

## President's Annual Report for 2016

**Friends of the Appomattox River celebrated its twentieth year of activities in 2016. In commemoration of this event, Sandy Willcox is putting together a scrapbook of articles and photos documenting our history.**

**In addition to our annual meeting in January, your Board of Directors held two meetings to discuss our operations and plan events for the year. Gene Donovan, Joe McCutcheon, and Mel Smith were elected to the Board. Officers elected were: President—Ron Heinemann; Vice-president—Joe McCutcheon; Secretary—Robin Sedgwick; Treasurer—Lee Woodruff; Membership—Marianne Dennison (who reported that we have 61 active members at the end of 2016); and Communications Coordinator—Sandy Willcox. Our by-laws have been amended and circulated to the members.**

**Activities for the year 2016 included field trips, programs, clean-ups, special projects, and social events.**

**Field trips:** 1) a paddle on the Slate River in April with nine participants; 2) a paddle on the Sandy River Reservoir at sunset and moonrise in July attended by 19 members; and 3) a paddle on our own Blueway in October, poorly attended because of bad weather.

**Programs:** Chaired by Al Lookofsky, the Program Committee presented several outstanding programs, all well-attended at the Prince Edward-Farmville Public Library.

On May 18, Evan Spears made a presentation on “The Natural History of the Farmville Blueway”, showing the diversity of life along Wilck’s Lake, Buffalo Creek, and the Appomattox River as they flow through Farmville. Evan has worked on documenting the flora and fauna of the Farmville Blueway. His field work has been funded by Obsidian Solutions Group in cooperation with FAR. He is the park naturalist at Holliday Lake State Park in Appomattox County, the vice president of the Margaret Watson Bird Club, and the ornithology presenter for the local chapter of the Virginia Master Naturalists.

On July 14, Lee Woodruff, a member of FAR and expert canoeist, gave a talk on “Which Canoe Is Best for You?” showing several canoes to consider for paddling in this area. Lee has been paddling the rivers and lakes around Farmville almost daily for many years.

On October 20, Damien Fehrer, a member of FAR and one of its advocates for the Farmville Blueway, discussed “The Farmville Blueway”, describing its historic features and natural beauty. He provided the audience with some background on the Friends of the Appomattox River and the work we do to protect and establish this trail.

**Clean-up:** A Spring Waterway Cleanup on Saturday, April 16, focused on the Appomattox River, Buffalo Creek, and the lower section of Gross Creek. Nine FAR members collected 14 bags of trash, four auto tires, and an auto wheel totaling approximately 290 pounds of debris.

On Saturday, October 15, twelve FAR members participated in the Fall Waterways Cleanup around the Farmville area. This was part of the International Coastal Waterways Cleanup effort. The group covered approximately 2.75 miles of shoreline, concentrating on the Appomattox River, Buffalo Creek, Briery Creek Reservoir, Sandy River Reservoir, and Wilck’s Lake. Approximately 715 pounds of debris,

consisting of 20 bags of trash and 18 auto/truck tires, were removed from these waterways. The Town of Farmville provided trash containers and proper disposal for both of these events.

**Special Projects:**

**EOD team visit:** A 13-member Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal team visited the Farmville area on October 9–14. The section of river focused on for clearing this fall was the stretch from Route 608 in the Prospect area downstream to Route 15. For the first time in the team’s 18 years of visits, a few private landholders denied access. Alecia Daves-Johnson coordinated their visit, lining up landowners, eateries, and overnight accommodations, The project relies on strong support from the Town of Farmville and local businesses. She reported: “The Inland Waterways Training project is important to the mission of FAR because the work accomplished by these teams has allowed for flood reduction, protection of river banks and less erosion of the river bottom, and improved recreational use. Sites of past work now demonstrate characteristics of bank and riverbed stabilization. The removal of major obstructions is especially valuable, because as an organization of volunteers, it is unlikely that FAR could achieve as efficient and effective results independently.”

**Heart of Virginia booth:** As in years before, FAR members staffed a FAR booth at Heart of Virginia in 2-hour shifts. We sold bluebird houses made by FAR members with considerable help from John Jamieson, who made his workshop available and prepared wood components in advance of FAR’s birdhouse assembly get-together. Having a table at the festival gives the organization good public exposure. Thanks to Al Lookofsky for coordinating this effort.

**Social Events:** “What this group does best of all is socialize,” and we had two very fine social events: an August cookout at the Lookofskys and the December holiday party at the Heinemanns.

**Treasurer’s Annual Report for 2016:**

Beginning Balance	\$3,327.41*
<u>INCOME</u>	\$1,232.00
Dues	\$735.00
Fundraising (HOV sales & addit. Birdhouses)	497.00
<u>EXPENSES</u>	\$606.07
HOV Booth	\$35.00
Reimburse A. Daves-Johnson for EOD plaque & postage	38.39
Penn. Nat. Insur. (liability 1 yr)	250.00
Reimburse A. Lookofsky for Evan Spears speaker dinner	7.76
Kinex Annual Fee	119.40
State Corp. Commission fee	25.00
Reimburse J. Watson to renew Domain Name with Go Daddy for 2 yrs.	40.34
Reimburse S. Heinemann for picnic	

supplies at Lookofskys'	16.81
Renew P.O. Box 784 – 1 yr.	60.00
Reimburse L. Woodruff – chain saw sharpen & file	13.37

Ending Balance \$3,953.34

\*Includes Gift Fund of \$400.00

The heart of our organization is the active support of the members for the care and enjoyment of our waterways and surrounding environment—“promoting stewardship, education, responsible recreation, and improved river access.” I encourage your continued active participation in this effort. And if you think we can do more, please contact me or other Board members. **For more detailed accounts of our activities, consult the minutes of the annual meeting of 2017 and the board minutes for 2016.**

**Ron Heinemann, President**