

Puttin' On the Stutz!

September 15, 2022

The National League of Cities bestows its John G. Stutz Award on people who have served 25 years or more on the staff of a state municipal league, state league risk pool, or NLC. The award is named in honor of John Stutz, who convened representatives of ten state municipal leagues for the first meeting of what was to become the American Municipal Association and subsequently the National League of Cities, and *not* for the Stutz Motor Car Company of Indianapolis which, until 1935, made high-end sports cars.

This year, VLCT has two recipients, both of whom work astutely and skillfully behind the scenes to help their VLCT colleagues deliver the goods to members.

The first is Senior Business Analyst **Jill George**, who started at VLCT in March of 1997, when our offices were located at 12½ Main Street. Having arrived to fill a secretary/receptionist opening, Jill was soon enough able to put her facile and technically-oriented intellect to full use by assisting staff with all manner of IT related issues. Moreover, she was instrumental in establishing and maintaining VLCT's first member contact database, a feat that was much more easily said than done!

In 2016 Jill became the first (and so far only) Business Analyst for VLCT's Risk Management Services (RMS) department. In this role she performs critical data analysis and clean-up and generates reports that help our staff make the data-backed decisions that keep VLCT's risk pools healthy. More than that, Jill has her finger on the pulse of the software systems that PACIF and the Unemployment Insurance program use daily, and she specifies and monitors the periodic updates and improvements to those systems. Her strong knowledge of information systems and attention to detail are relied upon heavily across the organization.

Jill and her husband Michael live in Roxbury, where they have many acres to explore and lots of fruit bearing trees to maintain and harvest from. When Jill is not working or maintaining her property, you can find her climbing up a mountain as she is an avid, experienced, and fast hiker.

Congratulations, Jill!

The second recipient is **David Gunn**, Senior Communications Administrative Associate in the Communications and Marketing department. He started with VLCT in the late 1990s, and staff quickly learned to appreciate his sense of humor along with his skills in administration, organization, writing, editing, and photography.

David served in a number of roles in his 25 years with VLCT, giving him an in-depth knowledge of many core functions and member needs, but he's best known to members for his role as Editor and Contributing Writer for the now retired *VLCT News* print magazine and the new digital news digest, the *VLCT Journal*. In addition to those keystone news magazines, David is responsible for editing many of VLCT's publications, including the *Weekly Legislative Report*, and writing the Trivia and Vermontscapes features of the *VLCT Journal*. As a core contributor to the VLCT website, he casts his grammatical spell over classified ads, speedily posts current news items, and crafts other various articles. David is often the first to jump on editing and publishing requests and is always eager to help in other ways. To top it all off are the refreshing kindness, wit, and humor that he adds to almost every task and exchange with colleagues, to say nothing of his incredible fashion sense, which includes a vast and vintage array of colorful patterned attire.

In his spare time, or, as he says, "his other life," David is an accomplished composer and published author.

Congratulations, David!

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David Gunn: Moseyin' on Down the Road

Now that David Gunn has raked in his Stutz Award, he is making this year extra memorable by following through on an intention he articulated last spring: the close of his employmental era with VLCT – or, as he put it, "moseyin' on down the road." We've hardly used the "R" word

when discussing David's abandonment of his coworkers. How does one actually feel ready for all that post-employmental stuff anyway, especially when it means bidding *zbogom* to a truly irreplaceable humanoid?

David will be greatly missed for all his precise editing and writing, but mostly for the humor and playfulness that he brings to as much of his writing as we think our readers can handle while still taking us seriously. The light-hitting yet insightful interviews in the *VLCT News* print magazine and the online *VLCT Journal* are completely David's work – as are the circuitous and obscure questions and answers that constitute the monthly Municipality Triviality. An aficionado of the weird and wonderful, he has acquired interesting things in his VLCT space, e.g., the bag of pork rinds which, like his own dapper sense of fashion, WILL NEVER expire! He's quick with a clever twist of phrase and appreciates a pithy anagram. He has a wonderful eye for photography, and he works and types and walks and hikes *super fast*. Did we mention he's a composer? You can follow along in David's music journey at davidgunn.org.

David is also a published author beyond the bounds of VLCT. His book *Cautionary Chronicles: A Compendium of Human Striving* is available on Amazon. We learned of this series of short and stunningly outlandish stories accompanying odd found photographs because David emailed a new one to VLCT staff every Friday along with in-house access to the freshly minted *Weekly Legislative Report*. The tidy little compendium shows the apparently endless nature of David's creative spirit – like a picture of a mirror in a mirror that seems to go to infinity (and beyond).

Quirky and unique are words that come to mind for David, but they don't seem quite right. Other-worldly is closer, but all the synonyms just don't add up to enough. How about we simply say "*truly* one of a kind." David's kindness, creativity, and passion for the English language are irreplaceable. Don't even get him started on the Oxford comma!

As David's biggest fans, we hope this extra time means the world will soon be treated to more of his music. We thank David for his twenty-five year language-crafting and photo-snapping career at VLCT. Please join us in wishing him the very best in his future exploits!