

MML Lifetime Achievement Award

Bruce A. Wahl

Mayor, Chesapeake Beach

Bruce Wahl entered the U.S. Army at age 19 and earned a commission as an Infantry 2nd Lieutenant at age 20. Six months later he was assigned to a tour of duty in Vietnam, where he served first as a training battalion advisor at the Vietnamese Infantry Officers Candidate School, and then as the Officer in Charge of American Forces Vietnam Network detachment in Pleiku. Returning to Virginia from Vietnam in January, 1971, Bruce found a job as the eighteenth employee at a new organization, National Public Radio, where he still works (45 years later!).

In 1985, Bruce moved from Northern Virginia to Chesapeake Beach, Maryland, where he quickly became acquainted with the local elected officials and business leaders. Unlike Fairfax County, this local government was very accessible. Bruce was appointed to the Town's Planning and Zoning Commission in 1988, and then to fill a Town Council vacancy in 1989. He completed that term and was re-elected to the council four times. In 2008, Mayor Gerald Donovan decided not to seek re-election, so Bruce stepped up to run for Mayor. Now in his twenty-eighth year as a volunteer Chesapeake Beach elected official, he is nearing completion of his second mayoral term.

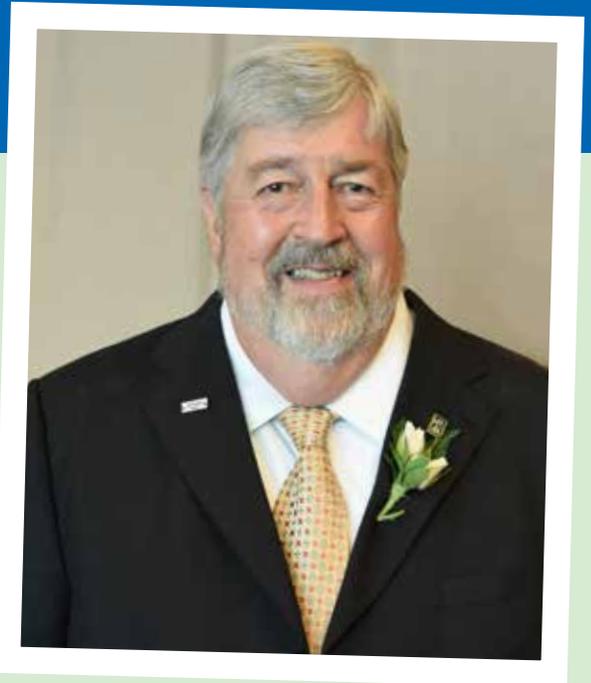
Under Mayor Wahl's leadership, the Town has completed many important projects. These include the completion of a State Highway Administration \$5 million streetscape program, major improvements to the local sports complex, building the Town's third water tower, construction of the Chesapeake Beach Railway Trail, and the subsequent creation of the Chesapeake Beach Oyster Cultivation Society (CBOCS). Other

projects include replacing the Fishing Creek Bridge, adding a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system to monitor the water and sewer infrastructure, and implementing a preventative maintenance program that has eliminated all catastrophic water and sewer failures.

One direct result of the construction of the Chesapeake Beach Railway Trail and the formation and support of CBOCS is a collaborative effort with the Calvert County Public School System that now brings every county fifth grader to the trail twice per year on field trips. Here, the students get hands-on opportunities to see oyster aquaculture, learn about water quality and make their own measurements, and learn how tidal wetlands flush out unwanted nutrients from the water.

During Mayor Wahl's tenure, town special events have included the annual Memorial Day Stars and Stripes Festival, memorializing the ultimate sacrifice made by those in the Armed Forces of the United States. In 2015, this event commemorated the Korean War, with Maryland's First Lady Yumi Hogan as the keynote speaker.

Prior to being elected as MML President in June 2014, Mayor Wahl served on the Board of Directors as a Member-at-Large, and President-Elect. He has been a League Executive Committee member since 2012. Mayor Wahl also served as Chair or Vice Chair of MML's Convention Planning Committee for many years, and was the founding Vice Chair of the Hometown Emergency Preparedness Committee.



Mayor Wahl graduated from the Academy for Excellence in Local Governance in 2002, the second class to do so. When the stewardship of the Academy was transferred to the School of Public Policy at the University of Maryland, an Academy Council composed of Maryland Municipal League members, Maryland Association of Counties members, and University of Maryland faculty was created. Mayor Wahl is a founding member of the Academy Council, and continues to serve in that role. He also is a 2003 graduate of Leadership Maryland.

Mayor Wahl's 28 years as a dedicated volunteer to Chesapeake Beach exemplifies the best in public service and serves as a shining example for others to follow. In recognition of his devotion to the town government and residents of Chesapeake Beach, and for his many years of service to the Maryland Municipal League, Mayor Bruce A. Wahl will receive MML's Lifetime Achievement Award on June 28, 2016 during the League's annual convention in Ocean City. ■