, I would challenge you to speak with some of the individuals who are hanging out "on the corner" and find out why they are there.... within five minutes I guarantee you they will say "they cannot find work". These young men, many who are in their prime, often do not have the skills or education to find employment that provides upward mobility and the opportunity to provide for their families. Many times they feel society has abandoned them and that a life of

revamping their land development process. Virginia Beach offers the case study on Great Expectations: Moving Long-Range Plans into Action. They will share the challenges and successes of their eight Master Plans. Arlington County is also co-presenting on Citizen Engagement. You can get an overview of the case studies here. This year's conference will be held in Denver, April 23-25, 2014. I hope to see you there.

As your regional director, I encourage you to reach out to me at saburnett@transformgov.org, or 800-777-2509 with any questions.

Visit the [Alliance for Innovation](#) for more information.

Mel's Poetry Corner



Mel Gillies

Spring Rebirth

Spring, a metaphor
of life reborn.
The seed within our soul
has finally begun
to grow
and in light, water,
fertile ground,
support and encouragement surround.

Fear tries to choke this awakening
with excuses for hesitating
in the comfort of dogmatic sleep,
the lethargy that insidiously creeps.

If all I think I know, I let go,
what am I without my ego?
What will I feel and be
in this spiritual life that is me?

Spring holds the priceless key -
contemplate a flower's beauty.

[Contact Mel Gillies](#)

Host Region Discount and State-Based Scholarships

Host Region
Registration
Discount



poverty is all they can expect, not because they can't or don't want to work but because of lack of opportunity and low wages.

As local government officials we cannot turn our back on these individuals and to be truly successful we must partner and collaborate with the private sector to provide skill and workforce development opportunities for our residents. We need to find individuals and organizations that can reach out to those who believe they have been left behind and help those individuals recognize that there are employment opportunities available. By combining economic development, and workforce training we have the potential to rebuild the middle class in our communities' one family at a time.

[Contact David Ellis](#)

Certificate News

After getting to a rough start last month, spring finally appears to have arrived. The beautiful weather and longer days make studying and sitting in class difficult. The Certificate students, though, truly are dedicated as they push to the end of the semester. Others may slack off in the nice spring days, but our students do not give into that temptation.

Of course, what better way is there to distract students than to talk about summer? This summer will be a milestone in the preparation of the next generation of local government leaders. The Certificate program is preparing to host its first professional development conference on June 2nd and 3rd at the Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center in Roanoke City. The high-energy, two-day conference will bring together senior Virginia local government officials, Certificate faculty, alumni,



Any ICMA member from the host region who is attending his/her first annual conference is eligible to receive \$200 off the conference registration fee. The host region includes Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. Also, any nonmember in the host region who joins ICMA can receive the \$200 registration discount PLUS half-price ICMA membership for a year.

Calendar

Upcoming Events

VLGMA Summer Conference - June 18-20, 2014 at the Sheraton Oceanfront Hotel - look for registration materials in April

[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](#).



and current and prospective students. The keynote speaker will be Dr. John Nalbandian, a preeminent scholar of local government from the University of Kansas who is also a Courtesy Professor of Practice at Virginia Tech and a friend of the Certificate program. Those two days will surely make this summer one to remember.

If you or any of your staff are interested in the Certificate program or this summer's conference, the time to express interest is now. Registration and more information for the conference are available here:

<http://www.cpe.vt.edu/lgm>

And, now that basketball season is coming to a close, Bob Stripling is actively cruising the state looking for new student recruits. If you are interested in the program, he can be reached at chars08@vt.edu or 540-448-1102.

Find the Certificate online:



Quick Links

[VLGMA Website](#)

[ICMA Website](#)

[Alliance for Innovation](#)

[Virginia Municipal League](#)

[VA Association of Counties](#)

Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service Website Contact



[Forward this email](#)



This email was sent to mjh3a@virginia.edu by mjh3a@virginia.edu |
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

VLGMA | P.O. Box 400206 | Charlottesville | VA | 22904