

# CURRENTS

SUMMER 2004

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 4

## VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY HOSTS DRBA'S THIRD ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

At its Third Annual Membership Meeting Thursday, May 13, the Dan River Basin Association reviewed its impressive progress in its short two-year existence, elected officers and Board members, and heard a report from William Butler on the cultural and natural resources that serve as a foundation for the Mayo River State Park.

Meeting at the Virginia Museum of Natural History in Martinsville, the group heard Butler, a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech, describe his survey of the Mayo River in Rockingham County, North Carolina.

Butler was engaged by the Association to develop a water quality and recreational use plan for the Mayo River in the summer of 2002. Extending that work, he has served as a planning consultant for the Association's Mayo River State Park Committee in 2003-2004.

Butler depicted the Mayo River's cultural and natural features as "pearls" on the Mayo River's "string." One task of the Dan River Basin Association, he said, is to see that the pearls are connected by trails, portages and river access sites. He also mentioned the possibility of creating a bi-state park which could include portions of the South and North Forks of the Mayo River in Virginia.

The group elected officers and added five new members to its Board of Directors. Host for the occasion was Dr. Richard Hoffman of the Museum staff.

Jeffrey Johnston, retiring president and founder of the Association, indicated that the successes of the Association in Rockingham County, North Carolina were the result in

part of the fact that its leadership was concentrated in the County. Now, however, the group is poised to focus its efforts in other portions of the Dan watershed.

"We have had a successful First Saturday Outings program," Johnston added, "fulfilling the first of our stated goals, recreation," but now the group is ready to take the next step, focusing on river stewardship, the second part of its mission. The Association has been designated coordinator of North Carolina's stream watch program in the basin.

Elected President was Thomas Edmonds, Economic Developer in Caswell County, North Carolina. K. Paul Johnson, Director of Libraries for Halifax County and past editor of the Association's newsletter, was elected Vice President. Dorcas Midkiff of Eden will assume editorship of Currents.

Lindley Butler, Treasurer, and T Butler, Secretary, residents of Wentworth, were re-elected to their posts. Newly elected to the Board of Directors were Julia Pyron of Stoneville; John Buck, of Martinsville, a history teacher at Patrick Henry Community College; Clark Graves, of Halifax County, postmaster at Blairs and interested in water quality and river recreation; Brenda Martin, science teacher at Patrick County High School and an active, award-winning environmentalist; and Wayne Kirkpatrick, a dairy farmer on the Mayo River in Patrick County.

Jeffrey Johnston and Mike Covey, retiring president and vice president, will continue on the Association's Board of Directors. Covey has



Dan River Basin Officers and Board of Directors. First Row, left to right: Barry Dunkley, Jeff Johnston, Julia Pyron, Brenda Martin, Tom Edmonds, T Butler, Lindley Butler. Second Row, left to right: Forrest Altman, Clark Graves, Steve Carpenter, John Buck, Wayne Kirkpatrick, Ken Bridle, Paul Johnson

been active in promoting greenways, and Johnston will assume the role of creating access sites.

Continuing members of the Board of Directors include Forrest Altman of Caswell County, author of *The Dan River Book*; Steve Carpenter, Person County Manager; Neill Watson of Eden, former chair for recreation; Joey Bane of Halifax County, a history buff and hiking enthusiast; Ken Bridle of Stokes County, a conservation biologist; Barry Dunkley, Danville Water Director; Terry Painter of Person County, currently building a trailer to carry the Association's recently-acquired bateau; Paul Ferguson of Raleigh, author of *Paddling Eastern North Carolina*; and Tom Taylor of Greensboro, active in the Association's proposals for grants.

Reports from the Secretary and Treasurer, T and Lindley Butler, indicated a healthy fiscal situation, continued expansion of membership and an 88% membership renewal rate.

Following the General Meeting, the Association's

Board of Directors held a brief session. The Board's next meeting is scheduled for July 17.

Upcoming "First Saturday Outings" scheduled are the Dan River Race on August 7 in Madison and a September 4 float on the Dan from Danville, Virginia to Milton, North Carolina

Submitted by

Forrest Altman

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## APRIL 3RD OUTING:

## STOKES COUNTY 4H CAMP TO HANGING ROCK

*April 3rd Trip Report  
Dan River in Stokes County -  
4H Camp to Hanging Rock*

*Weather- Cloudy and windy  
50 degrees*

*Fifteen Paddlers, including six visitors*

The rain we got on Tuesday and Wednesday unfortunately did not last until Saturday, so the original trip we planned to

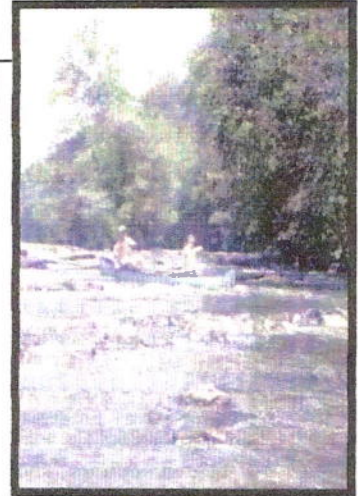
run from 704 to 89 would have been long and bumpy. With some help from David Hoskins at the Dan River Company, we were able to get access at the 4H campground. After caravanning around and setting shuttle we were ready to paddle from 4H to the Hanging Rock access.

This run was a little shorter at around five miles, but made for a better day on the river. After regrouping on the river we paddled on down and found a nice little beach on river right to

stop and eat lunch. The weather started to improve a bit as we left the beach, which inspired one of our couples to take a short but invigorating swim (no names). With no more spills, we reached the take out and had a great paddling day.

Thanks again to all for helping me plan and conduct my first trip as trip coordinator.

*submitted by  
Jay Newton*



Tom and Gloria Butler  
on Smith River.

## MAY 1ST OUTTING

## STAUNTON RIVER TRIP

On Saturday May 1 the DRBA met at 10:00am at Food Lion in Brookneal Va. for a trip down the Staunton River. This trip had been cancelled two times last year due to high water so Forrest and I were looking forward to getting it in this year!

As the 10:30 departure time approached we had new friends arriving at the meeting place. Brenda and friend Richard from Halifax Va. joined the the group as did Jason and wife Jenny from Halifax.

We also had Grant, a native of New Zealand, who most recently lives in South Boston and Les Adams from Danville.

*Historical Note: This particular stretch of the Roanoke River is named after Captain Henry Staunton. Staunton, a soldier from the Revolutionary War was put in command of company of soldiers organized to patrol the river valley from the mountains, to the mouth of the Dan to protect the early settlers from the incursions of the Indians.*

Our group put on the river at Long Island. As you leave the pool of slow moving water at Long Island, the river breaks out into five different fingers, and we chose to run the river left channel as it is the best channel to run. As you run this channel you cross 4 distinct ledges that are fish dams built by the Indians or early white settlers.

The river at the end of the fingers breaks out into a

large boulder garden. As you work the garden you approach Goose Mountain on river right that has a nice log cabin on top of it looking out over the river.

Just past Goose Mountain is the take-out at the site of the old Melrose Ferry. This ferry was also known as McIver Ferry. At this take-out we had five participants who took out. Forrest, Terry, Kip, Brenda, Richard, Jason and Jimmy chose to continue on to Brookneal.

Just after Melrose, you reach Fish Trap rapid. There are two ways to run this rapid, right of the island if you are able to punch the eddy line, or the chute down the left of the island. Both are a lot of fun.

Forrest showed us some of his solo whitewater boat paddling prowess as he led us through the rock garden below fish traps rapid.

Just after this rock garden there is a nice island in the center of the river, and we stopped there to have lunch. As we were ready to leave the island it started to drizzle rain. It sprinkled rain of and on until we had a major storm that lasted for about 20 minutes. We sought refuge under the trees over hanging the banks as we put on our rain gear and waited for the storm to subside. After the rain it turned a little colder as we continue down the river. After a

series of rocks and flat water, you get to a surfing wave on river right as you approach yet another island. Below this island you start to see some homes built on the river as we were starting to get back to civilization.

This being the weekend of the Annual Brookneal Stripper Tournament, we also started to see some boats. Most people that own these weekend homes were at them cooking on grills, fishing and playing music on their stereos, and waving as we passed by.

Below this area you get to a river wide rock that is called Cat Rock Rapid. We generally pull right up to the rock and look at our options for running the rapid and stretch our legs. River left, at normal water levels, is the only way to go.

Today we had the river right channel and one running over the rocks center from the left channel. All of the group chose different channels.

River right looked particularly challenging, but I chose river left because of my 7 year old passenger Kip. As we crossed the wave train below the left channel we took on a lot of water. All boaters were successful on the various routes that we chose. Forrest noted that he thought he would capsized in the river left wave train.

Just below this rapid is another large rock entering the river from the right called Salmon Rock. There were a few fishing poles set up on it today with nobody there watching them....but I could see a camping trailer on the bank.

Just around this bend you can see the bridge at Brookneal. Before you get to the bridge, you see a rock in the center of the river. This is the gage rock called 5 foot rock. If you cant see the rock, the water is more than 5 foot. Today you could see about a foot of the rock. As you cross the bridge into Brookneal you can see the rock from the bridge. If you can not see this rock, I suggest not running the river that day.

If you go under the bridge between the river left bank and the first column there is a gage on the river column. Today it was at 358. The USGS.GOV page showed we had 2500cfs water flow which was great!

Thanks to all who participated in a very good trip. Hope we can do it again next year!

*submitted by  
Terry Painter  
Person Co. Rep.*



## OUTFITTERS ANNOUNCE LOCATIONS AND SERVICES IN ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

Wentworth, N.C.—More indicators that river recreation is a growing and viable tourism industry for Rockingham County are the announcements of two, new local outfitters: Eagle Falls Outfitters and 3 Rivers Outfitters. In addition to the two, new county outfitters, Greensboro-based Get:Outdoors has announced that it will provide services and guided trips on the Dan and Mayo Rivers in Rockingham County.

Eagle Falls Outfitters has opened in Madison at 742 Eagle Falls Road, just off Highways 704 and 65. It is owned and operated by Linda Adams. The company provides canoe and tube rental and shuttle services along the Dan River. The company also provides overnight horse stalls for paddlers with horses and camping facilities during special events.

3 Rivers Outfitters has opened in Eden at 413-B Church Street, in the "Spray traffic circle" in a former textile mill building. Principles of 3 Rivers Outfitters are Jeff Johnston, Mark Bishopric and Steve Rippey. The company provides canoe and kayak rental and shuttle services along the Dan, Mayo and Smith rivers.

"We are very thrilled to announce these two, new local outfitters," said Robin Yount, vice president of Tourism for the Partnership for Economic & Tourism Development. "Their services will help us

tremendously with attracting more visitors to our rivers and continuing to expand this sector of our tourism industry."

In addition, Get:Outdoors, the Greensboro-based outdoor retailer and adventure travel company, will begin offering its paddling instructional program and livery (shuttle/rentals) services on the Dan and Mayo Rivers in May. The company is also providing a guided historic paddle trip on the Dan River the second Saturday of every month beginning on May 6<sup>th</sup> through October 4<sup>th</sup> of this year.

The Get:Outdoors guided historical Dan River trip will start at noon and travel approximately 8-miles on the Dan River for 3-4 hours to paddle with another ½ hour for lunch. The day will begin with an orientation and some instruction. Stops along the way will emphasize both the natural and cultural history of the Dan River. The trip is \$45.00 per person. For reservations or more information contact Get:Outdoors at 800-450-6819 or [www.getoutdoors.us](http://www.getoutdoors.us).

"When we changed our name from Pro Canoe & Kayak to Get:Outdoors we were serious about getting our clients outdoors and on the water," said Greg Sweval, president of Get:Outdoors.

"Last year between demo days, Neuse River livery operations, paddling instruction and our ad-

venture trips program, we safely put over 5,000 people on the water. This year Triad residents won't have to drive to Raleigh to participate in Get:Outdoors trips, instruction or livery opportunities with the program offered in Rockingham County."

"The services and trips offered by Get:Outdoors in Rockingham County are a huge step for us," said Yount. "They have the name recognition and large customer base to help us grow. We are really excited about what this partnership will do for Rockingham County's river recreation and our local economy."

Tourism in the form of outdoor recreation has been noted as one of Rockingham County's key growth industries in its plan for economic recovery.

Other outfitters that have been serving Rockingham County for a number of years include the Dan River Campground in Stoneville, The Dan River Company in Lawsonville, Hanging Rock Outdoor Center in Westfield, and Troublesome Creek Outfitter in Stokesdale.

submitted by  
Robin Yount

Vice President of Tourism  
336-342-8138

[ryount@ncnorthstar.com](mailto:ryount@ncnorthstar.com)  
[www.ncnorthstar.com](http://www.ncnorthstar.com)

FYI  
Brown RIVER  
ACCESS signs have  
been installed  
directing boaters to  
Rockingham  
County's  
public access  
locations.

WE'RE ON THE  
WEB  
AT  
[www.danriver.org](http://www.danriver.org)

## DRBA TAKES 3RD PLACE SPRING CLEAN

Wentworth, NC - May 27, 2004 - The Rockingham County Beautification Council awarded \$1300 in cash prizes to participants in the fourth annual Spring Clean event at the Folk Festival May 2. This year, those involved in Spring Clean collected 209,390 pounds of trash and debris from county roadways and dumpsites, bringing the four-year total to 308 tons.

The Madison Circuit Charge Youth took the \$500 first prize, collecting a total of 79,960 pounds. Midway United Methodist Church Men took second place with a 69,140-pound total.

Dan River Basin Association won the \$100 third prize with a total of 24,160 pounds. Each of the other 12 groups received prizes ranging from \$25 to \$50.

Spring Clean is a county-sponsored event in which FedEx, Waste Management, Energy United, Sprint, and other corporate partners provided funds for prizes, and NC DOT provided vests and trash bags for participants. The ongoing effort to improve the county's appearance continues with NC Big Sweep, to be held in September.

Submitted by:  
T Butler and Ginger Weynick



Left to right: George Pyron, Jeff Johnston, Tom Robinson, Carol Robinson, Julia Pyron, Milton Hundley, Sandy Connolly, and Lindley Butler.

# MINUTES

## DAN RIVER BASIN ASSOCIATION

### Minutes

Dan River Basin Association  
13 May 2004, 7:00 – 8:45 p.m.  
Virginia Museum of Natural History  
Martinsville, VA

Welcome: Richard Hoffman welcomed the group to the museum, which has a new director and which is beginning construction of a new building in Martinsville. Thirty-five people attended the meeting.

Reports: Jeffrey Johnston presented the president's report on DRBA's goals and activities for the first two years. Our efforts to organize the basin, to bring folks to the river and educate them about the river, have worked well, with leadership concentrated in Rockingham County. Our First Saturday Outings are a great success, as is the establishment of the new Mayo River State Park. Now it is time to spread the organization's focus and leadership further north and east and to highlight the stewardship aspect of our mission.

T Butler reported that we have 170 memberships from 11 North Carolina and 8 Virginia counties, with an 88% renewal rate. Treasurer Lindley Butler's report through March 31 gave total assets of \$14,785, with \$13,800 in savings and grants. Since then we have received a \$540 matching grant from the Rockingham County Naturalist Club to purchase a PowerPoint projector for the use of both organizations. The projector's first use is for this meeting's program.

Election: Julia Pyron reported for the Nominating Committee, recommending the election of the following slate of officers and Board members, who were elected unanimously:

President: Tom Edmonds,  
Caswell County

Vice President: Paul Johnson,  
Halifax County

Secretary: T Butler,  
Rockingham County

Treasurer: Lindley Butler,  
Rockingham County

#### New Board Members:

Terms Expire 2005:  
Mike Covey,  
Rockingham County

Jeffrey Johnston,  
Rockingham County

Term Expires 2006:  
Julia Pyron,  
Rockingham County

Terms Expire 2007:  
John Buck,  
Henry County

Clark Graves,  
Halifax County

Brenda Martin,  
Patrick County

Wayne Kirkpatrick,  
Patrick County

#### Returning Board Members:

Terms Expire 2005:  
Forrest Altman,  
Steve Carpenter,  
Neill Watson

Terms Expire 2006:  
Joey Bane,  
Ken Bridle,  
Barry Dunkley,  
Terry Painter

Terms Expire 2007:  
Paul Ferguson,  
Tom Taylor

Jeff Johnston noted that since Paul Johnson is now Vice President, the new newsletter editor is Dorcas Midkiff. Jeff will chair the river access committee, and Julia Pyron will handle sales.

Program: Forrest Altman introduced William Butler, Planning Consultant for the Mayo River State Park project, who presented a slide program on the park plan. Butler described the concept as a string of pearls connected by the river and summarized the natural and cultural resources on this western Piedmont stream. Highlights included the Native American fish weirs, unique geological formations that host rare and endangered plants, historic power dams, scenic vistas, and recreational use for fishing and paddling. Butler challenged DRBA to work on the paddle trail, increasing the number of paddle accesses and improving portages. He asked whether the two forks of the river in Virginia can be included in a bi-state park to protect more of the river corridor.

Next Meetings: The next outings are as follows:

**June 5**.....Smith River in Eden, NC

**July 3**.....Dan River in South Boston, VA

**August 7**.....Dan River Boat Race in Madison, NC

**September 4**.....Danville, VA to Milton, NC

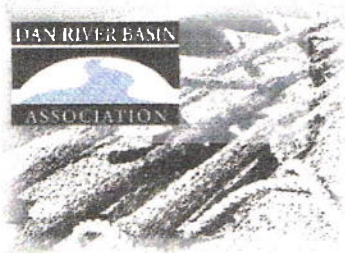
The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be on July 17.

*Respectfully submitted,  
T Butler, Secretary*



# dan river basin association

First Saturday Outings  
July - December 2004



July 3

Dan River at South Boston, VA. Tour the Prizery; Paddle Hyc-o-Dan, and Aaron's Creek. Chris Jones of the Prizery will meet group at 9:30 to see area to house the Crossing of the Dan exhibition. The bateau will be the centerpiece for commemoration of General Greene's Crossing of the Dan during the Revolutionary War. To reserve space, contact Trip Coordinator: Paul Johnson at 434-476-3358 (at the Halifax Public Library) and pauljohnson@yahoo.com

Aug. 7

Dan River Boat Race at Madison, NC. Contact: Dixie Penn at 336-548-9572 and dpenn@nuvcc.net

The Dan River Basin Association  
PO Box 103  
Wentworth, NC 27375  
336-342-1415  
members@danriver.org

Sept. 4

Dan River from Derrville to Milton, NC. Combined trip with Piedmont Land Conservancy. Contact: Will Truslow at 336-547-1903 and willtruslow@hotmail.com

Oct. 2

River Cleanup  
Contact: Will Truslow at 336-547-1903 and willtruslow@hotmail.com

Nov. 6

Hike on the proposed Eden Greenway, Eden, NC. Contact: Mark Bishop at 336-627-6215 and 3-R-O.com

Dec. 4

Mistletoeing on the Upper Little River near Lillington, NC. We will meet at Hardees in Lillington at 10:00 a.m. Bring large garbage bags and a long pole. Be prepared to cooperate with others to bring home luscious mistletoe sprigs. Contact: Forrest Altman at 336-234-8556 and musakulu@qemavood.net

These trips are geared to the novice and above. They are free and open to the public. Trips are weather permitting and meet at 10:00 a.m. unless noted otherwise. Bring lunch, water, life jacket, and rain gear. Boats are not provided. To find out where to meet, and other trip information contact the trip leader as listed for each outing.

## DAN RIVER BASIN ASSOCIATION CO-SPONSORS DAN RIVER BOAT RACE IN MADISON, NC

Join the Dan River Basin Association in a fun day on the river Saturday, August 7th at the 16th annual Dan River Boat Race. Sponsored by the Madison-Mayodan Recreation Department, the race gathers canoeists and kayakers from all over NC and VA to compete for trophies and prizes.

Lunch is provided for the racers, and spectators can purchase lunch on site. The lunch will be catered by the Airport Drive-In. Entertainment will be provided by Kirby Wilkins of Reidsville, who will be playing your favorite tunes from the 70's.

Corporate sponsors include the Dan River Basin Association, Cybernet Advertising, All About Floors, Sutherland Products, Y & W Farm Center, EcoFlo, Carolina Environmental, Stokes Rental, Dan River Company, Get:Outdoors, and the Rockingham County Tourism Development Authority.

The race begins at 11:30 a.m. at the Lindsey Bridge access site in Madison, NC. Racers will travel approximately 2.5 miles to the finish line at the 704 Bridge access in Madison. A shuttle will be provided.

Prizes will be awarded to winners in each category. Age categories include those 16 and under, 17-39, 40-59, and 60-over. Families and Scout troops are eligible for special rates. Boat rentals are available, and life jackets are required for everyone.

Pre-registration is \$15 per person, and on-site registration is \$20 per person, which includes lunch and a T-shirt. Check-in is from 9:00-11:00 a.m. at the Lindsey Bridge access site in Madison. For more information call Dixie Penn at 336-548-9572, or visit [www.danriverboatrace.com](http://www.danriverboatrace.com).

Submitted by Lindley Butler