

CURRENTS

Dan River Basin Association

DANRIVER.ORG • VOLUME 14, ISSUE 3 • Fall 2015

**Local Awards / Local Author
Kids Explore Camp
History in the Making**



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Currents Newsletter

Editor: T Butler
Design/Production: Betty Kirkpatrick
Publisher: Rich Seybert, Felts Printing

Photo Credits:
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Cover Photo
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AWARDS

Banister River Gateway Recognized by VML

The Virginia Municipal League (VML) grants competitive Achievement Awards to municipalities throughout the commonwealth. The Town of Halifax has won the 2015 President’s Award for towns with a population under 5,000 for the Banister River Gateway Project, which includes the King’s Bridge Landing Access. According to the VML publication, this represents “the equivalent of a best-in-show selection.” DRBA congratulates the Town of Halifax, and Town Manager Carl Espy, for this highly deserved honor.



On September 19 King’s Bridge was the site of the Wild Blue River Festival, in which 35 racers from three states competed on a 6.2-mile section of the Banister, officiated by Brian Williams. Event coordinator Rebecca Ramey was delighted with the turnout and the paddlers’ praise for the beauty and cleanliness of the river.

Patrick County



Two years ago, at the request of Patrick County citizens, DRBA assembled the 2013 Rivers and Trails Master Plan, which was received but not accepted by the Patrick County Board of Supervisors. An inventory of the county’s natural and cultural resources, the plan included potential enhancements to the resources aimed at enhancing economic activity derived from tourism. At a recent meeting the Board of Supervisors officially accepted the plan, thereby allowing the local Tourism Advisory Committee to fully utilize the plan’s recommendations.

The action by the Board was prompted by DRBA’s being awarded grants through the Riverbank Fund, which was established by Duke Energy as part of remediation from damage to the Dan River basin caused by the 2014 coal ash spill. The Supervisors sent the request to DRBA to “Spend some grant money here [in Patrick County].” To read the master plan, see

<https://docs.google.com/file//0BxImVTprhBk2MEZ1eWVQVko5ZXM/edit?usp=sharing>

Wayne Kirkpatrick

PROGRESS

Coal Ash Spill–Remediation?

The Dan River Basin Community Stakeholder group continues to work with Duke Energy toward the remediation of damage caused by the February, 2014 coal ash spill. A wide-ranging list of 26 projects, shared by several entities, will be implemented within three to five years. A new Duke University study has found that coal burned to generate power concentrates radioactivity, making levels 10 times higher than in the parent coal.

Questioned about the study, Tiffany Haworth responded, “...DRBA has been working in partnership with several university research teams to monitor and test impacted waterways for almost two years and will continue to do this work for as long as it takes. This new research...provides valuable information as we continue to explore, understand, and try to decrease the negative impact of coal ash now and in the future.”

Wayne Kirkpatrick and T Butler

DRBA Joins Uranium Lawsuit

This summer Virginia Uranium Inc. and its Canadian owner, Virginia Energy Resources, sued the Commonwealth, with the outlandish claim that the 33-year-old moratorium on uranium mining is suddenly unconstitutional. DRBA has long been a member of a coalition to keep the ban on storing radioactive waste from uranium mining in our basin, which provides drinking water for 1.1 million people. All elected officials representing the area, as well as Governor McAuliffe, have supported the moratorium.

On September 4, 2015, DRBA and the Roanoke River Basin Association asked the court to intervene in the proceeding on the side of the state. If the request is granted, both groups will be able to participate in the proceeding as parties and to preserve their right to appeal the court decision if necessary.

Olga Kolotushkina

CONCERNS

◆ Become a DRBA Sustainer!
Contact us at www.danriver.org ◆

Voices of the Dan River

by Amy Farinelli

This spring, History United, an initiative of the Danville Regional Foundation, launched “Voices of the Dan River” in Caswell County. Community “history harvests” collected materials and photographs related to the river from local residents. Videographers recorded oral history interviews with county residents Hosanna Blanchard, Earl and Vanessa Richmond-Graves, Elizabeth Lassiter, and Joe Graves about their personal experiences with the river and its significance to their communities.

A mini-documentary, narrated by 104.5 The Dan Radio Host Justin Lloyd, will be created from the compiled oral histories, along with historical photographs from the Caswell County Historical Association and others. The finished product will be revealed to the public at a premier screening in Milton, NC in November, 2015. Noting that this is only a beginning, Evelyn Riley, representative for the Thomas Day House, joins DRBA’s Amy Farinelli in hoping that “Voices of the Dan River” will encompass the entire Dan River Basin. All information gathered from the Caswell project will be housed in perpetuity for public use on History United’s online database of local history.



Friends prepare to ‘ride the wave’ on the Smith River below Phipott Dam

“We did it!” DRBA’s partnerships built with the US Army Corps of Engineers and Dominion Power over eight years were key to a historic agreement reached at

an August 11 meeting in Henry County. With participation by Congressional staffers and local officials, Dominion representatives agreed to release water from Phipott Dam from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on weekends. As a result, recreational opportunities and the health of the fisheries are already showing improvement. “More people than ever are on the river, says DRBA’s Brian Williams, “and that is economic development for our community.”

“You expected to be sad in the fall. Part of you died each year when the leaves fell from the trees and their branches were bare against the wind and the cold, wintry light. But you knew there would always be the spring, as you knew the river would flow again after it was frozen. When the cold rains kept on and killed the spring, it was as though a young person died for no reason.”

Ernest Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast*

We are so sad for our DRBA friends, the family of Alison Parker. We are devastated that this beautiful and bright young life has been taken from our community, along with Adam Ward. We wish for them peace and for the spring to come again.

Allison Szuba, President
Dan River Basin Association

Kids Explore Camp



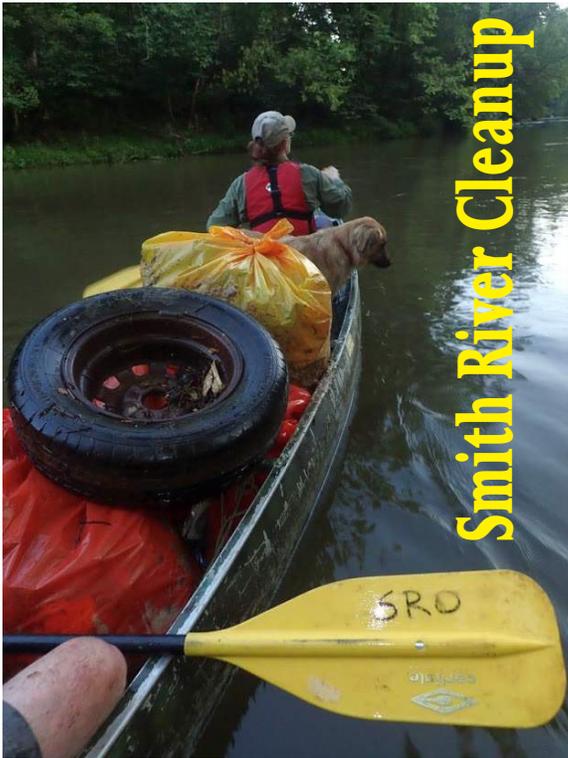
Getting it right, before shoving off!

DRBA partnered with Henry County Schools to teach youngsters about paddling and water quality monitoring at the South Martinsville Access. Many of the Kids Explore Camp participants were on the river for their first time. Thanks to Brian Williams and Krista

Hodges, it may well be the start of a lifelong love of the river.



Students discover the world of macroinvertebrates



Smith River Cleanup

On August first, 10 DRBA members and friends had a “trashy time” as part of the 20-mile-long “Great Smith River Clean-up.” Our fleet of 3 canoes and 5 kayaks accumulated a dozen tires and some 500 pounds of trash over our 7.4 miles from Mitchell Bridge to a private take-out near Morgan Ford. It was a joy to be on the river with long-time DRBA friends, Betty, Wayne, Norma, Sharon, Lucas, and T and Lindley, as well as with new friends, Amy and her daughter, Morgan, who are former DRBA members and hopefully will be DRBA members again soon!

We noticed bright red cardinal flowers as we savored the gorgeous day on a truly remote and peaceful part of the river. Among the many rock outcrops is one looking like a giant whale, called Whale Rock, go figure! Our lunch stop was a lovely gravel bar graced with large blooming Swamp Rose-Mallow. Toward the end, 20-foot tall stone piers marked the former Morgan Ford Bridge, with the present steel truss bridge beyond. I'd like to remind folks

“We enjoyed the Smith River but were disheartened by all the trash in the water. I saw the river cleanup in the paper, and it was the perfect opportunity to do something about it.”

Victor Correa

that DRBA requires wearing Personal Flotation Devices (PFD's) on DRBA paddles. Each person is very precious to us, and we want them all to be safe to enjoy our rivers and lakes for many years to come! Meanwhile, DRBA partnered with Gateway Streetscape, Henry County, and Bridgestone Tires to clean the Smith River from Stanleystown to Mitchell Bridge. More than 50 volunteers collected 2,805 pounds of trash. Co-organizer Lisa Perez recognized DRBA members, local residents and paddlers, and “a great crew from Boxley that comes every year.”

Ellen Jessee and Brian Williams

Water Quality Matters

DRBA continues work to improve our water quality. Here are some of our recent efforts.

- The Virginia Citizens for Water Quality held their annual summit in conjunction with the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay's Mid-Atlantic Conference in August. Conference presentations can be viewed at <https://vcwq.wordpress.com/>.
- Coliform sampling in the Smith, and North and South Mayo rivers continues as the implementation phase of the Department of Conservation & Recreation's Total Maximum Daily Load study progresses. Results to date indicate the streams have low incidence of coliform pollution except during high flows. Sampling will continue at least through the end of 2015.
- The Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries, with volunteer help from the Smith River Trout Unlimited Chapter, conducted its annual sampling of Smith River trout populations. Results will be reported at the December 3, 2015 Chapter meeting, 6:30 pm at Rianas Restaurant in Martinsville.
- DRBA assisted the Southwest Virginia Chapter Master Naturalist training class with an introduction to macroinvertebrate sampling.
- The Tub-of-Bugs will be one of several environmental classes for MHC After 3 students of Martinsville/Henry County during October and November.
- The semi-annual meeting of the Virginia Water Resources Research Center's State Advisory Board will be held in Charlottesville on October 30. DRBA is represented on the Board through a Governor's appointment.

September 5 Float through Danville

On an overcast day, I arrived early to scout the best put-in for our float through Danville. People started to pull into the parking lot about 9 a.m. It's rather colorful seeing all the boats loaded on the vehicles.



Many of the guys were more than helpful in assisting those that needed it with unloading the boats and carrying them to the put-in at Newton's Landing. I always enjoy the feeling of family we have at our First Saturday Outings. Everyone is so kind and considerate of each other—there to enjoy the day, each other and the river. After our shuttle and a quick safety briefing, we were on our way. The river was low and clear for our 35 boats to weave our way around the rocks. Everyone seemed to do very well at this. During a short break on a sandbar, I briefed everyone on how to approach the one Class II rapid so we'd avoid a traffic jam. All did a super job of it. As we approached the end of the trip at Angler's Pride, many wished it were longer. We all had a good time this day—another good DRBA trip on the river.

Charlie Williams III

October 17 Third Saturday Outing



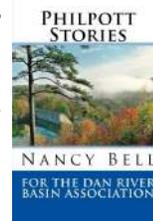
DRBA members are invited to a fun-filled day in Stuart and Patrick County on Saturday, October 17.

Lucas Conkle will coordinate Saturday's Hike to the Pinnacles of Dan

Wayne and Betty Kirkpatrick are hosting a challenging hike, followed by a covered dish meal. Please join us for a full day of activity; feel free to enjoy any or all of the events. Start the day with the Apple Dumpling 5K run/walk in downtown Stuart. Registration starts at 7:30am and the race begins at 8:00. Following the race, gather at 10:30am at the Kirkpatricks' home located at 1342 Commerce Street, Stuart, VA 24171 (GPS 36°37'44.17"N; 80°14'58.10"W). We'll car pool for a very strenuous hike to the Pinnacles of the Dan in Kibler Valley, Patrick County (GPS 36°39'59.98"N; 80°26'53.28"W). For those who do not plan to hike, enjoy the Apple Dumpling Festival in Downtown Stuart. A more complete description will be posted to the members-only page of the DRBA web site.

Wayne Kirkpatrick

From the Director
Even after four years with DRBA, I still get excited when someone goes above and beyond in supporting our local resources. We are so grateful to have so many people who support and believe in DRBA. Thank you to each and every one of you!



Here is one more amazing person: former DRBA staffer, Nancy Bell, has written Philpott Stories, about the people from prehistoric times until today who have lived along the Smith River and Philpott and Fairystone lakes in Patrick and Henry counties. She has donated all the proceeds to DRBA. Please get your copy today! You can buy it on Amazon or through a few local retailers.

Tiffany Haworth

DRBA Race Series

The DRBA Race Series resumed on September 27 with



Run with the Cows, the

"UDDER 5K" on the Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail. Despite much-needed rain throughout the weekend, nearly 80 hardy runners and walkers took part under the gaze of inquisitive Black Angus cows.

For results and photos, see

www.ChinquaPennTrail.org.

The final event of the 2015 series is the Apple Dumpling 5K on October 17, 2015 in the Downtown Depot area of Stuart. Additional details can be found at <http://www.danriver.org/drba-race-series>.

T Butler and Wayne Kirkpatrick



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Apple Dumpling 5K Race Atticia Bundy



Join DRBA today! www.danriver.org



December 5
FSO - Hike at Lauren Mountain Preserve

November 7
FSO - Paddle on Townes Lake

October 24
VMNH Reptile Day Festival

October 17
Apple Dumping 5K Race
Third Saturday Outing
Danville River District Festival

DRBA On the GO!



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