



VIRGINIA CAPITOL CONNECTIONS

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Fall 2016

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Newly renovated 9th Street Office Building.

Cover photo by
Wanda Judd



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General Assembly Experience may not help Rookie Congressmen

By RICHARD MEAGHER

Observers of politics have long noted one of the many ironies of the United State Congress: everyone seems to hate the institution, and yet it’s nearly impossible for a member not to get re-elected. In 2014, as Gallup’s approval rating measure hit an all-time low of 9%, nearly 95% of incumbents were returned to Congress.

Still, if there’s one state that has bucked this incumbency trend, it’s Virginia. Thanks to the cumulative effects of a number of events, both routine and historical, the Virginia Congressional delegation has been dramatically reshaped over the past few elections. The most seismic of these events, of course, was the 2014 election of (my former colleague) Dave Brat in the Virginia 7th. Brat’s upset of sitting House Minority Leader Eric Cantor in the 2014 Republican primary turned out to be the first of many changes to the VA delegation. To wit:

- The 2014 election also saw two major retirements, with the replacement of longtime representatives Jim Moran (8th district) and Frank Wolf (10th) by Don Beyer and Barbara Comstock, respectively.
- Earlier this year, both the 2nd district’s Scott Rigell and 5th’s Robert Hurt announced their own retirements.
- Court-ordered redistricting also led to Randy Forbes’ ill-fated attempt to switch districts in 2016, leaving Forbes’ 4th district open as well.
- Rob Wittman may be comfortably ensconced in the 1st district this year, but he hopes to leave that seat for the Governor’s office next year.
- Tim Kaine’s Vice Presidential nod adds even more uncertainty, as Bobby Scott (3rd district) is one of the names most mentioned to fill Kaine’s Senate seat should the Democrats win the Presidency this fall. And who knows which, if any, members of Congress from the Republican side might run for that Senate seat in not one, but two upcoming elections in 2017 and 2018?

The end result is a massive amount of turnover in our state’s House delegation. It would not be out of the question for Virginia to head into 2018 with Republican Bob Goodlatte in the 6th (serving since 1993) as the only member of the state’s delegation with more than 10 years of Congressional experience.

What does this mean for Virginia? Less experience in office means less experience playing the game of politics in Washington. The resulting lack of clout means that Virginians might not get appointments to key committees. This was Randy Forbes’ argument in switching to a new district; Virginians, he claimed, needed the power he had as Chairman of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee to help defend Norfolk and Virginia Beach against cuts in defense spending. (Voters in his new district seemed to think that his chairmanship mattered less than his carpetbagging.)

Congress may have eliminated official earmarks—line items that direct money to specific projects in legislators’ districts—but that doesn’t mean that “pork barrel” politics have gone away. Savvy politicians can still find ways to direct funding towards home or, as Forbes claims to have done, at least protect the funding that is still there. It might be unpopular to publicly defend traditional pork barrel spending in the age of the Tea Party. But even conservative politicians have been happy to take credit for highway funding and public works projects, economic development, and targeted loans and grants.



This year’s crop of new representatives may need to find successes like these to stay popular with constituents back home, but they may also have a distinct advantage: familiarity with legislative politics. Three favored candidates for Congress this fall are currently members of the Virginia General Assembly:

- In the 2nd district, Scott Taylor stunned Forbes in the GOP primary and is heavily favored against Democrat Shaun Brown; Taylor is in his second term as a Delegate from Virginia Beach.
- Long-time Democratic State Senator Don McEachin is facing a tougher battle against Henrico Sherriff Mike Wade in the 4th district, but is still favored to win. (Larry Sabato has been rating this district as “safe Democratic” for most of the summer.)
- Tom Garrett, who just started his second term as State Senator, is taking on Jane Dittmar in the 5th; the Buckingham County Republican is solidly favored (despite concerns that even “safe” GOP districts might be dragged down if Trump loses badly in the fall).

Assuming the favorites win out, that would be three Virginia state representatives now moving up to the big leagues. They would join Barbara Comstock, who served as a Delegate for five years before moving to Washington.

State-level politics is different from the national level in many ways, but of course the general principle is the same. Rookies like McEachin and Garrett would have a sharp learning curve in terms of institutional knowledge—how Congress itself operates—but presumably they already have a considerable amount of political knowledge. Unlike outsiders or even those who come from other kinds of offices (attorneys general, say, or state cabinet secretaries), these rookies would at least have familiarity with legislative policymaking: how to make deals, work with others, and get bills passed.

McEachin particularly has long been a player in state politics, and a position in Congress would make him one of the most powerful Democrats in the state (if he isn’t one already). He seems most poised to take advantage of his experience. Garrett and Taylor are fresher faces, and landing in Congress would be the latest step in rapid rises to power propelled in part by their staunch conservatism. The question for them as rookies will be how much to work with GOP leadership or, like their soon-to-be colleague Brat, whether to buck the powers that be. Brat’s maverick style has helped keep him popular in his district, but some conservatives (particularly writers at Virginia’s *Bearing Drift* blog) take him to task for his lack of accomplishment. Unlike Brat, Garrett and Taylor have been legislators, and might know a thing or two more than him about dealmaking—while pleasing constituents at the same time.

Comstock might be a better model for rookies than Brat. She has so far been successful in voting with her constituents, even as it has somewhat reduced her conservative credibility. (Citizens Against Government Waste rates her as merely “Friendly” as opposed to a “Taxpayer Hero” like Brat.) And she has managed to land the chair of a subcommittee favorable to NoVA’s technology sector.

Still, Washington is a very large and very new pond, with lots of fish swimming in it. No matter what, it will take time for the newbies to make an impression and find their place—and that’s assuming they even stick around for more than a term or two. Legislators are often most vulnerable to challenge after their first victory—just ask Glenn Nye—so there are no guarantees they will even stay in office, let alone become the next Frank Wolf, who served for 34 years. In fact, the only guarantee is that with so many fresh faces, the Virginia delegation will have a long way to go before it moves back up the pecking order in Congress.

Richard Meagher is Associate Professor of Political Science at Randolph-Macon College. His writing about Virginia state and local politics is featured on the Washington Post’s All Opinions are Local page, WRIC’s #RVALife site, and his own RVA Politics blog (rvapol.com).



Virginia delegation’s home for Delegates, Alternate Delegates and Guests for the week was The Holiday Inn at Strongsville, Ohio, which is about 20 miles south of Cleveland. Most of us arrived on early Sunday afternoon.

State Delegate Glenn Davis sponsored a meet and greet reception at the hotel bar. I was interviewed by Patrick Wilson of The Virginia Pilot and noted that I was attending my ninth GOP convention and backed Trump from the start. “I’m here to unify the party and to make sure Trump-Pence carries Virginia,” I said.

The Welcome Party – Rock the Night in CLE – “East, Drink and Party Like a Rock Star” at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame was fantastic. Security has been an issue that everyone was talking about. While eating food from 50 ‘truck’ vendors ranging from apple wood-smoked wood-fire pizza, sausage rolls, fish bites, and hummus with chips, I also had the opportunity of meeting and talking to U.S. Secret Service Director J. P. Clancy and enjoyed listening to a Three Dog Night Concert.

The GOP Convention Program highlighted speakers, films and live remotes that showcased Donald Trump’s leadership and his vision for America.

DAY ONE – Make America Safe Again

This morning at our delegation breakfast meeting, we heard from Ken Cuccinelli, Chair of our Virginia Delegation, Corey Stewart, State Trump Chairman and Morton Blackwell, our RNC Committeeman. Congressman Rob Whitman and businessman Ed Gillespie also attended. During the week, I shared a breakfast table

with Delegate Danny Marshall, Delegate Kathy Byron, Kathy and Jim McKelvey and my guest, Tim Reith.

Blackwell said that Donald Trump is our nominee and the anti-Trump forces have been extinguished. Cuccinelli stated some obscure rule changes that will only affect the 2020 RNC convention and wanted with other delegates to force a roll call vote on the floor of the convention to adopt rule changes.

Notable speakers today included Reince Priebus, Chair, RNC; Rick Perry, Former Texas Governor; Mark Geist & John Tiegen, Benghazi Annex Security Team; Jeff Sessions, U. S. Senator; Rudy Giuliani, Former Mayor of New York City and Mrs. Melania Trump.

During the rules debate, Cuccinelli was on the floor with efforts to have a roll call vote to change the rules while another Delegate Beau Correll, an active member of Delegate Unbound, was on a live TV interview saying the reason for the roll call vote was to unbind the delegates. This was an attempt to undo what the RNC Rules Committee voted on last Thursday, which was to bind the delegates to vote on the first ballot for the winner of their state primaries.

As for the roll call vote on the Rules, Cuccinelli and his team needed to get the majority from at least seven state delegations to sign a petition forcing a roll call vote on the floor. They only got the majority of delegates from five states (VA, CO, UT, WA and WY) to sign that petition. The majority of delegates from fifty-five delegations opposed their efforts. The rules were adopted on a voice vote despite a lot of booing and shouts of “no” especially from our Virginia delegation. Cuccinelli shouted “shame, shame!” and tossed his delegate credentials on the convention floor.

DAY TWO – Make America Work Again

Today, we heard from Former Ambassador John Bolton at the Virginia Delegation breakfast.

I was invited to a conference and luncheon sponsored by the The American Conservative Union Foundation – “The Conservative Pit Stop: Destination White House”. After a great conference with excellent speakers and a scrumptious Italian luncheon, Governor Mike Pence attended and gave us a sneak peek of his acceptance speech which was well received by attendees. One of the guest speakers included Kellyanne Conway who is now Donald Trump’s Campaign Manager.

Took a side trip to visit the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland. There was an interesting display of how the “Wizard of Oz” was essentially a political book based on the 1890’s gold and silver currency fight.

Walked to the “House of Blues” where drinks and hors d’oeuvres were provided while listening to Ashley and Shannon Campbell performing songs for the screening of Glen Campbell’s “I’ll Be Me” Documentary for the Alzheimer’s Readiness Project.

Before tonight’s session, a “Taste of Cleveland Reception” to honor The Energy of Americans was sponsored by Dominion in downtown Cleveland for the Virginia, West Virginia and North Carolina Delegations.



Kellyanne Conway, Donald Trump's Campaign Manager

See *Rock And Roll*, continued on page 7



It all started with a phone call. In 1992, as President of the University of Richmond Young Democrats, I worked with the Clinton/Gore campaign advance team in preparation for the Presidential Debate. I was on my way to a rally to introduce the Chair of the Democratic Party of Virginia when the phone rang. Hillary Clinton wanted to invite a student to sit with her at the debate, and the campaign suggested me. I was elated!

That night started my journey as a Democratic Party activist and eventually led me to run for office myself. Over the course of the next 24 years, Hillary was a role model, proving women could succeed in politics and government. As First Lady, she shattered expectations by spearheading health care reform, resulting in the creation of the successful Children's Health Insurance Program that covers 8 million kids today. She rallied a generation of women at the U.N. Fourth Conference on Women in Beijing by declaring "human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights." She became the first woman to serve as U.S. Senator from New York, and the third woman to serve as Secretary of State. Her

accomplishments in both offices were many.

Twenty four years after that phone call at the University of Richmond, I had a front row seat to see Hillary Clinton shatter another glass ceiling by accepting the Democratic Party nomination for President of the United States. As the mother of a one year old daughter, I cried tears of joy not only because of what Hillary had accomplished, but because of its significance.

Accepting the nomination, she stated, "When there are no ceilings, the sky's the limit."

That is one legacy she has left for my daughter:

The sky is the limit.

Hillary also outlined her vision for an America that is stronger together, thrives when the middle class thrives, and where Wall Street can never wreck Main Street again.

The Democratic National Convention took on added personal significance when Senator Tim Kaine became the nominee for Vice President. I first met Tim when he was my Richmond City Councilman and Mayor. We became friends when he ran for Lieutenant Governor. One night before the election, as Chair of the 3rd Congressional District Democratic Committee, I drove across the District to attend three GOTV rallies with the Warner-Kaine-McEachin ticket. As we ended the evening in Portsmouth, Tim realized I was driving by myself. He decided to ride back with me. We talked about everything from baseball, to our favorite books, to politics and government, to my own future goals. From that day forward, Tim has been my mentor and friend. I was proud to not only be elected to the House of Delegates the same day Tim Kaine was elected Governor, but to be his delegate. We worked together on issues from energy, sexual and domestic violence, and education. Dave and I were also fortunate to join the ranks of couples who had Tim Kaine officiate our wedding.

Despite all of his accomplishments, Tim Kaine has remained the kindest, most humble public servant I know. The Virginia delegation was thrilled to see him introduced to the rest of America at the convention. And yet, it was pretty surreal to see him surrounded by Secret Service as he visited the Virginia Delegation breakfast that morning.

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Senator Tim Kaine and Anne Holton

Rock And Roll from page 5

As we were being treated to delicious heavy hors d'oeuvres, drinks and good company inside, a huge protest was taking place right in front of the building.

There were as many police and law enforcement personnel as there were protesters. The irony was that the protesters were walking side by side with police on bikes and horses that were used as a protective barrier. Many of us gave the Cleveland Police and other security officers a spontaneous round of applause and cheers as we walked to "The Q". A masked protester was apprehended and detained right in front of me by four police officers.

Visited the Media Center where TV and Radio stations were interviewing dignitaries and also went to the Communication Center where the newspaper and magazine organizations were located.

The highlight of the evening session was the roll call vote of the states to formally nominate Donald J. Trump for President, followed by voice vote to officially nominate Indiana Governor Mike Pence for Vice President.

Tonight's speakers were Speaker Paul Ryan; Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell; Kevin McCarthy, House Majority Leader; Chris Christie, Tiffany Trump; Donald Trump, Jr.; Shelley Moore Capito, and Dr. Ben Carson.

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie especially shook the rafters with his Secretary Clinton "prosecution" speech. Loud chants of "guilty" and "lock her up" rang out throughout the convention hall.

Once we came back to the hotel for the late evening bash, I was interviewed by Tom Sherwood of WRC-TV 4 Washington, D.C.

DAY THREE – Make America First Again

Off to the convention hall for tonight's activities. The highlight tonight was Mike Pence's acceptance speech to be our nation's next Vice President.

Other speakers included Laura Ingraham, Governor Scott Walker, Senator Ted Cruz, Eric Trump, Newt and Callista Gingrich. Senator Marco Rubio addressed the convention by video.

Governor Mike Pence's acceptance speech was warmly received by all of the delegates. Ted Cruz refusal to endorse Donald Trump for President to a packed convention was met with thunderous 'boos' across the convention hall. Most Virginia Cruz supporters thought it was a mistake for him not to endorse the GOP presidential candidate Donald Trump but instead vote your "constitutional conscience".

DAY FOUR – Make America One Again

This morning at our delegation breakfast, we heard from Former Presidential Candidate Dr. Ben Carson and Congressman Louie Gohmert (R-TX).



Dr. Ben Carson

Before our last session, Budweiser sponsored an "America's Grand Old Party" with food and drink for the Virginia and Missouri Delegations at a local pub.

Surprised to see former Virginia State Delegate Jay Katzen, who was an Alternate Delegate from Alaska. Katzen ran for Lieutenant Governor in 2001 against Democrat Tim Kaine, now the Democratic nominee for VEEP, and came within 2.29% of winning that election.

The highlight tonight was Donald Trump's acceptance speech to be our GOP nominee for President of the United States.

Donald Trump hit hard on Hillary Clinton's incompetence and disqualifying background that make her unfit to ascend to be president. His main themes were to defeat ISIS immediately, and to bring back law and order to America's cities. He emphasized bringing jobs and manufacturing back to the United States.

Since 1968, I have enjoyed going to many Republican National Conventions. If you haven't been to a convention you are missing being an active part of our American political system. You don't have to be an elected Delegate or Alternate Delegate but participate as a guest of the Virginia delegation to future Republican conventions. Get involved now in a local Republican organization for your active participation at the 2020 RNC!

Michael E. Belefski is President of CPC CORPORATION, a Communications and Marketing Firm specializing in Performance Management Analysis in Business, Law and Political Systems. He can be contacted at cpccorp@verizon.net.

The nomination of Hillary Clinton and Tim Kaine as the Democratic ticket was the official business of the National Convention in Philadelphia. But it was also a time to reflect on the accomplishments of President Barack Obama, First Lady Michelle Obama, and Vice President Joseph Biden over the last eight years and to express our love and gratitude.

The days were long, but full of excitement. Virginia was front and center not only as the home of the Vice Presidential nominee, but solidifying our role as a battleground state. Our delegation got a lot of media attention and TV time, and was probably the most spirited delegation in Hall every night!

We left Philly unified and invigorated to do everything we can to elect Hillary Clinton and Tim Kaine on November 8th!

Delegate Jennifer McClellan, 71st District of Virginia



Brenda Edwards

41 Years of Resilience and Optimism in the DLS

By LYDIA FREEMAN



“I had become immersed and enamored with government and history as a college student,” said Edwards. “When I saw the ad, I thought, hmm, I think I might want to work there.”

Meet Brenda Edwards, the Senior Research Associate for the Virginia Division of Legislative

Services (DLS). She’s been working for DLS for forty-one years, leading multiple commissions designated by the Virginia legislation. Two notable commissions are the Virginia Bicentennial of the American War of 1812 Commission and the Martin Luther King Jr. Commission.

“During the commission’s six years, Brenda Edwards served as it’s dependable, hardworking, full-time staffer,” said Delegate Kirk Cox on Edwards’ work with the 1812 Commission. “Her positivity and love of history was without rival. Without Brenda, our programs, and specifically our signature Legacy Symposium, would not have been so well organized and received by its attendees. The 1812 Commission was a success in large part due to her.”

Delegate Jennifer McClellan spoke on Edwards’ work with the MLK Commission.

“Commission chairs and members come and go, but Brenda is the glue that binds the Commission together and we would be lost without her tireless efforts,” said McClellan. “I don’t make the decisions,” Edwards explains, “but I put the guide out there. Tell them, ‘here are some things you need to think about to meet your goal. Here are the advantages and the disadvantages.’ Then the group decides.” Edwards attributes her leadership style to her Jim Crow era education.

“I grew up during the Jim Crow era,” said Edwards. “When I went to school, we went to school in shifts. There were no textbooks to speak of and the ones we had were damaged and part of the story would be ripped out of the back or the book would be mutilated sometimes. So what our teachers would do, and we didn’t even know it at the time, they would tell us to read the book or the story as far as the pages would allow and then based upon what you had read, come up with two or three plausible conclusions to the story. Then

we would discuss them in class. The teacher would say, ‘based upon what you told me or what you’ve read, does that make sense?’ And so that kind of reasoning was kind of a hallmark or continuation in my education even from college.”

One of the projects that Edwards guides is the Martin Luther King Jr. Commission. Edwards has been working with the MLK Commission since 1992 when it was established by Virginia in response to federal legislation.

“The commission strives to live up to its statutory responsibility of continuing King’s work and his legacy in Virginia,” said Edwards. “They [the commission] work very hard at doing that. And they work to educate the public about the totality of Dr. King. A lot of people just see him as a civil rights icon when he was so much more than that. He was an author, scholar, pastor, theologian, educator, historian, and he loved history, loved education. It was like he was a man for all seasons. The commission does a great job of trying to get that information out and trying to do even more to the fact that he was more than a civil rights activist.”

One objective of the commission is as follows: “Promote the legacy and continuation of the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., particularly racial, economic and social justice, academic scholarship, and community service.”

Edwards loves her work on the commission in part because she personally encountered racial injustice throughout her upbringing. She remembers that her school did not have indoor plumbing, an assembly room, a cafeteria, or school bus transportation. She remembers the dried fruit skins placed on the potbelly stove in the classroom in order to deodorize the air. She remembers gathering outside her school in 1954 as her principal announced the Brown Supreme Court decision. The moment was so significant that she can even remember the blue and red plaid dress she was wearing.

Other historic civil rights moments surrounded her early life experience. Edwards attended the prominent HBCU, [historically black college or university], Howard University during the Civil Rights era of the 60s. During this time she was transformed by a

multitude of leaders, such as Ramsey Clark, Dr. Demetrios G. Kousoulas, Shirley Chisholm, Emperor Haile Selassie, Donny Hathaway, Dr. Nathan Hare, Stokely Carmichael, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr. Robert Martin, and other music, political, education, scientists, judiciary, and artists and cultural legends during her time on campus.

“But I didn’t appreciate exactly the moment in history during that time,” explained Edwards. “That was also during the Motown era, and so we had a lot of Motown related people who were also students and guests. It was a really really exciting place to be. Just seeing the history actually being made. To be able to touch it.”

Over the years, Edwards remembers the struggle of being the first African American hired at DLS while her brother, a graduate of Harvard University, joined the military due to an inability to find employment in the late 1970s. She remembers the streets she couldn’t cross to get ice cream in the summertime. She remembers the places she was unable to live in Richmond. She remembers the dirt sidewalks of her childhood village of Woodville, where the community taught its children how to safely interact with the white community. She remembers her maternal grandfather enduring the indignities he suffered for the right to vote, teaching her how to vote, taking her to vote. She remembers getting all dolled up, just to go into the stores on Broad Street, but not being able to try on any clothing. She remembers that even in 1974 there were still places in Richmond that made the illegal choice not to serve her.

Despite challenges, Edwards persevered and flourished at her research position in Richmond, climbing to the position of Senior Research Associate, knowing that her work mattered to her community.

“I continued to work here (DLS) in spite of the challenges because I love the work and I was always taught to persevere and to have hope,” said Edwards. “Remember, I grew up during Jim Crow and the Civil Rights Movement and that experience develops mettle. My family and church family were my support and safety systems. They encouraged me not to give in or give up and reminded me that I had been divinely placed here for a purpose.”

“It has been a blessing working here,” Edwards continued. “It’s been a real blessing. The Lord has used even all of the negative things



Delegate Jennifer McClellan, Valerie Braxton-Williams (Confidential Assistant for Policy, Commissioner's Office, Virginia Employment Commission), Brenda Edwards (Senior Research Associate, Division of Legislative Services)

that I’ve endured here for my good. He’s used it for my good. He’s protected me, provided for me, he’s done everything. I couldn’t ask for anything else.”

In August, Edwards’ house was struck by lightning for the second time. She explained that there were probably minerals in the soil that drew the lightning to her house. But her attitude was not one of defeat. Her voice contained a lightness. Her spirit sang of hope.

Our country’s history of racial injustice is not one that can or should be denied or forgotten. This history of injustice has shaped both individuals and communities throughout our country Edwards being one of them. These are individuals who can think quickly on their feet. Individuals who can present solutions to problems with confidence. Individuals who can have their houses struck by lightning and respond with hope and resilience. For forty-one years, DLS has had one of these individuals using tenacity, quick-wittedness, and optimism to direct legislative commissions.

Lydia Freeman is a graduate of Bluefield College, former intern at David Bailey Associates, and currently Teach for America fifth grade teacher in Northampton County, NC.



Brenda and her late husband — The Rev. Glenn T. Edwards, Sr.

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2nd District

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3rd District

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4th District

Charles City County, Chesapeake City, Chesterfield County, Colonial Heights City, Dinwiddie County, Emporia City, Greensville County, Henrico County, Hopewell City, Petersburg City, Prince George County, Richmond City, Southampton County, Suffolk City, Surry County, Sussex County



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5th District

Albemarle County, Appomattox County, Bedford City, Bedford County, Brunswick County, Buckingham County, Campbell County, Charlotte County, Charlottesville City, Cumberland County, Danville City, Fauquier County, Fluvanna County, Franklin County, Greene County, Halifax County, Henry County, Lunenburg County, Madison County, Mecklenburg County, Nelson County, Pittsylvania County, Prince Edward County, Rappahannock County



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6th District

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9th District

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Continued on page 12



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10th District

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93rd House District

James City County, Newport News City, Williamsburg City, York County



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1st Senate District

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High School Redesign

BY DIETRA TRENT

I have had the honor of serving as Virginia's Secretary of Education since late July. In that short time, I have met hardworking students, committed educators, and I have become even more convinced that the lessons I learned as a child in Southside Virginia are now more relevant than ever.

I grew up in Halifax, Virginia, surrounded by a family full of educators and academics. In fact, Mrs. Faustina Mae Trent was both my grandmother and my first-grade teacher.

She taught for over forty years in Halifax County Public Schools, impacting the lives of thousands by providing students from impoverished backgrounds with a sound education, a positive influence and a helping hand.

Even when things got tough, when the students struggled, when she saw the impacts of entrenched, intergenerational poverty, she kept the faith in the transformational power of education.

This lesson has stayed with me throughout my career, first as Deputy Secretary of Education under then-Governor Tim Kaine, and later as Deputy Secretary of Education under Governor McAuliffe.

And today, my grandmother's life-long belief that every student deserves a world-class education continues to inform my work as Virginia's Secretary of Education.

Over the past month, I have had the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of all the amazing work taking place on behalf of the students of the Commonwealth. There are a lot of exciting initiatives underway from pre-K through higher education, but the one I am most excited about is our effort to redesign high school and prepare students to succeed in the new Virginia economy.

As Governor McAuliffe is often fond of saying, our high schools have not changed a great deal since the 19th century. Indeed, the underlying structure is still based on goals and expectations rooted in the Industrial Revolution. We are all convinced that students deserve better.

That is why policy makers and educators across the state are working together to fundamentally change the high school experience, providing a variety of rigorous pathways for students to earn their diplomas and bridge the gap between the classroom and the workforce.

The SOL Innovation Committee, a bipartisan a group made up of educators, advocates and lawmakers, recognized the need for this sort of reform and made a recommendation in November of 2015 to redesign high school for the 21st century.



Governor McAuliffe heard the same thing during his statewide education roundtable tour last year. Our students want more hands-on experience, our teachers want more creativity in the classroom, and our parents want more emphasis on practical skills.

That is why the Governor and the General Assembly worked together in a bipartisan manner in the 2016 session to pass innovative legislation to address these concerns.

Based on this legislation, the Virginia Board of Education is working to establish a "Profile of a Virginia Graduate," articulating the skills every student should have upon graduation.

The Board is also developing new graduation requirements to align our education system with these skills; remove the pressure of high-stakes testing; and ensure that students gain exposure to 21st century careers. Additionally, the board recently hosted four public hearings in different parts of the Commonwealth to hear from citizens regarding this proposal.

Under the new model, the first two years of high school will focus more on core classes while the next two years, will allow for experiential learning, internships, externships, on-the-job training, and other opportunities that will help students adapt to the demands of the 21st century.

According to the annual education poll from the Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute at Virginia Commonwealth University, 72 percent of those surveyed supported the idea of using 9th and 10th grades to develop basic skills and reserving 11th and 12th grades for career preparation.

If we aren't looking at these results seriously, then we aren't fulfilling our responsibility to prepare our students to be productive citizens for decades to come. Our current system has been slow to embrace the importance of hands-on skills. We can do better.

By adding experiential learning opportunities, expanding how credits can be earned and developing a variety of rigorous new pathways to graduation, high school redesign will finally unleash the full potential of our teachers, our students and our schools.

High schools should be places where students can earn hands-on experience in emerging fields like cybersecurity and bioscience. They should be incubators of innovation where students have the flexibility to learn how academic knowledge translates into real-world experience. They should be providing our young people with the resources they deserve and the rigorous pathways they need to become successful, thriving citizens.

Years ago, my grandmother Faustina Mae Trent instilled in me the importance of giving every student a chance to succeed. By implementing this bold new redesign, we are well on our way to achieving that lofty goal.

Dietra Trent is the Secretary of Education for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

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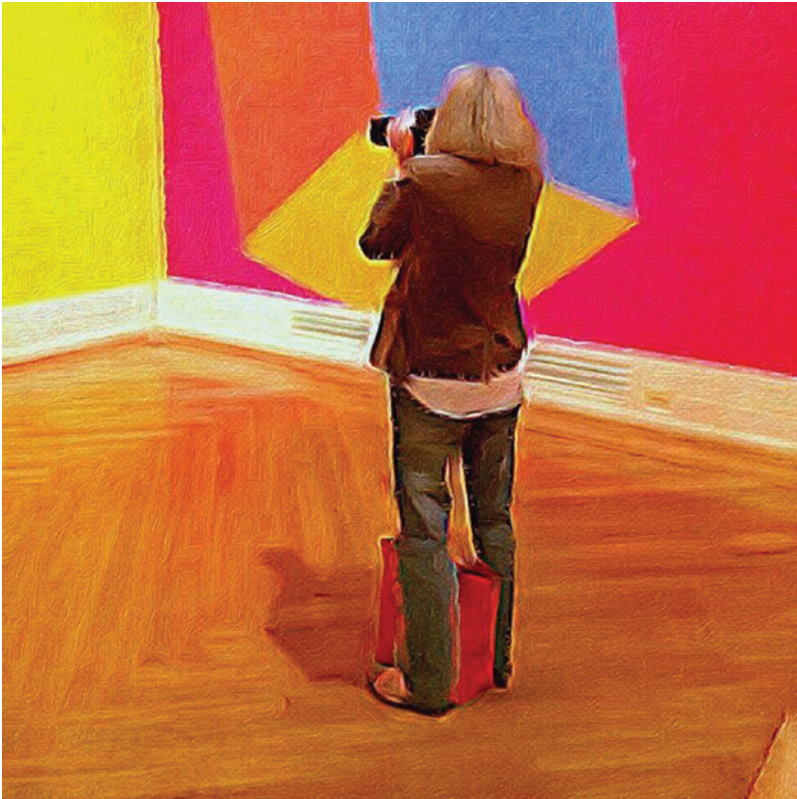
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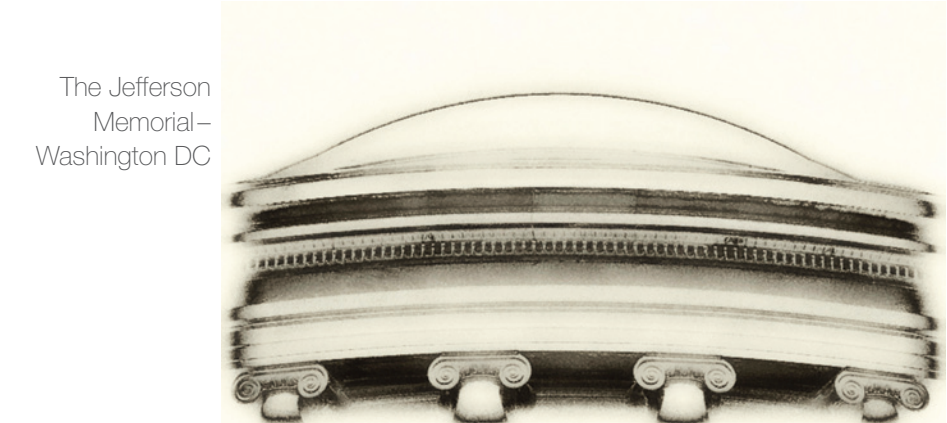


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How To Find Out Almost Everything About Almost Everything And Stay Busy For The Rest Of Your Life:

The Wonderful World Of Digital Collections

By BONNIE ATWOOD

History buffs, trivia buffs, government buffs —well, buffs of all kinds—can find an overflowing treasure chest of precious silver and gold just by clicking, if they only know where to look. The Twenty-First Century has brought images and information that this reporter never dreamed of as she sat with her Encyclopedia Britannica in the high school library. The word “digital” was not even in everyday use at that time, as we imagined a future with what now would be considered just a sliver of information available to us.



Today, the curious rule. They can find anything and everything from a vast number of sources available to the public from their home computers. Ray Bonis, Senior Research Associate with the Special Collection and Archives at VCU’s Cabell Library, gave us just a glimpse of the astounding amount of information one can access.

We started with the main link to the rich collection of documents at VCU: <http://dig.library.vcu.edu/>. Caution! Clicking may be habit-forming. Once you start surfing, you may be there all day. You can find subject matter from African-American history to collections of comic books. You can find information presented in written documents, photographs, maps, videos and more.

- Here is just a tiny sample of this reporter’s favorites:
- Baist Atlas of Richmond, VA (1889): Not only can you see the Richmond city plan in 1889, you can click on various portions and bring them up for a bigger view. Street by street, you can see how the Capitol City grew. On another website, this reporter looked up her own current city neighborhood, and documented its growth from a pine forest to “Richmond’s Most Successful Subdivision!” (Circa 1900). The residential city was moving west, and property there was hot, and by today’s standards, cheap. Then came churches, synagogues, movies and stores. And what was considered “west” moved further and further away.
 - Broad Street Old and Historic District: Go to this site and you will find crisp, detailed black-and-whites of 1896 that are sure to amaze you. Some of the buildings are recognizable. The wide street is traversed by trollies, horse and buggies, and pedestrians. Cars? You can count two. There appears to be no rhyme or reason to traffic patterns, and why should there be? Broad Street is mostly clear sailing. If your

NRV Rail from page 15

federal levels. Passenger rail service is something that everybody is interested in.”

Delegate Rush summarized the impact of passenger rail service to the New River Valley.

“Any way we can efficiently seem closer to our national treasures and landmarks in the nation’s capital, to the nation’s financial center in New York and emerging economic centers like Boston’s biotech region will be a good opportunity for our citizens and business community,” Rush said.

Calling passenger rail service “one of the most important things we will be doing,” Edwards added: “It will be a major step toward improving the quality of life and enhancing the lives of those who live here and the students and faculty at Radford and Virginia Tech. “

Additional information can be found at the NRV Passenger Rail website <http://www.nrvpassengerrail.org/>) or on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/nrvpassengerrail>).

Don Bowman is a public relations writer for the Radford University Waldron College of Health and Human Services and the College of Science and Technology. █

interest is architecture, this fully searchable site is a dream-come-true.

- Confederate Military Hospitals in Virginia: When we think of the Civil War in Richmond, we think of killing, maiming, fire, starvation, and brother-against-brother. This site, however, blows those images, at least temporarily, out of the water. This site describes over 100 hospitals. Some were mere tents, with just one patient. Others, like the most well-known Chimborazo General Hospital, cared for a normal occupancy of about 300. The hospital was a city unto itself, with about 120 buildings in all. The site is packed with text and photos.

And all that’s just a sample from one URL address!

Maybe old newspaper stories are your passion. Your time has come! No more rifling through crumbling, musty pieces of paper. You can find almost every publication you could want—online. These two sites will thrill you: <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/> and www.virginiamemory.com

You can find digital copies of nearly all newspapers printed in the Commonwealth, and in the nation. Chronicling America is operated by the National Digital Newspaper Program at the U.S. Library of Congress, and Virginia Memory is a part of the Virginia Newspaper Project at the Library of Virginia (LOV). You can read papers that were published as early as the 1700s, all the way up to the present day.

Universities and libraries are your best source of digital collections, and each of them have overlapping offerings. Kathy Jordan, Manager of the Digital Initiatives and Web Services (LOV) gave us an introduction to this. For Virginia genealogy, your best starting point is probably the Library of Virginia: <http://www.lva.virginia.gov/>. Look at the left side of the screen and the “For the Public,” and explore “Using the collections.” You will see a wealth of information, a million ways to use it, along with instructions on how to access it.

Some of the information is simply available from your home. For most, you will need a library card, but those are easy to register for and to renew—again— from the comfort of your own home. Go to: <http://www.lva.virginia.gov/about/policies/circ.htm>. Some cannot be used from home, but you can go to the Library of Virginia Reading Room and log in. A major one of these is Ancestry.com. Another set of documents that is red hot today is the collection of governmental data regarding vice presidential candidate and former governor, Tim Kaine.

Virginia Memory (<http://virginiamemory.com>) has a myriad of digital projects and collections, including the civil war letters of this reporter’s great-great-grandfather. Other information too long to list here includes blogs, transcriptions, state publications, vital records, photographs, and moving images.

We know that modern lawyers use the computers for most of their research on prior cases. Imagine this: Harvard University is digitalizing nearly 40 million pages of case law, which will become available to us free of charge. (We’ll still need bookcases of law books as backdrops for lawyer photos.)

Digital collections have been a game changer for writers and historians such as Dale Brumfield:

“It certainly has made the research aspect of manuscript writing infinitely simpler,” he said. These collections have cut down on his trips to libraries and trying to track down old news stories. While some services charge subscription fees, many do not. Libraries pay fees, he pointed out, and there is some alarm that some of the sites that are currently free of charge may become commercialized.

What you have glimpsed in this short article is just the tip of the iceberg. The whole world, and the whole of recorded history, are just a few taps away.

Bonnie Atwood, a freelance writer with Tall Poppies Freelance Writing LLC, is the winner of 30 national and state writing awards, and represents legislative clients with David Bailey Associates. She can be reached at BonAtwood@verizon.net. █

Governor’s Cabinet

three new and one changed secretariat



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Virginia Officials and their Military Service

In Service to Our Country

is a brief summary of the military service rendered by your public servants. You are invited you to take a moment to recognize them, and perhaps most importantly, to remember all those who have worn the uniform of our country.

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Lewis “Bud” Saunders

Died July 23, 2016

By DAVID BAILEY

Bud Saunders worked in the mail room of the Virginia House of Delegates for the past 15 years. When the General Assembly convenes in January we will be missing one of the friendliest persons on Capitol Square. Some of us who knew him can still see his big smile on top of his lanky frame. Did anyone ever see a frown? Last April we worked together in the General Assembly Building loading dock, and those boxes of 2016 Redbooks were very heavy. Bud only smiled. We never knew his health issues. He never complained.

My apologies are extended to everyone who would have said something about Bud. If I had asked everyone in the GAB, we would have devoted an entire issue to him. And when I think of his kindness, it would have been fitting.

“He was a hard worker, great to be around and always willing to help. Bud was liked by members, staff, lobbyists and everyone who came to the mail room. It did not matter who you were, he treated everyone alike. When it would get hectic during the session, he would crack a joke, setting us at ease to do a better job.”

Dennis Maxey, House Mail Room

“The House Post Office always reminds me of a general store in a small town. A one stop shop for just about anything and everything... part office, part town square. Something always going on or about to go on—and Bud was usually somewhere in the center of the action, processing mail, selling stamps, cracking a joke, or telling a story about something that happened a long time ago. He loved his wife, he loved his family, and he loved working for the House of Delegates. He was a calming presence in the fast-paced world of the General Assembly; but more importantly, he was a true gentleman and a good friend.”

Jay T. Braxton, Assistant Clerk | Virginia House of Delegates

“I’ll always remember Bud as one who loved a good laugh. When things weren’t busy in the GAB post office, Bud would come out and chat with the Capitol Police guys. It usually didn’t take long for someone (often Bud) to make a crack that started everyone laughing. The 2017 General Assembly session won’t be the same without Bud and his smile.”

Jane Sparks, Capitol Police

“Like so many around Capitol Square, he loved being around the energy of the General Assembly. Bud contributed in ways large and small to the good workings of the House of Delegates for over 15 years. Bud was graced by God with a warm smile and a wonderful way with people, which is why he is so sorely missed by all who had the good fortune and real pleasure of knowing him.”

G. Paul Nardo, Clerk of the House of Delegates



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The Governor’s School for Career and Technical Education Takes Off

By BRENDA LONG

The Hanover Regional Governor’s School for Career and Technical Advancement (HRGS-CTA) launched its inaugural three-week residential program housed on the University of Richmond’s campus this summer.

As noted by the HRGS-CTA, educational programs for students identified as or considered to be gifted and talented had focused on one of three general areas: academic achievement (e.g., mathematics/science), visual and performing arts, or leadership. This left a gap in the preparation of students who have demonstrated advanced achievement in career and technical education (CTE). The HRGS-CTA addresses this gap in educational programming for gifted CTE students. By extending, enriching, and advancing their skills, selected students enhance their ability to analyze, synthesize, and apply their talents and CTE skill sets in the classroom, workplace, and marketplace.

The HRGS-CTA proposed a dynamic and innovative three-week residential program for the advancement of gifted CTE students in Superintendent’s Regions 1 and 3. These regions comprise 32 school divisions, and the goal was to select 40 students whose strengths and interests represent a variety of career clusters. The expectation is that the number of students will grow in coming years.

Applicants are rising juniors who are enrolled in at least one CTE course with a grade of B or better and expect to continue in the CTE program during their final two years of high school, or rising seniors who have completed at least one credit in a CTE course and/or are currently enrolled in a CTE course with a grade of B or better and expect to continue in the CTE program during their final year of high school.

The HRGS-CTA worked to increase opportunities to enhance students’ workforce preparedness, meet the Commonwealth’s workforce needs, and advance The New Virginia Economy initiative.

The program was designed for gifted CTE students who demonstrate accomplishment, aptitude, and interest in CTE curricula and careers. Consistent with the Regulations Governing Educational Services for Gifted Students, including a specific definition for giftedness in CTE, participating school divisions identified students who demonstrated or showed the potential for high levels of accomplishment in CTE.

The program focused on the development of workplace readiness and entrepreneurial skills. Students cultivated and honed these skills through participating in group problem-solving activities, listening to guest speakers from the business and academic communities, visiting regional businesses recognized as leaders in their fields, and experiencing mentorships designed to highlight workplace readiness



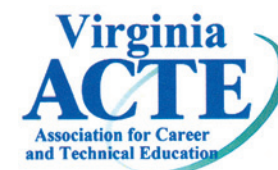
within the context of their individual career interests. Participants enjoyed a fast-paced, exciting, and relevant hands-on experience with students and staff who shared their passion for CTE.

As part of the program, students were introduced to Workplace Readiness Skills (as identified by Virginia’s business and industry) and how these skills are necessary in all aspects of any job. Local tours of businesses and behind the scenes visits included the Morooka America LLC manufacturing plant; the Richmond International Raceway; Kings Dominion; The Martin Agency; the Diamond, home of the Richmond Flying Squirrels; the U.S. Defense Supply Center; and Virginia Commonwealth University. These visits, and several others, provided the students with insight into developing their business plans and projects, using critical-thinking and problem-solving skills to advance their projects and reinforce the practical application of specific skills. Specialty groups and team meetings included working with mentors and visiting with guest speakers. Near the end of the program, student groups presented their solutions before the cohort and a panel of mentor judges.

To appreciate the work of the students who participated in the program, the guest speakers from the community, and the projects developed by the students, visit the blog <https://hrgscta.wordpress.com/>.

The HRGS-CTA presents a model to be replicated in other school divisions across Virginia and to meet the ever-growing demand for career-ready individuals. It is supported by a leadership council composed of representatives from participating school divisions, along with a steering group whose function is to provide guidance and practical support during the planning and implementation phases of the summer program. Representatives from postsecondary education, local business and industry groups, and economic development participated in the planning and implementation phases.

Dr. Brenda D. Long, Executive Director, Virginia Association for Career and Technical Education.



Dr. Brenda D. Long
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A Non-Partisan Party with a Purpose

By SARAH ALDERSON

The second President of the United States, John Adams, once wrote a letter to his wife about his “fear that in every assembly, members will obtain influence by noise, not sense.” At the same time, he opined that if political leaders did not act with civility the country would eventually fall apart. He believed that respect needed to be practiced at every level of government.



Adams wasn’t the only President—and Founding Father—to feel this way. George Washington wrote a book when he was young called the “Rules of Civility and Decent Behaviour in Company and Conversation.” In this publication he introduced 110 rules on civility. Washington insisted that practicing good manners was the key to good government.

In today’s political climate, and in this upcoming Presidential election in particular, it would appear that civility—especially when it comes to politics—is now a dying art. That’s why the Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership at the University of Virginia believes that its work is more important than ever.

Since its founding in 1993, the Sorensen Institute’s focus has been to foster trust, civility and respect in politics. To that end, this non-partisan organization is dedicated to identifying, educating and training emerging community leaders. Their mission is to strengthen and enhance the quality of government at all levels throughout Virginia.

Sorensen sponsors various programs and events during the year across the Commonwealth. And there are three central themes at the heart of everything they do: ethics in public service, the power of bipartisanship, and a concentrated study of public policy issues. These days, it could be said that their work is needed to actually restore those qualities to our political discourse.

If you’re interested in finding out more about how you can get involved, the next big event on Sorensen’s schedule is their 4th Annual Autumn Gala on Friday, November 18 at The Ritz-Carlton in Pentagon City. It’s a high-profile fundraiser that started four years ago and now typically attracts at least 250 to 300 attendees. The purpose is not only to raise funds and recruit new participants, but also to build new partnerships in Northern Virginia and provide more visibility for Sorensen in the region. And it has become a very popular networking opportunity for everyone who attends.

If you’re unfamiliar with the Sorensen Institute, this is the perfect occasion for you to get a first-hand look at what they do. You can talk with and get to know alumni and fellows of its programs to find out directly what they learn while they’re there. You can gain a deeper insight about the political process and help others do the same in a non-partisan environment. And you can better understand how Sorensen ultimately serves the Commonwealth. You may even consider applying personally or suggesting that an interested friend apply.

Even if you’re already familiar with what they do, the gala is a great time to meet and mingle with other individuals and corporate partners who believe in promoting good governance.

The gala includes a reception, dinner and program. This year’s program will include an in-depth analysis of the 2016 Presidential election by Bob Holsworth, one of Virginia’s leading political analysts. Holsworth is the author of five books and numerous articles on public policy and American politics. He was the Founding Director of both the Center for Public Policy and the Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University. His comments on Virginia politics as well as national politics have appeared in the Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, The Washington Post and other prominent newspapers throughout the country. He has also

been interviewed on most major American television networks as well as the BBC.

A Congressional Panel consisting of the winning candidates of Virginia’s Congressional races will also be discussing the prospects in Congress and the future of the Commonwealth itself.

All of the proceeds from this event benefit the Sorensen Institute and its participants. Although it’s housed at the University of Virginia, Sorensen relies on donations and grants from individuals, corporations, and foundations to fund its programs.

Currently, there’s plenty of room for everyone who would like to participate, and many sponsorship opportunities are still available. However, with this being an election year, ticket sales and table reservations will likely be in higher demand than ever.

Individual tickets are \$300. Tables for ten can be reserved for \$5000, half-tables may be reserved for \$2,500 and supporters tickets for two are \$1,250. Partnerships are created with those who reserve tables in advance. Higher level sponsorships are also available for anyone who may be interested. Please contact Colleen Smith, Interim Executive Director and Director of Development, for more information and/or to become a sponsor. Her email address is colleen.smith@virginia.edu, and her phone number is 434-982-4910.

If you can’t attend, but would like to make a contribution to the Sorensen Institute, you can do so online at giving.virginia.edu/sorensen. Every gift helps to underwrite the direct costs of their programs. It also makes a big difference to each and every class.

If you or someone you know is interested in participating in one of their programs, the Political Leaders Program application window opens Monday, September 12 and closes on Monday, November 14. The Candidate Training Program deadline to apply is January 31. And the High School Leaders Program application window will open on Thursday, December 1, with an early application deadline (guaranteed interview) of Tuesday, January, 31; and a final application deadline of Tuesday, February 28.

Ultimately, supporting the Sorensen Institute is a great way to actually promote civility and invest in good government. And that’s something that is needed more than ever today at every level of government across the country.

Most recently in a speech in Illinois, the 44th President of the United States railed against today’s low-brow political discourse and called for a “modicum of civility” to be returned to politics. President Obama’s message to all candidates running for office was clear. “We should insist on a higher form of political discourse that is based on respect.”

John Adams, George Washington AND the Sorensen Institute couldn’t have said it any better themselves.

For more information regarding purchasing tickets or sponsoring a table, contact Colleen Smith at 434-982-4910 or email her at colleen.smith@virginia.edu, www.sorenseninstitute.org.

Sarah Alderson is an award-winning freelance writer who also works in the Senate broadcast control room during sessions and the Capitol Studio throughout the year. She can be reached at aldersonproductions@gmail.com



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A Snapshot of Where We Are

BY EDGAR H. THOMPSON

Most people don't have much good to say about politicians at this moment in time. However, when individuals are elected to office in Virginia, when they come to Richmond, I believe the vast majority want to serve their fellow citizens, their communities. Given this desire, what issues must they address? The situation within the electorate is not as simple as it used to be. Consider what has happened to me and my wife in just the last week.

At breakfast Monday, when I asked our waitress for more coffee, she said, "No Problem." When I asked for the check, she said, "No Problem." I wanted to ask her if it was a problem that my wife I came into her restaurant to buy breakfast, in part so she could get paid? Today, "No Problem," suggests that something was a problem to begin with. It is as if you are saying, "I am entitled. I am owed your money and your attention just because I am me. In other words, it is everyone else's job to remove all barriers or issues or problems for those who are not anointed. I said nothing.

On the way to cataract surgery Tuesday—my second eye—, a Henrico Police officer stopped traffic near Broad Street to let some Canadian Geese cross the road. I didn't mind this, but when I was working on my doctorate at Virginia Tech, my wife's office was in Cassell Coliseum. When I used to pick her up for lunch, often the football team crossed in front of me. They didn't stop for cars, cars stopped for them. The geese reminded me of this naïve entitled attitude.

We went to a home building supply store Wednesday evening, and there were no shopping carts at the front door. A worker at Customer Service found us one, and that was a help. Then we went looking for someone to help us buy plantation blinds for the new house we have bought. We could find no one. We asked three people before we found a person who could help. We were assured that someone would contact us about coming to measure our windows for blinds within 24 hours. Three days later, we are still waiting to be contacted. Think about this scenario—we couldn't find anyone to take our order for a service we needed that this store sold, until I got aggressive about finding the appropriate representative—the one who knew something—while other employees walked by and pleaded ignorance. Is this store in business to make money? At what cost to the consumer?

A worker at our local post office was rude to my wife. She asked him if she had to bring anything back to the post office if she did the address change on line. "I said, do it on line," was his order to my wife as she questioned him. I suspect his behavior was age or gender based. He has never taken this tone with me. Then again, I went into a convenience store the other night to buy a bag of ice. I asked an employee if a 10 pound bag was the smallest they had. She said it was, and then another



VIRGINIA CAPITOL CONNECTIONS

ADOPT-A-SCHOOL

Adopt-A-School is a service of Virginia Capitol Connections that allows sponsors to provide schools of their choice with government-related educational materials throughout the year. If you have any questions or would like to sponsor a school please contact Kristen Bailey-Hardy at Kristen@capitolsquare.com or by phone at (804) 643-5554.

Additional thanks to Joseph Romeo, Jr. and former Delegate Paul Cline who are new supporters in our Adopt-A-School Program.

worker asked me what I wanted, and I tried to answer her question, but the one who had initially answered my question interrupted me, and said that she had answered my question. About her coworker, she said, "She is hard of hearing." It was as if I had done something wrong, was somehow disrespectful of her hearing-impaired co-worker. How? I was trying to answer the question I had been asked. I have white hair, and I may appear gruff, but I was polite. I was just a potential customer. Since when does a customer have to go above and beyond to be served by workers in a situation like this one? I was offended by this whole experience. I went across the street to buy my ice. I was treated fairly there.

Friday, I tried to use a MacDonald's App for two breakfast sandwiches, one free. I had my wife's phone with me and the square bar code ready. The older employee couldn't figure out how to use the App and called the manager over. The manager said she would add it in at the end, implying she wouldn't need my square bar code. The worker finished our order. She then called the manager back over, who informed me she did in fact need my phone bar code. I retrieved my wife's phone, and concluded the transaction. This App has been available for months, if not over a year. Why have all employees not been trained how to use it? The manager, in her 30s I guess, looked askance at the employee as if it was the employee's fault this transaction was not going smoothly. I wondered who had trained, or not trained, this employee adequately. Does this business have the goal of making money, and if so, at what expense to the customer?

Maybe my life is different from yours, but in conversations with friends and people I have come into contact with over the last few weeks, what I have just described is not uncommon. It is clear that we have problems across the board we have not had before that makes solving the numerous political dilemmas we face as a society very difficult. We live in a world where we all expect more than perhaps we should, or maybe we are not getting the care and attention we really deserve. I do believe that leaders at all levels, and particularly our elected leaders, need to demonstrate patience and be willing to go above and beyond in modeling exemplary behavior for all of us to follow and mimic at this time in our lives.

Herb Thompson is a widely published poet, essayist, and literary critic. His research interests include the American West, play, literacy, and educational policy.



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The Virginia War Memorial

By DR. CLAY MOUNTCASTLE, DIRECTOR, VIRGINIA WAR MEMORIAL

Sixty years ago, on February 29, 1956, the Virginia War Memorial in Richmond was formally opened and dedicated.

Five years earlier in 1950, the Virginia General Assembly authorized the building of a memorial to honor and remember those Virginians who had made the ultimate sacrifice serving in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. A design was chosen and a location selected—nearly five acres overlooking the James River and the Richmond along U.S. Routes 1 and 301, the primary route from Maine to Florida before the construction of Interstate 95.

Before construction began, America entered the Korean War and the Memorial's design was changed to also honor and remember the heroes of this conflict. When it was completed, the Memorial included a 200-seat auditorium, a small visitors' center, and the inspiring Shrine of Memory where the names of Virginia's heroes were etched on its stone and glass walls.

In the 1980s, the Shrine was expanded to include the names of those Virginians who died in Vietnam and in the 1990s the names of those killed in the Persian Gulf War were added, and now total nearly 12,000.

The Commonwealth has a long and proud tradition of honoring its military for their service, from the Revolutionary War to today. It is therefore not surprising that Virginia would establish the premier state war memorial in the United States.

The basic mission of the Virginia War Memorial is to *Honor Veterans, Preserve History, Educate Youth and Inspire Patriotism in All.*

The addition of the 18,000 square foot Paul and Phyllis Galanti Education Center in September 2010 dramatically changed the size and scope of the Memorial. It also allowed it to extend its focus to honor all veterans through educational and patriotic programs, historic exhibits and documentary films designed to pass their stories of service and sacrifice forward to future generations.

While the Memorial is owned and maintained by the Commonwealth, and since 2013 has been a division of the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, the Galanti Education Center was built with a combination of public and private funding. This center includes exhibits, classrooms, administrative offices, a research library, and two theaters that show the Memorial's award-winning film *Into Battle* and award-winning documentary series, *Virginians at War*. The 500-seat E. Bruce Heilman Amphitheater on the Memorial grounds hosts numerous major events such as the Commonwealth's Memorial Day, Patriot Day, and Veterans Day ceremonies each year.

The non-profit Virginia War Memorial Foundation finances the Memorial's exhibits, films, and educational seminars and outreach through funds raised from individuals, corporations, military and veterans' organizations, civic groups, and grants.

The Memorial now hosts over 50 programs each year and visitation has grown more than 500% in the past five years to over nearly 75,000 in 2015. Plans are underway to further expand the Memorial with a 20,000 square foot addition that will include a lecture hall, additional exhibit space, classrooms, a distance learning center, and a multilevel parking garage.

As a retired Army officer and a military historian, it was my honor to be chosen as the new director of the Virginia War Memorial, succeeding Jon Hatfield this past June. We have the opportunity to build upon the traditions here and to utilize the newest technologies to assure that Memorial excels in its mission and remains a vibrant and living place of learning and excitement for each new generation.

I invite you to bring your family and friends to the Virginia War Memorial. Come meet our more than 70 volunteer docents—most of who are military veterans themselves—and let them give you a tour



How to be an Effective Citizen Lobbyist

By EMMETT HANGER

Here is a timetable and some helpful tips to be an effective citizen lobbyist in both the budget and bill process.

Public hearings on the BUDGET are held in early January. The Senate Finance Committee website always has the specifics. Attend committee meetings during session. Call or write or visit. House and Senate Sessions can be viewed online during the session at virginiageneralassembly.gov.

Our offices can get, especially during Session, hundreds or more emails a day, constant phone calls, mail and visitors. Let's be frank, staff has to manage and triage the flow of communication to ensure the most critical information gets to the legislator in time. We communicate constantly with agency heads, lobbyists, groups and organizations too—so I will focus this next part on making sure individual citizens get heard!

Help us hear you by making sure we know:

1) You are a constituent—include, first thing at the top of your email or letter, your name and home address. We hear from all over the state (sometimes the world) but your biggest advocate is often your own legislator so we try to prioritize our constituents communications.

2) Succinctly tell us what your issue or concern is and how you would like us to help. Sometimes people want the legislator to vote a particular way; tell us why. Sometimes people want help resolving a problem in state government; give us details. Sometimes people just want to vent; that is okay too!

3) Be aware that lots of groups and organizations use robo calls and mass emails to communicate about hot topic issues. A personal call or email is always most effective! There is an apparent misconception that if we get 1,000 emails for a bill and 2,000 emails against a bill, that the legislator will automatically vote against the bill. That is not how it works. We are a representative democracy, and often the legislator (thru the legislative process) has the advantage of all kinds of additional information to evaluate an issue and make a decision. The legislator can review the input of those mass contacts but it is always better to get personal!

4) Contact us in a timely matter. (I am still getting emails to support specific bills that were defeated over a year ago!) We want your input, and we know you want to be effective!

Senator Emmett Hanger, 24th District of Virginia



and show you what a living memorial can be. I can promise you that you will be enlightened, entertained, and inspired by this beautiful tribute to our heroes and our heritage.

The Virginia War Memorial is located at 621 South Belvidere Street, Richmond, 23220, just north of the Robert E. Lee Bridge. The Paul and Phyllis Galanti Education Center is open from 9 a.m. –4 p.m. Monday-Saturday and Noon–4 p.m. Sunday. The Memorial grounds are open from 5 a.m.-midnight daily. Admission and parking are free. For more information, please call 804.786.2060 or visit www.vawarmemorial.org or [Facebook/virginiawarmemorial](https://www.facebook.com/virginiawarmemorial). The Virginia War Memorial is a division of the Virginia Department of Veterans Services.

Dr. Clay Mountcastle joins the Virginia War Memorial as its Director after serving as Assistant Professor of Military History at U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Lee, Va. He is a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute and earned his PhD in history at Duke University. He retired as a Lieutenant Colonel after 21 years of service in the U.S. Army.



29th Infantry Division Soldiers begin federal active duty

By ALFRED ANDERSON PURYEAR

FORT BELVOIR, Va. — Senior leaders from state government and the Maryland and Virginia National Guard joined family members, friends and fellow Soldiers in bidding farewell to approximately 80 Soldiers assigned to the Fort Belvoir-based 29th Infantry Division as they began federal active duty Aug. 1, 2016, at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. The Maryland and Virginia National Guard Soldiers will provide mission command in the Middle East in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

Mission command is the term the U.S. Army uses to describe the headquarters that provides direction and intent to subordinate units in order for them to carry out their mission. That headquarters also provides guidance and coordination for personnel, intelligence, sustainment and communications support.

The group of Soldiers, also known as Task Force 29, are expected to serve on federal active duty for up to 12 months. “We have this mission because of what we have proven,” said Brig. Gen. Blake C. Ortner, commander of the 29th Infantry Division. “We have proven it during our training, and we have proven it during the previous missions the 29th has taken on. They are trained, they are capable and they are ready. They are going overseas to make things safer for all of us.”

Deputy Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Curtis Brown, Virginia Senator Bryce Reeves, Delegate Richard Anderson, Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, Maj. Gen. Linda L. Singh, the Adjutant General of Maryland, and Brig. Gen. Paul Griffin, Director of the Virginia National Guard Joint Staff, were all on hand with Ortner to send off the Soldiers.

“I stand here humbled and awed in my responsibility as the commander of Task Force 29,” said Brig. Gen. Jeffrey P. Kramer, 29th ID Deputy Commanding General – Support who will command the combined group of Maryland and Virginia Soldiers. “National Guard Soldiers have been repeatedly called upon to defend their states and nation, even before we were a nation, and they continue

to answer that call. These men and women are the best that our nation has to offer, and we all owe them our deepest thanks and gratitude.”

Williams put the mobilization in a historical perspective and asked the Soldiers to keep in mind that the 100th anniversary of the 29th Infantry Division will be recognized during their deployment. “In World War I, it was the 29th Infantry Division that set the pace,” Williams said. “Seventy-five years ago, it was the 29th that set the pace in World War II. Here we are in this global war, and I have every faith and confidence in you and that the 29th will set the pace once again. Go forward, be safe and do great things for our nation.”

Singh shared that she had deployed with the 29th on two different occasions, and said that she couldn’t think of a better division to take on the upcoming mission. “I grew up in this division, I know you are going to make us proud,” she said. “Take care of each other, respect one another, look out for your battle buddies, just in case someone needs your assistance. That’s what it takes to get through a deployment.”

Brown thanked the Soldiers and their families on behalf of Governor Terry McAuliffe and Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security Brian Moran. “For the 29th, our message is simple. We want to say thank you.” Brown said. “Thank you for your service. Thank you for your dedication to excellence and all you do to defend the values we hold so dear. You are an elite fighting force, and the best trained and equipped in the history of the world. We know that you will be successful in all that you do.”

Soldiers conducted a short training period at Fort Pickett in early July, and they will conduct additional training in Texas before heading overseas.

This is a short notice mission to fill a capabilities gap identified by the U. S. Army and National Guard Bureau. The senior leadership of the 29th ID, Maryland and Virginia National Guard understand that a short notice mobilization creates significant challenges for Soldiers, families and employers, and all the leaders expressed their

deepest appreciation for the family members and the critical support they provide.

“Your families will be cared for because they are our families as well,” Ortner promised the Soldiers. “Whatever is needed, we will provide. They will be safe with us, and they will be cared for. You do not need to worry.”

The 29th ID, Maryland and Virginia National Guard have multiple support systems in place if there are any hardships created by the mobilization, and the Family Programs Office had personnel available before the departure to help answer any questions or provide assistance.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, more than 15,000 Virginia National Guard Soldiers and Airmen have mobilized on federal active duty for homeland security missions and combat operations, sustainment support and peacekeeping in Iraq, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Kosovo and other locations around the world.

The pace of federal mobilizations for the Virginia National Guard shows no sign of slowing down. Approximately 1,550 Virginia National Guard Soldiers and Airmen will start, continue or complete a federal mobilization in 2016 in places like the Middle East and Cuba.

Cotton Puryear is the state public affairs officer for the Virginia National Guard. He retired from uniformed service in 2010 after 24 years in the active Army and National Guard including tours of duty in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm with 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment and in Kosovo for peacekeeping operations with the Guard's 29th Infantry Division.

Additional information on the 29th Infantry Division: Soldiers from 29th Infantry Division traveled to Europe to participate in Saber Strike 16 June 4-22, 2016, in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania where they served as an exercise control cell and managed many of the support functions and tracking the training requirements for different units going through the exercise. They helped ensure all units met their training objectives and helped reallocate resources during the exercise to achieve training objectives.

More than 400 Maryland and Virginia Army National Guard Soldiers from the 29th Infantry Division joined with National Guard and active duty Soldiers from around the country, as well as active duty and Air National Guard Airmen, for a nine-day warfighter exercise Nov. 13-22 at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, where they received high praise for their outstanding performance during the exercise.

Maryland and Virginia National Guard Soldiers in the 29th Infantry Division last served in federal active duty in Afghanistan from 2010 to 2012 when they conducted two rotations assigned to NATO’s International Security Assistance Force Joint Command Afghan National Security Force Development Team. During that time they served as advisors and mentors to senior Afghan leaders with the mission to provide Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police subject matter expertise to facilitate ANSF growth and development.

Prior to their service in Afghanistan, Maryland and Virginia Soldiers from the 29th Infantry Division deployed overseas for peace-keeping duty in Kosovo from August 2006 to November 2007.

Formed in 1917, the 29th Infantry Division deployed to France during World War I and saw action in the First United States Army’s Meuse-Argonne offensive as part of the French XVII Corps. In World War II, the 29th Division was in the first wave of troops to storm the beaches of Normandy and begin the liberation of France.





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In Memoriam

A Tribute To Jack Gravely

By JOE W. DILLARD JR.

When you say the name Jack Gravely, you cannot help but to think of the NAACP. I first met Jack in October of 2014 when he was the keynote speaker for the Virginia Beach NAACP Freedom Dinner. Being fairly new to the civil rights movement, I was blown away by this man who reminded me of Joe Clark from the movie "Lean on Me." He went into detail how in his younger days he got with some younger members of the NAACP like now State Senator Louisa L. Lucas and discussed their desire to represent the people they served in many spheres of the civil rights movement. Never before this day had I heard from a pioneer in the movement who vividly painted the picture of his activism in his younger days. It was more inspirational at the time than I knew it to be.



The second time I met Jack Gravely, he was this fired up NAACP savior hopeful to return the Virginia State Conference NAACP back to its rightful place as the leading civil rights advocacy group in this land. He was so fired up; he began to tell anyone in the crowd, if they had a problem with him they could meet him at his house and he proceeded



GRAVELY

to give out his home address. Again, déjà vu, this was most certainly a scene from "Lean on Me." I wondered why this man had so much air in his chest at such a "young age" but many took his passion out of content. See as a new leader in the civil rights movement, I never witnessed this style of leadership. Of course as a millennial I read about it in textbooks and some novels. However, I was in the thick of witnessing a Virginia State Conference NAACP legend return to rear the organization back into top shape.

I didn't know how to take his comments. Where they an insult to the general membership? Not so, it was a clear challenge to every member of the Virginia State Conference NAACP to get on board with doing the work of the people. It didn't take long for me to begin to get calls of seasoned members of the NAACP excited to know that Jack Gravely was returning as our interim executive director. Rev. John Hines was beaming with excitement of his friend returning. Literally, the Virginia State Conference received a jolt of energy after his announcement. What I never shared with anyone is why I decided to run for the Vice President of the Virginia State Conference of the NAACP. Jack Gravely was a major influence on my decision, he challenged members of all ages to step up and be the leaders needed today in society. After his dynamic speech in Virginia Beach, I am sure he didn't know it but he convinced me it was time for the millennial generation to step up to the plate. Jack, was the man who would approach you directly with problems. You did not have to hear "Jack, said" because, certainly he would be telling you himself. Jack leaves behind big shoes to fill but isn't that cliché to say? Jack has made one of the greatest impacts on the growth of the Virginia State Conference NAACP and I think that is a safe assumption for anyone who knew the legend Jack W. Gravely.

What better way to close this tribute than to quote the late Jack Gravely? "Walk Slow, Drinking Plenty of Water. Gone."

Joe W. Dillard Jr. is President, Norfolk Branch NAACP & Vice-President, Virginia State Conference NAACP



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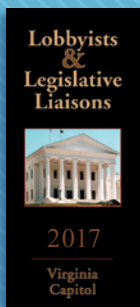
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