

# F CL POINT

*Magazine*

April 2016 Edition 18



**Letter from our  
new President**

**Breaking  
Ground  
for Clean Up!**

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Summer is just around the corner!!!! It's time to clean off the outdoor furniture, fuel up the boat, get the fishing gear together, count the life jackets, and break out the bathing suits and sunscreen. As we all prepare for another fun filled season, FOCL is also very busy planning it's 2016 Summer Calendar. It's shaping up to be a very active one!!!

As you all know, after four VERY successful years as FOCL President, Laura Walters stepped down in January.

Fortunately, Laura is continuing her service to FOCL as Chair of the Environmental Committee and will oversee the Clean Up and the Native Vegetation Planting programs that are so important to the health of Claytor Lake. The Board is so thankful for her leadership and dedication to FOCL, and to the Lake. I look forward to many more years of working side by side with my friend!!!!

\*\*\*\*\*

Over a decade ago, knowing little about FOCL, I began attending monthly meetings. I was very pleased to find an organization that is open to all, and able to listen to any and all issues that impact the Lake. I quickly realized that this was a group that was willing and able to do the hard work of caring for Claytor Lake in a thoughtful and careful way.

When my family came to Claytor Lake in the early 1950's, there was no Friends of Claytor Lake! For many years, individual property owners struggled to keep ahead of the constant flow of debris and trash in the Lake. Almost every lake front cabin had a never ending pile of driftwood near the Lake, and late evening fires frequently dotted the shoreline.

In 1992, after a flood event that made navigation in the Lake nearly impossible, a group of hearty men (in boats, with chainsaws) put together the first organized clean up on Claytor Lake. Over the years, FOCL has been very successful in expanding it's ongoing commitment to this effort. By buying new, and updating old equipment, the Clean Up operation has become more efficient, and safer. The planned new abutment on Clark Road, will allow for clean up in the upper 1/3 of the Lake.....the first ever!!!

As a community based, non-profit organization, FOCL's success is directly tied to community (Lake) involvement. In the last ten years, there have been many wonderful Lake folks who have contributed a significant number of volunteer hours to support programs that benefit everyone who uses the Lake. During the same time period, the percentage of property owners who donate to FOCL has been 7%-10% (90%-93% do **not** participate). I challenge those of you who have not volunteered, or donated, to make this the year!!!!

My focus, for the next few years, will be to meet with, and get to know you and the issues in your neighborhoods. I hope to get you excited about the existing FOCL programs and develop new ones. Together, we can work to support and improve the quality of the Lake that we ALL love.

I am humbled to have been chosen to follow many others who have committed their considerable time and talents to FOCL's mission.

Regards

*Cheri Strenz*



# 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL BASS FOR GRASS

Claytor Lake State Park

Saturday August 20, 2015 6:00 AM or first safe light -3:00 PM



**\$1000.00 from FOCL**

**Additional Prizes to come!!!**

*In addition 70% will payout based upon number of paid entries.*

**\$100 Youth Prize**

**Optional \$10 Big Fish Pot-Big Largemouth and Big Small Mouth**

***Special Prize Donation Drawings***

**\$100 entry per boat**

*Weigh in by Virginia BASS Nation*



***Tournament Rules Apply***

*5 fish per boat with a 12 inch length measured mouth close on a golden rule*

**Proceeds go to Restoration of Native Fish Habitat in Claytor**

**More info at [www.bass4grass.com](http://www.bass4grass.com) [www.focl.org](http://www.focl.org) or call 540 395-FOCL**



FOCL will once again be partnering with AEP, Virginia BASS Nation, Department of Game and Inland FisheriesVDGIF and Claytor Lake State Park on numerous habitat projects this summer. Virginia BASS Nation, FOCL, and VDGIF have received a grant to put artificial Mossback shallow water habitat structures in around the fishing pier at the State Park and Harry DeHaven Park. AEP has agreed to match the grant funds, giving us a total of \$5000. This project will provide shallow water habitat for spawning bass, sunfishes, and crappie and cover for juvenile fish and crayfish. In addition, it will create areas where anglers can increase their catch rates for these species during spring months. When

examined in the context of recent native aquatic vegetation replenishment and deep water habitat enhancement in the same areas proposed for this project, the overall effect is to create corridors of fish habitat connecting nearshore areas to deep water areas. BASS Nation anglers, bank anglers from the Virginia Conservation Corps, Friends of Claytor Lake (FOCL) and VDGIF will complete this project as part of a summer camp in order to teach future anglers how habitat is used to promote the increase in fish populations in the lake. In addition, the native grass water willow will be transplanted to the outside area of the island in front of the state park to supplement the concrete reef installed by FOCL last year.

This group will continue partnering with the Boy Scouts to install the remainder of the old dam from Camp Powatan for fish habitat, a project that was started last year. Proceeds from the BASS for GRASS tournament will fund hauling the concrete and installation will be completed by FOCL crew and equipment with assistance from DGIF and AEP. GPS locations of these concrete formations are available on the website.



FOCL and partners will be transplanting water willow from areas around the State Park to the area just off the newly completed shoreline stabilization off the main lake at Harry DeHaven and also off the lake side of the State Park island. Again, in both these areas, plantings near the concrete reef habitat will promote corridors connecting shore areas to deep water areas. Water celery will continue to be grown in cages at the State Park area to enable expansion of plants FOCL put there several years ago.

FOCL is very pleased initiate a new partnership this year with Pulaski County High School Career Technical Educational

Department. This fall students will be planting and growing native vegetation for us, specifically water celery. Virginia BASS Nation, FOCL and VDGIF are the recipients of a grant that will provide tanks to plant and cultivate seeds, which will then be transplanted to Claytor Lake. Water Celery, a native plant, was choked out by hydrilla. High School students will be growing the water celery and harvesting the plants to be returned to Claytor. The short-term goal for the lake is to establish sufficient nursery capacity to provide plants for restoration efforts that FOCL, VDGIF, Appalachian Power and other shoreline management teams can use in restoration efforts and to insure no invasive species will be transferred to the lake through reintroduction habitat efforts. The goal for high school students is to teach native aquatic plant culture techniques that may provide the basis for starting a small for-profit business enterprise and to introduce the students to ecological principles outside the greenhouse and to conservation practices that can help control shoreline erosion, provide fish habitat and improve water quality.

All of these efforts will improve both fishing and attract additional invertebrates needed for waterfowl and mammals, improving our ecosystem and also water quality. Aquatic plants also reduce erosion of banks which cause sedimentation. Native vegetation is monitored by FOCL through annual sonar and visual inspections annually. Watch [www.focl.org](http://www.focl.org) for additional information on these projects during the summer.



In 2016 The Friends of Claytor Lake have contracted RU student Cadie Goulette, who specializes in Geospatial Studies to start conducting an erosion study for Claytor Lake.

This proposed project will use historical data to determine how the shoreline position of Claytor Lake has changed since it became fully impounded in 1940. This analysis will result in a variety of map products that could be used to observe trends in any given area of the lake's shoreline regarding erosion or disposition. These map products will be useful locating areas which suffer from the most erosion so that steps can be taken to mitigate it, as well as locating areas with little change that would be suitable for planting native species. Additionally, the original riverbed will be overlaid so as to determine if the trends seen in the shoreline movement are in any way related to Claytor Lake returning to its original course.

Cadie worked on a similar study for Peak Creek last fall and showed a wealth of information. The Friends of Claytor Lake are hoping this study will be very beneficial in determining the loss of land around the lake due to naturally occurring events as well as traffic from boats and personal watercraft during the summer season.



### Pulaski County's Kid's Fish Day

The 2016 Pulaski County Kid's Fishing Day was kicked off this year again at Camp Powhatan in Pulaski County by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries along with Pulaski County and The Boy Scouts of America. Kids from all over came with their families to get outdoors and enjoy some good ol' fashion fun fishing at Lake Powhatan. The Friends of Claytor Lake were there to give fun and information things to the kids about fishing, boating safety, and showing them how long items disposed of take to decompose in the lake.

[www.kidsfishingday.org](http://www.kidsfishingday.org)

### Harry DeHaven Project

The Friends of Claytor Lake, along with AEP, Pulaski County, and VDGIF, began work this month of improvements of Harry DeHaven park on the Snowville side of Claytor Lake. The project consisted of installing 490 feet of shoreline along DeHaven with Rip Rap stone, a concrete seawall, upgrades to guard railing, and additional shoreline grading at a 2:1 slope around Harry DeHaven. The project also included more extensive cleaning and maintenance of the park grounds to be more appealing to its visitors during the year and summer months. This project cost as estimated \$21,000 to complete.





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The 2016 Spring Splash continued to be the year's event for FOCL. Rockwood Manor hosting the event again this year with FOCL using their inside venue which turned out a fantastic crowd to support FOCL and all we do for the lake.

Over 200 supporters showed to have a great time with silent & live auctions, great food by Draper Mercantile, drinks from Kroger of Radford and Virginia Eagle Distributors, and another print by artist P. Buckley Moss showing the cliffs of Claytor Lake. Spring Splash serves as FOCL's premier fundraiser to help support programs, projects, and events on Claytor Lake such as Shoreline Stabilization, Native Vegetation planting, Erosion studies, Water Quality testing, Drawdown and mussel salvage, boater safety, and our all important clean up program which will be operating above the bridge this year. Each year this event continues to grow and show just how much we all love Claytor Lake and want to support keeping it beautiful.

The Friends of Claytor Lake are so fortunate to have support from the Claytor Lake community. We are very grateful for your contributions to our programs. Every year we list our donors on our website as we receive donations. You can look online at [www.focl.org](http://www.focl.org) and click the below link. Our website is updated month to month each year depending on when donations are received. To cut down on any errors between years, you can find your information from year to year below.



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Our 2016 Calendar is again filled with great lake events for the entire family. Everyone is welcome to attend any and all events.

**May 1st, 2016 - Third Annual Spring Splash**

**June 7th, 2016 - Pulaski Kid's Fish Day**

**June 11th, 2016 - Claytor Lake Festival**

**June 25th, 2015 - ALL LAKE CLEAN UP DAY**

**August 13th, 2016 - FOCL Annual Meeting**

**August 20th, 2016 - FOCL Fishing Tournament**

*Some dates and event are tentative and/or not planned yet. FOCL Supporters will be updated as things change or are added for next summer.*

[www.focl.org/calendar](http://www.focl.org/calendar)



The Friends of Claytor Lake were proud to honor Laura Walters as the 2015 Volunteer of the year. Her years of service and dedication to FOCL as a board member and President, her work with AEP and Pulaski County, her tireless efforts on FOCL's mission can't be replaced and we are proud to have had her serve as our President. Laura will remain on FOCL's Board and continue to work with on many projects vital to Claytor Lake.

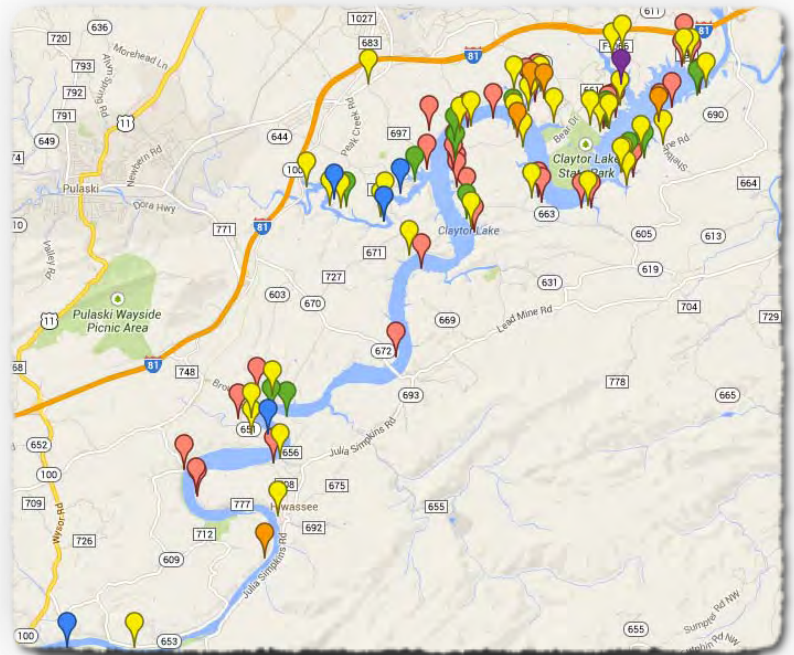
## Are you on our map?

The Friends of Claytor Lake are so proud of the stakeholders and recreational lake users that contribute to us each year that we do everything we can to acknowledge and celebrate their contributions to our organization.

Sadly only 7-10% of property owners donate to FOCL each year. With the amount of work that FOCL puts into keeping Claytor Lake such a wonderful recreational destination, we would love to see property owners, boaters, anglers, and more start to help FOCL by making a tax deductible donation each year to keep our projects funded and Claytor Lake beautiful!

**HELP OUT NOW!**

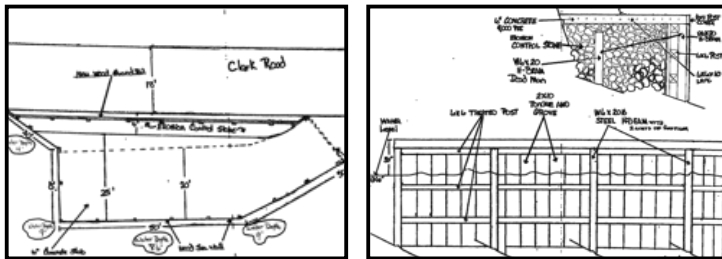
[WWW.FOCL.ORG/DONATE](http://WWW.FOCL.ORG/DONATE)



# Above the Bridge



The long awaited moment has finally come that allows The Friends of Claytor Lake to perform clean up operations in the upper half of the lake. This stretches from Lowman's Ferry bridge passed the Allisonia boat ramp. With cooperative efforts by FOCL, AEP, Pulaski County, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Army Corp. of Engineers, and Virginia Department of Transportation construction will begin within the next few months of the proposed abutment that allows our barges and excavator to unload debris long stuck in the shallow shoals of the upper lake areas. Clark Road has been the selected site for the abutment. Areas of the road are narrow enough and adjacent to deep enough water to accommodate the plans for the abutment.



The project cost is estimated at **\$120,000** to complete and have operational. The project will still have limitations for the clean up operations as our debris conveyor will not be able to be utilized above the bridge. Don't underestimate the ability of the program's excavator thought being able to pull large amounts and big items of debris out of the water and onto the barge.



So far this year the clean up crew has removed over 64 roll off loads (960 tons) of debris, 16 tires/rims, 147 bags of trash, 2 barrels, and 1 pipe. FOCL has seen a drop off in debris this year which helps us show our clean up crew is doing a great job. Obvious benefits to the abutment is the ability to clean the upper part of Claytor Lake when each season starts to catch debris coming down from the New River and catching it before it travels further down the lake while also offering this service to plenty of property owners in these areas in desperate need of help. The Friends of Claytor Lake are excited to get this project finalized and underway given the time and efforts from all all volunteers and partners involved in this project.

The new abutment will be constructed by Jamie Riggins and his crew at Virginia Shoreline as we broke ground in late May to begin the project. FOCL, AEP, VDGIF, and stakeholders hope this will have a significant effect on the amount of debris coming down the lake if we are able to clean about the bridge as well as begin to help those homeowners who are in a worse need for clean up than other areas of the lake.

*Pictured from Left to Right: Laura Walters, Cheri Strenz (FOCL President), Liz Parcell (AEP), Dave Dobyns (FOCL Clean Up Coordinator, and Jamie Riggins (Virginia Shoreline)*

