PRESIDENTIAL PONDERING  Mark C. Fletcher

As we reflect on the year 2000, most of us will remember the Presidential campaign, votes being recounted, Florida, and chads! Let us not forget that in 2000 VRA hosted its 1st Annual Golf Tournament Fundraiser at The Hollows Golf Club in Montpelier, Virginia. The event heightened awareness of VRA and promoted collaboration and membership.

In 2000, the NRA Delegate Assembly vote for restructuring was approved. This will certainly impact the VRA Constitution and By-Laws, membership categories, dues structure, and the divisions. As a result, Past President McGuire-Kuletz formed a Task Force to examine anticipated changes to VRA. Under the NRA restructuring plan, the Associate Membership category will no longer be an option for new members joining the NRA Association. Current Associate Members will be phased into the Professional Membership category over a 3 year period. The new fee for Professional Members beginning January 1, 2001 will be $110.00 a year. The Associate Membership was $64.00 a year. Associate Members will be billed $79.00 for 2001, $94.00 in 2002 and $110.00 in 2003. Linda Winslow and the Transition Team for NRA will meet with the Division Presidents in January, to discuss membership issues and dues. NRA will be working on a new Membership brochure. I invite members to participate in the Task Force.

In August 2000, Alexandria was the site of the 4th Annual Collaboration Training Conference co-hosted by VRA, VaAPSE, and vaACCSES with over 300 participants. We will be returning to Virginia Beach in September, 2001 for the 5th Annual Training Conference. The training is expected to be excellent and energizing!

In December VRA members participated, with NRA, in the filming of a segment of a Public Television series, American Medical Review hosted by Morley Safer of Sixty Minutes

(Continued on page 8)
NEW CO-EDITORS FOR THE VRA NEWS NOTES

The new co-editors, Norm Kropp and Steve Sommer, wish to invite all VRA Members to send in their articles and ideas for the newsletter. During the year 2001, a quarterly issue is planned for mailing during the first week of April, July, and October. The deadline for submitting material for each issue will be the 15th day of the month prior to the mailing. Those items coming by way of the US Postage Service, should be sent to Norm Kropp at DRS, 2930 W. Broad Street, Richmond, Va. 23230. Or send your articles by way of email to both Norm and Steve at KroppNV@drs.state.va.us and SommerSA@drs.state.va.us (We thank Mary Kaye Johnston and Carl Nowakowski for sharing their expertise in getting this issue together.)

Enjoy seeing your articles on our professional website. Visit the site today to view past issues of the News Notes, Legislative Issues, and election updates of VRA officers, Division officers, and current board members. www.vra.org

VATS Conference Call For Papers

The Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) and GMU have published a Call for Papers from people who would like to be presenters at the next Assistive Technology conference to be held June 14-16, 2001 at George Mason University.

Presentations will fall in the general tracks of School, Home, Community, Work, Emerging Technologies and Research, Recreation and Leisure, and Legal.

For more information contact Annette Carr at (703) 993-3670, or at the conference website at http://chd.gse.gme.edu/east

www.vra.org

2000 VRA OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

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MARK FLETCHER

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PAST PRESIDENT:
MAUREEN MCGUIRE-KULETZ

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NEWS NOTES CO-EDITORS:

STEVEN SOMMER
NORM KROPP
VRA DAY AT THE STATE CAPITOL  (Continued from page 1)

On January 15th, VRA members will meet at 8:30 A.M. in the Ninth Street Office Building in the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities Conference Room on the Ninth Floor. From 8:30-10 A.M., VRA members will go over basic advocacy skills, be briefed on the Governor’s Budget, and work on VRA issues. We will discuss how to best communicate with our Senators and Delegates. Members will be given a tour of the Capitol and General Assembly Building. We will then have the opportunity to meet with our own representatives. In order to register for this event, please contact: Maureen McGuire-Kuletz at (202) 973-1558 or mkuletz@gwu.edu

This will be a short session of the General Assembly, and money is getting tight. VRA efforts will be critical to sustaining the momentum we have gained in the past. I look forward to seeing you on the 15th for a day you won’t soon forget. Submitted by Jim Rothrock, VRA Governmental Affairs Staff, (804) 673-0119 or jarothrock@aol.com

F&M Bank Raises Over $20,000 to Benefit Brain Injury Services

F&M Bank-Northern Virginia raised over $20,000 to benefit Brain Injury Services at its Sixth Annual Charity Golf Classic held on October 2nd at the Country Club of Fairfax. Thirty teams of golfers participated in an event consisting of hole-in-one competitions, a putting contest, and a silent auction. The winner of the putting contest won $200 and a gold putter. This is the sixth year the bank has held a charity golf tournament. On behalf of the Board of Trustees and BIS Staff we would like to thank F&M Bank for their support.

Collaborations Conference 2001

The VRA Conference program chairs, VRA President-Elect Bonnie Hawley and VRA Past-President Maureen McGuire-Kuletz are preparing for our 2001 Collaborations Conference. Mark your calendars!

September 23-26, 2001
Ramada Plaza Resort Oceanfront Hotel
Virginia Beach

Committee members are still needed in the following areas:

* Speakers Committee
* Registration
* On-site Operations
* Publicity
* Program Book

If you are interested in assisting on any of these or other committees, please contact Bonnie at HawleyBS@DRS.state.va.us or call (703) 335-5550 Ext.108

Assistive Technology Perspectives Seminar Series!!

The Virginia Assistive Technology System is sponsoring a series of Introductory AT Workshops. The goal of the seminars is to provide, at an affordable cost, a comprehensive overview of the assistive technology topic at hand, with an emphasis on audience information sharing, and hands-on, practical experiences.

VATS Central Regional Site, in collaboration with the University of Virginia’s Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, is coordinating this initiative. Topics of past seminars have included Seating, Mobility, and Adaptive Transportation. Future seminars include Alternative and Augmentative Communication/Computer Adaptations to be held March 9, 2001 in Charlottesville, and Worksite/Home Modifications to be held April 27, 2001 in Charlottesville. The final seminar in this series is entitled Adaptive Recreation/Leisure/Sports, and will be held in conjunction with the Eastern Assistive Solutions with Technology East Conference June 14-16, 2001 at George Mason University.

(continued on page 5 Assistive Technology Series)
NRA 2001 Government Affairs Seminar and VRA Day on Capitol Hill

EVENT: The National Rehabilitation Association
2001 Government Affairs Seminar
DATE: Sunday, March 11 - Tuesday March 13, 2001
LOCATION: Hilton Alexandria Old Town
1767 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314 (For more information call (888) 258-4295)

Join fellow VRA members on Capitol Hill to meet with our elected Virginia Legislators and their staff on Monday, March 12th. No cost. Increase public awareness of rights and needs of persons with disabilities. For more information, please contact Maureen McGuire-Kuletz at mkuletz@gwu.edu or call (202) 973-1558. Please join us!

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www.VRA.org
2001 VRCA Officers and Board Members

Congratulations to those newly elected officers and board members who have been elected to serve by the members of the VRCA Division. Their willingness to serve in this capacity is deeply appreciated by the membership they represent. The newly elected persons who have agreed to take on the challenge, as we move into the new millennium, are as follows:

Robin Metcalf  President
Russ Ward  President-Elect
Alice Berman  Secretary
Darlene Ackerman  Treasurer
Jane Bennett  Board Member
Kelly Desclos  Board Member
Kristi Lockhart  Board Member
Cheryl McDonnell  Board Member
Eammon McEvilly  Board Member
Pamela Willard  Board Member

$1.3 MILLION BUDGET AMENDMENT TO BE SUBMITTED TO 2001 GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR STATEWIDE BRAIN INJURY SERVICES

The Virginia Alliance for Brain Injury Providers (VaBISP) is supporting the submission of a $1.3 budget amendment to the 2001 General Assembly. On October 17th and December 5th, some of the Alliance attended the Disability Commission’s meetings held at the General Assembly, at which time, several individuals asked the Commission Members for their support of this amendment. The Budget bill recommends additional funding for the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services to help provide Community Support Services for Persons with Brain Injuries. The purpose of the funding would be to expand already existing community based programs, to expand the new day program on the Eastern Shore from part-time to full-time, to continue to support the day program (The Millhouse) in Richmond, and to develop new community support services in three communities.

DUST OFF YOUR GOLF CLUBS submitted by Howard Green

The 2nd Annual VRA Golf Classic is scheduled for Friday, September 14th at the Hollows Golf Course. (Same place as last year!!) Members are encouraged to start soliciting corporate sponsors and securing gifts.

VRA TRAINING PLANS submitted by Margaret Gillispie:

The VRA Education Committee is currently planning training activities for 2001 in each of the following areas, Tidewater, Richmond, Northern Virginia, and Southwestern Virginia. Seminar topics have not yet been chosen, so if you have specific training needs please contact Margaret Gillispie by phone at (540)776-2740 or by email at gillismt@drs.state.va.us Also serving on the VRA Education Committee are Marie Del Gardo, Jean T. Steveson and Jane Bennett.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERIES (continued from page 3)

The target audience includes, but is not limited to: persons with disabilities, direct care-providers (families, friends, nursing assistants, personal care assistants, etc.), persons who provide community services (advocates, rehabilitation counselors, CIL, CSB, and DSB staff members, home-health providers, camp counselors, etc.), and rehabilitation and Allied Health professionals (physical, occupational, speech and recreational therapists, nurses, physicians, assistive technology practitioners, and rehabilitation technicians). The information presented will be especially helpful to those who are new to the field or would like a review.

The Seminar fee is $75.00, with a limited number of partial scholarships available to non-professional users of assistive technology. Contact Joyce Sharp, VATS Central Regional Site coordinator to register, or for information telephone (804) 924-0041 or email vats@virginia.edu.
AWARDS & NOMINATIONS

Naomi M. Aitken, VRA Awards Chairperson

The Nominations and Awards Committee is seeking nominations for awards to be presented at the 2001 Collaborations Conference. Again this year, the Awards Ceremony will include all three associations (VRA, VaAPSE, and vaACCSES) at the ceremony and reception on Monday, September 24th. We want to recognize and highlight VRA’s outstanding recipients for all seven distinguished awards. As a quick reference, here are the seven categories:

- Excellence in Rehabilitation (Reedy)
- Special Business (Hammond)
- Professional (Dawson)
- Physician (Hoover)
- Excellence in Rehabilitation by a VRA Member (Anderson)
- Leader in Removal of Barriers (Stillfried)
- Person with a Disability (Distinguished Achievement)

A detailed description of the awards and the nomination form are included below. Please be thinking about who you know deserves to receive recognition for their commitment to the field of rehabilitation. Nominations will be accepted throughout the year. Now is the time to ACT! Let’s show our appreciation for the Best of 2001. The deadline for accepting nominations is July 30, 2001. If you would like additional information or assistance you can contact me, Naomi Aitken (804) 295-0990/aitken.ssr@prodigy.net

AWARDS/DESCRIPTIONS

Norman C. Hammond Award: Mr. Hammond was credited with creating IBM Data Processing for the Handicapped Program. This award was established to honor business and industry leaders whose contributions to the field of rehabilitation in Virginia are outstanding and resulted in the employment of persons with disabilities. Eligible for this award may be organizations or industrial leaders that have made a contribution to the well being of rehabilitation of disabled persons in activities over and beyond the purpose for which the organization was established. Preference is given to individuals or organizations that have effectively and actively advocated for individuals with disabilities; introduced innovative programs and approaches to rehabilitation; and the impact on rehabilitation beyond the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Franz Stillfried Barrier Free Achievers Honor Roll: Established in 1988, to recognize efforts made by individuals, businesses or organizations for the removing of architectural, attitudinal and environmental barriers. A plaque honoring Mr. Stillfried’s work for more accessible facilities was prepared and presented to Mr. Stillfried’s family when this award was established. Awarded to an individual who has exercised notable leadership in either removing environmental, attitudinal, or legal barriers and/or has contributed to the attainment of independence for persons with...
disabilities by significantly supporting the growth of rehabilitation services throughout Virginia. The purpose of this award is threefold: (1) to develop a cooperative resource link between Virginia’s Mayors’ Committees/Commissions and the Virginia Rehabilitation Association; (2) to increase awareness and share information on innovative projects; and (3) to generate more activities and participation in barrier removal.

**Dr. Roy M. Hoover Award for Outstanding Medical Achievement:** Dr. Hoover of Tallahassee, Florida, former Roanoke orthopedic surgeon and former medical director of Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center, initiated this award at Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center. In 1969 WWRC requested that the Virginia Rehabilitation Association accept the responsibility for its administration. It honors a physician practicing in Virginia who has given outstanding medical rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities and whose contributions are substantial. This nominee may have a local, statewide, or regional impact on services to clients through rehabilitation, in the field of medicine or in any field, rehabilitative in nature. Length of service in Virginia and voluntary efforts are taken into consideration.

**A. R. Dawson Humanitarian Award:** In 1971, Dr. Dawson, who was director of geriatric and rehabilitation services for the Virginia Department of Mental Hygiene and Hospitals, initiated this award with a $1,000 grant and presented the first award. It is presented for outstanding services to the disabled by a practitioner, who is not in an administrative or supervisory position. Awarded to a professional person having direct contact with persons with disabilities in the rehabilitation process, and whose efforts have had a significant impact on their lives. Individuals may have worked in psychology, vocational evaluation, or medical specialties.

**R. N. Anderson Award for Leadership:** In 1986 a classroom at Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center was dedicated to the memory of Mr. Anderson, the first Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services. Awarded to a current member of the Virginia Rehabilitation Association who has demonstrated excellence in services to persons with disabilities. The first R. N. Anderson Award was presented in 1961.

**Virginia Rehabilitation Association Distinguished Achievement Award:** Awarded to a person with a disability who has demonstrated imagination, perseverance, resolve, and an indomitable spirit in working to overcome barriers in their lives resulting in a better quality of life for themselves and others. When making nominations for this award volunteer work, part time and full time employment is a consideration but not a requirement.

**Corbett Reedy Award for Excellence:** This award was created in 1985 to honor Corbett Reedy who was a Virginia Rehabilitation Association service provider, as well as an official of the Rehabilitation Services Administration. Upon his retirement to his native Virginia, he was appointed to serve on the policymaking Board of the Department of Rehabilitative Services. Awarded to a resident of Virginia currently involved in the rehabilitation field, but not limited to a rehabilitation professional. This person must have creatively pursued excellence in contributions to the rehabilitation program, projects, issues, publications or a significant rehabilitation cause. Excellence in the field of service to persons with disabilities is recognized through this award.

(The nominations forms will be in the next newsletter or go to www.vra.org)
The Mill House, Virginia’s only clubhouse program for survivors of brain injury, held its second annual open house on December 13, 2000. During a formal awards ceremony, two members shared their personal impressions about The Mill House and presented two plaques to program supporters. Clubhouse member, Ed Zeigler presented the **Community-Partnership Award** to Ms. Andrea Wright of Capital One, in recognition of their generous donation of five computers. The **Leadership Award** was presented by clubhouse member, Michael Benninghove to Mr. Harry Weinstock, Executive Director of the Brain Injury Association of Virginia (BIAV). Mr. Weinstock’s leadership has resulted in improved and expanded services for people with brain injuries in Virginia.

The Mill House is a program for survivors of brain injury. Ed Zeigler presented the Community-Partnership Award to Ms. Andrea Wright of Capital One, in recognition of their generous donation of five computers. The Leadership Award was presented by clubhouse member, Michael Benninghove to Mr. Harry Weinstock, Executive Director of the Brain Injury Association of Virginia (BIAV). Mr. Weinstock’s leadership has resulted in improved and expanded services for people with brain injuries in Virginia.

Kim DePoto, Program Manager, has resigned in order to join her husband in Edinburgh, Scotland. She will be sorely missed. Christine Grauer, who has over ten years of experience working with people with brain injuries, will assume the role of Program Manager. For more information about The Mill House, including how to join or refer a member, call Christine Grauer at (804) 261-7050 or email her at Christine@careersupport.net.

**Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority (ATLFA) Now Makes Direct Loans**

Direct loans at 5.5% interest are now available on loans up to $4,000. The ATLFA is making loans directly to Virginians at significant savings for the purchase of assistive technology. Any Virginian with a disability, or their family members, is eligible for an affordable loan to purchase equipment or devices that increases employment, education or independent living opportunities. For those individuals, the new ATLFA program offers a significant savings. For additional information contact Michael Scione at (804) 662-9000 or loanfund@erols.com.
VRA GOLF TOURNAMENT RESULTS

The VRA Golf Tournament, held Friday, September 15th, at the Hollows Golf Course, was both an exciting and successful event! The event consisted of 20 teams, 80 golfers, a beautiful day on the course, camaraderie, and a delicious lunch. Tournament winners were:

**1st Place** - WINN Team--- Richard W. Winn, Richard A Winn, Joe Kehminski, & Joe Gynomury- Team from Fredericksburg, Va. (friends of Darlene Ackerman)

**2nd Place** - KAESTNER, PITNEY & JONES Team- Benjy Burnett, Brian Jones, Terry Duehl, & Wick Gillispie

**3rd Place** - CAREER SUPPORT SYSTEMS Team- Lance Elwood, Joseph Wharf, Monroe Spencer, & Lee Ellis

The $100.00 Corporate Hole Sponsors were:
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(Continued next column—Golf Results)

VRA Schedule/Rehabilitation Events for 2001

**January**
12-VRA Atlantic City Trip
15-VRA Legislative Day
19-VRCA Board Meeting-Richmond

**March**
7-9-Transition Forum 2001-Williamsburg
11-13-Governmental Affairs Seminar, Alexandria
12-Meet on Capital Hill to meet with Virginia Legislators

**April**
15-Deadline for VRA News Notes articles
29-April 1-VEWAA 10th National Forum

**May**
27-VRA Board meeting-Richmond

**June**
15-Deadline for VRA News Notes articles

**July**
27-VRA Board Meeting-Richmond

**September**
14-Second Annual VRA Golf Classic at the Hollows
15-Deadline for VRA News Notes articles
23-26-Collaborations Conference, Virginia Beach, Ramada Inn
24 or 25-VRA Annual Membership Breakfast meeting

**October**
26-VRA Board Meeting-Richmond

**November**
31-Nov. 4-NRA Annual Training Meeting-Biloxi, MS., Beau Rivage Resort

**December**
7-VRA Board Retreat
15-Deadline for VRA News Notes articles

Let us know which events you would like added to the VRA/Rehabilitation Events Calendar.
All Newsletter articles should be submitted to both co-editors by Email at:
SommerSA@drs.state.va.us and KroppNV@drs.state.va.us
Or if by US Mail, send to VRA NewsNotes
c/o Norm Kropp
DRS, 2930 West Broad St.
Richmond, Virginia 23230
Phone 804-367-9889