Spring Conference 2014

By Lorie Newton, CPPO, CPPB
Conference Committee Chair

I would like to thank the Conference Advisory Committee for their efforts in making the Spring Conference a huge success. The conference, held in Fairfax, Virginia at the George Mason Inn and Conference Center, had 132 registered attendees. A big thank you also to our event sponsors Daly Computers, U.S. Communities, Virginia Business Systems, SHI, Eastern Data, Siemens Industry, and Casper Colosimo & Son, Inc.

The theme of the conference, “What’s Your PQ?” was observed in each session. Josh Makely of Loudoun Water Authority did an awesome job introducing the theme by kicking off the conference at the opening session. Participants were energized to use this conference as an opportunity to grow their procurement quotient.

The vendor expo was packed, exceeding expectations of the originally-planned space! Kudos to Amy Bevins for her hard work in moving booths around, identifying additional spaces, and assuring great exposure for each participating vendor. Each of these vendors plays a critical role in the overall success of the conference. Without their support and sponsorship, the VAGP could not provide the quality speakers and educational opportunities at our conferences. If you have the opportunity to utilize one of these vendors, please be sure to offer them your appreciation.

Congratulations to the VAGP Spring Conference award recipients who include Bill Lindsey, CPPO, C.P.M., recipient of the Manager of the Year Award; Amy Murphy, CPPB, VCO, the recipient of the Buyer of the Year Award; and Kathy Elgin, CPPO, CPPB, recipient of the Distinguished Services Award. You are amazing at what you do!

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From the Desk of the President

By Jan Giffin, CPPO, CPPB, VCO

We’ve had a busy year so far for 2014! Governor Terence R. McAuliffe officially recognized March 2014 as Governmental Purchasing Month in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Many entities held events for Purchasing Month in March (see coverage on page 8). How exciting it is to be a part of this profession.

The 2014 Spring Conference and Vendor Expo in Fairfax, Virginia was a HUGE success! I want to express my thanks to Lorie Newton and the Conference Advisory Committee along with all the conference volunteers. Thanks to their hard work and efforts VAGP was able to provide an exciting event for the membership. Another big thanks also goes out to the great speakers who shared their time and talents, our vendor partners, and all the conference attendees—all of whom contributed to a successful event. It was great to meet new members and see so many familiar faces in attendance at the conference. Congratulations to all our scholarship recipients and award winners!

In April, Members of the Board met in Wakefield for a strategic planning session. Stephanie Suter, President-Elect, did an excellent job of planning and leading this meeting. This strategic planning is important for VAGP’s continued growth. Instead of focusing on a SWOT analysis, we used a SOAR analysis. While SWOT focuses on Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, the SOAR analysis focuses on Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results. Stephanie provided the Board with helpful information prior to the strategic planning sessions to get us all focused on the SOAR approach. During the discussions we focused on VAGP’s mission, vision, values and goals. There were many good discussions that ensued and great ideas that resulted. Stephanie will be working to pull all the input together and compile these ideas into the Strategic Plan document.

There are many events still to come! Plan to attend the Reverse Vendor Trade Show and Fall Symposium later this year. Also take advantage of the many NIGP seminars and VAGP Low-Fee seminars that are currently available.

In the March 2014 edition of the News & Views, there was a reminder that the UPPCC recertification requirements changed January 1, 2014. If your certification is coming up for renewal in the next year, you may want to get started reviewing the changes now to ensure you have enough points to meet the requirements or at least have enough time to see what else you can do to earn points toward recertification.

As always, a thank you goes out to the Board Members, committee members, volunteers, the membership, and vendor partners for all you do to support our profession and this association. Your involvement and support is greatly appreciated!

(Spring Conference, continued from page 1...)

The Conference Advisory Committee is hard at work visiting sites for the Fall Symposium and the Reverse Trade Show (tentatively scheduled for late September and early October). If you are interested in working at any upcoming event or would like to join the Conference Advisory Committee, please send me an email at newtonl@chesterfield.gov. Take an opportunity to reevaluate your PQ and what you can do to grow the organization by volunteering!
What’s Your PQ?

By Joshua A. Makely
Loudoun Water

Earlier this year when I was asked to volunteer on the Conference Advisory Committee to assist with planning VAGP’s 2014 Spring Conference, I did not anticipate the amazing opportunity that would develop from my involvement with this event. When the committee was asked for ideas regarding a theme for the conference, I shared a concept that I had originally conceived two years ago, when I first entered the procurement profession. A week later the theme was approved, and I was asked to present it during the opening session at the conference. While I had not fully developed the idea, I knew the message that I wanted to communicate. So in the weeks leading up the conference, I put into words the emotions that I feel when I reflect on the procurement profession.

Given that I would be one of the first speakers at the conference, I knew it was critical that I really connected with the audience in order to explain the concept and simultaneously build enthusiasm for the days ahead. I felt fairly confident that my theme would help me accomplish both. The theme was called, “What’s your PQ?” I intentionally made this slogan in the form of a question, because it gets people’s attention as they start trying to guess what the phrase “PQ” means. Of course, several people correctly deduced that it stands for “Procurement Quotient,” but the concept doesn’t stop there. One must then ask themselves what this question means and how PQ can be measured.

Rather than giving the explanation up front, I started by asking the audience a rhetorical question. What does it mean to be a public servant in the procurement profession? As an industry, procurement professionals make significant contributions to the operations of their agencies nationwide. We provide valuable services to our clients on a continual basis, while faithfully serving our constituents. Our jobs demand that we be quick learners, diligent listeners, competent speakers, good teachers, strong leaders, and hard workers. We approach our work with a sense of flexibility and determination knowing that each day brings with it new and different challenges that must be faced with the skills and knowledge acquired in our profession. Despite no two days being exactly the same, there is much to gain from this diversity, as with each new achievement we grow in our profession.

We’ve all heard the expression “Jack-of-all-trades, master of none.” Well, procurement is a little like mastering the Jack-of-all-trades bit. Through the combined efforts of our respective teams we are involved in some way with all aspects of our organizations, whether it’s meeting our client’s needs, planning for the future, or innovating with the ever-changing times. Over the years it becomes natural to expect the unexpected, not knowing when we may be required to pitch in and finish something last minute, or hit the ground running with a priority item to meet someone else’s deadline. We know what it’s like to have multiple projects going simultaneously, and still find the strength and time to take on more work, always stretching to serve others. In work environments that are so often filled with urgency, we somehow manage to provide an astounding amount of support to one another.

Early on in my time with Loudoun Water, I noticed the peer support shared among the VAGP community and saw this personified in my colleagues in the office, as well. Being new to public procurement, it was very reassuring to know that my teammates wanted me to succeed and were willing to take time to make sure I understood processes. I could have been met with a “sink or swim” mentality in my new position, but instead my office demonstrated a caring attitude that was most welcoming. Later that year, when I attended my first NIGP 3-Day Course, this sense of professional camaraderie was further emphasized by the instructor simply stating, “You [the class] are your best resource,” meaning that we should reach out to our peers for their insight on matters when we have questions. And that’s when it really started to make the impression on me that this was not an ordinary profession.

Whether it’s by responding to a VAGP ListServe research inquiry, networking at educational courses, or participating in conferences. As procurement professionals we share our knowledge with one another and build each other up in ways not common to the modern business world. It is truly amazing to see the responses people give to research requests from peers, and that’s what we can do with the little time we have on a busy day. Imagine what the response rate would be if we had more time to devote to our peers. It’s this sense of caring for one another as professionals that sets our industry apart from many others in the public sector.

(continued on page 4...)
Like the conference audience back in March, I bet you’re still wondering, “What’s your PQ?” What’s that all about? The answer is—it’s all of these things. Your Procurement Quotient is a collective investment in yourself, your customers, and your peers.

It starts with the individual. How much you put into yourself by learning every day at work, participating in training through VAGP, and other opportunities, serves as an investment in you. As members of VAGP we are so fortunate to have so many training opportunities hosted within our home state. Other, smaller chapters are not able to hold as many of the different NIGP courses. Think of all the training opportunities offered during a twelve month period in Virginia that members can attend, and then ask yourself, “am I taking advantage of these opportunities?” By investing in yourself you are increasing the value you bring to both your customers and your peers, and by extension your organization.

The second investment is in your customers. How much dedication are you showing to your customers? Can you be doing more for them? Are you committed enough to them? Maybe you’re looking for ways to improve your relationship with internal customers. Try getting involved with their department. Ask to attend their staff meetings to be a part of their procurement discussions. In procurement, we sometimes have to think outside the box. It’s the same when it comes to investing in your customers; don’t think you’re limited to just procurement related opportunities. Maybe one of your internal customers is hosting a community outreach event; volunteer to help them with it. Maybe they have an annual benefit for their department; swing by to show your support. These acts may seem insignificant at the time, but your potential return on investment will show you the true impact they make.

Actions speak louder than words. And while words are things we encounter in abundance in our jobs, deeds are sometimes more effective teaching methods. Investing in your customers can demonstrate how you really care about their needs, and goes a long way towards building stronger working relationships.

The third area of investment is in your peers. Ask yourself, “What am I doing for my peers in the industry?” Can VAGP count on you to be involved? Are you giving back in some way? Are you willing to step up and take on a larger role in VAGP? I could not have planned that I would be as involved as I was with this year’s Spring Conference, but the committee members and I were willing to give of our time, because we recognize the value our organization offers all of us throughout the year. And when you look at it that way, it’s plain to see there are plenty of reasons and opportunities to be involved. Earlier I mentioned the List Serve. I am sure we all know that a lot of communication goes on there, and each of us cannot respond to every request for information. But I hope we don’t underestimate the value this tool has to offer. You might be thinking, “What are you talking about, it’s just an email exchange?” Let me explain why I think there is more to it than that.

Two and a half years ago I was a senior marketing major at James Madison University. December graduation was fast approaching and I had no job offers in hand. While applying for full time jobs was an everyday event that took as much time as an additional three credit class, the competition was steep. I simply persevered and continued to apply for marketing and buying positions in the private retail sector; never really considering public procurement. Well, graduation came and not having secured full time employment, I went back to my temporary position with Fairfax County to fill in the time between graduation and the start of my career. One day a List Serve announcement went out for an entry-level buyer position with Loudoun Water. My sister, being a VAGP member herself, forwarded the email on to me. Fast-forward two years: I’ve been with Loudoun Water since May 2012, and I can honestly say it’s highly unlikely that I would be sharing this idea with you if not for the VAGP List Serve. This tool is much more than a means of communication and knowledge sharing. It’s an opportunity to tap into the individual networks of your peers to reach greater audiences and achieve even greater results.

Your PQ is your probability factor for success. And while success is not something readily associated with precise measurements, it can be linked to these areas through a self-assessment that I will be developing over the coming months in the hope that we may be able to track success in a model easily followed by individuals who wish to advance their procurement career. The point is this: if you make the right investments your PQ will increase, which attributes to higher rates of success. That’s what PQ is all about. If any of you have your buttons from the conference, I hope you will wear them with pride, tell others about PQ and set a personal goal to be more and do more for yourself, your customers, and your peers in the future.
Spring Conference 2014

(Above) VAGP President Jan Giffin (left) and Amy Bevins (right) officially open the Vendor Expo.

(Below) Eastern Data awards Alan Witt with a huge door prize!

(Above) VAGP members socialize in the hospitality room.

(Below) Attendees enjoy dinner.

(Above) Grainger at the Vendor Expo.

(Below) Al Elias kicks back in the Hospitality Room.

(Above) PR Committee Members Ginger Gordon (left) and Mary Pennington (right) promote VAGP’s social media.

(Below) Joshua Makely opens the conference with, “What’s your PQ?”

(Above) Bright Smiles at the Conference!

(Below) Clarence Wilson (DPS) enjoys some sweet snacks!

(Above) Jeff Moyer (left) and Bob Gleason, Director, DPS (right).

(Below) Sandra Gill, Director, Policy Consulting and Review, DPS.
A silent charity auction was held during the 2014 Spring Conference at The Mason Inn Conference Center and Hotel in Fairfax. The auction was a huge success! VAGP members, friends and suppliers donated a total of 35 items. The total amount raised was $1,841.00, with proceeds being donated to Alternative House, a refuge for abused and homeless children. Alternative House has a four-star rating (the highest awarded) from Charity Navigator, an independent nonprofit evaluation organization. Alternative House’s vision is of a community in which all young people are safe, live in a nurturing environment and have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Founded in 1972, Alternative House transforms the lives of children and youth helping them stay safe, make positive decisions, achieve educational success, and overcome personal crises. More than half of the resources they need to help young people come directly from the community.

There is a lot of creative talent among VAGP members: handmade items, gift baskets, supplier gift certificates and jewelry up for bid were all top notch! The most expensive item was a rolling toolbox donated by Carquest and auctioned for $200. Everyone in attendance was more than gracious, supportive, enthusiastic and had a lot of fun with the bidding. Some extra donations were also received from conference participants showing the generosity of the VAGP family. The hand-made gift baskets (brain-child of Lorie Newton) were especially popular as municipalities came together, got everyone involved and delivered relevant, unique and beautiful baskets. The VAGP membership really came through and showed the true spirit of Virginians and procurement professionals throughout the Commonwealth. Thank you!

SAVE THE DATE

VAGP and CAPA will be hosting the REVERSE TRADE SHOW this year on October 27, 2014 at the Doubletree Hotel, Midlothian Turnpike, Richmond, VA (formerly the Holiday Inn Koger Center).

Although a date has not been set for the FALL SYMPOSIUM, plans are under way for this event to be held in downtown Richmond. Stay tuned for more details!
Benefits of Pre-Sort

By Richard Budaji, VAGP Protégé
Virginia Retirement System

We are all business professionals and our job is to obtain goods and services in the most efficient and cost saving way that benefits our particular agency.

I have been in the procurement world for over 2 years now, and I must say what a great opportunity it is to serve in the business that we are all in.

I have found a way to save money on mailing charges by asking the simple question: “Do we really need to pay full postage for everything that leaves the Virginia Retirement System (VRS)?” The answer was no.

I looked into getting a pre-sort service to pick up our mail at a reduced rate, but we had to have more than 1,000 pieces of mail per day, and our volumes at VRS alone did not meet this threshold. However, in looking around the City of Richmond at other government agencies and universities, we identified Virginia Commonwealth University as having over 1,000 pieces of mail per day. So, once the VRS mailroom support came under the VCU state contract, we were able to pool our volumes to share in the state pre-sort contract and get discounted postal rates for the VRS.

For FY2013, VRS had a total volume of 300,000 pieces of first class mail. By using pre-sort services we were able to save nearly $.11 an item in postage costs, for a total overall savings of $31,000.

In order to use presorted mail, you must meet the following minimums for each type of mail:
- First-class Mail: 1000 pieces
- Standard Mail: 200 pieces or 50 pounds
- Parcel Select: 50 pieces
- Bound Printed Mail: 300 pieces
- Library Mail: 300 pieces
- Media Mail: 300 pieces

I suggest you all look around your municipalities and identify other organizations that you can partner with to obtain sufficient volumes on a combined basis that will allow all involved to share in the savings. Enjoy!

Thank You, VAGP

By Kathy S. Elgin, CPPO, CPPB
Town of Leesburg

VAGP Board of Directors and fellow members, I am so very honored and proud of the Distinguished Service Award that was bestowed on me at the 2014 VAGP Spring Conference.

While I did not and could not have done this alone, neither can I begin to list the names of the many individuals who have helped me along the way, as I am sure I would miss a few. So many VAGP professionals have made an impact on my life and have in some way helped me become who I am.

The Loudoun County Sanitation Authority (now Loudoun Water) and the Town of Leesburg administrations and staff however, deserve special mention. My direct supervisors and the administrations of these entities truly value the work you and I do every day. They believed in me and allowed me to invest countless work hours on my continual professional development and my participation in NVCPC, MWCOG, VAGP and NIGP. These folks value and support the networks of procurement professionals with whom I associate myself.

As I apply for recertification of my CPPB and CPPO for the fourth and fifth time, respectively, I am reminded of the sacrifices I have made to continually develop professionally. Over the years, my customer satisfaction surveys have always netted a B+ or better. And now, a DSA recognition from my peers, OMG! My PQ has hit a high! Investment in Self: YES; Community: YES; Peers: YES!

This VAGP Distinguished Service Award is undoubtedly the highlight of my career! My sincere thanks.
Many VAGP members and their colleagues celebrated this past March in honor of Governmental Purchasing Month. Read how several of these members and their offices commemorated this event and get great ideas for your own office for next year!

LOUDOUN WATER
The Loudoun Water Procurement Department celebrated National Purchasing Month on March 31. To kickoff the celebration, the staff invited all internal clients to complete a Procurement Word Search. By submitting their completed puzzle, their names were entered for drawings and great prizes announced during the hour long event. Attendees tested their knowledge of Public Procurement by spinning the game wheel and answering questions related to Principles and Practices of Public Procurement, NIGP Course Trivia, and membership benefits with VAGP. Several of Loudoun Water’s existing contractors proudly supported the event and generously donated prizes! The Procurement made individual prize labels to highlight the features and benefits of the partnership with those contractors, in recognition of their kindness. The staff takes pride in serving their clients and valued the time spent together! The event was well accepted by everyone—after all, who doesn’t like cupcakes and cookies?

Amy E. Bevins, CPPB

CITY OF HARRISONBURG
The Purchasing Office & Accounts Payable Clerks in the City of Harrisonburg hosted our second annual Supply Swap on March 27 in honor of Purchasing Month. The event was advertised by flyers, a story posted in the monthly newsletter, and discussed also at departmental staff meetings. Employees were asked to do some “spring cleaning” and give their unwanted items or supplies to their AP Clerk, who in turn brings them to the Swap. We have over seven boxes of items left over, ready to list as surplus (that was AFTER folks were helping themselves to items during the swap). Also, our City Council gave recognition of Purchasing Month through a special proclamation. We were excited and honored that Council supports our field!

Nicole Robertson, MPA

DGS-VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
The Virginia Dept. of Social Services (VDSS) has recognized Governmental Purchasing Month with a Procurement Quiz for the last three years. An announcement, including the Quiz and the Governor’s Proclamation, is placed on VDSS’ intranet, and the Quiz is opened up to all VDSS and all local DSS staff. Participation is excellent, and feedback has included remarks such as, “Even though I’m not in Purchasing, and I know I won’t win, I wanted to try my hand at the Quiz. Please let me know how I did;” “This is fun, thanks for doing this;” and, “I learn a lot from taking these quizzes and then comparing answers once they’re made available.” After the response deadline, another announcement is posted with information about the winner and with the answers to the Quiz. The winner receives a prize, which has included a gift basket or gift cards (procurement staff chips in to pay for the prizes). Not only does the contest promote Governmental Purchasing Month, it also creates interaction, camaraderie, and good-natured competition!

Sharon S. Vaughan, CPPB, VCO

CHESTERFIELD COUNTY
As procurement professionals, we all understand the significance of Governmental Purchasing Month and the goal of this recognition, which is to raise awareness and support of purchasing’s role in procuring goods and services on behalf of public entities across the nation. But do the organizational leadership, department heads and our end users understand the importance of this recognition? That is the question that the Chesterfield County Purchasing Department began to ask as another Purchasing Month quickly approached. The Purchasing Department organized a creative approach that would raise awareness and support of Purchasing’s role in procuring goods and services on behalf of the County and Schools. The Purchasing Month Premiere event was set

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and spent many hours on conference calls developing the VAGP position for each issue. Recognizing the important role VAGP can play in the study group outcomes, this was a significant project for the committee. You can view the VAGP position statements on our legislative webpage at www.vagp.org/legislative.html. We will keep you informed of the study group progress. As always, feel free to reach out to any member of the Legislative Committee if you have questions.

LeeAnne Beatty Smith, CPPB, VCA, CUPO

(Purchasing Month, continued from page 7...)

highlight the role that each department has in the success of the procurement process. The feature presentation highlighted the significant role that purchasing plays in County operations. For example, the purchasing department has documented cost savings of $63 million from 2009 to present. In 2013, the Purchasing Department awarded 2,180 purchase orders for a total of $154,308,727. Positive feedback was received from those in attendance, including County leadership. We encourage other municipalities to come up with an out-of-the-box approach to celebrating Purchasing Month in the future.

Stephanie Brown, MBA

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

Often our large department is so busy that we rarely get the time to just sit down and catch up with one another on a more personal level. To commemorate March as Purchasing Month, our director ordered a catered lunch that was brought in to our department complete with salad, pork barbeque, green beans, macaroni and cheese, and of course, delicious desserts! Our department has hired five additional full time staff in recent months, so this lunch was timely as it gave the whole staff an opportunity to get to know one another in an informal manner. It was so nice that everyone came together and got to enjoy each other’s company without having to pause to approve a purchase order! We got to hear a few funny personal stories, as well! No one rushed, and that small period of time together recharged our batteries.

LeeAnne Beatty Smith, CPPB, VCA, CUPO
By Bill Lindsey, CPPO, C.P.M
1st Past President and NIGP Representative

As I am writing this article for our newsletter, I'm also trying to rapidly read all of the briefing materials that NIGP has sent me in preparation for our Spring Board of Directors meeting in Philadelphia during the first week of May.

First and foremost on the agenda is our continuing discussions regarding the implementation of the Institute’s new governance structure. By the time you read this, a very important step will have been accomplished through the Board’s vetting of the various candidates that have applied for the new Talent Council. From this process, the Board will be ready to make its final decisions and appointments at its June teleconference.

Another important topic of discussion slated for the Spring meeting is how to integrate the highly successful Chapter Relations Structure into the new governance model. Although the governance model is not based on the previous regional framework, the importance of the communication derived from the Chapter Relations programs continues to be very desirable. Presently a hybrid of the past Chapter Relations structure identified as the new Chapter Relations Ambassador Program is being discussed for implementation considerations. It is anticipated that an action for this program would occur in July 2015.

The Spring meeting also has two other very important pieces of business to discuss and consider. The initial discussions will center on the various bylaw and board policy manual revisions needed to fully implement the new governance model by July 2015. Additionally, to ensure the financial viability of the Institute, the FY 2015 budget hearings will be conducted that will lead to final agreements and voting by the Board. Inclusive of the ever important discussion of future fee structures, this year’s budget discussion will also include a significant exchange regarding the Institute’s capital budget. Staff is currently in negotiations for the sale of NIGP’s current facility and will be looking at future opportunities for office space. Current projections point to a solid financial success for this initiative.

Last, but not least, is the NIGP Forum that is scheduled for August 23-27, 2014 in Philadelphia. The NIGP Forum has been identified as the largest North American conference exclusively for the public procurement profession, and it continues to grow each year. The program offers educational opportunities that are second to none and capitalizes on the networking of colleagues and numerous suppliers. At present, over 200 businesses have signed up for the products exposition, and if the program is anything like the previous ones, this will sell out with a far greater number.

The NIGP Forum is provided exclusively for public procurement professionals where they can avail themselves to over 60 educational workshops and networking opportunities. If you have not already registered to attend this premier event, I strongly urge you not to delay. Go to www.nigp.org and click on the NIGP Forum. NIGP wants you to “Be a Procurement Champ!”

If you have any questions about NIGP or if I may be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at blindsey@gloucesterva.info.
TCPN saves municipalities time and money.

Overseeing services and infrastructure requires a lot of effort and planning. The Cooperative Purchasing Network (TCPN) helps simplify your steps and reduce your costs. TCPN’s contracts leverage the purchasing power of over 37,000 actively engaged government entities. All contracts are competitively bid and awarded by a single entity – Region 4 Education Service Center. TCPN monitors contracts through third-party audits and regular reviews to ensure vendor accountability. You can rely on TCPN’s lead agency’s ISO certified processes, 100+ combined years of government purchasing experience and 50+ combined years of auditing experience – we know what it takes to keep a community running.

Keep your service responses on time and on budget. Go to www.tcpn.org and sign up today.
Being a VAGP Member Also Means Family

By Ginger Gordon, CPPB
Public Relations Chair

You may have asked yourself, what does it mean to be a VAGP member? You have also heard from the VAGP Board many times, listing the benefits of being a member. I would like to share a story with you that will show another benefit of being a VAGP Member, one that is far more personal and has a much more profound meaning than any professional benefit.

Many of you may already know or have heard that one of our members, Mary Pennington, had her house catch fire on April 9, 2014. Fortunately, Mary and her youngest son, Chad, weren’t at home when this happened. Mary also has a 25-year old son, Todd, who lives in Radford, Virginia. Unfortunately, the home was completely destroyed. Yes, most of their day-to-day necessities can be replaced; however, they lost everything in the fire, including special mementos that Mary will never be able to replace.

As soon as the VAGP Board heard of this tragedy they took action and set up a fundraising account on behalf of Mary and Chad. Two of the VAGP Board Members volunteered to be contacts for members to reach out to with any questions. Once the email broadcast was sent, there was an overwhelming outreach from the VAGP members that was astonishing to witness. She has been receiving contributions from people that she has never met before. Some of the emails I have received have brought tears to my eyes, from all the concern, generosity, caring, and support. Right now, Mary and Chad are doing well, under the circumstances. They are in temporary housing and are slowly adjusting.

Mary has worked for Fairfax Water for over 25 years and she has been a VAGP member since 2002. Melanie Tillotson, CPPB, a colleague and close friend said, “Our Fairfax Water family has overwhelmed the Procurement Department with the contributions that have been made. We sit in awe of the outpouring of love being sent Mary’s way. I know Mary will reach out once she can wrap her head around this situation. In the meantime, I cannot say thank you enough for presenting the situation to the Board and for setting up the website. I know that every single dollar, dish, hug, card, and prayer will be deeply appreciated.”

If you are interested in making a monetary donation, please go to https://rally.org/f/8ftwcvd393x - or, if you would like to send something directly to her office, her information is as follows:

Mary Pennington, CPPB, Fairfax Water, 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA 22031

Please continue to keep Mary and Chad in your thoughts and prayers they do have a long road ahead of them.

The other meaning of being a VAGP Member is “FAMILY”, individuals coming together to help one of their fellows in a time of need.

If you have any questions, please contact me at ggordon@ci.manassas.va.us.
There is no mistaking that we continue to do more with less, become more innovative in our practices, and most importantly pinch pennies. Since training, travel, and professional organization memberships are the first few areas that are reviewed to be cut from the budget and save money, we must be able to substantiate the value received from membership within VAGP. The $35 annual membership fee is the best investment an organization can make. Membership in VAGP provides thousands of opportunities for professional assistance, mentorship, and training. Did you know? Our membership is comprised of over 300 public entities, including state agencies, cities, counties, towns, higher education institutions, authorities/districts, community service boards, hospitals, schools (K-12), other public bodies, and most importantly “lifetime members” who are retired but still actively participating in VAGP.

NETWORKING
VAGP membership offers networking not only with our members but with members of CAPA (Capital Area Purchasing Association), VACo (Virginia Association of Counties), VML (Virginia Municipal League), VASCUPP (Virginia Association of State College & University Purchasing Professionals), DGS/DPS (Department of General Services/Division of Purchases and Supply), and our organization has an NIGP Region IV Representative and a Chapter Relations Representative that actively participate in NIGP communications and events. As you see, networking within our association can provide many additional resources and access to so many other public partnerships, and members receive all this and more!

EDUCATION
Our Education Committee sponsors NIGP courses to assist members in continuing procurement education promote and support certification. NIGP courses are offered numerous times per year and VAGP attempts to hold the classes in various regions of the Commonwealth in order to maximize attendance by minimizing travel and therefore offering savings to members. If there are any classes you are interested in attending but find that they are offered mostly out of state, please feel free to contact our Education Committee Chair, Cindy Smith, to discuss how to get the class here in Virginia and if possible at your organization.

Our Professional Development Committee offers affordable educational courses, called Low-Fee Seminars. They are developed by members and are usually offered when a member asks to host a class at their organization.

SCHOLARSHIPS
Enhancing your education normally means “out of pocket expenses”—unless you have a scholarship! Our members are eligible for two different scholarships: UPPCC Certification and the J. Brad Oakley Scholarship. VAGP also offers a Management Level Scholarship to individuals who have made a positive impact on the organization and in our profession and who may benefit by continued education. VAGP sends out annual notifications when accepting applications for scholarships; make sure you do not miss out on the opportunity to save money and enhance your profession at the same time.

CONFERENCES
VAGP hosts a Spring Conference and Fall Symposium annually. Conference locations are selected by an entity or group of entities agreeing to host. VAGP tries to diversify conference locations in order to maximize the number of members who will be able to attend. Our conferences are our largest events and need members to plan, research, negotiate, and organize. Conference planning is open to all members and we gladly take volunteers, suggestions for conference sites, and comments for future classes and presenters.

NEWS & VIEWS
If you are reading this article you are somewhat familiar with our quarterly newsletter. This publication is the result of the hard work of our Public Relations Committee. The purpose of the News & Views is to keep you, our member, abreast of current procurement trends, what’s going on in the legislative world, member opportunities, and generally keep you informed of what’s happening in the association.

I urge you, when looking at your budget, to consider the value you receive from your VAGP membership. Your Board of Directors works hard to offer top services. As the 2014 Membership Chair, if at any time you want to talk about the value of your membership, my email, my telephone, and I are all open for your input! Contact me at Sharita.Bryant@dgs.virginia.gov or 804-786-3897. Happy Summer!
Upcoming 2014 Educational Offerings

NIGP SEMINARS

NIGP seminars are taught by NIGP approved instructors and can assist those aspiring to achieve their CPPB and/or CPPO certifications. These are the standard training courses for entry-level to experienced purchasing professionals. Please visit www.VAGP.org for a list of all 2014 courses offered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEMINAR TITLE</th>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contract Administration</td>
<td>Jun. 4-6</td>
<td>Manassas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effective Management of Construction Contracts</td>
<td>Jun. 12-13</td>
<td>Virginia Beach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Aspects of Public Procurement</td>
<td>Jul. 16-18</td>
<td>Falls Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contract Administration</td>
<td>Jul. 21-23</td>
<td>Henrico</td>
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<td>Ethics: A Survival Kit for Public Procurement</td>
<td>Sep. 15</td>
<td>Christiansburg</td>
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<td>Strategic Procurement Planning</td>
<td>Sep. 17-19</td>
<td>Arlington</td>
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<td>Performance Based Request for Proposals</td>
<td>Sep. 23-24</td>
<td>Richmond</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPPB PREP</td>
<td>Oct. 6-7</td>
<td>Falls Church</td>
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<td>CPPO PREP</td>
<td>Oct. 8-9</td>
<td>Falls Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effective Contract Writing</td>
<td>Oct. 23-24</td>
<td>Arlington</td>
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LOW FEE SEMINARS

Low-fee seminars are designed to offer VAGP members continuing education through courses designed to meet their particular needs. These courses are taught by instructors familiar with both the subject and Virginia Procurement Law. These courses can provide CPPO, CPPB and VCO recertification points (earn one point for a full day—eight hours of instruction time).

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<tr>
<th>SEMINAR TITLE</th>
<th>DATES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Information Technology Procurements</td>
<td>Jul. 18</td>
<td>Chesapeake</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Specifications</td>
<td>Aug. 11</td>
<td>Manassas</td>
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From the President-Elect

By Stephanie Suter, CPPO, CPPB
President-Elect

First, I would like to thank all of you who responded to the Member Survey back in March. You all provided some great feedback, and the results are invaluable to the Board as we look for ways to enhance services and programs and work to increase the value of membership for every member. All responses and comments are very much appreciated.

In April, the Board met at the Airfield 4H Conference Center in Wakefield for a day and a half Strategic Planning Retreat. During the retreat, the Board reviewed VAGP’s Mission, Vision, and Values Statements, conducted a SOAR analysis (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and measurable Results), discussed the results of the member survey, established goals for the next three years, and brainstormed action items and new initiatives for 2015 to begin working to achieve those goals. This was an excellent opportunity to consider what we are currently doing, what we should be doing, and where we can improve. A team-building activity, led by our 4H educator, Mike, was a welcome break as we enjoyed the beautiful day and worked to solve problems together through multiple exercises. For those who stayed overnight, many experienced grilling pizzas and roasting s’mores for the first time.

The 2015-2017 Strategic Plan and 2015 Action Plan will be finalized during the Board’s June teleconference. Both plans will be posted and available on the VAGP website soon after. I hope you all will take some time to review these plans and offer input and ideas for how VAGP can continue to grow and enhance its value to the membership. The Action Plan is a living document, so if you have any suggestions or recommendations, no need to wait for a survey, please contact myself or any other member of the Board. I look forward to hearing from you!

Pro D and...Disney!

By Gregory Scearce, CPPB, VCO
Professional Development Committee Chair

I am very pleased with the class offerings that we have completed so far this year, as well as the classes that are currently scheduled. We have successfully held Competitive Sealed Bidding vs Competitive Negotiation in Richmond, and VPPA in Fairfax. We currently have on the schedule:

• Information Technology Procurement in Chesapeake on July 18
• Writing Specifications in Manassas on August 11
• VPPA in Henrico on October 15

I am also working with the town of Herndon to host the Insurance and Bonds class in September, and trying to bring back a very special teacher for an Ethics class this fall that would be offered in Richmond.

As a lot of VAGP members already know, I am a huge Disney fan, so I thought I would start sharing some Disney World trivia occasionally. Trivia #1: Approximately 2,000 people get engaged at Disney World each year! Trivia #2: At the Haunted Mansion ride in Disney World, there are supposedly 999 ghosts.

For more on classes, please visit www.vagp.org/education/lowfee.html. The Professional Development Committee is always looking for sponsors, new instructors and new class ideas. The classes run for either 4 or 8 hours and remember, if you sponsor a class, you get a free seat. I would like to thank everyone for continuing to support the Professional Development Committee.
Where in Virginia?

By Jeff Moyer, CPPB
Public Relations Committee Member

CAN YOU NAME THIS HISTORIC BATTLEFIELD?

This northern Shenandoah Valley battlefield, along the I-81 corridor, was the scene for a climactic battle of the 1864 Shenandoah Valley campaign.

On October 19, 1864, General Jubal A. Early’s confederate forces launched an early morning attack on the union forces of General Phillip Sheridan who had just arrived from Winchester, Virginia to join the Army of the Shenandoah. Confederate General John B. Gordon observed the Yankee position from the nearby Massanutten mountain range and conceived the attack that resulted in this battle.

As of today, the Civil War Trust has saved over 500 acres of this historic area in the face of threatened expansion by a nearby limestone quarry. Due to this threat, this is considered to be among our most threatened historical battlefields.

Think you know Virginia? Visit us on Facebook and be the first person to tell us the name and location of this historic battlefield! The first person to correctly comment on VAGP’s Facebook page underneath this article’s thumbnail wins a VAGP goody!

Send a suggestion and picture of another Virginia landmark to feature in the News & Views to LeeAnne Beatty Smith at smith2lb@jmu.edu.

News & Views

We want your news and views!

This is your Association and your publication—make your voice heard! All VAGP members are encouraged to send articles, press releases and photos. Published articles on purchasing related topics may help members earn recertification points. For eligibility requirements, please verify directly with the certifying agency. Suppliers and contractors are also encouraged to submit purchasing-related articles for publication. Limited opportunities are available and offered at no cost!

Submit your contributions to LeeAnne Beatty Smith at smith2lb@jmu.edu.

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<tr>
<th>Production Schedule</th>
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<th>4th Quarter</th>
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<tr>
<td>Available</td>
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Virginia Association of Governmental Purchasing, Inc.