

# CURRENTS



Dan River Basin Association

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## Dan River Basin Association

### North Carolina Offices

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

Tiffany Haworth  
Executive Director  
336-627-6261  
thaworth@danriver.org

Robin Light  
Office/Accounting Manager  
336-627-6270  
rlight@danriver.org

371 NC Hwy 65  
Reidsville NC 27320  
Jenny Edwards  
Rockingham County Program  
Manager  
336-339-6169  
jedwards@danriver.org

### Virginia Offices

3300 Kings Mountain Road  
P.O. Box 7  
Collinsville, VA 24078

Brian Williams  
Virginia Program Manager  
276-634-2545  
bwilliams@danriver.org

Krista Hodges  
Education Outreach Manager  
276-634-2592  
khodges@danriver.org

308 Craghead Street  
Danville, VA 24541  
315-209-5055

### Currents Newsletter

#### Editor

T Butler

#### Design/Production

Betty Kirkpatrick

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Rich Seybert, Felts Printing

#### Photo Credits:

Gordon Allen  
Patricia Bentley  
Carl Espy  
Betty Kirkpatrick  
Wayne Kirkpatrick  
Brian Williams

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Cover Photo by Betty Kirkpatrick

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# Brian Williams Receives Prestigious Award



“I was extremely honored to receive the ‘Randy Carter River Conservationist of the Year’ award from the Float Fishermen of Virginia,” says DRBA Program Manager Brian Williams. Named in honor of Randy Carter, premier river runner in Virginia in the 1950s and 60s, the award recognizes “outstanding efforts to protect Virginia’s free-flowing streams for their recreational and environmental value, for significant contributions to the growth of the Virginia Scenic Rivers Systems, or for promoting a greater appreciation of our rivers among the citizens of our state.” Those who know Brian know that this captures the essence of his service to DRBA and to our rivers.

**“It is awesome  
to find such a  
strong river  
advocate like  
Brian.”**

**-- BILL TANGER**

The award was presented by Bill Tanger, president of Friends of the Rivers of Virginia (FORVA) and the Float Fishermen of Virginia Foundation. All-volunteer FORVA is dedicated to the conservation, preservation, and enhancement of Virginia’s river resources. Their efforts include removing unused dams, building more river accesses and campgrounds for paddlers, and reducing pollution and obstacles to make rivers cleaner and more navigable.

Tanger was the first person to write a letter supporting weekend generation on the Smith River, helping stimulate Brian to undertake the project nearly a decade ago.



**BRIAN WILLIAMS IS PRESENTED THE RANDY CARTER RIVER CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR AWARD BY BILL TANGER**



## SMITH RIVER CLEANUP JULY 16TH

Over 1300 pounds of debris from the river and roads. As usual, most of the trash came from the 1.5-mile section from South Martinsville to Frith Road. After offloading at Frith Road, we continued downriver to the Sports Complex for a nice cookout, thanks to volunteers and DRBA staff.

Partners in Smith River Cleanups are DRBA, Gateway Streetscapes, Smith River Outfitters, and Henry County. This year was supported by the Duke Water Resources Fund, which provided the food and some snappy new t-shirts for all our volunteers!

Brian Williams



The second stage removed 40 additional tires from the river.

A second team of volunteers returned the next week to bring the collected tires up and off the bank of the river. The B.F. Goodrich Company has graciously taken the tires to a recycling plant without charge. Support for this and other cleanups this summer was provided by the Duke Energy Water Resources Fund.

The partnership between citizens, businesses, environmental organizations and local clubs resulted in an estimated 7100 pounds of trash and tires removed from our river. There is more to be done! Watch for announcements in your local newspaper or on the DRBA website, and join in as we work to keep our rivers safe and clean for everyone to enjoy. B Kirkpatrick



## RIVER OF TIRES AUGUST 25

they worked to clean up 5.2 miles of the Dan River between the 311 bridge and Pine Hall Road bridge in Stokes County. Within the first mile the paddlers gathered over 80 tires from the river bottom and banks using shovels, rope, and determination. With canoes unable to carry anything more, the tires were temporarily deposited at the confluence of Carrington Creek.

“Get down and dirty” had a whole new meaning to 24 hardy DRBA, Rotary and community volunteers in August as

*“To remain indifferent to the challenges we face is indefensible. If the goal is noble, whether or not it is realized within our lifetime is largely irrelevant. What we must do therefore is to strive and persevere and never give up.”*

— Dalai Lama XIV

The ST8 Crossings site ([www.st8crossings.com](http://www.st8crossings.com)) is expanding to include destination packages with a variety of activities, unique dining experiences, and scenic countryside. Accessing the site through social media, organic web searches, or referrals, viewers are engaging more site pages for longer



periods of time. More interest in the Dan River Basin has been created through in-depth articles about significant individuals from the basin, themes such as festivals and wineries, or features such as a nostalgic drive-in movie theater. Steady growth has been recorded since the site launch last May. Wayne Kirkpatrick

**TAKE PART -- JOIN DRBA TODAY!**  
**WWW.DANRIVER.ORG**

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## Education

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### LOCAL SUPPORT FOR TROUT PROGRAM

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In 2005 Martinsville orthodontist Dr. David Jones, a Trout Unlimited life member and conservationist, introduced Trout in the Classroom (TIC) to southern Virginia, sponsoring 15 tanks in the Martinsville area. For the past 10 seasons, TIC under DRBA's management has impacted over 25,000 students, teachers, and citizens in Virginia and North Carolina, aged pre-K to college.

The award-winning program connects students to their local rivers and raises awareness about protecting our natural resources and water quality. TIC students raise trout from eggs to fingerlings in their classroom. Caring for the trout provides a hands-on learning experience as students witness the trout life cycle and eventually release them into the Smith River. TIC teachers use the program to provide valuable science lessons about wildlife habitats, adaptation and ecology. The trout tanks provide a living incentive to learn math, biology, language and other subjects, while contributing to a positive learning environment.

Recently DRBA staff and River Legacy Circle members helped with a trout release honoring Dr. Jones, Dr. Nicole DeShon and Blue Ridge Aquaculture for their generous donations.

"We are proud to once again contribute to keep TIC going in our local schools" said Dr Jones. "This program provides excitement in learning like no other environmental education we have seen, and the results reach beyond academic success."

DRBA Education Outreach Manager Krista Hodges stated, "I cannot wait to get started on the 14th season of TIC. Teaching the students about healthy aquatic ecosystems, conservation and clean water is our mission and TIC can be related to all subjects." She adds, "Many students have said [the trout release in the spring] is the best field trip they have ever been on!"

To learn more or donate to help continue the TIC program in our basin, contact Krista Hodges at [khodges@danriver.org](mailto:khodges@danriver.org)



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### DRBA SHARES "SECRET LIVES" WITH READING PROGRAM

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Twenty children ranging from ages 4 - 8 in the Spencer-Penn summer Reading Class were treated to real-life secrets about creatures in our neighborhood we don't often see, courtesy of DRBA staff and volunteers. After hearing the story, "The Secret Life of Streams" by Lynell Marie Garfield,

the youngsters and their parents enjoyed a live version as DRBA's Tub-o-Bugs brought macroinvertebrates from a local stream to visit them.

In another Reading Class session, DRBA's Brian Williams drew oohs, aahs and a few shrieks when he introduced a collection of snakes to the children.

As the cover photo shows, the children were fascinated by these reptiles and gained insights into their secrets from Brian's vast knowledge.

DRBA values partners like Spencer-Penn and appreciates the opportunity to speak about stewardship of the basin's natural resources.



W. Kirkpatrick

*There is something that unites every living thing on this earth. It doesn't matter what your age is, your race, your gender or your beliefs—our natural resources are essential to everyone (and everything) on the planet. Clean water and oxygen are crucial to life and as stewards, we are responsible for protecting and preserving these resources for future generations. Thank you for choosing DRBA as your trusted partner to ensure the care of these precious resources. With your support, the work of DRBA stays strong, connecting all of us to the wonder of nature.*

**Tiffany Haworth, Executive Director, DRBA**



## Outreach

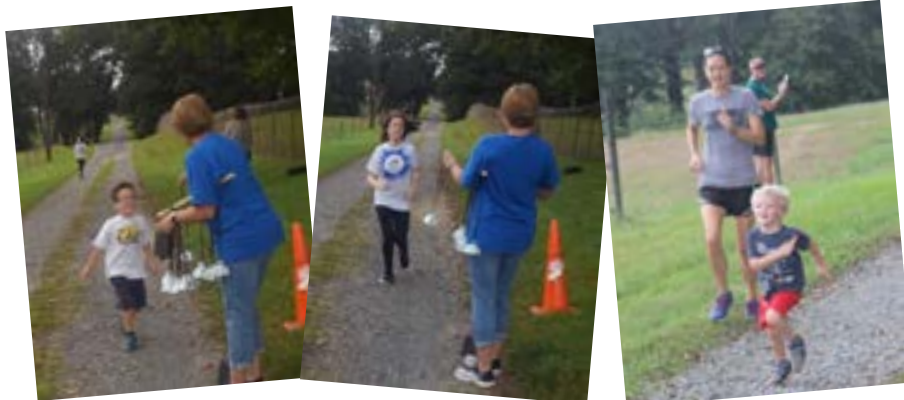
### RUN WITH THE COWS—A “MOO-VING” EXPERIENCE! CELEBRATING 5 YEARS!

Friends of Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail’s September 30 fundraiser, Run with the Cows, was not just *anudder* 5K. All runners and walkers earned a Cowbell Finisher’s Award, both in the one-mile Kids’ Fun Run and the main event -- MORE COW-BELL!

Participants from far and near joined in the fun. Robbin and Jeff Grigsby from Chicago, who were running a race in every state and Washington, DC in 2018, chose this as their North Carolina race. For the first time all year, both won first place in their age divisions.

Visitors from Montreal seeking a race in NC found the event on RunUSA and were delighted with their choice.

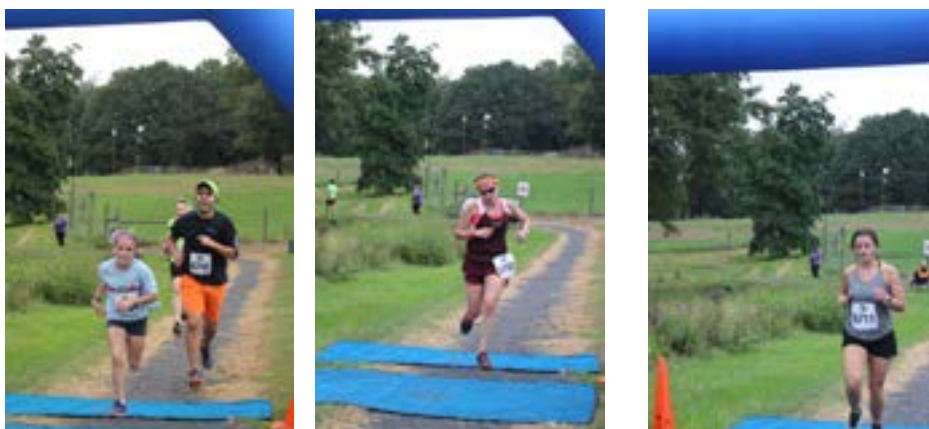
The best story of all goes to the young couple whose friends waited at the Summer House beside Betsy Pond. When they reached the spot, Daniel Bibee pulled his girlfriend, Sadie Smithey, aside, knelt down, and asked her to marry him. They arrived at the finish line holding hands, hers adorned by a new diamond ring, with huge smiles and a gaggle of happy friends!



**MORE THAN A DOZEN FUTURE MARATHONERS CROSSED THE ONE-MILE FINISH LINE IN THE CHILDREN’S RACE. SIX YEAR OLD CALEB, 11-YEAR OLD RACHEL, AND FOUR-YEAR OLD WIT SHOWED FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD (RESPECTIVELY)**



**TOMMY BOLES, STEVEN CROUSE, PATRICK KANE EASED OVER THE FINISH LINE IN FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD PLACE**



**(L TO R) SKYLER CRITZER, REBA SLIVKA, AND REGAN WHITE BROUGHT HOME FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD PLACE WOMEN’S FINISH**



*See said YES!*

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**2018  
SMITH RIVER FEST  
AUGUST 11**

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Over 1500 guests attended the annual Smith River Fest on August 11th. Preparing for the festival, one of Henry County's signature events, always means a hectic week. DRBA was instrumental in creating this event over 11 years ago and still is one of the main partners on the planning committee.

committee.

A big thanks to Wayne and Betty Kirkpatrick for setting up and working the DRBA booth. Rains came about 2pm and brought some thunder and lightning, forcing some events to shut down early. Fortunately, we still had a great turnout and the Mud Run and River Race were completed.

Brian Williams



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**CHINQUA-PENN  
TRAIL JOINS  
QUILT TRAIL**

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Rockingham County's popular Quilt Trail has a new member—the Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail. Local artist Teresa Talley Phillips created and donated a stained glass mosaic quilt square to the trail in honor of the Talley family who settled here in 1850. Depicting scenes along the trail—a

Black Angus cow, a bluebird, a butterfly, and bamboo—the piece is centered with the trail logo, the Summer House that overlooks Betsy Pond. The quilt square was unveiled on September 27, just in time for Run with the Cows 5K on September 30.

The Quilt Trail is sponsored by the Rockingham County Tourism Development Authority to promote tourism and introduce the public to the county's beautiful rural landscape. There are now 31 quilt squares on the Trail. Download a map at



[www.VisitRockinghamCountyNC.com](http://www.VisitRockinghamCountyNC.com)

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**Recreation**

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**JULY 7  
ON PHILPOTT  
LAKE**

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DRBA's First Saturday Outing was FANTASTIC!! Philpott Lake is beautiful, and the Jamison Mill Launch area very accessible. The easy paddle and warm water were a real treat, and all the other kayakers were friendly and easy to have fun with. Brian Williams, DRBA program manager and owner of Smith River Outfitters, made it super easy to rent the kayaks. He

even brought them, dropped them off, and picked them up. How easy is that!

We discovered a few Bryozoa floating in the water—a species I had never even heard of. Known commonly as moss animals, they are a phylum of tiny colonial aquatic invertebrate animals. Typically about 0.5 mm long, they are filter feeders that sieve food particles out of the water using a retractable lophophore, a "crown" of tentacles lined with cilia. They are a sign of clean water.

The outing was a wonderful opportunity to enjoy the park and to learn more about our surroundings, as well as a great way to have low impact exercise and enjoy the sunshine.

It's easier to become involved with being a steward of the environment when you're a part of it. Whether by yourself or with a group, it's very peaceful to float on Philpott Lake. And next time I'll remember to pack a lunch and enjoy the picnic area!

Patricia Bentley





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### MOTHER NATURE INTERVENED AGAIN!

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Approximately one year after my first kayak lesson, I looked forward to exploring a 6.5 mile section of the Dan River from Milton, NC to Leggett's Bottom in Halifax County, VA.

Well, it seems that Mother Nature had other plans. A huge rainfall had raised the Dan to 17 feet versus its normal level of 5 feet, and its flowrate from a normal 1900 to 17,000 cubic feet/second. With the Dan unsafe for paddling, the August FSO was moved to Farmer Lake in Caswell County near Yanceyville, NC.

River conditions had significantly reduced the number of participants to four paddlers in four watercraft: one paddleboard, two sit-on-top kayaks, and one sit-in kayak. I was paddling a sit-on-top to help me decide which type of kayak to purchase. I already knew I wasn't ready for a paddleboard.

Picturesque, quiet Farmer Lake is a 365- acre reservoir built in 1968 for the city of Yanceyville. The paddle was very relaxing and enjoyable. Several beautiful Great Blue Herons visited with us, and a relatively new paddleboarder supplied some light comic relief. The small group size made interacting with everyone easy and free flowing.

I have thoroughly enjoyed all of the DRBA events I have participated in during my 1.5 years as a member, and this was no exception.

Graham Park



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### SEPTEMBER 1 LOWER BANISTER RIVER

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On September 1 sixteen DRBA members and guests in three canoes, ten kayaks, and one standup paddle board plied the Lower Banister River from Terry's Bridge to the take-out on Wolf Trap Road. The 3.5-mile route through the Banister Wildlife Management Area offered a steady, gentle flow with an ample tree canopy. The area has changed very little since 1733 when William Byrd II described the "charming low grounds" and named the river for his companion, John Banister III.

Among the charms the group experienced were black bear tracks on a sandbar, pointed out by trip coordinator Carl Espy, and ripe pawpaws collected and shared by Jeff Johnston, a DRBA founder. For those unfamiliar with the soft, green-skinned fruit, he suggested just scooping



out the custardy flesh, which can taste like a mango/banana hybrid with a hint of pineapple. In addition to Native Americans, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson enjoyed the fruit. Today at Molasses Grill in historic downtown



Halifax Chef Steven Schopen collects pawpaws along the Banister for his pawpaw ice cream, jams, and sauces.

As part of the 63.3-mile length of the Banister designated a Virginia Scenic River, the section floated in September "features a mature lowland forest offering an aesthetic experience much different than much of the corridor banks," according to the official

Scenic River Report. Just upstream of the take-out is an imposing, two span truss railroad bridge and river course pier, which pierces across the wild landscape surprisingly. Unlike tall bridges in areas with high banks, the massive trestle is only about 18 feet above the river, since the floodplain spreads out considerably where the Banister and the Dan are about to merge.

Those interested in knowing more about navigable water in this area may visit the Southern Virginia Wild Blueway site, [www.sovawildblueway.com](http://www.sovawildblueway.com).

Carl Espy



## Membership June 1, 2018 -- August 31, 2018

### Sponsor Membership

#### River Legacy Circle

Kathleen Anderson and Peter Jonas  
Hugh Citty and Margaret Petty

### Municipality Membership

City of Eden  
City of Reidsville  
Rockingham County  
Town of Madison  
Town of Mayodan (Customer)  
Town of Stoneville  
Town Of Wentworth

### Protector Membership

Carol and Siler Rothrock

### Steward Membership

Cathie Carter

### Family Membership

Amy Farinelli  
Steven & Karen Schopen  
David Lee & Deborah Sharp

### Individual Membership

Charlene Bowling  
Linda Drage  
Shari and Randolph Hopkins  
Robert Kadle  
Christopher Noell

### Donations

6/01/2018 - 8/31/2018

### Sponsor Donation

Mark Bishopric

### Benefactor Donation

Lindley and T Butler

### Protector Donation

Edwin G. & Emily Wilson

### Steward Donation

Irvine River Company  
Ben & Debbie Lewis  
Anne Sweazey

### Other Donation

AmazonSmile Foundation  
Amy Farinelli  
Robert Kadle  
The Conservation Fund

### Donation for Trout In the Classroom Program

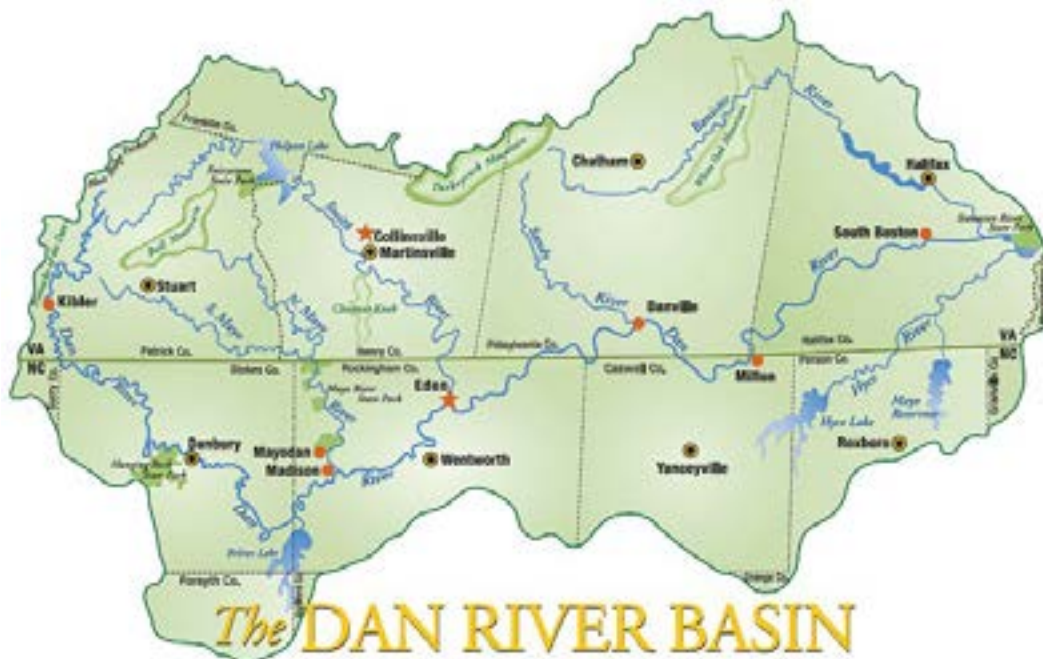
Blue Ridge Aquaculture

### Chinqua Penn 2018 Run with the Cows Event Sponsors

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Fletcher & Ginger Waynick



# Thank you for your continued support!



www.danriver.org



DAN RIVER BASIN ASSOCIATION  
413 Church Street, Suite 401  
Eden, NC 27288-3242



**OCTOBER 20: THIRD SATURDAY OUTING & COVERED DISH  
AT WAYNE & BETTY KIRKPATRICK'S HOME,  
STUART. VISIT DC POWER PLANT**

**NOVEMBER 2: HIKE ANGLIN MILL TO BYRD'S LEDGE, MAYO  
RIVER**

**DECEMBER 8: HIKE AT MOUNTAIN LAUREL TRAIL,  
HORSEPASTURE, VA**