



# VTC

VIRGINIA  
TOWN & CITY

VOL. 59 NO. 1 JAN/FEB 2024

THE MAGAZINE OF THE VIRGINIA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

# 100 YEARS







# 2023 Annual Report

## Protecting Virginia's Entities

Staff maintained their presence throughout the Commonwealth this year visiting with members from the smallest to the largest local public entities.

Whether our risk services staff provided training or an inspection, or if a claims representative visited with their assigned member, we were, and continue to be, there - present in the communities we protect.

The Fall Education Forums returned for the first time in three years and were held in **Fredericksburg, Williamsburg, Wytheville, and Staunton.**

The forums were attended by more than 150 members and included presentations from the **Cities of Manassas and Suffolk, the New River Resource Authority, the Shenandoah Water and Sewer Authority, and the Towns of Hamden and Vibron.**

"We have been instrumental with bringing back in-person events," said VRSA Managing Director Marcus Hester.

"We wanted to get back out into member communities and continue to build and strengthen relationships with our members face-to-face."

Learn more about the 2023 Annual Report at [www.vrsa.us](http://www.vrsa.us). You can also contact your representative or call 800-963-6800 for more information.



Soon after, VRSA brought back the **Risk Manager Forum**, gathering members from five cities, two counties, three towns, and several authorities to discuss marijuana in the workplace, drug safety, contracts, and insurance requirements.

As we continued to increase our presence across the Commonwealth, staff presented at events hosted by the **Virginia Municipal League**. In addition to their Annual and Local Elected Officials Conferences, staff joined them in the **Town of Marlin** and the **Town of Onancock** to discuss topics such as legislative updates, the Freedom of Information Act, open-air marijuana cultivation, recreational marijuana, and site inspections.

As staff continue to engage, they have focused on connecting the dots between VRSA's coverage and services to help members prevent and reduce losses.



Virginia Risk Sharing Association 2023 Annual Report

# As a truly member-owned and governed organization, our annual and financial reports may be viewed online at any time.



We are here to protect Virginia's cities, counties, towns, schools, and authorities, and their employees, so they can effectively serve their communities.



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THE MAGAZINE OF THE VIRGINIA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

VOL. 59 NO. 1 JAN / FEB 2024

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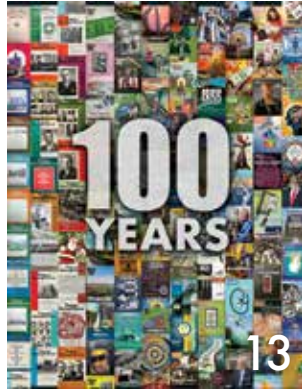
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BETTER COMMUNITIES THROUGH  
SOUND GOVERNMENT



**ABOUT THE COVER**

Really, the topic here should be "About the covers" because that beautiful mosaic is really dozens of *VTC* (nee' the *Virginia Municipal Review*) covers through the years. But a magazine is so much more than its cover and we're glad you've turned the page and opened this issue marking 100 years of VML having a magazine! More memories to explore inside.

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**The National League of Cities turns 100!**

We swear we didn't plan this, but it turns out that not only does VML's magazine turn 100 this year, but so does the National League of Cities. But coincidences are worth celebrating too! ..... 10

**Celebrating 100 years of VML's magazine**

What began in 1924 as the *Virginia Municipal Review* has evolved (we hope) over the years to become your league's magazine – *Virginia Town & City*. Join us for stroll down memory lane ..... 13

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**Events, events ...**

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Visit [www.vml.org](http://www.vml.org) or scan the QR code to download the VML app.



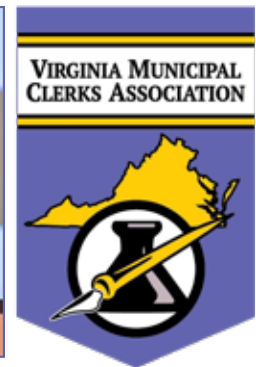
# 100 years is a long time, let's hope the budget doesn't take that long!

100 YEARS OF A MAGAZINE – how cool! I am so excited that we continue to publish a magazine and that (hopefully) it is still useful! We enjoy putting together the stories and coming up with the themes and can only imagine that the VML staff in 1924 felt the same way when they put out that first issue! Thank you to everyone who has contributed over the years. A special thanks is due to Manuel Timbreza who has been designing and laying out the magazine for over a quarter century! As you'll read inside, David Parsons, who was VML's Director of Communications from 1994-2014, was the one who made the decision that VML should have an in-house graphic designer and Manuel has been an asset to the magazine and the league is so many ways. I was also pleased that longtime VML staff member Mary Jo Fields was able to share her thoughts on the magazine. Her first involvement with VML was in the 1970s as a contributor to the magazine before she was even on staff! After she retired from VML in 2018 she came back part-time to help run the magazine while we were between editors. And of course, one of my predecessors, Mike Amyx, was a great champion of the magazine and it was great that he could contribute to this issue as well.

Putting together these thoughts on *Virginia Town & City* has been a nice break from thinking about the General Assembly, but as I write this the 2024 session is in full swing. Legislative day is over, cross over is over and we are now in the last few weeks of the session – everyone is exhausted and waiting for the next big thing! I'm sure many of you saw VML's initial thoughts in eNews on the budget and just how far apart everyone (House, Senate, Governor) is on a budget that will be responsible for making the Commonwealth work. While we may not all agree on which nuggets are most important, what we can agree on is that we need a timely budget. Given the discrepancies, I would ask you to please reach out to your delegation and encourage them to pass a timely budget. I know we all remember how the delayed budget last year led to unnecessary uncertainty for localities. It is vital to know what monies from the state that you can count on as you go through your local budget process.

While we can explain to General Assembly members issues with proposed legislation; they need to hear from their constituents on how these issues affect their home turf. Your continued advocacy makes all the difference as we navigate the General Assembly session. Thanks to everyone who came to Local Government Day to hear staff and reports and to meet with their legislators. Please continue to help us as we push toward the end. VML staff will continue to use eNews to point out the issues and budget items we need to really support or oppose. Thank you!

Looking ahead to April, VML is pleased to present keynote speaker Matt Lehrman on the final morning of the Virginia Municipal Clerk's Association (VMCA) conference (April 19 from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the DoubleTree Hilton in Charlottesville). As most of you know, Matt Lehrman has presented at VML's two most recent annual conferences and is an incredibly engaging speaker. He is the co-founder and managing director of Social Prosperity Partners – an Arizona-based consulting firm dedicated to the proposition that “Where people work together courageously, their potential is unlimited.” In addition to delivering inspiring keynotes and substantive workshops on topics of civility and collaborative leadership, Matt's Social Prosperity Partners practice specializes in strategic planning services for municipalities, civic associations, and nonprofit organizations.



## About the presentation – “A Community of Possibilities: Advancing Beyond Civility to Visioning”

The ultimate responsibility of local government isn't just infrastructure, it's “Idea-structure” — the ongoing process of involving, connecting, and empowering the diversity of its community members toward a mutually desired future. Here's what every municipal leader should understand about their role as a guardian of responsible and inclusive civic.

Matt has been a good friend to VML, and this is a great opportunity to spend time with him and your clerk! For more information on attending scan the QR code or check out VML events at [www.vml.org/Calendar/Event-List](http://www.vml.org/Calendar/Event-List).

Let's hope for a timely budget and Happy St. Patrick's Day!!







**April 19**

**Va. Municipal Clerk's Assoc. Conference feat. Matt Lehrman -**

Registration and information at [www.vml.org](http://www.vml.org).

**May 16-17**

**2024 Broadband Together Conference -** Hilton Short Pump, Richmond, VA.

Registration and information at [www.broadbandtogether.com](http://www.broadbandtogether.com) or see page 20.

**Oct. 13-15**

**2024 VML Annual Conference -** Cavalier Marriott, Virginia Beach, VA

**PEOPLE**

**Town of Round Hill's Graham marks over 40 years of service**



**- Graham -**

On January 1, Vice Mayor **Mary Anne Graham** of the Town of Round Hill marked her fourth decade of elected service. Graham moved to Round Hill in 1977 and joined the town council in 1983 by being

appointed to fill a vacant seat. She was subsequently elected to her first four-year term. Her service has not been consecutive, having lost one reelection bid during her tenure, but it remains a remarkable achievement. Congratulations Vice-Mayor Graham!

**Emporia's Johnson appointed to lead National League of Cities' Small City Council**



**- Johnson -**

City Manager **William E. Johnson, III** of Emporia has been appointed to the National League of Cities (NLC) 2024 Small Cities' Council. Johnson was elected to a one-year term to

develop and guide programs among local elected officials from similar communities. The appointment was announced by NLC President Mayor-Elect David Sander of Rancho Cordova, CA.

"Our member councils play an integral role in NLC's work, bringing local leaders together to share ideas and inform NLC policy about the issues and challenges facing every kind of community in America," said Sander. "I'm excited to have City Manager Johnson serve on NLC's Small Cities Council. The council will ensure that all our cities, towns and villages have access to ideas and resources they can use to thrive."

As a member of NLC's Small Cities Council, Johnson will play a key role among a diverse group of local leaders to encourage collaboration, networking and the development of resources and programs beneficial

to communities that share demographics, size or location that can be replicated across the country.

The leadership of this year's council will consist of Chair, Jan Arbuckle, Vice Mayor, Grass Valley, CA; Vice Chair, Mary Sarver, Mayor Pro Tem, Grandview, TX; and Vice Chair, Gabrielle Nelson, Councilwoman, Port Wentworth, GA.

**Herndon appoints Williams director of Parks and Recreation**

On January 16, **Bob Williams** began work as the Town of Herndon's new director of



**- Williams -**

Parks and Recreation. Williams replaces Cindy Roeder, who retired from the town this month after more than 20 years of dedicated service.

In his new post, Williams will be responsible for the town's Parks and Recreation department, to include staff management, recreation program planning and development, facilities operation and maintenance, and capital improvement planning. Williams will also oversee the operation of Chestnut Grove Cemetery; will foster collaborative relationships with Herndon's sports, schools, arts, non-profit and business organizations; and will provide leadership and oversight to the department's five operating divisions: administration, recreation programs, facilities, aquatics, and parks.

Williams will report to Town Manager Bill Ashton and will serve as a member of the town's management team. "No question, Cindy Roeder's shoes are hard to fill," Ashton said in a press release. "We are confident that Bob has the experience, insight, and expertise to maintain the department's high quality of operations and programming while bringing new, fresh ideas that further its legacy. In particular, I look forward to new initiatives under his leadership that establish new events and traditions, build on our vibrant sense of community and celebrate the

myriad cultures represented in Herndon."

Williams has most recently served as director of Parks and Recreation for Martinsburg-Berkeley County, where he created the department's first strategic and master plan and developed improved processes that greatly increased productivity as well as community and employee engagement. Previously, he held positions of increasing responsibility in the parks and recreation divisions of Alexandria, VA; Licking County, OH; and Chester County, PA. He is a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional (CPRP) and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Parks and Recreation from Slippery Rock University and a Master of Science degree in Nonprofit Management from Robert Morris University.

**Shenandoah welcomes familiar faces to new roles**



**- Jenkins -**

**Charles Jenkins** who has served as the Town of Shenandoah's assistant town manager since May of 2023, became the town manager on January 1, 2024. Jenkins previously served 22 years on the Shenandoah Town Council. Jenkins replaces Juanita Roudabush, who had served as town manager since April 1, 2017 and retired at the end of 2023.



**- Huddle -**

Also beginning a new role on January 1 was **Christl Huddle** who became the Town Treasurer after serving the town for 20 years most recently as the systems manager/deputy treasurer. Huddle replaces Town Treasurer Cindy Breeden, who had been with the Town of Shenandoah for 31 years and treasurer for the last 20 years.

**Lyons named Charlottesville’s deputy city manager for operations**



- Lyons -

On January 22, the City of Charlottesville announced the appointment of **Lionel Lyons** as the deputy city manager for operations. Lyons most recently served as the deputy city manager for development and operations for the City of Petersburg, a role he held for four years.

Lyons built an impressive public service career that spans 30 years, serving in multiple executive level positions across the City of Phoenix, AZ local government.

As Charlottesville’s deputy city manager for operations, Lyons will oversee a variety of assignments relating to the city’s capital improvement plan and special projects, organization-wide initiatives, and operational efficiencies. His portfolio will include Neighborhood Development Services, Public Works, Transit, and Utilities. Lyons will report to the city manager.

In a press release, City Manager Sam Sanders said, “I welcome Lionel, a seasoned veteran of public service, to help fill out my team. I am energized by the knowledge and professionalism he will bring to enhance our ability to deliver on my commitment to have a government that is focused on strengthening our service to our community while making an impact daily.”

Lyons is a graduate of Ohio State University with a Master of Public Administration and North Carolina A&T State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science.

**Roanoke County Board of Supervisors appoints Shepherd to Vinton District**

On January 11 the Board of Supervisors of Roanoke County voted to approve the appointment of **Tammy E. Shepherd** to fill the vacancy in the Vinton Magisterial District.



- Shepherd -

Shepherd will hold office until a special election on November 5, 2024. The person elected at the special election will serve the remainder of Jason Peters’ term, as a result of his election to Roanoke County Commissioner of the Revenue. Peters’ term expires December 31, 2025.

“I am deeply grateful and privileged to be chosen as the representative of the Vinton Magisterial District during this interim phase,” said newly appointed Supervisor Shepherd in a press release. “I’ve earned a living working in Vinton, and now I have an opportunity to give back to the community that has supported me.”

A graduate of William Byrd High School, Shepherd attended Virginia Western Community College and has worked in the field of real estate for more than 35 years. She holds a Virginia Real Estate Broker License and a Virginia Real Estate Salesperson License. Shepherd has owned Shepherd Realty Group since 2017 where she manages the day-to-day operations and is an active salesperson. Prior to becoming a small business owner, she was employed as the business manager for 14 years at LT McGhee and Company where she was responsible for managing more than 150 properties and gained extensive experience in real estate, finance, accounting, and management. She also worked for 16 years in real estate sales with LT McGhee and Company.

Shepherd was selected to serve on Roanoke County’s Board of Equalization in 2022 and has served on multiple HOA boards. Shepherd also has served as president of the William Byrd Football Booster Club and treasurer of the William Byrd Booster Club.

**Petersburg names Mason director of Petersburg Area Transit**



- Mason -

In late December, the City of Petersburg announced the selection of **Darius Mason** as the director of Petersburg Area Transit (PAT). Mason began his tenure with PAT in 2006. He has served as PAT’s operations manager since 2017.

“The city received an outstanding pool of applicants and interviewed several excellent candidates,” said City Manager March Altman in a press release. “Mr. Mason impressed the interview panel and me with his knowledge and understanding of transit operations and PAT’s challenges. I believe Mr. Mason is the right person to lead PAT into the future and make PAT the model transit organization in Virginia.”

Mason’s experience includes transit operator, transit supervisor, transit system man-

ager, and interim transit general manager. He holds numerous certifications including an Outstanding Achievement Award for Safety from National Safety Council by VML Insurance Company, Certified Reasonable Suspicion Trainer for the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, and Certified Safety and Security Officer - Community Transportation Association of America (among others).

“Petersburg Area Transit is essential in promoting accessibility, supporting economic growth, and providing transportation services to vulnerable populations within the city,” said Mason in the press release. “I am eager to lead the growth and expansion of PAT, a key priority for our region.”

After graduating from Petersburg High School, Mason attended St. Augustine College and later transferred to Virginia State University.

**Dorsey begins as Salem’s new city manager**



- Dorsey -

As of January 8, **Chris Dorsey** has assumed the duties of the City of Salem’s city manager. Previously, Dorsey was the city manager of East Ridge, TN, until resigning there just over a year ago. He also was city administrator in several other Tennessee localities including the City of Sparta, the Town of Signal Mountain, and the City of Red Bank.

Dorsey’s background also includes serving as budget director for the office of management and budget for Pasco County, FL, and 18 years with the local government of Memphis, TN where he held a number of positions including budget manager.

Dorsey’s appointment follows the November 1, 2023, retirement of Jay Taliaferro, the city’s manager since 2019 and before that the assistant city manager, city engineer, and a staff engineer in a career with the city that began in 1991. Assistant City Manager Rob Light served as interim manager after Taliaferro stepped down.

“We are thrilled to have Chris join our community to lead our city management team and our dedicated employees,” Mayor Renee Turk said in a press release. “His extensive local government experience and strong financial background, along with his focus on communication and teamwork, make him the ideal fit for our city.”

In the press release, Dorsey said that he is “honored and humbled to have been chosen to be Salem’s new city manager” and was aware of the city’s “proven track record in the region.”

Dorsey has Master’s and Bachelor’s degrees in Public Administration from the University of Tennessee, and was certified by the University of Tennessee’s Institute for Public Service’s Local Government Leadership Program, and is a certified municipal finance officer.

**Cassidy is Warrenton’s town manager**



- Cassidy -

Effective January 10, **Frank Cassidy** is no longer the Town of Warrenton’s interim manager, a position he has held since April of 2023. As the newly selected town manager, Cassidy is responsible for executing the policies set by the town council

and for the coordination and delivery of municipal services.

Cassidy began his career with Warrenton in 2017 as its building official. He was selected as the community development director in 2019 and then moved into the role of public works and utilities director in 2020. He has been instrumental in the development of multiple town programs and initiatives that have led to streamlining of department processes and procedures, the implementation of the property maintenance program, the execution of RollOutWarrenton program, a key player in setting the foundation of the 5-year CIP plan for public works and utilities, and creating an advantageous working relationship with the county.

In a press release, Mayor Carter Nevill stated, “Frank’s leadership, expertise, communication, and dedication makes me grateful that he has chosen to take on this important role. This opportunity for the town is unparalleled as we adapt to the changing world around us and face challenges on the horizon that must be met with grace, thoroughness, and new ways of thinking to overcome. It is not just a welcome but a thank you for the work he is going to do to make this town experience the excellence in action that he inspires every day.”

Cassidy relocated to Virginia after 28 years of government service in Florida, holding various positions within the Community Development realm. He holds a Bachelor’s degree in Interdisciplinary Social Sciences from Florida Gulf Coast University.

**Hillsville bids farewell to Jackson, welcomes Surratt in new role**



- Jackson -

On February 23, Town of Hillsville Manager **Retta Jackson** will begin her new job as the City of Christiansburg’s planning director. She has served as the town manager in Hillsville for 10 years. At its January 23 meeting, the town council unanimously approved promoting Assistant Town Manager and Treasurer **LeAnna Surratt** to the dual role of town manager and treasurer effective March 1, 2024.



- Surratt -

At the meeting, Mayor “Greg” Crowder

**Celebrating Our 20 Year Milestone**

Thanks to all of our 308 (and counting) Virginia local government participants!

- ▶ More than 300 loan closings\*
- ▶ \$4 billion in invested assets
- ▶ Over 200 accounting engagements and actuarial studies

*\* Includes loans and Municipal Advisory engagements | valocalfinance.org*



## PEOPLE

noted that Jackson was just in her early twenties when she took the job and overcame difficulties to become “One of the best town managers in all of Southwest Virginia”

In an interview published in *The Carroll News*, Crowder shared that he felt the town was lucky to have a depth of capable, talented staff to step up to the plate. He said he felt Surratt had proven herself as “One of the best treasurers ever for the town and had really earned the right to move to the next level as manager with council confident in her abilities.”

Jackson holds a Bachelor’s of Science in Human Development and a Local Government Management Graduate Certificate (both from Virginia Tech), as well as a Master’s of Business Administration from Western Governors University. She is a member of the Virginia Women’s Municipal Leadership Institute.

Surratt holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from James Madison University.

### Staunton names Johnson as director of tourism

**Samantha Johnson** has been named the new director of tourism for the City of Staunton and will assume her new role with the city in mid-April, 2024.



- Johnson -

Johnson has over a decade of experience in sales, marketing, and creative destination development. She is a native of Appalachia and has worked within the mission of creating, serving, and enriching rural communities, most recently in Eastern Kentucky.

Before coming to the City of Staunton, Johnson was the executive director of tourism in Prestonsburg, KY. Johnson and her team have seen record high visitation consistently over the last four years.

Johnson is involved in the arts and was the artistic director of Artists Collaborative

## Movers and shakers

Do you know someone who’s on the move? Send your announcements about new hires in local government, promotions, retirements, awards and honors to **Rob Bullington** at [rbullington@vml.org](mailto:rbullington@vml.org).

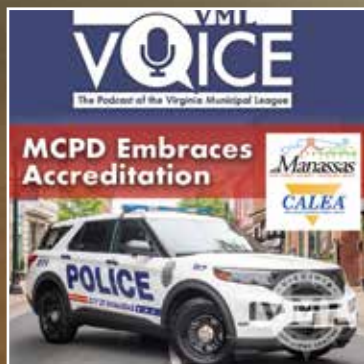
Theatre in Elkhorn, KY. She was president of the Kentucky Appalachians regional tourism initiative, and on the Kentucky Travel Industry Association board, representing Kentucky tourism at the state level.

“We are thrilled that Samantha is joining our team as we launch into the busy spring tourism season,” said City Manager Leslie Beauregard in press release.

Johnson was recently named the 2023 Business Person of the Year by the Floyd County Kentucky Chamber of Commerce. She has a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Kentucky.



The VML Voice is the official podcast of the Virginia Municipal League. Each episode explores a different locality or issue but the focus is always on Virginia and the local governments that make the Commonwealth work for everyone.



Contact Rob Bullington, [rbullington@vml.org](mailto:rbullington@vml.org) to suggest topics, ask questions, or inquire about sponsorship opportunities.

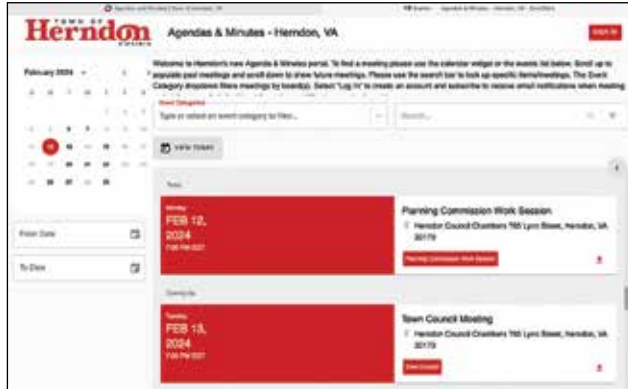
Listen to our newest episode at [www.vml.org](http://www.vml.org).





## Herndon debuts new agenda and meeting software

THE TOWN OF HERNDON has launched a new portal, accessible at [www.herndon-va.gov/meetings](http://www.herndon-va.gov/meetings), that streamlines its agenda and meetings management processes and enhances public access to archived meetings documents, upcoming meeting agendas, and livestreaming of meetings in real time.



Powered by CivicPlus, the new portal allows users to subscribe to receive emailed meeting updates and information and to follow meetings in real time, with action items posted immediately. Meeting materials are also assembled more intuitively, with meeting overviews, materials, and video livestreams clearly marked. Users may also share meeting posts with one easy click. The portal is mobile-friendly and PDFs of meeting materials are readily downloadable.

The town is also now offering livestreaming of town council work sessions. Previously, only public meetings were available via livestream. The town is partnering with HCTV, Herndon's cable access channel, to provide the livestreams.

“We are always looking for ways to make our meetings more convenient and transparent,” said Mayor Sheila Olem in a press release. “This new portal, coupled with work session livestreams, represent easy, accessible means by which town residents may engage with their government. We look forward to the added participation these tools will bring to our discussions and deliberations.”

## Danville launches “Visit SoSi” tourism website

THE DANVILLE OFFICE of Economic Development & Tourism recently launched its newly designed website for the regional tourism brand “Visit SoSi” that invites locals and visitors to take a fresh look at the city and Pittsylvania County. The website showcases local attractions, dining options, lodging accommodations, and travel information for visitors, stakeholders, and SoSi residents. The website also features a calendar of upcoming events and digital copies of the Tourism Master Plan and visitor guide. The new Visit SoSi messaging builds on the region's well-known geographical affiliation with Southside Virginia and provides a playful twist highlighting all there is to do and see within the area. The brand was created by Eddy Alexander, a full-service marketing and growth strategy advisory firm, headquartered in Roanoke.

“The creation and development of the new regional tourism website was a crucial first-term priority in our Tourism Master Plan,” said Tourism Manager, Lisa Meriwether in a press release. “The launch of the new website is just one more step we have taken to create a more dynamic and engaging way for our community to support and engage with our new regional tourism brand, Visit SoSi. Our communities offer warm hospitality and abundant activities, unique delights, and plenty of adventure, and we wanted a platform to share that information with both visitors and residents.”

Created by Simpleview, a worldwide leading provider of website design and data insights for destination marketing organizations, the new website utilizes both a content management system and customer

relationship management, to engage stakeholders and promote the region. Businesses and stakeholders are encouraged to utilize the extranet portal to communicate directly with other businesses, provide up-to-date information on sales, coupons, and events, and receive announcements from the Visit SoSi team regarding initiatives and events. These listings feed directly to the Virginia Tourism Corporation's website

The website also features information on the Visit SoSi Tourism Sponsorship program, a reimbursable funding opportunity for stakeholders interested in creating new experiences that elevate community presence, attract new visitors, and support the local economy.

Visit the new website at [www.visitsosi.com](http://www.visitsosi.com).



# VACP awards Winter 2023/24 Law Enforcement Executive certifications

ON FEBRUARY 8, THE VIRGINIA Association of Chiefs of Police & Foundation (VACP) recognized twenty-two Virginia law enforcement executives with the designation of VACP Certified Law Enforcement Executive.

The VACP strives to promote the professional development and highest standards of executive and management level personnel of law enforcement agencies throughout Virginia. With that mission in mind, the VACP Law Enforcement Executive Certification Program encourages police executives to attain and maintain established benchmarks of accomplishment to achieve a recommended standard for police leadership within the state of Virginia.

There are two levels of law enforcement certification available for Virginia public safety leaders:

- **Certified Chief Executive Officer** – for the currently-appointed chief or commanding officer of a Virginia law enforcement agency.
- **Certified Command Executive Officer** – for a law enforcement command officer who serves in an executive or upper management position; or, for chiefs who do not meet the basic eligibility requirements for Certified Chief Executive.

Learn more about the program at [www.vachiefs.org/certification](http://www.vachiefs.org/certification).

Congratulations to the following law enforcement executives for achieving their certifications!



## ACP Certified Law Enforcement Chief Executive Officers:

- Chief Alonzo Howell, VCLEE-CEO (Smithfield PD)
- Chief David Huchler, VCLEE-CEO (Metro Washington Airports Authority PD)
- Chief Scott A. Vantrease, VCLEE-CEO (Va. Dept. of Conservation & Recreation - LE Division)
- Chief Milton S. Franklin, Jr., VCLEE-CEO (Bridgewater College Campus Police)
- Chief Angela McKenzie Greene, VCLEE-CEO (Lexington PD)

## VACP Certified Law Enforcement Command Executive Officers:

- Captain Danny Crouse, VCLEE-CO (Salem PD)
- Lt. Barry Dufek, VCLEE-CO (Purcellville PD)
- Lt. Stacy Henry, VCLEE-CO (Virginia State Univ. PD)
- Asst. Chief Easton McDonald, VCLEE-CO (Alexandria PD)
- Lt. Evan McManus, VCLEE-CO (Radford City PD)
- Asst. Chief Monique Myers, VLCEE-CO (James City Co. PD)
- Capt. Steven Pihonak, VCLEE-CO (Herndon PD)
- Asst. Chief Renado Prince, VCLEE-CO (Portsmouth PD)
- Lt. Chris Eric Whiteaker, VCLEE-CO (Bristol PD)
- Major Jiwan Chhetri, VCLEE-CO (Falls Church PD)
- Lt. Marcus Downey, VCLEE-CO (Alexandria PD)
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- Chief Stephen Jenkins, VCLEE-CO (Portsmouth PD)
- Asst. Chief Jacob Martz, VCLEE-CO (Manassas City PD)
- Asst. Chief Tara Lea Moore-Petty, VCLEE-CO (Manassas City PD)
- Chief Christopher Wiles, VCLEE-CO (Danville PD)



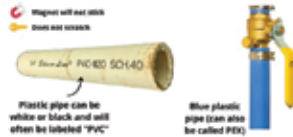
**VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION**  
of **CHIEFS of POLICE**  
— & Foundation





## Martinsville launches “Know Your Line” initiative to identify lead sources in home plumbing

### White, Blue or Black Plastic



### Lead



### Copper



### Galvanized Iron



MARTINSVILLE UTILITIES and Water Resources is inspecting all 120 miles of piping throughout the city. As part of this effort, the department is asking the community to assist in identifying potential lead sources within home plumbing. Residents are asked to locate the service line where drinking water enters their home through a pipe that connects to the water meter and is typically located in a home’s basement or utility closet. The department is requesting that all customers self-report their service line materials using an online portal.

Water service line pipes can contain many materials, including lead, galvanized iron, brass, copper, or plastic. An informative chart helps residents figure out their water service line material and/or plumbing material.

This initiative aligns with the EPA’s Lead and Copper Rule Revision, ensuring compliance and transparency.

## Hampton and the Army Corps of Engineers to study sea level rise



AS OUTLINED IN A JANUARY 17 press release, the City of Hampton and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will work together to investigate flooding along coastal regions and rivers on the Peninsula that is exacerbated by sea level rise. The city and the Norfolk district of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers received approval in December from the Corps’ national headquarters to conduct the Virginia Peninsula Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study. The study includes low-lying areas that have experienced repetitive damage from coastal storms, rainfall, and flooding. The study is 100% federally funded for an initial \$3 million and approved under the Long-Term Disaster Recovery Investment Plan component of the 2019 Additional Supplemental Appropriations Disaster Relief Act.

In the press release, Hampton City Manager Mary Bunting observed: “Hampton has taken a very proactive position on mitigating the impact of storms and sea-level rise. This is a study we have been seeking for several years and are pleased that it is moving forward. We are very excited for the opportunity to partner with our regional partners and the Army Corp of Engineers. Floodwaters cross borders, and this comprehensive study is an opportunity for the Peninsula to have a regional planning approach for shore-

line protection projects. The Army Corps’ study will provide an understanding of those issues and develop potential solutions that will make the region safer and stronger.”

The study area is comprised of the cities of Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson and Williamsburg, as well and York and James River counties. It is bounded by the James River to the south, Chesapeake Bay to the east and the York River to the north.

The study will examine the federal interest and the feasibility of implementing measures that may include building elevation or flood-proofing, nature-based solutions such as wetland restoration, and structural measures such as tide gates and flood walls to help manage the risk of storm damage.

Based on the study findings, the city and surrounding communities will partner with the Army Corps of Engineers to develop a plan to design measures that will lead to construction that will tangibly manage coastal storm risk and improve economic resiliency of the Peninsula region.

More details are available at [www.nao.usace.army.mil/About/Projects/PCSRM](http://www.nao.usace.army.mil/About/Projects/PCSRM).



# The National League of Cities turns 100!

**A**T 9:30 A.M. ON DECEMBER 12, 1924, in Fraser Hall at the University of Kansas, John Stutz called to order a meeting of ten state leagues of what would be the first meeting of the group initially called the Association of State Municipal Organizations, next the American Municipal Association, and finally, the National League of Cities (NLC). The call to establish an umbrella organization for state municipal organizations came out of the late 19th-century drive to reform and empower local officials, as cities and towns expanded rapidly following the Industrial Revolution. Over the following 100 years, the organization would also expand both in size and impact, coming to represent nearly 3,000 cities and becoming the top resource and advocate for local governments across America.

The National League of Cities is a trusted resource for mayors, city council members, and municipal government staff, providing them with unparalleled research and technical expertise. Now based in Washington, DC, the NLC also serves as a relentless advocate for the nation's cities, towns, and villages in our nation's capital, and has played a historic role in shaping some of the country's most significant pieces of public policy. Among these are the passage of the creation of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, the American Rescue Plan Act, and the

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. As a testament to the organization, presidents of the National League of Cities have gone on to become governors, members of Congress, senators, and cabinet secretaries.

*Through the Virginia Municipal League's membership in the National League of Cities our local government members have access to many of its opportunities and resources.*

A great example of what NLC offers municipalities began in the fall of 2022 when it launched its Local Infrastructure Hub's series of bootcamps designed to help small and mid-sized local governments take advantage of the grant opportunities available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act. Hundreds of communities took advantage of these free trainings.

In its fourth series, the Local Infrastructure Hub is launching a new set of training "bootcamps" in the fall of 2023 to keep pace with new grant opportunities being released by the federal government. The bootcamps helped more than 600 localities – including several in Virginia – develop competitive federal grant applications, offering peer counseling, office hours, and technical support to small and mid-sized cities.

Thanks NLC and happy birthday!



1924-2024: A CENTURY OF STRENGTHENING CITIES

## Time to celebrate with the NLC Centennial Roadshow: 100 Years, 100 Cities!

TO MARK ITS CENTENNIAL milestone, the National League of Cities is preparing for a year-long celebration of activities, events, and celebrations highlighting our members, partners, and the transformative progress we've accomplished together. At the heart of this celebration, NLC is hitting the road for what we're calling the "NLC Centennial Roadshow: 100 Years, 100 Cities."

During this journey, NLC aims to visit 100 cities, in-person and virtually, to spotlight the unique stories of municipalities and the invaluable relationships they've cultivated with NLC.





2

*First Meeting  
held at Lawrence, Kansas*

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Title</i>
1	<i>Harry A. Darr</i>	<i>Oklahoma Municipal League</i>
2	<i>Don C. Lewis</i>	<i>Colorado Municipal League</i>
3	<i>Robert W. Williams</i>	<i>League of Virginia Municipalities</i>
4	<i>Robert S. Johnson</i>	<i>League of Texas Municipalities</i>
5	<i>Frank W. Bates</i>	<i>Indiana Municipal League</i>
6	<i>A. D. M. Tarkenton</i>	<i>Secretary</i>
7	<i>Thomas S. Lewis</i>	
8	<i>Frank P. Pierce</i>	<i>Sec. Treas.</i>
9	<i>John F. Lyons</i>	<i>Sec. Treas.</i>
10	<i>William H. Lyall</i>	<i>Director Political Service</i>
11	<i>Samuel M. Smith</i>	<i>Executive Sec.</i>
12	<i>Harvey Hadden</i>	<i>Asst. Secy.</i>
13	<i>Chester K. Shore</i>	<i>Managing Editor, "Kansas Municipalities"</i>
14	<i>James W. Russell</i>	<i>Assistant Secretary S.M.A.</i>
15	<i>D.C. Brock</i>	<i>Student</i>
16	<i>Walter DeLafon</i>	<i>Stdt. in Political Science</i>
17	<i>Louis S. French</i>	<i>Student</i>
18	<i>David E. Lyons</i>	"
19	<i>Oscar V. Manning</i>	"
20	<i>Joseph M. M. Murray</i>	"
21	<i>Robert C. Morrow</i>	<i>Reporter</i>
22	<i>W. T. Wright</i>	<i>Mayor</i>
23	<i>Edwin Clark Hill</i>	<i>Area Admin. Kan. Munic.</i>
24	<i>Frank T. Stockton</i>	<i>Secy.</i>
25		
26	<i>Officers Elected</i>	<i>President</i>
27		<i>Vice President</i>
28		<i>Executive Secretary</i>

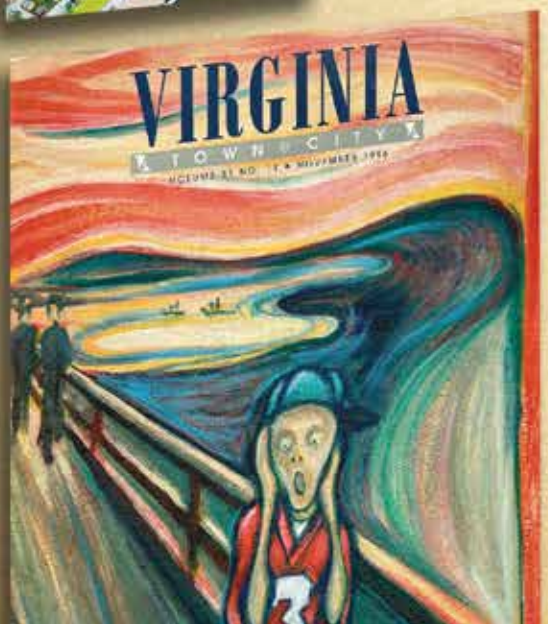
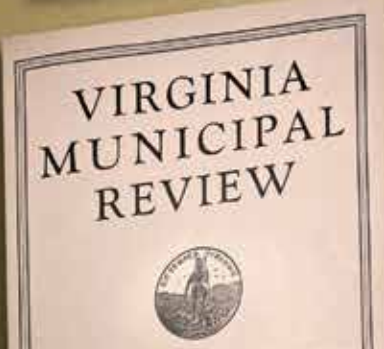
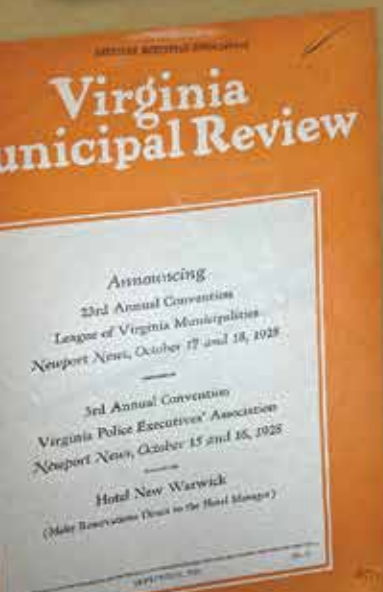
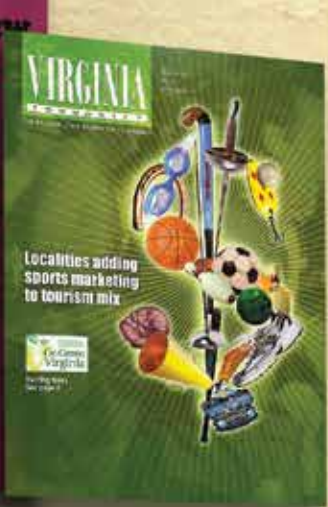
**1924:** (Left) Coming out of the growing movement to create state-wide leagues of municipal officials, a number of municipal league secretaries meet in Lawrence, Kansas in December 1924 and decide to create the Association of State Municipal Organizations, headquartered at the League of Kansas Municipalities and led by John Stutz, the Kansas League secretary. At its second conference in Chicago the following year, the new organization changes its name to the American Municipal Association.

**2015:** (Below center) The National League of Cities announces that it will move, along with the National Association of Counties, into a newly constructed, 200,000-square-foot, LEED Gold certified building at 660 North Capitol Street.

**2020:** (Below) NLC takes a central role in helping guide and empower local governments during the pandemic, launching the Cities Are Essential campaign in April to lobby the federal government for direct funding to cities during the most devastating months of the COVID-19 pandemic.









# 100 YEARS

By Rob Bullington

WHEN I FIRST CAME to the Virginia Municipal League a little over five years ago, I was assured that I would mostly be working on the magazine and that there were plenty of subject matter experts I could rely upon for local government knowledge. That was a relief to me because, while I did have a fair amount of experience as a writer and editor, I had almost no experience with anything related to local government.

I figured I could learn the local government stuff as I went along. To paraphrase Billy Shakespeare: “Some are born knowing about local government and some have knowledge of local government thrust upon them.”

I fall into the latter category.

As an example of how little I knew when I started: Early in my tenure I asked our director, Michelle Gowdy, what we should cover in an upcoming issue of the magazine. “We should do something on procurement,” she suggested. “Right,” I replied, “sounds good. Procurement it is!”

As soon as I got back to my office I googled, “What is procurement?”

As my duties at VML have expanded to encompass myriad tasks for our members, I’ve learned a great deal about how local governments in Virginia work and all the work they do for the residents of the Commonwealth. Whether helping to organize VML events, managing our Community Business Member program, assisting VML’s policy team, taking part in the transition to a new database, or putting together a panel on Procurement (!) for the Annual Conference, my job at VML has been a fantastic school in all things local government. And the learning continues!

But, as my responsibilities at VML have broadened over the years, there’s one that I still claim as my favorite: The magazine. It’s the best part of my job and I wouldn’t trade “Editor of *Virginia Town & City*” for any other role (no matter how many are thrust upon me).

So, hats off to VML’s magazine and here’s to the next 100 years!

By Manuel Timbreza

THIS IS THE 308TH ISSUE of VML’s magazine that I’ve completed (but who’s counting?). I remember my first one. Back in 1996 I was working for Gates Communications in Richmond on a publication called *Campus Voice* when I got a call from a guy named David Parsons. I didn’t quite catch the name of the organization he was with, but I heard him say he was seeking a cover concept for *Town & Country*. I immediately thought I’d hit the jackpot by landing a project for a national magazine. I told everyone I knew that I was going to be famous. I had to do a lot of “back-bragging” when I realized the assignment was for something called *Town & City*.

The issue that David needed a cover for was going to be about Virginia capping the spending for youth with emotional and behavioral problems. I presented the idea of illustrating the famous painting “The Scream” by Edvard Munch. My added touches were a sport jersey and cap to the figure. The cover got a very mixed reaction – VML members either loved it or hated it – but at least it grabbed some attention!

The following year I was offered the position of Assistant Director of Communications at VML. Over the years, a lot has changed. I remember when I completed my degree in graphic design back in the 80s – when computers were just starting to become commonplace – one of my professors told the class that everything we’d learned was about to become obsolete. He wasn’t kidding! Working on the VML magazine has meant keeping current by attending Photoshop workshops and experimenting with various layout applications as new technologies have become available. But the one thing that hasn’t changed is the artistic challenge of developing artwork that suits the subject and “screams” for attention. Some of the covers and layouts have worked better than others, but it’s always a fun challenge.





# Magazine Memories



## Mike Amyx (VML Executive Director, 1980-2013)

While working for the League of Kansas Municipalities in the early 1970s, I had an opportunity to meet John G. Stutz, the retired Kansas League Executive Director (and in 1924 the primary organizer and first Director of the forerunner of the National League of Cities). When I encountered him, John was carrying

an armful of Kansas League magazines that he brought in once a year to be bound. He explained how vital the magazine was to the league's work because every month every league member was able to get the latest local news.

As the decades have passed, many league magazines have been phased out due to rising production and mailing costs. For many years during my tenure as Executive Director, VML conducted membership services surveys. The top two rated services were always *Virginia Town & City* and the legislative advocacy program. Key features of *VTC* have included: articles on local government best practices, legislative news, activities of our affiliated groups, updates on the VML sponsored programs such as group insurance programs, and appointment/retirement news from individual local officials. Not only do the thousands of current local officials get *VTC* each month, members of the Virginia General Assembly, state officials, and public libraries are also recipients. During the many visits I made to local officials' offices over the years, I often noticed stacks of *VTC* back issues close at hand for quick reference.

On behalf of myself and the local government officials that have benefited from *Virginia Town & City* over the years, I want to thank the publication staff for their fine work in producing each issue of the magazine. May future generations of officials continue to receive this valuable tool for at least another 100 years!

## David Parsons (VML Director of Communications and VTC Editor, 1994-2014)

Beginning in 1994, I oversaw the publication of the magazine. A former journalist from Newport News with 15 years of experience in daily newspaper reporting and editing, I directed changes in the content of *Virginia Town & City* soon after I started with VML.

I felt like readers would spend more time with the magazine if it had a better mix of feature stories about best practices combined with lots of news briefs about personnel and happenings from our member local governments. I also wanted to modernize the appearance of the magazine, which had resembled a government journal for much of its first 80 years. That ultimately was accomplished in 1997 with the hiring of Manuel Timbreza, a skilled graphic designer with an abundance of experience in print production. Twenty-seven years and approximately 300 issues later, Timbreza continues to design the now nine issues of *Virginia Town & City* published annually.

Hiring a full-time professional graphic designer dramatically improved the appearance and readability of the magazine overnight. All of a sudden, VML had one of the best designed league magazines in the country. And we eventually were able to go from using color printing on the front and back covers only to using color throughout.

Publishing a magazine with a statewide readership is a challenge when that magazine does not have a staff of reporters and photographers based around the state. During my time at the league,



*"It all comes together in Virginia Town & City. For me it was a must read, chock full of inspiring success stories, creative policy initiatives and leadership comings & goings. The magazine helped us effectively launch and sustain VML's*



*Go Green Virginia program. Three cheers for reaching 100 and adjusting to the times to stay relevant and useful."*

- Jay Fisette, Former Arlington County Board Member  
(VML President 2007-2008)



*"Being involved with VML has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my political life. Making a difference of influencing the General Assembly, as well as many educational opportunities. The best part has been the networking and becoming friends with other elected officials from all over our beautiful state and learning about their communities."*

- Rosemary Wilson,  
Councilmember – City of Virginia Beach  
(VML President, 2011-2012)





David Parsons



Manuel Timbreza

obtaining relevant content would not have been possible without the cooperation of public information officers, all of whom were already swamped with their own daily workloads. They were invaluable. I can't remember the number of times I called on people such as Melinda Mayo in Roanoke, Marc Davis in Virginia Beach, Heather Browning in Blacksburg, Arnold Hendrix in Danville, Lori Crouch in Norfolk, and Lee Ann Hartmann in Williamsburg. I'm leaving out so many people – Rosa Lee Jude in Wytheville, Craig Fifer in Alexandria, Robin McCormick in Hampton, Ken Heath in Marion. The list just goes on. They were all such pros and willing to take on the extra work. I'm surprised that they kept taking my phone calls!

In addition to the contributions from member local governments, the magazine continues to lean heavily on VML lobbyists to provide and coordinate inciteful content on legislative and legal issues throughout the year. Longtime (and now retired) VML Director of Research Mary Jo Fields took a particular interest in the magazine. It was not uncommon for her to spend several hours at home proofing an upcoming issue of *Virginia Town & City*. It's also worth noting that the magazine always had the strong support of Board of Directors – a trend which I understand continues to this day. That support is probably one of the biggest reasons VML continues to be able to put out a glossy print magazine throughout the year.

Another initiative I put into place was publishing a more comprehensive profile of newly elected VML presidents than had been done in the past. Getting to know a local official while visiting

their community was something I looked forward to doing every fall. I can recall walking down the street in Marion with (Mayor) David Helms, who had just been elected VML president, and wondering how he ever got anywhere on time! It seemed like every person we encountered on the street greeted him, and about half of them wanted to continue a running conversation they had been having with him about this or that.

I also clearly remember my visit to Martinsville in 1998 to interview City Manager Earl Reynolds, VML's new president at the time.

In addition to conducting the interview, I needed to photograph Reynolds for the cover of the magazine. At the time, VML did not own one of the newfangled, very expensive digital cameras that were coming onto the market – the kind that let you immediately review what you had photographed on a screen. Instead, I had a 35mm camera that used film (remember film?). I brought two rolls though – just in case. Each roll could capture 36 exposures, and I proceeded to shoot 72 frames of the always immaculately dressed Reynolds standing on the edge of a park. Keep in mind, I only needed one good shot. I never believed I was a good photographer, but I did believe in the law of averages!



After the film was processed, a close examination of the negatives quickly revealed a problem. In each of the first 70 frames, Reynolds' necktie was crooked – and not just a little bit crooked, but jarringly crooked. Comically crooked! As luck would have it, frames number 71 and 72 were of a smiling, in focus Reynolds with a perfectly straight tie.



*Twenty-four years ago I reached for my first copy of "Virginia Town & City", anxious to find out about my sister towns and cities in Virginia, and wanting to learn about relevant legislation, grants and programs for my town! I still look forward to VTC each month ... read it cover to cover. Congratulations for 100 wonderful years!*

- Robert Coiner,  
Mayor – Town of Gordonsville  
(VML President 2016-2017)



*"Congratulations to VML on providing 100 years of service to the Commonwealth of Virginia! Thank you for keeping us informed on current municipal issues and providing awareness of best practices from near and far! And of course – keeping us connected across this great state! From the Star City of the South - you are our Shining Star!"*

- Anita James Price,  
Former Councilmember – City of Roanoke  
(VML President, 2018-2019)



# Mary Jo Fields

**(Legislative Associate, Director of Research, 1984-2018)**

My first assignment with *Virginia Town & City* was in the late 1970s when I was working for the University of Virginia's Institute of Government



(now the Weldon Cooper Center). I was tasked with writing a University of Virginia "Commentary" column, which was then a monthly, one-page feature on various topics in VML's magazine. My first Commentary was on a trendy idea at the time – sunset legislation – and had the imaginative title of "Sunset Legislation". I'm sure I worked on other Commentaries during the eight years I was at the Institute but

only remember that first one! It was a difficult assignment, as you had to come up with a topic and research and write it, and then undergo the red pen editing by the Institute's editor, Sandra Wilkinson (now Sandra Wiley). I was devastated when I got that first draft back from Sandra – it was covered with red pencil marks!

Later, when I was working for VML, the part of working with *Virginia Town & City* that I enjoyed the most was writing a regular series of one-page articles focused on particular local officials. I got the idea for the series while attending one of VML's Newly Elected Officials conferences. The backgrounds of the attendees were just all over the board and were totally fascinating. It was great getting to think of people I wanted to feature, talk with them, and come up with the piece. And all the people included in the articles were just as nice as could be and were willing to talk to me despite their busy lives!



*"Each time I receive an issue of Virginia Town & City, I am reminded how those of us who are passionate about local government across the Commonwealth are all connected. Stories from small towns in SWVA, to cities on our coast, from our friends on the Eastern Shore, to our Southside companions, to my colleagues in NOVA, reveal our similarities and how the lessons learned by one can apply to others. In this way, and so many others, VML's magazine is a valuable resource in our work to make local governments more agile and better for our constituents."*



- Jon Stehle, Councilmember – City of Fairfax  
(VML President 2021-2022)

*"Congratulations on 100 years! VML's magazine has been a big help to me. It's a great tool and helps me help my people to stay informed. In fact, sometimes I read about things in the VML magazine before I see them in the local paper. There's so much good information – but you have to read it! I always look forward to receiving the next issue and I hope it continues for a long time to come."*



- Willie Greene, Mayor – City of Galax  
(VML President 2020-2021)

*"I have been reading – and occasionally appeared in – the VML magazine since my involvement in VML. It is a great tool to inform officials throughout Virginia on their involvement and update them on the political arena and spotlight our localities so we can learn about each other."*



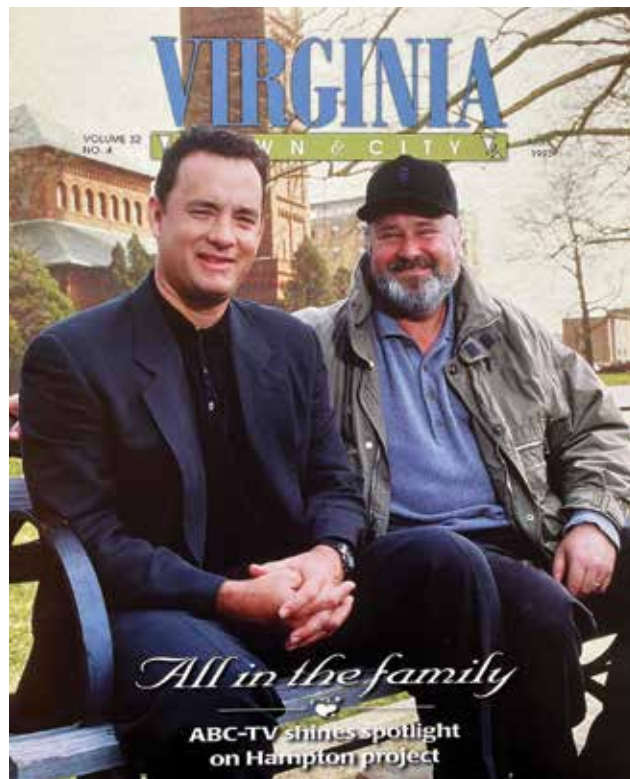
- A.D. "Chuckie" Reid,  
Vice Mayor –  
Town of Farmville  
(Current VML President)



# Notable covers ...



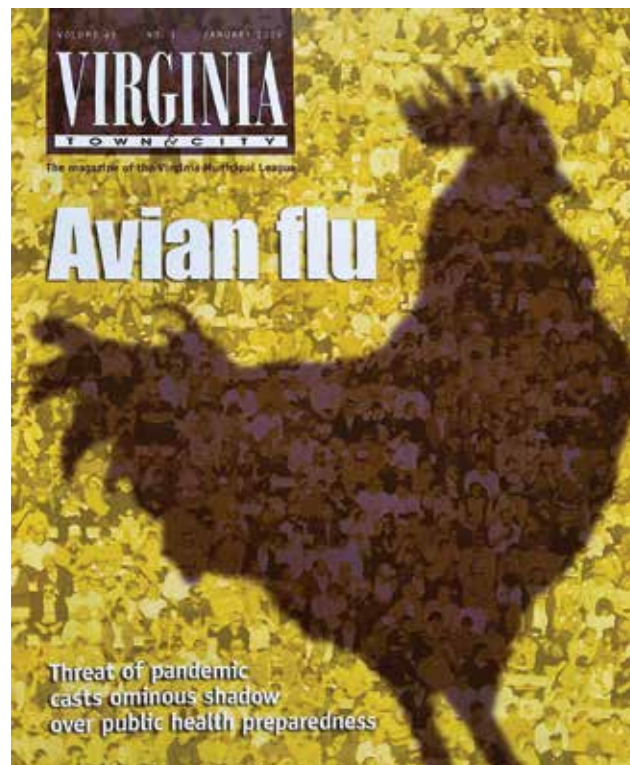
**1978:** The theme for VML's 73rd annual convention was a play on looking toward the future but also the idea of having clear vision. Thankfully, like platform shoes, carpeted bathrooms, and extra wide ties, this rendering of the VML logo didn't survive the 70s.



**1997:** This was the year that actor Tom Hanks and director Rob Reiner reached the pinnacle of their careers by appearing on the cover of Virginia Town & City. Thankfully, they filmed the ABC-TV special "I Am Your Child" on the campus of Hampton University and earned their moment in the VML sun. Wonder what they've been up to since?



**2001:** Sometimes a picture is all that's really needed. Interesting fact: This photo of the Pentagon after the September 11 attacks was taken by Scott Boatright of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue who sent it directly to VML's Manuel Timbreza. It appeared on the cover of VTC first.



**2006:** OK, we were off by 14 years and thought maybe the pandemic that would shut down the world would involve monster chickens, but we nailed the "we're not ready for a pandemic" angle. Unfun fact: Bird flu is on the rise again in 2024. Might be time to dust off that giant chicken for another photo shoot.



# Advertising through the years ...

**1941** – We've been looking for an economical motor grader, so if anyone has an A-W "55" sitting in their garage we'd love to talk to you. Our non-motorized grader eats too many oats.

**1951** – The Baker Equipment Engineering Co. really knew how to take the guess work out of naming a product.

**1956** – Proof that there was a time when people could just be unavailable. Also – if you called the Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Company of Virginia's office as advised how likely were you to get a live person instead of an Automatic Answering Device? So it began.

**1970** – Astute readers will notice that the Shoup Voting Machine Corporation advertisement doesn't say anything about hanging chads. Enough said.

**1980** – *Awwww!* It's McGruff the crime puppy before anyone knew his name! It's probably best he waited until he was a little older to properly introduce himself – "Take a Chew out of Crime" doesn't have the same bite.

**1990** – In the days before fights for (or against) casinos and "gray machines," businesses could just install these things to raise money. A note to our younger readers – those are phones, you had to put coins in them to make them work, you shared them with the whole world, and all they did was allow you to call someone. Nope, you couldn't send a text, but the call quality was amazing thanks to those silver tethers called "cords."

Meet the NEW A-W "55"

... An Economy Motor Grader Especially Specially Sited for Maintenance and Grading Jobs

Highway Machinery & Supply Co., Inc.

1941

You can't afford to be without the GarWood LOAD-PACKER

FOR GREATER CLEANLINESS AND BETTER HEALTH

FOR MUCH LOWER GARBAGE & RUBBISH COLLECTION COSTS

BAKER EQUIPMENT ENGINEERING CO.

1951

How to be "in" when you're out

You can't be in your office all the time. If you've been missing telephone calls and orders, you need an Automatic Answering Device. It takes calls even when you're out. It's a compact unit connected to your telephone, gives callers a recorded message in your own voice and lets them leave messages for you to play back when you return.

The Automatic Answering Device is only one of the many aids we have for business. No matter what your communication needs, we can help you. Just call our Business Office – today.

The Chesapeake & Potomac Telephone Company of Virginia

A company of 9,000 Virginians providing good telephone service for their friends and neighbors

1956

Shoup VOTING MACHINES

The most important advantage of the voting machine is a democracy is that it makes every vote count.

The Shoup Voting Machine offers a complete, self-contained system of recording and counting votes which are locked and sealed in the machine to provide immediate, accurate election results at the precinct level.

Along with this improved voting process, The Shoup Voting Machine Corporation provides training for your election officials, instruction of your voters and service of your entire voting machine election.

The Shoup Voting Machine has become an established, effective tool of efficient government through half a century of use in 45 states and abroad. It guarantees the integrity of every vote and has become

The People's Choice

THE Shoup VOTING MACHINE CORPORATION  
105 E. City Line Avenue, Oak Spring, Pa. 17094

1970

You don't know me ...yet.

But you will see, I've been assigned to help you learn how to protect yourself against crime. I'll be giving you tips on how to discourage burglars, discourage snugglers, and generally make life a little harder for criminals.

Like, for instance, did you know if a burglar can't break into your place after four minutes, chances are, he'll quit? So locking your door could ruin a crook's night.

Another example. Don't carry a purse when you don't need one. It makes a lot of sense; if you don't have your purse, it can't be snatched.

You'll be seeing a lot of me, but in the meantime, find out more. Write to: Crime Prevention Coalition, Box 6600, Rockville, Maryland 20860.

Find out what you and your neighbors can do to prevent crime. That's one way to help.

TAKE A BITE OUT OF CRIME

1980



Intelligent  
network **IQ**<sup>SM</sup>

NEW JERSEY BELL • BELL OF PENNSYLVANIA • DIAMOND STATE TELEPHONE



# Our slots pay off hundreds of times a day.

In Atlantic City, the competition is tough. So Bally's Casino Hotel can't afford to gamble with customer satisfaction. With public phones from Bell Atlantic, Bally's has a sure thing. We promise dependable service no other phone company can match, with sealed collection boxes, promptly paid commissions, and a service line that operates 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week. "Our customers demand the best," says Ron Mann, general manager. "If everything in the hotel isn't top quality,

they'll find another place to play. That's why our public phones are Bell Atlantic public phones. Period."

Let us show you how Bell Atlantic public phones pay off every time they're used. Call us toll-free during any business day for more information.

1-800-782-8355

**Bell Atlantic**  
We're More Than Just Talk.<sup>SM</sup>

NEW JERSEY BELL • BELL OF PENNSYLVANIA • DIAMOND STATE TELEPHONE

1990

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**MAY 16-17**

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DISCUSSIONS ABOUT CONNECTION,  
COMMUNITY & OPPORTUNITY

Hilton Short Pump, Richmond, VA



VCTA

Broadband  
Association of Virginia



SCAN QR CODE



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[broadbandtogether.com](http://broadbandtogether.com)

CALL FOR DETAILS  
804-780-1776





PERCILLA ZENO, CITY OF FRANKLIN

# Transforming personal tragedy into a community triumph of peer recovery support

**Editor’s note:** *Our regular readers know that we often include “Spotlight” columns that feature the work and achievements of our member localities, their staff and officials, and our Community Business Member organizations. However, here at VTC, we sometimes receive stories about individuals or groups doing great work within a VML member locality that don’t exactly fit into any of the regular “Spotlight” categories. So, with the start of a new year, we are pleased to introduce a new “Spotlight” category that borrows its name from the “Local Champion” awards VML presented during the pandemic. Thanks to City of Franklin Councilmember Lynwood Johnson for bringing this issue’s Local Champion to our attention. Feel free to send us suggestions for future Local Champion Spotlights – we’d love to hear from you!*

**T**HE YEAR 1996 MARKED a pivotal moment in PerCilla Zeno’s life. In that year she lost her husband, an active-duty service member, to an addiction exacerbated by mental health issues. His death left a void filled with sorrow and unanswered questions. The challenges didn’t end there. In 2011, PerCilla’s son, grappling with a co-occurring disorder, lost a full academic scholarship and returned to their rural home in Suffolk where resources for recovery were scarce. Despite successfully completing an out-of-state inpatient program, he too tragically lost his life.

Determined to turn her grief into a force for positive change, Zeno became a peer recovery specialist. She founded a non-profit dedicated to helping others navigate their recovery journeys and launched Zeno Wellness Group LLC, an outpatient practice specializing in substance use disorders. Zeno Wellness Group offers clinical and nonclinical services including crucial peer recovery support for adults and a full peer recovery specialist training center.

Currently located in the four-story, 40,000 square-foot Franklin Business Center building in Historic Downtown Franklin, Zeno Wellness Group’s commitment extends throughout Virginia, with a special focus on rural communities. Recognized for its impactful work, Zeno Wellness Group recently received a six-figure grant in collaboration with the Department of Veteran Services. This grant has been instrumental in aiding rural areas with limited services that are struggling with increasing rates of suicide and opioid abuse.

At Zeno Wellness Group, the focus is not only on treatment but also on empowering individuals. Zeno understands that Peer Recovery Support is vital not just in homes, but also in municipal workplaces, prisons, and local jails, with the understanding that mental health and substance use challenges do not discriminate. As such, Zeno Wellness Group’s peer support specialist training and internship program is available to anyone 18 years and older. Participants have included private sector employees, justice-involved individuals, clinicians, service members, veterans, military families, and those in recovery. By empowering these individuals with peer recovery specialist skills – literally equipping at least one person in a given space with the knowledge and skills to save lives – the program is crucial in reducing suicide rates and substance use.

*“Wellbeing is attained by little and little, and nevertheless is no little thing itself.”*

- Zeno of Citium, founder of the Stoic school of philosophy (334 BC – 262 BC)



The training curriculum at Zeno Wellness Group is comprehensive, encompassing peer support skills, communication strategies, self-care, ethical considerations, and even basic computer skills. This wide-ranging approach ensures that trainees are well-equipped to handle various situations effectively.

PerCilla Zeno’s determination to put her life experience and expertise as a peer recovery specialist to work in her community have benefited scores of individuals. On a personal level, the work has proven to be lifesaving for her youngest son, an overwhelmed college student who struggled to find on-campus mental health support but is now thriving and fully self-supported. This personal victory further cemented her commitment to peer support as an essential component of mental health and substance use recovery.

# Events, events ...

ON JANUARY 5, VML hosted an Elected Officials Conference for new and veteran local electeds. Then, on February 1 – in conjunction with the Virginia Association of Counties and the Virginia Planning District Commission Association – we hosted Local Government Day. Both events were held at the Richmond Downtown Marriott, and both were big successes! Thanks to everyone who came. We look forward to seeing you all again!















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As a CBM organization you hold a sustaining membership in VML and keep your firm or organization connected with the issues that are important to municipalities around you. Being a CBM places your organization at the forefront in the minds of VML members, ensuring you the visibility, access, and awareness that will help move your organization forward.

Please note that each level of membership includes both year-round benefits as well as benefits specific to VML's Annual Conference held in the fall.



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