



Dan River Basin Association

CURRENTS

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**DRBA Celebrates 18 Years
Trail Growth and Development • TIC Program**

Currents • Volume 19 • Issue 2

Dan River Basin Association

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Cover Photo: Brian Williams

Features



Director of Eden's Economic Development, Mike Dougherty (L) and Cindy Adams, Eden's Director of Tourism spoke to members at the 2020 Annual Meeting.

DRBA Celebrates 18 years

At Eden City Hall on March 7, eighty DRBA members, staff, and guests enjoyed an abundant brunch and celebrated eighteen amazing years. Welcomed by DRBA President Sonya Wolen and Eden Mayor Neville Hall, we were reminded that DRBA's first public meeting was held here in 2002. Guest speakers Mike Dougherty, Director of Economic Development, and Cindy Adams, Director of Tourism, described partnerships with DRBA that help stimulate Eden's economic development and increased focus on the rivers.

Vice President Wayne Kirkpatrick recognized departing board members Nate Hall, Wayne Knox, Cori Lindsay, and Sherri Wright. New board members elected unanimously are Mark Estes from Halifax County and Jo Proia from Guilford County.

DRBA Program Manager Brian Williams and Education Outreach Manager Krista Hodges described programs such as Trout in the Classroom, which reaches over 7,000 students in NC and VA; Streamside Trees in the Classroom and a Green Schoolyard project that introduce students to environmental stewardship; Water Quality Monitors; Storm Drain Monitors; cleanups; and development of new parks, trails, and river accesses. DRBA Executive Director Tiffany Haworth summarized 2019's successes and forty-seven projects



for 2020 –the Year of the DRBA Volunteer.

Service awards were presented to faithful volunteers Sherri Wright, Mike Haines, and Lee Jarrett and journalist Joe Dexter. Corporate Partner Awards went to Carter Bank and Trust and Eastman Corporation. Volunteer of the Year Award was given to Betty Kirkpatrick, who introduces boaters to our waterways, designs and produces Currents, hosts the popular October Third Saturday Outing, and works tirelessly on resource development. Margaret Petty



Tyler Carter accepts the Corporate Partnership Award from Tiffany Haworth



Ongoing in Henry County



As DRBA works to bring Master Plan projects to fruition, stakeholders have been consulted regarding choices for first-year projects. They include:

- River access improvements (high priority).
- A new Smith River access about 1 mile upstream from Doe Run Park, at the end of Clubhouse Drive.

• **Smith River Sports Complex Natural Dog Playground and Trail:** On 2 acres just off the Paw Path near the River Access, dogs will be allowed to run off leash inside a fenced area along the new trail.

• **Spencer Penn Center Trail:** The reworked current path near the ball field will include an 85 ft-long “Butterfly Boardwalk “ and deck with benches and interpretive signs. Additional educational signs and family areas will be enhanced along the trail. With planning and development done and bids accepted, work was scheduled to begin in April.

Brian Williams

Underway in Rockingham County



Currently DRBA has several projects in the hopper in Rockingham County.

• In the City of Eden, a new riverside park is under development.

• In Madison, the Pine Hall Dam restoration project design has been completed, and permits must be obtained before construction can begin.

• Progress is being made on the Lake Reidsville Trails (see story).

• On the Dan River, the county’s Settle Bridge Access will be redesigned, and the Jacobs Creek Batteau Landing Park will soon begin construction.

• A master plan for trail connections between the NC Mountains to Sea and VA Beaches to Bluegrass trails will hold public input meetings when possible.

Brian Williams

Lake Reidsville Trail

Also in Rockingham County. A new 2.5-mile section of natural surface trail is under construction at Lake Reidsville. As phase I of a trail that will go around this beautiful reservoir, it will connect with the existing trail upon completion.



Amenities at the lake include a boat launch, fishing, hiking, a disc golf course, and picnic areas. Although not accessible while under construction, the new section should open with a summer ribbon cutting.

Brian Williams

Hidden Roads Trail Begins



DRBA is one of multiple partners in developing the Hidden Roads Trail in Meadows of Dan, VA. Funded by a Rotary Foundation Grant with matching funds from the Rotary Club of Stuart, the 0.6-mile natural surface trail is under construction by the Stuart Club. This initial leg of trail to connect Meadows of Dan with Mabry Mill has been slated for completion by April 30, 2020.

Wayne Kirkpatrick

Patrick County HANDS Project Is Complete!

The Trail HANDS project was completed in early February when DRBA’s Brian Williams, helped by volunteers Jim Allen and Wayne Kirkpatrick, installed interpretive signs near each of the five hand sculptures.

This grant-funded project grew from an AIR-Shift workshop hosted by the Reynolds Homestead, designed to meld the arts with a business minded approach that required an artistic component tied to a strict budget.

As a partner, DRBA provided volunteer resources and experience with signage. Four of the five signs were built with funds from the Patrick County Apple Dumpling 5K, which are designated to trail enhancement within Patrick County. The fifth sign was funded by the Homestead Hikers for the sculpture located at the Reynolds Homestead’s Leaf Trail.

Wayne Kirkpatrick



Eastman Boardwalk



When you visit the Great Road River Access near Eastman on the Smith River you'll see the newly constructed Eastman Educational Boardwalk. Running 125 feet from the parking area to the river's edge upstream of the main access, the boardwalk was constructed by DRBA staff and funded in full by the Eastman Chemical Company located in Bassett, VA. The structure will soon have interpretive signs about the Smith River ecosystem and how we protect our water resources.



The access, one of the Smith's most popular for paddlers, is used frequently by students to release trout and learn about the river. It's also a great place for the entire family to relax, have a picnic, or wade in the water.

Brian Williams

And then there was this. . .

Love at first sight? Well, no, not exactly. But DRBA will take the credit for introducing the soon-to-be-married couple Leslie Marsh and Keith Kallapos. Keith, a retired American Airlines pilot from Washington DC, and Leslie, a Stuart businesswoman originally from Texas, found themselves paddling side by side on Philpott Lake during an outing sponsored by the Dan River Basin Association.



While both will say this meetup wasn't the highlight of their day, they soon learned that a love of kayaking wasn't the only thing they had in common. Both enjoy traveling, hiking, music, gardening, cooking and cruising in their classic MG's – Keith's a '58 and Leslie's a '74.

Eighteen months later, they have one more thing in common, a wedding date! And where else but over the waters of Philpott Lake later this Spring. Best Wishes and Congratulations to Leslie and Keith from the Dan River Basin Association.

From the Director

The health crisis has a lot of us stressed. I hear from a lot of DRBA members that when world and personal worries seem too much to handle, the first thing they do is to head outdoors to enjoy a hike or a paddle with friends and family. This isn't an option for many of us right now. So, what are we going to do as we hide out during the coming weeks, or possibly months?

You can watch reruns on TV, play video games, or snuggle up with a romance novel, I guess. Or you can choose to use this time to get informed about the environmental challenges and success stories you might have overlooked when life was too busy to sit still for more than five minutes. Consider using your couch time to watch documentaries and read nonfiction books about current environmental issues. Perhaps take some time to truly explore DRBA's extensive website and research online the best practices and success stories from other environmental organizations around the globe.

I am lucky to have a home office and staff members who are comfortable with holding meetings online, by phone, and via text. I assure you that DRBA's operations have not slowed down one bit. But in my down time (which there seems to be a bit more of lately), I've decided to virtually learn, explore, and expand my knowledge about the natural world until I can literally hug a tree again.



DRBA Volunteers Share Conservation Lessons

The Tub of Bugs visited Blue Ridge Elementary School's 6th grade classes in February to show the future food source of the TIC trout being raised by the students. Lessons learned included information about indicator species, sensitivity to pollution, water quality and personal responsibility in caring for the earth.

At the Conservation Fair of the Women's League of Eden DRBA volunteer T Butler showcased two of DRBA's Environmental Education programs, Trout in the Classroom (TIC) and Streamside Trees in the Classroom (STIC). A tub of bugs illustrated the macroinvertebrates found in local, clean water streams, and that provide forage for trout raised by students across the basin. After growing from eggs to fingerlings, the trout are released into the Smith River where macroinvertebrates become their main food source. STIC utilizes Black Willow cuttings that are rooted in water in classrooms. Students then plant them along streams across the basin, helping reduce erosion and keep sediment and other runoff pollutants from entering the stream.



T Butler discusses DRBA Education Programs with Ruth Leeper of the Women's League of Eden

Wayne Kirkpatrick

*Our Mission:
The Dan River Basin Association protects and promotes the Dan River Basin through recreation, education and stewardship*

What about TIC during the Spring of 2020?

Anticipating school closures because of national health concerns, DRBA's Education Manager, Krista Hodges, immediately made plans for hundreds of trout fingerlings lovingly raised by students in 21 classrooms in NC and VA. After months of pouring their hearts into raising and caring for the trout, students looked forward eagerly to releasing them into an approved coldwater stream this spring.



Since that was no longer possible, Krista offered each teacher the option to release the trout early, evacuate them to a temporary home outside of the school, or keep them in the classroom if they could care for them while the school was closed.



To enable the students to virtually experience seeing their trout enter a stream or river for the first time, Krista and DRBA's Brian Williams created a video in which they and Magna Vista High School teacher Alyson Martin carefully released some of the trout into the river.

Be sure to view the video, including Brian's underwater footage, at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oraB80K55Co&feature=youtu.be>



January 4 on the Chinqua-Penn Trail

As our first experience with DRBA, we explored the Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail on January 4th. Upon arriving, our group of 21 hikers and 1 dog were welcomed by T Butler, who gave us introductory information about the Chinqua-Penn property and the trail. We began our walk beside pastures with Black Angus cattle of direct lineage from the Penns' herd of the 1940s. This is where research is conducted on the best feeds for cattle. Nearby is the Penns' Pet Cemetery where their prized show dogs were remembered.



An easy walk took us into a tree covered area leading down to Lake Betsy and the Penns' Summer House gazebo, a beautiful spot to imagine the Great Gatsby-style Sunday brunches that they hosted in the 1920s. The dam that creates the lake is a beautiful structure of stone and granite millstones that forms a waterfall which I imagine in the summer provides a refreshing spot. We

walked along the lake to the Pump House, which provided 1920s state-of-the-art irrigation for their gardens.

We continued to Turkey Pond with its flock of Canada Geese. This area opened up to more clearings and open fields. Then we hiked on to the Spring House site where Jeff Penn entertained guests with his unique Brunswick Stew, for which the recipe is on display for all to try for themselves.

The morning hike was a pleasure, giving us an opportunity to meet some new friends, see the beauty of the Walking Trail, learn the history of the sites along the trail, and enjoy being outdoors for a little bit of healthy exercise on a cool January morning. We highly recommend that everyone seek out the Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail to see it for yourselves and to appreciate all the work that has gone into the restoration of such a hidden treasure in Rockingham County.



Lori and Eddie Tucker

February 1 on the Red Tail Hawk Trail

DRBA's February First Saturday Outing was held at Mayo Park in Person County, NC. Begun in 1996, Mayo Park now maintains more than six miles of trails, along with boat landings, cabins, tent sites, boat rentals, and rest rooms. Like the Mayo River, the park is named for Major William Mayo, a member of William Byrd's 1728 survey party, "a Virginia official, land speculator and surveyor."



Eleven hikers enjoyed the two-mile loop on the slightly hilly, natural surface trail, guided by Park Superintendent Jeremy Royster. According to Jeremy, "The early winter is an excellent time for bird watching around Mayo Lake. The leafless trees are home to several species, including birds of prey. You can also view waterfowl when

we walk along the shore. This time of year is a great time in general for wildlife viewing in the quiet forests around the park."

Jeremy shared an additional bonus with the group, veering off the Red Hawk Trail for a short connector segment, the Sappony Indian Spring Trail. Each year the Sappony Tribe celebrates their heritage with a ceremony at the spring.

More information about Mayo Park is at <https://www.personcountync.gov/departments-services/departments-i-z/parks-recreation/mayo-park-and-lake>.



Recreation



DRBA March 7 FSO -- Matrimony Creek

Following DRBA's 2020 annual meeting on March 7 an intrepid group of 20 hikers and 1 lively hound gathered at Matrimony Creek in Eden, NC. Before exploring the creek and trail, we were treated to a brief history of the area, including how the creek was named (it is "exceeding noisy and impetuous"); the effects of the February flood (all picnic tables under the trailhead shelter were lost); and the difference between frostbite and frost nip (spring-time hikers who ford cold creeks and continue to hike in wet shoes, beware).

Along the greenway we observed flood damage, as the granite dust surface soon gave way to sand. Mark Bishopric, DRBA's and Eden's walking encyclopedia of local history and river lore, described how the Matrimony Creek floodwaters had backed up when they reached the flooded

Dan River, depositing the sand that the creek water had carried. Further upstream, where Matrimony made a 45-degree turn, those same flood waters had cleared the trail of all granite dust, leaving large rocks and tricky footing in their wake. Near the end of the trail, where the creek makes a 90 degree turn, flood waters had significantly eroded the creek bank.

We paused to view the old stone dam at the end of the trail before heading back. It was hard to imagine that the thick tangle of woods across the creek had for 2 centuries been a beehive of activity, supporting grist mills, a foundry, a tannery and even, beginning in 1909, the generation of electricity for Leaksville, Draper and Spray. In 1970, the mill went silent when the stone dam burst. A fire destroyed the mill building and all equipment in 1994.

Kathryn Converse



Annual Meeting Friends



Reidsville Trail Construction



Hidden Road Trail



Chinqua Penn Spring House



Trail HANDS Signage

Membership January 1, 2020 - March 3, 2020

Sponsor Membership

River Legacy Circle
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Allison Gentry
Joe & Ellen Jessee
Sherri Wright

Benefactor Membership

Vince Joyce
Dan and Beth Mosca
Sharon M. Olson

Protector Membership

Marcus & Sarah Brinks
Organization Membership
Carolina Canoe Club

Steward Membership

Nancy (Customer) Bell
Elaine L. Day
Tom & Margaret
Gurley Edmonds
Ted and Helen Jane Hodges
Bill & Linda McConahey
Fletcher & Ginger Waynick

Family Membership

Amy Bergamo
Kim & Debra Brown
Lee Jarrett
Lenzie and Jean Kinyon
Skip & Jo Silvers

Individual Membership

Nancy (Nancy's Weddings & Events) Bell
Thomas Emory
Anne Lee Gravely
Donald Lampe
Jo Proia
Frances Gwen Pruitt
Bryan D. Thompson

Donations

Benefactor Donation
Lindley & T Butler

Protector Donation
Reidsville Rotary Club

Steward Donation

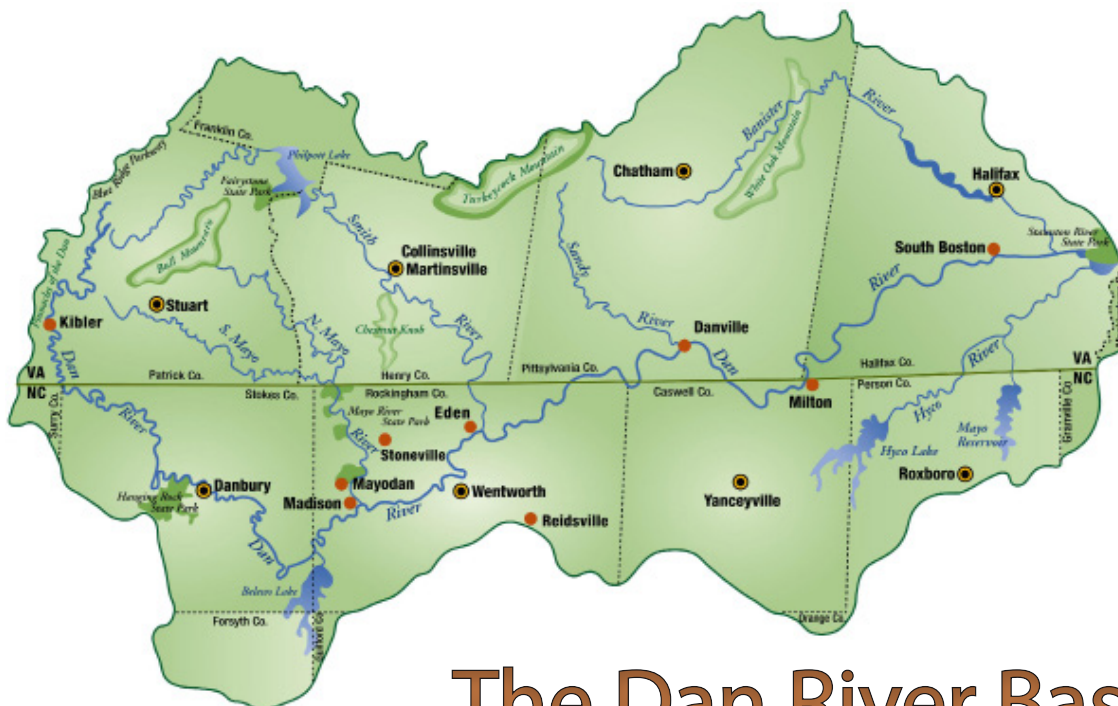
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Donation

Chinqua Penn Trail
Straders Shoe Store



The Dan River Basin

Upcoming First Saturday Outings

April 4 – Postponed

*May 2 – Banister River
King's Bridge Landing to Terry's Bridge*

*June 6 – Dan River
Jessup's Mill to Hart's Access*

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