



Volume 7, Issue 4

Fall 2008



Preserving
and
Promoting
the
Natural
and
Cultural
Resources
of the
Dan River
Basin
through
Stewardship,
Recreation
and
Education

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JENNY EDWARDS JOINS DRBA STAFF

DRBA welcomes Jenny Edwards to lead our new Southern Virginia Rivers Initiative (SRI) in Patrick, Henry, Pittsylvania and Halifax counties.

Funded by the Virginia Environmental Endowment, SRI will seek to ensure healthy waterways, promote river and trail recreation, and help identify watershed priorities. Ms. Edwards will connect with partners to create networks of natural recreational areas, organize stream monitoring teams, and share information about how land use impacts the river.

Ms. Edwards grew up on the NC Outer Banks

where she spent summer days playing in the pine woods, swimming, and helping her father with their crab pots in Roanoke and Halifax counties.

"The best part of growing up on the Banks was the freedom to explore the outdoors," she recalls. "I'm troubled that many kids today do not have that luxury, to 'just be' in the outdoors." One of the things she likes best about DRBA is that "they are active in creating opportunities for kids to connect with and enjoy the river and the natural world. For so many people in the Dan River basin, the river is part of who they are, historically and culturally.

is part of who they are, historically and culturally.



Jenny Edwards and Rudy

scendants of Outer Banks lighthouse keepers and an African-American community near Wilmington, NC. As a program officer with the NC Humanities Council she developed environmental humanities programs and projects. She comes to DRBA from the SPCA of the Triad, where she served as development director and then as executive director.

They have a right to it."

A trained public historian, Ms. Edwards holds an M.A. in history from UNC-Wilmington. She has conducted oral history projects with de-

Located in DRBA's Eden office, Ms. Edwards may be reached by phone at (276) 340-2462 or email at jedwards@danriver.org.

HOME SAVINGS BANK DONATES \$3,000 TO DRBA

CASWELL COUNTY HERITAGE TRAILS

The Danville Regional Foundation (DRF) has awarded DRBA a one-year grant of \$177,400 for its Heritage Trails initiative for Caswell County, NC. Planned in coordination with the Caswell County Recreation Commission, an affiliate of DRBA, the project will support the development of a master trails plan, multi-use trails, and programs to promote Caswell's heritage.



Karl Stauber, DRF President and CEO, said, "DRF is excited to be a supporter of DRBA's work in Caswell County.

continued page 2



Mr. Jonathan Jobe of Home Savings Bank presents check to Katherine Mull.

South Van Buren Road in Eden, NC presented DRBA Executive Director, Katherine Mull, with a check for \$3,000 to support DRBA's work on behalf of the community.

The Home Savings Bank's investment has helped DRBA take a giant step forward in meeting two matching challenge grants from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and Miller Brewing Company, now MillerCoors.

In August, Mr. Jonathan Jobe of the Home Savings Bank on

continued page 5

Greetings from the Director



Late summer and early fall seem to be prime time for festivals. Virtually every weekend features a race, fair, festival, stomp or hoe-down. Two major events, Eden's Riverfest and the Stokes Stomp, consistently fall on the same weekend in September.

Local festivals offer entertainment, crafts, fun for children, and a chance to learn about programs in our local communities. Each festival is a valuable chance to greet members and friends—and to share what we do with the public. Sadly, this year DRBA had to cancel our booth at the Rockingham County Folk Festival. We were unable to have booths at festivals in Stoneville and Mayodan, and we could not consider events in the eastern portion of the basin, in Halifax and Person counties.

The reason: lack of volunteers.

A number of DRBA's volunteers have staffed DRBA's booth at multiple events, and they have done so year after year. Many thanks to the volunteers who helped out this year: Forrest Altman,

T Butler, Bonnie Cornwell, Darrin and Jennifer Doss, Linda Drage, Milton Hundley, Betty and Wayne Kirkpatrick, Edith and Harold Knight, Mildred Mann, Ashley Parham, Hazel Puckett, Lynda Purcell, Julia Pyron, Will Renyer, Ariel Thomas, Vicky Thomas, Will Truslow and Brian Williams.

I would like to pay a special tribute to Forrest Altman, who as a youthful 80-something volunteer, has been DRBA's face to the public at the Stokes Stomp and Caswell Brightleaf Hoedown for many years. Forrest has driven hundred of miles and hauled many pounds of DRBA displays, sales items and educational and informational materials. Most importantly, he has engaged hundreds of members of the public in conversation, sharing our work and attracting new faces to become involved.

If you enjoy meeting new faces and would like share your enthusiasm for our work, please consider spending a few hours at the DRBA booth at one of next year's festivals. Please send a short email of interest to Vicky Thomas: vthomas@danriver.org Do it now, before you forget. Let us know if you have a preferred festival, and we will be in touch when the time comes.

You will be glad you did!

Katherine Mull

CASWELL HERITAGE TRAIL FUNDED

Continued from front page

By increasing the trails and access to the Dan River, this effort will improve the health of area residents through walking and biking as well as create new economic opportunities through tourism."

According to Barry Smith, Chairman of the Recreation Commission, "Trails will give our visitors new opportunities to experience the beautiful outdoors and the nature and wildlife of our

county. Also, by working with the surrounding cities and counties in the Dan River basin, this project will enhance the region and make it into a more desirable vacation destination."

Forrest Altman, a DRBA founder and Commission member, said, "Bravo to the Danville Regional Foundation for its vision in funding first the Senior Center and now a trail system connecting schools, historic sites, places of natural

beauty and other places where citizens of the County want to walk, bicycle, push strollers and ride horses."

DRF invests for the long term in efforts that promise sustained positive impact for the Dan River region. The Foundation is committed to development, promotion, and support of activities, programs, and organizations that address the health, education, and well-being of the region's residents.

Katherine Mull

PRESIDENT'S SPACE

I would like to introduce you to Jenny Edwards, our new Program Manager in Virginia. She will head DRBA's Southern Virginia Rivers Initiative that is funded by the Virginia Environmental Endowment (VEE). Jenny grew up on Roanoke Island, has an MA in history, and has recently served as the executive director of SPCA of the Triad. Welcome to Jenny, and many thanks to VEE.

Some of you may have been con-

tacted by Vicky Thomas from our Eden or Martinsville office. Vicky serves as DRBA's administrative assistant and is contacting members via email and telephone. She and her daughter Ariel helped with the children's program at the Eden Riverfest River Village. Vicky's help is greatly appreciated.

We have recently had very exciting news concerning Caswell County. DRBA has been awarded \$177,400 from the Danville Regional Foundation for a one year grant to start the Caswell Heritage Trails.

The grant will fund a project manager who will oversee developing a master plan for trails and help in its implementation. Many thanks to the Danville Regional Foundation for the generous support.

Will Truslow



SATURDAY OUTINGS . . .

1

JULY 5: PADDLE, MAYO RIVER

On Saturday July 5th, like every morning, Dame Turtle was nonchalantly crossing Anglin Mill Road to collect good leaves for her brunch when she found herself caught in unusually thick traffic—a herd of bipeds in automobiles topped with multicolor boats all rushing towards the put-in for the DRBA monthly floating. Acrobatic zig-zags and break slamming allowed Dame Turtle to manage her way to better pasture while the invading bipeds reached the meeting point where, greeted by T and Lindley, they proceeded with signing the waivers, unloading the boats, and arranging the parking and shuttling of cars and drivers to and from the take-out—a successful arrangement thanks, among others, to Three Rivers Outfitters—while the rest of us flocked around Lindley to listen to a most interesting historical

introduction on the Native Americans' experience with the river.

Then, under the hoorays, encouragements, and camera shots of the landowner, who graciously authorized us to use her property to embark on the Mayo River, 42 boats were set for this 6-mile floating under a cloudy sky but sunny leadership of T and Lindley and their canoe.

In this armada of kayaks and canoes, young and not-so-young alike enjoyed the thrill of some rapids and the joy of being beached (despite disciplined efforts to follow Lindley's advice to avoid the middle of the river where the risk of getting stuck was higher). Old and big trees bent over the Mayo River, twisting and stretching to get more light, at times toppling down in the water and turning into woody obstacles for the boat-

ers, and rhododendrons blooming on the banks, mixing with trumpet vine's orange flowers, made up a beautiful scenery for all to appreciate.

A gravel bank was spotted by our leaders and welcomed by the boaters for rest and lunch, from which crumbs attracted a curious and hungry crawfish.

With satiated stomachs, we pursued our trip, when, in graceful performance, four herons showed us the way by "dancing" in front and alongside our column, teasing us so closely that everyone could get a vivid impression of their aerial talent.

When an old tire was discovered littering the beautiful river, a rescue operation was launched to remove it from the riverbed. Loaded upon a canoe, it will be brought to end its life in

a more proper disposal location.

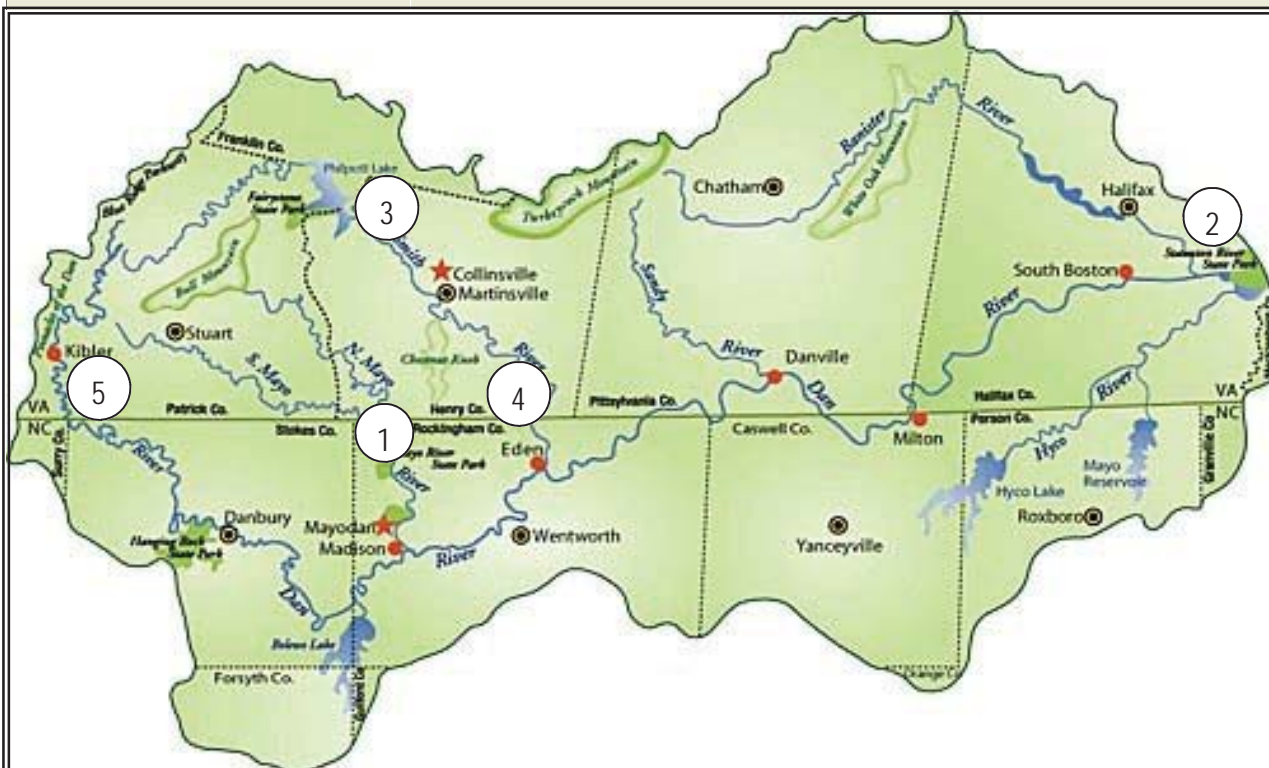
When the troupe arrived at the take-out on Route 770, the boaters enjoyed an easy exit thanks to T and Lindley's intervention that same morning to check and prepare the spot. A chain of volunteers was organized by Lindley to carry boats from the river to the road. Very strangely, most of the boats were heavier to carry out to the road than they had been at put-in, reminding us of all the water that had been accumulated inside the boats while braving the rapids.

Tired but refreshed as we were after this journey on the Mayo River, what a treat it was to find some brownies at the take-out—compliments of T! For those boaters who pursued the trip for another 3 miles downstream, there were no brownies, but wild blackberries to close this joyful journey.

Thanks

to remarkable leadership from T and Lindley, no boat was reported lost during this monthly floating and, at dusk, Dame Turtle was spotted safe and sound in her side of the Anglin Mill Road. See you next year, Dame Turtle!

Guy and Laure Almainac



2 AUGUST 16 STAUNTON RIVER: LONG ISLAND TO BROOKNEAL

A flotilla of about 24 DRBA members and guests made this 11-mile third Saturday trip in 22 boats. The river was abnormally low, increasing the chances of getting stuck on an underwater rock.

Veteran trip coordinator Terry Painter quizzed participants about their skill level before setting the shuttle. River Prognosticator predicted that there would be at least three mishaps.

"Let's have fun," said Trip Coordinator, after briefing, launch, and boat count.

The first mile of this section is flat water. In the second mile rocks divide the stream into finger-like channels of varying degrees of navigability, including the one we traveled, a tortuous, zig-zag watercourse demanding a degree of alertness and dexterity. Throughout the rest of the trip long, flat sections of sometimes shallow water were punctuated by stretches of heavy turbulence demanding, in the words of Ernest Hemingway, "grace under pressure." The group displayed such grace.

It wasn't long, though, before the assigned "Sweep" got so far behind that even the "Assistant Sweep" was uncertain, peering back upstream, whether Mishap #1 was serious. Blowing two blasts of his whistle ("Gather") instead of three

("Rescue") did succeed in calling forth an anonymous kayaker to help empty the swamped Sweep boat.

At Pannell Bridge Terry decreed a stand-up snack, leg stretch and history lesson. On river right stands the solid stone pier of the bridge burned by the Rebels when they (mistakenly) thought the Yanks were coming. Pannell Plantation stood river left.

Mishap #2 occurred at a rocky rest and snack stop. The Dan River Historian went into the shallow water up to his eyebrows helping River Poet re-launch.

The Staunton was almost as popular August 14 as on Fun Float Day, when thousands float the river on anything that will even pretend to float. Our group met not only several lone anglers but also at least three sizeable groups of floaters, one of them flying the flag of a by-gone cause and prompting us to consolidate our phalanx.

Mishap #3 occurred again in the rear guard. Associate Sweep, solidly stuck on a rock, was rammed by Sweep. Now Associate was balanced precariously on a rock, while Sweep Boat became submerged below the drop, taking on its full capacity of river water. Sweep's gear, rescued from the boat and dropped into Asso-



Forrest Altman researching Caswell Trails. (See page one.)

ciate Sweep's bow, caused the Associate's boat to list above the drop at an awkward and hazardous angle, ready to capsize. Associate blew three blasts and paddled downstream for help. Luckily Brain and Brawn had been delayed upstream and hurried to the rescue.

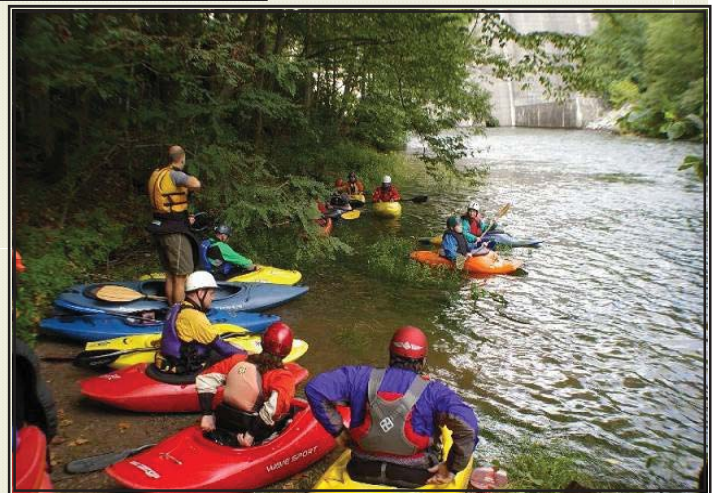
River Reporter affirmed that everyone in the group, including Coordinator, Sweeps, Brain and Brawn, had a Good River Day of serenity, exertion and excitement. River Poet declared that the Staunton, a National Wild and Scenic River, "exemplifies abundantly the elegance of the Natural Order."

Forrest Altman

3 AUGUST 2: RAINY DAY AT PHILPOTT RESERVOIR

August's outing at Jamison Mill Park began under gathering clouds at the boat access, and by the time we reached the picnic area at the mouth of Nicholas Creek, thunder began to rumble, so we took out to await the rain. Wayne Kirkpatrick amazed us with his ability to predict the arrival and departure of the thundershower down to the second. After it passed, we got back in our boats and were able to make it to our destination, the head of Beard's Creek, before a gentle rain resumed. Dampened but not soaked, our paddlers returned to the parking area, with only a few braving the rain to picnic on the way back. 22 boaters from DRBA, Friends of Philpott, and Creek Freaks of Franklin County enjoyed our all too brief excursion to this sheltered corner of Philpott Reservoir. Due to rain, we chose not to explore the expanding network of trails, so Jamison Mill would be an excellent choice for a future hike.

Paul Johnson



August 23 Smith River Fest, see Henry County Update, page 7.

4 RAIN, RAIN, GO AWAY

... and it did!

DRBA's **First Saturday Outing** on **September 6** found 13 paddlers willing to chance the weather as tropical storm Hanna passed barely to the east of Henry County. An early morning rain gave way to light showers, mist and drizzle that later dissipated to welcome very warm sunshine toward the end of this 4.5 mile paddle from Marrowbone Creek to Mitchell Bridge.

The Smith River was a little murky, but not muddy, and flowed briskly with the cool water creating a vision of the classic Smith River blanket of fog



so common further up-stream near the Philpott Dam. A prelude, one realizes, to autumn days ahead. Surfacing fish, quietly floating wood

ducks, the beautiful great blue herons, doves and kingfishers entertained and awed our leisurely group of paddlers.

The Gravely Nature Preserve welcomed us back for lunch under the Outdoor Educational Shelter. The surrounding paths, freshly created from the forest floor just this year, show signs of much foot traffic, and a brisk hike along these trails provided our group with the opportunity to top off a full day's activity in beautiful surroundings with abundant wildlife.

Wayne Kirkpatrick



5 A TEST OF WILL(S)

Located near Claudeville in Patrick County, Kibler Valley took its name from Mr. C. W. Kibler, a prominent local man who operated a big sawmill in the valley.



Above: Will Renyer receives his third place trophy.
Left: Will digging all the way to the finish.



This narrow mountain valley, carved by the Dan River, creates a whitewater experience that challenges the most capable paddler. The river's energy, when harnessed by the City of Danville's Pinnacles Hydro Plant, provides thrilling Class One and Two rapids. With recreational water releases, the difficulty of the rapids climbs to an exhilarating run of Class Three rapids.

On the last Saturday of July each year, the Red Bank Ruritan Club sponsors another chapter in the classic struggle of man versus nature. In this, the 26th Kibler Valley River Run, DRBA President Will Truslow and DRBA member Will Renyer, both veterans of the race, pitted their paddling prowess against the power of the Dan River.

While Will Truslow decided not to officially race on this day, he spent it making multiple runs over a particularly challenging set of rapids. (See photo of Will Truslow on page 2.) Will Renyer completed two full runs and was awarded a third place trophy for his outstanding times. Congratulations to these gentlemen!

Approximately 200 paddlers, their families, and the spectators attended the event. Many stopped by the DRBA booth. Our display, manned by Wayne Kirkpatrick, featured a large photo story board, brochures and an educational program on macroinvertebrates—the tub of bugs!

Wayne Kirkpatrick

HOME SAVINGS BANK DONATES \$3,000 TO DRBA
Continued from front page

According to a bank spokesperson, "On behalf of Home Savings Bank, President Jonathan Jobe is pleased to join with other area groups in their support of DRBA's mission to safeguard

and promote the entire basin through which the Dan River flows." Said Will Truslow, President of DRBA, "We are very pleased that Home Savings Bank has given DRBA such a generous gift. Our rivers are one of the most valued resources we have, and Home Savings Bank is really contributing to the goal of making the future of this area brighter."

MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS

JUNE - AUGUST 2008

Memberships

Sponsor

Roy E. Truslow, M. D.

Benefactor

Alison Snow Jones and David Pinney

Protector

Tom and Gloria Butler
Homer Wright

Steward

Deborah and Gerald Comer
Nancy Scales Garner
John Grogan
Joseph Montgomery
Mike Reed
Janet W. Reid
William Renyer
Sam and Lea Thompson
Ed Wilson
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Coastal Canoeists, Inc.

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Dennis Casey
Joel Deaton
Paul Ferguson
Red Knight
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Eloise Nenon and Robert H. Martin
Lee Templeton

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Arlyn and Susan Bunch
William H. Butler
Catherine Clark
Mike Wayne Clifton
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Michele and JR Edwards
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Mike and Jane Haines

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Bob and Pat Moore
Charles W. L. Newland, Jr.
Ken and Margo Perkins
Marti and Sam Phillips
Jarrett Sell
David Lee Sharp
Jay and Vickie Slaydon
Eldridge and Bonnie Turner
Clark and Lisa Snyder Tyson
Jim and Judy Weems, in honor of the
Weems and Brown Families
Harry and Susan Welker
Katie Whitehead and Robert McNutt

Individual

Forrest Altman
Roger A. Anderson
Ray Barker
Jim Belcher
Gloria T. Best
David Beveridge
Stephanie Blake
Sarah Chamberlin
Randy Crum
Dee Farrell
Mary Elizabeth Turner Furrow
Donald H. Gibson
Karen L. Giles
K. Joanne Hill
Randy Jeffries
Judith P. King
Bonnie Kober
Scott V. Larsen
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Jim Murray
Robert Nesbit
Emma Parcell
Charles Powers
Vance Sauls
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Kevin Michael Ratliff
Dennis Reeves
Alidean S. Roberson
J. Hall Roberts
Robert Schasse

Michael B. Shahan
Douglas Shumate
Randy Sweatt
Jim Tobin
Kitty Williams

Donations

Protector

Karen L. Giles

Steward or Corporate

Larry F. Baker
Mr. and Mrs. Robert G. Futrell
Greg and Phyllis Gendron
Mike and Jane Haines
Joseph and Ellen Jessee
Harold and Edith Knight
Joseph Montgomery
Triad River Runners

Friend

Randy Jeffries
Scott and Elizabeth Luking
Bob and Pat Moore
Jay and Vickie Slaydon
Karl and Hollis Stauber

Other

Gilbert Anderson and Susan Merritt
Sarah Chamberlin
William B. Moore
Joan Ragland
Kevin Michael Ratliff
Alidean S. Roberson
Robert Schasse
Lee Templeton
Kitty Williams

In Memory of

Vivian and Herman Wharton &
Paul Comer,
from Deborah and Gerald Comer

Ben Lackey, from Ken
and Margo Perkins

UPDATES FROM THE HENRY COUNTY OFFICE

Smith River Fest—On August 23, thanks to Dominion and the Army Corp of Engineers, a Saturday release from Philpott dam allowed boaters to enjoy the Smith River in what we hope was the first annual Smith River Fest. Despite short notice, we had a huge turnout—over 240 boaters, including visitors from as far away as Richmond and Charlottesville. Paddlers especially enjoyed the section from Philpott Dam to North Bassett Access where fog hovered over the cold water discharged from the reservoir. Boater surveys established the positive economic impact of the event.

Special thanks go to all the DRBA staff and volunteers, the Franklin County Creek Freaks, Edible Vibe Café, Henry County Parks and Recreation Department, and Franklin County Swift Water

Rescue Team. Thanks also to Congressman Virgil Goode and County Administrator Benny Summerlin. (See photo page 4.)

Recreational Master Plan—Just completed, the M-HC Rivers & Trails Recreational Use Plan will serve as a guide for planning and building trails, parks, and river access. It discusses conservation easements and programs that enhance recreational resources, such as water quality monitoring, Trout-in-the-Classroom, environmental education, and cultural/historical programs.

VEE Conference—This year's Virginia Environmental Educators Conference, hosted by the Virginia Museum of Natural History, welcomed over 150 conferees from throughout the commonwealth, about 90% of whom had never before visited Martinsville or

Henry County. DRBA's Brian Williams and Jennifer Doss helped plan the conference; Brian and Wayne Kirkpatrick presented a workshop on Trout-in-the-Classroom and Water Quality Monitoring; and Jennifer led a field trip to the Gravely Nature Preserve to discuss how the interpretive park can be used as a model for other localities.

Fieldale Trail—DRBA volunteers, we need you on the Fieldale Trail! The Phase II one-mile extension will be constructed by Frith Construction, supplemented by volunteer labor. The 10-foot-wide natural path, built to International Mountain Biking Association standards for maximum sustainability, will accommodate two-way traffic for walkers and cyclists. Visitors may see animal tracks alongside the river and gigantic sycamore

trees, some with a circumference of over 10 feet! You can volunteer for 2-5pm Sunday, Oct. 19; 10am-2pm Wednesday, Oct. 22; and 2-5pm Sunday, Nov. 2. Contact Jennifer Doss at 276-634-2545.

November 8, 2008- Oh, Deer!—Children ages 4-12 are invited to *Oh, Deer!*, a fun day of nature exploration at the Gravely Nature Preserve in Ridgeway, VA. Youth will enjoy learning about Virginia Whitetail Deer habitat and adaptations through an interactive hike that includes games, activities, and a craft. The program is free, but pre-registration is required. Contact Jennifer Doss at 276-634-2545.

Jennifer Doss

Check out our blog at :
www.rivers-trails.blogspot.com

They're Baaaaack!!!

Those "busy as a beaver" beavers are back at it on the Mayo! Not only do I have the dam as evidence, but this time, the guilty parties! Currently, about eight inches of water above normal depth has been dammed by my summer vacationers and is being held back by a combination of sticks, limbs, mud, rocks and—yes, you guessed it—my cornstalks! Once again, my corn crop is being utilized beyond its intended use as silage to produce this dam that has

spanned the entire width of the Mayo River—well over 15 feet across in this section.

Unfortunately, the next heavy rain will most likely remove the beaver's efforts. But, I am always amazed at their engineering ability and their inexhaustible tenacity to interrupt the flow of the strong running waters of the river. Their work serves as a boon to other wildlife. While wood ducks and herons are regular visitors to the Mayo, when the beavers' work

is present, it seems to concentrate the populations upstream in the long, quiet pools.

Otters, bobcats, coyotes, eagles, white ibis, egrets and cormorants—our farm has been home to or a 'stop over' for just about every type of animal found in this latitude of the eastern United States. While the black bear and the elk continue to elude us, I feel certain that we will see these someday—it is just a matter of time.

Wayne Kirkpatrick



Meetings of the DRBA Board of Directors are held on the third Wednesday of January, April, July, and October. All DRBA members are welcome to attend. The next Board meeting will be at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 15 at the Eden City Hall.

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Vice President, Wayne Kirkpatrick
Treasurer, Mark Bishopric
Secretary, T Butler

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Visit us on the web at
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DRBA Outings

October 4 and 5:
Dan River, Moratock
Park to Hemlock,
Mountains-to-Sea Trail

October 18:
Hike Bull Mountain,
Covered Dish at
Kirkpatricks'

November 1:
Dan River, Madison to
Jacob's Creek

December 6:
Hike, Hanging Rock



DAN RIVER BASIN ASSOCIATION

"Rivers are ribbons that tie us to the spirit of the land." --Jeff Rennie

Uncle Chess's Persimmon Pudding

**Uncle Chess's
Persimmon Pudding**
From Ben D. Lackey

- 2 cups plain flour [sifted]
- 3 cups white sugar
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 cups strained persimmons
- 1 cup cooked sweet potatoes
[mashed]
- 3 beaten eggs
- 2 cups buttermilk with 1 heaping
teaspoon baking soda
dissolved in it
- 1 tablespoon molasses
- 1/2 stick melted butter

Combine the dry and wet ingredients. Bake in 9x12 dish @ 325 degrees for 2 hoursbutter bottom of dish before adding mixture.

Dot top of pudding with butter about 10 minutes before removing from oven.

ENJOY!!!!!!
Ben Lackey

Notes from T Butler:

Putting the sweet potatoes through a ricer or food mill removes any stringy fibers and makes the pudding smoother. The pudding will rise above the edge of the dish and drop back into it as it cools. If the mixture is even a little bit too runny, it will spill over the edge. I suggest using a slightly larger or deeper baking dish—or, at least, place a pan underneath to catch the spillover!