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**Beachside with Becky**



**Becky Dickson**

**Beachside with Becky (Savannah, Georgia to be exact)**

Because of the season (and honestly because it snuck up on me), I thought this month I would share just a few of my favorite quotes on gratitude. Please know that I am most grateful for all of you. How lucky we are that of all the people and places on earth, our lives have been intertwined, connected and made better by knowing each other. While I am sure you have all heard of my upcoming retirement (one of the hardest decisions of my life), I consider myself to be blessed and shined upon. As we get older, I think we realize how little we really know...but gratitude I know!

- *Reflect upon your present blessings-of which every man has many-not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some. ....Charles Dickens*
- *This is the key to life: to expect everything to be given to you from above, yet to be genuinely surprised and forever grateful, when they are. Expecting all good things to be yours, while not knowing how to take anything for granted. If there may be a key in life, this is the key. ....C. Joy Bell*
- *'Enough' is a feast. ....Buddhist proverb*
- *At times, our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another*

*person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame within us. ....Albert Schweitzer*

- *One can never pay in gratitude; one can only pay "in kind" somewhere else in life. ...Anne Morrow Lindbergh*
- *Piglet noticed that even though he had a Very Small Heart, it could hold a rather large amount of gratitude. ....A.A. Milne*
- *Gratitude is more of a compliment to yourself than someone else. ...Rahell Farooq*
- *This is a wonderful day. I have never seen this one before. ...Maya Angelou*

Hope you have a safe, joyful and thankful season.

Welcome to our new member Tyler Schenck, Winchester Program Manager.

Signing off, thankful,

Becky

[Contact Becky Dickson](#)

## Position Changes

November, 2015

• Chris Lawrence, town manager for Vinton since 2008, has been appointed deputy town manager for community development for Blacksburg, effective January 4th.



• Timothy "Tim" Fitzgerald, director of community development for Augusta County since 2010, has been appointed administrator there, effective January 1st.

• Anne Seward, administrator for Isle of Wight County since September, 2013, resigned effective December 31st

• John D. Crim, town manager for Dayton, resigned to pursue opportunities in the private sector. William (Bill) O'Brien, retired Rockingham County administrator and current VLGMA/ICMA senior advisor, is serving as interim manager, effective November 23rd.

## Member Spotlight - Jay Stegmaier

Chesterfield County Administrator Jay Stegmaier's son is making headlines and doing cool things.



Jamey Stegmaier  
Click [here](#) to learn more.

[Contact Jay Stegmaier](#)

### Tedd's Take



Tedd Povar

## Non-Traditional Hires

A recent ICMA Smartbrief carried the following item:

Iowa city hires former S.D. city mayor as administrator  
Cherokee, Iowa, has hired Sam Kooiker as city administrator. Kooiker served as mayor of Rapid City, S.D., for two terms. "I'm looking forward to doing what I believe is my talent: city operations," he said.

This highlights a trend in council-manager localities where candidates with non-traditional backgrounds have been hired as CAO. They may be from any number of professions in either the public or private sector. Local government management experience does not seem to be an unconditional requirement anymore.

My question is whether this shift creates a need to develop a new academy (for lack of a better term) specifically for first-time administrators, or maybe adapt an existing program like the Graduate Certificate in Local Government Management, to familiarize these new administrators with the fundamentals of the job. Similar to the certificate program, the courses could be taught by seasoned local government professionals and other topic experts through any number of delivery options. Such a program would also serve to integrate the new managers into the profession by establishing peer and mentoring relationships that would be beneficial for years to come.

While some want to put more effort into countering the trend of non-traditional hires by better informing the public and elected officials about the need to select experienced local government professionals, it may be more worthwhile to accept this apparent reality and work with it to maintain an acceptable level of competency in the ranks.

Change can be embraced or resisted. In this case, the horse may have already left the barn.

[Contact Tedd Povar](#)

### Certificate News

Another fall semester is coming to a close as students and professors are preparing for their final classes and assignments. This fall has been busy for all involved with the program, but the reward at the end is surely worth the effort. There is no prouder moment for the Certificate program than when we celebrate our graduates.

This December, we are proud to welcome the following 16 individuals into the ranks of our Certificate alumni:

**THE Graduate Certificate  
in Local Government  
Management**

 **VirginiaTech**  
*Invent the Future®*

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

Akai Jones  
Mallory Stribling  
Christian Youngblood  
Alex Showalter  
Jeffrey Martin  
William Garrett  
Adina Pogue  
Adelina Fuente

Kimberly Taylor  
Teena Tutt  
Paul Davis  
Jennifer Privette  
Emily Pelliccia  
Julie Kang  
Matthew Scott

These folks have worked hard throughout the program and are truly prepared to be a part of the next generation of local government leadership in Virginia. If you know any of them, be sure to congratulate them on their accomplishment and keep an eye out for their updated resumes.

Of course, completing the Certificate program is an immense accomplishment, but another cause for celebration comes when one of our alumni moves into a new leadership position. Alumnus Pete Peters has been appointed the new Assistant Town Manager of Vinton after serving for nearly a decade in Botetourt County. Pete has guided the Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Department as director and has overseen a number of major projects for Botetourt. His passion for local government, excellent management skills, and strong preparation will make him a great asset for Vinton. We all wish him the best!

In other news, for those interested in branching out of their comfort zones, the Certificate program is hosting one-day workshops featuring John Nalbandian and The Alliance for Innovation. These Contemporary Leadership Challenge workshops will take place on April 6th in Abingdon and on April 8th in Stafford. Stay tuned for more information!

Lastly, if you are interested in any of the Certificate's courses or programing, Director Stephanie Davis is always willing to answer questions. Feel free to contact her at [sddavis@vt.edu](mailto:sddavis@vt.edu) or 804-980-5549.

## A DAO in the Life

### Community Investment

The Southeast Community of Newport News is witness to a high concentration of poverty, an aging population, high crime rates, as well as a rich community heritage that's host to a number of notable celebrities and historical landmarks.

Within the last year, the only grocery store serving the community closed. The population of roughly 19,000 residents, approximately 10% of the City's total population, has a median household income of approximately \$26,726. A large number of residents in the Southeast Community have limited resources, particularly in the areas of transportation



Robert Lee

and job opportunities. When the only grocery store closed, it essentially made the Southeast Community a food desert. Now residents must travel a minimum of three to five miles to reach the nearest grocery store or shop at one of the local neighborhood markets that offer significantly less fresh food options and at higher prices than many grocery stores.

In 2008, the city sought public submissions for redevelopment projects for a 29 acre area of the Southeast Community that had already been designated for redevelopment. The original submission for this project was a mixed-use residential/commercial project proposed by former professional quarterback Aaron Brooks and his development company, Tidewater Partners Property and Development. After some consideration, Mr. Brooks partnered with developer Armada Hoffler to create the Southeast Commerce Center Associates with the goal of creating a mixed-use project that would provide much needed services to the residents of the surrounding community. Through the EDA's public-private partnership with Southeast Commerce Center Associates, the City's participation includes the police precinct, upgrades to existing infrastructure and a new grocery store. The EDA will own the grocery store through the assistance of New Markets Tax Credit financing and lease the facility to operator Jim Scanlon, who will have a future purchase-option. The end result will be a new police precinct open for operation in January to improve police services to the community, a full-service grocery store and complementary retail expected to open in April 2016.



Despite the process to secure willing grocery store investors, the City and the EDA were finally fortunate to partner with Mr. Scanlon, who has over 40 years' experience in the industry, to create Jim's Local Market. The concept of Jim's Local Market is primarily to provide the community with an accessible full-service market that will offer healthy grocery options while providing jobs

and training to residents in the Southeast Community. The long term goal of Mr. Scanlon's is to provide the employees with the training and education needed to turn the market into an employee owned store that residents will be invested in. Ultimately this project shows the dedication of the city to work with partners to ensure residents have the resources to meet their basic needs.

[Contact Robert Lee](#)

The Virginia Certified Public Manager Program (VCMP)



The Virginia Certified Public Manager® Program (VCPMP) provides an in-depth, comprehensive, competency-based executive education by promoting professionalism, excellence, and quality principles in public management and leadership.

Benefits of the VCPMP include:

- An enhanced set of knowledge, skills, and abilities;
- An improved ability to manage within the organization; and



-An expanded network of professional colleagues.

The VCPMP is designed to enhance the careers of those in or dealing with the public service who seek new knowledge, want to connect communities of learning with practice by addressing critical need curricula topics as governance, information technology, and ethics.

Individuals working in and across all sectors - public, nonprofit, and private - are welcome to apply. Applicants need a high degree of conceptual ability, reading comprehension, and written and oral communication skills. Further, applicants who do not currently supervise staff but have responsibility for managing, coordinating, or overseeing a program area whose deliverable has an impact beyond their current work unit will also be considered.

The VCPMP is currently undergoing the process for initial accreditation by the National Certified Public Manager® Consortium. The VCPMP expects to graduate its first cohort this upcoming January and offer its second cohort by March 2016. For more information or to register, please visit <http://psc.gmu.edu/cpm> or contact the Program Director, Dr. Tonya T. Neaves, at [tneaves@gmu.edu](mailto:tneaves@gmu.edu). The VCPMP is hosted by the Centers on the Public Service at George Mason University's School of Policy, Government, and International Affairs.

## Civic Engagement Best Practices - Windsor's Michael Stallings



Michael Stallings

### Shop Local

I recently had the need to purchase some lumber for a project at home. On my lunch break I was heading to Lowes in a neighboring City to pick up the needed 2x4's. As I left the office and headed East, it hit me like a ton of bricks, "Why in the world am I driving to Suffolk when everything I need is just across the street?" Not only did Windsor Hardware have the supplies I needed, they were actually cheaper, and I didn't have to burn fuel to get to Suffolk and back. How many times have you left your community to buy something that was, in fact, available in your own community? Between our hardware store, pharmacy, grocery store, farmer's supply store, and other businesses, there are very few things that you can't get here in Town. By the time you factor in fuel and your valuable time, you are often saving yourself money by shopping in Town. Every dollar you spend in Town helps your neighbors and local businesses. I want to challenge each of you to stop and think before you leave your community to buy something. Ask yourself, "Can I get that here?" If the answer is yes, then stay in Town and support your local businesses. Not only does shopping local help keep the coffers full, it also promotes a sense of community. As you go into local businesses, they begin to recognize your face. They know who you are, and you begin to build relationships. What better way to engage citizens than with face to face interactions. Local businesses can be the best place for this type of engagement. It can be seen as neutral ground, and can provide a place for meaningful conversations and interactions.

[Contact Michael Stallings](#)



**Mel Gillies**

## Our Gift to Each Other

Our joy, serenity, humility, gratitude, presence  
silently express  
the realization of our Oneness  
and may even spark the start  
of the opening of a unfulfilled heart.

We all have the capability  
to break out of the prison of an artificial identity.  
Our liberation has a profound ripple effect  
that flows throughout the divine Inter-net.

The understanding of our spiritual power  
is an incomparable gift to share with another.  
Our inspiration invites the dormant seed to awaken and find out  
what divine Life is all about.

This holiday season is an invitation to be  
the gift we want to receive.

[Contact Mel Gillies](#)

### Innovation Edge

From his recent article in the Ambassador Update, Alliance staffer, Jim Ingram states, "Creativity and innovation are crafts that can be practiced and exercised; over a period of time the craft can be honed and used successfully. But failure is inevitable and in fact, should be embraced as part of the learning and growing process."



Does fear of failure paralyze us, or do we seize the opportunity for creativity?  
Read Jim's article [here](#) and be refreshed by his valuable point of view.

**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](http://www.transformgov.org) or contact me at [saburnett@transformgov.org](mailto:saburnett@transformgov.org)

Winter Conference - February 17-19, 2016 at the Omni Hotel in Charlottesville - registration materials available [here](#)  
[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

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[ICMA Website](#)  
[Alliance for Innovation](#)  
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