

## VIRGINIA JUVENILE JUSTICE ASSOCIATION History Part 3: 1986 – 1996

### *Not Necessarily an Extreme Makeover*

*(This is the third in a four part series on the history of VJJA.)*

As VJOA completed its second decade, the Association was gearing up to celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1986. The State Officers at that time were: Ron Belay, President; Frank Currier, Immediate Past President; Amanda Wimberley, Vice-President; Carol Selby, Secretary; and Kathi Meenihan, Treasurer. The Association boasted a membership of 386 on March 1, 1986; the general fund held \$3,305; and the institute account stood at \$6,255.

VJOA's 20<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration took place March 24 – 27, 1986, at the Marriott Hotel in VJOA's home town of Roanoke. The 1986 Conference featured keynote speakers John Ward and Joanne Branyon-Ward, consultants with Creative Communication, speaking on the topic, "Making a Difference." A variety of workshops were offered on family counseling, adolescent sexuality and homosexuality, stress and time management, sexually abused children, domestic violence, teen suicide, substance abuse, cross cultural counseling, street law, teen pregnancy, eating disorders, and a workshop designed specifically for secretarial staff.

The Honorable Lawrence L. Koontz, Jr., Chief Judge of the Virginia Court of Appeals, presented the Meritorious Service Awards at a dinner and awards ceremony during the evening of Tuesday, March 25. The 1986 Award Winners were: Administration – Roland Murphy, 10<sup>th</sup> District CSU Director; Community Service - Reverend Melvin Williams, True Apostolic Church in Richmond; Institutions - Richard Hagy, Assistant Superintendent of Highlands Detention in Bristol; and Probation: Margaret Denise, Probation Officer with the 17<sup>th</sup> District CSU.

*Advocate* Editor Bob Truitt put out three issues of the newsletter in 1986: Winter; Spring; and Fall. The "buzz" in 1986 was the possible creation of Family Courts. The pages of the *Advocate* carried the pros and cons of the Family Court System in articles by Judge E. Preston Grissom (pro) and Vince Picciano (con). The 1986 *Advocates* also published interviews with: Bob Sutton, Deputy Director for the Department of Correction's Division of Youth Services; Billy Williams, Chairman of the Virginia Board of Corrections; Secretary of Public Safety, Vivian Watts; and DOC Director Ed Murray.

1986 saw the election of VJOA's first woman president, Amanda Wimberley, a Probation Officer with the 3<sup>rd</sup> District Court Service Unit in Portsmouth. Ms. Wimberley assumed office with Vice-President Carol Selby; Secretary Mike Mastropaolo; and re-elected Treasurer Kathi Meenihan. In an interview with the *Advocate's* Bob Truitt in the Fall 1986 issue, Ms. Wimberley observed that she was "proud to be chosen" as VJOA's president. She cited the Association's strengths as its "diversity" and "visibility and credibility with the Department of Corrections." When questioned about the membership, Ms. Wimberley said, "400 members is realistic, yet I believe it can be higher." President Wimberley set goals to strengthen training and foster more activities at the district level.



In 1987, VJOA's Legislative Committee under the chairmanship of Vince Picciano proposed modifying 16.1-260 to allow an Intake Officer to deny a petition for custody being filed solely for the purpose of enrolling a child in school; and modifying 16.1-293 to clarify issues of supervising and releasing juveniles on parole. Legislative sponsors could not be secured for either proposal. Additionally, a position statement was endorsed by VJOA

supporting a request for additional residential placement money. 1987 produced two issues of the Advocate: Spring and Summer.

The 1987 Conference was held at the Omni Charlottesville Hotel, April 5-8. The issue of substance abuse was the conference theme, and the keynote speaker was nationally-known speaker and author of Families Under the Influence, Michael Elkin. Workshops included Chemical Dependency in Adolescents, Drugs and Youth, Therapy with Families Under the Influence, and Adolescent Substance Abuse-Parental Perspectives. There was also training on Vietnamese Cultural Awareness, Ericksonian Hypnotherapy, Image and Communication Skills for Women, and Creative Anger.



Meritorious Service Award Winners for 1987 were: Administration – Steve Pullen, Regional Manager; Community Service – Mike Kovacs, Executive Director of the Boys Club of Bristol; Probation – the Fairfax Court Service Unit; and Residential Care (formerly the Institutions Award) – John Matish.

It was at the 1987 Conference where the Board took action which would live in VJJA folk lore. Since the theme of the 1987 Conference was substance abuse, Mountain Wood Regional Services, a substance abuse treatment provider in the Charlottesville Area, sought to purchase a vendor booth during the three day event. Unfortunately, there was no vendor space left unsold; so Mountain Wood was advised by the Board that they could sponsor the President’s Reception. This was readily agreed to, and the provider paid \$300 for the sponsorship. The VJOA Conference Planning Committee then used Mountain Wood’s \$300 to purchase alcoholic beverages for the President’s Reception. Rick Teague remembers going to the ABC Store to spend the provider’s donation in advance of the reception. “I brought a lot of boxes out of that ABC Store,” Teague said. “I think we bought some beer, too.”

In November of 1987, the Department of Corrections, VJOA, and children throughout Virginia lost a good friend when Deputy Director for DOC’s Division of Youth Services Bob Sutton succumbed to lung cancer.

With renewed talk about separating the Division of Youth Services from the more adult oriented Department of Corrections as the backdrop, the year 1988 opened with yet another reorganization of the Division of Youth Services under way. Legislatively, VJOA continued to push for changes in an Intake Officer’s authority to deny custody petitions solely for school enrollment purposes as well as simplification of juvenile records retention, extending the 72 hour detention hearing rule when Holidays were involved, making driver’s license ceremonies optional, clarifying language regarding public and private hearings, and separating the Division of Youth Services from the Department of Corrections. At the end of 1988, VJOA issued a formal Resolution endorsing “legislation to separate youth services from the Department of Corrections to make it a separate state agency.” On December 14, 1988, the Virginia Board of Corrections voted 5-3 against the separation of Youth Services from Adult Services citing excessive cost as the deciding factor.

The annual Conference was held April 10-13, 1988 at the Pavilion Tower in Virginia Beach. The keynote speaker for the event was attorney and author Andrew Vachss, whose topic was “The Life-Style Violent Juvenile.” Mr. Vachss began his address by saying, “This will be no academic presentation... We’re experiencing a new phenomenon, the franchising of major gangs in various cities. There are nineteen year old millionaires with fortunes made entirely from drugs.”

Workshops at the 1988 Conference included a Gangs Panel, Treating Sexual Offenders, The Impact of AIDS, Youth Gang Activity in Virginia, Substance Abuse Awareness, Law-Related Education, Family Therapy, Computer Literacy, Intensive Supervision, Public Law 94-142, Innovative Programs for Runaways, a Legislative Overview, Depression in Children and Adolescents, Emotional Abuse of Children, and Family Violence. The

Meritorious Service Awards were presented to: Administration – Kevin Moran, Norfolk CSU Director; Community Service – Josephine Phipps, Friends of the Norfolk Juvenile Court; Probation – Rodney Hubbard, 25<sup>th</sup> District CSU; and Residential Care – Frank Jones.

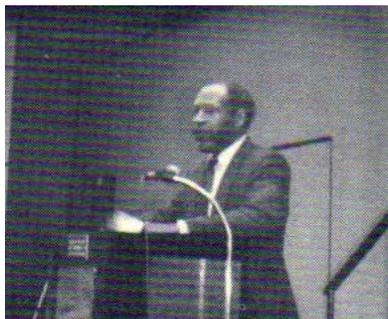


1988 was also a VJOA election year and the Association elected a young, energetic Detention Home Superintendent from Fairfax County named David L. Marsden as President of the Association. Marsden had literally joined VJOA less than a half hour before the business meeting where he was elected President. Elected along with Mr. Marsden were: Vice President Rodney Hubbard; Secretary Diane Dennison; and Treasurer Tom Gooding. Amanda Wimberley served on the Board as Immediate Past President.

The Editorial Committee published the *Advocate* in the Winter, Summer, and very late Fall of 1988. The Summer issue contained two pages of tributes to the late Bob Sutton. The newsletter also reported on the Conference, “The Probation Counselor and Religious Beliefs,” substance abuse screening, persuasion techniques, creating a Department of Youth Services, and CHINS.

In 1989, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law legislation creating the new *Department of Youth and Family Services*. The new Department would not officially be formed until July 1, 1990, but these were exciting times for professionals working with juvenile offenders in Virginia. Finally juvenile offenders would have equal standing with adult offenders at the department level, or so it was generally believed.

The 1989 Conference was held for the first time at the Sheraton Park South, April 2-5. The keynote address was given by Department of Corrections Director Ed Murray, followed by noted motivational speaker Dr. Ben Bissell, who spoke for 90 minutes on “Feeling Good About Yourself and Your Job.” Some of the workshops at the 1989 Conference were: Law-Related Education for Residential Programs; Group Facilitation Exercises; Motivating Youth Through Art Therapy; School Phobia and Refusal; Independent Living; Communicable Disease Control; and Purchasing Services in the Open Market.



Winners of the 1989 Meritorious Service Awards were: Administration – Ron Belay, 29<sup>th</sup> District CSU Director; Community Service – Marshall Honaker, Sheriff in Bristol; Probation – Diane Floyd, 2<sup>nd</sup> District CSU Probation Officer; and Residential Care – Madeline Arter and Rice Lilley with the Fairfax Detention Center. The *Advocate* was published in the Spring and Summer of 1989; one being a pre-Conference issue, the other a post-Conference newsletter.

VJOA Legislative Committee representatives testified in the General Assembly in 1989 on behalf of creating the new Department of Youth and Family Services. Of VJOA’s five other proposals, only the one to extend the time limit for detention hearings over a Holiday was successful. VJOA also teamed up with our colleagues at Adult Probation and Parole to propose a “Career Ladder” concept to the Senate Compensation Sub-committee.

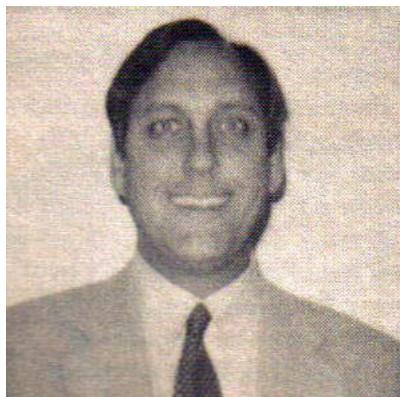
At the beginning of 1990, the *Advocate* published the very first interview with DYFS's first Director, Charles J. Kehoe, in its Winter edition. Six months before the new Department came into existence, Mr. Kehoe told the *Advocate*, "I believe the emphasis the Division of Youth Services is giving prevention programs is good." He also noted that he saw "the new Department needing to define who the youth are that need the Learning Centers' level of care and developing programs to meet their needs." He charged VJOA members to "never, never forget, the name of the game is kids, they come first." During the year, only two eight-page issues of the *Advocate* were published.



Amidst the significant changes going on in Virginia's Juvenile Justice System, two VJOA Conferences were planned for 1990. Due to the lack of available funding however, the Fall Conference was cancelled; but a Spring Conference was held March 27-30, 1990 at the Charlottesville Sheraton. The State Board was re-elected without opposition: President David Marsden; Vice President Rodney Hubbard; Secretary Diane Dennison; and Treasurer Tom Gooding. Amanda Wimberley continued to serve as Immediate Past President.

The Conference opened with a three hour panel discussion moderated by Dr. Gail Funke entitled "The New Department of Youth and Family Services: How It Will Affect Us." The panel included DYFS Director Charles Kehoe and several members of the DYFS Board. Conference workshops included: Creative Dispositions; Crack and Cocaine; Relaxation Techniques; Children at Risk; Healing the Child Within; Team Building; Dealing with Loss; Coping with Temperament in the Workplace; Satanism and the Occult; the Teenage Criminal Personality; a workshop for supervisors; and Managing Change. The 1990 Conference was especially notable in that three nationally-known workshop presenters addressed Association members: Sandy Queen; Dr. Stanton Samenow; and Pat Pulling.

Meritorious Service Award Winners for 1990 were: Administration – Diane Dennison, Executive Director of the Greater Southwest Regional Group Home in Lebanon; Community Service – Chesapeake Sheriff John R. Newhart; Probation –Thea Madsen with the Outreach Detention Program in Fairfax County; and Residential Care – Dan Fallen, the Assistant Superintendent of Opportunity House in Lynchburg.



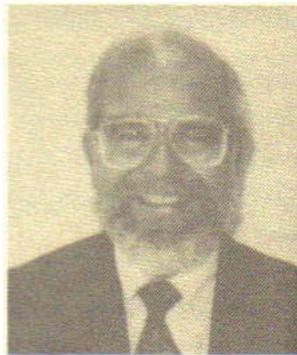
1991 found the fledgling Department of Youth and Family Services still struggling with budget problems. Partly as a result, VJOA, now with a membership of 376, decided to move its annual Conference from the Spring to the Fall, and to hold it once again at the Sheraton Charlottesville. The Tidewaters District's annual Spring Fling would begin in the Spring of 1991, however, and would eventually grow under the leadership of Diane Floyd to one comparable in size to a statewide event. The July 10, 1991 VJOA Board meeting held at the Sheraton Charlottesville saw two ideas resurface that would change the face of VJOA. At that meeting, Tom Currier noted the need to eliminate the associate membership status and have all members as professional members. President

Dave Marsden referred the matter to the By-Laws Committee for study. Diane Floyd, citing the career diversity of VJOA members, suggested that VJOA change its name to the Virginia Juvenile Justice Association. Mr. Marsden said that he would ask *Advocate* Editor Bob Truitt to use the pages of the newsletter to solicit input from the membership.

The 1991 Conference, the Association's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, was held November 7-8 at the Sheraton Charlottesville on a shoestring budget. Attendance was limited to current VJOA members only, and VJOA paid for members' hotel rooms (one night, two to a room). The theme of the 1991 Conference was "Networking," and the keynote speaker was June Bucy a Consultant in Youth Services. Following the keynote, the afternoon was dominated by a panel discussion moderated by Bill Harrell with five Juvenile Court judges from Virginia. Workshops on the second and final day of the Conference were Conflict Resolution, FBI Homicide Research, The Good Supervisor, and SHOCAP. There was also a roundtable discussion with the VJOA Board of Directors entitled, "VJOA: Future Directions." Meritorious Service Awards in 1991 went to: Administration – Bill Harrell, Director of the 5<sup>th</sup> District CSU; Community Service – Tidewater Psychiatric Institute; Probation – Laura Harris-Chastyk, Emergency Services P.O. with the Fairfax Juvenile Court; and Residential Care – Rice Lilley, Director of the Fairfax Boys Home.

Only two issues of the *Advocate* were published in 1991 – Winter and Fall. In the Winter issue, Dave Marsden wrote the first 'The Prez Sez' column to outline his goals and visions for VJOA. His second column, published in the Fall issue, was entitled 'I've About Had It!!' In it, Mr. Marsden railed against the proliferation of handguns in Virginia, and sparked a feud with an *Advocate* contributor that 15 years later shows no sign of abating.

In 1992, VJOA once again selected Ron Belay to serve as the Association's President. Along with Mr. Belay, the following officers were elected: Vice President Cynthia Kelley; Secretary Lewis Wright; and Treasurer Tom Gooding. Dave Marsden stayed on as Immediate Past President and VJOA Legislative Lobbyist. Mr. Belay's 'The Prez Sez' column appeared in each of the three *Advocates* published in 1992: March; June; and September. His administration planned to focus on a name change for VJOA, redefining professional and associate membership, becoming more vocal in advocating youth issues, and profiling positive youth programs.



The Association began the year with 491 members. Board meetings were dominated by discussions around changing the name of the Association, eliminating associate membership designation, the probation officers' class action suit over on-call, and pay increases for institutional and state-operated group home counselors. The Board acted to establish an Institutional Account separate from its General Fund, and expanded the Vice-President's role to include serving as liaison with the District Chairs. In early 1992, the Board realized that they had created the Bob Sutton Humanitarian Award in 1988, but no one had ever won it. The Award was not to be a yearly one, but one presented to a VJOA member "for special activities or outstanding career achievements."

In the March issue of the *Advocate*, frequent contributor Gary Conway challenged Dave Marsden's stand on gun control calling the former VJOA President's views "the emotional upchuckings of a rapidly aging flower child." Marsden responded by challenging Conway to a debate on the issue at the Fall Conference in Richmond.

The Fall Conference was held November 18-20 at the Sheraton Park South in Richmond with 175 registrants. The theme of the 1992 Conference was 'Substance Abuse: Education, Prevention & Intervention,' and workshops included: Juvenile Drug Dealing; Dual Diagnosis; Drugs and the African-American Male; Pharmacology of Drugs; AIDS, Adolescents, and Substance Abuse; Cocaine, Crack, and Hallucinogens; Drug Testing; Drug Use Forecasting; and Substance Abuse Programs through DYFS.

Barbara Hickey, Chair of the DYFS Board, presented the 1992 Meritorious Service Awards to: Administration – Cynthia Kelley, Fairfax CSU; Community Service – Gary Conway, 25<sup>th</sup> District CSU; Probation –Gregory Kiskinis, Chesapeake CSU; and Residential Care – Ann Phillips, Director of the Virginia Beach Crisis Intervention Home.

When 1993 opened, VJOA had 421 members and an ambitious legislative agenda: adding penalties for juveniles who escaped from custody or detention facilities; providing parental financial support for dispositional programs; destroying records of juveniles found not guilty; and making driver's license ceremonies optional. VJOA also gave its support to full funding for Senior Probation Officers' positions and pay upgrades for Institutional staff. Given Virginia's and DYFS's continued budget problems in 1993, neither proposal met with success.

1993 saw much debate over two major changes in VJOA's Articles of Incorporation: changing the Association's name to the Virginia Juvenile Justice Association; and eliminating associate member status to make all members professional members. The June issue of the *Advocate* contained a forum on the pros and cons of both proposed changes.



The 1993 Conference was held November 8-10 at the Fort Magruder Inn and Conference Center in Williamsburg. There were 165 participants. Conference workshops included: Treating Adolescent Sex Offenders in the Community; The Resistant Client; Finding Fulfilling Growth in What You Do; Ways to Make Learning Disabilities Disappear; Basic Safety Techniques; Research, Evaluation, and Motivation; Working with Today's Black Urban Teen; and Treating Adolescent Sex Offenders Inpatient.

The keynotes on November 9 were unusual presentations: a dramatic offering by a group of youth focusing on issues with which young people struggle; and a presentation by former Washington Redskin Ricky Harris who was working with Compassion House in Woodbridge, VA. Yet before the keynotes could begin, DYFS Director Charles Kehoe took the podium to sadly announce that 15<sup>th</sup> District CSU Director Al Chaplin had died suddenly at his home in Fredericksburg that morning while preparing to leave for the Conference.

At the VJOA Business Meeting held the afternoon November 9, 1993, By-Laws Chairperson Karen Wright introduced the two changes to the Articles of Incorporation that had previously been mailed to the membership: changing the name of the Association; and eliminating the associate membership status. A motion was made and seconded to accept the By-Laws Committee report. By a vote of 154 to 38, the membership voted to change the name of the Virginia Juvenile Officers Association to the Virginia Juvenile Justice Association. By a vote of 187 to 6, the membership voted to eliminate the status of associate member and for all members to hold professional membership.

The 1993 Meritorious Service Awards were presented by DYFS Board Chairman Frank Slayton to: Administration – Bill Burke, Rappahannock Detention Home Superintendent; and Probation – Kelly Moorefield, a P.O. with the 29<sup>th</sup> District CSU. No nominations were received in the categories of Community Service or Residential Care.

As 1994 opened, the following slate of State Officers was installed: President Ron Belay; Vice President Lewis Wright; Secretary Karen Wright; and Treasurer Tom Gooding. Because of his re-election, Mr. Belay became both the *last* President of VJOA and the *first* President of VJJA. At the February 17 Board Meeting held in

Charlottesville, the Board voted to change the membership dates to July 1 through June 30, and to offer a discounted membership to any new member who joined during the last half of the membership year. Total membership at that time was 388. Also at the February 17 meeting, Vice President Lewis Wright was appointed to chair a Goals and Objectives Committee consisting of the District Chairs to look at what changes may be appropriate for the Association.



Legislatively, VJJA continued to work hard for a study to look at upgrading the salaries of institutional personnel. VJJA's Legislative Study Resolution was adopted by the General Assembly during its 1994 Session. VJJA's Legislative Lobbyist Dave Marsden and DYFS's Legislative Liaison Officer Don Carignan drafted the Resolution, and VJJA's Legislative Committee Chair Chris Nace was instrumental in getting it adopted.

During 1994, the Association's By-Laws were tweaked to reflect the name change, membership status, and change gender-specific references. On the front page of the June *Advocate* (one of three issues published in 1994), Editor Bob Truitt published an open letter from outgoing DYFS Director Charles Kehoe who had learned that he would not be reappointed by the new Governor, George Allen. "To me," Mr. Kehoe wrote, "the term 'public servant' means government at its best."

The 1994 Conference was held November 16-18 at the Sheraton Charlottesville with nationally-known author and speaker Rabbi Edwin H. Friedman giving the keynote address – "A Failure of Nerve: Leadership and Violence in the Age of the Quick Fix." It was attended by Virginia's new Secretary of Public Safety, Jerry Kilgore, and DYFS's new Director, Patricia West. Workshops at the 1994 Conference were: Juvenile Correctional Centers Programming in the 90's; Gangs and Youth Violence; Bringing Humor, Fun, and Balance to Our Work; Stop the Violence/The Fall Out (two skits); Domestic Violence, the Hidden Pain; Recidivism and Multi-Generational Process; Youth Gang Mediation; Juvenile Sex Offenders; Beyond the Mask; and Violence-Disease in the Black Community.

Winners of VJJA's Meritorious Service Awards for 1994 were: Administration – Denise Mullins, Director of the Tidewater Regional Group Home; Community Service – Sheriff Frank Drew of Virginia Beach; Probation – Eddie Fowler, P.O. with the 28<sup>th</sup> District CSU; and Residential Care – Edward Gates, Sr., Outreach Coordinator with the Henrico County Detention Home.

1995 began amidst a public, or at least a political, outcry that the juvenile justice system in Virginia and across the country was too lenient. Probation Counselors in Virginia would become Probation Officers; Learning Centers – Correctional Centers; Aftercare – Parole. "These youth are not your clients," Secretary Kilgore said. "They are offenders. Your clients are the law-abiding citizens of the Commonwealth." Under the conservative leadership of Governor Allen, the pendulum of juvenile justice was swinging to the right.

At VJJA's February 16 Board Meeting, Vice President Lewis Wright submitted the Goals and Objectives Committee Report which they had been working on for the past year. The Report offered the following Mission Statement for VJJA and a new set of goals.

### Mission Statement

The mission of the Virginia Juvenile Justice Association is: to advocate quality services for juveniles and families within the Commonwealth of Virginia, to enhance the professionalism

and skills of its membership. To foster communication among its members, and to promote alternative approaches to resolving youth and family problems.

As the Report noted, the “statement is essentially unchanged from the VJOA mission statement.” The goals, too, were very similar to those developed in 1984, although the objectives for these goals were much more specific.

### Goals

1. To provide for communication with and between the membership.
2. To provide learning opportunities to members on pertinent topics in a timely manner.
3. To research, develop, and present legislative recommendations to the General Assembly and other law and policy setting bodies.
4. To develop alternative communication strategies in order to enhance the relationship between and among related human service organizations and agencies.

As service providers were adjusting to the Comprehensive Services Act, the Virginia Juvenile Community Crime Control Act was being implemented in 1995 to give more local control to juvenile offender programming. In the pages of the August *Advocate*, the forum was entitled “Juveniles: Accountability, public safety, treatment...or what?” In the November issue of the *Advocate*, long time Editor Bob Truitt announced his retirement as Superintendent of the Tidewater Detention Home *and* as Editor of the *Advocate*.



At the September 18 Board Meeting in Virginia Beach, Jim Woolf was introduced as the new Chair of VJJA’s Membership Committee and Scott Warner as the new Chair of the Awards Committee. Even at this late date, DYFS had given VJJA only tentative approval to hold a Fall Conference. A Conference was held, however, December 4-6, 1995 at the Sheraton Park South in Richmond with 176 registrants.

The theme of the 1995 Conference, ‘Conflict in the ‘90’s,’ had as its keynote speaker Geoffrey Canada, author of Fist Stick Knife Gun. The 1995 workshops were: Understanding People; Parent/Child Mediation; Conflict Resolution Skills for Adolescents; Effects of High Conflict Divorce on Children; Staying Afloat in the Sea of Change; Suburban Street Gangs; Competency-Based Residential Care; and Beyond Slogans-Scrutinizing the Abuse Excuse. The Meritorious Service Awards in 1995 went to: Administration – Dave Marsden, Fairfax Detention Home Superintendent; Court Services – Cynthia Duffus, a Family Counselor with the Fairfax CSU; Community Service – Prince William Group Home for Boys; and Residential Care – Esquewie Jones and Claramae Sheffey, with Abraxas House. At the 1995 Awards Ceremony, Vince Picciano, Director of the Fairfax CSU, became the first recipient of the Robert H. Sutton Humanitarian Award. After this conference, her fifth, Institute Planning Committee Chair Diane Floyd turned the reigns over to Co-Chairs Luanne Blair and Tracy Chiles. Ms. Floyd continued to chair the Tidewater District’s yearly Spring Fling.

VJJA began its third decade with 386 members, and ended it with 306. With change in the air for Virginia’s Juvenile Justice System, VJJA sought to be more inclusive in its membership and true to its original mission and goals. The next ten years would offer even more changes and challenges.

*In the next issue of the Advocate, we will present our final installment of the History of the Virginia Juvenile Justice Association, Part 4: 1996-2006.*