

RECORD

December
2023

The newsletter of the Virginia Association of Government Archives & Records Administrators

President's Letter

Hi VAGARA members,

It seems hard to believe that 2023 is nearly over, but as I reflect on the past several months, I can't help but be proud of the year VAGARA has experienced. Membership is at its highest level in several years and on behalf of the board, I would like to thank each of you for your continued support of this amazing organization.

Thanks to all who attended the 37th annual conference in October! Attendance was the highest we've seen in recent memory which made for a busy and energetic two days in Virginia Beach. The board appreciates your participation, and we are already looking ahead to next year's conference. We received a lot of great feedback from the conference surveys and will work to implement some of the ideas for 2024.

The month of December means that several members will be cycling off the executive board in the coming weeks. A big thank you to Margie Tacci (Vice President and Conference Chair), Mina Barberis (Secretary), Jonathan Tillman (Treasurer), Rachael Brinson (Member-at-Large), Nicki Taylor (Member-at-Large), and Ben Smith (Member-at-Large), and Glenn Smith (Past President) for their service to VAGARA during the last two years. The board members for the 2024-2025 term met at the conference and are excited to get to work in January. You can read more about the new board members later in this issue.

As 2023 ends, I'd like to wish each of you a wonderful winter season. Great things lie ahead, and I look forward to seeing where the next year takes VAGARA.

Happy New Year!

Jessie Graham
VAGARA President

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2023 Annual Conference Recap



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The 2023 VAGARA annual conference in Virginia Beach was amazing! Attendance exceeded the executive board's expectations this year with 168 attendees, speakers, and exhibitors. VAGARA members demonstrated that they are committed to learning, sharing, and mentoring one another.

Thank you to the board members who chaired a conference committee, to those who worked hours outside their daily hours, and all who rolled up their sleeves to assist during the conference to ensure its success. The conference ran smoothly, the speakers were excellent, the exhibitors provided great information, the hotel treated us well, the food was delicious, new friends were made and old friends were reacquainted.

To all the attendees thank you for your feedback on the survey! Responses indicated that the conference ran smoothly, the hotel food and accommodations were satisfactory, the session topics were useful and the speakers engaging. We've noted areas that could benefit from additional improvement and the board will work to implement as many ideas as possible for 2024.

Thank you to everyone who purchased raffle tickets for the Connis O. Brown Scholarship - we raised \$835. The funds will be used to sponsor conference registration for members in need each year.

Thank you again to Susan Throckmorton of Southern Virginia Higher Education whose submission, "Ride the Wave of Records Management," was selected as this year's theme.

If you attended the conference and need a certificate of completion, please email margie.tacci@herndon-va.gov. If you'd like to revisit the conference sessions, all of the 2023 presentation slides are available for download if you are logged into the vagara.org website.

Don't forget to mark your calendars for the 2024 and 2025 conferences which will again be held at the Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront ~ October 23-25, 2024, and October 22-24, 2025! Planning for the 2024 conference will start early next year. Keep your eyes open for upcoming newsletters with more conference details. If there is a topic or speaker that would be beneficial to our members at the next year's conference, or if you're interested in serving on the conference committee, please contact us at conference@vagara.org.

Membership Update

Currently VAGARA has 201 active individual memberships, 4 vendor members, and 7 honorary members. Please remember that your VAGARA annual membership of \$20.00 for individuals and \$100 for vendors comes due for the period of January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2024.

JOIN OR RENEW NOW ►

Membership gives you resources and links to other members to assist you in tackling your archives and records management issues, as well as access to past conference presentations. Your membership affords you the opportunity to share, collaborate, and develop both professional and personal relationships with your peers. If not renewed by April 1, 2024, your membership will lapse but can be re-instated with payment.

Please contact the current membership coordinator at membership@vagara.org for more information and thank you for continuing to be part of the VAGARA family.

We Care Program

As part of our We Care program you are encouraged to review and update your membership details. Be sure to add your birthday month, so VAGARA can send you a birthday email during the month of your birthday.

Also, do you know of a member that could use a “pat on the back,” a “thinking of you,” a “get well,” or another spirit-lifter? If so, please email membership@vagara.org and a card will be sent on behalf of VAGARA.



2024 – 2025 VAGARA Board Members

VAGARA is pleased to announce the election of the 2024-2025 Board members. Jessie Graham, University of Virginia, will continue serving as President; Matthew Logie, County of Fairfax, will succeed Margie Tacci and take on the role of Vice President; Katie Ray, Virginia Retirement Systems (VRS), will carry out the duties of Treasurer; Amy Roper, Virginia Lottery will execute the charge of Secretary, and Shavonne Munnlyn, George Mason University will assume the responsibility of Historian. Christine Branch, King William County, Janice Deem, Bath County, and Kyna Thomas, City of Charlottesville, will join the board as members-at-large. Travis Morris, County of Albemarle, will return as a member-at-large for 2024-2025.



Left to right:

Katie Ray – Treasurer, Virginia Retirement System

Amy Roper – Secretary, Virginia Lottery

Matt Logie – Vice President, Fairfax County

Shavonne Munnlyn – Historian, George Mason University

Jessie Graham – President, University of Virginia

Board Members, continued...



Left to right:

Kyna Thomas – Member-at-Large, City of Charlottesville

Travis Morris – Member-at-Large, Albemarle County

Janice Deem – Member-at-Large, Bath County

Christine Branch – Member-at-Large, King William County

Remembering Founding Members

George A. Hruneni and Bernice Berry, two of the Association's founding members, recently passed away. Both were invaluable contributors to the Association from its earliest days when, at the very first meeting in February 1985, Berry presented on indexing city minutes and Hruneni on establishing records standards.

George A. Hruneni

George Hruneni passed away August 1, 2023, in Culver City, CA. He served on the executive board first as an executive member (now known as a member-at-large) and later as president and historian. He received the Outstanding Member Award in 1990, and again in 1996. As historian, Hruneni wrote a comprehensive history of the Association in 2001. His contributions to the archives and records management community extended beyond his role in the Association. In 1991, Hruneni was appointed by Governor Douglas Wilder to serve on the State Historical Records Advisory Board.

Hruneni retired from Fairfax County where he served as the Archivist and Records Administrator. He was made an honorary member in 2002.

Bernice (Bea) Berry

Bea Berry passed away August 19, 2023, in Staunton, VA. She served as the Association's first secretary before going on to fill the roles of president and executive member. During her time with the Association, Berry served as conference chair on several occasions and chaired a committee to update the constitution and by-laws in 2000. She received the Outstanding Member Award in 1989. As a Master Municipal Clerk, she was also active in the Virginia Municipal Clerk's Association and the International Institute of Municipal Clerks.

Berry retired from the City of Newport News in 2004, where she had been City Clerk since 1978. She was made an honorary member in 2008.

VAGARA's Newest Honorary Member

During our annual business meeting at the conference, VAGARA recognized one of the Association's longest serving and hardest working members. Nancy Tyler, retired Coordinator of Document Management for Fairfax County Public Schools, was made an Honorary Member.

Beginning thirty years ago, and until the pandemic canceled the 2020 conference, Nancy served as a member of the Conference Committee in some capacity every year. Over those years Nancy chaired the committees for registration, scholarship, vendors, conference program, and the conference itself. For many years she led the charge for selecting the conference site. Nancy is probably the only member elected to serve on the Executive Board in every position possible, from Member-at-Large in 1995 to serving two terms as President beginning in 2008. Even after reaching term limits and no longer holding a board seat, she continued serving in roles such as Membership Coordinator, Webmaster, and Newsletter Editor. During Nancy's presidency, the Standing Rules and Bylaws were updated, our website was developed and launched, and a Google account was acquired, into which she scanned all of VAGARA's historical documents to allow for broader, more effective access and to help ensure their preservation.



Nancy helped create and lead the Public School Records Consortium (PSRC), which was established to foster working relationships between staff members responsible for managing public school records, as well as between those staff members and the Library of Virginia's Records Management Section. The Library and the PSRC forged a relationship that has supported records management in public schools for almost twenty years. While serving as PSRC's president, Nancy began to offer affordable records management workshops throughout the commonwealth, helping to make the PSRC a trusted resource for public school staff who often have limited funding, yet a robust responsibility for managing their school's records.

Nancy was nominated for Honorary Membership by Maralee Weeks, Stafford County Public Schools. Maralee accepted the award on Nancy's behalf as she was unable to attend the 2023 annual meeting. Plans to meet with Nancy personally are in the works. Congratulations, Nancy!

calling all
Vendors

Did you know?

Vendor members of VAGARA are eligible for **FREE** advertising in the Newsletter!
Paid vendor members may contact the Newsletter Editor for more details.

2023 Member of the Year



Left to right: Margie Tacci, Jessie Graham, Anita Vannucci, and Glenn Smith

At the conference in October, VAGARA recognized the 2023 Outstanding Member of the Year, Anita Vannucci, from the University of Virginia.

Anita has been in the business of managing records for sixteen years. She began her career as a records management analyst at the Library of Virginia and concluded her time there as the Records Analysis Services Coordinator.

Anita relocated to Atlanta where she sojourned a season with the city's housing office and was then hired by Emory University to bring new life to its records management program. She has been in her current position at the University of Virginia for four years, and along the way she earned the designation of Certified Records Analyst from the Institute of Certified Records Managers.

Having rejoined VAGARA on her return to the Commonwealth, she has served as our Association's webmaster since July 2021. In that time, she has spearheaded the implementation of very effective updates that have served our members well, including our web presence, Google storage and communications package, and the conference registration and check-in process.

Anita was nominated by Glenn Smith Records Management Analyst, LVA and Past President, VAGARA and Jessie Graham, Electronic Records Manager, UVA and President, VAGARA. Congratulations Anita and thank you for your contributions to VAGARA and records management in Virginia!

2022 Member of the Year

The 2022 Outstanding Member of the Year, Robert "Bob" Kolstee, was unable to attend last year's conference to receive his award in person, so his plaque was accepted by colleagues on his behalf. Bob was in attendance this year, and the board worked to recreate the photo opportunity to memorialize his acceptance of the award. Congratulations to Bob!



Left to right: Mina Barberis, Bob Kolstee, Margie Tacci, and Jessie Graham

Systematically Out of Control

The definition of records management is aptly, almost beautifully, defined in the Virginia Records Management Manual. Every stanza concisely, inherently, and logically builds its meaning. What does it do? It provides systematic control. When does it do this? Throughout its lifecycle. And why? To ensure efficiency and economy in their creation, use, handling, control, maintenance, and disposition. Beautiful—I really mean it. But, as all information professionals know, it's too beautiful to be true. Often times records management to our customers could be described in three ways: (1) it's solely about capture and indexing—what's a lifecycle?; (2) it's an afterthought—merely housekeeping; or (3) they just generally don't think of it at all until the “stuff” hits the fan or they've made such a mess of things they don't what to do. None of this seems to fit the well-oiled machine defined in our definition. It seems that our definition may be more of an ideal.



But let's not to lose heart! The reason the definition is so beautiful is because it is an ideal. It is something we can continually aspire for ... to achieve a state of records management. So how do we get our organizations to aspire? Paths vary, but the foundational pillars are consistent. The first pillar is records management policy. It's the authority upon which our authority rests and outlines how records management should (must) be addressed. That said, just like a user manual won't fix your broken lawn mower, even the best and most informed policy won't fix your records management program. The success of the policy relies on our second pillar, policy implementation. This is ultimately a project to implement a program. Our third pillar is training, our customers must know their basic records obligations and expectations. The final fourth pillar, and tied directly to the previous three, is records management needs to be addressed at all points of the lifecycle of our electronic systems and applications (from procurement, to design, implementation, maintenance, and ultimately decommissioning). It's not just about “baking it in.” Systems evolve over time and with that evolution so do its records management requirements.

What luck have you had creating records management policies? What are some successes and failures for implementation? What tips or needs do you have for records management training? What are the barriers you face to getting records management addressed in electronic systems an application. Come join the discussion on the [VAGARA discussion board](#).

Matt Logie, CRM
VAGARA Historian

Would you like to submit an article for the VAGARA newsletter?
Email announcements@vagara.org for consideration!



ANNOUNCEMENT CORNER

Welcome New Members!

VAGARA welcomes those that have become members since our last newsletter. We are thrilled to have you and cannot wait to get to know you. Should you need any assistance, please feel free to contact any VAGARA member.

Amy Babines, Virginia Beach City Public Schools
 Joanna Balderson, Northern Neck Soil & Water Conservation District
 Melissa Bentley, Rockingham County Public Schools
 Camisha Brown, Dinwiddie County
 Shilton Butts, County of Sussex
 Kathy Clarke, Northern Neck Soil & Water Conservation District
 Kimberly Clingenpeel, City of Salem Commonwealth's Attorney Office
 Brenda Crawford, Pulaski County Public Schools
 Krystal Davis, Virginia Department of Health
 Brenda Dunn, Bristol Public Library
 Megan Evjen, Mathews County Administration Offices
 Tabia Gaston-Rowe, Norfolk State University
 Mike George, Fredericksburg City Public Schools
 Rachel Hartenbach, 9th Judicial Circuit Court
 Trudy Hickman, Northampton County Sheriff's Office
 Mark Hinman, Stafford County Government
 Merari Hollingsworth, King George Sheriff's Office
 Trisha Lindsey, Department of Housing & Community Development
 Patrice Morgan, Library of Virginia
 Paul Nash, Isle of Wight County Sheriff's Office
 April Neach, Herndon Police Department
 Will Nixon, Jamestown - Yorktown Foundation
 Tiffany Payne, Herndon Police Department
 Patricia Perkins, Spotsylvania County Department of Social Services
 Kenneth Pritchett, Central State Hospital
 Lisa Ramey, Fauquier County Commonwealth's Attorney Office
 Tamara Remhof, Germanna Community College
 Valerie Scott, Virginia Department of Transportation
 Amanda Simmons, Ashland Police Department
 Lacey Smith, Highland County Department of Social Services
 Candi Stewart, Rappahannock Regional Criminal Justice Academy
 Shana Sykes, Chesterfield County Police
 Jennifer Test, York County School Division
 Joan Townsend, City of Chesapeake
 Larry Trotter, Portsmouth Department of Social Services
 Kelly Tsengas, Supreme Court of Virginia
 Deborah Whitley, Fauquier County Water & Sanitation Authority



Welcome new and returning
Vendor Members:

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VAGARA Trivia

The first to respond with the correct answer(s) wins a gift card!

Send responses to:
announcements@vagara.org

Question:

John Mancini mentioned two books during his conference keynote presentation.

What were the titles?

Thank you to our Vendor Members!



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