

TIDEWATER APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Monthly Meeting
January 2, 2025

Members Present:

Bill Bunch, Lon Carpenter, Bruce Davidson, Paul Heymann, Lee Lohman, Mike Martin, Kama Mitchell, Jim Newman, Greg Reck, Peg Seriani, Rich Seriani, Jim Sexton, John Sima, Lelia Vann and Don Williams

Members Absent:

Sandra Canepa, Brittany Collins, Catherine Fowler, Andy Grayson, Greg Hodges, Ned Kuhns, Kaci Midgette and Sharon Salyer

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 December 2024 Board meeting minutes were accepted without amendment.
3. **Finance Report - Andy Grayson, Treasurer:** Lelia presented the Treasurer's report. Our December financials show the club continuing to be in good overall financial condition. I'm still projecting us coming in on track at the end of the fiscal year. I've begun working on the budget trends over the last three years, and should be able to share that with Lelia (and the Board) in January.
Balance: November balance was \$38,318.47. **Current December balance is \$38,622.43.**
ACTION ITEM-Andy will develop the draft 2025 Budget, send to Board for review, and present draft Budget to present at February GMM to the Board at the February Board meeting.
ACTION ITEM-Lelia will coordinate the Budget Audit date and location.
-Lelia read aloud a thank you letter with a \$25 gift card from a father and son that Bill Bunch helped drive back to their vehicle during the last Fall Maintenance event.
4. **Membership Report - Sharon Salyer/Kama Mitchell, Membership:** Kama presented the Membership report. November 2024: 434 members. **Current December membership is 420 members.**
5. **Lightning Round Reported:**
 - A. Trail Supervisor Report - John Sima, Trail Supervisor**
 - March 28-30: Sherando Cleanup Day
 - April 11-13: Spring Backpacking AT Walk-Thru
 - April 25-27: Spring AT Maintenance (Williams Branch)
 - June 20-22: Swingblade & Lopperfest #1 (CCC Kitchen)
 - July 18-20: Swingblade & Lopperfest #2 (CCC Kitchen)
 - August 22-24: Swingblade & Lopperfest #3 (CCC Kitchen)
 - October 10-12: Fall Backpacking AT Walk-Thru
 - October 24-26: Fall AT Maintenance (Williams Branch)
 - B. Cabin Report - Gregory Hodges, Cabin Committee Chair**
 - Greg and his father made wood base for the plaque to memorialize Susan Fourney and the contribution made in her name for the stove.
 - C. Local Trails Report - Paul Heymann, Local Trail Supervisor**
Planned 2025 TATC Local Trail Maintenance First Landing State Park - Live Oak/Cedar Swamp Trails. Subject to changes upon request of FLSP.
 - Saturday, January 18, 2025: Bill Bunch
 - Saturday, February 15, 2025: Paul Heymann
 - Saturday, March 15, 2025: Greg Reck & Lelia Vann
 - Thursday, April 17, 2025: Bob Mooney
 - Thursday, May 22, 2025: Kaci Midgette

- Thursday, June 12, 2025: Dave Plum
- Thursday, July 10, 2025: Lee Lohman
- Thursday, August 14, 2025: Jim Sexton
- Thursday, September 18, 2025: Kaci Midgette
- Thursday, October 16, 2025: Jim Sexton
- Saturday, November 15, 2025: John Iglodi
- Thursday, December 11, 2025: Paul Heymann

-Discussed adding the PPE required (i.e. safety glasses / gloves) into the calendar descriptions for local trails maintenance events.

D. Safety Report - Bruce Davidson, Safety Committee Chair

-See "PPE Requirements Recommendation " under Discussion.

E. Tool Shed Report - Rich Seriani, Tool Boss

-Returned more tools from the Fall Maintenance

- 6 Shears
- 1 Long Red Handle Lopper (never used)
- 2 short silver handle loppers
- 3 titanium Fiskars
- 1 short regular Fiskars
- Privy Cleaning brushes
- Two 5-gallon buckets

-Filed thirteen Pulaski hoe and axe ends and oiled the metal

-Oiled the Pulaski leather sheaths

-I'm taking two Pulaskis out of service because of damaged handles. They're marked with red tape.

-See "Tool Inventory 20250101.xlsx - Google Sheets.html" attached

-See "Concern re: Pulaski Condition After AT Maintenance Events" under Discussion

-Discussed needing to include a count of the chain saws, inReaches and Sherando tools in the inventory list.

F. Program Report - Lee Lohman, Program Chair

-January 8: TATC Election - Lee Lohman/TATC Nomination Committee Chair

-February 12: Guest Speaker - Kalen Gilliam/FLSP Maintenance Ranger re: Volunteer Maintenance Groups that can do work in park w/o Ranger supervision

-March 12: Budget Presentation - Andy Grayson/TATC Treasurer

-April 9: Guest Speaker - Sherri McQueen on Kayaking

-May 14: Guest Speaker - Lance Deaver/resident EMT: Severe Wound Management

-June 11: Guest Speaker - Don Williams/TATC Education Chair: Food on the Trail (description of foods and cooking methods useful on the trail --not car camping)

-July 9: vacant

-August 13: Guest Speaker - Dr. Richard Wittecar: Formation and Legacy of the Chesapeake Bay Impact Crater

-September 10: Guest Speaker - Ned Kuhns: Part II of Hadrian Wall

-October 8: TATC Awards Ceremony - Jim Newman/Awards Coordinator

-November 12: Silent Auction

-December tbd: Holiday Party - tbd

G. Outreach Report - Kaci Midgette, Outreach Committee Chair/Lon Carpenter, Co-Chair

- January 25: 2025 Winter Wildlife Festival - Kaci registered and we have been accepted. Volunteers filled.

- Waynesboro's HikerFest

- Devil's Backbone, if they have any events that we can have a table

- Norfolk PrideFest '25

- I will be reaching out to SkiBarn to see if they would host us for a tabling event, seems like cold weather would be a busy time for them.

-I think we should discuss participating in the 2025 Grand Illumination Parade - exposure is important.

-See "Approval for Kaci Midgett as Outreach Chair and Lon Carpenter as Outreach Co-chair"

H. Education Report - Don Williams, Education Committee Chair

- We will be producing new articles every two months in alignment with newsletters. This project will be ongoing for many months. I also invited new members to join the committee since some members' interests have moved on for the last two cycles of articles. Nobody has contacted me yet, but this time of year is disrupted. I hope to get some interest at the January GMM.
- I posted my plans for the 2nd Backpacker 101 trip. It will be in late April to False Cape State Park. I will also have Backpacker 101 prep trips on the Southside and Peninsula a few weeks ahead of the main event. See the club calendar.

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

- See ["Holiday Party Lesson Learned" under Discussion](#)

J. Volunteer Time Report - Greg Reck, Timekeeper

- Met with Jim Newman, Jim Sexton and Lelia Vann to discuss the schedules for the TATC and ATC/APPA awards programs and to set target dates for providing the TATC volunteer hours data needed to support those programs.
- See ["Timekeeping Meeting 12-17-2024.pdf" attached](#)
- The timekeeper will provide hours data for the following periods to Jim Sexton by June 22, 2025:
 - AT Awards and Local Awards: June 11, 2024, through June 15, 2025
 - Cabin Awards: April 19, 2024, through June 15, 2025
 - Leadership/Service Awards: February 1, 2024, through June 15, 2025
- Final submission of volunteer hours to ATC by Lelia Vann will be no later than June 30, 2025.
- The timekeeper will provide the TATC editor a brief description of the timekeeping forms (on an annual basis) and list the total number of hours submitted for each form for the past fiscal year 2024 (Oct. 1, 2023 – Sept. 30, 2024).
- The annual volunteer reports to ATC and to the USFS will continue to span the federal fiscal year. These reports require much more detailed information than only the volunteer hours, but the timekeeping forms have been constructed to provide almost all the information requested on the federal forms.

K. Awards Coordinator Report - Jim Newman, Awards Coordinator

- Current left-overs:
 - 2 ATC Vests
 - 4 ATC caps
 - 2 ATC pins
 - 98 ATC stickers
 - 14 TATC T-shirts
 - 1 TATC AT cap
 - 12 Water bottles
 - 1 TATC local trails T-Shirt
 - 2 TATC local trails cap
- I will keep all these items safely in my truck until springtime deadline for claiming. Will be present for next week's GMM

L. Hikemaster Report - Kaci Midgette, Hikemaster

- Always looking for event leaders and/or event ideas
- Continuing to "Not" highlight Tuesday Groups events because the # of participants are consistently hitting their limit.

M. Merchandise Report - Mike Martin, Chair

- See Mike's ["Merchandise Inventory..." under Discussion](#).
- Owe Andy Grayson \$20 for TATC card purchase this month.

N. Newsletter Report - Peg Seriani, Newsletter Editor

-Feb/Mar will be sent out on February 1st, so the next deadline for articles/photos will be **Saturday, January 25th**.

O. Webmaster Report - Jim Sexton, Webmaster

- Sent out seven blast emails.
- Made six posts on the TATC Facebook page.
- Posted link on the website for the TATC Holiday Party.
- Had Andy switch the credit card information used to pay the \$1,512.00 yearly fee for Wild Apricot, which is next due on 01/11/2024, from my credit card to the club's credit card.
- Working on an Intro to Trail Maintenance field book to be used during a two-hour training session.
- Archived twenty (20) records for long overdue lapsed members.
- Need to give Kaci the TATC business cards and notecards for the Winter Wildlife Festival.
- Had lunch with Bill Rogers and gave him his vest for volunteering on the A.T., need to return extra vest to Jim Newman.
- Sent Sharon a list of twelve members whose invoices had not yet shown as being paid. She is contacting these members.
- Continue to work on plans for scheduling additional club events in 2025.
- Met with Lelia Vann, Greg Reck, and Jim Newman to discuss Timekeeping.
- Need to finalize USFS and NPS contact information after the next VARO meeting for the TATC Injury Packets.
- I attended the December VARO Meeting.
- I attended the December TATC Board Meeting.
- Sent email to Plinio Beres re: AT Volunteer Injury Packet contact info for USFS Ranger District Office Contact and NPS Park Unit Emergency Contact.

P. Facebook Report - Bill Bunch, Facebook Master

- There are now 698 that have joined our group page as of 1/1/2025 up from 672 last meeting.
- 37 participants in the First Day Hike at FLSP.

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

- An ATC Volunteer Leadership Meeting (VLM) is scheduled for August 15 - 17, 2025. TATC can have two attendees funded by ATC. Our club able to send more attendees if we fund their attendance. ATC has requested one experienced leader and one new leader with potential for the future. I recommend that Lelia and Kaci fill the two ATC funded attendee positions. I recommend that TATC pay for Greg Reck to also attend the VLM to gain experience for the future.
- The 2025 Southern Partnership Meeting (SPM) and spring Virginia Regional Partnership Committee (RPC) Meeting is scheduled for March 21 - 23, 2025 at the Blowing Rock Conference Center in NC. We will be receiving additional information in the new year.

R. Nomination Committee - Lee Lohmann, Chair

2025 TATC Elections: Nomination Committee - Lee Lohman/Chair, Bill Bunch, Cecil Salyer

- President: Lelia Vann, Vice President: Jim Sexton, Treasurer: Andy Grayson, Secretary: Peg Seriani, Trail Supervisor: John Sima, Asst Trail Supervisor: Kaci Midgette, Counselor (rotating 3-year Term): Chris Butler
- Sent out an email blast of the slate of candidates. Nominations can be accepted from the floor at the GMM.

S. Membership Committee - Bill Bunch, Chair

- Meeting held on 1/1/2025 prior to HHH at Bold Mariner.
- See "[Activity Scheduling & Sponsorship for Local Events in 2025](#)" under Discussion

T. Prez Report - Lelia Vann

- Submitted 2025 AT Hall of Fame nomination form for Bill Rogers on 12/15/2024
- Met w/Jim Sexton, Jim Newman, and Greg Reck to establish the cutoff date for 2025 Awards. This date is June 15, 2025. My submittal date to ATC will be NLT June 30, 2025. We plan to submit Reese Lukei for the ATC Gold Award (50 years of membership). Jim Sexton pulled the list of all members that qualify for the ATC

Silver Award (25 years of membership). And he researched what needs to be done to allow TATC to submit members for the Presidential Lifetime Service Awards for volunteer work on AT, Local, Leadership, Service and Cabin events.

- Greg Hodges has said he will be the Cabin Chair for 2025. Please let me know if you know ANYONE interested in helping him out as the Cabin Co-chair.
- Lee Lohman is passing the Program torch. Paul Heymann has agreed to take the torch as Program Chair for 2025 and 2026. Please join me in thanking him for taking on this extra assignment.
- Kaci Midgette, Cathrine Fowler, and I plan to attend the ATC Volunteer Leadership Meeting (VLM) on August 15-17, 2025. If anyone else is interested, please let me know.
- We (Greg, Bridgett, and I) plan to lead a Hasty Hiking event on Saturday, January 11, (12th rain date) at FLSP and we plan to host the "For Hikers and Jazz Lovers" at Delaware Water Gap again the weekend of May 16th.

6. Approval Requests:

- A. Approved Kaci Midgette as the Outreach Chair**
- B. Approved Lon Carpenter as the Outreach Co-Chair**
- C. Approved the January 8, 2025, GMM Agenda** See "[Draft 1-8-25GMMAgenda](#)"
- D. Approved Registering as a Non-Profit to submit requests for TATC Presidential Lifetime Service Awards - Jim Sexton**

7. Discussion Items:

A. Donations and Bequests - Jim Sexton

- See "[Donations to the Tidewater Appalachian Trail Club](#)" and "[Gift from Will or Trust to TATC - Legacy Confirmation Form](#)" attached.
- Back in 2022, Lee had looked into TATC accepting Bequests. At that time, he found it was a complicated process to register with the state of Virginia, make TATC Tax Exempt and would have required TATC to adopt a complex accounting system. However, it now appears there is an exemption that TATC may be able to apply for.
- ACTION ITEM**-Lee will meet with Mal to discuss the feasibility of this exemption option.
- ACTION ITEM**-Lee will review the Bequest Form document from Jim S.

B. Activity Scheduling and Sponsorship for Local Events in 2025 - Jim Sexton

- See "[TATC Planning](#)", "[TATC Event Planning](#)" and "[TATC Monthly Schedule](#)" attached.
- This past year there were few calendar activities on weekends. The BOD would like to schedule in advance hikes and events for the year to help increase interest in the club and club membership.

The scheduling process Jim proposed would work as follows:

- A blast email will be sent out to 42 club members who are either on the TATC Board and/or have led TATC events in the past. TATC is asking them to use the following link to go to SignUpGenius and sign up as an event leader in the next seven days for one or more of the fourteen proposed TATC events listed for the next 3 months.
- Link to Event Leader Sign Ups: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F45A5AE29A1F5C61-54145894-tatc>
- Once a club member agrees to lead an event, it will be included on the online club calendar, and listed in the club newsletter. Activity sign-up sheets will also be posted for the events at general membership meetings.
- The event leader will be responsible for making any (non-monetary) reservations needed for group events, such as restaurant reservations.
- Both the event leaders and the assistant event leaders will accumulate hours for TATC leadership awards for any event they lead.
- The SignUpGenius sign up requests will also allow for volunteers to sign up as Assistant Event Leaders. If the Event Leader cannot unexpectedly lead the event, the Assistant Event Leader is expected to lead the event.

- Starting on March 1st and for every month thereafter, another email request will be sent out to the potential list of event leaders, asking them to lead events that are being proposed to be held starting in the third month being scheduled into the future.
- If no one volunteers to lead some of the proposed events within seven days of the SignUpGenius request being sent out, then one more email will be sent out that includes a follow up request asking for event leaders. If no one still does not volunteer to lead an event within three days of the follow up requests, then the event will not be added to the club schedule.
- If a volunteer wants to sponsor a different event on the same date as an event listed in the SignUpGenius request, for which there is yet not an event leader assigned, then they can just sign up for the event slot listed on that date anyways, and then email the Hikemaster at hikemaster@tidewateratc.com, asking that the event for that date be retitled to reflect the desired event to be scheduled, and if needed, ask for different timeframes for the event on that same date.
- Any club member can still request that other events be scheduled by emailing the Hikemaster. However, they shouldn't try to schedule an event in the Tidewater area on the same day as another similar event is being held in the area. They should only schedule events on the same days as other events, when the events are targeting different interest groups.
- The Hikemaster will add scheduled events which have leaders assigned to the club calendar. The Hikemaster will include the title of the event on the calendar, the date(s) and time(s) for the event, the POC information for the Event Leader and Assistant Event Leader, and a very brief description of the event. Event leaders should provide the Hikemaster with any additional verbiage and information that they want included in the club calendar, on Facebook, on Meetup, or in the club newsletter for their scheduled events. One common addition to local events is the identification of some place to eat out after the event.
- The Hikemaster will send out blast emails every two-weeks announcing upcoming events for the next two-month period. You can always contact the Hikemaster at hikemaster@tidewateratc.com if you want additional blast emails sent out.
- Club members will still be able to sign-up to participate in events by signing the activity sign-up sheets at the club meetings, but TATC will also be using SignUpGenius for most sign-ups. Once you sign up to lead an event, the Hikemaster will ask you how you want your event listed and if it should appear on our Facebook and/or Meetup sites.
- Only meetings, maintenance events, and events requiring registration/reservations will be listed on the club calendar for a period that is more than three months in advance.

-The BOD agreed in general with Jim S. events/activities approach.

ACTION ITEM-Jim will announce this new approach to events/activities at the upcoming January GMM.

-Discussed "rating" the event's level of difficulty (i.e. how strenuous) in the event calendar descriptions.

-Event leads can limit group size and set restrictions.

-Kayak events may be added when we find a knowledgeable TATC kayak leader.

C. Movie Offer -Lee

-The producer for the new movie "Granite Rapids Moon" would like to offer up the Norfolk premiere of his movie as a fundraiser for TATC possibly at Naro Cinema in early May.

-If approved, TATC would encourage members to attend the premiere and TATC would get a percentage of the ticket sales.

-The BOD agreed to move forward with the movie offer proposal and gather more information.

ACTION ITEM-Lee will meet with Mal to vet this proposal. Then he plans to propose the event to members at the February GMM.

D. Merchandise Inventory Report and Purchase Plan/Budget - Mike Martin

- 1 online order this month (to date).
- Please see attached listing of in-stock merchandise. MerchandiseInventory.pdf

Summary of online merch orders July 2023 - Dec 2024:

	Online	GMM
T-shirts	3	34
Polos	1	26
Hats	2	1
Fleeces	1	
Patches	6	1
Stickers	2	5
Tote	1	1
Key fob	3	1
Beanie	1	
Lanyard		1
Can Cozies		12
Cards		30

Summary of received merch surveys:

	High	Medium	Low
T-shirts	5	1	
Polos	1	2	
Sweatshirts	2	2	1
Hats	3	3	
Fleeces	2		2
Patches			3
Stickers	1	1	1

- Based on Michelle Cobb's recommendation of 4imprint, I have sent an email to our Account Rep, Kylie McCarthy, introducing myself and asking for some time to discuss options going ahead.

-Discussed online orders are low compared to GMM sales.

ACTION ITEM-Mike will check with the printer to see what the minimum buys will be for T-Shirts and Polos.

ACTION ITEM-Jim S. will contact Michelle Cobb for status on the MauHar Loop Trail Maintenance patch, so that the cost of the patch can be incurred before the end of the 2024 FY.

ACTION ITEM-Jim S. agreed to work with Mike on Google survey form for merchandise for blast email to members.

E. Concern re: Pulaski Condition After AT Maintenance Events - Rich/Toolboss

-I found that many of the Pulaski axe ends were badly dinged and chipped. I ended up blunting and reforming at least two of the axes to get a good bevel and edge on them. I think we need to include a brief "how to use a Pulaski" discussion when John gives his Maintenance Safety Brief. Or maybe a "how not to use a Pulaski" would be better.

-Cleaned, sharpened, and lubricated six hedge shears that were used during the Fall Maintenance

F. Lesson's Learned for Holiday Party - Catherine, Sharon, Lelia

From Sharon:

"I think everyone would agree that the Holiday Party was a huge success. Of course, the food was terrific and plentiful as in previous years, but thanks to Catherine, the venue, decorations, and entertainment surpassed

anything that we've ever had in my memory. Attendance was slightly down from 60 some last year to 52. This may have been due to a conflict with the Friends of Back Bay party that I believe several of our members attended. In any event, the hall was pretty much at critical mass, and I don't know how we could have squeezed in many more guests. The volunteers were amazing as usual and kept the tables well stocked, neat, and tidy. I didn't stick around for the entire clean-up, but it looked like everything was under control, however I think that Dan cleaned up more dirt and dust bunnies than we created. I hope the management is impressed! I have sent our proceeds to Andy via Zelle. So, I believe all is complete on my end."

From Catherine:

- The holiday party was a success as Sharon previously stated.
- There is no need for too much of a change.
- The potluck provided everyone with a myriad of delicious food to choose from.
- Just a thought, continue the potluck but assign dishes according to the letter of your last name.
- The Sign-Up Genius was added this year (thanks Jim) so people could sign up to volunteer at the party. I think that should continue.
- Next year I hope we can have people RSVP to the party by using Signup Genius (just like Lelia is doing for the Hasty Hike).
- If the same venue is used, then better directions are needed.
- The budget is small for the holiday party, so next year may look a lot different. I don't think I can get another free band, but I have a couple of ideas: acoustic guitar player or a DJ.
- Change the date so there will not be a conflict with Back Bay. Maybe have the party on a weekday or later in the month. I will be honest, my daughter flies in for my birthday almost every year; therefore, the weekend around December 9 is usually not good for me.

From Lelia:

The TATC Board made an agreement many years ago that there would be no prayer given at TATC events. This is a reminder to everyone holding a TATC event in the future.

G. Focused Events for recent Sawyer A Cert - John Sima, Paul, Jim Sexton, Andy

-The BOD agreed that holding focused events for recent Sawyer A certs was positive. Jim S., Jim N., Don, Andy, and John (current Sawyers) are willing to lead the focused events.

-Discussed incorporating ax practice into maintenance events.

ACTION ITEM-Lee and Paul will talk with FLSP prior to January GMM about being allowed to use an ax to cut downed trees during FLSP maintenance events.

H. PPE Requirements Recommendation - Bruce Davidson, Kaci Midgett, Greg Reck

Safety and PPE - The safety committee recommends the following use of PPE on all events, including local:

-Safety glasses shall be worn while performing maintenance tasks. This is in keeping with practices suggested by the ATC. Ultimately, the crew leader is in charge. The use of sturdy hiking boots is strongly suggested.

-When performing tasks using a crosscut saw; safety glasses, leather gloves, sturdy hiking boots, and hard hats shall be worn at all times. The certified sawyer in charge of the group is a well-trained sawyer and has command of the entire operation. This person is in charge with seeing that everyone has appropriate PPE.

-The BOD agreed in general with Bruce's PPE requirements with the additional requirement of having a Sawyer cert for any sawing over 5" diameter. The BOD also agreed that these requirements should be included for AT, Local, and Cabin Maintenance.

ACTION ITEM-Bruce will rewrite/update the above recommendation for the BOD's approval at the March BOD meeting.

Reported Later:

- January 2025 GMM had 35 people in attendance.

Adjournment: President Vann adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.