



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – JON JOYNER

Summer is on the horizon and the NWTF is alive and well! Two things that many of our members and volunteers live for! While 2021 was a whirlwind of ups and downs, and no doubt the global pandemic has touched someone close to you, we are hopeful that we are beginning to emerge out of the other side together. You, our volunteers, members, and donors have helped stabilize the NWTF over the last year, and many of our local chapters across the state are planning their annual banquets and outreach events, which is the life blood of our existence and why our volunteers get up in the morning. In 2021, we were able to get back to a little normalcy as the virus ebbed and flowed through the seasons, but 2020 taught us how to adapt and overcome obstacles that presented themselves. With that, we had some record setting events across the state and were able to provide hunting opportunities with over 50 outreach events attended across the state from turkey season to deer season. We were able to reactivate our SuperFund, after over a year of financial uncertainty, and our committee went to work immediately on putting plans and budgets in place for how to best put those funds to the best use across the state. We are happy to say that all of the habitat projects that were submitted were approved for funding in this year and we know that they will make a big impact on the resource in the immediate future.

2021 taught us more about how to get creative and our faithful followers have walked lock-step with us through our digital transformation. We held in-person and virtual fundraisers, and you answered the call, no matter the format. You all continue to answer the call at every turn, and for that, we consider ourselves blessed. In 2022, we have great hope that our local chapters will be able to get their in-person banquets and hunts back on track, so that we can continue to make impact in all areas of the state. I am proud to announce that as a result of your contributions that Virginia was recognized as the 12th ranked state in the country for 2021 in funds raised. Virginia also received two awards at the NWTF National Convention in Nashville, TN in February. One for 2nd overall state with 2000-4999 members and an L.A. Dixon Outstanding Chapter Grand Slam award. We also had three of our local chapters win national awards at the convention. Franklin County Longbeards received an award for Membership Achievement with 256 JAKES members. The Piedmont Area Chapter received two awards. 2nd place banquet over 350 attendees, and an L.A. Dixon Outstanding Chapter Grand Slam award. The Tri-County Longbeards Chapter received an L.A. Dixon Outstanding Chapter Grand Slam award. Piedmont and Tri-County Longbeards were also recognized for being in the top 10 nationally for sponsor members (199 and 149 respectively). A true testament to our tremendous members and volunteers.

Speaking of volunteers, our very own Robin Clark was awarded the Roger M. Latham Sportsman Wild Turkey Service Award for his decades of service to the organization's outreach mission.

Spring 2022

VA NWTF Executive Committee

President – **Jon Joyner**
Vice President – **Ray "Bear" Davidson**

Treasurer – **Staci Longest**
Secretary – **Liz Grove**

Women in the Outdoors
Coordinator – **Julie Abel**

Wheelin' Sportsman Coordinator –
Robin Clark

JAKES Coordinator –
Tim Burton

Save the Hunt Coordinator –
Jeff McCambridge

NWTF STAFF

Regional Directors – **Billy Hall,**
Davy Blessing

Regional Biologist – **Cully McCurdy**

The NWTF presents Roger M. Latham Sportsman Wild Turkey Service awards to members who are not employed as professional wildlife managers but have made significant contributions to wild turkey conservation. We have learned so much throughout this pandemic, but our core is wrapped around gathering in fellowship at our local conservation banquets, and we are excited that most of those are already scheduled throughout the remainder of this year. I hope you all continue to remain healthy and safe, and I'll look forward to seeing you at an event around the state in the near future.



HUNTING HERITAGE PROGRAMS



VAWS – Bigger and Better!

Our Virginia Wheelin' Sportsmen enjoyed our busiest deer season on record, as local chapters and hunt clubs hosted 28 hunts! That created a lot of excellent hunting opportunities for our sportsmen with disabilities, and I appreciate everyone's commitment, hard work, and time involved to make these events happen. There are only so many hunting days of deer season, but I'm already working on some new bow hunting opportunities for our guys, as well as a September doe management hunt.

We'll kick off our spring events as the Piedmont Chapter came up with a novel idea; a day for our hunters to pattern their shotguns for turkey season. Our guys and gals often don't have the resources or places needed to pattern or sight-in their firearms before the seasons start so we're really excited about this first-time event. Once everyone is all lined up, we'll be hosting six spring gobbler hunts in April, including two new hunts. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services have opened their properties to turkey hunting this spring and we'll be one of the first groups of hunters to enjoy a day of chasing longbeards on their property outside of Warsaw. The Apple Valley Longbeards will hold their first turkey hunt for our members on properties near Winchester. Both are promising new hunts! It has been a long cold winter and we're ready to hit the spring woods. May is booked up with trout fishing events. Scotland Farm in West Augusta will host the Charlie Scott Memorial Outdoor Day on the 14th, followed by the Botetourt Longbeards Trout Rodeo the 21st, and the ever-popular Susie-Q Farm Trout Rodeo on the 28th. Also, in case you're wondering, the Little Switzerland Trout Rodeo in Monterey will be scheduled for September again this year. We'll have other great events planned for the summer and I'll need to lock in the dates for our deer and dove hunts by mid-July. If your chapter or hunt club is interested in having some of our members out for a hunt or fishing event, please contact me as soon as possible. Our deer hunt application will go out August 1st.

Thanks again to everyone for making VAWS the best and biggest program in the country!

Picture 1 – Our VAWS Vice-President, Doug Galica, got this nice buck at the Apple Valley hunt in Winchester. Picture 2 – A brand new hunter, Scott Vetter, bagged this awesome buck on our hunt with the Taylor Hunt Club in Orange Co. Picture 3 – The Franklin Co. Longbeards hosted an amazing hunt. Two first-time hunters killed their first deer, and Kramer Turner dropped this big 8 pointer.

Robin Clark
State Coordinator
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2022, a new year for our JAKES program here in Virginia. If you attended the leadership weekend back in January, some of this may be old news. I still would like to emphasize the importance of registering all outreach events into the HHP website. If you don't register your event, you are taking big risk by not having your event insured under the NWTF. Jeff McCambridge can assist anyone in registering your event or he can register your event for you. Each event also must be registered to be eligible for Superfund money. Be sure to finalize after the close of the event. I would prefer that once the event is closed out, go ahead, and fill out the outreach award application instead of waiting till the end of the year and send to me. This would help showcase your accomplishments and keeps me informed of happenings across the state. I am willing to help all of you in any way that I can. There are lots of great events going on that are not being sharing with the rest of the state.

Please reach out to me for anything. I will help you with planning, executing, and reporting your events. I would like to put together a list of all events to share with the entire state. We can work together to help each other out and exchange ideas of what works in your area. I have heard a lot of you say that you don't have enough help, so why not join forces with your neighboring chapters. We just need to do a better job of communicating with each other. I will start this communication, Franklin County Longbeards will be holding its JAKES event on June 4, 2022. Everyone is invited to come help or just walk around and see if anything we do will help you and your chapter. Our chapter would love to show everyone what we do and see if you have suggestions on ways we can improve our event.

Here is to 2022, may it be the best year yet!

Tim Burton

Virginia JAKES Coordinator

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Virginia
National Wild
Turkey Federation



LOCAL CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



FAITHFUL CALL CHAPTER



VA STATE CHAPTER

Reunited and It Feels So Good!

Jon Joyner – Virginia State Chapter President

Although mother nature and omicron attempted to thwart our ascent on Roanoke, we finally did it...After over a year away from our fellow volunteers and chapter leadership from across the state, the VA NWTF reconvened in person for our annual Leadership Weekend and state awards banquet, February 4-6, 2022.

"New Look, Same Mission" is the mantra for 2022 and we kicked off on Friday the 4th after having to postpone due to a white out in the valley on our originally scheduled time together. We had a great night of sharing ideas and our passion for the mission that we carry every day for the NWTF. We were greeted with new and familiar faces, two national board members and two of the executives from the national headquarters that had heard of all the great



things the Virginia NWTF has accomplished were in attendance for a town hall style meeting. We shared ideas on effectively running a local chapter, fund raising by thinking outside of the box, how to collaborate with other government and NGO organizations to execute outreach events, and many other fun topics. Over 35 chapters in Virginia had representation at the weekend events.

The energy from Friday night's "fun night" spilled over into Saturday, where we held a full day of updates and education on all things NWTF. We shared information with all of the attendees on all of the great accomplishments of the (VA)NWTF had in 2021. Obviously, getting some of the banquets (the NWTF's #1 fundraising effort) reactivated in 2021 as COVID and government restrictions allowed, were a big part of the successes. We launched our Conservation Seed program in the spring of 21, and had a tremendous amount of corn, milo, and winter wheat distributed, creating over 6000 acres of enhanced habitat on private lands. We were able to reactivate the Super Fund, which is the epitome of what we do, where we put your money back in the ground on critical conservation projects around the state. Most importantly, we celebrated helping the NWTF navigate through one of the most turbulent times anyone could ever imagine. Without the national organization there is no local or state organization, no conservation work being done for the turkey and other species, and vice versa. We need each other to survive!

The rest of the day was reinforcing how local chapters can make an impact in their communities, with tips on creating outreach events, applying for local conservation projects, administering scholarships in the community, seed program access, fund raising options, and tons more information to help your local chapters be more involved in your local communities.

We received the conservation report from our district biologist, Cully McCurdy, where he reviewed the over \$200k in habitat projects that were done by the NWTF in Virginia in 2021 and provided an overview of the \$215k in projects on the slate for FY22. All things that go all to unrecognized and are not celebrated enough. The Mission Never Stops! In just the last 10 years, in Virginia, we have administered OVER \$1.5 million in conservation projects, and in the last 5 years impacted over 5000 acres of public land. All helping achieve two years earlier than planned the NWTF's Save the Habitat goals.

We rounded out the day with a Q&A from the chapter leadership on what they have learned throughout the day and share tips that they have found to help them impact their communities, before closing out the day with our annual Awards Banquet, where we celebrate chapters and volunteers across the state for their outstanding efforts throughout the previous year.

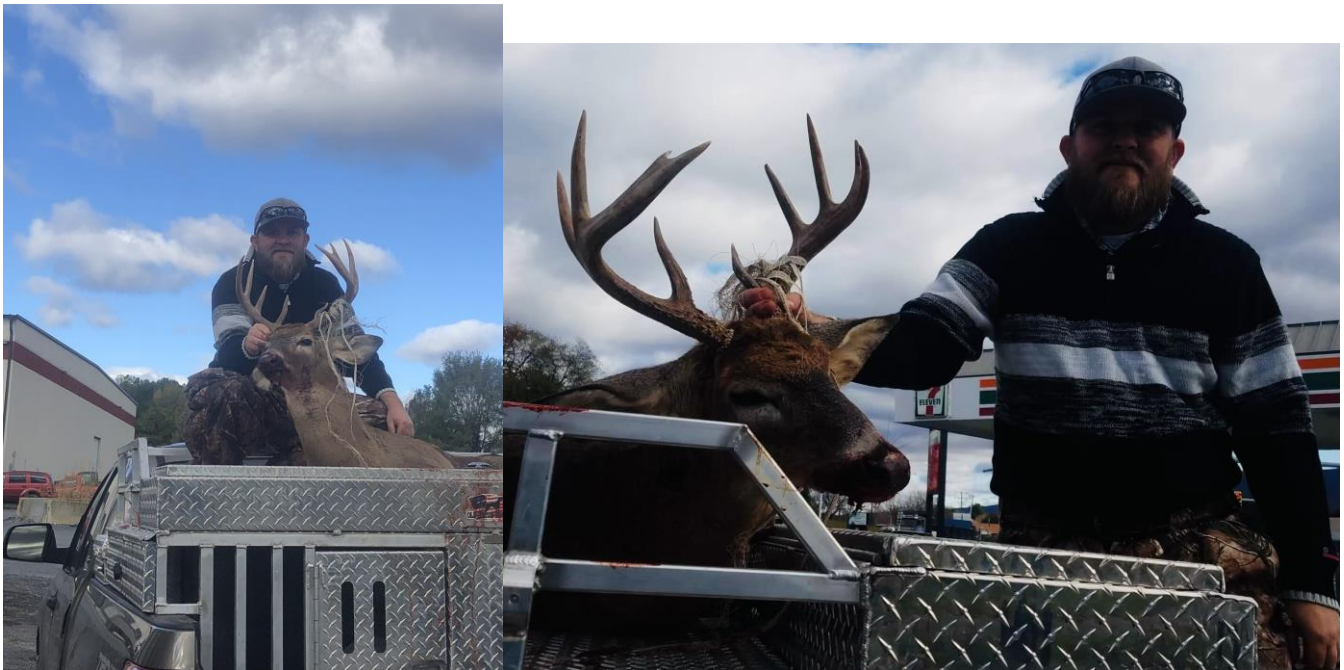
It was a blessing to be able to gather together with our peers to celebrate our successes and learn how to give it back. We all left Roanoke with a strong sense of purpose and a rejuvenated leadership base that are ready to take their chapters and community projects to the next level. We are already planning for the 2022 even. We encourage you to get involved



in your local chapter in any way possible, as there is something so special about helping carry out our mission and see all the great work being done around that state, and being able to say "We did that"!

We are #NWTFFStrong

2021 PHOTOS





Virginia National Wild Turkey Federation





Virginia National Wild Turkey Federation



 **Virginia**
National Wild
Turkey Federation





Take a child outdoors, introduce them and others to our pastime, help create new hunters, or take your neighbor who maybe doesn't have anywhere to hunt. Good luck afield, have fun, be safe, and thank you for helping the NWTF
“SAVE THE HABITAT, SAVE THE HUNT”!

