

# CURRENTS

Volume 8 , Issue 4

Fall 2009

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

DAN RIVER BASIN ASSOCIATION

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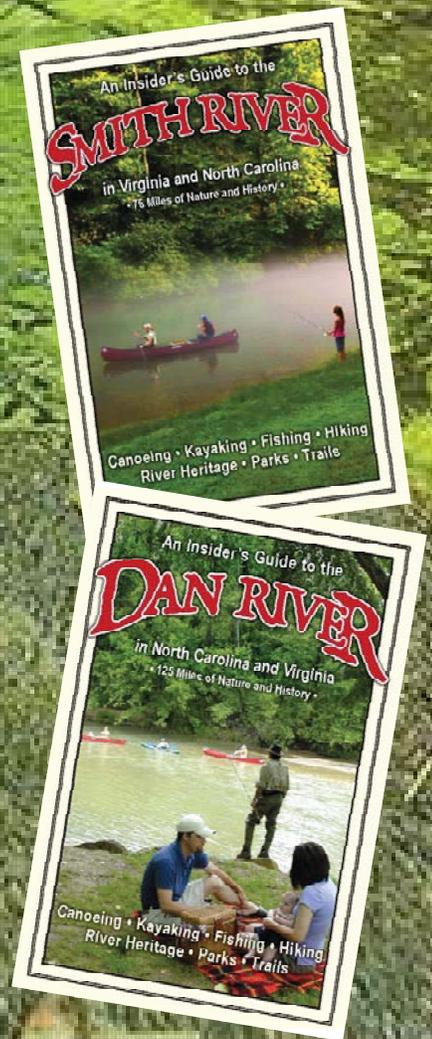
*New Stokes Field Office !*

*Two New River Access Points*

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*Dan and Smith River  
Guides Now Available*

*STREAM WALK TRAIL OPENS IN  
CASWELL COUNTY*



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### *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 at-  
tend. The next Board meeting will be at 5:00 p.m. on  
Wednesday, October 21 at the Eden City Hall.

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### **On the Cover...**

Rock Castle Creek...in Woolwine, Va. One of the few  
creeks in the area where you can catch the triple crown...  
(Rainbow, Brook, and Brown Trout).  
Photographer Darrin R. Doss

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PRESIDENT'S SPACE

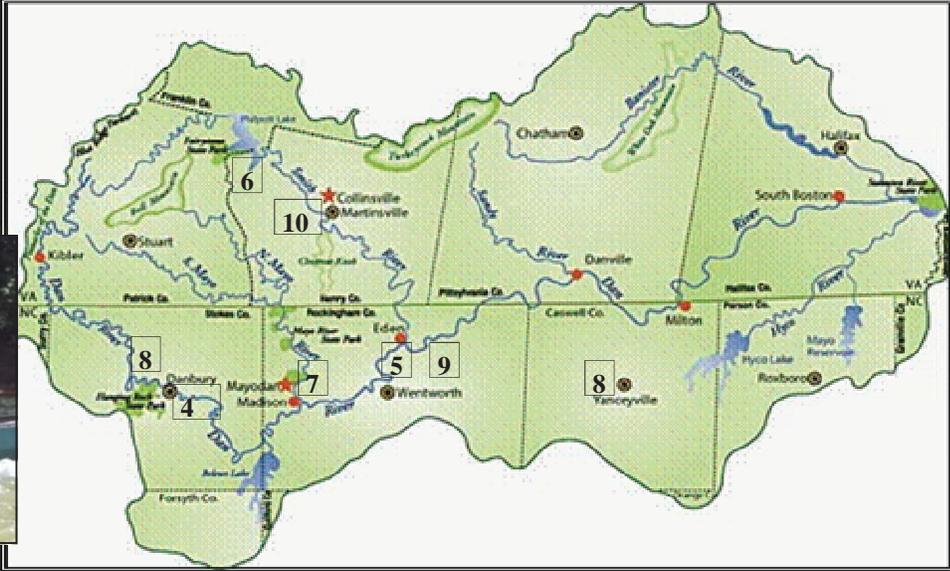
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DRBA volunteer Paul May assisting two Boys and Girls Club children with a net of macroinvertebrates



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### A NEW CHALLENGE !

On behalf of the Dan River Basin Association, many thanks to each person who has contributed to DRBA's challenge grant from Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation.

DRBA is honored to have received an additional challenge from a very generous board member. If DRBA raises \$10,000 by the end of December, DRBA's work for our communities, our children and our land and water will be bolstered with an additional \$5,000 contribution!

Now is the perfect time to share DRBA's work and encourage friends, neighbors and colleagues to help meet the challenge. If you have not already contributed, please consider an investment in the many good things that DRBA is doing. The return on your investment is unbeatable; your \$100 donation will turn into \$250!

*Katherine Mull*



## Introducing DRBA's New Stokes Field Office!

DRBA is pleased to introduce a new Stokes County Field Office and our new staff member, Dale Swanson, the Stokes Program Coordinator. The office is located in the Stokes County Arts Council building in Danbury, thanks to efforts of Alan Wood, Economic Development Director, and Eddy McGee of the Arts Council, with the support of the county commissioners and many others in Stokes.

Swanson, an avid outdoor recreation enthusiast, is excited about the opportunity to work as a local contact for engaging the Stokes community. In addition to driving DRBA projects such as river access, trails development, and Trout/Catfish in the Classroom, he will be working on a new initiative to develop a youth paddling program.

Thirteen years ago, Dale and his wife, Carol Hart-sog, moved from Winston-Salem to the Danbury area with their children, Noah, Susie, Joey and Peter, "to raise our children in a more rural setting." They have become a part of the community through the schools, church, and youth sports leagues.

Swanson grew up vacationing and working in the outdoors, spending teenage years in northern California backpacking, rock climbing and cycling on the open hillsides and working at a Boy Scout camp in the Sierra Mountains teaching swimming, life saving, rowing, sailing and canoeing, "where I finally gained an understanding of the J-stroke."

Swanson holds an English degree from East Carolina University and has been a freelance technical writer and an IT staff member at RJ Reynolds. He is an ACA-certified whitewater canoe instructor, competes in

downriver racing with his children throughout the southeast, and has discovered trail running in Hanging Rock. He credits the Dan River Company near his home with "providing our children with summer employment and drawing all of us

closer to the river." Currently freelancing in web site development and social media marketing, Dale has also been doing some river guiding and paddling instruction with DRC.

Swanson says, "The new office will be a focal point for strengthening DRBA's presence in this important and beautiful corner of the Dan River basin. Connecting economic development with environmental protection and quality of life issues seems impossible to so many people, and I'm thrilled to have found a home with DRBA, which has done so much elsewhere in the basin. Bringing DRBA's significant resources more fully into Stokes County is about as exciting and rewarding an opportunity as I could dream of."

Dale Swanson can be reached at [dswanson@danriver.org](mailto:dswanson@danriver.org) or 336-593-DRBA (3722). The office address is 108 Bank Street, Danbury, NC 27016



## CITY OF EDEN DEDICATES TWO RIVER ACCESS POINTS

Culminating sixteen months of dedicated planning and work, on July 19 the City of Eden, “Land of Two Rivers,” proudly dedicated two new access points, one on each of the two rivers that run through the city. Mayor John Grogan and other city leaders cut the red ribbons.

Island Ford Landing, at the Meadow Road trailhead of the Smith River Greenway, is just across the river and almost in sight of DRBA’s office. The greenway and the river access are the southernmost components of the Smith River Trail System of footpaths and river miles running through Henry County, VA, and ending at the Smith’s confluence with the Dan in Eden, NC.

Draper Landing, at the NC 700 Bridge on the Dan, is the furthest downstream access point in Rockingham County before the river reenters Virginia on its way to Danville. Both accesses enable boaters to launch handheld boats down the rivers’ high banks.

Noting that Eden is made up of three towns—Leaksville, Spray, and Draper—that consolidated in 1967, Johnny Farmer, Director of Eden’s Parks and Recreation Department, commented, “Island Ford and Draper Landing, along with Leaksville Landing and the Boat Landing, now tie the rivers and all the sections of our city together.

“Along with our planned greenways and bikeways, the river accesses provide another component of connectivity for our community.”



Draper Landing L-R, Councilman Jerry Ellis, Mayor John Grogan, Ray Thomas, Councilman Darrel Carter



Island Ford L\_R. Councilman Darrel Carter, Councilman Jim Burnette, Councilman Jerry Ellis, Mayor John Grogan, Parks & Recreation Director Johnny Farmer, City Manager Brad Corcoran

Farmer noted that the city’s citizens and visitors of all ages are already using the accesses frequently for boating, tubing, fishing, observing wildlife and just watching the water go by.

*T Butler*

## PRESIDENT’S SPACE

Festival Season! Everywhere you travel in the Dan River Basin this time of year fairs and festivals tempt you with creative crafts, local history, sinful foods and toe-tappin’ music. Just about every Saturday finds DRBA’s display with staff and volunteers at a festival near you! Please stop by and spend some time with us.

The popular First Saturday Outings enjoyed an all time record participation on the September 5 outing from Eden’s Draper Landing to Berry Hill Bridge. Seventy-seven boats carrying ninety-eight people made the float down the Dan River. The excellent access at the 700 Bridge and many enthusiastic DRBA volunteers made the trip a treat for everyone. DRBA thanks everyone who helped make this day a success.

DRBA welcomes Regenia Manns and Kat Bongarzone to our staff. These wonderful ladies work with

DRBA’s Collinsville office. Regenia is office manager and Kat comes to DRBA through an intern program with Averett College.



As we approach Fall foliage and cooler weather, I invite you to join with DRBA as we take our last paddle trips and first hikes of the season. I have met and enjoyed spending time with many folks on the rivers this year, and I look forward to more lazy floats and leisurely hikes this Fall and Winter. I’ll be seeing you across the Basin!

*Wayne Kirkpatrick*

## SMITH RIVER FEST 2009

The Second Annual Smith River Fest has come to a close, but what a fun event it was! Here are some highlights from the Labor Day weekend.

The festival kicked off with Smith River Film Fest on Friday night with more than 100 in attendance. We laughed at bloopers, sat in awe of Mother Nature, and enjoyed the scenic beauty of the Smith River. Audience members won door prizes and voted on their favorite films.

Third place went to "Surprise on the Smith River" by Andy Parker about a friendly otter on the Smith River. Second place was



awarded to "Troop 168 on the River" by Betti Seale & James Whitlow, which showed about 20 scouts enjoying a day on the Smith River and the "carnage" as they paddled over Eggleston Falls. This film also won the Best Wipeout Award. The first place trophy went to Linda Drage for her comical

"A Safety Short: Learning to Kayak." Linda superimposed her face onto photos of boaters from around the world as she demonstrated what to do and not do while paddling.

At DRBA's Gear Swap more than 150 people shopped for recreational gear, including kayaks, life jackets, kids' swimsuits with built in flotation, hiking and paddling gear, t-shirts, bike racks, and a mountain bike.

The main event on Labor Day attracted over 250 visitors from as far away as Georgia, Richmond, Fredericksburg, Greensboro, Roanoke, and Raleigh who came to enjoy live music, food, vendors, and of course the river! This event was a partnership between DRBA, Henry County Parks & Recreation Department, and Franklin County Tourism. The highlight of the day was the six-mile Smith River Canoe/Kayak Race.

A huge thank you to our vendors, volunteers and staff who contributed to the fun and safety of this event.

Due to popular demand, encore events are planned: a repeat showing of the film festival at the Philpott Lake Visitor's Center on November 14<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.; another Gear Swap on April 10, 2010, and the next Smith River Fest later that year.

For contest winners, vendors, and more details, visit <http://rivers-trails.blogspot.com/2009/09/wow-what-weekend.html>

## CONFUSION ON URANIUM STUDIES

There is understandable confusion about Virginia's uranium mining studies. Will the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) undertake a technical study funded solely by a mining company? Del. Terry Kilgore, Chairman of the Virginia Coal and Energy Commission, doesn't know. No one knows. We know even less about the uranium socioeconomic study.

A NAS governing board will decide whether the Academy will do the technical study. The board must also determine whether accepting 100% of the funding—however indirectly—from a uranium mining company is consistent with the board's responsibility to safeguard the academy's unique reputation for independent, unbiased scientific research. The technical study is to provide legislators with evidence regarding whether uranium mining, milling, and tailings storage are being done safely elsewhere under conditions comparable to those in Virginia. It should also identify knowledge gaps.

Del. Kilgore has held open the possibility that other organizations (besides Virginia Uranium, Inc.) will contribute money for the technical study, but so far no one has. It's not

clear whether any organization has been solicited to contribute. So far no legislator has offered to ask the legislature for funding to cover even a small portion of the cost. If it's important to the state to do this study, why are our legislators unwilling to pay for even a token part of it?

The uranium socioeconomic study is arguably the more important of the two studies. Whereas the technical study is to address the safety issue, the socioeconomic study will address whether uranium mining is something we want in our state. It should provide evidence about how introducing the uranium industry affects the overall health, economic well-being, and quality of life in communities.

Perception, as well as science, plays a critical role in whether introducing this industry is a good idea. The state policy decision depends not only on the safety question, but also on the much larger question of what life we want for our communities.

*Katie Whitehead, Chair of DRBA Mining Task Force*

## JULY 4 ON THE MAYO AND DAN

Saturday, July 4, was about as perfect a day as you ever see; what a great day to paddle! Lots of other folks must have thought so as well; altogether there were 71 people with 56 boats who met in Mayodan for the DRBA First Saturday Outing.

This was our first river trip with DRBA so we didn't know what to expect. Fortunately, there were plenty of people willing to answer any questions we had, and there were many of those!

We had made arrangements to rent equipment, and Three Rivers Outfitters delivered everything we needed, canoe, vests and paddles, right to the site where we put into the Mayo River. That was really a big help for people like us who don't often go on the river because we don't have the equipment.

A few folks had paddled the route the day before, so we had some idea of what to expect. The

river seemed really nice that day; not too low, not too high, and the water was mostly clear & beautiful! My canoe partner & I didn't have any trouble keeping up with the group. In fact, a lot of the time we were holding back, trying not to get ahead of everyone else! I don't think there were many spills, but some did get to cool off in the water. (I guess they were just warm; it was a pretty hot day!)

We put into the Mayo near the NC 135 Bridge, paddled for 1.5 miles until the river joined the Dan, and then another 4.5 miles to the take-out at Jacob's Creek. According to the press release we saw before the trip, there are several historically significant spots along the route, including Mayo Ford, a stone pier and remnants of navigation structures. Other than these, there was scarcely any evidence of man-made construction (or destruction) any-



where along the route.

The entire trip was Class 1, which made it a good experience for those of us with limited river experience. I think I'm ready for a little more challenge now! Thanks, DRBA, for coordinating and offering this experience! Thanks also to Wall Lumber for allowing the group to access the river, and to the Kennedys for permitting our take-out at Jacob's Creek (and for the cooler of very welcome drinks at the end!)

*Suzanne Hutchens*

## STREAM WALK TRAIL OPENS IN CASWELL COUNTY

The Heritage Trails Master Plan took a huge step forward in recent months with the completion of the first pilot trail at the



Caswell Senior Center. The "Stream Walk Trail" was completed in early July after a month-long delay due to rainy weather.

DRBA staff and volunteers worked through changes in the original plans to resolve funding issues that arose from the grading and soil conditions on the site, adding over 300 feet of trail and an additional boardwalk.

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held on July 28 with over 60 people in attendance.



### Key Dates:

Contract signed: May 27, 2009

Trail Clearing: June 1, 2009

Trail Construction began: June 22, 2009

Trail Construction completed: July 2, 2009

Trail Opening Ceremony: July 28, 2009

In other news, DRBA will be assisting four different schools in Caswell County with trails on their campuses in the near future.

DRBA will also have a booth set up for the Caswell County Bright Leaf Hoedown in Yanceyville on September 26.

*Chad Hall*

## August 1 Outing From 9-year-old Perspective

My name is Sarah. I am 9 years old. I have been on 4 canoe trips and let me tell you—this one was the most fun in my entire history!

Here is why. The Dan River was a calm, but fast flowing river with small, but fun rapids. It was very deep water. I am used to a section of the New River and it can be very shallow. This water might have been up to my waist. We didn't even scrape the bottom of the boat. We barely got any water on us.

The rapids there were great fun. They moved you quickly thru the water, like a fun coaster only with paddles, and a canoe instead of a train. I felt like it was the greatest day of my entire life. Even better than Wet and Wild.

At first I was not so sure that I was going to like this. But after 20 minutes of lightly paddling down the river in the calm water I felt that it was going to be a very

very fun ride. I have been canoeing on the New River and canoed on several lakes near my home. But I can tell you, this was the most fun trip that I have ever been to. But remember, I'm only 9

years old, so there are many more to come. It was so fun, I plan to have my birthday party canoeing down the Dan River next year!



Sarah Seguin

## DRAPER LANDING TO BERRY HILL ON SEPTEMBER 5

DRBA's September 5<sup>th</sup> trip on the Dan River was a record-breaker! 98 people with 77 brightly colored boats floated down the river, accompanied by the earliest of the autumn leaves.

The crowd gathered at Draper Landing in Eden, a new river access that is very accommodating. As always, the high standard of organization was in place. DRBA President Wayne Kirkpatrick was the trip coordinator, aided by Three Rivers Outfitters.

Bob and I have greatly enjoyed all the trips we have taken with DRBA. The people on these excursions vary in age and paddling experience; however, everyone is gracious and helpful, pitching in to move boats in and out of the river. There is someone on point and also a sweep person to keep an eye out for the crowd. Along the way, people who know the river share history and paddling tips. The more we understand paddling, the better time we have!

Leonardo DaVinci is credited with saying, "In rivers, the water that you touch is the last of what has passed and the first of that which comes; so with present time." It is apparent how lucky we are to enjoy this snippet of time in the rivers' life. We are just guests here.

Half way into the trip, we stop for lunch at a shady sand bar. It is a social time, and one can hear stories of how people fared through the rapids, which while not super challenging, must be given due respect so that a boat does not get hung up on a rock.

Trees along the banks have stretched out over the water to fight for light. Some weren't so lucky and now lie along the banks. I wonder what finally felled them. Was it a flood? High winds? Disease? And, of course, did anyone hear them?

While I can get wrapped up in the scenery, watching the variety of birds and the occasional fish jumping out of water, we enjoy all the people we meet. The prevailing statement from fellow paddlers was that the day was perfect in every way. One couple were involved when placing access points on the river was in its infancy. Others who have only been out a couple of times have had a great time, like the way DRBA organizes the events, and are looking forward to continuing.

Thanks to Mark Osborne for allowing us to take out on his private land. Some folks described the take out as a "Class 5," but it was said with good humor. A passel of wonderful men helped boaters out and hauled their canoes and kayaks up a steep grade. Their hard work was greatly appreciated!

As people loaded up and left for the day, there were pictures taken and phone numbers exchanged. DRBA's continued efforts to introduce people to the river and to each other are working like a charm!

*Allison Szuba*

## Insiders' Guides to the Dan and Smith Rivers Now Available

There is never a better time to explore the Dan River region than now when the air turns crisp and leaves are tinged with orange.

Just in time for the fall travel season, DRBA is pleased to announce the publication of two river guides for visitors to the area. The guides are printed on water-proof paper and sized for travel.

*An Insider's Guide to the Dan River*, with 52 annotated strip maps covering 125 river miles of nature and history, includes more than 200 color photographs. The guide follows the flow of the Dan in North Carolina from northwest Stokes County to Milton in Caswell County, including the Virginia section that flows through Pittsylvania County and the City of Danville.

*An Insider's Guide to the Smith River* includes 19 strip maps covering 75 miles of the Smith from Phil-

pott Dam to the Dan River in Eden. (The 20 miles upstream of Philpott Dam are shown on a single map.)

Both guides highlight river features, access areas, fishing holes and river history. Trails, parks, birding areas, outfitter information and historic sites are identified on the maps. Whether used for paddling or just exploring the Dan's river valleys, the guides are intended to be read as books and are designed to attract visitors interested in heritage and nature-based travel.

The insider's guides can be purchased from DRBA's online store, [www.danriver.org](http://www.danriver.org). Retailers who offer the guides for sale are listed on DRBA's web river guide pages.

DRBA is grateful to many volunteers who provided photographs and who helped review and edit the material contained in the guides.

*Katherine Mull*

## Fieldale Iron Bridge Preservation Project

*In loving memory of Bobby M. Craddock*



Regenia Manns

Kathryn Bongarzone

The Historic Fieldale Iron Bridge is coming back! Thanks to generous donations from a great many people, trusses from the bridge will be installed along the Fieldale Trail as a historic and educational point of interest.

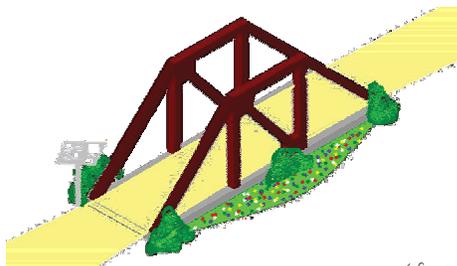
Built in 1931, the bridge over the Smith River has been an important landmark in the community. Since it is being replaced with a new span, DRBA, its Rivers & Trails affiliate, and the Fieldale Heritage Festival have combined efforts to mount 54 feet of the old structure on either side of the Fieldale Trail so that trail users will once again walk "across" the Iron Bridge.

Work on the project is scheduled to begin in early October and should be complete by mid-November.

Thanks to many donors, the fundraising goal of \$12,000 for the entire project is now 71% complete. Tax-deductible contributions are being accepted, with the option of purchasing a plaque in honor or memory of a loved one. Contact [drba.va@danriver.org](mailto:drba.va@danriver.org) or 276-634-2545.

For more details, including our many generous partners and in-kind donors, visit

<http://rivers-trails.blogspot.com/search?q=Fieldale+Iron+Bridge>



Jennifer Doss

## NEW MEMBERS JOIN TEAM DRBA IN VIRGINIA

Two new members have been added to Team DRBA in the Henry County office. Regenia Manns of Martinsville is now part-time Administrative Assistant, and Kathryn Bongarzone, a senior at Averett University, is interning with DRBA during the 2009-2010 school year.

Regenia comes to us from WEK Industries in Reidsville, NC, and prior to that she was a customer service representative for the PillowTex Corporation in Fieldale for over thirty years. She is very active in her church and enjoys baking, bowling, and walking area trails. Her office hours are Mondays and Wednesdays 9:00 - 4:30, and Fridays 9:00 - 3:30. Contact Regenia at 276-634-2591 or [rmanns@danriver.org](mailto:rmanns@danriver.org).

Originally from Massachusetts, Kathryn Bongarzone, known as "Kat," now lives in Danville where she is studying Environmental Science at Averett. Last fall she spent a semester studying in Dundee, Scotland, where she took a class on conservation and ecology and experienced some of Scotland's oldest and most beautiful national parks and forests.

Kat has also spent the past three summers working as an aide at a school for children with special needs. She looks forward to bringing her two interests together. After graduating, she hopes "that my experiences through out college will propel me to a career in the field of Environmental Science. I look forward to the experience and knowledge I will gain this year while working with DRBA!"

Jennifer Doss

## MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS

### Mid-June – Mid-September 2009

#### MEMBERSHIPS

##### Steward

Michael Dorn  
Mike and Jane Haines  
Mike Reed  
Sam and Lea  
Thompson  
Michael Wenkstern  
Laurie and Edwin Wil-  
son, Jr.

##### Corporate

Najjar's Pizza  
Haven, Inc.

##### Organization

Patrick County 4-H  
Shooting Club  
Three Rivers  
Outfitters

##### Friend

Dwight and Martha W.  
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Kim and Andy Ingram  
Jane and Charles (Ron)  
Norwood  
Dale Swanson  
Jim Tobin

##### Family

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Deborah and Gerald  
Comer  
Bonnie Cornwell  
Charles and Pat  
Dameron  
Linda Drage

Nancy and Doug  
Henderson-James

Mark and Pippa  
Jordan  
Robert and Mary Beth  
Jordan  
Mary Kallam  
Harold and Edith Knight  
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Susan Morehead  
Ruth and Sam Morgan  
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Nenon  
Linda K. and Coy M.  
Park, Jr.  
Larry and Ann Parker  
John Hartman and Kay  
Richey  
Cathryne Schmitz and  
Christine Stinson  
Edwin Wilson  
Robert and Allison  
Szuba

##### Individual

Roger Adams  
Marianne and  
Warwick Aiken  
Gwenola Aujard  
Glenn Bozorth  
Jason Burton  
Catherine Clark  
Randy Crum  
Paul Ferguson  
Crystal France  
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Mildred Mann  
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##### Other

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Joni and Tim Carter  
Nancy Garner  
K. Joanne Hill  
Kim and Andy Ingram  
Katie Latta  
William Moore  
Cathryne Schmitz and  
Christine Stinson  
Jim Tobin  
Anne Woods

##### In Honor of

T Butler, from Tom and  
Gloria Butler



## DRBA Outings

### October 3

River cleanup  
on Smith and Dan,  
using Island Ford,  
Eden Wildlife, & Leaksville  
Landing accesses, Eden

### October 17

Members' picnic and hike  
at Kirkpatrick Farm, Stuart

### November 7

Dan from Hanging Rock to  
Moratock Park, Danbury

### December 5

Hike Fieldale Trail

## Dan River Basin Association

413 Church Street, Suite 401  
Eden, NC 27288-3242

**TO:**

Visit us on the web at [www.danriver.org](http://www.danriver.org)

## Just in Time for the Holidays!

DRBA is pleased to offer Caswell County in the Snow note cards, just in time for your holiday correspondence. Eight beautiful scenes of rural splendor will make a great gift, and they may inspire you to write warm notes to your friends and family. Visit the DRBA Store at [www.danriver.org](http://www.danriver.org) to see all eight scenes and make your purchases.

