



## Education Committee Meeting

**June 13, 2023, at 10:00 AM by ZOOM**

Attendees: 18

Barbara Monfort, Mary Spear, Gregg Korbon, Kathy Nepote, Allen Ingling, Tim Maywalt, Carolyn Burgess, David Marrs, Emily Ferguson, Rebecca Turner, Anne Benham, Jackie Savage, Chris Stroupe, Rachel Keen, Steve Huff, Monica Newby, Vanessa Hurst, Pam Dorland

Minutes of the May 16th, 2023 meeting were approved, with a comment to delete a duplicative paragraph. <Complete>

The following table summarizes ACTION items noted in this month's minutes.

Reference	Action Description	Contact	Due Date(s)
Communications Committee	Please check TIF to sign up for Tabling events. (*Help at the upcoming County Fair is needed.) Please check TIF to sign up for Tabling events. (*Help at the upcoming County Fair is needed.) Contact Mary if you are interested in taking on the tabling manager/coordinator job.	Anne Benham	Soonest
Plans for 2023 Tree Steward Class	Need volunteers to help with class field activities (pruning, planting, invasive controls).	Tim Maywalt	Soonest
Red Hill Elementary School	If you are interested in helping to water/maintain plantings at the school over the summer, please contact Pam.	Pam Dorland	Anytime
New Business – Going Further	Contact Joann and form a small group to consider variations/possibilities of Gregg's suggested "A Tree in Every Child" program	Barbara Monfort	Soonest

### UPDATES

Communications Committee:

- Advertising for training – may follow with a print ad depending on registration mid-July.
- Advertising for Emily's Summer Tree ID class has been distributed; we are advertising approximately 10 days before Tree ID walks.
- Donations YTD are \$1,117.
- Website host changed to SiteGround; to increase speed and reliability. Please check out the new donor portal; the design will follow after content is established, but it's a start. The team is working on the page content

section-by-section and some links will be disabled as updates are ongoing. If you have comments, or notice anything to be adjusted, please contact Mary. We are open to suggestions!

- Tabling
  - Crozet Fair on 6/13 was cancelled. Riverfest was a last-minute reschedule which caused confusion, although 2 CATS Volunteers showed up and worked at the PRISM table. Tufton was well attended but customers are more interested in buying plants, so CATS will not have a table there going forward.
  - Anne Benham is rolling off her role as tabling manager and we'd like to gather a team of 2-3 people who can rotate leadership/coordination among them and ensure we have members signed up to man tables at events. Please contact Mary if you are interested in being part of the leadership team.
  - For the Albemarle County Fair, we have 4 people confirmed, but other days are available too. Please sign up via TIF.

Projects Committee (<https://www.trackitforward.com/site/76306/events>):

- We have weeding and mulching dates planned for Chris Green and Ivy Creek. Barbara, Allen and Kathy are assessing other sites for maintenance.
- Met with Steve Gaines, Chris Jensic, and Robert Hughes and found trees near Dogwood Memorial that will have vines removed.
- At Darden, 2 trees from last year's planting have died and need replacing. A redbud main stem died, but we could keep it going. Cages are being replaced with tubes as park mowers are bumping up against the trees. We will mulch around the trees, hopefully keeping mowers further away.
- At Jackson Via, the site has been neglected and now needs serious invasive control of vines and pokeweed. Check TIF to sign up for helping on 6/29.
- One dead tulip tree at Mint Springs; we removed cage and supports.
- Chris Green Lake – trees are problematic and need attention.
- Check TIF for these projects as they are being developed.

## **STATUS REPORTS**

### Plans for 2023 Tree Steward Class

- Registration currently at 18; 32 slots total.
- Workgroup is meeting 6/23 and will review the status and set a closing deadline (if we are not full by then). Will do print advertising if necessary, but it's usually not.
- Class presentations are being updated in tandem with website changes.
- We need current members to help with field activities. Please contact Tim if you can help. We are ready to go!

### Tree Basics Classes

Since our last Education Committee Meeting we have had several tree walks:

- May 20/21 - Pen Park walk lead by Dana with 7 participants each day
- May 26/27 - Darden Towe Park lead by Kathy and Allen with 12 attendees on both days
- June 2/3 - Belmont Walk lead by Steve, Scott, and David with 9 participants the first day and 14 participants the second day
  - A follow-up comment from a participant: "The group on Saturday was interesting, but you, Scott, David, and Rick provided an extremely informative and interesting walk. I learned so much, but now the challenge is retention."
- June 27 – via Zoom at 7:00pm; Emily's Summer ID class. With a walk on 7/1 at 9:30am.
- In October, we will start these up again.

## Tree Basics Walks – Training

- Emily has sent out emails to all our Tree Walk Leader Workshop Participants and already has heard back from most of them (two are working together as a team). Here are the results, which are very promising:
  - 3 are aiming to lead walks this fall!
  - 3 others are still interested but don't have a time frame in mind; and
  - 1 plans to remain a walk leader assistant (which is also very helpful).
- We are in the midst of planning a possible walk or workshop at Lesesne State Park in Nelson County through Tom Wild to learn more about the American Chestnut work that has been done there.
- We are also starting to work on the tree measurements training with some of our volunteers.
- Thanks to everyone who continues to volunteer and support the CATS outward facing Tree Basics opportunities for the public.

## Tree Basics Walks-Scheduling

- We've noticed lower enrollments, so waiting lists are not being used right now. We've also shortened advertising time, hoping people won't forget they signed up (if we send out too far in advance).
  - Kathy suggested combining public and CATS-only walks for the short-term.
  - Steve noted he's more concerned about no shows (especially those who've reserved multiple slots).
- We're planning for fall now.
- 7/16 – the next UVA walk.
- August or September - Marylee Epps at Preddy Creek
- 9/16 - Tom Wild for a Chestnuts walk (will not conflict with classes)
- 10/26-27 at Darden Towe
- October/November - Sherri Fitzgerald is considering (location Simpson Trail across from the Yancy Community Center).
- We will reach out to Phil to see if he can do a fall walk.

## Member Meeting Presentations

- Chris Stroupe noted the meeting date is 6/21 (changed from 6/28). Callan Bentley, Associate Professor of Geology at Piedmont Virginia Community College, will present on earth shifts/changes and how they affect the environment. The title of his talk is "Beneath Charlottesville's trees, there are a billion years of rocks."
- Natasha Heller has scheduled speakers through the end of 2023. Please let us know any suggestions – we'd love your input!

## Proposed Project at Red Hill Elementary

- Winding down at end of year. Last PTO meeting tomorrow.
- Emily is working on a tree inventory; we hope to do a planting assessment soon.
- OWLS is starting planning for Fall and will keep a maintenance schedule over the summer, watering plantings and monitoring invasives. If you are interested in helping this summer, please contact Pam Dorland.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Proposed Program

- "A Tree in Every Child" - Gregg Korbon has been impressed with CATS's good work and mentorship. He proposes targeting 4<sup>th</sup> graders who would plant a tree in the fall, with CATS present to support the plantings. Then go into high schools to talk to clubs who could mentor the elementary grades--eventually high schoolers would take over implementation of the programs.

- We could start with one elementary and one high school and try to grow the program. The County school system would have to buy into it.
- Gregg checked for iterations in other countries and found that UK and India have similar programs. In India, they have planted 111 trees for each female child born – this becomes their dowry.
- The main problem is space - how do you plant a tree for each student and every year forward from 4<sup>th</sup> grade to high school? Also, need solutions for school/grounds limitations and maintenance over seasonal breaks.
- Vanessa mentioned Girls Scouts found the same problem; limits on space and maintenance. They have begun to emphasize “happy trees”, e.g., citing benefits of trees and encouraging childrens’ observations of their health, growth and care.
- Kathy noted CATS did a planting at Albemarle County High School at the invitation of and with help from the Environmental Science teacher. She also noted Steve Gaines (Charlottesville Parks & Recreation) planted 200 trees at various schools and CATS needs to contact Steve if we want to do anything on school grounds.

### Thoughts for Alternatives

- Similar program could be enhancing what Walter Hussey is doing right now. Classes come out and plant smaller trees (but no one is maintaining/caring for them).
- Barbara suggested considering this program become a class project rather than individual children planting trees.
- Rachel commented that 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grade is a great age to talk about environmental issues (not only limited to trees) and for high schools, maybe offer a lecture-type of class.
- Carolyn suggests looking at the curriculum for which grades have ecology units. When students have their own plant to steward, it’s more personal and leads to successful learning.
- Emily offered an alternative to have students start a tree in their class, but then take them home and plant the tree in their own yard. We could also incorporate the right tree right place by asking students about their yards, so we send them home with a tree best suited to their environment. This would preclude having permissions at schools, space limitations on school grounds, etc. If a student lives in an apartment or condo, they could team up with a fellow student or a CATS mentor/connector. The students would also be able to care for and monitor the progress of their own tree.
- As a follow on to that, Vanessa suggested planting a “class tree”. Plant the tree in their freshman year and by graduation, what is happening with the tree?

### Going Further

- Allen (Hammer) mentioned a targeted program for 4<sup>th</sup> graders (through Rivanna Conservation Alliance) – maybe we could check with him?
- Gregg wondered if CATS might consider hiring a summer intern who would be responsible for watering/caring for new trees we’ve planted?
- Mary Spear asked if CATS has ever looked into contacting estate owners (e.g., Bundoran (environmental)) to ask if we could plant trees on their property? For educational purposes?
- Walter Morgan is currently working on a presentation for the public about making your backyard a habitat. This fits into Tallamay’s book, e.g., we need to evolve our yards to become more like parks.
- Barbara Monfort suggested that we form a small group to discuss a way forward. She offered to contact Joann to discuss it further and consider elevating it to Board and presenting some possibilities for their consideration. Barbara will report back at next meeting.

**Next Education Committee Meeting:** Tuesday, July 18<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am via Zoom.