

**A Plea to VA/DC/MD area affiliates  
by ANTD Robert Jackson**

The VA Chess Federation (VCF), Hampton Roads Chess, Capital Area Chess, DMV Chess, Eastern Chess and others. What a wonderful time to be a Virginia Chess player!

There is no shortage of quality tournament opportunities for VA, MD, and DC players. Missing a tournament no longer means you have to wait a couple of months for another opportunity to raise your rating to new heights ... or to tell everyone how you were definitely winning but then your opponent found a move you didn't see, but only because you were really tired.

As a parent of 2 Chess players, I think this is fabulous. However, as an organizer, an employee with another affiliate, and a VCF Board member, I am starting to see a concerning trend among affiliates. I fully understand how difficult it is to find a weekend that is not already taken by another event. However, something even more concerning is the response that is given to fellow affiliates when asked why they ran a tournament right on top of theirs. I would like to give some insight.

Mike Hoffpauir does an amazing job keeping up with the Clearinghouse on the Virginia Chess Federation website (<https://vachess.org/Clearinghouse/Clearhouse.html>). This is a great spot to see if you are conflicting with another affiliate. I use it for every event I run. I do not ever want to compete with other affiliates. However, as someone who runs tournaments in the Richmond area and works in the Hampton Roads Chess scene, we have not gotten the same sentiment from other organizers. We commonly get the same answer from other affiliates when we point out that we already have an event on a particular weekend. "It doesn't matter, you're too far away from us". To clear this up, this is unequivocally false. IT DOES MATTER! In the Hampton Roads/Richmond area, we count on 10-12 players from the Northern Va/Maryland area at our events. That can account for \$1000 or more. When an event in those areas is scheduled on top of ours that number dwindles to almost zero. This can and usually does mean that a tournament we were hoping to make a profit on has turned into a loss. We do not get the turnout that the Northern VA area does. We not only rely on those 10-12 players to attend our tournaments for numbers but also as a way to give our locals a quality tournament as there is tremendous talent coming from that area.

To be clear, the vast majority of affiliates follow the Clearinghouse and are respectful of the other organizers. I am putting this open letter out there to establish understanding among the affiliates who habitually run events on the same weekend as other events that are already listed on the clearinghouse. PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT IT HAS A SERIOUS EFFECT ON OTHERS. We should all work together to keep Chess booming in Virginia!