

Virginia Creeper Trail Club Meeting  
October 29, 2014  
Washington County Public Library

Present: Carolyn Barry, Charles Barry, Tom Boyle, Bo Catron, Kevin Costello, Gerry Davis, Janice Donovan, David Donovan, Myrl Dunham, Lawrence Dye, Gerry Henninger, Kitty Henninger, Bob Horsch, Kathy Hutson, Lee Massicotte, Bunny Medeiros, Wayne Miller, Lisa Quigley, Roger Reynolds, Jeff VanCleaf, John Wilson

Guests: W.J. Cober, John Garrett, Eva Leonard

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

**President's Report—Wayne Miller**

- The venue for 2015 VCTC monthly meetings will continue to be the Washington County Public Library in Abingdon. The next VCTC meeting is March 15, 2015.
- About 70 people attended the VCTC annual picnic celebrating the VCTC 25th anniversary under perfect weather at Alvarado Station on September 28. Volunteers Lee Massicotte, Gerry Henninger, and Bob Horsch received recognition and an award (VCT clock) for outstanding contributions to the VCTC and VCT. Volunteer Lisa Quigley received hers during the meeting. A big thanks to all four!
- The ceremony for the VCTC induction into the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy Hall of Fame was held on October 20 at the Findlay House located at the VCT railhead in Abingdon. The Findlay House is now the *Virginia Creeper Trail Welcome Center* (VCTWC) and the headquarters for the VCTC.
- The VCTWC resides in the Findlay House and is slated for potential ideas/areas/items such as visitor information, VCT orientation, merchandise sales, O Winston Link gallery, benches, Wi-Fi, phone charging station, video screen, VCTC storage. The VCTC and the Town of Abingdon Tourism staff will share the VCTWC.
- Amy Sullivan is resigning her VCTC administrative role (\$25/wk). Wayne will chair a committee to assess a VCTC part time paid position to perform various VCTC duties. Committee members will include Jeff VanCleaf, Lisa Quigley, Gerry Henninger, and Chris Lindeman. Committee recommendations/output will be presented to the VCTC board.
- Lawrence "the Legend" Dye has ridden 184,000 miles on the VCT.
- The next VCT Advisory Board meeting is November 12.
- 2014 VCTC events include Trail Cleanup, Earth Day, Trail Days, Plumb Alley Day, Harvest Table Dinner, Highlands Festival Ride with the Legend, Green Cove Station 100th Anniversary, September Great Outdoors Celebration at Mt. Rogers, Outdoor Expo at Heartwood, VCTC picnic and 25th Anniversary.
- 2014 VCTC construction projects include the build and installation of six memorial benches and the repair of 2 memorial benches.
- We need volunteers for VCTC positions beginning May 2015 to include President and Vice President (and Secretary).
- The VCTC received a donation and thank-you letter from a rider that lost their cell phone that was returned through the gracious actions of Myrl Dunham. Wayne read the letter; kudos to Myrl!
- Joe Tennis will discuss his recent book, "Virginia Rail Trails: Crossing the Commonwealth," featuring a chapter on the VCT, at the March 2015 VCTC meeting. Joe will also discuss his book at 3:00 pm on November 2, 2014 at the Washington County Public Library in Abingdon and at 6:00 pm on November 6, 2014 at the Damascus branch library.

**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 (\$49,593.55 as of October 26, 2014).
- Gerry provided a recent month detailed example of expenditures and income.

**Publicity—Kevin Costello**

- The brochure proof is complete and is now with the printer. A demonstration copy of the brochure was available for review by attendees. The brochure will be provided through a wide variety of tourist/visitor centers.
- The final phase of the grant for the brochure will include a publicity blast in the spring of 2015.

- The VCT will be a month featured in the 2015 Rails-To-Trails Conservancy calendar. Order your calendar at <http://www.railstotrails.org/index.html> Also, their next magazine will include an article about the VCT.
- Updates to the VCTC website are continuing and will include links to business members.
- A big thanks to Kevin and the Town of Abingdon for their efforts for the successful October 20 Rails-To-Trails inductee ceremony.

**Town of Damascus—Tim Williams**

- With approval from the USFS, the Town of Damascus intends to install low voltage lighting on trestle #16. The potential project is in discussions and early planning and will consider factors such as cost, durability, safety, aesthetics, and maintenance.

**USFS—W.J. Cober**

- The work replacing trestles # 35 and 36 is proceeding. Installation of sections of trestle #36 are to commence next week; there will be delays in traffic on the trail but no closures are planned. Trestle #35 work will follow. Pictures were available for attendees.

**Program – John Garrett, retired school teacher and Damascus resident: Maud and O Winston Link**

John spoke about his experiences as a child growing up in Damascus. Ol' Maud, the mare made famous in the photograph captured by O Winston Link as she bowed to the mighty steam engine, was owned for many years by John's parents. John's parents befriended O Winston Link and he stayed with the Garrett family during his photo shoots. John assisted O Winston Link on numerous photography adventures, the output of which were mostly available for display/sale at the Damascus Bank where John's mother worked for many years. John enlightened meeting attendees with some of the methods used by O Winston Link to capture his famous photographs. He also discussed some evolutionary changes in Damascus along with a few little known facts.

John freely admits he is not a historian. However, his recollection of facts, perceptions, and experiences and his ability to discuss these in detail was well received and appreciated.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff VanCleaf, VCTC secretary