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About the cover

Local governments have learned the hard way about the potential for cyberware threats and ransomware attacks. Find out the results of a survey on the top concerns of information technology professionals and learn what local governments can do to combat cybercriminals. The article by Dr. Alan R. Shark with the Public Technology Institute begins on page 12.

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The sky's the limit: Airports and local governments work together for economic growth

The aviation industry in Virginia employs nearly 147,000 people who collectively earn more than \$7.7 billion in wages each year. Companies rely on airports for fast and efficient transportation of people, supplies and products and airports play a vital role in the state and regional economies.

By John W. Campbell Jr.

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Preparing the next generation of managers



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The Graduate Certificate in Local Government Management, a partnership between the Virginia Local Government Management Association and Virginia Tech, enters its tenth year of enabling current local government employees to advance in their careers and to prepare students who have recently graduated for a career in local government administration.

By Stephanie Davis

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Communities across Virginia are feeling the LOVE



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The Virginia Tourism Corporation created the LOVEwork reimbursement program in 2013. The program has resulted in the creation of more than 100 LOVEworks projects across the Commonwealth that reflect the diversity and creativity of local residents who have banded together to showcase their communities.

By VML staff

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Busy summer and fall awaits us

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY session is finally over – well, except for the most important budget and the veto session – and I have had time to digest all of the studies and work groups that will take place over the summer. All of these are designed to create legislation for next year and our involvement in these processes is important. I am going to talk about a few of them and if you are interested in being involved, please let me know.

One of my personal favorites is SJ75 by Senator Norment, which establishes a two-year study of the ethics laws in Virginia. The Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council has many members who have expressed the need to “redo” the laws rather than trying to fix what we have. This study will consist of 6 legislative members and 2 non-legislative citizen members. While arguably the study language only relates to General Assembly members and state employees, it most likely will “bootstrap” in local governments and their employees.

Speaker Cox and Senate Majority Leader Norment have convened a joint House and Senate committee to study election issues. The study will include the acceptance of absentee ballots, the assignment of voters in split precincts as well as recount law and procedures. Delegate Mark Cole and Senator Jill Vogel will serve as the co-chairs.

Delegate Head began last year to convene a work group on public notices in Virginia. This group will consider the usefulness of newspaper advertisements and how the internet has affected public notices. This group includes newspaper officials as well as VML and VACO.

The FOIA Council had 13 bills referred to it for study this session; I will spare listing them all here! There will be three subcommittees to study the various issues: Records, Meetings and Remedies. The issues include the definition of “custodian,” defining “public records,” and the proposed requirement for public comment at every public body meeting.

The Committee on Senate Local Government had a lot of fun with the proposed proffer legislation and let me tell you there was a lot of it! They created the “proffer party” which was held on April 17th to begin to discuss proffers overall. I fully expect that this issue will end up taking a lot of time this year.

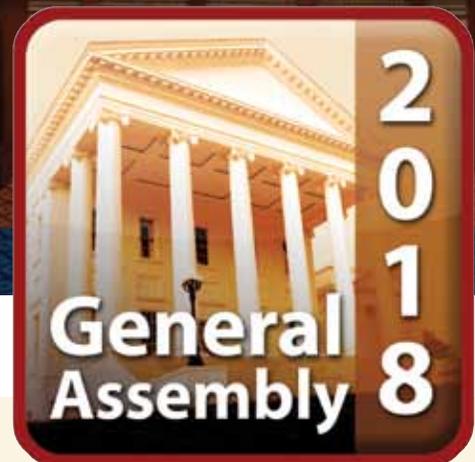
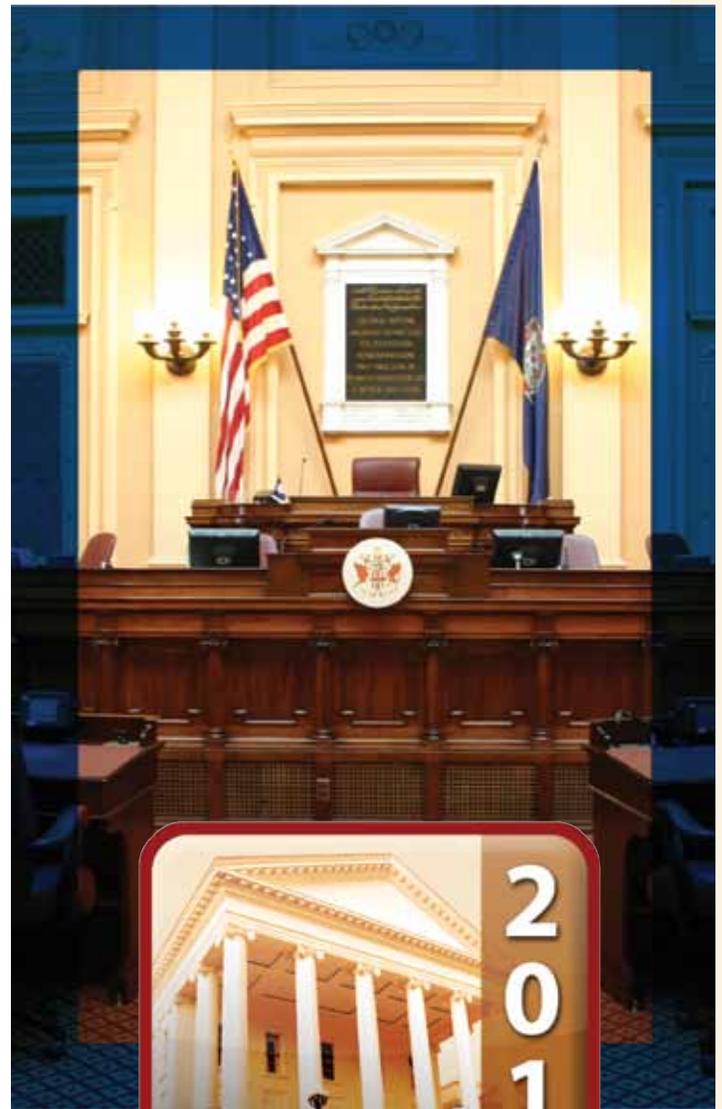
The Virginia Pretrial Services Stakeholders Group is continuing its study of pretrial services and has already scheduled meetings for July 11 and September 19.

The Virginia Housing Commission will look at the issue of “tiny houses.” Right now, the commission staff is in fact-gathering mode. VML has helped by recently asking local officials whether any “temporary family health care structures” have been erected and if any have been removed.

Speaker of the House Kirk Cox has established a select subcommittee of House members to study school safety

issues, including emergency preparedness and school security infrastructure but specifically not issues related to guns or broader behavioral health policy. In the meantime, Delegate David Toscano, the minority leader in the House, announced the formation of a working group that will examine gun violence and school safety.

Then, there are all the ongoing commissions and study groups, such as the Joint Subcommittee to Study Mental Health Services in the Twenty-First Century, the Youth Commission, the Crime Commission and the Future of Public Elementary and Secondary Education! There will be plenty of issues to cover – and again, let me know if you are particularly interested in any of these topics! [VTC](#)



VBCOA past president dies

Emory Rodgers, the retired deputy director of the Division of Building and Fire Regulation in the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, died March 8. He was a former president of the Virginia Building and Code Officials Association (VBCOA)



- Rodgers -

and the national Building Officials and Code Administrators (BOCA).

Mr. Rodgers was an influential advocate in the code development industry for 40 years. He began working in Arlington County in 1970 where he held several positions, including serving as the building official from 1978 until his retirement in 2000. He then went to work for the Department of Housing and Community Development as the chief building official for the state.

Mr. Rodgers received numerous awards during his career in recognition

of his service, including the VBCOA Meritorious Service Award for Building Officials in 1987, the Jack A. Proctor Meritorious Service Award in 1999, and the Meritorious Service Award for Long Term Achievement in 2013. He received the Bobby J. Fowler Award from the International Code Council in 2009 and the National Institute of Building Sciences Mortimer M. Marshall Lifetime Achievement Award in 2015.

Considered to be an industry leader in code administration and a mentor to many, Mr. Rodgers will be greatly missed. "Emory's impact on our profession is immeasurable. He will be truly missed by all who knew him, but never forgotten, as his legacy will be forever captured in the fabric of our state and national family of codes," said Gregg Fields, CBO, CBMO, president of the VBCOA.

Mr. Rodgers served in the U.S. Army and held an undergraduate degree in political science from Bridgewater College and a master's degree in public administration and government from the University of Maryland.

The full obituary is posted at <http://bit.ly/2FAHhom>.

Chesterfield names Coates as budget director

Meghan Coates was appointed director of budget and management for



- Coates -

Chesterfield County effective March 14. She has worked for the county for 10 years, including the last five years in budget and management. In her previous position, she

led the development of the annual operating budget, the capital improvement plan and financial projections, as well as managed a portfolio of county departmental budgets and key special projects. As department director, she will be responsible for the oversight of the county's \$1.3 billion consolidated budget and five-year capital improvement plan.

Coates holds a bachelor's degree from Roanoke College and a master's degree from Virginia Commonwealth University. She is currently pursuing a certificate in innovation through the University of Virginia's executive education program.

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Lawless appointed Scottsville administrator

Matt Lawless is now the town administrator in Scottsville, taking that position in March. Lawless previously was the town manager in Boones Mill, where he worked to secure state grants, renovate factory buildings, and bring in new businesses and festival events. He also has held junior staff positions with Albemarle County, the City of Charlottesville, and the City of Winchester.

Lawless has an undergraduate degree in government from William & Mary and a master's degree in public administration from American University, as well as a graduate certificate in local government management from Virginia Tech.

Burke assumes Luray manager post

Steve Burke began work as the town manager in Luray March 5. Previously, he was the director of public works in Manassas from November 2016 to March 2018. Prior to that, Burke held several positions in the Town of Front Royal from 2006 through 2016, including town manager, director of environmental services and director of public works. Prior to his tenure in Front Royal, he worked for Pinellas County, FL.

Burke holds an undergraduate degree in civil engineering from the University of Florida. He is a member of the International City/County Management Association and the Virginia Local Government Management Association.

Purcellville taps Mekarski as manager

David Mekarski has been appointed the town manager in Purcellville, effective April 16. His recent experience includes serving as the village administrator in Olympia Fields, IL, the city manager in Vero Beach, FL and the vil-

lage administrator in Matteson, IL.

Mekarski has an undergraduate degree in political science from the State University of New York in Buffalo, a master's degree in urban and regional planning from the University of New Orleans, and a master's degree in public administration from Oakland University in Michigan. He is a member of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and is a certified planner with the American Institute of Certified Planners.



- Mekarski -

Albemarle County hires new economic development director

Roger Johnson takes office as the economic development officer in Albemarle County effective April 2, according to a county media release.

Before coming to Albemarle County, he was the director of economic development in Greenville, NC, where he was responsible for the creation and implementation of all economic development strategies, programs, and policies. He has twelve years of private and public economic development experience, including leadership positions with Progress Energy-Florida and Wilmington, NC.

Johnson has an undergraduate degree in personnel management from Appalachian State University and a master's degree in organizational leadership and management from the University of North Carolina, Pembroke.

Stoney appoints policy advisor

Richmond Mayor Levar M. Stoney has named **Osita Iroegbu** as a senior policy advisor responsible for advancing priorities in community engagement, diversity and inclusion. Iroegbu was named as a 2017 Governor's Fellow in the Virginia Children's Cabinet and a 2017 Initiatives of Change/Hope in

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 Manuel Timbreza at mtimbreza@vml.org.



- Iroegbu -

the Cities Community Trustbuilding Fellow. She is a former reporter for the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, served as an instructor and assistant director of university relations at Virginia State University, and managed public relations at the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority from 2010 to 2014.

Iroegbu earned her undergraduate degree in English from the University of Delaware and a master's degree in journalism and public affairs from American University. She is a Ph.D. candidate in the media art and text doctoral program from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Boones Mill hires new town manager

Beverly Thomas "B.T." Fitzpatrick III assumed the position of town manager in Boones Mill in February.



- Fitzpatrick -

Fitzpatrick is not new to Boones Mill, however. He led the design team that worked on the restoration of the historic town depot while with Anderson & Associates Inc. Fitzpatrick's prior experience includes serving as an airport operations officer in Harrisburg, PA, a planner with Hill Studio, P.C. in Roanoke, a city planner/GIS tech with the City of Roanoke, and GIS client advocate at Anderson and Associates, Inc. At the City of Roanoke, he served as a key member of the city's brownfield redevelopment team, and he administered several brownfield plans funded through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Fitzpatrick has a degree in public and urban affairs from Virginia Tech.

Freeman named assistant to the city manager

David S. Freeman is now the assistant to the city manager in Newport News, a position he has held since December. Prior to his position in Newport News, he worked for eleven years for the City of Norfolk, including serving as the director of general services from 2011 to 2017. Before that, Freeman worked for more than five years for the City of Suffolk, as the assistant director of public works and then the director of neigh-



- Freeman -

borhood development services.

Freeman is a certified planner with the American Institute of Certified Planners.

Brower honored on his retirement

The Loudoun County Board of Supervisors honored **W. Keith Brower**



- Brower -

with a resolution of appreciation at the March 22 meeting of the board. Brower retired as chief of the county's combined fire and rescue system effective April 1. Brower began his career in fire

service as a member of the Purcellville Volunteer Fire Department in 1973. In 1984 he was appointed chief fire marshal in Loudoun County. He was selected as Chief of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Management in 2010, and became chief of the Combined Fire and Rescue System in 2014. He has received numerous awards during his career, including receiving the 2018 Governor's Fire Service Award for Career Fire Chief of the Year presented by the Virginia Department of Fire Programs.

Assistant Chief Keith Johnson has been named acting chief of the Combined Fire and Rescue System while the county conducts a nationwide search for a new system chief.

Calendar

Save the dates!

Learn about these opportunities and more at www.vml.org/events-list.

May 23

National Symposium on Cybersecurity and Local Govt.

May 23

MEPAV Annual Meeting

Sept. 15

VBCOA 89th Annual School and Conference

Sept. 29 - Oct. 2

Mayors Institute and VML Annual Conference

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Williamsburg launches text messaging service

THE CITY OF WILLIAMSBURG became the second city in the United States to launch Citibot, the country's first text messaging and customer service software system for civic engagement with government, according to a February 20 city news release. Residents can use the system to report potholes, schedule bulk trash pickups or look for information on city functions.

According to the news release, Mike Barham, the city's director of information technology, compared Citibot to a personal assistant like Siri or Alexa. The user texts "hello" to Citibot, which then will ask if you want to report a problem, ask for information or send a message. If it's information that is needed, Citibot will send links to answer the question. Citibot also will take reports of issues such as potholes and put tasks on a city to-do list, or it will send messages to staff. Citibot follows up with the user after the issue has been addressed.

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Pace adds to city's strategic and pedestrian plan



NORFOLK IS ROLLING out a new bike share program in early April called Pace. Pace allows riders to locate bikes with their smartphones and rent and return bikes at any public bike rack or a Pace bike rack. Bike share is part of the City of Norfolk's Strategic Bike and Pedestrian Plan.

According to a city press release, Norfolk is the first city in Virginia and the fourth city in the country to launch Pace. It is a dockless bike share service powered by Zagster, a provider of modern bike share programs. The cost of the program is supported through sponsorships, including the Downtown Norfolk Council, Visit Norfolk, Sentara Healthcare, TRAF-FIX – Service of Hampton Roads Transit, IPConfigure, Inc. and S.L. Nusbaum Realty Co.

NorfolkOpenData portal rolled out

NORFOLKOPENDATA includes data published by the city of Norfolk that can be used, repurposed and distributed by anyone without restriction or cost. The city provides this data to better inform residents about the work of the city, to enhance coordination and efficiency among departments, and to serve as a catalyst for innovation by businesses, educational institutions and residents. NorfolkOpenData contains an array of city information, including call center information, permits, city employee salaries and a system for viewing incidents resulting from inclement weather. It also includes links to crime mapping, which allows residents to search by address to find incidents, and to restaurant inspections.

Further, Norfolk and Austin, TX have been selected from among cities across the country to work with the Sunlight Foundation. This group will assist Norfolk in creating a pilot project for Tactical Data Engagement – a way for the city and residents to mine open data for solutions to locally pressing issues, according to a city media release.

Additional information is available at www.norfolk.gov/opendata.





Newport News unveils Pearl Bailey mural

THE CITY OF NEWPORT NEWS unveiled a mural in honor of Newport News native and world renowned entertainer Pearl Bailey on March 29, the 100th anniversary of her birth. The mural is on the Pearl Bailey Library at 2510 Wickham Avenue.

From an early age Bailey sang, performed, entertained and captivated her audiences throughout the world. An all-around entertainer with success on television, film and Broadway, Bailey was a Tony and Emmy Award winning entertainer who often used her celebrity for good causes. With humor, compassion and a strong faith she wrote six books, was the US Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations and worked tirelessly on behalf of literacy and AIDS prevention/awareness. In 1988 the City of Newport News named its Wickham Avenue Library in her honor. Pearl Bailey passed away unexpectedly on August 17, 1990.

Asa Jackson, who grew up in Newport News' Southeast Community, created the mural that was unveiled on March 29. He also designed the Ella Fitzgerald mural which adorns the Jefferson Brookville Apartment building located at Jefferson Avenue & 26th Street as well as the W. Hale Thompson mural at 611 25th Street, which was unveiled last month.

Veterans memorial pavers available

PEOPLE WHO HAVE SERVED in any branch of the U.S. Armed Services are eligible to have a paving stone inscribed with their name and placed in the Veterans Memorial Park in Virginia Beach. The program, operated by the Virginia Beach Mayor's Veterans Committee, began taking orders in March, according to a city press release. Pavers will be placed in the William L. "Billy" Myers Sr. Veterans Me-



morial Park located near the Virginia Beach Convention Center.

Two sizes of pavers are available, 4" x 8" and 8" x 8".

Roanoke region launches solar co-op

THE CITIES OF ROANOKE AND SALEM and the counties of Roanoke and Botetourt have joined forces with Virginia Clean Cities and Solar United Neighbors to form the Greater Roanoke Solar Co-op. The purpose of the



co-op is to save money and make going solar easier, while building a network of solar supporters.

By going solar together as a group, the co-op gets a discount through its bulk purchasing power. The group uses a competitive bidding process and selects a single company chosen by the co-op to install systems on participants' homes. Each participant signs his or her own contract at the group discount. Solar United Neighbors of Virginia works with participants to educate them about solar and acts as a consumer advocate throughout the process.

Best of the Region art winners announced

AS PART OF ITS EMPHASIS on art in the city, the City of Manassas presented the Best of the Region Art Show featuring the work of artists from the area at its exhibition hall this past month. This juried show is presented by p-ART-ners professional network with sponsorships from Arcadia Art Studio, Art Guild of Clifton, Diesel Easel, Manassas Art Guild and Prince William Art Society.

Winners in the Best of the Region Art Show were selected by Rosemary Gallick, professor of art and art history at Northern Virginia Community College. “The Best of Region 2018 show encompasses a great variety of styles, subject matter and techniques. The exhibition displays a variety of artistic categories and embraces abstractions, still life’s, landscapes and portraiture in a wide range of techniques. In each category, the artists showed mastery of their chosen medium, ranging from oil, acrylic, watercolor, engraving, colored pencil and photography,” said Gallick in a city media release.

Exhibits in The Hall at City Hall rotate monthly and include different forms of visual art. A sample of groups displaying art in the Hall include the Manassas Art Guild, the Manassas Warrenton Camera Club, the Prince William Art Society and the Manassas Senior Center.

The Best of the Region Art Show is just one of several art events in the city. Coming up on May 18-20 is the three-day One Love Manassas art event featuring music, a juried art competition, speakers, and hands on activities. (Go to www.onelovemanassas.com for more details.) Each year, the city and Historic Manassas, Inc. work together on an



Honorable Mention: Amarylis and Apples by Chong Teasley

annual banner competition held in the fall/winter. Another program is Little-bits, which are small pieces of art around the historic downtown part of the city that has resulted in a painting of a babbling brook in an alley; one bench painted like the American flag and another painted like a piano keyboard, and a water conduit painted to look like a happy snake, to name just a few.

For more information about art in the City of Manassas, visit www.manassascity.org/art.



Winner: Flowing Music in Magapolis by Svetlana Monochova



2nd Place: Unassumed Beauty by Mary Reilly



3rd Place: Converse by Roza Sharifi

Building Safety Month in Virginia “Building Codes Save Lives”

BUILDING SAFETY MONTH is an entire month dedicated to promoting building safety among code officials, industry professionals and the community. This campaign is held annually during the month of May and participation includes people in Virginia, across the nation and all over the world. This year’s theme is “Building Codes Save Lives”.

All the eight Virginia Building Code Officials Association (VBCOA) regions play an important role in this campaign by raising awareness about the importance of building codes and their role in creating safe structures.

Each region offers a diverse grouping of events and activities during the month of May. In previous years, the regions have sponsored community outreach projects, training/volunteer opportunities and proclamations.

Each week of Building Safety Month incorporates a different sub-theme that is based on the overall theme of “Building Codes Save Lives.”

Week One (May 1-5): Partnering with Code Officials to Build Stronger, Safer Communities

Week Two (May 6-12): Advancing Resilient Communities Through Science & Technology

Week Three (May 13-19): Protecting Communities from Disasters

Week Four (May 20-26): Safeguarding Our Water

Week Five (May 27-31): Improving Education & Training Standards for a Safer Tomorrow



This year in Region V, Prince William County and VBCOA are working together to promote the Building Safety Month campaign.

They are kicking off the month with a special event on Tuesday, May 1 from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the Sean T. Connaughton Plaza, located at 1 County Complex Court in Woodbridge.

The agenda includes a presentation to the Board of County Supervisors, a behind-the-scenes look at the Building and Development Department in Prince William and a brief ceremony showcasing the local high school students from Colgan and Patriot high schools who are currently enrolled in the ICC High School Technical Training Program. There will also be a variety of vendors showcasing building safety products and lunch will be provided by VBCOA.

In Region VIII, a community outreach event is scheduled for May 19, 2018 at Lowe’s Home Improvement Store located at 1308 N Battlefield Blvd, Chesapeake. The goal is to educate citizens about the permit process, building code requirements and their positive impact on the community. Volunteers from throughout Region VIII will be on site to assist and educate. Region VIII will also offer several public safety events at local schools throughout Norfolk and Chesapeake.

To get involved or learn more about the campaign, visit www.vbcoa.org.

Montgomery Hall Park added to National Register



MONTGOMERY HALL PARK in Staunton is now on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Park Service approved the addition to the National Register this past February. The city purchased 148 acres of land in 1946 during the Jim Crow segregation era for use as a park for the local African-American community, and it continued in that manner until 1969, when it was desegregated and incorporated into the rest of the city park system. During that time, the park was run by a committee of African Americans.

Montgomery Hall Park was one of very few parks in Virginia that African Americans could visit, and it drew visitors by the busload from across the state. Summer visitation numbers reached past 18,000 thanks to the park’s distinct attractiveness and size, plus numerous amenities, including a swimming pool, playgrounds, music and dancing in the park’s historic two-story brick mansion.

Hampton chosen for Facebook's 'Community Boost' program



HAMPTON IS ONE of eight cities that was chosen March 26 to be a Facebook Community Boost site, according to a city media release.

The purpose of the program is to teach digital and social media skills to job seekers and businesses – especially small businesses. Hampton Mayor Donnie Tuck noted that “Facebook’s Community

Boost program will offer training to take Hampton’s business community to the next level,” according to the press release.

After surveys of small businesses in Hampton and the region to determine their needs, Facebook will offer training to help job-seekers with digital skills businesses needs, and help businesses grow using social media and training on recruitment and metrics-related skills

Other cities announced on March 26 for participation in the program include Buffalo, NY; Columbus, OH; Denver, CO; Helena, MT; Minneapolis, MN; Phoenix, AZ; and East Palo Alto/Menlo Park, CA.

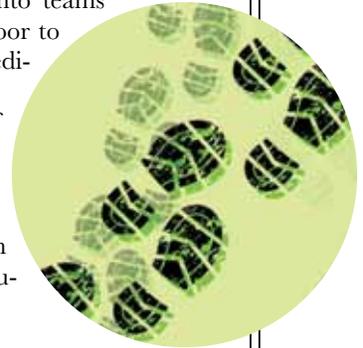
This group of eight cities was the second round of announcements, and the program eventually will reach 30 US cities. Already chosen for participation are St. Louis, MO; Houston, TX; Albuquerque, NM; Greenville, SC; and Des Moines, IA.

Danville holds second police walk

DANVILLE POLICE CHIEF Scott Booth and other police staff held a community engagement walk in March in neighborhoods adjacent to G.L.H. Johnson Elementary School. The area was chosen as the second in a series of walk locations due its close proximity to a shooting event that took place very near to the school.

The walk began at 2 p.m. at the picnic shelter at the school. The police chief and staff then divided into teams and went door-to-door to houses in the immediate vicinity.

The purpose of the walks is to build public trust and develop positive relationships between officers and community members.



Wytheville completes downtown project

WYTHEVILLE TOWN COUNCIL recently celebrated the completion of a multi-year downtown revitalization project with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The revitalization work began with the installation of a 20-inch water line along Main Street in 2013. Other improvements included brick sidewalks; new curbs and gutters; improved drainage; and decorative street lights with hardware for banners, hanging baskets, flag poles and seasonal decorations. Above-ground power lines disappeared, replaced by power conduits installed under the brick sidewalks.

Aging traffic signals were replaced with new decorative poles and improved pedestrian communication. A sound system has been installed to facilitate public announcements during special events and create opportunities for music during business hours. New trees, landscaping, and other plantings are being added to enhance the four-season beauty of the downtown. Street furniture, including benches, trash receptacles, and bike racks will also be added. Aesthetic enhancements in the form of improved business facades also are taking shape.



During this same period, Downtown Wytheville Inc. (DWI) was formed as a 501(c)3 organization and has achieved the national accreditation of being a Virginia Main Street community.

Ten years of achievements

But we aren't resting on our laurels

SPRING IS IN THE AIR! That means it is the time of year that the Virginia Municipal League, the Virginia Association of Counties, and the Virginia School Boards Association will start the annual Go Green Virginia Challenge. The challenge this year will be looking much as it has in years past, with emphasis on innovation and exceeding the initial goals for new and ongoing programs. VML's "Go Green Virginia" initiative recognizes that communities – now more than ever – need to take innovative steps to reduce energy usage, promote sustainability and save money.

The 2017 Go Green program proved to be a tremendous success with many of the localities that participated attaining or maintaining platinum status and several others attaining or maintaining silver and gold status. During the 2017 challenge, 14 percent of VML's member localities participated in the challenge, and the more than 2,500,000 residents represented by those localities benefited from the programs the challenge provided. The challenge allows local governments to save money and energy in the daily operations, which benefits everyone.

2018 marks the tenth anniversary of Go Green Virginia and participants can justifiably take pride in efforts to reduce



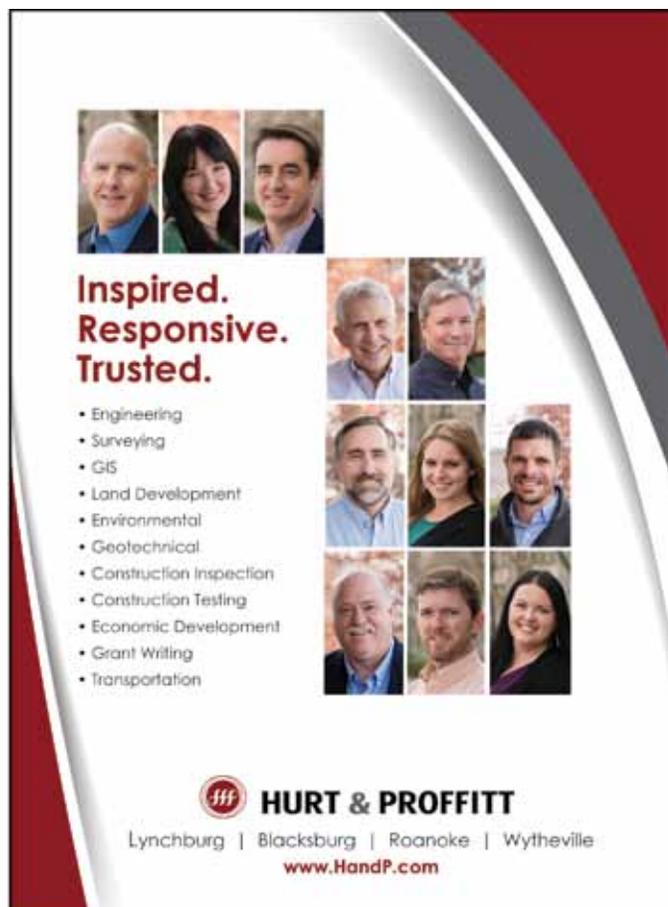
their carbon footprints. Each year there are changes to the program, and 2018 is no exception. The 2018 GoGreen Challenge will feature some informational sessions in conjunction with local government training sessions throughout the summer in an effort to share the success of the program and allow more local officials to see first-hand how their participation will save money in lowering the operation and maintenance costs.

Most importantly, member local governments once again are urged to participate in the friendly competition. The 2018 Challenge is designed to encourage implementation of specific environmental policies and practical actions that reduce the carbon emissions generated by both the local government and the broader community. Citizens will applaud local efforts towards saving energy and operating in a more environmentally responsible way.

May 15 is the magic date when localities can register to participate in the 2018 Challenge. Even if a locality participated in the Challenge last year, registration at www.GoGreenVa.org is required to participate in 2018. The web site will provide detailed instructions, technical assistance and samples of actions and policies already established by other jurisdictions.

Local governments will have until September 7 to complete the challenge. This will allow time for tabulating the results and preparing the awards that will be given during the VML Annual Conference, to be held September 30 – October 2 in Hampton.

VML looks forward to the tenth year of presentations for the 2018 Go Green Virginia Challenge – and good luck to all the participating localities! 



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42%

of respondents have not performed a network security audit within the past 12 months.

55%

only have an enterprise-wide cyber security plan.

62%

do not have a formal breach response policy.

48%

do not provide comprehensive security and awareness training to end users/government employees.

71%

have a staff person responsible for managing their cyber security efforts.

Adapted with permission from the Public Technology Institute. This quick poll of city and county IT officials was conducted in September 2017 as part of PTI's effort to promote Cyber Security National Awareness Month. www.pti.org

AMERICA'S CITIES AND COUNTIES employ 3.6 million employees who serve some 308 million residents. Local governments play a significant role in every aspect of our lives. In Virginia, for example, cities and counties provide law enforcement, operate fire departments, issue marriage licenses, ensure building safety, run social services departments and administer elections. Cities and counties in Virginia provide vital services to all Americans, from determining eligibility for Medicaid to operating 911 call centers. While balancing numerous administrative responsibilities, cities and counties deliver essential services to ensure healthy, vibrant and safe communities across the United States.

Given this vast scope of responsibilities, local governments have become increasingly attractive to cybercriminals who view them as vulnerable targets.

The Public Technology Institute recently completed a survey on information technology (IT) professionals' top concerns. It was no surprise that cybersecurity ranked No. 1. Indeed, cybersecurity has been ranked as the top concern over the past five years. Cybersecurity breaches have grown some 26 percent over last year with ransomware, in particular, continuing to rise.

Imagine waking up to find that all your government files and applications are frozen. You receive a message requesting \$23,000 in Bitcoins (basically dollars converted to untraceable cryptocurrency) as the price to regain control of critical files and operations. This is exactly what happened to Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, in early December 2017.

Until recently, ransomware has become highly profitable for the "bad guys." Ransomware demands are often paid because of the relatively small amount asked coupled with what it might cost to completely reconstruct a system — let alone the perceived comfort of immediate relief.

In the case of Mecklenburg County, they spent many hours agonizing over the pros and cons of "giving in." It would have been far cheaper to pay the bad guys off, but what if they reneged, or asked for more, or attacked again?

In the end, Mecklenburg County took the advice of most major security experts; they decided not to pay and, instead, went through a labor-intensive and time-consuming exercise in rebuilding their systems from previous backups. It was more than money that was at stake.

As long as ransomware demands are met, more such attacks will continue. But accord-

ing to cyber experts, if more local governments followed the latest best practices, much can be done toward prevention.

Local IT professionals are fighting back and adapting to an ever-challenging environment. Just a few years ago, the focus was on purchasing better firewalls as the main defense. Today, IT professionals are moving away from relying on perimeter-based protection systems and toward active monitoring systems that constantly scan for intrusions and system anomalies throughout the enterprise. Savvy IT managers know to have to-the-minute accurate backups, as well as system mirror-image application systems that allow restoration of a system to its pre-infected state. Another major development has been the introduction of software that reviews incoming messages and automatically isolates suspicious files before causing damage.

Today, local government leaders realize that cybersecurity defense is an all-hands endeavor. All city and county employees should undergo continuous cybersecurity awareness training to keep up with the latest threats.

IT professionals should undergo continuous training to keep pace with the latest technologies and mitigation strategies. IT

Thinking about cyber security coverage?

LOOK FOR COVERAGE that will help your locality prevent data breaches, identify security shortfalls and help you recover should a data breach occur. VML Insurance Programs (VMLIP) provides cyber security coverage for hundreds of Virginia local governments. Coverage includes privacy and network liability, Internet media liability, and data breach. VMLIP members who purchase cyber security coverage through the pool also receive complimentary access to YourCISO, a cyber security self-assessment tool; cyber awareness training materials and periodic training webinars. For more information, see the inside front cover ad and contact Jeff Cole, director of member services or Thomas Bullock, director of risk services. www.vmlins.org



professionals should take the lead in establishing and enforcing new policies regarding mobile device usage and storage in local government.

Finally, regardless of all the new technologies, the human element holds major opportunities for local governments in cybersecurity awareness as well as leadership training. Cities and counties must be willing to share their experiences with others so that when something bad happens, others can learn and adjust. Here, Mecklenburg County is but one good example.



About the author: *Dr. Alan R. Shark is the executive director and CEO for the Public Technology Institute and is an associate professor at the Schar School of Policy & Government, George Mason University.*

About PTI: *Established in 1971 by several major national associations representing state and local governments, including the National League of Cities and the National Association of Counties, PTI is the advocate and resource for early adopters and thought leaders who have a passion for the furtherance and wise deployment of technology. PTI's initial funding was through a grant from the National Science Foundation.*

7 simple steps to online safety

1. Passwords still matter. Strong passwords have at least 8 characters with numbers and symbols. Try and come with a formula where you can remember them too. For example, you may use an old address or transpose a letter for a number or symbol. Passwords should not begin with a capital letter; underscore is a good way to separate a bunch of numbers. It's also a good idea to use multiple passwords for different accounts. Too many passwords to remember? Consider using a "password manager" like LastPass or Dashlane. Most password managers remember and recall passwords and payment information across your PC, laptops, and all your mobile devices.

2. Think before you click. Ransomware and phishing attacks have increased dramatically. Many of these attacks can be traced to employees clicking and opening attachments. Before you open an attachment, make sure it is from the person or entity it says it is. Look for suspicious signs like misspellings, using a salutation such as "dear customer" instead of your name, or a return URL/address that is different from the senders. If in doubt always contact your IT folks as they have ways of checking authenticity without risk to others.

3. Limit address book entries. Many professionals use their mobile device address books to store credit card numbers, passwords, family social security numbers and birthdates. As tempting as it is – don't use your mobile device's directory as your personal information database! Most cyber breaches attack your address books and yes, these same rogue software programs are programmed to search for this type of information in addition to all your contacts.

4. Update your devices. Computer and mobile device manufacturers are routinely updating their operating systems to help improve performance as well as actively addressing known security vulnerabilities. Make sure you not only have the best virus and malware protection available but update in real-time to gain maximum protection.

5. Avoid public WIFI. There are plentiful public WIFI offerings at airports, trains, coffee shops, etc. Unfortunately, public Wi-Fi (free or not) can easily be exploited by the bad-guys who can "see" what you are logging into without much effort. Never conduct business in public places offering Wi-Fi that requires passwords which might include logging into your office or your bank. Consider having your own mobile hotspot offered by all wireless carriers.

6. Secure your cloud. If your cloud provider can't easily and quickly tell you how your data is secured, odds are it isn't. Also, for any accounts used to access your government's data, make

sure you have strong passwords and only access it via a computer you own or trust. If you access your cloud on an infected device, a hacker could potentially learn your password and use it later on without your knowledge.

7. Back up your data. Not regularly backing up your files exposes you to the risk of losing that information. By storing the backup information offsite on a daily and weekly basis, you minimize the loss of information.



Adapted with permission from the Public Technology Institute.

The sky's the limit



Airports and local governments work together for economic growth

By John W. Campbell Jr.

GOOD LEADERSHIP, FRIENDLY neighbors, a sense of community, public safety, parks and greenspace are some of the hallmarks of Virginia's local governments. But these are just a few of the items that define quality of life. Another important, but often overlooked item is a convenient and reliable array of public-use airports that serve the citizens of, businesses in and tourists visiting the Commonwealth.

Aviation is a major economic engine in Virginia that contributes almost \$23 billion in economic activity each year.

other states. And that's a real testament to all who have a role in keeping our air transportation network the best it can be."

Virginia's cities, towns and counties are responsible for and own Virginia's airports, with only a few exceptions. Thirty-two of Virginia's airports are part of the city, town or county that owns them, or are an authority with one locality as a member. The 20 regional airport authorities and commissions are ultimately a part of the several localities that are members. This shows that airports are local government operations. They cost money to operate and expand, but they also create critical opportunities for their localities to grow.

Just as no locality that wants to increase its economic base neglects its road system, localities that want to see their econo-

"Virginia has some of the best airports in the nation," said Mark Flynn, director of the Virginia Department of Aviation. "Pilots consistently tell us how well maintained and managed these airports are in comparison to those in

mies improve support their airports.

If a business is searching for a place to start a new factory, distribution center, headquarters or satellite office, a good airport can make or break the deal. Very often, if the locality doesn't have an airport to support business aircraft, it will not be in the running for new businesses to open facilities.

If the airport is tired and rundown, it will create a negative impression in the minds of the business leaders who fly in to tour an area. Realtors call this curbside appeal. It works in the business context – if a prospective company's decision-makers are turned off by the airport when they land, it becomes much harder for the locality to sell itself to the prospect.

What do those local government assets – airports – do for Virginia's economy? Aviation is a major economic engine in Virginia that contributes almost \$23 billion in economic activity each year. The industry employs nearly 147,000 people who collectively earn more than \$7.7 billion in wages. Each and every day in Virginia, more than 72,000 people board commercial aircraft and 23,000 visitors arrive on commercial airlines or general aviation aircraft. And the economic benefits of airports extend well beyond their boundaries. Even residents who might never fly benefit from airports through the creation of businesses, jobs, income and tax revenues. Air cargo and freight operations support just-in-time delivery for manufacturers and consumers alike, while providing overnight shipping capabilities to global markets. From major employers to small businesses, companies depend on Virginia's airports for fast and efficient transportation of people, supplies and products. On-airport tenants and businesses create jobs and purchase goods and supplies from other Virginia businesses



Business activity comes to town via local airports. Here's \$100 million worth of aircraft at a Virginia airport.

thereby creating additional jobs in other sectors of the state's economy. (Examples of on-airport tenants and businesses include airlines, air-taxi operators, air ambulance operators, air charter companies, aircraft sales and management companies, airport management, corporate flight departments, fixed base operators, ground transportation operators, local and state government agencies, rental car agencies, retail concessions, the Transportation Security Administration and a whole host of others.)

In addition, the aircraft based at Virginia's airports bring the cities, towns and counties where they are based significant personal property tax revenue each year. And the businesses operating on the airports pay business license taxes.

"All of these airports – large and small – play a vital role in the state and regional economies by creating jobs and contributing to overall economic development," Flynn said. "And these airports serve as gateways to the nation's air transportation system and connect the Commonwealth to the global economy."

While most people think of the nine commercial airports (Dulles, Reagan/Washington National, Richmond, Norfolk, Newport News/Williamsburg, Charlottesville/Albemarle, Lynchburg Regional, Roanoke/Blacksburg, and Shenandoah Valley Regional) when planning to travel, there are 57 general aviation airports in Virginia that serve our towns and cities well. Combined, these 66 public-use airports account for more than 4,000 aircraft take-offs and landings each day. These flights bring in more than 8.3 million tourists annually to visit state parks, historic sites, beaches, mountains, theme parks, scenic byways and towns and cities. The travel industry is the fifth largest private employer in Virginia and accounts for \$5.6 billion in annual payroll. In addition, domestic travel in Virginia directly supported \$3.3 billion in tax revenue for federal, state and local governments last year. And several Virginia cities received more than \$100 million each in domestic travel expenditures in 2016.

In addition to the Commercial Service airports, there are four other classifications of airports that serve the Commonwealth: 1. Reliever; 2. General Aviation – Regional; 3. General Aviation – Community, and 4. Local Service.

Reliever airports are general aviation airports located in metropolitan areas that serve to reduce congestion at nearby

commercial service airports by providing comparable landside and airside facilities to general aviation operators. The reliever airports are Leesburg Executive, Warrenton-Fauquier, Manassas Regional, Stafford Regional, Hanover County Municipal, Richmond Executive-Chesterfield County, Hampton Roads Executive, and Chesapeake Regional. These eight airports contribute more than 3,200 jobs and nearly \$700 million in economic activity.

General aviation – regional airports serve large geographic areas and are often the only airport facilities in the region. They serve the needs of businesses as well as recreational users by offering services and amenities, such as jet fuel, instrument approaches, fixed base operator services, and aircraft hangars. The regional airports are Lonesome Pine, Virginia Highlands, Tazewell County, Mountain Empire, New River Valley, Virginia Tech-Montgomery Executive, Blue Ridge Regional, Danville Regional, Ingalls Field, William M. Tuck, Farmville Municipal, Mecklenburg-Brunswick Regional, Emporia-Greenville Regional, Suffolk Executive, Dinwiddie County, Middle Peninsula Regional, Accomack County, Tappahannock-Essex County, Louisa County, Culpeper Regional, and Winchester Regional. These 21 airports generate more than 1,400 jobs and \$160 million in economic activity.

General aviation – community airports serve the needs of businesses and recreational users but often serve a more limited market area than the regional airports. They provide services such as aircraft rentals, flight instruction, and aviation fuel. The community airports are Tangier Island, Williamsburg-Jamestown, New Kent County, Wakefield Municipal, Franklin Municipal, Shannon, Blackstone AAF, Orange County, Front Royal-Warren County, Luray Caverns, Lake Country Regional, Brookneal-Campbell County, Twin County, and Lee County. These 14 airports create approximately 650 jobs and more than \$70 million in economic activity.

Local service airports provide limited general aviation services and accommodate comparatively low levels of activity. Many of these airports have aeronautical, physical, environmental or political constraints that limit their expansion. The local service airports are Grundy Municipal, Smith Mountain Lake, New London, Falwell, Waynesboro-Eagle's Nest, Bridgewater Air Park, New Market, Gordonsville Municipal, Lake Anna, Hummel Field, Lawrenceville-Brunswick Municipal,

Crewe Municipal, Lunenburg County, and Chase City Municipal. These 14 airports contribute nearly 800 jobs and more than \$160 million in economic activity.

Flynn said, “A number of towns and cities have embraced the airports that serve their communities and have benefited greatly from that supportive relationship. But there are some localities that, for many diverse reasons, have chosen either to not be as supportive or haven’t been able to be active partners with their airports. One of our goals at the Virginia Department of Aviation is to help foster better relationships among airports, the local governments they are a part of and the citizens they serve. And, more importantly, we strive to help governments understand that their airports are truly an integral part of their vital infrastructure.”

Ron Rordam, former mayor of Blacksburg, said, “Supporting our airport always made great sense. For years, the Town has invested \$50,000 annually in our airport. This investment

One of our goals at the Virginia Department of Aviation is to help foster better relationships among airports, the local governments they are a part of and the citizens they serve.

has supported the growth of our Corporate Research Center, located adjacent to the airport, and has given our citizens a seat at the table when discussing airport issues. It has been a significant point of cooperation between neighboring localities and Virginia Tech.”

The City of Manassas owns and operates the top performing general aviation airport, Manassas Regional (airport code HEF), in Virginia. Mayor Harry J. Parrish said, “Our Airport Director is a City employee who works closely with a City Council-appointed advisory commission of industry experts. This ensures a close working relationship among all stakeholders. Our past and planned investments, as well as hard work and diligence by our professional staff, enable HEF to operate efficiently and profitably. This affords Manassas a unique ability to benefit from the many contributions that the airport brings to our businesses and residents.”



As part of the Virginia Department of Aviation’s goal, the agency provides the 66 airports with more than \$32 million (which is derived from Aircraft Sales & Use tax and fuel tax) annually to support the operations, maintenance, safety and planning of these facilities. Of that total, \$24 million from the Commonwealth Airport Fund goes to terminal construction, runway rehabilitation, new airport development, T-Hangar site preparation, and aircraft fueling systems. In addition,

through the Aviation Special Fund, the agency provides the airports another \$8 million each year to support runway and taxiway maintenance; maintenance and clearance of safe approaches to runways; maintenance of terminal buildings and infrastructure that serves the public, business and tourist passengers; the modernization of navigational equipment, weather reporting systems and lighting systems to ensure all-weather access, public safety and security; airport system planning, and airport promotional activities.

“As you can see, the Commonwealth of Virginia has invested heavily in these community assets,” Flynn said. “And we will be working more closely with local governments in the days ahead to demonstrate that their support of their airports is in the best interest of everyone involved. No one entity can go it alone. We all need to work together to bring the most benefit to the most people.” 

About the author: *John W. Campbell Jr. is the director of communications and education for the Virginia Department of Aviation.*



Preparing the next generation of managers

10th anniversary of the Graduate Certificate in Local Government Management

IN THE EARLY MID-2000s, the local government management profession turned its attention to the waves of retiring Baby Boomers and the impact on the profession. The answer was to bring in the “Next Generation” of local government managers, but how?

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) had identified leadership development as one of the most important issues that local governments will face in the coming decade. Recognizing the importance of this issue to professional local government administration in Virginia, VLGMA tackled the problem by creating a steering committee that worked for a two-year period along with faculty of the Virginia Tech Center for Public Administration and Policy (CPAP) and the College of Architecture and Urban Studies. Bob Stripling, who was then the city manager in Staunton, headed up the work on behalf of VLGMA.

In 2008, that collaboration resulted in the roll-out of the Graduate Certificate in Local Government Management program as a partnership between CPAP and VLGMA. VLGMA’s leadership was evident throughout, as the association developed the curriculum for the certificate program, provided initial seed funding, and identified staff to teach the courses.

This certificate program in local government management provides the next generation of local government managers and leaders with the tools to advance their careers and provide exceptional leadership within the communities where they work. The central goal of the program is to offer graduate-level training in local government management that enhances the capacities of existing local government employees who aspire to advance in their careers and that prepares students who have recently graduated with a bachelor’s degree for capable and ethical public service at the local level.

In its ten-year history, more than 250 students representing over 45 local governments in Virginia have obtained their certificates. The program is preparing the next generation of local government managers and leaders and follows in the spirit of Virginia Tech’s motto, *Ut Prosim*, “That I May Serve”.

The certificate program consists of four 3-credit hour courses, for a total of twelve hours of graduate coursework. Students are required to complete all four courses with a GPA



of 3.0 or better in order to earn the certificate. The four courses are Local Government and the Professional Manager; The Context of the Local Government Organization; Finance, Human Resources and Performance Management; and Economic Development and Planning.

Students are exposed to a full spectrum of local government issues, service delivery options, and management tools. The analysis of a real-life, local government case study is central to each classroom experience. Case studies are used within the courses to emphasize the relationship between the political and management worlds that all local government managers must understand and navigate in order to be successful.

All courses are taught by experienced, highly qualified Virginia local government practitioners via two-way video telecasts to Virginia Tech broadcast centers located throughout the state, allowing the class to be taught around the state simultaneously and giving more students the opportunity to participate. Current instructors include Anthony Romanello (Henrico County); John Budesky (Goochland County); Cindy Mester (Falls Church); Wyatt Shields (Falls Church); Rob Stalzer (Fairfax County); Kim Payne, (formerly with Lynchburg); Greg Kelly (Abingdon); Peter Huber (formerly with Pulaski County); Steve Owen (Staunton); and Stephanie Davis (Virginia Tech).

The program was originally focused on local government



employees as students, allowing them an opportunity to learn more about the many facets of management and potentially move up into positions as city and town managers, county administrators, or department heads. Once the program became a permanent part of Virginia's Tech's curriculum, more full-time students began taking the classes as well. Currently students include both "in-career" professionals currently working in local government positions and "pre-career" students enrolled in the CPAC's Master of Public Administration degree program. This mix of students provides both a lively education environment and significant networking opportunities both inside and outside class. One of the in-career students has commented:

"I have thoroughly enjoyed the weekly class discussions and the case studies, but most of all I have enjoyed the interaction with other local government employees and with the master's

degree students in this course. The class has helped renew my spirit and my love for local government management, and I plan to continue to use many of the concepts learned during this semester in my future years as a manager."

In-career students include local government managers, assistant and deputy managers, department heads, budget and policy analysts, engineers, and planners as well as other professionals from operating departments of local governments. Several students have made career promotions since being awarded the certificate.

As part of the program, students are afforded opportunities to build connections in the local government community including attendance and support at the Virginia Local Government Management Association annual conferences, free membership in ICMA through the Virginia Tech ICMA Student Chapter and monthly webinars with local government

managers throughout the State. In addition, Virginia Tech is one of four universities in the nation that is an affiliate member of the Alliance for Innovation, thus providing students with access to trends in local government, innovative practices, and a repository of information on the process of innovation.

Both full-time and part-time employees of Virginia local government are eligible for financial assistance through VLGMA's Bob Stripling Scholarship for the Advancement of Local Government Management. Funds available are dependent on donor contributions and are approved on an annual basis.

The Certificate Program is an innovative response to the need to educate the next generation of managers. In recognition, in 2012 ICMA awarded Bob Stripling its Stephen B. Sweeney Academic Award. This award is presented to an academic leader or academic institution who has made a significant contribution to the formal education of students pursuing careers in local government. The award was established in the name of the longtime director of the University of Pennsylvania's Fels Institute of Government.

For more information on the program, please contact Stephanie Davis at sddavis@vt.edu or visit the program's website at www.cpap.vt.edu. 

About the author: *Stephanie Davis is the program director for the Graduate Certificate in Local Government Management program at the Center for Public Administration and Policy, Virginia Tech.*

Reflections on the certificate program

by Bob Stripling

I FEEL BLEST to have been part of the Graduate Certificate in Local Government Management. I must admit when I first became involved it was for a very selfish interest. On my list of things I wanted to do when my city management career came to a close in 2006 was to teach and I saw the GCLGM as an opportunity to teach the next generation. My experience in the GCLGM did include that opportunity to teach but it became much more than that.

Although there were, and are, many people involved in all aspects of what became a mission for me, it was in my mind always about the students. It has created a special joy in my heart to see hundreds of young people (they are all younger than I) drink the Kool-Aid of local government, grow as people and professionals and make so many contributions to the governments and communities of this great Commonwealth.

All my students were special, but I must admit a particular satisfaction in seeing the ones who have risen to the challenge of the Chief Executive Officer position in local government, including Ryan Spitzer, Tim Baroody, Matt Lawless, Laszlo Palko, Shawn Utt, Spencer Suter, Randy Wingfield, Chris Hively, Morgan Quicke and Brent Robertson. I am sure I have left someone out and I eagerly await adding some of the many accomplished women who have completed the Certificate to the future list of CEOs, but in my old age I find I am more easily forgiven for my memory loss.

I still count myself as a missionary in preparing the next generation and urge all those with an interest in local government to support and urge others to participate in the GCLGM.

About the author: *Stripling retired as the city manager of Staunton in 2006. He is the former program director and professor of practice with the Graduate Certificate in Local Government Management program at Virginia Tech. He currently is a project manager for Virginia Town Action Management.*

Communities across Virginia are feeling the LOVE

WHAT IS LOVEWORK? The LOVEwork program is a state-wide initiative of the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) that encourages localities to create works of art that spell LOVE, thus reinforcing the Virginia is for Lovers brand. The program began over five years ago and since then, nearly 100 LOVEworks have been created, with some communities creating more than one.

According to the Virginia Tourism Corporation's website, "the LOVEworks program is a state-wide branding initiative designed to promote historic life experiences in Virginia and strengthen awareness of the 'Virginia is for Lovers' message."

VTC created a LOVEwork reimbursement program in 2013 that offers grants of up to \$1500 to help pay for the costs of the projects. The application has a few guidelines that must be followed, but the projects themselves reflect the communities in which they are located. As an example of the guidelines, the LOVEwork has to be in a permanent location in a highly-visible area, well-trafficked area and should be large enough for an adult to stand beside it for a photograph. VTC also offers technical assistance in the form of a tool kit, sample news releases and advice on how to get started with the program.

LOVEwork gets underway in Winchester

Interested residents from Winchester and Frederick County brainstormed ideas about the feasibility and scope of a LOVEwork initiative that could be undertaken at a February 21 meeting at the Visitors Center of the Winchester-Frederick County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The February 21 meeting included an overview of the VTC program and exploration of topics placement of the project, whether there should be one or several outworks, design ideas and funding possibilities. According to WDVM TV, some people came to the meeting armed with prototypes of what they thought the project should look like. By the end of the meeting, a task force was created to steer the project's next steps.

Justin Kerns, executive director of the CVB, said that the effort was meant to be a grassroots effort led by members of the community. He said that the task force, made up of residents in both Winchester and Frederick County, was very careful in considering both the city and the county in the placement and design of the LOVEwork. Several options were considered, including multiple projects and various placements. After a very positive and well-balanced discussion, the committee decided on one initial project in one of three primary locations, with a design that clearly incorporates aspects of both the city and county. The locations in order of preference are the Court House lawn in the center of the Old Town Walking Mall, in front of Handley Library, or at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitor Center. The task force plans to begin narrowing down the design components at its next meeting.

LOVEwork completed in Marion

A new LOVEwork was unveiled in the Town of Marion this past month, after more than three years of work. This LOVEwork is an interactive sign, incorporating a chalkboard feel, for the community to share messages of love for Marion and Virginia. But instead of chalkboard, the 17-foot long sign is made of cast iron, tying into its location on Iron Street Mall at the side of the Lincoln Theater in downtown Marion. The powder-coated material allows individuals to write on the sign with chalk, easily able to clean off much like a chalkboard sign. The LOVE letters are painted with the same colors of the Marion Downtown Revitalization Association, Inc., the lead organization heading up the effort to create a LOVEwork. Also, the sign is designed to be illuminated with lights from behind, and Marion Downtown has plans to add that lighting this spring, making the sign a perfect photo op day and night.

The Marion LOVEwork project was the culmination of an effort begun by Marion Downtown as part of its goal of beautifying the main pedestrian walkway along Iron Street Mall, which is a primary pedestrian connection between two municipal parking areas. Partners included Virginia Main Street, the Virginia Tourism Corporation, the Town of Marion, Prosim Engineering, the Marion Senior High School Senior Art Class and Royal Oak Properties.



LOVEWORK IN MARION - 117 East Main Street, Marion, VA 24354

Find out more about LOVEwork

Leah Harms is the brand coordinator at VTC and can be reached by e-mail at lharms@virginia.org. Check out the nearly 100 LOVEwork projects that have been completed at <https://www.virginia.org/love>; see other LOVEworks on the following pages. 



LOVEWORK IN THE TOWN OF MONTROSS - 15725 Kings Highway, Montross, VA 22520



LOVEWORK AT DELTAVILLE MARITIME MUSEUM AND HOLLY POINT NATURE PARK - 287 Jackson Creek Road, Deltaville, VA 23043



LOVEWORK AT CULPEPER DEPOT - 111 S. Commerce St., Culpeper, VA 22701



LOVEWORK AT VIRGINIA LIVING MUSEUM - 524 J. Clyde Morris Blvd, Newport News, VA 23601



LOVEWORK AT BURKE'S GARDEN - Burke's Garden Road, Tazewell, VA 24651



LOVEWORK IN CAPE CHARLES - Bay Avenue and Mason Avenue, Cape Charles, VA 23310



LOVEWORK AT RICHMOND INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY, 600 E. Laburnum Ave., Richmond, VA 23222



LOVEWORK IN LYNCHBURG - Concord Pike and Jefferson Street, James River Heritage Trail, Lynchburg, VA 24504



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