

## PROLOGUE

VAGARA'S history is directly related to the initiatives of a series of succeeding "generations" of elected officers and members. Those individuals, who hailed from every part of the Commonwealth and represented county, city, town, school district, and state agency, nurtured this organization from infancy to maturity. It is our membership whose collective efforts were dedicated to the development and implementation of the policies and standards which will ensure the preservation of historical records and provide leadership in new technologies for the storage, maintenance, retrieval, and disposal requirements in the management of public records. These same members also represented multi-dimensional interests throughout Virginia; and they served on standards committees, advisory boards, regional conferences, national associations in addition to participating in numerous workshops, seminars, roundtables, and other training arenas. They were, and still are, clerks, records managers, archivists, analysts, technicians, and educators whose diverse nature has been manifested in their unity of purpose to initiate productivity in our professional ranks.

While our membership provided the organization with the strength to continue programs and policies, it has been VAGARA's good fortune to have a history reflective of a dedicated succession of elected officers whose deeds have been responsible for providing our growth and development. These successive "generations" charted the course, captained the ship, navigated through a variety of obstacles and challenges, sailed through a static maturation process, and ultimately anchored VAGARA in an ocean of organizational stability.

In our "First Generation", with Robert K. Friedman (City of Alexandria) at the helm, we experienced a constitutional birth and direction of purpose as a new local entity generated from a single idea. Our "Second Generation", under George A. Hruneni (Fairfax County), developed a scholarship program, established training workshops, initiated an awards program, designed and published our first organizational brochure, defined specific duties for at-large members, and planned a comprehensive by-laws revision. The "Third Generation", headed by William Wolchak (Prince William County), continued restructuring of the by-laws, conducted workshops, and increased membership rolls. Bea Berry (City of Newport News) was elected to lead our "Fourth Generation" of board members; and we achieved fiscal solvency, revised the scholarship program and training agenda, promoted workshop development, supported by-laws revisions within proper parliamentary guidelines, and added the position of historian to the Executive Board. Our "Fifth Generation" stayed the course established by the "Berry Bunch"; and under Patricia F. Noble (Chesterfield County) maintained financial stability, continued a rigorous member-oriented training agenda, developed job descriptions for each elected board member, doubled the organizational membership roster, and approved a structured conference management procedural manual.

With Ann Winstead (Fairfax County Public Schools) as President of our "Sixth Generation, we entered the electronic age with the production of an official VAGARA

Website, increased membership rolls with the influx of public school records managers, initiated a training partnership program with the Library of Virginia for educating professionals in the field, established organizational standing rules, incorporated the organization as a viable entity within the Commonwealth, developed a regional demarcation for identifying VAGARA membership influence, and promoted fiscal stability. Our “Seventh Generation”, under Dick Harrington (Library of Virginia) we increased our knowledge and awareness of information technology through the development of locality Websites, promoted the partnership training opportunities with the Library of Virginia statewide, and initiated a new VAGARA logo. With the current “Eighth Generation” of officers, we have reached new heights in conference planning with Wintergreen, continued an aggressive training workshop partnership with LVA, increased our membership numbers, enhanced an existing Website, and prepared to restructure the organizational by-laws.

This, then, has been our story. The history of nearly a score of cooperation between a supportive membership and a pattern of “succeeding generations” of solid leadership. It was Thomas Jefferson, in writing to Samuel Kercheval during the Summer of 1916, who stressed a staunch belief in the strength and wisdom of “succeeding generations”. Our distinguished Declaration author advised, “Let us not [sic] weakly believe that one generation is not as capable as another of taking care of itself and or of ordering its own affairs.” An evaluation of our VAGARA history lends credibility to that statement. Furthermore, this renowned philosopher-statesman appeared to characterize our VAGARA “generations” with further remarks in that same letter. “Each generation is as independent of the one preceding, as that was of all which had gone before.” “It has, then, like them, a right to choose for itself the form of government it believes most promotive of its own happiness....”

No better story line can introduce the history of VAGARA to our readers. It has been a history in which the **unity** of our purpose, aligned with a **diversity** of our membership, culminated in our marked **productivity** of effort.

**GAH**

