



CURRENTS

Dan River Basin Association

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NEW DRBA OFFICE OPENS

TROUT ARE BACK!

RUN WITH THE COWS

DRBA VISITS MAYO STATE PARKS

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FIRST SATURDAY OUTINGS

(details at DANRIVER.ORG)

October 4: NC Big Sweep Cleanup, Dan River,
Whetstone Creek to Eden

November 1: Sheppard Mill Pond and Tour of Historic Mill

December 6: Revisit Snow Creek Restoration,
Stokes County

**Meetings of the Board of Directors are held on the second
Wednesday of February, May, August and November. The next
meeting will be November 12, 2014.**

Cover photo by Linda Drage.

CURRENTS NEWSLETTER: Editor: T Butler. Designer: David Pinney

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Tiffany Haworth with Lillie Hodges.

"Every living organism needs fresh water to survive. Plants need water to make food, and all animals depend on plants for food either directly or indirectly. Therefore without fresh, clean water, all life forms will cease to exist."

I remember where I heard this statement and wrote it down. I was at River Rally, a national conference of river organizations, a few years back. I keep that same paper with me always to remind me why I work long hours, why I feel personally attacked when I

see someone polluting our waterways, why when I've been in meetings about fracking, uranium, landfills and coal ash, I can't sleep some nights.

The speaker's handout had these words of wisdom: "With the ever increasing population, water is becoming a scarce commodity. To worsen this situation, the few available sources of water...are being depleted at an alarming rate. Release of

waste and chemicals into water bodies is a major problem today. If nothing is done to reverse the situation, then it is predicted that it will be extremely hard to find clean water in future."

Ugh. That can be very, very depressing. I figure we can sit and wait for laziness, greed and carelessness to deplete our water supply, or we can actually do something about it.

Doesn't everyone need to take care of water, since everyone's survival depends on it?

There is much we can do to for this precious commodity, our fresh water. We can conserve it, we can rally against threats to harm it, we can volunteer to clean and monitor it, we can educate others about it.

Please pause to think about where the water comes from when you turn on the faucet. Where the water comes from that provides your food on farms. Where the water will come from for future generations.

DRBA members, volunteers, donors and sustainers are doing that every day. Please join us by investing in protecting our local waterways and support DRBA as generously as you can.

-Tiffany Haworth

PRESIDENT'S SPACE



Allison Szuba.

Greetings! While out and about on a couple of beautiful and very different trails this weekend, I thought about gratitude. How grateful I am that trails, greenways, and blueways exist for our use and pleasure. Of course, after running into several spider webs, I felt sure the spiders were grateful, as well, for the wide trails over which to weave their webs.

I took quite a few steps in a my little size 6 shoes and thought about the steps that so many

people have done to create those trails and the ones across our Basin. To dream, create, plan, procure, and build can be a monumental task, yet someone did it. Someone thought the land offered us enough beauty that we should be able to see it and then figured out how to make it happen.

It is easy to forget how much goes into building these trails. Land, slope, water, rocks, drainage, paved, natural, gravel, municipality concerns and regulations...the list continues for a proverbial mile. Of course, there is also a cost. Trails, depending on so many complexities, can cost anywhere from \$10 per yard up to \$10,000 a yard.

DRBA has helped build trails all over the basin and is always ready to give a hand with planning, overseeing, building, connecting people to resources, etc. Your membership dollars help DRBA build trails and partner with others to build



Photos by Alison Szuba.

trails. Why do we think trails are so important? Because, in addition to the mental and physical benefits, the economic impact is tremendous. Trails can bring in excess of \$10,000,000 in economic growth!

Your membership dues, directed donations and gifts to DRBA help us in the most basic ways achieve our mission to promote and preserve our natural resources and to move the DRBA mission forward. So, on your next trip out on a trail, look down and appreciate!

Thank you for your continued support of our beautiful Basin!

-Allison Szuba

Photography, Furniture, Jewelry, Paintings, Sculptures,
Home Decor, Carvings, & More!

Art in Nature Auction

Thursday, October 16, 2014

Reception and preview at 5:30 p.m.

Auction begins at 7:00 p.m.

Limited Tickets!

Eclectic items created by North Carolina and Virginia artists,
made from nature, about nature or upcycled/recycled.
Jewelry, sculpture, artwork, pottery, furniture, quilts and
more! Proceeds support DRBA's efforts to protect and
preserve our regional natural and cultural resources.



2 Witches Brewery & Winery
209 Trade Street, Danville, VA
Tickets \$15, includes wine/beer tickets,
reception and bid card.
Call (336) 627-6270 or visit
danriver.org for your ticket!

100% Proceeds Benefit Our Local Rivers & Trails



DRBA's New Office in Danville

DRBA announces the opening of its new office at 308 Craghead Street in Danville, VA. Amy Farinelli is now full-time Program Coordinator for the City of Danville, Pittsylvania County and Caswell County, NC. She will focus her energy on education, recreation and stewardship projects in collaboration with local partners.

"Thank you to the Danville Regional Foundation (DRF) for providing this capacity grant to help us establish the new office in Danville that will support existing environmental education, recreation, and stewardship programming in the Dan River Region," said Tiffany Haworth, DRBA's Executive Director. "DRBA's focus in this region will support improved water quality, increased outdoor recreational assets and enhanced environmental education opportunities for both students and adults."

Farinelli moved to Danville in 2013 and is a graduate of the University of New England in Southern Maine. She completed degrees in both Environmental Studies (B.S.) and Sociology (B.A.) in May 2013. That summer she worked with DRF as an intern on the Span the Dan Movement, a community-driven project that continues today. After completing her internship, Farinelli then became a Dan River Year Agent, which allowed her to work part-time for DRBA for 10 months. She has Nonprofit Management Certification from Duke University and serves on the steering committee for the Nonprofit Network of the Dan River Region.

Said Farinelli, "I have seen first-hand the enormous impact that DRBA makes in this region, and it is exciting to be a full-time member of this amazing organization. Danville is my home, and I am looking forward to helping to improve our piece of the Dan River, to develop future generations of good stewards of our environment and to help boost economic transformation in the region."

Since its inception in 2002, DRBA has become a leader

in outdoor recreational master planning, trail and blueway development, bi-state and multiple jurisdiction collaboration, interpretation and dissemination of information about environmental issues, and environmental education to improve the region's quality of life, making the area a better place in which to live, visit, and do business.

"We are thrilled to welcome Amy as a member of DRBA's dedicated and experienced staff and can't thank DRF enough for its confidence in DRBA to make a positive impact," said Allison Szuba, President of DRBA's Board of Directors. "DRBA's reputation is well established with successful projects and programs in other areas of the Basin, and it is exciting to bring these opportunities to residents, businesses, families and children who live, work and play in Danville, Pittsylvania and Caswell."

Amy Farinelli can be reached at 315-209-5055, or afarinelli@danriver.org.

-Amy Farinelli

Attention: Seeking Feedback on The Dan River Atlas

Dr. William E. Trout, author of The Dan River Atlas, is preparing to release a second edition of the book in the coming year.

Do you have any corrections or additions to The Dan River Atlas that you would like the author to know about? If so, please contact the author directly at Bill@vacanals.org.



STEWARDSHIP / EDUCATION

Water Quality Update

The TMDL (total maximum daily load) implementation phase of sampling for coliform levels in the Smith and Mayo rivers in Henry and Patrick counties is underway. Baseline coliform level sampling is nearly complete, final sampling sites have been selected, and DRBA volunteers have been trained in protocols for sampling, plating, and reading results. The sampling will help to isolate sections of the rivers where coliform levels exceed state standards for water quality. Remedial actions include cost share programs for sewer systems, exclusion fencing and riparian buffer plantings. Contact the DRBA office with questions or comments.

DRBA's Virginia staff members are now certified as Virginia Save our Streams (VASOS) volunteer water monitors. Tiffany

Haworth, Krista Hodges, Amy Farinelli and Brian Williams received training in the VASOS Rocky Bottom sampling protocol.

The Tub of Bugs has been busy with stints at the Virginia Museum of Natural History's Living on the Water Festival and the fall meeting of the Smith River Trout Unlimited fly tying meeting. It plans to be at the Danville River District Festival on October 11.

The coal ash spill remains a water quality issue for the basin. Several DRBA volunteers escorted a Greensboro News & Record reporter and a photographer through the spill area on August 3. Ash remains in the river, even with the removal efforts accomplished to date. DRBA has been invited to participate in a stakeholder group on September 24 to discuss

what action Duke Energy should take to further alleviate the environmental pollution potential of the coal ash storage pits and the remaining in-stream ash.

-Wayne Kirkpatrick

With Fall, Comes Trout

As schools settle into their routines, many are preparing for DRBA's 10th season of Trout in the Classroom (TIC). They're setting up tanks, checking equipment, and preparing for the tiny bundle of Brook trout eggs to arrive in early October. Browns and Rainbows will come later, but as soon as students see tanks being set up, they start getting excited and asking daily when the trout will arrive.

Begun by Martinsville orthodontist Dr. David Jones, DRBA's TIC has grown to over 40 tanks last season. With the expansion of the program, DRBA is finding new ways to sustain the program, like having the classes decorate items for the Art in Nature Auction and applying for more grants.

Recently, DRBA was awarded a United Way Community Impact grant. The funds will sustain TIC in Martinsville/Henry County and provide more resources for teachers, including new TIC Manuals. Teachers can borrow DVDs from DRBA about trout habitats and water quality, to deepen

As the program begins this fall, teachers can show their students one-year-old Brook trout at the Virginia Museum of Natural History through a streaming LIVE webcam placed on the museum's tank. These trout will be released soon and replaced with Brook trout eggs, so students can then watch the life-cycle changes over the live webcam.

Also under development is a presentation about the



Stuffed Toy Trout for Adopt-a-Trout "Parents".

complex food web of the Smith River—a little-understood topic. Designed for upper middle and high school students, the complex dynamics of the Smith River and the life that depends on it will be explored, demonstrating how the ecosystem impacts all the living creatures, from smallest to largest.

This year, DRBA is also launching its new "Adopt a Trout" program, enabling individuals to symbolically adopt a trout to support the TIC program. At the \$10 level, the "parent" receives a certificate indicating the adoption and a picture of trout eggs or a picture of an adult trout. The \$40 level includes an adoption certificate, a picture, a DRBA membership for a new member, an optional tour of a trout tank, and an opportunity to attend a trout release.

Without funding from these activities, grants, and donations, the Trout in the Classroom program would not be possible. DRBA thanks everyone for showing their support and



Tiffani Underwood Awards United Way Grant to DRBA.

students' understanding of ecosystems and the importance of keeping our water clean.

This year teachers will apply to be in the program, answering how they plan to handle inclement weather situations and how they incorporate the trout in their lesson plans. DRBA hopes to use their responses in applying for more grants to sustain the program.

believing in TIC.

For more information, or to Adopt a Trout, contact Krista Hodges at khodges@danriver.org or 276-634-2592.

-Krista Hodges

Patrick County Progress

The next phase of the Mayo River Rail Trail (MRRT) has been flagged and awaits beginning of construction. The new section is two pronged, with one leg continuing along the Mayo River downstream to the end of the flood control bench-cut. An overlook of the Mayo will be constructed here and be the terminus for now. The other leg starts at the downstream kiosk, crosses Commerce Street, and meanders through a portion of the Landmark Center property. The planned addition will approximately triple the current distance for a total of about 1.5 miles.

Blue Ridge Heritage, Inc. (BRHI) is nearing completion of a site master plan. The document details design and location for proposed buildings on the property and incorporates likely alignment of trails in the first phase of development. Connecting the BRHI site trails to the Blue Ridge Parkway trail system, notably the Rock Castle Gorge trail, is a priority.

The DRBA Club at Patrick County High School is gearing up for the 2014/2015 academic year. Anticipated activities include a hike, paddle, and visits to the Reynolds Homestead and the Virginia Museum of Natural History. Later this fall the Club will clean up litter at the historical marker at the terminus of William Byrd's journey surveying the Virginia/North Carolina border from the Atlantic Ocean to within sight of the Blue Ridge Mountains. A large amount of trash and tires has been reported dumped near the marker at Peters Creek.

October 18 will be a fun day to be in Patrick County. Start the day with the Apple Dumpling 5K run/walk, with proceeds to benefit Patrick County trail development, and follow with a Third Saturday Outing hosted by the Kirkpatricks.

-Wayne Kirkpatrick

Get Dirty with DRBA: Help Build the Mayodan Mountain Bike Trail!

There are few things in life more satisfying than building a trail. If you've done it, then you know. If you've yet to experience it, this is a great opportunity to connect with great people and learn about sustainable trail construction!



To volunteer, come to Farris Memorial Park, 2878 Park Road, Mayodan, NC on

- Saturday, October 11 from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm (special surprise day) and/or
- Wednesday, Oct. 16 from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm (cookout day with REI)

We will provide equipment, but any shovels, rakes, gloves, or mattocks you can bring will be much appreciated. No experience is necessary to volunteer!

This trail will be the officially adopted trail of the Mountain Bike Club at McMichael High School.

DRBA thanks REI Greensboro, Reidsville Area Foundation, and Town of Mayodan for making the Mayodan Mountain Bike Trail possible.

For additional information, please contact Jenny Edwards at 336-339-6169.

-Jenny Edwards

FEATURES

DRBA Visits VA & NC Mayo River State Parks

On Sunday, September 14 some 15 DRBA members toured a portion of the nascent Virginia Mayo River State Park (VMRSP) and the developing North Carolina Mayo River State Park (NCMRSP) at the confluence of the North and South Mayo rivers. Lindley Butler, North Carolina historian and DRBA co-founder, guided the group past forests and wildflower-bedecked fields to relive the 1728 visit of William Byrd's surveying party.

Byrd's witty journal describes his odyssey from the coast to the mountains to determine the "dividing line" between Virginia and North Carolina. In great detail, Byrd's classic of colonial literature provides a vivid description of the terrain. Two and a half centuries later, Richard Gravelly, whose generosity preserved the Gravelly Nature Preserve, followed Byrd's path and found much of the boundary land little

changed. That is certainly the case here.

Byrd crossed the North Mayo River on "Byrd's Ledge,"



Beside Byrd's Ledge at the c.1728 campsite. Photo Tiffany Haworth.

where his horses struggled to keep their footing, and camped beside the river where the cascading water lulled him to sleep. Standing on that spot on a beautiful late summer afternoon, Butler read from the journal, making Byrd's experience come vibrantly to life.

Thanks to the vision of the previous landowner, the dedicated efforts of DRBA's T and Lindley Butler and Katherine Mull and SELC's Kay Slaughter, future visitors will be able to enjoy the beauty of this little-changed historic border site. It now is preserved by the VMRSP and the NCMRSP, both of which were brought into being through DRBA's efforts.

DRBA thanks the staff of the NCMRSP and Virginia's Fairystone State Park who jointly care for the property and made it possible for us to visit this hidden treasure. Molly Ward, Virginia's Secretary of Natural Resources, who visited the site with DRBA in April, has expressed her desire to open the park to the public during her tenure. As funds allow, both states are committed to making it open to the public for hiking, picnicking, and river camping.

"Run with the Cows" a Great Success

Friends of Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail's September 21 fundraiser, "Run with the Cows," was an "UDDERLY awesome" experience for the 130 participants. When the bluegrass music



"Cow-Girl" Sandra Williams congratulates Coy Rickman, first to finish "Run with the Cows." Photo by Gerri Hunt.

signaled the start of the inaugural 5K by ringing antique cowbells. After two loops around the Chinqua-Penn Trail, runners and walkers reached the finish line to cheers and more ringing cowbells.

First male to finish was Coy Rickman, who timed himself at 24:19. First female runner was Boots Vandemark, who reported a 29-minute circuit. She was followed soon by 9-year-old runners Jason

Lovett, Lane Julian, and Lane Blankenship, proving it was not just "ANUDDER" race.

Along with "regulars" who walk or run the trail often, many came to the trail for the first time. Karen Burke posted on Facebook, "We had such a wonderful time walking the...diverse terrain of countryside fields and barns, wooded mountains, and bridges. It's breathtaking! Even my electronically-addicted teenager wants to walk the trail again. I'm SO thankful to be exposed to such a beautiful place."

Funds raised by the event will be used for trail improvements, including preservation of the historic Springhouse, where weathered slates have been removed from the roof for repairs. Slate fragments that cannot be reused are being decorated by Rockingham County artists with birds, wildflowers, and landscapes from the trail. Sales of these unique works further support trail projects. See samples at www.chinquapenntrail.org/store. [Note: Some will be for sale at DRBA's Art in Nature Auction!]

Friends of Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail thank their many volunteers and the following generous sponsors: BIG BULL—Town of Wentworth, Rakestraw Insurance Center, and DRBA; MAMA COW—Screen Print Plus and WLOE/WMYN; BOUNCING CALF—Carolina Apothecary, Compute This, Furniture Showroom, In Touch In Life, Hicks Nationwide Insurance Agency, Keystone Foods, and Dr. Robert Wheless, DDS; and MOO-MOO—Angelo's Pizza, Big Apple Farm Supply, Celtic Fringe, Elizabeth's Pizza, Reid's House Restaurant, Rockingham County Naturalist Club, Sanitary Café, and Strader's Shoe Store.

"MOO-chus gracias, y'all!"

—T Butler



Above: They're off! Running with the Cows on the Chinqua-Penn Trail.

Right: Merea Bridges triumphantly crosses the finish line!

Photos by Gerri Hunt.



began broadcasting near the trail, even the cows lined up at the fence to listen!

Families, friends, and serious runners checked in for the "MOO-ving" fun run/walk. Emcee Randy Hunt and Cow-Girl Sandra Fuller Williams

Adventures on the Staunton River

Twenty-one participants in twenty boats spent the July 5 First Saturday Outing on the Staunton River with DRBA. According to trip coordinator Paul Lowry, "I believe we had more than the usual number of swimmers, likely due to having a few novices and particularly children who were handling their own boats for the first time." But, he added, "We didn't lose anyone, no one was injured and most had a good time."

Because it was the day after July 4, the put-in at Long Island and take-out at Brookneal on this most popular section of the Staunton were "extremely busy." Large groups of paddlers required boats to be launched intermittently. But once on the water, the crowds were no longer an issue.

Lowry gave grateful accolades to Lucas Conkle, chair of DRBA's Outings Task Force. "He was the primary on virtually every swimmer rescue and boat recovery. He also helped with the shuttle and gave the leads some pointers with respect to how to handle the large group."

Lowry also praised Waverly Morris, another DRBA member, who had scouted the trip the day before and led the group for most of the outing.

As sweep, Lowry himself reported, "I spent most of my time ineffectively trying to convince an 8-year-old to keep paddling

and then towing him when that failed."

As usual, DRBA members watched out for one another, provided help wherever it was needed, and ensured that everyone had a safe, enjoyable outing.

DRBA Cleanup on the Smith

A determined group of eight DRBA members met at Mitchell Bridge Access on the Smith River for a 7-plus-mile cleanup on August 2, 2014. The FSO was part of DRBA's coordinated effort to accomplish a cleanup along the entire length of the Smith from Philpott Dam downstream through Henry County.

The flotilla comprised two kayaks and four canoes, which quickly (and unfortunately) became brimming trash barges. After only the first mile of the trip, every boat had a full load of debris. Unable to pack any more onboard, the crew left scattered trash in the river over the next six miles. Tires, tires, and more tires were pulled from the banks and bottom, along with plastic bottles, cans, various toy carcasses and a chair. An approximate total of 1,000 pounds was removed, but the victory was dampened by the amount left behind.

Aside from the trash, this stretch of the Smith from Mitchell



Bob and Wayne fill canoes. Photo by Betty Kirkpatrick.



Bob the tire man. Photo by Betty Kirkpatrick.

Bridge to a private access near Morgan Ford Bridge is stunning. High banks line the stream for much of the trip, featuring rock outcroppings and steep inclines with heavy vegetation. The river itself was running at a low water level and very clear. The bottom undulated from sand and gravel shallows to a deep green of unknown depth. A healthy scattering of submerged vegetation and boulders added to the variety of bottom cover.

The private take-out boasted recently installed rail tie steps, making the transfer of trash from “ship-to-shore” an easy task. DRBA thanks members and volunteers Traci and Dave Morton for their gracious hospitality, allowing and facilitating use of their property. Additional clean-up paddles are necessary to remove more of the garbage and the many tires from this stretch of the Smith. Fortunately, the Mortons have offered their access as needed.

-Wayne Kirkpatrick

First Saturday Outing September 6, 2014

We all met on Pine Hall Road around 10 a.m., but finding the “put in” point too dangerous, one group (around 12 boaters) went further downstream with Three Rivers Outfitters to

paddle another section of the river and another group (15 boaters) drove a couple miles further up Pine Hall Road and put in at Duke Energy’s Pine Hall Access to Belew’s Lake. We paddled a little over 5 miles on the lake, which encompasses nearly 4,000 acres with a shoreline of 88 miles. The lake water is especially warm because it is used by the plant as cooling water for the Belew’s Creek Steam Station, the largest of Duke Energy’s coal-fired steam stations.

We didn’t see a lot of wildlife, but it was a beautiful day. We took a couple of rest breaks, and a few folks fished from their kayaks. This may have been the first time a DRBA group has paddled on Belew’s Lake. Charlie did a great job leading the group, with Wayne bringing up the rear. Several of us took pictures of the Steam Station and Reddy Kilowatt along the shoreline. Reddy Kilowatt is a symbol of electrical power, and although he looks a little like a clown with horns, he is actually a giant light bulb statue with electrical bolts on his head and outlets for ears.

As a participant, I wanted to comment that DRBA group members were very helpful and I appreciated their kindness, since I had not been on a paddle in over a year.

-Tisha Bundy



Belews Lake. Photo by Betty Kirkpatrick.

Memberships:

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Passion flower and bee. Photo by Linda Drage.



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