

Notice of 2021 C&O Canal Association Annual Meeting

By Steve Dean

Announcement of Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the membership of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Association will be held on Saturday, March 20, 2021. At the time of publication of this newsletter it has not been determined if a physical meeting will be held, or if an on-line, or virtual, meeting will be necessary due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Members will be notified via email, social media and on the Association website of the meeting arrangements. The meeting will be for the purpose of electing officers for 2021, electing a nominating committee for 2022, receiving reports of officers and committees, considering adoption of a proposal to amend the bylaws, and any other business that may properly come before it. All members of the Association in good standing are invited to attend. This notice constitutes the call for the meeting, pursuant to articles II.2, III.1, and IX of the bylaws.

Nominations for Officers and Directors

Officers, except directors, are elected at each annual meeting to serve a term of one year. In addition, five directors are elected at each annual meeting to serve a term of three years. The nominating committee, chosen at the preceding annual meeting, will present a slate of candidates. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the annual meeting. Members attending the 2020 annual meeting elected Barbara Sheridan (Chair), Diana Dean, Steve Dean, Tony Laing, Richard Radhe and Tim Snyder to form the 2021 nominating committee. The committee has nominated the following candidates for election in 2021.

Bill Holdsworth – President, *Rockville, Md.*

I am honored to be nominated for the presidency of the C&O Canal Association, an organization that plays a vital role in maintaining one of the nation's historic treasures. I previously served nine years on the board of directors, including six years as secretary. I act as webmaster for the Association website and coordinate the broadcast emails. I look forward to the challenge of serving the organization as the president for a sixth year. I am a retired federal employee.

Barbara Sheridan – First Vice President, *La Plata, Md.*

I have been a member of the C&O Canal Association for over 20 years and have served previously on the board as a director, as first vice president, and as president. I have chaired two thru-hikes (2004 and 2009) and was the membership chair for 15 years. I am also currently serving on the programs

committee. I was born in Washington, D. C. and have lived in the area all my life. My first awareness of the canal was an aerial view of it from a streetcar while on the way to Glen Echo Amusement Park as a child. The streetcars are long gone, as is the amusement park, but the canal lives on for all to enjoy! If elected as first vice president, I will work with the Association to help preserve and protect this valuable resource for future generations.

Anthony (Tony) Laing – Second Vice President, *Olney, Md.*

I have been a member of the C&O Canal Association for 15 years. During this time, I have enjoyed participating in the paddling trips that the group sponsors, including the Paw Paw Bends weekend trip, the Monocacy River trip, the Brunswick to Monocacy trip on the Potomac, and trips on the canal itself. I backpacked the canal from Cumberland to Harpers Ferry in 1980, and I cycled the entire length from Cumberland to Georgetown in 2009.

I have been on the Board of Directors for two terms and I am one of the two canoemasters who are responsible for the paddling trips.

I have a certain historical affinity to the canal as my great grandfather helped construct the canal in the 1830s. He and his two brothers got jobs digging the canal after they disembarked from a ship sailing from Hamburg, Germany to Baltimore. At one point they operated a boarding house in Oldtown before settling in Cumberland. I was born in Cumberland and now live in Olney, Maryland. I am retired from the U.S. Department of Education.

I would like to serve a second term as second vice president to give back for all of the fun and growth that the Association has given me.

Richard Radhe – Treasurer, *Columbia, Md.*

I have been a member of the C&O Canal Association for over 15 years. For most of those years I enjoyed the hikes, canoe trips, dinners and the efforts of many dedicated members. Seven years ago, I decided it was my time to contribute to the Association by accepting the treasurer position. It is an honor to work with former and current board members. It was exciting to implement inventory into QuickBooks to track the sales and distribution of Steve Dean's revised NPS 142 Handbooks and the updated Pocket Guides. I am an enrolled agent with a small tax practice which gives me the resources to prepare annual 990 nonprofit tax return, sales tax and personal property returns. I look forward to serving in 2021.

Kerry Gruber – Secretary, Gaithersburg, Md.

I've been an Association member since 2010 and joined the board of directors in 2015. I have also participated in hikes along the canal and several World Canals conferences. I was born in Baltimore and raised in North Chevy Chase, Maryland and Washington, D.C. My grandparents lived in the Burleith neighborhood of Washington, D.C. and painted scenes of the canal and Georgetown back in the 1930s. I retired from the federal government in 2012 as an education statistician. The beauty and history of the canal is something I enjoy sharing with others. It would be an honor to continue serving the Board as the secretary.

Doug Zveare – Information Officer, Rosemont, Md.

I am honored to be nominated to serve a third term as information officer for the C&O Canal Association. I have been an Association member and a level walker for over 19 years. During that time I have completed over 53 level walks, participated in Association meetings and activities as well as having bicycled and hiked the entire towpath several times. I am active in the VIP program helping to install picnic tables, benches and waysides in the Park. I participate in the Association's stewardship of the Swain's Lock picnic area and campground. If elected, I will work hard to further the Association's continuing mission.

Trent Carbaugh – Director, Hagerstown, Md.

I grew up on the Potomac River and C&O Canal and fished it with my grandfather and my father, as well as spending many happy hours when I was young walking the towpath and traveling by boat on the river with my parents and younger brother. I am looking for a meaningful way to give back for some of the joy and solace that the canal has given me over the years.

I have been a level walker for a year and spend much of my free time on the river or in the park. I have experience in the historic restoration business as a historian for Maryland Department of Natural Resources, as an archaeological field technician, and have extensive experience climbing, hiking and paddling. Currently, I am the director of education and co-owner of Birds of a Feather School which uses fine arts and interpretive history to enrich the lives of autistic adults and those suffering with memory disorders. I am also a volunteer at Little Antietam Creek Inc., an archaeological teaching nonprofit in Waynesboro, Pennsylvania

Philip deVos – Director, Monroe, Va.

I became interested in the Erie Canal as a student up in Rochester in the mid-1970s, and after relocating to Virginia, joined the Virginia Canals and Navigation Society. My duties there have included editing *The Tiller* and service on the board.

I'd like to be involved with the World Canal Conference in 2021 and hope that it does come off in spite of the virus.

Dick Ebersole – Director, Hagerstown, Md.

My wife and I live in Hagerstown, but I grew up in Williamsport and I remember playing on the canal in my youth. I've been a member of the C&O Canal Association and a level walker since 2007. I've volunteered at the Williamsport Visitors Center for the last nine years, and have had the pleasure of aiding William Bauman in writing several canal family histories. I have a special interest in the section of canal from Dam 5 to Four Locks; my wife's great-grandfather was the lock tender at Dam 5 from 1898 until 1914, and many other family members lived in this section and worked for the canal company. If elected, I would like to focus some attention on the stabilization and restoration of the many historical structures that are in dire need of maintenance. I would like to thank the nominating committee for giving me the opportunity to serve the Association.

Christine Holdsworth – Director, Rockville, Md.

I have been a member of the C&O Canal Association for over 20 years and am proud of our efforts that help preserve and maintain the park. I currently serve on the special projects and archives committees. In the past, I volunteered at Lock House 75, was a level walker, helped with the Douglas Hike weekends, and participated in many other activities. The canal is a beautiful place to walk and I enjoy seeing the changes each season brings. If elected to another term I will continue to work with the Association to help preserve the C&O Canal National Historical Park and encourage others to explore the park and learn the history of the canal.

Paul Petkus – Director, Laurel, Md.

The C&O Canal is my favorite weekend destination in this area. I enjoy hiking, bike riding, and taking photographs along the towpath. I've been visiting it regularly since 2005. I have a background in information technology, but I also enjoy observing and learning about nature. The towpath is a great place for that. I've learned about the flora and fauna in the park through participation in nature walks organized by the C&O Canal Association. I've also learned by participation in nature surveys. Two of the surveys to which I contributed from outings in the park were for the Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas and the Maryland Biodiversity Project. Additionally, I've participated in butterfly surveys in Howard County. I've learned enough from the experts in those surveys to lead annual nature walks along the canal focusing on butterflies. I sought out a way to formally help the park after assisting three stranded bicycle riders during one outing. As a result, I started volunteering as a level walker in 2009. I've also participated in activities such as the removal of garlic mustard. I hope to use my background and experience to additionally help the park through board membership.

Notice of Proposed Bylaws Amendments

Four proposed amendments to the Association's bylaws will be presented at the annual meeting. The bylaws may be amended at a meeting of the membership of the Association by a two-thirds vote, provided that the text of the amendment has been published in the call to the meeting. This notice constitutes the required publication. The Board of Directors recommends the adoption of each of these proposed amendments.

1. William Stewart, a member of the Board of Directors, has proposed a change to the method of setting dues rates with the following:

MOTION: To amend Article I, section 1, by striking out the words "Dues shall be [xx] dollars per year" in each of the three classes of membership, and adding the following: "The amount of dues for each class of membership shall be determined by the Board of Directors no later than the Board's regular August meeting in the calendar year before the new amounts shall take effect."

Currently, Article I specifies the dues rate for each class of membership (individual, family, and patron). Prior to the adoption of the current bylaws in 1999, dues rates were set by the Board of Directors. Inclusion of the dues rates in the bylaws requires an amendment adopted by the annual meeting to adjust them. (The current rates have been in effect since the mid-1990s, so membership has never been called upon to vote on a change.) Since the majority of memberships are renewed before the annual meeting, the full financial benefit of a dues increase under the current system would not be realized until the following year. If the authority to set the rates is returned to the Board, the income benefit to the Association's operating budget would be advanced by a year.

2. William Stewart has also proposed creating a new class of membership by adding the following after line C in Article I.1:

MOTION: To amend Article I, section 1, by adding the following: "D. Commercial Sponsorship, for businesses and consisting of one or two named adults, together with their dependent children, who reside in the same household, and designated as the voting membership named by the sponsoring business for the term of membership. Such designation may be granted for a minimum of one year. Reasonable exceptions to this designation may be granted by the Membership Chair, at his or her sole discretion, upon written application of the sponsor."

Mr. Stewart's proposal would create a new class of membership for commercial businesses. He states that this would

benefit the Association because it would generate income; the dues for this new class would be considerably higher, perhaps double the patron rate. He suggests that sponsors could be listed separately on the donors' page of *Along the Towpath*, and recognized in some way at Association events and in our social media postings. He explains the inclusion of the sponsor's representative's family as analogous to a family or patron membership. The "reasonable exceptions" would apply when the sponsor-designated family leaves the company or area and a replacement is named, but would avoid the possibility of frivolous designation switching within the period of membership.

3. The Board of Directors proposes an amendment authorizing virtual meetings in lieu of in-person annual or special membership meetings:

MOTION: To amend Article III by inserting after Section 3: "The Board of Directors may order the Annual Meeting or special membership meetings to be held by one or more means of remote communication. Such meetings must be conducted in a format in which all participants can hear and speak to each other at the same time."

Article III describes the time and purposes of the annual and special membership meetings of the Association. When the current bylaws were written, more than twenty years ago, no one had ever heard of conference calls and "Zoom" meetings. Thus, the 1999 bylaws made no provision for how to meet when everything is locked-down. The substitution of a conference call for the 2020 annual meeting, for the purpose of electing officers, directors, and a nominating committee, was successful, though not sanctioned by our bylaws. The proposed amendment will correct this deficiency.

4. The Board of Directors also proposes an amendment authorizing virtual board meetings:

MOTION: To amend Article IV, Section 3, by adding the following: "Upon order of the President, the Board may hold virtual meetings so long as all Board members have been given notice and all persons participating in the meeting are able to hear and speak to one another. Such participation shall constitute presence at the meeting."

The rationale for this proposed amendment is the same as for motion #3.

The complete bylaws can be found in the Association's website, www.candocanal.org/bylaws.