



The Newsletter of the Dan River Basin Association

# CURRENTS

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**DRBA'S RIVER HERO**

**WORKS OF ART IN NATURE AUCTION**

**CITIZEN WATER QUALITY MONITORING**

**LOVER'S LEAP CLEAN-UP**





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Meetings of the DRBA Board of Directors are held on the second Wednesday of February, May, August and November. The next meeting will be on August 14.

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## UPCOMING OUTINGS

*(details at DANRIVER.ORG)*

**July 6:** Paddle Philpott Lake, Ryans Branch to Otter Creek

**August 3:** Smith River cleanup, Morgan Ford to Eden

**September 7:** Paddle on Farmer Lake near Yanceyville

## CURRENTS

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# FROM THE DIRECTOR



DRBA Director Tiffany Haworth

The Dan River Basin is a wonderful and varied place. Many DRBA members live and work here, but there may be a few things you didn't know about this amazing place!

The Dan River Basin:

- Covers 3,300 sq miles,
- Has 11,123 linear miles of streams,
- 25,042 acres of lakes,
- 5,946 acres of federal & state conservation acres and 43,858 other conservation acres,
- And includes 25 municipalities.

The Dan River originates on the eastern slope of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Patrick County, Virginia. From there it travels 200 miles, passing through Stokes, Rockingham, Caswell and Pittsylvania counties, before reaching Halifax County, where it enters Kerr Reservoir near South Boston, VA. Along the way, it is fed by five

main tributaries—the Smith, Mayo, Sandy, Hyco, and Banister rivers. The Dan River Watershed forms part of the headwaters of the Roanoke River Basin, which feeds Albemarle Sound in coastal North Carolina, part of the second largest estuary in the United States.

The basin has long supported a diverse abundance of life, including rare and endangered plants, animals and aquatic organisms. The Virginia cup-plant, goldenseal and small-anthered bittercress are a few examples of endangered plant species found on the shores of the Dan and its tributaries.

This summer I hope you find time to explore the Dan River Basin, and I hope you will invite friends and family to join you. Coming in July, DRBA is having a Scavenger Hunt – with a prize if you can find all of the amazing places in the Hunt. Visit a new place and soak up the sun, explore, get inspired by nature. I think we live in one of the most beautiful places in the United States – thank you for helping us keep it that way.

And please don't forget to visit our website often – there is always something fun to do!

–Tiffany Haworth

## PRESIDENT'S SPACE



DRBA President Fletcher Waynick.

As we paddle our way into summer, what better place to spend our time than on the Dan River or one of its tributaries? After all, your support as part of DRBA helps make the river and surrounding trails available for public enjoyment. Your children and grandchildren will enjoy the projects, parks, and trails that you help build for years to come.

We must continue to be diligent in accessing and reacting to the challenges that continue to threaten not only the recreation on the river but the water itself. PBK Holdings, LLC is moving forward with its Special Use Permit request for a landfill on the Dan River near Eden. PBK has filed suit against Rockingham County to help move that process

forward. Legislation is being introduced in Raleigh to make it easier to build landfills in North Carolina. Fracking is being pushed through in North Carolina with little information on what effect it might have on local geology and water supplies. Uranium mining in Virginia continues to rear its ugly head.

The "Science" on many of these issues is based on assumptions in the place of hard data. We are told that if it is done properly, it is safe. Over and over, corners are cut, regulators have little enforcement authority, and the public loses. An apology after a disaster is of little comfort: it cannot fix anything.

Fortunately, none of these outcomes is inevitable. We can all have a positive impact in these matters, if we make our voices heard. I look forward to the day when *all* of our efforts can be directed toward our recreation and economic development efforts.

–Fletcher Waynick

**Are you receiving your email notices from DRBA?**

If not, please notify Robin Light, [rlight@danriver.org](mailto:rlight@danriver.org)  
to be sure your email address is up to date!



# COMING EVENTS

## Online Events Calendar

Summer is filled with many ways to enjoy being outdoors! Check the DRBA events calendar often, and let us know if you have any questions! [www.danriver.org/events](http://www.danriver.org/events)

## Patrick County Recreational Use Plan

The Patrick County Recreational Use Plan is near completion and will be presented to the Board of Supervisors on July 8, 2013. The public input meetings have concluded, and the plan is being readied for publication.

The value of the plan is not only as a guide for potential recreational enhancements in Patrick County, but also as a resource for the inventory of existing natural and cultural amenities and as an oft-required document for grant funding applications.

–Wayne Kirkpatrick

## Works of Art in Nature Auction

Carvings. Nature paintings. Butterfly jewelry. Beeswax candles. Upcycled, recycled and nature-made items... these and more are being sought for a one-of-a-kind auction for nature lovers this fall. Proceeds will benefit DRBA while exposing local artists to a larger audience.

If you'd like to create something new or donate something you have for the auction, let us know. We'll tell you how it works and how your donation will be put to good use. We're also looking for creative team members to help plan the event.

Contact us today! [nbell@danriver.org](mailto:nbell@danriver.org) or call 336 627 6270

–Nancy Bell

# STEWARDSHIP

## Citizen Water Quality Monitoring

DRBA is launching a new water quality monitoring initiative across the Dan River Basin. We will introduce you to types of harmful bacteria and provide an overview of sampling methods and analysis.

Sampling will occur weekly from May to September,

with data published on DRBA's website, [www.danriver.org](http://www.danriver.org). No monitoring or science background is required. DRBA will assign volunteers to sampling teams and work with each volunteer to help establish a sampling schedule that fits your availability.

To register, or for more information, contact [bwilliams@danriver.org](mailto:bwilliams@danriver.org)

## Springtime Water Quality Education

Springtime means more water quality awareness, and DRBA's Tub of Bugs (TOB) hits the road.

At Caswell County's Farmer Lake, DRBA board member Nate Hall coordinated a DEED's (Dillard Environmental Education Development) Health and Wellness Day, including the Kids Club Fun Day. Canoeing,



Tub o Bugs at Farmer Lake. Photo by Wayne Kirkpatrick.

kayaking and fishing headlined the day for over 30 youth and their parents. The TOB rounded out activities designed to raise water quality awareness and teach boating and fishing skills and natural resource appreciation.

The well-traveled TOB visited Trout in the Classroom (TIC) students at Snow Creek Elementary School in Franklin County, Tunstall Middle School in Pittsylvania County, and Collinsville YMCA and Sanville Elementary School in Henry County. Two trout releases, from TIC classrooms in Patrick County High and Stuart Elementary schools, were held in the upper Dan River in Patrick County.

DRBA staff and volunteers attended a TMDL Implementation Plan meeting on pollutants in the rivers, and a DRBA stream monitoring training session was held at Little Cherrystone Creek in Pittsylvania County.

Bet those bugs are glad to be back home in the Mayo River!

–Wayne Kirkpatrick

## EARTH DAY 2013

DRBA staff spent Earth Day at MillerCoors in Eden where employees learned about the Dan River Basin, the environment, and how they can recycle electronic items. Door prizes and other incentives were offered for attendees from all three shifts.



MillerCoors management set up recycling boxes and encouraged employees to bring their unwanted electronics – cell phones, remote controls, laptops, MP3 players, digital cameras, inkjet and toner cartridges, etc. These items are being recycled at Funding Factory with proceeds going to DRBA educational activities.

If you want to help, visit the link below and recycle to help DRBA. You'll receive free, post-paid collection boxes! [www.fundingfactory.com/goal/DRBAClub](http://www.fundingfactory.com/goal/DRBAClub).

–Nancy Bell

## Lover's Leap Litter Clean-up

The view from Lovers Leap on Saturday, April 13 was spectacular as always, with cool, clear air letting visitors see for many miles over the budding Patrick County spring. The view down the mountain slopes was much less appealing, with trash so thick, the ground was not visible in places –



Cub Scout Pack 2611, Leaders and family members.  
Photo by Wayne Kirkpatrick.

disgusting to think such a treasured overlook had become a trash dump. Some of that mess is now removed, thanks to DRBA.

DRBA members and volunteers from Cub Scout Pack 2611 removed 48 bags of trash, 6 tires and various car and furniture pieces. Additional support came from Scott Pike with a donated comfort station and the Town of Stuart for disposal of the trash.

DRBA supports and participates in litter clean-

ups across the Dan River Basin. DRBA applauds all the volunteers who work to create a welcoming look to our natural resources for our residents and visitors.

–Wayne Kirkpatrick

## Uranium Update from SELC

The Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) has summarized the efforts of Virginia Uranium Inc. (VUI) to repeal Virginia's 1982 prohibition on uranium mining. VUI seeks to mine uranium near Chatham, at the headwaters of the Banister River, a major tributary of the Dan. SELC notes that if VUI's mining and milling operation were approved, "at risk are drinking water supplies for 1.1 million people."

Furthermore, "in addition to water quality impacts, the mine threatens to undercut the economic recovery of Southside Virginia...[which is] making a comeback with new business opportunities in recreation, tourism, education, and high technology, all attracted to a setting with a beautiful river and a great quality of life. Uranium mining would put all of that in jeopardy."

Perhaps most startling, "The deposit, while large, is of poor quality. Only a tiny fraction of the ore could be milled into 'yellow cake' for enrichment as nuclear fuel. Millions of tons of mining and milling waste would be stored on site and would remain radioactive for thousands of years."

DRBA applauds the leadership of SELC and other partners in the Keep the Ban Coalition who work to preserve our watershed.

For more information, visit [www.selc.org](http://www.selc.org).

–T Butler

## FEATURES

### DRBA's National River Hero

In St. Louis this spring, River Network, a national organization of nearly 2,000 watershed protection groups, recognized DRBA Project Manager Brian Williams as one of five National River Heroes. The River Hero Award honors the hard-won successes of outstanding individuals involved in natural resource conservation.

"Brian's energy and enthusiasm inspire children and adults alike," said T & Lindley Butler, founders of DRBA. "Creating a nationally recognized Trout in the Classroom program, he has worked tirelessly to educate over 2,000 youngsters each year. Brian's extraordinary commitment to conservation inspires individuals, governmental agencies, and businesses to partner with DRBA in creating riverside

trails and boating accesses. Brian's service makes him a beloved member of the community and serves as a model for staff and volunteers throughout the river basin."

Some of Brian's accomplishments include:

- Helping to build 7 river accesses and many miles of trail, inspiring people from all races, ages, and abilities to explore outdoor recreation. All of these projects utilized in-kind donations from municipalities, volunteers, and local funding.
- Creating partnerships with individuals, families, churches, schools, businesses, and governments to help manage and protect our watershed through dozens of clean-ups, citizen water quality monitoring, BMPs, TMDL implementation plans, funding, river festivals, etc. His environmental education programs for students have reached over 10,000 local students and have been modeled in other states.
- Working to plant miles of buffer, repairing streamside erosion, coordinating dozens of cleanups, and helping develop Master Plans for communities to protect their rivers.

Born in Knoxville, TN, Brian is married to Patricia Williams and has a daughter and three grandchildren who live in Florida. He studied Wildlife Biology at Abraham

Baldwin Agricultural College in Georgia and worked at the Zoo in Atlanta. While working on a tropical fish production facility in Florida, he worked with non-profit organizations to help protect the Everglades. Later he volunteered as a project cave diver, working to map the underwater springs of Florida's state parks.



Brian Williams

Moving to Virginia in 2006, Brian began volunteering with the newly created Virginia

Trout in the Classroom Program and was hired by DRBA in 2008. Brian is an avid photographer and writer who spends more time on the water and in the woods than behind his computer. His biggest thrill is working with kids and taking anyone on their first river trip. His many published articles and photographs include a beautiful picture of the Smith River, winner of the 2011 Scenic Virginia Vista Photography Award. Brian also has an engaging YouTube Channel focused on outdoor recreation.

"Overall, it is safe to say that Brian Williams is a true River Hero," said Tiffany Haworth, DRBA's Executive Director. "His leadership has inspired the work of thousands of people to get involved in protecting our watershed. The model he created in Martinsville/Henry County is the model DRBA is using in the other 16 counties of the basin we serve to improve water quality, increase outdoor recreation, and educate kids and adults about conservation.

He has completely changed the mindset of an entire community by utilizing innovative strategies such as TIC, Heritage Trails, Streamside Trees in the Classroom (STIC), private river tours, corporate teambuilding outdoors, a river festival, and an unbelievable 30-mile, one day clean up. But the most important result of his work is the fact that future generations will continue to protect their natural resources and honor their river because of the seeds he is planting today."

—Tiffany Haworth

## Bamboo Bonanza!

Did you know that bamboo makes great teepees for beans, cucumbers, and other vines? That bamboo makes excellent tomato stakes, picture frames, wind chimes, or other crafts?

Did you know that you can get bamboo at bargain prices from the Friends of Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail (FCPWT) - just \$1 each for six-foot poles, and \$1.50 each for eight, ten, or twelve-foot poles?

And that your purchase will help preserve a unique historic structure on one of the area's premier trails?

FCPWT invite you to help us fund the restoration of the stone Springhouse beside the trail. Below its pyramid-shaped roof a stream on the southernmost edge of the Dan River Basin begins. As the slate roof succumbs to age and weather, the Springhouse is threatened.

FCPWT are selling bamboo, which they harvested beside the trail, to help raise the necessary funds. Your purchase, or your donation, will help restore and maintain the Springhouse and other historic and natural features on the Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail.

Contact T Butler, [members@danriver.org](mailto:members@danriver.org), or 336-349-5727.

—T Butler



Milton Hundley's trailer, loaded with Chinqua-Penn bamboo. Photo by Dee Dove.

## National Trail Designation for South Boston Trail

In Washington, D.C. on May 31, Interior Secretary Sally Jewell and National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis announced the designation of 28 trails across America as national recreation trails.



One of these is the Tobacco Heritage Trail in South Boston, VA, where DRBA has enjoyed First Saturday Outings, most recently in December 2012.

The Department of Interior's website describes the 2.6-mile Tobacco Heritage Trail: "Along this [trail]... history and nature are close at hand. Featured historic sites on the rail-trail include the remains of a cotton mill, the Prizery (once a tobacco warehouse, now a community theatre, museum, and events venue), Diamond Hill (a former slave cemetery), and Berry Hill Plantation. Nature enthusiasts enjoy birding, scenic views of the Dan River, and plenty of fresh air."

According to Heather Susee, Trails and Tourism Coordinator for the Tobacco Heritage Trail, "It is an honor to have our South Boston section of the Tobacco Heritage Trail identified as a National Recreation Trail. This stretch of trail is dear to my heart. I began the position as the Trail Volunteer and Tourism Coordinator just as work on the South Boston section was beginning. It has been a joy to see it developed, then received with enthusiasm by South Boston citizens and now just under a year later be awarded this national recognition."

The recognition comes under President Obama's America's Great Outdoors program to promote outdoor recreation and reconnect Americans to nature. The National Recreation designation recognizes existing trails that link communities to recreational opportunities on public lands and in local parks.

-T Butler

## Think Pink

Help us welcome Team DRBA's newest member. Lillie Mae



Hodges, daughter of DRBA staffer Krista Hodges and husband Jarod, was born in the wee hours of May 28, weighing 6 pounds, 8 ounces. Welcome Baby Lillie!

## Delegation from Tajikistan Visits DRBA

A delegation of eco-tourism business owners from the former Soviet Union visited Eden on May 14 to learn about river-based cultural tourism and environmental stewardship in Rockingham County. The delegates, from what is now Tajikistan, were hosted by DRBA, Three Rivers Outfitters, and Piedmont Folk Legacies as part of the Rockingham County Jobs, Forests, and Rivers Initiative (RCJFR).

RCJFR works to encourage job growth through

stewardship of rivers and forests and to prepare Rockingham County for the impact of global environmental changes. It is funded by the Reidsville Area Foundation, Model Forest Policy Program, and DRBA members.



Business owners from Tajikistan. Photo by Jenny Edwards.

The Tajikistan delegates' businesses include preservation of natural and cultural heritage, backcountry excursions on camel- and horseback, production of tour guides, hikes, and more. Their small country shares some common themes with Rockingham County: low economic productivity, high unemployment, and poverty. Like Rockingham County, the region is culturally rich, with unspoiled landscapes and rivers that hold the potential to draw adventure-seekers.

The delegation's sponsor, the Open World Program, is an ambitious public diplomacy effort founded by Congress in 1999, which has brought over 14,000 current and future Eurasian leaders to the United States. The delegates stay in American homes; work with their American counterparts; experience American democracy, civil society and community life; and gain new ideas and inspiration for implementing change back home.

DRBA hopes to stay in touch with these visitors, and we wish them well.

-Jenny Edwards

## Riparian Tea on Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail

On May 25, a perfect spring day, about 20 people attended DRBA's first Riparian (Streamside) Tea at the historic Summer House on the Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail, in conjunction with "Meet 'n' Greet" hosted by Friends of Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail (FCPWT).

Modeled in the spirit of traditional British riparian teas, suppers, and entertainment, DRBA's Riparian Tea featured live acoustic music performed by Ken Marion beside the Rock Dam at Lake Betsy. DRBA staff and volunteers served a variety of iced teas and baked goods and provided free riparian planting guides. The event was part of the Rockingham County Jobs, Forests, and Rivers Initiative made possible by the Reidsville Area Foundation and DRBA members.

The Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail near Reidsville, NC meanders along open pastures, creeks, ponds, and a mature





Participants at the Riparian Tea.  
Photo by Jenny Edwards.

hardwood forest. An informational kiosk at the start of the trail provides displays about the area. Points of interest along the trail include the Penns' Stew Site, Turkey Pond, a small

waterfall, Lake Betsy, and two stone quarries. Migrating and breeding song birds frequent the site, which is featured in "NC Birding Trail Guidebook." The trail is open to the public and supported by FCPWT.

—Jenny Edwards

## The Abundance of the Dan River

(May be sung to the tune of *On the Banks of the Wabash Far Away*)

Oh, the breeze is blowing softly on Dan River,  
Overhead Blue Heron calmly guide the way.  
While the water course is rapid through the channel,  
Flanked with banks of tall red Carolina clay.  
And my sweetheart loves the rush of rolling water,  
Lazy privacy the atmosphere she dreams.  
Battered trees arch overhead to filter sunshine,  
Nature's kindest gift is solitude it seems.  
Crossing through a very old Triassic basin,  
Fossils encapsulate the flora and dinosaur;  
Preserve the shards and arrow points of Saura Indians,  
Clues of life in every period to explore.  
The river carries us through cliffs of Rhododendron,  
Sharp outcroppings punctuate our languid way.  
A tormented landscape lies beyond our vista,  
On the river we can hold reality at bay.  
Revolutionary armies raced toward Dan River,  
As the spring floods became a barrier of war.  
Crossed and re-crossed to come to battle,  
At Guilford Courthouse underneath the cannon's roar.  
Many years ago the songs of river boatmen,  
Meant to synchronize the poling of batteau,  
Were an echo of the work that gave them purpose,  
And an independent life as free Negroes.  
The atmosphere of antebellum Rockingham,  
Great plantations, leaf tobacco, corn, and grain;  
Hid a society of economic exploitation,  
Caused a Civil War with disaster to remain.

With the harnessing of industrial potential,  
As it worked against Nature's ordinary plan.  
Work or leisure, environment or exploitation,  
Seeking best uses for a rich and fertile land.

DRBA seemed to be the engine of deliverance,  
Called the Dan our treasured asset to protect.  
We can fish and float our inner tubes and kayaks,  
See Nature's beauty in an enduring vast prospect.

If we recognize that reflection of abundance,  
As joint sacred trust for our community;  
We will appreciate its bounty for our own use,  
The custodial duty of a responsible trustee.

—Charles D. Rodenbough.

(Dedicated to DRBA and its years protecting the sacred trust of Dan River in North Carolina and Virginia)

## OUTINGS

### Smith Headwaters Hike

*Editor's note: Reporting on the DRBA members' hike to the headwaters of the Smith River are long-time member Sharon Olson and staff member Anna Wallace.*

*Sharon:* March 30, marked on my calendar the moment I read about the event. I knew at the end of that day I would take with me wonderful memories and images, another great DRBA experience.

We gathered at the beautiful home of Rusty Lacy in Patrick County for an afternoon in a truly spectacular setting. Familiar faces and always welcome new faces were among the 35 on the hike, accompanied by 6 dogs. The climb was gradual, with the cascading stream always close and a few challenging stream crossings. The more adventurous explored the waterfall between two large rocks. Some continued on, finding refreshing coolness on a snow covered trail. We headed down after writing "top" in the snow.

*Anna:* The North Fork is the headwaters of the Smith River, a major tributary of the Dan. However, it was hard to imagine that this rocky, robust mountain stream that stair-stepped its way through the narrow gorge would eventually flow out of Philpott Dam and lazily wind its way into North Carolina to meet the Dan just south of Eden.

*Sharon:* Relaxing on the porch and front lawn, enjoying refreshments and stories from old friends and new members ended a perfect day. Many thanks to Mr. Lacy and our organizers, Anna Wallace and Brian Williams.

*Anna:* Kudos to Suzanne and Rusty Lacy for having thoughtfully acquired a conservation easement to protect the North Fork, the native Trout population that it supports, and the surrounding forest.

–*Sharon Olson and Anna Wallace*

## Canoeing

Today we went for a 5-mile canoeing trip down the Mayo River. It was a beautiful morning, 60 degrees. It took 30 minutes to get the boats loaded. It snowed a few days before so the water was fast. We saw a Canadian [Canada] goose and a king fisher and a lot of butterflies. One landed on me. We stopped for lunch and ate in a tree. Then we switched seats and paddled to the takeout.

–*Lily Peer*

*Editor's note: Lily Peer is 9 years old. She and little sister, Sydney, paddled with their father, Kyle Peer, accompanied by 31 other adventurers.*



The Peer girls enjoying a snack on the Mayo.  
Photo by Kyle Peer.

## May 4 on the Dan

Even though conditions were not ideal, the May 4 trip from Draper Landing to Berry Hill Bridge was still enjoyable for the 20 people who made the trip.

After unloading the boats, we caravanned to the take-out. Special thanks to Three River Outfitters for transporting all the drivers back to the put-in. Draper Landing offers easy access to the river. One kayak rolled when we were launching, but the paddler was quickly rescued.

Will Truslow was our leader and Lucas Conkle our sweep. This was only my second trip with the group, and it's great the way the regulars help out newer paddlers. Cloudy weather and wind blowing in our faces didn't dampen our spirits. The river was high enough to offset the head winds and cover most of the rocks without being muddy.

Lucas got wet practicing his kayak rolls, but the rest

of us stayed out of the cold water. The planned lunch spot was underwater, but Will found a nice sand bar that made getting in and out of the kayaks easy.

The wildlife highlight was the heron rookery. I counted 10 heron nests in one location with 8 of them in the same tree.

Perhaps the most exciting part of the trip was the take-out. The bank was steep and wet with deep water at the river's edge. Even with these obstacles, Will, Lucas, and some experienced regulars got everyone out of their kayaks and up the bank without incident.

I'm looking forward to the next trip. Even if conditions are not perfect, we always have a great time on the river.

–*Bob O'Neal*

## June 1 on the Dan in Stokes

On June 1, outdoor enthusiasts convened at Moratock Park in Danbury in an organized effort to float nine miles down the beautiful Dan River to the Hemlock Golf Course Access in Stokes County, NC.

The convening gathered a bright, colorful array of boats, along with purposeful, courteous people. DRBA volunteer and past president, Will Truslow, briefed the group for the scenic float, noting important safety concerns, significant sights to expect, and how the water level was somewhat higher than normal.

The actual float of the Dan River was delightful. Participants enjoyed:

–Sights of lush green trees, beautiful plants, blossoming flowers, wildlife, and people smiling.

–Sounds of cicadas, tree frogs, trickling water, and people conversing.

–The feel of moderately blowing 85-degree wind, cool water, and, when needed, assistance from a helping hand.

While this was my third float with DRBA, I was pleased to see how DRBA volunteers and other participants consistently welcomed and offered assistance to new and returning participants. I personally brought two first-time participants with me, and they had a wonderful experience.

Thank you to the people that serve DRBA.

–*David Stone*

**Visit us on the web!**  
**DANRIVER.ORG**



# MEMBERSHIPS & DONATIONS 3-1-2013 | 5-31-2013

## **Memberships:**

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Lindley and T Butler

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Steve Helms, Primland

Rockingham County Naturalist Club

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Earl and Regina Beeghly

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Kent Bryant

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REI

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