

TIDEWATER APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Monthly Meeting
August 7, 2024

Members Present:

Bill Bunch, Sandra Canepa, Michelle Cobb, Bruce Davidson, Paul Heymann, Ned Kuhns, Lee Lohman, Mike Martin, Kaci Midgette, Kama Mitchell, Jim Newman, Greg Reck, Sharon Salyer, Peg Seriani, Rich Seriani, Jim Sexton, John Sima, Lelia Vann and Don Williams

Members Absent:

John Barnes, Brittany Collins, Kevin Dubois, Andy Grayson and Greg Hodges

1. **Welcome and Call to Order:** The meeting, with a quorum, was called to order by President Vann at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Proceedings of Previous Meeting:** The July 2024 Board meeting minutes were accepted without amendment.
3. **Finance:** Lelia presented the Treasurer's report for Andy. July's financial trends are basically an extension of June's; with overall spending remaining low and income being about \$350 above those expenses for the month. So, at this point, income is also slightly above expenses for the year. The only account that looks on track to be above its budgeted value is for Affinipay expenses (as was noted a couple of months ago).

Balance: June balance is \$39,049.75. **Current July balance is \$39,404.53.**

4. **Membership:** Sharon Salyer presented the Membership report. June 2024: 357 members. **Current July membership is 327 members.**
 - Jim Sexton: Membership Cleanup.
 - I just finished the most recent long-awaited lapsed membership cleanup and adjusted some records in the WA system.
 - I archived 31 membership records where the membership had lapsed, and which were more than 4 months overdue.
 - I left two records over 4 months overdue for a couple of members who I believe are still active, I will talk to them.
 - I sent out a message to 8 members who are now over two months overdue.
 - I found one record, Rick and Tammy Sylvia, for which membership dues were due in May, but it was marked as being an Access Only record. I changed the membership level to Family—New.
 - We have 11 records that indicate that the membership is either 'Pending Family New' or 'Pending Single New' and these records don't indicate a payment, most from 2023. We need to clear up these records.
 - There is still a lot to clean up, but my best guess is we have around 350 members, counting families. However, when we account for many life members who are no longer around, our actual active membership is probably under 300.
 - I'm thinking we should meet somewhere to discuss membership and plan.

5. Reported/Discussed:

A. Trail Supervisor Report - John Sima, Trail Supervisor

- August 9-11: Swingblade & Lopperfest #3 [Moved to Discussion Section below...](#)
- October 11-13: Fall Backpacking Walk thru
- October 25-27: Fall Maintenance

B. Cabin Report - Gregory Hodges/Kevin DuBois, Cabin Committee

- Gary Fourney (relative of Douglas Putman) donated \$1200 toward the purchase/installation of new wood stove.
- September 13-15: Cabin Maintenance
- November 1-3: Cabin Maintenance [Still needs a volunteer.](#)

C. Local Trails Report - Paul Heymann, Local Trail Supervisor

- Planned for First Landing Live Oak / Cedar Swamp Trails. Subject to change / additions upon request of First Landing State Park.
 - Thursday, August 22, 2024 Kaci Midgette
 - Thursday, September 19, 2024 Paul Heymann
 - Thursday, October 17, 2024 Bob Mooney
 - Thursday, November 21, 2024 Paul Heymann
 - Thursday, December 19, 2024 Dave Plum

D. Safety Report - Bruce Davidson, Safety Committee Chair

[Moved to Discussion Section below...](#)

E. Program Report - Lee Lohman, Program Chair

- August 14 GMM: Guest Speaker - Ned Kuhns on *Hadrian's Wall Path in England*
- September 11 GMM: Guest Speaker - Pam Northam on *Ryan Resilience Lab/Elizabeth River Project*
[NOTE: Our meeting will be at the Resilience Lab and start at 6:30 instead of 7 pm.](#)
- October 9 GMM: Awards Ceremony
- November 13 GMM: Auction
- December tbd: Holiday Party
- January 8: Election
- February 12: Open
- March 12: Budget Presentation

F. Tool Shed Report - Rich Seriani, Tool Boss

- Received Lopperfest #2 tools and supplies from Jim Newman
- Cleaned, sharpened, and lubricated nine shears
- Cleaned, sharpened, and lubricated ten loppers
- Cleaned and oiled the 42" 1-person saw
- Glued hand grips on three Blue Hawk brand loppers and sharpened and lubricated them – these are ready for use
- Cleaned and oiled two shovels, six Rogue Hoes, and two Pulaskis
- Inspected Silky Saws – they all look clean
- Sharpened and lubricated three grass whips
- Sharpened and lubricated ten swing blades, also replaced mounting hardware on nine of these swingblades.
The other one is riveted together.

G. Outreach Report - John Barnes, Outreach Committee Chair/Kaci Midgette, Co-Chair

- October 5-6, Fall-O-Ween Festival (NN Fall Festival): Registration Accepted on 4/18/2024. [Need someone to Lead this event. Jim Newman has agreed to set up the mock AT but cannot lead this event. Kaci has agreed to lead this!](#)
- Potential Events:
 - Great Outdoor Provision Company, tbd
 - REI, tbd
 - FLSP, tbd

H. Education Report

- Education committee has some articles ready for the next newsletter. They will be published in the newsletter via a link for readers to find the articles under the section "Documents/Index of Educational Handouts." The new articles are already posted now before the membership may know of the change. We will be producing new articles every two months in alignment with newsletters. This project will be ongoing for many months.
- Educational Committee Meeting - COVA Brewing August 6th at 10 am.

I. Social Events Report - Sharon Salyer, Social Events Committee Co-Chair

- Nothing to report this month.

J. Volunteer Time Report - Greg Reck, Timekeeper

- Focusing on the fiscal year reports for USFS, NPS and ATC (due by Sept 30). Using data from the previous reporting system from Oct. 2023 through Feb 2024, plus data from the new timekeeping system from March 1 to September 30, 2024.
- Based on the TATC calendar, forms have been submitted for almost all scheduled events (with exception of several Tuesday Group activities). I'll be sending out emails for any 'missing' event forms or missing data on the forms to either the crew leader (if known) or the responsible board member.
- For all remaining Aug and Sept events, please submit reports as soon as possible.

K. Awards Coordinator Report - Jim Newman, Awards Coordinator

- Will schedule a meeting to finalize ordering quantities for TATC and Local Trails awards.
- Jim S. requested approval for the extra 3 Ridges Patch that John Sima had requested. The estimated expenditure of \$200 was approved. We believe that we can fit this purchase into our original 2024 budget for awards.
- When placing orders, Jim N. will order a few extra bottles, patches and caps. This will allow us to get more items at a lower cost.

AT/Blue Ridge Mtn Trails Maintenance Award Count

Golden Pulaski: 3

Caps: 35

T-Shirts: 43 total

M-S: 1

M-M: 10

M-L: 12

M-XL: 10

M-XXL: 1

W-S: 1

W-M: 5

W-L: 2

W-XL: 1

Bottles: 30

Patches: 27

Local Trail Maintenance Award Count

Caps: 17

Water Bottle: 2

T-Shirts: 13 total per below

M M: 1

M L: 5

M XL: 1

M 2X: 1

M 3X: 1

W M: 2

W L: 1

W XL: 1

L. Hikemaster Report - Kaci Midgette, Hikemaster

- 8/21 @ 6:00pm TATC Coffee Break at Cafe Stella.
- Looking for event leaders or event ideas.
- Not highlighting Tuesday Groups event due to the large NUMBER of participants in Tuesday Group.

M. Merchandise Report - Mike Martin, Chair

- \$77 raised in July GMM.
- 2 orders submitted online totaling \$15.
- I expect to add an update on sourcing new merchandise.

N. Newsletter Report - Peg Seriani, Newsletter Editor

- Thanks to everyone who submitted articles for the Aug/Sep Newsletter.
- Oct/Nov will be sent out on October 1st, so the next deadline for articles/photos will be [Monday, September 23rd](#).

O. Webmaster Report - Jim Sexton, Webmaster

- TATC Webmaster – updated the 'Index of Education Handouts' page with 5 updated articles and five presentations. I sent out 11 blast emails since the last Board Meeting.

P. Facebook Report - Bill Bunch, Facebook Master

- 587 folks have now (7/30/2024) joined the Facebook group page.

Q. ATC RPC Report - Ned Kuhns/Jim Sexton, ATC RPC Representative

- Andrew Downs, ATC's Senior Regional Director for the Southern & Virginia AT regions has just announced that he has taken a new position with the New River Foundation. ATC has not announced how or if they will fill his vacancy. VARO Zoom meetings held at 3:00 PM on the first Tuesday of each month will continue to be held to share information of a common interest to the Virginia Clubs.
- The Autumn Virginia Regional Partnership Committee (RPC) meeting will be held on Saturday, 19 October 2024, in Damascus, Virginia. Lelia Vann, Jim Sexton and Ned Kuhns will attend to represent TATC.

R. Counselors Report - Bill Bunch/Sandy Canepa/Jim Newman

- Nothing to report this month.

S. Prez Report - Lelia Vann

- Hog Camp Gap and Tye River/VA-56 Parking Lot Site Visits
 - Thursday, August 29 Site Visit
 - NPS funding dedicated to these two sites in 2026.
 - Jim Sexton will meet with Kathryn Herndon-Powell, et al at Tye River Lot.

6. Approval Requests:

- A. Approved the August GMM Agenda.

7. Discussion Items:

A. Lesson's Learned from Lopperfest #2 - John Sima, Bruce, Kaci, Lelia

- We had 23 attendees with several new people.
- Our new Wilderness Ranger (Michael Lowry) returned and worked with John Sima in the St. Mary's Wilderness.
- Jim Newman provided profiles/mileage of our section of the trail so people could see what sections we were referring to wrt Work Forms.
- We spent time talking with the attendees on Friday night and Saturday morning to find out how they felt and what they felt like working on.
- There was some confusion wrt starting/finishing locations, carpooling, pickup. Do we need to have someone available to better coordinate this???

- Bruce discussed a safety concern about “dropping off and picking up” trail maintenance volunteers without vehicles who could potentially be accidentally stranded due to lack of communication. If the driver doesn’t have an InReach, they will not know what is going on if the trail maintenance hiker becomes delayed.

Safety wrt InReaches -Bruce

- My personal Garmin account bill had an additional \$15.10 charge that was not expected. This added expense is due to numerous messages sent to my InReach during the June Lopperfest.
- So, in future maintenance events I will have everyone send a message during the morning safety briefing only.
- We will eliminate the lunchtime message.
- This will cut down the number of messages sent to Andy’s InReach, My InReach, plus others receiving messages!
- Bruce said all InReaches are ready for Lopperfest #3.

B. Lopperfest #3 - John Sima, Bruce Davidson (safety), Rich (toolboss)

- Are we ready for Lopperfest #3 next weekend? 13 people have signed up as of 7/31. -14 participants signed up as of 8/7.
- Our Lopperfest #3 is listed in the A.T. Volunteer Opportunities - August 2024 by Jessie Johnson/ATC. Bill Bunch will follow by posing it on our TATC FB page. Thanks Bill!
- We will return to Sherando CCC Kitchen. Jim N. will bring stove/grill. Lelia will pick up local fresh eggs and provide an omelet breakfast on Sunday.
- InReaches are active and ready to go for Lopperfest 3. As mentioned above, will eliminate the lunchtime message.

-Status of First aid kits

- 8 kits are ready (1 per crew)
- Lee recommended that we put out 1 or more first aid kits with their contents displayed at the next GMM so people can see what is in them.

-Tools: This might be for the discussion:

- It looked like seven the swingblades were not used, based on the condition of the blades. I’m considering ways to clearly identify tools that aren’t used to help me judge what needs to go through the cleaning/sharpening/lubricating process after the trail maintenance events.
- I need to glue the grips on the extendable Craftsman shears after Lopperfest #3.
- I’m replacing the hardware that secures the blades to the swingblade handles ¼-20 stainless steel hex head screws, stainless steel self-locking hex nuts, and stainless-steel washers to make them all uniform. I’ll do the remaining seven swingblades as they are used and need sharpening, or over the winter, whichever comes first.

TATC Board July 3, 2024

Action 2: Bruce Davidson agreed to research whether ATC issued Coveralls found in Tool Shed should be worn during any privy cleaning activity at AT and/or Cabin. -NO ACTION REQUIRED.

C. Maupin Field Shelter

- Pete Burch met with FS on July 22 to discuss potentially having an SST privy (like privy at CCC Kitchen) instead of a moldering privy since we have fire road access to Maupin Field.
- FS mentioned not wanting to see the privy from the trail. Pete's thinking, we could move the trail.
- While there, Pete was asked what other improvements we would like for this area. They suggested a porch for the shelter. I'm thinking we may want to add another shelter since this area is used by many on the weekends. We should design/layout what we'd like to have, i.e. more pea graveled tent sites. New fire rings. Additional bear boxes and/or bear poles/lines, etc.
- Form an ad hoc committee to design/layout a design. -form subcommittee to gather ideas.

D. Membership

- Should we form an ad hoc Membership Planning Committee? -Don suggested rearranging the TATC website to put the most used items upfront and add more graphics. Bill, Jim Sexton, Kaci and Lelia volunteered to be on the committee.

TATC Board July 3, 2024

Action 1: Board Members: More discussion needed around our membership numbers – we need to analyze the numbers to better understand them. We talked about having a membership drive, but some thought we needed to have more activities on our calendar first to attract new members. We need to link this with our Outreach efforts. We talked about writing News/Press Releases whenever we have an Event of notice that we push out to Pilot/local newspapers, WHRO/local news stations, etc.

E. Other Awards

-Suggestion(s): Michelle Cobb

-ATC 25 years (Silver) and 50 Years (Gold) - due first week in February

F. Books in Shelters

-Per guidance from ATC, our Ridgerunner, Evan Brown, has been removing books that have been left in the shelters for others to read. We have a member that leaves her used books in hiker boxes at hostels or pack stores. Some hikers will pick up these books and leave them in shelters so others can read them. She is concerned that Evan has just thrown these books away. I asked Kathryn Herndon-Powell, our ATC Regional Manager, if ATC has a policy about this. They do not. She said it was up to each trail club. Should we make a policy so our ridgerunner knows how to handle books? -After discussion, the consensus was that nothing should be left in the shelters. Anything found left will have to be removed.

G. Deceased members – protocol for posting obituaries

- website – post obituary

- newsletter – include obituary in the next newsletter issue, if the person was a distinguished member who led past TATC events.

Reported Later:

- August 2024 GMM had 63 people in attendance

Adjournment: President Vann adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.