

Virginia Creeper Trail Club Meeting
August 27, 2014
Washington County Public Library

Present: Tom Boyle, John Brenner, Patty Brenner, Gerry Davis, Mary Davis, Janice Donovan, Myrl Dunham, Lawrence Dye, Eleanor Grasselli, Gerry Henninger, Bob Horsch, George Kilgore, Yvonne Koncsol, Chris Lindeman, Anne Maio, Wayne Miller, Debbie Stern, Jeff VanCleaf

Guests: Phil Hoffer, Donny Necessacy, Dennis Sanders, Laura Spence, George Young

VCTC President Wayne Miller called the meeting to order at 6:59pm.

President's Report—Wayne Miller

- A big thanks to Debbie Stern for the excellent work on the VCTC Newsletter.
- The August 2nd event "Ride with the Legend" was a success. Forty riders participated in this Virginia Highlands Festival event. Chris Lindeman raised funds through merchandise sales and new memberships.
- The August 3rd celebration of Green Cove Station 100th Birthday was well attended under perfect weather and included a performance, albeit tardy, by legendary musician Wayne Henderson.
- VCT user Betty Roberts passed away and asked memorials be donated to the VCTC. On behalf of the VCTC, Amy and Chris Sullivan send acknowledgement letters to all donors.
- The ElderSpirit Community has purchased a park bench to honor all VCT volunteers. Bob Horsch will lead the effort next week to install the bench.
- Lawrence "the Legend" Dye has ridden 182,860 miles on the VCT.
- The next VCT Advisory Board meeting is September 10.
- Some items discussed at the VCT Advisory Board meeting of July were (i) removal of the temporary gates at the Smith Farm since trestle #7 replacement is complete, (ii) shuttle operators to inform passengers about the mile markers and trestle numbers to assist riders of knowing their location along the trail, (iii) signage of size 8x8 to indicate the VCT path will be installed at locations of paths departing or crossing the VCT.
- A big thanks to the Town of Abingdon and the Town of Damascus for their continual work on the trail removing fallen trees and cutting and clearing encroaching brush.
- Representatives from the Brevard, North Carolina Ecusta Trail recently interviewed Wayne Miller, Rachel Fowlkes, and Al Bradley to assist in the establishment of their trail and working with adjacent land owners.

Treasure's Report—Gerry Henninger

- The latest financial statements were emailed to the board members and available in hardcopy for attendees.
- The balance remains healthy. Recent expenditures are covered by recent income.
- The memorial donations from Betty Roberts are appreciated.

Construction—

Six new memorial benches have been built this year. Two benches have been repaired.

Events—

- Chris Lindeman was able to coordinate the opening of the gate on the fence surrounding the Engine at the railhead at the start of the "Ride with the Legend" on August 2nd. This provided the opportunity for great photographs with the group of riders.
- The next event is the Outdoor Expo at Heartwood from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM on September 13.
- The annual VCTC picnic is at 5:00 PM on September 28 at Alvarado Station. Beverages and some food will be provided, but bring a dish to share. The VCTC will celebrate its 25 years!

USFS—Beth Merz

- A big thanks to Wayne and Sharron Miller for working the entire day at the Green Cove Station 100th anniversary. Beth presented Wayne with a certificate of appreciation.

- The USFC office copy of a comprehensive and extremely detailed itemization catalogue of the artifacts at Green Cove Station was available for review and enjoyment by meeting attendees.
- The work replacing trestles # 35 and 36 is proceeding. Temporary trail closures will be limited. The VCT will be slightly realigned at the multi-piece single span metal replacement trestles. The trestles will have interior wood decks and rails.

Program – Dennis Sanders, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) presentation: "Rte. 91 Creeper Trail Crossing at Damascus"

Dennis presented a potential solution to the safety issues with the VCT bicycles and pedestrians crossing Highway 91 at the junction of Highway 58. The presentation included photographs from various positions and viewpoints at the intersection as well as the potential alternate trail safety route. The presentation also included actual traffic count data transgressing over a twelve hour period on Saturday, May 17, 2014. Dennis was joined by fellow VDOT members Donny Necessacy and George Young. All three gentlemen strongly desire to remedy the safety issues at this intersection.

The potential solution is to provide an alternate route for VCT traffic to travel underneath the Highway 91 bridge along the edge of the stream. The bridge is slated for refurbishment beginning November 2017 and the alternate VCT route would be available upon completion of the bridge construction in 2018. The existing VCT route shall remain in place for (i) folks that choose not to take the alternate and safer route or (ii) during times when the stream level floods the alternate VCT route.

Challenges such as funding, design issues, permits, survey, topographical grade, and approval from VDOT Richmond must be worked through in order for this conceptual alternate VCT traffic route to be established.

The VCTC will provide Mr. Sanders with a Letter of endorsement for this project.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff VanCleaf, VCTC secretary