

*“How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.” Winnie the Pooh*

Yes, I have chosen to quote a bear as I pen my last article as your President. It has been a wonderful year. I salute our exceptional Board and all those that have worked so diligently. These individuals have organized a highly successful Convention, provided professional development activities every month all over our state, advocated and collaborated for counselors and social justice, and continuously worked behind the scenes on projects to move this organization forward. I have been an active member of VCA for over thirty years, but it was not until my time as President that I developed a true understanding and appreciation for all that goes into running and leading the organization.

In addition to the work of your Board, I want to express gratitude to our lobbyist, Rebecca Bowers-Lanier, for always being ahead of the game and keeping us on track legislatively. She never misses an opportunity to get our members placed on state committees and to get us connected to like-minded organizations for collaborative action. The support that our Director of Member Services & Operations, Vicky Wheeler, offers to each group of incoming officers and to our membership is outstanding. She is a crucial part of VCA who provides consistency and understanding.

VCA is moving forward, we attained our strategic goal of a 5% increase in our membership and our financial foundation is strong. The incoming Board will be led by Dr. Monica Band who has already shown excellence in leadership. As a child I was taught that it was my responsibility to leave things a bit better than I found them. I hope I have been able to do this for VCA.

I would be remiss if I did not move on without leaving you with my traditional challenge. I want to challenge each of you to be involved. VCA represents ALL counselors in ALL settings. It functions best with your involvement. Actions as simple as responding to surveys or attending local activities do make a difference. We are at our best when we work together. I thank you for the honor and privilege of serving you this year and look forward to seeing you in Norfolk at the Convention!

*Linda*