

**Press Release**  
**Lee Lohman**  
**Appalachian Trail**  
**Virginia Regional Partnership Committee**  
**Volunteer of the Year for 2023**

The Virginia Regional Partnership Committee (RPC), representing the eight Appalachian Trail Clubs in Virginia, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and National Park Service (NPS), recognizes one volunteer each year from Virginia for outstanding contributions to Appalachian Trail (AT) Stewardship. This year, Lee Lohman, President of the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club (TATC), was presented with the Volunteer of the Year Award for 2023 at ATC's Spring Southern Partnership Meeting (SPM) held March 10th-12th, 2023, at the Lake Junaluska Conference Center in North Carolina.



Attending this meeting were representatives from Appalachian Trail Clubs from Virginia to Georgia, Staff from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's (ATC's) Southern Regional Office (SORO) (TN, NC, & GA), Staff from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's (ATC's) Central and Southwest Virginia Regional Office (VARO), ATC Headquarters Staff Members, Members of the United States Forest Service, and Members of the National Park Service.

While Lee was still at the podium, TATC representatives were surprised when Forest Service Rangers from the Glenwood-Pedlar Ranger District of the George Washington & Jefferson National Forests presented TATC with a carved wooden sign in honor of TATC's recent 50th Anniversary.



[Link to more photos](#)

# TATC's Nomination of Lee Lohman as the 2023 Virginia Club A.T. Volunteer of the Year

Submitted by: Ned Kuhns & Jim Sexton, TATC



Lee Lohman has been President of the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club (TATC) for the last two vital years and is entering his third and final term as Club President. His tenure in office in the previous two years turned out to be a fortunate occurrence for TATC, since his talents, strengths, and dedication to the job as Club President couldn't have come at a more critical time in the club's history.

Lee provided the leadership needed to get TATC through the hard COVID times and shutdowns. Due to his efforts, the club is better organized, has more members, and is more financially sound, with volunteer activities surging.

First and foremost, Lee presided over both Board of Directors and Club Membership Meetings in an exemplary fashion.

Over the last two years, Lee has sent out dozens of blast emails to our 1,000 email subscribers, promoting volunteerism and support for the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and our Federal Partners.

Lee keeps our membership informed of current events and engaged through his inciteful 'Prez Sez' articles in the club's bi-monthly newsletters.

TATC was lucky to have Lee leading the club during our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2022. He was an active member of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning Committee.

He arranged for TATC's 50-Year History Book to be added to the Library of Congress's permanent collection. He also distributed copies of the history book to local libraries.

Lee contacted local newspapers so that articles in two newspapers were published about TATC's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Lee supervised fundraising efforts where TATC received over \$13,000 in donations from 2022 to 2023.

Lee also participated as a member of the 2022 Time Capsule Committee, which placed a device celebrating TATC's 50-year history under the floor of the club's cabin.

Lee organized TATC's participation in the last two Winter Wildlife Festivals in Virginia Beach. He also led and/or participated in other outreach events held locally, where TATC set up information tables and display boards.

Lee revamped how TATC sells its promotional logo merchandise; he established and manages a TATC online catalog/store on our club's website. He also arranged to contract with a vendor to produce TATC club merchandise.

Lee has been actively attending and contributing to both VARO and SPM Meetings. He ensured TATC members attended ATCs Volunteer Leadership Meetings to ensure continuity in the club's support of ATC and the trail.

Leading by example, Lee also participated in numerous Local and A.T. maintenance work trips.

He did all this while accomplishing his regular club duties of coordinating and managing; articles, emails, financial plans/budgets, elections, meetings, schedules, publicity, events, insurance, COVID policies, taxes, correspondence, proposals, complaints, agendas, speakers, training, and inter-agency communications.

He also directed or coordinated the following club activities:

- Membership recruitment; TATC's membership has increased by 20% in the last two years.
- Even after TATC spent tens of thousands of dollars for its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events, the clubs' finances, and account balances have never been in better shape.
- TATC completed a 500-tree planting project as part of their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, with Lee participating in almost all of the tree planting events.
- To emphasize and support the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and TATC, 60 free copies of TATC's 50-Year History Book were given to partner organizations and local public and college libraries
- TATC, with Lee's support and direct participation, conducted various outreach events over the last two years with information tables and display boards set up at REI, L.L. Bean, GORP, First Landing State Park, the Virginia Beach Winter Wildlife Festival, the Newport News Fall Festival, the Nelson County Library, and others.
- TATC purchased and has been using online accounting software for the last two years that increased our financial accountability and controls and made budgeting and auditing much more accessible.
- TATC obtained a Google Drive for Non-Profits site, where TATC is now archiving club documents and photos, including; newsletters, meeting minutes, maintenance documents, policy documents, publicity documents, activity sign-up sheets, training documents, the 50-year history book, as well as 4,000+ articles and 4,000+ photos.
- Under Lee's leadership, TATC now has a new group Facebook page.
- TATC purchased equipment and conducted training for an InReach emergency communications network for trail maintenance.

- Now that the central COVID crisis is behind us, TATC is again sponsoring dozens of local trips in the Tidewater area each year in support of trail maintenance, trail construction, and park facility maintenance.
- The number of TATC maintenance trips on the A.T. has also surged in the last year.
- TATC has held a major Day-in-the-Park social activity for the last two years in both the Spring and Fall and plans on continuing this event.
- TATC is once again participating in training activities since COVID, including training for; cross-cut & chainsaw certifications, waterbar construction, map & compass, trip leadership, GPS, and InReach communications.

Lee Lohman represents the essence of leadership needed to manage an A.T. Club and motivate volunteers successfully. This is why TATC wholeheartedly nominates him as the 2023 Virginia Club A.T. Volunteer of the Year.