Helping support the HSTTP ....

From left: Gregg Fields, Doug Morrow, Sandi Morris, Pete Mensinger, Cindy and Emory Rogers, Steve Shapiro, James Anjam, Paula Johnson, Bill Dupler and Brian McGraw, kneeling. (Not pictured: Jeremy Lutrell)

The 2018 Richmond Conference Planning Finance Committee presented the ICC Foundation with a check for $17,487.69 to be used for promoting educational opportunities throughout the United States, particularly those high schools seeking assistance in getting the ICC Technical Training Program started in their building trades, technical training programs and community colleges. The donation was what remained of their funds from the 2018 ICC Annual Conference held in Richmond, Va.

“As you are aware, our building code and life safety officials are a tremendous resource and integral part of establishing and maintaining safe buildings in our communities,” said Pete Mensinger, CBO, co-chair of the 2018 Richmond Conference Finance Committee and immediate past president of the Virginia Building and Code Officials Association. “Recognizing the careers of these highly valued men and women eventually draw to an end, we are supportive of the next generation of young professionals who need financial assistance in beginning their careers in our shared fields of expertise.”

“It is our desire that this donation to the ICC Foundation go primarily to support the educational opportunities for our young people in high schools, technical trade schools and local community colleges,” Mensinger continued. “We trust the ICC Foundation will assist our future public safety leaders in helping to satisfy the financial needs for the next generation of leaders in the U.S.”

“On behalf of the 2018 Richmond Planning Committee made up of Virginia’s four Code Council charter members — the Women in Code Enforcement and Development of Virginia, the Virginia Fire Prevention Association, the Virginia Plumbing and Mechanical Inspectors Association, and the Virginia Building and Code Officials Association — thank you for taking special care of this donation.”
VBCOA Annual Conference and School

Dear VBCOA Member,

We are saddened to report the 2020 Virginia Building and Code Officials Conference has been cancelled due to the COVID 19 concerns. The 2020 Annual Business Meeting will, however, be held virtually on Tuesday, December 15th at 9:00am, we will provide more information as it becomes available.

This meeting pays tribute to that first meeting on December 1929 when a handful of Building Inspectors and other officials worked diligently to form what is now known as the VBCOA. Today, we (VBCOA) are a strong association, with 1,000+ members, dedicated to carrying out the mission set forth by our founders.

Although we are not able to have our 2020 VBCOA Annual Conference, VBCOA will conduct business, though virtual in all respects.

Let us honor those who saw the need to form this great association and remember the time in which they lived. In our last edition of this newsletter we were reminded that VBCOA was formed within weeks of the worst stock market crash in history and what became one of the catalysts of the Great Depression. This is an indicator of the character, drive and determination of VBCOA. Now we are navigating a very challenging times and yet have come together and continue the great work of this Association. Our Association is only as strong as it membership. We are fortunate to be comprised of the most dedicated, resourceful and knowledge filled members thus ensuring our longevity. We will continue to stress the importance of our role in the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of all persons who live, work, or visit the Commonwealth.

Stay safe and we hope to see you all in person soon.

VBCOA Officer Core

A word from our Executive Director—Sandy Harrington

It is hard to believe as I sit here and write this message, enjoying the landscape of a sunny, colorful October morning, that it has been a year since I have seen many of you. This has been a very challenging year for humanity. VBCOA has been forced to cancel in person meetings and other events that have been long planned, due to the pandemic and in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our members. Realizing that our Association has been going strong for over 90 years, this is a good time to reflect and focus on the future. VBCOA members continue to be creative and discover new ways to conduct business and engage with the community and each other. I wish everyone well and hope to be able to see you all in person in 2021.

Sandra S. Harrington
Committee PULSE...

EDUCATION—Christina Jackson
VBCOA is offering training events to our membership in order to help them prepare for their various certification exams. Each training will be held for 4 hours.

A typical class will consist of instruction on how to sign up for an exam as well as how to determine what materials will be needed. The instructors will also provide test taking tips. A times practice exam will be given, 25-30 questions. Once the exam is over the instructors will go over the answers and provide the code section for each answer. The floor will then be open for questions and general discussion.

VBCOA’s Education Committee offered a virtual continuing education class for Home Inspectors: Over the past couple of months Ms. Christina Jackson has been able to put together and deliver a virtual training for home inspectors. The class was provided via ZOOM training August 19, 2020. Ms. Jackson had 28 people sign up for the class. Second Vice president Eutsey would like for all of VBCOA to recognize what a great job Ms. Jackson and entire education committee is doing.

Time and Place Committee: Mike Eutsey, John Broughton
VBCOA Annual Membership Meeting Tuesday, December 15, 2020 (virtual meeting) details to come soon

2021 VBCOA Mid-Year Conference—Madison Hotel, Harrisonburg, VA, March 21-22, 2021

2021 VBCOA Annual School and Conference—The New Virginia Beach Marriott, September 12-14, 2021

PUBLIC INFORMATION—Chair, Tom Coghill

Past President Mensinger and President Moss have encouraged the publication of this Newsletter. We hope to continue this communication into the future. We can only accomplish this with your assistance.

MEMBERSHIP—Chair, Michelle Coward

Greetings to the Members of VBCOA,

I hope this finds everyone and their families doing well, in the midst of COVID-19. I want to first thank each of you for what you are doing within your jurisdiction to continue to ensure the health and safety of the citizens of Virginia and the communities in which you work. This has truly been a year to remember, 2020 will forever be a part of our lives.

As we remain hopeful, resilient and prepare for 2021, I am looking forward to each of you continuing your commitment and partnership with VBCOA. Membership renewal will be opening in November 2020. In order to be considered a member in good standing payment must be received by January 31, 2021. Some jurisdictions may be experiencing budgetary restraints that have alleviated the payment of membership to organizations. It is my hope that if this is the case for your jurisdiction you take the time over the next several months to identify an alternate method of payment.

I look forward to continuing to work with each of you, as we accomplish the purpose of VBCOA.

Remember—“Our Strength is in Our Members”

Michelle Coward, CBMO
A Message From NFPA...

NFPA LiNK™ Digital Reference Tool Launches with NFPA 70, National Electrical Code (NEC)
New Platform Delivers Vital Code Information on Demand

In September, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) launched NFPA LiNK™, a new digital platform, with the four most recent editions of NFPA 70, National Electrical Code® (NEC®). With up-to-date code information and situational context, NFPA LiNK is different from other digital products because it can help professionals and practitioners better understand problems and find solutions in real time while on the job. It is specially designed for those responsible for building, electrical, and life safety, and can easily be accessed via mobile devices, tablets, laptops, or other preferred device.

People around the world have turned to NFPA codes and standards for more than a century to help them perform their work more efficiently and effectively, but in recent years there has been a shift in the way people approach their jobs. Today’s workers do not always find that a physical or static digital version of a codebook is the best answer to solving problems in real time. Work now demands they have the most current, relevant information and resources available at their fingertips so they can resolve challenges quickly and at any given location. To help address these growing needs, NFPA LiNK will become a “living library” for users that offers:

- The ability to work alongside the codes by adding personal notes, assigning colors, and saving to custom collections for quick and easy reference;
- A broader understanding of code requirements through access to expert commentary, visual aids, and helpful resources;
- Collaboration features to share code sections, work across teams, and ensure everyone is knowledgeable of what is required.

NFPA LiNK subscribers will get access to continuous updates, features and functions, and new editions of NFPA codes and standards as they are released. Fire and life safety professionals who rely on the codes in their daily work will find the new NFPA LiNK platform can help seamlessly deliver the right situation-based information whether they’re on the job site, in the office, or anywhere in between. It allows people to collaborate and stay connected easily while in the field, and this means more lives are saved and more property protected from fire, electrical, and other hazards.
Moving to the Virtual Classroom

This year was off to a great start with the Virginia Building Code Academy’s (VBCA) roadshow running smoothly. Instructors and students alike were enjoying the onsite experience - the comforts and amenities of the venues, the food, the camaraderie, the networking. Then COVID-19 struck. And fast. We all watched with dread as the dire warnings continued and soon the pandemic hit North America. It hit hard. As we all know, absolutely no one was immune from the effects of the pandemic. The Virginia Building Code Academy, along with those in the private sector, had to figure out a way to pivot to virtual and we had to figure it out quickly.

Moving from weekly in-person courses to a full-time virtual environment is no easy feat. VBCA staff were faced with a number of challenges. Not all students and instructors were tech savvy, not to mention the different requirements of a virtual audience versus in-person training. Most instructors feed off the face-to-face interaction and standing at the front of the room, they can quickly gauge a student’s level of interest and understanding. During group activities, the instructors can walk around and give reassuring nods or offer helpful insights as needed. Students were most certainly more engaged and emboldened to ask questions. Let’s face it - we’re all encouraged by a instructor’s tap on the shoulder when we get it right.

In addition to this, the VBCA staff had to come up with a plan to effectively translate the very interactive, hands-on course material to online learning. How could we make online classes as engaging as being there in person? In fact, virtual learning would require a higher level of engagement, given that students would now be in their own home or office, with numerous distractions possible. Imagine turning large 3-D plumbing modules and electrical boards into 2-D slides on a computer. A different attention level is required when one is in the comfort of their own home, with numerous distractions possible.

Then there is the technology side. We know very well that technology can make or break a virtual event. Even those who have perfected their virtual offerings can have nail-biting, hair-pulling moments. We are all at the whim of the technology gods. Is there a strong Wi-Fi connection today or will the weather create disruptions in some parts of the state? Are the networking and Ethernet cables secure? Is the bandwidth enough? With instructors, providers, and staff working from home, one bad connection can create a domino effect on the entire virtual event.

The VBCA team considered all this, and more, when moving to the new virtual reality. Before choosing, there was much research done on which platform would best suit our needs and enable us to offer the same level of quality and effectiveness. There was not much room for error. Not only would the VBCA team all have to learn this new technology, but also would then have to train the instructors on how to use it. We would have to develop a new model to account or gauge students’ learning. The schedule would need to change. Class sizes had to be smaller, the days shorter in time. An extra day was needed to allow for the shorter days. Even adult learners have limits on their attention span. Continued on next page...
DHCD Corner continued...

Although we have made it to October, the transition has not been without some bumps and bruises along the way. Mistakes were made. Network outages created headaches. Staff had to improvise on many days. There was always one or two students for whom technology presented challenges.

However, even with all the bumps along the way the instructors breathe a sigh of relief at the end of the first day, and certainly by the end of the course. Inevitably, the instructors express that teaching online was not as difficult as they expected. And when students are as engaged and eager as ever and share those light bulb moments, we are all encouraged.

Though the digital arena will never equal live interaction, there are many unforeseen benefits. More students are able to take advantage of virtual learning without having to travel, which can only help the localities with staff scheduling and budgets. The disruption caused by the pandemic and its restrictions has enabled the VBCA to strengthen and expand the creative and technical aspects of our goal to provide quality, timely, and relevant training to all code enforcement personnel in Virginia. Although we do hope to return to the in-person classroom in the future, we are excited to integrate a hybrid delivery model that will allow us the flexibility to offer courses to both online and in-person audiences.

2018 Code Development Cycle

The Final phase of the Virginia 2018 code update process is almost complete. The Board of Housing and Community Development made decisions on over 100 proposals at their meeting on October 19, 2020. Those proposals will be incorporated into the proposed regulations already approved and the full document will be presented to the Board at their meeting on December 14, 2020 for final approval. Depending on the timing of approvals from the Governor’s office and other administrative approvals, the anticipated effective date of the 2018 Virginia Codes is mid to late 2021.

DHCD would like to extend the deepest appreciation to VBCOA for their work during this cycle. Your expertise and willingness to share it is what makes the Virginia Code process a success. In spite of a global pandemic and the declaration of a national and state emergency, you along with our other stakeholders stepped up, embraced the virtual workgroup meetings, suffered through the technical glitches with the platform and continued to engage without missing a beat. Kudos to all of you.

DHCD will soon be starting the code update training and will be reaching out for Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to assist in the development.

Continued on next page...
DHCD Corner continued...

Sneak Peek at a 2018 Significant Change:
Multi-User Gender-Neutral Toilet Facilities

The legal origins of sex-segregated water closets in the United States dates back to 1887 in the Massachusetts legislature under a statute entitled, “An Act to Secure Proper Sanitary Provisions in Factories and Workshops.” This act, which was passed as a response to the social anxieties surrounding women entering the workforce, becoming active in social reform and suffrage movements, and having more of a presence in sites of social engagements like theaters and public parks, ultimately lead to forty-three states adopting similar legislation by 1920. Coupled with the social-anxieties precipitating new sex-segregated water closet legislation sweeping the nation was also the public health reformation in post-reconstruction America that laid the framework for the germ theory of disease, which understood for the first time in history that disease spread through unsanitary conditions.

The turn of the 19th century saw incredible public works projects championed by the Public Health Sanitarians armed with the new knowledge of sanitary science to connect private homes to public water systems. Incredible gains in the protection of the health of our nation can be attributed to plumbers and sanitary engineers who were able to use novel construction practices to protect our potable water systems, such as air gaps and backflow preventers. It was at this moment that this group of reformers began lobbying local, state, and federal legislatures for uniform plumbing codes and standards. This pre-eminent organization would eventually become the organization we know today as the Plumbing-Heating-Cooling-Contractors Association.

Fast forward over a century and our industry professionals are still working tirelessly to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public while also working to update the building code to reflect modern social mores and create inclusive, equitable space for all of us. To that end, many jurisdictions across the country have amended their plumbing codes to reflect the need to address multi-user gender-neutral toilet facilities. Virginia will soon become the latest State to address this need.

The new code changes proposed [cdpVA Proposal ID TP1209.3.1-18] by Kenney Payne, which was recommended as Consensus for Approval by Workgroup 4 and approved by the Board of Housing and Community Development at their October 19th meeting for inclusion in the 2018 USBC final regulations, provide greater design flexibility in meeting the minimum fixture requirements in Assembly occupancies in Table 403.1 of the Virginia Plumbing Code. As an example, a designer for a theater may provide 1 water closet for every 85.5 occupants in a multi-user gender-neutral toilet facility instead of having to provide 1 water closet for every 125 male occupants in one toilet facility and 1 water closet for every 65 female occupants in another toilet facility. Further, the code change provides that single-user toilet facilities shall be identified as being available for use by all persons regardless of their sex. Kenny Payne states in his reasoning for code change proposal that, “with the recent Supreme Court decision, [gender-neutral toilet facilities] may become the norm rather than the exception. Therefore, both designers and code officials need guidance on how to properly design, regulate, and enforce such toilet facilities.”

Stay tuned for information from the Virginia Building Code Academy on 2018 Code Change Training that will include additional information on this change as well as many other significant changes to Virginia’s building and fire codes.
International Code Council ...

ICC hosts virtual panel events, keynotes & breakouts on building safety topics. The International Code Council offers its inaugural virtual education summit, **ICC LEARN LIVE**, a five day virtual event which includes a series of panel sessions and keynotes from building industry experts. ICC Learn Live will address the most pressing issues and priorities for building safety professionals such as training the next generation of talent, the impact of COVID-19 on building safety and the economy, adopting virtual capabilities, and an in-depth overview of the upcoming 2021 International Codes (ICodes). *Educational sessions offer continuing education units (CEUs). Just a few of the sessions are:*

- **Monday, November 9, at 3 p.m. ET - COVID-19 Global Impact Panel.** A group of distinguished international panelists will discuss the impact of COVID-19 on the building safety industry. Speakers will address economic impact, best practices and pandemic strategy. Register here: https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/2ZVLcERBADCK52JTMG6fu8M?domain=send.iccsafe.org

- **Tuesday, November 10, at 11 a.m. ET - Sneak Peek at 2021 Code Changes.** The Code Council will debut significant changes to be released in the 2021 I-Codes. Get a sneak peak at the updated building, residential, fire and plumbing codes. Register here: https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/5I43CG6EDGSo5Rps5Qs6b7?domain=send.iccsafe.org

- **Wednesday, November 11, at noon ET - Remote Virtual Inspections – Recommended Practices.** Recently, the Code Council released **Recommended Practices for Virtual Inspections.** This overview will include suggestions for implementing an effective and consistent remote virtual inspections program and how to assist jurisdictions in adapting readily available technologies in their own inspection programs. Register here: https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/mYUbCKvR0M05NvsPmWDP?domain=send.iccsafe.org

- **Thursday, November 12, at 3 p.m. ET - Evolution of Careers Building Safety Panel.** A panel of industry experts will provide the industry’s need for new professionals and the various ways to get involved. Register here: https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/D8jWCL9RLNsSnprIfGPl?domain=send.iccsafe.org

- **Friday, November 13, at noon ET - Keynote Address: Discovering the Building Safety Profession and Networking.** Eric “Doc” Wright, Founder and CEO of Vets2PM, LLC, and Amazon #1 best seller, will share his experience as a Veteran entering a new career. Register here. Having launched its Coronavirus Response Center earlier this year, the Code Council’s ICC Learn Live event is the next step to provide building code officials, construction workers and others with resources and tools necessary to adapt. For more information and to register for ICC Learn Live, go to. https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/Lc3CPN8PRtqErFDuQ9?domain=send.iccsafe.org

**Virginia Opportunity!**

cdpACCESS is now open for proposals to the 2024 Group A cycle! Proposals are being accepted until 11:59 p.m. PT on January 11, 2021. All code committees are encouraged to participate in the national debate, continuing the legacy of Virginia leadership! As of this writing, a final decision has not yet been made specific to virtual or in-person committee action hearings. Either way, hopefully Virginia participation will continue!

**Make Your Opinion Matter - Join an ICC Exam Development Committee**

If you’ve ever been interested in having a say in the development and maintenance of the ICC National Certification exams, now’s the time to apply. But hurry – the deadline for applications is December 10, 2020. There are openings beginning January 1, 2021, on the following Exams Development Committees (EDCs):

**2019 Group B Code Cycle Appeals Concluded**

The International Code Council Board of Directors has issued a final decision on the second groups of appeals within the 2019 Group B code cycle – surrounding scope and intent, and the impact of online voting (CP 28), cost impact, voting guides, voter eligibility and validation process – completing the appeals process.
Scope and Intent
The American Gas Association, the American Public Gas Association, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) and the Leading Builders of America (LBA) appealed three proposed changes to the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) and 2021 International Residential Code (IRC) on the grounds that the proposals in question are outside the scope of the codes. The code changes appealed were RE147-19 (requiring electric readiness) and CE217-19, Parts I and II (requiring electric vehicle supply equipment).

Following the recommendation of the Appeals Board, the Code Council Board determined that the code changes in question are outside the current scope and intent of the energy provisions of the IECC and IRC and sustained the appeals. RE147-19 and CE217-19 will not appear in the 2021 International Codes.

Impact of Online Voting (CP 28), Cost Impact, Voting Guides, Voter Eligibility and Validation Process
NAHB and LBA appealed a group of twenty code changes to the 2021 IECC on the grounds of ineligible voters, cost impact, not meeting the spirit and intent of the process, and improper use of voting guides.

The Appeals Board found no clear violation of process or procedure and recommended denial of the appeals. The Code Council Board of Directors voted to deny the appeals.

In addition, the Code Council Board referred a number of issues to the Board Committee on the Long-Term Code Development Process for further review, including the definitions of governmental members and voting representatives, the procedures for the in-person and online votes, and the issue of cost impact. This committee is a venue for stakeholders to provide feedback on the process and suggest changes.

The Code Council Board also recommended consideration of a Code Council energy standard to replace the IECC and Chapter 11 of the IRC.

Computer-based Testing (CBT) Locations Reopened at Limited Capacity
On May 1, 2020, many testing locations that were closed due to COVID-19 will reopen in most jurisdictions. Availability for testing will be limited as test sites will be operating at 50% capacity as part of social distancing. If you’ve already scheduled your exam, you will receive communication about rescheduling from Pearson VUE.

New Pronto Exams added
Effective September 1, 2020, the following Certification exams are available to test exclusively on PRONTO under the 2021 code year:

- M2 - Commercial Mechanical Inspector
- M3 - Mechanical Plans Examiner
- P2 - Commercial Plumbing Inspector
- P3 - Plumbing Plans Examiner

WICED
WICED’s virtual training, via Microsoft Office Teams, APPL YING THE CODE TO CANNABIS FACILITIES training held on September was a success. WICED utilized a Virtual Training Room: This type of online classroom allows you to see and hear the instructor and classroom and they are able to see and hear you. This was not a web session with voice over as some other offerings. The class covered: Cannabis cultivation, processing and sale are handled differently than other industrial processes which means that as legalization of cannabis becomes more prevalent, the need to know how to apply the code will be valuable for the building safety community to know. Topics in this course include building, fire, mechanical, plumbing, energy, and electrical code requirements, different types of facilities and a checklist for plan review inspection.

ICC Region VII...

ICC Region VII will hold a virtual meeting for items of discussion ONLY.

Please see our Meetings and Events Page for details

ICC Governmental Relations

Follow @ICC_GR on Twitter for breaking news & announcements throughout the month.

For any government relations inquiries, please contact Lisa Berger. Lisa is the Government Relations Associate with ICC who is the contact VA and WV.
Virginia Fire Protection Association...

VIRGINIA FIRE PREVENTION ASSOCIATION

Fall Conference

The Virginia Fire Prevention Association continues to active during the third quarter of 2020.

Work on our strategic plan continues and it is hoped that it will be ready for presentation to the VFPA general membership at the Fall Meeting.

Our Fire Code committee has been active participating with the Virginia Fire Services Board Code and Standards Committee, as well as VBCOA members and other code organizations working on the 2018 Statewide Fire Prevention Code amendments. Over 2,000 amendments were reviewed with more than 900 becoming “consensus” amendments going forward in the Code making process.

After a significant amount of discussion the Board of Directors elected to make the 2020 VFPA Fall Conference a go and had both “live” (for 50 attendees) and “virtual” offerings of the conference (97 in attendance). The “virtual” coverage was provided over the newly purchased Zoom paid account that permits us to have up to 100 persons and unlimited sessions up to 24 hours in length.

The conference site would normally be able to handle over 100 attendees. However with the COVID restrictions and maintaining a 6 foot social distancing the capacity was reduced to 50 attendees thus the limitation on the “live” offering. The conference was held at the Best Western Plus in Waynesboro, VA, October 13 through 14. The conference provided 16 hours of continuing education hours approved by the VFMA and the ICC over the two days. The use of facemask was mandatory and hand sanitizer and masks were made available at the conference site.

Ernie Little, VFPA President said “We have had a successful conference in Waynesboro! We had a total of 97 attendees which breaks down to 42 at the live session and 55 attending the simultaneous virtual session.”