**FRIENDS OF CLAYTOR LAKE**

**Annual Meeting Minutes**

**August 13, 2022**

**Claytor Lake State Park, Shelter 5**

**9 to 11:30 a.m.**

**Present:** Steve Rapp, Laura Walters, Jeff Arnold, Bill Cunningham, Dean Jackson, John & Betty Johnson, Dave Dobyns, Todd & Leigh Ann Brewster, Laura Bullard, Cheri Strenz, Jackson Beamer, Caroline Gaskins, Dave & Joan Stevenson, Alice & Bill Hurlebaus, Martha & Ralph Harvey, Jacqueline Clark, Patrick Ford, Joel Jackson, Alan Graybeal, Bob & Sandra Jackson, Brett Fowler, Kenneth Gray, Wilma (Dixie) Shughart, Steve Kienzle, John & Janice Woodward, Gerald Duncan, David Mitchell, Steve Holcomb, Richard Parks, Anne Bullard, Cathy Hanks, Shannon Ainsley

**Welcome & Introductions:** Steve Rapp, FOCL's President, welcomed everyone and introduced Laura Walters, Chair, Pulaski County Board of Supervisors, Supervisor for Ingles District, and FOCL Director; Steve Holcomb, USCGAUX Commander and Richard Parks, USCGAUX Vice Commander; Patrick Ford with The SW Times; Shannon Ainsley, Executive Director of Pulaski County's Chamber of Commerce; and Cathy Hanks, President of the Friends of Peak Creek. He introduced FOCL Directors by asking them to stand. For his safety briefing, he asked everyone to be careful during the remaining weeks of summer.

**FOCL Then & Now:** Dean Jackson, a founding member, shared about FOCL's beginnings 30 years ago. After an initial 1990 meeting of citizens concerned about pollution in Peak Creek, FOCL was formed in 1992 following a flood that filled the lake with debris. Clean up was first done by lake residents and businesses using their own equipment, and then by county inmates with WWII equipment and surplus Navy push boat Ms. Pulaski. Bill Cunningham, also a founding member, shared that the first donations of $756 to FOCL in 1992 have grown to an annual budget of $250,000, and each of FOCL's 3 Executive Directors has built on the one before to expand FOCL into a team effort involving many in the community. The Legacy Fund has been established as a way to help ensure FOCL's continued operation into the future.

**2021 Annual Meeting Minutes,** presented by Laura Bullard,FOCL's Secretary,were approved by acclamation.

**Election:** Cheri Strenz announced the names of FOCL Directors up for re-election and opened the floor for additional nominees. Laura Walters, Laura Bullard, Cecil Doyle and Dave Stevenson were re-elected by acclamation. Cheri encouraged attendees to come to Board meetings and be involved with FOCL.

**Mussel Presentation:** Tim Lane with Virginia's Department of Wildlife Resources (VDWR) provided information about mussels found in Claytor Lake. In order to reproduce, each species of mussel requires the help of a specific host fish, so the species of fish in the lake determine the species of mussels. (For example, the flathead or mud catfish is the host fish for the state-threatened pistolgrip mussel.) When stocking fish, he stressed the importance of placing stocked fish in the lake by net rather than pouring them in with the water they came in because of the possibility of introducing unwanted elements into the lake. He shared that mussels filter 10 to 20 gallons of water a day, so the 7,700 mussels saved during the 2021 drawdown represent at least 28 million gallons of filtered water per day.

**Clean Up Report:** Dave Dobyns, Clean Up Supervisor, reported that due to no storms yet this year there has been less debris. Clean up totals for 2021 were 330 roll-off loads of woody debris, 240 trash bags, 48 tires/wheels, and 11 docks. Last year they were able to clean many places they weren't usually able to clean. For 2020 they have a 6-man crew and new excavator and push boat. To date they have been able to clean above the bridge, and have collected 186 roll-off loads, 75 trash bags, 15 tires, 2 barrels, 6 docks and 1 water heater.

**All Lake Clean Up:** Ciara Harris, FOCL Executive Director, was surprised that All Lake Clean Up this year which was a 1 week/2 weekend campaign did not get a response, perhaps because of less trash. She asked that people send her photos when they do pick up trash. She also shared information from FOCL's newsletter FOCL POINT.

**Habitat and Water Quality:** Laura Walters, Chair, Environmental Resources Committee, reported that they are working with VDWR and Virginia Bass to get grants for habitat which FOCL and AEP will match. They expect to have $4-$8,000 for Mossbach structures for fish habitat. Hydrilla has been found at Blackberry Lane up lake. Pulaski County High School is growing and planting native aquatic vegetation for the lake (water willow/celery). Chinese Mystery Snails are getting more numerous and are competing for habitat. They are impervious to chemicals. There is also more filamentous algae in the lake, and she advises against fertilizing land where runoff can get into the lake. FOCL is working with VT on water quality and she expects to have results for this summer by early fall.

**Community Outreach Committee:** Co-chairs Todd Brewster and Caroline Gaskins recruited Neighborhood Captains to serve as point of contact and provide FOCL information in their neighborhoods.

**Events and Donations:** Ciara Harris listed FOCL's many activities and events. She offered FOCL supporter signs to donors and shared her hope of having a meeting of campgrounds around the lake to discuss issues. She said donations are down this year and shared how donations can be made.

**Awards:** Steve Rapp presented the following:

 Certificate of Appreciation to Todd Brewster for Kollmorgen's volunteer lake clean up

 Certificate of Appreciation to Martha and Ralph Harvey for their volunteering and support of FOCL

 Volunteer of the Year to Jeff Arnold for all his work on sonar testing and water quality

**Wrap-Up:** Steve Rapp thanked a number of groups and individuals, including the State Park for donating the use of the shelter for the meeting. He asked everyone to tell friends and family about FOCL and to donate.

The meeting was adjourned and 30th anniversary cake was served.