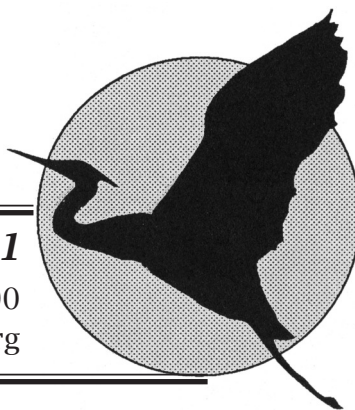


# Voice of the Haw

The Haw River Assembly December 2011



P.O. Box 187 · Bynum, NC 27228 · (919) 542-5790  
email: [info@hawriver.org](mailto:info@hawriver.org) · [www.hawriver.org](http://www.hawriver.org)

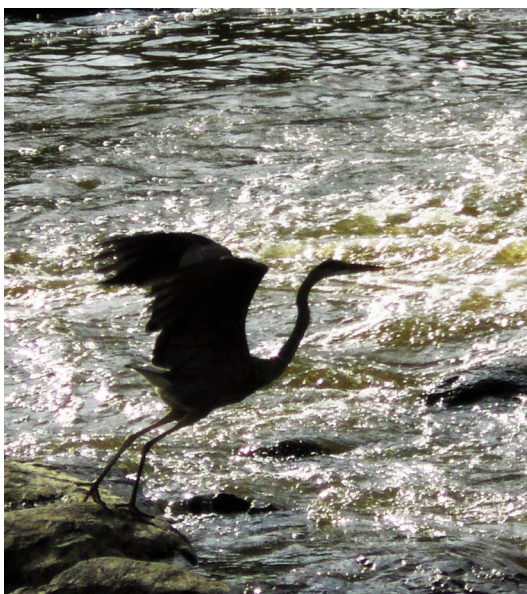


## Haw River Assembly: 29 Years and Counting

by Elaine Chiosso, **HAW RIVERKEEPER®** What a glorious autumn this has been, with reflections of trees in the river turning waters to gold, sparked by crimson leaves floating downstream. It has been an autumn of hope as well, as November's elections brought awareness that voters do not want current economic and environmental injustices to continue. Many local elections in our watershed have put in place new majorities interested in tackling issues that are priorities for cleaner water. We hope to work with these newly-elected officials to prevent the natural gas industry from bringing its fracking destruction to NC; stopping new developments, pipelines and landfills that threaten our waters; and pushing back against state and federal attacks on environmental protections. The Haw River Assembly will celebrate its 30th Anniversary in 2012, and the federal Clean Water Act will be 40 years old! Let's dedicate ourselves to making sure both are still going strong, long into the future.

Water pollution and shortages, climate change, environmental destruction from extraction and delivery of petrochemicals, radioactive waste, incinerators, landfills, sludge application, pharmaceuticals in surface waters...these issues that threaten the world threaten our watershed as well. As Haw Riverkeeper, I know there are few environmental issues that are not also water issues. I have become increasingly aware that so many of these problems could be solved if we all used LESS STUFF. Why is there so much trash, leftover medicines and hazardous wastes that need to be disposed of, and that often end up poisoning our waters and ourselves? Why do we need to constantly find more sources of water and non-renewable energy to consume? Using less, and conserving what we have, would go a long way towards solving these problems. At the same time we

must address the fact that there are still so many in the world lacking the most basic amenities needed for a healthy life and environment. Starting locally, in our own watershed, we can find more sustainable ways to provide food, energy, clean water, and shelter. We can be healthier, conserve resources, create jobs and reduce our carbon footprint. As we begin the 30th year of the Haw River Assembly, we will redouble our efforts to support environmental equity and justice throughout our watershed, working for clean water for all of us.



## Opposition to Fracking in NC Grows

Momentum is growing to protect NC from the dangerous health and environmental consequences of fracking for natural gas that have been seen in other parts of the country where this is taking place. Hydrofracturing (fracking) for natural gas trapped in shale deposits is an emerging issue in the eastern part of our watershed, and to our sister river – the Deep River. Millions of gallons of water are needed for this method of extracting pockets of natural gas by fracturing underground rock with high pressure water, mixed with sand and chemicals. The quantities of fresh water used for fracking, contamination of ground water and wells, air pollution, truck traffic, and disposal of the contaminated fracked water have all proven to be major new environmental problems wherever fracking takes place. Rural areas have become industrialized landscapes.

South and eastern Chatham County, Chapel Hill, western Wake and Durham are in the Triassic basin, where ancient shale rocks may contain natural gas, as well as parts of Lee, Moore and Granville counties. Due to existing laws in NC, fracking is not allowed here, but the natural gas industry is working hard to change that.

HRA is working with other NC organizations to prevent fracking here. We organized our members in October to attend the state's public hearing in Sanford on a new study that DENR has been mandated to produce on the geological resource, potential

impacts, and regulatory guidance for fracking in NC. It was an overflow crowd and the majority of speakers were against fracking in NC. Our comments to the state included concerns that the timeline (by May 2012), staff, and dollar resources for this study are totally inadequate. We also continue to urge the legislature not to override the Governor's veto of Senate Bill 709 that would put fracking on a faster track (they convened *continued on page 3*

## HRA Board of Directors

**Gerald Lynn Featherstone**, President, *Chatham*  
**Ruth Lucier**, Vice-President, *Bynum*,  
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## HRA Staff

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**Cynthia Crossen**, *Haw River Watch*  
**Donna Myers**, *Watershed Education*  
**Germane James**, *Development & Outreach*  
**Kathy Buck**, *Office Manager*

## Newsletter Staff

**Editor:** Cynthia Crossen \* **Contributors:** Elaine Chiosso, Cynthia Crossen, Germane James, Donna Myers \* **Photos:** Elaine Chiosso, Cynthia Crossen, Ken Crossen, Susanne Gomolski, Maja Krickler \* **Logos & Poster Art:** Jan Burger

**To join The Haw River Assembly**  
or renew your membership, send a check to:  
**HRA, P.O. Box 187, Bynum, NC 27228.**

*Individual: \$20    Family: \$30*

*Sustaining: \$50; Heron Circle: \$100 & above*

*Low Income: \$10*

*The Haw River Assembly is a nonprofit grassroots organization founded in 1982. Our mission is to protect and restore the Haw River, its tributaries, and Jordan Lake; and to build a community that shares this vision.*

**(919) 542-5790    [www.hawriver.org](http://www.hawriver.org)**

## HRA 2012 Board of Directors

We welcome newly-elected Justin Robinson, Dr. John Bang, Deepa Sanyal, and Jonathan Davis to our Board of Directors, as well as Mimi Pollard who was appointed in June to fill a vacancy. Justin Robinson, a Durham resident, is studying forest restoration at NCSU, as well as being an amazing musician who has contributed his talents to benefit HRA at our Festival with the Carolina Chocolate Drops and his current group, Justin Robinson and the Marionettes. John Bang is a professor in the Dept. of Environmental, Earth, and Geospatial Sciences at NC Central University and lives in Cary with his family. Deepa is a Community Revitalization and Regional Planner with public involvement in planning and advocacy for sustainable development and livable communities. A Fearington resident, she has served on the Green Building and Sustainable Environment Advisory Board in Chatham County. Jonathan, a glass blower with a studio and home north of Pittsboro, is a strong advocate for better environmental protections. Miriam (Mimi) Pollard lives in Chatham County, teaches in Durham, and is an MPA student at NC Central Univ. in Public Policy. We are pleased to have such a strong and diverse group of new board members to help us launch our 30th year of work at HRA, including important work on policy and advocacy issues, environmental justice work, and new initiatives in Durham.

A big round of thanks to all our current Board members who are continuing to serve in 2012: Brian Baker, Sam Berryhill, Bob Brueckner, Chris Carter, Anne Cassebaum, Gerald Lynn Featherstone, Sharon Garbutt, Rich Goldberg, Ruth Lucier, Janet Macfall, Tom Patterson, Cecelia Vassar, Mimi Pollard, Efrain Ramirez, Matt Steible, and Cecelia Vassar.

Finally we are sorry to say farewell to those retiring from the Board--their talents and energy will be greatly missed. Susanne Gomolski (Kayak Adventures) and Joe Jacob (Haw River Canoe and Kayak Co.) have introduced so many to the adventure and beauty of our river and lake with their guided trips and water clean-ups, and we thank them for helping us become a stronger organization. Joe's and Debbie Tunnell's advocacy for public access and protected lands along the river is a lasting legacy of their time with HRA, and we thank Debbie for her years of leadership on the Board. Nancy Zeman of Benjamin Winery has given gifts of her time and resources to help support our work, and we look forward to continuing to work with her in new ways. Thanks for all you've done for HRA!

## HRA Annual Meeting

We gathered on November 5 at Forest Hills Park under blue skies and colorful autumn leaves for a guided hike along Third Fork Creek with Bob Brueckner (HRA Board member, Land Comm. chair and Durham resident, *far left in photo*). Bob pointed out Durham's restoration efforts of this tributary, impaired by city stormwater, of New Hope Creek which flows into Jordan Lake. Inside the park's lovely community center we convened for Board elections and updates on issues. Steve Bocckino, of Durham, summarized efforts to stop the 751 South development near Jordan Lake, and I gave a presentation on threats to our watershed if fracking is allowed in NC. Omega Wilson, our keynote speaker from West End Revitalization Assoc., discussed the impacts suffered by communities as a result of environmental injustice, and how his own Mebane community took steps to address these inequities, all the way to the federal government. Thanks to our speakers, Board, staff, and attendees for making it a great meeting! --Elaine Chiosso



Photo by Cynthia Crossen



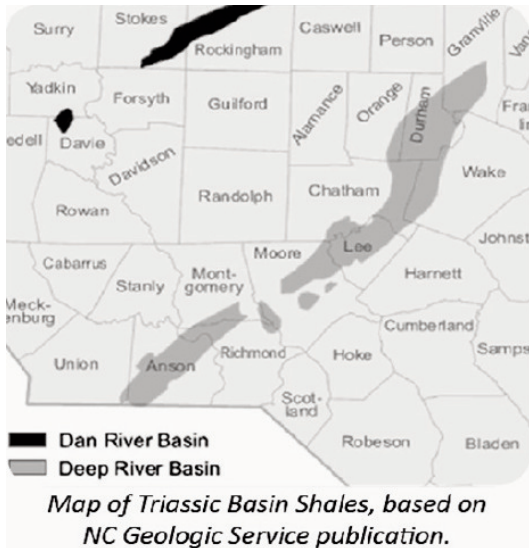
# HAW RIVERKEEPER<sup>®</sup>

## *Issues in the Watershed*

from Elaine Chiosso, HAW RIVERKEEPER<sup>®</sup>

*continued from page 1* this past summer without enough votes for the override). We expect the 2012 Legislative Session, which starts in May, to be a major push to get regulations in place to allow fracking in NC. We will continue to use the time between now and then to build local and statewide support to stop them. If you would like to receive the Haw Riverkeeper email alerts about fracking in NC, please send a message to [info@hawriver.org](mailto:info@hawriver.org) to request being on the fracking listserve.

Thanks to Clean Water for North Carolina  
([www.cwfnc.org](http://www.cwfnc.org)) for this map.



### ***Durham - 751 South Development Stumbles***

Durham City Council voted in October to deny city water to the controversial 751 South, a huge mixed use development near Jordan Lake that the Haw River Assembly has long opposed. Durham County Commissioners have agreed to supply sewer service to the project from their Triangle Waste Water Treatment plant (whose effluent discharges into Northeast Creek and then Jordan Lake) even though the 751 property lies in the traditional service area of the City of Durham's WWTP. The county does not supply water, leaving the developers to proclaim they would drill wells to get the water they need. City officials expressed skepticism that the developers could build 1300 homes and 600,000 sq. ft of commercial space on 167 acres without city water. Drilling for wells of this capacity opens up a whole new set of concerns for neighbors to the property, many of whom are already suing the county for the re-zoning decision that gave approval to 751 South to proceed.

### ***Cary Proposes Jordan Lake Aeration System to Improve Drinking Water***

The Haw Riverkeeper submitted comments for the upcoming environmental assessment that will be undertaken by the US Army Corps for the reservoir aeration system project proposed by Cary and Apex. If approved, the towns would install a

“WEARS ResMIX” aerator that would impact several acres of water near the existing intake at Jordan Lake to improve water quality, including decreasing uptake of heavy metals from the lake bottom sediment. HRA raised issues to be addressed in the EIA, including whether there have been any reports of negative impacts or hazards to fish, birds, or other wildlife in other reservoirs where WEARS ResMIX systems are installed. What kind of signage will be used to alert boaters of the equipment in the water, and how will this signage be maintained and protected from storm damage so that it is consistently viewable? We also question how much prevention of pollution through stormwater BMP's and retrofits in the jurisdictions of these two towns could be funded by the equivalent cost of the WEARS ResMix system?



Photo by Susanne Gomolski

### ***Greensboro - White Street Landfill***

The Greensboro battle over re-opening the White Street Landfill has moved into new territory with the election of anti-landfill Councilman Robbie Perkins, who defeated pro-landfill opening Mayor Bill Knight in the recent November elections. Other City Council election results also promise a new decision on a landfill located near mostly African-American communities. The landfill is in the North Buffalo Creek watershed, which has long been on the NC “Impaired Waters” list for a variety of pollutants and degraded biological conditions. The proposal to add more trash to an existing area of the site called Phase Three, a 50 acre section of land, would mean the landfill mound could ultimately rise more than 900 feet off the ground. Ten years ago, the city promised to shut down the landfill. But over the past year the city council had hoped to save money by re-opening it – despite protests from the local community, who have been joined by a student group from NC A&T, “Ignite Greensboro”. Councilwoman T. Dianne Bellamy-Small, community supporter who just won re-election, said she will ask her colleagues to have the city manager begin some long-range planning for solid waste, which could include things such as more efficient recycling.

### ***N.C. Environmental Inequities/Environmental Justice Workgroup (EI/EJWG).***

EI/EJWG is a project initiated by the Research Triangle Environmental Health Collaborative. Omega Wilson of West End Revitalization Association and Elaine Chiosso of the Haw River Assembly will serve as co-chairs during six-months of meetings. The Research Triangle Environmental Health Collaborative held a summit in September 2010 focused on “America’s Healthcare Policy through the Lens of Environmental Health.” A set of recommendations were produced and published (see

*continued on page 4*



# HAW RIVERKEEPER®

## Issues in the Watershed

*continued from page 3*

<http://environmentalhealthcollaborative.org/summit/summit-2010/> ). Three work groups have been formed – 1) Health Impact Assessments; 2) Shared Data Sources; 3) Environmental Inequities/Environmental Justice – that will focus on clarity about the meaning of “environmentally-related disease prevention” and how it relates to the national healthcare debate and cost savings, and prevention of adverse environmental health impacts. The Environmental Justice workgroup will look at how measurable indicators of environmental (in)justice can be tracked over time. A second goal will be developing a tool kit to assist communities with advocacy, that includes methods of engagement, linking environmental and health data, and grant writing to fund local improvements.



Photo by Cynthia Crossen

*Environmental Justice Advisor to HRA Omega Wilson shares his work at the local level to improve public health and clean up Mebane streams, as well as his national work as advisor to the EPA on environmental justice issues. At left are HRA Board members Debbie Tunnell and Cecelia Vassar.*

### **Clean Water Act – 40th Birthday or End of Protections?**

Once again the federal Clean Water Act is under attack in Congress. Signed into law by President Nixon in 1972, this landmark legislation made protection of our waters the law of the land, and was a major reason the Haw River began its recovery from an era of untreated factory and sewage pollution. For nearly four decades, the Clean Water Act has been our nation's best defense against toxic water contamination and other water pollutants, and it has been weakened and attacked ever since it was passed. The latest comes as Senators Barrasso (WY-R) and Heller (NV-R) are pushing a dirty water amendment to the Energy and Water Appropriations bill. If this amendment passes, our nation's waters will be at risk of becoming more polluted. Waters that will lose protection include headwater, intermittent, and ephemeral streams that supply public drinking water systems serving more than 117 million Americans. The Haw River Assembly will be joining all Waterkeeper Alliance members in 2012 to celebrate the Clean Water Act through actions showing the immense value of our rivers for swimming, fishing and drinking water.



*The mighty Haw was remembered this Halloween at Pumpkins on the Bridge in Bynum, with this pumpkin carved by Elaine Chiosso. Photo by Debbie Rosenstein.*

## ***New Book Tells the History of Our River***

Written by Anne Cassebaum and published this year by Macfarland and Co., this brand new book's 229 pages, maps, and photos are packed full of fascinating information about the river we so love.

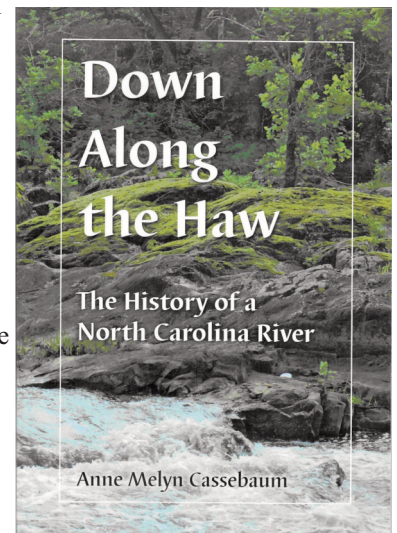
It features interviews with mill workers, archaeologists, environmentalists, farmers, water managers, paddlers and many others who are connected to the river. It explores the rich geographic, cultural and ecological history of this beautiful river that runs through our lives.

The good, the bad, and the inspirational --it's all here!

Author Anne Cassebaum is Associate Professor Emerita at Elon University where she taught writing and Environmental and American literature for 25 years. She serves on the HRA Board of Directors, and lives in Alamance County.

***All profits from sales of Anne's book will be donated to HRA.***

To purchase your copy, (additional copies make great gifts!), call (919) 542-5790, or email [germane@hawriver.org](mailto:germane@hawriver.org). The purchase price is \$25 for HRA members (store retail, \$29.95). Add \$3 per book for shipping. Special holiday shopping opportunity: come by the HRA Bynum office on 199 Bynum Hill Road **Saturdays Dec.3 & Dec.10, 10 am to 2 pm.**







# Development & Outreach Report

Catchy title, right? Since the Rainmaker project is officially over, I will resume the title of Development & Outreach Coordinator, giving me a broader range of responsibility and reach. Similar to the structure and goal of the Rainmaker grant, I will continue to focus my efforts on membership cultivation, event coordination and volunteer management with a slight twist!

As the organization continues to extend our accessibility to new and diverse populations, I plan on adding an element of community organizing to my job description. I enjoy building relationships and encouraging stewardship throughout our watershed, focusing my energy within our most urban populations, Durham and Burlington. After attending the North Carolina Environmental Justice Summit in Tillery, NC, I learned just how important it is to be an ally to whole communities as we try to avoid "yesterday's injustices today!" I am excited about these new initiatives and look forward to reporting on our progress as we kick it into high gear in 2012!

*from Germane James, HRA  
Development and Outreach  
Coordinator*

Speaking of the new year, the Haw River Assembly will be celebrating another incredible milestone--our 30th year defending the Haw River and Jordan Lake! This is an incredible accomplishment that we credit to the passionate leadership of our dedicated staff and board throughout the years, as well as to you, our loyal constituents. The economic landscape has shifted several times throughout these 30th years but HRA remains strong and capable. We look forward to offering our members and friends several opportunities to celebrate with us throughout the year, culminating with a big river gala! More information on that event will be available soon.

In the meantime, an anticipatory birthday gift or end of the year gift to the river to kick off this memorable year is always welcome! Help us get a head start raising \$30,000 for our 30th year campaign. Also, as the holiday season approaches, consider giving the unique gift of Haw River Assembly merchandise! We have just unveiled **our newest t-shirt**, which highlights our 30th year featuring Clyde Jones' beautiful interpretation of our heron logo. "**Down Along the Haw**" is a **great new book**, written by Anne Cassebaum (member of our board of directors) that explores the rich geographic, cultural and ecological history of the Haw River. And don't forget about a **gift membership** which truly is the gift that keeps on giving! All of these goodies will be available at the Haw River Assembly Office (199 Bynum Hill Road, Bynum, NC) through December 23. Or join us for our annual holiday sale -- Saturday, December 3rd and Saturday December 10th, from 10 am to 2 pm, at the HRA office. All shirts will be on sale, featuring **deep discounts on vintage HRF t-shirts!** This is a great way to keep our local economy thriving and to present the ones you love with some funky, one of a kind treasures! What better way to show you care then supporting conservation and pollution prevention!



## 2012 Haw River Assembly T-shirt Clyde Jones "Heron"

*Shirts are available in bluebird (light blue). These are soft organic cotton shirts from TS Designs in Burlington, which uses the environmentally friendly Rehance dye process to eliminate plastisol inks.*

Be sure to pick up your  
Haw River Assembly t-shirt,  
sure to become a collector's item!

*Modeled by Tom Patterson (HRA Board), Martha Pentecost (HRLC Volunteer), & Rich Goldberg (HRA Board)  
Photo by Cynthia Crossen*

**\$ 22 (adult) S, M, L, XL, XXL**  
**\$ 22 (ladies) S, M, L, XL**  
**\$ 16 (youth) S, M, L**

Available at the General Store Cafe in Pittsboro, Townsend Bertram Outfitters in Carrboro, Saxapahaw General Store in Saxapahaw, and the HRA office in Bynum--**open for holiday shopping Saturdays Dec. 3 & Dec. 10, 10 am - 2 pm.**

To order, send checks made out to Haw River Assembly, to: HRA, P.O. Box 187, Bynum NC 27228. Include total number, sizes & colors of shirts ordered and to whom to ship them. Add \$3 per shirt for shipping. Or call us at (919) 542-5790 to arrange a time to come by our office in Bynum to shop. Previous years' shirts are also available.

# Upcoming Events in 2012

**Saturdays, December 3 and 10, 2011, from 10 am to 2 pm**

**-- Haw River Assembly Holiday Shopping** Join us Saturday December 3 or Saturday December 10, from 10 am to 2 pm each day, to do your HRA holiday shopping at the Haw River Assembly Office (199 Bynum Hill Road, Bynum NC). All of our **Haw River Festival t-shirts** will be for sale, designed by the legendary Clyde Jones!

Come grab a new organic cotton 2012 "Heron" shirt (see page 5 for details). Vintage t-shirts discounted, Gift Memberships available. It's also an opportunity to purchase "**Down Along the Haw**", the brand new history of the Haw by Prof. Anne Cassebaum (see 4 for details). You can also stop by the HRA office any weekdays before December 23 to shop--call first (919-542-5790) to make sure we will be there.

**December 10-11, 2011, and March 24-25, 2012 -- Haw**

**River Watch Monitoring** See page 7 for Haw River Watch News. For info, contact Cynthia at (919) 967-2500, riverwatch@hawriver.org.

**March 17, 2012 -- Haw River Clean-up-A-Thon** We will be holding our 22nd Annual Haw River Clean-Up-A-Thon on March 17. Come join with eager volunteers as we clean up trash from the river banks, creeks, and Jordan Lake on foot, and even by canoe! We ask local businesses and individuals to sponsor the work of the volunteers by making a donation to HRA--we are also raising funds for our projects to keep the river clean all year long.

Interested in joining a team or starting your own? We provide the bags, gloves, and tally sheets--you provide the people power! Canoe clubs, youth groups, scouts, neighborhood and community organizations have all been part of the effort. We welcome all teams that would like to get out and clean up trash along waterways in our watershed--which includes parts of Rockingham, Caswell, Guilford, Alamance, Orange, Chatham, Durham and Wake counties. Call (919) 542-5790, or email germane@hawriver.org to sign up. Let us know if you have a specific location you want to clean up, or would like to join an existing team.

**March 17th -- 24th -- Durham Creek Week** Creek Week provides opportunities for Durham residents to discover and explore local streams and lakes through educational programs and recreational activities, and to do their part to protect waterways through volunteer projects. Contact germane@hawriver.org for more information.

**May 5, 2012 Celebrate the River at the 23rd Haw River Festival in Saxapahaw!** Plans are underway for our annual event, which will be held on May 5th, 2012 in Saxapahaw. The Haw River Festival is an annual family fun event, honoring the mighty Haw River! We will offer stream monitoring, kids' activities, raffles, a live auction, canoe rides, live music and much, much more! We're hoping to bring an extra festive vibe to the event this year, sharing the celebration with the Cinco de Mayo, a celebration of Mexican heritage and pride, commemorating freedom and democracy during the first years of the American Civil War. Stay tuned for more information as it becomes available. This is going to be another great Haw River shindig!

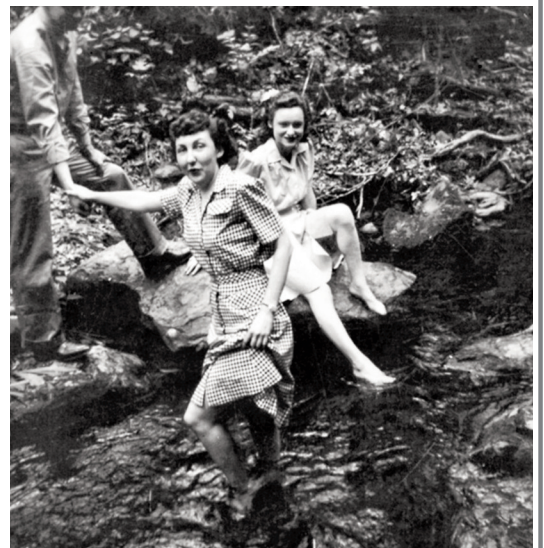


Photo by Cynthia Crossen

*Fourth-graders celebrate the Haw River in Saxapahaw at this year's Learning Celebration.*

In memory of Eleanor Cely Carter, (1917 - 2011) of Chapel Hill, who was a great lover of people, art, and nature. The mother of our remarkable Board of Directors' member Chris Carter, he says fondly that she "let me play in the woods, and bring home snakes" -- and we are all grateful that she did.

Thank you to her family for making HRA a recipient of memorial donations. Read her "Life Story" at: <http://www.newsobserver.com/2011/11/07/v-print/1625170/she-made-a-home-for-all.html>







# Standing in the Stream

## Haw River Watch Project News

from Project Coordinator Cynthia Crossen

(919) 967-2500 (office); (919) 542-3827 (home)

riverwatch@hawriver.org

**Teaching Our Youth that the River is Full of Life** This fall gave me and many river watch volunteers an opportunity to take children and youth down to the river, to let them discover its wonders and learn the importance of protecting our waterways. Thank you Maja Kriker, Sharon Garbutt, Jeannie Ambrose, Betsy Kempter, Bruce Ellis, Catherine Deininger, Deborah Amaral, and Rob & Molly Dubose, for being part of my river watch efforts. I couldn't do it without you!



Photo by Ken Crossen



Photo by Cynthia Crossen

Hawbridge science teacher Adam McEvoy (upright, center) helps his middle school students discover life in the Haw River at Saxapahaw.

Watch station for 4th-graders at Great Bend Park on the Haw River at Glencoe. This is a beautiful park, with a golden-leaved trail along the river, impressive dam, and historic mill village. I'm excited to go back to do a stream monitoring

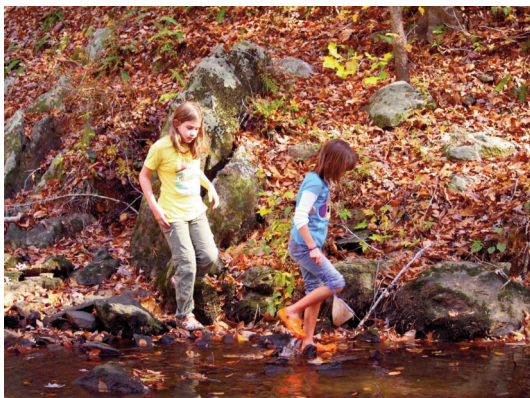


Photo by Maja Kriker

Homeschoolers learn stream monitoring at New Hope Creek, in preparation for monitoring Third Fork Creek in Durham's Forest Hills Park.

\*\*\* Volunteers and I taught macroinvertebrate collection and identification to 170 enthusiastic and engaged middle and high school students at Hawbridge Charter School in Saxapahaw in September. Many thanks to Adam McEvoy, our partnering Hawbridge science teacher, who wants to join Haw River Watch to monitor year round with his students.

\*\*\* Three weeks on the Learning Celebration gave me a chance to work with terrific volunteers and hundreds of 4th-graders, in Bynum, Saxapahaw, and Guilford & Rockingham counties. Standing on the river's shore, students described their experience as "relaxed", "peaceful", "exciting", "pretty", "awesome", and "naturous". At Camp Guilrock (partnering with Joy Fields of Piedmont Triad Resource Council and Stormwater Smart), I offered a River Watch monitoring training for folks interested in river watch, and LC crew. At least two teams joined our network: the Sierra Student Coalition, led by Happy Mackenzie, will monitor Little Buffalo Creek at Lake Daniels Park; and Eddie and Vance Sauls will locate a site on Reedy Fork to monitor.

\*\*\*Several homeschool groups formed monitoring teams. Karen Beaton will lead Chatham homeschoolers in monitoring several sites on Robeson Creek in Chatham County. Allison Armieri will lead a home-school team in monitoring Third Fork Creek at Forest Hills Park in Durham.

\*\*\* Maja Kriker and I ran a Stream

program there next year.

\*\*\* Maja and I took Prof. Amy Kennedy's CCCC Environmental Science class down to Robeson Creek to hunt for macroinvertebrates, which students brought back to the lab to identify.

**Welcome to These Many NEW TEAMS, and thanks to EXISTING TEAMS!** We are grateful for your monitoring efforts, and we will use the data you collect to protect and restore our watershed.



Photo by Maja Kriker

CCCC Environmental Science students find all kinds of critters in Robeson Creek in Pittsboro.



# The 2011 Learning Celebration: Blending Tradition with Fresh Approaches

from Donna Myers, Watershed  
Education Coordinator

This year HRA volunteers and staff brought very great ideas to fruition while standing on the foundation that has sustained the program for 22 years.

Fourth grade students, volunteers, meal providers, contributors, donors, river lovers, puppeteers and performers came together to continue the traditions of the Learning Celebration (LC), the Haw River Assembly's flagship riverside environmental education program. Volunteers led participants through learning stations that emphasize using all senses to interact with the river ecosystem. The animals, plants, stream watch and stewardship stations offer scientific exploration of river ecology and inhabitants. The history of the Haw River watershed, as well as artistic expression and creativity are nurtured at the clay and nature art stations. Musicians and puppeteers lead the students through interactive performances that reiterate the messages of stewardship and a sense of awe for the natural environment. Once the fourth-graders leave for the day, volunteers have the opportunity to camp out at the LC sites. Volunteers enjoy swimming, paddling, hiking and singing while they continue the tradition of stewardship, community and of course, enjoyment of the river. All of these traditions will endure, but each year different approaches are incorporated in order to ensure the sustainability and relevance of this amazing, unique program.

**Highlights of this year's fresh takes:** Volunteer feedback from the 2010 LC fueled the work of the 2011 Steering Committee (SC), which began monthly meetings in January, with fresh fundraising ideas a priority. An auction of "Dinner overlooking the Haw" provided an enchanting evening dinner and music in Bynum to donors. Our "Keep the Haw River Learning Celebration Flowing" crowd funding campaign raised \$2,350, making it possible for anyone to give any amount and clearly see how their donation supports the LC, via email, Facebook pages, websites and word of mouth.

At a volunteer potluck at the Bynum General Store in June, we socialized and spruced up the banners and signs used at the LC. At a volunteer recruitment workshop with the Volunteer Center of Durham, I learned how to better use social media to recruit volunteers, using the HRA Facebook page, website, emails, as well as the NC environmental education list serve, and postings on websites like NC Conservation Network, Craigslist and the Independent Weekly. Volunteer Eric Chetwynd donated a volunteer recruitment ad on WUNC radio. Recruitment with a personal touch--word of mouth and phone calling--played a large role, and our new web-based volunteer form streamlined registration. These approaches brought us 10 new volunteers, including two from NC DENR DWQ and one from the Piedmont Council of Governments, as well as returning volunteers. As always, the core of volunteers who consistently volunteer every year were integral to the continued success of the program.



Happy kids hit the trail at the LC in Bynum.

Photo by Cynthia Crossen



Photo by Ken Crossen

4th-graders enjoy environmental songs led by Cynthia Crossen and Chris Carter, at Camp Guilrock.

Another amazing addition to the LC volunteer ranks this year came from students throughout our watershed, who jumped right in as volunteers, helping us lead groups and teach stations. Catherine Deininger, long time HRA supporter and volunteer, brought 10 high school volunteers from the Woods Charter School Envirothon. Cyndie Lawrence of Northern Guilford Middle school brought her four 8th grade classes to Camp GuilRock. HRA board Vice President, Ruth Lucier facilitated 12 Bennett College students' visit to Camp Guilrock.

Taking a "boots on the ground" approach to recruiting 'target' schools, I visited schools very close to our program sites who have not ever, or recently, attended. With Mark Barroso's LC film, the Turtle Tracks kids' newsletter, and stories about the wonderful experience our program offers, I encouraged administration and teachers to sign up. That approach, as well as calling target school teachers, worked, bringing at least one new school each week to our program. In total we had 1,083 students participate from 19 schools from every county in the Haw River Watershed!

Other work by the SC and volunteers included updating teacher information packets, Learning Station teaching guides, and crew camp chore responsibilities; creation of a brand new puppet stage; and sprucing up of puppets, banners and signs.





Donovan Zimmerman teaches LC students about clay.

New or refreshed approaches move the program forward and keep it applicable to each year's volunteers, teachers, parents and 4th graders. Traditions, embodied by dedicated volunteers, create a welcoming, magical program that sustains stewardship and community--the Learning Celebration's enduring legacy.

**We Take the LC Program to Glencoe** On November 8, HRA partnered with Alamance County Recreation and Parks to host 76 students from Eastlawn Elementary at Great Bend Park in Glencoe. HRA staff and volunteers offered a Learning Celebration program with river walk, animals, plants, stream watch, stream steward, and nature art. Thank you to the following for making it all possible: Alamance County Recreation and Parks \* Sharon Garbutt, Maja Kricker, Sue-Anne Solem, CC, Rufus and Sutton King, Jessica Ferrer, and \* HRA staff Germane James, Cynthia Crossen, and Elaine Chiosso.

## Learning Celebration Special Thanks:

**Volunteers, HRA Board and Staff:** Steering Committee Maja Kricker, Jo Sanders, Eric Chetwynd, CC King, Wanda Sundermann, Jamie Saunders & Martha Pentecost, and Hope Wilder \* Chris Carter, Zella Magoo & Maja Kricker who volunteered for the entire 3 weeks of the LC \* Chris Carter, Hope Wilder, Martha Pentecost and Mardi Magoo for puppet show direction \* Rachel Winters, Food Coordinator \* Jamie Saunders who spearheaded the Bynum fundraising dinner, loaned kitchen equipment, & assisted with moves \* All volunteer crew meal providers \* All volunteers who came out to lead groups, teach stations, perform in the puppet show, help with moves and do all the amazing things that y'all do to make the LC a reality \* HRA Board of Directors \* Cecelia Vassar for procuring business gift certificates for food & equipment \* Clyde Jones \* Jesse Wilder & Ken Crossen for spearheading volunteer crew site set up/breakdown \* The HRA staff for going beyond the call of duty in the weeks leading up to, during, and after the LC: Kelley Phiffer, LC Assistant Coordinator; Germane James, Development & Outreach Coordinator; Kathy Buck, Office Manager; Cynthia Crossen, Haw River Watch Coordinator; Elaine Chiosso, HRA Executive Director.



Watershed Coordinator Donna Myers helps kids hunt for critters in the Haw at Great Bend Park, Glencoe.

**Business Donors:** Whole Foods Bakehouse \* Counter Culture \* Lindley Mills \* Harris Teeter \* Food Lion \* Company Shops \* Townsend Bertram & Company for donating use of tents \* Kevin Meehan of Turtle Run Farm for donating the use of Use-Yer-Foots and produce for meals \* Henry Outz \* Benjamin Vineyards \* Saxapahaw General Store \* Jordan Properties for use of facilities and for office support \* Target \*

**Hosting Thank Yous:** Bynum General Store for donating space for the Volunteer Recruitment/Retention event \* NC State Parks, with special thanks to Jordan Lake State Park Superintendent Shederick Mole and Ranger Brock Martin, for use of the Lower Haw River State Natural Area \* Saxapahaw land owners who donated use of their land during week 2, Donovan Zimmerman, Lea Clayton, Yolanda Lujan, Elizabeth England, Jim and Diana Burke, James and Janet MacFall \* Tom Roberts and Johnnie Farrar of Chatham Mills Development Corp., Billy York of the Bynum Ruritan Club and Sue Eldon of Saxapahaw United Methodist Church for donating indoor space for rain sites \*

Mark Christy of Camp Guilrock \* Deborah Amaral for providing storage \* Wanda Sundermann and family for hosting and organizing the thank you party

**Equipment and Materials Donors:** Lia Gilmore and Emma Gilmore for remaking the game bags \* Paperhand Puppet Intervention for lending puppets \* Austin Lybrand and Lynn Featherstone for use of brush clearing equipment \* Jo Sanders for the use of an equipment trailer \* Chris Carter for the use of his solar cart, cargo van and trailer. Also, for the creation of a brand new puppet set that is totally sturdy, reusable, adaptable and easy to transport! \* Libby Searles-Bohs and family for Thank you picture frames \* Lynn Odom of the Volunteer Center of Durham for donating volunteer recruitment ads and thank you gifts.

## 319 Watershed Education Grant Successfully Completed!

Our environmental education work--the Learning Celebration for fourth-graders and our Stream Investigation Program for eighth-graders--has been supported during 2008 through 2011 in part by a NC DENR Division of Water Quality 319 grant, which ended this September. This grant has enabled us to fund a full time, year-round Watershed Education position. Some highlights of the work we accomplished with the help of this grant are:

**Learning Celebration 2008-2011:** 4775 students attended; 307 volunteers participated

**Stream Investigation 2008-2011:** 695 students attended; 25 volunteers participated

Special thanks to Cynthia Crossen, Jenna Schrieber and Elaine Chiosso for creating and submitting the grant. Also, gratitude to Germane James, Cynthia and Elaine for help with the final grant report.

Photo of the Haw River from the Saxapahaw Bridge, by Elaine Chiosso



### Water

The world turns softly  
Not to spill its lakes and rivers.  
The water is held in its arms  
And the sky is held in the water.  
What is water,  
That pours silver,  
And can hold the sky?

from *Poems by a Little Girl*,  
by Hilda Conkling, 1920



Photo by Cynthia Crossen

Join us for the 22nd  
Annual Clean-up-a-thon  
on March 17!

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