

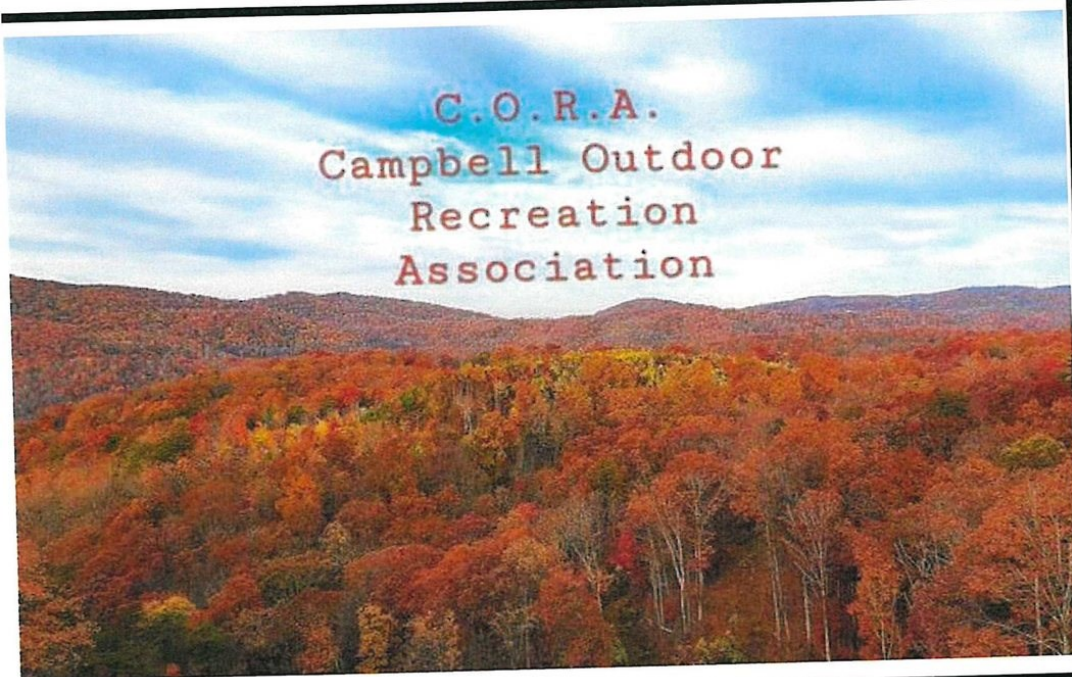
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INSIDE

Page 1

CORA PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Pages 2-3

NEWS FROM THE NORTH CUMBERLAND

CORA MEETINGS SUMMARY

CORA PRESIDENT'S LETTER Cont'd

Pages 4-5

Ramblings..... By Mark J. Tidwell

Ramblings..... By Mark J. Tidwell Cont'd

RECIPE

Pages 6-7

MEETINGS SUMMARY Cont'd

Pages 8-9

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY

CORA Book Available

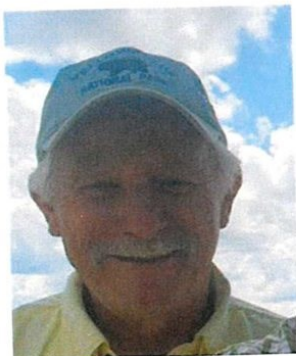
Page 10

NEWS FROM THE NORTH CUMBERLAND Cont'd

Cartoon and photos

CORA PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Terry Lewis- CORA President



OHV thoughts and questions

OHV riding has become quite the rage to so many. I began riding in these mountains in 1977 when almost no one was riding here. Four wheelers had not been developed

until 1984 when Honda manufactured the TRX 200. I know, because I bought one of the first to hit the trails. Four wheels made it so much easier to carry all of the stuff a hunter needed to get to his hunting area and to pack out his game once successful. It was nearly impossible to put a harvested deer on a dirt bike and ride it out, but we sure did try it many times. These days most users are simply riding for the enjoyment of riding the trails and seeing the wonderful vistas and backwoods sights.....

(Cont'd on page 3)

NEWS FROM THE NORTH CUMBERLAND

**CORA MEETINGS
SUMMARIES**

Keith Thomas-
Area Manager



It has been one of the most breathtaking fall seasons that we have had in a while here on the North Cumberland WMA. The leaf colors have been brilliant, and the temperatures are even better. Our staff has been very busy this year working on food plots, posting signs, conducting turkey surveys, and now preparing for deer season and the cold, wet months of winter that lay ahead. Due to a very wet mid-summer and a continuation of high vehicle and OHV traffic our roads have seen better days, however we are making every effort possible to get them in the best condition we can.

The 2022-2023 deer season opened on September 24 th , and we have noticed a fair amount of archery hunters out in the woods. This may be due to the recent expansion of Bear Hunt Zone 4 and the transition-

al bear zone. The entire North Cumberland WMA falls within one of those two zones. Another positive change that was implemented this deer season is the antler regulations for the Ed Carter Unit of the WMA. An antlered deer must have a minimum of 4 points on one side or a 15-inch minimum outside spread. This regulation was put in place to help deer in the younger age classes get a little older. We have received a lot of positive comments regarding this regulation, and hope that it will have positive effects on our deer herd in that Unit.

Elk have been in the spotlight this year as well. C.O.R.A spearheaded a total and complete makeover of the now “Terry and Jane Lewis Elk Viewing Tower” on Hatfield Knob. Terry Lewis, TWRA, and University of Tennessee Professor Dr. Craig Harper met earlier in the year to construct a plan to enhance the forage in front of the viewing tower. Terry Lewis and a few of the North Cumberland Staff executed that plan this fall. We sprayed to eradicate approximately 25 acres of existing fescue in the field and then replanted the field in a variety of annual and perennial cool season plants. (Cont'd on page 10)

Detailed minutes are kept for each meeting. Meeting date is the first Tuesday of every month.

The location is the lower courtroom of the Campbell County Courthouse in Jacksboro, TN.

Publicity, activities, newsletter, roads and trails, membership, old and new business are on each

agenda. Following are brief highlights of the meetings since the last newsletter publication in April 2022.

May 3, 2022: Newsletter distribution numbers were discussed. The long standing 300 copies will stay in place. Bill Stanley discussed OHV issues, ethical riding behaviors, and types of offenders. An elk tower update was given. Thanks to Bill Stanley for the accounting process, to

Ron Lambert for helping with funding through a grant, to Tommy Overton for painting, to Ron Dilbeck for gravels. Terry Lewis reported the tower roof was a real challenge due to height, winds. Joe Elkins and the Boy Scout Troop will seed and straw the site after construction is complete. New tower signage remains to be installed. Due to immense cost increases, an additional \$25,000 will be asked from TWRA. CORA has a verbal commitment for the additional funds to complete the project. The grand opening of the tower will be held at the behest of Campbell County.....

(Cont'd on pages 6-7)

CORA PRESIDENT'S LETTER Cont'd

In the early 1990's there were approximately 800 miles of trails on the east side of I-75 from the flat woods to the north end of what is now the Sundquist unit of the North Cumberland Wildlife Management Area. I traveled every one of those trails so many times. Now that the trail system has been established, the number of trails is down to only a couple of hundred miles of marked and maintained trails. I, like so many, have watched the huge increase in the number users and the impacts to the trail system. Because of this increase, it is easy to understand the challenges to the OHV system. Remove about 600 miles of trails and then add back thousands of users, with new high powered machines with huge tires and high output, to the couple hundred miles of open trails, and it is really easy to see the highly negative impacts to some of the trails.

It's my opinion that TWRA's Rusty Dunn and his crew do about as good of a job maintaining these trails as can be done with the limited funding that they are given annually. The weather certainly makes it difficult and challenging to maintain these over

used trails. The number of small drainage areas crossing the trails provides opportunities for the mud holes to develop. Then we, add several thousand users, with their high-powered machines. It's easy to see the impacts that need to be frequently addressed. Machines with stock tires have a difficult time traversing many of these mud holes.

It's the opinion of many that we need to provide the trail system with additional funding to allow more frequent maintenance on the trail system. This begs the question of if we have so many new users who all purchase a permit to ride where exactly does that permit money go? Well, all of it goes directly into the general fund and not back to the trail system. No one has yet been able to tell me exactly how much money is created annually from the OHV program,. I'm betting it's a large revenue stream. Would it not make sense that some of the money created by the OHV users be given back to maintain the trail program? Some questions additional questions I have are:

- I would like to know

if anyone knows exactly how many users there are annually?

- Exactly how many dollars are generated by the high impact permits?

- How much is thought to be created by the purchase of "hunter legal" permits vs a riding permit?

Way back in 1993, when CORA turned over the property to TWRA, it was established that if you are hunter legal you could ride without an additional riding permit. That was done to allow the agency to collect the federal funding that is created from hunting license sales. CORA knew full well that it would become difficult to know exactly how many users were buying a hunting license vs buying the riding permits. I think that there are ways to determine this number with some degree of accuracy.

It is time that we start asking some of the hard questions and getting some of the specific answers, and then working the bureaucratic system to appropriate additional funding for the trails program. CORA should lead that effort.

Mark J. Tidwell....Ramblings

Ramblings.....

Mark J. Tidwell

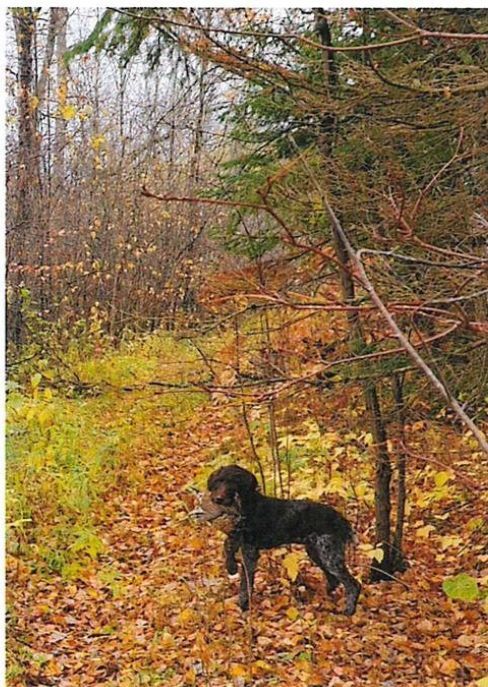
A lot has occurred since the last issue of the CORA Newsletter. Many months of effort went into the completion of the elk tower viewing project. Like a big jigsaw puzzle, all the various components at long last came together. The finished product now sits atop Hatfield Knob ready for the footfalls of young and old alike to climb its stairs and look out over Tennessee elk country. Also, very importantly, the design has a handicap accessible ramp leading to the first level, to accommodate the mobility impaired. Hopefully, in the near future, a phase 2 project will see a new handicap accessible trail built from the parking area to the newly renamed Terry and Jane Lewis Elk Viewing Tower.

CORA meetings in recent months have been more in the public eye than usual. On a couple of occasions, the lower courtroom in Jacksboro has been packed with those interested in our public lands and the issues surrounding them. People

are passionate about their outdoor

pursuits. Emotions often percolate to the top and flow out in discussions at these meetings. As was emphasized at a couple of meetings, there are a lot varied groups of WMA users. No one group can have things 100% their way. The process of give and take will ensure that all interests are considered, but everyone may have to give a little along the way.

We lived through another beautiful fall here in East Tennessee. The mountains are always interesting to look at through the respective seasons. However, autumn's splash of vivid colors



may have to be considered the visual high point of nature's beauty. Driving across I-75 from Jellico to Caryville was a real eyeball "popper" this October and November. Conditions were pretty much optimum for leaf pigmentations. During the summer we had received significant rainfall which had contributed to a heavy forest canopy. The dry, cool fall followed suit to bring forth the colors. Though the peak days of autumn colors lasts but a few days, it certainly is a spectacle to behold, and Campbell County has some of the prettiest vistas in the world!

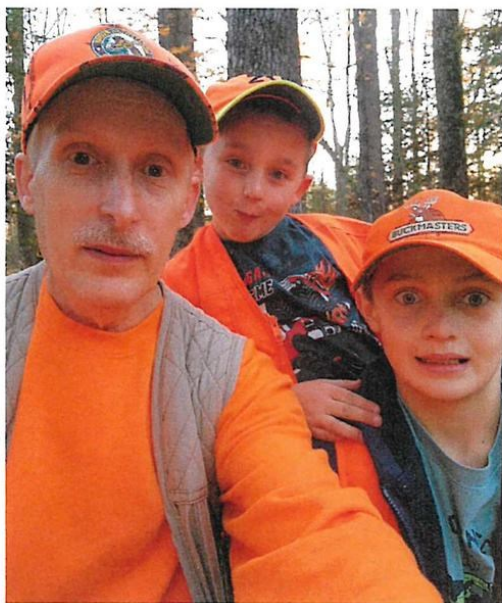
The lay of our land is something spectacular as well. I travelled one thousand miles north, back in October, to chase ruffed grouse and woodcock through the Northwoods of Wisconsin.

To a country boy whose brain has been programmed to navigate via ridge and hollow, for over half-a-century, the pancake flatness of the expansive Northwoods can be confounding.

Reliance on technology, such as a handheld GPS unit, became part and parcel of the daily hunting routine. Log-

Mark J. Tidwell Ramblings
Cont'd

RECIPE



ging a waypoint in as quickly as we exited the truck and headed off into the featureless thickets became routine. Sometimes, as we hunted until dusk each day, depending on the glow of a GPS screen to get us back to the truck was a little spooky.

After a couple of weeks of that, I surely was glad to roll back into East Tennessee and see land with some spine to it. Being surrounded by peaks and valleys is comforting to me in a way I can't explain. Navigating by a peak that has been there for eons is a little more my style than depending on a satellite I've never seen. In an nutshell, I suppose you can remove the boy from the mountains, but not the mountains from the boy's psyche.

Peanut butter

Pinwheels

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 cups white sugar
- 2/3 cup light corn syrup
- 1/3 cup water
- 2 large egg whites
- 1 tablespoons confectioners' sugar
- 1/2 cup peanut butter

INSTRUCTIONS

Mix sugar, corn syrup, and water together in a sauce pan; bring to a boil.

Heat to 250 degrees F (120 degrees C), or until a small amount of syrup dropped into cold water forms a rigid ball (hard ball stage) which is about 15 minutes.

Beat egg whites in a glass or metal bowl until stiff peaks form. Lift your beater or whisk straight up: the egg whites will form peaks. Slowly pour sugar mixture over egg whites while beating with an electric mixer. Beat until candy clings to a spoon and loses some of its shine.

Spread candy mixture onto a sheet of waxed paper; sprinkle with confectioners' sugar.

Generously spread peanut butter over candy mixture.

Roll candy into one large roll; cut into 2 rolls.

Slice each roll into desired pieces.



MEETINGS SUMMARY Cont'd

Mayor E.L. Morton and the TN Wildlife Commission. The Wounded Warrior Hunt was discussed. There were 17 participants this year, with 5 birds harvested. CWD in deer and feedback from the public to TWRA was discussed.

June 7, 2022: A quick run through the roll call, previous minutes and reports was conducted.

The meeting quickly transitioned to OHV issues as there was a large crowd in attendance. Grievances were expressed by various area residents concerning OHV use. Ralph Davis, 5th District Campbell County Commissioner, addressed the possibility of adding a \$100.00 county fee for OHV use in Campbell County. TWRA noted it was not within its realm to enforce infractions on county roads. Campbell County Sheriff Robbie Goins spoke to the OHV situation generating both money and problems. Alcohol use on the WMA was discussed at length. The legalities of DUI checkpoints and enforcement were also talked about. Tennessee Highway Patrol's Will Bruce talked at length on education of the OHV riding community. He also talked about the mixed interpretations of state law when it comes to the expansion of ATV/OHV law from 2 paragraphs, formerly, to the current 25 pages. Campbell County Litter Control Officer

Glennis Monday spoke to the issue of trail and road side litter. Following such lengthy discussion, matters turned back to the Hatfield Knob project. The additional \$25,000 will come from TWRA to cover materials cost increases. CORA will need to formally thank the Campbell County Chamber of Commerce for all its contributions to the project. WMA Manager Keith Thomas advised of some changes: turkey season will begin 2 weeks later, fanning for turkeys is banned on WMAs, there will be an expanded bear hunt in Zone 4, and a 4 point on one side, 15" minimum spread rule will go into effect for deer on the Ed Carter (Tackett Creek) Unit.

July 5, 2022: June's public input concerning OHV issues was discussed: trash, erosion, noise and dust, differing regulations in various jurisdictions, enforcement issues, and behavioral issues. A local ATV/OHV guide discussed issues with non-licensed guides booking tours of the WMA as well as non-licensed campgrounds that are untaxed. A general viewpoint of the CORA board is that there needs to be a plan developed that addresses OHV issues in collaboration with TWRA, riders, and other interested stakeholders. It was announced that TWRA will dedi-

cate the Hatfield Knob Elk Viewing Tower on August 17 with the Tennessee Wildlife Commission present. Election of CORA board members was delayed, until August, due to the absence of several board members.

August 2, 2022: Election for board members was held. Mike McAfee and Glenn Massengill retired but will stay active. Andy Wallace, Scott Cornett, and Jimmy Jeffries left the board. It was decided Mike McAfee would retain the title chairman emeritus. New nominations for board members were Sheila Westray, Fred Walker and Jason Vanover. For the executive board: Terry Lewis remained president by acclimation, Ron Lambert was elected vice-president, Mark J. Tidwell was elected secretary, Coy Crutchfield was elected treasurer, and Bill Stanley was elected chairman of the board. Following the election, WMA Manager Keith Thomas spoke to the upcoming tower grand opening. Shuttling folks to and from the tower site was discussed.

Other topics such as the possible grant for an OHV simulator, teaching folks to ride in an environmentally friendly way, JAKES Day, the CORA barbeque, and the RMEF Banquet were discussed.

September, 2022: President Terry Lewis expressed his thanks to the board in support of the elk viewing tower project. Ron Law-

MEETINGS SUMMARY Cont'd

horn expressed his pride in the project being taken from concept to fruition. Bill Stanley was lauded for his excellent speech at the tower's grand opening ceremony. Keeping elk viewable, ATV/OHV issues, and alcohol use on the WMA were discussed. Westray spoke to educating riders. Vanover brought up the Tread Lightly program.

Stanley spoke to the OHV issues being a classic multi-variant problem. JAKES Day was discussed with a reported 220 kids and 160 volunteers participating. From fishing to rock climbing to BB gun shooting, there were plenty of activities for the kids. The 11 th year of the event saw perfect weather and plenty of good food as well. The upcoming CORA barbeque, the RMEF banquet and Hunters for the Hungry were also topics of discussion.

October 4, 2022: Westray reported trails 7, 8, 19, and 26 were in need of maintenance. Meal and gun raffle tickets were discussed for the upcoming CORA barbeque at Cove Lake State Park scheduled for October 22 nd . An update was given on keeping the Terry and Jane Lewis Elk Viewing Tower (so named at the August dedication) a high probability viewing area. Oats, wheats, and turnips will be replacing fescue in a long-term effort to keep the

core area around the tower a major draw for the elk herd. The lower courtroom was packed with an audience drawn to the meeting by internet posts concerning the perception that the trail system on the WMA was in danger of closure. TWRA's John Mike, Joe Elkins, and Keith Thomas all addressed a host of questions and accusations from the assembly. Though the discussions were sometimes pointed, civility remained intact. With the focus of a multiplicity of user groups centered on the area, stakeholders will need to be open to the views, considerations and interests of all concerned. A collaborative effort to arrive at the best solutions, instead of fracturing into competing, opposing groups was stressed. One fact everyone can agree on is that the draw of the outdoors to Campbell County's public lands has increased at a rate and scope that no one ever imagined, particularly within just the last 3 years. After one hour and fifty minutes of discussion, the meeting was dismissed, with the crowd leaving with the assurance the trail system is not going to be closed.

November 1, 2022: Westray reported that Trails 13, 29, and 35 were extremely rough and in need of maintenance. She also handed out a preliminary map workup of legal OHV roads in

Campbell County. This is a work in progress. Walker discussed the increased traffic to the fire-tower on Walnut Mountain and potential safety risks. The CORA barbeque, held on October

22 nd , was discussed. 68 people attended and the weather was great. Costs, drawings, and meals were spoken to, with the board approving raising the price on meal tickets in the future. The customary \$5.00 per meal, the price for as long as anyone remembers, will be increased to offset the rise in cost for providing meals. Hunters For The Hungry picked up the first shipment of 520 pounds of venison. Historically, 18,500 to 22,000 meals are provided through this effort.

The CORA Board voted to donate \$1000.00 to Hunters For The Hungry. A donation of \$250.00, to help fund local high school students in the Brandon Carr Fishing Tournament, was also brought up and approved by the CORA Board. Revisiting the October meeting, discussion was conducted concerning law enforcement, trail maintenance, and rider education on the WMA. A meeting is planned with the TWRA's Director Maxedon in the near future.



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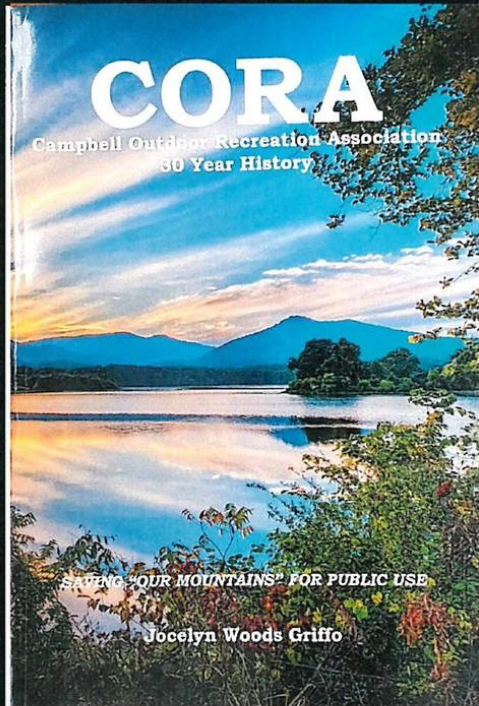
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**NEWS FROM THE NORTH
CUMBERLAND Cont'd**

A new viewing tower along with some high-quality forage should make for outstanding wildlife viewing in the future.

The constant and continued effort from the Staff at the North Cumberland WMA is always focused first and foremost on enhancing the usable wildlife habitat to promote a diversity of healthy wildlife populations, as well as striving to provide the best experience for all our users.



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PROUD TO BE AN
AMERICAN**

**Meetings 1st
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