

Virginia Creeper Trail Club Meeting  
April 25, 2012 7pm  
Washington County Public Library

Present: Olivia Bailey, Carolyn Barry, Charles Barry, Tom Boyle, Emily Camer, Jane Caldwell, W.J. Cober, I. B. Dent, Lawrence Dye, Link Elmore, Eleanor Grasselli, Larry Harrison, Jim Hayden, Bob Horsch, George Kelley, Doug Levin, Chris Lindeman, Steve Lindeman, Mary Moffatt, Anne Maio, Debbie Meade, Sharon Miller, Wayne Miller, Anna Sherrill, Jack Sklepowicz, Debbie Stern, Jeff VanCleaf

VCTC President Wayne Miller called the meeting to order at 7pm.

The minutes of the March 28, 2012 were approved with one correction: the status of the Damascus Library was changed to indicate that construction is well underway. Tom Boyle motioned for approval, Link Elmore seconded.

**President's Report—Wayne Miller**

Wayne thanked those who volunteered at the Trail cleanup and Earth Day. He also discussed the interview and video that Jack Murray made of Lawrence Dye; the story is scheduled to be published in the July issue of Blue Ridge Outdoors magazine. Wayne reported that he accompanied Lawrence and Mr. Murray on a VCT bike ride.

**Vice President's Report—Eliot Cannon**

Eliot Cannon was unable to attend tonight's meeting – no VP report.

**Treasurer's Report—Greg Meade**

Greg Meade was unable to attend tonight's meeting but provided a financial report for review. The total VCTC assets were \$35,540.29 as of March 31, 2012.

**Membership Committee—Chris Sullivan**

Chris Sullivan was unable to attend tonight's meeting but Wayne reported that there are about 200 members.

**Construction—**

Bob Horsch, Roger Reynolds, and Wayne Miller scoped out the preparation work required prior to starting the painting of Green Cove Station.

**Events—Chris Lindeman**

Chris reviewed the 2012 events calendar and asked for volunteers to sign up for Trail Days (May 19) and Plumb Alley Day (May 26). She also reported on the bike raffle planned for Plumb Alley Day and proceeds from Earth Day.

**Publicity & Website Updates – Link Elmore**

Link reported that there were over 2,500 visits to the club website during the past month. Of those, about 80% were new visitors.

**Nominating Committee –**

Wayne reported that they need to begin recruiting 2013 officers.

**State of the Trail—Lawrence Dye**

Lawrence "the Legend" Dye reported that work by the USFS is just getting underway. To date, he has ridden 2,170 miles and 13 round trips so far this year and 167,370 total miles and 1,798 round trips.

**Trail Advisory Board –** No report.

### **Town of Abingdon**

Kevin Worley was not present but Wayne reported that the Town had selected a design for Trestle 7 replacement that is estimated to cost \$1.4 million. They are currently taking bids from engineering firms for the detailed engineering. The Town hopes to start construction this fall but anticipated completion would be late 2013.

### **Town of Damascus**

Anne Maio reported that 48 students from the Evergreen School are scheduled to work on VCT service projects on May 30, along with a camp-out and bike ride on the trail. Planned projects include building short trails to several benches, clearing weeds and planting grass seed. The students will be divided into groups with the USFS and Mt. Rogers Appalachian Trail Club supervising many of them, but she asked for additional volunteers to help out.

Anna Sherrill, Appalachian Trail Ambassador for Damascus, asked if someone from the VCTC would be interested in making a presentation on the VCT at an event held by CGI in Lebanon, VA. The event is planned sometime in late May for their summer interns and employees to highlight outdoor activities of interest in the region. She also shared that Abingdon just received recognition as an Appalachian Trail Community.

### **USFS—W.J. Cober**

W.J. reported on the work planned at White Top Station and Green Cove Station this summer. Projects include improving water drainage and cleaning ditch lines to help alleviate rutting on the VCT. He also mentioned Steven Rainey's project to improve trestle approaches.

**Trail Neighbors** – No report.

### **Program**

Wayne introduced Dr. Twange Kasoma and her students in the Reporting, Writing and Editing class at Emory & Henry College. Dr. Kasoma discussed her students' assignment to collect oral history from individuals associated with the VCT. The students took photographs and their interviews were captured on video. A video presentation was shown at tonight's meeting that captured highlights from the interviews. The VCTC will receive a DVD and transcripts of interviews for the club website and newsletter, and to submit with the grant report as proof of work completed. Each student stood before the meeting attendees to share a brief summary of their interviews:

- Mark Robertson: Charles Seaver, who discussed work with the Historical Society and time spent restoring old locomotives and train stations.
- Evan Williamson: Beth Merz of the Mt. Rogers recreation area.
- Olivia Bailey: Senator Rick Boucher, on securing State and Federal funding for implementation of the trail.
- Jacob Lishen: Bruce Wankel, owner of the local fly fishing shop, who discussed how the trail impacted the local business community.
- Wes Polly: Eleanor Grasselli, who recalled memories when she and her brother walked the tracks in the days when the train was still active.
- Megan McMillen: Dr. Mel Heiman, who was instrumental in getting the trail started and still visits often.
- Consuela Perry: Tom Taylor, former director of Mt. Rogers.
- Emily Carrier: Al Bradley, Abingdon Town planner at the time of trail implementation.
- Sarah Goldwasser: Ed Morgan, Mayor of Abingdon, discussed the impact of the trail on local tourism.
- Keran Billand: Lawrence Dye, who discussed history of the trail and perspectives from an athlete.
- Becky Sharkey: French Moore
- Cat Richardson: Tom Horsch
- Drew Piscopo: Bob Horsch

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Stern, VCTC secretary