

Volume 7, Issue 1

Winter 2008

EDEN'S BATTEAU MURAL UNVEILED

NC Piedmont Triad's first Bricolage Arts Festival! Eden's first collaborative public art, a mural project! Months of preparation! What will it be?

On the chilly evening of November 1, the crowd shivered with excitement at the Washington Street Park. Slowly the covering was dropped, to the sound of "AAAAHHH!"

What emerged was a 12' X 36' mural entitled, "RIVER BOAT MEN: DAN RIVER, 1835." The water appeared to be rippling as the lights shone on it.

"Bricolage" (bri - ko - lazh) is "something made or put together using materials found on hand, indicative of creativity and resourcefulness."

DRBA members have taken this approach since inception, embracing our natural resources and pooling our research and personal experiences. Why? So that we could partner with each other to identify, maintain,

improve and enjoy our natural resources for the enrichment of all.

For the mural, two artists collaborated—DRBA member and muralist Kitty Williams of Madison, and painter Jack Stone of Brushfire Studios in Greensboro.

Historian Lindley Butler stated, "The mural is a tribute to the river boatmen who were responsible for economic development along the Dan River. Prominent figures in the mural, the African American boatmen, reflect dignity and the community's respect for them. The little-known role of these boatmen is honored by this mural, which proclaims their important legacy to the community."

The mural reminds us of the Dan River history, its economic and recreational importance, and that setting goals and working together make the best use of our time, funds and cultural assets.

By Gloria Best

EDEN'S SMITH RIVER GREENWAY IS NOW OPEN

The first leg of the City of Eden's greenway system is now open! A trailhead for the new Smith River Greenway is located on the east side of the Smith River, just downstream of the Spray traffic circle and Island Ford Bridge (now under construction).

The trail is level and smooth and extends for approximately 1.7 miles to the Eden Family YMCA on Kennedy Street. Interesting plants and wildlife are to be found along the trail as it winds through woods and open fields alongside the river, using parts of the sewer easement and sections of an old roadbed.

The Smith River Greenway was a project of one of DRBA's founders, Mike

Covey. Mike met with all of the landowners to gain their approval, and he worked tirelessly to make this beautiful trail possible.

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DAN RIVER BASIN



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

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As the year ends, special thanks go to DRBA's many volunteers, members and contributors. Volunteers make our river clean ups, recreational outings, and other activities the success they are. Our outings introduce more people to our rivers for the first time and attract participants from as far away as Raleigh and Charlotte. Many thanks to the press for the excellent coverage DRBA's outings receive.

Much is in store for 2008. With funding from CONTECH Stormwater Solutions, DRBA will promote the importance of protecting trees and shrubs along our streams.

Funding from the VA Department of Conservation & Recreation will enable us to plant ten acres of forest buffers to help keep our waterways clean and safe for drinking, fishing, and recreation.

With funding from the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund we will launch a water testing program for bacteria and sediment to help reduce pollution in the Dan River.

DRBA works closely with trails supporters in Caswell County, NC and Henry County, VA. We have participated in river clean up strategies and regional roundtables for canoe trails and rail trails in VA. We plan to double the length of the Fieldale Trail in Henry County. With funding from the Harvest Foundation, DRBA will continue our partnership with Martinsville-Henry County to work toward a comprehensive system of river accesses, trails, parks and open space. DRBA's grant from the Harvest Foundation has also made possible the development of the Gravely Nature Preserve.

Finally, DRBA will ramp up our efforts to work regionally, across state lines, to rebuild the region's economy through the promotion of nature and heritage tourism. Our goal is a National Park Service designation for a Dan River region National Heritage Area. This is a special place; we want to celebrate it and share it.

As a visitor from Canada said when we took him on a canoe trip down the Smith River, "you have a piece of heaven here."

Katherine K Mull

DRBA'S VICE PRESIDENT TO SPEAK AT RIVER RALLY

Wayne Kirkpatrick, Vice President of DRBA, has been selected to present a workshop, "Bringing the Environment into the Classroom," at River Network's River Rally 2008 in May. Wayne's workshop, one of 70 chosen from over 180 proposals from across the nation, will describe the successful Trout in the Classroom and teacher training program in Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania counties. Co-Presenters will be Dr. David Jones, Brian Williams, and Betty Kirkpatrick.

River Rally, River Network's annual conference for watershed groups in the United States, will be held May 2-5 along the banks of Lake Erie at Sawmill Creek Resort in Huron, Ohio. It is open to everyone interested in preserving and improving the health of any of our nation's rivers. According to DRBA members who have attended River Rally in previous years, the conference lives up to River Network's promise, "Connecting People, Saving Rivers." For information about River Rally, visit www.rivernetwork.org.

PRESIDENT'S SPACE

This year DRBA has made significant strides in beginning to implement programs to protect the Basin's water quality, instigating Virginia officials' exploration of possibly extending the Mayo River Park, and seeing the opening of hiking trails and river accesses. Our Executive Director, Katherine Mull, describes these and other achievements in her article.

The progress that DRBA is achieving comes from hard work and attention to details to see that projects

are completed. I would like to give special thanks and recognition to Katherine Mull, who has been so instrumental on many of these accomplishments. She gives exceptional focus and puts her heart and soul into seeing the successful completion of each project. I want to greatly thank Secretary T Butler and Corresponding Secretary Barb Solomon for their outstanding and tireless due diligence in keeping DRBA running smoothly. Also, sincere thanks to our Executive

Committee, Board of Directors, and the support of so many volunteers and contributors for all they do. This truly is a team effort.

Will Truslow



FALL SATURDAY OUTINGS

1

OCTOBER 6: A BIG SWEEP DOWN THE MAYO AND DAN RIVERS

The day started out beside the river in Mayodan with talks by Lindley Butler and Jeff Johnston. Lindley spoke of the historic structures we would encounter, and Jeff spoke of the trash situation along the rivers, saying that although river use has increased greatly over the last fifteen years, littering has diminished. He believes people are being educated on the importance of keeping their rivers clean, and are responding to it.

Trash pickup was the order of the day, but I am always looking at and enjoying the rivers with an artist's eye. The day was beautiful, with the water low and clear. The lower Mayo is intimate, and at this time of year the vines hanging from the trees have turned shades of red and orange. The Sun, at a low angle, shone through the green leaves of the trees, with their trunks in dark silhouette. Beautiful.

Then out onto the Dan River, a broader, more open river. We immediately came upon a large pebbly sandbar straddling the middle of the

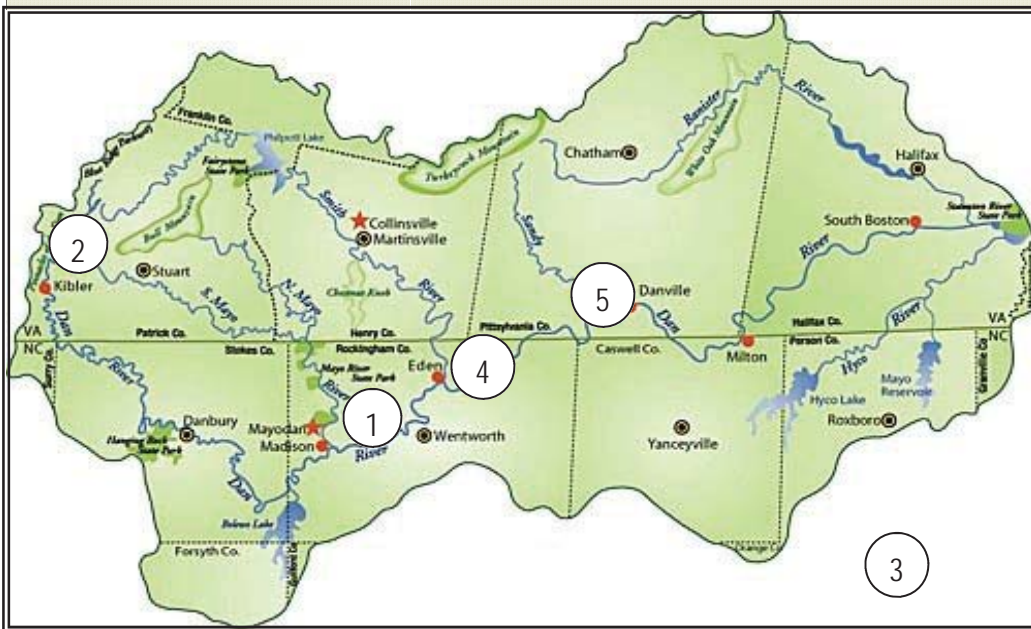


river with what looked like a tire graveyard. Tires were standing up out of the water everywhere. Jeff Johnston had previously staged the tires for easy pickup. Everyone cheerfully pitched in to get this done. Then a run through Slink Shoal Sluice (an elaborate navigational structure), good

fun, followed by a leisurely lunch in the sun on Lone Island. A short run after lunch brought us to the takeout point. All trash collected was brought up to Mike and Kelly Kennedy's trailer waiting to be hauled to the landfill, the perfect end to a great day on the river.

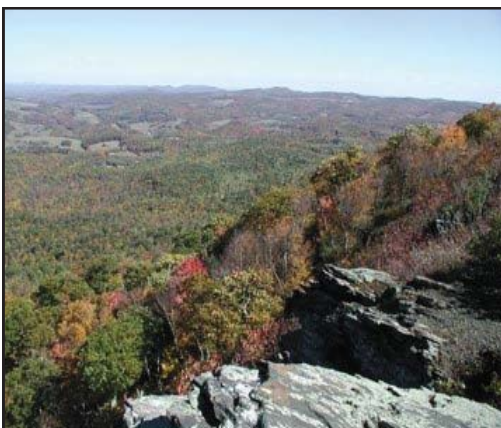
Editor's note: The 17 eager volunteers collected 1350 pounds of trash on the 6-mile float, including 21 tires, a tricycle, two bicycles, and the end of an aluminum canoe.

By Jeff Bliss



2

OCTOBER 20: THIRD SATURDAY OUTING ON BUFFALO MOUNTAIN



On a chilly October morning nine DRBA members headed to Buffalo Mountain in Floyd County near the Blue Ridge Parkway. This 1000 acre natural area boasts a 3971 foot peak. Julia and her daughter Ashley had made the trip earlier in the year with Betty and Wayne Kirkpatrick, our hosts, so they knew what to expect—huff and puff 0.7 miles straight up a mountain to an unbelievable view.

Fortunately, the straight-up trail had recently been changed to an easier winding trail that provided views missed by the previous route. At every stop all we could say was WOW. Once on top, we were treated to an amazing 360-degree vista and crystal clear skies. Colorful trees were scattered across the mountainous landscape, and the many ledges and trails made it easy to find a spot to take it in by yourself.

Continued page 7

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DECEMBER FIRST SATURDAY OUTING

The December Sprig Outing

(begging the forgiveness of Clement Clarke Moore)

'Twas the first of December, when all through the town
 The people of Lillington woke to the dawn
 The traffic lights blinked with a red, yellow green
 It's a sleepy sweet town, a sight to be seen

The folks they were gathering all 'round the lot
 With mugs of hot coffee from their kitchen pot
 Some with their kayaks and some with canoes
 And all with a friendly "good morn, how to do!"

When out from his truck, there appeared no one other
 Than our leader, our guide, our friend and our brother
 Away to the clipboard we all went a-writing
 Reading so quickly it was really quite striking!

The sun from the sky of a fresh new morning
 And friends all about was very heart warming
 When, what to the wonder of folks all around
 This frenzy of cars began leaving town!

With one in the lead and ten in the back
 Folks knew in a minute, we wouldn't soon be back
 The truck up ahead, it drove through the town
 And we followed him closely to the home he had found

Mrs. Johnson, the lady of whom we are guests
 And who kindly agreed to allow us access
 To her land, and her drive and her river banks, too
 We all hailed a hearty and sincere Thank you!

A beautiful wreath we laid at her door
 Handmade by Forrest, who could ask for more
 From Nature's abundance, he made in himself
 (I can tell you – I know! He's a kind old elf!)

Our guide spoke the rules we all said we would keep
 To Larry the point and to Will he gave sweep
 He spoke of ripe berries and shared history
 Of mistletoe we learned the mystery

Now Catherine and Scott and Susan are ready
 So are Evan and Tim, Marie-Claire, Sue and Betty!
 Bonnie and Audry come along like you 'oughter
 Christine is here (and she's Forrest's granddaughter)

Joni and Guy, we mustn't tarry
 Come with us now, Katie and Larry!
 Wayne and Will, Bonnie and Sue
 Lydian's here, but I'm still missing two!



The river, it twinkled and so gently it flowed
 And into the water we were ready to go
 To wrestle the mistletoe down from the tree
 There's plenty of it for you and for me

Reach up, stretch and stand on tippy toes now
 Don't rock the boat, pull up tight, catch that bough
 Pull gently, twist light, careful now, here it comes!
 Soon we had sprigs, and more than just some!

Lunch by the river near a babbling fall
 Gave us rest and good fellowship with one and all
 Then back to our boats we were led and helped in
 It good to have so many wonderful friends

The end of our journey, a float gently downstream
 Leaving each to their thoughts of only one dream
 We knew that the mistletoe trip we couldn't miss
 For this was the night we'd all get a kiss!

Betty Kirkpatrick

4

NOVEMBER 3: DAN RIVER, WHETSTONE CREEK TO EDEN

The air was warm, the sky was clear, even the Dan was crystal clear. There were 28 boats and 31 fellow paddlers of all ages and backgrounds enjoying a day on the river. And also a new four legged member belonging to Katherine Mull—Abigail, DRBA's official River Cat.

We put in at the confluence of the Dan and Whetstone Creek, thanks to the generosity of the Tuttle family, several of whom joined in for the float. This was followed by Gallo-way's Lower Ford Sluice and Fish Trap where a Kingfisher joined us and led us downriver to Sneed Strong's Fish Dam Sluice.

As we floated along we saw a young deer lying at the edge of the water just a few feet away from us soaking up the warm sun. I turned to look over my shoulder, and behind me was this flotilla of canoes and kayaks, the people in them probably meeting someone and creating a new friendship. The conversations of such meetings mingled with the sounds of the birds, the rustling

of the river over the rocks and the brightly colored leaves gently falling. The river can be a very serene and spiritual place.



As we continued on we passed Matrimony Creek, so named by an unfortunate married man because it was exceedingly noisy and impetuous. Past small stands of River Cane we floated to Leaksville Landing where four rock-and-timber cribs used for mooring batteaux are still visible. Lunch at the landing was nice with picnic tables in a park-like setting. Thanks for the brownies, T.

After lunch we proceeded downstream past the remains of the Leaksville covered toll bridge and the confluence of the Smith and took out at Eden Wildlife Access Area.

Another great day on the river. Thanks to everyone; see you soon .

By Will Renyer

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NOVEMBER THIRD SATURDAY AT ANGLER'S RIDGE

Sixteen DRBA members and three pets gathered at Angler's Park in Danville on a sunny, warm November 17th for the final Third Saturday Outing of 2007, led by Paul Johnson, Outings Chairperson. We explored portions of the Angler's Ridge Mountain Bike Trail System, a 17-mile network of mainly single-track natural surface trails.

Leaving the parking lot and entering the trail called Riverside Drive, we found ourselves in a wooded area much hillier and more remote than the paved Riverwalk along the river. We followed and criss-crossed a scenic stream for a mile uphill, then looped a half-mile in an area called The Mesa before returning back along the creek. Sunlight through the bronze leaves of beech trees gave the woods a golden glow and enticed us to extend our walk as long as possible. As always on DRBA outings, the group was congenial, and everyone enjoyed the setting and the company.

Although most of the hikers lived fairly near Danville, no one had experienced this hidden treasure before. In two hours, we encountered no mountain bikes and few hikers, but we did meet a member of the Southern Virginia Mountain Bike Association who was maintaining the trail. Members of SVMBA constructed the original seven-mile trail and have recently expanded it to seventeen miles. Trail maintenance is done entirely by vol-

unteers, and DRBA members expressed our appreciation for the work that makes this a highlight for both hikers and bikers in Southside Virginia.

By Paul Johnson



MEMBERSHIPS AND DONATIONS

SEPTEMBER 2007-NOVEMBER 2007

Memberships

Sponsor

Piedmont Magazine

Benefactor

Carolina Canoe Club
Katherine K. Mull

Protector

Mike, Kelly, Zeke, and
Amanda Kennedy

Steward

Deborah and Gerald
Comer
Roy and Mary Fagan
Joseph Montgomery

Corporate

Super-Sod Carolina

Friend

W. Price Watt
Dan and Jackie Wiggers

Organization

Smith River Valley Canoe
Club

Family

Chuck Britten
Will Butler and Rachel

Christensen

Joni and Tim Carter
Linda and Jim Drage
Bryant, Elisa and Clara

Haynes

Nancy and Doug Hender-
son-James
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Jessee

Harold and Edith Knight
Mr. and Mrs. Richard
Lindsey

Carl J. Smith

Charles Strauss

Andy and Bonya Tredway
Ray, Ann, and Jade
Vernon

Anne Woods

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Joey Bane
Eddie R. Barker
Jeffrey Bliss

Caroline and Steve Cum-
mings

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K. Paul Johnson
Mr. and Mrs. John D.
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Janet W. Reid
Rex and Judy Rouse
Eric Schaefer
Sam Thompson
Roger D. Ward
Michael G. Wenkster

Friend

Joel L. Deaton
Dr. David C. Jones
Lee Plummer Templeton

Other

Larry and Ann Parker
Hazel S. Puckett
Dennis E. Reeves
Margaret A. Smith

Memorial Gifts

In Memory of:

Benjamin R. Gardner,
from
Piedmont Surveying and
Design, P.C.

Ben Dixon Lackey, from
Lucy Berry
Kenneth and Luann Bridle
T & Lindley Butler
Patricia and David Colonna
Martha and Timothy Ford
Katherine K. Mull
Kevin Sills and Sue Pedraz-
zani
Julia Pyron
Carol N. Shipp
William W. Truslow
Patricia N. Whisnant

DRBA RECEIVES GRANTS

Golden LEAF, Inc. has awarded DRBA a grant for the Dan River Nature & Heritage Tourism Initiative in NC. The project will support the development of visitor river guides and trip planners for the Dan River region in NC to foster regional promotion of nature and heritage sites.

The Harvest Foundation has funded DRBA's "Community Connections: Rivers and Trails" project. In partnership with Henry County and the Southern Environmental Law Center, DRBA will continue to create trails, parks and river access points. In addition, a new outreach and education coordinator will support stream monitoring, trout in the classroom, and water quality initiatives.

Miller Brewing Company of Milwaukee, with a plant in Eden, has offered DRBA a grant for research to nominate the entire batteau navigation system to the National Register of Historic Places and for our efforts to protect and restore the water quality of local rivers and streams.

The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation has awarded DRBA a grant to support North Carolina operations. ZSRF's grants of over \$414 million to recipients in all NC counties give special attention to community economic development; the environment; democracy and civic engagement; pre-collegiate education; and social justice and equity.

GREENWAY OPEN

continued from front page

From the traffic circle, the Greenway can be accessed by crossing the Smith River on Meadow Road and turning right. Parking, picnic shelter and rest room facilities are available at the trailhead. Benches are located along the trail

The next phase of the planned city-wide system will extend the greenway up river beyond the bridge toward the Spray dam. The city's 30-year trail plan calls for 43 miles of trails and greenways to connect parks, schools, residences, and commercial districts.

In addition to Mike Covey, DRBA thanks City of Eden Mayor John Grogan, members of the Eden City Council, planning director Kelly Stultz, Sam W. Smith, Inc., and the Annie Penn Community Trust for making the Smith River Greenway a reality.

By Katherine Mull



OUTING ON BUFFALO MOUNTAIN

continued from page 3

Looking back over the Dan River Basin, several familiar landmarks were discernible: Rocky Knob, Bull Mountain near Stuart, Pilot Mountain to the south, Mount Rogers to the west, and Sugarloaf Mountain off to the north.

After a leisurely lunch we headed back down the mountain, stopping our cars at Lovers Leap, Nancy's Fudge in Meadows of Dan, the Dan River Queen, and a produce stand. The end of the day was topped off by hamburgers and hotdogs, provided by the Kirkpatricks, and all the goodies the guests had brought with them.

Good friends, good food, good fun, spectacular hike!

By Julia Pyron and Wayne Kirkpatrick

MARTINSVILLE HENRY COUNTY RIVERS & TRAILS GROUP UPDATE

Completed projects include a new Smith River access point at Doe Run on Dupont Road just above the Martinsville Dam and a map of existing walking trails in the area prepared by the Health & Wellness Coalition.

Rivers & Trails continues to forge alliances with other groups committed to our common goals. Recent activities include supporting the following:

- Southern VA Trails Roundtable, working toward a "Mountains to Sea Trail" across southern Virginia
- Activate Martinsville/Henry County, encouraging and enabling more active lifestyles, including the Interna-

tional Walk to School Day on October 3, and creating infrastructure for biking and walking through "Complete Streets" and "Safe Routes to Schools" programs

- Friends of Philpott, planning and constructing trails and preventing closure of Jamison Mill Park at Philpott Lake

Programs at the R&T meetings have included a report on the National Trust for Historic Preservation project in Martinsville-Henry County and a presentation about tourism in Virginia.

By Ellen Jessee

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, January 16 at the Eden City Hall.

Dan River Basin Association Officers

President, Will Truslow
Vice President, Wayne Kirkpatrick
Treasurer, Mark Bishopric
Secretary, T Butler
Corresponding Secretary, Barbara Solomon

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DRBA Outings

January 5:

Hike Mayo Park, Person Co.

February 2:

Hike: Hanging Rock State Park

March 1:

Annual Celebration,
The Prizery South Boston
Afternoon Hike
Prizery to Berry Hill



Nature always wears the colors of the spirit.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

DRBA'S BIG SWEEP FEATURED IN *PIEDMONT* MAGAZINE

At North Carolina Big Sweep's annual luncheon in November, Rockingham County received the first award ever given for the greatest number of miles cleaned during the fall cleanup. The county's 1138 participants covered 202 miles of waterways and roadsides, retrieving 56,000 pounds of debris. DRBA teams included 58 volunteers who collected nearly 16,500 pounds of trash, and many more teams of youth and adults were led by DRBA members.

DRBA's October 6 First Saturday Outing, a Big Sweep on six miles of the Mayo and Dan rivers in Rockingham County, attracted Mary Louise Smith and Cheryl Hopkins of *Piedmont Magazine* who came on the trip as reporters. Mary Louise's delightful story, lavishly and expertly illustrated by her photographs, is the "Day Tripping Piedmont" column (pp. 59-60) in the Fall 2007 issue.

That issue has a stunning back cover—a photo by DRBA's Jeff Johnston of his red canoe pulled up on Lone Island in the Dan River. The copy on the photo is an ad for DRBA with the invitation, "Find Yourself a Piece of Heaven." Thanks to tireless work by Jeff and other DRBA volunteers, our piece of heaven is staying clean.

