

CURRENTS

Dan River Basin Association

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Bartlett Yancey High School and the Dan River
Trout in the Classroom Update
Festivals, Outings and Events, Oh my!

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
Program Manager
336-339-6169
jedwards@danriver.org

VIRGINIA OFFICES

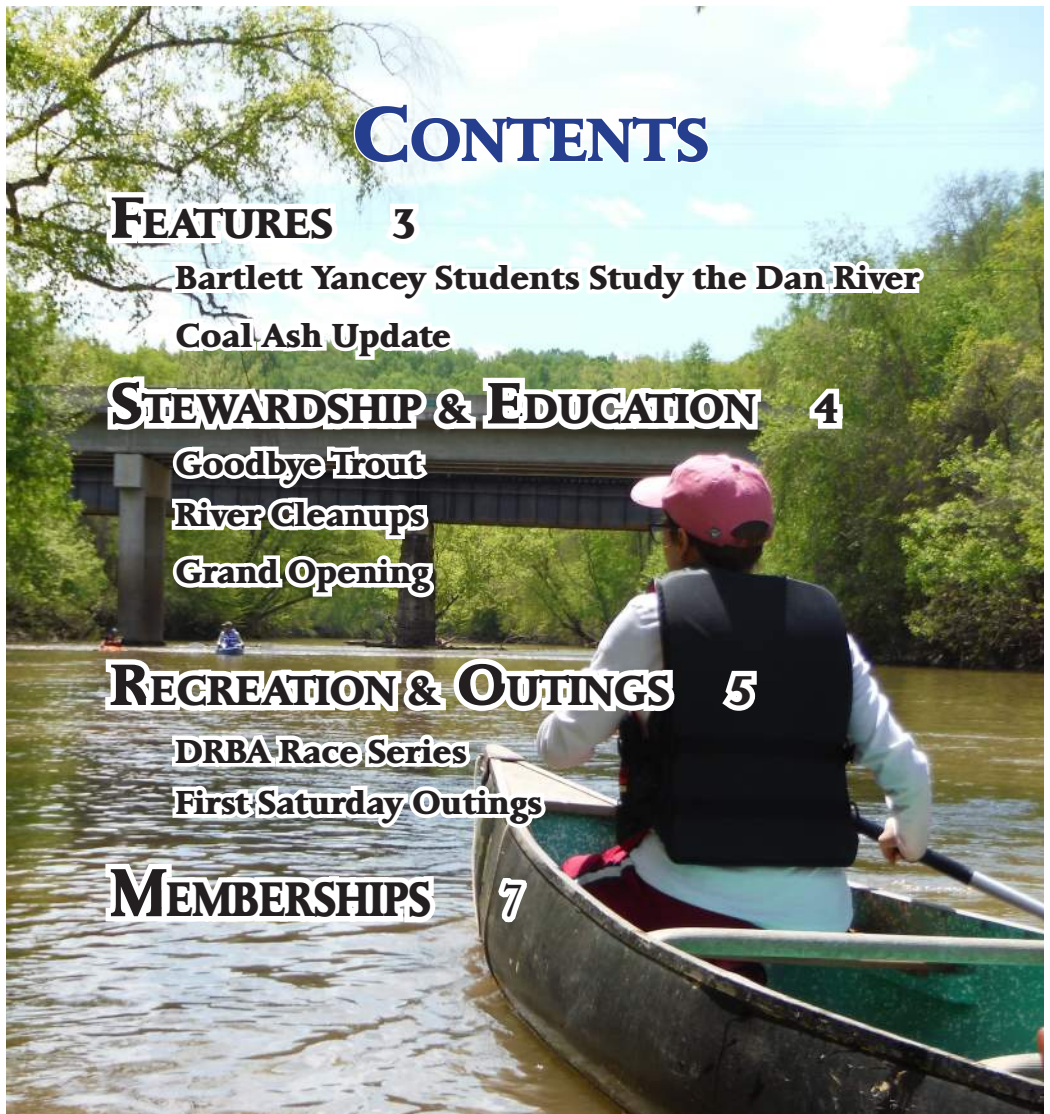
3300 Kings Mountain Road
P.O. Box 7
Collinsville, VA 24078

Brian Williams
Rivers & Trails Program Manager
276-634-2545
bwilliams@danriver.org

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

308 Craghead Street
Danville, VA 24541

Amy Farinelli
Program Manager
315-209-5055
afarinelli@danriver.org



CONTENTS

FEATURES 3

**Bartlett Yancey Students Study the Dan River
Coal Ash Update**

STEWARDSHIP & EDUCATION 4

**Goodbye Trout
River Cleanups
Grand Opening**

RECREATION & OUTINGS 5

**DRBA Race Series
First Saturday Outings**

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Amy Farinelli Krista Hodges
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DRBA Member Doug Mabe runs a section of the
Dan River on his SUP



Bartlett Yancey High School Students Study the Dan River

Nearly 40 students from Bartlett Yancey High School kayaked and performed water quality testing at Abreu Grogan Park in Danville in May. The Caswell County students were members of Ms. Mathis's AP Environmental Science, Ms. Holshouser's AP Biology, and Ms. Reagan's AP Chemistry classes. With support from the Danville



Regional Foundation, the teachers partnered with DRBA, Danville Science Center, Danville Parks and Recreation, and Smith River Outfitters to collect and analyze water quality data from the Dan River.

As they paddled, students learned from DRBA's Brian Williams about the coal ash spill—its current and future impacts on the Dan River's ecosystem and wildlife, and what researchers are doing to understand the long term effects. At the landing, the students performed a battery of chemical and biological tests, recorded data, and took samples for further analysis back at school.

"This was a wonderful opportunity for us to provide an educational outdoor experience for these students and have fun doing it," said DRBA's Amy Farinelli. Williams commented, "The students came well prepared to do their water quality tests. I was really impressed at how well everyone did on the river and how efficient the students were at doing their water testing. It was a fun and educational day."

Williams added, "Anyone else interested in collaborating with us to provide environmental education programs, please let us know—we are always looking to get students involved in the natural world around them in exciting and engaging ways."

Amy Farinelli



The coal ash saga continues with Duke Energy receiving penalties documented by various reports. See danriver.org/coalash. The Dan River Region Community Stakeholder group is finalizing a list of projects to help the river and the region recover from the effects of the February 2014 spill. See danriver.engagingplans.org.

It is important that your voice be heard in this process.

Please add your comments at danriver.engagingplans.org/open-questions.

I was reminded why DRBA is so critical to our region recently when I received over a dozen phone calls and emails in a week related to logging in our area. Water quality is directly impacted by poor logging practices and it is imperative that our local governments, businesses and property owners are committed to making sure adequate buffer remains along our waterways. DRBA will be focusing on this issue in the coming months!

Tiffany Haworth

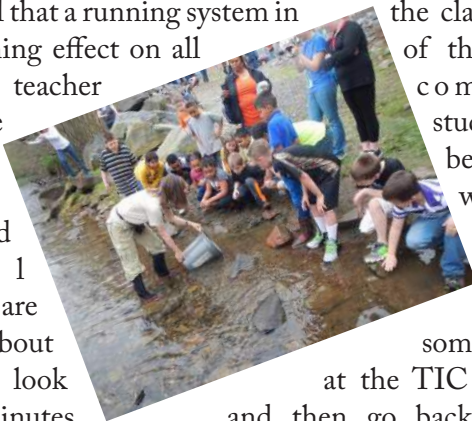


Goodbye Trout and Moving Forward

Over 3,000 students from area schools visited the Smith and Dan rivers to say goodbye to about 2,000 Brook, Brown, and Rainbow trout they raised in their classrooms this year. The culmination of the Trout in the Classroom (TIC) program, the releases are the most anticipated part as students, teachers, and a few parents experience a field trip to one of our beautiful rivers, some visiting the river for the first time.

Since TIC's establishment in 2005 by Martinsville orthodontist and conservationist Dr. David Jones, it has grown to 41 tanks in Virginia and North Carolina raising trout from eggs to fingerlings and learning about watersheds, pollution, ecology, habitats, and the importance of protecting our water resources.

The impact of the program is measurable in many ways, from fewer behavioral issues to better grades. Many teachers feel that a running system in the classroom has a calming effect on all of the students. One teacher commented, "The students will be sitting working and then they stop like think-something and at the TIC tank for a few minutes, and then go back to work."



The program also has a positive effect on some students who may otherwise not be interested in school or have learning challenges. A TIC elementary student with autism, who usually dislikes going outside and getting dirty, enjoyed his trout release day as he held a crayfish for the first time and stood by the riverside to release a trout.

"I believe these nature experiences are essential for every child, regardless of a learning or physical disability," says DRBA's Krista Hodges. "It could change everything for them."

This program relies on numerous sponsorships, including the Harvest Foundation, which contributed enormously in the past, Dr. David Jones, the Stanley Foundation, Reidsville Foundation, clubs, and funders like the Frith family in Martinsville. Partners such as Patrick Henry Community College's HVAC department contribute greatly to TIC's sustainability, and DRBA's second annual Trout-N-About 5K fundraiser was a great success.



Beginning this fall TIC will be scaled back in Virginia as DRBA expands other impactful environmental education programs. Thanks to funding from the Danville Regional Foundation, a catalog of these elementary, middle, and high school programs is

River Cleanups Planned



DRBA members and friends will have two First Saturday Outing opportunities to collect litter from our rivers. First is the August 1 Smith River Cleanup from Mitchell Bridge to Morgan Ford. This scenic 7.5-mile section is DRBA's part of the cleanup of the entire river in Henry County. Then on October 3, DRBA has chosen to clean up portions of the Mayo and Dan rivers in Rockingham County, from the NC 135 Bridge in Mayodan to Jacob's Creek. Over the 5.5-mile trip, participants will float to the mouth of the Mayo and enter the Dan just above the most elaborate batteau navigation structures on the river. After enjoying a ride through Slink Shoal Sluice, boaters will reach Lone Island, where Revolutionary War troops crossed the Dan in 1781. Just downstream is the historic Jacob's Creek batteau landing for the plantation of Revolutionary era governor Alexander Martin. Both cleanups are made possible by generous private landowners who support DRBA's efforts by providing take-outs on their property. Scenery, history, and stewardship blend together to make these outings a special time of fun, fellowship, and service—an ideal DRBA combination!

T Butler



Our Great Lakes, harbors, ports, and rivers provide not only vital resources for us to live, but an entire maritime way of life for so many people. The least we can do is to protect it, and the way of life it provides for so many. -- Candice S. Miller

As we are heading into summer and enjoying time with family and friends on our rivers and lakes, please remember to respect the water and help DRBA protect our waters by joining today!
Allison Szuba, President

Grand Opening



Photo courtesy of Justin R. Kerns

Members of Lead VA gather in May at the Kings Bridge Access on the Banister River in Halifax VA. Officially opened on 24 April 2015, the access provides a gateway to the Southern Virginia Wild Blueway.

Recreation

Trout-N-About Begins DRBA Race Series

At DRBA's second annual Trout-N-About on May 30, forty participants ran along River Road, through Lester Properties' woods, and on the Fieldale Trail, finishing with a splashy jog across the Smith River. The race supports DRBA's Environmental Education Initiatives, including Trout in the Classroom (TIC). Race sponsors included TIC founder Dr. David Jones of Jones and Deshon Orthodontics, Hugo's owner Aman Sarwary, Uptown Sweets, Nat Greene Fly Fishers, Haywood's Jewelers, a DRBA board member, Mollie's Originals, Smith River Outfitters, and Collinsville Farm Market. Race coordinators were Krista Hodges and Wayne Kirkpatrick. Hodges comments, "We especially want to thank Henry County and all the great volunteers for supporting this event." Placing tops in their categories were Lisa Perez, Rebecca Adcock, Dakota Fix; Dwayne Williams, Mark Joyce, Jonathan Adcock; Jodie Berger; Aman Sarwary. All Trout-N-About participants are still eligible to register for the series, which includes Run with the Cows on September 27 and Apple Dumpling on October 17. See danriver.org/drba-race-series. Combined times for the three events will determine winners, and prizes for series participants will be drawn at the last race.

Brian Williams

Recreation

Fun for All at Jones Lake on April 4

On a sunny, windy, cool day, DRBA members and friends formed two groups at Jones Lake in Franklin County. We have reports from Greg Arens and Ward Collis.

Greg: Sixteen hikers, led by hostess Ellen Jessee, hiked up Fork Mountain through fields, new-growth woods, and mature forest. The latter held big fine hardwoods, while the ridgetop had pines



Hikers prepare for the trail at Jones Lake

and wind-bent scrubby oaks. Only from the farmland could we see evidence of new spring foliage, and few wildflowers had yet shown their heads. The 4.13-mile round trip didn't reach the highest part of Fork Mountain, but we were rewarded with views of Franklin County, including Rocky Mount, Cahas Mountain, and the Blue Ridge. From another direction we could see Turkeycock Mountain. One unexpected benefit was that at least 5 of us encountered people in this small group whom we had known earlier in our lives, but hadn't seen for years, making this as much a social event as a nature hike.

Ward: Meanwhile, eight paddlers launched onto Jones Lake, where the chilly wind effect was shielded by the shoreline. By early afternoon it was a very pleasant Spring day. For the first-time paddlers, the pond's small size gave them confidence as they developed their paddling skills. Sharp-eyed paddlers scoured the pond's edge for springtime growths, birds and waterfowl, and aquatic creatures such as minnows, salamanders and turtles. For the angling contingent, the pond yielded a few nibbles and fewer catches. We thank Ellen Jessee for sharing her family's heritage with this DRBA First Saturday Outing. All enjoyed the on-water experience, and the on-shore amenities were greatly appreciated.

Greg Arens and Ward Collis

May 2 on the Mayo River

On the morning of May 2, DRBA once again gathered for its monthly outing, as nineteen members and guests put canoes and kayaks onto the Mayo River. The weather really couldn't have been better, and this particular stretch of the river was very calm and smooth. It was truly an opportunity to be free from the

noisy roads and factories that we live with every day. Geese are often seen on the Mayo as well as the occasional cormorant. New green foliage is always a nice visual stimulus in the spring. A muskrat that inadvertently swam too close to my craft, and then quickly dove for safety when it made eye contact, was definitely a high point. This was my first outing with DRBA, and everyone there seemed warm and welcoming. It was safely and efficiently organized. I wanted to thank Wayne Kirkpatrick and especially Lucas Conkle for the tour of the Avalon Dam.

Walt Flythe

June 6 FSO

Editor's note: Nathan is 10 years old, a 5th grade homeschooler from South Boston. According to his "Pop Pop," he enjoys kayaking as long as there are some rapids. His first paddle was on the Staunton River from Long Island to Brookneal.

I got to enjoy a kayak paddle with my Pop Pop on June 6. We did the Dan River. We paddled from Moratock Park in Danbury, NC to the Snow Creek access. This was my third paddle I went on. I used our sit-on kayak that is bright green. I like that kayak a lot.

There were 19 boats on this paddle. One was a standup paddler whose dog rode with him the whole way. The rest were kayaks or canoes. It was a nice day. There was a lot of sunshine. There was also a breeze that made it real nice. We could have used a little more water, but it was fun.

One lady felt a snake crawl up her leg. She screamed and kicked her feet. The snake went flying and the lady was okay. It was just a water snake. I wouldn't have screamed, but I'm glad it wasn't me the snake was on. The name of the lady was Rebecca.



Inspired by a fellow paddler and encouraged by his Pop Pop, Nathan works on his SUP skills while floating down the Dan River

I can't wait to go on another paddle with my Pop Pop.
Nathan Norstrud

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Apple Dumpling 5K Race

Jonathan & Rebecca Adcock
Marcus & Sarah Brinks
Atticia Bundy
Lindley & T Butler
Mark Joyce
Dan LaPrade
Sonya Wolen



The Dan River Basin

Save the Date



First Saturday Outings

July 4 – Paddle to Deer Island, Philpott Lake

August 1 – Smith River Cleanup, Mitchell Bridge to Morgan Ford

September 5 – Dan River Float, Newton's Landing to Anglers Pride

Upcoming Events

**TBA, Mid-July
"Voices of the Dan River" History Film**

**August 8
Smith River Fest**

**September 18
Eden Riverfest**

**September 19
Halifax Wild Blue River Festival**

**September 27
Run with the Cows 5K**

**October 17
Apple Dumpling 5K Race
Danville River District Festival**

**October 24
VMNH Reptile Day Festival**

**TBA, October
DRBA's Third Annual Art in Nature Auction**

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



www.danriver.org