

CURRENTS

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Recreation • Education • Stewardship



From the Director

Tiffany Haworth, Executive Director

My furry kid Anabel insists on a walk every day of the year regardless of pouring rain, sweltering heat or slippery snow. There are many days that I can think of a million other things I'd rather do, but those big brown pleading eyes get me out of the house and heading for a trail.

Sure, we both benefit from the exposure to phytoncides (the natural oils found in trees) which improves our immune systems, enhances our sleep and memory, lowers stress and simply makes us both feel good. But it's more than the health benefits we get by heading outdoors. With her tail wagging and her nose to the ground, she leads us to discover a turtle, a hidden stream or an interesting tree.

You don't need a dog to guilt you into the outdoors this summer, just do it for your own mind, body and spirit. And while you're there, why not take the advice from a pup and explore nature through all of your senses!



Pictured here: DRBA staff and board at DRBA's 22nd Annual Celebration on June 1 in Danville, Virginia.

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Currents Newsletter

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TAILS ON TRAILS

DRBA GETS OWNERS AND THEIR PUPS OUT AND ABOUT

Pups and paw parents are enjoying time out on the trails in Rockingham County thanks to a grant DRBA received from Purina to provide educational dog safety hikes and resources about pet-friendly hiking options.

The first Tails on Trails hike was in the cool shade of the Lake Reidsville Trail in June, 2024. Human friends and dogs of all sizes showed up to explore the 2-mile trail along the lake - full of sniffs and beautiful views. Hikers were first educated about the importance of pet safety on a trail such as keeping your pet on a leash, when to yield to other users, and a reminder to pick up after your pet. DRBA provided free dog treats, leashes and waste bags thanks to Purina.

Many trails are located near or around lakes, rivers, and other bodies of water where pet waste can pollute and degrade the water quality. Lake Reidsville was a perfect place to kick-off the Tails on Trails program because the lake is also the source of the City of Reidsville's drinking water. Pet waste can contribute to higher cost for water due to the increased cleaning methods required at water treatment facilities.

The next Tails on Trails hike was held at Farris Memorial Park in July, 2024. Farris Memorial Park has miles of meandering mountain bike trails and a mile-long lake trail. It was a hot day along the trail but we had a great group come out. Before the hike, DRBA spoke about summer safety issues for pets and provided a dog safety checklist of items to keep pups safe. While dogs are heat tolerant to a degree, DRBA emphasizes the importance of walking dogs in the early morning or late evening to prevent heat exposure and how to check the ground temperature as their paws can burn and blister. It's best to walk a dog on natural surfaces during the summer months to protect their paws.



Thanks to Rockingham County Tourism, free collapsible water bowls were available for the participants.

Scan QR code for DRBA events page.



THE NEXT OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN

The next Tails on Trails hikes will be held this Fall. All are invited with or without a furry kid. The next hike will be held during Eden River Fest at the Smith River Greenway on September 20th at 6 pm at the Meadow Road entrance.

The final Tails on Trails hike in 2024 will be November 22nd at Mayo River State Park on the Fox Trail and we will educate about winter dog safety.

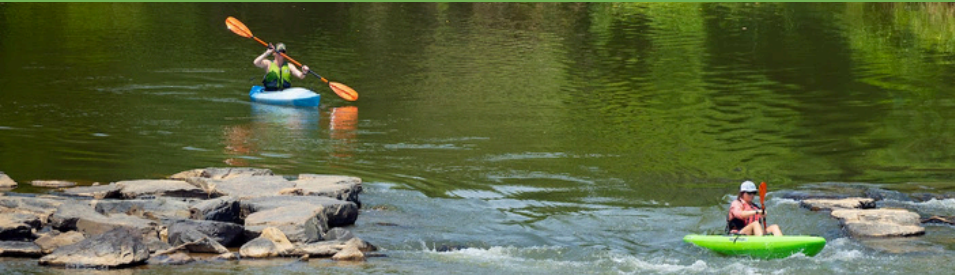
DRBA is currently working on a map that highlights the best places to get outdoors and explore with a dog in the Dan River watershed. If you have any

recommendations of existing trails or parks that are fun to visit with your dog, please contact Anna at awheeler@danriver.org.



MASTER PLAN

Dan River State Trail



The Dan River is naturally, culturally, and environmentally significant. That is why NC legislation wrote a bill in 2021 that enacted the Dan River as a State Trail!

We are excited to announce the Dan River State Trail Master Plan that will continue to ensure that we expand the trail; including improving accesses, adding new sites, and continuing work at each access to ensure continuity at each site.

Currently, DRBA has successfully designated eight sites on the Dan as State Trail access points. DRBA staff are hard at work to continue the designation applications for other sites and to expand access improvements and accessibility on the river.



The goal of this Master Plan is to develop an access every 5-10 miles of the Dan River for users to enjoy. This master plan, along with continued partnerships with key stakeholders, will guide DRBA to reach this goal.

The plan is currently being reviewed by State Parks and when approved, you will be able to read it on DRBA's Master Plan web page. Look for updates in DRBA's free E-newsletter.

Scan the QR code to sign up for DRBA's e-newsletter!



M.C. MARTIN PARK

Project Update



Renovations to the M.C. Martin Park on Memorial Drive in Danville, VA are almost complete. The renovations have included a cleanup of the site, historic signage, a new Creekside Trail, an overlook deck, benches and a storm drain painting.

The trail has been cleared and a load of gravel has been delivered on site. Danville Parks and Recreation is partnering with DRBA on the project and has loaned resources to help spread some of the gravel out along the trail. DRBA will recruit volunteers to help do the finish work.

The storm drain artwork was completed in June by a young artist who won an art contest sponsored by DRBA and the Community Foundation of the Dan River Region. The overlook deck and benches are expected to be installed in August.

If you are interested in volunteering to help DRBA finish this project, please sign up for our Volunteer Alerts!

Scan the QR code to stay on top of DRBA volunteering opportunities!





GETTING YOUTH INVOLVED



DRBA'S STEWARDSHIP MISSION IN ACTION

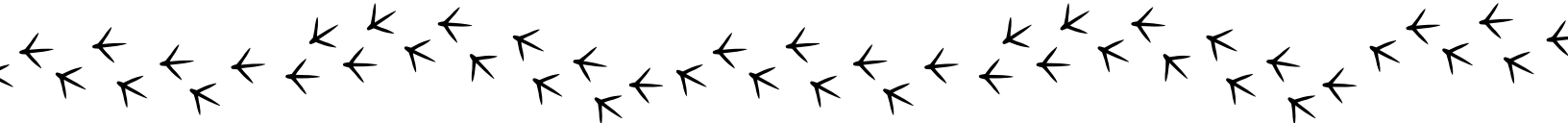
Third grader Rory Busby, of Forest Hill Elementary, won the storm drain art contest this past spring, managed by DRBA and sponsored by the Community Foundation of the Dan River Region.



Pictured here: Rory Busby with the finished and painted storm drain.

The theme of the art contest was “protecting our rivers and streams, and the wildlife that lives in them.” He then painted his winning submission on the storm drain in June, 2024 at the M.C. Martin Park in Danville, VA.

The storm drain art contest is just one component of the Anti-Litter Campaign. DRBA will be managing a high school anti-litter poster campaign this Fall with the winner having their design printed as posters and distributed to teachers in Danville to post in their classrooms, installing fishing line collection bins along the Dan River and designing and installing interpretive signage about the impacts of litter on local waterways.



HENRY COUNTY CREEK CRITTERS

Three years ago, DRBA staff assisted Henry County Parks and Recreation in developing a “Creek Walk” summer program which provides students aged 8-12 the opportunity to explore a local creek and discover what lies beneath the waters while learning about the importance of macroinvertebrates.



The program has continued and this past June, 2024, DRBA helped out another year providing students with a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE).

SUMMERTIME WITH DRBA

MHC AFTER 3

Nearly 50 students from MHC After 3 middle school summer camp participated in DRBA's Epic River Experience focused on watersheds and macroinvertebrates at the Smith River. Students participated in hands-on environmental education programs that focused on the importance of clean water.

Students started each day at the Eastman Outdoor Classroom building with a model watershed and learning about how stormwater flows from mountain



ranges to small tributaries, then to large rivers and eventually ending up in the Atlantic Ocean.

Students also learned through an Enviroscape watershed model demonstration how stormwater picks up pollution such as oil, fertilizer, litter and pet waste and carries it to waterways, which can affect the health of organisms that live in and depend on the water, including humans. Following the demonstration, students built a water filter to show how river water can be filtered at a water treatment plant into drinking water.

Pictured here: One of the demonstrations of a water filter.



Finally, students headed over to the Smith River to learn about benthic macroinvertebrates and had the opportunity to identify some found in the river. They also learned why macroinvertebrates are important to the health and quality of rivers and streams.



Students cooled off in the river using viewfinders and nets to collect macroinvertebrates and look for fish. A variety of macroinvertebrates were found in the river including damselflies, stoneflies and mayflies. The sessions ended with students learning about reptiles and their importance to our local ecosystem.



CHINQUA-PENN TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

If you have been hiking in Rockingham County, you have probably walked at the Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail (CPWT) in Wentworth, NC.

Thanks to an allocation through the North Carolina Legislation, DRBA has been awarded funding and is partnering with the amazing volunteers of Friends of the Chinqua-Penn Walking Trail (FCPWT) to provide key improvements that will assist in erosion mitigation, boardwalk enhancements, and more.



Drop by the CPWT, located at 2138 Wentworth Street in Reidsville, and see the improvements for yourself!

A huge thank you to the FCPWT for recognizing T Butler and Lee Templeton for their hard work in making the CPWT a reality with a commemorative plaque on the old stew site's chimney.

Pictured here: T Butler and Lee Templeton gathered to view the recognition plaque.



— VEE RECEIVES GRANT FUNDING —

For the next two school years, DRBA will work with every elementary school in Franklin County, VA to become certified as Virginia Naturally schools, thanks to a grant from the Virginia Environmental Endowment (VEE).

DRBA was awarded the two-year grant to provide environmental literacy programming to the same students through their 4th grade year into 5th grade. The project, called “Green Leaves Inspire Clean Water” is in partnership with the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources Virginia Naturally program.

The elementary students will focus on community conservation, environmental literacy, water quality protection and place-based investigations. The first year, students will participate in DRBA’s Streamside Trees in the Classroom (STIC) program that partners with the US Army Corps of Engineers at Philpott Lake. Students will root native black willow cuttings in the classroom and take a field trip to plant them around Philpott Lake.

Following the STIC program, students will participate in a Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) through this project, in addition to aligning with 2018 VA Science Standards of Learning “Green Leaves” components

The green leaves components are found in the curriculum framework, stating that all students need to complete an investigation project. With the expertise of DRBA and other partners who will assist, the schools will receive in-depth knowledge and curriculum to support the SOL guidelines.



The second year of the grant dives deeper into understanding our natural resources through hands-on water quality testing. This will include an introduction to riparian buffers through a streamside trees or riparian buffer assessment, while also learning about the history of Philpott Lake and the effects of pollution on our precious water resources.

Finally, after the students complete water quality testing, the place-based investigation of choice will be completed in the classrooms, along with environmental presentations for each

school. The Virginia Master Naturalists will serve as a third partner on the project, providing classroom presentations for each school that chooses recycling initiatives and wildlife habitat friendly areas as their place-based investigations.

The culmination of the project will be for all schools to become Virginia Naturally certified at the end of the two years. Virginia Naturally (VAN) Schools is the official environmental education school recognition program of the Commonwealth.

The Virginia Board of Education has recognized the Virginia Naturally School program as the official environmental education school recognition program for the state. This program recognizes the wonderful efforts of many Virginia schools to increase the environmental literacy of our youngest citizens.

“

"We can't wait to read about how this initiative funded by the VEE helps enhance the learning of 4th into 5th grade students and add Franklin Co. Elementary Schools to the list of recognized Virginia Naturally Schools."

Courtney Hallacher,
Statewide Wildlife Education Coordinator,
Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources

”

PATRICK COUNTY ROTARY TRAIL



The Rotary Club of Stuart and The Rotary Club, along with project partners Dan River Basin Association and Patrick County Tourism, opened a new hiking and biking trail at 420 Woodland Drive in Stuart, VA with a celebration that included a ribbon-cutting, guided hike, drawings for prizes, refreshments from Pickle & Ash, and networking opportunities for guests to connect with others who share a passion for nature and an active lifestyle. Stop by and enjoy a beautiful walk immersed in nature.



VEE UPDATE

DRBA's Volunteer Environmental Educators (VEE) have been busy this summer planting monarch waystations and educating youth about protecting our waterways. The volunteer educators assisted with planting monarch waystations in Henry County, Martinsville and Franklin County.

The first waystation was planted at Snow Creek Elementary, complimenting the Green Schoolyard project currently underway. This beautiful garden is the largest of the waystations planted in the basin thus far.



The second garden was planted at Patrick Henry Elementary school as a pocket garden sponsored by Dr. David Jones of Jones and DeShon Orthodontics and Dr. David L. Jones of Roanoke Valley Orthodontics.

The pocket waystation will directly serve four, second grade classes at the school.



The last garden was planted at Fisher Farm Park in memory of the Nichols Family.

In addition, VEEs donated nearly 25 hours of their time this summer educating youth about water quality, recreation on the water and protecting our natural resources at two summer camps, MHC After 3 and Talent Search of Patrick & Henry Community College.



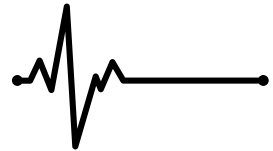
During the camps, youth participated in hands-on environmental education activities and learned about water safety during an introduction to paddling workshop.



Interested in joining DRBA's amazing crew of dedicated volunteer educators? One of the responsibilities of a VEE is to assist with recruiting and training new VEEs. Volunteering allows people of all ages and backgrounds to inspire and engage people, and it is a wonderful opportunity to develop skills, enhance personal growth, connect with others and have a meaningful impact in today's world.

Anyone interested in volunteering, can visit the website at www.danriver.org/VEE to learn more and complete the online application.

KEEPING A PULSE ON OUTDOOR RECREATION



The Rockingham County Economic Development and Tourism Office understands the importance of outdoor recreation to their community. That's why they have worked with the North Carolina Department of Commerce to create and implement a program called CORE: Creating Outdoor Recreation Economy.



The plan will ultimately serve to attract businesses and create a community-driven vision that will in turn increase the outdoor economy on the western side of Rockingham County.



This plan will include recommendations for downtowns to include components of the outdoors, create opportunities for additional outdoor recreation retailers or outfitters, and inspire an economy in Rockingham County that will be sustainable for the future.

DRBA has been an integral part of this stakeholder group by providing our expertise and experience.



Pictured here: A Rockingham County river blueway guide and visitor guide to help enhance the Roco outdoor experience.



CHRIS ADCOCK

An interview with DRBA's new board president

Chris Adcock was voted in by the board of directors as President with his one-year term starting January 1, 2024. Chris has been a long-time supporter and partner of DRBA and has many years of experience taking care of our regional waterways.

He is a registered professional engineer in Virginia and North Carolina, has a Class 5 waterworks operator's license, and a Class II waste management facility operator's license. Before taking on his current position as Director of Public Works for Pittsylvania County, Virginia, he worked for a consulting engineering firm in Danville, as a staff engineer with the City of Danville, and was the Director of the Pittsylvania County Water & Sewer Authority.

Chris is married with one son. He enjoys hiking, mountain biking, brewing beer, overlanding, and attending music festivals. He also owns a couple of Italian style scooters and regularly rides with local clubs.



1 Q: What excites you about the DRBA mission?

A: I believe the Dan River and its tributaries are an under-used resource recreationally and, historically, these waterways have been neglected and treated with a lack of respect. DRBA's three prong mission addresses each of these items by getting people on the water, cleaning and caring for the water, and educating our residents about the basin's ecosystem. I am excited about our impact in these areas but more excited about our potential future impact as we hopefully expand our programs and outreach.

2 Q: What event or circumstance got you interested in coming onto the DRBA Board of Directors?

A: When I had just graduated from Virginia Tech in the early '90s, I met Forrest Altman and did some hikes and floats with him. We actually did some hikes to locate the source of the Dan River which he discussed in the "The Dan River Book."

He got me involved in the Dan River Trail Association which I believe was a predecessor to DRBA when they were working on the development of the Ringgold Rail Trail. After that I was a supporter of DRBA and attended some FSOs. Later, I was contacted by Mark Estes who I knew through our shared work overseeing local water and sewer utilities. He mentioned that our work was intimately intertwined with the Dan River and I took that to heart. Combined with my enjoyment of the local outdoors and the seeds that Forrest and Mark planted, I really thought DRBA was a fitting organization for me to share my time and talents with.

3 Q: Since you've been on the board, what are you most proud of that DRBA completed/did?

A: I have become really interested and proud of our education programs and I would like to see that part of our mission grow. I believe it provides our youth with a great introduction to our local ecosystem which will reap rewards as they grow into adults.

4 Q: What do you see in DRBA's future?

A: Continuation and expansion of our programs.

5 Q: Any words of wisdom for our readers?

A: We have such a great mission that deserves our financial resources. Give till it hurts and tell your friends and family about our mission and ask for their support.

For the full list of DRBA's board of directors, scan the QR code and then click the link!



ART IN NATURE

Annual fundraising auction supports DRBA efforts

DRBA's Art in Nature Auction is an annual fundraising event that raises money to help protect the natural and cultural resources of the Dan River Basin and spotlights regional artists, hobbyists, craftspeople and experiences.

DRBA's Art in Nature Auction pieces include one-of-a-kind pieces that are made from and inspired by nature, upcycled or recycled pieces, donated pieces from private collections and experiences in nature that will make memories of a lifetime. Items include sculptures, paintings, stained glass, photography, pottery, jewelry, furniture, and more.

Do you have pieces or an experience you would like to donate to help support the protection and preservation of our natural resources?

Preferred items are items that have been created by artists from North Carolina and Virginia. Sculptures, ornaments, knitted items, furniture, photographs, paintings, jewelry, quilts, toys, and more are accepted. Or you can donate a nature-related experience!

100% of the proceeds from the Art in Nature Auction help support the protection of our natural and cultural resources throughout the 3,300 square miles of the Dan River Basin.

Select items that have already been accepted are featured at the right side and bottom of this page!

If your donation is accepted, you will have made a real, tangible difference for our rivers and streams!

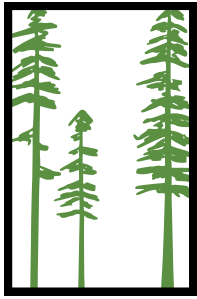
To sponsor the event, please contact Tiffany Haworth at thaworth@danriver.org.

To find out how to donate items to DRBA's Art in Nature Auction, please visit: www.danriver.org/artinnature.

DRBA acquires pieces for the auction year-round; however the deadline to receive items or experiences for the 2024 Art in Nature Auction is **September 13, 2024**.



STAY ON TOP OF DRBA'S ACTIVITIES!



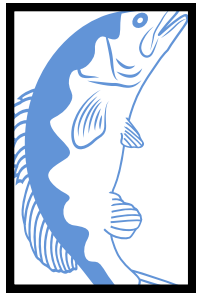
"DRBA's June FSO was an amazing day for many reasons! Pulling into the meetup, there was a huge crowd of people and then we caravanned down to the reservoir access. The dam and

lake made for a stunning view as our group paddled through the twists and turns of Talbott Reservoir. It was an adventure -- you never knew what would be around the next corner you paddled around! Just make sure to bring your water and sunblock," said Monique Holland, pictured below with DRBA staff member Anna Wheeler. The September FSO will be on Sept. 7, location Mitchell Bridge Access.



Join DRBA for the Smith River Cleanup on August 17 to help prepare the river and surrounding areas ahead of the Smith River Fest on August 25. Cleanup participants will be served lunch after the

cleanup and DRBA will be set up at a booth at the festival and man a demo pool to provide a beginner level experience for festival attendees.



DRBA will be present at Stokes Stomp on Sept. 14. This festival, held on the Beautiful Dan River at Moratock Park, is held by the Stokes Arts Council. This year marks the 50th annual

celebration. This free event features a parade, multiple musical performances, a marching band, a dance performance, the Dan River Duck Race and a variety of vendors to enhance the guest experience.



DRBA will be present at the Eden RiverFest on Sept. 21 to celebrate Eden's art, history and river heritage. This annual event takes place in the historic Leaksville area of Eden, it's oldest downtown area that

dates back to 1797. The 21st edition of the festival will feature live concerts all day, axe throwing, gem mining, a 360 photobooth, chainsaw carving, giant games, magicians, kid's play zone, sand art, trick roping, stagecoach fun and plenty of vendors.



Other important events for 2024 include:
 Sept. 2: DRBA offices closed for Labor Day
 Sept. 4: Citizen Water Quality Monitoring Training
 Sept. 7: Monthly FSO

Scan the QR code for the calendar of events!



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4/1/24 - 6/30/24

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Thank you, Donors!

To support DRBA, scan the QR code.



THANK YOU FOR BEING A FRIEND OF DRBA!

Dan River Basin Association
413 Church Street, Suite 401
Eden, NC 27288



Mark your calendar for the Smith River Cleanup on Aug. 17 and Smith Riverfest on Aug. 25! To view DRBA's calendar of events, visit danriver.org/events or scan the QR code.



You can protect nature from anywhere,
anytime. Give today.

www.danriver.org/donate