

In This Issue

Cup of Joe to Go

Position Changes and Other Events

Tedd's Take

Certificate News

Civic Engagement - Go Where the People Are

Innovation Edge

Mel's Poetry Corner

Calendar

Cup of Joe to Go



Joe Casey

Cup of Joe to Go

I was so touched by the many of you who took time out of your busy lives to thank me for the Becky Dickson remembrance from last month's Cup of Joe to Go. I had also shared the e-news story around the office and many forwarded it to retirees and friends.

Even her late husband thanked me with the following message - "Thank you for your kind words. I actually think coming back to Chesterfield and working with you helped her cope with what was to come. The day she got the call from you I can still see the joy in her eyes. I thank you for that and I will never forget that YOU brought that to her and this family."

WE brought that joy as over the past year, I ran into many of the "VLGMA Sisters" and their reflections on Becky's role (I think she was a founding member). I rightfully don't qualify for the "sisterhood" even though I recall one rogue shot of Fireball coming my way in a celebratory toast. I do respect the VLGMA Sisters in all their support of each other and the greater role woman are having in the profession.

This greater role is also more broadly supported by VLGMA through its DAO (Deputies, Assistants and Others). When the e-news was conceived during my role on the Communications Committee of the VLGMA Board, I penned the first "DAO in the Life" column. As I had noted in that inaugural column, the title is a play on words from the Beatle song "A Day in the Life." In the column I reflected that a quote in the song reminded me of a DAO task - "I read the news today, oh boy,

4000 holes in Blackburn Lancashire, and although the holes were rather small, they had to count them all."

For some reason, it falls to the DAO to "count holes" and an infinite number of other tasks as they slowly but surely get to master the profession; even the minor and inconsequential items. Take the time, as Albert Einstein notes, "the only reason for time is so that everything doesn't happen at once." However, be mindful of the time expended and productive because "lost time is never found again" (Benjamin Franklin).

Please join me in welcoming our newest VLGMA member:
Kevin Richardson, Virginia Beach Assistant Superintendent of Waste Management

[Contact Joe Casey](#)

Position Changes and Other Events

September 2018

- Matthew "Matt" Reynal, operations manager for the town of Ashland since 2015, has been appointed assistant town manager there.
- Samuel "Sam" McGhee, III, former assistant manager, among other positions, for the city of Roanoke and former president of Mattern & Craig, died at the age of 77.
- William E. Johnson, III, former city manager for Petersburg, and currently business development manager for Prestige Construction Company, has been appointed city manager for Emporia.
- Bill Rolfe, retired Bedford County administrator, has resigned from his part-time post as town manager for Glasgow. Jon Ellestad, retired Lexington city manager, has been appointed acting manager there.
- Sandy Wanner, retired James City County administrator and serial interim, has been appointed interim administrator for Surry County effective October 1st.
- Dan Witt, assistant town manager for Altavista since 2003, has been appointed administrator for Charlotte County.
- David Whitlow, retired Morehead City, NC manager and VLGMA/ICMA senior advisor, has been appointed interim administrator for Essex County.
- Peter Stephenson, retired Smithfield town manager, has joined the VML Insurance Programs as local government specialist.
- Rob Stalzer, deputy executive for Fairfax County since 2000, and Herndon town manager for 12 years prior to that, announced his retirement effective February 1, 2019.
- Clarence Monday, former administrator for Amherst and Pittsylvania Counties and city manager for Martinsville, has been appointed interim city manager for Franklin.
- Michael Hatfield, a project manager and former long-time Wise County resident, has been appointed Wise County administrator effective October 22nd.
- Amos "Buster" Nicholson, town manager for Round Hill since 2013, has been appointed public works director for the town of Purcellville effective October 22nd.



- Tony Sullivan, police chief and interim town manager for Abingdon, resigned from the interim town manager position.

Tedd's Take



Tedd Povar

Getting the Band Back Together!

On October 17th, there will be a luncheon for retired Virginia administrators, managers, and significant others at the Hanover Tavern outside of Richmond. The brainchild of former manager Bob Noe, and arranged by yours truly, some 30+ folks from as far away as Florida have said "I'll be there!" We won't talk about the ages represented...let's just say all are young at heart.

The positive reception this event has received is representative of a different generation of managers-one that had to wait for a conference or other statewide meeting to reconnect with many of their peers. There was no email or social media, and the best tool for staying in touch was to pick up the phone. A conference was truly a treasured opportunity to see many of our fellow managers in one place, and there was a commitment to attend every time.

This was a time when the interests of the state as a whole took priority over regionalism. One needed to be at a conference to hear the speakers, get the information, and find out what was going on. The managers were simply thrilled to see each other. Size and sophistication of the localities they represented were not defining criteria; everyone was a near equal in a very exclusive club. Sure, there were areas of the state that did not participate to any great extent, so not much has changed in that regard. Like today, conferences were a place where war stories were swapped, career events exchanged, and challenges discussed in hopes of finding a possible fix or two. The difference was that these gatherings represented the few chances for personal interaction each year. We felt a greater intensity and sense of urgency. Professionally and personally, we had to make the most of those rare opportunities.

So, this mid-October, a bunch of folks from a bygone era are going to assemble to do much the same: swap old stories, find out who had what body part replaced, and probably toast a departed friend or two. Most importantly, we will reconnect at a very human level, much the way they did back then, during a time when there was only one way to do it. In rock & roll, it's called getting the band back together. Just like The Blues Brothers!

[Contact Tedd Povar](#)

Certificate News

Did you know the Certificate is preparing the next generation of local government managers and leaders?

Did you know that the Certificate program connects to Zoom and 14 different sites in the State of Virginia? Students attend from Southwest VA, Hampton Roads, Northern Virginia, Central Virginia and can connect via Zoom as well. We are

**THE Graduate Certificate
in Local Government
Management**



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

excited to have our "furthest" student this fall from the Town of Wise, Va.

Did you know that we travel to local governments and conduct one-hour recruitment sessions for local government employees? Recruitment sessions will be conducted in Abingdon, VA and Wythe, VA in October and November. Sessions in the central area will continue through the Spring and we are making plans for Northern Virginia as well.

Did you know that The Certificate is a sponsor of the ICMA National Conference in Baltimore? We are very excited to attend and present at the Conference! The Virginia Tech Student Chapter continues to recruit members in the MPA and Certificate program and held their first "meeting" in September with Sallie Ann Burnett giving an overview of the Alliance for Innovation. Did you know that Virginia Tech is one of only four Universities that are Affiliate members of the Alliance?

Did you know that Virginia Tech is the developer of the VGFOA's Professional Development Program? Yes! We coordinate four one-day workshops and three webinars annually for our finance officials. Our next event is October 12th - "Citizen Engagement in the Budget Process" webinar. Use this link to register! <https://register.cpe.vt.edu/coursebasket/publicCourseBasket.do?method=load>

For any questions, please contact Dr. Stephanie Davis, Associate Director, Center for Public Administration and Policy and Graduate Certificate in Local Government Management Program Director at sddavis@vt.edu or 804-980-5549.
[Contact Stephanie Davis](#)

Civic Engagement - Go Where the People Are

Civic Engagement ~ Go Where the People Are

Stephanie Jones, Senior Program Manager/Compliance Officer, Virginia Resources Authority

Regarding civic engagement, I have been hearing of various localities taking a "go where the people are" approach. This is a great approach to engaging more citizens in governance. Generally, a citizen will only show up for a Council meeting if they have a very strong reaction to an agenda item - well after this has gone through the development process in the local government. To me, engagement is about involving citizens in the planning and visioning process.



Stephanie Jones

So what is a go-where-the-people-are approach? It could mean attending festivals and events in your community and renting exhibit space to invite residents and businesses to provide thoughts about potential projects. It could mean attending meetings of community organizations, including charities and churches, and listening to what members of these organizations would suggest. It could even

mean partnering with local craft breweries and hosting roundtable events. The sky is the limit - the more innovative, the better.

Here are two specific examples of this approach:

- York County is taking its comprehensive plan update to the people by engaging them in a comprehensive plan game where the players build their own community as they play the part of a citizen and a board member to learn about the diversity of opinions and provide practical feedback on the comprehensive plan process. The process will be kicked off with a Youth Commission meeting where youth will be asked, "What will it take in our community design for you to graduate, go away to college and then attract you back to our community?" This process will be followed up with homeowners' association meetings, board committee meetings, employee meetings, and concluded with the annual Board of Supervisors retreat.
- Chesterfield County created an initiative called Blueprint Chesterfield to engage its community in the planning process. The initiative has its own website where citizens can review budget documents, easily see the big picture of what tax dollars are funding, and see engagement events. At the start of the initiative, staff attended 17 planned community events (various business, civic and social events), held three community workshops where 200+ people attended, and heard from 6,200 people through an online survey - all in a period of 39 days!

To engage all members of your community, especially working adults, local governments are going to need to re-invent the wheel on community engagement. Government transparency and civic engagement are two different things. Transparency in government is achieved by open-to-the-public meetings, live video streams of Council sessions, and minutes recording the action of the governing bodies. These are all good things, but these things alone do not lead to the citizenry being actively involved in the decision-making process. Democracy and self-determination work best when all members of the public let their voices be heard. It is up to local government leaders to share the microphone and go where the people are.

[Contact Stephanie Jones](#)

Innovation Edge



Innovation Edge

Drug abuse affects the entire community and impacts municipal services. The nation is facing an opioid crisis that reaches into the lives of our families, friends, co-workers, and colleagues. Is your local government on track to face this ever-growing situation? Join colleagues and over 100 nation-wide leaders at Alliance's BIG Ideas Conference in Austin, Texas, October 26-28, 2018, and take part in discussions to find new solutions to this dire emergency. BIG Ideas is a conference like none other; very focused with many takeaways that you can engage in your community. Read more about BIG Ideas [here](#).

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 or contact me at saburnett@transformgov.org.

Mel's Poetry Corner

Change Agent

Evolution is singing a love song,
a disturbing and an awakening call.
The times are ripe for the new.
Let the change agent within you debut.



Mel Gillies

The unpredictable forest fire clears out deadwood
that allows new growth instead.
By allowing stale habits, assumptions, beliefs to decay,
energy is released to transform the day.

What never before seemed possible somehow
is at your fingertips right now.
Limitation, conformity, certainty lose their appeal.
The unknowable, the ineffable, the sacred are the real.

By changing the definition of who you think you are,
you become a living Light reflector, a shining star.

No matter who you are.

[Contact Mel Gillies](#)

Calendar

Upcoming Events

2019 VLGMA Winter Conference - Feb. 20-22 in Staunton at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel

[More Dates](#)

Update Email Address



Making a change? To continue to receive the monthly eNews and other VLGMA notices, please email [Molly Harlow](mailto:Molly_Harlow) to update your contact information.

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](mailto:Molly_Harlow).

Future Newsletter Articles

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